



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

A Non-Profit Org., Inc'd 1971

June 1997

Volume 27, Number 5

Fire!

June's exciting General Meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, June 2, 1997 at Glendale Federal Bank, Community Room, 21821 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth (one block east of Topanga Canyon Boulevard).

Our program will begin at 7:30 p.m. with a representative from the Los Angeles City Fire Department, speaking on issues important to SSMPA members.

This will be our last meeting until September 9.

See you there!

Strange Developments

Excerpted from the Daily News, 4/9/97

The Eagles Nest housing development company is suing actor (and Chatsworth High School graduate), Val Kilmer, because it contends he has reneged on a deal to share a main access road that runs through undeveloped Chatsworth property Kilmer and his family own. In its lawsuit, the company (through attorney Larry Rothstein) claims that as a result of Kilmer's actions, the company cannot move forward with its plans to build at least 19 million-dollar homes... The case hinges on an easement -- a crucial access road that would extend from Kilmer's property to the adjoining Eagles Nest land, a 43-acre site at Andora Avenue and Valley Circle Boulevard.

(ed. note#1: Claiming this land is undeveloped is like looking into someone's mouth and saying it's undeveloped because none of the teeth have been removed.) (ed.note#2: I am involved with SSMPA because I realized the urgent need for my personal involvement to combat threats like this to our children's heritage. How about you? Are you tired of developers destroying what you value, pushing you around, and making you feel powerless? Creating an active role for yourself in SSMPA may lead to wondrous rewards! Call any member of the Executive Board and tell her/him you want to actively help save our open space.

More Open Space Saved!

by Nancy Razanski, President, FPSSM

Thanks to the successful completion of the State Resources Agency Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program grant, written on our behalf by Robert E. Baxter from CA State Parks Land Acquisition Section in Sacramento, our Santa Susana Mountain Park Project will increase from its current 670.68 acres to 705.22 acres.

Mr. Baxter notified me by phone of the good news on Wednesday, May 7, 1997 and sent me the project standings list. We were rated twentieth of 65 Southern California finalists. The cut-off was the top thirty projects.

The acreage to be acquired consists of 27.23 acres of Southern Pacific Railroad property and 7.31 acres of Frank Retz's property near the Pass Road. These parcels, listed as #11, #12, and #13, stretch from the Pass Road to the eastern boundary of Chatsworth Park North, which connects to the railroad property in the back corner north of Chatsworth Street.

In addition to letters of support from SSMPA and FPSSM, letters of support were written by Susan Gerke of the Chatsworth Conservation Coalition, Virginia Watson of the Chatsworth Historical Society, and Muriel Kotin of the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society.

All transactions should be completed by February, 1998.

*unfortunately
at the last
minute - this
deal did not go through*

LEACHING THE ACORN

by Barbara Coffman

On Sunday, May 19th, I attended a special demonstration at the Southwest Museum in Pasadena on the Indian process of acorn leaching. The demonstration was performed by a Chumash Indian from Sat Wewa. I will try my best to reconstruct his narration.

The oak tree produces acorns three times a year. Only the third crop is harvested since it produces the largest number of perfect acorns. Acorn shells that are flawed are likely to be wormy and hence, useless. The gathered crop is sheltered in a granary. The granary floor is lined with wormwood which is an insect repellent. The sides are covered

with pine boughs pointed down, so that the needles will repel rodents from climbing up the sides. The acorns can be accessed at any point by the cook by simply reaching in through the boughs and taking out a handful. Intact acorns can be stored up to five years due to the presence of tannin in the acorn which acts as a preservative. However, it is this same tannin that must be removed before the acorn can be eaten.

After the acorn is shelled, it is ground into a fine flour and is ready to have the tannin removed. The two necessary items for the leaching are sand and water, so the preferred place to leach is stream-side. A mound of sand is made, with a shallow concave depression on the top. Next, the acorn flour is mixed with a large amount of water.

When the acorn flour is in proper suspension in the water, it is slowly poured over the concave sand mound until a thin layer of water and flour covers the sand. This thin layer is allowed to percolate into the sand, which acts as a filter. At this stage, the tannin, which is an oil, clings to the sand and forms a barrier between the acorn flour and the sand. At this time, the flour gradually changes color, indicating its time to add more flour/water. The leaching of each layer takes about a half hour.

When the leaching is finished, there is a coating of tannin oil left between the sand mound and the flour which prevents the mixing of sand into the flour. After the flour is removed, the layer of tannin can actually be rolled up. (A carefully leached batch of acorn flour will not contain any sand.) This is a very leisurely process because the object is to produce as high a quality product as possible.

When the processing of the flour has been completed, the acorn flour is cooked in one of three ways: mush, soup, or pancakes. The acorn flour is nutritionally an extremely good food and was the basic food source of the Chumash.

Andres Pico Adobe

The San Fernando Valley Historical Society invites you to the Re-Dedication of the historic Andres Pico Adobe, 10940 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills on Sunday, June 8, 1997, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. In addition to the Re-Dedication Ceremony, there will be tours of the Adobe, entertainment and refreshments and a

Home Town Picnic in Mentryville

A Home Town Picnic in Mentryville will be held on Saturday, August 2, 1997 from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This Santa Clarita Valley event is family oriented and will include barbeque, storytelling, children's games, music, and dancing. Proceeds will be used for the restoration and furnishings in the Historic Pico Canyon Ghost Town. For more information, call the Friends of Mentryville at 805-254-5272.

TRAIL WORK

by Barbara Coffman

On April 20, five volunteers (John Sabol, John Downey, George Busch, and Paul Coffman & myself) spent the morning clearing a section of our Loop trail. I'm sure those people who have hiked the loop since then have noticed a big difference in the worked-on section of the trail!

Oh, yes! On the hike on May 11, John Sabol and our newest Board member, Jeff Johnston, worked on the trail as we hiked along!

Since we can count on no help from the State in trail maintenance, we are completely dependent on the good will of our volunteers. If you are willing to give a few hours of your time to help keep our trail open, please call me at 818-347-5603, and I'll tell you what you can get in return.

Land Conservation Funding Bill

Your support letters are needed for a priority bill now before the State Legislature. This bill is Senate Bill 2 (Senator Mike Thompson) which places a \$495 million park and open-space bond act on the 1998 ballot to fund state and local park acquisition and facility projects and open-space protection projects. Write a letter to State Senator Cathy Wright in Sacramento urging her to support this legislation. State park and open-space agencies have seen their land acquisition budgets plummet 80-90% since the 1980s. State Park's ability to help fund local park projects has also declined 95% since 1981-82. These funding shortfalls prevent state agencies and non-profit groups from saving threatened open-space lands, expanding recreational opportunities, and repairing damaged park facilities. If you have additional questions, call Nancy Razanski at 818-341-3512, Chuck Mills of the Trust for Public Land at 916-557-1673, or review the text of this bill (and others) on the internet by visiting the State Senate's Home Page at <http://www.sen.ca.gov>.

September's General Meeting has been re-scheduled until the second Monday of the month, September 8, 1997 because of the Labor Day holiday. There will be no general meetings during the months of July and August. However, you are invited to the Executive Board Meetings, which will be held June 16, July 21, and August 18.

Los Angeles City Park Commissioners' Meeting

The L.A. City Park Commissioners are scheduled to meet on Wednesday, June 18, 1997 at 3:00 p.m. at Chatsworth Park South, Recreation Center. This could be a great opportunity for each of us to interact with the commissioners and to find common ground on how to continue to work toward completion of our priorities. See you there!

Chatsworth Community Coordinating Council - 1997 Awards Banquet

On Friday, May 16, 1997, three members of SSMPA (Lindsay Wilhelm, James Riley, and Theodore Dent) were honored with Certificates of Appreciation from CCCC at their annual awards banquet. Present for the awards were over 150 individuals, including State Senator Cathy Wright, Assemblyman Tom McClintock, and many other notable individuals concerned with making our society work. Each of the individuals honored has donated hundreds of hours of personal time and energy for the benefit of others. CCCC seeks other nominees for next year's awards and can be reached by calling 360-0894.

FROM THE ARCHIVES by Albert Knight, Vice-President SSMPA

Surprise! The information for this month's FROM THE ARCHIVES comes from the records of Oakwood Memorial Park (to which we extend our thanks), not those of the SSMPA/FPSSM. Oakwood Memorial Park is located at the western-most end of Lassen Street in Chatsworth. There are several interesting historic sites in this area. There are, for example, the double row of olive trees between Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Farralone Avenue, east of the entrance to the Memorial Park. These trees are listed by the City of Los Angeles as Cultural-Historic Monument #49. Another interesting "site" is found at the western end of Lassen Street, just past the entrance to Oakwood. This private property is the site of the former Roy Rogers Ranch, which once included much of the area across from the entrance to the Memorial Park. Oakwood Memorial Park itself is listed as L.A. Cultural-Historical Monument #484, while Chatsworth's Community Church, which is located on the grounds of the Memorial Park, is listed as L.A. Cultural-Historical Monument #14. Also located on the grounds of the Memorial Park are the Miranda Adobe (extant) and the former Stone Archway entrance, which was destroyed during the 1994 Northridge earthquake. Both of these are listed as historical sites by the State of California. I visited the Memorial Park recently, to ask the Director, Mr. Norman Ruppert, a few questions about the history of the area in the vicinity of the Memorial Park (the Memorial Park forms much of the southern boundary of the Santa Susana Mountains Project). One of the several interesting things that I asked about, was if there was anyone of historical interest buried there. Mr. Ruppert mentioned the Iverson family, including Joe Iverson himself, are interred there. I thought that was/is pretty interesting. I was also given a short list of well-known entertainers, who not reside at Oakwood... Although I am not familiar with the careers of Stephen Boyd and Gloria Graham, as perhaps you are... I do remember Bob Crane, because I used to watch "Hogan's Heroes" (and because I once met Werner Klemperer). I must say that I was most pleased to see the names of Fred Astaire (and his wife Adele?) and Ginger Rogers. Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers... interred at Oakwood Memorial Park??? I don't know about you, but I'm going to go and buy some nice flowers and go for a walk in the Memorial Park and say "hello" to Fred and Ginger... and see if I can find other names of note...

Stagecoach Trail Hikes

SSMPA hikes are conducted every Sunday, October - June (except fifth Sundays of the month & rain-out, are occasionally a problem) from the parking lot of Chatsworth Park South Recreation Building, which is located at the western terminus of Devonshire Street, about one mile west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

Hikers meet at 9:00 a.m. with the hike leader for the 4 mile (700 ft. gain) loop up the Stagecoach Trail, which is in the hills west of the park. Hikers are advised to bring water and a snack in hiker's back pack or hip pack. Lug sole shoes or sturdy, closed shoes are advised as is the wearing of a hat. All hike leaders are knowledgeable and experienced.

Barbara Coffman is the hike leader for the first Sundays of the month; Judy Garris on the second Sundays; Lindsay Wilhelm on the third Sundays; and Lee Baum on the fourth Sundays.

Hikes Leaders, Train Now!

Every Sunday (except July-Sept. and fifth Sundays of the month) hike leaders take groups of approximately ten to thirty interested individuals, families, and groups on hikes on the Stagecoach Trail. The need for additional hike leaders to be trained is always there. If you would like to become one of the few, the proud, the hike leader, please call Barbara Coffman at 818-347-5603.

We're user-friendly!

Visitors Center

The Visitor Center is open to everyone, Sundays from noon until 3:00 p.m., October through June. The purpose of the Visitor Center is to help educate, inform, and inspire the public as to the special historical significance and the natural beauty of the area. The Visitor Center's Docents' duties include answering questions from the public, encouraging visitors to sign the guest list, and maintaining and securing the room. The Inspired Docents for the Visitors Center are:

1st Sunday of the Month Gretha Davis; 2nd Sunday of the Month Rodney Harding; 3rd Sunday of the Month Catherine Roy; 4th Sunday of the Month Irene Tonius; 5th Sunday of the Month Linda Stone; For information, call Gretha at 818-340-4011

Santa Susana Docents

The Santa Susana Docents provide Nature/History walks at Chatsworth Park South for elementary school children. On the walk, the children tour five stations, including a small display of local artifacts at the Visitors Center. This program has been very well received by hundreds of children, and hundreds more children could learn about the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills if ... if... we had a couple of more docents. If you have a need to help others, have a couple of hours free on a regular basis, and want some really good times, this may be your great opportunity knocking. For more information on becoming a docent and joining the fun, sharing your love of nature with children, please call Pat at 818-998-5224 or Jan at 818-993-0508.

Other Simi Hills/ Santa Susana Mountains Hikes

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority offer hikes on an irregular basis at Rocky Peak Park (SR118 at Chatsworth/Simi Valley border); Sage Ranch (118 or 101 to Topanga Canyon Blvd., West on Roscoe or Plummer to Valley Circle to Woolsey Canyon Road (Rocketdyne Road) to Black Canyon Road); Santa Clarita Woodlands/Mentryville (I-5, Lyons, west to Pico Canyon, left at Y to end of road), and Towsley Canyon Park (I-5, Calgrove, west on The Old Road to Ed Davis Park, 1/2 mile to parking area by kiosk). These hikes are free. Please call Nancy at 310-589-3200, extension 126 for additional information and requirements.

There are many hikes scheduled this month!

Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

offers a comprehensive hike schedule, including strenuous five-mile hikes on Sunday evenings at 5:00 from Rocky Peak trail-head. For information call, Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at 805-584-4400.

Phone List

California Parks & Recreation (general information) ----- 818-880-0350
 California Parks & Recreation EMERGENCY DISPATCH ---818-880-0365
 California State Parks Foundation ----- 415-258-9975
 Friends of California Parks (Laura Svendsgaard) ----- 800-300-7501
 Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson (NR. office) ---- 818-886-5210
 Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (general information) --- 213-665-5188
 Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (Ranger dispatch) ----- 213-913-4147
 Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (S.F.V.) ----- 818-885-1032
 Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (San Clarita) ----- 805-254-2111
 Governor Pete Wilson ----- 213-897-0322
 State Senator Cathie Wright ----- 800-458-8500
 State Assemblyman Tom McClintock ----- 818-368-3838
 Frank M. Buda, Attorney At Law----- 818-999-9871
 William S. Abbey, Deputy Attorney Gen'l., State of CA ----- 213-897-2604
 Southern California Edison (general information) ----- 800-655-4555

SSMPA Facts & Figures

Number of years the City of Santa Clarita has been incorporated:

10

Since incorporation, money spent on parks, recreation facilities, and other infrastructure:

\$110,000,000

Number of the 21 missions in Alta California never to be abandoned:

1 (Santa Barbara)

Maps Available

For a map of the Rim of the Valley and public parkland, call the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy at 310-589-3200.

Address List

Donald W. Murphy, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation; Box 942896; Sacramento CA 94296-0001
 Governor Pete Wilson, State Capitol, Sacramento CA 95814
 Senator Cathie Wright (or your Senator), State Senate, Sacramento CA 95814
 Assembly Tom McClintock (or your assemblyperson), State Assembly, Sacramento, CA 95814

SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAIN PARK ASSOCIATION

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN, REJOIN, RENEW

Investing in the future of our communities and its resources is probably one of the best expenditures of our time and efforts. Please return this cutoff with your contributions. Please mail checks payable to SSMPA, and mail to:

SSMPA, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831

_____ Senior or Student (\$5.00) _____ Individual (\$10.00) _____ Family (\$15.00)
 _____ Business or Organization (\$25.00) _____ Life Member (\$100.00)

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

SPECIAL INTEREST/EXPERTISE: _____

CALENDAR

JUNE 1997

- June 1, Sunday - Hike with Barbara Coffman, meet at Chatsworth Park South at 9:00 a.m.
June 2, Monday - General Membership Meeting (see article on front page)
June 8, Sunday - Hike with Judy Garris, meet at Chatsworth Park South at 9:00 a.m.
June 15, Sunday - Hike with Lindsay Wilhelm, meet at Chatsworth Park South at 9:00 a.m.
June 16, Monday - Executive Board Meeting, Glendale Federal Bank, 7:00 p.m.
June 22, Sunday - Hike with Lee Baum, meet at Chatsworth Park South at 9:00 a.m.

Preliminary Draft, Santa Susana Mountains Project - 4-28-97

(Excerpts from page one of 16 pages) - (with thanks to Joanne Kerbavaz)

...Public Resources Code, Section 5002.1 requires that an inventory of the scenic, natural, and cultural features be provided to the State Park and Recreation Commission when classifying or reclassifying a unit of the State Park System. This Resource Summary has been prepared for the Commission when they consider the naming and classification of the Santa Susana Mountains Project. ... The inventory information will be used in the development of resource policies and resource management programs, and as background information for land use planning, maintenance, interpretation, and operation... In 1961, the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) investigated potential acquisitions in the Santa Susana Pass and Simi Hills area. This Advance Planning memo found the area unsuitable for the establishment of a State Park, largely because of the perceived limitations on recreational development within the project. In the 1970s, there was increased community interest in creating a state park unit in the Santa Susana Mountains. In 1970 a group of advocates for a park formed the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association (SSMPA). In 1974 the Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains (FPSSM) was established to accept donations and hold land. Both groups continue to work for land acquisition and protection. Assembly Concurrent Resolution 83 (1971) requested the DPR conduct a study of the feasibility of establishing a state park, to be named Santa Susana State Park, in a larger area north of the City of Los Angeles, and in both Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. This study recommended against acquisitions to be added to the State Park System, but instead suggested state assistance for regional and local parks... In the late 1970s, DPR policy toward urban parks changed dramatically. The Department began actively pursuing potential park projects adjacent to urban areas, and available to serve urban populations. The Santa Susana Mountains Project, with its distinctive natural, cultural and recreational resources fit these new criteria. In addition, the acquisition had the active support of local park advocates. DPR began acquiring land in the Santa Susana Pass area in 1979. The Department currently owns 670 acres in Los Angeles County. (For more information on the complete report, please contact Theodore Dent, at 818-882-4664.)

SSMPA Executive Board

Doreen Rusen, President - 818-360-0894; Albert Knight, Vice President - 818-252-3466; Theodore Dent, Recording Secretary - 818-882-4664; Susan Gerke, Treasurer - 818-704-9304; Members-at-Large: Pauline Aue - 818-341-5872; Barbara Coffman - 818-347-5603; Judy Garris - 818-340-0469; Jeff Johnston - 805-522-8662; Lindsay Wilhelm - 818-348-9682.

Fdn. for the Preservation of the S.S. Mtns.

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Non-Profit Organization

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Address Correction Requested