



From the President — Manny Romero —

In this issue

Hello Friends,

Welcome to the final edition of *Branching Out* for 2017. Special thanks to editor **Jean Ober** for her production expertise in creating our one printed and mailed publication of the year.

Thanks also to everyone in attendance at our annual membership meeting and recognition event last month at the Beaver Creek Work Center. You helped make the event a success. Winners of Team Award Certificates and Special Service awards are listed elsewhere in this issue.

As a reminder, our next meeting is only a few days away—*Wednesday, December 13* at 9 a.m. in the Ranger Station Administration building. A key item of business will be to formally appoint officers for the 2018 calendar year.

Candidates are **Manny Romero**, President; **Craig Swanson**, Vice President; **Jean Ober**, Secretary; **Tom Cloonan**, Treasurer; and **Joe Polorski**, Assistant Treasurer.

Come early and sample the variety of tasteful refreshments provided by Hospitality Committee members **Deneise Piepiora**, **Betty Parker** and **Dan Aragaki**. Get an early start on your Holiday shopping as you browse through an interesting collection of Friends merchandise courtesy of Merchandising specialists **Debbie Wych** and **Ronnie Ward**.

Next year, Board and Membership meetings will be held on these dates:

March 7

May 9

September 12

Annual Meeting – November date to be set by Forest Service

December 12

Here's another date you'll want to add to your calendar: *Saturday, January 13*.

As you may know, the Red Rock Ranger District has honored long-time members **Gene** and **Darl Rector** with a new trail in their name. The Rector Trail will be a new wilderness connector trail between Bell Rock and Courthouse Butte and all Friends members are invited to help construct the new trail on the 13th.

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Trail Maintenance

Volunteers will meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Bell Rock Vista Trailhead. Bring work gloves, a hard hat or bicycle helmet and lots of water. The Forest Service will provide supervision, tools and safety, according to District OHV and Trails Coordinator Forrest Saville. A dedication ceremony will follow at approximately 1:00 p.m. As a sponsor, we'll provide lunch, drinks and pre-event publicity. Let's all help honor our valued colleagues Gene and Darl for their many years of remarkable service.

Membership Chair **Betty Parker** is working diligently to ensure the success of next year's New Member Welcome Event, *Thursday, February 15*. See Betty's article for further details.

Friends of the Forest was in the news recently. "Sedona volunteers bring smartphone mapping, art-inspired graffiti removal to red rocks district" declared the *Arizona Daily Sun* in a lead article on Sunday, December 3rd.

The article by environment and science reporter Emery Cowan is a complimentary look at key initiatives that earned the Friends a national award from the Forest Service. Images are by *Daily Sun* chief photographer Jake Bacon.

If you haven't seen the story, go online to azdailysun.com and search "Sedona Friends of the Forest."

Last month past president **Jennifer Young** turned over Interpretative Program leadership responsibilities to **Bob Wych**. Jennifer has skillfully piloted the program for several years and is a trailblazer in the use of Neon and other web tools to publicize Friends-lead hikes and First Friday presentations. She has worked closely with Neon system administrator **Peg Kern** and webmaster **Marilyn Painchaud** to initiate *Neon Events* for timely and easily updated display of upcoming events.

Thanks for all you do. I hope to see you at our meeting on the 13th.

Check out all of the great interpretive programs on our website:

friendsoftheforestsedona.org

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION DATES

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The newsletter is posted on-line one week before the board meeting

February 26 - March 7 meeting

April 30 - May 9 meeting

September 4 - September 12 meeting

December 4 - December 12 meeting

Jean Ober, Branching Out Editor

Four new Board members were approved at the November 4 Board meeting. **Terri and Jon Petrescu** are leading Trail Patrol with stellar results logging in 690 hours in October and 633 in November. Great job to our two new Committee chairs and welcome to the Board. Also new to the Board is **Jerry Checchia**, leader of the Graffiti Removal Team with **Jerry Piepiora, co-chair**, the group logged in 124 hours in October and 140 in November. They are doing a fantastic job of keeping tagging and graffiti off the Red Rocks. **Rich Spinelli** joined the Board and has taken on the role of Trail Sign Maintenance, a large task that is included in the Trail Maintenance and Construction Committee. He shares leadership with **Ernie DiMillo, Jim Manning, and Kurt Starbuck**. TM&C committee logged 271 hours in October. Welcome **Terri, Jon, Jerry, and Rich**.

Remaining on the Board for another 3-year term are **Bob Beltz** who works with Interpretive Programs; **Jennifer Young**, our Past President who continues to provide continuity to the current President and Vice President; **Marilyn Painchaud**, who has turned the reigns of Air Quality over to **Brian Painchaud**, keeps us all informed by maintaining our website and is part of the Tech team with **Peg Kern and Bob Haizmann**. **Jerry Walters** also returned to continue with the leadership of Cultural Resources. This is a large task with the multi-faceted role that Cultural Resources plays, from Docents to Photo logs and Heritage Site documentation, and coordination of V-Bar-V days volunteers. This group logged in a tremendous amount of work in October with 1058 hours.

Other Board members who keep busy with the Friends are **Spence Gustav (Friend Extraordinaire), Elaine Hackett, Ed Hodges (Interpretive Programs), Bev Jackson (VIS), Mark Munsell, Mike Ober, Garry Neil (Lichen Project), Betty Parker (Membership), Paul Ward, and Veronica Ward and Debbie Wych (Merchandising)**.

The Executive Board are **Manny Romero**, President; **Craig Swanson**, Vice-President, **Jean Ober**, Secretary and Newsletter Editor, **Tom Cloonan**, Treasurer, **Joe Pokorski**, Assistant Treasurer.

Along with the election of new Board members, awards were presented by the Committee chairs to their members who provided outstanding service to the Friends.

Air Quality Testing - *Brian Painchaud* **Eloise Baldauf, Rick Baldauf, Chuck Boyle**
Cultural Resources - *Jerry Walters* **Bob Beltz, Tom Cloonan, Paul Cooley, John Losse, Ruti Lovitt, Paul Schwartz, Wayne Swart**
Graffiti Removal - *Jerry Checchia* **Evan Holtz, Betty Parker, Jerry Piepiora, Nori Thorne, Dave Popp**
River Patrol - *Mike Vitek* **Don McClimans**
trail Maintenance & Construction - *Ernie DiMillo* **Mark Munsell, Steve Orr, Jim White, Jim Manning, Al Milavec, Jean Ober, Kurt Starbuck, Rich Spinelli**
Trail Patrol - *Elaine Hackett for Terri and Jon Petrescu* **Michael Harris, Tim Fogarty, Gene Rector, Terri Petrescu, Jon Petrescu**
Visitor Information Services - *Terry Orlick* **Bob Chadwick, Norm LaDuke, Butch Greathouse**
Water Sampling - *Al Cornell* **Michael Campbell**

Special service awards presented by **Manny Romero**

New Volunteer of the Year **Jerry Checchia, Betty Parker**
Volunteer of the Year **David Murrill**
Heart of the Friends **Ernie DiMillo, Debbie Wych**
Distinguished Volunteer **Jim Manning, Carol Wirkus, Jennifer Young**
Special Projects Award **Bob Haizmann**
President's Award **Peg Kern, Marilyn Painchaud, Gene Rector**

Installation of officers will be held at the December 13 Board meeting.

Jean Ober

Greetings

As the holiday season is upon us it seems graffiti is not taking any time off. The graffiti crew has been very busy since September with group outings to Slide Rock, West Fork, Fossil Creek and an upcoming trip to the infamous Devils Bridge. The summer was kind of slow, but we are making up for it now. The new FOF report app has been very useful and helps us keep track of about 90% of the work we do, big thanks to **Bob Haizmann** for all his hard work on the app.

We currently have 59 members, and a total of 264 hours put in since October 1st, we are fortunate enough to have a great group of hard working volunteers that are quick to reply every time we put an outing together. We also have some fun out on the trails which is one of the things I really like about this group.

Congratulations to the entire Friends of the Forest on winning the prestigious Chief's Honor Awards, the highest honor in the Forest Service. We were asked to do an interview with a reporter from the AZ Daily Sun. She wanted to see us in action and how we remediate the graffiti on the patina. Nori Thorne was nice enough to join me on such short notice and off to Bell Rock we went. Within minutes we found several scratching's and were able to demonstrate exactly what we do best.

Lastly a special thanks to **Jerry Piepiora** (JTE) for being a great teacher and turning over an outstanding team to me, he has taught me so much in such a short time.

I cannot tell you how proud I am to be a part of such a wonderful organization.

Hope to see you out on the trails,

Jerry Checchia



Graffiti team at work removing scratching's from the Red Rocks.

Left - Tim Fogarty showing the end results of his work.

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Top

Work by the team in West Fork entailed lots of water to wash off scratching's.

Bottom

Evan Holtz painting over graffiti artwork on a bridge abutment in Fossil Creek area.



I hope that everyone has been enjoying the trails in the Red Rock district! As the new head of Trail Patrol for the Friends of the Forest, I would like to thank you for the reports you have made, and invite you to join us for our Trail Patrol group hikes. I'd also like to thank Elaine for the job she did as the prior trail patrol chair.

We've been hiking trails all around Sedona, the Village of Oak Creek, and Oak Creek Canyon. Now that the weather has cooled off, I will be scheduling about three group hikes a month. Two hikes will be around 4 to 5 miles, and the third hike will be more difficult, like North Wilson, which is both steep and long. Each month I will send out an email to trail patrol members with the dates and hikes and any special instructions.

The new trail reporting application makes reporting issues a snap. We've reported issues on almost every hike. Just remember to sync the app the morning before you leave, and if you have a report to make, either sync on the trail if there is great connectivity, or when you get home. In the picture you can see we enjoyed the beautiful changing leaves on North Wilson while reporting a trail issue. The views from the Sedona overlook made the climb worthwhile.

The most visitors we encountered on a hike was 74! That was a busy day on Brins Mesa and Soldier's Pass.

Remember to bring a trash bag and pick up trash on hikes. We've found little trash on most hikes, and picking up what we do find discourages others from littering.

Hiking the trails, reporting issues, helping out visitors, and picking up trash is a win-win for everyone. I'd like to thank the trail maintenance folks for the great job they do to keep the trails in such great shape.

Happy trails!

Terri Petrescu



A Record Year!!

This has been a record year for volunteer hours for this committee across all projects. The total came to 8,369! Many thanks to the ~100 generous men and women who volunteered!! The 27 members of the Site Photo Documentation team accounted for 2,838 of those hours. The 12 FoF members of the newly formed Site Recording Project had 438 hours (I know there will be a large increase this coming year). The 5 members of the Photo Digitization Project contributed 250 hours. I am especially proud of the Docent program as 41 members contributed 4,671 hours. In 2012 we only had 27 members and 2,121 hours. The number of participants and total hours has been increasing steadily.

The total number of hours is impressive, but the individual commitment is even more impressive.

# Volunteers by project	400+ Hrs.	300 – 399 Hrs.	200 – 299 Hrs.	100 – 199 Hrs.
Docents	3	3	4	6
Site Photo Documentation	1	0	2	5
Photo Digitization	0	0	0	1
Site Recording	0	0	0	1

Congratulations to everyone for a job well done!!

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 still continues on the print portion of the project. To date, we have processed 61,449 (91%) 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 93% 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.

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 group goes out ~twice each month and, since resuming activities in late September, has recorded 8 sites. There are 40+ sites that still need to be recorded!!

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



“SRP team pausing to admire the view in route to the site 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 result is that fine details can be seen that are not otherwise visible in situ or on 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)!

UPDATE: The group has continued to refine its techniques for RTI image capture and has revisited several sites. They have also embarked on doing a thorough photo documentation on the large sites in the Camp Verde area (i.e. Wingfield Mesa and John Heath ruins). Even though these sites have been known for a very long time, there are few photos in the Forest Service records.

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.

Docent Program

We continue to have a shortage of site hosts at Palatki. The team has done an outstanding job of keeping the site fully staffed.

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 (fofdocents@gmail.com) for more information.

Jerry Walters

Technology Team

The FOF implementation and customization of our new administrative and communication software NEON, the Nonprofit Enterprise Online Network, is complete! We have migrated most of the administrative processes previously accessed via the FOF website to NEON, as a secure, confidential portal. The work of Treasurer, Membership Chair and various data related functions have been dramatically simplified.

“For tasks previously done by phone and mail, NEON has reduced the time from 5 hours to about an hour per month. Emailing was initially a great start, but with NEON, now all communication tasks have been effortless. Alerting the committee chairs about a new member takes a few minutes, and renewal notification take a few minutes more. Also, NEON is precise when reporting data about all aspects of membership. The days of counting and recounting names are over. I find it to be a remarkable tool”. **Betty Parker**, Membership Chair

We encourage members to sign in to view and update your Member information, advise FOF leaders of new or changing volunteer interests, acknowledge Job Hazard Analysis forms, renew your membership - and even opt out of receiving printed issues of the Newsletter by mail! For login information visit <http://members.fofsedona.org> or email us at members@fofsedona.org.

Neon Implementation Team

Peg Kern, Marilyn Painchaud, Jennifer Young

Membership

Membership renewal is due by January 1, 2018. The online response thus far has been encouraging. Please remember your funds will be dedicated to maintaining, protecting, and restoring the scenic beauty of our National Forest lands in the Sedona area. If you accidentally discarded the initial email regarding renewal, you can go online to www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org, select “Join Us,” and follow the steps to **renew**, using PayPal or Credit Card.

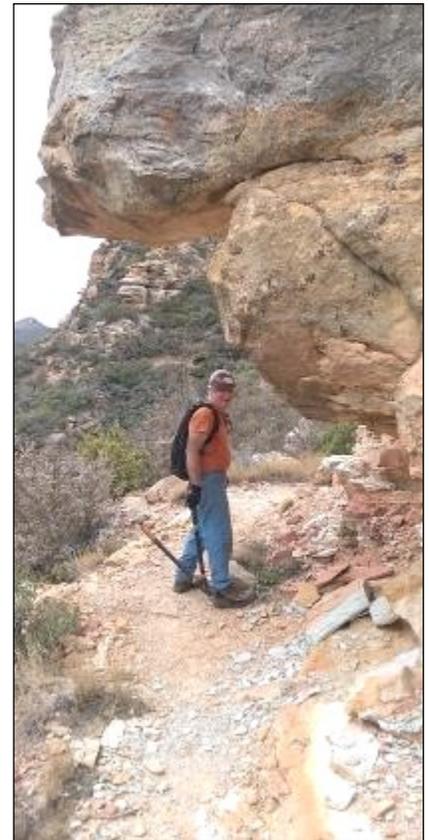
Since our board meeting in May, and as of this entry, FOF has welcomed 16 new members! Individual members include **Brandi Miller, Cathy Robinson, Cathy Lutz, Kelly Carlson, Di Bustamante, Leslie Viennea, Melissa Pontikes, and Mike Boyd**. In addition, **Michael and Joyce Huesemann, Peter and Liz Gifford, Teresa and Tom Shadle, and Karen and Will Hazzard** signed on as Life Family members. We hope you enjoy volunteering in all the areas you chose. Thank you for joining and supporting Friends of the Forest.

All are cordially invited to attend our annual Member Welcome Event on Thursday, February 15 at 2pm in the Red Rock Station Visitor’s Center. I hope to see you there.

Betty Parker

The season is fall and that means stepping it up for TM&C. Our winter regulars are back and ready to work. We have had good weather and the hot summer is behind us. Our Forest Service co-workers have been with us on our Friday outings and work on the trails is progressing well. The TM&C crew is excited to have Gene Rector, one of our own, recognized for his years of service and his mentoring for many of us. We invite all Friends of the Forest members to participate in the **January 13, 2018 "Trail Days"** building of the "Rector Trail" in honor of Gene and Darl.

Ernie DiMillo



Loy Canyon Maintenance was an all-day outing for the crew of 8 TM&C members on December 1.





November 16, 2017 Sawyer Certification Class led by Forest Service Ranger **Justin Loxley**

B-Sawyer recertification for **Jim Manning, Kurt Starbuck, Mike Ober**

A-Sawyer certification for **Ernie DiMillo, Pete Malmgren, John Kuzmiak, Jerry Checchia**



Interpretive Programs

Interpretive Programs (“Public Events” on the FOF home page) are off and running this fall, and there are many more events yet to come in the next few months. In October, **Judy (J.K.) Lovelett** kicked things off with a Red Rock Photo Walk; she held another in November. First Friday talks were presented by **Spence Gustav** in November (“Preservation of Archaeological Sites Through Photography”) and **Al Cornell** in December (“Wilderness Preparation”). **Chris Weld** led a Red Rock Geology Walk in mid-November, and **Kevin Harding** led his first Birding Walk of the season in late November.

The Geology Walk, Birding Walk, and Photo Walk will all be repeated between now and Christmas. Birding Walks led by Kevin are also scheduled twice monthly through April, and he will lead Nature Walks in January and March. We have a First Friday talk on the topic of owls lined up for January, plus several other intriguing subjects under development for February thru May. Stay tuned to future issues of Branching Out, or check the Friends’ web site, for more details as they become available.

Finally, in this, my first article for Branching Out, and on behalf of the Friends, I want to express thanks to **Jennifer Young** for her leadership and dedication during the formative years of interpretive programs. She began to develop the idea in 2013, and achieved FOF Committee status in 2014. She has spent countless hours lining up speakers and hike leaders, coordinating them with the Forest Service, and generating and posting publicity for them. When you get a chance, thank her for all her hard work to establish this successful program.

Bob Wych
Chair, Interpretive Programs

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Wednesday December 13, 2017 9:00 AM - Ranger Station

FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting

All Members are welcome

Future Board of Director Meetings:

March 7, 2018

May 9, 2018

September 12, 2018

Annual Meeting - November (to be announced)

December 12, 2018

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.