

SEDONA WESTERNERS MONTHLY MEETING

MARCH 11, 2021

Trail Boss, Terri Petrescu, began the meeting at 7:01 pm.

There were no new members in participation during this meeting to introduce themselves.

ANNOUNCEMENT ON HIKING SEASON

The Board voted and approved to resume the hiking season beginning on 4/1/2021. As of the time of the meeting, the Yavapai County two week positivity rate was 6.7%; many Westerners have been and are being vaccinated; our COVID protocols will be observed, including the wearing of masks at sign-in; as always, this is a voluntary activity, you accept any risk. Also note, that the May picnic is canceled, as the Posse Grounds remains closed to groups.

VOTES

The Trail Boss asked the general membership in attendance to vote on passing the Foreman's report dated February 3, 2021. The resolution passed unanimously with no objections.

The Trail Boss asked the general membership in attendance to vote on accepting the General Meeting Minutes dated February 11, 2021. The resolution passed unanimously with no objections.

UPDATES ON RED ROCK TRAIL FUND-DRIVE

As of As of March 2 we are pleased to announce that 49 Westerners donated \$3,890. We had met all the criteria for matching, which netted an additional \$3,000 donated. This gave a total of \$6,890 that was raised for the Red Rock Trail Fund! Wonderful news!

MEMBER UPDATE: GRETCHEN YAGER

Members were pleased that Gretchen was able to join the Zoom call. She thanked those who sent well-wishes, and informed us that she was currently in the rehabilitation center, but was expected to be discharged home on Tuesday, March 16, 2021. Wonderful news!

HIKE BOSS REPORTS

Hike Bosses were able to post upcoming hikes for April 2021 and if any additional Hike Leaders are needed.

OFFICER REPORTS

Michael McCaffrey, Prospector, reported that as of March 9, 2021 the total members are 276, of which 61 are new members and 28 are honorary members. This time last season, the membership was 405 total members.

Mark Bealafeld, Foreman, reported that the club has a cash balance of \$12,384.32 as of March 3, 2021. The complete Foreman's Report is on the website at <https://sedonawesterners.org/minutes.php>

Sandi Heysinger, Historian, reported that due to our paused hiking season, she has very few pictures for our yearbook. She has requested submissions of many photos of April hikes, both of members and of scenery, from all hiking groups, especially needed was that of Rustlers. You may contact the Historian through the link found on the Officers page at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>

Our Trail Boss, Terri Petrescu, presented for the Sunbeam officer, Phyllis Elliott, that there were no cards sent out this past month. Should you have knowledge of cards that would need to be sent out, please contact the Sunbeam through the link found on the Officers page at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>

Our Trail Boss, Terri Petrescu, presented for Michael Henry, Ranger, who sends reports to the US Forest Service, which for the past month included 1 report of graffiti and vandalism and no reports of transient camping. Please note our guidelines for our hikers: first, in the event that a hiker sees any graffiti or vandalism, to capture the location (with GPS and pictures, preferred) and not to try to remove the graffiti ourselves; secondly, if a hiker encounters a transient camper NOT to approach the person, but to note the number of persons and their location, and if possible, to discretely take photo or GPS to aid law enforcement. In all cases, send the information to the Ranger whose link is found on the Officers page at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>

Harold Brockwell, Roundup Boss, acknowledged those who have sent in articles for submission to the Red Rock News. However, more articles are needed! Please consider submitting an article, by contacting our Roundup Boss whose link is found on the Officers page at: <https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Barbara O'Connor, Chairperson of this year's Nominating Committee, (whose members include: Donna Forsythe, Ray LaPorte, and Mark Bealafeld), expressed thanks to all who have volunteered for positions for the **2021-2022 Sedona Westerners season**:

Trail Boss (President): David Minott

Wagon Boss (Vice President and Program Director): Donna Forsythe

Wrangler (Secretary): Sophia Sweeny

Foreman (Treasurer): Mark Bealafeld

Prospector (Membership Chair): Michael McCaffrey

Top Hand #3 (Actively Hiking Member): Dave Vanderwater

Top Hand #1 (Honorary Member): John Losse (1 year)

Ambler Boss: Judy Dolloff

Cactus Dodger: Ken Ferguson

Dogie Boss: Harry Strong

Drover Boss: Linda Shook

Mustang Boss: Jim Sweeny

Rustler Boss: Patricia Pierce

Tracker Boss: Charlie Schudson

Chuckwagon Boss: Patty Persons

GUEST SPEAKER

The Wagon Boss, Dave Minott introduced our guest speaker, Anne Mottek, who is the Coordinator for the Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership (GFFP), along with her colleagues and fellow Board members: Dirch Foreman (Fire Chief of the Highlands Fire District), Neil Chapman (Forest Health Supervisor for the Flagstaff Fire Department), and Andrew Sanchez Meador (Executive Director of the Ecological Restoration Institute at Northern Arizona University [NAU]). Also speaking was Jay Smith (Forest Restoration Director for Coconino County). They spoke on the necessity for prescribed burns and the associated smoke nuisance, in order to prevent catastrophic wildfires and intense, harmful smoke impacts. A few points of interest were:

- The Ecological role of fire in our forest
 - A century of fire suppression has led to today's overly dense forests – these are prone to uncharacteristically severe wildfires
 - Low-severity surface fires play a natural role in our forests – they reduce the risk of severe fires and improve ecosystem health
 - While the number of fires has decreased, the total acres burned has increased dramatically
- The long-term benefits of prescribed fire vs. the short-term costs
 - Smoke emissions from severe wildfires are MUCH GREATER than that of prescribed fires, and is much greater than that of the maximum EPA safe levels (prescribed burns are under this level)
- Characteristics of severe wildfire vs. prescribed fire and its repercussions
 - Wildfires can damage soil, which then cannot absorb water, which causes flooding, landslides and a damaged watershed
 - Wildfires decrease plant and animal diversity, increases invasive plant abundance
 - Link to report on the Slide fire: https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENT/stelprd3808033.pdf
- Wildfire smoke and your health
 - Cocowildfire.org is upcoming for Coconino county residents when wildfires occur in the area
 - www.gffp.org/smoke is a page for news of fires in the area
 - HEPA Air Purifier Program – they are purchasing through a grant HEPA filters to be able for local residents to apply to receive one - at no cost
- An Invitation to join Arizona Fire Adapted Communities (azfac.org) will have a new member webinar on 5/5/2021, 1:00 – 2:30 pm. This is a “podio” platform to connect with other fire adapted communities across AZ

For more information about the Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership, go to: <https://gffp.org>

Terri ended the meeting at 8:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia Sweeny
Wrangler