



From the President

After what seems like a longer and cooler winter than usual, both the warmer weather and the Spring Break crowds are back in the greater Sedona area. Our Visitor Information Services volunteers and our Cultural Resources docents have had their work cut out for them keeping up with the demand for assistance and information. Thanks much to **Bev Jackson** and our great group of VIS volunteers and to **Jerry Walters** and our dedicated docents.

As anticipated, with the Spring Break crowds, we're seeing an uptick in reported graffiti, but our graffiti removal team, under the leadership of **Jerry Piepiora** is keeping our trails clean. This group continues to innovate and implement ways to respond quickly and to effectively remove the vandalism to our rocks. Trained committee members can now remove scratches on the rocks themselves, as long as the markings are within predetermined limits. Jerry has an excellent article in the May 1 edition of the Red Rock News on our graffiti remediation efforts. And next month, **Nori Thorne** will contribute an article on the innovative techniques she has developed to tackle graffiti on patinated areas. Look for her article in the June 5 edition of the Red Rock News.

It's not too early to start thinking about the upcoming fire season, and the implications for the Red Rock District. As always, we need to take every opportunity we have to educate visitors on the need to exercise extreme caution, and to report any fires immediately to the authorities. Calling 911 is the most direct and simplest way to do so. In the July 3 edition of the Red Rock News, Forest Service Hydrologist **Tom Runyon** will be contributing an article on the impact of drought on the district. Be sure to check it out.

I want to express our sincere thanks to members **Pauline Rosen** and **Weihong Pan** who each donated a refrigerator that will be put to great use over the coming years. Pauline's will be used at V Bar V, keeping the water that we sell to visitors cold. You'd be surprised by how many visitors don't come prepared for our dry and hot climate. Weihong's will be used at the Apache Maid Cabin that visitors can rent to enjoy a rustic outdoor experience on our National Forest.

Thanks to the hard work of **Marilyn and Brian Painchaud** and a team of worker bees, our 25th Anniversary Potluck Social was a buzzing success. Marilyn suggested holding the event at the Mystic Hills Community Center, which proved to be a great location. Throughout this 25th Anniversary year, you'll be able to purchase commemorative water bottles supplied by our merchandising guru, **Terry Orlick**.

Joe Pokorski has assumed the role of FOF Treasurer, with **Tom Cloonan** now

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filling the role of Assistant Treasurer. Thanks, Tom, for your service as Treasurer, and for all of the great work you continue to do in support of so many aspects of our mission! **Noreen Lisowski** will begin coordinating membership activities, relieving Jerry Piepiora. Thanks Noreen for assuming this important role.

With the coming of Summer, there's always a slight lull in some of our activities, like Trail Maintenance and Construction. **Jerry Checchia** and his crew have continued to work each week on important projects keeping our trails in such wonderful condition, and in constructing new trails like those in the Western

Gateway. **Adam Barnett**, our Forest Service District Recreation Manager who supervises trail maintenance activity, has accepted a promotion as the Forest Recreation Program Manager position with the Inyo National Forest in Bishop, CA. Thank you Adam for everything you've done for the Red Rock District. You'll be missed.

Our next FOF Board meeting will be on Wednesday September 11 at 9:00 in the usual place, the Forest Service Administration Building. See you there, then!

Craig Swanson

Merchandise

The 25th Anniversary commemorative water bottles have arrived. Made from stainless steel, these 25 oz. bottles are light, yet sturdy. Only 50 have been purchased, so you'll want to get yours before they're all gone.

The bottles will be available at the May 8 Board Meeting. The water bottles are selling for \$15 each. Bring cash or a personal check. If you cannot make the meeting, you may contact me directly at terryorlick@q.com to reserve a bottle.

Terry Orlick



Forest Service News

Is the Drought Over Yet????

We've had a pretty wet fall, winter, and early spring here in Yavapai County, Arizona. In fact, if you look all the way back to this past summer with its very good monsoon, the last 9 months (ending in March 2019) puts this period in the top 16 wettest for this period since weather records have been kept beginning in the late 1800s. Compare this with the same period beginning in July 2017 and ending March 2018. This period was the 11th driest on record. Even worse is the time period beginning in August 2017 at the tail end of the North American monsoon (NAM) and ending in June 2018 just prior to the 2018 NAM. This was the driest 11-month period on record!!!

So, is the abundant moisture over the past 9 months a

signal that we are out of our long-term drought and has this pulse of moisture undone the damage from the record dry spell of the year before? The answer to the second part of the question is "nope". If I could answer the first part of the question, I probably wouldn't be writing this article as I would be putting my predictive abilities to work earning tons of money!

Let's tackle the first part of the question by starting with a quote from the Arizona State Climate Office's website (<https://azclimate.asu.edu/drought/>):

"Arizona is currently in our 21st year of a long-term drought. Drought in the West is a long-term concept where a single dry year does not constitute a drought. Since Arizona has an arid and semi-arid climate, extreme variability in precipitation is normal, and drought is characterized by a string of drier than

normal years, often interrupted by a few wetter than normal years. Currently most watersheds in the state have experienced only 7 or 8 normal or wetter than normal years during the past 21 years.”

Pay attention to the phrase “long-term concept”. This really highlights the fact that one can’t really know where one is within a particular drought cycle. Drought is a fact of life in Arizona. Since the late 1800s, we have had 3 major statewide periods of drought including the one we are in. Using tree ring studies, we can look way back in time and find evidence for multi-decadal droughts worse than the one we are in that likely caused widespread migration of human populations. It may be that there were other contributing factors in the disbursement of pre-historic southwest Native Americans, exemplified by the abandonment of major cultural centers such as Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde, but drought likely played center stage.

One particularly alarming property of this latest drought is the combination of sub-normal precipitation with above normal temperatures. Since 2000, mean monthly

temperatures have been above normal every year with 2017 being the warmest year on record. Unfortunately, this is one prediction of a changing climate. Even if total rainfall were to remain unchanged, increasing temperatures would effectively create drought conditions by increasing evapotranspiration with its consequent negative impacts on soil moisture, stream flow, reservoir storage, and groundwater recharge.

This gets to the second question about recovery from drought. One (or even several) good years does not make up for a string of bad ones. One way to demonstrate this is by looking at reservoir storage on the Colorado River. Reservoir levels have been in fairly steady decline since 2000. A few good years temporarily reversed the trend but certainly did not undo the loss of water storage in this reservoir. If this keeps up, Arizona is likely to see its allocation of CAP water being cut as part of Arizona’s recently passed drought contingency plan. More close to home, this certainly doesn’t make life easier for those desperately trying to restore forest structure in our nearby ponderosa pine forests before nature does it for us.

Tom Runyon, Hydrologist, Coconino National Forest

Statistical Summary

Understanding Our Membership

Among the many benefits we get from our implementation of the NEON member management system is the ability to analyze membership data to better understand our organization and our members.

Peg Kern recently generated and then summarized a series of reports that do just that.

Among her most interesting findings are:

Of our 543 members, 68% are family members, with 32% being individuals.

60% are lifetime members, with 40% being annual.

59% of our members are currently associated with at least 1 committee.

Of the 264 members who have joined since January 2016, 73% are still members.

73% of our new members have joined at least 1 committee.

85% of our new members have a primary address in Arizona.

These figures support what we experience as we interact with each other: we have an active and dedicated membership, people join in order to volunteer time on our committees, once a person or family joins, they’re likely to remain active. Our retention rate for new members is very high.

Craig Swanson

Volunteer Hours

March 2019 showed some real commitment by our volunteers, who recorded 4,400 hours, our highest single-month total in 20 years! However, we continue to lag behind our record-setting FY18 hours due to the government shutdown in December/January and some rather inclement weather in February. In spite of this, Graffiti Removal, River Rangers, and TM&C actually increased their fiscal year-to-date hours. Trail Patrol recorded their 2nd-highest total for March (1,131 hours) since

1999, only surpassed by 1,231 hours in March 2017. And then there's Graffiti Removal team, which recorded their highest-ever number of hours in March (338), beating every month for the past 10 years!

For the first half of the current fiscal year, we are about 3,850 hours behind where we were for last year. Here's the recap of the hours by committee through March, compared to last year's totals:

Committee	FY19 Hrs thru Mar	FY18 Same Period	Change in Hours	% Change
Air Quality	185	284	-99	-34.7%
Cultural Resources	4,207	6,187	-1,980	-32.0%
Graffiti Removal	839	599	+240	+40.1%
Interpretive Pgm	88	224	-136	-60.8%
River Rangers	221	213	+8	+3.8%
Special Projects	78	624	-546	-87.5%
Wildlife/Fish/Plants	1,436	1,661	-225	-13.5%
Trail Maint&Const	2,071	2,014	+57	+2.8%
Trail Patrol	4,330	4,822	-493	-10.2%
VIS	1,905	2,502	-597	-23.9%
Water Sampling	31	0	+31	
Admin/Meetings	1,629	1,739	-111	-6.4%
Total	17,018	20,868	-3,850	-18.4%

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)

Our administrative software for managing all our member information NEON (Nonprofit Enterprise Online Network) continues to be a valuable tool. Remember that you can log in to your own profile 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). Renewing your annual membership or making an additional donation at any

time 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 on a monthly basis. Requesting to actively join a project and signing the necessary JHA (Job Hazard Agreement) are also easily done via your personal account.

To log in, go to the Friends website (friendsoftheforestsedona.org), click on “Members”, then scroll down and click on “Member Login”. Instructions are provided directly below the Member Login link.

Peg Kern

Greetings Fellow Volunteers,

The TM&C group has been very busy since our last newsletter. Besides our regular Friday TM&C days we have been working on special requests from the FS. These are just some of the requests we've been working on.

Repairing the trail at V-V that got washed out & next week we will repair the fence along the creek,

Painting the Forest Service building at Beaver Creek Work Center that houses the seasonal employees,

Dismantling and removing a shed at Ike's Backbone that sustained damage from the high winds

Picking up 2 refrigerators that were donated by members and bringing them to V-V & the Ranger Station

Some trimming & rock work at the visitor center.

So, as you can see we do more than just the regular trail maintenance. It's kind of fun and my group always answers the call.

We also just had our 2nd Sponsored Volunteer Work Day on April 4th, it was a great turn out & we got a bunch of work done on Margs Draw & Huckaby Trail, Special Thanks to the Friends for the delicious donuts & pizza.

Happy Hiking & hope to see you out on the trails,

Jerry Checchia



Ernie DiMillo & Don McClimans painting the building at Beaver Creek Work Center



This is the group at V - V repairing the path that got washed out



Ernie DiMillo & Charlie Snyder doing rock work on Margs Draw



Al Milavec, Kurt Starbuck & Wayne Schwetje at Templeton Trail next to Oak Creek repairing trail damaged by heavy rain.

Photos by Jerry Checchia

FOF Interpretive Programs

Several new events and a couple repeat events are scheduled for May through August: First Friday presentations will include these topics: "Native Fish of Arizona", "Anthropogenic Fire", Geology (title TBD), and "Composting". Wildflower Walks will continue until at least mid-May. There will also be a lichen display and a rattlesnake exhibit at the Visitor's Center in May.



Lastly, the Forest Service is planning a special celebration of the 75th birthday of Smokey Bear on August 10. We are working with the planning committee on this event and will spearhead the signup for FOF member volunteers to assist with several of the displays and "fun" stations being planned. Look for sign-up sheets at the May 8 board meeting. If you're unable to attend the meeting but would like to participate, contact Bob Wych (bobwych@aol.com) or Jennifer Young (Jennifer.Young@fofsedona.org).

A sincere thank-you is extended to Tori Marshall (ANHA) and FOF members **Bob Beltz, Chris Weld, and Kevin Harding** for the time they spent in preparing and delivering interesting topics in January through April. I also truly appreciate FOF member Ed Hodges for the time he devotes to printing and distributing the flyers that advertise these events.

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

Leave No Trace

BEAR HUGS FROM SMOKEY

Fire Safety and Leave No Trace Training is a very important part of the Forest Service message to the public. Friends' members **Spence Gustav, Mike Vitek, Frank Wirkus, Peg Kern and Mike Ober and Jean Ober** assist Smokey and Forest Service staff to get the message out. Local appearances have been to area schools visiting K - 3rd grades and Smokey made an appearance at Posse Grounds Spring Event.

Jean Ober



Only YOU Can
Prevent Forest
Fires

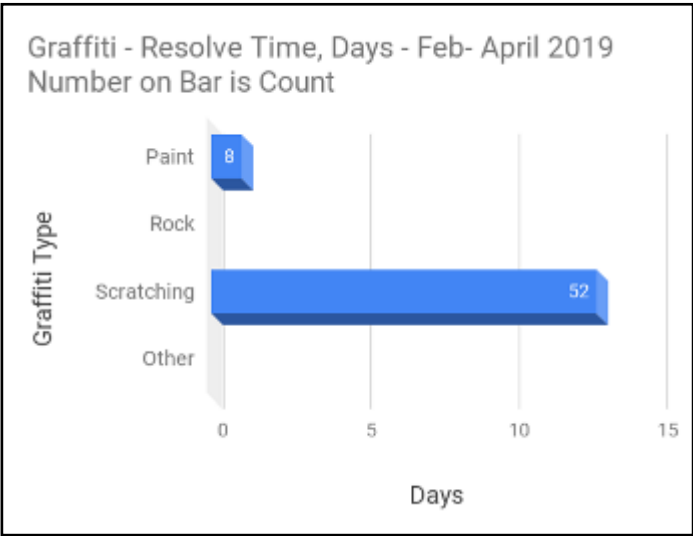
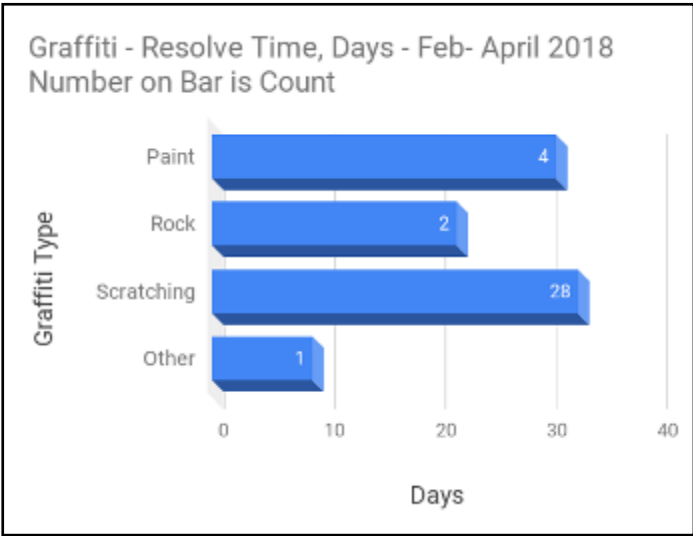
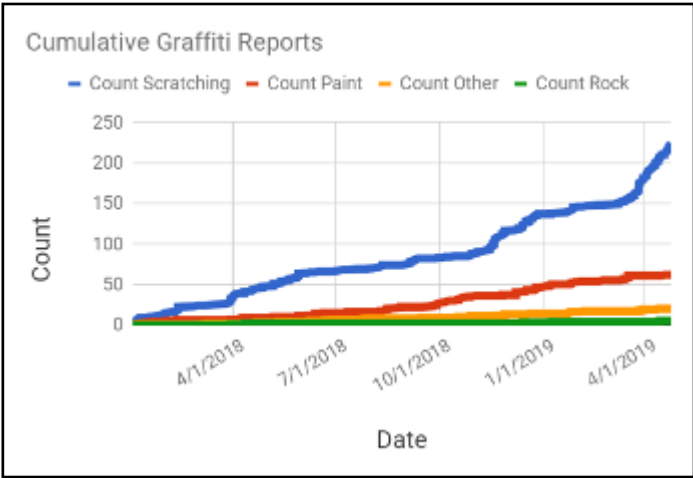
Technology Helps Fight Graffiti

We have developed a new phone app for the Graffiti team to support reporting and cleaning of graffiti. The focus has been on scratchings on the rocks since these occur most frequently. The most important requirement was that scratchings cannot be cleaned if there is any chance that archaeological rock art is nearby. To add to the challenge, archy rock art often cannot be detected with the eye. Fortunately, the Forest Service had categorized all the trails so we could protect potential archy rock art. This information was embedded in the Graffiti app but not made visible to the user. Also, three options were added for recording the distance the graffiti is from the trail: on the trail, within 20 feet, or beyond 20 feet. Once the trail name and the distance from trail is entered, the Graffiti app indicates if the graffiti can or cannot be cleaned.

The Graffiti team was trained in the new app on March 14. The results have been outstanding. As indicated in the 1st plot, the number of graffiti scratching reports has doubled compared to the year before. This increase is a combination of more vandalism and FoF doing a better job reporting. Just as importantly, as shown in the 2nd and 3rd plot, the time it takes from reporting to cleaning the scratchings, the “Resolve Time”, has dropped from 32 days to 13 days.

A new version of the app that is now being trialed will help the Graffiti team find reports that can be cleaned on a map and see the details of those reports including pictures. When the cleaning is done, completed pictures, date, and name are documented within the app and our database.

Bob Haizmann



For this report, it seemed best to describe our efforts with photos, more than words, so I will attempt to make the written part shorter.

Our mission since the last report has been to prepare for Spring Break by getting many more mini teams into the field to remove scratching from all non-sensitive areas.

We accomplished this in a twofold manner – holding an advanced training class, which was accomplished on March 14. As you can see from the photos, it was a sold out event with over 40 students and all the key FOF instructors along with the management from the Forest Service. We also presented Nicole Branton and Justin Loxley specially engraved “tool kits” in appreciation for their continued support of our team.

We also have been most fortunate to have Bob Haizmann develop a smartphone app, which will allow us not only to report graffiti, but also clean scratchings in all non sensitive areas at the same time. Several of

our team have been beta testing this specialized “graffiti app”. Previously we have been able to report, but not clean at the same time, using a “reporting app”. As of this writing, we have finished testing and shortly will be training everyone.

In addition to these added tasks, the team has attempted to keep up with all the reports. We have not been completely successful. Spring Break has just inundated us with problems. If we finish one of the popular sites on a Monday, we get more reports on Tuesday. During these recent weeks, it’s been the scratchings, not the paint, which has been most disturbing.

The additional photos show the team removing paint on Huckaby Trail and some young people helping at Buddha Beach. The latter was a real treat for us. Maybe there is some hope for the future.

Keep the reports coming!

Jerry Piepiora, Chairman



Nori Thorne – patina remediation presentation

Ted Neff and Spence Gustav – talk about using caution when around sensitive sites



Level II Graffiti class was held March 14 from 9 till noon with a large turn out of current and potential committee members. **Nori Thorne** conducted two patina remediation classes in April with two more scheduled in May





Les & Barb Heffner, Deneise and I were cleaning scratched graffiti at Buddha Beach on 4/23. These two youngsters approached Deneise and asked if they could help. They took our abbreviated training program and helped us for about 15 minutes. Many thanks to **Gavin and Nave** who were visiting with their parents from West Windsor, NJ



Annie Glickstein, Pete Malmgren, Susan Meyer, Les Heffner, Barb Heffner, and Bill Logan removing paint from Huckaby Trail with the use of our new high pressure washer



Presentation of special "Tool Kits" to **Nicole and Justin** from the Friends of the Forest



Membership

Since our board meeting on March 13, this current reporting period includes not only new members, but also the deduction for ex-members who did not pay their 2019 dues.

Since March 13, we have welcomed 6 new members. However, there were 43 individuals who chose not to renew. We called approximately 35 of these and most calls went to voicemail, or there was no answer. As of this report, we stand at 541 members, still an increase over 2018. For those not yet renewed, we hope you will reconsider and be current for 2019. With no overhead expenses, all of our income goes towards the mission of the Forest Service. And as the Forest Service budget for forest activities continues to shrink, our contributions – both financially and physically are more important than ever.

New members include – **John Tymczyn, Andy Von Laven, Charlie Snyder, Jeff Harvey, Raymond Schultz, and Jason Danoff.** We hope you enjoy volunteering in

all the areas you chose. Thank you for joining and supporting Friends of the Forest.

And as a quarterly reminder, please carry the FoF business cards and give one to any local hiker you encounter on the trails. You will be surprised how many people you meet have heard of the “Friends”.

Lastly, I am pleased to announce that **Noreen Lisowski** has agreed to take my position as Membership Chair. We’ll spend some time over the summer preparing for the position and by the fall, she will be ready to go. Thank you, Noreen.

Jerry Piepiora,

Membership Chair (443.324.1360)

Email: membership@fosedona.org

Publicity

As our 25th year of volunteer work has begun, the idea to create a Branching Out issue to commemorate the occasion was suggested for publication and mailing in October 2019. To accomplish this, I would like to invite all members to reflect on your time with the Friends and send me a note or email relating your fondest memory, funniest moments, bravest feat, or just a little bit of history to be included in this special edition. The articles featured in our Branching Out are normally submitted by the Committee Chairs and Board Members, in this issue I would like to also focus on all of you, the FRIENDS who make this group so amazing. If you have a picture you would like to share with or without an article that can be submitted as well. I would request that you name all persons in the picture, where the picture was

taken (hiking trail, Bell Rock, heritage site, etc.) and a date or time frame reference of when the picture was taken. If you have a special caption to add under the picture, include that as well. Your name and address, i.e.: Sedona, AZ, will be featured with each article and/or picture included in the newsletter, unless you instruct me otherwise.

Please send your information to my attention by October 1, 2019 at:

Email: newsletter@fosedona.org

Mail: Sedona Friends of the Forest, P O Box 2391, Sedona, AZ 86339-2391

Jean Ober, Editor

We have had 22 new Trail Patrol members join since October 1, 2018, for a total of 151.

Here are summary statistics from October 1, 2018 thru April 29, 2019.

So far for the 2018-2019 year 72% of members recorded Trail Patrol hikes and, excluding the MOTOR trails, covered 80% of the Red Rock District system trails. There was quite a reduction of patrol activities due to the Government Shutdown. Since the government reopened, and Friends of the Forest activities resumed, the Trail Patrol group has been very active.

We will continue to offer 1 to 4 monthly group Trail Patrol hikes through the summer. These will start early

in the morning at 6, 7, or 8 depending on length and expected temperature. Hikes vary, both short and long. During the hike, we will use the smart phone FOF Report application to document trail issues like graffiti, brushing required, signage issues, downed trees, large amounts of trash that we did not pick up due to amount, 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.

Hope to see you on the trails.

Jon and Terri Petrescu

Stats from October 1 to April 29

Number of TP Members That Hiked	109
Number of Trails Hiked	139
Number Trail Patrols	1302
Total Miles Hiked	7561
Total Hours Reported	5358
Total Hikers Observed	28800
Total People Engaged	10032
Total Bikers Observed	6510
Total Equestrians Observed	136
Total Dogs Off Leash	666
Total Lbs Trash Removed	359

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members Meeting Red Rock District Ranger Station

Wednesday May 8, 2019 9:00 AM

Wednesday, September 11, 2019

Annual Meeting - November (to be announced)

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

ALL MEMBERS WELCOME

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.



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Branching Out Graphic Design, Manny Romero