



## From the President — Manny Romero

**Hello Friends,**

Fall brings the promise of cooler temperatures and higher visitor numbers to Red Rock Country. This issue of Branching Out will bring you up-to-date on the broad sweep of our summer activities and present a snapshot of what you can look forward to in the coming weeks. Please express your thanks to Newsletter Editor **Jean Ober** for her energy, diligence and artistry in creating another fine issue.

Each year at this time, you can cast your vote for the Friends Board of Directors. Pending current Board approval, ballots will be distributed through NEON (and by mail if necessary) for use if you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting and vote in person. I am indebted to **Peg Kern, Brian Painchaud, Betty Parker and Jennifer Young** for joining me as members of the Officer and Director Nominating Committee. We're pleased to recommend the following Friends members for three-year terms:

New nominees are **Jerry Checchia, Jon Petrescu, Terri Petrescu and Rich Spinelli**, while returning for another term are **Bob Beltz, Marilyn Painchaud, Jerry Walters and Jennifer Young**.

Retiring from the Board this year are veteran leaders that have contributed immeasurably to the Friends in countless ways: **Bob Kenney, Noreen Liskowski, Sam Serrill, Mike Ward and Carol Wirkus**. They have my deepest appreciation and respect. THANK YOU.

Several program management changes took place this summer. Friends Webmaster **Mike Ward** and Trail Patrol Chair **Elaine Hackett** stepped back from their leadership roles. We've been fortunate to have such skilled, dedicated trendsetters at the helm of these pivotal Friends programs and I am most grateful.

Our new Webmaster is computer expert and digital troubleshooter **Marilyn Painchaud**. As a key member of the NEON software development team, Marilyn was instrumental in adopting NEON to fit our needs. She lead the Fossil Creek air quality control project and recruited enough volunteers to make the project viable as a regular Friends committee.

**Brian Painchaud** is now chair of Air Quality Control Committee. He manages an

## In this issue

**Page 1**

Presidents Letter

**Page 3**

Membership

Treasurer

**Page 4**

Statistical Data

Technology Team

**Page 5**

Visitor Information

Merchandise

**Page 6**

Cultural Resources

**Page 8**

Graffiti Removal

**Page 9**

Interpretive Programs

**Page 10**

Trail Patrol

Trail Maintenance

**Page 12**

Calendar of Events

elaborate process, from conducting training on proper filter change procedure (a three-week filter change cycle) to scheduling a team to make the arduous journey to Ike's Backbone once each week.

**Jon and Terri Petrescu** are the new co-chairs of Trail Patrol. With 135 members, Trail Patrol is our largest activity. Jon and Terri lead an important group in the sizable task of keeping hikers and bikers well informed and safe. They help make the forest experience more enjoyable for everyone. I extend a warm welcome to our new program leaders.

While many of our field activities slow down during the summer, two First Friday programs at the Visitor Center kept us in the community spotlight. On July 7, past-president **Mike Ward** brought geologic time to life in his presentation, "Geomorphology of Sedona and the Verde Valley." On August 4, visitors were treated to music along with history as **Jim Wilson** traced the evolution of native American flutes. His presentation, "Ancient Melodies: An Anasazi Legacy of Native American Flute," looked at flute styles, composition and playing techniques.

Graffiti remediation is a never-ending process on the Red Rock District. **Jerry Piepiora** and his dedicated team are constantly on the move. Jerry's latest graffiti report (July) describes nearly 60 projects, with locations like Devil's Bridge, Bell Rock, Boynton Canyon and Oak Creek Canyon needing frequent visits. Volunteer Coordinator **Justin Loxley** says the list "doesn't really do justice to the countless hours our graffiti crew spends mitigating the actual graffiti. The behind the scenes effort in coordination is not mentioned but should be."

October 1 marks the start of the 2018 fiscal year, so you need to update your Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) form. It's easy to do. Just log in to NEON—refer to the August 24 message from the NEON team for instructions—and use the drop-down menu on the Member Portal to select "Review and Sign JHA." Remember, to volunteer for any project, you must electronically sign the appropriate JHA every October.

Please mark your calendar for the Annual Meeting at the Beaver Creek Work Center. This year the volunteer appreciate event will take place Saturday, November 4 beginning at 10 a.m. Vote for Board of Director candidates, congratulate individual and committee award winners, connect with other members, socialize with our Forest Service colleagues, and enjoy a tasty lunch hosted by the Forest Service and District Ranger **Nicole Branton**. Hope you can join us November 4 at the historic, picturesque Beaver Creek Work Center.

Our next Board and Membership meeting is just around the corner. Take the short drive to the Ranger Station Administration Building and network with other like-minded members Wednesday, September 13 at 9 a.m. Come early, munch on the mouthwatering treats, and browse through a selection of Friends merchandise. I hope to see you there. Keep up your good work.

## **Nineteen new members since May**

Individual members - **Luke Edens, Adrienne Pichette, Diane Schweickert, Alex MacLachlan, and Wayne Fischer.**

Family members - **Ania and Darek Leski, Cheryl and Marcus Crane, Jim and Janet Oliver, Paula and Mike Medow, Laurie and Bill Kelso, and Louise Brinton and Kevin Adams.**

Life Family members - **Sharon and Larry Turner**

We hope you enjoy volunteering in all the areas you chose. Thank you for joining and supporting Friends of the Forest.

**Betty Parker**

## **Donations to Friends of the Forest**

Friends of the Forest, Inc. is a registered 501(c3) non-profit. Donations to the organization including membership dues are, in most circumstances, tax deductible. Please check with your tax professional to verify deductibility based on your tax situation. All donors receive a tax letter from the organization. While we greatly appreciate your donations, as an organization we do not actively solicit donations from within or from outside the organization. We will never share member or donor information with anyone.

Monetary donors (check, cash or PayPal) receive a recognition letter that includes the donation date, amount of the donation and our heartfelt thanks and appreciation.

In-kind donors receive a recognition letter that includes the donation date, list of item(s)/service(s) donated, our intended use of the donation and our heartfelt thanks and appreciation. The letter cannot include a valuation of the donation. The IRS does not allow non-profits to place a value on donated items or services. We cannot be placed in the role of an appraiser.

If requested by the IRS to justify the claimed value of a tax deduction, the donor must prove the value. Keeping purchase receipts and/or taking a picture of the item at the time of donation works well. You could also search internet sites like E-Bay for a like item for sale at the time and print out the description and price for your records.

A few members have purchased specific equipment, software and/or services as donations to us. To save any problems with donation valuation justification to the IRS at a later date, it is simpler to make a directed monetary donation to the organization and allow us to make the purchase.

To simplify our tax status, we do not own any assets. Friends of the Forest does not retain donated item(s); the ownership is transferred to the Forest Service.

**Tom Cloonan**

## Statistical Summary

For the ten months ending in July the Friends have 29,672 hours, beating the record set last year of 28,430 hours.

Cultural Resources had 6930 hours better than the 6717 hour record for the same period last year. Trail Maintenance & Construction had 3669 hours not near the record set in 2015 of 4435 hours. Trail Patrol had 6642 hours better than the record of 6332 record set in 2015. Visitor Information had 4370 hours not near the record set in several years in the past.

The following members volunteered over 500 hours for the ten months reported:

**Jerry Checchia** - 612 hours   **Tom Cloonan** - 706 hours   **Ernie DiMillo** - 582 hours  
**Spence Gustav** - 1064 hours   **Bob Haizmann** - 674 hours   **Michael Harris** - 625 hours  
**Peg Kern** - 764 hours   **Gary Neil** - 624 hours   **Marilyn Painchaud** - 571 hours

**Bill Kusner**

## Technology Team

### NEON Update

Our new administrative and communication software NEON, the Nonprofit Enterprise Online Network, has been introduced and made available to all FOF Members. On August 24, Members were contacted via email with an invitation and instructions for direct access to this secure, customized software tool.

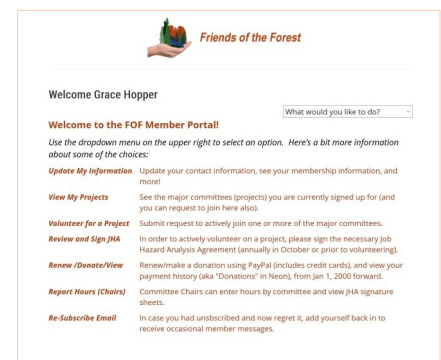
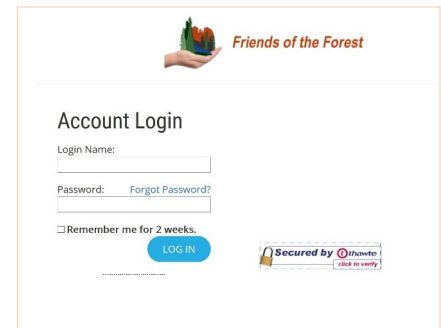
If you, or a Member you know, did not receive the Neon announcement and log in instructions, please contact [members@fosedona.org](mailto:members@fosedona.org) or [webAdmin@fosedona.org](mailto:webAdmin@fosedona.org). To date, more than 100 Members have logged in and updated their account information. We encourage every Member to explore how NEON can support participation in Friends of the Forest: view and update your Member information, advise FOF leaders of new or changing volunteer interests, review your membership - and even opt out of receiving printed issues of the Newsletter by mail!

We are migrating most of the administrative processes previously accessed via the FOF website to NEON, as a secure, confidential portal. All active Members please note that the **Job Hazard Analysis** forms which we sign annually in October, at the start of the Federal fiscal year, **will be accessed through your NEON account starting October 1**. Committee Chairs will remind their teams about this new procedure as that time approaches.

Since late 2016, the NEON project team has been immersed in research, customization, training, and phased implementation of this software. The work of Treasurer, Membership Chair and various data related functions have been dramatically simplified. The full potential for effective communication and engagement of our almost 500 Members can be realized if you sign in today!

NEON Support Team:

**Jennifer Young** - Project Lead,  
**Peg Kern** - System Administrator,  
**Marilyn Painchaud** - FOF Tech Team



---

## Visitor Information Services

---

First, a big thank you to everyone who worked in the Visitor Center this summer season. We really appreciate your generosity in covering shifts for vacationing or ailing (get well soon) volunteers. Soon our seasonal volunteers will be back in town to fill out our ranks again. In addition, I'd like to welcome **Diana Manter, Richard Antczak and Janet Oliver**, the latest volunteers to complete training.

Another thank you goes out to the volunteers who helped with the celebration of Smokey Bear's 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Along with our regular stream of weekend visitors, we had an estimated 800 people enjoying the festivities during the party on Aug 12. Lots of families were out getting some final travel in before the kids were back in school. Photos are posted on ANHA's Facebook site [@AZNatHistAssoc](https://www.facebook.com/AZNatHistAssoc) and you can follow this and other ANHA events and happenings on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AZNatHistAssoc>.

With the worst of summer heat behind us, we can expect the arrival of many more visitors in search of a memorable Sedona experience. As we've noted before, most want to see the most popular and heavily trafficked destinations around town. In an effort to help smooth out congestion and reduce wear and tear on those heavily visited destinations, the Chamber of Commerce, with input from the Red Rock Ranger District, has recently launched a new tool to raise awareness of lesser known trails and activities in Sedona. Check out <http://www.SedonaSecret7.com> for ideas to share with our visitors.

I think we all have our favorite go-to map to use when chatting with our visitors. Good news for those of you who prefer the Sedona Verde Valley Illustrated 3D Visitor Map. The publisher has included Forest Service input on updates and includes all of Verde Valley, not just Sedona. But those of you favoring the Sedona Discovery map are out of luck. It will no longer be available. And one last word on maps. Spend some time getting to know the Motor Vehicle Use Map. Although it's primarily a forest road map, it is very useful in helping visitors interested in dispersed camping.

**Terry Orlick**

---

## Merchandise

---

We hope you have all been enjoying your sun shirts while you have been hiking. We still have one long sleeve shirt in our inventory. Ronnie found some bargains recently and they are at Joy Dotson's for embroidery. These shirts are in the picture. Five have short sleeves, and there is one lady's sleeveless shirt in lime green. All the shirts have sun protection. They range in size from small to 2 XL. There are some neat colors, so if you are looking for a comfortable shirt, check them out. Let us know of other items you would like, and we will try to have them for the annual meeting in early November.

Ronnie will not be here for the Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, and I must catch a flight to Des Moines late in the afternoon on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Therefore, **I will be selling only before the meeting. I will try to have everything out by 8:30.**

Ronnie and I both have young grandchildren, and it is not always easy to schedule travel around FOF meetings, and I have too many commitments. We are both looking for a couple of people to work with us on merchandising and then to take over our jobs. Please see or email either one of us to let us know of your interest.

**Debbie Wych and Ronnie Ward**



### **Photo Digitization Project**

The project to digitize and catalog the historical/archaeological 35mm slides and prints for the Coconino National Forest continues in Phase 3 of the project. The slide portion of the project was completed in 2012. Work continues the print portion of the project. To date, we have processed 58,307 (86%) of 67,442 print images!

Phase 3 entails transcribing the hand-written and typed comments, from the margins of the slides and back of the prints, into a “photolog” database (MS Excel). This phase is by far the largest in terms of hours required for completion. We are **90%** complete for the total project. I hope that we will have this project completed in the next year.

The skills required to be a member of this team include a general comfort with using a Windows based PC, entering data into a spreadsheet, using an image (i.e. photo) viewer, and attention to detail. Training and hands-on work sessions will be provided.

Please consider volunteering for this project. You do not need to be a docent to provide great value to this project.

If you are interested in helping with this project, or would like more information, please contact **Jerry Walters** at [fofdocents@gmail.com](mailto:fofdocents@gmail.com).

### **Site Recording Project**

This is a new project that is due in part to the Cultural Site Photo Documentation Project. It has become apparent that there are dozens of archaeological sites in the Red Rock Ranger District that are known to many locals and avid hikers and are unknown to the Forest Service. It is important to get these sites recorded and into the Forest Service inventory so that they can be documented for future evaluation. Many are in readily accessible areas and are at risk for vandalism/graffiti. This project is being headed up by **Scott Newth** and is a joint effort with Friends of the Forest, Verde Valley Chapter of the Arizona Archaeological Society (VVC/AAS a.k.a. VVAS), the Verde Valley Archaeology Center (VVAC), and the Arizona Site Stewards.

**UPDATE:** This project has been on hiatus for the summer. Activities will resume at the end of September or early October. There are 40+ sites that still need to be recorded!!

### **Cultural Site Photo Documentation Project**

This team has also been on hiatus for most of the summer. That doesn't mean that they have been resting on their laurels. They have added a new tool (RTI) to their repertoire. RTI (**R**eflectance **T**ransformation **I**maging) is a technique where the camera is fixed and multiple images are taken with a strong light source from multiple directions. The resulting composite image can be manipulated so that the light source comes from different angles (as well as several other “tweaks”).

The entertainment portion of the process is that the technique and the software used requires the use of oversized black marbles, old popsicle sticks, long poles, duct tape and string. It usually takes a team of 4 to operate the camera, hold the pole and strobe flash, align the string, subject and sticks and someone to call out “shoot.” If you would like to see how this all works, join the photo team. Newbies get to hold the pole and yell “shoot”.

The result is that fine details can be seen that are not otherwise visible in situ or on



## Cultural Resources

standard photographs. This is especially beneficial for artifacts and small to moderate groupings of petroglyphs/ pictographs. As with any new technique, there has been a learning curve. Through much diligence and re-photography at several locations, that curve has been surmounted. Both the 3-D modeling and RTI processes require a firm protocol and attention to detail to achieve even mediocre results.

To date, the team has achieved outstanding results (yes, numerous sites had to be photographed several times)!

The site photography project still has several years of work ahead. If you are interested in helping with this project, or would like more information, please contact **Spence Gustav** at [spencehg@yahoo.com](mailto:spencehg@yahoo.com).

### Docent Program

I would like to extend a special thanks to those docents who remained in town for most of the summer! Once again, we were short of on Site Hosts at Palatki. The team did a great job in filling the needs at the site. Our "Sand Bird" docents (those who spend most of the year in Sedona, but leave from June to August) are beginning to return and are eagerly anticipated at all the sites!

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 ([fofdcent@gmail.com](mailto:fofdcent@gmail.com)) for more information.

### Archival Photos

The recent request for old photos of rock art at various sites for an evaluation of degradation of pictographs at various sites resulted in the acquisition of quite a few high-quality photos over 20 years old from a variety of sites. Over 1500 photos are being added to the historical archive and used for comparative analysis.

**Jerry Walters 284-1339**



### IT'S ALL GOOD!

I can't think of a more positive title to begin the summer report. Although there is always more illegal scratching and painting on our rocks and structures, our team tries to focus on the "cup is half full" philosophy. They have many reasons to be proud of their ongoing efforts.

We now have a complete array of weapons to fight just about any type of defacing we come across. When our efforts are complete at any site, we feel the surfaces are almost as they were before the illegal activity. Even when we spent a recent morning painting bridge abutment at Beaver Creek, we did our best to blend in the paint with the concrete. Didn't quite match the color, but we were close.

We know there are at least three different types of people who indulge in this illegal activity. There are those who scratch on the rocks on impulse – "Mary loves John" scenarios. They normally are not trying to cause damage, just acting without thinking. The second we call "copycats". There is already writing here, so it must be OK. The last, and most serious individuals are those who enter the trails with spray paint or something similar. They are there to intentionally cause damage. Since we now have the ability to respond quickly to multiple reports, we can send more than one team out simultaneously, the quicker we can clean an area; the odds are that it will stay like that – for a while longer.



We continue to work successfully with the folks at Slide Rock, West Fork, Grasshopper Point, and Red Rock Crossing (Crescent Moon) and receive an ever-increasing number of reports from those outside of the FOF, including some of the Jeep companies and resorts. These are critical to our success.

The graffiti removal committee continues to attract men and ladies who are genuinely upset with what they see. Our members want to part of an effort to keep the Red Rock District as free from graffiti as possible. Our team now has over 50 members and without exception, whenever we request members to help, they are quick to respond. Graffiti removal sessions become social events, with a little work thrown in, we do have an enjoyable time on the trails.

In several areas – especially sites that we regularly visit, we are seeing a decrease in graffiti. Case in point – Devil's Bridge. Every few weeks, any one of our members stops by that site and reports minor graffiti, and then cleans whatever is found (copycat preventer). That combined with the new "no graffiti" sign installed for us by **Mike Suggs** of the FS several months ago, has really helped. We are looking at other possible sites where this can be used effectively.

Our team has responded to well over 80 reports this fiscal year, with nearly 1300 hours recorded hours to date. By the end of September, we will be approaching 1500 hours. 2 of our members contributed over 200 hours each, 1 member over 100 hours, 7 more than 40, and 7 have 20 hours or more.

Lastly, I have been most fortunate to work side-by-side with a truly outstanding co-chair, **Jerry Checchia** – aka JTY. I am pleased to announce that Jerry the Younger will be



taking over as chair of this outstanding committee as of 10/01/2017. He is very well qualified to lead this team in the field and is most personable with the tourists we meet on the trails. I am confident that members of this committee will continue to support JTY in the same manner as they have done for me. We all wish him the greatest of success in the coming year.

And, as usual - The entire graffiti team looks forward to seeing you on the trails.

**Jerry Piepiora**



---

## Interpretive Programs

---

### **FOF Interpretive Program Resumes For Fall Season**

A regular program offering guided hikes focused on photography, geology and birding will resume in September. Many Friends Members have enjoyed participating in these public events. They are also good activities for out of town guests. The core program for September through December is listed below. Forest Service First Friday Presentations at the Visitor Center are ongoing with program details available on the FOF website.

We welcome new hike leaders or presenters. If you would like to offer a program or have a program suggestion please contact:

**Jennifer Young** 928-284-0016

**Bob Beltz** 928-761-9632.

CHECK OUT ALL OF THE GREAT INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS ON OUR WEBSITE:  
FRIENDSOFTHEFORESTSEDONA.ORG

---

## Trail Patrol

---

Welcome to the upcoming year of Trail Patrol! **Jon and Terri Petrescu** want to thank **Elaine Hackett** for a good season and all the work she did for Friends of the Forest. We hope to see her ankle all mended when she returns to Sedona.

There is a new Friends of the Forest app for iPhone and Android phones being rolled out to report issues on trails. A separate email announcement will be sent to all Trail Patrol Members. Training will be held on September 20 at the Ranger Station. The app should make it easier for Trail Maintenance and Graffiti Removal groups to schedule remediation and track issues reported.

We are continuing the Trail Patrol group hikes. Now that Fall is coming we will be hiking at 7:30AM every other Monday. Hikes are generally 3 to 5 miles. During the hike, we will use the new reporting app to document trail issues like brush, downed trees, large amounts of trash that we didn't pick up. If you are a member of Trail Patrol then you should be getting emails with the schedule. In September, we will be hiking the Hogs trails and Huckaby. As the weather cools, we may also schedule a longer monthly hike.

Please be timely in reporting your trail hikes. The Friends use this information to report to the Forest Service. This is especially important for September because this is the end of the government fiscal year and all volunteer hours need to be reported by October 1.

Hope to see you on the trails  
**Jon and Terri Petrescu**

---

## Trail Maintenance & Construction

---

What a Summer! June and July were as hot as ever, but we still got some work in on our Friday schedule. We stayed up in the canyon initially and saw some wonderful views of our area while clearing trails. Some special projects consisted of erecting a new entrance sign at Red Rock Ranger Station, helping at the garden at Redrock Crossing, improving various trailhead parking areas and installing the new style Kiosk at trailheads.

**Jim Manning, Kurt Starbuck and Mike Ober**, our official Sawyers, led crews out around the entire district to remove trees from the trails.

**Rich Spinelli** our "sign-n-tologist" replaced and repaired numerous signs. The Forest Service has adopted the new reporting app system developed by **Bob Haizmann** and has embraced it as a primary method of recognizing and documenting needed work. The cooler season is coming up and if you ever thought about doing a little trail maintenance, don't hesitate to sign on. We always have an extra shovel or lopper. See you on the trails!

**Ernie DiMillo**



**Rich Spinelli** takes care of signs for TM&C



## Trail Maintenance & Construction

Here are a couple of before and after pictures I took August 28 of a downed tree on H.S. Trail. **Dan Aragaki** and **Jerry Piepiora** drove their ATV's to the Secret Canyon trail head, with **Ernie DiMillo**, **Jerry Checchia**, and myself as riders. We also did a fair amount of brushing on H.S. and Secret trails, and some graffiti removal as well.

**Jim Manning**



A crew of TM&C members installed the new Red Rock Ranger Station sign along Route 179



The fantastic views do not distract **Jerry Checchia** and **Bill Cobb** from doing trail work.

In the center photo are sawyer **Jim Manning** and **Paul Ward** using a crosscut saw to remove a downed tree from the trail, **Ernie** is assisting.

**Jerry Piepiora** and **Pete Malmgren** using a chain and jack to remove an old Kiosk signpost, prep work for new Kiosk installation

## Calendar of Events