



# Canyon *Connection*

Fall 2009

Newsletter of the Santa Clarita Sierra Club a group of the Angeles Chapter  
<http://angeles.sierraclub.org/scg>

## Reflection of Your Departing Newsletter Editor

by Carla Swift



**Carla Swift**

The Canyon Connection  
is a publication of the Santa Clarita  
Sierra Club Group

21827 Parvin Dr, Saugus, CA 91350  
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### Monthly Meeting & Program

2nd Thursday each month at 7:30 p.m.  
(except Aug. & Dec.)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
Meeting Room: Lounge on upper level.

Enter on E. Side facing Rite Aid/Kragen

Parking lot, opposite main church

Entrance. Visitors welcome!

For information: Henry 284-5613

Opinions expressed herein are those  
of the individual writers and do not  
reflect official Sierra Club policy unless

expressly stated as such.

Editor: Henry Schultz

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When my dear friend, Karen Pearson, told me she was starting a Sierra Club Group in our valley, I wished her well, but declined to "get involved." As I recall, Karen started planning and organizing this group during the last months of our 3-year long drive for Santa Clarita cityhood or shortly after, it's difficult to remember now. The cityhood campaign had left me exhausted-- mentally, physically, emotionally. Plus, I was going to school, raising two teenagers, and working. So I watched from the sidelines as Karen started organizing and recruiting members for her new Sierra Club Group. Member or not, Karen shared the new group's newsletter with me, and called on me to help her with her work on letters and proposals as she lobbied government officials.

In 1989 I took a Marketing/Public Relations internship that required me to learn desktop publishing. Soon I looked at the newsletter with a new eye. When I received the graphics design computer software as a gift, I couldn't resist. "Karen," I said. "Would you like me to design the newsletter for you?" Well, that was 1992 and the rest is history.

The newsletter moved from "cut-and-paste-and-tape" typed articles containing plenty of white out and a few hand-written add-ins, to my desktop publishing program and printer. No more individual pages stapled in the corner; we shifted to the 11x17 folded version. No more long rambling articles -- I love concise writing. No more careful peeling away of the oak tree in the header for re-use in the following issue (it was the only one we had). We scanned it and incorporated it into the overall design. In fact, I've looked far and wide for an electronic version of our oak tree, and it doesn't exist. Karen cut it out of something at the beginning, and after years of use, it has become "ours."

In the early days, I retyped everything. Email wasn't part of our vocabulary yet. In fact, Internet and "browser" weren't part of our vocabulary either. Later when more people started using computers, we continually ran into the problem of "I'm a Mac" and "You're a PC," since the two systems didn't yet speak to each other. And so it began. I set about editing and designing the newsletter. Because I was going to college, working, and raising two teens on my own, I seldom came to a meeting. My participation was primarily by computer, which I could fit into my schedule better.

After 12 years as a part-time college student, in 1997 -- with Masters Degree in hand -- I moved to Cambria to continue my career in credit union marketing and to teach at Cuesta College. Thanks to email, I brought the club newsletter publishing duties with me. It was a great way to stay in touch with activities and friends and to keep myself up-to-date in the graphic design software changes. Looking back, I'm amazed to discover that I've spent more years designing the newsletter from Cambria than I did in Santa Clarita.

Now, as I turn over my duties to a new editor, I may find time to get more involved with my local Santa Lucia Sierra Club group. It's a different world here, where the club works to protect the rich coastal waters, the sand dunes, and the estuary. Outings on foot and by kayak are common. As I write, the family of foxes that have taken up residence under my house are rattling around. I'll find their footprints on the beach tomorrow morning where they hunt for birds, along with prints from the bobcat that chases the foxes. It seems a long way from Santa Clarita, where you all continue the fight that started before we were a city -- the fight to preserve our valley and to share appreciation for the wonders that are part of the area. I'm glad to have been a part of those efforts. And when you come to the central coast, call me. I know some good hiking trails!



# Notes from the Chair

by Dave Morrow

Summer is now gone, there's a chill in the air, and it's time to reflect on events of the past season. On August 8<sup>th</sup> Henry Schultz and I represented the Santa Clarita Group at an open house for Sierra Club newcomers sponsored by the San Fernando Valley Group. It was my first visit with our neighbors to the south and I had an enjoyable morning networking with fellow Sierrans, though I must admit not too many newcomers attended. My opinion is that it's more effective to reach out into the community with activities newcomers may be interested in rather than waiting for them to come to us. Our presence at local events such as Santa Clarita's annual River Rally, see below, is a great way to let people know who we are and what we do.

Our annual party/fundraiser on August 30<sup>th</sup> was its usual big success. Many thanks go to Louise and Henry Schultz for hosting again. We had a large crowd and some wonderful food. This event is our major fundraiser for the year and helps us with various projects, including this newsletter. If you didn't attend this year plan to be there next year.



*L to R Dave and award winners Carla Swift, Nina Riga, Louise Schultz, Diane Trautman*

I had the pleasure of presenting our annual Santa Clarita Group awards at the August fundraiser. Every year we acknowledge local Sierra Club members who have made exceptional contributions to the group, the community, and the environment. This year Louise Schultz received a Green Tiger Award for Activism in recognition of her outstanding work updating our web site. Katherine Squires, our group Conservation Chair, also received a Green Tiger Award for Activism for her work on Tejon Ranch and other local conversation issues. The Green Tiger Award for Outings went to Nina Riga, who has done a superb job leading hikes

# Outings Outpost



*Mt. Baldy Hike - Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut*



*Baden Powell Hikers*

## San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study

This study is required by legislation instigated by Hilda Solis. It aims to establish the feasibility of establishing a San Gabriel Mountains National Recreation Area (similar to the Santa Monica Mountains). Three alternatives incorporating different roles and management structures are considered. To access the documents visit <http://www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel>. Comments can be made at the website until October 30, 2009. The Angeles Chapter supports the work towards the proposed National Recreation Area. What do you think?

## Hike and Event Schedule - Everyone Welcome

Sat, Oct 17 Towsley Cyn Loop Trail 9AM  
Moderate 5 mi, 600' gain in Ed Davis/Towsley Cyn Park.  
Meet 9 am at Santa Clarita rideshare pt. Park outside  
main gate. Bring water, lunch, lugsoles.  
Ldrs: Ed Benison (254-7517), Donica Woods

Sun, Oct 25 North Devil's Backbone Trail 7AM  
Strenuous, rugged 8 mi, 4000' gain reaching the 3  
highest peaks in the San Gabriel Mtns of Pine Mtn #1  
(9648'), Dawson Pk (9575') and Mt Baldy (10,064').  
Magnificent views, gnarled stunted trees and true alpine  
terrain. Poles a big help. Serious well-conditioned hikers  
only. High clearance vehicles helpful on last 7 mi of dirt  
road. No beginners. Meet 7 am at Canyon Country  
rideshare pt or 8 am at Inspiration Pt on Hwy 2 at Blue  
Ridge Rd. Bring plenty of water, lunch, lugsoles,  
appropriate clothing, fsp. Rain cancels.  
Ldrs: Ken Kerner (259-8800), Gaylon Rodin (263-0568)

Wed, Oct 28 Mission Peak Moonlight 7AM  
Conditioning Hike  
Moderate 5 mi, 1200' gain to view San Fernando Valley.  
Meet 7 pm at trailhead (take 405 Fwy to 118 Fwy W,  
exit Balboa N, 2 mi to Sesnon, W 1 mi to Neon Way, R  
to end of street). Bring water, lugsoles and flashlight.  
Ldrs: Mary Ellen Dittmore (254-8543), Ken Kerner  
(259-8800), Nina Riga (297-4079), Gaylon Rodin (263-  
0568), Henry Schultz (284-5613)

Sun, Nov 8 South Fork Campground 8AM  
to Islip Saddle  
Moderate 10 mi, 2100' gain hike from the high desert to  
the high country. Enjoy fall colors and changing  
landscape passing from cactus to pines. Meet 8 AM at  
Canyon Country rideshare or 9 AM at South Fork  
Campground trailhead. Bring water, lunch, lug soles  
and fsp. Rain cancels.  
Ldrs: Matthew Lax (252-2393), Geraldine Lorme (296-  
0246)

Thur, Nov 12 Monthly Meeting 7:30PM  
Dean Webb of the Antelope Valley group will discuss  
the proposed race track adjacent to the poppy preserve.  
This is not a good development. Come and find out  
what you can do. Refreshments will be available.

Sun, Nov 15 Santa Clara River Walk 9AM  
Easy 3-4 mi stroll with 0' gain along Santa Clara River  
with discussion on the effects from development to this  
vital water resource and wildlife corridor. See  
interesting natural areas and possible bird sitings. Meet  
9 AM at Pavillions Shopping Center located on corner of  
McBean Pkwy/Magic Mountain Pkwy, in Santa Clarita  
(take I-5 N, exit at Valencia Blvd, turn R (east), then L

(north) on McBean Pkwy. Turn L at first stoplight past  
Magic Mountain Pkwy into Pavillions Shopping Center.  
Meet at far north side by River. Bring water, binoculars  
and snack. Rain cancels.  
Ldrs: Dave Morrow (254-5245), Henry Schultz (284-  
5613)

Sun, Nov 29 Sierra Pelona Ridge via PCT 9AM  
Moderate 6 mi, 1200' gain to the windy ridge of Sierra  
Pelona with gorgeous views of Bouquet Cyn, Agua Dulce  
and surrounding mts. Meet 9 AM at Newhall Ave exit in  
Santa Clarita (take I-5 to 14 Fwy N (Antelope Valley Fwy)  
1<sup>st</sup> exit Newhall Ave, R (south) to carpool area.  
Rideshare 40 minute drive to trailhead. Bring water,  
lunch, lug soles, and fsp. Rain cancels.  
Ldrs: Ed Benison (254-7517), Donica Woods

Sun, Dec 6 Annual Holiday Brunch 10:30AM – 2PM  
Our annual holiday brunch is one the big social events of  
the season. Mimosas flow, along with the fun. Call Henry  
at 284-5613 to RSVP and indicate what dish you're  
bringing (hors d'oeuvres, dessert, fruit, egg based main  
dish, fancy bakery stuff, salad, veggies, etc). A chance to  
meet and greet friends of the environment and  
knowledgeable hike leaders should not be missed. See  
you there.

Sun, Dec 13 Hollywood Sign 10AM  
Moderate 4 mi, 500' gain hike to the world famous  
Hollywood sign and Mt. Cahuenga. Part street and part  
trail hiking. Optional lunch at a local restaurant  
afterwards. Meet 10 AM at Santa Clarita rideshare. Call  
leader for possible meeting place in Hollywood. Bring  
water and snack.  
Ldrs: Nina Riga (297-4079), Mary Ellen Dittmore (254-  
8543)

Fri, Jan 1, 2010 New Year's Calorie Burner 12NOON  
Los Pinetos Trail  
Join our annual calorie burner up the Los Pinetos Trail.  
Moderate 5 mi, 1400' gain hike to ridge between San  
Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys. Outstanding view of  
the two valleys. Meet 12 Noon at Walker Ranch entrance  
of Placerita Cyn Park. Take I-5 N to 14 Fwy N (Antelope  
Valley Fwy), exit Placerita Cyn Rd, go R on Placerita Cyn  
Rd passing main entrance to park and continuing another  
1 ¾ mi to gated entrance to Walker Ranch (do not block  
gate). Bring water, snack, and lug soles. Rain cancels.  
Ldrs: Ray Lorme, Geraldine Lorme (296-0246)

Sun, Jan 10 Soledad Canyon to Vasquez Rocks 9AM  
Moderate 10 mi, 600' gain hike along PCT in Agua Dulce  
with observation of the faulting process from the San  
Andreas Fault. Lunch at the famous film site Vasquez

More **Events** - page 4

**Sierra Club Waiver** All Sierra Club Outings require that you sign an "Acknowledmnt of Outing Member Responsibility, Express Assumption of Risk, and Release of Liability" before participating. If a minor participates, the minor's guardian must sign on minor's behalf.

# Hikes and Events - continued from page 3

Rocks, named after the notorious bandit, Tiburcio Vasquez. Meet 9 AM at the Canyon Country rideshare. Carpool 15 min to trailhead. Bring water, lunch and lug soles. Rain cancels.

Ldrs: Matthew Lax (252-2393), Geraldine Lorme (296-0246)

Thur, Jan 14 Monthly Meeting 7:30PM

It's our annual Mayor's state of the city presentation. We are privileged to have Mayor Laurene Weste talk about our valley and all the things that go to make it so special. Don't miss this opportunity to ask questions and find out what's happenin'. Refreshments will be provided.

Sun, Jan 17 Whitney Loop 9AM

Easy 3.5 mi, 500' gain stroll in Whitney Cyn Park on the Rim of the Valley Corridor along the north slope of the San Gabriel Mts. This quiet park provides an excellent example of oak woodlands and chaparral and riparian vegetation.

Meet 9 AM at the south end of Newhall Ave in Santa Clarita.

Take I-5 N to 14 Fwy (Antelope Valley Fwy), 1st exit Newhall Ave, R to carpool area. Bring water and snack. Rain cancels.

Ldrs: Henry Schultz (284-5613), Gaylon Rodin (263-0568)

Sun, Jan 24 Towsley Peak 9AM

Moderate 6 mi, 1500' gain in Towsley Cyn Park. Explore rugged terrain and wonderful views of Santa Clarita Woodlands. Meet 9 AM at Santa Clarita rideshare. Park outside main gate. Bring water, lunch, and lug soles. Rain cancels.

Ldrs: Dave Morrow (254-5245), Ken Kerner (259-8800)

Sun, Feb 7 Altadena to Oakwilde 9AM

Moderate 7 mi, 900' gain fast-paced hike through historic Arroyo Seco which was a favorite vacationing spot for Southlanders in the early 1900's. Many stream crossings under the cover of willow, sycamore, alder and bay trees. Meet 9 AM at Santa Clarita rideshare; 1 hr rideshare to trailhead. Bring water, lunch and lug soles. Rain cancels.

Ldrs: Nina Riga (297-4079), Dave Morrow (254-5245)

Thur, Feb 11 Monthly Meeting 7:30PM

Speaker to be determined.

Sun, Feb 21 Towsley Canyon Loop 9AM

Moderate 5 mi, 600' gain hike in Ed Davis/Towsley Cyn Park through the rock formations of Towsley Gorge and along trail of oaks and California Black Walnuts to see outstanding views. Meet 9 AM at Santa Clarita rideshare; park outside main gate. Bring water, lunch, and lug soles. Rain cancels.

Ldrs: Mary Ellen Dittmore (254-8543), Melinda Arredondo (298-9024)

## Notes - continued from column 2

minimize the hazard of fire. And we need to help restore the Angeles Forest. The Angeles Chapter has recently set up the Angeles Forest Recovery Project and needs volunteers. If you would like to help go to [growangelesgrow@gmail.com](mailto:growangelesgrow@gmail.com).

# Notes from the Chair - continued from page 2

this past year. It seemed every time I turned around she was leading a spirited group up one of our local peaks. Our highest group award, the John Muir Award, went to Carla Swift, who has edited this newsletter for the past seventeen years. Thank you, Carla, for your dedication all these years. Finally, our 2009 Conservationist of the Year Award went to Diane Trautman. The Conservationist of the Year is presented to a member of the community, not affiliated with the Sierra Club, who has made great contribution to protecting our local environment. Diane was recognized for years of strong environmental advocacy, most notably as a member of the Santa Clarita Planning Commission. Congratulations to all!

I want to send a special thanks to Sandra Cattell and Henry Schultz for representing the Sierra Club at this year's River Rally on September 12. Due to a scheduling conflict (I was co-leading one of Nina's hikes and it was a great hike) I was unable to attend. I strongly support our presence at local events. We should do more of these. If you have any ideas on upcoming local events that we could attend, let me know.



Sandra and Henry at River Rally

On a sadder note, the recent Station Fire has burned more than 160,000 acres of the Angeles National Forest resulting in loss of life, property, and the destruction of key wildlife habitat. Local wildfires seem to grow more frequent and severe each year and, as local Sierran Lynne Plambeck noted in a recent newspaper editorial, are turning our green spaces into brown spaces. These are ecologically rich areas (Southern California has been called a biological hot spot) and did not evolve under conditions with such frequent fires. The end result will surely be a decline in local biodiversity and the loss of these areas as prime habitat for human recreation. I find this not an acceptable option. We need to hold local and federal agencies to a higher standard of wildland protection and to incorporate new strategies to

Continued at bottom of column 1

## One Valley One Vision

One Valley One Vision (OVOV) is a joint effort between the County of Los Angeles (County), City of Santa Clarita (City), and Santa Clarita Valley (Valley) residents and businesses to create a single vision and set of guidelines for the future growth of the Valley and the preservation of natural resources. Realizing that development within both jurisdictions can have regional implications, the County and City have jointly endeavored to prepare planning policies and guidelines to guide future development within the Santa Clarita Valley. The result of this work effort will require the adoption of two separate documents. The County will adopt a new Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan to replace the 1990 Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan and prepare its own environmental impact report (EIR) while the City will adopt a new General Plan and EIR. This EIR has been prepared to evaluate the potential impacts of the policies of the County's Area Plan.

The OVOV planning process reflects the County's and City's mutual decision to coordinate land uses and the pace of development with provision of adequate infrastructure, conservation of natural resources, and common objectives for the Valley. Major goals of the OVOV joint planning effort were to achieve greater cooperation between the County and the City; coordinated planning for roadways, infrastructure, and resource management; and an enhanced quality of life for all who live and work in the Santa Clarita Valley.

The County of Los Angeles' Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan Update (Area Plan) is the proposed project in this Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The Area Plan is a component of the Los Angeles County General Plan and is intended to provide focused goals, policies, and maps to guide the regulation of development within the unincorporated portions of the Santa Clarita Valley. This updated Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan replaces in its entirety the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on February 16, 1984, and subsequently updated on December 6, 1990, which had previously served as the basic planning tool for the unincorporated portions of the Santa Clarita Valley. This Area Plan, as it may be amended from time to time, is intended to serve as a longterm blueprint for development over the next approximately 20-year planning period, except where specific policies address other target dates as set forth in the plan.

The County of Los Angeles' objectives for the programmatic Area Plan EIR are as follows:

- Identify current and projected environmental conditions, which may affect or be affected by the Area Plan.
- Update the Area Plan development projections for the year 2020, including projections for dwelling units, non-residential square footage, population and employment.
- Provide an environmental analysis of the proposed goals, objectives, and policies and disclose to the public the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Area Plan.
- Evaluate alternatives to the proposed Area Plan.
- Foster public participation in the planning process for the Area Plan.
- Conform with 21000 et seq. of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which requires that environmental impacts be addressed and mitigated. Identify a mitigation framework, which could eliminate or reduce potentially significant environmental impacts of the Area Plan.
- Provide a legally defensible environmental foundation upon which decisions may be evaluated and justified.
- Prepare and certify an Area Plan EIR (Program EIR) that will serve as a first tier environmental document, consistent with the requirements of Section 15152 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.
- Provide a basis for informative decisions when considering the 20-year development associated with implementation of the Area Plan.

OVOV as proposed repeals the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan adopted in 1984 and also makes significant Zone changes. The project location includes all unincorporated areas including the communities of Agua Dulce, Bouquet Canyon, Castaic, Fair Oaks Ranch, Hasley Canyon, San Fransiquito Canyon, Val Verde, Sunset Pointe, Southern Oaks, Stevenson Ranch and Westridge. At the October 5 public hearing many land owners from these areas complained that they would be negatively impacted by the proposed zone changes. The public comment period on the DEIR was extended at that meeting until Dec 2, 2009. The DEIR is available at the Canyon Country, Newhall, Valencia and Castaic Libraries and on the web at <http://planning.lacounty.gov/ovov>. You ought to take a look - OVOV will determine to a large extent the degree and density of future development in our valley.

YES, I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage!  
My check is enclosed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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