Major Awards

**Chester Versteeg Outings Award**

**Keith Martin.** Keith has been a leader since 1991. He has estimated that he has led nearly 1000 outings for different Angeles Chapter entities. These outings have ranged from local conditioning hikes to multi-week international trips to Mexico and Spain. These outings have included dayhikes, local weekend peak climbs, multi-day Sierra backpacks, bus ski trips to Mammoth, bus and lodge trips to the Grand Canyon, telemark ski lessons with ski instructors at Big Bear and Mammoth, carcamping in Joshua Tree, Anza Borrego, Pinnacles and Morro Bay, day trips to view petroglyphs in Coso Canyon, hiking and ski/snowshoe cabin trips to Yosemite, assisting with navigation check-off weekends in Joshua Tree, week-long volunteer shifts at LeConte Memorial Lodge in Yosemite, leading Natural Science outings to Yosemite, June Lakes and the White Mountains. Keith has been active with many chapter entities, NSS (current outings chair), PVSB (past chair and outings chair), SMS (past chair and outings chair) OCSS (management committee) and WAS (management committee and assistant outings chair). He has been the chapter incident investigator for the Safety Committee since 2013. He has been a Navigation examiner for the Navigation Committee for nearly 20 years.

Keith and his wife Beth currently live in Groveland. They are active with the Toulumne Group. Keith is the group’s Outings chair and is the Group representative to Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions, a forest management advisory panel to the Forest Service.

**Donna Specht Fundraising Award**

**Joan Jones-Holtz.** Since 1992, for 27 years, Joan has led the Political Fundraising trips that have raised tens of thousands of dollars that have helped elect environmentally friendly candidates that support the Sierra
Clun in the Angeles chapter and statewide. Joan has organized 7-8 fundraising trips per year that are usually sold out. The fundraising trips are unique that they draw participants from all over California and showcase the Channel Islands National Park, a unique environment. Joan joins the very small, but dedicated Angeles Chapter group of leaders who organize fundraising outings that support the chapter and our entities. Job well done.

**Political Service Award**

**Ray Hiemstra.** Ray has long been the Chair or Co-Chair of the Orange County division of the Chapter PolCom and the Co-Chair of the Chapter PolCom for three years. He also serves on the Calif. Sierra Club PAC's board. He organized both the 2017 and 2019 PAC fundraisers held in Orange County that were great successes.

Ray has led popular hikes in Huntington Beach with an educational environmental focus along the way as the hikers view the proposed Poseidon Desal plant, Banning Ranch, and least tern nesting site. Prior to becoming chair of the OC PolCom, he was a member of the PolCom for approximately 5 years. He also serves as chair of the OC Conservation Committee. In addition to his work for the Sierra Club, Ray works full time as associate director of programs for Orange County Coastkeeper.

**Lifelong Service Award**

**Don Bremner.** Don has been active in the Pasadena Group for 35 years, serving on the ExComm and as Outings Chair. He regularly leads weekend Pasadena Group hikes. He is involved in conservation and political issues of interest to the Pasadena Group, including the Devils Gate Dam Sediment Removal Project, One Arroyo Trail, Arroyo Seco Canyon Project, and Hahamongna Oak Grove Area Improvement Proposal. He also serves on our interview committee for support of
political candidates. Don is a founder and co-chair of the Forest Committee, formed after the 2009 Station fire to repair trails. In cooperation with the Angeles National Forest, he and his committee do trail work very month. He received a grant to supply equipment for this work. Two years ago while hiking, Don encountered a man who had collapsed on the trail. He performed CPR on the man, unfortunately the man did not survive. He received an award for his actions from the Angeles National Forest. Don recently celebrated his 90th birthday and is still going strong! Don is also an elected Outings Representative member of the Chapter Outings Management Committee.

Special Public Policy

Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi, District 66
In his years in the California Assembly, Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi has authored numerous environmental bills. In his first term, after a solar installation firm in his district told him that solar installers throughout the state faced delays and increased costs from variable and sometimes onerous permitting issues, he wrote a bill to require a streamlined permitting process for residential rooftop solar energy systems. Undoubtedly, this has helped increase rooftop solar installations. He also wrote a law to require that renters can install electric vehicle charging stations at their parking spaces.

In 2015, the Torrance ExxonMobil refinery explosion shook the community with the force of a 1.7 earthquake and almost released a plume of deadly hydrogen fluoride. In response, he authored a package of five bills related to refinery safety. Three of these became law. One requires local air quality management districts to establish fenceline and community air monitoring around oil refineries. Another requires a public alert system around refineries, and a third requires periodic public safety hearings for refineries.

In January 2018, the Trump Administration announced its plan to open 90% of federal waters, including off the California's coast, to new
drilling leases. In response, Al Muratsuchi authored AB 1775, to prohibit new oil- and gas-related infrastructure in State waters or tidelands for Federal offshore oil leases. Similarly, in 2019, Al Muratsuchi wrote AB 342, to effectively prohibit new infrastructure on California land for oil and gas drilling on Federal protected lands. Carrizo Plains National Monument is one areas that would be protected. His bill, AB 345, to prohibit new oil or gas wells within 2500 ft. of homes, schools, or hospitals, is still pending in the California legislature. Like similar efforts in Los Angeles County, this faces fierce opposition from the oil industry. Also facing fierce opposition is AB 495, which prohibits a list of toxic additives in cosmetics.

Special Conservation Award

South Bay Parkland Conservancy. Founded in 2004, the South Bay Conservancy has been a leading force in working to increase parkland in the South Bay, especially in Redondo Beach. As part of their efforts, the SBPC worked with the California State Coastal Conservancy for a plan for a park to replace the AES power plant in Redondo Beach, rather than repower the old power plant or create dense residential and commercial housing. SBPC became a grassroots champion of the need throughout the South Bay region to create and maintain parks. Presently, SBPC is primarily focused on rewilding the South Bay, connecting existing parks and utility corridors, and re-creating native habitat with native plants.

Special Media Award

Shawnte Salabert. Shawnte is the author of “Hiking the Pacific Crest Trail: Southern California”, which is the first guide book written by an Angeles Chapter member in recent years. Her numerous bylines include Backpacker Magazine, KCET, Los Angeles Magazine, ModernHiker.com and Outside Magazine. Shawnte has been a Sierra Club member for 10 years, She took WTC in 2013 and has been part of the WTC staff for 5 years.
Extraordinary Achievement Award

Patrick McKuskey. Patrick has brought the Los Angeles Chapter mountaineering into the 21st century. He introduced modern safety and climbing methods to M and E rock checkouts, helping bring the Chapter into conformity with the climbing world. He was instrumental in the creation of the Advanced Mountaineering Program in 2009, which has taught principles of safe rock climbing to hundreds of chapter members, and he remains one of its primary teachers and guiding spirits today. Pat has also dedicated many years as a group leader in the WTC in the San Gabriel Valley.

Citation of Merit

Hundred Peaks Section. The Hundred Peaks Section was established in 1941 by Weldon F. Heald and some of his hiking buddies. They compiled a list of one hundred peaks over 5000 feet in Southern California and a ‘game’ ensued to see who could climb the One Hundred Peaks first. Today the HPS list has grown to over 281 peaks over 5000 feet and hundreds of hikes are led to these peaks every year. Hundreds, if not thousands of other hikes occur each year, inspired by the Section and its list. With a list that spans Southern California from the Mexican border to San Lius Obispo and the Southern Sierras and from the Pacific Ocean to the high peaks of Joshua Peak National Park, the Hundred Peaks Section has been introducing Sierra Club members and others to the beauties of the local high mountains for more than 70 years. Besides hikes to local mountains, the HPS sponsors a variety of special events over the course of the year, including camping events, the annual Waterman rendezvous, an Oktoberfest and the Annual Awards Banquet. The Section has recognized more than 1000 people who have climbed 100 of the peaks. With a paid membership of 225 members and an active Facebook community of nearly 1000 members, HPS continues as one of
the Chapter’s most active hiking sections, and its leaders are among the most active and honored in the Chapter.

Membership and Fundraising Award

**The Central Group.** The Central Group serves the cities in the heart of the Angeles Chapter, but most are underserved communities with a lot of suspicion about environmental groups. While out hiking, Central group Chair Barbara Hensleigh and Chapter Membership Cochair Will McWhinney, came up with a brilliant tabling idea: provide Sierra Club Gift Memberships for individuals at tabling events who have expressed some interest in joining the Sierra Club, The Central Group does not have a large bank account so this idea was risky, but recruiting 38 new members paid off when they received their National FRIP (Field Recruiting Incentive Program) rebate check for $570 and replenished their bank account.

Along with the Central group, Palos Verdes South Bay and other Chapter entities participating in field recruiting new Sierra Club members, the Angeles Chapter was the highest performing Chapter in the United States in 2019.

Conservation Awards

**Robert McDuff.** Bob has been a very active member of the Water Committee. He has attended meetings rallies and press events. He has been available to do tabling events. He consistently upholds the conservation values of the Sierra Club. He remains in constant communication about conservation matters and always volunteers to help.

**C. Robin Smith.** Robin has led her task force in an orchestrated effort to guide the City of Diamond Bar in updating their general plan/land use/conservation planning. She has led development project oversite and
commentary which have stopped damage to southern oak riparian woodland and California Gnatcatcher coastal scrub habitats. She has restored her oak woodland/coastal scrub property as a demonstration habitat garden in order to teach biodiversity to city decision makers, Sierra Club groups and the general public.

**Jeremy Burnham and Robert ‘Bobcat’ Thompson.** These 2 are being recognized for their work in the reforestation effort in Dukemejian Wilderness Park in La Crescenta after the 2008 Station fire. Together with the City of Glendale and the friends of the Sierra Club, they have helped to organize the planting of trees in the area. Since 2010, they have watered these trees at least twice a month, more in the hotter months. They also lead monthly community watering and work events at the park.

**Brian Jobst.** Brian created Liveable West Covina: local residents organized to save the BKK landfill site. This site is suitable for wildlife, native vegetation and recreation. He has personally conducted dozens of community meetings informing local residents of the risks and opportunities that BKK represents. He utilized social media and created a website. He has developed relationships with regulatory agencies, state legislators, LA Supervisor, City Council and a reporter at the San Gabriel City Tribune.

**Raj Patel.** Raj is an integral member of the Central Group. He has organized the Zero Waste festival at Grand Park: its success would not have been possible without his leadership and careful planning. He has also organized mixers and has volunteered with Team Sierra Hikes, engaging new and potential members of diverse backgrounds. He has partnered with 5 Gyres Institute and coordinated the group’s participation in their citywide trash survey, devoting considerable time and energy to the project.

**Patricia McPherson** Patricia has dedicated her life to protecting the Ballona Wetlands since the late 1980’s. She has also discovered a gas
issue at Playa Vista and the problems with the Southern California Gas Facility in Playa Del Rey. She discovered this year that a Conditional Use Permit for So Cal Gas facility had not been reviewed for many years and she was able to get the LA City Council to request that a review of the permit be done. Her work on the gas issue at Playa Vista resulted in a new experimental Methane Code for the City of Los Angeles. She continues to expose gas dangers such as leaking oil well in the Playa Vista fresh water marsh that is a danger. She has made a big difference in protecting the lives of residents of Playa Del Rey and Playa Vista and protecting the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve.

Outings Service

Anne Mullins. Anne has been a member of the San Gabriel WTC since 2013. Her natural teaching abilities and willingness to share knowledge gained her a place on the WTC’s San Gebriel Group 5, followed by a position as an examiner with the Leadership Training (LTC) in 2016 navigation team in 2016. Over and over again, she has demonstrated her love of the outdoors as an I rated leader, leading creative and inspiring cross-country trips for WTC, as well as hikes for other sections. She is now the ATC SGV group 5 Assistant Group Leader for 2020.

Sherri Sisson. Sherri has been an active member of the Orange County Group since 2009. She has been hiking with the Orange County Group Wednesday Hikers since that time. She became the Outings Chair for the Orange County Group in 2017 and has served as a member of the Orange County Executive Committee since 2018. She has continued to be active with the Wednesday hikers group, making sure that there is a Wednesday hike every week.

Kate Miller. Kate wanted to learn about backpacking in 2015, so she attended the Beginning Backpackers Class. Since that time, she has taken WTC, become an O2 rated leader, joined WTC and has become
one of the leaders for the Beginning Backpacking Class. She leads trips for WTC, Crescenta Valley Group and Backpacking Committee. Her trips are well-researched: she gives a great trailhead talk, not only highlighting safety but includes a history of the area.

**Phil Bates.** Phil took WTC in 2010 and this began his involvement in WTC. He became an instructor first in the WTC Long Beach- South Bay area and then a Group Leader in 2017 with Orange County WTC. He is an M rated leader since 2013. He has been the outings chair for the Sierra Peaks Section. He has also been a Chapter Safety Committee member as an outings reviewer. He is always willing to help and has served as webmaster with OMC/LTC/Safety in the past. His warmth and kindness of spirit radiates among his WTC students, setting a positive tone for their travels.

**Jeremy Evans.** Jeremy is an ‘O’ rated leader and leads trips into the backcountry of the Sierra. He is an excellent leader: he adjusts his pace to make sure everyone stays together, and constantly makes sure every participant is doing well. He takes his leadership responsibilities seriously: he practices ‘leave no trace’ and makes sure everyone is doing so as well. As a professional photographer, he gives a unique perspective to spending time in the backcountry. He shows those who don’t have a photographer’s eye the beauty of the area. His knowledge of the stars and night sky is incredible. He also spends a week every summer volunteering at the Yosemite Conservation Heritage Center.

**Ron Domash.** Ron has been the primary organizing leader for the annual Catalina Island outing each Labor Day weekend. He has done this for about 12 years. This outing brings in $20,000-$25,000 per trip. Most of the profit is passed to the ICO, the Angeles Chapter and other Angeles Chapter entities. Each Catalina outing takes nearly a full year to organize. He negotiates with the Boy Scouts for the use of their Camp Emerald Bay and he arranges boat transportation. He also gets approval
for this event, advertises the event, and coordinates activities during the event. He has also led countless trips over the years for the 20’s-30’s.

**Paul Garry.** Paul has been an accomplished mountaineer, climber and hiker. He took WTC in 2004 and soon after joined the staff. His interests, skills and talents led him to become M-rated in 2010. He has been an inspiring Group Leader for WTC West LA group 2 for almost 10 years. He also serves as OMC’s rep to the Safety Committee and has served on Safety Committee, adding ratings to the database. Paul also leads for HPS, likes to promote Sierra Peaks and can be found outside on trips wherever mountains exist.

**Special Service Awards**

**Pat Kramer.** Pat is a 30-year member of the Crescenta Valley Group, where she currently serves as secretary. She is known for her outreach work on issues in her community of Sunland-Tujunga and the northeast San Fernando Valley. She was named 2019 Woman of the Year for Sunland-Tujunga by Congressman Adam Schiff. She serves on the S-T neighborhood council. She brings this community service to the Crescenta Valley Group, keeping the Management Committee informed of important community issues. She is devoted to issues concerning the safety of her community and the human treatment of companion animals.

**Ken Kerner.** Ken is an active member of the Santa Clarita Group. He is the group treasurer. He researched the move of the group checking account with due diligence. He keeps careful records and follows all filing deadlines. He is also a great hike leader and has led many hikes over the years. He is always available to table at events, is welcoming to new members, and is the glue that has held the group together for years.

**David Morrow.** David is a long-time member of the Santa Clarita Group. He has held many offices, including Chair, Vice-Chair and
currently is Outings Chair. In this capacity, he works to have interesting hikes at all levels. He keeps leaders up to date on certifications and new leader requirements. He has led many hikes over the years. He also brings a professional and balanced approach to issues important to our group. He is available to table at events, helping with set-up and takedown. He is an amazing asset to our group!

**Kathleen Smith.** Kathleen is one of the original members of the Water Committee. Since accepting the responsibility of the Volunteer Connection Manager, the Water Committee has seen a steady stream of volunteers to help with the work. She is able to recruit volunteers with certain skills, usually within 1-2 weeks of the request for a volunteer.

**Rob Seltzer.** Rob has been leading hikes for ICO since 1999. Despite having a demanding job, he is willing to fill in when a leader is desperately needed. His young son has become an honorary co-leader for ICO. He has also helped to raise funds for ICO.

**Ellen Bradley.** Ellen has been with ICO for 3 years doing extraordinary work during her ‘retirement’. She writes funding proposals for us and is the Leader Certification Chair. Her proposals have been successful, which means we have more money for buses. She does not lead hikes, but works entirely in the background helping to keep our organization functioning and current.

**Dr. Michael Stevenson.** Dr. Stevenson has served the San Fernando Valley group faithfully for many years as the group’s program chair, offering a monthly program at the group’s monthly general membership meeting. This position has involved a great deal of stress. He has spent a lot of time researching topics, coordinating with speakers and making sure all goes well at the meeting.

**Brian and JoAnne Decker.** Brian and JoAnne have put in hundreds of volunteer hours helping to renovate the Keller Ski Hut. They handily organized, recruited and encouraged volunteers in completely restoring
the kitchen which had been neglected for 40+ years, installing a new hot water system, which the Hut did not have for 80 years, built 21 new beds, installed new bath fixtures, organized and rebuilt a large non-functional deck, removed tons of trash and debris and much more. As a result of their work, the Hut is years ahead of the original restoration schedule.

**Peter Kosenko.** Peter has been involved with the Angeles Chapter’s Web Committee since April 2015, taking on complex development projects for the Chapter’s Drupal web site, such as the complex Add-Up campaign blocks, customized styles and especially the recent web site redesign project. He works with each chapter entity to support unique web branches. You will also find Peter on the trails, he recently completed the WTC and continually volunteers with the SMMTF trail Crew.

**Kathy Stevens.** Kathy has been leading outings for ICO since 2000. She began when she was a teacher. Since ‘retiring’ from teaching, Kathy stepped up into leading ICO hikes. She is the liaison for many schools which means she does all the backseat coordination work to make the ICO hikes possible. She never says no to leading a hike and repeatedly takes on new challenges such as restarting our whalewatching event this year.

**John Nilsson.** John supports the Sierra Club conservation goals through the medium of photography; assisting club members and volunteers in improving their photographic skills. He has also been building the Chapter’s media library with the most amazing variety of photographs. He is always engaged, attending weekly Communication Committee meetings, and providing his time taking photographs at events whenever needed. We have published numerous materials where his photos are what catches the eye of curious readers, and potential members and/or volunteers. He has shared his art to help enhance our Chapter’s outreach
capacity through beautiful pictures that exemplify our culture, opens spaces and local work.

**Greg Kilinger.** Greg is receiving this award for his contribution to the management committee of the 20s & 30s Section. He joined the management committee in 2017, he was the first to express concern about protecting participant privacy when the rest of the group was looking at an online tool to help register participants. As secretary, he had the minutes ready the day after the meeting, which allowed for prompt follow-through on tasks. As treasurer in 2018 and 2019, Greg evaluated outings budgets and reimbursement requests with precision. He made sure money was used in the best possible way. He functioned as chair when needed, working to find new candidates for management positions. Greg is reliable and enthusiastic, day in and day out.

**Pamela Sivula.** As the current chairperson of the West LA branch of WTC, Pamela’s tireless efforts toward publicizing and recruiting for WTC has resulted in maximum capacity enrollment in recent years. She has organized events at local retailers and participated in charitable fundraisers outside of the club to spread the word about WTC.

**Melanie Berringer.** Melanie has served as the West LA group eNewsletter editor since 2017. She edits the monthly newsletter competently to include important articles and stories, to send it out punctually and then to monitor readership rates. She recognizes the importance of having a mix of pieces in the newsletter, not just negative pieces but pieces that point out good news and encouraging issues.

**Toshiro Tokunaga.** Toshiro has been instrumental in helping the Communications Committee ramp up the newsletter and social media outreach of the chapter, recruiting volunteers to help post on social media and train those same volunteers. He also formalizes our recruitment of environmental journalists to help the chapter have enough articles for out monthly publications and useful information for content marketing.
**Ignacia Doggett.** Ignacia is one of the Chapter’s most accomplished and indefatigable outing leader. In December of 2017, she became only the third person to complete leading a hike to every summit on the 281-peak Hundred Peaks list an incredible 5 times. Many of the hikes on the HPS list are difficult and Ignacia is well-known for her patience and encouragement on trips and for working with hikers to bag peaks that they need in order to complete their HPS list. She plans the hikes carefully, submits it, publicizes it and carefully manages the trip. She encourages others to become leaders. She has completed the HPS list 7 times and has completed more than 3000 trips to HPS peaks,

**Judy Herman:** Judy has been the Newsletter Editor for the PV-South Bay Group’s newsletter, the Foggy View, for three years. She apprenticed under outgoing editor Eva Cicoria in November 2016, then jumped in solo to publish the January 2017 issue and she has published each issue since in a professional, captivating, and timely manner.

In addition to publishing the print newsletter, Judy took us digital—a tremendous, time-consuming achievement. In March 2017, in addition to posting the PDF of the print version on our website, Judy added a link to a web-friendly WordPress edition that includes slideshows and links to articles of interest elsewhere on the web. It is tagged with key words in the hope of bringing in non-member readers who are searching for those topics. Key word searches also allow readers to find all the articles on a topic from March 2017 to present.

One of the challenges of being a newsletter editor is finding willing writers to submit conservation-related content on timely topics and Judy’s contacts have come through for her. Judy encouraged Susan Deo, a children’s writer with a master’s in environmental education, to contribute a column to the Foggy View and from May 2017 to the present “Along the Path: A Young Person’s Guide to Exploring Nature” has been a delightful, educational column in each issue.
In addition, Judy counts among her friends very talented wildlife and landscape photographers in the Photographic and Digital Artists (PADA) affiliate of the Palos Verdes Art Center, many of whom have contributed photos to the Foggy View.

Judy continually pushes herself to improve and broaden her skills to make the Foggy View ever better. Recently, she has been experimenting with desktop publishing programs such as Adobe InDesign to facilitate aligning photographs and text in MS Word.