

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

A Non-Profit Organization, Inc'd. 1971

MARCH 1997

Volume 27, Number 2

OUR ELECTION OUR FUTURE

SSMPA's Annual Election of Officers

and **March General Meeting** will begin at 7:00 p.m. Monday, March 3, 1997 at **Glendale Federal Bank**, Community Room, 21821 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth (one block east of Topanga Canyon Blvd.)

PAULA ELEFANTE

representing Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson, at 8:00 p.m. will be speaking on issues important to our future. Topics to be presented will include Stoney Point and the land to be acquired north of Stoney Point, Browns Canyon (Landfill?), Chatsworth Nature Preserve/Reservoir, and other pertinent issues pertaining to the Chatsworth area.

We Need You To Be There!

Visitor Center vandalized

On Monday night, 17 February 1997, the recreation center at Chatsworth Park South was vandalized, and we were directly affected. Damage to our Visitor Center included the destruction of the inside entrance door, the demolition of a display case and the mounted rattlesnake that had been displayed in it. Other damage included the "trashing" of the contents of boxes of records and other mayhem. On Saturday, a work crew had planned to restore order and access to the center.

SSMPA Facts & Figures

Number of years Mother Nature worked to create the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills:

4,000,000

Number of years SSMPA members have been working to save this open space:

26

Number of years that SSMPA has been working that development/elimination of open space was not planned:

0

Election of Officers By-Laws, Article V, Section 4, "The Board of Directors shall be elected by a majority of the members present at the annual meeting to be held in March of each year."

SAMPLE LETTER OF SUPPORT

FOR CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION VS. SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON

This sample letter can be used as a blank (send as is) or it can be used as a guide in order to compose a letter of your own. Please send the original to Governor Wilson's Office and, if possible, copies to the parties indicated at the bottom:

Governor Pete Wilson
State Capitol
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Governor Wilson:

I am writing to urge you to strongly support the on-going efforts by the State of California Office of the Attorney General to claim restitution from the Southern California Edison Company (SCE) to a maximum sum of \$24,000,000 due to SCE's illegal grading of significant portions of archaeological sites CA-LAN-448 and CA-LAN-449, which exist within the boundaries of Chatsworth (City of Los Angeles) in the Santa Susana Mountains.

SCE is responsible for work done by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department which took place in December 1993 and resulted in significant damage to the archaeological sites, which are located on land which is, and was in December 1993, owned by the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation. These sites and the open space where they are located were purchased and supposedly protected for the purpose of their being included in a new California State Park (currently referred to as The Santa Susana Mountain Project).

The damage caused by SCE's ill-advised actions cannot be undone. A significant fine and/or restitution is entirely appropriate and will send a message that archaeological sites are an important public resource not to be tampered with.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
(Signature)

cc: Douglas Wheeler, Director, State Secretary of Resources
1416 9th Street, Room 1311
Sacramento CA 95814

Donald Murphy, Director, State Department of Parks and Recreation
1416 9th Street 1405
Sacramento CA 95814

Senator Cathie Wright
State Capitol, Room 4052
Sacramento CA 95814

SSMPA Executive Board

Doreen Rusen, President (818-360-0894); Albert Knight, Vice President (818-252-3466); Theodore Dent, Secretary (818-882-4664); Susan Gerke, Treasurer (818-704-9304); Janice Hinkston, Founder (818-884-9610); Members-at-Large: Pauline Aue, (818-341-5872); Bette Butler (818-700-0220); Barbara Coffman (818-347-5603); Lindsay Wilhelm (818-348-9682)

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association Elections for Board of Directors Ballot - March 3, 1997

The By-Laws of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association state that "Each member shall be entitled to one vote which will be cast by such member in person or by mail" (Article II, #5). It is respectfully suggested that members in good standing attend the annual elections (held in March of each year) to cast their ballot(s) in person. However, because some members, who wish to vote, cannot attend in person, we offer the following Absentee Ballot. Please vote for one candidate for each of the following offices: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer. Please also vote for FIVE candidates for Member-At-Large. Candidates currently nominated for SSMPA offices at this time are indicated. Please note that any member can nominate either themselves or any other member at anytime previous to the actual election (including from the floor at the elections meeting itself) and any member can write in the names of any member on the ballot itself, whether or not that member has been nominated (however, persons elected by this latter process can choose to not serve, if that is their wish). SSMPA members should fill out the ballot, fold it, and either tape or staple it shut, and SIGN THEIR NAME AT THE BOTTOM (unsigned Absentee Ballots will not be accepted or counted) and mail the ballot to: NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR; Santa Susana Mountain Park Association; P.O. BOX 4831 Chatsworth CA 91313-483. Mail the ballot not later than March 10, 1997 (ballots received with postmarks later than that date will not be accepted or counted).

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association Elections for Board of Directors BALLOT

SSMPA Board of Director positions, please vote for ONE candidate for each office:

1. President - Doreen Rusen or (write-in candidate) _____
2. Vice President - Albert Knight or (write-in candidate) _____
3. Recording Secretary - Theodore Dent or (write-in candidate) _____
4. Corresponding Secretary - (open) - (write-in candidate) _____
5. Treasurer - Susan Gerke - or (write-in candidate) _____

Members-At-Large - Of the following, vote for FIVE:

- Candidate #1 - Lindsay Wilhelm or (write-in candidate) _____
- Candidate #2 - Barbara Coffman or (write-in candidate) _____
- Candidate #3 - Judy Garris or (write-in candidate) _____
- Candidate #4 - Pauline Aue or (write-in candidate) _____
- Candidate #5 - Jeff Johnston or (write-in candidate) _____

Stagecoach Trail Hikes

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

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

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

Hikes Leaders, Train Now!

Every Sunday (except July-Sept. and fifth Sundays of the month) hike leaders take groups of approximately ten to thirty interested individuals, families, and groups on hikes on the Stagecoach Trail. The need for additional hike leaders to be trained is always there. If you would like to

become one of the few, the proud, the hike leader, please call Barbara Coffman at 818-347-5603.

We're non-violent.

Santa Susana Docents

The Santa Susana Docents provide Nature/History walks at Chatsworth Park South for elementary school children. On the walk, the children tour five stations, including a small display of local artifacts at the Visitors Center. This program has been very well received by hundreds of children, and hundreds more children could learn about the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills if ... if... we had a couple of more docents.

If you have a need to help others, have a couple of hours free on a regular basis, and want some really good times, this may be your great opportunity knocking.

For more information on becoming a docent and joining the fun, sharing your love of nature with children, please call Pat at 818-998-5224 or Jan at 818-993-0508.



Other Simi Hill/ Santa Susana Mountains Hikes

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

extension 126 for additional information and requirements.

Visitors Center Docents

Have you always wanted to tell people where to go? Have you never wanted to tell someone to come look at your rattlesnake?

Every Sunday, people visit the SSMPA Visitors Center, located in Chatsworth Park South, open from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m., asking questions about the area, its history, geology, archaeological sites, location of Devil's Slide, location of the rest rooms, etc.

As a citizen/volunteer, you can become a Visitor Center docent and become fulfilled and have a great time doing it. Please call right now, or as soon as you can, 818-704-9304, and tell Susan that you know you are the right person (trained or trainable), you have three hours a month to give to others, you're ready to begin building some great relationships.

Phone List

California Parks & Recreation (general information) ----- 818-880-0350
 California Parks & Recreation EMERGENCY DISPATCH ---818-880-0365
 California State Parks Foundation ----- 415-258-9975
 Friends of California Parks (Laura Svendsgaard) ----- 800-300-7501

Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (general information) --- 213-665-5188
 Los Angeles City Park Headquarters (Ranger dispatch) ----- 213-913-4147
 Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (S.F.V.) ----- 818-885-1032
 Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (San Clarita) ----- 805-254-2111
 Governor Pete Wilson ----- 213-897-0322
 State Senator Cathie Wright ----- 800-458-8500
 State Assemblyman Tom McClintock ----- 818-368-3838

Frank M. Buda, Attorney At Law ----- 818-999-9871
 William S. Abbey, Deputy Attorney Gen'l., State of CA ----- 213-897-2604
 Southern California Edison (general information) ----- 800-655-4555

Updated Foundation Tentative Slate of Officers - March 3

by Nancy Razanski, Nomination
Chair

President: Nancy Razanski
 Vice President: Janet Lazik
 Recording Sec.: Gretha Davis
 Treasurer: Pauline Aue
 Corres. Sec.: Lisa Nicholson
 SFV Area Chair: Judy Garris
 Simi Valley Area Chair Pearl Turbush
 Santa Clarita Area Chair George Riipi
 Member-At-Large: Joe Meagher
 Lindsay Wilhelm

Founder: Janice Hinkston
 Nominations will also be taken from
the floor.

Address List

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

SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAIN PARK ASSOCIATION

We Invite You To Join/Renew/Rejoin S.S.M.P.A.

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

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

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

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

CALENDAR

March 1997

- March 2 (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- March 3 (Monday) General Membership Meeting (see article on page one)
- March 9 (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- March 16 (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.
- March 17 (Monday) Exec. Board Meeting - Glendale Federal Bank - 7:00 p.m.
- March 23 (Sunday) Weekly Hike; meet at Chatsworth Park South - 9:00 a.m.

From the Archives - **THROUGH THE SANTA SUSANA PASS** - SEPTEMBER 22, 1869.

Part 2 by *Albert Knight*

William H. Seward may have been the most distinguished American to visit Southern California up to September 22, 1869 (as you know from reading the February 1997 Newsletter), at least according to a Westways magazine article by W. H. Hutchinson (from May 1962 - the following quotes are from this short article). Seward, famous because he had been wounded by the same conspirators that had murdered President Lincoln and infamous because he had "wasted" \$7,200,000 in government funds (as Secretary of State he had arranged for the purchase of Alaska from Russia), was now retired from government service and was making a grand tour of the country. Seward was to have traveled by stage from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara, exciting enough in itself, but the local Republicans wanted time for speeches and for feting and came up with a plan to deliver the former Secretary to his destination more promptly. In fact, they arranged to convey Mr. Seward from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara IN A SINGLE DAY, something never done before! The "designated driver" was to be 27-year-old Thomas Robert Bard, a member of the Board of Supervisors of Santa Barbara County, who was said to be the fastest and best wagon driver in Southern California. Bard got ready by pre-positioning extra teams of four horses at selected stage stations along the route. In addition, he stationed an extra two vaqueros at the "east end of Santa Susana Pass". Seward himself was now 68 and had never entirely recovered from the assassination attempt of 1865. He was, however, a "more than competent reinsman" and ready for the challenge. We will not recount the entire journey here... let it only be said that the next morning (September 22, 1869) Secretary Seward, his wife, their son, and Bard (and the Seward baggage) left the Bella Union Hotel in Los Angeles at 7:00 in the morning and were in Santa Barbara by 11:00 that same night. The most romantic part of the ride was probably the moon-lit run up the beach from Ventura, past Rincon Point and on to Santa Barbara itself. But surely, the most exciting part of that wild ride (well over 100 miles in just 16 hours), the part when their hair must have stood on end, and their hearts must have leapt into their throats, was the part in passing through the Santa Susana Pass. Here, as told by Hutchinson, "At the site of Chatsworth... Bard swung due west into... a narrow defile and the two waiting vaqueros, dressed in their best, rode gravely forth to meet him, their riatas in their hands. Shaking out a loop, each man cast it around a front wheel of the carriage... they moved ahead to give the straining team extra power up the tortuous grade... At the top of the grade... Bard stopped... and the vaqueros removed their riatas and waited courteously (for them) to go ahead." Now I find myself getting a little dizzy walking up the Devil's Slide, ever, at a slow pace (I must be out of shape). Can you imagine galloping up the Devil's Slide at full speed, being pulled by 2 vaqueros and six horses? And no 911...

Fdn. for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mtns.

Box 4831 Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Van Nuys, CA

Permit No. 761

Dated Material

Address Correction Requested

RL LIFE
Nancy Razanski
22149 James Alan Circle
Chatsworth CA 91311-2051