SAN GORGONIO WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION
SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST
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The Newsletter of the
San Gorgonio Wilderness Association
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SGWA services are supported by the U.S. Forest Service and your National Forest Adventure Pass.

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President's Message

Jarome Wilson

San Gorgonio Wilderness A Cause Worth Living

Dear Volunteers, Members, and Friends of the SGWA,

In the winter of 1962, the **Defenders of the San Gorgonio Wilderness** began forming in order to counter the ongoing attempts by skiing associations to develop the top of Southern California. The Defenders, headed by **Joe Momyer**, **Neale Creamer**, **Alice Krueper**, and **Harry James**, drew a proverbial line in the sand and demanded that the land on one side remain a pristine wilderness untrammeled by man.

The Defenders spoke strongly for preserving the Wilderness for the generations that were not yet born. I was born in the winter following the forming of the Defenders and I belong to one of those generations for which they worked so selflessly. There can be little doubt that my life has been entirely influenced by the acts of these people. Had they failed in their battle to preserve San Gorgonio, my youth would not have been filled with the outdoor experiences that lead to my appreciation for the wilderness in general and San Gorgonio in particular.

The fierce storm that raged over these mountains in the 60s and early 70s has passed. The threat of development has receded. The Defenders withdrew quietly into the background as others, such as the SGWA, stepped in to advance the cause of the Wilderness. Yet the Defenders did not disappear; they retained their assets and silently stood vigil, watching for signs of development.

Today, few members of the Defenders remain. Many have passed away. Remaining members **Neale Creamer, Gordon Cleaver**, and **Harry Krueper** have quietly kept a watch over the remaining assets of the Defenders. This summer, Neale, Gordon, and Harry decided to liquidate all the remaining funds from the Defenders. They have placed their faith and trust in the SGWA to watch vigil over the Wilderness the Defenders fought so hard to preserve. On Tuesday, August 27, 2002, Harry Krueper presented $4,205 to the SGWA Board.

It is a testimony to the selfless work done by volunteers in the SGWA that the Defenders entrust us with their remaining funds. And it is a testimony to their faith that we will safeguard the Wilderness as they have done.

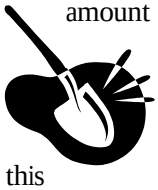
It is also a reminder that we continue to live the cause started by a small group of people who fought so hard for generations not yet born. We have an obligation to live this cause so we can likewise turn over the mantle to another generation in the future.

Future generations will judge if we have successfully lived the cause that was started in the winter of 1962. What will they say of the summer of 2002?

Alice Krueper PCT Cleanup Day

Saturday, November 16, 2002
Val Silva, Equestrian Coordinator

Instead of the annual **Alice Krueper** hike this year, we are joining with Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA), Bureau of Land Management, Back Country Horsemen of California, and the Forest Service in cleaning up the PCT crossing between Interstate 10 and Snowcreek.



There is a tremendous amount of trash and graffiti from I-10 and the railroad bridge abutments, making the area an eyesore. Come on out for this day to remember Alice, and to make a difference! Lunch and refreshments will be provided for those who signup in advance. Bring gloves, daypack, and water bottle, wear boots, long sleeves and long pants for your protection.

We will meet at 8:30 a.m. for orientation and to form crews. Directions: Exit I-10 at Verbena Road, just west of the junction with Hwy 111. Go west on Tamarack Road parallel to

I-10 for 0.3 miles to Fremontia Road. Roadside parking is available.

Contact **Val Silva** (760) 868-2133, email dsilva@snowline.net to sign up.

Forest Festival

Karen Saffle, Forest Festival Coordinator

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped at this year's Forest Festival. Our volunteers, service groups, and exhibitors were on hand to greet at least 500 happy visitors throughout the day. The raffle raised $166 dollars, donations from the cross cut saws totaled $66, and **Phebe Baty**, with her magic fingers, sold 23 basket kits. Virtually all of the exhibitors that I visited with were having a great time and felt their time was well spent. One family I visited with spent about three hours with us.

Of course, **Smokey** was a huge hit. He was smothered with kisses (especially from his three top fans, **Cassidy Silva,** and **Faith and Peter Van Horsen**), and had his picture taken with children of all ages. There were, however, a few timid souls who ran screaming back to Mom.

Next year's Forest Festival will be held on August 16th. Setting the date early ensures **Search and Rescue** participation, as well as the **Moonridge Animal Park** being available to join us again.

If you have any suggestions that might make next year's festival even better, please let me know. **Karen Saffle, 760-948-1026.**

Water Works!!!

Val Silva, Equestrian Coordinator

There is a rumor on the mountain that SGWA is re-hydrating the springs. Is it true? Sort of. The equestrians have hauled 40 gallons of water up San Bernardino Peak trail for the volunteer trail crew. Thanks to **Ross (Tonka/Hog) Stark**, **Earl (Apache) Rider**, **Gail (Dakota) Seymour**, **Jim (Cruiser) Gooley and Val (Rhapsody/Mac/Kate) Silva** there has been plenty of water and tools for the volunteer trail crew to complete a much needed brushing of San Bernardino Peak Trail.

It's been interesting taking several trips in and seeing the brushwork accomplished each time. On one trip we moved water from a spot by the Columbine trail to Limber Pine Camp. We had a little assistance by a bear--apparently he thought he had found a new spring in the area and drank three containers of the water (after nicely opening them). At least the horses didn't have to carry the water the additional two miles, and fortunately we brought extra water.

Larry Stiles, Volunteer Trail Crew Leader, gave me written instructions of where he wanted the water and tools placed at Limber Pine. It went something like "80 yards past the trail split, 40 yards on the north side of the trail in a little tree that looks like a hut, with a white handkerchief tied around it." Good thing Earl was along, he has sharper eyes than I do. After scouting around a little, I found out 80 yards is not as far as I thought, Earl was much closer. **Bob Oppermann** was patrolling in the area and helped us unload and store the water and tools.

We have had a good time with visiting hikers. When they ask what we are doing, we simply reply taking water to the spring. Most of them say "Oh great!"

Thank You For Your Support!!

Many who know the great value of our forest and wilderness areas may not have the time but have the monetary resources to help the SGWA continue to "Serve, Protect, and Educate." Recent contributing members to whom we and forest visitors owe many thanks are:

Individual ($25)
Family/Dual ($35)
and Student/Senior ($20) Members

Linda Patino

Trail Blazers
($50 or more annually)

Dean G. Christy
Karen Saffle

President's Summit Team
($100 or more annually)

Janelle Kotzin
Bill and Anneli Ostic

Adventure Pass

Jarome Wilson, President

Hello SGWA Volunteers,

Because a significant portion of SGWA's funding comes from the Adventure Pass, it is natural that many of us are interested in what is happening in the efforts to make the Pass (or some modification of it) more permanent. This update is provided to let you know what is currently happening:

About two months ago, many volunteers responded to John Flippin's email regarding the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, which is examining the pros and cons of the Adventure Pass and other demonstration fees being trialed by the Forest Service, Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management. Both the House and Senate continue to examine this issue, and it is expected that some legislation will occur during the current Congress. Whether this legislation makes the Adventure Pass permanent, modifies it, or eliminates it altogether remains to be seen. As with any important issue, there are strong opinions and passions on all sides of the issue.

Congressional staff members from both the House and Senate participated in a public meeting recently in Lytle Creek. They heard mostly positive testimony from citizens regarding their experiences with the Pass. Because SGWA is a direct beneficiary of Adventure Pass funds, many volunteers have expressed an interest in participating in efforts to support the Adventure Pass and have asked what you can do.

Very recently a group of forest residents, forest volunteers, and forest visitors formed a group with the intent of having a positive influence on the Adventure Pass debate. The Citizens for Responsible Forest Management (CRFM) includes folks from all four Adventure Pass forests, and will be looking to influence opinions in the general public, as well as in Washington, D.C. This group is not part of SGWA, but if you would like information about it, I'd be happy to pass on information

about how you can participate in their efforts.

Thanks for your time. If you would like more information let me know.

Bears

John Flippin, Volunteer Coordinator

The black bears in and around the San Gorgonio Wilderness are apparently becoming more desperate than usual for food this year.

There is at least one in the Alger Creek Camp and Dobbs Cabin Camp areas that is extremely persistent in staying around campers and getting into/tearing up gear. There are at least two roaming between Vivian Creek Camp and High Creek Camp that are not afraid of humans and are trying very hard to get into food bags and backpacks (have been successful a couple times that we know of).

On the north side, there are possibly three bears (one extremely large) that are pushing over and getting into dumpsters at most of the campgrounds and at the Barton Flats Visitor Center. At least one of these bears has reportedly broken into vehicles at the San Gorgonio Campground and has looked into vehicles (paw prints on windows) at other locations.

This has become more serious than I have heard of for several years around here, possibly because of the drought. Please let everyone you see in the mountains, or anyone you know who might go to the mountains, know about this situation.

It is extremely important that everyone take precautions:

- All food, garbage, and scented items (toothpaste, lotions, soap, etc.) should be kept where bears cannot get to it or in bear proof containers - all away from sleeping areas.
- Vehicles are NOT bear proof containers. Recommend that nothing be left in a vehicle that looks like it might have food in it or that smells like it might be food. Bears can smell what is in a vehicle trunk and will rip open a door window/frame and go through the back seat to investigate an interesting smell.
- ABOVE ALL, do not attempt to withhold or come between a bear and what it knows or thinks is food. The bear may be very desperate and not hesitate to hurt you to get at the food.

All of this is a little inconvenient, but worth it if we want to have bears in our forests and wish to protect them from having to be killed by wildlife managers. Enjoy the wild outdoors and take care out there.

Volunteers Help with Rescues

July 20, 2002

The Vivian Creek Trail continues to keep everyone busy. A group of visitors reported to our Big Falls volunteers, **Sue Fantazia** and **John Sporcich**, that a friend was stranded high above Halfway Camp with an injured knee and altitude sickness. Sue and John calmed and reassured the worried group, and assisted them in contacting San Bernardino County Sheriffs Department (SBSD).

In the meantime, volunteer **Larry Stiles** on wilderness patrol was just making contact with the injured hiker and a friend who had stayed with him. SBSD decided to call in a helicopter medivac crew, which soon radioed Larry for assistance in locating the injured person. They asked Larry to signal somehow and fortunately Larry had a mirror, which the crew was able to see flashing. There was no area nearby where a helicopter could land, so they had Larry move the injured man a short distance to where they could hoist him out with a cable and basket. The maneuver was a success, and he was flown to Loma Linda Hospital.

Larry finished off the long day by accompanying the injured man's friend to the Vivian Creek Trailhead where very relieved friends waited. Larry, Sue, and John -- a great team, doing a fantastic job.

September 2, 2002

SGWA volunteers not only help visitors, they also help the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department's (SBSD) volunteer search and rescue crews. The friends of a group of three adults and four children reported the group missing to SBSD after 9:00 p.m. on September 1. The group failed to return from a day hike along the Vivian Creek Trail to the summit of San Gorgonio Mountain. SBSD's search and rescue team could not do much that late at night, so they prepared to start the search at 6:00 a.m. the following morning.

At that time, **John Grzeskiewicz** and **Phil Rosenkrantz** were on an overnight Vivian Creek Trail patrol at Halfway Camp and heard the radio traffic between SBSD and San Bernardino Dispatch. They contacted Dispatch and reported that they had seen some people matching the description of the missing group the day before as they were going towards the summit. John and Phil headed back up the trail in hopes of finding the missing group. Luckily, about a mile and a half above Halfway Camp, they found the missing people in good condition. Our volunteers radioed the good news to SBSD enabling the cancellation of the search and rescue operation. John and Phil were able to save several more hours of worrying for waiting family and friends, and to save the search and rescue team a lot of work.

Having all of our volunteers spread around the mountain so often results in one or more of them being in the right place at the right time. Great work John and Phil!

Defenders Donate Again

by John Flippin

The **Defenders of San Gorgonio Wilderness** (represented by **Gordon Cleaver**, **Neale Creamer**, and **Harry Krueper**) has very generously donated $4,205 to the SGWA. To all SGWA volunteers, the Defenders "compliment you on all the wonderful work that everybody in the wilderness association undertook this summer in the form of trail maintenance, education, and protection of the San Gorgonio Wilderness area." The SGWA volunteers carry on a long and wonderful tradition.

On a 1923 trip to the summit of Mt. San Gorgonio by the Western Rangers (a boys' outdoor organization), led by Harry C. James, the idea of preserving the San Gorgonio area as a wilderness was born. Through a lot of hard work, and despite much opposition and bureaucratic hurdles, the campaign to preserve the San Gorgonio high country – led by Harry C. James and his Western Rangers - finally resulted in the San Gorgonio Primitive Area being established on April 23, 1931. Many different development proposals threatened the Primitive Areas throughout the '30s, '40s, and '50s leading to an all-out offensive by very large and powerful ski industry forces in the early 1960s. Then, on January 29, 1963, was born the Defenders of San Gorgonio Wilderness, the brainchild of **Joe Momyer**, retired San Bernardino postal superintendent, and **Harry C. James**, by now a forty-year veteran of San Gorgonio battles. Joe Momyer was the Defenders' first president, **Neale Creamer**, vice president, **Gordon Cleaver** and **Harry Krueper**, members at large, **Alice Krueper**, secretary, and Harry James, chairman of the advisory board. Through the initiative of Harry James, the 51 member advisory board included the intellectual, scientific, and cultural elite of the Southwest. The board included **Ansel Adams**, nature photographer; **Newton Drury**, former chief of the National Park Service; **Carl Russell**, former Yosemite superintendent; **Russ Leadabrand**, newspaperman and author; **Glen Dawson**, publisher; and **Dr. Herman T. Spieth**, chancellor of the University of California.

Leading a tremendous grassroots force, the Defenders fought industry and political opposition hard for several years. The Defenders' efforts paid off for all of us when the San Gorgonio Wild Area was included under the protection of the Wilderness Act signed by President Lyndon Johnson on September 3, 1964. Of course several ski industry corporations continued to lobby Congress intensively to have a large area pulled out of the heart of the San Gorgonio Wilderness for development. The Defenders successfully fought off additional serious development/political threats in 1965 and 1967. In 1971 ski industry inquiries were made in Washington, D.C. as to whether the Defenders were still organized. Of course they were and to this day there have been no further serious threats of developing any parts of the San Gorgonio Wilderness.

As funding and staffing began to dwindle, the Forest Service began using a small number of volunteers to help patrol wilderness trails and to run the Barton Flats Visitor Center in the late 1970s. In the early 1980s, a formal San Gorgonio volunteer program was started by Bob Shuker, USFS Wilderness Manager, and David Hood, USFS Volunteer Coordinator. One of the most active volunteers was Alice Krueper, Secretary of the Defenders. Alice and a few other volunteers formed the San Gorgonio Volunteer Association (now the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association) in 1988 to assist the Forest Service in managing the volunteer program and to help the public better understand, enjoy, and care for the public's natural resources in and around the San Gorgonio Wilderness.

Today, SGWA volunteers serve, protect, and educate as they carry on the wonderful tradition of Harry James' Western Rangers and the Defenders of the San Gorgonio Wilderness. And we thank the Defenders of the San Gorgonio Wilderness very much for their continued support to the efforts of our outstanding volunteers.

(Some information adapted from "San Gorgonio, A Wilderness Preserved" by John W. Robinson, published by San Gorgonio Volunteer Association)

SGWA Wish List

To enable us to better serve the public we wish we had the following items. If you know of someone who would like to donate these items, new or used, please let us know. Tax deductions are applicable.

- Self-focusing slide projector with timer for nature talks.
- Copy machine for the Barton Flats Visitor Center.
- Metal cabinet for Mill Creek Ranger Station.
- Used trailer with shower for Barton Flats Visitor Center.
- Folding utility tables.
- Folding chairs.

Wishes Come True

We thank very much the following individuals who have donated the following items listed in previous SGWA wish lists. Their generosity will benefit the public greatly.

Jeff Highton – Metal cabinet for Big Falls Visitor Center.

Danny and **Val Silva** – Small propane tanks for festivals and special projects.

Howard Simpkinson – Microwave oven for Mill Creek office.

Mark Voykovic (plus brother and friend) – Small copier and toner cartridges for Mill Creek office.

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