



**Sedona**

Helping to protect  
National Forest Lands



# Branching Out

## Friends of the Forest

Volume 2010, Issue 4

September 2010

### **From the President**

**Roy Julian**

As some of you may know, we have had numerous personnel changes in the Coconino National Forest recently. The Red Rock Ranger District has had a new Acting District Ranger, **Mike Chaveas**, who joined us from the Peaks District, where he served as the Deputy District Ranger. Mike announced that he anticipates being in our district for two to three months. In our first meeting with him, **Carol Wirkus** and I thought he was a likable, friendly, straightforward individual and we look forward to working with him.

Meanwhile, **Heather Provencio** is on temporary assignment in Flagstaff as the Acting Deputy Supervisor for the Coconino National Forest. She anticipates being in that job for approximately 2-3 months as well.

We also have a new Acting Volunteer Coordinator, **Angie Abel**. Angie came here from the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia, where she worked as a Bioscience Technician with a specialty in fish. She has worked previously in Recreation and would like to return to that field. She has been with the Forest Service approximately ten years overall, in North Carolina, Vermont and West Virginia. She also worked with the USGS in Flagstaff and in the Grand Canyon. Welcome Angie!

One of the first issues Carol and I talked about with Mike Chaveas was some concerns regarding liability while volunteering with the Forest Service. Mike responded very helpfully and promptly with information about Volunteers in the National Forests Act of 1972, PL 92-300, and the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, PL 105-19. In addition, he provided the following interpretation from the Forest Service Washington office about the Volunteer Protection Act:

*The Volunteer Protection Act provides that no volunteer of a nonprofit organization or governmental entity shall be liable for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of the organization or entity if the volunteer meets four requirements. First, the volunteer must have been acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities in the nonprofit organization or governmental entity at the time of the act or omission. Next, if it is required or appropriate, the volunteer must have been properly licensed, certified, or authorized by the appropriate authorities for the activities or practice in the State in which the harm occurred, where the activities were or practice was undertaken within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities in the nonprofit organization or governmental agency. Third, the harm may not have been caused by willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed by the volunteer. And finally, the harm may not have been caused by the volunteer operating a motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other vehicle for which the State requires the operator or the owner of the vehicle, craft, or vessel to possess an operator's license or maintain insurance.*

If we in the Friends stay within these guidelines, we should be covered by the Forest Service in the event of a mishap.

Other News & Announcements:

**Mike Haboush** has accepted the job of Chair of Trail Maintenance & Construction, and has been doing a great job of keeping this committee rolling. Many thanks to Mike for accepting this new position, and to **Rick Zabor** and **Bob Tener**, who have stepped down as the Chair and Co-chair of this committee after many years of exceptional service.

**Chuck Jenkins** has also stepped up to become the new Chair of the Fire Tower Lookout committee. Our thanks go to Chuck for his service in this important activity.

The Apache Maid cabin is now open and reportedly is doing a brisk rental business. The Forest Service has received a grant to have solar panels installed to provide electricity to the cabin. It will be interesting to see the final result once the panels are installed.

**Sarah Belcher** and her staff had a very successful planting day at the Forest Service grounds, where they, several Friends, and other volunteers planted around 150 different plants, including trees, cacti, agaves and yuccas, and also set up rainwater harvesting to provide water for the new plants. This should be a great addition to the grounds around the Forest Service buildings.

Volunteer Appreciation Picnic and Friends of the Forest Annual Meeting

\_October 23<sup>rd</sup> has been tentatively set by the Forest Service as the date for the Volunteer Appreciation Picnic, which is when we also hold our Annual Meeting. Please put this date on your calendars and come out for a great meal!

As you know, we will be voting to fill the Director positions that expire in 2010, representing approximately one third of the total Board. Please read over the ballot which is enclosed in this newsletter and follow the instructions on it to vote.

Roy

**MEMBERSHIP** **SONYA LANDHOLM**

Our featured new member in this report, **Donna Gould**, joined the Friends as a good way to meet new people. Donna agreed to participate in an interview for this biographical sketch. Currently residing in Clarkdale, she plans to move to Sedona soon. Born and raised in western MA., it has been her lifelong dream to live in the

Southwest, and having received the approval of her grown children, Donna made the move in October, 2009. She is the R.N. Case Manager for Verde Valley Community Hospice. We welcome Donna to Friends of the Forest, Sedona, and feel confident that, as she becomes active in our FOF family, she will, indeed, find the new friends that she is seeking.

Other new members who have joined us since the last Newsletter report are **James Wilson, Esther Silva, Barbara Wolak, Larry Juskiewicz, Michael Dally, Larissa Dedeia, and Andrew Scott**. To all we extend a hearty FOF welcome! We look forward to getting acquainted with each and every one of you!

Sonya Landholm

Membership Secretary

928-284-1299

**PUBLICITY** **CAROL WIRKUS**

Thanks to our fine writers who volunteer to write about the Friends of the Forest, we continue to have great stories published monthly in the Red Rock News "Serving Sedona" column. Many thanks to each of you!

In June **Kevin Harding** wrote about how a skilled FOF design and construction team built storage units and work space for the Forest Service fire crew. **Mark Munsell** volunteered to use his engineering talents to design the storage units and work space, with authorization to use \$4,000 in FOF funding. **Georgia Munsell** obtained significant discounts from a construction retailer that allowed the group to buy quality materials.

"We needed to cut and assemble many of the units in his (Munsell'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," wrote Kevin. "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."

The project team included **Dan Aragaki, Glen Buening, Al Gilson, Kevin Harding, Joe Landholm, Jim Manning, Mark Munsell, Gene Rector, Ron Rusk, John True, Mike Vitek, and Rick Zabor**. As Kevin wrote, "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." The FOF team built a large workbench, cabinets, shelving units,

tool racks and hose racks.

In July **Susan Vitek** wrote about how the Friends go “rollin’ on the river” to support River Ranger **Dexter Allen** and other FS staff. Susan joined FOF volunteer **Rick Baldauf** as he hauled people, trailers, and supplies to the Verde River put-in site of Beasley Flats. There, Baldauf helped the crew unload inflatable boats and then fill them with sleep pads, coolers, chairs, food, stove, human waste containers, first-aid gear, satellite phone, and other necessities.

As Susan writes, “Several days or even a week later another volunteer crew arrives to pick up the group and the trash they’ve collected—tires, Styrofoam building materials, a small cooler. This can be about 200 pounds of trash placed in the rubber rafts.”

According to Susan, “This group of river patrol volunteers has many reasons for doing this work. First, it frees up an employee to remain at his/her regular job; they get to see areas that they might otherwise not have access to; and they spot unusual things, like a crested saguaro cactus, blue herons, wildflowers, blooming cacti, javelinas and a bird dining on a snake. They feel good because they are helping make the ‘Wild and Scenic’ Verde River just that again.”

In August **Chuck Jenkins** informed us about the visitors’ surveys the Friends are helping conduct. “A few of us who are members of the Friends of the Forest have been trained to assist the Red Rock District of the Coconino National Forest in conducting National Visitor Use Monitoring, or NVUM, surveys during fiscal year 2010. The NVUM surveys are statistical samplings of information and opinions of visitors who are exiting the forest after having used the forest for various recreation activities.”

The NVUM surveys are conducted every five years and are used by forest managers to make day-to-day decisions in the district, as well as at the federal level to provide budget inputs. The survey sites and dates are randomly selected by computer and include campsites, scenic overlooks, wilderness trailheads and swimming areas.

Chuck wrote, “I have enjoyed my opportunities to conduct NVUM surveys. I have talked to people from all over this country and from many foreign countries as well. The common thread of discussion with all these people is about the beauty of the Red Rock District.”

If you missed the above stories when they appeared in the Red Rock News, you can find them on our web site at [www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org](http://www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org). Click on “Member News” and then scroll down to the list of press releases. Happy reading!

Carol Wirkus

**VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES**  
**JANET WALTERS & NOREEN LISOWSKI**

As fall travel and hiking season approaches, we expect a brisk upturn in visitor numbers at the Forest Service Visitor Contact Office (VCO). The Committee is fortunate that several new Friends of the Forest members have already received training as Frontliners. The VIS Committee welcomes **Ginette Haas, Ned Isom, Barbara Wolak, Larissa Dedeia** and **Jim Wilson**. **Larry Juskiewicz**, who already volunteered at the VCO as an ANHA volunteer, joined the Friends this summer. Most Frontliners know Larry and Jim as these two busy Frontliners worked numerous shifts per week throughout the summer.



Larry Juskiewicz and Jim Wilson can handle the crowds!

Longtime Frontliners, **Louisa Connell** and **Twyla Langenberg**, have experienced health issues and everyone hopes they can soon return to their shifts. Thanks to all regular and substitute Frontliners for continuing to communicate days off or days available via email or phone while schedule coordinator **Jan Walters** deals with a broken elbow and wrist and cannot drive to the VCO through October.

If you would like more information on training as a Frontliner, contact **Jan Walters** at [vis@friendsoftheforestsedona.org](mailto:vis@friendsoftheforestsedona.org) or 284-1339.

Early in Forest Service history it was recognized that grazing was a legitimate use of the land as long it complied with the principles of multiple use. Permits, herd size, allotments and seasons of use were attempts to protect the resource. An allotment is a piece of land where a private citizen is permitted to graze their cattle. The Red Rock Ranger District has twelve cattle grazing allotments, the average size is about 70,000 acres, on which they inventory, classify and monitor rangeland vegetation for wildlife as well as cattle.

Range Managers are tasked not *only* with the health of forage and browse resources but with the protection of wildlife, fish, and rare plants on rangeland. Occasionally allotments are, for a variety of reasons, waived back to the Forest Service. Such was the case with the Bucksprings allotment. East Clear Creek forms the northern boundary and the Mogollon Rim forms a portion of the southern boundary.

The land could no longer support cattle grazing. The now vacant allotment has active allotments on two sides. The land has an abundance of spongy wet meadows, a unique and important elk habitat as well as supporting a significant elk migration route. This land is also critical habitat for an endangered species of fish—the Little Colorado Spinedace. The allotment takes in several ridges extending north to south that lay parallel to each other. Between each of these ridges are “stringers” of perennial riparian habitat that various mammalian, avian, and aquatic species depend on.

The Forest Service has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Arizona Elk Society (AES) and the former allotment permittee to repair ten miles of fence annually and maintain ten tanks. These entities have special concerns and interests in the land and will work toward the goal of conserving unique habitat. Fence will be maintained to keep cattle out of the area thus protecting prime habitation and preserving a migratory route for the elk and other wildlife. Information will be gathered for Arizona Game and Fish, and US Fish and Wildlife indicating where there are tanks that are supporting wildlife as well as endangered fish and amphibians. They are eager to know they will have access to the exact and very timely information needed to come to a conclusion whether repatriation is feasible or not. There are over 190 earthen tanks to be surveyed and recorded.



Robert Garcia and the Elk Society

One of the exciting things about being a Friend and working along side the Forest Service is that we learn about the land surrounding our community. We begin to understand the larger picture of land management and wildlife habitat. Such has been the case for the Wranglers, first working with **Janie Agyagos**, USFS Wildlife Biologist, and pronghorn habitat and now working with **Robert Garcia**, Range Conservationist for the Red Rock District. In late May the Wranglers learned that our next project would be on the Bucksprings allotment, trading the hot summer dust of Sedona for the cool air in the high Mogollon Rim country. Our GPS units have been out of their holsters most of the summer and the horses and people are enjoying the pleasant temperatures!

**Jeff Upshaw, Craig Stevens, Mike Ward, Marlee Vanderbeck, Milt Moore, Steve and Ginny Rench** and I spent weeks riding miles of fence line to provide the decisively significant information on the condition of the fence line to Robert for this years work. He was given a GPS reading, photo of the fence damage, and a narrative of what equipment will be needed to do the repairs. We also located and GPS-ed earthen water tanks on the allotment, giving their correct location, with a narrative and photographic report of the condition. In some cases a tank that is marked on the map may no longer exist, having silted in over the years. All the information is entered into a FS map and information computer program where the data will be stored and available to generations of Range Managers and Wildlife Biologists.

Armed with this information, each year Robert can efficiently plan the work. He'll know exactly where to begin and what he and the work crews will face when they get there. This year he was able to provide the Arizona Elk

Society with the information needed to satisfy the work goal slated for this year. **Robert** said “This project’s strategy and success was *completely* dependent on the information provided by the Wranglers.”

But **Steve, Ginny, Craig, Milt,** and **Jeff** didn’t stop there. They also worked over 180 man-hours in one long, wet weekend, providing horse support to the 85 Elk Society workers.

But it isn’t *all* work for the Wranglers. I read once that *feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.* **Janie and Robert** presented a beautifully wrapped *present* to the Wranglers when they hosted the Wranglers and spouses at a Saturday afternoon BBQ at Robert’s home. It was a fabulous afternoon with—as Robert and Janie intended—not a care in the world for us ... no work...just relaxing, taking off our spurs and letting them serve us for a change. The large dining table was laden with a feast of foods they had prepared; snacks, salads, baked beans, fruit, scalloped potatoes ... it was amazing. **Iric Burden**, USFS Range, kept the perfectly cooked burgers coming off the grill. It was a chance for all of us to talk about so many different things, enjoy a terrific afternoon and to feel the camaraderie that is the Friends of the Forest. It doesn’t get any better than that! *Thank you Janie and Robert!*

with an emphasis on safety, efficiency and low impact back-country travel.” Craig drove to Bayfield, Colorado, near Durango, spending more than 45 hours over the five day week in either the classroom or out in the field. He wrote on the last day of the course ... “*You got T-posts to pack, no problem—2x6 fence rails, fourteen feet long, no problem—bags of concrete, truck batteries, barbed wire, shovels, picks, double axes—you name it ... I can do it!*” We now have a member of the Friend of the Forest who is a certified FS Packer....a first I do believe.



Wrangler Steve Rench



Craig Stevens and Glenn Ryan at USFS pack school

The Wranglers received another *present*, a huge compliment and vote of confidence when Robert Garcia told me that the Forest Service would like to send a *Wrangler* to The FS Rocky Mountain Regional Packing School. **Craig Stevens**, jumped at the chance to attend and later said it was everything the brochure stated it would be; “Five days of classroom learning and hands-on packing

Craig’s expertise has already been put to good use as he and fellow Wranglers **Jeff Upshaw** and **Steve Rench** answered Will Hill’s request for help. They packed water, tools, food, propane, a cook stove and ten personal back packs into a CREC crew in Woods Canyon in the muggy heat of August. Sycamore Canyon seems to be the location of many packing trips. **Jeff Upshaw, Marlee** and **Butch Vanderbeck** provided the Forest Service with over 300 combined man-hours packing supplies into the canyon.

If it sounds like I’m boasting about the Wranglers and what we have been able to do for the FS, well ... I guess I am. Just as we all feel proud of the Friends of the Forest and the amazing can-do attitude we have to “just get the job done.”

Helen



I am very pleased to announce that we have had several individuals join the committee and complete their training! I would like to welcome **Jim Wilson, Mark Holst, and Barb Wolak**. Jim and Barb are new to the Friends and are involved in several committees. Special thanks to **Buck Packard** for conducting the Palatki training.

The Palatki cliff dwelling remains closed pending review by a geological technician of cracking sounds and seepage from behind the large rock slab that overhangs room number 2 (counting from the left as you face the cliff). The ruin is being interpreted from a canopy that has been setup along the "Vista Trail" that crosses a safe distance in front of the ruin and proceeds to the parking lot.

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](mailto:culturalresources@friendsoftheforestsedona.org) for more information.

Jerry Walters 284-1339

As the Ambassador at Large for the Friends of the Forest I have the enviable opportunity of talking about our amazing organization. In February I was invited to speak to the National Conference on Water for Line and Staff Officers that is put on annually by and for the Forest Service. As per usual I am surrounded after the meeting by folks who want to talk one on one. Waiting patiently for almost a half hour was **Garth Smelzer**, Deputy Forest Supervisor of the Lincoln NF. He wondered, considering the long distance I would have to travel, if I would come to New Mexico. He was so enthused about what he heard and lamented to me that they do not have one single volunteer group on the Lincoln.

He enticed me and my husband Dean by saying that the Lincoln NF would be having their Leadership Team meeting at 7000 feet in the cool mountains of Sacramento, New Mexico. He said it would be a perfect opportunity to reach all the District Rangers. It was a long two day drive across the flat desert landscape before the mirage-like Sacramento Mountains rose abruptly out of the dry sand around Alamogordo.

Garth introduced me the following morning and spoke of

a volunteer organization that will "blow your socks off." There were about twenty-five people in attendance, all eager to hear about Friends of the Forest and what we do. My goal is to demonstrate it CAN be done and to inspire other districts across the west to make it happen on their forest.

I told them of our very humble financial and manpower beginnings. We didn't start as the powerhouse we are now ... we developed over many ever-evolving years. I talked about the enormous demands and unquenchable expectations put on the Red Rock District by visitors and locals too. I talked about the hours the Friends give to the district each year and how last year that equated to 13 full-time, GS-5 Forest Service Technicians.

But it isn't just the hours or the money we give that is so enviable. It is the people and how we work with the Forest Service and how they work with us. There is a synergy, a symbiotic relationship between us. We have earned the Forest Service's trust and we are able to manage ourselves. We understand that the FS sets the priorities, we are solution oriented and dedicated to the cause. And we are **non-political!** I emphasize this several times through my talk because it is fundamental to our success.

Quite often I hear..."Yeah, but Sedona is so unique." And it is. I can't deny it. But I believe it is the spirit of a place that inspires and Sedona is not the only place with spirit. Every corner of every forest has a spirit all its own that will inspire the human heart to protect that which they love.

Hands shot-up all around the room, eager to ask the questions they'd been holding on to over the last hour. Many of the questions were about the financial aspects of the organization. Dean, as Treasurer for the past ten years had the answers as he joined me at the lectern.

We received an enthusiastic round of applause, and then everyone put their socks back on.

Helen



“Hi ho, hi ho, its into the woods we go,” but we don’t have to worry about being eaten by a wolf like Little Miss Riding Hood. We need to worry about Zoonotic diseases, any infectious disease that can be transmitted from non-human animals—both wild and domestic—to humans.

**Janie Agaygos**, USFS, recently gave a safety presentation for forest service personnel and guests, and I added a new word to my vocabulary--Zoonosis. We all know of E. coli and Salmonella, but what about Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis, Tularemia and Leptospirosis? We can’t “see” over thirty Zoonotic diseases, *but we can learn how and why to avoid them.*

Friends have invited you and your three grandchildren to their forty year old cabin. They haven’t been there in several months, and mice have invaded the building yet again. Other creatures have also lived the cabin, and upon arrival, one never knows what animal one may find. So naturally, the WOMEN go in first.

All looks safe, so the men bring in the ice chest to transfer sodas left in the cabinets. Perhaps by the time they arrive at the lake to fish, the sodas will have cooled a bit. When Grandpa Bob opens a cabinet door, a mouse is standing on its hind legs. Bob screams, the mouse screams, and both beat feet out the open door.

“Nothing like seeing an unexpected creature to get your heart rate going when all you think you are doing is reaching for a soda to put on ice,” Bob jokes. Now the rest of the sodas are taken out of the cabinet where they’ve been for several months and put in the cooler. (The cabin is rustic—no refrigerator—and whatever is left over stays in the kitchen until the next visit.

This is to be a simple weekend and cans of tuna are sitting next to the sodas. If the fish aren’t biting, the tuna is a last resort for a meal. (The same happens at my house, minus the mice.) So now the group has unpacked the car and will walk down the trail to the lake.

Just a short distance away from the cabin, the kids have found animal scat (poop). Ten year old Chrissie has a stick and is poking it apart. “Look grandpa, doesn’t it look like the coyote scat at the Red Rock Visitor Center?” “Hmm, sure does,” gramps says. “Looks like he ate berries too,” “Let’s get a move on.”

Five-year-old Cody lingers behind, thinking how neat it will be to pull out coyote poop at show and tell Monday. The scat is dry, so Cody decides to stick some of it in his pants pocket. He feels a piece of hard candy (unwrapped) as he pushes the scat deep into his pocket. He grabs it and puts it in his mouth.

While walking to the lake, the group passes an old abandoned rancher’s bunk-house. This place was always locked, but now

the door is a bit ajar. “Oh, let’s go inside,” the kids beg. After a cursory look, the grandchildren ask if they can stay a while and play “pioneer/cowboys.” You don’t see any danger—just an old broom someone left, dirt on the floor, and a musty smell. “Don’t stay too long,” you tell them.

Johnny gives Chrissie the broom and tells her to sweep while he and Cody go out to gather wood. A liberated young lady, Chrissie tells her brother to sweep it himself or they can share the work. Dust rises and sweeping soon is no fun. Playing pioneer is over and their coughing stops soon after the broom is tossed back in its corner.

As the children leave the bunk house for the short walk to the lake, they stumble on to a real find—a nest of baby bunnies with mother bunny absent. Soft and cuddly bunnies to put up to your face and then kiss on their noses before putting them back in their nest. Now mother bunny shows up and she’s walking slowly. She lets the kids pet and kiss her too. “Wow—how come the bunnies at our house always run away so fast, and this one doesn’t mind if we pick her up?” Chrissie wonders.

Leaving the rabbits behind, the kids race to the lake but slow down to cross a stream. They are thirsty so they scoop some of that crystal clear water into their hands and drink it.

Now the entire group is together at the lake and everyone is opening a soda. It’s not super-cold yet, but it sure tastes good. It’s getting really hot and there isn’t as much shade as they remembered, and the fish aren’t biting.

Grandpa Al says, “I brought the last of that elk I shot last year and we can grill it.” He mentions that he likes his game meat on the rare side. So dinner will be elk, pasta salad and other items brought from home.

Back at the cabin, Chrissie says she won’t eat elk meat, so she opens a can of tuna. She squishes the lid down to drain off the excess oil. Yuk. She mixes it with the mayo from the cooler and toasts bread over the campfire gramps has started.

Grandma notices that her husband has a tick burrowing into his lower leg, having its own supper. She pulls it out with her fingers.

In just this short time, gramps and the children have been exposed to: Salmonellosis, Brucellosis, Toxoplasmosis (kissing the bunnies and their mom—who lets you catch her because she is sick) Histoplasmosis and Hantavirus (inhaling fungal spores while sweeping old bunk-house) Giardia, Salmonellosis and Toxoplasmosis (handling scat), Tricinihosis and Tularemia (eating undercooked game meat), Salmonellosis, Leptospirosis and Lymphocytic choriomeningitis (not cleaning soda and tuna cans which had mice feces and urine on the lids) and drinking untreated water (Tularemia and Giardia)

These are your uninvited guests—think Wicked Witch of the West—that were along on your weekend in the woods.

Susan



**Sedona**

**Friends of the Forest**

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National Forest Land*



## **IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

**Wednesday, September 15, 2010 - 9:00 AM - Ranger Station**  
**FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting**  
**All Members are welcome**



Future Board of Director Meetings:

**Wednesday December 8, 2010**

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Annual Meeting

**October 23, 2010**

*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.*