



"Friends of the Forest Lend a Hand"

By Kevin Harding

At a meeting in February, the Friends of the Forest voted to spend up to \$4,000 to help the fire crew of the Red Rock District build storage units and work space in the new warehouse near the new ranger station. The warehouse was two floors of vacant space when we began. After several meetings with the fire crew to decide what was needed, Mark Munsell volunteered to use his engineering talents to plan the storage units and workspace.

The fire crew is presently storing their supplies at the Beaver Creek station, but with this newly organized space, along with some smaller storage buildings, they will be able to work out of the Red Rock Ranger Station. Fire season gears up in April, so we had to work fast to provide an organized space for the crew to move into as soon as possible.

One question that sometimes comes up when visitors stop by is "Why do we do it?" The answer is really not complicated. There was a need that would have been difficult for the Red Rock District to meet in another fashion, we had the manpower and the resources, and our volunteers like to work and enjoy each other's company.

Most of us are retired from a variety of professions, and these kinds of projects give us a chance to make a contribution to the community in a very tangible manner. The hours pass quickly as we work together towards a common goal.

Before we began construction, Georgia Munsell came to the rescue by making several key phone calls to obtain significant discounts and sales tax relief from Home Depot. This was a great boost to the project that allowed us to buy quality materials for a successful outcome. We are very grateful for Home Depot's cooperation and generosity.

Mark Munsell also volunteered his shop as the primary construction site. We needed to cut and assemble many of the units in Mark's shop because there were no power tools available at the warehouse and the slanted floor space that provides drainage makes building cabinets true and square a challenge. Thanks to the efforts of Rick Zabor, Gene Rector, Mike Vitek, Jim Manning, Dan Aragaki, John True, and members of the fire crew, we shipped completed units to the warehouse for mounting.

Before we were done, we built a large workbench, cabinets, shelving units, tool racks, and hose racks. This has been a substantial project with over 400 man hours, 75 sheets of plywood, and over 4,000 screws. Yes, we have driven at least 4,000 screws!

On several occasions the fire crew, under Dave Corrin's leadership, provided the much needed muscle to move and mount large structures. But without a doubt, it was Mark's talents as a cabinet maker, guiding those of us who have some basic carpentry skills to build things that are actually square and fit that made this project possible. Mark's standards were high, but the result was well worth the effort.

The crew included Kevin Harding, Ron Rusk, Dan Aragaki, Glen Buenning, Joe Landholm, Al Gilson, and Gene Rector. All of the cabinets and shelving on the first floor have adjustable shelving which involved drilling thousands of carefully spaced holes for the tabs that hold the shelves. Glen and Joe did the lion's share of that tedious work without complaint. Gene, Joe and Kevin lacquered the cabinet doors and frames to guard against the dirty

hands of busy firemen. Al Gilson stepped up to help us layout a foundation for the fifty-foot outside hose rack.

This is the kind of project that the Friends of the Forest can be proud of. Our funding, time, and skills were put to good use to meet an urgent need. Friends of the Forest always welcomes news members. For more information, visit www.friendsoftheforestedona.org or contact the Red Rock Ranger Station at 203-2900.