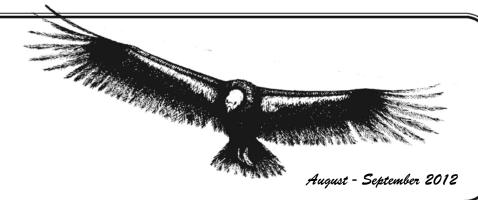


Wild visions....Chaparrel....Condor trip....Candidates
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# Condon Call

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



# Another vision evolves for our local wilderness

By Jim Hines and Jeff Kuyper

Wilderness advocates in communities throughout Santa Barbara and Ventura counties have created a vision for preserving a full range of connected wildlands in the southern Los Padres National Forest under the banner of the Los Padres Wild Heritage Campaign.

Organizers spent the better part of three years building community support, which recommends more than 200,000 acres for formal wilderness designation and seeks to

# What does club think?

Want to know what the Sierra Club thinks?

The club doesn't render an opinion on everything under the sun, but over the years it has crafted statements from Agriculture to Wildlife Conservation.

Just go to www.SierraClub. org/policy.

At the top of the page there is a policy window that brings you to general areas (such as Biotechnology, Environmental Justice, Military, Nuclear Issues and Land Use policies, among many others. To hone in on a specific, go to the search box at the bottom of the page.

The website also gives you the club's purposes and goals and its mission statement, which is:

"To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth:

To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives."

add more than 120 miles of creeks and rivers to the nation's Wild and Scenic River system.

The Wild Heritage proposal wants to create one contiguous network of wilderness areas in the forest. It would permanently protect one of the country's best remaining assemblages of Native American rock art, protect portions of the Chumash badlands, White Ledge Peak, and a significant portion of the upper Santa Ynez River watershed.

The proposal would not impact any current motorized access, retains remote fire roads and preserves mountain bike access along popular trails. Details of the Wild Heritage proposal can be found at www.lospadreswild.org.

Several parts of the original Wild Heritage proposal were modified to benefit mountain biking access. For example, the Condor Ridge proposed wilderness area was changed to a Scenic Area for cycling groups who were concerned that designating wilderness there would preclude them from using the Tequepis Trail, a very popular mountain bike route.

From the beginning, Campaign organizers were determined to resolve conflicts before any bill was introduced to Congress. The idea was that a smaller bill supported by the entire community would be better than a larger bill with numerous opponents. The success of this strategy is reflected in the broad

#### EAVESDROPS

"In the outdoors, to have that energy and excitement and enthusiasm is pure gold."

-- Teacher and outdoor maven Matt Inman of Ojai Valley School, whose outdoor program for middle school students is extensive, comprising backpacks, island treks and education about ecology.

support the proposal enjoys.

Another proposal

In February, Congressman Elton Gallegly (R-Simi Valley) introduced a controversial piece of legislation that would expand the boundaries of three wilderness areas in the Los Padres National Forest, while also opening up new areas of the forest to motorized off-road vehicles and mandating a controversial exchange of land.

The bill – dubbed the Los Padres Conservation and Recreation Act of 2012 (H.R. 4109) - would extend the current boundaries of the Sespe, Matiliia, and Dick Smith wilderness areas in the heart of the Los Padres National Forest, increasing the size of these areas by 63,576 acres (20 percent). It would also protect 89 miles of back country streams, including Mono and Indian Creeks in Santa Barbara County and the upper Sespe and upper Piru creeks in Ventura County. The bill also establishes a new 18,520-acre Condor Ridge Scenic Area along the crest of the Gaviota Coast in Santa Barbara County.

The bill is controversial because of the concessions it makes to off-road vehicle users, such as recognizing two "OHV (Off-Highway Vehicle) Areas" in the Ventura County backcountry totaling 65,833 acres, where vehicles such as dirt bikes, quads, and four-wheel drive vehicles would be encouraged. It also proposes the construction of three new OHV routes in remote areas of the forest and would open 69 miles of remote forest roads to vehicles.

Finally, it requires the Forest Service to trade several hundred acres of public land around Lake Piru to United Water District. Under this land exchange, the federal government would give away 440 acres of public lands in the Los Padres National Forest, including Blue Point Campground, a stretch of Piru Creek, continued on page 2



We lost both of these ecology giants, but their legacies will live on for generations ... In 2006, Coastal Commission Executive Director Peter Douglas received the Environmental Defense Center's Environmental Hero award from former SB Supervisor and Coastal Commissioner Naomi Schwartz, herself a recipient. Both passed away this year, Peter on April 1 and Naomi on June 4. Their hard work and contributions to the environment are incalculable, and as people they were inspirational. Naomi, a long-time Sierra Club member, was a dedicated public servant, a role model and a trailblazer. Peter was key figure in drafting a proposition in 1972 that created the Coastal Commission, and he fought for the coast as its director since 1985. He coined the famous phrase: "The coast is never saved. It's always being saved." (Photo courtesy Environmental Defense Center)

See this issue in

## **GLORIOUS COLOR**

http://lospadres.serraclub.org

# Press gives club whole lotta love

By John Hankins

Outing Outing -- The Los Padres Sierra Club got wonderful coverage in the Ventura County Star on July 21 with a prominent hiking feature entitled, "On the Trail to Fitness," in the print and web version, plus a narrated video on the web.

"Want to work up a sweat? Lose a few pounds? Tone those leg muscles? See nature at its purest? Then hiking might the ticket for you, and you'll likely run into folks with like interests," wrote Monica Lara, in detailing hike leader Stephen Bryne's Sierra Club outing up Horn Canyon. Photos by Karen Quincy Loberg accompanied the article and she also posted a video.

You can read and see both by going to the Star's website (www.VCStar.com) and searching for "Horn Canyon hike" or the name of the reporter or Bryne.

The article gave Sierra Club outings a major boost, over and above normal coverage of outing notices and should attract many more young people due to our new "meet up" social networking announcements. Its take on fitness was also a major draw along with evoking a curiosity about the local trails.

**Tip of the** *Edhat* – In Santa Barbara, Robert Bernstein of the SB Group is a regular writer online at Edhat, and he often gives accounts of his Sierra

Club hikes with a link to his photos, vastly expanding our visibility in the community.

Most recently, he penned a short feature on the man behind the long-running Friday night hikes who is long-running himself: 70-year-old Al Sladek. Robert reported that Al has been leading the Sierra Club Friday evening hikes in Santa Barbara since 1974; almost every Friday for 38 years nonstop. Al just celebrated his 70th birthday "and we had a little party for him on the trail and at the potluck/slide show on Friday July 13."

The comments on Edhat after the article: "...and the guy can swing dance, too!" and "Long may he lead."

This year alone Robert has written about the steep Cold Spring hike, Gaviota Caves bushwhacking, Gibraltar Rock via Rattlesnake Trail, jellyfish exhibit at the SB Sea Center, a record number of hikers to the Playground, Earth Day weekend, Figueroa Mountain wildflowers, Pinnacles National Monument, hike to Inspiration Point where they found an owl and singing frog, Rocky Pine Ridge, Tangerine Falls, and a

continued on page 2

#### **COVER PHOTO**

On a trip to Bryce Canyon slots, photographer Niall Fritz caught sight of this tall tree growing perfectly in an opening of the rock walls. (©Niall Fritz)



The Los Padres National Forest from West Camino Cielo shows its mostly wild and natural beauty, but as "The Land of Many Uses," there are competing visions for how to manage it (see story above). Check out more of Erin's wonderful outdoor photos and other venues at <a href="https://www.ErinFeinblatt.com">www.ErinFeinblatt.com</a>. (Photo ©Erin Feinblatt)

#### **Press**...from page 1

hike that took in seven trails.

Edhat keeps track of how many people read its articles, and for Robert, it is hundreds for each hiking article and some even reach a thousand.

In between he had time to be a lion fish on a unicycle in the Solstice Parade.

Write on, Robert.

Forever Sad – Ventura Sierra Club member Trevor Smith was quoted in the Ventura County Star's report on the McGrath Peaker Plant being built, which was strongly opposed by the club.

The SoCal Edison plant ended up in court, but it won out over the opposition.

"We lost. They destroyed the coastline," Smith told the Star. The new plant, coupled with ramped-up oil drilling operations nearby, have degraded two miles of coastal property, he said, and concluded, "we're forever sad, we can't bring it back."

#### **EAVESDROPS**

"It has always been a problem with us – who has a pass and who doesn't."

- Ventura Sierra Club hike leader Kurt Preissler, quoted in the Ventura County Star about the Los Padres Forest "Adventure Pass" that is in legal limbo now and possibly limited to certain areas. Personally, Preissler said he doesn't mind paying the fee.

Copy Deadline: 15th -



Al Sladek (center with hat) was feted for his 70th birthday on the trail and off. He's been leading the Santa Barbara Friday evening hikes for 38 years (see adjacent story). Just meet at the Mission at 6 p.m.; pizza afterward is optional. When asked for words of wisdom, he said: "Growing old is mandatory. Growing up is optional." (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

#### Another vision...from page 1

several parcels of land along the lake's shoreline, and all of the remaining publicly owned portions of the access road around the lake's perimeter. In return, the U.S. Forest Service would receive 340 acres of land on a grassy hillside that is currently used for livestock grazing. The land exchange has generated significant amount of local controversy because it is unfair and unequal – the public loses more acreage with higher biological and recreational values than it gains. Moreover, the exchange would eliminate the water district's responsibility to protect and restore steelhead and other protected species in the area.

Gallegly's bill is generating strong responses among environmental groups, notably the Los Padres Sierra Club which opposes it.

Gallegly's bill awaits a hearing before the House Natural Resources Committee. Given the

Condor Call

All numbers 805 area code

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Editor John Hankins (see EDITOR address, phone and email above)

Photos, news, tips always welcome!

Sierra Club

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current slow pace of wilderness bills in Congress, and the fact that this is an election year, it remains unclear whether there is sufficient momentum in Congress to shepherd any wilderness bill in 2012.

Meanwhile, wilderness advocates continue to promote their vision embodied in the Wild Heritage Campaign and are focused on removing the harmful provisions contained in Gallegly's bill.

With redistricting reshaping Congressional districts around the Los Padres National Forest, the fate of wilderness designations in the Los Padres hangs in the balance.

-- Editor's note: Jeff Kuyper is the founder of Los Padres Forest Watch, and Jim Hines is the Los Padres Sierra Club's forest representative.

## **Fish stories**

Steelhead trout is the main course in Keep the Sespe Wild's current newsletter.

The issues surrounding the steelhead's migration from the ocean into our local rivers to spawn is presented in detail. It quotes from the federal Fish and Wildlife agency's final recovery plan issued in January, such as the factors that led to the steelhead's endangered species listing, its importance throughout Santa Barbara and Ventura counties and fish ladder and habitat projects.

Read it by going to www. SespeWild.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

San Francisco, CA 94105 Chapter Contact Catherine Graham 682-1357



## A natural wonder

By Al Thompson

The June pot luck of the Arguello Group was to be followed by a program, but the presenter had cancelled, so we made do with an older Huell Howser DVD wherein he was accompanied by a biologist whose primary subject was chaparral. I sat through the twenty-five minute presentation getting really edgy about the subject ... more on that later.

Chaparral is just about everywhere in California and if one were to name what natural features define this state, one would have to list the sea, the mountains, the desert and most of all, the chaparral. Yes, there are the tall redwoods, the magnificent giant sequoias, the Joshua trees and so much more.

But it is the chaparral which surrounds the greatest population within the state, and it reaches from southern Oregon to Mexico, making it our most prominent habitats. I make that plural, because there are many forms of chaparral, depending upon what particular plant dominates what area of chaparral growth: Ceanothus chaparral, Manzanita chaparral, Chamise chaparral, etc.

Any person -- whether a hiker, a botanist or one just interested in California native plants -- probably realizes as well that the amount of light reaching chaparral communities and the type of soil beneath the surface, usually determines what will be the dominant plants that inhabit what areas. And the endemic flora greatly influences the fauna found therein.

In a state which includes some of greatest amounts of native species on the globe, chaparral pretty well tops the list. Knowing that fact is only the beginning of a study of life-forms. Perhaps as hikers and just interested persons, we take for granted that chaparral is there, has always been there, and presumably will always be there. But beneath it all, there are mechanisms to dazzle the mind.

A Mediterranean type climate with dry warm summers and mild moist winters is a starting point. Adaptations to

soil types, often alkaline and many times of poor nutrient content, are primary factors. Fire adaptation is extremely important. My guess is too many people just take chaparral for granted, even misusing the term "scrub" in its place. One might consider "coastal sage scrub" as a legitimate term, but once one gets inland a bit more, it's chaparral.

NativeAmericans, sometimes called "proto-agriculturists," not just hunters and gatherers, lived among the chaparral communities for thousands of years and knew how to adapt to it and make use of it. It might behoove modern humans to do the same.

So why was I edgy during the recent presentation showing Huell Howser with the botanist in the chaparral? Well, I'm also a member of the Lompoc Valley Botanic and Horticultural Society and we produced a rather professional video in 1996, now on DVD, called "The Burton Mesa Chaparral, A Natural Wonder." Where Huell Howser was in the chaparral of the Cleveland National Forest, ours was about the chaparral right in our own back yard.

We explained it all in our DVD using three narrators, an ecologist from Santa Barbara, a PhD from CalPoly Technical University and an all-around botanist. Our DVD is as timely today as it was sixteen years ago. Whoever grabbed a quick fill-in for the cancelled presenter that June evening just didn't know what could have been on hand.

I must add that the Burton Mesa chaparral is one of the most unique communities in the world, largely due to a diversity of climatic factors and soil content, it being the remains of ancient sand dunes. Several thousand acres of it are in a reserve which is known to include at least 250 plant species, 50 being endemic and 10 rare, and 235 species of fauna. La Purisima Mission State Historic Park lies within its eastern reaches.

No wonder I was edgy; Huell Howser, as nice a guy as he is, didn't cover even half the subject!



Close-up of early summer fruits of the Burton Mesa Chaparral, located in the Lompoc area. It is one of the most unique communities in the world and is now protected as a preserve. (Photo by Al Thompson)

## **Compelling films shown**

The Ojai Valley Green Coalition invites all to fill one or more of your August afternoons with an inspirational movie during its 2012 summer film series.

Four films are featured:

~"Cultural Creatives 1.0," August 4; about the cultural shift via depletion of oil.

~"City Dark." August 11; blending visual poetry and hard facts for a film that chronicles the disappearance of darkness.

~ "Revenge of the Electric Car," August 25; about the fall and resurgent rise of green cars.

~ "Seeds of Freedom," September 1; exploring the history of the corporate takeover of seed and the resulting impacts on communities across the world.

The series is once again being sponsored by Nutiva and the films will be shown Saturdays at 4:30 p.m. at the Ojai Playhouse Theatre, 145 E. Ojai Ave.

Transportation: Michael Chiacos
Treasurer: Richard Hunt, 966-4157, Richard.Hunt@LosPadres.SierraClub.org
Typography and production by Jim Cook • Printed by Western Web Printing, Inc.

# Los Padres Group News

The public is welcome to our programs

#### STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee normally meets on the fourth Thursday of every month in Carpinteria. Email Chair Gerry Ching for agenda: gching@cox.ne

#### **ARGUELLO GROUP**

Volunteers needed as hike leaders and for monitoring issues, etc. ExCom meets first Monday of most months. All information from Jerry Connor, 928-3598, or email: Connor.gd2@verizon.net

#### **CONEJO GROUP**

Get all information from John Holroyd, 495-6391, email: backpacker2@earthlink.net. On the web: http://lospadres.sierraclub.org/conejo/index.html

#### **SANTA BARBARA GROUP**

- Join our email list: contact stephen@lospadres.sierraclub.org
- Get the latest updates on events and issues at: www.SBSierraClub.org Breakfast by the beach, Sunday, Aug. 19, Shoreline Park. Details below.

#### VENTURA SIERRA CLUB

Up-to-date information on our website: www.VenturaSierraClub.org

#### **SANTA BARBARA GROUP**

# **Breakfast by beach** is a tasty tradition

The Santa Barbara Group's annual picnic breakfast is a cheerful tradition, and for good reason, as it is held at the picturesque Shoreline Park, the menu boasts favorite breakfast treats and an optional beach walk tops it all off.

You can connect with old friends and meet new ones at the event, starting at 9 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 19 in the middle of Shoreline Park off Cabrillo Boulevard in Santa Barbara.

Santa Barbara Group and Los Padres Sierra Club leaders will be on hand to answer questions or hear what you like or don't like, so this is a great time to find out more about what is happening in your local Club.

Bring friends and enough food to share, as well as your own reusable dishes and utensils, to minimize our environmental impact. We provide coffee and orange juice.

After breakfast, those interested can join a walk, led by Robert Bernstein. Don't miss this opportunity to share your favorite breakfast treats while enjoying one of Santa Barbara's most picturesque locations and become part of our annual tradition.

For further information, contact Jim Balter, program committee chair, at 689-2716 or email Jim@Balter.name.

# Ventura BBQ a savory event

Members of the Ventura Sierra Club and their friends enjoyed a summer picnic at Steckel Park in Santa Paula on June 23 with good food, good company, and an aftersupper hike along scenic Santa Paula

Lots of new faces showed up and so did Fran Pavley, the Sierra Club's choice for the State Senate, in a newly drawn 27th District that has close Democrat - Republican registration. Both parties have targeted that district as a must win. It covers eastern Ventura County and much of the western San Fernando Valley.

"I'm going to need a lot of grassroots support," she said, partly because so much of that area "was not represented by environmental people." The group's president, Jon Ziv, has known Pavley for 30 years and called her "an environmental icon."

Beyond politics, Pavley urged all to see the new, "fantastic visitor's center" for the Santa Monica Mountains, which has a coveted Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating.

The organizer, Carol Marsh, would like to thank the following people for their help in staging this event: Mike Stubblefield and Barbara Okundo for setting up the picnic area and cleaning up afterwards, Dr. Jon Ziv for cooking hot dogs of all kinds, Jim McComb for sending out email invitations to literally thousands of environmentalists, and Pat Jump for leading the hike.

In turn all of them thank Carol

# **VENTURA SIERRA CLUB**

Jon Ziv, Chair of the Ventura Sierra Club, cooked up a delicious array of hot dog species during a social outing in Steckel Park, bolstered by food shared by members and friends. (Photo by John Hankins)

Marsh for organizing the event.

The Ventura group would like to hold another party in December to celebrate the holidays. In December, however, the weather is not reliable enough to plan a party outdoors, so the Club will need to find a house. If you know someone who has a house that can accommodate 40 to 50 guests and who is willing to open it to the Sierra Club on a weekend evening during the

first half of December, please contact Carol Marsh by telephone at 984-3590 or CleoCAM1776@aol.com.

Currently, one person is doing almost all the work involved in planning these parties. If enough people volunteered to help, the Club could hold more frequent social events. It you would like to serve on the party committee, please contact Carol.

# Club's lodge has deals

In case you need a reason to get out of your routine and up into the mountains, take a look at the activities being offered at the Sierra Club's Clair Tappaan Lodge at the end of summer and early fall.

Located at 7,000 feet in the Sierra Nevada, in the middle of the Tahoe National Forest, it is cool enough to require a sleeping bag and jackets and caps in the evenings.

There are quite a variety of activities going on, too. For instance, during Aug. 17-19 it is the annual fundraiser "Into the Woods," which is only \$155 for two nights lodging including all meals and activities.

Wine tasting, painting, service work, fly fishing and opera are just a few of the activities that happen between now and October. Spaces are limited, so call to reserve a spot at (800) 679-6775 or go to see the whole calendar at:

http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/ sierranevada/activities.htm

# Smart meters modernize grid

By John Hankins

meters will be installed by SoCal Edison by the end of the year, but most of them are already in place in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

The Ventura District is 94 percent complete, Santa Barbara District 87 percent (South Coast) and Thousand Oaks District 39 percent, according to SCE.

Essentially, your electric usage is read by wireless technology, so there is no need for meter readers to physically look at the data for those millions of customers.

Edison calls "SmartConnect" is estimated to raise rates by less than two percent but, "customers can more than offset this by actively participating in new smart meter programs and services designed to help save energy and money," SCE believes.

Modernizing the grid is a key reason why it has wide support. The national Sierra Club has no set policy, leaving it up to chapters to decide. At least one in California, the San Francisco Chapter, has come out against it, but most do not consider it an issue.

The most positive aspects of smart meters are in its name: "smart." Customers can monitor their usage anytime on the web; and SCE spokesman David Song said he uses the "budget assistant" service in which you can specify what price fits your budget and a text message will inform you if you're going over it.

"The long-range goal is to Nearly five million smart reduce demand," Song said.

> Smart meters access to customized reports and energy-saving programs and in the future will be able to communicate with 'smart' appliances via a home network. Those who have electric vehicles can also figure out the specific cost, and the future should bring even more benefits.

> Despite the need to upgrade the grid from analog technology that has existed for generations, the change has caused some anxiety.

Locally, the Ojai City This \$1.6 billion effort that Council passed a moratorium halting the installments "because of concerns about the impact and accuracy of Smart Meters ... Significant health questions have been raised concerning the radiation emitted from wireless technology ... (and) opt out rules belatedly approved by the CPUC are unjust, discriminatory and ineffective ... "

In Santa Barbara County, the supervisors last year voted unanimously to demand that people who want to stay with current analog meters should not have to pay a fee to opt out. Currently, SCE would charge a \$75 set-up fee and a \$10 per month fee for those who opt out (lesser fees for low-income households).

Song said SCE believes it is not fair for SmartConnect customers to pay the extra cost for a dual system. In any case, even if you have a smart meter now, you can opt out at any time, just call (800) 810-2369. In a poll conducted by the Santa Barbara Independent, 39 percent of about 200 people said the meters pose less danger than a cellphone, while 51 percent claimed they are "a huge threat to our health, safety, privacy and wallet."

Regarding the health risk, Emir Macari, a university engineering dean and part of a research team that evaluated smart meters for the California Council on Science and Technology, was quoted in the Ventura County Star: "There is no evidence to suggest that smart meters are producing any level of electromagnetic fields that causes any health effects to anyone."

# Condor Classifieds

A.R.E. ALUMINUM CAMPER shell to fit Toyota Tacoma. Has custom rooftop roller kit for easy loading anything on top. Many extra features, in excellent condition lovingly owned by Sierra Club member. A great deal at \$2500; just call 683-2641 or email Y2KSuz@ cox.net.

FIND YOUR SB HOME at www. sbhomesearch.com; Info Kevin Berni, Coastal Properties and UCSB '80. 564-3400 or www.sbre.com

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

**ACUPRESSURE MASSAGE, Rest** your back & feet. Call Paula 687-4671. SAVE THE OLD GROWTH redwood houses, shed and 1960's workshop at 1236 San Andres from massive condo project also Val Verdeo. 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.

USED CELL PHONES for sale as a benefit for the Santa Barbara Group of Sierra Club. 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 up and running. If for any reason you want to return it within the three-days, you may do so and get a full refund. Call 962-8415.

#### 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 September 25. Questions? Call the Condor at 452-2885.

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

one:									



Craig Carey signs his new book entitled "Hiking and Backpacking Santa Barbara & Ventura" at Barnes and Noble in Ventura. A mapmaker by profession, he embarked on a two-year journey culminating in this up-to-date 400-page paperback which he says is so complete, "if it's out there, it's probably in here." Web and Kindle versions are in the works. Meanwhile you can get it at local bookstores or through Wilderness Press. (Photo by John Hankins)

#### August 6

Monday Morning Walk: Meet at 9am at Ventura Harbor at the corner of East Harbor and the small boat center to do a circle & Settling ponds. Pat 643-0270 (VEN)

#### August 11

PIEDRA BLANCA: Strenuous 8 mrt hike across the Sespe and up Piedra Blanca Creek, then some rock and boulder scrambling to our favorite swimming hole. Much of the hike will be in the creek bed, so expect to get wet. It can be very hot in August, so bring at least 3 liters of water, plus electrolytes. Also bring lunch, snacks, hat, swimsuit, hiking shoes, and sandals for water crossings. Meet at 9am Ventura carpool lot (Seaward and Harbor between Chase Bank and Carrows). JIM 447-1876/644-6934 (SB)

#### August 12

EAST PINERY ROAD: Long

#### Conditions

A number of campgrounds and roads in Los Padres National Forest are closed or have restricted (no autos) access due to protection of habitats and species or are under repair, Before you go into the local backcountry, it's a good idea to check conditions with rangers. Numbers to call (unless noted all are area code 805):

#### Los Padres National Forest Districts

Headquarters 968-6640 Ojai District 646-4348 Mt. Pinos (661) 245-3731 Santa Barbara 967-3481 Santa Lucia 925-9538

Other Areas

370-2301 Santa Monica Mtns. Area Conejo Parks 381-2737 Simi Valley 584-4400 Montecito 969-3514

#### **Forest Notes**

For updated information, news releases, maps, and many other goodies, go to Los Padres National Forest's website: http://fs.usda.gov/LPNF

#### Regional Hike Info

There are a number of websites that give you information as varied as outings, trail profiles, wildflower alerts, trail work opportunities, and much more. Here's a few

http://LosPadres.SierraClub.org www.SBSierraClub.org www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com www.LPForest.org www.VenturaCountyTrails.org http://Hikes.VenturaCountyStar.com

car pool through Happy Canyon to Figueroa Mt. Nearly level walk on a dirt road through beautiful pine forest with views of the back ranges. Easy 3 mrt. Optional steep descent to Fir Canyon adds 2 miles to hike. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DAVE 563-4850 (SB)

#### **August 12-14**

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park, 2012: 3-Day, Live-Aboard, Multi-Island Cruises. Explore the wild, windswept islands of Channel Island National Park. Enjoy the frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on rare sea and land birds, and for whales and dolphins. Watch for the endangered Island Fox. Hike trails bordered by blankets of wildflowers and plants found no other place on earth. Kayak or snorkel the pristine waters--- or just relax at sea. All tours depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' twin diesel Truth. Fee for all tours, \$590, includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes, call attention to items of interest and present evening programs. This fundraising cruise benefits Sierra Club California. To make a reservation mail a \$100 check, payable to Sierra Club to leader: Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leader for more information 626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com (Sierra Club California and Angeles Chapter)

#### August 13

Monday Morning Walk: Meet at 9am under the overpass at San Jon Rd to walk to the end of Pierpont Blvd and return. Pat 643-0270 (VEN)

**ROCKY PINE RIDGE - SHORT** ROUTE: From Camino Cielo, hike

#### **August 18**

into this wonderful pine tree/rock region and skirt along the ridge line. Short, moderate morning hike, 4-5 mrt. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. TONY 682-8290 (SB)

#### August 18

LIGHTHOUSE **HUENEME** HIKE: We will tour the Hueneme lighthouse and learn the early history of the Hueneme beach, pier and dock area. Then, we'll head for the beach pier and the memorial to the Alaskan Airlines plane crash. After the hike, we'll enjoy the Beach Festival, then head for a great Vietnamese lunch nearby. Meet at 9:30am at Seaview and Ventura Road, or carpool from the Von's parking lot on Seaward in Ventura at 8:45am. For more info, call TED at 985-8963 (VEN)

#### August 19

SHORELINE PARK PICNIC AND WALK: Share a potluck breakfast. Bring food to share. Coffee provided. Meet in the middle of Shoreline Park at 9am. Possible hike down to the harbor and back. (SB)

#### August 19

CONDOR CALL OUTINGS DUE SOON: Outings leaders should be preparing their write-ups for the next Outings Schedule, covering the period of October 2012 thru January 2013 plus at least the first week into February. Submit them to your Group outings chair. Questions? Contact Gerry at gching@cox.net

#### August 20

Monday Morning Walk: Meet at 9am at the small boat supply yard on Harbor Blvd to walk into McGrath State Beach Park and McGrath Lake. Pat (805) 643-0270 (VEN)

#### August 25

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)

#### **August 25-26**

Backpack to Maple Camp on the North Fork of Matilija Creek: This strenuous hike will be approximately 7.5 miles each way and will gain approximately 2250 ft of elevation. This hike is not recommended for beginners. Limited to 10 participants. Trip will depart from Mission Plaza in Ventura on Aug 25 at 7:30am. Rain cancels. To reserve your spot and for more info, call STEPHEN 794-1150 (VEN).

#### August 26

MISSION RIDGE: Hike up Rattlesnake trail to the connector onto Tunnel. From there we'll take a primitive trail to a high ridge for a lunch break. From there we'll loop back down to Rattlesnake. Moderately strenuous 7 mrt. Bring plenty of water and lunch. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. TONY 682-8290 (SB)

#### August 27

Monday Morning Walk: Meet at 9am at Mission Plaza to walk into Emma Wood State Beach Park & Beyond. Pat 643-0270 (VEN)

#### September 1

MONTECITO -SUMMERLAND/ ORTEGA HILL TRAIL LOOP: Rediscover several of Montecito's neighborhood roads and trails. An easy-moderate 4 mrt on back roads and trails. We will start this loop hike from the Greenwell Preserve back of Summerland. We'll hike up a short trail to the hills above Summerland, meeting Ortega Ridge Road. We'll have a light lunch near the QAD plant. After lunch, we'll continue on the Ortega Hill Trail, then return via the Coffin Family and Summerland

#### cuts digital noise Camping

By Hannah Somers

What does it mean to be a camper in the digital age?

In addition to being an environmental cleanse from the toxins and chemicals that burden our everyday lives, camping now serves as a technological cleanse.

#### **Ongoing Outings Ventura Every Monday Morning**

Join Patricia Jump every Monday morning at 8:30 a.m. for moderate walks in the Ventura and Ojai areas. Now in its seventh year, the walks last about two hours, and the group sometimes goes for coffee afterward. Call 643-0270.

#### Ventura Every Wednesday

URBAN EVENING HIKE: Weekly urban hike in Ventura meets at 6:45 p.m. for a 4.5-mile hike up hill to Father Serra's Cross (spectacular scenic views of Ventura, sunset, and the Channel Islands); hike continues across hillside, down to the ocean, and out to end of the pier; then along beach promenade to mouth of Ventura River; up the Ventura River to Main Street, and finally loop back to the Mission. People interested in this hike should meet across the street from the San Buenaventura Mission, Wear comfortable walking shoes, Contact KURT PRESSLER, 643-5902. (SP)

#### Santa Barbara Area

SOCIAL HIKE: An easy-to-moderate 2-4 mile roundtrip night hike in Santa Barbara front country, beach, or back roads. Meet at 6pm at the Santa Barbara Mission. Leave at 6:15pm sharp. Bring a flashlight. Optional potluck or pizza afterward. AL SLAYDEK, 685-2145. (SB).

- A strenuous, 5- to 10-mile roundtrip night hike on Wednesdays. Meet at 6:30 p.m. at the S.B. Mission, 2201 Laguna St. Bring water, flashlight. (Hikers in this group like to wear head lamps to keep their hands free.) The hike is designed for conditioning. For more information, call leader 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: Slide shows, speakers, and movies-third Friday of each month. Inquire for details: 928-3598. (AR)

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.

While companies have come up with solar powered chargers and digital devices, campers are pushed more towards self-reflection and human interaction, especially when out of range. They can enjoy the solitude and peace that comes along with the camping experience.

Perhaps this trend will create a spike in visitor traffic and an overall interest in California's open space preserves.

This sentiment is echoed in

#### **Outing Notes**

The two-letter abbreviations at the end of each outing is a key to the group that has organized the outing.

AR: Arguello Group CJ: Conejo Group SB: Santa Barbara Group VEN: Ventura Network WLA: West L.A. (Angeles Chapter) All phone numbers are in area code (805) unless otherwise noted.

The public is welcome at all outings listed, unless otherwise specified. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. If you have questions, contact the leader listed. Pets are generally not allowed. A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 14.

A frequently updated listing of all outings can be viewed at www.sierraclub.org/ chapters/lospadres. This website also contains links to the group web pages.

the recent re-opening of McGrath State Beach in Oxnard. California's budget woes threatened to close the park in 2011. However, an outpouring of support from Ventura County, private donor Peter Mullins and a federal grant saved the park from closing its doors to the 650,000 visitors who flock to the park's pristine coastal wetlands each year.

Perhaps the more tech savvy our worlds become, the more our open space preserves will hold value and continue to survive future economic downturns due to the unique place they have in the minds of modern campers.

Overall, such a convergence of support for a park like McGrath hopefully marks a trend in which the desire to preserve open spaces across the country will be the norm. Most importantly, parks will serve as an outlet for digitally jaded minds as a place where nature reigns and technology is put on hold.

In a recent NPR interview, Park Superintendent Rich Rozelle summed up the uniqueness of McGrath State Beach by saying, "When you are walking the beach, through the sand dunes, you can almost put yourself back 200 years to what California used to be like."

trails. Bring a light lunch and water. Meet 9am at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope & State St. GERRY 964-5411 (SB)

#### September 2

HOT SPRINGS VIA SADDLE ROCK: We will hike from E Mountain Drive through the recently acquired Hot Springs trail area. After a brief stop for a view from Saddle Rock we will continue to the Peace Rocks mesa for an even more expansive view and then on to the ruins of Montecito's old Hot Springs resort. Not much of a hot spring flows these days so we won't be doing any bathing in the Hot Springs. 3 mrt with a few steep sections. If everyone is up for it we can add an optional 1.5 mile hike up to the Cold Spring Trail. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. STEPHEN 574-9445 (SB)

#### September 2

CONDOR CALL OUTINGS DUE SOON: Group outings chairs should be preparing their write-ups for the next Outings Schedule, covering the period of October 2012 thru January 2013 plus at least the first week into February. Questions? Contact Gerry at gching@cox.net

#### September 3

Monday Morning Walk: Meet at 8:30am at Corner Park & Bard Rd. in Port Hueneme to carpool to nature preserve and Arnold Rd. to walk to Hueneme Pier. Pat 643-0270 (VEN)

#### September 7

WILDWOOD PARK (T.O.) AND MORE: We will do a cross section of six parks that are in or adjacent to Wildwood Park. This will be a 10mile hike (about 5.5 hours) with a few stream crossings, some cross country hiking, but mostly trekking on various lesser traveled trails. Because of the length of the hike and the various ups and downs (about 1750 feet of gain/loss) this is a moderately strenuous hike. Meet at 9am in the paved parking lot near bathrooms. (Directions: Take the 101, exit at Santa Rosa Road and drive east. Turn right on Hill Canyon Road and continue half a mile to parking lot/bathrooms.) Ten essentials, hiking boots and poles, 3 quarts of water, and snack/lunch required. Sunblock, sun hat and insectrepellant recommended. Rain cancels. For more info, call PHILIP 218-2103 (VEN).

#### September 8

DABNEY CABIN: Long car pool to Nira Campground, then a long nearly level hike down Manzana Creek to Dabney Cabin. Strenuous 14 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 8am. NOTE EARLY START TIME! TONY 682-8290 (SB)

#### September 9

RED ROCK TO GIBRALTAR DAM: Hike up the road to Gibraltar Dam, then back past a popular swimming area. Moderate-strenuous 6.5 mrt. Bring swimsuit, wading shoes, lunch and water. Optional side trip to old mercury mine adds 4 miles. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 898-1240 (SB)

#### September 10

Monday Morning Walk: Meet at 9am at Mission Plaza to walk north on Bryce trail and return. Pat 643-0270 (VEN)

#### September 15

HIKE LEADER BBQ: This is an opportunity for our hike leaders to get together and enjoy and learn from one another. If you are a hike leader, want to be a hike leader, or are a friend of a hike leader, you are welcome to join us for this pot luck BBQ. Please call for details TONY 682-8290 (SB)

#### September 15-16

Bright Star Service and Hike: The Bright Star Wilderness Area, north of Ridgecrest, has been impacted by both trash and by illegal ORV trespass. On Saturday our group will assist BLM Wilderness Resource Specialist Marty Dickes putting up barriers, concealing illegal routes, and placing signs. Sunday is reserved for a long hike through the interior of the wilderness to visit Cortez Creek and monitor a cherry-stemmed vehicle corridor. The ponderosa forest and chaparral should provide a delightful diversion in the early fall. Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig. deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. (CNRCC Desert Committee)

#### September 16

LIZARD'S MOUTH CLEANUP: Have fun exploring while making this popular spot a bit cleaner! Beautiful rock formations and wind caves are a pleasure to enjoy and restore! Short Easy hike with some boulder hopping. Bring a snack and water. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. Rain cancels. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

#### September 16

CONDOR CALL OUTINGS DUE NOW: Group outings chairs should send their write-ups for the next Outings Schedule, covering the period of October 2012 thru January 2013 plus at least the first week into February. Send to Gerry at gching@cox.net

#### September 17

Monday Morning Walk: Meet at 9am at Casitas Vista parking under freeway to walk north on Bryce trail to new bridge. Pat 643-0270 (VEN)

#### September 21-23

National Public Lands Day in Black

## **Fee Free Days**

This year's final "Fee Free Days" for visitors to the Los Padres National Forest are:

Sept. 29 -- National Public Lands Day

Nov. 10-12 -- Veterans Day weekend

This includes all areas where an "Adventure Pass" is normally required. Local exceptions to the Fee Free Days include the Lower Santa Ynez Recreation Area (Paradise Road in the Santa Barbara Ranger District), reservation fees and group site fees.

Rock: We will be doing assigned service work and celebrating National Public Lands Day in the Black Rock Desert High Rock Canyon Immigrant Trails NCA. All meals except lunch are provided. Contact closer to the date for full details Graham Stafford 775-686-8478 graham@grahamstafford. com or Pat Bruce of Friends of Nevada Wilderness pbruce@ nevadawilderness.org. (Great Basin Group-Toiyabe Chapter)

#### September 22

ALISO CANYON: A leisurely loop from Sage Hill campground on a marked trail alongside a stream. Easy 3.5 mrt. Optional descent to Upper Oso adds 1.5 miles to hike. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. VICKI 563-4850 (SB)

#### September 22

JOLLA CANYON/RAY ΙΑ MILLER TRAIL LOOP: Beautiful, moderate 7.5-mile walk up La Jolla Canyon Trail, with a few steep parts, stopping for a snack at the campsite, continuing on up to South Overlook Trail, then the Ray Miller trail and back down to the starting point. Sweeping views of the ocean, islands and Santa Monica Mountains. Total gain about 1100 feet. Bring water, snack, sunscreen, 10 essentials. Parking fee in lot or park on PCH. Meet at 9:45 a.m. at La Jolla Canyon, Point Mugu State Park. For more info, call TERESA at 746-6030 (VEN).

#### September 23

SAN YSIDRO MUTLI-TRAILS: Hike up San Ysidro, over to Cold Springs, down to Hot Springs to a primitive trail to Saddle Rock and McMenemy trails. Bring lunch and at least two liters of water. Strenuous 12 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)

#### September 23-30

Historical Virginia Trip: If you've always wanted to see some of the most famous historical spots in and around Virginia, this 8 day/7 night trip is for you. Fly into Washington Dulles Airport, then bus to the historical sites: Colonial Williamsburg; Jamestown, the first English settlement in America; Yorktown Battlefield where George Washington won the climactic battle of the Revolutionary War; Appomattox Court House where Lee surrendered his army to Grant;

continued on page 6

# **GREETINGS FRIENDS The Santa Monicas:** mountain to the sea

**By Jim Hines** 

They are beautiful, wild, a natural place of solitude and setting right in the middle of one of the largest urban areas on our planet.

They are the Santa Monica Mountains, starting at the sea at Pt. Mugu State Park and stretching



miles Griffith to Park in Los Angeles. From the beauty of the ocean at Malibu to the grass

covered oak savannahs outside of Agoura Hills, it's a wild place where mountain lion, deer, and majestic birds-of-prey intermingle with large ocean-view mansions and upscale subdivisions.

We are urban, but we need the wild and this is where the clash of man and the natural world comes together.

The Santa Monica Mountains are part of two Sierra Club chapters, the Los Padres and Angeles, crossing two counties, Ventura and Los Angeles.

Starting as a vision over 30 years ago, Congress created the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA), which now includes within its boundaries over 130,000 acres of state parklands, protected open space, recreational areas and wildlife habitat. It is governed by the state Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the National Park Service.

The Sierra Club has been a major player in protecting the area through the club's Santa Monica Mountains Task Force.

Several weeks ago on a beautiful Saturday, under 200 year old oaks and native sycamore trees, the partnership of local state and federal agencies was celebrated with the grand opening of the Santa Monica Mountains visitor center located at the historic King Gillette Ranch in the heart of mountains.

The Los Padres Sierra Club in Ventura County has some of the largest open space and parkland parcels of these protected lands:

~ Pt. Mugu State Park includes beach camping as well as inland trails and campsites.

~ Rancho Sierra Vista in Newbury Park is the site for interpreting the Native American (Chumash) culture in the mountains.

~ Circle X Ranch offers camping in the shadow of Sandstone Peak, a well known natural landmark in the western Santa Monicas.

~ Sprawling grasslands dotted with majestic oaks and home to one of the largest birds-of-prey habitats in southern California are among the Cheeseboro Palo Comado canyons, owned by the National Park Service and the state-owned Upper Las Virgenes Preserve.

Whether you enjoy hiking, camping, walking on the beach, wildlife viewing or just finding comfort in knowing that one of the most beautiful wild areas in California is protected, you will find all of this and more in the Santa Monica Mountains. Check out these websites:

www.nps.gov/samo www.smmc.ca.gov

See you on the trail.

# **New ranger**

A man who has an extensive background in fire, range management and law enforcement is the new Los Padres National Forest ranger for the Santa Barbara District as of August.

"Pancho" Smith John comes from a similar post on the Croatan National Forest in North Carolina. He has a 40year career in federal service, ranging from a seasonal fire employee, foreman, game range manager and law enforcement officer.

Smith replaces Doug Dodge, who retired recently after serving as the Santa Barbara District Ranger since 2009.

a check and mail to Sierra Club, x 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968



A Humboldt lily was among the blooms and buds in a recent Sierra Club outing. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

> **Nature buds** Join the Club

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Life	□ \$1000	□ \$1250								
Senior	□ \$25	□ \$35	time to							
Student/Limited Income	□ \$25	□ \$35								
Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.										
SIERRA F94Q W 1000 1										

# One Day of the Condor at Hopper Mountain

By Mike Stubblefield

The story of the California condor is one of those rare and wonderful exceptions where humans have been successful in bringing an endangered species back from the brink.

And they are right here in our own backyard in the Sespe Condor Sanctuary, where lies the Hopper Mountain Wildlife Refuge, an obscure and seldom visited 2471-acre research facility run by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Here, condor chicks are studied from birth, then later tagged and tracked via GPS as adults. For condor fans, Hopper is Shangri-La, and just as hard to visit.

How does someone actually get to visit the Hopper Refuge? One way is to wrangle a seat on an occasional field trip as a guest of the Friends of California Condors Wild and Free, a nonprofit that works with the Wildlife Service to enhance public awareness. Our Day of the Condor arrived in June starting at a Fillmore shopping center parking lot surrounded by an impressive array of well-used 4WD trucks, the vehicle of choice to navigate the way to Hopper, which is a bewildering labyrinth of narrow, winding, steep and treacherous fire roads that hug the mountainside.

We were briefed by Carol Langford, a Friends' board member. My wife, Janis McCormick, and I plopped into the rear seat of Friends' President Vince Gerwe's truck and soon we're headed out of Fillmore on Goodenough Road along Sespe Creek.

Vince expertly maneuvers his truck up the worst mountain road I've ever experienced, occasionally punctuated by an electric gate that opens only for oil field workers and Wildlife Service personnel.

At the top of a ridge we pull off where there is a commanding view of

the Sanctuary. Everyone jumps out with binoculars, spotter scopes and cameras with long lenses. Suddenly, there's a collective gasp as someone spots a few condors already riding the mid-morning thermals.

The condors aren't that close, but it's the first time I've ever seen a condor. The adult condors have a ninefoot wingspan, and in flight they glide, silently, on rising thermals of warm air, like a big black feathered glider.

Later, we reach the old ranch house that serves as the headquarters for the Wildlife Service staff, site of Ari Hopper's homestead dating to 1883 while the home was built in 1930 by Eugene Percy. After cattle grazing, oil companies bought the land and in 1974 the Wildlife Service purchased it and established the Refuge.

After lunch, we crowd around a monitor to watch adult condors returning from a successful scavenger hunt to feed the chicks.

When the Service began its efforts to bring back the big birds in 1982, there were only 22 condors left in the wild. Had it opted to do nothing, they soon would have become extinct. Today, thanks to a zoo breeding program, there are 416 condors, 236 of them in the wild and 180 in captivity. The Sanctuary here is one of only three places on the planet with condors; Arizona and the Andes in South America are the other two.

After watching the birds on the monitor we drive over to the "condor condo," a brand new structure where chicks are prepared for life in the wild. One-way glass coatings on the windows allow biologists to study the birds without being seen.

As we leave the condo and head for the trucks to start the long drive back down on the road from hell, someone spots a bevy of the big birds at play - 15 or more - lazily riding those thermals above a nearby ridge. I wish we didn't have to leave so soon. This very special place lies scarcely more than 25 miles from my home in Oxnard, yet few of us will ever be able to visit it, because if it were opened to the public the condor population would surely decline.

To protect them - mainly from ourselves - we cannot love them to

death, as we are sometimes inclined to do with other species.

With this in mind, I strongly urge you to support their work any way you can.

A good place to start is the Friends' program, which does regularly scheduled refuge cleanups, outreach, education programs, advocacy and fundraising.

Check them out at www. friendsofcondors.org.

# Pick your piece

This summer the Sierra Club aunched "My Piece of America," a brand new website and information hub where Americans can share our favorite outdoor places and take action to protect special areas.

Upload and share a photo of your favorite piece of America with your family and friends, and inspire them to take action, too. My Piece of America gives users a way to channel their renewed passion into enduring lands protection so this and future generations can enjoy the great outdoors.

The site highlights ongoing work by the Sierra Club to permanently protect public lands in today's technology-driven age – including campaigns along the California Coast, the Sierra Nevada, San Gabriel Mountains, and the Berryessa Snow Mountain region, to name a few.

Visit the site at:

http://content.sierraclub.org/mypieceofamerica/

# Bioneers are **Eco-pioneers**

The third annual Central Coast Bioneers Conference aimed at restoring the natural world will take place October 19-21 at the Monday Club in San Luis Obispo.

Presentations from internationally-known speakers from the Bioneers main stage in San Rafael will be transmitted live to Central Coast attendees, who can choose to attend all offerings or select single day passes.

Bioneers is a gathering of scientific and social innovators who have demonstrated visionary and practical models for creating resilient communities and restoring the natural world. The popular event includes 16 workshops, plus films and field trips in areas ranging from activism to health and food.

For details, call 548-0597 or visit: www.centralcoastbioneers.org

# Plug into cars' future

The Sierra Club and partners are teaming up for National Plug in Day on Sunday, September 23, part of events in over 50 cities.

Visit www.PlugInSB.org or contact Los Padres Sierra Club's Transportation Chair, Michael Chiacos if you can participate or for event info at mchiacos@gmail.com.

Electric Vehicles achieve 100 miles per gallon (mpg) equivalent, produce zero tailpipe emissions, and on California's clean electric grid reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75 percent. EVs get cleaner as they age – California's grid is improving from 20 percent renewable energy in 2012 to 33 percent renewables in 2020, and coal is being phased out.

Contrast this to oil, which is getting dirtier as we use up the easy oil and are moving toward tar sands and deepwater oil, with the attendant environmental disasters. Many EV owners are taking it a step further and "Driving on Sunshine" by charging up through

solar panels on their homes.

These huge benefits are why the Sierra Club has launched the national Go Electric Campaign to encourage the transition away from dirty oil. "EVs require no gasoline and emit no pollution from their tailpipes, present a critical opportunity to slash pollution, reduce dependence on oil, create American jobs, and improve national security," according to the campaign's website at: www.sierraclub.org/electric-vehicles.

EVs are also very fun to drive, with electric torque providing plenty of power and a quiet, smooth ride. While most owners charge up conveniently at home, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties now feature almost 100 public charging stations. Is this enough to make you consider an EV?

Learn more and come meet local owners of the Chevy Volt, Nissan Leaf, Plug in Prius, Tesla Roadster, and more at National Plug in Day.



Matt Perko plugs in his Chevy Volt, one of many new vehicles that eschew gas. Learn about them at National Plug-in day in Santa Barbara Sunday, Sept. 23. (Photo contributed)



During the Ventura Fourth of July Street Fair, a young girl is fascinated with the length of a single condor feather. The group conducts forays into the restricted Condor Sanctuary and mans an information booth on Cerro Noroeste Road in the Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge through September, a prime location to see the wild condors. (Photo by John Hankins)

Outings...from page 5

Monticello home of Thomas Jefferson; Shenandoah Valley and the Appalachian Trail; Harpers Ferry site of John Brown's revolt; Gettysburg Battlefield; Fort McHenry site of the Star-Spangled Banner; Annapolis and the US Naval Academy, ending with a cruise on Chesapeake Bay. The cost is \$1,250 for Sierra Club members, \$1,350 for nonmembers (based on double occupancy). Includes lodging, all breakfasts, transportation in Virginia to and from Dulles Airport, and admission fees to scheduled locations. Lunches, dinners, airfare are not included. \$500 deposit to reserve, balance due 7/1/12. For application forms send email to Mike Sappingfield, at mikesapp@cox.net, Subject line: "Sierra Club California Virginia Trip", or, if you prefer mail service, send request to Mike Sappingfield at 25352 Via Juanita, Mission Viejo, CA, 92691 and include 2 SASE (Sierra Club California and Angeles Chapter)

#### September 24

Monday Morning Walk: Meet at 8:30am at Mission Plaza to carpool to Lake Casitas to walk to bench. Pat 643-0270 (VEN)

#### September 29

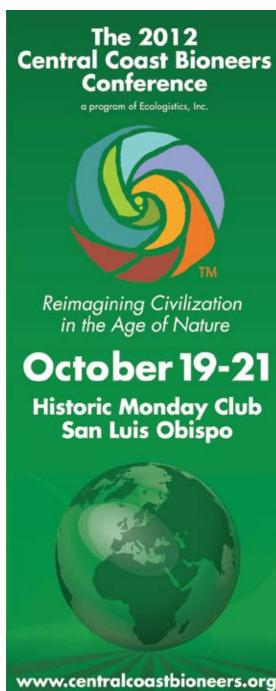
ROMERO CANYON TO CAMINO CIELO: Walk all the way up this mostly tree shaded trail to the top. Great views of back country. Moderate-strenuous 9 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. CHRISTINE 963-2347 (SB)

#### September 30

URBAN HIKE TO FRANCHESCI PARK: Start near the Mission, walk through the Riviera, then up the "1000 steps" to a great view of the city and harbor. Return via Las Tunas Rd. Some steep sections. Moderate 4 mrt. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

#### September 30

TED'S FAMOUS BEACH HIKE AND STEAK FEED: Join Ted for an easy six-mile-round-trip walk along the beach from Rincon to Carpinteria. Then cook your own steak, chicken or fish at The Palms. To carpool, meet at 1:45 pm at the Carrows parking lot, between Carrows and the Chase Bank, on the corner of Seaward and Harbor Blvd. in Ventura. Or meet us at the starting point for the hike, at Bates Beach/Rincon parking lot. For more info, call TED, 985-8963 (VEN).





Doc Caballero shows the new version of his "Mileage Hiking Maps," comprising over 1,000 miles of 158 local trails for day attraction at the Green Block; this one is owned by hiking. For details see his ad on this page. (Photo by John Hankins'



booth. The volunteers are (from left) Mike Stubblefield, Jim | then decide whether or not it's recyclable. (Photo by Larry McComb and his daughter Shannon, and Jim Hines. (Photo Older)



The fully electric Tesla sports car is always a prime Timothy and Pamela Rodgers of Ventura, who also have an all-solar home. (Photo by Larry Older)



It takes a village, or at least a quartet, to man the Sierra Club City of Ventura had a booth where you spin a dial and

#### by John Hankins) Green Block attracts thousands

The Ventura Sierra Club's "Green Block" during the July 4th weekend was chock full of visitors who were drawn to the booths and exhibits, indicating a heightened interest in the environment.

"There were a lot of visitors who were seriously focused on the environment and the things they could do to help it," said Larry Older, who organized the block just off Main Street. He also said he had good feedback from the groups who took part.

At the head of the pack of participants was the Ventura Sierra Club's booth and adjacent was the club's Wilderness Basics Course display.

Other participants included the city of Ventura's water agency and environmental services, Doc Caballero's Mileage Hiking Maps, a group urging folks to support the initiative to require disclosure of Genetically Modified Foods, Mike Maguire's hand-made velomobile. Master Gardener Course, Turning Point Foundation, Planet Solar, and Friends of the Ventura River.

Always a treat was the line of hybrid and electric cars organized by Michael Chiacos

which boasted a wide variety transportation, including two ebikes. The vehicles were provided by Vista Honda and Paradise Chevrolet and various owners, and included two electric Teslas, Nissan LEAF, Volt, Cruze Eco, Civic Hybrid and CRV.

Older praised the volunteers who made it all possible, saying "they deserve an award or two or three." They included Mike Stubblefield and his wife Janis McCormick, Kathrine Heinzman, Teresa Norris, Jim Hines and Jim McComb and his daughter

property, and the absence of a certain

and Surfrider Foundation added, "Naples is

irreplaceable ... we will continue to pursue

our lawsuit challenging the County's 2008

approval of the Santa Barbara Ranch

Project, and we will advance a plan to

ensure long-term preservation of this

Nathan Alley, attorney for the EDC

water supply."

#### **Gaviota Coast investors** back off

A consortium including two developers and a private equity firm that appeared poised to purchase the Santa Barbara Ranch property (aka Naples) to develop leap-frog housing along the Gaviota Coast have terminated their planned purchase from FirstBank.

"The original project was a house of cards, and it is now obvious that site constraints preclude development of this property for anything but open space and agricultural uses," said Marc Chytilo, the Naples Coalition's attorney. "We applaud the partnership for abandoning plans to attempt development at Naples and hope this can lead to the preservation of this important parcel as public open space."

FirstBank acquired the property through foreclosure in 2010 from the original developer, Matt Osgood, after Osgood defaulted on outstanding loans. Two developers, BondRok Partners, LLC and Tom Gray of Preserve Communities, Inc. formed a partnership with Bostonbased private equity firm CrossHarbor Capital Partners for the planned purchase

and development of Naples.

The partnership asked the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to approve the transfer of a "development agreement" affecting a portion of the property on May 15. Environmental Defense Center, Surfrider and the Naples Coalition (which includes the Los Padres Sierra Club) opposed the transfer, and the Board was hesitant to approve it. Less than one month later, the partnership terminated its efforts to acquire and develop the property.

"The development of this property has never made sense," Chytilo said. "The Gaviota Coast possesses open space of national significance. Anyone attempting to develop on these lands faces the unrelenting opposition of Santa Barbara's environmental community and must overcome an insurmountable series of hurdles, ranging from lawsuits, uncertainties over the effectiveness of approvals, a stringent Coastal Commission review, public rights of use and access based on historic prescriptive use of the

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precious coastal property." ~ Editor's note: this update was provided by the Naples Coalition;

to keep apprised of the issues, go to: www.savenaples.org.

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# Help elect our endorsed candidates

The candidates and propositions below have earned the Sierra Club's endorsement on the Nov. 6 ballot for the Santa Barbara and Ventura region. Please go the websites or call to help with the campaigns, ensuring the best possible outcome for the environment. More endorsements and profiles will appear in the next issue of Condor Call.

**PRESIDENT Barack Obama** www.barackobama.com/state/CA

(312) 698-3670

**US CONGRESS District 24 Lois Capps** www.cappsforcongress.com (805) 884-0202 District 25 Dr. Lee Rogers www.leerogers2012.com (661) 200-9205

**District 26 Julia Brownley** http://juliabrownley.com (805) 330-1070

STATE SENATE DISTRICTS District 19 Hannah-Beth Jackson http://hannah-beth2012. (805) 203-6337 **District 27 Fran Pavley** 

http://franpavley.com (818) 921-6825

STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT **District 35 Das Williams** http://daswilliams.org (805) 452-1214

**District 38 Edward Headington** http://www.edward2012.com (805) 620-7038

VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**District 1 Steve Bennett** 

http://bennettforsupervisor.com (805) 653-0831

STATE PROPOSITIONS

Proposition 32. OPPOSE -Prohibits political contributions by payroll deduction. Prohibitions on contributions to candidates.

Proposition 37. SUPPORT -Genetically Engineered Foods; mandatory labeling.

SUPPORT -Proposition 39. Tax treatment for multistate businesses; clean energy and energy efficiency funding. For details on the propositions, go

to: www.sos.ca.gov/elections/

# More solar opportunities

The Community Environmental Council (CEC) is kicking off its second Solarize Santa Barbara program starting August 8 through Nov. 9.

Solarize Santa Barbara is a group purchasing program for solar electricity. All homeowners within the southern Santa Barbara area are eligible. The purpose is to make it easier and cheaper for local homeowners to switch to solar electricity.

Anyone interested is encouraged to attend one of three introductory workshops this fall to learn how to participate in the group purchasing program, including financing options and leasing. For dates, times, and locations, call 963-0583 Ext. 105, visit www.solarizesb.org, or email at info@solarizesb.org.

The program may overlap

a similar "Rooftop Revolution" sponsored by the Sierra Club, which is available throughout Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, not just Santa Barbara's South Coast. Check it out at: http://sierraclub.org/solar/sungevity

#### **EAVESDROPS**

"The only thing they had in common was stupidity."

- Reaction to a high number of deaths in Yosemite Valley last year, mostly from amateurs climbing rocks and swimming above the falls, and due to visitors ignoring posted warnings. Reaction was a letter by Phil Brimble to the L.A. Times on its story "A park full of peril."

## **Condor Call e-version available**

It's easy to order up the Condor Call e-version in full color with hot links to emails and websites, and it's a pleasure to read that way.

Check out the e-version out at our website (<a href="http://lospadres.sierraclub">http://lospadres.sierraclub</a>. org>) and if you like what you see, you can stop the print version and get it sent to your comuter.

To sign up, your name, phone number and email to:

<CondorJohn@gnusman.com>

Note to those already getting the e-version: if you change your email, let us know, we are getting error messages back on about a dozen subscribers.

### Saturday, AUGUST 4 • 4:30 PM

**Cultural Creatives 1.0** 

Audience discussion: Heart and Soul of Resiliency

Saturday, AUGUST 11 • 4:30 PM

#### City Dark

Presentation: How to Achieve a Dark Sky City Designation plus a drawing for a Meade telescope model 4501

Saturday, AUGUST 25 • 4:30 PM

#### Revenge of the Electric Car

EV Car Show on Signal St. Additional sponsorship by NewEnergyAnswers.com, Santa Paula Chevrolet, Team Nissan and Ventura Toyota

Saturday, SEPTEMBER 1 • 4:30 PM

#### Seeds of Freedom

Prop 37 CA "Right to Know" Genetically **Engineered Food Act Campaign Rally** 

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# Hike a mile for amazing views

By Craig R. Carey

"The top of Reyes Peak was lit by the fire of sunset, and a soft wind from the sea moved through the pines."

— Louis L'Amour, "The Californios"

The Condor Trail traverses a great many terrain types, and over tread of widely disparate quality. One of the easiest stretches to navigate — and one of the few along which the option to car-camp avails itself — is along Pine Mountain Road.

From the eastern end of the Road, the Condor Trail is set to follow the undulating Reyes Peak Trail for a beautiful six-mile stretch through mature conifer stands before intersecting with the Gene Marshall - Piedra Blanca

National Recreation Trail.

But only a mile from that 7000-foot parking area at the



end of the Pine Mountain Road is another great destination and the high point of the Pine Mountain massif: Reyes Peak. Popular with area peakbaggers and those seeking amazing views clear out to the Pacific, the 7514-foot summit of Reyes Peak was also the site of a Forest Service fire lookout.

The lookout towers of the Los Padres National Forest have a long and proud history ... but the history of the 14' x 14' lookout atop Reyes

Gene Marshall - Piedra Blanca x 14' lookout atop Reyes

Metal rebar and other indications of the Reyes Peak Tower still exist and the site is one of the best spots to see as far as you can see. (Photo by Craig R. Carey)

Peak is among the shortest. Built in 1927 (when the Los Padres was still known as the Santa Barbara National Forest), the lookout tower was destroyed only five years later in the infamous Matilija conflagration of 1932. As with many lookouts from the era, its steel beams were delivered by mule teams. Later, during the Matilija Fire, most of the fire camps were likewise supplied by mules, given the inhospitable terrain.

During its construction, RevesPeakalsobenefittedfrom its nearest and most plentiful local resource — timber and featured numerous beams sourced directly from the area's namesake pines. Jim Blakley's history recounts the sad irony of how the marine layer prevented the Reyes Peak lookout from spotting the Matilija Fire in the inferno's nascent stages, despite the fact the lookout was the closest tower to the fire's point of origin.

The fire moved with such ferocity the lookout man is said to have barely escaped with his life.

The lookout's shortened life also means it did not survive to see the Second World War, and as such wasn't pressed into service by the Aircraft Warning Service to warn against approaching Japanese aircraft.

Remains of the lookout abound: a portion of the roof



The Reyes Peak Tower didn't last long, ironically ravaged by fires it was built to detect. (Photo from Los Padres National Forest archives)

still sits idle in the meadow to the north; a battered bedframe just off the approach scramble; concrete footings, timbers, and twisted steel reinforcement bars protrude from the summit. These are weathered testaments to a forest tradition long past.

Editor's note: Craig R. Carey is a frequent wanderer of the Los Padres backcountry and author of the new guide, "Hiking & Backpacking Santa Barbara and Ventura" (Wilderness Press, 2012).

Next issue of

Condox Call

comes out 1st of October

DEADLINES:
Editorial: September 21

Advertising: September 25

Questions? Call 452-2885