



From the President

In this issue

President's Message

It never ceases to amaze me how many of our members step up when we identify a need. Last year, when we put out a call for a used refrigerator for V Bar V, 5 different members offered one, but **Pauleen Rosen** was first to offer. Recently when we asked for a used vacuum cleaner, again for V Bar V, **Jon Sales** was the first of another 5 members who offered.

And when it comes time for a special project or task, there's always someone who raises their hand. Recently it came to the attention of **Ernie DiMillo** that a number of signs were bleached out almost beyond recognition, he took on the task and repainted them.

Which brings me to the main topic of this message: if you have a skill that you think would be useful, let us know. There are always tasks that the Forest Service identifies for which they need our assistance. You can note your skills and knowledge in the View/Update My Information page on the [NEON website](#). While you are in NEON updating your skills and knowledge, please take a minute to check that your personal contact information is correct and update it if needed. We guard this information carefully, but periodically need to use it to send out renewal reminders or to contact a member directly. Only you can prevent undeliverable email!

Speaking of NEON, **Marilyn Painchaud** has made it easier to access information about volunteering. On our NEON FOF Member Portal home page, there's a section labeled VOLUNTEER, where you can review Forest Service requirements, view your active projects, join a project team, and review safety information Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) forms.

I ask all volunteers to access the VOLUNTEER page and then to look at the information on requirements of volunteers. You'll find important information on what to do [if you're injured while volunteering](#), and you'll see the protocol for [checking in and out](#). This is very important information that all Friends of the Forest volunteers need to be familiar with.

Finally, two of the key Forest Service positions have been temporarily filled. **Bruce Carlson** will be taking on **Terrilyn Green's** responsibilities as the Heritage Site Work Leader. **Brady Vandragt** has accepted a temporary promotion as the Red Rock Ranger District Staff Officer for Visitor Services, Interpretation/Education and Volunteer Programs, filling **Justin Loxley's** position.

Craig Swanson

Page 1

Presidents Letter

Page 2-3

Trail Maintenance

Page 3-4

Wildlife

Page 4-5

Graffiti Removal

Page 6-7

Cultural Resources

Interpretative Programs

Page 8

Membership

Page 9

Trail Patrol

Page 10 - 11

Statistical Reports

Publicity

Page 12

Calendar of Events

Hello fellow FOF volunteers.

We are the new Chairs of the TM&C committee and we'd be extremely remiss if we didn't give a huge public THANK YOU to **Jerry Checchia** for all that he's done the past two years. Jerry has been an exceptional leader, he's a hard worker, and more importantly, he's a wonderful human being. We are incredibly fortunate that Jerry is still an active volunteer, so we don't have to say goodbye as we say thank you.

Our volunteers are extremely dedicated, knowledgeable and willing to work week after week to make the trails safer and more enjoyable for all. Since the beginning of 2020, TM&C has worked almost 600 hours on over 35 miles of trails in the sun, rain, and snow. In addition to our regular Friday mornings, many volunteers put in additional hours removing

downed trees, installing new signs, and doing special projects for the Forest Service.

As we head into Spring, we'll be able to tackle more trails, including some of the trails that are not "winter friendly" for hiking or trail maintenance – such as North Wilson and West Fork. We'll also continue working on special projects, such as installing new kiosks at trailheads, installing a handful of dog waste stations, and painting.

We look forward to seeing you on our beautiful trails!

Mike Boyd and Melissa Pontikes



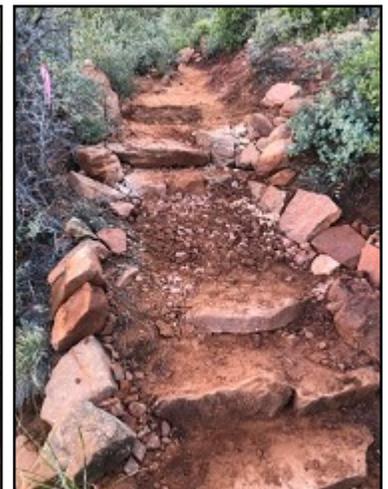
Group heading out to do work on Baldwin



Building a new rock cairn and general trail maintenance on Templeton



Closing social trails on Doe Mountain



Rock work on Doe Mountain (during and after)

Picture by **Melissa Pontikes, Mike Boyd, Ed White and Ernie DiMillo**



Tree removal on Brins Mesa



New rock cairn and sign on Ramshead



Before and after painted Wilderness Sign

Wildlife Projects

Spring is right around the corner and outdoor activities are a specialty for the Wildlife/Fish/Rare Plants team. **Janie Agyagos** has provided a [FY20 WFRP Volunteer Projects](#) list which is posted on the website. If you are interested in any of the projects, you can send an email to wildlife@fosedona.org.

Recently, Janie provided a training on domesticated agaves. The first half of the class was indoor lecture, conversation, and slides while the second half of the class was a field trip to the Stagesop area. We took a short hike and went to the location she previously scoped out. The team counted agaves, used the ruler to take photos showing heights/widths and documented GPS coordinates. It was very interesting, and you had to watch for the cow pies. All in all, it was a very educational day with "Friends".

Check out our W/F/RP website at <https://wildlife.fosedona.org> We have current projects highlights, a calendar of upcoming training and project work, and a wealth of information provided by district biologist Janie Agyagos about the flora and fauna of the Verde Valley.

Upcoming events:

Friday, March 13 at 11:00-12:00. You can learn how natives used agave for food and fiber. A presentation by Wendy Hodgson and Andrew Salywon, entitled Pre-Columbian Agaves in the Southwest Discovering Lost Crops among the Hohokam and the Verde Valley Cultures will be held at the Red Rock Visitor Center.



Wildlife Team **Anne Glickstein**, **Rick Paul**, and **Shelley Hagberg** working on the domesticated agaves count.

Continued from page 3:

We have teams going out hiking in specific locations to monitor, photograph, inventory, and report on these ancient agaves.

Bat Mist Netting is coming in April and May. Janie could use some volunteers to assist with putting up nets and taking them down. Also, assisting the bat handlers with documentation of their findings. Set up on the scheduled nights are before dusk then staying until 10pm or so. Let us know if you would be interested.

Peregrine falcon monitoring begins as early as March and goes through June/July. Volunteers for this project signed up for the training which was held on March 5th.

There is so much going on and our volunteers are quite active. Janie provides training and maps for the various activities and sites as well as a great appreciation for all the wonderful work our volunteers do.

Thanks!
Annie

Graffiti Removal

It's all about the volunteers!

From time to time, a little reflection is good for the soul...

Before every graffiti removal hike, we remind the team that the goal is not about removing the damage but returning safely. If for whatever reason we don't eliminate what we set out to do, it will be there tomorrow.

Regardless of the group that is sent out to the Forest, safety, enjoyment of the environment, and, appreciation of each other's contributions and friendship are always of paramount importance.

FOF Branching Out readers are used to looking at paint, scratching, carvings, and other damage on and off the trails in the graffiti removal articles. For this issue, I just want to focus on the people who work so very hard to maintain the beauty of Red Rocks. In the attached photos, the locations are not named or even important. **Jerry Checchia** and I do our best to make each and every outing a fun social experience – and maybe – with a little work involved. Yes,

the damage is repaired, but what we all remember is who went out and what new friends were made.

Since October 1, 2019, 41 of 67 members have recordable hours in the field. That represents a 62% involvement! The support this team continually provides never ceases to amaze me. Certainly, we don't get this amount of participation based on how many rocks we clean. Whether a small group or a full team, we all know we are making a difference. I have never been prouder to be part of a group of men and women than I am with this committee.

Lastly, I am pleased to report that our graffiti removal class (03/12/2020) is **sold out**. The conference room will be filled with 35 students, instructors, and speakers! These annual classes are critical as we are continually finding better methods for reporting and removing the affected surfaces with less and less damage.

Thank you all – and keep the reports coming!

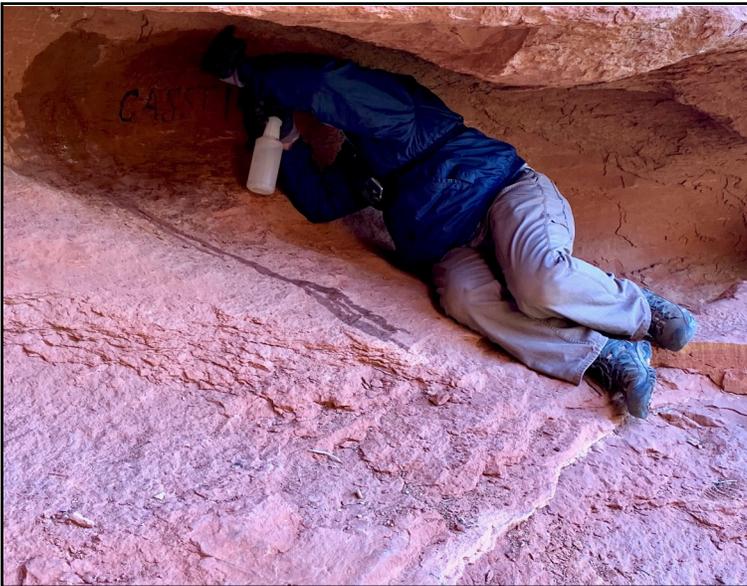
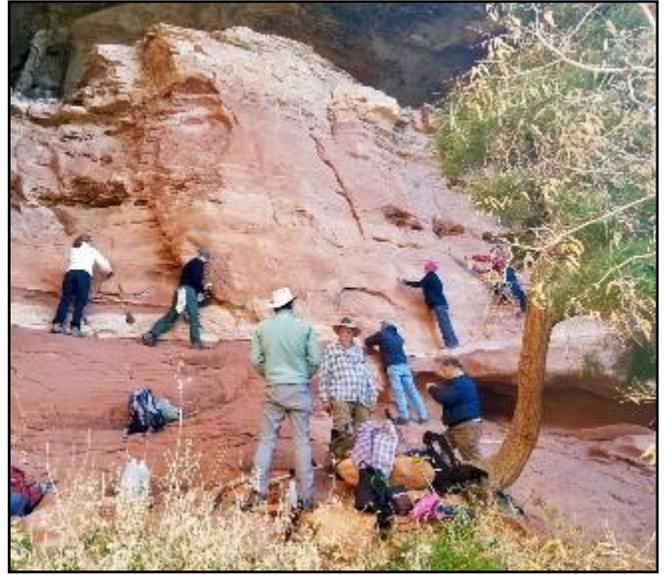
Jerry Piepiora, Chairman

Bill Logan, Mike Donahue,
Adrienne Pichette, Alan
Glickstein, Annie Glickstein, Rod
Cashin, Mike Boyd, Jerry
Checchia, Chase – our mascot,
Dan Aragaki, Maryann
Livingstone, JTE.

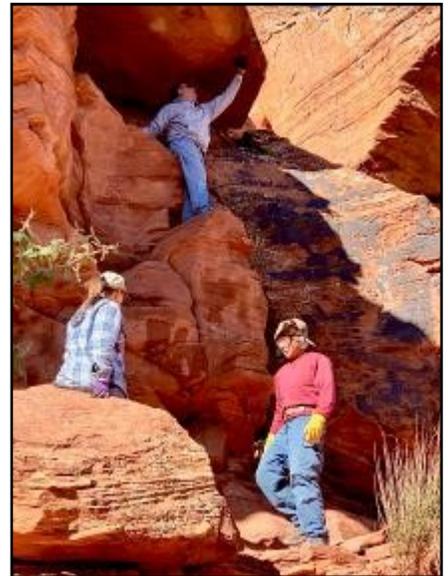




Site #1 – Amanda Brown (FS) – so glad to have her join us, Pete Malmgren, Tom Yager, Dan Aragaki, Bill Logan, Annie Glickstein, Rich Spinelli, Charlotte Danner, Doreen Dziepak



Who is the MYSTERY worker?



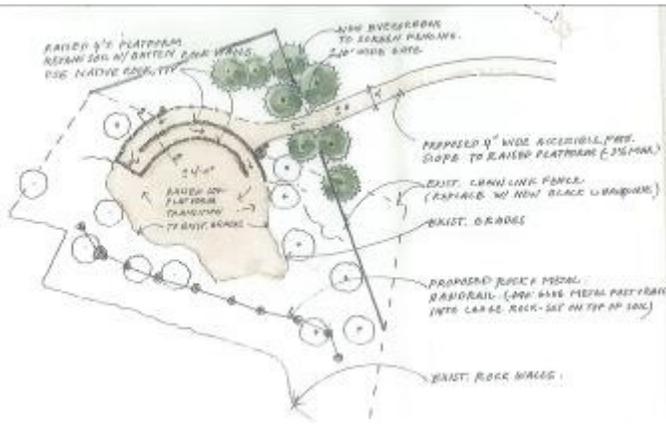
Who is the MYSTERY climber?

David Murrill making sure we remember he was there!



V-Bar-V Viewing Area Construction – Phase 1

V-Bar-V was closed for the month of February to do Phase 1 of the long-awaited Viewing Area Reconfiguration project. This phase maintains the existing rectangular fence line surrounding the petroglyph viewing area (dashed line in site plan view). A knee wall was constructed just inside the fence line to retain compacted fill to level off that area and to provide a less erosion prone surface. This phase will not raise it to its final height. A series of steps were added to the left side going towards the recessed cliff area. Trail repair/improvements were completed as well. The next phase will extend the fence line and allow for ramps to access the viewing area. No date on when that may be.



Plan View above and Artist Rendition below



As built below



Bittersweet Farewell

We bid a sad farewell to **Terrilyn Green** as she retired from the Forest Service after 20+ years on the Red Rock Ranger District and 13(?) years as the Cultural Site Supervisor whom I worked with closely in my 11 years as committee chair. The sweet part is that Terrilyn is remaining in the area, has joined Friends of the Forest and will continue to volunteer at Palatki (when she isn't teaching yoga or camping with Skip).

Site Recording Project

The team has recorded 13 sites since resuming activities in October. The team will be busy for a while longer as new sites continue to be discovered and there is still a backlog of sites to visit.

If you are interested in helping with this project, or would like more information, please contact Scott Newth at rnewth@msn.com. (928-274-7773)

Cultural Site Photo Documentation Project

The site photography project still has endless years of work ahead. The group that operates the Sketchfab site, that houses and serves up the 1,600+ 3-D models created by the team, asked for a BLOG article describing what the team does and how they do it. That article has finally been published and is available for public viewing: <https://sketchfab.com/blogs/community/sedona-friends-of-the-forest-digitize-history-in-coconino-national-forest/> This is well worth reading to learn about the amazing work being done by this team.

The Photo team is collaborating with **Dr. Frank Bungartz**, ASU lichenologist who also works with Gary Neil of the FOF. They are working on documentation and evaluation of lichen growth on petroglyphs at V-Bar-V, Red Tank and other RRRD archaeological sites. Some of the collaborative work is expected to be presented at a technical conference in Brazil this summer.

Photo team is also collaborating with **Dr. Peter Anick** of Brandeis University. Peter is a long term participant at the Texas Pre-Archaic Gault Site. Peter has drawn several interesting comparisons of pre and early Archaic petroglyphs at the Gault site with examples identified at Palatki and Honanki by our **Peter Pilles**. Photo and 3D evidence acquired by the FOF team and provided to Dr. Anick is being reviewed for use at a conference presentation later in the year.

If you are interested in helping with this project, or would like more information, please contact **Spence Gustav** at spencehg@yahoo.com.

Docent Program

Join me in welcoming new FoF members and new docents **Kathleen Lovell, Cheri Breeman, Mae Woodward and Warren Holm**. Thanks to Ruti Lovitt for conducting the Palatki and Honanki training.

We are always in need of new docents, particularly if you spend all or part of the summer months in the Verde Valley!

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 (docents@fosedona.org) for more information.

Jerry Walters 284-1339

The Red Rock Ranger District is hosting the following programs for Archaeology Awareness Month, the Red Rock Ranger District is hosting several events that you may want to attend:

Friday March 6 – **Peter Pilles** will be giving his “**Rock Art of the Verde Valley**” talk at 11:00am at the RRRD Visitor center.

Friday March 13 – **Wendy Hodgson** (from The Desert Botanical Garden) will be giving a talk on prehistoric agave domesticates titled “**Pre-Columbian Agaves in the Southwest – Discovering Lost Crops Among the Hohokam and the Verde Valley Cultures**” at 11:00am at the RRRD Visitor center in VOC.

Saturday March 21 – **Jake Newhouse** (longtime site host and now Sedona resident) will be doing the Spring Equinox talk at V-Bar-V starting at Noon.

Saturday March 28 – **Bob Erb** will have his “**Ancient Technology**” display at V-Bar-V from 10am until 2pm. Bob has a very large and varied collection of prehistoric tools that he has personally researched and recreated. Some of you may know Bob from his Mountain Man persona “Hopi” from V-Bar-V Days.

Jerry Walters

Interpretive Programs

Our 2020 program is off to an excellent start. In just two months we’ve already had several interesting walks and presentations. A sincere thank-you is extended to FOF members **Chris Weld** (geology) and **Kevin Harding** (birding, nature) for the time they spent preparing and leading their walks in January and February. In early January, Forest Service Wildlife Biologist **Janie Agyagos** presented a stimulating overview of the “Plight of the Pronghorn in the Verde Valley”. We also appreciated the excellent discussion of water issues in the Verde Valley led by Gary Beverly of the Sierra Club following the showing of his film “Viva La Verde” in early February.

Several returning events are scheduled for March through May: Geology Walks, Birding and Nature Walks, and Wildflower Walks will all be repeated one or more times. Upcoming First Friday presentations will include one repeat topic (“Ancient Melodies: An Anasazi Legacy of Native American Flute”) by FOF member **Jim Wilson** (on April 3), and a new presentation on native plant species in Sedona (title and date TBA) by David Cole, who is an outfitter with ANHA.

We also prepared publicity for four talks or demonstrations sponsored by the Forest Service that will occur in March, which is Arizona Archaeology and Heritage Awareness Month. A brief overview of what we do was presented to potential new FOF members at the new member welcome event on February 27.

If you, or someone you know, has a special skill, knowledge, or interest suitable for either an outdoor guided walk or hike, or an indoor presentation, please contact either Ranger Candice Mark at the Visitors Center or me.

For a complete list of upcoming events and a brief description of each one, check out the “Events” tab on the FOF home page on a frequent basis.

Bob Wych

Chair, Interpretive Programs

I'm happy to report that membership is still on the rise, and as of March 1, we have now surpassed the 600 mark, with a total of 605 members, including 22 new members since our last board meeting (12/11/19- 2/29/20).

Annual individual members include **Bev Sass, Cheri Breeman, DJ Everett, Michele Fitzgerald, Shelley Hagberg, Warren Holm, Greg Knopp, Donald McClelland, Jim Meade, Tori Marshall, Gerry Van Kooten**. Annual Family members: **Pat & Charlie Blum, Jennifer & Jamie Brehler, Brant Chesbro & Carol Sanders, Carol & Phillip Genatossio and Rod Ostrand & Vicki Hill**. Life Individual Member: **Terrilyn Green**. Welcome all and thank you all supporting the Friends.

On February 27th our annual **New Member Welcome Event** was held in the administration building, which afforded us a much larger and more comfortable space than the Visitor Center conference room, used in the past. 51 people attended, and of those, 37 were members and 14 were prospective members. Six of those prospective members (3 families) were able to sign up on the spot, thanks to **Treasurer Joe Pokorski** and his magic "square"!

Special thanks go out to all our presenters, President **Craig Swanson** (who took time out while from moving into his new home), Forest Service Recreation Program Manager **Chris Johansen**, and our awesome Committee Chairs, **Jerry Walters, Mike Boyd, Jerry Piepiora, Jon Petrescu, Annie Glickstein, Bob Wych, Spence Gustav, Brian Painchaud, Al**

Cornell and Mike Ober. The set-up team came in early to arrange chairs, man the sign-in desk and help keep things running smoothly. My thanks **Jerry & Deneise Piepiora, Mike & Jean Ober** and **Jerry Checchia** as well as **Manny Romero**, who ran the visuals, and **Tom Cloonan** who set up the audio. **Terry Orlick** also set up a merchandise display. You all made the program run smoothly.

FINAL REMINDER! There are **38 members who have not yet renewed**. If you wish to continue membership for 2020, please do so as soon as possible. This is especially important if you are currently an active committee member, since you will not be able to volunteer for any committee if you are not a member in good standing. You can go online to www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org, select "Join Us" and follow the steps to renew using **PayPal or a credit card**.

To mail in your renewal. Just print and fill out the form below and mail along with your dues payment to: **Friends of the Forest, Inc. P.O. Box 2391 Sedona, AZ 86339-2391. Your dues and donations are fully tax deductible.**

Respectfully,
Noreen Lisowski,
Membership Chair, (928-274-1314)
Membership@fosedona.org



Friends of the Forest Membership Dues, 2020

Name (s) _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Category: Friend \$25 Family \$35
 Lifetime Friend \$150 Lifetime Family \$250
 Additional Donation \$ _____

As of March 1, 2020, there are currently 141 Trail Patrol members.

Trail Patrollers have been very active over the first five months of the Government Fiscal Year with over 1,200 trail patrols. The new trails that have been added in the Western Gateway area last year are being actively patrolled (Roundabout, Ledge n Airy, Outer Limits, Last Frontier, Saddle Up). The series of new trails in the Western Gateway are being completed ahead of schedule due to the generous support of the Sedona Trail Fund (Lasso, Stirrup, Bolo, Rover, Ground Control). When these are officially opened, we expect these trails to be patrolled as well.

We are continuing to offer monthly group Trail Patrol hikes, usually starting at 9 AM during the winter and early spring.

Hikes vary, both short and long and easy to more difficult. During the hike, we will use the smart phone Report application to document trail issues like graffiti, brushing required, signage issues, downed trees, large amounts of trash that we didn't pick up, and any other issues that we come across. If you are a member of Trail Patrol then you will be getting emails with the group hike schedule during the first week of each month.

Please be timely in reporting your trail hikes.

Here is the summary of trail patrols from October 1, 2019 through February 29, 2020.

Hope to see you on the trails.

Jon and Terri Petrescu

Stats So Far For the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year

Number of TP Members who hiked	90
Number of trails hiked	150
Number Trail Patrols	1,232
Total Hikers Observed	22,685
Total People Engaged	8,257
Total Bikers Observed	4,641
Total Equestrians Observed	101
Total Dogs Off Leash	587
Total Lbs. Trash Removed	213

Volunteer Hours

With five months of activity and NO government shutdown this year, the Friends are surpassing last year's hours through February by a whopping 23%. Of course, last year's activity picked up dramatically once the government reopened, so

we still have our work cut out for us if we want to maintain or even beat our hours from last year. Here's the recap of the hours by committee, compared to last year's totals:

Committee	FY20 Hours Thru Feb	FY19 Hours Same Period	Change in Hours	% Change
Air Quality	209	134	+75	+56.0%
Cultural Resources	4,149	3,237	+912	+28.2%
Graffiti Removal	727	502	+225	+44.9%
Interpretive Pgm	192	78	+114	+146.2%
River Rangers	229	221	+9	+3.9%
Special Projects	116	78	+38	+48.7%
Trail Maint&Const	1,467	1,462	+6	+0.4%
Trail Patrol	4,998	3,203	+1,796	+56.1%
VIS	1,166	1,474	-308	-20.9%
Water Sampling	0	0	0	
Wildlife/Fish/Plants	1,423	957	+466	+48.7%
Admin/Meetings	870	1,298	-429	-33.0%
Total	15,545	12,641	+2,904	+23.0%

As a reminder, please report ALL hours (including Admin hours for Committee chairs and all Trail Patrol hours by individual members) as soon as possible at the end of each month, but no later than the 7th of the next month. This allows us to consolidate and update the hours in each member's NEON profile in a timely fashion.

NEON (Member Information Software)

We have been on our administrative system (NEON – Nonprofit Enterprise Online Network) for three years now, as we converted all the membership data back in February 2017 and began using the system on a limited basis at that time, with full system roll-out later in 2017.

Sign in to your personal account at any time to update your contact information, as well as your seasonal dates, skills/knowledge, and the expiration date of your Government Driver's License (for drivers of Forest Service vehicles.) See the new Volunteer page; it consolidates all Volunteer

information, including links to request to join a committee (project), sign the required "JHA's", and review volunteer procedures.

Renewing your annual membership (or making an additional donation) is easy – just click on the "Renew/Donate/View" option, then click on "Donate Now" and complete the required information. You can pay on-line using a credit card via PayPal (you don't need a PayPal account), or you can select to "Pay Later" and mail in a check. You can also view your total FOF hours by fiscal year from 2014 forward, with the current year updated at least quarterly.

To log in, go to the Friends website (friendsoftheforestedona.org), click on Members Area, then click on Member Updates. Instructions are provided directly below the Member Updates button.

Peg Kern

FOF News

At the December 2019 Board Meeting the Friends met **Amy Tinderholt**, the new Red Rock District Ranger. Amy introduced herself with a brief history of her Forest Service career and announced two projects she will be working on, a new fee proposal for Fossil Creek and a new River Management Plan. **Janie Agyagos**, RRRD Biologist, thanked the Friends for their support and efforts on the Toad Survey. Thanks to all the man hours put in, the Survey was a great success and it received a regional award.

A funds request was passed by the Board for supplies to build two mini-vivarium boxes for a study of the Narrow-Headed Garter Snake. Janie Agyagos is working with the Northern Arizona University Biologist on this project. Funding for Graffiti removal supplies was also approved by the board.

The Election of Officers was approved by the Board members for **Craig Swanson**, President; **Lynn Zonakis**, Secretary; **Joe Pokorski**, Treasurer; **Tom Cloonan**, Assistant Treasurer. The Vice President position has been accepted by **Ruti Lovitt**, official nomination and election by the Board will be held at the March meeting.

Members may purchase FOF-branded items, generally available for sale at each Board meeting. Clothing items have the FOF Logo shown on the FOF website at: <https://www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org/merchandise/>

If you wish to order embroidered items, such as a hat, shirt or jacket, please contact our merchandising committee. Order forms are available on the website

Friends member, **Richard Spencer-Coen** has been working on the Gully Restoration project for many years. With a background in engineering and restoration experience, he and his wife have joined the Friends is assisting Red Rock Ranger District with erosion control and revegetation of bare soil. Richard said, "Many areas in the Gully System will revegetate in a natural process once stabilized." The Red

Rock Ranger District Hydrologist, **Tom Runyon** will be presenting information to the board on Gully Restoration at the March meeting. Members interested in assisting with the Gully Restoration project are welcome to attend the March 11 Board meeting for more information on this worthwhile project.

The Friends members truly love the Red Rocks and enjoy the many hours of volunteering they do. It is always a pleasure to get a Thank You for all those hours and one such thank you came in the form of a letter addressed to the US Forest Service in Flagstaff by local Sedona resident Donald McClelland who wrote:

"Most of all, hence the purpose of this letter, is convey to you our appreciation for the manner in which the Forest Service, in partnership with a number of other organizations, maintains and improves each and every trail, and our wilderness areas, having thousands of hours of volunteer help to compliment your Staff. Where would the Forest Service be without the assistance of Friends of the Forest? And when hikers become lost or injured the Sedona Fire District and the Department of Public Safety can be counted upon, even to rappel to an injured hiker and airlift them to Flagstaff Medical Center if necessary. Even the Volunteer Park Ranger Program administered through Parks and Recreation does a module of training with the Forest Service. Everyone is working in harmony and cooperation to keep our trails safe and beautiful."

It is a pleasure to work with and be a member of the Sedona Friends of the Forest.

Jean Ober

Editor, Branching Out

All members are welcome at the Board Meetings

Join us Wednesday, March 11 @ 9:00 a.m. at the Red Rock Ranger District Office

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Wednesday March 11, 2020 9:00 AM - Ranger Station

FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting

All Members are welcome

Future Board of Director Meetings:

May 13, 2020

September 9, 2020

Annual Meeting - November (to be announced)

December 9, 2020

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.

