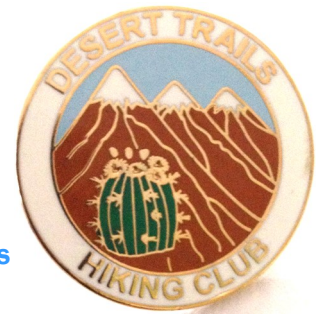


# Newsletter

Providing members a variety of hiking, social and stewardship opportunities



Fall 2017



## Another Year for DTHC

Where does the time go? A new season is upon us with lots of hiking, socializing and trail stewardship, for the Desert Trails Hiking Club. Join in!!!!

### Our Website

The DTHC took on a new look this summer. Dave Luckwell, our webmaster, took on the task, of updating our website. Looks great. Make sure you continue to check our website for all current and updated DTHC news, especially the hike schedule. **The hiking schedule is an ongoing process that should be reviewed frequently.**

### Trail Updates

Heavy rains have done damage to some trails in the Coachella Valley. Working with Gordon Fiddler of the Friends of the Desert Mountains [FODM], workdays have been well-attended making excellent progress with each outing. FODM Workdays are now being published on the Desert Trails Hike Schedule as Gord is also a member of DTHC. Think about coming out to help with these worthwhile projects.

Make sure and **DO NOT LEAVE ANYTHING OF VALUE** lying around in your car when hiking. It just entices individuals to break into your car.

**WHAT YOU PACK IN-PACK OUT.** That includes orange peels....as they take quite a long time to disintegrate, and yes even Toilet paper. We are only visitors to this great desert, and let's lead by example.



### Mark your Calendars

- **December 5** - Palm Desert Country Club - You should have already RSVP 'd
- **December 31** - New Years Eve Day hikes and pot-luck. Look for an evite
- **March 2018**—Getaway—Santa Monica Mountains/Agoura Hills—details will appear on website in the near future

### Council Members 2017/18

Dianne Delong  
Rich Jarvinen  
Dave Luckwell  
Dave McGuire  
Mike Ovesen  
Bernard Rochet  
Herbie Rochet  
Gary Ward



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## Coalition of Trail Users – Rise Up!

As a member of the Desert Trails Hiking Club, we enjoy the socialization with our fellow members both at the Socials and on the trails within the Coachella Valley. Long lasting friendships have been formed around our common interest of hiking. Many of us volunteer to help maintain these trails. This is part of the creed of what sustains Desert Trails Hiking Club .

We have come to know and love the trails of Coachella Valley. For the most part, we consider these trails as our own. We respect the organizations that actually own the land and share their vision to protect its natural beauty with only footprints left in the wilderness.

It is easy to forget that our access to the trails is a privilege and not a right. Owners of the lands that contain our trails make decisions that are best for their interests-which may or may not always be consistent with ours. All we want to do is use the trails and enjoy the beauty around us.

It is great to see the Peninsular Big Horned Sheep high in the mountains from the trails or up close on local golf courses. The animals are not threatening to us but they are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Federal, State and local agencies enforce that law as part of their job. In the last year, La Quinta spent nearly \$500,000 on a fence to protect the sheep from harm on their Silver Rock golf course.

As the count gets more finite with GPS collars on more of the animals, data rolls into the government agencies. Assumptions and decisions are made based on that data. Policies are formalized. The federal, state and local authorities begin implementing actions that could well impact all trail users. So what happens if we see changes in the sheep population?

First the optimistic view: the number of sheep continues to increase and they are removed from the Endangered List. Limited impact on trails might result, but the recovery plan could still call for diminished trail use on specific trail segments.

The alternative might be that the sheep begin again to decrease in numbers and more trails and more land are closed to protect them. Closing off more land has historically been done due to an assumption that hiker interaction with the sheep is one possible reason for the decrease in numbers. The negative population impacts from disease, weather extremes, and climate change may exist but are not as easy to control as are people on trails. So closing of more land is visible, actionable, and enforceable even if it might not be necessary.

Both outcomes, but especially the alternative picture looks pretty grim for hikers if there is no push back.

Desert Trails Hiking Club is not motivated to become a political action group to protect our trails. Desert Trails Hiking Club is a social club and determined to stay that way. Fortunately, for the last 20 years, there has been a group that shares our interest in keeping trails open and has the motivation to interact with the public and private landowners to keep our trails open. That group is the Desert Trails Coalition.

Desert Trails Coalition is composed of groups representing hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders. Their singular purpose is to keep trails open for all users. Some of our current Hiking Club members were instrumental in setting up the Coalition. Desert Trails Coalition [DTC] interacts with both public and private land owners to protect the trails.



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Our Rich Jarvinen is currently the DTC President. Gary Ward is currently the Treasurer of DTC. Dave Luckwell and Dave McGuire are currently also on the Board of DTC.

It is great to enjoy the trails of the Coachella Valley and think that they will be there forever. We need to work together to make sure that the interests of both the sheep and trail users are considered in decisions about land management in areas where those interests overlap. This does not mean to carry protest signs or write letters to your Congressmen. This does mean that we need to consciously support the Desert Trails Coalition in their efforts to protect our trails.

If you want to know more, just ask one of your representatives.

## The Santa Monica Mountains/Agoura Hills

**The Santa Monica Mountains** are a playground of parks and public lands that offer opportunities for escape, adventure, and enjoying the outdoors. No matter your interest or abilities, you'll have fun in these mountains!

Want to get moving? There is more than 500 miles of trails for you to get your adrenaline fix, that crisscross the Santa Monica Mountains, offering a lifetime of exploration. From short, flat loops for first timers and rugged, steep climbs that lead to 360-degree views of the mountain range and Pacific Ocean.

The landscape of the Santa Monica Mountains was not just created by geological forces, altered by weather, or covered by vegetation, but shaped by the people who lived and worked here. You can discover the hidden histories of the Santa Monica Mountains, by their legacies that can be seen at Native American cultural sites, historic ranches, and former movie set locations.

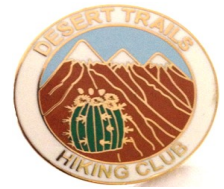
Also an endless source of inspiration, from sublime panoramic views of beauty in the smallest details which provides photography and stargazing opportunities.

**Agoura Hills** is in the eastern Conejo Valley between the Simi Hills and the Santa Monica Mountains. Agoura Hills is called the "Gateway to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area". A variety of hikes are available in this area.

Just in case you want a little diversity from the great hiking with friends around Agoura Hills, there are many options. Some suggestions are listed below. Inclement weather works well for the first three on the list.

The first suggestion is not to be missed even on a sunny day. To date, there are only 13 presidential libraries in the USA. Reagan's Library is very memorable regardless of your politics.

- **Ronald Reagan Presidential Library** / Simi Valley/19 minutes / 15 miles
- **J. Paul Getty Museum** / Los Angeles/ 27 minutes / 23 miles
- **J. Paul Getty Villa** / Pacific Palisades/ 33 minutes / 23 miles
- **Pepperdine University** / Malibu/ 20 minutes / 13 miles
- **Ojai, CA** /51 minutes / 49 miles
- **Gardens of the World** / Thousand Oaks/ 10 minute drive / 6.4 miles
- **Santa Monica Pier-Santa Monica** / 36 minutes / 34 miles



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## Summary of DTHC Coordinating Council Meeting November 13, 2017

Our first Coordinating Council meeting of the season was held on November 13, 2017. In attendance were Dianne Delong, Rich Jarvinen, Dave Luckwell, Dave McGuire, Mike Ovesen, and Gary Ward.

**Treasurer's/Membership Report:** Gary reviewed financial status as of 10/31/17. Membership is currently at 384. Our new Financial Statement reflects available funds beyond reoccurring expenses. Our bank balance stands at \$2977.36. Gary said the upgrades to the membership renewals on the website has been a timesaver for him. Added tweeks are still in process.

**Social Report:** Dianne reported that the end of last season's Socials were big hits and the first Social this year continued to hit the mark. Nearly 60 members attended the November Social in La Quinta at the Grill on Main.

December's Social at Palm Desert Country Club is a member favorite and should be well attended. Details will be coming via Evite to active members. January's Social is still questionable. The regular first Tuesday of the month is January 2—too close to Art Smith Pot Luck and New Years. Check the website for final decision.

**Hike Leaders Report:** Mike announced that Nancy Pringle is our latest Hike Leader. Welcome to Nancy!

At the November Social, Rich announced that Carl Gorretta and Jane Udall are developing an interactive program for new hike leaders. This program will, hopefully, be the incentive for members to expand their horizons, learn the basics and join our elite group of Hike Leaders.

**Workdays Report:** Rich informed the Council the East Indio Hills Trail is getting closer to completion. Working with Gordon Fiddler of the Friends of the Desert Mountains [FODM], our Workdays have been well-attended making excellent progress with each outing. FODM Workdays are now being published in the Desert Trails Hike Schedule as Gord is also a member of DTHC.

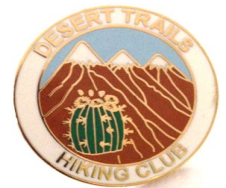
Rich also announced that we may have some work days with Wildlands Conservancy in the Sawtooth Mountains this season.

**2018 Getaway:** Rich announced at the November Social that Mary Barlow and Diane Stielstra have volunteered to organize the 2018 Getaway in the Santa Monica Mountains and Agoura Hills area. Dates are March 23-26, 2018. Details on lodging are still being negotiated. A few of the 100+ alumni of the last Getaway there in 2011 will be working on potential hikes.

**Hike Scheduler and Website Report:** Dave Luckwell announced that the website has been totally rebuilt over the summer and is now functioning well. Capabilities of the site are more robust, current and easier to manage. Bravo! Bravo! To Dave and his special friends.

Postings of hikes on the website have been easy for Leaders. With the conveniences built into using the Scheduler, Hike Leaders can easily modify their hike times, dates or even cancellation. CHECK THE WEBSITE FREQUENTLY as updating by all Leaders is now very easy.

**Communications Report:** With baton passing from Cathy Luckwell to Herbie Rochet who is not in the Valley yet, Dave McGuire reported there was nothing to report. All of us know there will be soon!



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**Desert Trails Coalition [DTC] Report:** Rich reported that the Land Exchange decision is imminent and the Trails Plan for the Valley is done but continuously updated. Current 2017-2018 goals of DTC include working to the removal the big horn sheep from the endangered species list and opening the Bump and Grind year round again. DTC has begun an educational outreach campaign to trail users in the Valley to increase awareness

**ONGOING BUSINESS:** Club donation discussion was postponed until the next meeting.

East Indio Hills Trail Name: The frontrunner name is Savannah Storm in the Indio Badlands. Nothing final on name selection but this one is gathering momentum. Trail will likely remain Strenuous.

**UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETING:** Friday, Jan 12, 2018 from 3-5 at Dianne's home

**Meeting lasted 2 hours 50 minutes**

**If you are interested in donating your time to a great club, consider becoming a member of DTHC council or hike leader. DTHC would love to have you join us. Contact any one of the council members. Give it a try!!!!!!**

