

Branching Out

May 2024

Sedona Friends of the Forest

Vice-President

Just to change things up this quarter, it's a message from the VP instead of the President. I promise, Jerry is still the man in charge, will be leading the May Board Meeting, and will be back in the next issue of Branching Out! As the Spring Break invasion slowly recedes, it's nice to have a few moments to reflect on all the incredible FOF happenings over the last three months. In addition to the "regular" (and by that, I mean INCREDIBLE and AWESOME) work of our volunteers and committees, there have been a few special projects/events that I want to highlight.

Beaver Creek Heritage Days made its first post-pandemic appearance and drew approximately 500 visitors over a very soggy weekend. The event celebrated the renaming of V-V Ranch to The Crane Petroglyph Heritage Site and FOF contributed more than 300 volunteer hours. A big THANK YOU to all of the volunteers that helped set-up/tear-down, managed the parking lot, provided invaluable information to visitors, and helped make the event a huge success!

The 30th Anniversary Committee of Jerry Checchia, Carol & Bob Dore, Annie Glickstein, Adrienne Pichette, and Margie & David Terrell deserve huge kudos for planning, organizing, and executing the April 6th Anniversary event. Despite the cooler weather, we had 70 attendees who enjoyed authentic Dutch Oven Cooking, trivia, s'mores, cornhole, and storytelling with fellow FOF members. Special thanks to our friends at Pink Jeep and Toni Salazar, USFS Volunteer Coordinator, for shuttling people to/from the parking areas, and to Jean Ober for the epic 30th Anniversary Edition of Branching Out.

Hopefully, this is one of the last times you hear "Cathedral Closure" out of my mouth! After 7 weeks, the Forest Service completed their final phase of construction and restoration. Once again, FOF partnered with the Sedona Westerners Hiking Club to help inform and re-route hikers. This year, FOF had 45

volunteers that dedicated over 700 hours to this massive undertaking. THANK YOU!!

Congratulations to FOF's very own Ernie DiMillo for being honored with the Award of Excellence for Community Service from Keep Sedona Beautiful. In addition to always being one of the first to sign-up for FOF projects, Ernie readily donates his time and talents to numerous other local organizations, including the Sedona Public Library, Sedona Heritage Museum, Keep Sedona Beautiful, and probably several others I'm not even aware of.

With Summer just around the corner, Preventative Search and Rescue (PSAR) is gearing up for a busy summer. Please reach out to Dale Evans (dale.evans@fosedona.org) if you you'd like to get involved with or even just learn more about this potentially life-saving committee.

Another annual summertime occurrence is the convening of the Nominating Committee for filling Board of Directors positions. If you'd like to get involved with the committee or want to know what it entails, please reach out to me. Our 3-4 meetings are all virtual and it's a great way to have a better understanding of the internal workings of Friends of the Forest.

Lastly, we are always looking to strengthen our leadership ranks by adding Committee Co-Chairs and/or rotating responsibilities. If you have a special interest in learning more about leading any committee or becoming a Co-Chair, please don't hesitate to ask the current Committee Chair, Jerry or myself. Thank you to FOF's newest leaders Warren Holm, River Rangers Chair and Steve Jacquay, Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plants Co-Chair.

If I don't see you at the Board Meeting, I hope to see you on the trails or around town. Enjoy the summer and stay safe!

Melissa Pontikes



Friends of the Forest
30th Year Celebration



After a slow couple of months early this year the TM&C was super busy this spring. We held workdays on Chuckwagon, Deadmans, Dogie, Boynton Canyon, Fay Canyon, the Mooney Trail, West Fork, and Vultee Arch. Activities included drain clearing, cairn construction, social trail rehab, tree clearing, and, of course, brushing! Many thanks goes to the Red Rock Ranger District, **Kevin Kuhl**, Trails/Wilderness/OHV Coordinator, and **Holly Barbush Cliche**, our new fulltime Trails/Wilderness Foreman, for keeping us pointed in the right direction. We especially want to recognize the hard working Seasonal Crew for the Forest Service; **Alan, Ashlyn, Ben, Cassidy, Cole, Conner, Cooper, Emily, Emma, Hannah, Josh, Jessica, Meghan, Rebekah, Sam, and Seth**. These fantastic

young people did a great job maintaining and improving our trails. We wish them luck on their new assignments and hope they'll return to the District next season.

There was also a sad note for the TM&C as we lost one of our longest serving and most dedicated members, **Jerry Piepiora**. On every trail we worked Jerry could tell a story of working on it, and sometimes even building it, in years past with the "old timers." In addition to everything else he did for the Friends of the Forest, he was especially active in recent years working with the sign crew fabricating and installing signs throughout the RRRD. He'll be missed.

Glenn Kingsbury, Pat Quinn, Rod Cashin

TMC at Boynton Trail - Friday 4/5/24



TM&C with Forest Service

Chuckwagon 3-29-24



Crew ready to get to work

Trail Maintenance

West Fork



Taking a well deserved break

Mooney Trail



Heading out with Wilderness Crew



West Fork



Rock cairn with trail sign

West Fork



Gearing Up

Trail Maintenance

Vultee Arch Trail



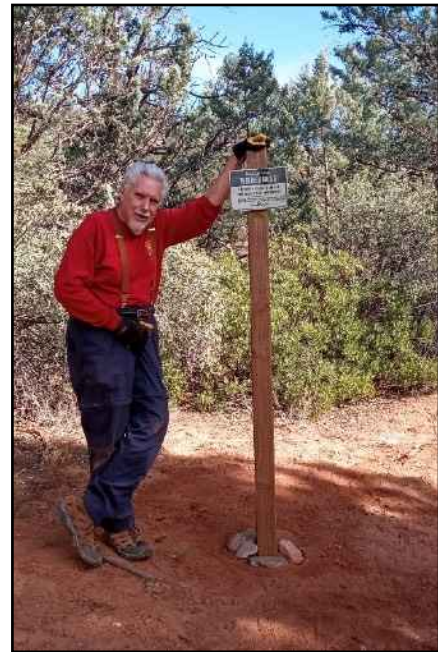
Sam Serrill on Crosscut Saw



Jerry P. aka "Jerry the Elder"



Glenn, Rod, Barry and Pat



Installing a wilderness sign earlier this year



Preventative Search & Rescue

Be part of the Preventative Search and Rescue Team in our efforts to support first responders at Devils Bridge (Dry Creek Vista) and "The Crack" (Bell Trail) Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

Training will be held at Red Rock Ranger District Admin. Offices Conf. Room (lower parking lot). If interested, please sign up for one of the training sessions - SignUp Genius links below.

Thursday May 2nd from 9-10. A field trip to Beaver Creek Work Center to view set up site, tent set up, supplies storage, water/ice.... will follow for those planning to volunteer for "The Crack" and needing a review - new members interested in working "The Crack" strongly encouraged to attend.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B4BA4AD22A6F4C16-49075422-psar>

Tuesday May 7th from 9-10. This will be the same general training as on May 2nd but will be followed by a field trip to ATV Sedona and Dry Creek Vista to go over logistics of water/ice and to review storage area/materials and tent setup.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B4BA4AD22A6F4C16-49075960-psar>

Please contact me with any questions.

Dale Evans PSAR Chair
(dale.evans.dvm@earthlink.net)

Dale Evans



Keep Sedona Beautiful Volunteer of the Year
2024

Ernie DiMillo

Congratulation Ernie and thank you for the many hours of volunteer work you provide the Sedona Friends of the Forest

Graffiti Removal

The Graffiti Removal Committee is now monitoring social media for reports of graffiti. Many of you may be familiar with **Nextdoor**. Users have been reporting graffiti on this social media platform. We've picked up these reports and remediated the graffiti. If you have friends or neighbors which find graffiti, then ask them to email the details to graffiti@fosedona.org. Or they can post to **Nextdoor**. Either way, we'll get these reports. The

sooner we get reports, the sooner the graffiti is cleaned; the less graffiti grows. This really extends the reach of our committee.

We are used to taking care of inappropriate rock structures. Usually stacks of rocks called cairns. But we are now seeing a new form of rock structure: prayer circles.

Chapel Trail

Sugarloaf Loop



Someone went to a whole lot of effort to build these circles. And committee members have equally spent considerable time to disassemble these structures. Hopefully this is not a trend.

📌 Graffiti App Tip: The Graffiti, Report and Manage apps have been modified to add a new category (Description) of Observation: Graffiti: "Scratching on Paint". It was decided that scratching on paint was sufficiently more complex and required a different set of tools than the normal toolkit, therefore they

should not be available for independent cleaning. Any observation of this type will automatically be entered as "Pending" under Work Status.

Thanks to committee members that continue to work independently on reporting and remediating graffiti. We now have 117 members, an all time high!

Everyone be careful out there and enjoy our forest.

Jim White

Wildlife, Fish, Rare Plants

There's always something going on with W/F/RP. Janie has kept the volunteers busy with training and actual work. One project in particular took a team to the Thompson Property.

- In 1876, J.J. Thompson took a chunk of land that's right across from the Indian Gardens Store, which is still in operation to this day. Having found some deserted gardens left behind by Native Americans and a healthy spring, he was able to survive off the land and built a log cabin for shelter.
- Forest Service (FS) Botanist, **Andy Pigg**, FS Archaeologists **Dana Brown and Thomas Kroll**, and others along with **Pete, David & Margie Terrell, and Johnny Johnson** took a stab at controlling invasive ivy at Thompson homestead.
- Janie said "It's a real treat to get back through the neighborhood to see this historical property that we acquired not too

long ago. Not many FS employees even know we own it or how to get to it!"

- Seven hours of vine eradication was quite enough for our dedicated volunteers. The FS staff stayed and worked on longer...good to be young and paid...

Because there is always something going on, I was looking for a Co-Chair and sure enough someone stepped up to start learning about this awesome committee/team. **Steve Jacquay** has taken on that role of Co-Chair.

Steve will gradually learn which volunteers do what, the systems we use (NEON-FOF database, Signup Genius, and spreadsheets), as well as all the projects that Janie has going on. Every committee needs a Co-Chair, it's such an important role. I'm sure glad he is willing to take on a leadership role within FOF. That's how this great organization can continue on for another 30 years...Happy 30th anniversary FOF.

Annie Glickstein

Crane Petroglyph Heritage Site



FOF volunteers assist with new signage

Special Projects

Crescent Moon Ranch house painting project



Editor

What does it take to put together an issue of Branching Out? It all starts with our fantastic committee chairs/co-chairs, board members (the behind the scenes people who keep us running) and our fantastic volunteers. Three weeks before a scheduled board meeting, I send out a request for articles and pictures of our great members in action. Some of these board members are prolific writers and send informative and fun articles and include pictures of their groups activities, other members send in great photos and let them tell the story of the volunteers at work. These amazing articles and photos are then put together to tell the story of The Sedona Friends of the Forest.

The tools needed for this job are a computer with a word processing program with a newsletter template, FOF graphics (complements of Manny Romero) and our FOF logo. The results are this amazing newsletter. Of course, putting all this together is a lot of cutting and pasting, using the software to personalize the design and layout, then Email it to our members for their reading pleasure.

Sound easy?

newsletter@fosedona.org

Jean Ober

Happy Trails



Jerry & Chase