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Santa Susana Mountain Park Assn., P. O. Box 831, Chatsworth, Calif. 91311

NEWSLETTER FOR MARCH 1972

Dear Friends:

Our Save the Stagecoach Trail Country Fair and Parade will have been over when you receive this, so be sure to come to this month's meeting when all the committees will be giving their reports on its results. Meetings are always held the third Monday of each month at the Glendale Federal Savings and Loan, 21881 Devonshire, in Chatsworth, at 8:00 P.M.....March 20th. Those of you living in Ventura County won't have to be making the trek over the hill each month to meetings; because, starting March 15th, SSMPA will also be holding meetings on the third Wednesday of each month in the upstairs meeting room of Bank of A. Levy, Los Angeles Ave., in Simi Valley at 8:00 P.M.

SSMPA is not dividing into separate units. It has, from the start, included as board members area chairmen from (1) Newhall and neighboring communities, (2) San Fernando Valley and (3) Ventura County. SSMPA began as a committee within Chatsworth Beautiful. Jan Hinkston was its chairman and soon her enthusiasm about preserving the beauty and environment of the Santa Susana Mountains attracted others from Simi, Newhall and as far north as North Hollywood. SSMPA was incorporated as a non-profit organization last year; and; as evidenced by the support given our recent hike-ins from numerous communities, we are an organization that encourages communities to work together for a healthier environment. We try to pool all of the many talents within SSMPA and use them in whatever area they are most needed. Now, if a Talent Coordinator or a professional in Public Relations would volunteer his services, then ALL our valuable human resources could be utilized in a far more efficient manner and SSMPA could really take off with wings!

SINCE OUR OPTION money has about reached the \$4,300 mark (plus \$1,000 from America the Beautiful) and option negotiations are eminent,, SSMPA members may be pleased to learn that we have obtained a speaker for Monday's meeting whose topic will be APPRAISALS. A subject about which most of us have a great deal to learn.

NOW THAT THE COUNTRY FAIR AND PARADE are over, it means we can all pitch in and help our hard-working and long-suffering chairman of the "Save the Stagecoach Trail Sponsor Book," Joy Totschek, and all of those on her committee. This weekend--March 18th and 19th--has been designated as "Stagecoach Saturday and Sunday" for volunteers going door to door soliciting sponsor ads in their neighborhoods. Joy points out the enormous need for enough volunteers (teen and adults) for this special weekend and invites anyone who is interested in covering their street or block to contact her at (213) 340-1473, or Mrs. Zelma Skillman (213) 882-2695, or Pat Toomin, Simi Valley Chairman, (805) 527-7702. Post cards may be sent to Joy Totschek, 22101 Londelius in Canoga Park.

Don Murphy

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This Sponsor Book is important, not only from a fund raising viewpoint, but it is one way to prove to government officials how strongly the people want and demand to have preserved some of our remaining open space and cultural heritage for our children and our children's children. Two unique and largely unspoiled mountain ranges--the Santa Susana Mountains and the Santa Monica Mountains--separated only by a few miles of hills need desperately to be protected from development. Both mountain ranges are the only reasonably close fresh air and open space refuge for the millions of people living and working in the smog choked city below.

The Santa Monicas are coastal mountains and, as such, provide for many the only form of water recreation. Development would mean the end of natural open beaches and rustic mountains....in its place would come luxury hotels, commercial amusement areas, loss of ocean view and access limited to those who can afford the \$. The Santa Susana Mountains rise above the heavily populated San Fernando Valley and the rapidly growing Simi Valley. These mountains are rich in oak filled canyons; high, but accessible, peaks bathed in sun even when the valley below disappears beneath a sickly yellow blanket. Equestrian trails grow fewer and fewer....soon horses will be banished completely from these two valleys. The history of the Santa Susana Mountains is colorful and rich from the time of dinosaurs--when the towering mountains were uplifted from the floor of the sea; through the age of the ancient Indian tribes who dwelled throughout the Santa Susanas as evidenced by archeologists' findings; to the time of the Mexican and Spanish settlements and large ranchos; on down to when the pioneers made the long, hard migration west and stage coach trails, (such as the section of trail the SSMPA is seeking to purchase) were the freeways of that day. In an 80 square mile area where so many different periods of history are still evident--it would be an injustice to our descendants not to save this living history for them too. When all the Indians, Mexicans, Spanish and pioneers used it without spoiling it, why should we be the ones to allow its destruction?

There are many avenues by which our city, county, state and federal governments can assist in helping all of us to save the Santa Susanas; but, unless we can SHOW them that we--as INDIVIDUALS--care enough to do something, all the fine words in the world will fall on deaf ears. HOW do we show we care? This is how: (1) WRITE LETTERS or a POSTCARD in your own words to all of your government representatives--500 separate letters are worth 1,000 names on a petition and 100 hand-written post cards or letters will have more impact than 400 signed form letters.

Two suggested representatives to whom you can write are: Supervisor Warren Dorn and Councilman Robert M. Wilkinson. Their addresses are:

L. A. County Supervisor Warren Dorn  
County Courts Building  
6230 Sylmar Avenue, Room 221  
Vany Nuys, California 91401  
Phone: 787-3350

Councilman Robert M. Wilkinson  
8444 Reseda Blvd., Suite D  
Northridge, California 91324  
Phone: 886-5210

Ask Supervisor Dorn to use the money they were going to use for the County Knudson Parkway (scheduled to extend from the end of Devonshire west, through Chatsworth Park South, turns north across the Southern Pacific Tunnel, the Simi Freeway and through the remote areas of the Santa Susana Mountains to Piru). Instead, use the funds for a park and save taxpayers all that money by buying the Stagecoach Trail! The Parkway would desecrate Chatsworth Park South--the environmental impact would be indecent and the cost outrageous.

*Doris Murphy*

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The cost of the Parkway just from the end of Devonshire to the Simi Freeway would surpass the land cost of the Stagecoach Trail all the way to the pass. Since the County has a four million (\$4,000,000) surplus, the parks should get their share. It could save the Stagecoach Trail--already declared an Historical Site (No. 92) by the City of Los Angeles.

A suggestion when writing to Councilman Wilkinson is that he try to initiate an ordinance to buy the land for our proposed park and/or coordinate with the County to buy land for a Regional Park.

After you've sent these cards, the way to prove you intend to use more than words is to help purchase the Stagecoach Trail by deciding what you do best and then choose your area of activity within SSMPA. The rest will come naturally. When we purchase this trail, we'll have proof of public action as well as public interest.

Every activity in SSMPA has its "moment of glory" and right now anyone who's a good fund raiser is top banana. So, no matter what the rest of us are deeply involved in, let's try to give the fund raising committee an extra hand now when they really need it. The Sponsor Book has tremendous potential because its ads run from one-liner children's names for a dollar and one adult or Mr. & Mrs. for two dollars to commercial ads ranging in price from business card size for \$10 to a full page for \$100. The commemorative book will not be just ads. One fourth of it will be devoted to an editorial section including articles on the Stagecoach Trail and the surrounding Santa Susana Mountains, facts about the geology, archeology, plant and animal life and history of the area and of those who lived there, as well as colorful sidelights about bandits, treasures and hair-raising rides on the trail itself--all illustrated with excellent photos. The book will have something for everyone so those taking out ads will get their money's worth. Joy reports that as of March 8th the total amount collected is over \$700; so, if only a few people managed to bring in this much in such a short time, think how much we can do with all of us pitching in. She has plenty of fact sheets explaining the project and will send one to anyone interested. Please note the change in the Social Service permit number--it is now No. 1878.

DISNEYLAND HAS AGREED to provide a special trip to the top salesman in our teenage division--all schools take note. We are awaiting word from LAS VEGAS for confirmation of a free weekend to the adult who brings in the most money. Top salesmen thus far (adults) are: Jackie Wild, Zelma Skillman, Dr. Ruth Boak and Dick Kinsman; and, of course, Joy Totschek who hasn't asked anyone to do anything she doesn't do herself. CALL OR DROP JOY A CARD AND LET HER KNOW YOU'LL HELP.

All checks should be made payable to the Stagecoach Trail Sponsor Book, and sent to 22101 Londelius Street, Canoga Park, Calif. 91304. Names should be printed exactly as they will appear in the publication and complete addresses should be supplied. Material for commercial ads should be supplied "camera ready." The proceeds from this sponsor book will go into the Santa Susana Mountain Park Land Trust Fund as have all previous SSMPA donations.

Jan Hinkton, our President, reports we have received formal notification from the I.R.S. indicating our Federal tax exemption status.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT A SSMPA OFFICE: Through the generosity of Dr. Pampalone in Chatsworth, we now have at least a temporary office. By this time next month we hope to be well established with a phone, a sign and a place for

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people to stop in and really see what SSMPA is all about. If anyone can spare a few hours a week to man the office, please call Mary McVey in Chatsworth, (213) 332-6153 or Doris in Simi (805) 527-0925. If anyone has a typewriter or other office equipment we can have or borrow...CALL! Thank you again, Dr. Pampalone.

SPEAKING OF GIVING THANKS....SSMPA is indebted to an extremely large number of individuals and organizations who made the Hike-Ins and Parade and Fair so well received; therefore, we are printing a special gold "Thank You" issue of our paper which will consist entirely of those to whom we are especially indebted and what they did. Naturally this writer is in no position to know who all of them are, so it is up to YOU to call me (805) 527-0925 or drop me a post card or letter (3073 Cobb Circle, Simi, 93065) listing the individual or organization's name and what their contribution was. (Chairmen: You could bring your lists to the March 20th meeting).

DON'T FORGET THE "GIMMICK BIKE RALLY" at the Ecology Fair, Sear's Lower Level, Canoga Park, on Saturday, March 18th at 9:30 A.M. The donation is \$2.00 and all proceeds go to SSMPA thanks to Sears Canoga Park Teen Advisory Board who is sponsoring it.

Mary Gorman, our Fund Raising Chairman, reports another increase of \$130.00 in our treasury from the garage sale conducted by the Canoga Park Jr. Women's Club.

As previously announced, March is the month when SSMPA has it's annual election of officers and other board members. The nominating committee is presenting the following slate of officers for the general membership to vote on at Monday night's meeting:

President: Janice Hinkston  
Vice-President: Zelma Skillman  
Recording Sec'y: Lois Scott  
Corres. Secretary: Joy Totschek  
Treasurer: Adel Campbell  
Area Chairmen:  
1. Ventura County: Doris Murphy  
2. San Fernando Valley: Zorka Nelson  
3. Newhall, Valencia, Saugus: Open  
Member at Large: Paul Doran  
Member at Large: Steve Elias

All members, including those in the Simi Valley area, are asked to attend this meeting in order to cast their vote. ALSO, please bring any slides, movies or photographs that you've taken on the Hike-Ins or at the Country Fair so that we can have a PHOTOGRAPHY EXCHANGE on the 20th.

ANOTHER ALSO: We will be forming a committee to plan a Country Fair for next year. We will have a short discussion at the meeting on evaluating this past Fair and making plans for next year's Fair.

See you all Monday,

Doris Murphy, Newsletter Editor

P. S. If there's anything you want included in the monthly newsletter, it should be received by the editor in writing within one week after the regular meeting. Thanks.