

Newsletter

ANNUAL MEETING TO FEATURE NOTED AUTHOR

Milt McAuley, a noted local author and naturalist, will be the featured speaker at the annual meeting of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association to be held the evening of Monday, March 16 in Chatsworth.

A dual projector slide presentation will depict hiking and wildflower walks in local mountains. McAuley has written five books on the subject, the most recent of which is *Wildflowers of the Santa Monica Mountains*. Many of these species contained in this volume are also found in the Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains.

McAuley first began leading hikes in 1934 as a boy scout. In 1967 he became a Sierra Club hike leader. A naturalist specializing in wildflowers and botany, he has also been active in pushing for the acquisition and development of the Backbone Trail, an integral segment of the Santa Monica Mountain's Rim of the Valley Corridor.

A resident of Canoga Park and a member of SSMMPA, McAuley said that more citizen involvement is needed on behalf of the Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains if there are to be accomplishments similar to those made in the protection of the Santa Monica Mountains. His other books are hiking guides to the trails and state parks of the Santa Monica Mountains.

His books will be available for review and purchase at the meeting, which will be held at the Glendale Federal Community Room, 21821 Devonshire Street at 7:30 pm. Refreshments will be served and guests are welcome.

Prior to the program, the annual election of the SSMMPA Board of Directors will be held.

INITIATIVE EFFORT BEGINS; PARK WOULD RECEIVE \$10,000,000

An effort to place a park and wildlife bond act on the June 1988 California ballot utilizing the initiative process officially began last month. The Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills would receive \$10,000,000 in funds for land acquisition once the measure passes. This will be the first time that any bond act is placed on the ballot by the voters by petition.

SSMMPA was able to obtain this level of funding by committing itself to collecting 50,000 signatures of registered voters. Unlike previous bond acts, which we supported, our area will be guaranteed funding at this level. In the past, our nominated projects have competed against all others on a statewide basis and have not been funded.

The campaign is being coordinated by the Planning and Conservation League (PCL), a statewide conservation and lobbying organization headquartered in Sacramento. A total of 500,000 to 600,000 signatures must be obtained in order to assure that there is a sufficient number of valid signatures. The total amount of the bond act will be approximately \$500 million dollars.

Two PCL representatives, Jerry Meral and Ken Masterton, met with over seventy SSMMPA members and supporters on the evening of Friday, February 27. Everyone was supportive and enthusiastic about the initiative and SSMMPA is now working to organize and expand our base of support.

Soon SSMMPA will be distributing volunteer cards to all our members and friends. We will be asking you commit to one, two or more mornings or afternoons to help gather signatures at markets, shopping centers, etc. Even though we can't begin the official signature gathering activity until about June 15, we must get ourselves organized--beginning now!

SSMMPA feels this effort may be our last chance to acquire scenic and historic parcels that are threatened with development. We hope we can count on every member and supporter to do all that you can to help us.

In the weeks to come, we will be contacting you by mail and telephone about this initiative. In the meantime, if you would to help us get organized (telephone calls, contacting other community groups, etc.) please call Glenn Bailey (818)345-1222 or Jan Hinkston (818)884-9610.

To the seventy plus members and friends that attended our February 27 informational meeting, thank you so much for giving up a Friday evening on such short notice. Your presence made a difference! Both SSMMPA and PCL needed to know that it was realistic to make a commitment of this magnitude. We now know the answer is an emphatic YES! Special thanks are given to the Sierra Club's San Fernando Valley Group and 20s and 30s Singles Section, Equestrian Trails Corral 54, and EarthWatch Club for their show of support and participation.

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU

Who will be your officers for the next year? This question will be answered at the March 16 general membership meeting when SSMMPA conducts its annual election for the Board of Directors. The ten members who so serve do so without pay and attend one Board meeting per month. Nominations may be made at the meeting or prior to then by telephoning Jan Hinkston at (818)884-9610. There are several openings so please consider if you might be able to serve. The offices are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and five Member-At-Large Directors. If you are not able to serve on the Board, perhaps you could assist in some other capacity (ad hoc committee, special project). Please let Jan know how you can help.

Our by-laws require a quorum of the general membership to conduct the election so your attendance Monday night is important.

COLLEGE STUDENTS BACK SSMMPA

Two local colleges have student conservation groups that have committed their support for the goals of SSMMPA. EarthWatch Clubs are active at California State University, Northridge and Pierce College. Their activities include an annual Earth Week during the third week of April which features displays, lectures and films on conservation and environmental topics. They jointly organize or participate in hikes led in the Santa Susana Mountains and other local areas.

EarthWatch has agreed to obtain signatures on behalf of SSMMPA for the Parks and Wildlife Initiative, sponsor a SSMMPA speaker at a general meeting and promote a student internship program to help students get involved with SSMMPA projects.

SSMMPA is delighted with the assistance from both campuses and we are confident that those students who become involved will make meaningful contributions and broaden their educational experience. More information about the activities of either group may be obtained by contacting Dan Cooper at (818)885-7925.

-Dan Cooper

ARE YOUR DUES DUE?

Spring is the time of year that nature renews itself. It is also the time that most of our members show their continuing support for our efforts by renewing their membership in SSMMPA. To find out the date your dues expire, look at your mailing label. If the year and month is 87-03 or earlier, please take a moment to return the tear-off with your dues payment.

Even though we do not publish a glossy magazine or fancy newsletter every month, rest assured that we are working hard on your behalf every day. Since we are all volunteers with other work and family obligations, we think you can appreciate that we would much rather spend our limited time and money getting the job done rather than just writing about it.

The date on your mailing label indicates when your membership expires. Members whose dates are prior to 87-03 are requested to renew at this time. Thank you.

ENCLOSED ARE MY ANNUAL DUES FOR (check one): RENEWAL NEW MEMBERSHIP
CATEGORIES (check one): INDIVIDUAL (\$10) FAMILY (\$15) STUDENT or SENIOR (\$5)
 SUPPORTING (\$25) BUSINESS (\$25) LIFE MEMBER (\$100)

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY/ZIP _____

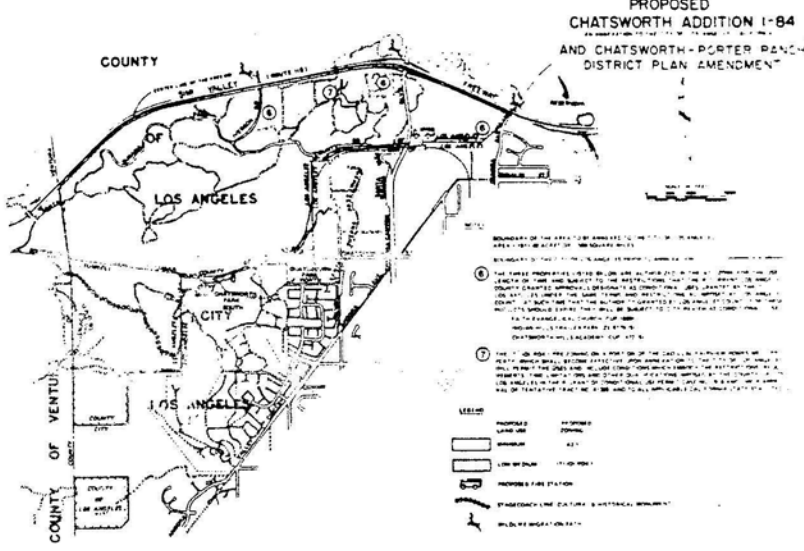
ANNEXATION TO CITY MOVES AHEAD

A proposal to annex 1,011 acres to the City of Los Angeles was given the green light by the Local Agency Formation Commission on January 14. Initiated by Councilman Hal Bernson in 1984, the annexation (see map) includes all of the 428 acres presently owned by the State Department of Parks and Recreation that SSMPA was instrumental in having obtained.

After thoroughly considering the advantages and disadvantages of annexation, a consensus was developed to support the proposal. The City's allowable land use densities are substantially less than what has been approved by the County already. The City has been supportive of our efforts to obtain land and trails, whereas the County has refused to accept any donations or dedications. It also makes sense from an operational standpoint for the City to have jurisdiction over police and fire responsibilities in an area that is isolated from other unincorporated communities of the County. Most of the residents of the area live in the Indian Hills Mobile Home Park and are supportive of annexation. The opponents consist mainly of the companies having large land holdings in the area and some development companies desiring to build along the Santa Susana Pass Road.

A public hearing will be held by the Los Angeles City Council on Tuesday, May 19 after 10 a.m. to consider any protests. If more than 25% of the residents or landowners protest, an election is required to be held. If more than 50% do so, the annexation cannot proceed.

Glenn Bailey, president of the Foundation for the Preservation of Santa Susana Mountains, attended the LAFCO hearing in January as well as the initial one held November 19. If you are interested in becoming involved in this issue, contact him at (818)345-1222.



MOUNTAIN LIONS THREATENED

California mountain lions may be subject to trophy hunting under a proposal now being considered by the State Fish and Game Commission. Lions have been protected under a legislative moratorium since 1972, but that protection lapsed when Governor Deukmejian vetoed legislation in 1985 that would have extended it. Last year the Commission deferred the hunting season for one year and it is presently conducting public hearings on the issue.

Attempting to capitalize on the unfortunate and tragic attacks on two children in Orange County, trophy hunting enthusiasts are trying to convince the public that lions are a threat to public safety and that the lion's already limited population must be further reduced by "sport" hunting. Except for these two attacks in Orange County, there have been no other mountain lion attacks on humans in California since 1909.

The mountain lion is a symbol for the few remaining wild and remote places that still exist in this state. A sport hunting season will only provide a few individuals the opportunity to shoot one of California's last remaining wild and majestic predators at point blank range after it has been endlessly chased by a pack of hounds.

The Department of Fish and Game, which has recommended that the Commission approve a hunting season, has estimated that there are 4,800 lions in California. Other estimates are as low as 1,000. It has been estimated that there are only five or six lions in the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills. Lions have been sighted in the Santa Susana Mountains, but it is unknown how many are in the area. SSMPA believes the main cause of human-lion conflict is loss of wildlife habitat to development.

The final Commission hearing will be held April 3 in Sacramento. Letters can be submitted prior to this date to the Commission at 1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento, California 95814. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Mountain Lion Coalition at (213)457-LION.

BERNSON URGES STONEY POINT CLEAN-UP

Days after hundreds of volunteers converged on Stoney Point Park to pick up broken glass, paper and debris, Councilman Hal Bernson sent a letter asking the City Department of Recreation and Parks to initiate regular clean-up of the property. Since the park was acquired by the City a number of years ago, the department has not conducted regular maintenance out of concern exposing the City to increased liability. SSMPA feels the timely removal of dangerous conditions, such as broken glass, could only reduce the risk of injuries and therefore applauds Bernson's action.

The March 7 clean-up was sponsored by the Sierra Club and had the participation of a number of groups and businesses. Bernson encouraged the effort and provided lunch for the volunteers.

SSMPA hopes to see the park expanded to the north, a scenic area that has been proposed to be developed as a mobile home park and, more recently, as a commercial center.

THANKS, THANKS AND MORE THANKS

Our deepest appreciation to several members and businesses whose donations have greatly assisted SSMPA. Mr. and Mrs. Butler and Florrie Strobel (on behalf of Ronald Craig and Company of Northridge) both contributed much needed office furniture and Gene Hinkston gave a two drawer file cabinet. Sheelagh Watts (Nature's Flower Garden in Chatsworth) previously donated an IBM typewriter.

Our current needs include a computer and printer for word processing use, an additional typewriter and office supplies. We also are looking for someone who has the expertise to chemically clean and/or replace rollers on a typewriter. Please call Jan at (818)884-9610 if you can be of help. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowable under the law.

We appreciate your thinking of SSMPA when it's time to clean out your garage or office. Why not let your unwanted or unused items be put to work on behalf of all of us?

IN MEMORIAM

SSMPA wishes to express its sorrow at the loss of one of its dear members, Celia Abby Woodman, who passed away Saturday, January 31 after a lengthy bout with a pancreatic tumor.

Celia was always supportive of the goals of SSMPA. She was editor of the Chatsworth Historical Society's "Smoke Signal" newsletter for over ten years. In that capacity she regularly publicized issues of concern to SSMPA, including preserving the stagecoach trail and protecting oak trees. She could always be counted on to write letters of support.

Celia was a very giving person. We'll miss seeing her, but her memory will be forever strong in our hearts.

-Nancy Razanski

FOUNDATION FOR THE PRESERVATION
OF THE SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS
POST OFFICE BOX 4831
CHATSWORTH, CA 91313-4831

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
VAN NUYS, CA
PERMIT NUMBER 761

"HIKING AND WILDFLOWER WALKS"
PROGRAM AT MARCH 16 MEETING
7:30 PM -- ALSO ELECTION
DETAILS ENCLOSED

Barbara Ryan
7255 Studio Road
Canoga Park CA 91304

DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE DO NOT DELAY