

Prudential
Malibu Realty
310.456.6431

OLAN LAW
www.olanlaw.com
310.566.0010
PERSONAL INJURIES • ACCIDENTS

Click to Tour
Malibu Rentals
Jannette Frazier
No Charge to Tenants
Access All Malibu Rentals
310-457-RENT

CFAM
The Right Mortgage The Right Way
Rosie Rains 310.444.7191 ext. 126

MALIBU ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS
Malibu & Topanga
weekend "open homes"

For LEASE
Malibu Garden School
(Odyssey/New Roads)
310.210.7156

Isabel Miller
Rents Malibu!

The Malibu Times

58°
Clear

Welcome to the site! [Login](#) or [Signup](#) below.

[Login](#) | [Signup](#)

Advanced Search

GO

[Home](#) [News](#) [Opinion](#) [Blogs](#) [Malibu Life](#) [Entertainment](#) [Community](#) [Photo Gallery](#) [Our Newspaper](#) [Malibu Times Magazine](#) [Classifieds](#)

Home ▶ Malibu Life

High-flying volunteers

The little-known, all-volunteer Mountain Bike Unit has been patrolling the trails of the Santa Monica Mountains for 25 years

Story **Comments** Image (2)

Share Print Font Size: - +

[Previous](#) [Next](#)



Jimmy Tallal / TMT

Bikers on patrol

Stacey Ruda Best, Volunteer Coordinator for the Mountain Bike Unit and resident of Woodland Hills, rides on patrol with volunteer John Weiler of Pacific Palisades in Cheeseboro/Palo Comado Canyon—one of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Areas, located next to Agoura Hills.



Posted: Wednesday, December 26, 2012 8:00 am

By Jimmy Tallal / Special to The Malibu Times |
0 comments

Last month, two members of the Mountain Bike Unit (MBU) patrol found a man with a badly broken leg on the Backbone Trail, about a mile off Mulholland Highway. They radioed for help, knowing he'd have to be carried out to an area where a helicopter could land and take him to a hospital. Forty-five minutes later, an emergency crew arrived and carried the injured man out on a stretcher.

It was the latest example of the essential yet little-known service this all-volunteer team of mountain bikers has been performing for 25 years: patrolling the public trails of ten nearby parks totaling 60,000 acres in the Santa Monica Mountains on lands owned by the National Park Service, California State Parks and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

The 130 volunteers currently in the program patrol the trails in groups of two to four wearing distinctive yellow jerseys and helmet covers. In the Malibu area, volunteers patrol the national recreation areas of Zuma/Trancas Canyons and Circle X Ranch, as well as the Malibu Creek, Leo Carrillo, Point Mugu and Topanga Canyon State Parks. They assist hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers – or anyone using the trails - by providing information, directions, help with minor repairs and first aid. The bike unit is able to go places where rangers in vehicles can't go, because most of the trails are only about three feet wide.

Malibu resident Larry Koch has volunteered with

Mountain Bike Unit for the past several years.

"We're the eyes and ears of the park rangers," he said. "I've had three rescues with a broken collar bone and one with a broken leg. The dispatchers know we're out there.

"What's interesting is I'd be out mountain biking anyway," Koch continued. "I'm a retired airline pilot, so I've got time on my hands, and it's a chance to give back to the community. I got 500 hours in this year and I try to go at least twice a week for about four hours."

The MBU was formed back in 1988 by a Calabasas-based group of mountain bikers called the Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA), and later spun-off as an independent organization. It was the first volunteer program in the nation co-sponsored by both a federal and state agency, and became a model program for the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA).

The volunteer organization reports to Melanie Turner, a Santa Monica Mountains law enforcement park ranger for the National Park Service.

"They kind of run themselves," Turner said. "The ages of the volunteers run from the 20s to the 70s. They schedule themselves for a minimum of eight hours of patrol each month on the MBU website."

"There are all levels of riders in the MBU and you only go where you're capable of going," Koch explained. "You

Connect With Us

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

The Malibu Times On Twitter

MT about a day ago the malibu times was checking out Merry Christmas, #Malibu! <http://t.co/kW8xMG7X>

MT about a day ago the malibu times was checking out #Blog | Taming our gun culture: How much does fear drive our reactions to mass shootings and other dangers? <http://t.co/cBhulaPn> #gunrights

MT about a day ago the malibu times was checking out Holiday forecast: No rain on Christmas, but rain for the rest of the week <http://t.co/3B3ckl6h> #Malibu #Weather

Malibu Times is not responsible for the content above, which is provided in real-time from Twitter.

Calendar

December 2012						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
today's events		browse		submit		

Popular Commented Facebook Activity

Stories

- ▶ [Eye on the sparrow](#)
- ▶ [Light earthquake strikes off Malibu coast](#)
- ▶ [Malibu facilities closed for the holidays](#)
- ▶ [State parks finds more hidden money](#)
- ▶ [Malibu under Hazardous Weather Outlook](#)

More

Photos

go on patrol with like-skilled people and all trail levels get covered. One person carries a medical pack and another carries a radio."

What causes the most trail accidents?

"Speeding too fast for conditions, a lack of common courtesy and head-on collisions," Turner said. "There have been 14 wrecks in the past two years that have led to a helicopter take-out."

Volunteers are certified after undergoing an extensive series of training classes conducted by the park agencies, and must also go on several ride-alongs before they can graduate.

Class topics include visitor contact skills, radio use, park rules and regulations, first aid and CPR certification, park etiquette, park philosophy and historical information.

Field training exercises are held at Malibu Creek State Park. "It's a huge production of about a hundred people enacting a dozen mock scenarios of what we might encounter when we're patrolling," said Volunteer Coordinator Stacey Ruda Best. "For example, different situations with horses, people picking wildflowers and major medical emergencies."

While volunteers are considered to be first responders in emergency situations, they have no law enforcement authority. They report park violations to the rangers by radio if visitors are uncooperative.

An informational meeting for those interested in volunteering is scheduled for the King Gillette Ranch Auditorium at 9 a.m. on Sat., Feb. 2. Actual volunteer training sessions begin on Feb. 9, 2013 at National Park Service headquarters in Thousand Oaks. For more information, visit the website at www.mountainbikeunit.com.

Videos

Latest Photos

Latest Photos



Bikers on patrol

Volunteer John Weiler of Pacific Palisades and Stacey Ruda Best, Volunteer Coordinator for the Mountain Bike Unit and resident of Woodland Hills, ride on patrol with in Cheeseboro/Palo Comado Canyon—one of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Areas, located next to Agoura Hills.



Bikers on patrol

Stacey Ruda Best, Volunteer Coordinator for the Mountain Bike Unit and resident of Woodland Hills, rides on patrol with volunteer John Weiler of Pacific Palisades in Cheeseboro/Palo Comado Canyon—one of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Areas, located next to Agoura Hills.



The Eruption of Mount Vesuvius

Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes's 1813 work "The Eruption of Mount Vesuvius," is on display until Jan.



Young Pompeian Woman

Body cast of a victim of the eruption, called "Young Pompeian Woman with a Garment around her Waist," at the Getty Villa.

Discuss Share Print

Posted in Malibu life on Wednesday, December 26, 2012 8:00 am. | Tags: Malibu Creek State Park, Santa Monica Mountains, Mountain Bike Unit, Malibu, Zuma Canyon, Trancas Canyon, Point Mugu, Malibu Creek, Leo Carrillo, Larry Koch, Stacey Ruda Best

Rules of Conduct

- 1 Keep it Clean. Please avoid obscene, vulgar, lewd, racist or sexually-oriented language.
2 Don't Threaten or Abuse. Threats of harming another person will not be tolerated. AND PLEASE TURN OFF CAPS LOCK.
3 Be Truthful. Don't knowingly lie about anyone or anything.
4 Be Nice. No racism, sexism or any sort of -ism that is degrading to another person.
5 Be Proactive. Use the 'Report' link on each comment to let us know of abusive posts.
6 Share with Us. We'd love to hear eyewitness accounts, the history behind an article.

Welcome to the discussion.

Screen Name or Email
Password
Login
Forgot?

Need an account? Create one now.

PACIFIC COAST GREENS
THE NATURAL CHOICE
Open Daily 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.
310-456-0353
www.pcgreens.com
22801 Pacific Coast Highway Malibu, CA 90265

TEAKWAREHOUSE
Outdoor furniture including sofas, chairs, tables, and dining sets.

WHEN BUYING, SELLING
OR TRADING

confidence
— IS —
precious.



*Antique Platinum Diamond ring. Circa: 1920's.
Price available upon request.*

Estate Diamond Exchange

5017 Kanan Road, Agoura Hills, CA 91301
(Kanan Road at the 101)
yournextdiamond.com
(818) 865-8160

S e c t i o n s e r v i c e s c o n t a c t u s

- Home
- Community
- Malibu
- News
- Sports
- Opinions
- Obituaries
- Entertainment
- Photos
- Videos
- Online
- Weather
- About Us
- Contact Us
- Advertisers
- Services
- Subscriptions
- Classifieds
- Real Estate
- Features

S e a r c h

Search

Search in:

- All
- News
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Business
- Opinions
- Community
- Photos
- Videos