

Vol.'14, No. 1 of 6

Condor Call

February - March 2014



Journal of Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club

Serving Ventura & Santa Barbara Counties



In this issue: Help us celebrate wilderness while the climate changes and we conduct local, national and international outings.

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**NEW
FEATURE**

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Condor Call

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EDITOR: 'Condor' John Hankins, 452-2885

260 Pacos St. Ventura CA 93001 • condorjohn@gnusman.com

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Sierra Club

• LOS PADRES CHAPTER •

Post Office Box 31241, Santa Barbara, Ca 93130-1241

<http://lospadres.sierraclub.org>

Santa Barbara 965-9719 • Ventura 988-0339

Change of Address: Member Services P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO, 80322-2968
or address.changes@sierraclub.org or call (415) 977-5653

National Office: (415) 977-5500

85 2nd St., 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105-3441

Washington Office: (202) 547-5550

408 C St., N.E., Washington, D.C., 20002

• Steering Committee •

Gerry Ching (chair): 964-5411, gching@cox.net

David Gold (vice-chair): 642-7748 x6, davidgold4@aol.com

Michael Stubblefield: 216-2630, motodata@roadrunner.com

Jerry Connor: 928-3598, connor.gd2@verizon.net

Fran Farina: 681-8822, ffarina@cox.net

Stephen Dougherty: 574-9445, stephen@lospadres.sierraclub.org

Jim Hines, 340-9266, jhcasitas@gmail.com

• Group Chairs •

Arguello: Jerry Connor, 928-3598, connor.gd2@verizon.net

Conejo: John Holroyd: 495-6391, backpacker2@earthlink.net

Santa Barbara: Robert Bernstein, 685-1283, robert@lospadres.sierraclub.org

Ventura Sierra Club: Jon Ziv, (818) 421-3988, jzivdds@pacbell.net

• Club Services •

Forest issues: Jim Hines, 340-9266, jhcasitas@gmail.com

Wilderness Basics Course: Teresa Norris, 524-7170, lospadreswbc@gmail.com

Air Quality: Michael Stubblefield, 216-2630, motodata@roadrunner.com

Conservation SBC: Jerry Connor, 928-3598, connor.gd2@verizon.net

Conservation VC: Jim Hines, 340-9266, jhcasitas@gmail.com

Legal: David Gold, 642-7748 x6, davidgold4@aol.com

Legal (Alt): Fran Farina, 681-8822, ffarina@cox.net

Media Coordinator: Jim Hensley

Outings: Michael Stubblefield, 216-2630, motodata@roadrunner.com

Political SB: Fran Farina, 681-8822, ffarina@cox.net

Political VC: David Gold, 642-7748 x6, davidgold4@aol.com

Transportation: Michael Chiacos

Treasurer: Richard Hunt, 966-4157, richardhunt@cox.net

Typography and production by Dan Fuller

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send your email to
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Questions? Call 452-2885



Condor caws
"we want more wilderness."
Pg 5. (Photo Dean Zatkowsky)



Mother Earth's lovely lands,
pg. 11. (Internet photo)



Channel Islands sunset, pg 12.
(Photo Joan Jones Holtz)

Condor Call

*Journal of Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club
Serving Ventura & Santa Barbara Counties*



Suspension is over!

The Los Padres Chapter's suspension has lifted, and a new Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) will be elected at the end of March (see story on page 6).

The suspension happened about four years ago when a Chapter ExCom election was clouded by election irregularities. The election was voided and a repeat of the election was run, but serious election fraud was uncovered by the Election Committees of both the Chapter and

the Sierra Club.

The Sierra Club Board of Directors suspended the Chapter and appointed a Steering Committee of chapter members as the governing body to replace the member-elected Chapter ExCom.

During this suspension period,

New ExCom election (see page 6)

it was pretty much business as usual for the Chapter, renamed as the Los Padres Sierra Club. We won a major battle at Ormond Beach in Ventura County. Our conservation and environmental programs continued and our voice continued to be heard throughout Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

The suspension of the Chapter was lifted late last year. New bylaws were adopted and approved by the Club's Board of Directors and so now we are in the process of restoring the Chapter ExCom.

Under the bylaws, the ExCom consists of five at-large seats plus an appointed representative from each Group within the Los Padres Chapter. Since it is important to maintain continuity on the ExCom, two of the five at-large seats will be occupied by current members of the Steering Committee. Candidates for the three remaining at-large seats are being sought.



Wilderness Basics Course students and leaders from a prior class pose during a backpack trip to Forbush Flat. (Photo by Michelle Horton)

WBC course begins

Our popular educational adventure – Wilderness Basics Course – has its first class Feb. 4, running over eight weeks of learning savvy skills in the outdoors, be it a day walk or overnight backpack.

To determine if there's still room available, contact Teresa at 524-7170 or lospadreswbc@gmail.com

WBC takes advantage of the vast swath of land in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, made up of woods, forests, chaparral, mountains, valleys, grasslands, semi-desert areas, rivers, creeks and nearly 500 fish and wildlife species ... all chock full of adventure under a big sky.

You'll experience dynamic classroom instruction, and apply the knowledge during day hikes, car camp and overnight backpacks in

Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

The WBC offers smart and savvy instruction on how to day hike or backpack in the wilderness at various levels of fitness, for teens to adults, couples, families and singles.

You'll meet outdoor experts and make friends with like-minded people anxious to leave the urban scene behind for a while and, as the Sierra Club says, "To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth."

Warning: the course could change your life.

For details, call (805) 524-7170 or log on to www.lospadres.sierraclub.org/wbc

There is also a Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/lospadresWBC



Happy 50th birthday Wilderness Act! And the Sierra Club is among many who are celebrating it. See stories on pages 4 and 5.

COVER PHOTO

Mark Jansen, professional photographer based in Camarillo, took this shot that surely represents the essence of the Santa Barbara Channel's beauty. Mark also leads photography and expedition workshops. Check out his ad on page 9 and/or go to the website for more spectacular photos:

www.MarkJansenPhotography.com



Thank you to Gerry Ching, who has been our Executive Committee Chair throughout the chapter's suspension period. He was a steady influence who ensured "it was pretty much business as usual." (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

Wilderness Act is a fab fifty

This year marks the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon Johnson signing into law the National Wilderness Preservation Act, one of the most important pieces of land conservation protections ever created by Congress.

Its definition is succinct as it is remarkable:

"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does

not remain."

It was primarily written by Howard Zahniser of the Wilderness Society, who was in alliance with David Brower of the Sierra Club in successfully fighting the Colorado River Storage Project (Echo Park dam), which afterward led to the Act. Zahniser wrote over sixty drafts over eight years and personally lobbied all members of Congress.

Today, the Act permanently protects more than 106 million acres of federal lands throughout the nation. They include the biologically rich forests of the northeast states to

the everglades in Florida, from the Rocky Mountains to vast Arctic wildlands, western deserts and areas around National Parks. The wilderness act protections allow these important eco-sysyems to remain intact forever.

This year the Sierra Club has joined with the four federal land management agencies (U. S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) to host 'Wilderness 50' celebrations throughout the nation bringing attention to the value and importance of wilderness to our society.

Here in our Los Padres Chapter region (Ventura and Santa Barbara counties) we will host several 'Wilderness 50' events, including several wilderness art showings and outings into the wilderness. Watch future issues of the Condor Call for updates.

We currently have five designated wilderness areas, all located in the Los Padres National Forest (Sespe, Matilija, Chumash, Dick Smith and San Rafael). There are movements afoot to add more wilderness areas nearby.

The recently released general management plan for Channel Islands National Park is recommending to Congress that almost 70,000 acres of the five-island park be designated for wilderness, which is strongly supported by our chapter.

The wildness of our land, wilderness as we call it, is a place to go, to learn, to be at peace with the world around us, a place to leave untouched, a place to respect and a place to be left "untrammelled by man."

~ Jim Hines and John Hankins



Dick Smith's wilderness legacy

Here's a young Dick Smith with his horse and dog, heading into the wilderness that was eventually named after him. He was a reporter, photographer, historian and pioneer in environmental journalism for the Santa Barbara News-Press. He was also a sculptor, woodworker, stonemason, photographer, naturalist, conservationist, and leather worker. Smith spent more time in remote regions of Santa Barbara County than anyone, often disappearing for days and weeks, while the editors waited. They were not disappointed when he'd come back with lots of stories to tell and photos to show the public what it was like and why he loved it. Seven years after his death in 1977, his accomplishments were recognized when the 64,700-acre Dick Smith Wilderness was carved out of the Los Padres National Forest. While most of the acres are in Santa Barbara County, it is most easily accessible from two trailheads off State Route 33, which runs north from Ojai.



Late Vermilion Light, Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness, oil on linen by Thomas Paquette, one of many now on view at the Wildling Museum, which is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

Wildling gets into the act

In celebration of the 50th anniversary, the Wildling Museum has a whole wall dedicated to the Wilderness Act that highlights our local San Rafael Wilderness.

Wildling is also featuring the paintings of Thomas Paquette, entitled

"On Nature's Terms: Paintings of Thomas Paquette commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act."

Paquette's paintings were

inspired by his journeys to federal wilderness areas all across the country and the exhibit will run through April 7. The Wilderness Wall will be up all year but will change occasionally.

The Museum is located at 1511-B Mission Drive, Solvang and on the Third Wednesday of every month there is free admission (Feb. 19 and March 19).

Visit online:

www.wildlingmuseum.org

Coalition clamors for more wilderness areas

A veritable Who's Who of over 50 local ecological groups – including the Los Padres Sierra Club -- are fighting a Forest Service decision that would add no more wilderness areas in the Los Padres National Forest, leaving many areas open to development pressures.

The public has until March 18 to file objections.

“We share a common concern that the Forest Service’s Preferred Alternative 2 does not recommend any new areas as recommended wilderness, leaving these lands, watersheds, and rare plant and wildlife habitats vulnerable to

development,” asserts a letter signed by the groups to the Forest Service.

At issue is a Land Management Plan amendment

High value places here

The Sierra Club has selected 21 natural areas throughout the United States as top priorities for protection either through congressional action or by Presidential executive order.

Two of these areas are in our region, according to Jim Hines, Los Padres Chapter’s Ventura Conservation Chair. They are:

~ Central Coast National Marine Sanctuary, a proposal to extend federal protections from the southern end of the current Monterey Bay Sanctuary (at Cambria) to Pt. Conception in Santa Barbara County. This would close the gap of unprotected ocean waters between the Monterey Bay and Channel Islands sanctuaries.

The Los Padres Chapter supports this extension as does the Santa Lucia (SLO) Chapter.

~ San Gabriel Mountains: while not within our chapter boundaries, this beautiful mountain range in Los Angeles County plays an important link for wildlife migration from both the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests to the Santa Monica Mountains.

Designating the San Gabriels as a national monument is the top priority of the club’s SoCal national forest committee and awaits action by President Obama.

for the Los Padres National Forest, which evaluates 16 Inventoried Roadless Areas covering a combined 421,058 acres to determine what level of protection these areas should receive.

The letter was originally sent last May and the Forest Service came out with their preferred alternative in January, which recommended no new wilderness areas in the Los Padres, although some new areas were suggested for other SoCal forests.

“Unfortunately the agency completely ignored the concerns outlined in our letter and the thousands of other letters submitted by local residents,” said Jeff Kuyper of Los Padres

EAVESDROPS

“If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it.”

-- Wisdom from President Lyndon Johnson, when he signed the Wilderness ACT in 1964.

ForestWatch.

For details, search for “Southern California National Forests Land Management Plan Amendment” or go to:

www.fs.usda.gov



The Tar Creek area north of Fillmore is an example of the wilderness being loved too much. It’s supposed to be closed because of massive trash, graffiti, vandalism and viral videos of cliff jumping into the water, yet people go anyway. Another area now closed is Cherry Creek Canyon off Hwy 33 north of Ojai, mostly because gun owners like to shoot there. In both areas there are endangered condors ... so please stay out! (Photo by Jim Duliakas)

Celebrate Wilderness
new exhibit now on view:

On Nature’s Terms
Paintings by Thomas
Paquette Commemorating
the 50th Anniversary of the
Wilderness Act

where art and nature meet

1511-B Mission Drive
Solvang, CA 93463
www.WildlingMuseum.org
Phone: (805) 688-1082
Email: info@WildlingMuseum.org




Join us **March 7-8, 2014** for an
exclusive trip to **San Diego**
Behind-the-scenes tours of the San
Diego Zoo, Safari Park, & Beckman
Conservation Research Institute



STEERING COMMITTEE

~ Usually meets the fourth Thursday of every month in Carpinteria. Email Chair Gerry Ching for the agenda and details: gching@cox.net

ARGUELLO GROUP

~ Board meets first Monday of most months often with a program. All information on this North County Santa Barbara Group from Jerry Connor, 928-3598 or email: Connor.gd2@verizon.net Volunteers are needed as hike leaders and to monitor issues; your talents could make a difference.

CONEJO GROUP

~ Get all information on this southern Ventura County Group from John Holroyd, 495-6391 or backpacker2@earthlink.net. On the web: <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org/conejo/index.html>

SANTA BARBARA GROUP

~ Get the latest updates on events and issues of this South Coast Santa Barbara area at www.SBSierraClub.org; also join our email list by contacting Stephen@lospadres.sierraclub.org

VENTURA SIERRA CLUB

~ Up-to-date information about the northern Ventura County group at www.VenturaSierraClub.org

SANTA BARBARA GROUP

Opportunity knocks for SB involvement

The Sierra Club Santa Barbara Group can use your help in matters where you can make a real difference. Here's just some of the volunteer opportunities available:

~ Web site maintenance and computer skills: We can use help keeping our local web site updated with current outings, planned events, hot issues and more.

~ Staffing our Earth Day booth in April. A great way to meet people.

~ Publicity Person: Contact media, handle Meetup and other on-line announcements of events.

~ Be the new Volunteer Coordinator. You could be that single point of contact for people who want to get involved.

~ Conservation issues: Attend public meetings to represent Sierra Club positions on issues

you know and care about.

Contact Robert Bernstein at Robert@robert.name if you want to help with any of these.

~ Recruit more members. Dorothy Littlejohn is our new Membership Chair and has worked for years to recruit new members. She can use your help. If you're a social person and like to meet and greet others, this is a great opportunity for you. Dorothy can be reached at dlittlejohn1@cox.net

~ Outings and Trail work. We can use help with trail maintenance as well as with leading our outings. Tony Biegen is our Outings Chair and he can use your help. Other groups also do local trail maintenance and perhaps we can collaborate more with them as well. Tony can be reached at abiegen@cox.net

BE A CANDIDATE

Help lead our chapter on ExCom

This is an announcement and call for candidates for an election of three at-large members for 2-year terms to the Los Padres Executive Committee (ExCom) to be held on March 27, at the regular meeting of the Steering Committee.

Any current member of the Los Padres Chapter is eligible to seek nomination for one of these seats. If you wish to be a candidate, please submit your name to any member of the Los Padres Nominating Committee. Deadline for submission of names is March 3.

Candidates will be nominated by the Committee whose members are:

~ Jim Hines:

jhcasitas@gmail.com

~ Stephen Dougherty:

stephen@lospadres.sierraclub.org

~ Jeri Andrews:

jeriandrew@alum.mit.edu

A candidate may also be proposed by submitting at least 25 Chapter members prior to the March 3 deadline for submission of petitions.

The ExCom consists of five at-large seats plus an appointed representative from each Group within the Los Padres Chapter. As per our bylaws, the election of at-large members will be staggered so that there will always be experienced members on the ExCom.

Two of the seats for 2014 will be filled by members of the present SteerCom for the remainder of 2014. For the upcoming election, three at-large seats with 2-year terms are up for election.

Under the bylaws, ballots will be cast by members of the SteerCom and a representative from each

Group. At present, three Groups are included in the Los Padres Chapter: Arguello, Santa Barbara and

Conejo. The Ventura Sierra Club is appointed by the SteerCom until its suspension is lifted.

ARGUELLO GROUP

Frank frack testimony

The Arguello Group election continued the four incumbents from 2013: Chairman- Jerry Connor, Vice Chair Rosemary Holmes, Treasurer Doris Connor, and Secretary Connie Geiger.

We applaud the dozen or so Arguello Group members, many Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN) members, and others who participated in a demonstration before the Jan. 13 state hearing on fracking in Santa Maria and who spoke at the

mike opposing the practice.

Most folks who came up to mike either wanted an immediate moratorium or outright prohibition of steam-enhanced well stimulation and actual fracking, not dwelling very much on the wordage of the proposed regulations. Many were concerned about the permanent removal of deeply injected water from the hydrological cycle, as well as the hazardous contamination underground.



The Santa Barbara Group had a full house for its annual Holiday Party at Jefferson Hall. Lots of good food and a most educational report by Paul Cronshaw (shown smiling at the buffet) on his solar power installation and how you can do it, too! (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

Climates they are a 'changin'

By John Hankins

Don't believe in climate change?

We have the scientific proof.

Is it really that bad?

Yes.

That was an obvious take-away from a recent talk entitled, "There is No Plan B; Stop the Madness." While it can evoke fear – the photos were stunning of receding glaciers, killer tornadoes, devastating floods, drought, earthquakes, and more bugs! – the attitude of: "we can fix it" was emphasized.

Activist CK Kravetz shared the latest details and further proof at a Sierra Club-sponsored event at the Oxnard Library Jan. 18. Then she laid out some trends:

~ "Win the conversation, don't let denial go unchallenged."

~ India taxes coal to finance clean energy, why can't we?

~ Protests against new coal plant proposals caused cancellation of half of 300 plans with social media playing a large part.

~ Join and/or assist effective environmental groups. (*Editor's note: Sierra Club, 350.org, Cooler Heads Coalition, Climate Reality Project, Climate Network, and Kids versus Global Warming, the latter started by Venturan Alex Loorz as a teenager.*)

The event was organized by Elisabeth 'Liz' Lamar of the Ventura Sierra Club, who last summer was a Citizen Lobbyist at Sierra Club California's annual Lobby Day.

Club activist Jim Hines introduced Kravetz to the tune of "The climates they are a'changin'."

Kravetz, who was trained through Al Gore's Climate Reality Project, said: "We're here to encourage people to speak up."

She first laid out the "Greenhouse effect" of increased carbon dioxide



The audience is still coming into the Oxnard Public Library as activist Carol 'CK' Kravetz begins her talk and slide show. (Photo by E.L. Fragosa)

causing higher temperatures, and the domino effects cause "unbelievable human tragedy ... longer and deeper droughts ... more flooding ... bugs proliferate ... plant defenses weaken ... allergies worsen ..." and then the kicker, a quote from Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson last May:

"What good is it to save the planet if humanity suffers?"

The pin dropped in the room as the audience tried to digest the oilman's philosophy.

The Los Padres Chapter has sponsored more than a couple of similar

educational events, notably by Katie Davis of the Santa Barbara Group, whose latest was a Jan. 29 talk in Carpinteria. Davis was also trained by the Climate Reality Project.

EAVESDROPS

"According to a new U.N. report, the global warming outlook is much worse than originally predicted. Which is pretty bad when they originally predicted it would destroy the planet."

~ Jay Leno



The Sierra Club's Jim Hines and Climate Change organizer Elisabeth 'Liz' Lamar stand with the Climate Reality Project's activist, Carol 'CK' Kravetz just before the fascinating and educational talk. (Photo by E.L. Fragosa)



Take a wild guess at who is being endorsed by the Sierra Club for the upcoming Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors. Ensure that Janet Wolf does not become endangered by reelecting her and helping out her campaign; go to <http://janetwolf2014.com> (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

Gaviota Coast plan needs public input

Santa Barbara County's Planning Department is seeking input to an important Gaviota Coast Plan Environmental Impact Report, which would guide any development for years to come.

The public, agencies and groups are asked to give input on the scope of the EIR by Feb. 24 so that the study can focus on potential impacts on this valuable coastland.

A meeting to learn more is set for 6 p.m. Feb. 10 at the Planning Commission Hearing Room, 123 E. Anapamu St., in Santa Barbara.

A detailed project description and potential environmental issues to be addressed may be downloaded from the Long Range Planning Division webpage at: <http://tinyurl.com/Gaviota-Coast>

Written comments can be sent to: Brian A. Tetley at the Planning Department, or email to:

gaviotacoastplan@countyofsb.org.

There is also a Facebook page: www.facebook.com/longrange.sbcounty



EAVESDROPS

"Reclaim masculinity through adventure."

-- From a video touting a business providing wilderness guides for men who are seen as "weak and blundering ..." to climb Mt. Baker (10,871 feet). But there would also be "craft cocktails and artisan food," as quoted in *The Week* by story editor Ben Crair

Adventures near and far define Sierra Club trips

Celebrate 50 years of wilderness with Sierra Club outings throughout the land and sea, across the nation and throughout the world during the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

But that's just an excuse, you don't need one as the club has been offering outdoor adventures since 1901 and here's this year's trips:

<http://content.sierraclub.org/outings>

Some are for leisure, for adventure, for exploring and for service, helping the health of the environment. All are open to the public.

Take your pick from:

[Backpack journeys for seasoned hikers and newcomers alike](#)

[Family vacations for the whole clan](#)

[International excursions around the globe](#)

[Lodge-based trips featuring the amenities of home](#)

[Trips for younger participants](#)

[Volunteer vacations in Alaska, Hawaii, and the Lower 48](#)

Plus base camp, bicycle, and snow trips, supported trekking, and more!

You don't have to travel far for some, like these in California: "Leisurely Ladies Exploration in the Minaret Lakes," "Santa Rosa Island Service," "Muir Wilderness Trail Restoration," "Yosemite Wilderness Inspiration," or "Sand, Surf, and Family Service along the California Coast."

Go beyond California from Alaska to Wyoming: "Mule Packer Paradise: Ranch Maintenance in Shawnee, Col.," "Wild Trout Recovery New Mexico," "Wild Crags of the North Cascades," or



Machu Picchu is one of the foreign destinations offered by the Sierra Club. (Photo by Steve Aderholt)

"Gitche Gumee Gambol (Lake Superior Backpacking)."

International trips include "Land of the Thunder Dragon," Autumn Odyssey in Yunnan," Machu Picchu Eco-Lodge Trek, Peru and "Natural Highlights of Costa Rica."

There's even a "Just for Grandparents and Grandkids, Tahoe National Forest" and a "Top Ten Wild Places to Hike before You Die."



Sierra Club trips also include "service," meaning work projects that still allow a lot of time for exploring. This shows trail workers in New Mexico (Photo by Susan Estes).



One of the Crown Jewels of Sierra Club trips is surely Yosemite where you get to see more of the unpopulated areas and can also do ecological work while you're there. (Photo by Ian Shive/Tandem Stills+Motion).

Audubon birding sets record

By Phila Rogers

Santa Barbara Audubon members came out in record numbers for the 114th annual Christmas Bird Count, a national best of over 250 volunteers.

At the end of the day on January 4, 222 species had been tallied – the highest in California and the second highest number in the nation -- bested only by Mad Island Marsh, Texas.

Santa Barbara, with its diverse landscape within a 15-mile count circle, includes seashore, marshes, city gardens, chaparral foothills, mountains, and the Channel itself where volunteers in a donated boat counted pelagic species.

As the sun went down on count day, participants gathered for a pot luck dinner at the Museum of Natural History to hear the news. Count organizer Rebecca Coulter, assisted by compilers Jared Dawson and Joan Murdoch, began by reading the list of species seen in the past.

The total of 222 species was a

delightful surprise as bird numbers appeared earlier to be down, possibly because of the dry year, but the tally was only two short of the highest number of a few years before. A few mountainous species, such as Red-breasted Nuthatch and Pine Siskin, were missing. But a Tufted Duck was seen for the first time on a local Christmas Bird Count and an out-of-season Black-headed Grosbeak was discovered on a local feeder.

Another surprise was the number of birds, especially warblers, found feeding in the local Tipuana tipu trees that were infested with psyllids, a tiny insect attractive to birds.

On Count Day, volunteers become citizen scientists as the tallying of species and the total numbers of birds provide valuable information about bird populations, information that has been collected for over a century.

The next important event for Santa Barbara Audubon is the annual Birdathon, a fundraiser in April,

where small groups of participants join an expert leader for birding trips. This year's trips include Figueroa Mountain for mountain-dwelling birds and plants and the UC Sedgwick Ranch Reserve, a research property in the Santa Inez Valley. The trips offer an opportunity to see a variety of breeding birds, many of whom will be singing.

See details at:

www.santabarbaraaudubon.org

NEXT ISSUE:
We will feature
Ventura and Conejo
Audubon groups

Film honors Selma Rubin

Selma Rubin of Santa Barbara died March 8, 2012 at age 96, but the seeds she planted for environmental and social justice groups have grown formidable and are still producing.

The latest in her legacy is a new documentary film, "Selma Rubin and Community Life" by Beezhan Tulu, which opened at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival on Feb. 4.

To see details of her legacy, go to: www.livingwebfilms.com

"Selma Rubin was a moving force in our area and Sierra Club was her first love," commented Fran Farina of the Santa Barbara Group, Los Padres Chapter.

The chapter co-hosted the film and a reception along with the Environmental Defense Center and Community Environmental Council.



You're sure to see birds both common and amazing during Audubon's trips, notably the annual Christmas bird count held throughout the nation. Here's some of our avian friends: Cassin's Kingbird (top), Wandering Tattler (left) and Elegant Tern. (Photos by Denise Dewire)

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Santa Barbara Audubon members at the Christmas bird count are fascinated that a rare (for this area) Tufted Duck is at Rancho Goleta Lake. (Photo by Liz Muraoka)

Condor Classifieds

Advertise your outdoor gear, trips or whatever in the Condor Call where you'll reach like-minded members. Just fill out adjacent form and mail it in with a check.

BUY LOCAL PRODUCTS through the new Conscious Consumers Cooperative called Eco-Buyers Ventura. The coop buys non-perishable basic goods that are eco-friendly, from companies that are as local as possible AND we also have holiday baskets. Call Kendra Gonzales at 628-3198 or email: earthworks_works@yahoo.com
Best to go through the Facebook at: Eco-Buyers & Green Business Ventura.

FIND YOUR SB HOME at www.SBHomeSearch.info. Kevin Berni Coastal Properties, and UCSB '80. Call (805) 564-3400 or www.sbrc.com.

ACUPRESSURE MASSAGE, rest your back and feet. Call Paula, 687-4671.

USED CELL PHONES for sale as benefit for the Santa Barbara Group; only \$15 - \$35 for older cell phones with charger. Also chargers for older phones \$2. Guarantee: You have 3 days to get your cell phone connected; if for any

reason you want to return it within that time, you'll get a full refund. Call 962-8415.

SAVE THE TOWN from demolition; go to SB city planning hearings, 630 Garden St. Gebhard room, agendas posted there or at

www.SantaBarbara.ca.gov/abr or /sfdb, /hlc, /sho, /pc and city council. Very important Chumash burial grounds everywhere, don't add on to your house, no condos, no building. Go to the hearings or write comments and Save the Town!

SAVE THE OLD GROWTH redwood houses, shed and 1960s workshop at 1236 San Andres from massive condo project, also Val Verde. Call the SB City Planners at 564-5470, ask for Danny Kato. Tell your friends, call your legislators. Save all SB from demolition of similar historic houses throughout the city and Cottage Hospital. We need another Pearl Chase! Help now.

Stream team opens data faucet

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper has launched an interactive website that allows users to download and explore water quality data collected during their Goleta, Carpinteria, and Ventura Stream Team sampling events.

The Stream Team database represents one of the longest, most comprehensive datasets for our local watersheds. The new interface features maps, photos and graphs that depict more than a decade's worth of scientifically sound water quality data.

Users can see the percentage of samples that did not meet water quality standards. Data depicted on watershed summary pages help compare sites and identify those that have persistent pollution problems. Users can search by entire watershed, specific creeks or streams, or by site code, and can use the interactive map to identify locations and access data.

This website will help keep the public informed about water quality issues in their watersheds, facilitate access to data for scientific analyses, and inform policy. Channelkeeper is extremely grateful to Joseph Hoover, who dedicated hundreds of



hours to developing this portal.

Channelkeeper has educated and engaged more than 1,000 volunteers in helping to conduct monthly water quality sampling at 47 stream sites in the local watersheds.

There are also many opportunities for volunteers to help out. The team does Ventura sampling on Saturday and Goleta on Sunday the first weekend of every month

To see the new site and/or to volunteer, go to: www.sbck.org

Stream Team members Ben Pitterle and Leslie Purcell take samples from the Ventura River. (Photo by Udi Goren)



Classified Ad Placement Form

A classified ad in the Condor Call reaches over 6,500 Sierra Club members in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

Ads cost only \$6 for three lines, and 75¢ for each additional line per issue.

Specify by circling the months below. Deadline for next issue is March 22

Questions? Call the Condor at 452-2885.

Enclose a check made out to the Condor Call, 260 Pacos Street, Ventura, CA 93001

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Number of Issues: _____ Feb/Mar • Apr/May • June/July • Aug/Sept. • Oct/Nov • Dec/Jan

CEQA and ye shall find

Sierra Club California and many other groups have formed a coalition called CEQA Works.

It is, of course, the California Environmental Quality Act, which led to all-important Environmental Impact Reports.

"It has allowed us to challenge the impacts of many different projects throughout our state ... which would have a negative impact

on our environment," said Jim Hines of the Los Padres Sierra Club.

There are moves afoot to weaken the act, ironically from Gov. Jerry Brown who is using his executive power to suspend CEQA for a number of "drought related" construction projects.

To keep apprised of such moves and to support the act, go to: www.ceqaworks.org

'Ecosystems forever' idea lists our special places

By Jim Hines

Editor's note: Our Ventura conservation rep, Jim Hines, has come up with an 'Ecosystems Forever' campaign that we're going to run up the flagpole and see if anyone salutes. It's basically a list of important ecosystems in our region that may need special attention. Contact Jim at jhcasitas@gmail.com



Sea Otters feeding in ocean waters, a majestic condor soaring over a high conifer forest, migrating birds stop at a coastal wetland and mountain lions follow deer herds in their mountain range. These are just a few of the great ecosystems

EAVESDROPS

"The Golden Toad (*Bufo perigrinus*) is thought to be the first species to go extinct because of climate change."

~ Now you know ... from Nature Conservancy website.

which could be included in an 'Ecosystems Forever' campaign aimed at protecting the great natural ecosystems of our region.

Here's a preliminary list:

~ **Los Padres National Forest:**

The crown jewel of ecosystems in our region sports coastal chaparral, conifer forests, alpine regions,

barren wild lands, wild rivers, wilderness areas and important animal and plant species.

~ **Gaviota Coast:** A majestic coastline north of Santa Barbara, currently threatened by leap-frog development from the Goleta area.

~ **Ormond Beach Coastal Wetlands:** The last undeveloped coastal wetlands in SoCal, threatened by urban development and pollution.

~ **Rim-of-the-Valley Corridor:** A protected wildlife migration corridor from the western Angeles

National Forest, eastern Los Padres National Forest across the Simi Hills to the Santa Monica Mountains. Half of the corridor is within Ventura County and half is in Los Angeles County.

~ **Santa Monica Mountains:** About one-third of this beautiful mountain range is in Ventura County and the rest is in Los Angeles County. Wildlife habitat is facing increased pressure from urban encroachment.

~ **Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary:** An intact ocean ecosystem in the Santa

Barbara Channel that protects marine plants and animals; however an oil spill could be devastating. The islands themselves contain numerous endangered species and historical objects and attract thousands of visitors each year.

~ **Guadalupe/Nipomo Dunes National Wildlife Refuge:** The largest coastal sand dune complex in California. It is home to numerous endangered species.

~ **Santa Ynez Valley Oak Woodlands:** One of the largest intact oak woodland ecosystems

on the central coast. most of the oak woodlands are in private ownership and subject to threats of land development, often from new wineries, energy and housing projects.

~ **Watersheds** and its rivers and creeks: in Ventura County the Ventura, Sespe and Santa Clara rivers and in Santa Barbara County, the Santa Ynez, Cuyama and Santa Maria rivers, among others.



BEFORE



AFTER



These Northern Elephant Seals come ashore for a few months to give birth, breed and molt, happily at an easily accessible rookery on the San Simeon coast. The big guy to the left appears to smile at his job of carrying on the species, while a mom (right) does her part. Learn more at www.elephantseal.org (Photos by John Hankins)

Our chapter is in the news

By John Hankins

The Los Padres Chapter gathered a lot of ink in local newspapers and pixels on the web in the last few months because of its outdoor programs and activism. Here's a few that caught our eye:

~ **The Pink Kavu:** Sierra Club member Cathy Ungar, 77, of Thousand Oaks climbed Mount Whitney alone, going up and back in less than 24 hours, reported *The Acorn*. Closer to home, she has covered the Cactus to Clouds Trail from Palm Springs to the 10,500-foot-high San Jacinto Peak, known as the most difficult hike in Southern California, wrote Anna Bitong.

She's easy to spot on the trail with her signature pink Kavu hat. "When I hike on Mount Baldy, or anyplace, all these young men will say, 'How old are you? You're an inspiration.' It's really fun ... They say, 'I want to be like you when I'm your age.'"

~ **Two Clean Stephens:** Club members helped Ranger Heidi Anderson clean up trash in Santa Paula Canyon in an article in the *Ventura County Star*.

Ventura hike leader Stephen Bryne and Stephen Dougherty of the Santa Barbara Group were among the clean-up crew, and the club was given a good measure of credit.

"It (the canyon) attracts people who are more partyers and youths who don't always pick up their trash," Bryne said. "It's odd that people would go to such a beautiful, natural place and not clean up."

Reporter Monica Lara quoted Dougherty saying, "If it's clean



building bridges
to the outdoors

when they get there, they are much more likely to leave it spotless."

Ranger Anderson conducts such clean-ups on the First Saturday of every month. To participate, email her at:

handerson@fs.fed.us

~ **Topping Topa Topa:** The annual December tradition got a lot of notice in the *Ojai Valley News*, thanks to Perry Van Houten's *Ojai Valley Hiking Trails* column, who wrote, "The Sierra Club celebrated the holidays in the snow atop the Topa Topa Bluffs Dec. 8." Accompanying the column were two large pics of a small snowman and a line of hikers having fun (see story on page 21).

~ **Forest Fees Redux:** The long fight against forest fees has had some success as the Forest Service is allowing free access to an additional 40,000 acres in Los Padres, according to an article in the *Ventura County Star*.

Ventura Sierra Club Conservation Chair Jim Hines said in the article that he understands the need for financial support, but Congress should fund the agency appropriately. Accompanying the

article is a great photo of club hike leader Stephen Bryne "enjoying the views of the Chorro Grande Trail," for free!

Reporter Cheri Carlson wrote that the reduction of fee-paying sites stems from public protests. Also there is a lawsuit filed by four hikers, notably Alasdair Coyne of Keep the Sespe Wild.

~ **Fracking Action:** The Sierra Club's participation in protesting hydraulic fracking was prominent in numerous newspapers, such as the *Ventura County Star*, *Ojai Valley News* and *Santa Barbara News-Press*, among others.

Examples include the *Star*, which reported, "dozens of people carried signs and called for a moratorium on fracking in a protest organized by Sierra Clubs in Ventura and Santa Barbara," and Jim Hines was quoted in the *OVN* as saying, "I am really happy with the turnout." (See story on page 20)

EAVESDROPS

"A senator has to raise \$10,000 every day that they're in office -- every day of their six years -- to make the average amount that's spent today in a Senate race."

~ Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, quoted by the *BoldProgressives.org* group which is hot on the track to "reverse the impact of Citizens United..." and pass campaign finance reform by increasing the value of small dollar contributions. New legislation is afoot, so check them out.



Cuyler Harbor with flowers busting out all over San Miguel Island, is one of the stops for Sierra Club California's Channel Islands trips this year. (Photo by Joan Jones Holtz)

Channel Islands trips

This year is your chance to see the Channel Islands in your own front yard, living aboard the boat with all meals provided.

Often referred to as "America's Galapagos," you are likely to see whales, seals, sea lions, rare birds, the endangered island fox and blazing wildflowers. Experts predict a Channel teeming with wildlife due to the presence of the Marine Sanctuary, and onshore look for reminders of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years.

Opportunities abound to kayak, snorkel and hike or just relax at sea ... and it will help fund Sierra Club California's political work.

There are six trips planned: April 12-14, May 4-6, June 8-10, July 20-22, August 24-26 and September 14-16.

All cruises depart from Santa Barbara. The cost, \$590, includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, and beverages plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to help lead hikes, point out items of interest and give evening programs.

To reserve space, send a \$100 check, written to Sierra Club, to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. For more information contact her at (626) 443-0706 or email:

jholtzhl@aol.com

HELP RESTORE**Fire burns trail equipment****By Bryan Conant**

It was Memorial Day 2013 and the campsites and day use areas off Paradise Road were packed with families barbecuing and enjoying the warm summer-like conditions.

But the lack of spring rains had transitioned the grass to a golden brown and when mixed with the dry winds, the Lower Santa Ynez Recreation Area was ripe for an early season wildfire. Sure enough, a barbecue was not properly extinguished and by early afternoon



on May 27, the White Fire was gaining momentum as it burned up-canyon along the Santa Ynez River.

When the smoke settled three days later, the White Fire had destroyed nearly 2,000 acres of forest and one building. Somewhat ironically, that one building was within the Los Prietos Fire Compound, and unfortunately for trail users, that one building was the headquarters for the Los Padres Volunteer Wilderness Rangers (VWR).

The VWRs are trained volunteers who assist the Forest Service with trail maintenance, backcountry patrol and being the eyes and ears of the Forest Service on the ground. In existence for nearly 20 years, the role of the Rangers has become more and more crucial as the Forest Service struggles with budget constraints,

They represent many different



A Volunteer Wilderness Ranger sawyer helping make our trails habitable. (Photo by Paul Cronshaw)

user groups and organizations including horseback riders, hikers, mountain bikers, trail runners and backpackers. The common thread among the volunteers is their love for the Los Padres and their energy to keep trails clear.

The VWR Headquarters that burned during the White Fire housed many of the tools, gear and supplies that were used to maintain trails. Among the items destroyed were hardhats, trail tools, communication equipment, maps, historical documents and much of the DNA that made the VWR program so successful.

In late 2013 the Forest Service acknowledged the importance of the VWR program by donating a house for the program to use within the Los Prietos Compound. This house has

since been renamed the VWR Cabin and while our new Cabin is a nice upgrade from our old headquarters, it is also quite barren since our gear was destroyed.

In an attempt to resupply the lost gear and tools, the Rangers are promoting a fundraiser through Indiegogo. Learn more at: <http://igg.me/at/LosPadresTrailSupport>

We're sure you have your favorite trails for bird watching, hiking, peak bagging, riding or backpacking - however you enjoy our forest — chances are your trail has been maintained by a VWR. Now is the time to thank your local trail volunteers and contribute to the resupply efforts.

Thank you for your help and please pass along to any other trail users you may know.



Everything burned – except the Smokey Bear sign – at the headquarters for the Los Padres Volunteer Wilderness Rangers during the 2013 White Fire in late May, along the Santa Ynez River. VWR lost a lot of tools, gear and supplies that now need to be replaced. (Photo by Lori Rafferty)

Forest supervisor retires

Los Padres Forest Supervisor Peggy Hernandez retired from the Forest Service after 34 years on Jan. 31.

She came to the Los Padres in September 2007 with an ethic that public involvement was good. Holding a degree in Natural Resources Management from

Cal Poly, she has guided the Los Padres through many a public hearing on how best to manage the large forest with dwindling resources.

Deputy Forest Supervisor Ken Heffner will take her place temporarily until a new supervisor is found.

Help us help the land around us

Soon you'll be receiving a March Appeal letter from the Los Padres Sierra Club, asking you to support the incredible work our volunteers are doing in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

That includes hundreds of free outings per year and first-class activism keeping our air and water safe from threats like fracking, air and water pollution, destruction of sensitive habitats and unrestrained development.

We only ask once per year, unless there's a special need. We never ask something for nothing as the Sierra Club and

our allies have a long history of accomplishments, which are chronicled in the *Condor Call* every other month.

We accomplish what we do on a tiny fraction of what the other side spends, but we can only do it thanks to your contribution of \$35, \$50 or \$150. With your help we can win many more victories together here at home in the coming year.

For example, in 2013, lobbyists for oil, real estate and utilities spent \$15 million while environmental groups spent only \$360,000, according to figures reported to the Secretary of State.

To contribute, use the appeal letter sent to you in March, or simply send your contribution to: Los Padres Sierra Club, PO Box 31241, Santa Barbara, CA 93130-1241.

To support our effective action programs (not tax-deductible), make a check out to "Los Padres Sierra Club" and for a tax deductible donation, make it out to "Sierra Club Foundation."

THANKS DONORS

Meanwhile, we would like to thank those who have given recent donations. They are:

Jane Alexander, Lorraine V. Altman, Tanya Atwater, George Berg, Jeffrey Boyle, Sharon Broberg, Dolores & Robert Cathcart, Mr/Mrs J Roger Essick, Hyla Felter, Tracy Fernandez, C. Frisk, Georgia Lee Funsten, Donald Gingrich, Mary Graham,

John J. Griffin, Mark G. Hauser, Mr/Mrs John Jamieson, Andy & Susan Lentz, Michelle Macarthur, Philip Mckenna, Richard Morgan, J. Newton, Lucy Nichols, Deborah Pendrey, James Ross, John H. Sanger, Ralph P. Scaffidi, Sally Stanton, Dr. John & Sheila Suarez, Mary H. Walsh, William H. Wellman.

Art and activism combine

To join in the nationwide celebration of the 50th Anniversary of The Wilderness Act, the Santa Barbara based art group S.C.A.P.E. (Southern California Artists Painting for the Environment) is coordinating with the Los Padres Chapter with several events throughout 2014.

Leading up to a September fundraising event will be several coordinated hikes and paint sessions in the wilderness areas of the San Rafael Mountain range in the Spring



from the Santa Barbara entryway.

Another camping, hiking and paint outing will take place in the summer with Los Padres Chapter members leading into the Sespe Wilderness from the Ojai entryway.

The art will be for sale during the September event, in which the artists will donate 40 percent of sales to support the Los Padres Chapter.

Watch for details in the Condor Call or through the art group at: www.s-c-a-p-e.org



A typical "Paint-Out", this one along the More Mesa Bluffs. (Photo by Bonnie Freeman)

Brian Segee segues to EDC Ventura

The Environmental Defense Center (EDC) has promoted senior attorney Brian Segee to take over management of the Center's Ventura office.

Segee, who joined EDC in 2009, is no stranger to Ventura issues and has for years lead the organization's efforts to protect the Ventura River, establish regulations on fracking, and on clean water and endangered species issues.

With his promotion, Segee will manage other Ventura County efforts including the work to ensure protection of the Ormond Beach wetlands. He currently serves on the Board for FracTracker Alliance

He replaces longtime Ventura attorney Karen Kraus, who left EDC at the end of 2013 to pursue other opportunities.

The EDC has represented the Los Padres Chapter in various issues over the years, notably Kraus's work with Ormond Beach restoration and halting urban encroachment.

Segee's prior experience includes staff attorney with Defenders of Wildlife in the nation's capital, the Arizona Wilderness Coalition and Center for Biological Diversity.

**INVITE
a friend
to join
sierraclub.org**

SEND WILDFLOWERS
(acres of them)



Memorial or Commemorative gifts are a unique way to honor an individual or special event and at the same time provide important funding towards Sierra Club's long-term goals. And like the memories you hold, this is a gift that will last forever. For more information, call (415) 977-5653.

planned.giving@sierraclub.org
Memorial/Commemorative Program
85 Second St.,
San Francisco, CA 94105
Chapter Contact
Catherine Graham
682-1357



Take a Hike!

LOS PADRES CHAPTER

Updates at <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org>

Panoramic photo by Robert Bernstein

NOTE: A frequently updated on-line listing of all outings can be viewed at: <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org> This website also contains links to Group web pages and other resources.

February 6

VENTURA HILLS: Join Wilderness Basics Course (WBC) staff, students, and friends to get a good mid-week hill climb workout and walk through scenic Ventura. About 2 hours, 3.5 miles, total gain about 300 feet. Bring water and flashlight. Meet at 5:30pm across from the Mission San Buenaventura in downtown Ventura. For more info, call TERESA at 524-7170 (VEN)

February 7

SULPHUR MOUNTAIN, ONE-WAY: This is a moderate 9.5 mile (one-way) hike with up 1900 of gain/loss. Moderate pace (2.5 mph). Sulphur Mountain Road is a well-maintained fire road that climbs gently and quite consistently, starting at 400 feet above sea level and climbing to 2300' over 9.5 miles. The bottom section goes through an oak forest, then turns into grazing land higher up, with occasional groves of oak trees. From some points you'll get a good view of Lake Casitas to the west. You'll also see Santa Paula and to the southeast, the Santa Clara River Valley and Oxnard plain. The dirt road travels through ranch land. Meet at the Ventura car pool at Seaward and Harbor at 8 am so that we

can get an early start at trailhead or at the bottom of Sulphur Mtn Rd (turn right off Highway 33 onto the Sulphur Mountain Road right after Casitas Springs) at 8:30am. Required: 10 essentials, hiking boots and poles, 3 quarts of water, snack and lunch. Sunblock, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or extreme heat (above 85F) cancels. For more info, contact PHILIP & LORA at 218-2103 (VEN)

February 8

STEVENS PARK - JESUSITA TRAIL: Hike across meadow and up wooded area to an inspirational view of Santa Barbara. Moderate-strenuous 8 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at



Nancy Roman takes a break in the Gaviota Caves during a Sierra Club outing. She is described as "absolutely fearless and agile beyond belief." (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

Ongoing Outings

Ventura Every Monday Morning

EASY WALKS: Join Pat Jump at 8:30 a.m. every Monday morning for easy to moderate walks in the Ventura and Ojai areas. A long-time tradition, the walks will last about two hours and the group sometimes goes for coffee afterward. Call Pat at 643-0270.

Ventura Every Wednesday

URBAN EVENING HIKE: Weekly hike in Ventura meets across the street from the Mission at 6:45 p.m. for a 4 1/2-mile walk up to Father Serra's Cross for spectacular scenic views of Ventura, the Channel Islands and the sunset. It continues across the hillside, down to the ocean, to the end of the pier, then along the promenade looping back to the Mission. Wear comfortable walking shoes. Contact KURT PRESSLER 643-5902. (VEN)

Santa Barbara Fridays, Wednesdays and Weekends

SOCIAL HIKE every Friday evening for an easy-to-moderate 2-4 mile roundtrip evening hike in the Santa Barbara front country, beach or back roads. Meet at 6 p.m. at the Santa Barbara Mission; we leave at 6:15 sharp. Bring a flashlight; optional potluck or pizza afterward. AL SLADEK, 685-2145. (SB)

STRENUOUS 5-10 mile roundtrip evening hike on Wednesdays. Meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Santa Barbara Mission; bring water and a flashlight, preferably head lamp. Hike is designed for conditioning. For details, contact BERNARD MINES, 722-9000.

MODERATE AND STRENUOUS hikes at 9 a.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Meet at Bank of America at State St. and Hope Ave.

Monthly Programs

ARGUELLO GROUP offers slide shows, speakers and movies, the third Friday of each month. Call for details: 928-3598.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Help keep Highway 1 beautiful. Adopt-a-Highway trash pickup from the Lompoc 'Wye' to the Base boundary. Meet at Vandenberg Village Shopping Center parking lot at 9 a.m. on the fourth Saturday of odd-numbered months. Rain cancels. Contact CONNIE: 735-2292.

Outing Notes

Key to outing locations (noted in parenthesis at the end of each listing)

AR – Arguello Group
(Northern SB County)

SB – Santa Barbara Group
(Southern SB County)

VEN – Ventura Network
(Northern Ventura County)

CJ – Conejo Group
(Southern Ventura County)

LA – Los Angeles Chapter joint hikes

The public is welcome at all outings listed, unless otherwise specified. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Study footwear is recommended. If you have any questions about a hike, please contact the leader listed. All phone numbers listed are within area code 805, unless otherwise noted. Pets are generally not allowed. A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 14.

A frequently updated on-line listing of all outings can be viewed at: <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org> This website also contains links to Group web pages and other resources.

9am. TONY 455-4212 (SB)

February 8-9

WINTER ESCAPE IN THE CARRIZO PLAIN: This outing combines a day of service in the Carrizo Plain National Monument with a day of sightseeing and/or hiking. Weather can be cold, gray, and rainy, or it can be warm and bright - we take our chances. The service will be in removing or modifying fences to give pronghorn greater mobility on the Plain, and the recreation will be determined by the wishes of the group. This is an opportunity to combine carcamping, day-hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Contact leader: CRAIG DEUTSCHE, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, (310-477-6670) (CNRCC Desert Committee)

February 9

TANGERINE FALLS: Discover one of Santa Barbara's closest yet, after a few weeks of rain, most dramatic hiking destinations. Less than 1.5 miles from the trailhead we will experience the highest waterfall in Santa Barbara's front country. This is a moderate hike but it does entail a few boulder hops over the creek and several short but steep uphill sections. 2.75 mrt, 1,500 ft elevation gain. Tangerine Falls can be a challenge to find on your own, so going with a group is the perfect way to experience the falls for the first time. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind the Bank of America at 9am or at the Cold Spring Trailhead at 9:30am. STEPHEN 574-9445 (SB)

continued next page

Outings...continued

February 10

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 8:30am at Mission Plaza to carpool to Shelf Road (up and down) or 9 am at trailhead. For more info call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

February 13

VENTURA HILLS: Join Wilderness Basics Course (WBC) staff, students, and friends to get a good mid-week hill climb workout and walk through scenic Ventura. About 2 hours, 3.5 miles, total gain about 300 feet. Bring water and flashlight. Meet at 5:30pm across from the Mission San Buenaventura in downtown Ventura. For more info, call TERESA at 524-7170 (VEN)

February 15

TRESPASS TRAIL/GAVIOTA HOT SPRINGS: Easy to Moderate Hike from Gaviota Peak/Hot Springs trail head along a little-used loop trail. About 3-4 mrt with side trip to Gaviota Hot Springs. Elevation gain about 700 feet. Bring water and snack or light lunch. Meet behind the B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

February 16

ROMERO CANYON LOOP: Hike up a shaded trail with trees and a small stream to a lunch spot. Then down an abandoned road with a beautiful view. Moderate level hike, 6 miles round trip, 1500 ft elevation gain in about 2 miles. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 8:30am to carpool, for a 9am start at trailhead. DAN 818-421-0122 (SB)

February 17

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 8:30am at Mission Plaza or 9 am at Ojai Land Conservancy trailhead on Rice Road to do trail. For more info call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

February 20

VENTURA HILLS: Join Wilderness Basics Course (WBC) staff, students, and friends to get a good mid-week hill

climb workout and walk through scenic Ventura. About 2 hours, 3.5 miles, total gain about 300 feet. Bring water and flashlight. Meet at 5:30pm across from the Mission San Buenaventura in downtown Ventura. For more info, call TERESA at 524-7170 (VEN)

February 22

CARPINTERIA BLUFFS: Morning walk past Seal Rock, flower fields and over bluffs. Children welcome, bring water and a snack. Slow paced 3 miles or so. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. VICKI 563-4850 (SB)

LOS ROBLES TRAIL: NEWBURY PARK TO TRIUNFO CANYON PARK: Moderately paced 10 mrt hike with 1500' elev. gain and car shuttle. Bring water, lunch, good footwear and your camera. Meet at 8am in the west parking lot of Triunfo Park (Westlake Village), near the trailhead to which we will return. We will arrange car pools to the start of the hike off Potrero Road 0.2 miles east of Wendy Drive. This is a good chance to stretch your legs without having to climb a mountain. HUGH WARREN 497-9612 (CJ)

SOUTHERN NEVADA WILDERNESS SERVICE: A one-day project helping BLM enhance wilderness in or at the edge of one of the new (2002) wilderness areas in southern Nevada managed by the BLM. Option to enjoy the area on Friday and campout Fri night with VICKY HOOVER, contact Vicky to sign up 415-977-5527, Vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org (CNRCC Wilderness Committee)

February 23

McMENEMY TRAIL: Hike from San Ysidro trail to Saddle Rock overlook, then back by dirt road to starting point. Moderate 6 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 898-1240 (SB)

SYCAMORE CANYON TO DANIELSON RANCH: Easy,



Pete Scifres led a half dozen Conejo Group backpackers to Blue Lake (10,415') last July, leaving from the trailhead at Lake Sabrina (above Bishop). Day hikes to other lakes were beautiful. "We had good weather and no bears," said Joanne Sulkoske, who took the photo.

leisurely paced 8 miles round trip hike through Big Sycamore Canyon to Danielson Ranch for lunch under the trees. Bring water, lunch, hat, and insect repellent (optional). Meet 9am at old bridge by the entrance to Sycamore Canyon campground (parking fee or park along PCH where allowed). Optional carpool from Von's on Seaward at 8am. Rain cancels. For more info, call TED 985-8963 (VEN)

HINES PEAK AND TOPA TOPA: Strenuous 18+ mile rt hike, 4800' of gain. From Sisar Cyn trailhead, we hike up to the White Ledge Trail, hike trail to Nordhoff Ridge Rd, follow Ridge Rd around the back(north) side of Topa Topa

Bluff. Then we follow the Red Reef trail to the turnoff to Hines Pk (6704'). If no snow or ice, we'll summit Hines. On our return, we leave the Red Reef Trail and take an old fire rd up to the Topa Topa bluffs and head for the summit (6367'). These two summits offer breathtaking views of LP National Forest and Hopper Mtn Condor Sanctuary to the north, and the Ojai Valley, Sulfur Mtn, Oxnard Plain, Santa Monica Mtns and the Channel Islands to the south. From there we take the switchbacks back down to Nordhoff Ridge Rd and return to trailhead. Bring clothing layers to protect you from cold, wind, rain or snow. Bring warm hat, gloves, sunglasses, sunscreen, extra socks, first aid kit and other 10

essentials. Meet at Sisar Cyn trailhead at 7am. High clearance vehicles only at trailhead or park at water tank. RAIN OR SNOW CANCELS. For more info, contact MIKE at 216-2630 or 988-0339 (VEN)

February 24

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 8:30 am at Mission Plaza or 9am at Sulfur Mountain trailhead (uphill). For more info call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

February 27

VENTURA HILLS: Join Wilderness Basics Course (WBC) staff, students,

continued next page

Outings...continued

and friends to get a good mid-week hill climb workout and walk through scenic Ventura. About 2 hours, 3.5 miles, total gain about 300 feet. Bring water and flashlight. Meet at 5:30pm across from the Mission San Buenaventura in downtown Ventura. For more info, call TERESA at 524-7170 (VEN)

February 28-March 3

DEATH VALLEY EXPLORATION: Meet on Friday at 11:00 to set up. Hike at 12 noon in Amargosa Canyon. Sat. travel through lower Death Valley, hiking at Natural Bridge and Golden Canyon. Camp at Texas Springs Campground in Furnace Creek. Sunday travel north through the park stopping at sites along the way to Mesquite Sand Dunes. Camp at Stovepipe Wells. Monday hike up Mosaic Canyon. Bring your own food and water, and start with full tank of gas. There are some services at Furnace Creek and Stovepipe Wells. You may join the trip for just Sat. & Sun.. Contact leader: CAROL WILEY, earthlingwiley2000@yahoo.com, 760-245-8734. (CNRRCC Desert Committee)

March 1

SAN YSIDRO FIVE TRAILS: Hike up San Ysidro, over to Cold Springs, down to Hot Springs and the bamboo tunnel of doom and then down the Bud Girard and McMenemy trails. Bring Lunch and at least two liters of water. Strenuous 11 mrt. Prepare for an all-day adventure. This hike is not suitable for beginners or people with health issues. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DIANE 455-6818 (SB)

March 2

TEQUEPIS : Hike up to West Camino Cielo from Santa Ynez Valley. View of Cachuma Lake and the Pacific Ocean. Moderate-strenuous 8 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. CHRISTINE 963-2347 (SB)

March 3

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at

8:30am at Mission Plaza or 9am at 45 Alto Drive to walk on trail to horse barn (up and down). For more info call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

March 6

VENTURA HILLS: Join Wilderness Basics Course (WBC) staff, students, and friends to get a good mid-week hill climb workout and walk through scenic Ventura. About 2 hours, 3.5 miles, total gain about 300 feet. Bring water and flashlight. Meet at 5:30pm across from the Mission San Buenaventura in downtown Ventura. For more info, call TERESA at 524-7170 (VEN)

March 6-9

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK - SPRING WEEKEND: Visit Joshua Tree National Park when temperatures are cooler and wild flowers may be blooming. During our stay we may explore palm oases, boulder areas, and desert canyons or climb peaks within the Park. Camp in the Indian Cove campground (picnic tables, fire grates, and pit toilets). Bring your own drinking water or fill up at the Indian Cove Ranger Station. Hikes may be off trail. Some vehicle travel on dirt roads may be required. Cost is \$30 per person and includes 3 nights of camping. \$20 deposit required to confirm participation. Group size limited to 16 people. For reservation information call leader: RICH JURICICH, rich.sierraclub@pacbell.net, 916-492-2181. (Delta Sierra Group)

March 7

SYCAMORE CANYON: Loop: 13 miles - up to 2000' of gain. Moderate pace (2.5 mph). Not recommended for beginners. A good chance to see Sycamore Canyon from the ridge! Begin at the Sycamore Cyn trailhead and immediately leave it hiking to the top of Lookout trail (900'); then cross the ridge and travel back down to Sycamore Cyn trail cutting across it and continuing up Serrano Canyon trail (1100') ending back down at Sycamore Cyn trailhead. This hike has it all: good mileage, elevation gain, and excellent views. Meet at the Ventura car pool at

continued to page 18

How to get fit for the trip

By Mike Stubblefield

A question I get a lot is: How do you stay in such good shape (“for a guy your age” implied)?

In the Seventies I loaded Postal Service trucks, ran around 100 miles a week and on weekends I headed for the Sierras.

But by my late thirties my knees were pounded. An orthopedic surgeon cleaned up both knees but the damage was irreparable. I was told to quit running or risk arthritis.

It took a while to figure out what to do after running; aerobics, yoga, even Pilates. In my late forties, a gym owner suggested that I try his new “Spinning” indoor cycling class. Soon I was spinning three or four nights a week and have continued it for almost 20 years. Does it work? Well, at age 67, I weigh 162 pounds, and still head for the high country with my hiking buddies.

But indoor cycling is simply a means to an end. My passion is going to the mountains, so I concentrate on cardiovascular capacity, strong legs, light weight and flexibility. Not bulging biceps or rock hard abs, they’re just extra weight and don’t get you up the hill any faster.

Okay, enough about me. What should YOU do to get in better shape for hiking?

It depends; if your hikes are relatively short, then daily walks during the week might be adequate. If you hope to tackle longer and/or more difficult trips at higher altitude, running is absolutely THE best training. It improves your ability to sustain long periods of aerobic activity in relatively thin air (there’s about 30 percent less oxygen in the atmosphere at 14,000 feet). And if

you run up and down trails running works the same muscles you use for hiking up and down trails.

If you can’t run anymore you have two options.

~ Take up some new self-powered outdoor activity like bicycling or mountain biking, roller blading, kayaking, stand-up paddling, surfing ... anything that keeps you moving.

~ Join a gym and schedule regular workouts. Try various aerobics classes that offer an intense cardio workout. Strive to get your pulse up and keep it there for an hour, every day, until it’s no big deal.

Whether or not you exercise inside or outside, stay supple by combining cardio workouts with a regimen of *stretching* (yoga, Pilates, etc.) and some light weightlifting, focusing on exercises that increase *leg* strength.

If you can afford it, consider hiring a personal trainer. They work: a then 50-year-old friend weighed 300 pounds, hired a personal trainer, got down to 160 pounds and in little more than two years is now an avid hiker (and personal trainer!).

Other benefits of fitness: you are a *more alert* and therefore a *SAFER* hiker.

Most hiking accidents occur when we’re not totally “there” because our brain and heart are starved for oxygen. Tripping or losing your balance in some spots can be downright dangerous, or worse.

By their own admission, folks who’ve had accidents on the trail usually cite “brain fade” as the inevitable cause. I know folks who have NEVER had a serious accident on a trail. Guess which group is more physically fit?



The three Yogis (Yogas?) demonstrate their high fitness level during a Sierra Club hike. They are Nancy Roman, Karen Shelton and Yumi. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

Outings...continued

Seaward and Harbor at 8am so that we can get an early start at Sycamore Cyn trailhead. Park along Harbor Blvd. Required: 10 essentials, hiking/trail boots, 3 qts of water, and snack/lunch. Sunscreen, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or extreme heat (above 85F) cancels. PHILIP & LORA 218-2103 (VEN)

March 8

REFUGIO BEACH TO EL CAPITAN: Car pool to Refugio Beach and walk to El Capitan or beyond. Easy 6 to 8 mrt. Bring old shoes, lunch, and water. Share parking fee. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DAVE 563-4850 (SB)

March 9

PARMA PARK LOOP: A pleasant four mile morning hike through Santa Barbara's largest and least used park. Dirt roads and primitive trails, sometimes steep. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. KEITH 965-9953 (SB)

March 10

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 8:30am at Mission Plaza or 9am at Oakview Community Center to walk north on trail. For more info call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

March 13

VENTURA HILLS: Join Wilderness Basics Course (WBC) staff, students, and friends to get a good mid-week hill climb workout and walk through scenic Ventura. About 2 hours, 3.5 miles, total gain about 300 feet. Bring water and flashlight. Meet at 5:30pm across from the Mission San Buenaventura in downtown Ventura. For more info, call TERESA at 524-7170 (VEN)

March 15

COLD SPRING TRAIL TO GORILLA ROCK: Hike down to Forbush Flat onto an off-trail hike under strenuous conditions to rock formations in a remote canyon. Difficult/strenuous 8 mrt

with over 1500 elevation gain/loss. Rock scrambling, bush whacking involved. Wear long pants and shirt. The hike will begin headed down hill and end headed up hill. Prepare for an all-day adventure. Call hike leader for details. TONY 455-4212 (SB)

March 15-16

EARLY SPRING IN THE CARRIZO PLAIN: This outing combines a day of service in the Carrizo Plain National Monument with a day of sightseeing and/or hiking. Weather can be cold, gray, and rainy, or it can be warm and bright - we take our chances. The service will be in removing or modifying fences to give pronghorn greater mobility on the Plain, and the recreation will be determined by the wishes of the group. This is an opportunity to combine carcamping, day-hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Contact leader: CRAIG DEUTSCHE, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670 (CNRCC Desert Committee)

March 16

WEST FORK COLD SPRINGS TO TANGERINE FALLS: Hike along the trail then do some rock-hopping up the creek to the falls. Difficult 3 mrt. Some climbing and agility required. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind Bank of America on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 898-1240 (SB)

March 17

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 8:30am at Mission Plaza or 9 am at Matilija Canyon trailhead to do trail there. For more info call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

March 20

VENTURA HILLS: Join Wilderness Basics Course (WBC) staff, students, and friends to get a good mid-week hill climb workout and walk through scenic Ventura. About 2 hours, 3.5 miles, total gain about 300 feet. Bring water and flashlight. Meet at 5:30pm across from the Mission San Buenaventura in downtown Ventura. For more info, call TERESA at 524-7170 (VEN)



Above the Seven Falls area in Mission Canyon is a primitive, rocky trail to Cathedral Peak involving a lot of rock hopping and a very steep elevation gain of about 2,000 feet. Here's a portion of it sometimes called "Dragon's Back". (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

March 22

MORE MESA: Morning loop walk around this extensive coastal bluff. Children welcome. Slow paced 2-3 miles or so. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State Street at Hope Ave. at 9am. VICKI 563-4850 (SB)

March 23

UCSB LAGOON: Stroll for an hour or so around the Lagoon and over the Bluffs at the University. Children welcome, bring water, slow paced 3 miles or so. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. KEITH 965-9953 (SB)

HINES PEAK AND TOPA TOPA: Strenuous 18+ mile rt hike, 4800' of gain. From Sisar Cyn trailhead, we hike up to the White Ledge Trail, hike trail to Nordhoff Ridge Rd, follow Ridge Rd around the back(north) side of Topa Topa Bluff. Then we follow the Red Reef trail to the turnoff to Hines Pk (6704'). If no snow or ice, we'll summit Hines. On our return, we leave the Red Reef Trail and take an old fire rd up to the Topa Topa bluffs and head for the summit (6367'). These two summits offer breathtaking

views of LP National Forest and Hopper Mtn Condor Sanctuary to the north, and the Ojai Valley, Sulfur Mtn, Oxnard Plain, Santa Monica Mtns and the Channel Islands to the south. From there we take the switchbacks back down to Nordhoff Ridge Rd and return to trailhead. Bring clothing layers to protect you from cold, wind, rain or snow. Bring warm hat, gloves, sunglasses, sunscreen, extra socks, first aid kit and other 10 essentials. Meet at Sisar Cyn trailhead at 7am. High clearance vehicles only at trailhead or park at water tank. RAIN OR SNOW CANCELS. For more info, contact MIKE at 216-2630 or 988-0339 (VEN)

March 24

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 8:30am at Mission Plaza or 9am at Casitas Springs under freeway to walk in the park and go up Sky High Road. For more info call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

March 27

VENTURA HILLS: Join Wilderness Basics Course (WBC) staff, students, and friends to get a good mid-week hill climb workout and walk through scenic

Ventura. About 2 hours, 3.5 miles, total gain about 300 feet. Bring water and flashlight. Meet at 5:30pm across from the Mission San Buenaventura in downtown Ventura. For more info, call TERESA at 524-7170 (VEN)

March 28-30

MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE EXPLORATION: Meet at Sunrise Campground at 11.00 am on Friday, 4 mile rt hike to Teutonia Peak that afternoon. Potluck that evening. Saturday enjoy a 6 mile hike around Barber Peak from Hole-in-the-Wall. Hike to Kelso Dunes on Sunday. For those wanting to stay over on Sunday, we can camp at Granite Pass. Camping is primitive so bring plenty of water. More information will be available at time of sign-up. Contact: CAROL WILEY at desertlily1@verizon.net or 760-245-8734. (CNRCC Desert Committee)

March 29

ENNISBROOK: Morning walk through this Montecito area with large trees and plants near San Ysidro Creek. Flat, slow paced 2-3 miles. Children welcome, bring water and meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DAVE 563-4850 (SB)

March 30

BLUE PEAK: Plan 5-6 hours for this very strenuous 11 mile hike with 2700' elevation gain. We'll ascend by the 4 mile canyon trail to Romero saddle, make a 3 mile loop around and over the horn to the west of the saddle, then ascend Blue Peak. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. PAUL 886-1121 (SB)

March 30

CARPINTERIA BRUNCH HIKE: Join us for an easy hike to Carpinteria for brunch. We will meet at the Carpinteria Bluffs parking lot, 6145 Carpinteria Ave, at 8:45 am. The hike is about 5 miles round trip. We should be done about 1 pm. Rain cancels. The hike is

continued next page

Outings...continued

easy; the views of the ocean, islands and mountains are fantastic. All age groups invited, those under 18 must be accompanied by a parent on the hike. Optional carpool from Von's on Seaward at 7:45am. For more info, call TED 985-8963 (VEN)

April 4
CHUMASH/LA JOLLA VALLEY: Loop with short car shuttle: 7 miles total and up to 1100' of gain - moderate-pace (2.5mph). Begin at Chumash trailhead on PCH and climb (900') to junction of La Jolla Valley Loop trail and then connecting with the Ray Miller trail. Steep downhill to La Jolla Valley trailhead. On this hike you get to see pretty much all of the La Jolla Valley and much of its surroundings as well as ocean views on the Chumash and Ray Miller trails. Meet at the Ventura car pool at Seaward and Harbor at 8 am so that we can have a 9am start at Chumash trailhead. Park along Harbor Blvd. (Or meet at 9am at the Chumash trailhead.) Required: 10 essentials, hiking/trail boots, 3 qts of water, and snack/lunch. Hiking poles, sunscreen, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or extreme heat (above 85F) cancels. PHILIP & LORA 218-2103

April 5
PINE MOUNTAIN LODGE: Strenuous 13 mrt hike with 3000' elev. gain/loss - experienced hikers only. Wear hiking shoes/boots, bring lots of water, snack, lunch. There's a good chance that there will be in snow at the top, so bring a warm jacket, a hat, and gloves. Meet at Ventura carpool lot at 8:30am (Seaward and Harbor between Chase Bank and Carrows). JIM 447-1876 / 644-6934 (SB)

April 6
PLAYGROUND: Explore the labyrinth of boulders forming a natural playground off West Camino Cielo. Some rock scrambling and agility required. Always a new route! Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

April 12
INSECT HIKE: Learn about the most abundant form of life on the planet - insects - on this interpretive hike. Easy/Moderate slow paced hike. Please note that exact trail will be determined based upon weather conditions. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. KENNY 692-2227 (SB)

April 12-13
CAR CAMP/DAY HIKE - FIGUEROA MOUNTAIN: hike in Figueroa Mt. area. Car camp at Figueroa Campground Sat. night April 12. Sunday April 13 moderate day hike on Catway Road towards Zaca Peak, about 10 mrt, on graded dirt road. Beautiful views of San Rafael Wilderness, and hopefully there will be wildflowers galore. Figueroa Campground is located off Figueroa Mt. Road, in the Los Padres National Forest, about 12 miles NE of Los Olivos. No water(you'll need to bring your own),

vault toilets. Happy hour Sat. night with shared potluck dinner. Sunday morning begin hike at 8am, lunch on trail, return to cars mid afternoon and drive home, stopping in Solvang for Danish pastries. Dog friendly trip. Rain/fire cancels. For more details and to sign up (you must sign up ahead of time), contact leader SALLY at 805-689-7820. (SB)

April 13
ROMERO CANYON TO CAMINO CIELO: Walk all the way up this mostly tree shaded trail to the top. Great views of back country. Moderate-strenuous 9 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. CHRISTINE 963-2347 (SB)

April 13
OUTINGS NEEDED: Get your Jun-Sep outings to your Group outings chair soon. Be sure to include the first week of October in your schedule.

April 19
MIDLAND - HIGH COUNTRY LOOP: This is a 6 mrt moderate loop hike on Midland School property adjacent to Figueroa Mtn. We'll utilize portions of the Grass Mtn, Cabin Cutoff and High Mountain trails to get to a high point with great views of the Santa Ynez Valley and Zaca Peak. As this is a Winter hike, bring layers as the weather can be quite changeable. Note that there is a 40 minute drive to the trailhead. If you are coming from North of Santa Barbara, contact me for a map that locates the trailhead. Note that you must sign-in using the form supplied at the outdoor kiosk at Midland School. Bring a light lunch and water. Rain cancels. Meet 9am at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope & State St. GERRY, 964-5411, gching@cox.net. (SB)

April 19-20
CARRIZO SERVICE AND FLOWERS: This outing combines a day of service in the Carrizo Plain National Monument

with a day of sightseeing and/or hiking. If there are winter rains, wildflowers can be spectacular, although this is not a promise that can be made far in advance. Weather will be cool in evenings and comfortable in the day. The service will be in removing or modifying fences to give pronghorn greater mobility on the Plain, and the recreation will be determined by the wishes of the group. This is an opportunity to combine carcamping, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Contact leader: CRAIG DEUTSCHE, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, (310-477-6670) (CNRCC Desert Committee)

April 20
RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Hike up a wooded canyon with scenic views to meadow. Easy 3.5 mrt. Optional 1.5 mrt steep hike from the meadow to Gibraltar Road, by way of either the trail or the

continued next page



Jon McCabe takes it easy at an upper Madulce trail camp, taken by Craig R. Carey while he was researching his book, Hiking & Backpacking Santa Barbara and Ventura (Wilderness Press, 2012 or www.craigrcarey.net).

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Fracking complaints flood state agencies



Judging by the testimony at a number of recent hearings on fracking for oil, the Sierra Club's position is a hit, as it calls for a moratorium until and if more is known about impacts.

The club is searching for a legislator who would carry such a bill, but for now the focus is on the chemicals and underground pressure needed to frack oil wells. A new wrinkle has also emerged because of the drought.

"Fracking has an almost unquenchable thirst for water," according to Sierra Club California, since "a single fracking event may use from 80,000 to 300,000 gallons."

The state Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) is conducting hearings around the state to determine the scope of an Environmental Impact Report, required by State Sen. Fran Pavley's bill (SB4) signed in December.

Local hearings were held in January in Santa Maria and Ventura, and the Coastal Commission will hear a report from its staff on fracking during its Feb. 12-14 meeting at the Cliffs Resort Hotel in Pismo Beach.

At the Jan. 13 DOGGR hearing in Santa Maria, there were a few oil industry representatives who supported fracking, but as citizen Gary Pauldler observed, "I didn't hear a word of support for fracking from anybody who doesn't have a financial interest in the oil industry,"

Arguello Group's Jerry Connor told the *Condor Call* that "most folks who came up to me either wanted an immediate moratorium or outright prohibition ... not dwelling very much on the wordage of the

proposed regulations. Because of California's extreme drought, many were concerned about the permanent removal of deeply injected water from the hydrological cycle, as well as the hazardous contamination underground."

About a dozen or so Arguello Group and Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN) members conducted a demonstration outside before the hearing.

Demonstration numbers were much higher at the Jan. 8 hearing in Ventura, with estimates ranging around 200. The Los Padres Group was one of the key organizers along with Californians Against Fracking, Santa Barbara and Ventura branches of 350.org, the ACLU, CAUSE and CFROG.

"The protest outside of the hearing room was overwhelming," according to a policeman, said Jim Hines, the Ventura Sierra Club's Conservation Chair. Hines passed out the club's "talking points" and most of the testimonies were along those lines.

"We also had great press coverage, though the rally was the big event to the press ... we don't have rallies that big in Ventura," Hines said.

Despite these hearings, "DOGGR is creating these regulations before the environmental, health and economic impacts of this dangerous activity have been fully vetted," commented Sierra Club California's Mike Thornton.

Meanwhile, Ventura County will be considering "feasible mitigation measures," said Supervisor Linda Parks, who was present. Santa Barbara County already has a policy in effect requiring an EIR.

Add your voice by including your name and return address and submitting comments to

SB4EIR@conservation.ca.gov

For details, go to the DOGGR website:

www.conservation.ca.gov/dog

-- By John Hankins



Montecito Map

There's a new update of the Montecito Trails Foundation trail map provided to members, covering from Gibraltar Road east to the Franklin Trail, and from East Camino Cielo south to the ocean.

The map includes pictures and descriptive notes by James Wapotich and shows trails not found on any other map. Produced by Maps.com, it is available with a membership at: www.MontecitoTrailsFoundation.org

Help create cool schools

A "Community Co-Lab" for a strategic planning session to help local schools become carbon-zero models is set from 1-5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 16 at the Topping Room at Foster Library in Ventura.

The session welcomes anyone interested, from administrators to non-profit and ecological groups. All ideas are welcome.

To learn more, go to the Rally Campaign site:

<http://ral.ly/t/1427545>

For details, contact organizer Kendra Gonzales, 628-3198 or email:

earthworks_works@yahoo.com

Outings...continued

creek bed. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DAVID P. 705-3025 (SB)

April 26

COLD SPRING, FORBUSH FLAT TO GROTTO: Hike down Cold Springs Trail from E. Camino Cielo to Forbush Flat campground. Hike approx 1.5 miles further to natural grotto. Bring lunch and water. Strenuous 6 mrt. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 8am. NOTE EARLY START TIME! TONY 682-8290 (SB)

April 27

THREE POOLS BEYOND SEVEN FALLS: Primitive trail, some rock climbing. Bring swimsuit. Difficult but short 5 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 898-1240 (SB)

April 27

OUTINGS DUE SOON: Group outings chairs should ready their outings for the next Condor Call schedule, covering the

Jun-Sep plus the 1st week of October. Questions? Contact Gerry Ching (gching@cox.net).

May 2

NORDOFF PEAK: Howard Creek (3480') trail to Nordoff Peak (4485') to Cozy Dell trailhead with car shuttle: 12 miles total and up to 1200' of gain; moderate pace (2.5mph). Not recommended for beginners. This is just one of many ways to get to Nordoff Peak that provide plenty of views of the surrounding area and both sides of the Nordoff ridge. Begin climbing to Nordoff Peak at the Howard Creek trailhead. After reaching Nordoff Peak (lunch) head down fire road to Pratt trail and finally connect with the Cozy Dell trail and head out to Hwy 33. Meet at the Ventura car pool Seaward and Harbor at 8am so we can shuttle up to Ojai and get on the trail about 9 am. Park along Harbor Blvd. Required: 10 essentials, hiking/trail boots, 3 qts of water, and snack/lunch. Hiking poles, sunscreen, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or extreme heat (above 85F) cancels. PHILIP & LORA 218-2103



Who's that under the hat? It's Teresa Norris, head of our Wilderness Basics Course, who apparently wants to ensure the class has a manicured Pratt Trail. She was working as part of a volunteer work party conducted by Ranger Heidi Anderson, who took the photo. Contact Heidi to join the crew at handerson@fs.fed.us

Topping Topa Topa a Christmas tradition

By Stephen Bryne

The tradition of topping Topa Topa had a couple of hiccups affecting the 2013 annual Christmas Potluck Hike, advertised as a strenuous, 14-mile-roundtrip hike with 4,500 feet of elevation gain.

EAVESDROPS

"Singing songs around the campfire do not count."

~ Los Padres Forest Ranger Heidi Anderson, detailing all the hours you can accumulate to get a free Adventure Pass to National Forests for a year. Totting up 100 hours can be for trail work, visitor center, surveys, driving time to projects, training, LPFA meetings and report writing. Accumulate 250 hours and you get an inter-agency pass.

First, hike leader Mike Stubblefield got sick. Next, hike leader Teresa Norris stepped up to lead this hike, but a family emergency caused her to be unavailable. So Alisse Fisher and I agreed to co-lead this annual event.

Next, winter weather reared its head and threatened to put a damper on the hike, but it translated to 2-4 inches of snow on top.

According to Kim Cokley, this hike first began some 20 years ago to celebrate his father's birthday. The hike has continued ever since and is now tradition. Highlights included seeing 78-year old Cathy Unger make the trip and savoring "Pine Tar" Wilson's hot cocoa, with "secret" ingredients.

Sunday dawned clear and cold, with temperatures in Ojai around freezing. Alisse and I started checking in hikers at the

trailhead at 7:30 a.m. to begin the seven mile long climb to Topa Topa Bluffs.

We encountered patchy snow just before Nordhoff Ridge Fire Road and when we reached the summit around noon, there were already a dozen or so hikers beginning to celebrate.

Beautiful views of the Santa Monica Mountains, the Channel Islands, Oxnard Plain, Ventura River mouth, and Lake Casitas lay stretched out before us to the south. Temperatures were in the 40s or 50s as the celebrants broke out a variety of food and drink.

A total of 25 hardy hikers, and a dog named Bear, summited the bluffs and the potluck began. Food choices were a sumptuous array of meatballs, pulled pork, pozole, spinach turnovers, crackers, cheese, and baked goods -- all transported on the hikers' backs.

Beverages were passed around: hot buttered rum and cocoa and eggnog, some doused with alcohol to ward off the crisp mountain breezes. No beer or wine appeared to have made the trip, although I heard nary a complaint.

Prompted by the fresh, powdery snow on the ground, a snowball fight broke out, soon to be followed by the construction of a snowman, replete with a jaunty knit cap. Following this, the annual head-standing took place. A handful of hardies attempted this feat, although only Kim Cokley was able to achieve the goal.

Around 1:00 p.m., it was time to put a wrap on the festivities and begin the descent. I started down with about half a dozen hikers along the east side of Topa Topa



The first annual "Topa Topa Choo-Choo," led by "Pine Tar" Wilson, during the annual Christmas trek, which had "the most stoves, most snow, most refreshments and hot pozole magic to boot." (Photo by Perry Van Houten).

Bluffs and past the nearby peak known as Creampuff, dusted with a nice frosting of snow showing tracks left by rabbits, fox, and deer.

The hikers arrived back at Sisar Canyon trailhead between 4-6 p.m. On the way down, some of Alissa's group were treated to the sight of a black bear.

For me, this hike was a great way to kick-start the holidays. If you haven't participated, consider giving it a shot in 2014. The more the merrier.

ALERT: I found some hiking poles at the trailhead. To claim call [805-794-1150](tel:805-794-1150) and describe them.



Trailheads hit

A suspect was accused of breaking into numerous cars at the Matilija Canyon and Hot Springs trailheads.

"Vehicle windows were broken out and property was taken from inside the vehicles, including purses and personal electronics," the Ventura sheriff's reported.

It was a reminder to all who park at trailheads anywhere to leave valuables at home or put them in the trunk, said Walt Zabriski of the Conejo Group.

Police say the suspect, Luis Santillan, 21, of Oakview, "had been involved in numerous vehicle burglaries ... over the years.

To report anonymously, call Crime Stoppers at 800-222-TIPS (8477).



One of the views from the Topa Topa bluffs. (Photo by Bardley Smith)