



# Branching Out

## Friends of the Forest Sedona

Volume 2009, Issue 2

April 2009

### ***From the President***

***Roy Julian***

Spring is certainly here! The forest is alive and kicking thanks to wonderful rain and snow from Mother Nature, and also thanks to the dedication and hard work of the Forest Service and the Friends.

One of my goals for the Friends this year is to write a policy and procedure manual for how we conduct important business in the Friends. We are getting larger and more complex, with 400-plus members, and having some written guidelines for a few essential functions is a good idea. During the February meeting, the Board of Directors approved this concept. These standard operating procedures (SOPs) would constitute a supplement to our bylaws, not a change or replacement of them.

Some examples of written SOPs might include:

1. Formation of new committees
2. Special projects
3. Forest Service requests
4. Nominating people for awards
5. Nominating officers
6. Authorizing the Board to vote via email between meetings
7. How we count our members
8. Officer and chair job descriptions

A subcommittee comprised of **Mike Ward, George Coombes, Janet Walters, Carol Wirkus and myself** will flesh out the actual wording on a number of SOPs and present them to the Board in April for their consideration and vote. All SOPs will be

voted on by the Board before being placed in the Friends' policy and procedure manual.

I have appointed an Executive Committee consisting of **Al Cornell, Justine Kusner, Helen Campbell, Chuck Jenkins, Mike Ward, Carol Wirkus, Dean Campbell, Susan Vitek and myself**. We met initially in late January and discussed the procedure manual and several other issues of importance to the Friends. I would like to thank all of the members of the Executive Committee for their time and guidance on these matters.



Another issue voted on by the Board in February was to adopt a standardized list of committee names to be used in all official publications,

such as the membership brochure, website, new member welcome letter, etc. Informally, Friends are still welcome to use some of our more colorful names for committees, such as **Mike Vitek's "River Rats."** The standardized committee names are:

#### EXTERNAL COMMITTEES

1. Cultural Resources
2. Fire Tower Lookout
3. Fossil Creek
4. River Ranger Support
5. Trail Maintenance & Construction
6. Trail Patrol (& Hotshots)
7. Visitor Information Services
8. Water Sampling
9. Historic Orchards
10. Wranglers

#### INTERNAL COMMITTEES & ASSIGNMENTS

1. Ambassador at Large
2. Archivist
3. Auditor
4. Executive Committee

5. Grants / NFF
6. Hospitality
7. Information and Data
8. Membership
9. Merchandising
10. Newsletter Editor
11. Publicity
12. Training
13. Webmaster

We were pleased to receive a donation for \$1,426 from the Boynton Canyon Preservation Fund, specifically to be used for "trail and trailhead maintenance, re-seeding, signage, cleaning and improvement of Boynton Canyon." I have asked the Trail Maintenance and Construction Committee to evaluate Boynton Canyon's needs, in conjunction with the Forest Service, for recommendations on how to best use these funds.

The **Chief of the Forest Service, Gail Kimbell**, visited Red Rock Country from Washington on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February and met with members of the Forest Service as well as with members of the Friends. She was very likeable, approachable, down-to-earth person who quickly put you at ease with her sense of humor and warmth. It was a pleasure to meet her and have Friends tell her that one of the reasons volunteerism is so successful here is due to the dedication and hard work of the RRRD leadership and staff.

We had a very successful work day on January 23<sup>rd</sup> alongside numerous Forest Service personnel, when basic landscaping and drainage issues were successfully addressed. **Al Gilson and Kevin Harding** ramrodded the pouring of cement for the sign base and continue to save significant money through their efforts to complete most of the sign base with volunteer hours. **Sarah Belcher**, Forest Service landscape architect, who orchestrated the work day, remarked that the original bid for the sign was \$35,000, but that due to volunteer labor and materials, the final sign will cost about \$10,000. This is another excellent example of how our volunteer hours translate into money saved for the Forest Service.

Speaking of work, **Bill Kusner** reported record volunteer hours during the month of January for the Friends. Congratulations to all of you for the dedication you are giving our forest. You are making a difference!

During the February Forest Service staff meeting, **Heather Provencio, District Ranger**, reported that the Forest Service personnel would be using a new "emergency information form" which specifies whom to notify in the event of a medical emergency. She offered the form to the Friends as well. On an optional basis, any Friend who would like to utilize this form should contact their committee chair and fill out the form. The forms will be kept at VIS, which is open seven days a week. In the advent of a medical emergency, the Friends will know whom you want contacted. This form might be especially relevant to Friends working in Trail Maintenance, Cultural Resources, VIS, Orchards and Water Sampling.

**Jennifer Burns** has begun her new duties as the head of Recreation for the RRRD, replacing Bill Stafford. At the March staff

meeting, she discussed several upcoming goals including improving signage on district trails, dealing with "social trails" from a more community-oriented perspective, and trying to establish a new dialog with the mountain bike community. We welcome Jennifer and look forward to working with her.

In other news, in addition to **Dean Campbell** becoming the new president of ANHA, **Jennifer Young** and **Noreen Lisowski** were elected to the Board of ANHA, while **Jan Lisowski** has been appointed as liaison to ANHA from the Friends. These developments will serve to increase even more the cooperation and communication between our two groups, which is beneficial given that the mission of both organizations is to support the Forest Service.

In closing, I would like to comment that not only are we the "Friends of the Forest," we are also "Friends of the Friends." I have heard time and again from many of you that you have never met a more friendly, inclusive, warm group of people than we have in the Friends. **Claire and I** heartily agree with this observation and have been richly rewarded by the friendships of many of you. During this time of rapid growth, we have many new members from all parts of the country. Let's all be sure to live up to our name and reputation by extending that same friendship to new members and making them feel welcome.

Roy Julian

**An Important Reminder-----Please Read**

**The list of past due accounts is unusually long for mid-March. Please be reminded of our renewal policy: Those who have not renewed their 2009 membership BEFORE July 1 will be assumed to be no longer interested in FOF membership and will be dropped from the roster. For those who do wish to renew and have not yet paid 2009 dues, please mail a check ASAP to:**

**Friends of the Forest, P.O. Box 2391, Sedona, AZ 86339**

**If you are unsure whether or not your dues are paid, look on your Newsletter label. If yours says "Paid thru 2008", it's time to renew! Any other questions, call Sonya Landholm at 928-284-1299. Thanks, Friends !**

**Volunteer Hour Report from Bill Kusner**

**For the five months of the fiscal year, the Friends have volunteered 11, 157.50 hours compared to last years 9937.75 hours. Summary of committees: Cultural Resources—1476.5; Patrol—3199.25; Trail Building—1063.75; VIS—2413.5**

## Publicity

**Carol Wirkus**

When new Publicity Committee member **Georgia Munsell** asked what our goals are, we came up with the following: "The objectives of the FOF Publicity Committee are to inform the community about the activities of the Friends of the Forest, enhance the image of the Red Rock Ranger District, educate the public about Forest issues, and attract new members to the Friends of the Forest."

To help us understand how we can most effectively work with our local newspapers, **Roy Julian and I** met with the editor of the "Red Rock News," and I talked with the editor of "The Villager." Both editors expressed interest in the Friends of the Forest and provided insights about how to successfully get our stories published.

Our Publicity Committee developed a schedule of articles and writers for the next six months, with each of our members taking on a different FOF subject. Major thanks to **Roy** for writing the March article—a timely story to encourage people to attend V-V Discovery Days. In April, look for a story from **Past-President Mike Ward** who will inform the public about what the Friends are accomplishing through grant funding.

**Susan Vitek** is continuing to provide story ideas to the newspapers. She has built great relationships with some of the best reporters, who appreciate hearing from her. This is an effective way to get FOF and Forest Service news published—and someone else does the research and writing!

**David Fausch** continues to make his considerable marketing skills available to Red Rock District Public Affairs Officer, **Connie Birkland**, to assist with any activities with which she would like help.

Did you know the **Friends of the Forest will have a 15-year anniversary in June?** We are using this milestone as a publicity opportunity.  
Carol Wirkus



## Weed & Seed Committee

**Justine Kusner**

**Ruth Cornell, Noreen Lisowski and Justine Kusner** are continuing weed removal at Bell Rock TH. Target plants are Malta starthistle (*Centaurea Melitensis*) and Russian thistle (*Salsola iberica* Sennen). The rosettes of the Malta are being removed as they appear. Johnson Grass (*Sorghum halepense*), an invasive vigorously moving into our forest areas, is being removed when found from the two 'triangles' within our team's work area.

There is much work to be done along the perimeters of Bell Rock Trail Head. We have removed many bags of dried Russian thistle to improve the appearance of the Trail Head edges. Please join in our efforts to improve the appearance and vegetative health of this premier Trail Head. It is always very busy and deserves to look as beautiful as the red rocks everyone comes to see.  
Justine Kusner 284 0714

## Membership

**Sonya Landholm**

This month's Membership question was posed by Arizona/Maine Friend, **Georgia Munsell**, "How many states are represented on our Membership list?" It's a good question, with an answer that surprised me! Our members reside in a grand total of 22 states, including Arizona! That's right, we have Friends living from coast to coast, from California to New York, as far north as Minnesota and as far south as Texas: literally in every section of the U.S. The word of our remarkable organization has spread, and we are pleased and proud to have support throughout the country. Thanks for your membership, out-of-staters, and to all---Good job of passing the word!

Now on to our newest members. Since the last Newsletter Report, we were joined in January by **Rosalyn Sallenave, Craig Libby, Debra and Jeff Fleeger**; in February by **Bill Bruderman, Doug Brown, Steven Ryder, Ray and Linda Allen, Norm and Janice LaDuke, Richard and Sandra Johnson**; and as of mid-March, by **Jeanie Heiser, William and Janet Birtwell, David and Sharon Winkel, Sue and Jerry Haan**.

We hope to have the chance to greet and make welcome these new Friends at our April 15th meeting!

Sonya Landholm

**At Left: Sunday Hike in VOC on March 15th. Sunday hikes will likely end in late April and resume in October. For more information, call Gene and Darl Rector. 634 3942**

## **Trail Maintenance & Construction** **Rick Zabor and Bob Tener**

In this time period we completed work on **Broken Arrow, Submarine and Chapel** where we did our usual maintenance. We repaired and constructed drainages, installed steps, brushed and improved the tread. These trails are hard on signs; we found 2 in the bushes and another one was broken.

The **work day at the Ranger Station** was another full press on the landscape surrounding the Visitor and Administration buildings. The **Rangers, Fire and Ace volunteer group** along with 14 **FOF** members combined their efforts to address some of the pending items. We finished a rock retaining wall and two very large drainages with help from a small dozer. We painted a portion of a fence and a separate crew focused on the **sign near SR 179**. Over 72 hours were put in not including the sign crew. The **Red Rock District sign** footing was in place at the end of the day. Next came the rebar structure, the construction of the concrete forms, the pouring of the concrete and removal of the forms. A contractor will place red rock over the concrete and then the sign will be hung. The crew is working with the Forest Service (F.S.) engineers and lead by our own **Al Gilson** with help from **Kevin Harding, Mark Munsell, Glen Buenning** and several others. **FOF** has so far put in over **132 hours** on this important project.

Often we are asked to do what I like to call **specials**. A special is any project over and above what we typically do. Working with the **Patrol Committee, Jeff Dunn** informed us of a lot of trash near the **Bandit T/H** as reported by **Georgia Munsell**. Using a FS pickup 6-7 of us gathered the trash. We broke up 5 campsites comprising of mattresses, clothing, canned food, magazines, USB cables and sleeping bags. Wood pallets, foam, beer cans, tires, a roof of a car and scraps of plywood were also picked up. All told we filled 1.5 dumpsters at Beaver Creek R.S. and put in 47 hours of labor to clean this area. We repeated this effort at another abandoned campsite off of **RD 525** as reported by **Kevin Harding and Roy Julian**. Cans, many plastic water containers with shower head, a cooler, a decent dining room chair and trash; we again filled half of a dumpster.

**Big Park Loop Trail** is actually 2 loops that share Court-house Loop on the north side and private property bounds the south end. This trail is heavily used by all (bikes, horses and hikers). So extra attention is made to ac-

commodate all the users. Over 2 miles addressed with 69 drainages repaired, 19 check dams repaired, brushed and tread improved in numerous areas. The 6-9 workers put in over **122 hours** with **Ranger Brandon Haraughty**.

We have never worked on the **Llama Trail** which was built a few years ago. **Cat Sampson** (FS) suggested that we GPS the trail with it's connectors to have an up-to-date record and this would then allow us to coordinate our efforts. The recording was lead by **Mike Vitek** and assisted by **Al Cornell** and **Frank Wirkus**. Mike created a track on a topo map with photographs of all the junctions. A very thorough job that will be of great benefit for future work on this heavily used bike trail. We worked on 2.7 miles with up to 12 members including new member **Doug Brown**. The bulk of the work was improving the tread by eliminating some rock obstructions and improving the paving all in order to be a more durable bike friendly trail.

Rick Zabor

## **Ambassador At Large**

**Helen Campbell**

As your Ambassador, it is my pleasure and honor to represent the Friends of the Forest and I extend to you a plethora of tributes and accolades from near, far, and wide. The Forest Service, nation-wide, is aware of the amazing things we accomplish on the Red Rock District. I hear it everywhere I go, over and over and over and I pass it along to you. I have been tasked by the Forest Service to genetically reproduce every member of this organization. But until then, do not doubt for one minute that you are a part of an organization that while it is not huge, is a huge success.

Evidence of this was clearly demonstrated in two telephone conversations I have had in the past month. The first was from Lisa Machnik, PhD, National Project Coordinator on Volunteerism in the Washington Office of the Forest Service. She described us as a benchmark for volunteerism. The second was from the same office. Our District Ranger, Heather Provencio and I were interviewed for over an hour and a half. Friends of the Forest is the national role model for what the Forest Service is striving to have on the nation's forest lands throughout the country.

The week-long National Water Resource Symposium was

held in February in Sedona for the second consecutive year. I was invited to speak at both, about the fantastic Friends of the Forest. I spoke under the much-appreciated warmth of the rising sun at Crescent Moon Ranch. Even the red-rock spires of Cathedral Rock were no competition to information about the Friends. It is more than evident that the Forest Service is hungry for news about an organization that is so enormously triumphant reaching our goal of assisting the Red Rock Ranger District where it does not have the manpower or funds to complete the project on its own.

More recently I was invited by our Deputy Forest Supervisor, Joe Stringer, to speak in Flagstaff at the Community Conversation on Sustainability. Unlike when my audience is Forest Service only, this community forum was comprised of many government agencies, the mayor's office, city staff, County Board of Supervisors and, most importantly, many residents of the greater Flagstaff community. Before I left at the end of the day, there were twelve signatures of fired-up citizens ready, and I don't doubt for one moment, able to start an organization to assist the Peaks/ Mormon Lake district just as we assist the Red Rock! I spoke with several of these people and they saw, perhaps for the first time, that they **can** make a difference . . .they **want** to make a difference . . . and they **will** make a difference. Helen Campbell

**FOF Apparel**  
**Suzie Dunn and Judi Reichenberger**

**MERCHANDISE ORDERING AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!**

Thanks to **Ken Zoll**, we now have FOF logo merchandise photographed on the FOF webpage. To shop, simply click on "Member Merchandise" and select your item(s). Then click on the link in the text to place an order. State item(s) you desire by number and description. You may select any color advertised, even though the stock we carry is usually green, white or tan. Prices are not stated, as they vary slightly from time to time. We have chosen the best products for reasonable prices. Once you have ordered, you will be contacted with pricing information. Your approval is obtained before the order is placed with our embroidered. Ordering is done approximately once a month mid-month. If you have a more pressing need, allowances can be made. For your convenience, the Merchandise Coordinators will continue to display FOF logo items at our quarterly meetings.

Look sharp! Be proud! Wear your FOF gear (and name-tag!) to our meetings and when you are out and about!

Suzie Dunn



**Chief of the Forest Service, Gail Kimbell and FOF Ambassador at Large, Helen Campbell at the National Water Resource Symposium**

*All members are welcome at Board Meetings. Come and get acquainted with other Friends and learn what is happening in your organization. There's always great refreshments too.*

**Orchard Committee**  
**Justine Kusner**

The orchard crew did a Spring walk through the West Fork orchards to clean up any wind or snow damage. Light pruning to some trees was needed. We will continue to monitor the apple trees through spring into summer.  
 Justine Kusner 284-0714

**BRANCHING OUT EDITORS**  
**Chuck Jenkins—Summer**  
**Darl Ann Rector—Winter**  
 Thanks to everyone who contributes informative articles and pictures

Remember to look at the website to see the newsletter in COLOR along with more interesting information about the Friends of the Forest.  
[www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org](http://www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org)

## Visitor Information Services

**Janet Walters and Noreen Lisowski**

Wow!! In response to increasing numbers of visitors, volunteer staffing of the Frontliner desk at the Visitor Center has been increased to 45 shifts providing a total of 176 hours of service during the 7-day work week. When the sign at the entrance to the Forest Service complex is completed, even more visitors should be attracted like moths to a flame! The Visitor Information Services Committee (VIS) is fortunate that FOF Vice President **Carol Wirkus** and new member **Linda Allen** have joined the ranks of Frontliners as substitutes, while new members **Barbara O'Connor** and **Eloise Baldauf** adopted regular weekly shifts.



### **Eloise Baldauf assists Chicagoans who hope to thaw out in Red Rock Country.**

Your assistance is still needed and appreciated even if your schedule is so full that you volunteer for VIS on a very infrequent basis. Special thanks to **Spence Gustav**, who usually works as a docent at Palatki, but helped VIS as a “roving docent” in the interpretive display section of the Visitor Center on several busy days in March.

Part-time residents such as new member **Rosalyn Sallénave** are always a welcome addition to the Committee. Rosalyn has been a great help to **Noreen Lisowski** (FOF VIS Committee Co-chair and ANHA Assistant Manager) in the ANHA Bookstore on Mondays. Another part-timer, **Paulette Mari**, recently returned for a brief two month period and quickly adopted an important mid-day Saturday shift at the Frontliner desk. We'll miss our snowbird Frontliners, including **Pat Sexton**, as they begin to head

out of town. Snowbirds can contact Janet at [jwalters@esedona.net](mailto:jwalters@esedona.net) when they're ready to return to Frontliner duty in Red Rock Country. But, keep that FOF badge in a safe place as the first badge is on the Friends; the second is your responsibility.



### **Spence Gustav the Roving Docent**

Photos by Janet Walters

The busy camping season has begun and this always highlights the need for “Admin Frontliners” who are willing to answer phone calls about a myriad of subjects including camping. To paraphrase the 1897 newspaper editorial on Santa Claus, “Yes, Virginia, there is a Frontliner Desk at the Forest Service Administration Building”. Admin Frontliners have an abundance of reference materials readily available to them and there is always a Forest Service employee available for mentoring and consultation. Several volunteer shifts are open. Please visit the Admin Building on a weekday and talk with Forest Service employee Rochelle Hall about training to volunteer as an Admin Frontliner. **Karin Keene**, who routinely volunteered two days per week at Admin, will be missed. Her Red Rock Country expertise helped her to receive two job offers!

Best wishes to **Alice Musgrove**, who took a health sabbatical in February and March and hopes to return in April. Finally, as a reminder, a Frontliner class is usually offered on the fourth Tuesday of each month by **Genny Riner** of the Forest Service. Contact Janet at 284-1339 or [jwalters@esedona.net](mailto:jwalters@esedona.net) if you would like to train as a Frontliner or would like to take a refresher course.

Janet Walters



**Forest Service Employee, Rochelle Hall, researches an issue for volunteer Karin Keene**

## **Wranglers**

***Helen Campbell***

Eleven horses and one mule stood in varying degrees of patience along the fence at Arena del Loma in Camp Verde. A saddle straddled the pipe fence near each animal. **Will Hill**, USFS and I remarked “that’s one impressive dude-string.” Dude-string indeed. These animals represented stock from three ranger districts, and Forest Service personnel were beginning to arrive on this chilly February morning, to attend a day-long riding clinic sponsored by the Wranglers.

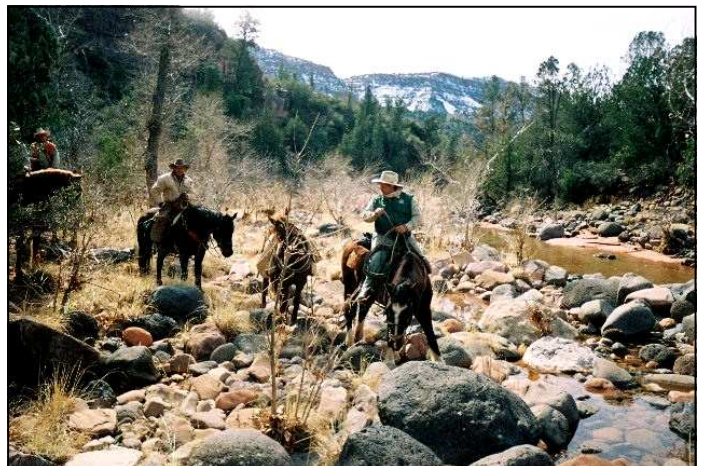
Throughout the agency, quite often it is far more effective to use a horse or mule to accomplish a project rather than two feet. The folks here this morning were about to receive basic or refresher training in grooming, saddling and riding. Karin Keene, who bred Spanish Mustangs in her native New York, planned a top-notch event. She used the large oval arena and worked tirelessly in the ever-increasing heat of the sun. **Merry Bolton** gave instruction in a smaller arena, and I instructed saddling and riding and assisted **Karin**. **Royal Arnold**, FS volunteer instructed the proper loading and unloading of the horse trailer. The entire event took place under the attentive eyes of **Cat Sampson**, USFS and **Will Hill**, USFS.

Besides the benefit to the FS, several Wranglers were able to put our horses through their paces in an arena, versus the constraints of a trail when we are focused en-

tirely on the job at hand. From comments made at the end of the day, I have no doubt this was just the first of many such events.

**Janie Agyagos**, USFS, Wildlife Biologist is tasked with the impossibly long project of checking on miles of range fence to be sure it is compliant under wildlife management guidelines. Janie has asked for the Wrangler’s help, thus cutting the time needed to complete the project in half. **Mike Ward, Diane Greathouse and I** have completed one allotment perimeter on Cedar Flat—a dozen to go.

**Diane Greathouse, Karin Keene, Milt Moore, Mike Ward and I** rode in a foot of snow from the Fossil Springs trailhead near Strawberry down to Fossil Creek. We crossed the creek and continued to the dam. This was a dry-run to gauge the time that will be required when we start regularly scheduled trash pick-up trips to the Fossil area.  
Helen Campbell



**Wranglers crossing Fossil Creek**

Photos by Helen Campbell



**Sedona**

**Friends of the Forest**

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**IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

**Wednesday April 15 - 9:00 AM - Ranger Station**

**FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting**

**All Members are welcome**



**Future Board of Director Meetings:**

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**June 17, 2009**

**September 16, 2009**

**December 9, 2009**

*The Friends of the Forest, Inc. is dedicated to assisting the U. S. Forest Service in maintaining, protecting, and restoring the scenic beauty and natural and cultural resources of forest lands for the enjoyment and use of present and future generations. The objective of this nonprofit, volunteer group is to work in partnership with the U. S. Forest Service in tasks it does not have the manpower or the funds to accomplish on its own.*