

October 2022 Volunteer Newsletter

Issue No. 8

Volunteer Today

Dedicate Yourself to Caring for the Land and Serving the People

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/angeles/workingtogether/volunteering>

Los Angeles Gateway Ranger District & San Gabriel Mountains National Monument

Correction Corner

In our August 2022 issue, page 4, Stop The Bleed Training article, we mislabeled OHVRC as Off Highway Volunteer Recreation Corps. It should have said OHVRC as Off Highway Volunteer Resource Corps. We regret this mistake.

John “Pete” Fish aka Pickaxe Pete

Pete Fish, AKA Pickaxe Pete, founder of the PCTA Trail Gorillas, 05/06/1931 to 03/26/22



Pete briefing a group of Boy Scouts on the day's work ahead in 2015.

Written by Matt Maxon

What can I say his dedication to the PCT was total.

He collected many tips and tricks for getting work done quickly and efficiently all the while maintaining an unmatched quality standard. Sharing all this knowledge freely.

I was inspired to emulate his work ethic, and bring it to our local trails. Pete took on what would at first glance a seemly impossible task of maintaining the first 706 miles of trail from Campo to Kennedy Meadows. Gathering other skilled and dedicated workers around him. But one bit at a time mile after mile the roughly 350 miles of chaparral & dead falls got done. Amazing to pull it all together. He also extended his work from time to time throughout California. One project sticks in my memory the dreadful terrible Section O ! Miles of deadfalls after a fire, day after day for 10 days of running chainsaws all day long 2-3 trips to work on this.

My contributions locally seem puny in comparison.

Probably some of the things Pete set out is a standard of work everybody is to follow. Another is the use of power equipment Clearing saw and chain saws are essential to achieving the amount of work and the standard of quality required/needed in southern California chaparral estimated to be about 350 miles of 706 miles from Campo to Kennedy Meadows . A dull tool is a dangerous tool; not only do you get less work done, you work harder too. Safety is job one, given the number of hours worked the number of injuries was low, I don't know what the value is but there were few serious or moderate injuries.

I went out on many 10 day projects for at least 3-4 years but my first was in the Anza Borrego State Park area. This is where I got my first cup of Pete's "Cowboy Coffee" definitely not good to the last drop! I was grateful to drink hot water and craved V8 after someone mentioned it. I guzzled a gallon of it on the way home. My electrolytes must have been way out of balance.

Thank You seems so inadequate when talking about Pete. I am happy to say I was privileged to know you. You are in my thoughts everyday and a constant reminder while I'm working on the trail to do better.

It is my understanding while Pete was "resting" he worked at the local food bank in Ventura, Ca.

What a guy!

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Ask An Altadena Mountain Rescue Team (AMRT) Member

Chris Gonzales, AMRT Member and Public Relations, had time to sit down (virtually, of course) to answer questions about the operations of AMRT in the Angeles National Forest.

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Pictured above: AMRT training on Sunday, August 21, 2022, end of day 'After Action Review' meeting.

Brenda: What area does AMRT cover in the Angeles National Forest?

Chris: Altadena Mountain Rescue Team (AMRT) covers the geographical area that begins East of Altadena called Kinneloa Mesa. From Kinneloa Mesa North to Mt. Wilson, then westward to Hwy 2. From Hwy 2, South to the famous NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory. A few of our most popular hiking destinations are Echo Mountain, Mt. Lowe, Mt. Wilson, Inspiration Point, Eaton Canyon, Henninger Flats, Brown Mtn Saddle, El Prieto Trail, and the Gabrielino Trail to name a few.

Brenda: What are your busiest months?

Chris: Historically it's May and June.

Brenda: Are there certain places you get called out to often?

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Chris: We get a lot of requests for service along one of our busiest hiking trails and its offshoots. The Lower Sam Merrill Trail has a high volume of traffic. The calls range from hikers falling off the steep trail and unable to climb back up, heat related injuries, lost hikers, and heat related canine injuries.

Brenda: Is there one type of call you handle more than others?

Chris: Our most common call is that of the unprepared day hiker. They become lost due to their unfamiliarity with the trail system and get caught out after dark. Since they didn't bring a headlamp or paper trail map, they call for AMRT to guide them out. Many times, the hiker will step off a trail and travel downhill, become cliffted out in one of our many brush choked drainages where once committed an individual cannot go up or down due to the steepness of the terrain.

Brenda: Do you get a lot of snow/ice rescue calls?

Chris: Being in, "Sunny Southern California", surprisingly we do. Not necessarily in our initial response area but high up on the Angeles Crest Highway. The areas around Mt. Waterman, Mt. Baldy, and the North side of Mt. Wilson come to mind due to recent rescues we were involved with. As a member of the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA), we are certified in snow and ice rescue.

Brenda: What should someone do if they get stuck in bad weather?

Chris: First, stay calm and seek shelter. It can be as simple as huddling under your jacket or a tarp. Anything that gets you out of the elements. Next assess your situation, are you in danger of cold or heat exposure? Add or remove clothing to help you stay warm or cool off. Take inventory of what you have with you to survive. If you believe your life may be in danger, call for help immediately, depending on the situation and your location, it can take hours if not days for help to arrive.

Brenda: What skills do you need to be a member of AMRT? Type of training?

Chris: A lot of the skills can be taught to new members. But life experience, common sense, and the will to never quit are traits that you have to bring with you. You're going to have to be a team player, no individuals in search and rescue! The County of Los Angeles mandates that all its Search and Rescue team members be certified as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). Team members will have to apply to become Reserve Deputies within the first few years of joining. Compassion, a love for the outdoors, mountaineering, camping, rock climbing, hiking, and community service are a few of the desirable traits and skills we look for.

Brenda: How does one get involved in Search and Rescue (SAR)?

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Chris: First do your homework, you need to know what you're getting into. Search and Rescue is not a hobby, it's basically another career, one that will involve great sacrifice and time away from your family and friends but is very rewarding. It shouldn't be taken lightly. There are many teams in our area, find the one that's right for you. You will want to live close by the team you choose so that you can answer the call in a timely manner.

Once you decide on what team you want to join, you will have to begin attending their monthly meetings. This will show that you can make a commitment.

Brenda: Any Advice for those thinking about applying to their local search and rescue team ?

Chris: Become a sponge, absorb all you can. Scour the internet and social media and see what types of calls the various teams respond too. Pay close attention to the skills needed to accomplish the mission.

*Read "Mountaineering, Freedom of the hills" by The Mountaineers

*Read the National Park Service, "Technical Rescue Handbook"

*Become an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

Be honest with yourself, why do you want to be involved with SAR. Will you be an asset to the team or a liability?

Brenda: How long does it take to be a fully qualified team member?

Chris: It varies from team to team. On average I'd say approximately two – three years.

Brenda: What must team members do to keep up their certifications and training?

Chris: I can only speak to what our team does to stay current.

We train every Thursday evening and the second Sunday of every month. The training is very structured and covers everything we may respond to.

On top of that we must maintain our Teams MRA certification. This involves an annual test of one of the three rescue disciplines: Snow and Ice Rescue, Technical Rock Rescue, and Search and Tracking.

Everyone must maintain a current EMT certification and their physical fitness.

Brenda: Besides the grueling physical aspects, what are some of the more unexpected challenges that come with being on a search and rescue team?

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Chris: The hours spent away from family and friends can be quite a challenge. You must remember to take the time and focus on family and put training and callouts on the back burner sometimes. The backbone of the team is really family and their support. You will rely on them more than you know.

Brenda: How would you respond to conflicting orders on the scene?

Chris: The best way is to ask the Team Leader to confirm the orders. For instance, if another member tells you to build a different anchor, let them know you were told by the Team Leader to perform a different task and to confirm it with them. Our team trains so much together we all know our job and have a unique cohesiveness that is quite impressive, so this rarely happens.

Brenda: How does the team handle stress?

Chris: After each call we conduct what's known as an "After Action Review" It's a quick recap of what went well and what we could have done better. Then once a month the Team meets, and we discuss the previous months calls. We again address any deficiencies and try to find ways to do things better.

The debriefs are a great way to relieve stress by talking about it with your peers. We have programs in place that allow us to seek counseling if we experience a traumatic event. And of course, good old physical activity is a great stress reliever.

Brenda: Can you share about the scariest situation you have encountered?

Chris: I don't have any.

Brenda: What is the most memorable rescue or mission you've been called out on?

Chris: When I first joined the AMRT, while still a trainee, I was allowed to accompany one of our Full Members on a search for an elderly man who had been missing for 7 days in the Angeles National Forest. We were given an assignment that involved hiking deep into a canyon, search it, then get hoisted out by helicopter at the end of our assignment. We hiked a few hours down a trail and into our search area. Once there we began scouring the banks of a rushing creek yelling for the lost hiker and blowing our whistles. We came across a party of campers. We stopped to chat with them and grab lunch. Just as I was getting ready to take a bite of my sandwich, we heard a faint yell for help. Our eyes got big, we dropped our food and sprinted down the stream. As we crashed through the water, we looped around a large boulder. Lying there, up under a boulder was the man that everyone had been searching for all week. What a huge relief to find him in relatively good condition but too weak to walk. To see the look on his face and the quiver in his voice as he rejoiced at being found was humbling. We radioed for a helicopter that arrived quickly to take him to the hospital. What an amazing start in search and rescue!

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Brenda: What are some skills and gear you wish more people had in the backcountry?

Chris: If people planned for the unexpected, they would be okay. Google the “10 Essentials”. Cater those components to each outing and take them with you every time. It’s not enough just to carry the survival gear. You need to learn how to use it before an emergency. I know a lot of people carry a compass but only know it points North, not how to truly navigate with it.

Always let someone know where you’re going and when to expect you back. If you’re in a group, NEVER split up. We have so many examples of parties separating and how that becomes the catalyst to a very bad situation.

Brenda: What are some things hikers can do to increase the chance of a positive outcome in the event of an emergency in the backcountry?

Chris: One of the acronyms we teach is S.T.O.P.

Stop:

- As soon as you realize you may be lost; stop, stay calm, stay put. Panic is your greatest enemy.

Think:

- Go over in your mind how you got to where you are. What landmarks should you be able to see? Do not move at all until you have a specific reason to take a step.

Observe:

- Get out your compass and determine the directions based on where you are standing. Do not walk aimlessly.
- If you are on a trail, stay on it. All trails are marked with signs (where intersections meet). However, signs are sometimes vandalized or stolen.
- As a very last resort, follow a drainage or stream downhill. This is often a difficult path but could lead to a trail or road. Again, this could be very dangerous.

Plan:

- Carry the “10 Essentials”.
- Based on your thinking and observations, come up with some possible plans, think them through then act on one of them.
- If you are not very, very confident in the route, then it’s always better to stay put.
- If it’s nightfall, you are injured or you are near exhaustion, stay in place.

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Brenda: This has been a fascinating discussion; volunteers have heard about search and rescue teams in the Angeles National Forest. It is important to acknowledge all the work that goes into being a Search and Rescue member. We appreciate all the information provided here to keep us safe too.

Thank you very much for your time!

Chris: You're very welcome. Hope everyone enjoys!

Volunteers in Action

Alan Coles and Bear Canyon Trail Crew recently installed new signs on the Burkhart Trail and Mine Gulch Trail. Staff had installed new signs last October on Mine Gulch but they got blown away in a massive avalanche. Those signs were on heavy metal post and you can see where they got ripped out and blown away.

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Passages (Image & content from the Arroyo View publication of the Sierra Club)

Long-time Sierra Club activist and Chapter volunteer Don Bremner passed away on the 22nd of August at the age of 93. Those of us who knew and worked with him are not surprised that he continued with his active support of the Club until the very end.

Don lived in Pasadena, and was vitally concerned about all environmental issues affecting the greater San Gabriel Valley and his backyard mountains. Since joining the Sierra Club in 1984, he served, and often chaired, entities such as the Pasadena Group, San Gabriel Valley Task Force, Forest Task Force, Conservation Committee, Chapter Elections Committee, and the Arroyo Seco Foundation. In 2009, in response to the disastrous Station Fire, he co-founded the Sierra Club San Gabriels Trail Crew, subsequently leading or participating in many work parties to restore and maintain trails within the burn area. For that work, and for revitalizing the Forest Task Force, the Chapter presented Don with an Extraordinary Achievement Award in 2016. His other Chapter awards included: Conservation Service Award (2003), Special Service Award (2007), Weldon Heald Conservation Award (2008), and Lifetime Service Award (2019).

Don's quiet demeanor and steadfastness in support of the Sierra Club endeared him to many and he will be greatly missed.—*Bob Cates, Chair of Chapter History Committee*

A memorial service will be held Saturday, October 22, 2022, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Neighborhood Unitarian Universalist Church , 301 N. Orange Grove Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91103.

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Wildlife in the Forest



Tarantulas comprise a group of large and often hairy spiders of the family Theraphosidae. Tarantulas of various species occur throughout the United States. The tarantula is an invertebrate that relies on an exoskeleton for muscular support. Their sizes can range from as small as the size of a BB pellet to as large as a dinner plate when the legs are fully extended. They are generally classed among the terrestrial types. They are burrowers that live in the ground. They don't use their webs for hunting, instead using them as building material or tripwire.

Tarantula fangs face downwards, as opposed to those of true spiders which face each other, allowing them to make pincerlike motions. They also own two book lungs, as opposed to true spiders which only have one. Their lifespan is also longer than most spiders. Most species take two

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to five years to reach adulthood. Female specimens have been known to reach 30 to 40 years of age and have survived on water alone for up to two years.

Some genera of tarantulas hunt prey primarily in trees; others hunt on or near the ground. All tarantulas can produce silk; while arboreal species typically reside in silken ‘tube tent’, terrestrial species line their burrows with silk to stabilize the burrow wall and facilitate climbing up and down.

All tarantulas are venomous. Although their venom is not deadly to humans, some bites cause serious discomfort that might persist for several days.

Source: Wikipedia

Photo Credit: Kristin Sabo

Photo taken on Gold Canyon Trail, Tujunga, California.

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Canyon Bat, also known as the western pipistrelle, is a species of vesper bat. They are the smallest bat in the United States. During the day, rock crevices serve as the preferred roosting sites, although some bats have been found roosting in crevices inside mines. The bats may also be found in buildings, under rocks, and in dense growths of sedge.

The bats are commonly the first bat out in the evening and the last bat to be seen after sunrise. They are usually not active during the overnight hours. They are an insectivorous bat. As such, their flight is erratic and fluttery. Their low-aspect wings give these bats increased maneuverability, an important characteristic when hunting flying insects.

They will enter periods of hibernation when the weather grows cold, or food supplies diminish. Bats that hibernate, on average, have a longer lifespan than bats that do not. The maximum lifespan of bats is three and a half times longer than other mammals of similar size. Six species have been recorded to live over thirty years in the wild.

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Females give birth to their young in June. These bats usually have two young but may produce only one young per mating. In keeping with their mostly solitary nature, females raise their young alone or in small maternity colonies of no more than a dozen bats. Young are typically capable of flight within two to three weeks of birth...

Source: Wikipedia

Photo Credit: Lauren Ballas

Photo taken at San Gabriel Canyon outdoor education center on Highway 39.

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ANF Hunting Update - 2022

HUNTING in the ANF 2022:

California Department of Fish & Wildlife

If you witness a poaching or polluting incident or any fish and wildlife violation, or have information about such a violation, immediately dial the toll free CalTIP number **1 888 334-CALTIP (888 334-2258)**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anyone with a cell phone may send an anonymous tip to CDFW by texting "CALTIP", followed by a space and the message, to **847411** (tip411).

DEER HUNTING ZONES/SEASONS – ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST

D-11 (General Deer Archery) Sept. 3 – Sept. 25, 2022

D-11 (General Deer) Oct. 8 – Nov. 6, 2022

A-31 (Archery-either antlerless sex) Sept. 24 – Dec. 31, 2022

J-13 (Apprentice*-either sex) Nov. 20 – Nov. 27, 2022

BEAR (archery): August 20, 2022, → September 11, 2022

BEAR: (General Bear) October 8, 2022) → December 25, 2022, or earlier if 1700 bears have been harvested within California. The reported harvest of bears in the 2021 bear season was 1267. Game wardens validate bear tags and determine when to officially end the bear season (usually mid-November). This includes bears harvested during the archery season.

BIGHORN SHEEP: Hunting not allowed on the Angeles National Forest

MOUNTAIN LIONS: Hunting not allowed in California

TREE SQUIRRELS: Hunting not allowed on the Angeles National Forest

JACKRABBIT: Open all year – no limit

COYOTE, SKUNK, OPOSSUM, WEASELS, MOLES, RODENTS, ENGLISH SPARROW, STARLING:
Hunting of these animals is open all year – no limits – any method of take except poison, traps or baiting.

A National Migratory Game Bird Permit must be affixed to the hunting license to hunt migratory game birds in California. For specific references go to <http://www.dfg.ca.gov>

HUNTING IS PROHIBITED IN THE SAN DIMAS EXPERIMENTAL FOREST

NOTE: Per Title 36 – Code of Federal Regulations, Section 261.10 (d) – Discharging a firearm or any other implement capable of taking human life, causing injury, or damaging property:

- (1) In or within 150 yards of a residence, building, campsite, developed recreation site or occupied area, or
- (2) Across or on a National Forest System road or a body of water adjacent thereto, or in any manner or place whereby any person or property is exposed to injury or damage as a result of such discharge.
- (3) Into or within a cave

*Apprentice- hunter must be less than 18 years of age at the beginning of the license year (July 1).

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Help Wanted

**The Volunteer Newsletter needs
volunteer Fellow Editors. If you are
interested, please email Ben White at
[bwooten@hotmail.com.](mailto:bwooten@hotmail.com)**

**The Volunteer Newsletter needs articles
about groups and our fellow volunteers.
Please submit to Brenda Beck at
[Brenda.beck@sbcglobal.net.](mailto:Brenda.beck@sbcglobal.net)**

Thank you!

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Work For the Forest Service!



The U. S. Forest Service needs you! The forest needs you. Our wilderness, watersheds, our recreation spaces, they all need dedicated men and women to serve by joining possibly the greatest, most rewarding job in the world.

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There has never been a better time to work for the U.S. Forest Service! Lots of new jobs are being hired now and in upcoming months.

Learn more: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/jobs/careers>

Be sure to click on the "Hiring and Recruitment Events" tab on the left of the page.

The Conservation Funding Crisis by the Conservation Economic Institute:

[5fc209_8d012f51d97c494fa174f62f95f3b57f.pdf \(conservationecon.org\)](#)

**Scientists Say: Hey,
Hikers, Stop Stacking
Rocks!** |
HowStuffWorks

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