

# ARTI-FACTS

*The Newsletter of the Award-Winning Idyllwild Area Historical Society*

Preserving the History of Idyllwild and Surrounding Communities  
in the San Jacinto Mountains

SUMMER 2015

## LIVING HISTORY: TALES FROM THE PACIFIC CREST TRAIL

*By John Blodgett*

What do hot sauce, cannabis and lip balm have in common? They're among the items PCT hikers wish they had packed in greater quantities, according to 18 respondents to the survey mentioned in the sidebar. The results are hardly scientific, yet highly illuminating and often amusing.

Most surprising is that, contrary to prevailing wisdom, not one hiker listed "Wild"—either the book or the movie—as motivation for hiking the PCT. Instead, hikers listed the influence of friends, desire for freedom, and the need "to do something extreme," among other reasons.

Assuming a trail name is a PCT rite of passage. Some are bestowed upon, others are self-declared. Often it takes many dusty miles for one to settle. One hiker — "El Flaco," or "The Skinny One" — used a nickname from his life outside the trail. "Jolly Pionjar," whose blog posts are printed below, was given her trail name for handing out Jolly Rancher candies and for using a rock-drilling tool called a Pionjar. "Blisters" requires no explanation, though it's worth pointing out that his namesake blister was so large it was given its own name, "Bilford."

*See Pacific Crest Trail, page 3*



**"Blisters"**

*Photo by John Blodgett*

IAHS's preservation mission includes collecting not only artifacts of the past for the present generation, but also a record of significant current events for the benefit of future audiences.

Thanks to the recent exposure given the Pacific Crest Trail in Cheryl Strayed's 2012 book, *Wild*, and the 2014 Reese Witherspoon film based on it, this past spring saw an unprecedented wave of through-hikers on their way from the Mexican border to

Canada. Because Idyllwild has become a popular stopover for these adventurers, Lynnda Hart, assisted by John Blodgett, circulated a questionnaire and talked with a sample of resting hikers at the Idyllwild Library, Nomad Ventures, and the Town Baker.

Just as we addressed the Mountain Fire in the Autumn 2013 issue, this time we present a report on what we learned about these hikers.

*—The Editors*

## IDYLLWILD AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### Board of Directors

*President:* Marlene Pierce  
*Vice President:* Charlotte Groty  
*Past President:* Carolyn Levitski  
*Secretary:* Barbara Jones  
*Treasurer:* Laura Caster  
*Directors:* Nancy Borchers, Suzy Bowman,  
George Groty, Carolyn Hall,  
Joan McCullough, Bob Smith,  
Linda Turner

*Board meetings are open to the membership and  
are held in the archive building  
on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month at 4 p.m..*

### Special Advisors

Harry Bubb, Kay Cenicerros, Janice Lyle,  
Walter Parks, Kent Steele, Lynn Voorheis

### Current Volunteer Staff

*Accounting:* Laura Caster, George Groty  
*Archive:* Darlene Beebe, John Blodgett,  
Nancy Borchers, Gina Genis, Lynnda Hart,  
Barbara Jones, Joan McCullough,  
Shannon Ng, Bob Smith  
*Digital Media/Website/Facebook:* John Drake,  
Rebecca Frazier, Bob Smith  
*Home Tour Coordination:* Charlotte Groty,  
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*Hospitality:* Linda & Larry Turner  
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*Campus Maintenance:* Richard & Carolyn Levitski  
*Museum Docent Coordination:* Barbara Jones  
*Museum Operation:* Suzy Bowman,  
George Groty, Lynnda Hart  
*Museum Shop:* Nancy Borchers  
*Oral Histories:* John Blodgett,  
Corrinne Brown, Morry Copeland, Lynnda Hart  
*Research:* John Blodgett, Lynnda Hart,  
Betty Parks, Robert Reyes, Bob Smith

### Arti-Facts

*Co-Editors:* Adele & Bob Smith  
*Layout:* Halie Wilson  
*Feature Writer:* John Blodgett

## Annual Meeting

Once again the IAHS annual meeting will be held at the Creekstone Inn, this time at 4 p.m. on Sunday, August 9. As always, it's open to the public and serves the dual purpose of sharing local history and fulfilling the legal obligations of a nonprofit organization.

Speaker for this year's meeting will be IAHS writer and archive supervisor Bob Smith. He recently completed a long-term research project reconstructing the history since 1878 history of the area known as Pinewood.. His talk, "So Far, Yet So Near," will emphasize the surprisingly close ties between what happened in the seemingly remote San Jacinto Mountains and events in the rest of Southern California and the nation.

The business portion of the meeting will include reports on the state of the society and election of officers and directors for the new year beginning September 1.

Nominees for officers are incumbents Marlene Pierce, President, and Barbara Jones, Secretary. Director nominees include incumbents Nancy Borchers and Linda Turner, plus newcomer Diann Coate. Diann has been a regular docent since the museum first opened in 2003 and is a long-time Idyllwild resident with extensive experience on other local nonprofit boards. She would replace Jeff Wu, who resigned recently due to the growth of his business in Taiwan and China.

*Beat the Heat on Labor Day Weekend  
with IAHS's Annual Gift to the Community*

## Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social

**Free Ice Cream & Root Beer Floats**

**Saturday, September 5, 12-2 p.m.**  
at the IAHS Museum and Village Garden

**PACIFIC CREST TRAIL ...** (continued from page 1)

“Trail angels” — people who help hikers along their journey in ways small and large — acquire names as well, some of which are carried over from their own PCT hiking days. San Diegans “Scout” and “Frodo” are famous for their hospitality: they pick up hikers at the airport, give them a place to stay and food to eat, and drive them 45 miles to the PCT trailhead in Campo. More than one surveyed hiker spoke with reverence of the couple. For her own efforts on behalf of “Jolly Pionjar” and other hikers, Lynnnda Hart was deemed a trail angel and named “Wildwood Flower” after a hiker noted her Toyota’s vanity license plate.

Surveyed hikers came from all walks of life. “Moo Juice” took advantage of his youth to quit a job and hit the trail; he plans to take up carpentry after finishing. “Half Hat” wrapped up a kindergarten teaching stint in Taiwan before tying on her boots, but doesn’t yet know her next steps beyond the PCT. “Tutone” is a mental health counselor, “El Flaco” has a “checkered employment history,” and “Blisters” grows cannabis (and yes, it was he who wished he had packed more of the herb).

The questionnaires contained other tidbits: fond hiking memories, the names of hiking companions, challenges faced. But across the board two items consistently rose above the others, expressed if not in actual words then in the scrawl of a pencil or in a smiling visage: great enthusiasm and humble gratitude.

Such feelings came through most clearly in the following blog entries (lightly edited) from 25-year-old Anna Marini (trail name “Jolly Pionjar”) of LaSalle, Illinois, whose dog-bite incident kicked into high gear the caring and camaraderie of hikers and locals alike:

**May 3, 2015:** *I knew I was good at making friends before but it’s really showing out here on [the]trail and especially in town. After hiking 22 miles on Thursday and 15 on Friday we*



**Typical PCT hikers**  
*Photo by John Blodgett*

*decided to take a “zero” (no hiking) day on Saturday in Idyllwild. Idyllwild is a small mountain town with lots of little shops, hotels and restaurants. Perfect for thru hikers. A group of us stayed in town to run errands like get groceries for the next few days, go to the health food store and the gear outfitter as well. I met tons of locals that were so interested in the hike. One couple gave us a ride to where we were staying, another person gave me a few bucks for dinner, and the guys at the outfitter gave me a discount for working for NPS (National Park Service). Everyone was so generous and kind. After the heat of the past week it was nice to relax in town and hang out with friends. Tomorrow we begin the detour/reroute of the PCT that was damaged in the forest fires a few years back. 7 of us found rides to hitch back to mile 152 and hike the detour. Some hikers decide to skip this part but we really wanted to see it. Away we go!*

**May 11, 2015:** *Last I wrote we were heading out to do the alternate reroute trail from the fires a few years ago. Lots of hikers skipped this section but the group I was with was determined to complete it. We hiked 10 beautiful miles on the PCT then 10 more off trail miles on*

*See PCT, page 5*



**Happy hiker enjoying a “zero” day**  
*Photo by John Blodgett*



# ALMOST TIME FOR THE 15<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HOME TOUR

This year's edition of the Idyllwild Home Tour, IAHS's biggest annual event, is fast approaching. Please note that, thanks to the periodic Labor Day

calendar shift, it will take place on September 19, a week later than in recent years. (For details see the box [on page 6].)

As always, Nanci Killingsworth has assembled a varied and fascinating collection of homes to visit.



*Photo by FrazierDrake*

You can let your imagination wander in a lodge seemingly transported from Hollywood that brings to mind stars from the 1930s caught up in intrigue complicated by romantic liaisons. You can descend into a forested hollow where a flight of fancy drives the architectural design with just a touch of the macabre.

Or you can step back in time into a cute (800 square feet!) cabin where on an ample deck you can ponder a past conjured by the feel of the kitchen and the plants in the garden below.

Two more homes each capture one of Idyllwild's twin magnets, art and the outdoors. In one you can

*See Home Tour, next page*



*Photo by FrazierDrake*

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## PCT ... (continued from page 3)

*dirt roads and some of the highway. After a long 20 mile day we found a campsite and got rest. The next day we did 8 more miles, part on the road and part on a mountain bike trail back into Idyllwild. Full circle! While we were back in town we hung outside the library and filled out a PCT hiker survey for a lovely lady [Lynnda Hart] from the historical group.*

*We were in a corner sitting on benches when a women [sic] tied up her dog and went inside. We didn't think much of it until we were leaving and I went to reach for my pack and the dog reached out and bit my left forearm. I couldn't believe it. A dog has never hurt me before....my trail friends around me jumped into action and got me away from the dog, called animal control, calmed me down and helped clean the wound. My historical group lady rushed over and immediately helped as well. She took me to the clinic and got me in right away. I got a tetanus shot and 10 days of antibiotics. The town really set me up and made me feel so much better. We met lots of hikers along the way and many heard about the girl that got bit by a dog. Crazy. . . .*



**Jolly Pionjar under the "Welcome to Idyllwild" sign on Highway 243**  
*Courtesy of Anna Marini*

**HOME TOUR ...** (continued from previous page)

explore beautiful Southwestern artistic works. The other, hugging a ridge-top, has an open design and soaring ceilings to echo and expose a view sweeping from valley floor to mountain peak.

As usual, there will be musical entertainment along the way and mid-day refreshments served on the museum grounds. Also at the museum artistic photographer and IAHS member Gina Genis will be selling and signing Volume 2 of her “Everybody and Their Mother” series of environmental portraits of Idyllwild residents.

We’re fortunate once again to have our experienced organizing team, with Charlotte Grotty and Carolyn Hall integrating dozens of chores from logistics to publicity to volunteer recruitment; John Drake and Rebecca Frazier contributing their exquisite photography and producing the tour booklet; and Joyce Miller composing descriptions of each house.



*Photo by FrazierDrake*

The ever more popular Home Tour plays a major role in financing IAHS’s annual budget. So be sure to join the crowd on September 19 for a relaxing and eye-opening day.

## 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL HOME TOUR



*FrazierDrake photo*

**Saturday,  
September 19,  
10 am to 4 pm  
\$20 per person  
Ticket booklets available  
from 9:30 am at  
Idyllwild Monument  
on Village Center Drive  
More information:  
(951) 317-4613 or (951) 201-1400  
Volunteers Needed!**

## OUR 15th ANNIVERSARY

That's right! In October the Idyllwild Area Historical Society will celebrate its 15th birthday. We'll mark the occasion on Saturday, October 24. Current plans include a panel of Hill old-timers recalling earlier days in Strawberry Valley. This will be followed by an open house at the museum, featuring a reception for Idyllwild area writers whose work appears in our latest exhibit. The Frank and Mabel Moote Archive and Research Center will also be opened to the public, so you can see what has been done there during the five years since the building's completion in 2010. Times and places will be announced via e-mail, our website, and our Facebook page. Join us in commemorating our 15 years of service to the Idyllwild area.

FROM HEMET NEWS,  
AUGUST 13, 1909

### MOUNTAIN DEFAMED

**Mt. San Jacinto Has Had Some Hard  
Jolts.**

Banning Herald: Isn't it about time old Mount San Jacinto had a rest? During the last half year this grand old mountain peak has been accused of about everything except horse stealing and it seems to be getting hot over the thing, as the snow up there is melting very fast.

The first report concerning the mountain stated that it was an eruptionist of the worst kind; that rumbling noises were heard emanating from the bowels of the earth and that the old mountain was certainly suffering from chronic appendicitis.

Then someone down in the Imperial valley saw airships sailing around the peak and over the Salton sea. The theory was that airship fiends had taken to the pine jungle and

were engaged in building a ship that would put the Wright brothers on the wrong track.

After the airship had spent its force in the desert air some enterprising explorer around the peak found the ruins of an ancient city. Here was the main street, there was the town pump—but the mayor could not be found and he had evidently been recalled, or possibly, lynched.

Scarcely had the ancient city subsided before the bones of cave dwellers were found in the vicinity. The cave dwellers were not at home when company came—probably out deer hunting.

The very latest is a report to the effect that Hon. H. A. E. Marshall, supervisor of the Cleveland Forest Reserve, found a large lake glistening in the sun near the summit, higher than Lake Tahoe and probably 2000 feet deep. This spot would make a delightful summer resort, but a person ought to have an incline railway or a burro.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Names(s) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Individual (\$15)   
  Contributor (\$35)   
  Benefactor (\$250)   
  Business (\$35)  
 Family (\$25)   
  Sponsor (\$100)   
  Patron (\$500)   
  Corporate (\$750)

*(Please make your tax-deductible dues check to IAHS & mail to PO Box 3320, Idyllwild CA 92549)*

If a gift membership, please enter your name and address:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Museum Hours**

11 am - 4 pm

**Follow us on Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/IdyllwildAreaHistoricalSociety>

**Summer Schedule (June 19-Labor Day)**

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays,  
4<sup>th</sup> of July, & Labor Day

**Visit our website:**

[www.idyllwildhistory.org](http://www.idyllwildhistory.org)

**Winter Schedule (Sept. 6-June 14)**

Saturdays, Sundays,  
& Monday holidays

For special tours and other business,  
call (951) 659-2717 or  
e-mail to [info@idyllwildhistory.org](mailto:info@idyllwildhistory.org)

**Admission Free**

**Donations Welcome**

**Dates to Remember:**

**Sunday, August 9 – IAHS Annual Meeting (see p. 2)**

**Saturday, September 5 – Annual Ice Cream Social (see p. 2)**

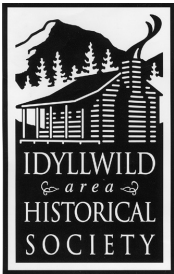
**Saturday, September 19 – 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Idyllwild Home Tour (see p. 5)**

**Saturday, October 10 – Art Walk & Wine Tasting**

**(sponsored by Art Alliance of Idyllwild)**

**Saturday, October 24– IAHS 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House (see p. 7)**

P O Box 3320  
Idyllwild, CA 92549



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**Mark your calendar:**

**HOME TOUR**

**September 19**