

May 2017



Branching Out

Sedona Friends of the Forest

From the President — Manny Romero

Hello Friends,

Warmer temperatures ...visitors...wildflowers...visitors. Spring in the high deserts of Sedona results in a flurry of activity. As always, this issue of Branching Out will give you a complete picture of the size and scope of our programs. It's a powerful communication tool and an impressive read. Thank you to Newsletter Editor **Jean Ober** for her hard work and professionalism in piecing it all together.

One way that we continue to respond effectively to ever-exploding visitor impacts is through training. Here's a summary of recent member training activities:

An all-day docent refresher class organized by Cultural Resources Chair **Jerry Walters** and District Heritage Site Work Leader **Terrilyn Green** was held in late February. New and old docents listened to presentations by Terrilyn and Coconino NF Archaeologist **Peter Pilles**. Volunteer Coordinator Justin Loxley discussed safety concerns and ethics.

A few weeks later, another day-long seminar covered map and compass techniques through a combination of class instruction and practical field work. Leaders were **Al Cornell, Mike Vitek, Brian Painchaud and Rick Baldauf**. A second outdoor skills class led by Al and Mike early this month unraveled the mystery behind the Global Positioning System. Participants learned to transfer map coordinates to a GPS, then ventured afield to navigate to specific locations.

In a first for the Friends, Graffiti Chair **Jerry Piepiora** organized a special training workshop March 23 on graffiti removal from patinated sandstone. Team member and artist **Nori Thorne** developed an approach that conceals graffiti on rocks covered with "desert varnish," eliminating abrasive sanding of the fragile rock. First, pigments are mixed that replicate the varnish color (egg yolk acts as a binder). The pigment is then sponged over the offending graffiti to obscure it without marring the surface. Hands-on participation allowed everyone to mix their own pigments and apply it over badly scarred rock samples. Prior to the hands-on portion of the workshop, archaeology expert **Spence Gustav** discussed ancient petroglyphs in patinated rock near Sedona.

As for events, Friends members provided the bulk of the staffing for the annual V-Bar-V Archaeology Discovery Days in late March. Special thanks to **Bob Beltz** who staffed the "bones box" all weekend; to **Ruth Cornell** for painting an amazing target of a saber-toothed tiger and short faced bear; and to **Al Cornell** and **Michael Campbell** for demonstrating fire by friction.

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Calendar of Events

The sixth annual New Member Welcome Event enjoyed good success thanks to top-notch planning and execution. The event was chaired by Past President **Carol Wirkus** with assistance from Membership Chair **Betty Parker** and committee members **Jennifer Young, Elaine Hackett, Noreen Lisowski, Susan Vitek, Debbie Wych and Bev Jackson**.

The LAFS (Life and Fire Safety) program is a joint venture by Verde Valley fire departments and Forest Service wildfire crews and featured **Smokey Bear**. LAFS aims to keep kids safe and make them fire wise through a humorous skit, music and audience participation. LAFS performances are staged at elementary schools throughout the Verde Valley. Smokey helpers included myself, **Jennifer Young, Frank Wirkus and Mike Vitek**.



Several Friends members were luncheon guests April 19 during a special visit from USFS Region 3 Regional Forester **Cal Joyner**, key regional staff and Coconino NF Supervisor **Laura Jo West**. District Ranger **Nicole Branton** hosted. Joining Friends of the Forest in the spotlight were the Arizona Natural History Association, Sedona Chamber of Commerce and the Red Rock Trail Fund. Members of the graffiti team held a field event after lunch at Bell Rock to showcase our expertise and contributions to the Red Rock District. The objective was to demonstrate graffiti mitigation and look at new techniques.

We continue moving forward on the digital front. I recently formed a Technology Management Team with **Jennifer Young, Marilyn Painchaud, Peg Kern, Mike Ward, Bob Haizmann and Tom Cloonan**. We've already discussed the "big picture" technology needs of our organization, the revamp and sectioning of the FOF website, security issues and possible policies. NEON communication tools are now in a test phase and it looks likely that NEON will dramatically transform our member communications. Stay tuned.

I hope to see you at our next Board and Membership meeting, Wednesday, May 3rd at 9 a.m. in the Administration Building (we don't meet again until September 13). Keep up your good work.

NEON UPDATE

We have a new FOF administrative and communication tool - NEON, the Nonprofit Enterprise Online Network!

After a very detailed review and crosscheck with multiple sources (and even with individual members), member data (such as contact information) has been consolidated into one secure repository with restricted access. Our treasurer and membership chair are now using the Neon system for membership functions.

We will soon be using Neon for email announcements, replacing the iContact software. And, members will be able to update their own contact information and volunteer activity choices, as well as see a history of their membership dues and donations.

Go to this web page: <http://members.fofsedona.org> for the latest news and information.

Thanks,
Marilyn Painchaud

V-Bar-V Discovery Days

Many thanks to the 24 volunteers who helped make this year's event a success! One delightful addition to this year's event was a large contingent of Hopi featuring talks about the Hopi culture, the youth dancers, and Piki bread making.

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 52,600 (78%) of 67,442 print images! Phase 3 entails transcribing the handwritten 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 82% complete for the total project. 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.



Hopi Youth Dancers

Jerry Walters

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: The training sessions have been completed. Two sites were recorded as part of this training. Teams have begun work in Long Canyon and have recorded an additional 3 sites.

Docent Program

Join me in welcoming new docents **Andy Herschowitz, Robert Paterson, Harold Brockwell** and **Joe Connellan**. Special thanks to **Spence Gustav** for providing training at Palatki and Honanki. 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 284-1339

**Would you
like to help
protect our
cultural
heritage
sites?**

**Learn more
here**

V-Bar-V Discovery Days



Parking Lot Team

*Photos by
Spence Gustav and
J. K. Lovelett*



Al Cornell and Michael Campbell still trying to learn how to make fire, the old fashion way!



Bob Beltz showing some skin J.K.Lovelett



Craig Swanson showing the angles of the sun shadows on a wood panel in front of V-Bar-V rock art



Our treasurer consorting with the Park Service

Membership

Since the February 22 Board Meeting, Friends of the Forest has welcomed 19 new members: Individual members include **Louise Osborn, Mary Smoak, Eric Voboril, Harold Brockwell, Donna Curry, Jack Evans, and Andy Herschkowitz**. Our newest Family members include **Weihong Pan and Abba Kastin, Len and Olga Ostrom, Pauline and Robert Rosen, and Jim and Marsha White**. Lifetime Family members include **Diana and Whit Manter and Carolyn Peterson**. **Paula Miller** joined as a Lifetime Individual.

Thank you for joining and we hope you enjoy your time with us. Friends of the Forest now has 466 members!

Betty Parker

Statistical Summary

Volunteer Hours – Mid Year Report

As of the end of March the Friends have volunteered 18,882 hours beating the record set last year of 18,133 hours. That equates to about 18 people working a 40-hour week for the 26 weeks.

Cultural Resource has 4069 hours well ahead of the 3479 hours set last year.

Graffiti Removal has 754 hours, they had 470 hours for the same period

River Rangers has 225 hours – 189 hours last year

Trail Maintenance has 2414 hours, a bit behind the 2698 hours last year

Trail Patrol has 4611 hours, beating the 4527 hours last year

VIS has 2749 hours, beating last year's 2655

Bill Kusner

Merchandise

Spring has sprung, and the nice weather and wildflowers are calling us to hike the trails. The sun will keep getting more intense, and merchandising will have new caps for sale as well as eight new sun shirts with SPF to protect you from the harmful sun rays. There are shirts for women and men in a variety of sizes and colors, so come look them over and perhaps take one home. The attached pictures show them upon arrival and they will be delivered to have the FOF logo embroidered on them before the meeting. Payment must be by check or cash. We do not take credit cards. Remember that you can always donate clean, gently used FOF clothing for resale to our members at bargain prices.

Roni Ward and Debbie Wych



Have you noticed that most travelers these days have done a lot of homework before they embark on their trips? They've checked the online travel sites, and have researched "the best things to do" in Sedona long before they arrive. When they hit the Visitor Center, they want directions to the same short list: Cathedral Rock, the Chapel, Devil's Bridge, the airport mesa and Slide Rock. And, in fact, these are among the jewels of our area. So, we share directions to these ultra-popular spots, advise them to be patient if there are no parking spots or if they get snagged up in the traffic back-up on 179, and hope the hold-up doesn't put too much of a damper on their day.

We all know about the congestion at the most popular features in the area. But what can we in the Visitor Center do to help alleviate some of the problem? Well, we can try our best to reroute and redistribute some of the traffic. For those day trippers coming up from the Valley, try directing them to West Sedona first, via Beaverhead Flats and Page Springs Rds. They can hit the scenic drives of West Sedona early in the day, and save the sights along 179 for the drive home as they head south back to Phoenix. And for those visitors who want to hike, how about offering alternatives trails that can be just as delightful as the top 5 or 10? Turkey Creek, Adobe Jack, Jordan, Pyramid, Aerie and Long Canyon come to mind as lovely trails away from the throngs. And when it's impossibly busy in town, don't forget the hiking opportunities in the Red Rock and Dead Horse state parks.

What do you think? Do you have any tricks or tips to help manage congestion or distribute visitors you'd like to share with your fellow visitor center volunteers? If so, email me at torlick1924@gmail.com and I'll pass them along in future articles.

Terry Orlick

**Do you
have tips
for our
visitors?**

**Let Terry
know.**

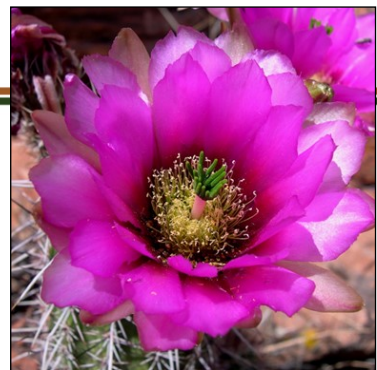
Interpretive Programs

Public Interpretive Program: Still Enjoying Wildflower Season!

The extended and prolific wildflower season continues, with three more Flower Walks on the schedule: Thursdays, April 27, May 11 and May 18 starting at 9:00am. Details and registration instructions are found on the FOF website in a new Upcoming Public Events location. Look for the Events link at the top of the home page or on the left-side menu list.

Also, check out an article written by Bob Beltz posted on the website under Member News, FOF Press Releases <http://www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org/member-News.html> which provides a self guiding tour of interesting plant life to be found at the Palatki Heritage Site.

May is a month for meeting and greeting local wildlife at the Red Rock District Visitor Center. The First Friday Presentation at 10:00am (one hour earlier than usual!) on May 5 will be a talk and presentation of live Birds of Prey. This is the first time this program is being offered on the District.



Bob Beltz



Top - Pink Flower Hedgehog Cactus
Bottom - Broom Snakeweed

Seating for the indoor talk is limited to the first forty participants. The live bird display will be on the patio after the talk.

Hummingbird feeding resumes on Saturday May 20 from 8:00-10:00am and will be offered at least monthly through the summer. And the Live Snake Display returns to the Visitor Center on Saturday and Sunday May 28 and 29, from 9:00am-4pm.

If you have not joined **JK Lovelett** for her monthly photography walk, the final walk of this season will be on Monday May 8, starting at 8:00am.

Our full program of guided hikes on a variety of topics will resume in the Fall.

Jennifer Young, Bob Beltz



*April 21, **Spence Gustav** led a Geo-Chemistry Hike for local students with the assistance of **Harold Brockwell** and **Deneise Piepiora**.*

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

friendsoftheforestsedona.org

Graffiti Removal

Friends all – We are now 7 months into the 2016-2017 year and here is a quick review of our activities since 10/1/16:

Members on our roster – 41

Active members – 29 (at least one outing)

Very active members – 12 (each with more than 20 hours)

Special note – 40 or more hours – **Jerry Checchia (JTY), Evan Holz, Betty Parker, Deneise Piepiora, Dave Poppe, Dave Murrill, Steve Orr, and JTE.** They all deserve special thanks from the Friends Of the Forest and Forest Service.



This team has been in the field more than 860 hours and completed approximately 45 missions. There about 7 sites we still need to take care of, not counting the regulars – Devil's Bridge, Bell Rock, West Fork, Slide Rock, Cathedral Rock, Fossil Creek, Boynton Canyon, and we will now add Doe Mountain.

Here are a couple of photos of our greatest challenge – Devil's Bridge. We seem to make that a destination every couple of months. As you can see, cleaning that area is no easy task. The group has named this particular set of rock panels – “wall of shame”.



*Of course, we have as much fun in our outings as work. For Spence's amusement, we took a photo of what we did when a “suspected” rock defacer was caught in a historically sensitive area... Thanks, **Deneise** for being our culprit.*



Lastly, we are most pleased with the results of our first classroom training. It was held on March 23, and 23 students attended. **Nori Thorne** taught us a much better way of remediating scratch graffiti on patina-covered rocks. Not only are all the ingredients of the “paint” all natural, but it is very similar to what the natives used several hundreds of years ago, we believe it will last on our rocks for many years to come. We have been field testing this process for approximately two years. Also, the students practiced first hand on sample rocks and mixed the paint components to match color. **Spence Gustav** followed Nori’s class with some very valuable information on how we are to handle graffiti in archeologically sensitive areas. Using results from the photographic team’s special projects effort, he showed what could be behind graffiti, not obvious to the naked eye. Any attempt to remove current graffiti would certainly do further damage to the ancient writings. As continuous training is critically important to our team, we will provide more of this kind training in the future.



The entire graffiti team looks forward

Graffiti Class Photos

*Graffiti Rock - **Manny Romero***

*Work in Progress - **Harold Brockwell***

*Clean Surface - **Rick Baldauf***

*Patina restored - **Heidi Anderson***



FRIENDS OF THE FOREST SEDONA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS MEETING RED ROCK RANGER
STATION CONFERENCE ROOM

May 3, 2017 @ 9:00 AM

ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME. HOSPILITY COMMITTEE PROVIDES COFFEE, TEA AND LIGHT SNACKS
PLEASE JOIN US AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FRIENDS AND HOW WE ASSIST THE U. S. FOREST SERVICE

Trail Patrol members logged a record number of hours for March—an impressive 1228 hours! And our roster of participants continues to grow with 14 new members. **Rob and Pauline Rosen, Joe and Sandi Connellan, Paula Miller, Mary Smoak, Betty Parker, Louise Osborne, Whit Manter, Len and Olga Ostrom, Weihong Pan and Abba Kasti, and Eric Voboril** are new to Trail Patrol and active on the trails. A warm welcome to all.

A sincere thank you to **Bob Kenny, Heide Heidepriem, and Holt Holthausen** for responding to a request from Justin Loxley to scout out the Bell Trail for social trails, illegal campsites, and graffiti in preparation for a work force in that area this summer. The project covered several miles along Beaver Creek and included detailed descriptions and GPS coordinates of their findings. A job well done and much appreciated. Responding to special requests of the Forest Service is another way Trail Patrol members serve the Forest Service, and our committee can be proud of its willingness to help with special projects whenever asked.

A couple of scheduled hikes were cancelled due to inclement weather, but those held were well attended and gave new members field experience as well as an opportunity to meet other Trail Patrol members. Scheduled hikes will resume in October. Meanwhile I encourage members to network within our committee to find hiking buddies, if desired. I am happy to help facilitate that process for anyone wanting assistance. You can email me at flyingpoint@comcast.net.

The position of Trail Patrol Chair will be open in October, and anyone interested in serving the Friends in a leadership role is encouraged to contact me or President **Manny Romero**, for details. The time commitment is about 10 hours a month and a rewarding way to serve the Friends of the Forest, as well as an opportunity to work with a dedicated group of individuals. I encourage you to give this opening some serious consideration.

I wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer.

Elaine Hackett



Marg's Draw Hike - Lois Johnson, Betty Parker, Sandi Connellan, Cynthia Jones, Mary Smoak, Ben Shore, Weihong Pan, and Dennis Uthes



Trail Patrol Hike - Sarah Rowley, Lois Johnson, Judy Themer, Kay Kunert

Trail Maintenance & Construction

Spring has sprung and the ongoing task of trail maintenance continues. The Friday work crew has been busy with brushing and drainage. The new “Dashboard” reporting system is showing us areas of concern and along with the Forest Service we are responding to these sites in a logical and efficient manner. A new member of our TM&C crew is the “Tool Trailer”, hopefully this will assist us in the transport and securing of tools needed for any project. We can always use an extra hand, so come on out and give trail work a try.

Ernie DiMillo



The Friday Trail Maintenance Crew with **Kyle Robb** (Forest Service) showing off the Tool Trailer that **Ernie** has re-tooled to handle all of the picks, McLeod rakes, shovels, loppers, saws and other tools needed to maintain the red rock trails.



Save The Daisies Fence Project

Janie Agyagos, Wildlife Biologist Save the Daisies Fence project got the assistance of TM&C crew members **Jerry Checchia**, **Don McClimans**, **Jim Converse**, **Tana Allman**, **Ernie DiMillo**, **Mike Ober**, **David Murrill**, **Pete Malmgren** and **Seth Ratering**, Forest Service Range Technician



IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

May 3, 2017 @ 9:00 AM FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting - Ranger Station

May 5, 2017 @ 10:00 AM Birds of Prey - Red Rock Ranger Station

May 8, 2017 @ 8:00 AM Photography walk with JK Lovelett

May 20, 2017 @ 8:00 - 10:00 AM Hummingbird Feeding - Red Rock Ranger Station

May 28 & 29, 2017 @ 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Live Snake Display - Visitor Center

September 13 @ 9:00 AM FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting - Ranger Station

December 13, 2017 @ 9:00 AM FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting - Ranger Station

SEDONA

FRIENDS OF THE FOREST

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.