

SEDONA WESTERNERS MONTHLY MEETING

April 13, 2023
at Sedona United Methodist Church

Call to Order – Welcome

Trail Boss, Donna Forsythe, welcomed both new and returning members to our monthly meeting. The meeting started at 6:59 pm.

Friends of the Forest

Jerry Checchia, President and Melissa Pontikes, Vice President of the Friends of the Forest Sedona came to discuss details about their organization. It is a 30-year-old nonprofit with 670 volunteers; 250 active at any time. They average 30,000 – 35,000 volunteer hours per year!

Partnership with the USFS/RRRD to fill the gap between needs and resources. They consist of the following committees:

- Trail Patrol
- Preventative Search and Rescue
- Cultural Resources
- Interpretative Programs
- River Rangers
- Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plants
- Air Quality and Water Sampling
- Visitor Information Services
- Trail Maintenance & Construction
- Trailhead Beautification
- Graffiti Removal

More information is available at: [FriendsOfTheForestSedona.org](https://www.FriendsOfTheForestSedona.org). John Petrescu asked for volunteers to help by being a docent at V-Bar-V and Palatki; if interested, please contact John through his officer contact at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>

Welcome to New Members attending the Monthly Meeting. The Trail Boss invited the new members in attendance to introduce themselves.

May Cookout

Will be held on Thursday, May 11, beginning at noon at the Posse Grounds Picnic Ramadas. Please register if attending, registration is open; you can go to the link on our Events page, or go to: <https://www.sedonawesterners.org/cookout.php>. Members are free and guests are \$10 per person (payable at the event). Should anyone want to participate, please contact Adrienne Pichette, Chuckwagon Boss at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>.

Votes (Monthly Meeting Minutes, Foreman's Report)

The **Minutes of our last Monthly Meeting held March 9, 2023**, as a "draft" posted on the website by our Wrangler, Sophia Sweeny, also needs Membership approval. Motion was made by Terri Petrescu and seconded by Mark Bealafeld. The vote was unanimous. **Motion approved.**

Our Treasurer is called the Foreman, who is presently Mark Bealafeld. The **Foreman's Monthly Reports** for the month of March 2023 was posted on our website for review by our members. Motion to approve the Foreman's Report was made by Jane Dasher and seconded by Hassan Hosseini. The vote was unanimous. **Motion approved.**

Nominating Committee:

Terri Petrescu, the head of this year's Nominating Committee, gave us the following list of candidates at last month's meeting. There were no nominations from the floor. The vote was conducted as a block vote of the following candidates. Motion was made by Kelly-Leigh Thomas and seconded by Michelle Rackey. The vote was unanimous. **Motion approved.** The new Officers will officially begin their term as of our May picnic, held on May 11, 2023.

Sedona Westerners: Elected Officer Nominees 2023-2024

Position	Current Officers	2023-24 Nominees
Trail Boss (President)	Donna Forsythe	Ray LaPorte
Immediate Past Trail Boss (Last Year's President)	David Minott	Donna Forsythe
Wagon Boss (Vice President & Program Director)	Ray LaPorte	Dave Vanderwater
Wrangler (Secretary)	Sophia Sweeny	Debby Losse
Foreman (Treasurer)	Mark Bealafeld	Mark Bealafeld
Prospector (Membership Chair)	Michael McCaffrey	Sandi Heysinger
Chuckwagon Boss (Food/Refreshment Coordinator)	Adrienne Pichette	Adrienne Pichette
Top Hand #1 - Actively Hiking Honorary Member (Director)	Jim Kemper	Jim Kemper
Top Hand #2 - Former Trail Boss (Director)	Al Vander Peut	Mary McCaffrey

Top Hand #3 - Actively Hiking Member At-Large (Director)	Dave Vanderwater	Terri Petrescu
Ambler Boss (Ambler Hikes Coordinator)	Jan Taylor	Jan Taylor
Rustler Boss (Rustler Hikes Coordinator)	Deb Hicks	Mark Hurtt
Drover Boss (Drover Hikes Coordinator)	Kelley Malek	Kelley Malek
Dogie Boss (Dogie Hikes Coordinator)	Lora Ellis	Lisa Celeste
Mustang Boss (Mustang Hikes Coordinator)	Jim Sweeny	Bob Apter
Cactus Dodger (Rough Rider Hikes/Scouts Coordinator)	Kelly-Leigh Thomas	Trisha Travis
Tracker Boss (Special Hikes Coordinator)	Charles Schudson	Linda Warren

Officer Reports

Prospector (Membership, Michael McCaffrey): Our total members are currently 448, with 159 of them being new members, and 30 honorary members. We have more members than last year at this time.

Old Timer (Sandi Heysinger) Thanks for all the photos. Please keep them coming, especially spring pictures and some action shots. Make sure to send in your photos next year to the new Old Timer: Margaret Davis.

Roundup Boss (Red Rock News articles, Dick Williams): Many thanks for all the articles submitted and please keep them coming! He related that the articles that received the most positive comments were the ones where authors relayed their feelings, along with what was done and seen. If you would like to provide an article, please contact the Roundup Boss through his contact on our Officers page at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>.

Chuckwagon Boss (Adrienne Pichette, Chuckwagon Boss): Thanked those who brought treats to our meeting and asked for volunteers for the May 11 Spring picnic. She also thanked Amanda and Donna for the cake celebrating 672 volunteer hours at Cathedral Trail Trailhead. If available, please contact Adrienne Pichette, whose contact is on our Officers page at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>

Foreman (Treasurer, Mark Bealafeld): presented the current financial status and outlook for the members.

Sunbeam (Sunbeam, Peg Cook) There was no report shared at this meeting.

Hike Boss Reports

Amblers Boss:	Jan Taylor and Jon Petrescu
Rustlers Boss:	Deb Hicks and Christina Loggia
Drover Boss:	Kelley Malek and Hassan Hosseini
Dogie Boss:	Lora Ellis and Lisa Celeste
Mustang Boss:	Jim Sweeny and Gary Morgan
Cactus Dodger (Roughriders Boss):	Kelly-Leigh Thomas and Trish Travis
Trackers Boss:	Charlie Schudson and Tim Lowrey

The Hike Bosses thanked those who led, co-led and tailgated on the past month's hikes, information on the criteria for their level of hikes was provided on the power point slide, and they shared news of some upcoming hikes.

Notes:

- **Trackers:** Upcoming events (to sign up, email Charlie at: keynoteseminars@gmail.com or Tim Lowrey at: vittadinia@gmail.com , depending on the hike
 - **Lowell Observatory** – April 19 – Note that there is no cap on the number of attendees, registrations are still welcome – email Charlie Schudson at: keynoteseminars@gmail.com)
 - **Botanical Beauties** – April 26 - led by Westerners members and experts Linda Schermer and Tim Lowrey. Registration opens April 16th at noon. Email Tim Lowrey at vittadinia@gmail.com
 - **Painted Desert** – TBD (planned date is: Wednesday, May 3, with a rain date of May 19). Details to follow.

Cliff Walker (Cultural Resources etiquette, Gary Morgan): there was no report shared at this meeting.

Ranger (Forest Service liaison, Amanda Maxwell): Updates on the Cathedral Trail Project: Nine weeks in the freezing cold! Thank you to all the volunteers who provided 672 hours of volunteering! The workers were very appreciative of the volunteers who kept the tourists off the trail, so that they could be free to safely do their work.

Volunteer Opportunities

- Volunteer for the May 11th Spring Picnic. Contact Adrienne at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>
- Did anyone volunteer for the Forest Service Leave No Trace training?
- Volunteer with the Friends of the Forest or the Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund!
- Lead a hike! Be a tailgater!

Guest Speaker

Our Wagon Boss, Ray LaPorte introduced our Guest Speaker, Nancy Steele, Executive Director of the Friends of the Verde River, who talked about the work being done to preserve and protect the fragile ecosystem along the Verde River. This presentation brought up some interesting facts, among them:

- The Verde River System includes Oak Creek, the Verde River, Wet Beaver Creek, West Clear creek, East Verde River, the Salt River; all the Creeks coming down from the Mogollon Rim

- It provides 40 – 60% of the drinking water for the Phoenix metro area
- She showed a film about the Verde River System
- It winds 190 miles through Arizona
- It provides important habitat to many birds and fish species
- The entire Colorado river system is under stress, and therefore, the Verde River system is looked to, to help provide essential assistance
- The Verde Basin encompasses 6% of the land area of Arizona: 6 Indian Tribes/Nations, 4 National Forests, 13 Wilderness Areas, 6 Important Bird Areas, 2 Wild and Scenic Rivers (the lower Verde and Fossil Creek).
- Over 3 million people depend on the Verde & Salt River System
- Since 1990, flow in the Verde River has been steadily declining. From 1990 to 2020, Verde River flow declined by 34% in the Upper Verde and 41% in the Lower Verde Valley. Data taken at the same time of the year annually.
- A way you can help is by using the River Friendly Living program which inspires a culture of voluntary river conservation. This includes saving water, harvesting the rain, making room for Native plants, picking up the trash on the river, not using harmful chemicals on our properties, encouraging the next generation of stewards through Connect with Nature by using the app: iNaturalist.
- Next up: River Center in Camp Verde – Friends of the Verde River will partner, co-fund & operate it.
- To donate: visit Verderiver.org/donate

Meeting was adjourned at: 8:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia Sweeny, Wrangler