



Volume 37, Issue 03

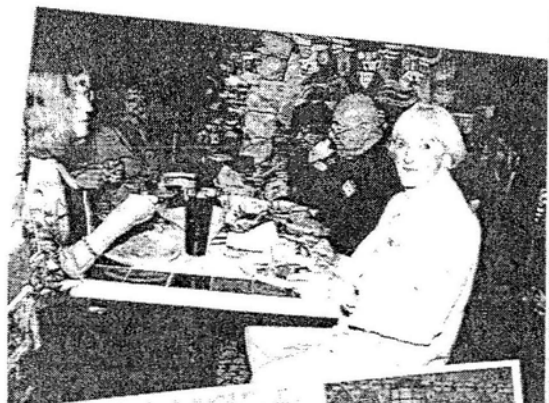
Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

A Non-Profit 501(c)(4) Organization  
Incorporated August 31, 1971

# April 2007 Newsletter

## March 25, 2007 - GREAT PARTY FOR A GREAT LADY!

Jan Hinkston, 80, Founder of Santa Susana Mountain Park Association and Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains, and some of her friends.



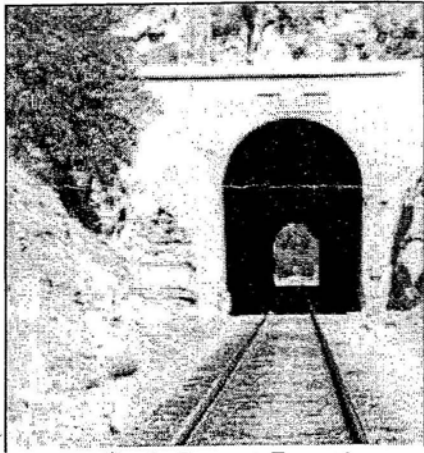
Photos by Reid Bogert & Bob Cates

### Local Crime Incident

SSMPA's president, Jan Miller, was hiking on Sunday evening, March 18<sup>th</sup>, in Box Canyon when he was assaulted, robbed, abducted and he and his families' lives threatened. Three local men were arrested for these offenses. They have since been released from jail. The case is under an ongoing investigation by the Ventura County Sheriff's Department. Questions regarding the incident can be directed to Jan at [miller.jan@att.net](mailto:miller.jan@att.net).

### Dynamite Shed Protection Underway

City Councilman Greig Smith (Dist. 12) has introduced a motion to save the historic stone shed in the Chatsworth Park South. The shed was used to store dynamite during the construction of the Santa Susana Railroad Tunnel between 1898 and 1904. The tunnel connected Simi Valley to Chatsworth, aiding in the movement of goods to Chatsworth. When it was completed, the railroad and tunnel made Chatsworth one of the busiest areas in the San Fernando Valley.



Santa Susana Tunnel

### Stoney Point Land Acquisition Approved

The Board of the Dept. of Recreation & Parks has approved the LA City Council District 12 office's proposal to acquire 5.5 acres of land adjacent to Stoney Point Park in Chatsworth, agreeing to keep it primarily for equestrian purposes. The preservation of this natural area is critical to the protection of the equestrian character of the neighborhood, and the addition of these five acres to the current Stoney Point Park will be of great benefit to all of those who ride or hike the trails, and to the entire community as well.

The Chatsworth Neighborhood Council has contributed \$20,000 of its \$50,000 yearly budget toward the acquisition. Total purchase price is \$2.5 million, and Councilman Greig Smith's office has put together funding from six different sources.

### Fire Brings Out Little-Seen Plants in Blazes' Wake

Everyone knows that raging wildfires can blacken miles of hillsides, incinerate whole communities and destroy the habitat for hundreds of species. But few are aware of fire's bounty - in the form of rare wildflowers and other colorful plants that sprout up, often just briefly, years after a blaze tears through an area.

"What people can see now, 2 1/2 years after the Foothill Fire in July 2004, is all these fire-following species coming up," said Ian Swift, director of the Placerita Canyon Nature Center and supervisor of the 350-acre natural park.

"The species will only be here for a few more years and will disappear. It may be decades before you will be able to see them again."

Local woodlands are incubating carpets of spindly fire poppies; Phacelia, a knee-high annual with fern-like leaves and blue flowers; and California lilac, a shrub. Unusual plants that stun even naturalists are literally born in the furnace-like flames as their seed pods split from contact with chemicals released by smoke.

The canyons that border Santa Clarita - Placerita, Towsley and Whitney - have been whipped by wildfires in the past several years. They form part of the same wildlife corridor, a section of undeveloped land between the Santa Susana and San Gabriel mountains. Months or years after firestorms, moonscape-bare hills erupt with dense regrowth and profusions of colorful blooms. Flames cracked open the brittle, spindly fire poppy seeds in Placerita after the Foothill Fire.

"(Seeds) can sit in the ground for decades until the fire blows through," said Wendy Langhans, a naturalist with the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

Langhans will lecture on fire ecology and lead a nature walk at the Placerita Canyon Center on April 21, pointing out burned areas in the process of recovery. The diminutive plant expert still marvels at the 6-foot-tall fire heart plant that towered over her near Towsley Creek two years after the Simi Fire touched down there.

"I have never seen it before," she said. One year after a burn, the plant sends up foliage; the following year, whitish-pink flowers crown the tall stalk. "It's a monster," she said. "It's huge."

For more information about the nature walk, contact Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel at (661) 259-2743 or e-mail her at [Zuliebear@aol.com](mailto:Zuliebear@aol.com).



## UPCOMING HIKES

**Sun., 4/15 & 5/20: Stagecoach Trail – 9:00 a.m.** Interpretative hike into history in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet at 9:00 am for a 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stage Coach Trail. From Topanga Canyon Blvd., turn Won Devonshire, drive into Chatsworth Park S to the 2nd parking lot. Wear long pants, lugsoles, bring water & snack. Ldr: Lee Baum (818) 341-1850. *Sierra Club (Santa Susana Mountains Task Force) Outing.*

**Tues., 4/24: Easy Pace Hikers/Chumash Trail – 8:30 a.m.** Moderately paced 5 mi, 1100' gain hike in the rolling hills and wonderful sandstone rock formations of the Santa Susana Mtns. See how quickly this area has recovered from the fire. Meet at trailhead (from 118 Fwy, take Yosemite Ave N ½ mi, R on Flanagan Dr ¾ mi to end, park). Bring water, lunch, hat sunscreen. Rain cancels. Ldrs: Marcia Harris & Pixie Klemic. *Sierra Club (San Fernando Valley, Wildemess Adventure) outing.*

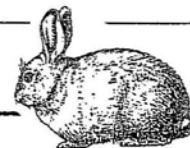
**Sun., 4/29: Bear Divide to Walk Ranch: A Wild Heritage Hike – 9:00 a.m.** Moderate 7 mi, 700' gain/1500' loss along ridge between San Fernando/Santa Clarita Valleys. Meet at Walker Ranch entrance to Placerita County Park (take 14 Fwy, exit Placerita Cyn Rd, S to park, continue 1-3/4 mi past main entrance to gated entrance of Walker Ranch – do not block gate). Bring water, lunch, lugsoles. Rain cancels. Ldrs: Dave Morrow (661-254-5245) & Henry Schultz (661-284-5613). *Sierra Club (Santa Clarita Chapter) Outing.*

**Thurs., 5/10: Towsley Cyn./Santa Clarita Woodlands - 8:00 a.m.** Moderately-paced, 9 mi, 1400' gain (optional 7 mi, 1100' gain) hike with great vistas, a chilly narrows, diverse plant life and tar seeps. Meet at Ed Davis Pk, The Old Rd, Newhall (take Calgrove exit from 1-5 Fwy, W back under fwy, take The Old Rd S, R ½ mi to entrance on R, take dirt rd to Nature Ctr and parking lot. Bring water, lunch, lugsoles. Rain cancels. Ldrs: Pixie Klemic & Bob Galletly. *Sierra Club (San Fernando Valley Wilderness Adventure) Outing.*

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. You can read the liability waiver before you chose to participate on an outing at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact Outings Dept. at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

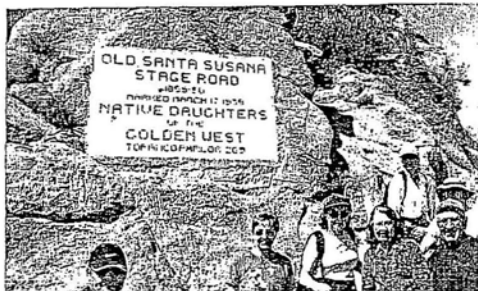


## UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS



Brush Rabbit

- **Sun., April 22 – 9am - Earth Day Community Project** in Chatsworth Park North, 22300 Chatsworth St. Join Councilman Greig Smith and community members in celebrating Earth Day! Enjoy earth-friendly activities, including trash cleanup to keep the park and community clean and green. Take home a free tree to plant at home! For more info, call Elizabeth Wiessner at (818) 360-2361 or email [Elizabeth.Wiessner@lacity.org](mailto:Elizabeth.Wiessner@lacity.org).
- **Sun., April 22 - 9:30am-4:00pm - Pierce College Farmwalk**, 6201 Winnetka Av, Woodland Hills - Victory / Mason Entrance (park free) - \$5.00 donation/children free. Website: [PIERCECOLLEGE.EDU](http://PIERCECOLLEGE.EDU)...scroll to 'News & Events'. Activities: animals, wool spinning, nature canyon walks, a Clydesdale horse, live music, cow milking, cow chip bingo, petting zoo, live bee displays, exotic animal shows, horse activities, fire fighters & fire engines, Fire Dept. & Forestry Div, CA Women for Ag & AG in the Classroom, large farm & plant equipment, BBQ & food court, Agriculture & Animal Science Class information, various educational displays. Fun for all! . Only physical assistance dogs permitted due to livestock. Bring sunscreen, sunglasses, hats & cameras. More info @ 818-710-4253.
- **Tues., April 24 - 6pm – Deerlake/Vistas Committee Meeting** at Radisson Hotel (Topanga Cyn. Blvd. & Lassen).
- **Sun., April 29 - 11am - 4pm - Chatsworth Historical Society Garden Festival** in Chatsworth Park South, 10385 Shadow Oak Dr., (end of Devonshire St.), Chatsworth. Enjoy this fun, family-friendly annual garden festival at the historic Homestead Acre. Food vendors, flower exhibitions, arts & crafts and more! Free parking. Presented by Chatsworth Historical Society. For more info call (818) 341-3053.



## Santa Susana Mountain Park Association



invites you to **JOIN / RENEW** (circle one).

Investing in the future of our communities and its resources is probably one of the best expenditures of our time and efforts. Return this cutoff with your contribution lend your support. Make your check payable to SSMPPA and send to SSMPPA, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831.

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior or Student ((\$10.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual (\$15.00)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$20.00) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member (\$150.00)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Business / Organization (\$30.00) |   |

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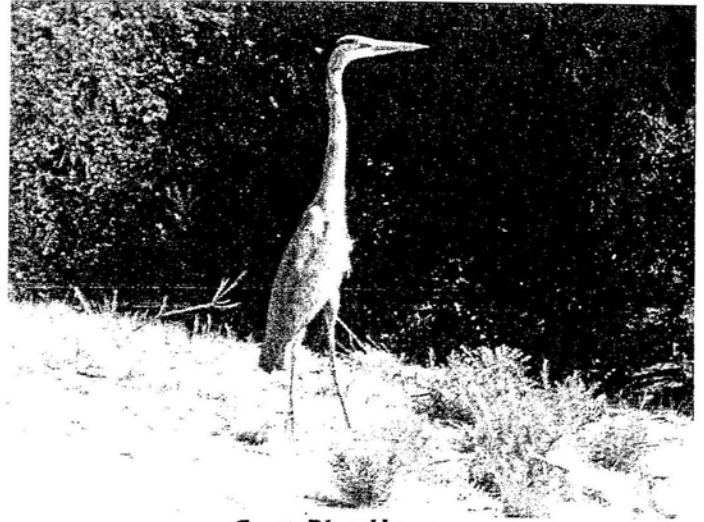
**Special Interest / Expertise:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SSMPA General Membership Meeting  
Monday, April 16, 2007 – 7:00 p.m.**

Save Oak Savanna (SOS) was organized in June 2005 to limit development in Woodland Hills to projects that are consistent and compatible with the neighborhood character and identity. Its mission includes educating area residents and elected officials on the value of preserving existing open spaces, protecting wildlife, and preserving natural resources, including coastal oak trees. Its position: In a community where there are almost non-existent parks and green spaces, any loss of open space area greatly impacts the character and nature of a community that has as its name - Woodland Hills.

Dave Breliant, president of SOS, using a PowerPoint presentation, will share the challenges and highlights of a journey being taken to save precious natural resources in Woodland Hills. Come, listen and learn.

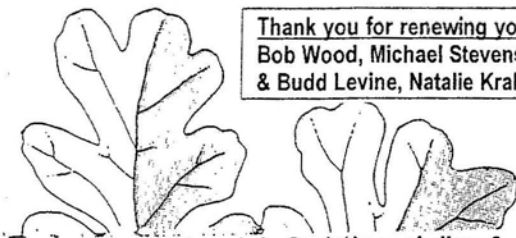
*SSMPA General Membership Program meetings take place every 3rd Monday September through November and January through May at the Rockpointe Clubhouse, 22300 Devonshire, Chatsworth, on the south side, 1 block before entering Chatsworth Park South. Program meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and conclude at 9:00 p.m.*



**Great Blue Heron  
Woodland Hills - March 2007**

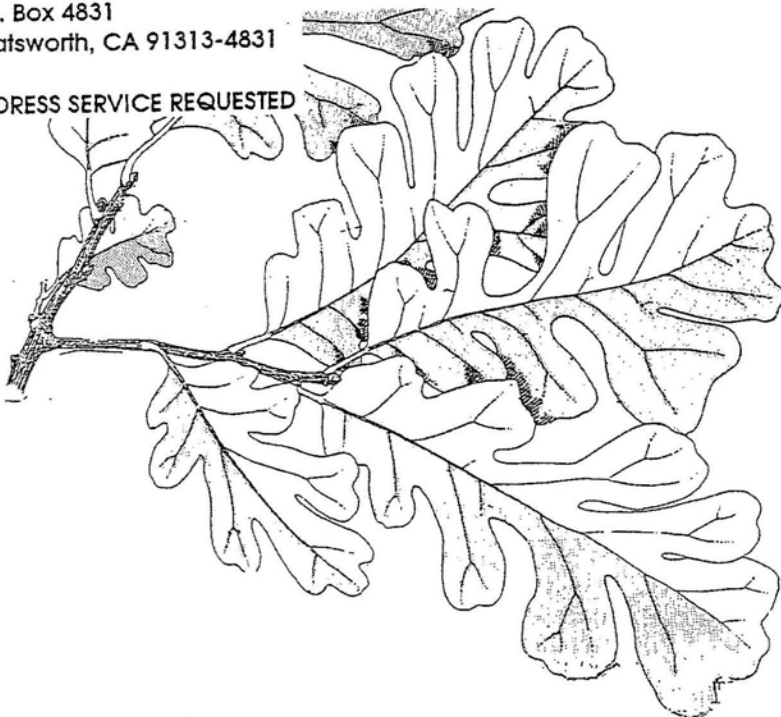
The purposes of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association are the protection, preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills as open space lands and wildlife corridors linking the Los Padres National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains, including the Angeles National Forest, to the Santa Monica Mountains; as habitats for plants and animals native to the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills; as locales of unique geologic formations; as sites of ethnological, archaeological and historical interests; to provide passive recreational opportunities and environmental education opportunities; and, to support the acquisition of new public parks, open space and conservation easements, the expansion of existing parks, participate in the planning of park infrastructure and programs, and support said programs.

Thank you for renewing your SSMPA membership: Sandra Johnson, Norma & Edgar Garbert, Beverly Cervini, Bob Wood, Michael Stevens, Shannon-Vaughn Family, Joanne Woodruff, Jim & Liz Carlin, Greg Jensen, Bunny & Budd Levine, Natalie Krah & Todd Doherty, Gail Boudreaux, Gerald & Carolyn Murphy, Bob & Laurie Dager.



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association &  
Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains  
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