

SEDONA WESTERNERS MONTHLY MEETING

JANUARY 11, 2024

AT SEDONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CALL TO ORDER-WELCOME

Trail Boss Ray LaPorte called the meeting to order at 6:02 and welcomed members to the monthly meeting. He invited new members to stand up and introduce themselves. They come from the state of Washington and Scottsdale, AZ.

Ray also gave a lively report on the holiday party, held at the Oak Creek Golf Course meeting room. Sixty-nine people attended, a smaller number than last year, but Ray assured us that they all enjoyed the festivities, especially the ukulele band. After being assured that Tom, head of the band would arrive on time, Ray welcomed two band members named Tom, but not the aforementioned band leader and lead singer. When Tom arrived, he recounted the sad story of a dead battery in his vehicle, something he was able to repair in time for the holiday party. Ray reported that the Westerners were indeed a lively bunch!

BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NOVEMBER 9, 2023.

Trail Boss Ray LaPorte called for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 9, 2023. Mark Bealafeld made a motion, seconded by Jan Taylor. The minutes were approved. Ray called for a motion to approve the Financial Report for November and December, 2023. Michael McCaffrey made a motion. Hassan Hosseini seconded it. The reports were approved.

OFFICER REPORTS

FINANCIAL REPORT (Mark Bealafeld, Foreman)

Mark Bealafeld reported that expenses for the holiday party were \$3100. A contribution to the Red Rock Trail Fund was made of \$1,000. Expenses for the year were \$ 10,052, with remaining \$747 to the good.

CHUCKWAGON REPORT (ADRIENNE PICHETTE, CHUCKWAGON BOSS)

Adrienne thanked those who had contributed cookies to the meeting. Ray thanked Adrienne and Lynn for their fine work on the holiday party.

ROUNDUP BOSS REPORT (SARA STIFFLER, ROUNDUP BOSS)

Sara thanked those who had contributed articles and singled out Jon Petrescu for writing two articles. She noted that this year two articles appeared covering the same hike but in two different levels of hikes. The contrast made for interesting reading. Sara also announced that the article by Mare Czinari, the journalist who hiked with the Amblers one Thursday, appeared in the January/February issue of *Phoenix*. Sara circulated the article.

PROSPECTOR REPORT (Sandi Heysinger)

Ray reported for Sandi that there are currently 346 members of which 83 are new, and 29 are honorary members. She compared the number with hiking season 2023 at the same time of year, when there were 406 members.

RANGER/ FOREST SERVICE REPORT (HASSAN HOSSEINI, RANGER/FOREST SERVICE LIAISON)

Hassan pointed out two important volunteer opportunities that mark our close working relationship with Kevin Kuhl of the USFS.

There will be a work day for trail repair on January 20, from 8:30 – 12:00. Bring water and work gloves. If you are interested, contact Hassan by email.

There will be a Cathedral Rock closure, as there was last year, from February 28-April 13. Again the US Forest Service is seeking volunteers to redirect hikers and explain about the closure.

The USFS is removing the metal signs placed by the Sedona Westerners. They

know the Westerners are not happy about this. However, the signs are being returned to the Westerners to auction off to create funds to contribute to the Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund.

Ray complimented the great work that Hassan has done in creating a working relationship with Kevin Kuhl and the USFS. If you see anything amiss in signage as you hike, please email Hassan with the location of the incident, so that he can give a prompt report to Kevin.

HISTORIAN (MARGARET DAVIS)

Margaret thanked the groups for providing terrific photos. There is one group from which she needs more photos, and she assured members that the group was aware of the need.

HIKE BOSS REPORTS

The Hike Bosses thanked those who led, co-led and tailgated on November and December Hikes. They shared news of upcoming hikes:

AMBLERS (JAN TAYLOR): Girdner Loop; Munds Wagon, Carroll Canyon; and Turkey Tank

RUSTLERS (MARK HURTT): Jim Bryant, Ledge 'n Airy; Huckaby Loop; Hog Heaven

DROVERS (KELLEY MALEK): City Hall—Saddle Loop; Submarine Rock; Long Canyon; Hiline/Templeton Loop

DOGIES (Jim Thomas for LISA CELESTE): Loy Canyon; Dry Creek/Earl's Cabin Loop; Marg's Draw Damfino

MUSTANGS (BOB APTER): Ice Cream Cone and More; Seven Warriors Loop; Hartwell Canyon; Norm's Notch

ROUGH RIDERS (Randy Dent for Trisha Travis): Bear Left; Sphinx Linx; Mescal and Moore; A.B. Young/Volte Arch

TRACKERS (Linda Warren): Wastewater Facility; Geology/Polygons

Remember to sign up; priority by date and time of email request

Before the break Ray took a few minutes to remember Gordon Scott, a longtime member Of the Westerners who passed away. He was a botany expert whose pictures of wildflowers adorn the Sedona Westerners website.

COFFEE AND SNACK BREAK

FEATURED SPEAKER: TED GRUSSING

TITLE: UNCHARTED TRAILS

Our Wagon Boss, Dave Vanderwater, introduced the guest speaker, Ted Grussing. Ted is a well-known photographer whose work is found in private and public collections in the United States and in the international arena. He has been a professional photographer since the age of 14, and photography remains a dominant force in his life. In addition to photography, Ted has been a successful businessman, lawyer, public speaker, author, pilot, gemstone cutter, jewelry designer, and inventor. Ted was a full-time caregiver for his wife Corky for more than twenty years until her passing in 2013. He holds a BA from Macalester College in Saint Paul, MN and a JD from the Carouso School of Law, Pepperdine University, in Malibu, CA.

His photography is focused on the beauty of nature, including aircapes (aerial), wildlife, flowers, and nature. Compositing and creative artwork utilizing his photographs is another passion. His work has been published in *Arizona Highways*, *Sedona Monthly*, *Momentum*, and *Sojourns*. He has done work for many state and federal agencies including USFS, EPA<USGS, AZGS, the City of Sedona, and the Sedona Airport Authority.

Uncharted Trails

Ted recounted that he had taken up flying at the age of 59. He began flying gliders in order to facilitate taking aerial photos. He showed us exquisite photographs from both our area (Bell Rock, Beaver Head Flat, Midgley Bridge under a brilliant sunset) and then he showed us breathtaking photos of the San Francisco peaks in snow and during the wildflower season. He has a deep fascination with volcanoes, and his photos of Sunset Crater capture the splendor of its setting and the depth of its crater. He had a number of photos of the Little Colorado River and the junction of the Little Colorado and the Colorado river. Some favorite photos for those present were his animal photos. Few will forget the photo of the blue heron coming in for a landing. His photography of falcons, eagles, hawks shows the strength and elegance of those raptors.

Ray thanked Ted Grussing and adjourned the meeting at 8:02.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Losse, Wrangler