

March 2004 Newsletter

MOUNTAIN LIONS, SALAMANDERS AND MORE



General Membership Program Meeting

Monday, March 15, 2004

Seth Riley, Wildlife Ecologist for the National Park Service at the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, will give a PowerPoint presentation on local wildlife issues.

Seth grew up in Washington, DC where he first became interested in wildlife, by way of snakes. He graduated in 1988 from Stanford University with a BA in Human Biology, concentrating in Animal Behavior and Ecology. From 1988-1990 Seth worked as a wildlife biologist for the National Park Service at the Center for Urban Ecology in Washington. He worked on a number of urban wildlife issues there, focusing particularly on the behavioral, population, and disease ecology of urban raccoons. Seth attended UC Davis, graduated with a Ph.D. in Ecology in 1999. His dissertation work was on the ecology of bobcats and gray foxes in urban and rural areas of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Seth worked as a post-doctoral fellow at Davis, using molecular genetic techniques to study hybridization between native and introduced tiger salamanders in CA. Seth's current projects, all related to the impacts of urbanization and fragmentation on wildlife, include a bobcat and coyote study that addresses home range and habitat use, reproduction, food habits, and genetics, a mountain lion GPS telemetry study, stream surveys for amphibians, pitfall/drift fence trapping to determine terrestrial reptile and amphibian distribution and abundance, and bat inventory and monitoring.

SSMPA General Membership Program meetings take place every 3rd Monday of the months September through November and January through May at the Rockpointe Clubhouse, 22300 Devonshire St., Chatsworth, on the south side, 1 block before entering Chatsworth Park South.

Tonight's meeting will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. with announcements and business, followed by the speaker presentation at 8:00 p.m.

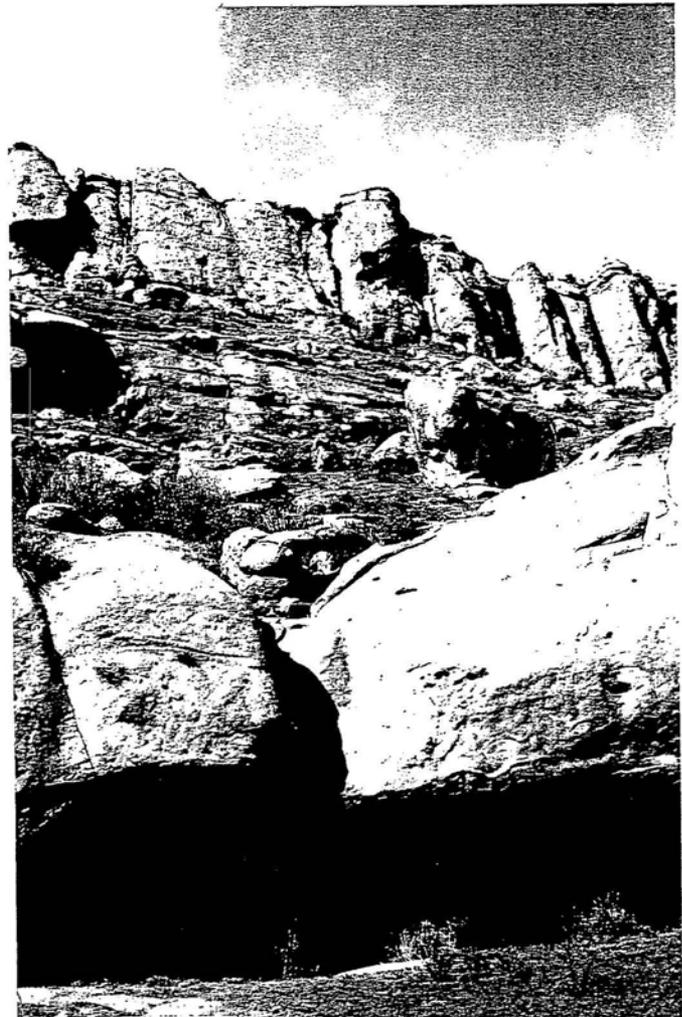


photo by Corina Roberts

The Chatsworth Formation

The Chatsworth Formation is the name given to the massive sandstone rock outcroppings in the Simi Hills. The formation is Upper Cretaceous in age, i.e., the outcroppings were deposited more than 65.8 million years ago. The northwestern extent marks the end of the age of the dinosaurs. Yes, when the Chatsworth Formation was deposited, dinosaurs ruled the earth! However, while some people have imagined that they have seen or heard of dinosaur tracks, they should remember that the sand was deposited in the deep ocean. Few fossils have survived the landslide

[see next page]

[from previous page]

grinding up of any soft materials. [More on that next month.]

The rock was derived from a volcanic and metasedimentary terrane. The sand was deposited originally on the continental shelf off Central America, or perhaps as far north as off the Peninsular Ranges of Baja or California. Massive landslides, oftentimes tens of miles in length and a half mile or more in width, dumped into marine canyons, resulted in the deposition of the sand in the abyssal of the ocean at a depth of 4,000 to 5,000 feet. The massive flows are called turbidity currents and the resulting deposits are called turbidites. If you look at the Chatsworth Formation from either the north or the south, so that a cross section can be observed, you can see that some of the deposits, or strata, are a few feet thick, while others are 20-30 feet thick. The thickness of each stratum reflects the thickness of each submarine landslide where each came to rest.

In between these catastrophic events, there were quiet periods without turbidity currents. During these periods, the silt and clay particles rained down from the surface of the ocean. These "fines" were carried into the ocean by rivers and streams during periods of heavy rains and resulted in relatively thin strata of siltstone. Siltstone is more subject to erosion than are the sandstones. The erodibility of the siltstone has helped accentuate the space between the individual turbidite deposits. Interbeds of pebble - to cobble - conglomerates also, but more rarely, occur.

Mike Kuhn

[This article will be continued in the April newsletter.]

Hidden Creeks - Los Angeles, California

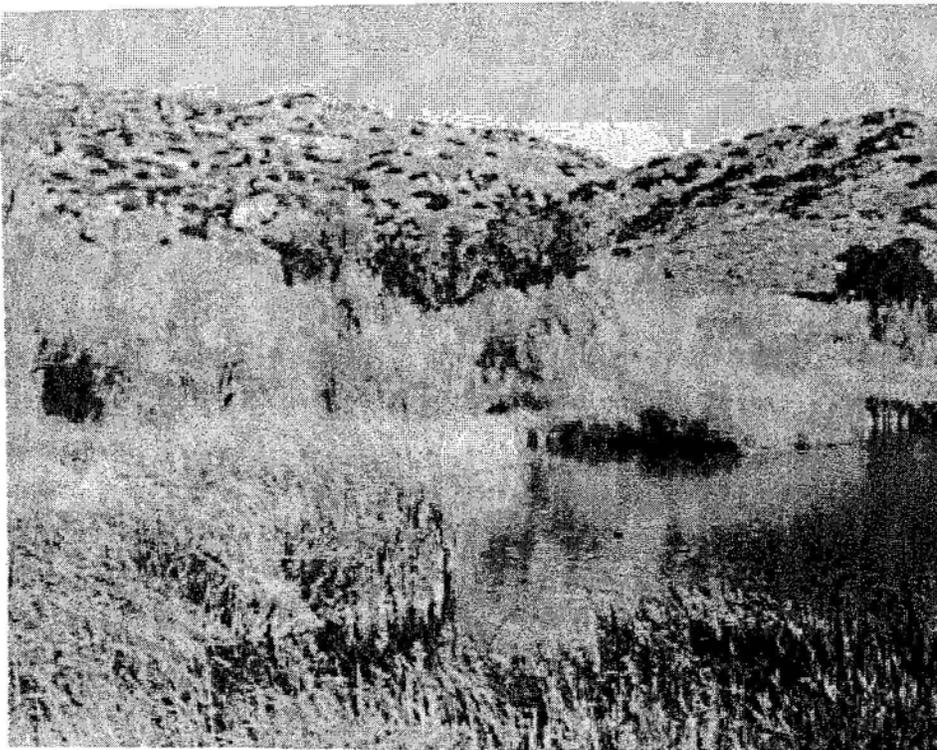
Hidden Creeks is a proposed 188-home estate community planned for a 300-acre site bounded by Browns Canyon Road on the west, Porter Ranch on the east, and the confluence of Mormon Creek and Browns Canyon Creek to the south. Approximately 125 acres of the 300 acres will be developed into estate homes and grounds; the remaining 175 acres will be preserved as equestrian areas and open space. The zoning that will be proposed for Hidden Creeks would allow RE-11 lots up to 5-acre lots.

Hidden Creeks will be a gated community with luxury homes clustered in the center of the site on a flat area of land that has already been disturbed by ranching operations and location filming. Clustering the development will leave the two creeks on the east and west and approximately 175 acres in an open, natural state. An equestrian center is proposed as part of Hidden Creeks, with public access equestrian trails planned along the east and west sides of the community, providing a linkage from existing trails to the Michael Antonovich Parkland to the north.

Presently located in unincorporated LA County, Hidden Creeks is proposed to be annexed into the City of LA, allowing the City to have input and control as the project moves through the review and approval process.

Be informed

The plastic bottles we use for drinking water leach toxins, which are bad for both the environment and us. The containers labeled #1 should not be reused due to leaking of bisphenol-A (BPA). BPA is a chemical that mimics the hormone estrogen, which can impair the reproductive organs of rats and mice. #1 plastic is the most widely produced plastic, but it cannot be reused. Stay away from #3, #6 and #7 plastics. These contain PVC and are the second most commonly use plastics in the world. In both heating and manufacturing they release dioxins into our food and environment. Most states do not recycle these. If these plastic bottles get into the ocean - and there are millions of them there - they can impair the reproductive organs of the fish and birds, which eat the plastics. We, in turn, eat these birds and fish and receive these chemicals in concentrated amounts. The safer and far more environmentally friendly plastics are #2, #4 and #5. These plastics have not shown any leakages of toxins. Find <http://www.thegreenguide.com/> (see Plastics for Kitchen Use) for further information.



Ecology pond in Chatsworth Nature Preserve

photo by Dali Shafer

Take only memories, leave only footprints...

Come join the Annual Celebration in Honor of Earth Day in the beautiful Chatsworth Nature Preserve on **Sunday, April 4, 2004, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** We will welcome and bless the earth with dances and legends of the Chumash and other Native American Tribes. Join the Sierra Club on docent-led tours around the lake and then have a picnic under the centuries-old oaks or in the pastures that are home to coyote, bobcat and deer. Members of other organizations will be on hand to share their expertise. Watch the Chumash dolphin dancers light the sacred sage in their ceremonial circle. Bring picnic snacks, blankets to sit on, water and sun-hats. Would you like to volunteer? For information, call Rosemarie White at 818-769-1521. Host/Sponsors: The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and City Councilmember Greig Smith. Directions: In the San Fernando Valley, take the 101 Freeway west and exit at Topanga Canyon North to Plummer (about 5 miles). Turn **LEFT** on Plummer and continue straight to the Preserve gate on right. Park on the **SOUTH** side of the street, and enter by foot. Street parking only.

Enjoy art and music...

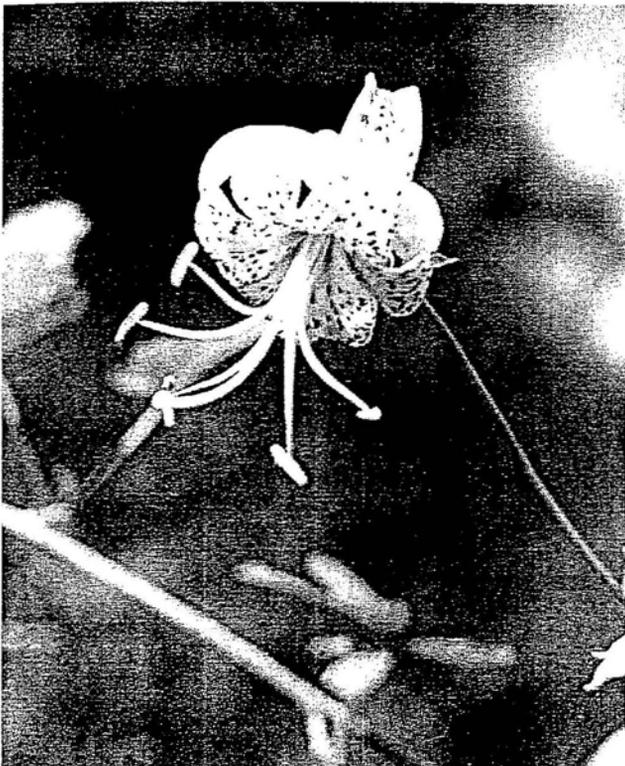
On **Sunday, March 28, from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.** at the Headwaters Corner at Mulholland Hwy and Old Topanga Canyon Rd., Carla Henry and other Allied Artists of Santa Monica Mountains and Seashore will be exhibiting artwork dedicated to landscapes and florals of the Santa Monica Mountains. Parking is available at Calabasas High School at 22855 Mulholland Hwy.

Annual farmwalk...

The Agriculture Dept. at L.A. Pierce College announces their Annual Farmwalk will take place on **Sunday, April 18th, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** at Los Angeles Pierce College, 6201 Winnetka Ave., Woodland Hills. \$5.00 donation; children free. Enter Victory/Mason. Activities: Farm animals / Sheep Shearing / Wool Spinning; Large Farm & Plant Equipment / Live Music / Cow Milking; Cow Chip Bingo; Petting Zoo; Live Bee Displays; Exotic Animal Shows; Horse Activities; Fire Dept. & Forestry Div.; BBQ/Chili Cook-Off; Agriculture; Natural Resources; Animal Science Class Information; Nature Canyon Walks; Educational Displays. Only Physical Assistance Dogs Permitted Due to Livestock. Website: piercecollege.edu [scroll to 'news @ pierce college']. For info, call Vicki Michaelson @ 818-710-4253.

Garden festival at the acre...

On **Sunday, April 25th, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**, the Chatsworth Historical Society will again present its annual garden festival at the Homestead Acre (in Chatsworth Park South). The events and exhibits will include live plants for sale, arts and crafts booths, bake sale, white elephant sale, entertainment and, of course, beautiful blooming gardens. Call Bea Berman for further information and if you would like to donate a white elephant for the sale: (818) 341-5449.



Humboldt Lily in Simi Hills

photo by Teena Takata



Chatsworth Formation

photo by Teena Takata

BELOW ARE CANDIDATE STATEMENTS RE: ELECTION OF SSMPA BOARD OFFICERS AT APRIL GENERAL MEETING. PLEASE USE FOR REFERENCE WHEN VOTING NEXT MONTH. BALLOTS WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE APRIL NEWSLETTER, TO BE EITHER MAILED IN OR BROUGHT TO THE MEETING ON APRIL 19TH.

Jan Miller - Candidate for President

Jan has served as SSMPA's President this past year and would like to continue to work in this capacity toward preserving open space in its natural state in the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills with a focus on the lands adjacent to the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park.

Dorian Keyser - Candidate for Vice President

Dorian joined SSMPA in 1990. Since 1991 he has continuously served in either a Board Member, President or Vice President capacity. Some of his major achievements have involved preservation of wildlife corridors and open spaces in the Santa Susana Mountains, Simi Hills and Santa Monica Mountains in working with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, LA and Ventura County Supervisors, CA State Parks, and U.S. Congressmen and Senators. As an active member of the Chatsworth Nature Preserve Advisory Committee and the Sierra Club's Joint Angeles Chapter/Los Padres Chapter Committee, Dorian has worked tirelessly for many years on numerous projects, testifying at hearings and generating analyses and recommendations.

Patty Miller - Candidate for Recording Secretary

Patty has been SSMPA's recording secretary this past year. She has recorded and typed up the minutes of all Board of Directors meetings for SSMPA's records. Patty took on the role of hostess for general program meetings, and sets up the refreshments.

Diana Dixon-Davis - Candidate for Treasurer

Diana has been a member of SSMPA since 1980 and has served as Treasurer for the past four years, performing all duties consistent with this position, which include not only keeping finances recorded and in balance but filing specific documents with the Secretary of State to maintain the organization's nonprofit status. Diana has a masters degree in demography and epidemiology. A lifetime member of the Sierra Club, Diana is also involved with other environmental and community groups. She is currently taking several adult school accounting classes.

Reid Bogert - Candidate for Member-at-Large

Reid, a lover of the outdoors and the natural landscape, is committed to protecting the rich heritage of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills. Reid spent his boyhood growing up on a small ranch in Chatsworth. He has been instrumental in setting up and maintaining SSMPA's group email list and membership database. He has a masters degree in business administration.

Susan Gerke - Candidate for Member-at-Large

Susan has been a member since 1994 and in previous years was both Treasurer for SSMPA and Member-at-Large. Currently newsletter editor, she would like to serve as a Board member to better assist SSMPA's efforts to preserve and protect natural resources in the Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains.

Sandra Johnson - Candidate for Member-at-Large

Sandra has been an SSMPA Board Member-at-Large for several years and was Recording Secretary for one year. She is a member of the Sierra Club and enjoys hiking and biking.

Carla L. Henry - Candidate for Member-at-Large

Carla wants to serve on the SSMPA Board of Directors in order to continue with the group effort to help preserve and protect the area from over-development. She wants to do her part to protect the natural beauty and the wildlife from becoming extinct in our historical surroundings. A businesswoman in the area of sales and marketing with an ability to handle a project from conception through completion, Carla is also a plein air artist and poet concerned about protecting the natural environment for future generations to enjoy.

Teena Takata - Candidate for Member-at-Large

Teena lives in Chatsworth and has been active with land use issues in the Chatsworth community for the last several years. A Board Member-at-Large for the SSMPA during the last term, she also presently serves as a Board Member on the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council as well as the Recording Secretary of its Land Use Committee. Teena hikes in the local areas and enjoys the open spaces that have been saved and that we are trying to keep open for future generations. She has used her business background and related skills to help the SSMPA with letters and information packages for the State Park.

LOCAL UPCOMING HIKES



Coast
Horned Lizard



Sagebrush
Lizard

Sierra Club Hikes

Saturday, 3/13 - Sage Ranch Plant Walk: 10:00 a.m. - See flowers, birds, rock formations on easy-paced 4 mi rt hike in NW corner of SFV. Take Roscoe Blvd. W to Valley Circle Blvd., R 1 mi to Woolsey Cyn. Rd., L to end, R for 1/4 mi on Black Cyn. Rd. to parking area). Bring snack, water; boots preferred. Rain cancels. Leaders; Bob & Maureen Cates.

Saturday, 3/20 - Fossil Hill, Santa Susana Mtns: 8:30 a.m. - Moderate 9 mi, (11-mi optional) 1200' gain. Meet at trailhead (118 to Yosemite, N 1/2 mi to Flanagan and go to end).

Saturday, 3/20 - Steves Trail, Verdugo Hills: 8:30 a.m. - 5 mi, 1500' gain to view and discuss controversial proposed Canyon Hills development. Meet at Steves Trail turnout on La Tuna Cyn. Rd. (0.8 mi W of La Tuna exit from I-210 in Tujunga).

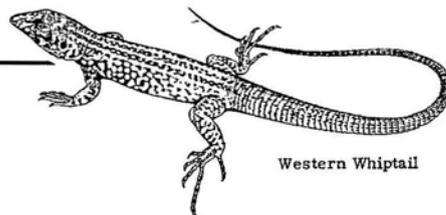
Sierra Club / Santa Susana Mountains Task Force Hikes

Sunday, 3/21 - Stagecoach Trail: (Provisional Sierra Club Leader Hike): Interpretative hike into history in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet 9:00 a.m. for a 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stage Coach Trail. From Topanga Cyn Blvd., turn W on Devonshire, drive into Chatsworth Park S to the 2nd parking lot. Wear long pants, lugsoles are preferred, bring water & snack. Serious rain cancels. Provisional Leader: Susan Gerke (818) 704-9304. Assistant Leader: Bob Galletly: (818) 885-1920.

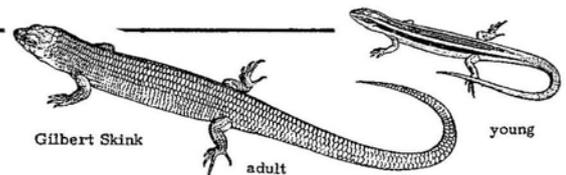
Sunday, 3/28 - Santa Susana Mtns.: (Provisional Sierra Club Leader Hike): 9:00 a.m. Collette Bertrand and Judy Garris will lead this easy paced, 5-mile hike along the Chumash Trail; 1000' gain through beautiful coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and sandstone rock formations overlooking Simi Valley. Take 118 fwy to Yosemite North, pass stop sign and turn onto Flanagan Drive East; go to the end. Park on the east side of street. Provisional Leader: Collette: (818) 349-8415; Assistant Leader: Judy: (818) 346-7654.

Sunday, 4/4 - Devil Canyon Native American Plant Walk: Easy-paced 5 mi rt, 300' gain. Walk with naturalist through wind-carved canyon into Ybarra Cyn. Learn how early Native Americans used plants for housing, food, medicine and religion. Join us for stream hopping and a potluck picnic. Meet 2:00 p.m. N end of Topanga Cyn. Blvd., off 118 Fwy, L on Poema Pl, park. Bring food to share for 6, utensils, cup, plate, water, wear lugsoles. Leader: Judy Garris, Co-Leaders: TBA.

PLEASE NOTE: For all Sierra Club/Santa Susana Mountains Task Force outings, participants are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you wish to read the liability waiver before you chose to participate on an outing, go to this website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact Outings Dept. at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.



Western Whiptail



Gilbert Skink

adult

young



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

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

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

- Senior or Student (\$5.00) Individual (\$10.00) Family (\$15.00)
 Life Member (\$100.00) Business / Organization (\$25.00)

Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Street Address: _____ E-mail: _____
 City / State / Zip: _____
 Special Interest / Expertise: _____



Support Your Parks!

Come to Chatsworth Park South **Saturday, April 24th, at 8:00 a.m.**, for the opening ceremony of an Earth Day event sponsored by the California State Parks Foundation, California State Parks, and LA City Recreation and Parks Dept. Then join members of your community in the clean-up efforts in **Chatsworth Park South & Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park**. Chatsworth Park South is located at 22360 Devonshire St., Chatsworth. Meet just west of the Recreation Center parking lot. Suggested items to bring: pair of gloves, water bottle, sunscreen, hat and appropriate footwear. Event will end at 12:00 noon.

Santa Susana Mountain Park Association &
Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains
P.O. Box 4831
Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The purposes of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association are the protection, preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills as open space lands and wildlife corridors linking the Los Padres National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains, including the Angeles National Forest, to the Santa Monica Mountains; as habitats for plants and animals native to the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills; as locales of unique geologic formations; as sites of ethnological, archaeological and historical interests; to provide passive recreational opportunities and environmental education opportunities; and, to support the acquisition of new public parks, open space and conservation easements, the expansion of existing parks, participate in the planning of park infrastructure and programs, and support said programs. To find out how you can participate, contact Jan Miller at (818) 702-0854.

To read the by-laws of SSMPA, please go to its internet group (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SSMPA/>) where you will also find many documents and resources relevant to the issues of concern to SSMPA and its members. If you have any questions regarding the website, feel free to call Reid Bogert at (323) 661-4686.

Thank you for renewing your SSMPA membership: Leon & Shirley Brown, Shannon-Vaughn family, Kim Sodek, Einhorn-Lyons family, Cecelia Heppes, Lynn Bonsall, Kyoko McKelvey, Tony Gaudenti, Gerald & Carolyn Murphy, Wendy Brunell and Bob Wood.

Subscribers & Members: We appreciate you! Please note the renewal date on your label. If you are a Life Member, we thank you and invite your continued support with periodic donations to help SSMPA meet the costs of producing this newsletter. *Susan Gerke, Newsletter Editor*

Non-Profit
US Postage
Paid
Van Nuys, CA
Permit No. 761

LIFE Member
Nancy Razanski
22149 James Alan Circle
Chatsworth CA 91311-2051