



Branching Out

Friends of the Forest Sedona

Volume 2012, Issue 1

February 2012

From the President

Carol Wirkus

This is the Chinese Year of the Dragon. According to Chinese astrology, dragon people get things done—their natural talent and abilities stand out with great end results. Sounds like our Friends of the Forest volunteers! I am in continued awe of what you all accomplish.

Detailed Data to the Forest

Did you know that some FOF committees provide detailed data to the Forest Service? Every month, for example, a half dozen dedicated volunteers drive many miles to pick up all the trail register logs. After collecting the logs, our volunteers give them to **Buck Packard**, who enters the trail register information into a database that summarizes trail usage for each trail by month. Data includes the number of day hikers, backpackers, dogs, horses, bikes and other information trail users have entered. He then applies an adjustment factor that is unique for each trail, to estimate the actual number of trail use totals. District Ranger Heather Provencio has said this information is enormously useful when seeking Forest Service dollars for recreation purposes.

Other committees that provide a bounty of well-organized data to Forest Service staff include **Mike Haboush's** detailed records of trail maintenance and construction, **Darl Rector's** trail patrol data and **Gene Rector's** Hot Shot trail maintenance records. Our volunteers don't just do the work—they also track and record it. Thanks to all!

New Projects Underway

At the December Board meeting we approved three additional projects for the Forest. The Friends are providing up to \$1,500 and labor to weld and install three **newly-designed horse gates** in the Forest, with an installation goal of March. The new gates are wider at the top, to allow horses with packs to pass through, while .

keeping out ATVs. With the old gates, horses were packed, ridden to the gates, unpacked to get through the gate, and then repacked. **Linzy Brower and Craig Stevens** have volunteered to install the new gates.

We also agreed to provide up to \$7,000 to **improve trail access at V-Bar-V**. Our dollars will be used to purchase gravel and other supplies for the CREC crew to add drainage and surfacing on the existing trail that becomes muddy during wet conditions, and to begin construction of a new trail from the parking lot to the visitor center, with the work to be done the last half of February.

The Friends are contributing an additional \$1,400 to purchase up to three **custom illustrations for the six signs at V-Bar-V and Honanki** that we agreed to fund at \$11,000 at our September meeting. The project is scheduled for completion fall 2012.

In addition, Friends of the Forest dollars are being used to **print the new Recreation Guides**. These are the multi-page newsprint handouts that include so much important information for visitors, including a map of the Red Rock District. The new guides will be available about February 1, and will include the new Red Rock Pass information, new Travel Management Rule and a few new Forest trails.

Donation Boxes Now Belong to FS

One way FOF has raised money has been through the donation boxes placed at the Visitor Contact Office, Palatki, and V-Bar-V. Last year 44% of FOF revenues came from these boxes. Since they were installed in 2004, we have collected \$67,000 for the Forest Service. At our December Board meeting, District Ranger Heather Provencio said the District would like to take direct ownership of the boxes. We wish the District as much success

as we have had. Many thanks to **Dean and Helen Campbell** who came up with the idea of installing donation boxes, and to Past-Treasurer **Dean**, current Treasurer **Rick Baldauf** and Assistant Treasurer **Jan Lisowski** for making numerous weekly rounds to collect the dollars.

Memorial Benches Dedicated

At noon after the December Board meeting, the Forest Service dedicated Memorial Benches for **Emma Peschke and Jim Miller**, which had been donated by **ANHA and Dennis Parker**. The dedication was brief and meaningful, as we remembered these two special people. The generously-sized wooden benches, located on the Visitor Center terrace, will be a welcome place to sit in the shade while enjoying gorgeous views of the red rocks.

FS/FOF Events—Mark Your Calendar

2012 Red Rock Orientation Update: During January and February the RRRD has been holding half-day training sessions to update employees and volunteers on the new streamlined Red Rock Pass Program, implementation of the new Travel Management Rule (TMR), current partnerships, important safety information, and more. The District has extended an opportunity to each of us to sign up for a morning or afternoon training session. If you work with the public, for example at VIS or the cultural sites, it would be particularly valuable for you to take advantage of this training opportunity. As of this writing, there are still openings in the training sessions. **To sign up, call 203-2900.**

V-Bar-V Discovery Days: This popular annual event will be held March 24-25, in conjunction with Arizona Archaeology and Heritage Awareness Month. There will not be an agave roast this year, but we look forward to the many other enjoyable and educational activities. If you would like to help with this event, Jerry Walters will be scheduling volunteers. This year the Verde Valley Archeology Center will host an Archeology Fair in Camp Verde over the same weekend.

Defensive Driving Class April 17: If you need a new or renewed government license to participate in an FOF activity, be sure to put this date on your calendar.

New Member Event April 26: If you are one of our newer members, or if you'd just like to know more about FOF, please mark your calendar for the morning of April 26. This is a great opportunity to socialize and to learn more about our many activities. We'll meet in the Visitor Center for camaraderie, refreshments and brief presentations.

Ongoing Thanks

As always, I thank each of you for the many ways you contribute to the Friends' activities and the Forest Service. The skills and time you volunteer make a huge difference to the residents and visitors who enjoy our incomparable Red Rock community. **OUR VOLUNTEERS ROCK!!!**
Carol

Forest Service Volunteer Coordinator

Angie Abel

Other Duties: Managing the Cultural sites (Palatki, V Bar V, Honanki) and the two cabin rentals on the district (Crescent Moon Ranch, and Apache Maid).

The idea came to me now that I have been in my current position on the Red Rock Ranger District for a year that many of you may not know exactly what some of us do on a daily basis. I would love to try and feature many of the new and regular faces here in the administration and visitor center offices. It seemed fitting that I take the first go at it.

Current projects I am working on: A project that will be hitting the ground this spring is the trail enhancements out at V Bar V. Those of you that help out every year for V Bar V days especially know that during the wet times of the year the trail out there get very slick and muddy. We will be hosting a CREC crew for 8 days to resurface the entire trail and hopefully constructing a new entrance trail from the parking lot to the visitor center. Thanks to the Friends for providing funding for this project.

Another on-going project is serving as project lead for the 6 cultural interpretive sign panels to be designed for V Bar V and Honanki. As some of you know the Friends graciously donated money for this project and we are working with Thunder Mountain design team here in Sedona. Our internal team has developed the concepts for each panel and by late summer we hope to have signs ready to hit the ground. We are also going to be teaming with Pink Jeeps to create a brochure for Honanki this year.

Another project is coordinating with engineering on developing a monitoring system of the crack at the Palatki ruins. I know many of you have been wondering what is going on out there- and yes, sadly it has taken some time to make any decisions on how to proceed.

This is where we are right now: 1) The FS is aware of the potential for rock fall at Palatki. 2) The FS promotes recreation use at Palatki. Consequently, usage is substantially higher in the area around Palatki than at other locations on the NF. 3) The FS has indicated to the public that it is studying rock fall issues on the site. Consequently, due diligence is now an issue. So at this point we will still explore affordable monitoring systems and move forward on developing an alternative and more accessible viewing platform.

As far as the cabins there are always random tasks that pop up. This last year we were able to get a lot done for a relative small amount of money. Most of the energy is spent at Crescent Moon Ranch which rents year round and has constant deferred maintenance needs. This past year we did quite a bit of interior painting, refinished all of the hardwood floors, and installed new insulation in the attic space. We bought a new dishwasher, grill, all new mattresses and bed frames. Hopes for this year include exterior painting, deck replacement, more interior painting and ongoing plumbing needs. If anyone would like to check it out or help out feel free to let me know!

I will say that my first year here has been a huge learning experience and truly rewarding. It has been so much fun getting to know most of you and I hope that we continue to grow together. We are so lucky to have such a devoted work force like the Friends of the Forest. Please feel free to check in with us here at the administration office anytime! Angie



A NOTE FROM BILL KUSNER

VOLUNTEER HOURS: With most of the committees reporting, we off to a good start. We added 1948 hours in October, 2524 hours in November (**a new month record**), and 2318 hours in December (**also a new record**). Keep track of your time, and make sure you report them to your committee chair.

Visitor Information Services

Noreen Lisowski

The frenzied holiday season is over and visitation has settled down to an easier pace, but things will be picking up soon. We expect lots of questions about the new Red Rock Pass system and the re-introduction of the Grand Annual pass, plus other new developments regarding Forest use, so it's very important that all frontliners sign up for the Forest Service orientation programs scheduled through mid-February. **If you haven't signed up yet, call the Visitor Center Forest Service desk 203-2900 for dates and times.**

Three newly-trained Frontliners **Katherine Aberle, Dottie Correl** and **Jim Molans** participated in the December 7 training class. Katherine has adopted a Friday shift and **Toddy Long** who completed the October 25 class, has taken a permanent shift on Sundays. The next training class will be sometime in late February or early March. If you are interested in joining our Frontliner family, or know someone who is, please contact me at **284-2813** or email vis.volunteers@groupmail.com Noreen



New Frontliners: Katherine Aberle, Jim Molans and Dottie Correl

Photo by Noreen Lisowski

Branching Out Editors, Chuck Jenkins, (Summer Issues) and Darl Ann Rector (Winter Issues) thank you for all the great articles and pictures submitted. *Branching Out* is published five times a year in: February, April, June, September and December to coincide with FOF Board Meetings.

Trail Maintenance and Construction (TMC)

Mike Haboush

In the cooler months we average 8 or 9 volunteers, while in the warmer months we average 5 or 6 volunteers. On our Friday, November 4th workday we had what is likely a record number of volunteers for a given day: 15 FOF volunteers and 2 USFS personnel. Along with myself were:

Rick Zabor, Glen Buenning, Dale Webber, Sam Serrill, Joe Landholm, Kevin Harding, Bob Wych, Dan Aragaki, Gene Rector, Garry Neil, Jean Ober, Mike Ober, Mark Munsell, Jim Grier, and Sam Mirza, and two USFS personnel, Laurent Deviche and Kamran Mousavi. We split into smaller groups to work Bandit, Airport Loop, Old Post and Carroll Canyon Trails; a very productive day.

We recently completed a ramp on the Munds Wagon Trail. **The accompanying pictures show the before and after of the project. And another picture shows some hard work done on Carroll Canyon Trail.**

Those of us who do trail maintenance work get some strange questions and remarks from visitors who are using the local trails. Some, seeing us cutting a tree that has fallen across the trail will ask, "What are you doing?" On several occasions, the visitor, seeing several people carrying pick mattocks, shovels and Mcleods will ask if we are looking for gold or other minerals. On one occasion I was pulling a large rock up for use as a step on the trail, when a passerby asked if I was looking for bugs or lizards under the rock. One woman recently, seeing several of us carrying our tools, remarked that she expected us to be singing, "Hi ho, ho, it's home from work we go." In this case she knew that she was trying to be humorous.

With all kidding aside, the vast majority of trail users are polite, caring and quite often thank us for our work. Mike



Bob Wych, Sam Serrill and Rick Zabor showing off their hard work on Carroll Canyon Trail

Photos by Mike Haboush



Munds Wagon Trail showing a much eroded area before the installation of a rock ramp.

Munds Wagon Trail after the rock ramp has been installed, making it much easier for hikers, bikers or horses to travel.



Membership

Eloise Baldauf

Nineteen new members have joined us since the December Newsletter Report including 1 new life-Family membership:

Leigh Wheldon, Jim and Heather Molans, Katherine Aberle, Dottie Correl, Sue Derrick, Peter and Joan Bruce, Ken and Amy Knox, Rick and Mary Schnell, Gwen Hanna and Dale Albright, Sylvia Strobel, Norm and Linda Sunstad, Gerri and Sam Hough, Richard and Diane Thomas, Thomas Mo-dahl.

On behalf of The Friends, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all new members and hope that your experience with the organization is rewarding and satisfying.

Eloise Baldauf
928-284-4356
eeb1951@yahoo.com

Remember to sign up for the Forest Service Orientation Training. See page 2

V-Bar-V Discovery Days

Mark your calendars! This year's event will be held on **March 24th and 25th**. The usual call for volunteers will be going out in early March. This is always a fun and highly attended event. Our organization's perennial participation has been a big contributing factor to the success of the event.

Photo Digitization Project

The project to digitize and catalog the historical/archaeological 35mm slides and prints for the Coconino National Forest is well underway in Phase 3 of the project. The initial thrust is to process all of the slides. Our small group has processed 67% (9,053) of the slides. Phase 3 entails transcribing the hand written comments, from the margins of the slides and back of the prints, into a "photolog" database (MS Excel). This phase is by far the largest in terms of hours required for completion. To date, we are less than 12% complete for the total project. The skills required to be a member of this team include a general comfort with using a Windows based PC, entering data into a spreadsheet, using an image (i.e. photo) viewer, and attention to detail. Training and group work sessions will be provided.

If you are interested in helping with this project, or would like more information, please contact Jerry Walters at Fofdocents@gmail.com.

Cultural Site Photo Documentation Project

The Cultural Resources Committee has just begun a project to do photo documentation of each of the cultural heritage sites. The purpose of this documentation is to record the current state of the ruins and rock art so that it can be compared to previous photos taken 15 years ago and to provide a new baseline for future photos. **Honanki** will be the first site tackled. Much of the effort is in matching maps, drawings, and photographs to the current state of the site, so that new images are properly identified and labeled to facilitate comparison. It will take several teams of 2 to 3 people, 2 to 5 days at each site to complete the task. **If you are interested in helping with this project, or would like more information, please contact Spence Gustav at spencehg@yahoo.com.**

I am pleased to welcome two new docents. They are **Katherine Aberle** and **Betty Dean**. Both have been in the Sedona area on and off for several years and felt that

now is the time to join FOF and get involved in something that they feel passionate about. Special thanks to **Roy Julian** for providing training at **Palatki**. If you are interested in helping protect our cultural heritage sites and learning more about the **Palatki, Honanki** and **V-Bar-V** sites, consider joining the Cultural Resource and Protection Committee. Please call or email:

culturalresources@friendsoftheforestsedona.org

for more information.

Jerry Walters 284-1339

***** HELP WANTED *****

Are you an active, semi-retired, or retired accountant or auditor or even CPA ?

If so, would you be willing to perform a pro bono annual audit of the Friends of the Forest financial records as prescribed in the Corporate By-Laws ?

The time commitment to complete this task for fiscal year 2011 would be during the first quarter and/or early second quarter of 2012.

If you can help out, please contact Rick Baldauf, Treasurer (592 3939 or fof.treasurer@gmail.com for more details)

FOF GEAR MERCHANDISE

Would you be interested in helping choose merchandise to sell and helping to sell at meetings ? Time involved: 2 hours a month. Pay: highest allowable volunteer wage (great big thanks and free coffee). If so, please **contact the Merchandise Chairman, Suzie Dunn at 284 4707**

Assistant FOF VIS Frontliner Volunteer Coordinator

Noreen Lisowski is looking for assistance in keeping track of Frontliner volunteer hours. Duties would involve picking up FOF and ANHA volunteer sign-in sheets from the Visitor Contact Center at the end of each month and entering volunteer hours onto a spreadsheet. Estimated time would be about one hour a month. Additional duties might entail updating the volunteer schedule online when Noreen is away. If interested, please call **Noreen** at **284-2813** or email: **vis.volunteers@groupmail.com**

*****HELP WANTED*****

The newsletter editors would like to find someone who either has Publisher experience or is willing to learn to do the newsletter so that we have back-up. If you use a computer, we can teach you to use the newsletter program. There are five issues per year and each takes about 20-25 hours. **Please contact Darl Rector at 928 634 3942 or e-mail: redrocktrail2@gmail.com.**

Merchandise

Suzie Dunn

FOF Gear

The embroidered sunshirts (fishing shirts with sun protective fabric), shown for the first time at our December meeting, is popular, but “caveat emptor”. Size and style are not always what we think they are. **Two members are looking for possible buyers to resell their selections. There is a white long sleeve men’s small and a salmon short sleeve men’s 2XL. Please call me now (284-4707) if you are interested in purchasing one or both of these.**

If possible, try on the clothing that is in stock. There is little we can do once a piece of clothing is embroidered. The rush to look at our gear prior to or immediately after our meetings is a problem. I do not mind dealing with members at a better time. I do that frequently, especially when members shop through our web page. Besides the relaxed atmosphere of our “tent sale” at the annual meeting, there will be another “gear show” at our new member orientation in April. Do remember that personally purchased items can be embroidered for the cost of our logo and shipping. We really like to see each other in our various styles of FOF gear and wearing it fosters recognition of our worthy organization.

At your service, Suzie Dunn

River Patrol

Mike Vitek

Who Moved the Lake?

The River Support Season is in full swing. **River Ranger Dexter Allen** has scheduled two to three trips monthly. Their purpose is to control the non-native invasive plant species like tamarisk—a very thirsty plant that flourishes along the Verde River.

Allen couldn’t go on the last river trip since he was working with the Coconino Rural Environmental Corps

removing such plants in the Gap Creek area. **Mike Roseman** (USFS) lead a group of five other kayakers from Childs to Horseshoe Lake--also giving it their best effort to destroy these invasive plants.

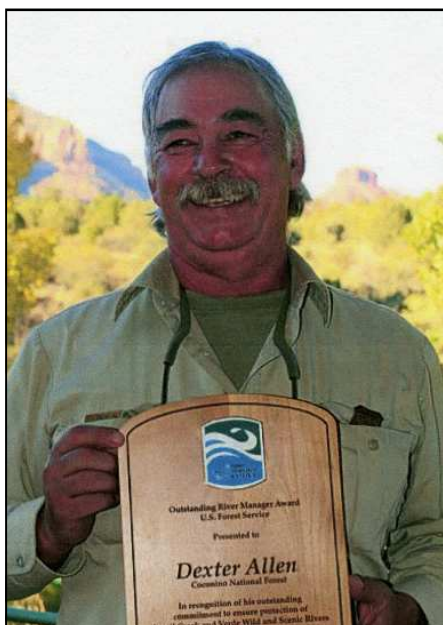
Last December, two of the drivers were surprised to find Horseshoe Lake empty. Guess they forgot this was Arizona and at times lakes “take a vacation.” This is normal for Horseshoe unless there is a lot of rain or snow in the high country.

On the last trip from Childs, a leaf spring on the trailer broke after unloading kayakers and their equipment. Luckily, a retired APS employee was in the area volunteering for the Forest Service at the Childs power plant. As he left for home, he came upon **Frank Wirkus** and **Al Gilson** with the broken trailer. Fortunately, he had a welding unit and was able to do a temporary repair to get the trailer back to the Verde station. I’m sure our guys were thanking their lucky stars. Let’s hope we don’t have any more such breakdowns because welding fairies are not always available !

The “River Rats” want to congratulate **Dexter Allen, Red Rock River Ranger** on receiving the **2011 Outstanding Wild and Scenic River Ranger/River Manager Award from the Forest Service.** Dexter has made numerous trips down the river cleaning up trash, removing noxious weeds, helping visitors and monitoring the bald eagles. He manages the Wild and Scenic Verde River and Fossil Creek.

Friends of the Forest provides support by hauling the rangers and their supplies to and from put-in’s and take-out’s on the Verde River.

Mike



Red Rock Ranger District, River Ranger, Dexter Allen receives the Outstanding River Manager Award for 2011

Trail Patrol

Darl Rector

Janet Walters and Roy Julian, co-chairs

Despite the wintry weather in December, the FOF Trail Patrol group managed to put in over 700 hours on the trails helping visitors and getting some exercise. January has been nicer and we have been able to have a couple of group hikes. The Forest Service is in the process of adopting several new trails, many of which are nice connectors to other trails. Our group checked out the new Chuckwagon Trail in the Dry Creek area. It is a nice, fairly easy trail from Dry Creek Road or Long Canyon Trailhead to Brins Mesa. The red rock views are superior. Our other group hike was from Little Horse Trailhead, down the Pathway to HT and Templeton. There were some nice bobcat tracks on the HT Trail near a water hole. We usually spend about three hours on these group hikes. The hikes are announced by e-mail to the Trail Patrol Group. **If you would like to join Trail Patrol, please contact me by phone at: 928 634 3942 or by e-mail at: foftrailpatrol@gmail.com.** Darl



Chuckwagon above; Templeton below

photos by Jean Ober and Darl Rector



Trail Patrol Hotshots

Gene Rector and Kevin Harding

During December and January, the Hotshots have been very busy working on trails, including **Soldiers Pass, Two Fences, AZ Cypress, Dawa, OK, Woods Canyon, Girdner, Bear Mt, Doe Mt and, most recently, HT/Templeton.** Most of the work includes cleaning and repairing rolling dips, building or repairing steps or ramps, brushing and rock removal. The group received some instruction from the FS trail technicians regarding new methods of making rolling dips more biker-friendly. Hard-working members who have helped with all this are: **Dan Aragaki, Kevin Harding, John True, Al Gilson, Mike Haboush, Rick Baldauf, Paul Ward, Jim Manning, Bob Wych, and Darl Rector.** A big **THANK YOU** to them and **WELCOME to Adrian, the new FS Trails Coordinator.**

Gene

FROM THE ARCHIVES

by Darl Rector

Recently, I started looking back through the old issues of Branching Out that we have, beginning with March 1996. The newsletter was four pages printed on green paper. **Mary Lee Dunning** was the first President of FOF and in her message she remarks that the budget was "very lean" and many committee heads, chairmen and board members donated much of their expenses. **Ken Anderson** was the District Ranger and **Jennifer Burns** was here in a different position than she has now. Mary Lee also talks about the FOF being a non-political organization.

Al Cornell was chair of the Cultural Resources Committee and attention was focused on Palatki-Red Cliffs site. The FOF was the only presence there at that time and tried to cover the hours of greatest visitation, usually Friday thru Monday. Al's motto was "**Be all you can be — Be a Palatki Warrior**"

Visitor Information Service was chaired by **Barb Zeschke.** Oak Creek Vista and the Ranger Station on Brewer Rd were the visitor information sites. She was hoping for a minimum of 14 volunteers a week ! The Membership was 215 at this time.

Buck Packard was Trail Patrol Chairman with 24 active members. He reported they hiked over 700 hours on 37 trails in 1995 and that 250,000 visitors had hiked district trails with West Fork getting 54,000 of those. **Does anyone know who the Editor was ???**



Sedona

Friends of the Forest

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IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Wednesday February 15 - 9:00 AM - Ranger Station

FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting

All Members are welcome



Future Board of Director Meetings:

April 18, 2012

June 20, 2012

September 19, 2012

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.