

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association P.O. Box 831, Chatsworth, California 91311

March 1975

Dear Members and Friends of Santa Susana Mountain Park Association:

It has been many months since our last newsletter and since mailing costs prohibits a monthly issue, we hope you will agree that this one was worth waiting for.

Good News Department:

In January, Zelma Skillman appeared before the Los Angeles County Parks & Recreation Commission in a desperate plea to obtain their commitment to purchase the 283 acre Nichols property. Mr. Sy Greben, Director of P&R, and a member of the Commission praised the efforts of SSMPA and when asked by the commission if the parcel in question was worthy of county acquisition, Mr Greben answered with an emphatic "Yes". He added that his department had studied the property and considered it to be a key parcel for a park in the Santa Susana Mountains but that the present financial picture prevented its immediate purchase. After almost one hour of discussion, the Commission concluded that this property was indeed worthy of acquisition, and passed a motion recommending that the property be purchased as soon as possible. As a direct result of the sincere enthusiasm shown by the Commission, the Trust For Public Lands (a non-profit corporation of conservationists devoted to purchasing desirable property and holding it in trust until such time as it can be purchased for public use) submitted an offer of purchase to the owners. Negotiations are still being worked on. Mrs. Elizabeth Nichols, one of the 3 owners, has been in continuous contact with Zelma and is highly optimistic about the sale. . . . This is the very closest SSMPA has ever been to realizing its dream come true. . so please keep your fingers crossed and wear a four leaf clover to our next

***** GENERAL MEETING ***** MARCH 17*****

Please note: If this sale is completed, SSMPA will probably be asked to assist financially. ~~Members will be asked to vote on the disbursement of funds towards this purchase at the next meeting so please do plan on attending.~~ And bring along any questions you may have about the sale or property.

Once again its time to renew your faith in SSMPA by sending in your dues! Compare the price with the amount of satisfaction you will enjoy the day our park is dedicated. . . . \$5.00 single; \$7.00 family; \$10.00 business; \$7.00 student. Buy some of that 'good feeling'. Mail them to-day! !

The spring wild flowers are just about ready to show their faces. Why not join Bill Scott on a hike over a hills and see them up close. Bill meets at 9 a.m. on the second Sunday of every month in the school parking lot at Devonshire and Topanga. Bring your lunch, water, and don't forget your camera. The hikes are not strenuous and provide a great way to start shaping up for the summer.

New faces and ideas are always welcome at 'Election Time'. Yep, its here again. Think it over and submit your suggestions to the Nominating Comm-

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ittee next Monday evening. And please remember that your dues must be paid before you can vote.

More Good News:

Surely, this must be 'The Year of the Mountain'. It certainly has started off to be a good one for us. After 5 long years of seemingly endless reports and appeals, we are finally gaining good support in several areas. Assemblyman Bob Cline has introduced AB674; a bill which requests \$1,500,000 of state funds to be appropriated to Los Angeles county for the purchase of park property in the Santa Susana Mountains.

We are listed on the proposed 1975/76 Los Angeles County Budget.

We have been placed in the 'Top Priority' list of the L.A. County Dept. of Parks & recreation.

Now here is where you can truly be of great help to our association. You may think that letters sent to assemblymen, supervisors, etc., rarely if ever reach them personally. Don't be fooled by this misconception. They are very much aware and recognizant of your requests. So with this positive attitude won't you please send a short, concise letter to either Mr. Cline or Mr. Ward and state your support to them for SSMPA.

Of special interest at the March 17 meeting will be Mr. David Horyopatubbi, a freshman from Cal. State Northridge, who has made a study of stagecoaching in Southern California. David will share stories of his travels with us and will display his interesting maps and books.

Jan Hinkston is on sabbatical and doing historical research on the history of the Santa Susana Pass area. She hopes to produce an historical pageant in conjunction with the Bicentennial celebration. Her purpose is to attract city, state, and county support which would lead to financial sponsorship for a yearly pageant.

Not So Good News:

The U.S. Army is no longer stationed at the Nike Site on Oat Mountain. The property reverts back to the Federal government (Health, Education & Welfare dept.) who are considering a proposal to use the facilities as a probation center for juvenile offenders. The proposal, accompanied by an outrageous estimate of \$638,000 for remodeling, has already been approved by the Board of Supervisors. SSMPA, along with Chatsworth Beautiful, Save Orcutt Community, Chatsworth Lake Assoc., and others, is opposed to this use and a request has been made by letter asking the Board of Supervisors to reconsider their decision. We protest the fact that no public hearings were held and no citizens input considered. We have a sound alternate plan to propose. We suggest that this site be used as an educational environmental center by the city and county school systems on an all year basis! ! Once again, if you agree with this logic, speak up and be heard. Don't allow decisions about your community to be made without your opinions being expressed.

SSMPA made an offer to purchase the upper 12 acres of Devil's Slide from Mr. Webster. The offer was refused because of the lack of access to the

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parcel. Further negotiations are still possible providing access can be made from other than Lilac Lane. One more reason why the Nichols property is so desirable. . . it is adjacent to the Devil's Slide.

Do you remember the 55 acres adjoining Chatsworth Park South where the Indian pictographs, the foundation cellar, and the rock quarry are? The owner of this site has applied for a permit to build a Mobile Home Park for 194 trailers. The L.A. City Planning Dept. has ordered the applicant to submit a complete archaeological & historical survey. The owner claims the property has no historical significance and says the cost of such a survey would be wasted. No hearing date has been set as yet but if you are interested in the outcome, call the L.A. planning dept., 485-5073 and talk with Mr. William Heeb.

In a similar case, the residents around Chatsworth Reservoir are involved in a fight to halt construction of a trailer park on Woosley Canyon road (ingress to Rocketdyne). Why not take a look for yourself and see just how much damage one indiscriminate builder can cause to the natural beauty of these majestic mountains! . . . drive west on Plummer, bear left to Woosley Canyon road, west again to the chopped up mountain side. . . note the erosion. . note the whole mess. . and always remember that the first one allowed sets a precedent! ! !
Interesting to note that neither of the above property owners lives anywhere near Chatsworth. But you do!

Please remember:

GENERAL MEETING. MARCH 17

GLENDALE FEDERAL 8 P.M.

A recent questionnaire was sent out by Congressman Barry Goldwater asking for opinions on the allocation of federal funds for a park in the Santa Susana mountains. If you received one, may we urge you to return the form with your comments to him.

In July, 1976, our nation will be celebrating its 200th birthday. Plans are already in the making in big cities and little towns alike. Here in Chatsworth, there is still much research to be done on the early settlers, the Chinese labor camp, the cistern remains, the stage coach stops, just to name a few. If you would enjoy helping with this interesting work, please call Jan Hinkston, 347-3736. Or if your family has any old photos, letters, memorabilia or old stories of early life in the north-west end of San Fernando Valley, now is the time to dig them out to share with everyone.

*****Please send your membership dues to-day. . . and remember, if for some reason you don't care to be on the active membership roster of SSMPA, but would still like to help us buy our mountain, any donation made to The Foundation For The Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains is tax deductible to you!
Zelma Skillman, President. . . Janice Hinkston, Founder