

# Wilderness Link

San Geronio Wilderness Association

June 2020

Volume 8, Issue 2

## Calendar of Events

These are the major events tentatively planned for this year. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, some of these events may not happen. For more information about these and other activities, or to sign up for events go to [www.sangorgoniowilderness.org](http://www.sangorgoniowilderness.org).

### June

30 Board meeting

### July

28 Board meeting

### August

25 Board meeting

### September

27 Barton Flats closes

29 Board meeting

### October

3 Winterize Barton Flats

10 Awards potluck

27 Board meeting

### November

17 Board meeting/Officer elections

### December

5 Holiday party

## Not the Season We Expected

By Val Silva  
and Bettye Miller

Fires and floods have interrupted summer activities for SGWA volunteers in recent years. This year it's a global pandemic, and its impact on our activities will be unlike anything we've experienced.

By now you know that our annual orientation was cancelled, as were cleanup days at Barton

Flats nature trails and the Visitor Center. SGWA is not accepting new volunteers because we're not able to provide the kind of orientation our participation agreement with the Forest Service requires as public health officials currently do not allow gatherings of more than 10 people.

The Forest Festival is cancelled this year, as are our monthly potlucks. We'll miss your delectable dishes and barbecued burgers.

Ranger Talks are on hiatus, and visitor centers at the Mill Creek Ranger Station and Barton Flats are closed, but may reopen later.

That's the bad news.

The good news is that deployment of our trail patrol volunteers was delayed by only a week, thanks to a lot of hard work by SGWA staff, the Board of Directors and Forest Service in compiling COVID 19 safety protocols for our volunteers.

Trail crews will soon resume their activities, although on a more limited basis. For example, crews will have no more than six people, and projects will focus on only the most serious trail repairs.

Lonnie Yett continues to process overnight wilderness permit requests from home. (Thank you, Lonnie!)

All volunteers will be required to follow specific safety procedures, from signing up ahead of time and answering specific health questions before each activity to practicing social distancing, frequent hand

**See Season on page 3**



Photo by John Flippin

## Send Us Your Photos

We're looking for pictures of volunteers on the job this summer. If you're on patrol, doing trail work, staffing interpretive sites (when they open), or making trail signs in your garage, please send us photos. They can be silly or serious and everything in between.

Please email your favorite pictures to yearbook editor Bettye Miller at [gorgoniogal@gmail.com](mailto:gorgoniogal@gmail.com) by Sept. 1.



Does your employer match contributions to your favorite nonprofit (i.e., SGWA)? Or does your employer support in other ways nonprofits where their employees volunteer? Are you a member of a hiking club that spends time in the San Gorgonio Wilderness? If so, please contact SGWA Executive Director Val Silva to find out how SGWA might benefit from these programs. [sgwa@earthlink.net](mailto:sgwa@earthlink.net)

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## Celebrating Wilderness

Gifts to the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association help support our efforts to preserve the wilderness and the forest surrounding it. We are thankful for these supporters whose generosity makes it possible for us to further our mission to serve, protect and educate. This list includes lifetime members and individuals who have contributed to SGWA since December 2018. If you would like to make a gift in memory of a loved one or to honor someone special please contact our office at (909) 382-2906, or visit our website at [sgwa.org](http://sgwa.org). Gifts may be mailed to: San Gorgonio Wilderness Association, 34701 Mill Creek Rd., Mentone, CA 92359

### Corporate

Adventure 16  
Boeing  
Edison International  
REI  
Rose Foundation  
San Manuel Band of  
Mission Indians

### Lifetime

Santa Ana River Cabins  
Assn.  
Elick Bowler Family  
David Brisban  
Allan Chang  
Bud Cole  
Brigitte Denver  
Bob Hazelton  
David Knapp  
Peggy Manning  
Bettye Miller  
Robert Oetzel  
Bob Opperman  
Karen Saffle  
Dan Scott  
Scott Warden  
Bryan Walton  
Dwayne Watson  
Jarome Wilson

### President's Summit Team

Dulce Becerra  
George Bingham  
Linda Griffith  
Beth Gunn  
Shauna Hoffman  
Walt & Suzie Kirkwood  
Audrey Scranton  
Benjamin Versteeg  
Scott Warden

### Wildernext Corp.

James Willinger  
Ernie Woodhouse

### Trail Blazer

Quentin Allison  
Tammy Barta  
Dulce Becerra  
Franklin Becerra

### Jodi Biers

Robbie Bishop  
Laurie Borer  
Michael Branscomb  
Patty Buchanan  
Patricia Carelli  
Sandra Figueroa  
Linda Foster  
Shane Franklin  
Daniel Garcia  
Terry Grill  
Eleanor Haire  
Deborah Harrison  
Mike Hawker  
Carl Imthurn  
Kimberly Knight  
Paul Lambert  
Anna Lee

### Rebecca Lehman

Elisabeth Longo  
Justin Palmer  
Joyce Palmese  
Danny Perez  
Walker Price  
Danielle Purdey  
Michael Richman  
Summer Rossel  
Shelley Russell  
Marianne Shuster  
Caitlin Smith

### Shannon Stratton

Paula Taylor  
Robin Thuemler  
Juli Unternaehrer  
Catherine Walsh  
Kathryn Wood  
Caroline Wright  
Kenneth Wright

### Individual

Adrienne Allegretti  
Judy Atkinson  
Jonathan Baty  
John Berlette  
Jeffrey Boehler  
Heather Broersma  
Mark Campbell  
Tricia Carelli  
Anne Chaffee  
Ashleigh Covarrubias  
Donna Crawford  
John Curtis  
Don Davidson  
Daniel Domancich  
Juliann Emmons  
Marianne Farretta  
Margaret Floyd-Evans  
Linda Foster  
Mark Friis  
Bertram Froehly Jr.  
Gwyn Frost  
Ewa Graves  
Ezra Greenhouse  
Matthew Hall  
Kevin Harvey  
Viviane Helmig  
Shauna Hoffman  
Molly Leddy  
Joanne Lessard

### Carl Lindemer

Christina Luther  
Jim Matiko  
Hannah McAnespie  
Michael McCoy  
Shan McNaughton  
Sarah Mellon  
Michael Mursick  
Kevin Proctor  
Penny Ramos  
James Rasco  
Kerry Rennie  
Travis Revicki  
Ralph Rigglin  
Phil Rosenkrantz  
Summer Rossel  
Rachel Sahl  
Heath Sawyer  
Matthew Schreiber  
David Schumacher  
Deborah Seibly  
Patricia Shearer  
Marianne Shuster  
Caitlin Smith  
Sandra Smith  
Frank Sprinkle  
Ann-Marie Stauble  
Brandon Swanson  
David Swantek  
Katy Swift  
Troy Sykes  
Paula Taylor  
Amanda Tromblay  
Vincent Van Rooijen  
Catherine Walsh  
Brian Wolk  
Kathryn Wood  
Caroline Wright



## Director's Desk

**Val Silva**

Well, geez. Just when we were looking forward to meeting old friends at orientation and getting back to volunteering in the clean mountain air, we were blindsided by the coronavirus. We are all worried about our health, finances, and kids.

It's good that we're able to get to the mountains again. We're back doing trail patrols, and trail crews will resume work shortly, although on a more limited basis. Visitor centers are still closed. It's possible they will reopen later in the summer. Things are really fluid.

During the stay-at-home order I've learned new skills. Some of you have, too. Believe it or not I started a garden. Yep, I have three zucchini plants. Whoo hoo! I hear I will need to give some away, so let me know if you need some.

I'm hearing that lots of you have been cleaning closets, garages and storage spaces. We could have a big yard sale (if we could get together), but of course we would buy what everyone else has and have too much junk again.

I am gratified to see all the people stepping up to help others. It seems people are all working together. I feel this is a reset for everyone, slowing us down, making us think about our family, friends, and how lucky we are.

Everyone stay safe. This, too shall pass.

The Wilderness Link is published quarterly by the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association.

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Contributors this issue:

**David Bratt, John Howell, Dee McCoy, Val Silva**

Submit story ideas and photos to [sgwa@earthlink.net](mailto:sgwa@earthlink.net) or [gorgoniogal@gmail.com](mailto:gorgoniogal@gmail.com)

## Season

Continued from page 1  
washing or use of hand sanitizer, and disinfecting tools. Copies of the safety protocols will be provided to every volunteer.



SGWA will provide work gloves to trail crew volunteers for their exclusive use during the season. Hand sanitizer will be provided to all volunteers, thanks to our discovery of a Nashville distillery that recently began shipping to individuals. We ordered several gallons.

We're exploring possibilities for recording Ranger Talks and making them available online. Some volunteers who typically work at the visitor centers are creating new interpretive materials to help the public appreciate the forest we love.

For volunteers who opt to limit their activities this season, we understand. We will miss you and hope to see you next year. Please keep in touch.

This isn't the season any of us anticipated. We expect that more challenges await, and we know that SGWA volunteers will rise to meet them.

## Certificate Extensions

If your first aid and cross cut certifications expired this year, no worries. The expiration dates for cross cut certifications have been extended for one more year. First aid certifications have been extended for 120 days. You may also renew your first aid/CPR certifications online with the American Red Cross (<https://www.helpaheartcpr.com/red-cross-onlineclasses.html>) or American Heart Association (<https://cpr.heart.org/en/courses/heartsaver-first-aid-course-options>).

## Directors Elected

The SGWA Board of Directors elected new members at the March and May meetings. The new directors are Roxanne Smith and Eileen Hay. They join directors David Bratt, Chelsey Feierfeil, John Flippin, Kristy Loufek, Rosie Nunez, and Bob Williams. Leaving the board is Lonnie Yett, whom we thank for his dedication to overseeing volunteer staffing at the Mill Creek Visitor Center. Officers, who were elected in November, are: Betty Miller, president; Rex Philpot, vice president; Dee McCoy, secretary; and Teddi Boston, treasurer.

## Volunteer Profile

### Sheila McMahon

#### By Bettye Miller

Forest visitors who drop by the Barton Flats Visitor Center might think they only need directions to a local camp or trail. But when Sheila McMahon is volunteering they'll likely leave having sniffed the bark of a Jeffrey pine (smells like vanilla) or told where to watch for mountain orchids.

"I always think it's fun to see someone who may not be interested in the out-of-doors get excited about something you show them, whether it's in a program or on the trail," Sheila said.

Her invitations to bikers to sniff a Jeffrey pine at the visitor center occasionally result in some eye rolling, "but then they smell the tree and go get their buddies. I like to get people interested in something they're not seeing at that moment. It's exciting to get them to see their outdoor experience differently."



archaeological dig in Wyoming, and leading Sierra Club hikes – and the camaraderie of SGWA volunteers clicked.



*Sheila is pictured here helping at the California Native Plant Society's table at the Forest Festival. Photo by Domenic Wager*

Sheila, who taught elementary school in Riverside for 58 years, joined SGWA in 1992 when a fellow teacher invited her to check out the organization. Her lifelong love of the outdoors – which included working as a Girl Scout camp counselor, volunteering on an

"The people you meet in SGWA are so special," she said. "They're all very caring; just a special group. Their interests are different, yet they all are very special and eager to help."

As an SGWA volunteer, she said, "I liked being assigned to hike with someone who hiked at my same level. I've been on most of the wilderness trails, although I don't hike much anymore. I like doing programs and have taken interpretative training at several venues. I've worked the front desk at Mill Creek Visitor Center, Barton Flats, and Horse Meadows. I like to do as many different things as possible."

She especially enjoys the challenge of figuring out what will spark someone's interest in the out-of-doors.

"Some don't want to be pushed too hard, some respond quickly. A couple of years ago I talked to a group hiking back from Jenks Lake. I asked if they'd seen the irises. What's an iris? There was a whole field of them. So many people don't see. They just head for the hills and don't stop to smell the flowers. I try to help them experience the awe of the natural environment."



*Volunteer Michael San Filippo shot this photo not long after an April storm blanketed Dry Lake with fresh snow.*

## Smile!

Remember SGWA when you make purchases from Amazon.

Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association as the charity you wish to support. A small percentage of your purchase will go to SGWA. Every little bit helps.



## **President's Corner** **Betty Miller**

SGWA has experienced some challenging seasons in the recent past – the Lake Fire in 2015 and extensive damage from last year's Valentine's Day flood – but nothing as daunting as the COVID-19 pandemic this year. We know how to wait for damage assessments after fires and floods, and have moved quickly to resume activities once we received the all-clear from the Forest Service.

This coronavirus is something very different. Each day seems to bring new information about the virus, how it is transmitted, and what safety precautions we should take.

Your Board of Directors is navigating unprecedented waters as we try to balance concerns for your health and safety with the desire we all have to resume as many activities as we can as soon as possible.

We delayed the start of our season while we fine-tuned enhanced safety protocols for volunteers on trail crews, trail patrols, and at visitor centers, and to gather the additional supplies we will need. We coordinated development of these safety protocols with the Forest Service, for whom we all work.

If you are not comfortable volunteering, please wait to join us until you are. Some of us are at higher risk because of age and/or underlying health issues. Your health and safety are important to us.

What passes for normal during a global pandemic may look different from one day to the next. None of us has experienced anything like this, and navigating the maze of county, state and federal guidelines can be challenging.

We've definitely had more than our share of challenges in the last five years, but SGWA as an organization has demonstrated the abilities to be resourceful and to persevere. In that regard, this year will be no different.

We look forward to seeing you soon. Stay healthy and safe.

### **SGWA**

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