

SEDONA WESTERNERS MONTHLY MEETING

February 9, 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 7:00 pm.

Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund

Representatives from the Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund came to discuss the benefits of donating to their annual fund drive, which is kicking off this month. In 2012, a group of 100 concerned citizens came together to discuss the state of the trails in and around Sedona. Out of that meeting, in 2013, the Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund was formed. It is the fundraising organization that helps to fund the projects that the Red Rock Ranger district needs to accomplish. In recent years, the Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund funded about 67% of the total amount the Red Rock Ranger District needed to do their recent projects. For this year, they have a fundraising target of over \$561,000. Please consider donating to this worthwhile organization. If the members of the Sedona Westerners want to donate to this fund, and have it shown from the Sedona Westerners, an email will go out from the Westerners this week that will have a link to donate OR, you can go onto the Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund and click on the “donate” button and you can email them to indicate that you want it to show that it is from the Westerners.

Votes (Foreman’s Report, Monthly Meeting Minutes)

The **Minutes of our last Monthly Meeting held January 12, 2022**, as a “draft” posted on the website by our Wrangler, Sophia Sweeny, also needs Membership approval. Motion was made by Ray LaPorte 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 January 2023 was posted on our website for review by our members. Motion to approve the Foreman’s Reports was made by Sophia Sweeny and seconded by Marilyn Bealafeld. The vote was unanimous. **Motion approved.**

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)
 - Grand Falls a.k.a. Chocolate Falls Tour – Mar 1, with possible rain date of Mar 8
 - Sign up starts Friday, Feb 10 at noon
 - Behind the Scenes Tour of NAU Biological Collections – Mar 19
 - In April, Charlie will be conducting an Intro to Backpacking session through OLLI
 - Check the OLLI offerings for more information and to sign up

Officer Reports

Due to time constraints, not all Officer reports were presented this month.

Prospector (Membership, Michael McCaffrey)

Sunbeam (Sunbeam, Peg Cook)

Old Timer (Sandi Heysinger)

Roundup Boss (Red Rock News articles, Dick Williams)

Chuckwagon Boss (Adrienne Pichette, Chuckwagon Boss): Thanked those who brought treats to our meeting and asked for volunteers for refreshments for our next monthly meeting in March 9, 2023. If available, please contact Adrienne Pichette, whose contact is on our Officers page at:

<https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>

Foreman (Treasurer, Mark Bealafeld):

Cliff Walker (Cultural Resources etiquette, Gary Morgan): reminded us of proper etiquette when in and or near ruin sites: do not bring your poles or your backpacks into ruin sites and do not eat near any ruin sites.

Ranger (Forest Service liaison, Amanda Maxwell): Reported on: Update on the **Trail Closure Project**. We have had almost 2 weeks so far, and it has gone very well. We are looking for members to volunteer to sit at the trailhead during the Cathedral Rock Trail Closure to inform hikers of the closure and point out possible substitution hikes. Perk: you get to wear a USFS volunteer hat and vest. If you want to volunteer for helping with the closure, the contact for the Ranger is on our Officers page at:

<https://www.sedonawesterners.com/officers.php>

Hiker Tip of the Month: Stay on the Trail (Part 2): Don't Bust the Crust! - Cryptobiotic crust consists of algae, bacteria, lichen, mosses, micro fungi, etc. It fixes nitrogen in the soil; stores water and nutrients, and it helps stop erosion. This crust is very fragile and our footprints can do irreparable damage to the crust (can take up to 5,000 years to replace itself). Be careful NOT to step on the crust!

Announcements

Nominating Committee: Terri Petrescu, the head of this year's Nominating Committee, asked for any person who might be interested in being next year's Wagon Boss, to please contact her.

Guest Speaker

Our Wagon Boss, Ray LaPorte introduced our Guest Speaker, Brett Smith, the Executive Director of Sonoran Reptiles, a non-profit organization that rescues, rehabilitates, and educates people about reptiles, their importance on our planet, and the valuable roles they play in maintaining the delicate balance of the natural world we share. Brett brought live animals (all stayed in their cages) to share the beauty and variety of these creatures and their role in the ecosystem. This presentation brought up some interesting facts, among them:

- Arizona has 58 native species (13 of those are rattlesnakes)
- Arizona has the highest concentration of rattlesnakes and the most rattlesnakes
- Kingsnakes are not venomous and eat rattlesnakes!
- The Sonoran Coral snake is the only snake in Arizona that doesn't have a rattle, but is dangerous to humans (venomous)
- Arizona Mountain Kingsnakes looks similar to coral snakes and are often mistaken for coral snakes
- The Sonoran Gopher snake tends to look like and mimic rattlesnakes
- The Sonoran Gopher snake tends to be the largest snake in Arizona, getting up to 8 feet long!
- The Western Diamondback rattlesnake is the most common rattlesnake in Arizona
- The Black-tailed Rattlesnake is the most common rattlesnake in Sedona – highly variable in color/pattern
- Arizona black rattlesnakes (also common in Sedona) can change colors!
- If you see a snake in your yard, call the police or fire department, who will normally call Brett Smith, who will come and relocate the snake.
- The average rattlesnake anti-venom hospital visit costs about \$250,000!
- The nearest hospital that has rattlesnake anti-venom is Phoenix (part of the \$250,000 is getting you there quickly)
- Gila Monsters are venomous, but not deadly
 - The venom causes severe pain, which is possible to not go entirely away
 - The first venomous animal to become protected in the United States

Meeting was adjourned at: 9:09 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia Sweeny, Wrangler