



## From the President

On March 15 of this year, Friends of the Forest members received an email from me informing you that the Forest Service would be closing all visitor contact sites due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In one sense, it seems like just yesterday that we were actively engaged in our volunteer activities. In another sense, it seems a lifetime ago.

A “new normal” has taken hold, as we’ve adjusted to the demands that circumstances have placed on us. While the situation remains fluid, most of us are limiting activities, wearing masks, and looking forward to the inevitable day when we welcome the “old normal” back into our lives. In the meantime, we carry on.

Here in the Sedona area, we’re incredibly fortunate to live in the midst of some of the most beautiful scenery anywhere in the world. That beauty can be healing, allowing us to constructively escape from our everyday cares.

My wife Lynn and I take a walk nearly every morning. Whether it’s a brief stroll around our neighborhood or a longer hike, being outside and marveling at the beauty of Red Rock Country always rejuvenates.

If you, too, are taking advantage of remaining active outdoors and on our trails, you know exactly what I’m referring to. You know that there are a seemingly endless number of hikes you can take where social distancing is not a challenge, and you know how much more positive you feel when you return back home.

If you’re hesitant to get back out on the land, I urge you pick a less used trail, prepare appropriately, and once again experience the majesty of the natural world. You’ll never regret it.

Craig Swanson

**The following FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meetings will be held via Zoom**

**Wednesday September 2, 2020 9:00 AM - <https://zoom.us/j/91432765376>**

**November** (Meeting date to be decided at September meeting)

**December 2, 2020 @ 9:00 AM**

*To join the Zoom meeting copy and paste link into Zoom.us (download app if needed) Click—Open Zoom Meeting. To join by phone only: • Dial either 602-753-0140 or 954-429-2566 • When prompted, enter Meeting ID: 914 3276 5376*

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JEAN OBER  
BRANCHING OUT EDITOR  
[newsletter@fosedona.org](mailto:newsletter@fosedona.org)

**Friends of the Forest  
Ballot for the 2021 Board of Directors**

**If you plan to attend the November Zoom Annual Meeting, you will be able to vote at that meeting and should NOT use this ballot.**

**If you will not attend the Annual Meeting, OR if you would like to write-in another candidate for a Board position, please use this ballot to cast your vote via email to [secretary@fosedona.org](mailto:secretary@fosedona.org)**

***Continuing the Board***

The following Board members have agreed to serve another 3-year term: **Bob Beltz, Gerard Checchia, Jon Petrescu, Terri Petrescu, Rich Spinelli, Jerry Walters, Jennifer Young**

***Retiring from the Board***

With our deep gratitude for her service! **Marilyn Painchaud**

***New Board Members***

The Nominating Committee is pleased to nominate **Melissa Pontikes** to serve a 3-year term.

Our Bylaws require that write-in votes be received by the Secretary before 5 p.m. of the day preceding the Annual Meeting. No nominations may be made from the floor. The new Directors' term in office begins as soon as the election results are announced at the meeting.

*Directors Nominating Committee Members: Craig Swanson, Spence Gustav, Bev Jackson, and Jerry Piepiora*

**MAIL-IN BALLOT**

**For members who will not attend the November Zoom Annual Meeting OR for members who wish to write-in another candidate's name.**

Please **cast your vote** by placing a check next to the candidates of choice or by writing in the name of another candidate. Do not vote for more than 14 candidates, including any write-in candidates.

☐ Bob Beltz ☐ Melissa Pontikes ☐ Jerry Walters ☐ Jennifer Young

☐ Gerard Checchia ☐ Jon Petrescu ☐ Terri Petrescu ☐ Rich Spinelli

Write-in Candidate(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of FOF member(s) who is (are) voting: \_\_\_\_\_

*E-mail ballot to: [FoF Secretary](mailto:secretary@fosedona.org)*

The Board Members will be voting for Board Officers at the  
December 2, 2020 Board of Directors Zoom Meeting

**Slate of Officers**

President - Annie Glickstein  
Vice-President - Bev Jackson  
Secretary - Craig Swanson  
Treasurer - Joe Pokorski  
Asst. Treasurer - Tom Cloonan



## **"The Serendipity of Random Circumstances in Volunteer Life"**

We live in odd and sometimes very frustrating times. Being volunteers with the FOF and other organizations, there are normally an overabundance of opportunities to keep busy and to do good for our community.

The Covid pandemic situation has put a significant damper on our activities. However, each of us, may have story or two regarding situations that have led to very unexpected opportunities.

Here is one of those stories. It is a story about scratches. It is a very old story. Perhaps it is just a story about very old scratches.

For those interested, please read on because there is a plea for help and an opportunity for volunteer work at the end of the story.

In early 2019, Peter Pilles, Coconino Forest Archaeologist, attended a conference out of state. He met and talked with avocational archaeologist Peter Anick from Brandeis University (Mass.) who is also a board member of the American Rock Art Research Association (ARARA). Anick's close friend Walter van Roggen from Northwoods Software Inc. (NH) and the North East Archaeology Research Association (NEARA) are even bigger Clovis nerds than I am.

Both of these gentlemen have extensive volunteer experience in a variety of archaeology projects. Peter has many years supporting the excavations and interpretation of Early Archaic and Clovis evidence at the famous Gault Site in Texas.

At the conference, our Peter (P) told their Peter (A) about some anomalous petroglyph scratches at Palatki and Honanki. Their interest was noted. Conference on the West Coast, home on the East Coast, the obvious decision, detour to Sedona on the way home.

The day that Peter A. and Walter were here, Peter P. had a Forest Service meeting he could not get out of. He sent a quick urgent email the night before. Could I meet two gentlemen at Palatki and show them specific rock art panels on site. The great pre-Archaic scratch hunt was on.

In the Grotto at Palatki, as we have been telling people for years, there is a lot going on from many different cultures over a time span of perhaps 15,000 years. Some of the pictographs and petroglyphs are interpreted to be Archaic or older. Within minutes -

**Peter A.-** "is that pictograph over there what you think is Archaic?"

**Spence G.-** "Yes!"

**Peter A.-** "Those scratches are overlain by the paint; they are older Archaic or pre-Archaic !!!"

**Spence G.-** "Duh, I guess so"

**Peter A.-** "This site has more evidence of pre-Archaic than any other place I have ever been"

**Spence G.-** "Duh, Is that so"

And to think that so many of you complain about how much I talk and won't shut up. Oh, the irony of it. In the Bear Alcove, more examples of scratches with the same patterns! In the Roasting Pit, many more examples and some incredible examples of Archaic over Archaic over older Archaic over even older and probably pre-Archaic. In the Water Catchment, really a lot more. Several additional sites in the area have evidence of the same styles and superposition relationships.

Peter A. showed me his photos of Clovis, Dalton and Archaic associated petroglyphs at Gault and other sites. These are cultures that have been reasonably interpreted to have been active over 10,000 years ago. We have incredibly similar styles in the same relationships and positions as at Gault. The big difference is Palatki has more! A lot more!

A few emails between the Peters, Walter, and myself on how interesting and exciting this could be and then silence. Another project goes to the back burner.

Skip forward to early this year before our local shutdown. Peter A. magically reappears via email and proposes that we publish a paper for next year's ARARA virtual conference. Abstracts due August 1 (no we did not meet the deadline but two of our potential authors are ARARA board members). We all jumped on the bandwagon and started putting our thoughts together. Talk about an incredible opportunity to try something new, and potentially archaeologically significant. As everything else is slowing down we have time and interest to take on a new project that we can work with the Covid pandemic restrictions.

With very substantial help, high end photo equipment/techniques and state of the art software, together with the amazing patience from Cultural Resources Photo Documentation team members we have been studying and photographing scratches at Palatki and other areas.

We have made some interesting preliminary discoveries:

Did you know that the virtually all of the scratch lines that we normally attribute to the Archaic time period or older are 0.2 to 0.5 millimeters wide?. Go ahead, find a piece of sandstone in your yard, and try to make a series of scratches that are consistently less than half a millimeter wide. What we believe are younger (Sinagua, Yavapai, Apache) scratched petroglyph lines are almost always much wider.

Did you know that at other sites there is a consistency of scratched styles including "checkerboard", "large diamonds", "smaller diamonds", "even smaller diamonds", "parallel pair checkerboards", "parallel pair diamonds", "random curves",

“splays”? Each of these are at varying angles to each other and frequently they overlay each other in specific patterns. We have evidence of each of these and, in most cases, in the same relationships as at other sites where they have convincingly been related to pre-Archaic cultures.

Did you know that some of the dark red coloration on the sandstone we typically identify as patinated or desert varnish is actually the result of a geochemical process (as yet unidentified) that occurred deep in the earth prior to exposure by erosion. It is the erosion that exposed the surfaces for the pre-historic Native Americans to have access to paint or scratch on?. This has a big impact on interpretation of who did what and when. Sometimes desert varnish is not desert varnish.

The bottom line is that the East Coast contingent of our collaborative effort are absolutely convinced we have earliest Archaic and pre-Archaic rock art in the Verde Valley that rivals some of the most significant sites in North America. They have convinced me (I am an easy sell) it is true. I am reasonably confident that Peter P. has believed it all along. We continue to put considerable effort into this project as the results could be significant for the archaeology world.

To identify and interpret what is on these rock art panels, we have taken the photo documentation effort to an even higher level than in the past. Our photos and 3D models are trending towards sand grain sized detail. For the last several months, we have taken advantage of the Heritage Sites being closed to the public and have been working away taking detailed photos of scratches. We photograph vertical scratches, horizontal scratches, diagonal scratches, curved scratches, random scratches. Fortunately, the Forest Service has agreed to let us continue working on site as long as we follow all the safety rules including social distancing etc. Progress has been significant. Finally, it is time to move on to the interpretation phase.

The 3 hour difference to the East Coast has an impact and I am impressed by the stamina of our collaborators who stay on Zoom until I give up after midnight or later sharing screens and arguing about "this scratch and that scratch".

#### **Volunteer Opportunities on offer!**

We think we should not keep all the fun to ourselves. We would like to share the opportunity to stare at hundreds of scratch lines. In some cases, this could be done on site. For the vast majority, it will need to be done from our photos and 3D photogrammetry models. This is the type of work that can be very frustrating, very time consuming and requires a good eye(s) and extreme patience. It is also potentially very valuable in adding to the general knowledge of archaeology in the Southwestern U.S.

At this time there are three main components that are required for us to continue moving forward. After we start getting results from small highly detailed area data sets, there are several more computer tasks that will also be required.

**1** - computer work that will require having standard software that allows the operator to draw various colored lines on photo files in individual "layers". If you have Gimp, Capture 1, CorelDraw, Pic Monkey, Photoshop or Photoshop Elements you have just about all that would be required. If you don't have any of these, I can probably set you up with GIMP (free software) or something else. This work will need to be done very carefully. Training will be required and provided. It would help to have a decent sized computer screen and reasonable mouse skills. No, I don't mean snacking on cheese while working. Unfortunately, being color blind will likely eliminate you from the volunteer pool for this phase of the work.

**2** - Computer work interpreting superposition of scratch line intersections (suggesting which scratch is older) that would require a decent size computer screen and any basic program that can view JPG files and can annotate letters or dots on the photograph. You almost certainly have software to do this if you have a PC or Mac. The vast majority of intersections are going to be "indeterminate" Some of this work can potentially be done on our 3D models to see more detail, but the annotation would need to be on the previously mentioned JPG files.

**3** - The same job as #2 but working on specific rock art panels that are within eye level at the Palatki Grotto, Water Catchment and Roasting Pit alcoves. Most of the panels are too high and cannot be easily accessed with a ladder. The photos will have to do.

***Once we have the annotation results coming in, additional tasks are:***

**4** - The locations of interpreted line intersections will need to be identified from gridded panel photos with 1.0-centimeter grids superimposed on the photos. Think of it as a variation of playing the old grid game "Battleship".

**5** - The annotations and grid locations will likely need to be transferred to a spreadsheet with the intersection grid location determined from gridded panel photos. There will be a code developed for each of the scratch types and the intersection will be classified as "indeterminate" or as an example C.75 x 43.5 BD60 over CB5. (I.E. At grid location C.75 (7.5 cm below the C grid marker x 43.5 cm from the upper left corner of the grid a Big Diamond scratch line at 60 degrees from horizontal overlies - is younger - than a Checkerboard scratch line at 5 degrees from horizontal.

**6** - Then! Anyone out there still up on their multi-variate statistics, Markov Chains, Factor Analysis. We will be trying to confirm consistency between sites and styles.

This all may sound like a short-term minor effort for a couple of people. NO! Best guess, it will be hundreds of hours for each of the panels of interest and their many small highly complex areas with scratch intersections.

*At this time, our priority areas are -*

Panel 15 at the Palatki Grotto with 6 distinct sub-panel areas



with scratches directly related and evidently underlying probable Archaic Pictographs. Most of this will need to be done from photos and 3D models.

Panel 27 at the Palatki Roasting Pit with multiple scratch sets underlying? Archaic pictographs. Potentially could be done on site.

Panel 1 at the Palatki Water Catchment with a great variety of scratch styles but no obvious related Archaic pictographs. Potentially could be done on site.

Panel 11 at the Palatki Bear Alcove with a great variety of scratch styles but no obvious related Archaic pictographs. Potentially could be done on site.

Panels 15 and Panel 47 (possibly additional panels) at a "remote" site that will likely need to be done from photos and 3D models.

Are you one of the few, the proud, the FOF volunteers who will try almost anything to keep usefully busy, expand our knowledge of archaeology in the area and continue the Friends of the Forest history of achievement in complex projects.

If interested email me at [Spencehg@yahoo.com](mailto:Spencehg@yahoo.com). I will send back a more detailed explanation of what is involved and what computer equipment is required for working independently at home, or supplies/equipment required if working on site. For those who might be interested, training will be substantial and will mostly be via Zoom or Skype.

If things go to plan, a preliminary project status report will be published early next year. The work we want help with is to tie down details on multiple panels. This is not a rush job; it is going to take quite a while to put it all together. We should have some of the material ready to be worked on very soon.

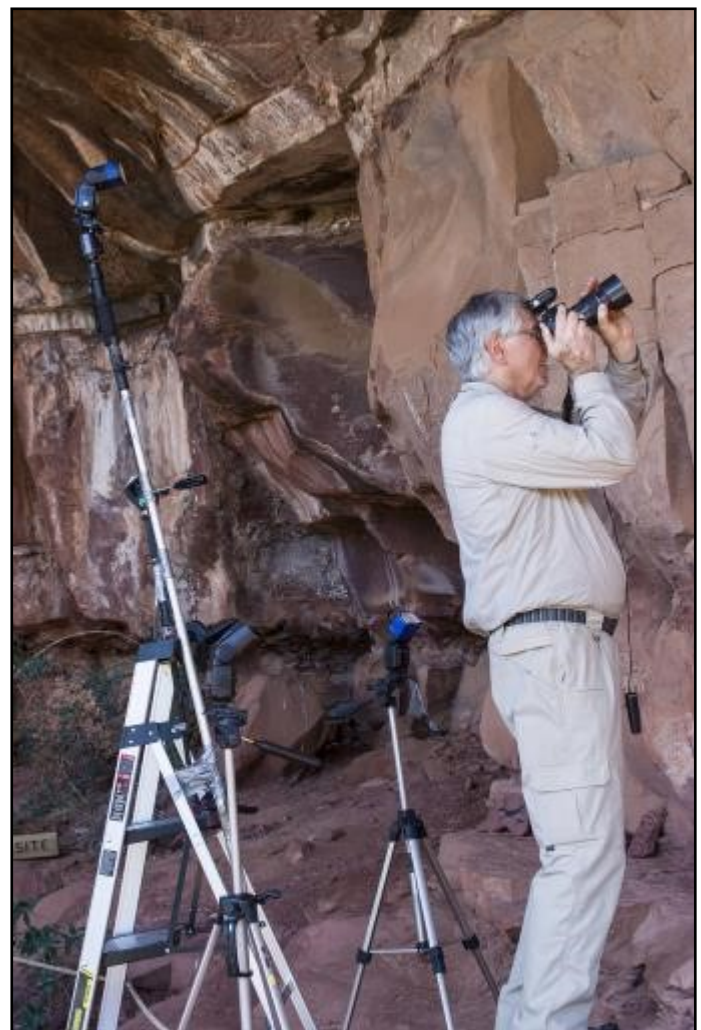
I hope everyone is keeping happy, healthy, and safe during these trying times. As is frequently said "this too will pass".

**Spence Gustav**

### Photos: Scratch samples



### snake pattern



Jon Petrescu photographing the Archaic scratches

## Publicity

During these times of distancing and less contact outside our homes, keep in mind that one way you can stay connected with Friends of the Forest is through monthly news items that are posted on the website at <https://www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org/news/>. These articles are prepared for the monthly "Serving Sedona" column assigned to Friends of the Forest in the Sedona Red Rock News on the first Wednesday of the month and are then posted on the FOF website. Recent articles have featured work that has been able to continue in recent months through approved safety protocols for our archaeology documentation and wildlife/fish/rare plant projects.

Guest writers are welcome and encouraged. And if you are not interested in writing, maybe you have an idea for our

column which I can research and prepare. I am always looking for new topics. With less FOF activity currently underway these days to serve as subject matter, there is opportunity to go further afield in our less well-known activity or take a deeper look at some aspect of ongoing Forest Service work and challenges.

As an organization that chooses to do only minimal publicity, this longstanding monthly news article is a great opportunity to profile something of interest or importance to the wider community.

Let me know your thoughts and ideas at [jennifer.young@fosedona.org](mailto:jennifer.young@fosedona.org)

**Jennifer Young**

## Statistical Summary

### Volunteer Hours

No surprise to anyone, there has been a significant decrease in our volunteer hours due to the restrictions and closures caused by the pandemic. In May and June of this year, our hours were about 7,000 less than in May and June of last year, so it's actually quite an accomplishment that we're only 4,116 hours year-to-date behind last year.

Trail Patrol and Wildlife/Fish/Rare Plants are the only groups ahead of last year, due to the individual nature of these projects – well done, teams. Trail Patrol has already broken the record for most recorded hours for the past 20+ years!

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 7<sup>th</sup> of the next month. This allows us to consolidate and update the hours in each member's NEON profile in a timely fashion.

**Peg Kern**

Here's the recap of the hours by committee, compared to last year's totals:

Committee	FY20 Hours Thru July	FY19 Hours Same Period	Change in Hours	% Change
Air Quality	239	383	-144	-37.6
Cultural Resources	5,155	7,478	-2,324	-31.1
Graffiti Removal	1,396	1,483	-87	-5.9
Interpretive Pgm	218	266	-48	-18.0
River Rangers	229	249	-20	-8.0
Special Projects	116	242	-126	-52.0
Trail Maint&Const	1,729	3,212	-1,483	-46.2
<b>Trail Patrol</b>	<b>10,024</b>	<b>7,703</b>	<b>2,321</b>	<b>30.1</b>
VIS	2,006	3,516	-1,511	-43.0
Water Sampling	0	222	-222	
<b>Wildlife/Fish/Plants</b>	<b>4,061</b>	<b>3,655</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>11.1</b>
Admin/Meetings	1,389	2,268	-880	-38.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,561</b>	<b>30,677</b>	<b>-4,116</b>	<b>-13.4</b>

As of August 23, 2020, there are currently 146 Trail Patrol members, an increase of two new members since the last newsletter.

The first table below shows the trail patrol stats for the period between October 1, 2019 through August 23, 2020. Even with the social distancing restrictions the Forest Service has asked us to follow, trail patrol has continued to be very active.

Just to see how much COVID-19 may have affected trail patrols I compared the first 5 months of the fiscal year, October 1, 2019, to the months that COVID-19 has been here. This is shown in the side-by-side tables below. This is not a scientific comparison. First, there not an equal number of days in both periods and second, the first half of March was probably not impacted much at all. It was only after mid-March that people started isolating and quarantining.

There were fewer Trail Patrol members that hiked but the number of trail patrols performed were impacted almost not at all. But it does appear that the number of people hiking was less based on number of hikers observed.

We are continuing to not offer group trail patrols at this time, but plan on offering them again when social distancing restrictions have been removed.

The Forest Service fiscal year ends September 30 and all trail patrols through September need to be logged by October 7. This to allow Friends of the Forest volunteer contributions to be reported to the Forest Service in a timely manner.

Please stay safe.

**Jon and Terri Petrescu**

*Here is the summary of trail patrols from October 1, 2019 through August 23, 2020, fiscal year to date*

## Stats for October 1, 2019 through August 23, 2020

Number of TP Members who hiked	100
Number of trails hiked	163
Number Trail Patrols	2,647
Total Hikers Observed	41,419
Total People Engaged	14,606
Total Bikers Observed	8,691
Total Equestrians Observed	185
Total Dogs Off Leash	1,311
Total Lbs Trash Removed	581

## Comparison of stats before COVID-19 and during.

### Stats for October 2019 through February, 2020

Number of TP Members who hiked	90
Number of trails hiked	150
Number Trail Patrols	1,276
Total Hikers Observed	23,151
Total People Engaged	8,458
Total Bikers Observed	4,823
Total Equestrians Observed	116
Total Dogs Off Leash	590
Total Lbs Trash Removed	244

### Stats for March 1 through August 23, 2020

Number of TP Members who hiked	74
Number of trails hiked	155
Number Trail Patrols	1,371
Total Hikers Observed	18,268
Total People Engaged	6,148
Total Bikers Observed	3,868
Total Equestrians Observed	69
Total Dogs Off Leash	721
Total Lbs Trash Removed	337



### Trailhead Safety Educators

Extreme heat has locked the Verde Valley in record temperatures, with many locals and visitors looking for a water hole to cool off in, such as Wet Beaver Creek and especially the Crack. During this time, Bell Trail and the Bruce Brockett connector are seeing a record number of visitors. Temperatures of 110 and above at the trailhead are magnified in the canyon with heat radiating off the rock face, with ground temperatures registered at 140 degrees by Forest Service staff. Our own FRIEND member Peg Kern reported, "Last year Verde Search and Rescue (VSAR) had a record 72 call-outs; so far this year we are at 68, with many more of them being heat-related rather than people being lost. Bell Trail has been a real hot spot; last Saturday alone, around 15-20 'subjects' were rescued by a combination of 3 fire departments/EMTs, one FS person, and 15 VSAR members, with 5 of the subjects requiring medical treatment (several were unconscious). Mostly hikers who didn't think they needed much if any water to hike the 3.5 miles each way to the "Crack" in 110-degree weather." This prompted a call from the Forest Service for assistance from the FRIENDS members for Heat Related Safety Education at the Bruce Brockett (Bell Trail Overflow Parking Lot) on the Saturdays and Sundays until the end of September or as needed.

My husband Mike and I volunteered for August 22 and 23 duty; we meet up with Forest Service Recreation Staff Trevor and Kelly bright and early for a summary of talking points and safety concerns. They were ready for us with an awning set up to provide shade, ice chest of cold water, and handouts for visitors for us to review. Unsure of what to expect at the trailhead, we arrived early with water, food, and salty snacks

to help us get through the day. Although the request was for volunteers to work until 2:30 pm, that time came and went with three of us talking to visitors who were still arriving late into the afternoon. We headed home on Saturday at 4:00 pm. Sunday was a slower day and visitor arrivals slowed greatly after 2:00 pm and we felt comfortable leaving Kelly at 3:00 to handle the remainder of the day. We are happy to report that Copper Canyon Fire made three trips on Saturday and at the time we left on Sunday, zero call outs. Not everyone heeded our warnings and we noted some returning out of water and suffering some effects of the heat, and with a couple of dog owners who took their pets in with them and came back carrying the dogs who were unable to walk out on their own.

I feel the Safety Education may have saved some visitors from having a "Very Bad Day" in the Coconino National Forest. Many realized that they were not taking enough water; it is recommended to have one gallon of water per person for the 7-mile hike. Several had more water in the car which they took with them, others drove into Village of Oak Creek to purchase more water and others chose to find other options for the day. Upon their return, many hikers were thanking us for the extra water recommendation as it was indeed needed and thanked us for being at the trailhead. Mike and I also found it a great pleasure to work with the Forest Service Staff, Kelly, and Trevor. We found their professionalism and dedication to the care of the Forest and safety of the visitors an exemplary example of the excellent staff working for the Red Rock District. Helping visitors have a fun and safe day to frolic in our scenic forest provides us with a sense of satisfaction and wellbeing. We are ready to do it again.

**Jean and Mike Ober**

*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.*

In my mind, a key component of Wellness of Spirit is the fact that I can find joy in volunteerism, social responsibility, optimism, and of course laughter (my favorite of all). During this pandemic, it can be and is isolating and a lot of volunteer opportunities have changed.

A few of us have been listening to recordings in search of the elusive Arizona Toad. Hours and hours in our own homes, just scanning through recording after recording. What we found were Canyon Tree Frogs, Red Spotted Toads, Western Chorus Frogs, but sadly no AZ Toads. In our time of, shall we say ennui we started paying attention to the bird calls we were also encountering. Just for fun, an email was sent to a few "birders" with attached bird call wav files. The birders could listen to brief bird calls and try to identify them. Of course, they wanted to know everything! What's the elevation, the time of day, is it a riparian area, etc. But Wow, with very little to go on, they had answers! We were connected and had more information and excitement! Here are a few excerpts that kept us (well at least me) going and growing:

Here is another bird for you. Sounds to me like a repeated "who" in the rain.

Single call from the Flammulated Owl.

I have another sequence of the potential "Flammy" owl for you. I saved it as 24-bit instead of 16-bit hoping you might hear him/her a little better. Please confirm when you get the opportunity. By the way, I think you're making up some of these names...lol.

oYes, it is the Flammulated. I did a banding study of these owls in the Manzano Mountains in New Mexico. Yes, birders have such funny names and acronyms! Sometimes we make words out of the standardized alpha codes for the birds. Pretty funny. It is its own language.  
oPretty hard to hear but Flammy is as good a guess as any to my ears. I think I might have also heard a pink-bellied purple nightjar. And I resent the thought that we might be making up some of these names.

In between these people talking are some tweets...what type of bird is it?

oIt is hard to hear but my first impression is a warbling vireo. They have a high pitched kind of wandering series of notes that often end with a sharp up slurred note which I think I'm hearing in several of the song segments.  
Where and when was this recorded? Warbling vireos nest along oak creek and other tree lined streams usually above 5500 ft in elevation and might be found a bit lower as birds move around after breeding. They are common at Cave Springs Campground area and at West Fork.

It's from Sycamore Canyon and here's your UTM for location... 402544 3860304.

oThat seems a bit low in elevation according to the Breeding bird atlas, but birds don't read much so who knows. The background noise makes it hard to really tell details of the song and the voice. There are other possibilities like black-headed grosbeak, oriole or even house finch to name a few. Keep sending stuff, it is fun to try to be a nature sound detective.

This one is from Cottonwood/Mesquite Spring, which is a small spring/creek off Fossil Creek Road, about two miles from AZ 260. This clip is the entire duration that I heard this sound -- nothing like it before or after.

- Rhino
- North America wildlife!!! But you're are right – it does sound like a big animal!
- the sound made me laugh. Another one of Frank's "weird ass sounds." We should be keeping a catalog of these!
- My first thought is that a hummingbird flew close to the recorder. Is there any red or yellow color on the recorder? It sounds like it may have been checking it out to see if it was a nectar source, decided there was nothing edible there and left.

Moral of the story is, you don't have to be alone just because you are physically isolated. There are "Friends" who you can connect with and challenge your abilities, inspire you to learn more, and enjoy a laugh during trying times.

**Annie Glickstein**

## Wildlife Projects

Extra! Extra! Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

During a trip to check on a fence exclosure that was installed to protect a spring site from livestock grazing, volunteer Peter Malmgren photographed a leopard frog in the water and sent the photo to biologists from the Chiricahua leopard frog recovery implementation team. This significant discovery generated a lot of excitement in the wildlife biology community. The Forest Service issued a press release ([read it here](#)) that was widely circulated - it was even published by the [Hindustan Times](#) in New Delhi! You can read more about this threatened species and its recovery efforts in our Serving Sedona column in the September 2 edition of *The Sedona Red Rock News*, or view the article [on our website](#).



### Riparian Area Protection

The law requires that the Forest Service prevent grazing in riparian areas. Friends of the Forest volunteers monitor the condition of twenty riparian exclosures within the Red Rock Ranger District with visits before and after the movement of cattle which graze under seasonal Forest Service permits. These exclosures are designed to protect riparian or other

sensitive areas from livestock damage and off-road vehicles.

Spawned by possible legal action against the Forest Service, District Wildlife Biologist Janie Agyagos recently received a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for documentation pertaining to keeping livestock out of riparian areas. In a note to volunteers, Janie wrote *"Hi vols! I wanted to thank you so much for all your great work adopting and monitoring our exclosures over the years. You can't believe how much documentation we have of your reports and all our efforts to maintain fences. It's so nice to have the proof that we are doing what we should be doing to protect riparian. Without your help, we would have had no chance in keeping these exclosures maintained. Great job, everyone!"*

Friends volunteers are assisting with installation of riparian/wildlife etiquette kiosks and signs near sensitive areas. Two kiosks were recently placed near Walker Creek.



### I Toad you so - they're not here!

For the third year in a row (and final year as promised by Janie), volunteers searched the Verde Valley for the Arizona toad (*Anaxyrus microscaphus*). The Arizona toad is native to the southwest, but its range is shrinking so it may join the list of endangered and threatened species in the future. This year's survey consisted of three separate efforts: 1) daytime surveys, 2) nighttime call point surveys, and 3) recorder deployment and data analysis. And, for the third year in a row, no AZ toads were found. This negative data is good data for the US Fish & Wildlife Service to use in their determination on whether to list the toad.

### A Fungus Among Us

Covid-19 disrupted a plan to test bats for White Nose Syndrome at Montezuma Castle and Well and numerous Forest Service sites. The original plan was to catch bats in mist nets and swab them for the white nose fungus. The bats could not be handled for fear of transmitting covid to bats. Environmental swabs were taken of surfaces in Childs Powerplant roost and guano collected for DNA analysis. All results were negative.



### Upcoming Cooler Weather Projects

Old fencing needs to be removed in several areas on the district. Workdays are usually about four hours, not counting drive time. Downed range fence poses an entanglement hazard for wildlife and is not aesthetically pleasing to forest visitors.

Fossil Creek bare area monitoring

Filing of herbarium specimens in herbarium - Numerous volunteers mounted hundreds of herbarium specimens and labels on to herbarium sheets, a workday to file them is pending

Monarch butterfly netting and tagging at Crescent Moon Ranch



Drop us a line at [wildlife@fosedona.org](mailto:wildlife@fosedona.org) if you are interested in any of these projects.

**Annie Glickstein**

**Marilyn Painchaud**



## A Different Way of Doing Business...

The Graffiti Removal Team continues to battle the ever-pervasive graffiti problem. Obviously, over the past 6 months, our effort has become more complicated. The COVID19 virus has affected all of our lives except, it seems, those who are hiking/biking in our Forest! With the continuing support of our District Ranger, Amy Tinderholt, we've found ways to continue to combat the defacing of our environment, while keeping our health as a top priority.

Under her direction, we have stopped all carpooling, kept social distancing while hiking and working, worn masks, worked singly or in in couples wherever possible, and have been extra cautious when approaching visitors (who almost never wear masks). Adhering to those rules, I can report that none of our team members have tested positive for the virus. With these changes in mind, we are most fortunate to have a sizeable trained team who can work independently and remove scratching on all approved trails.

It is not unusual to read daily reports and see multiple team members going out in all directions cleaning what they find or sending in reports of sites that need prior approval (paint, sensitive areas, etc.). In fact, 56 of our team members (approximately 70 total members) have recordable hours. Other than constant encouragement, how do we reward such outstanding efforts?

Another major change is that we have found new partners who advise us when seeing graffiti. The Stewards of Sedona, the Sedona Bulletin Board, and the Sedona Love and Community Message Board websites have given us more reports than we've ever had before. (you might consider joining them. Some very good posts). The challenge is keeping up! These unofficial partners give us valuable information while assuring us they will not attempt to remediate these sites themselves.

These new sources of reporting have revealed a number of previously unreported locations where major paint was found. At the bottom of this report you will see several groups of photos showing locations where it took considerable resources as well as team members to repair. In reporting the results back to these new partners, we are receiving kudos as well as more community exposure. Comments like – “leave the repair to the experts” and “thank you for what you do” are not unusual. The Friends of the Forest name is being seen throughout the internet community. Our local citizens want to help! It all comes back to **Raising the Awareness!**

Keep the reports coming!

**Jerry Piepiora, Chairman**



Old Bridge off Rt. 179 – **Bill & Bea Logan, Adrienne Pichette, Mike Boyd, Pete Malmgren, Gary Cooper, Ernie DiMillo, John Crowley, Mike Ober, Jean Ober, and Nori Thorne.** Large group, but all abutments were covered with paint.

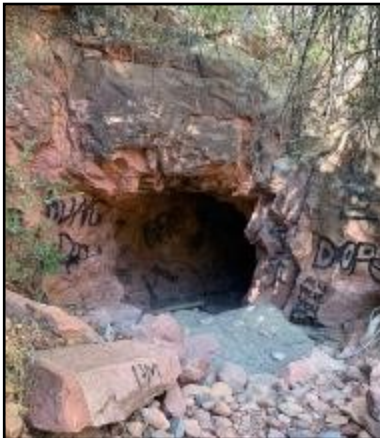




Secret Slickrock Parking lot –  
**Jerry Checchia, Maryann Livingstone, Dan Aragaki.** Not pictured  
**Annie Glickstein.** Just one of several boulders spray painted.



Tunnel under 89A, just north of Uptown. **Bill & Bea Logan, Gary Cooper, Pete Malmgren, Jerry Checchia, and Mike Boyd.**



Manzanita  
 Campgrounds

