



Hello Friends,

As my term nears conclusion, I want to express my sincere appreciation to everyone for your kind support these past two years. It has truly been an honor to serve such a talented, enthusiastic and creative group. Your hard work has made Friends of the Forest the best Forest Service volunteer organization in the country.

This is the final edition of Branching Out for 2018. We owe special thanks to editor **Jean Ober** for her expertise in creating such a lively, interesting publication. Although Jean will relay the reins of Board Secretary to **Lynn Zonakis** later this month, I'm grateful that she will remain as our newsletter editor.

Thanks to all in attendance at our annual membership meeting and recognition event last month at the Beaver Creek Work Center. The beautiful late fall weather and the delicious lunch courtesy of the Forest Service helped make the event a success. Winners of Team Award Certificates and Special Service awards are listed on page 10 and 11.

As a reminder, our next meeting is only a few days away—Wednesday, December 12 at 9 a.m. in the Ranger Station Administration building. A key item of business will be to formally appoint officers for the 2019 calendar year. Candidates are **Craig Swanson, President; Lynn Zonakis, Secretary; Tom Cloonan, Treasurer; Joe Pokorski, Assistant Treasurer.**

Come early and sample the variety of tasteful refreshments provided by the Hospitality group spearheaded by **Deneise Piepiora**. Get an early start on your Holiday shopping as you browse through an interesting collection of Friends merchandise courtesy of Merchandising specialist **Terry Orlick**.

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

March 13

May 8

September 11

Annual Meeting – November date to be set by Forest Service

December 11

Trail Maintenance Chair **Jerry Checchia** and Red Rock District OHV coordinator Forrest Saville planned and organized the Girdner Trail Volunteer Trail Day on December 1st. We co-sponsored the event with the Forest Service, the Red Rock Trail Fund and REI. Work consisted of trail re-routes. Twenty-five volunteers and seven Forest Service employees took part in this "digging in the dirt" project.

Once again, my sincere appreciation for your valuable friendship and encouragement. I know that incoming President Craig Swanson will enjoy the same support that has made this job both painless and gratifying. I look forward to new ventures with Friends of the Forest and hope to see you at our meeting on the 12th.

Our work since the last report has been focused on more serious situations.

In addition to the typical graffiti reports, a rash of paint writing and symbols has inundated us. (brushed on, not sprays). What makes this a more serious issue is the paint writings have been a mixture of obscene phrases and hate symbols. While these seem to be related, there is no way to be absolutely sure. What is sure is that it makes for a lot of work for our crews. And, because of the nature of the paint, it was important we respond immediately after receiving the reports. To this date, we have removed four hate symbols from three different trails - Doe Mountain, Secret Slickrock, and Bell Rock.

The obscene writings had to be remediated from five trails and sites - Fay Canyon, Robbers Roost (aka Shaman Cave), Wind Caves, Dogie Trail, and Damfino Trail.

NOTE: Recently, several newspaper articles have also been published. The Verde Independent (9/30/18) and the Red Rock News, (11/30/18) covered the vandalism. The FOF graffiti removal team was recognized in both articles for our efforts.

I can't thank the following team members enough for their willingness to respond almost immediately to each of these reports – **Jerry Checchia, Ernie DiMillo, Deneise**

Piepiora, Bob Haizmann, Evan Holz, Tim Fogarty, Pete Malmgren, Mike Boyd, Michael Campbell, and Dan Aragaki.

In spite of this added challenge, the team managed to keep up with the usual sites. Our regular schedule included visits to Slide Rock (which included even more paint removal at the upper end), Fay Canyon Arch, as well as – Cathedral and Bell Rocks. We even showed the Rockettes how it's done at our recent visit to Slide Rock!!

As a reminder, the next graffiti training class will be held on January 8, 2019. We are calling this a level II class, as we will be reviewing the latest techniques the team has developed. In addition, several guest speakers have committed to be there, including our District Ranger, Nicole Branton, Justin Loxley, and our own **Nori Thorne, Bob Haizmann, and Spence Gustav**. If you haven't already signed up, please contact me ASAP. We have 35 students already committed.

As always, we encourage any kind of report, regardless of the source or type. That is the single most important tool we have in making a difference in the Forest.

The entire graffiti team looks forward to seeing you on the trails.

Jerry Piepiora, Chairman

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

FOF Quarterly Board of Directors and Members meeting

Wednesday December 12, 2018 9:00 AM

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Wednesday, September 11, 2019

November To Be Determined

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

Red Rock Ranger Station - ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

I would like to extend a very large THANK YOU! To the 50 men and women who collectively contributed **10,197** hours to Cultural Resources for the year!

Site Recording Project

The team has begun activities for this season and has already recorded four sites not previously known to the Forest Service. There are still enough currently known unrecorded sites for this project to continue for several more years.

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)

Cultural Site Photo Documentation Project

The site photography project still has several years of work ahead. The current list of ongoing projects includes re-photographing major prehistoric sites using conventional, RTI, and 3-D technologies, similar photography for newly recorded sites, and periodic monitoring of the dust study images at

Palatki and Honanki. The team has also been busy creating 3-D images of selected historical Forest Service structures in the Red Rock and Peaks districts. If you are interested in helping with this project, or would like more information, please contact **Spence Gustav** at spencehg@yahoo.com.

Docent Program

Join me in welcoming new FoF member and new docent **Charlene Gier**. Thanks to Spence Gustav for conducting the Palatki and Honanki training.

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 (docents@fosedona.org) for more information.

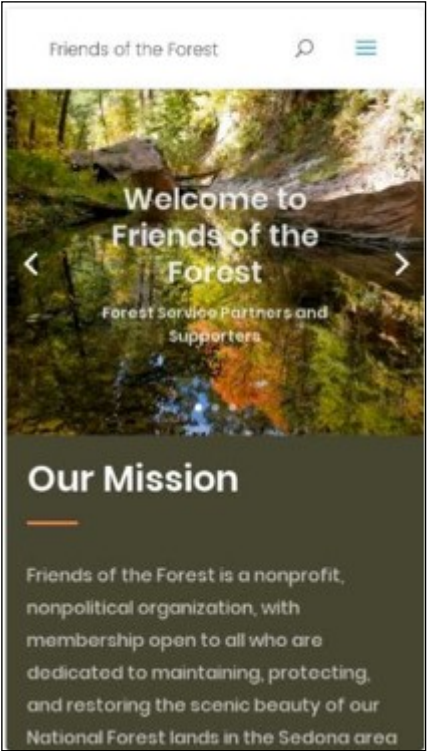
Jerry Walters 284-1339

We're getting a makeover!

A redesigned Friends of the Forest website will be launched around the first of the year to kickoff the celebration of our 25th anniversary. The new website will provide easy reading and navigation across a wide range of devices: desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone. Below are screenshots of our current site and the redesigned site as shown on a tablet. **Marilyn Painchaud**



Old vs New



Patrol Reports and Maintenance Activity

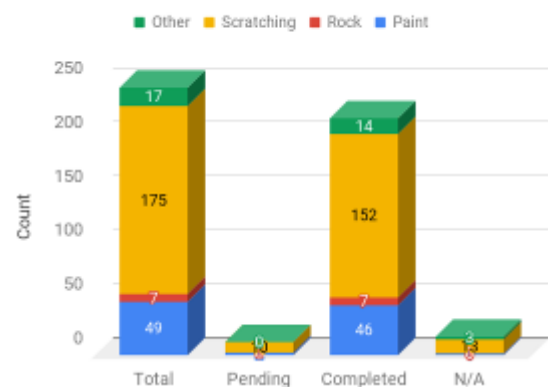
We support the National Forest by making observations of abnormal conditions on the trails and making repairs. Since the beginning of 2017 the FoF Report mobile app has been used in the field to log over 1100 problems. Our maintenance chairmen along with the Forest Service use another app, FoF Manage, to view all observations including problem types, trail names, photos, and locations on a map. FoF Manage is used to assign maintenance work and document when the problems have been fixed. The bar charts below highlight completed and pending work per observation type from the roll-out of the Report app in Jan 2017 to date. “N/A” indicates that maintenance is not required.

Through a form on our website we have also accumulated information on more than 3800 FoF trail patrol outings including trails hiked and number of hikers seen. By combining this information with the mobile app information we can find problem hotspots that need more patrolling. Proactive patrolling gives us an opportunity to improve trail maintenance and limit copycat graffiti.

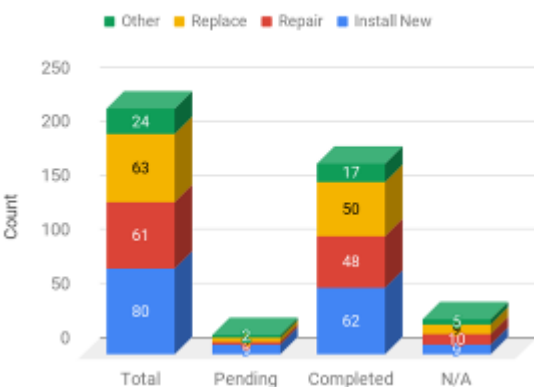
About 30% of Trail Patrol have used the Report app amounting to 45% of the total reports that have been made. Since the app is easy to install and use there is potential to make more reports. If you would like to contribute more to the effort of monitoring using our mobile app please contact **Jon Petrescu** (jpetrescu@gmail.com) or **Bob Haizmann** (bhaizmann@gmail.com) for training material and mobile app installation instructions.

Bob Haizmann

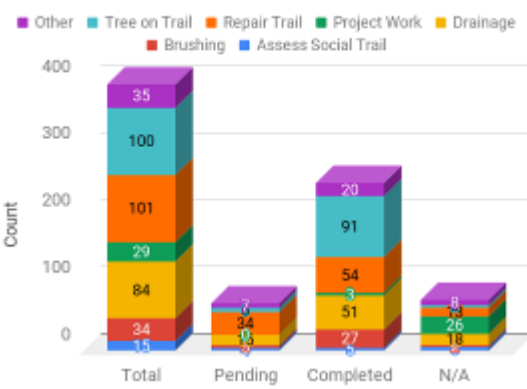
Graffiti Work Status



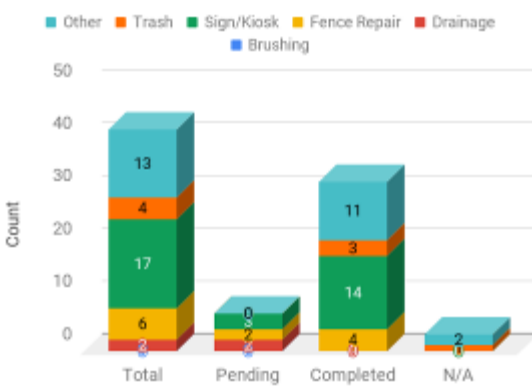
Signage Work Status



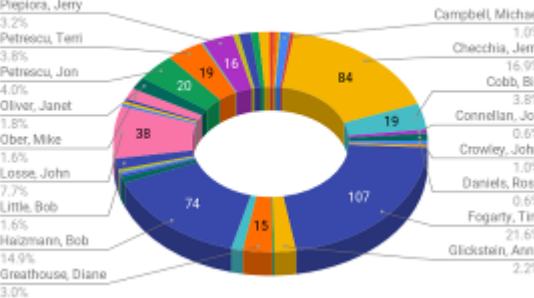
Trail Work Status



Trailhead Work Status



Trail Patrol Reports



Volunteer Hours

As reported at the Annual Meeting in November, the Friends once again set a new record for volunteer hours during the Forest Service's Fiscal Year 18! Here's the recap of the hours by committee, compared to last year's totals:

Committee	FY18 Hours	FY17 Hours	Change in Hours	% Change
Air Quality	528	632	-105	-16.5%
Cultural Resources	10,163	8,370	+1,793	+21.4%
Graffiti Removal	1,507	1,386	+121	+8.7%
Interpretive Pgm	591	457	+134	+29.2%
River Rangers	242	225	+17	+7.6%
Special Projects	4,104	2,597	+1,507	+58%
Trail Maint&Const	3,355	4,276	-921	-21.5%
Trail Patrol	7,646	7,916	-270	-3.4%
VIS	4,953	5,139	-186	-7.3%
Water Sampling	202	218	-16	-16%
Admin/Meetings	2,838	4,250	-1,412	-33.2%
Total	36,127	35,465	+662	+2%

Overall, a total of 258 members volunteered their time during this period (October 2017 thru September 2018), with an average of 140 hours per member. We had twelve members who contributed in excess of 500 hours each.

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

NEON (Member Information Software)

Our administrative software for managing all our member information (NEON – Nonprofit Enterprise Online Network) continues to be a valuable tool. Remember that you can log in to your own profile at any time to update your contact information, as well as your seasonal dates, skills/knowledge, and the expiration date of your Government Driver's License (for drivers of Forest Service vehicles). Renewing your annual membership (or making an additional donation) is easy – just click on the "Renew/Donate/View" option, then click on "Donate Now" and complete the required information. You can pay on-line using a credit card via PayPal (you don't need a PayPal account), or you can select to "Pay Later" and mail in a check. You can also view your total FOF hours by fiscal year from 2014 forward, with the current year updated on a quarterly basis.

To log in, go to the Friends website (friendsoftheforestsedona.org), click on Members Area, then click on Member Updates. Instructions are provided directly below the Member Updates button.

Peg Kern

The "River Rats" are volunteers with government driver licensed and certified by the Forest Service that allows them drive Forest Service rigs and pull government trailers. Trailer towing certification is not required except when a trailer is being used. Two to three rigs are used to transport the river rangers, their inflatable kayaks, equipment and all of their supplies to and from the Verde River at several put in and take-out locations. In the past without volunteer help, from two to four Forest Service employees would need to be reassigned from other essential assignments just to do the transporting.

If the river trip is long, we resupply and bring back trash from the river locations, thus helping return the Verde River to a pristine state. Six to eight river trips are scheduled annually between October and April when the river is running high. Transportation trips for put-ins usually involve a half day while take-outs at Horse Shoe Lake north of Phoenix can take more than 10 hours round trip. The drive to Childs on the Verde River involves an 18 mile stretch of rough and challenging gravel road for trailer pulling and can take more than 4 hours round trip.

Since October this fiscal year, the River Rats have supported four trips, both put-in and take-out. Seven volunteer drivers have recorded 89 hours. Receiving a government driver's license requires passing an online defensive driving course which takes 4 to 6 hours and having your driver record checked by the Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer which can take several months.

If you enjoy driving and the close camaraderie with the Forest Service rangers and other members of the "River Rats", contact me at riverrangers@fosedona.org.

Mike Ober

riverrangers@fosedona.org



Above: The river rangers un-loading their inflatable kayaks and raft from the Forest Service flatbed for the trip down the Verde River to Horseshoe Lake.

Below: Seven days of gear ready to be loaded onto the kayaks and raft.



Membership renewal is due by January 1, 2019. The online response thus far has been most 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 just sent regarding renewal, you can go online to www.friendsoftheforestsedona.org, select "Join Us," and follow the steps to **renew**, using PayPal or Credit Card. You can also use the same form, shown at the bottom of this report, and mail in your renewal.

Since our board meeting in September, and as of this entry, FOF has welcomed 36 new members!

All are individual members and include **Steven and Linda Peyton, Charlene Gier, Jeff Maust, Anne and Alan Glickstein, Dale and Sharon Evans, Matt Nicholls, Amy Isaacs, Emily Sosangelis, Alex Tylecote, Doug Campbell, Maryann Livingstone, Marc Luckey, Masood Behbahaney, Susan Luddy, Kimberly Stompie, April Payne, Soaring Bear, Sharon Gerdes, Rick and Marilyn Paul, Greg and Rose Daniels, Mike and Bella Berily, Cyndi Heuer, Stu and Maureen Aull, Linda Sogge, Steve Langston, May Jane Stell, Zac Livingstone, Jenni Livingstone, and Sylvester Jagla.**

We hope you enjoy volunteering in all the areas you chose. Thank you for joining and supporting Friends of the Forest. The net total of our membership has now reached 541 and we continue to grow!

As a quick review of our 2018 activities, we contributed a total of **36,127** volunteer hours with more than 540 volunteers. Which are more hours than any other Forest Service volunteer group in the country and we continue to receive national recognition for our many efforts.

In addition to the Chief's Award as the Forest Service's best volunteer organization in the country, our Sedona Friends of the Forest was also selected by the Department of Agriculture to receive the Under-Secretary's Award. This was presented for the many innovations initiated by the FOF. It is also the first time this award has been presented. Specifically, we were

honored for the work in electronic field reporting, archaeological photo documentation, and graffiti removal.

NOTE: There were a few members who chose not to include their email address in the membership form or asked us not to include them in mailings. Obviously we will comply with your wishes, but you will not receive notices about upcoming events, training classes, etc. Please reconsider.

All are cordially invited to attend our **Annual Member Welcome Event** on **Thursday, February 7 at 2pm** in the Red Rock Station Visitor's Center. I hope to see you there. Although we focus on new members, everyone is welcome. All of our committee chairpersons will be present to review what their committees do. We will also hear from several Forest Service people who will discuss their special projects. All FOF members are invited to participate in any of these activities!

Lastly, 2019 will be very special for the Friends of the Forest, as we will be celebrating our **25th Anniversary**. Our President will be requesting assistance in a number of different areas. Please consider being a part of this celebration.

Here is another copy of the membership renewal form:

Friends of the Forest Membership Dues, 2019

Name(s) _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Category: () Friend \$25 () Family \$35
() Lifetime Friend \$150 () Lifetime Family \$250
() Additional Donation \$ _____

Deadline for renewal is January 1, 2019.

Jerry Piepiora,

Membership Chair (443.324.1360)

Email: membership@focsedona.org

Visitor Information Services

As the year draws to a close, we want to thank all our volunteers for their hours behind the desk at the Visitor Information Center. Whether you have a regular shift, or fill in on an as-needed basis, we couldn't do it without your support.

Speaking of which, many of our fill-in volunteers are back in town. They are eager to get back into the swing of things. When the monthly schedule is published, please give them a chance to snag a shift or two and share in the fun. Don't worry, there will be plenty of shift opportunities to go around, especially as we head into the holidays and the dreaded flu season.

Happy Holidays,

Terry Orlick



Frontliners assisting visitors:

Norris Peterson (above), Norma Wallace (left) and Rhett Atkinson (right).



Merchandise

Forest Fashion on Sale Now!

Friends of the Forest is a wonderful organization, and you've chosen to be a member. You are one of the best ambassadors to spread the word about our mission and role in preserving the health and beauty of the Coconino National Forest.

A great way to start the conversation is by wearing our logo proudly when you're out and about town. We have a nice selection of men's and women's Columbia sun shirts on hand, in a variety of sizes and colors. Women's shirts are \$25 and men's range from \$30 to \$40...prices 40% less than original retail.

In addition to clothing, we also have magnets and patches.

These items are going fast. If you wish to purchase something, contact me at terryorlick@q.com. Or, come to

the December 12 Board Meeting. Merchandise will be available for sale before and after the meeting. Bring cash or your checkbook!

Terry Orlick



Thank you to the 130 Trail Patrol members who signed their JHA for the 2018-2019 season. This is 85% of last year’s Trail Patrol members, versus 72% from the previous season.

Starting December 1, trail patrollers will need to log their hikes at their NEON site. It is the same site and login credentials that you used to sign your JHA. A notice to all Trail Patrol members who signed their JHA has been sent. Please check your SPAM folder if you have not received this message. Exiting members who sign their JHA after December 1, and new FOF members to Trail Patrol will be given the new instructions for logging their hike hours.

We’re off to a great start on Trail Patrol. The previous report ended with the three months ending August. Therefore, the numbers presented here are of Trail Patrol logged for September through November. These number represent an increase over the summer months.

Stats for September, October, & November

Number of TP Members that hiked	78
Number of trails hiked	117
Number Trail Patrols	541
Total Hikers Observed	8672
Total People Engaged	3510
Total Bikers Observed	1961
Total Equestrians Observed	58
Total Dogs Off Leash	201
Total Lbs Trash Removed	107.5

We are continuing to offer 1 to 4 monthly group Trail Patrol hikes, usually starting at 9 AM. Hikes vary, both short and long. During the hike, we will use the smart phone FOF Report application to document trail issues like graffiti, brushing required, signage issues, downed trees, large amounts of trash that we didn't pick up, and any other issues that we come across. If you are a member of Trail Patrol then you will be getting emails with the group hike schedule during the first week of each month.

We are branching out a little bit, trying to make sure all trails are hiked including some of the longer trails in the wilderness that need 4WD to access. In addition, we’re hiking some of the social trails that get lots of graffiti, we

found a lot by Grasshopper Point and the Graffiti Removal team got right on it. We will also be doing a trash cleanup in Carrol Canyon in December.

Please be timely in reporting your trail hikes.

Stats For the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year

Number of TP Members that hiked	117
Number of trails hiked	131
Number Trail Patrols	1828
Total Hikers Observed	36070
Total People Engaged	14211
Total Bikers Observed	7356
Total Equestrians Observed	116
Total Dogs Off Leash	724
Total Lbs Trash Removed	669

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



Trail Patrol hike in Woods Canyon. From the left is Bill Cobb, Jon Petrescu, and Janet Oliver. Photo by Terri Petrescu.

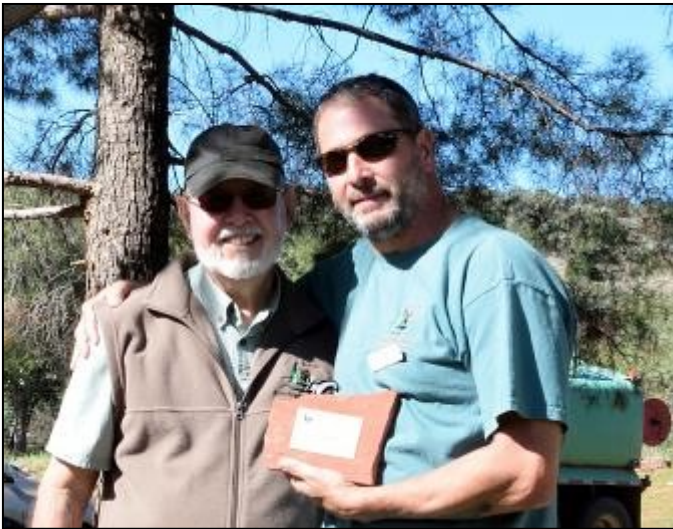
RED ROCK AWARDS



New Volunteer of the Year: Tim Anderson, (not present for picture) Rob & Denise Gibbs



Volunteer of the Year: Tom Cloonan (above)
Brian Painchaud (below)



Heart of the Friends: Jerry Checchia



Distinguished Volunteer:
Justine Kusner (right)



President's Award :
Garry Neil
(not present for picture)

Team Awards



Cultural Resources – Jerry Walters

Scott Newth, Paul Cooley, Tim Anderson, Brian Painchaud, (pictured with Jerry) Bob Beltz, Tom Cloonan, John Losse, Ruti Lovitt, Wayne Swart, Ed Hodges, Jon Petrescu, Peg Kern



Graffiti Removal – Jerry Piepiora

Hardcore Graffiti Removal Team: Jerry Checchia, Evan Holz, Tim Fogarty, Pete Malmgren, Deneise Piepiora

Team Spirit: Charlotte Danner, Adrienne Pichette



Trail Maintenance & Construction – Jerry Checchia

Rob Garrison and Joe Pokorski pictured. Mike Boyd Melissa Pontikes, Bill Wilcox, and Tony Schuit not present for photo



River Patrol – Manny Romero, representing River Patrol
Brian and Marilyn Painchaud



Water Sampling – Al Cornell

Michael Campbell

Not present for photos:

Trail Patrol – Craig Swanson, representing Trail Patrol

Paula Uthe

Visitor Information Services – Bev Jackson

Barry and Peggy Aronowitz, Dan and Penny Dunn, Dee Chadwick

Greetings fellow volunteers.

We have been a very busy group since our last newsletter. The heavy rains we had in late Sept. did a number on many of our trails. We did several reroutes & removed countless number of trees. We still go out almost every Friday to do Trail Work with the FS joining us on most days. We also have several new Kiosks to install, so come on out and join us if you haven't already, a special Thank You to all of my regulars, you know who you are.

We had a great turn out for the FOF sponsored Trail Work Day on December 1st on the Girdner Trail. Special thanks to the Friends for sponsoring this event. We will have another one coming up on April 4th so mark your calendars. The FS will be running these Volunteer Work Days thru the end of April so plenty of opportunity to get out and build or maintain our beautiful trail system.

Happy Hiking & I look forward to seeing you out on the trails.

Jerry Checchia



Trail Work Day December 1, 2018



The tree cutting crew went out and removed 7 trees off Vultee Arch/Sterling Trail (above)



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.