SEDONA WESTERNERS
HIKING CLUB

Sedona Westerners Yearbook

2001 - 2002

Hiking Season

2001 - 2002

Charles West

Trail Boss

Sedona Westerners
SEDONA, ARIZONA

HIKES

The club leads hikes at four levels of physical challenge. All Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday hikes leave the parking lot in Sedona at 9:00 AM, unless otherwise noted, and usually return to the parking lot mid to late afternoon. Sunday hikes leave at 1:30 PM. All hikes meet at the dirt parking lot at the Posse Grounds and car pool from there to the trail head.

Amblers Hikes: These hikes, on Thursdays, tend to go along trails of low relief. The hikes stop often "to smell the roses" and photograph the surroundings.

Mustang Field Trips and Hikes: All Field Trips will be on Thursdays. Botany field trips travel at a leisurely, relaxed, instructional pace. Archeological and geological field trips provide ample time for instruction and discussion but might be somewhat more challenging, depending on the destination. The Trail Boss Favorites hikes, also on Thursdays, vary in length and difficulty. The hikes on the schedule will normally proceed at a comfortable pace but it is suggested that you check the distance in miles and elevation change in order to determine the extent of the challenge being presented.

Dogie Hikes: These hikes, on Tuesdays, are more challenging and follow trails of greater relief. However, they tend to move at a comfortable pace and stop often to catch a breath. They occasionally get into areas of ledges and rock scrambling.

Saturday Hikes: These hikes are the most difficult. They move along at a steady pace with fewer stops. They often get into areas of ledges and rock scrambling. Although not extremely challenging, they are for the more experienced and conditioned hikers

Sunday Hikes: These hikes are generally short in distance and are usually to interesting view points. They may get into areas of rock ledges and rock scrambling.

MONTHLY MEETINGS 2nd Thursday Sept through May, 7:00 P.M., all at CHURCH OF THE RED ROCKS, Sedona, except October and May meetings which are cookouts. The December meeting is the Christmas party.

Cookouts—Oct 11 and May 9
Christmas Party (St. John Vianney Catholic Church)—Dec 13.

QUESTIONS: Contact Trailboss Charles West at 282-9007
Wagon Boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961

9/01

Sedona Westerners Officers 2001-2002
Elected Officers

Trail Boss	Charles West	282-9007
Immediate Past Trail Boss:	Olga Ostrom	284-9290
Wagon Boss:	Dave Jackson	282-8961
Wrangler:	Judith Jagla	203-4784
Foreman:	Jim Goodwin	204-0783
Top Hands:	Jack Leahy	282-3518
	Dave Singer	282-8938
	Diane Carson	204-2345
Cactus Dodger	Bob Dannert	204-2473
Dogie Boss:	Dick Eibeck	203-0219
Ambler Boss:	John Mezera	284-5395
Drover Boss:	Martha Leach	282-0220
Mustang Boss:	Bill Baker	203-4126
Prospector:	Larry Dreyfuss	203-9120
Chuckwagon Boss:	Sally Freeman	284-1524

Appointed Officers

Ranger:	Don Hooven	282-6262
Lookout:	Fred Johnson	282-1304
Roundup Boss:	Robert Shuman	203-0586
Assistant Cactus Dodger	Dan McKnight	284-9839
Assistant Dogie Boss	Sandy Unger	204-1169
Assistant Ambler Boss	Bob Allison	284-2981
Assistant Drover Boss	Linda Schermer	282-5654
Assistant Mustang Boss	Bill Gouin	203-4502
Old Timer:	LEAV SCHNEIDER	203-0785
Sunbeam:	Marge Schaeffer	282-5913
Cliff Walker:	Bill Sexton	284-1580
Point Rider:	Mark Casper	204-0623

Sedona Westerners Website

Find Hiking Schedules, Announcements, and much more go to

http://www.knowledge2000.com/westerners

Sedona Westerners

Red Rock News
8-31-01

Westerners ready for new year

HIKING SEASON is here. It may be a little warm yet, but the first hike of the Sedona Westerners season, an ambler level hike is Thursday, Sept. 6.

Ambler level hikes follow a leisurely pace. Hikers will be going to Kelly Canyon, north on Oak Creek, just beyond the switchbacks. The hike will be three miles, with a climb of 250 feet. Hikers need to be at the Posse Grounds gravel parking at 8:45 a.m.

Hikers must wear lugged-sole boots, bring a quart or two of water, lunch and a hat. Hikers should arrive 15 minutes before the designated departure time.

Pets are not allowed on Westerner hikes. The anticipated time of return will be approximately 4 to 5 p.m.

New hikers may hike twice as guests before they must become paid members. The dues for the September to May hiking season are $10. New memberships are $15, which covers the cost of a nametag.

Also on Sept. 6, at the same time and place, there will be a botany hike. Mustang hikes are very popular and are, therefore, restricted to paid members, and they can only accommodate the first 20 people. The hike will be moderate in difficulty.

Sept. 8 hikers can meet for the first Saturday hike of the season. The Saturday hikes are intended for more experienced and better conditioned hikers. The hike will be the Kachina Trail, involving a seven-mile trek with an elevation change of 900 feet. It is rated moderate. Hikers gather at 8 a.m. at the Posse Grounds gravel parking lot.

Interested hikers can meet on Tuesday, Sept. 11, at the Posse Ground lot at 8 a.m. for a dogie (pronounced dough-gee)-level hike. Hikers will depart for the Bismark Rank Trail, a hike of five miles with a climb of 600 feet.

The Westerners also offer drover Sunday afternoon hikes. The first Drover hike of the season will be Sunday, Sept. 9. Hikers will gather at the Posse Grounds parking lot at 1:30 p.m. for a hike to Rattlesnake Canyon. This is a moderate, three-mile hike with a climb of 700 feet and a rock scramble.

The first organization meeting of the season will be Thursday, Sept. 13, at 7 p.m. in The Church of the Red Rocks.

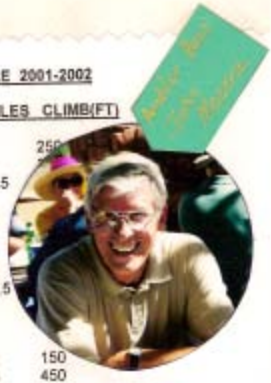
The Westerners, organized in 1961 as a social club, evolved into a hiking club over the years. The Westerners was the main social club in Sedona for many years, when it was truly a small town. Membership is open to all, whether active hikers or not.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact the Westerners trail boss, Charles West, at 282-9037, or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Westerners trail boss Charles West.

THURSDAY AMBLER HIKE SCHEDULE 2001-2002

DATE		HIKE	VOC*		MILES	CLIMB(FT)
Sept	6	Kelly Canyon			3	250
	13	Veit Springs			3	[illegible]
	20	Harding Point			4.5	
	27	Stoneman Lake	X		4	
Oct	4	Little Horse to Hart Prairie			4	
	11	Cookout no hike				
	18	Old Stage Route	X		4	
	25	Sunset Crater-Wupatki Pueblo		new	2	
Nov	1	Devil's Bridge, Earls Cabin			3.5	
	8	Margs Draw			4	
	15	Jack's Canyon to Woods Canyon	X		4	
	22	Thanksgiving Day no hike				
	29	Baldwin Trail	X	new	2	150
Dec	6	Long Canyon			3	450
	13	Doe Mountain			3	400
	20	Deadman's Pass			4.5	200
	27	Courthouse Butte Loop			4.5	200
Jan	3	Base of Cathedral via Templeton	X	new	5	200
	10	Sugarloaf via Soldier Pass new			5	600
	17	Secret Canyon			4.5	400
	24	Girdner Trail new			4	300
	31	Chicken Rock, Submarine Rock	X		4.5	350
Feb	7	Huckaby Trail			5	200
	14	Brins Mesa			5	800
	21	H.S. Canyon			5	800
	28	Vultee Arch			3.5	400
Mar	7	Woods Canyon	X		5	400
	14	Turkey Tank	X		4	300
	21	Back o Beyond-Red Rock Crossing	X		3.5	300
	28	Wet Beaver Creek	X		5	400
April	4	Sycamore Overlook			2	300
	11	Bear Wallow			3	250
	18	Beaver Flat	X		2.5	200
	25	Schuerman Mountain			2.5	400
May	2	West Fork			4	200
	9	Cookout no hike				



VOC* indicates that hikers may meet at IMAX Theatre Parking Lot or Posse Grounds

ALWAYS WEAR PROPER SHOES AND CARRY WATER (at least one quart). A hat and gloves are also recommended. The Hike Leader may reject any hiker not properly equipped.

Note: Schedule is subject to change without notice.

MUSTANG SCHEDULE, 2001-2002

Thursday Field Trips and Hikes

Date		Trail/Field Trip	Miles	Climb, ft.	Comments	V.O.C.
September	6	Botany			Field Trip	
	13	Kendrick Mtn.	8	2400	Hike (D,R)	
	20	Geology			Field Trip	
	27	Archaeology			Field Trip	
October	4	Botany			Field Trip	
	11	Cookout			//////////	
	18	Geology			Field Trip	
	25	Archaeology			Field Trip	
November	1	Fin	4	700	Hike (D,R,S,L)	
	8	Lost Wilson-Brins Mesa	7	700	Hike (D,R,L)	
	15	Geology			Field Trip	
	22	Happy Thanksgiving - no hike			//////////	
	29	Archaeology			Field Trip	
December	6	Jim Bryant	5	500	Hike (M)	
	13	Granite Dells (Prescott)	5	200	Hike (M,R)	yes
	20	Compass & Map Navigation Course**			Field Trip	
	27	Archaeology			Field Trip	
January	3	HS Canyon Lollypop	5	600	Hike (M,R)	
	10	Long Canyon*	6	500	Hike (M,S)	
	17	TBA				
	24	Archaeology			Field Trip	
	31	TBA			TBA	
February	7	Baby Roost-Sycamore Bluffs	6	600	Hike (M,R)	
	14	Narrow Canyon Loop	6	700	Hike (M,R)	
	21	Geology			Field Trip	
	28	Archaeology			Field Trip	
March	7	Botany			Field Trip	
	14	Paradise Forks-White Horse Lake	6	400	Hike (M)	
	21	Geology			Field Trip	
	28	Archaeology			Field Trip	
April	4	Botany			Field Trip	
	11	Walker Mtn.		1900	Hike (D)	yes
	18	Geology			Field Trip	
	25	Archaeology			Field Trip	
May	2	Botany			Field Trip	
	9	Cookout			//////////	

*Or Earl Canyon

All hikes leave from Posse Grounds Parking Lo[illegible] ind[illegible] meet at IMAX Theatre Parking Lot OR Posse Grounds.
ALWAYS WEAR PROPER SHOES AND CARRY WATER (at least one quart). A[illegible] gloves are also recommended. The Hike Leader may reject any hiker not properly equipped.
Note: Schedule is subject to change without notice.

HIKE RATINGS: E=Easy, M=Moderate, D=Difficult, R=Rock Scramble, L=Ledge, S=Steep

RED ROCK NEWS, Sedona, Arizona Friday, September 7, 2001

Sedona Westerners

Westerners on the move in new hiking season

HIKING SEASON is here, and the hikes have started.

The Amblers were scheduled for Kelly Canyon, a three-mile hike with an elevation change of 250 feet. Ambler hike boss John Mezera was to the hike with the aid of an experienced "tail gater" to move along the hikers. In the cattle driving days of the past century, the last cowboy rode "drag," the dusty end of the moving herd, to keep the strays moving along.

The second hike, actually a field trip under the general direction of Mustang boss Bill Baker, was to be a botany hike led by the wizard of the wild plant hikes, Norm Herkenham. It's been said that he can identify any native plant in the Sedona area from the window of a speeding car with his eyes shut. Enough of the Westerners tall tales.

Upcoming hikes and events:

* Saturday, Sept. 8, 8 a.m. — Scout led hike to Kachina Trail, seven miles, 300 feet of elevation change, rated moderate.
* Sunday, Sept. 9, 1:30 p.m. — Drover hike to Rattlesnake Canyon, three miles, 300 feet of elevation change, rated moderate with rock scramble.
* Sunday, Sept. 9, 1:30 p.m. — Drover hike to Kelly Canyon, two miles, 100 feet of elevation change, rated easy.
* Thursday, Sept. 11, 8 a.m. — Dogie hike to Bismarck Bask, five miles, 600 feet of elevation change, rated easy.
* Thursday, Sept. 13, 9 a.m. — Ambler hike to Viet Springs, three miles, 330 feet of elevation change, rated easy.
* Thursday, Sept. 13, 9 a.m. — Mustang hike to Kendrick Mountain, eight miles, 2,400 feet of elevation change, rated difficult and rock scramble.
* Thursday, Sept. 13, 7 p.m. — The first organizational meeting of the 2001-02 season will be at The Church of the Red Rocks.

Come early to enroll or renew memberships. $10 to renew, $15 for new member, which includes cost of name tag. Also sign up for Oct. 11 cookout, $5 per person.

The Sedona Westerners is open to all, including nonhikers. Members can receive the hike and event schedule, can renew friendships and volunteer to provide cookies. It will also be an opportunity to meet all the new officers.

The program will be presented by Rob Jackson, son of our wagon boss, Dave Jackson. Rob is an associate professor in the botany department of Duke University, Durham, N.C. He will speak and show slides on Global Change Observations.

Hikers must wear lugged or elevated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions (ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the fifties, and adding another quart for each ten degrees of temperature increase) and are urged to bring a lunch for the all day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners' trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 284-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Charles West.

SATURDAY HIKE SCHEDULE 2001-2002

DATE	HIKE		8 am	MILES	CLIMB	RATING	VOC
Sept 8	Kachina trail		x	7	500	M	
15	Mt Elden/ Schultz Pass	Dual	x	7-8	1200	M, S	
22	Taylor Cabin	Dual, HC	x	8-10	1800	D,S	
29	Humphrey Saddle/Summit	Dual	x	8-11	2300-3100	D,S	
Oct 6	Doyle Spring/Inner Basin		x	7	1600	M	
13	Secret Canyon	H C	x	8-10	600	M,R,S	
20	Boynton/Hartwell Canyons	K	x	8	1500	D,S	
27	Loy Canyon/Cabin	Dual		10-12	900-1600	D,S	
Nov 3	Long Canyon			7	700	E	
10	Wilson Mountain			10	2400	D,S	
17	Bear Sign/Secret Canyon	HC		8	800	M,R,S	
24	Parsons Trail	HC		8	300	D,R	
Dec 1	Bear Mountain! Ridge	Dual		6-8	1500-1900	D,R,S	
8	Brins Ridge/Fin	Dual		10	1000	M,S,L	
15	Sycamore Pass/Creek	H C		10	900	M,R,S	
22	Soldier Pass Loop	HC		7	1100	M,S,L	
29	Boynton Canyon/Mushroom	Dual		6	700-1000	D,R,S	
Jan 5	Lost Wilson Loop	HC		7	700	M,R,L	
12	Sedona Loop I	K		10	500	M	
19	House Mountain			10	1000	D,R,S	*
26	Sedona Loop II	K		9	600	M	
Feb 2	Wet Beaver/Bell Trail			7	250	E	*
9	Sedona Loop III	K		8	500	M	
16	HS/Secret Canyon loop	HC		6	500	M	
23	Jim Bryant Trail			6	400	M	
Mar 2	Sterling Pass/Narrow Cnyn	K		6	800	M,R,S	
9	Woods Canyon	Dual		7-10	500	M,R,S	*
16	Walker Basin	HC		10	1900	D,R,S	*
23	Rabbit Ears			7	500	D,R	*
30	AB Young/Crash Site	Dual		4-6	2100-2300	M,S	
Apr 6	Horse Mesa/Hot Loop			10	1000	D,R,S	*
13	Munds Mountain	HC		10	800	D,R,S	
20	Telephone/Cookstove Loop	Shuttle	x	4	1000	D,S	
27	Woodchute		x	6	500	M	
May4	Kendrick Mountain		x	8	2400	D,S	

Sedona Loop Trail:

Part 1 — High School/North Bell Rock Pathway — Key Exchange
Part 2— North Bell Rock Pathway/Jordan Road — Key Exchange
Part 3 — Jordan Road/High School — Key Exchange

HIKE RATING-E=Easy,M=Moderate, D=Difficult,R=Rock Scramble,S=[illegible]ge.
All hikes leave from Posse Grounds Parking Lot except below.
VOC and * Indicate that hikers may meet at Posse Grounds **OR** IM[illegible]
Scout hikes leave at 9 A.M. unless marked "X" for 8 A.M.

ALWAYS WEAR PROPER SHOES AND CARRY WATER (at l[illegible]
recommended. The Hike Leader may reject any hiker [illegible]

Note: Schedule is subject to change without notic[illegible]

DOGIE SCHEDULE 2001-2002

Date	TUESDAY HIKES	8 am	Miles	Climb Feet	Rating	VOC
Sept 11	Bismarck Bask	X	5	600	E	
18	Sunset—Little Bear—Little Elden Loop	X	8.5	1100	M	
25	Kachina Trail via Weatherford Cyn.	X	8	1000	M	
Oct 2	Inner Basin SF Peaks – Aspens	X	8	1300	M	
9	Sycamore Cyn. – North Rim	X	7	200	M	
16	Brookbank – Sunset – Oldham Loop	X	7	1000	M	
23	Woodchute Mt. Summit	X	7	700	M	
30	Millen Ridge Saddle		6	700	M,R	
Nov 6	Carroll Cyn. Loop		6	500	M	
13	Parsons Trail		8	200	M	
20	Wilson Mt. – Up North, Down South	X	8	1600-2400	D,S	
27	Boynton Cyn. Portobella		6	700-1000	D,R,S	
Dec 4	Bell Trail – Wet Beaver Creek		7	500	M	*
11	Broken Arrow Combo		6	400	M,S	
18	Hartwell Cyn.		7	500	M,R	
25	*MERRY CHRISTMAS – NO HIKE*					
Jan 1	Trails in Dead Horse Ranch State Park			200	E	
8	Doe Mt. / Cockscomb Combo			500	M	
15	Bear Mt.			1600	D,R,S	
22	Brins Ridge Loop			00	M,S,L	
29	Soldier Hts. Loop				M,S,L	
Feb 5	Turkey Creek Trail				M,S	*
12	Bear Sign – Secret Cyn. Loop				M,R,S	
19	Woods Cyn. Via Hot Loop				M	*
26	Steamboat Rock from Soldier Pass				M,R,S,L	
March 5	Rabbit Ears – Courthouse Rock					**
12	Sterling Pass Saddle & Vultee Arch					
19	Narrow Cyn. Loop		6			
26	Horse Mesa via Hot Loop Trail		6	900		*
April 2	Secret Cyn. Arch		6	700	E,R,S	
9	Fin Loop		4	700	D,R,S,L	
16	Munds Mt.		7	800	M,S	
23	Harding Springs – Upper Cookstove		4	700	M,S	
30	Long Cyn.		6	500	M,S	
May 7	Kelly Cyn. + James Cyn. (off I-17)		7	500	M	*

All hikes leave from Posse Grounds Parking Lot except as indicated below.
*** indicates that hikers may meet at Posse Grounds OR IMAX Theatre parking Lot**
**** indicates that hikers may meet at Posse Grounds OR Bell Rock Vista "South" Trailhead**
Hikes leave at 9 A.M. unless marked "X" for 8 A.M.
HIKE RATING-E=Easy, M=Moderate, D=Difficult,R=Rock Scramble,S=Steep,L=Ledge
ALWAYS WEAR PROPER SHOES AND CARRY WATER (at least one quart). A hat and gloves are also recommended.
The Hike Leader may reject any hiker not properly equipped.

DROVER SCHEDULE 2001 -2002

DATE	SUNDAY HIKE(S)	MILES	CLIMB-FT	RATING	VOC
Jan 20	Mayan Maiden	3	400	M,S	*
	Soldier Wash	3	250	E	
Jan 27	Dry Creek/Soldier Pass (Key Exchange)	4	300	M	
Feb 3	Bear Wallow	3	200	E	
	Cockscomb	2	400	M,S,L	
Feb 10	Sugar Loaf	3	300	E	
	H S Canyon	4	800	M	
Feb 17	Back 0 Beyond Loop (Key Exchange)	4	400	M,R	
Feb 24	Snoopy	3	600	M,R,S	
	Vultee Arch	3.2	500	M	
Mar 3	Damfino Canyon	4	500	D,R,S	
	Brins Mesa	4	400	M	
Mar 10	Red Tank Draw	2	100	E	
	Encinoso Loop	3	350	M,R,S	
Mar 17	Secret Canyon	4	300	M	
	Cathedral Saddle	3	400	M,R,S	
Mar 24	Secret Canyon	4	300	M	
	Huckaby Trail	3	300	E	
Mar 31	Doe Mountain	3	500	M,S	
	Fay Canyon	4	500	M,R,S	
Apr 7	Bell Rock/Court House Loop	4	200	E	
	Mescall Mountain	3	500	M,S	
Apr 14	Twin Buttes Saddle	4	500	M,S	
	Cibolla Loop	2	200	E	
Apr 21	Submarine Rock	2	400	M,R	
	Capital Butte Cave	3	500	M,R,S	
Apr 28	Earls Canyon Loop	4	300	E,R	
	Carrol Canyon	3.5	200	E	
May 5	Rattle Snake Canyon	3	700	M,R	
	Kelly Canyon	2	100	E	

RATINGS: E = easy; M moderate; D = difficult; R = ro
SUNDAY HIKES LEAVE AT 1:30 P.M. FROM POSSE
VOC and * indicate that hikers may meet at Posse Gr
BRING AMPLE SUPPLY OF WATER - AT LEAST O
WEAR STURDY LUGGED SOLED HIKING BOOTS~
RECOMMENDED.
HIKE LEADER MAY REJECT ANY HIKER NOT PROP

DROVER SCHEDULE 2001 -2002

DATE	SUNDAY HIKE(S)	MILES	CLIMB-FT	RATING	VOC
Sep 9	Rattlesnake Canyon	3	700	M,R	
	Kelly Canyon	2	100	E	
Sep 16	Narrow Canyon	3	200	M,R	
	Fay Canyon	4	500	M,R,S	
Sep 23	Enchnose Loop	3	850	M,R,S	
	Brins Mesa	4	400	M	
Sep 30	Cultural Ctr/Dry Creek Rd (Key Exchange)	4-5	200	M	
Oct 7	Mescal Mountain	3	500	E to M	
	Back O'Beyond/RR Crossing	3	200	E	
Oct 14	Sycamore Overlook	3	400	M,R	
	Earls Canyon Loop	4	300	E,R	
Oct 21	Baby Roost	3	300	E	
	Cathederal Saddle	3	400	M,R,S	
Oct 28	Devils Bridge	3	400	M	
	Airport Mesa	3	500	M	
Nov 4	Snoopy	3	600	M,R,S	
	Soldier Heights Saddle	3	800	D,R,S,L	
Nov 11	Jordan Park/Midgley Bridge (Key Exchange)	4	300	M	
Nov 18	Battlement Mesa	3	300	E	
	Capital Butte Cave	3	500	M,R,S	
Nov 25	Red Tank Draw	2	100	E	*
	Cibolla Mitten	2	200	E	
Dec 2	Twin Buttes Saddle	4	500	M,S	
	Schuerman Mountain	3	400	M	
Dec 9	Huckaby Trail	3	300	E	
	White Mountain	3	300	M	*
Dec 16	Bell Rock/Courthouse Loop	4	200	E	
	Soldier Pass/3 Arches	3	800	M,S	
Dec 23	Broken Arrow/Little Horse (Key Exchange)	4	200	E	
Dec 30	Carrol Canyon	3.5	200	E	
	Bear Wallow	3	200	E	
Jan6	Bear Sign Canyon	4	500	M	
	Rachels Knoll	2	200	E	
Jan 13	Robbers Roost	1.5	200	E,R	
	Doe Mountain	3	500	M,S	

RATINGS: E = easy; M moderate; D = difficult; R = rock scramble; S = steep L = ledge
SUNDAY HIKES LEAVE AT 1:30 P.M. FROM POSSE GROUNDS PARKING LOT
VOC and * indicate that hikers may meet at Posse Grounds OR IMAX Thrtr Parking Lot
BRING AMPLE SUPPLY OF WATER - AT LEAST ONE QT
WEAR STURDY LUGGED SOLED HIKING BOOTS~ HAT AND GLOVES ARE RECOMMENDED. **HIKE LEADER MAY REJECT ANY HIKER NOT PROPERLY EQUIPPED.**

Sedona Westerners

High country hike needed better breaks

by Charles West and Bob Shuman

HIKE LEADER Bob Shuman led the Sept. 8 hiking group on the Kachina Trail, high in the Flagstaff mountains.

Shuman was filling in for the scheduled hike leader Reno Pantintuan, who was enjoying the U.S. Open and visiting his daughter in New York.

At the trail head, Bob Dannert, Cactus Dodger, asked everyone to observe a minute of silence in memory of Westerner Rose Hager, who had passed on several weeks ago.

Dannert reminisced about Hager's never wanting anyone's help. He recalled that she once had unknowingly carried a rock on her pack, which had been placed there as a practical joke during a coffee break. She had continued to hike and refused to believe that the rock was really there until it had actually fallen off.

She always wanted to do everything by herself. Although small in size, Hager was one tough lady, and in the Westerners that is a very large compliment.

Hikers had the pleasure of spotting animals of diverse size, from the substantially large mule deer (Odocoileus hemionus) that may weigh more than 200 pounds to the remarkably small, young horny toad that was said to have been only ½ inch long.

Hikers also spotted a squirrel, probably an Abert's tree squirrel (Sciurus aberti), which is known to frequent the forested areas from the Mogollon Rim to the southern rim of the Grand Canyon.

Of course, by the time tailgater Carl Saban got to the spot where the animals were sighted, they had already disappeared.

One of the hikers commented on the difference in the haze in the air looking south to the clearer air looking north. Another hiker surmised that the haze had been caused by controlled burning. However, Steve Nahmanson did actually see a fire on the drive down from the Snowbowl area.

Earlier in the hike, the group had passed through the Leroux fire area, which had occurred earlier in the summer. This reminded Dannert that, while on a canoeing trip in northern Canada in mid-June, he had heard of the Leroux fire on National Public Radio and was quite amazed that a fire that close to his home had been reported.

The only complaint of the day was that the usual morning coffee break spot, a volcanic vent on the Kachina Trail, had been bypassed in favor of a spot farther up the trail. Maybe next time the hike leader will slow down a little more.

Upcoming hikes and events

- Saturday, Sept. 15, 8 a.m. — Scout-led Dual hike to Mount Elden/Shultz Pass; seven to eight miles; 1,200 feet of elevation change; rated moderate and steep.
- Sunday, Sept. 16, 1:30 p.m. — Drover hike to Narrow Canyon; three miles; 200-foot elevation change; rated moderate with rock scramble.
- Sunday, Sept. 16, 1:30 p.m. — Drover hike to Fay Canyon; four miles; 500 feet.
- Tuesday, Sept. 18, 8 a.m. — Dogie hike to Sunset-Little Bear-Little Mount Elden Loop; eight-and-half miles; 1,100 feet of elevation change; rated moderate.
- Thursday, Sept. 20, 9 a.m. — Ambler hike to Harding Point; four-and-half miles; 300 feet of elevation change; rated easy.
- Thursday, Sept. 20, 9 a.m. — Mustang Geology Field.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat. They should also bring sufficient water for the expected hiking conditions ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and adding another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Charles West and Bob Shuman.

Westerners

Red Rock News
9-21-05

Hike highlighted by large cork bark fir sighting

THE FIRST TUESDAY hike of the new season was created by Dogie boss Dick Elbeck, which he named "Bismark Bask."

The hike began north of Flagstaff on the Bismark Lake Trail, intercepted and followed an old Jeep trail and game trails, and finally the hikers bushwhacked to three locations which hike leader Sandy Unger wished to take them to.

This was a relatively easy hike of four to five miles and an elevation change of about 800 feet, through forests of pine, fir, spruce and aspen, and also through open prairie spaces heavily covered with grass and scattered wildflowers. During the hike, several landmark mountains such as Fern, Humphrey, Agassiz, Kendrick and Wild Bill Hill were in view.

There were several highlights on this hike. A mule deer and a large flock of wild turkeys were seen. There were fresh elk signs, but the elk remained well hidden. Three interesting sites were visited. The first one appeared to be an abandoned elk hunting blind. Scattered about were the remains of a camp chair, shovels and a sled, which was probably used for bringing out game through heavy snow. We also visited the "Sword of Damocles." This is the remains of a large aspen tree trunk suspended about 20 feet above the forest floor and supported only by a branch caught in another tree. It looks like a brisk breeze could bring it down. None volunteered to have their pictures taken standing under the "sword."

The most interesting site is a tree that Unger had discovered on a previous trail-scouting hike. This tree is possibly a record-size specimen. It is believed to be a cork bark fir that has a circumference of 15 feet, nine inches, with a diameter of five feet as measured at about three feet above ground. Mature trees of this type routinely have diameters of about two feet.

According to one of the hikers, Gordon Scott, the largest tree of this type as listed in the 1996 copy of *The Arizona Register of Big Trees* is in New Mexico, and it has a circumference of 12 feet, seven inches, with a diameter of four feet.

Before this Arizona tree can be registered as a record-size tree, it has to be authenticated and measured by a representative of the register. But, it appears that this tree will easily set a new record for size. Hike tailgater John Mezera took several photographs of the tree being measured by the hikers.

The trek back to the trailhead was interrupted only by a search party that was dispatched to locate Yona's hat, which she had left in the woods near Bismark Lake, where the group had previously stopped for a snack break.

This interesting hike on a beautiful fall day was enjoyed by all.

Upcoming hikes:

• Saturday, Sept. 22, 8 a.m. Scout-led hike to Taylor Cabin, eight to 10 miles, 1,800-foot climb, steep and difficult.

• Sunday, Sept. 23, 1:30 p.m. Dozer hikes to Encinoso Loop, three miles, 150-foot climb, medium, rock scrambles, steep or Brins Mesa, four miles, 400-foot climb, medium.

• Tuesday, Sept. 25, 8 a.m. Dogie hike on Kachina Trail via Weatherford Canyon, eight miles, 1,800-foot climb, medium.

Note: The Westerners are sponsoring a one-day course on Land Navigation for club members only, on Thursday, Dec. 20. The course is taught by Al Cornell and assistants on the use of a compass and topographical maps for navigating in unfamiliar and uninhabited areas typically encountered by hikers and backpackers. The course includes classroom training followed by a navigation problem in the field.

Club members wishing to enroll in this course must do so in advance to permit Cornell to provide the necessary number of maps, compasses and instructors. Enrollment is limited to 15 per session. To enroll, call Bill Baker at 203-4126 or Larry Dreyfuss at 203-9130. If more than 15 sign up, an additional course will be scheduled. There is no fee for this course.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions (ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the fifties, and adding another quart for each ten degrees of temperature increase), and are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Bill Baker.

What Oak Creek Canyon once was

by Dave Jackson

IMAGINE A canyon very similar to Oak Creek, but with few signs of civilization except a little fencing, a decrepit log corral and a sandstone cabin.

This was the destination for a Saturday hike in the strikingly beautiful Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Area.

Getting to the trail requires a long drive through the forest, above the switchbacks, around the Oak Creek drainage to the top of Mooney Trail. A magnificent herd of elk, with a protective bull guarding them, eyed us calmly as we passed. Not so calm were the deer, but four turkeys walked away majestically.

Hike leader Madalyn McMannes described the hike for the group and emphasized the long, steep climb on the return, which was the effort needed to savor the visual treats of Sycamore Canyon.

McMannes also stressed drinking lots of water, all day, to say hydrated.

Down into Sycamore, the hikers went passing a limestone castle as a beacon, into the forest and along a side drainage and then arriving in the main expanse of Sycamore. The dry stream bed is a melange of rounded, gray-black lava boulders, with smaller sized red sandstone and whitish limestone jumbled among them. The cabin is nearly two miles downstream past several recent lava flows.

The cabin was named after Ben and John Taylor, who drove cattle and horses from Flagstaff in 1892. The cabin was built of quarried sandstone in 1931 by local ranchers and named for the brothers.

The still-used cabin's chimney slopes whimsically along the red rocks supporting it while the front door is held shut by a horseshoe. Close by is a cave, with a slit opening leading to a room of eroded sandstone, which has probably been used by many civilizations.

Cactus dodger Bob Dumert observed how interesting it would be to hike the complete length of Sycamore Canyon from the Verde River to the Mogollon Rim. That would require a three-day backpacking trip, a separate adventure from the return trip of the day.

With Madalyn's encouragement and unerring leadership, the train of hikers slowly made their way back up and out of one of Arizona's most beautiful places.

Photo by Toni Likens

A RECENT photo of a swimming hole on Sycamore Creek in Sycamore Canyon.

Red Rock News 9-28-01

Upcoming hikes

- Saturday, Sept. 29, at 8 a.m. — Humphries Saddle/Peak (dual); eight to 11 miles; 2,300- to 3,100-foot climb; difficult and steep.
- Sunday, Sept. 30, at 1:30 p.m. — Drover hikes to Cultural Park/Dry Creek Road; four miles; 200-foot climb; medium both directions; first Sunday key-exchange hikes.
- Tuesday, Oct. 2, at 8 a.m. — Dogies hike to the Inner Basin through the aspens; eight miles; 1,300-foot climb; medium difficulty.
- Thursday, Oct. 11, at 9 a.m. — Little Horse to Hart Prairie; 450-foot climb; easy; or a special leisurely botany field trip that is for members only. You can join the Westerners at sign-in, however.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat and bring sufficient water for the expected hiking conditions. Water supplies should be no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s, and hikers should add another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Call Westerners wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961 for more information.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Dave Jackson.

SEDONA WESTERNERS

SEDONA WESTERNERS

Red Rock News

10/5/01

Hike provided lesson in ancient geology

ON A UNSEASONABLY warm Sept. 20, geologist and club member Paul Lindberg led the Sedona Westerners to Walker Creek on one of the club's special geology hikes to investigate another of our natural wonders.

Walker Creek valley cuts through the edge of the Mogollon Rim and crosses a major fault, or break in the Earth's crust.

The fault segment that was investigated is believed to be the southward continuation of the Oak Creek Canyon and Jacks Canyon fault zones. Both had a profound influence on the erosion and shaping of our colorful landscape. These faults were active twice in geologic history.

The first event took place during the Laramide Uplift about 65 million to 75 million years ago when our region was elevated high above sea level. The second event took place less than 10 million years ago when the Earth's crust was stretched apart during the Basin and Range Orogeny.

The structural depression that we call the Verde Valley was formed at that time. These inactive faults are not considered to be earthquake hazards.

Stops were made along the hike to explore gravel deposits, rock exposures and erosional features found beneath the Mogollon Rim.

Nearby cliffs are composed of 250- to 300 million-year-old Paleozoic sediments, including the red, iron oxide-stained Schnebly Hill sandstone, Coconino sandstone and Kaibab limestone.

Those layered strata are capped by relatively young basalt lava flows that are less than 10 million years old — mere youngsters in geologic time. The hiking group also saw a 6-foot-wide feeder dike that once allowed molten magma to rise up from deep within the Earth's crust and erupt on the former land surface as lava flows.

The gravel beneath the rim contain all of the rocks found in the cliffs above, including an abundance of fossiliferous Kaibab limestone boulders and chert concretions.

The concretions often contain silica-replaced marine shell and sponge fossils that the hikers were able to find with ease.

On the way up, tailgater Sandy Unger surprised us by letting the group taste the perfectly ripened fruit of a banana yucca. It truly tasted like a sweet banana. There's always something new to learn from members of the Sedona Westerners.

The highlight of the trip was a lunch stop along the edge of Walker Creek's cool, spring-fed water. It was a welcome relief from the desert environment just yards away.

After a sweaty scramble over the slabby Coconino sandstone hill on the east side of the fault and contouring through some brambles, the hikers found a more manageable return path.

The group persevered, and with a few cactus spines dutifully removed, mutiny in the ranks was avoided. We returned to our cars and refreshing ice-cold water.

Upcoming hikes and events

- Saturday, Oct. 6, 8 a.m. — Scout-led Doyle Spring/Inner Basin hike; seven miles; 1,600-foot elevation change; rated moderate.
- Sunday, Oct. 7, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 1 hike to Mescal Mountain; three miles; 500-foot elevation change; rated moderate.
- Sunday, Oct. 7, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 2 hike Back O'Beyond/Red Rock Crossing; three miles; 200-foot elevation change; rated easy.
- Tuesday, Oct. 9, 8 a.m. — Dogies hike to Sycamore Canyon north rim; seven miles; 200-foot elevation change; rated moderate.
- Thursday, Oct. 11 — Special event — Fall cookout at Red Rock State Park. Gather at 11 a.m. and eat at 12 p.m. Deadline for $5 sign-up fee is Sunday, Oct. 7. Contact prospector Larry Dreyfuss at 203-9120.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Paul Lindberg.

Botany hike highlights Westerners' week

LONGTIME CLUB member Norman Herkenham led another of the club's special botany hikes on Thursday, Oct. 4.

Before retiring to Sedona many years ago with his wife, Margo, Herkenham had a distinguished career with the National Park Service. His encyclopedic knowledge of botany is legendary. He has been very active in community activities and was recently honored by the city of Sedona for his route design and work, along with other civic groups, on the extensive hiking trail that circumnavigates Sedona.

The Thursday hike took place on the cool plateau high above Sedona, just beyond the edge of the Mogollon Rim. Despite the dry summer season, there were still a few late blooming flowers, some quite showy and others quite inconspicuous. Each had their own tale to tell.

The yellow goldeneye was examined up close. It's bloom is composed of both "ray" and "disk" flowers — a characteristic of the sunflower family. In other words, what looks like one simple flower turned out to be many individual flowers all packed together, each capable of producing a seed.

Not all flowers were obvious, and they could easily be overlooked by a casual hiker. The lacy, wild buckwheat, with its thin stalk and tiny pink flowers, shimmered in the breeze and was found in open patches between ponderosa pines. Under magnification, these beautiful flowers transfer millions of tiny pollen grains from one tree to another. Some flowers rely on vibrant colors to attract nectar-collecting insects to inadvertently cross-pollinate from one bloom to another. Other plants are free of bright colors and nectar and largely depend upon gravity or wind for pollination to occur.

For most of us, a particular plant is known by its common name, but for the botanist, a Latin or Greek-based scientific name is one that transcends international languages. One of the plants we observed had leaves that resembled a goose's foot. It is no wonder that its scientific moderate with rock scramble and steep.

• Sunday, Oct. 14, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 1 hike to Sycamore Canyon overlook; three miles; 400-foot elevation change; rated moderate with rock scramble.

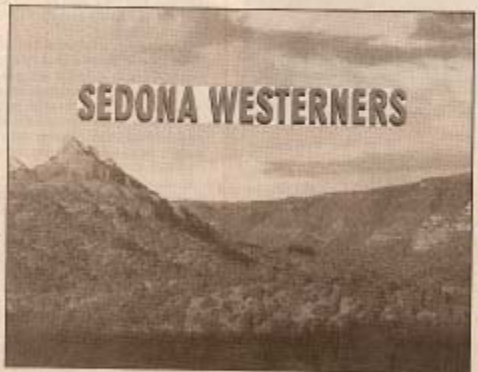
• Sunday, Oct. 14, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 2 hike to Earl's Canyon loop; four miles, 300-foot elevation change; rated easy with rock scramble.

• Tuesday, Oct. 16, 8 a.m. — Dogies hike to Brookbank-Sunset-Oldham loop; seven miles; 1,000-foot elevation change; rated moderate.

• Thursday, Oct. 18, 8 a.m. — Amblers hike on Old Stage route; alternate pickup in Village of Oak Creek; four miles, 300-foot elevation change; rated easy.

• Thursday, Oct. 18 — Geology special hike (members only), South Rim, Grand Canyon. Meet at 8 a.m. in Sedona for car pooling with 10 a.m. rendezvous at Cameron Trading post for other drivers. Park entry fee required. Two miles, easy hiking along rim; minor elevation change; return via Hwy. 180.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat. Bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions, ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the fifties, adding a quart for each ten degrees of temperature increase. Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.



Mogollon Rim
Photo by John Stabe

Red Rock News 10/12/01

Fall Picnic
October 11, 2001

THE "COOKS"

THE EATERS

Larry & Carol Dreyfuss

Prospector - Fall Cookout 2001

Serving Burgers, Beans, & Cole Slaw
Mary Ann Isom, Cathy Baker, & Yvonne Singer

Serving Ice Cream: Mousie Staub + Martha Leach
Receiving Ice Cream: Don Hooven + Tim Goodwin

Serving Burgers, Beans + Cole Slaw
Olga Ostrum, Gertrude Mayne, Paula Phyllis Lindberg

MORE EATERS

A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS
Ron Schneider

"WE LOVE The USA"
"Sedona Westerners"
CAKE
'Sedona Westerners'

ICE CREAM

Serve It Up and Move 'em Out

and then there was

CLEAN UP!

Rattlesnake Canyon a sight to behold

Red Rock News
10/19/01

SEDONA WESTERNERS

THE FIRST DROVER hike of the Sedona Westerners' season brought an enthusiastic group of dedicated hikers together at the top of Rattlesnake Canyon.

This canyon can first be appreciated by viewing its winding path from the road that leads to the top of the trail. Such a vista was worth the pause to reflect on the marvelous sight.

This is one of those hidden canyons you don't see unless you fly over it. The first settlers that laid eyes on Rattlesnake Canyon must have been in awe of the majestic sight.

Starting down the switchbacks of the well-marked trail provided ample time to glance at different vistas of the canyon, the ever-increasing sides of the spiraling rock formations of the canyon walls and the desert vegetation indigenous to the Sedona area at around 6,000 feet in elevation.

Hike leader Bill Johnson chose a waterfall that was near the bottom of the canyon, now presently dry due to lack of rain, as a final destination. Johnson and tailgater Bob Dannert kept a Sunday pace that brought the group to its afternoon apple break at the head of a gray basalt formation.

It was a perfect spot for just sitting around and talking with your friends and enjoying the cool winds that blow through the canyon. The hikers enjoyed the hummingbirds and butterflies that are attracted to the moisture-laden veins in the canyon.

From the point of the apple break, Rattlesnake Canyon would continue on 2.25 miles to eventually connect with Woods Canyon. Although the falls are dry this time of the year, there are pools of water near the head of the falls.

A hiker could envision how interesting it might be to see some thunderous cascades in the wet season. A hiker pointed out a water gauging station located nearby with what appeared to be a depth gauge showing water to be as high as five or 10 feet.

Heading back up to the top of the trail, the hiking group concluded that they were still ready for more. The hike leader moved off to the southwest, and the hikers skirted the upper walls for a short distance so they could appreciate the view from above.

This vantage point would provide a safer view of a potentially powerful waterfall during times of high water flows. The hike concluded as some of the group took the opportunity to slice open the fruit of the prickly pear cactus to get a sample of its sweet fruit.

The Sedona Westerners is open to all, including non-hikers. Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions.

Hikers should bring no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and add another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase. Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For more information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 284-8961.

Upcoming hikes and events

- Saturday, Oct. 20, 8 a.m. — a Scout-led hike through Boynton/Hart Well canyons; eight miles; 1,500 feet of elevation changes; rated difficult.
- Sunday, Oct. 21, 1:30 p.m. — two Drover-led hikes: one to Baby Roost, three miles, 300 feet of elevation change, rated easy; and the other to Cathedral Saddle, three miles, 400 feet of elevation change, rated moderate with steep rock scramble.
- Tuesday, Oct. 23, 8 a.m. — Dogie-led hike up Woodchute Mountain summit; seven miles; 700 feet of elevation change; rated moderate.
- Thursday, Oct. 25, 9 a.m. — two hikes: the first, an Ambler-led hike to Sunset Crater; two miles; 200 feet of elevation change; rated easy and the second, a members' only special hike to Wupatki Ruins; archaeology field trip; will be of moderate difficulty.

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Cryptozoological potential and the Mogollon Monster

WHAT IS IT about this place? This colorful place of red, orange and creamy rock, khaki sand and evergreen trees, contrasted against the robin's egg blue sky, at the base of the Mogollon Rim. This place of odd occurrences.

A local real estate agent, identifying herself only as Alice, relates that an unidentified man encountered several nine-foot tall creatures west of Sedona in one of the canyons before the Honanki ruin. She also describes her sighting of a similar massive creature, covered in black curly hair with inquisitive eyes.

As early European settlers moved westward into the Northwest United States and Western Canada, they began to record stories of huge, hairy hominoids. These stories had long been part of the traditions of the native peoples of their respective regions.

The silent rock-wall-panel portrayals of human and beast by native cultures speak to real or dream-like events. Occasionally, they portray massive unusual biped creatures, or their sign — the giant tracks of big feet, about a foot and a half long.

Members of the Westerners and the local archaeology club can attest that the Sedona area has a particularly striking rock art site locally named for, and possibly memorializing, "big feet." Perhaps, the big feet of a race of giants, who are seemingly, if not exclusively, most active at night, and may still be seasonal, if not permanent, year-round residents of the neighborhood.

A little bit of Internet search indicates that sightings of an apparent anthropoid ape, tentatively termed Gigantopithecus by some, are not limited to Sedona. Indeed, serious cryptozoology students who study unverified animals may be most rewarded by southeast-ward explorations, along the Mogollon Rim to the Payson area, where bigfoot sightings appear to be more frequent and recent.

description, which so terrified him that he fled the local campground never to be heard from again.

A female member of the same party describes a feeling of being watched while answering a call of nature. Upon looking up, she met the gaze of a very large being, human in appearance, with extremely long burnt-orange-colored hair that fell well below the waist. A search of the area revealed pods of chewed, bark-like food and footprints described as 19 to 22 inches long and 8 inches wide.

Another Payson sighting, this time only last January, was described by a late-night automobile traveler, who apparently has a degree in geology and is an avid outdoorsman. He reported he had

SEDONA WESTERNERS

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10/26/01

"never seen anything like this before," a large, two-legged figure with darkish, long fur. The vehicle's headlights caught the creature while it loped across the road.

Abominable snowman, bigfoot, bogeyman, gigantopithecus, hairy hominoid, Jacko, mountain devil, Orang Kubu, Orang Pendek, Sasquatch, skunk ape, wildman and Yeti — these are but a few of the names used to describe an ape-like creature that few are prepared to see. Perhaps, particularly at this time of the year and in this particular place, this creature might be described locally as the Mogollon Monster.

When to track the Mogollon Monster? Some would say the most productive time for monster hunting is upon us, or next Wednesday to be exact, when a somewhat rare full, blue moon

of caution: Today, present Westerner lore is silent in terms of expectations and experiences associated with costumed midnight hikes conducted on Halloween by the light of the silvery, full blue moon.

Hikes and events

• Saturday, Oct. 27, 8 a.m. — Scout-led dual hike to Loy Canyon and Secret Cabin, 10 to 12 miles, 900 to 1,800-foot elevation change, rated difficult and steep.

• Sunday, Oct. 28, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers hike No. 1 around Airport Mesa, three miles, 500-foot elevation change, rated moderate, and Drovers hike No. 2 to Devils Bridge, three miles, 400-foot elevation change, rated moderate.

• Tuesday, Oct. 30, 9 a.m. — Dogies hike to The Mitten Ridge Saddle, six miles, 700-foot elevation change, rated moderate with rock scramble.

• Wednesday, Oct. 31, All Night Long — Full gear, Mogollon Monster search and recovery expeditions to Devil's Bridge, Kitchen, Living Room and/or Outhouse and surrounding environs may be conducted at convenience of interested fearless members (distance, elevation change and degree of difficulty not established).

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions (ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the fifties, and adding another quart for each ten degrees of temperature increase, and are urged to bring a lunch for the all day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to

Lost Wilson Mountain offers great views

by Norm Herkenham

IN SOME YEARS, usually in the fall, a hike is scheduled that veteran Westerners regard as one of their classics.

Called the Lost Wilson-Brins Mesa Loop, it offers an assortment of demanding terrain along a complicated route. But oh, the rewards.

This challenging hike features a variety of conditions including crevicked rock-hopping, steep ledge scrambling, canyon crossing, bushwhacking on obscure forest paths and finally returning on an old wagon road, all totalling about eight miles with a 700-foot elevation gain. Almost all of it lies in the Red Rock-Secret Mountain Wilderness.

From the trail head on Dry Creek Road, hikers first view the imposing mountain known as Lost Wilson, so named because it is separated from the larger Wilson Mountain by a deep defile and is thus "lost." Later in the hike, the route skirts the rugged lower flanks of Lost Wilson.

But before this section is reached, the traditional morning coffee break is usually held in a small, hidden box canyon that drains Lost Wilson's south side. This narrow channel would be no place to be in rainy weather. (But the Westerners Weather Committee arranges for sunny conditions, so there is no problem.)

Then the serious climbing begins. A series of steadily ascending rock ledges, some requiring all fours to negotiate, brings the puffing hikers to top out on a prominent bench of the mountain. This geologic formation provides the route — at a uniform level but with minor ups and downs — for most of the remainder of the hike as far as Brins Mesa.

It is usually about noon when the party reaches a particular point along this shelf, which is a favorite Maroon Mountain, an almost unreal grouping of towering buttes and chiseled canyons to the west. They stand out like the Grand Tetons of the Dry Creek basin, though, of course, the resemblance is only fanciful.

The elevated position of the lunchtime vantage point gives perhaps the finest perspective for appreciating this grand scene.

Besides Maroon Mountain, the array of familiar landmarks includes Coffee Pot Rock, Capitol Butte and Mingus, Doe, Bear, Mescal and Secret mountains, as well as the traces of Boynton, Long, Secret, Bear Sign and Dry Creek canyons. On a day of bright skies and crystal-clear air, conversation often subsides as the lunchers stare in awe at the bold outlines of this panorama.

Continuing on, the route descends into and climbs out the opposite side of the rough canyon that isolates Lost Wilson from Wilson. The sculptured slopes of Wilson Mountain itself now become the focus of interest.

Finally, the faint trail reaches the much gentler terrain of Brins Mesa, followed by a leisurely descent of the former wagon road that completes the loop back to the starting point.

Although saturated with spectacular scenery all day, hikers at this time of year may also be treated to occasional clumps of late-blooming James' wild buckwheat with its saffron flowers, mauve-colored Gooding verbena, and red-orange autumn foliage of squawbrush sumac and gold of Gambel's oak.

Hikes and events

• Saturday, Nov. 3, 9 a.m. — Scout-led hike to Long Canyon, seven miles, 700-foot elevation change, rated easy.

• Sunday, Nov. 4, 1:30 p.m. — A choice of two Drovers hikes: the first to Snoopy Rock, three miles, 600-foot elevation change, rated moderate with rock scrambling, steep; and the second to Soldier Heights Saddle, three miles, 800-foot elevation change, rated difficult, steep, with rock scrambling and ledges.

• Tuesday, Nov. 6, 9 a.m. — Dogies hike to Carroll Canyon Loop, six miles, 500-foot elevation change, rated moderate.

water for the expected hiking conditions — no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and adding one quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase. Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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Red Rock News
11/02/01

Intrepid hikers enjoy 'doubleheader'

SEDONA WESTERNERS
Red Rock News
11/9/01

WESTERNER AMBLERS turned tourist for their late October all-day hike, following Sandy Unger on an outing to Wupatki and Sunset Crater volcano.

Although these popular visitor sites were favorites for many of the group before they moved to Sedona, a surprising number of longtime hikers had never set foot on the two sites before. To others, of course, they had been sure-fire places to expose touring relatives to the ways and history of the great American West.

A troop of eager learners started out, Diamondback-speaking, to score a double bogger on an absolutely perfect autumn morning. John Mezera kept everyone in sight and captured some rare digital pictures.

The first order of business was the visitors center routine, after driving in from Flagstaff on what appeared to be new blacktop.

Unger pointed out Zorro-branded, 8,916-foot Mount O'Leary peak, which has a barely visible fire lookout tower on top, to which those who really crave exercise can hike. From there, it was another short drive to the Lava Flow trailhead.

This nature trail enlightened hikers as to the workings and life cycles of volcanoes, of which climbers and is now returning to its natural cinder slope. The Lava Flow trail provides information on the three kinds of lava that have emerged from its base: pahoehoe, slab pahoehoe and aa. As translates as "yikes" in Hawaiian, and those who try to walk on it soon discover why the word is appropriate.

From there, a 20-mile caravan ride, which afforded plenty of time to take in the Painted Desert's colors on the horizon, took the group to the Wupatki Visitor Center. There was time for lunch, for looking at visitor wares and for seeing the partially reconstructed old pueblo, which dates back to the 1100s. Along with several other adjacent ruins, this building reflects a high point in the early Anasazi pueblo culture in relatively prosperous times.

Photo courtesy of John Mezera

WESTERNERS ENJOYED their outing, which included the Wupatki National Monument seen here in its entirety from a distant vantage point.

Particularly noticeable was the sophisticated architectural use of existing boulders to shore up walls and rooms, as well as provide for a unique air-conditioning system.

Westerners gravitated to the rebuilt community arena, as well as to the intact ball court, which apparently drew competition from far-flung neighbors. It served to foster trade and commerce as well.

addition to the advertised doubleheader, two additional assets were added to the day: driving twice through Oak Creek Canyon with fall foliage at its bountiful best and savoring the beloved outdoors. Two-base hit? No way; chalk it up as a home-run winner. Coming hikes:

- Saturday, Nov. 10, 9 a.m. — Scout-led to Wilson Mountain, 10 miles, 2,400-foot elevation change, rated difficult and steep.
- Sunday, Nov. 11, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers to Jordan Park/Midgley Bridge (key exchange) four miles, 300-foot elevation change, rated moderate.
- Tuesday, Nov. 13, 9 a.m. — Dogies to Parsons Trail, eight miles, 200-foot elevation change, rated moderate.
- Thursday, Nov. 15, 9 a.m. — Special geology field trip with Paul Lindberg to basalt volcanic rocks, three and a half miles, 800-foot elevation drop along Hwy. 260, rated easy.
- Thursday, Nov. 15, 9 a.m. — Amblers to Jacks Canyon to Woods Canyon (VOC), four miles, 350-foot elevation change, rated easy.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions (ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s, and adding another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase, and are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners trail boss Charles West

Hikers pull together to help fallen friend

Trek up to The Fin no walk in the park; Westerners still finished

FOR THE FIRST hike of November, the Westerners had picture-perfect weather. They departed shortly after 9 a.m. after they received a briefing on the strenuous and sometimes scary nature of The Fin.

Some hikers were a bit hesitant but decided to take on the challenge. The hike was a trail boss favorite led by Don Hooven, with Tom Hager keeping track of everyone and preventing strays.

As they hiked, Hooven explained how he and other hiking friends first did the trailblazing around The Fin about 15 years ago.

They had been scouting Mormon Canyon, and while taking a lunch break and staring at The Fin, they decided to find a way around. We are all thankful for their adventurous spirits that allow us to enjoy The Fin today.

While the hike is shorter in distance than most Westerner hikes, the difficulty factor is more challenging than most. The trail was steep and required much rock scrambling, but then the real fun on our first crossing of the ledge.

Hooven explained that in years past, the hiking trail had to follow a higher route because of a shooting range just below The Fin. It has since been closed. Everyone was glad that they no longer had to worry about stray gun shots.

The hike on the backside was entirely different. They left the red rock and were suddenly in the delicious coolness of shade as they hiked through stands of manzanita and smooth bark Arizona cypress. Once around the northern end of The Fin, all the hikers lunched and relaxed on a sunny slope before they headed down a steep wash.

This stretch entailed more rock scrambling, and there were several spots that required sitting and sliding, especially for those with short legs.

Part of the way down, they passed large boulders, which Hoover told them had fallen from the side of The Fin about two to three years ago. Of course, the thought went through most of their minds about when more might fall — not at that moment, they hoped.

Shortly after, as they continued down the wash, there was an unfortunate fall of a different kind. One of the hikers fell on a [illegible] came through to help a fellow hiker, and they were all able to finish the hike, which ended about 2 p.m.

Coming hikes

- Saturday, Nov. 17, 9 a.m. — Scout-led to Bear Sign/Secret canyons; eight miles; 800-foot elevation change; rated moderate and steep with rock scramble; (HC).
- Sunday, Nov. 18, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 1 to Battlement Mesa; three miles; 300-foot elevation change; rated easy.
- Sunday, Nov. 18, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 2 to Capital Butte Cave; three miles; 500-foot elevation change; rated moderate and steep with rock scramble.
- Tuesday, Nov. 20, 8 a.m. — Dogies to Wilson Mountain; up north and down south; eight miles; 1,600-foot to 2,400-foot elevation change; rated difficult and steep; dual.
- Thursday, Nov. 22, no hike — Happy Thanksgiving to all.

Call Westerners trail boss Charles West, 282-9007, or wagon boss Dave Jackson, 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Gini O'Brien.

SEDONA WESTERNERS
Red Rock News
11/16/01

Sycamore Canyon: A true wilderness

Area was first in Arizona protected under Wilderness Act

by Bob Dannert

THE SECOND LARGEST canyon to emerge from Arizona's red rock country is a lesser known, but just as scenic, cousin of famous Oak Creek Canyon.

But, you will not find any mad, developed campgrounds or crowds of people in Sycamore Canyon — just 56,000 acres of wilderness characterized by colorful cliffs, soaring pinnacles and a rare desert riparian area.

This wilderness encompasses all of Sycamore Canyon from its forested rim near Williams to its desert canyon mouth in the Verde Valley.

This area is sufficiently unique to have been the first in Arizona to be protected under the 1964 Wilderness Act.

The Sedona Westerners hike the Sycamore Wilderness from three entry points: The Taylor Cabin trail in the north, the Dogie Trail from the midpoint and the Parsons Spring trail in the south.

The subject of this article is about a hike down the Parsons Spring trail.

Hike leader Madelyn McMannus noted that the drive to the Parsons Spring trailhead was 35 miles. After bypassing Tuzigoot, the last 10 miles of gravel road parallels the Verde River.

Glimpses of the historic Verde Valley rail line to Perkinsville were often visible across the river. This trailhead also services the Packard Mesa trail, which ascends the high mesa to the west and winds its way north for 17 miles to the Taylor Cabin.

The hike began with a steep 200-foot descent to the canyon bottom and passes under huge cottonwood trees that were in brilliant yellow fall color.

As the trail proceeded north, mesquite, walnut, ash and cat's-claw were abundant. Good time was made to the first stop at Summer Spring, about one-and-a-half miles away.

Summer Spring bubbles from beneath the roots of a large tree and with the resulting pool, harbors an excellent crop of watercress.

Because of the possibility of giardia in the water, the watercress is unsafe to eat.

Proceeding up the trail, the hikers passed colorful cliffs that are a unique mix of dark columnar basalt, red sandstone and buff-colored limestone.

SEDONA WESTERNERS

In the early 1990s, the Parsons Spring trail was almost totally washed out by a severe flood.

Scars on the rocks and large trees stacked 10-feet high are ample evidence of the flood. The trail was rebuilt a few of years ago and is now positioned above the flood plain, so such trail damage from flooding is unlikely.

The reconstructed trail is easy to follow and hike. Five-foot high rock cairns inside wire cages, mark the six stream crossings. Good rock-hopping ability make the crossings much easier.

Lunch and the turnaround point took place at the four-mile mark, where Parsons Spring flows from a rock wall on the west side of the canyon. McMannus pointed out that the canyon was once a major American Indian route and in the hippie era was used as a camp area, probably due to the perennial warm-water springs.

Old mine entrances are still evident.

Following lunch, McMannus reversed direction and led the group back to the trailhead for the long drive to Sedona. Tailgater Bill Johnson ensured that no hikers were left behind.

Upcoming hikes

- Saturday, Dec. 8, 9 a.m. — Scout-led to Brins Ridge/The Fin; 10 miles; 1,000-foot elevation change; rated moderate and steep. Dual hike.
- Sunday, Dec. 9, 1:30 p.m. — Drover to Huckaby Trail, three miles, 300-foot elevation change, rated easy; or White Mountain, three miles, 300-foot elevation change, rated moderate.
- Tuesday, Dec. 11, 9 a.m. — Doggies to Broken Arrow Combo; six miles; 400-foot elevation change; rated moderate and steep.
- Thursday, Dec. 13, 9 a.m. — Amblers to Doe Mountain; three miles; 400-foot elevation change; rated moderate.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, and they should bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions. Hikers should bring no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and add another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For more information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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SEDONA WESTERNERS

HOLIDAY PARTY

POT LUCK DINNER

THURSDAY, DEC 13, 2001

MUSIC BY RON & LISA BACON

COST: $8

ST. JOHN VIANNEY CHURCH

SOLDIER PASS ROAD

(2 BLOCKS OFF 89A)

DINNER AT 6 PM

COME EARLIER TO SOCIALIZE

POT LUCK SIDE DISHES SCHEDULE

A – E SALADS

F – J HOT DISH, VEGETABLES

K - R DESSERTS

S – Z POTATOES, DRESSING

ICED TEA AND COFFEE WILL BE PROVIDED

YOU MAY BRING YOUR OWN LIQUOR

ALSO BRING:

YOUR OWN PLATES, CUPS, NAPKINS, UTENSILS

Earls Canyon shows sublime area landscape

Upcoming events include hikes at Parsons Trail and Boynton Canyon.

Red Rock News 11/23/01

ON A SUNDAY afternoon in October with temperatures in the high 70s and a clear blue sky, the Sedona Westerners set out for Earls Canyon Loop, an easy 4-mile hike with an elevation change of 300 feet.

The loop goes up Earls Canyon about 1.5 miles and then returns through a pinon-juniper forest.

Jack Leahy served as the hike leader and Kathleen Ezar was the tailgater. Eager as a dog to get going, the group entered Dry Creek near Earls Cabin, went upstream a short way and turned left into Earls Canyon. Here and there were clear pools of water.

Manzanita, with its pleasing auburn bark, frequently appeared in the brush along the banks. Jack drew attention to a healthy Parry's agave that looked like it had been put on display on a high rock in the waterway by a gardener. Looking northwest, the hikers could see the arresting cliffs of Maroon Mountain.

At a water stop, there was some merriment when some of the Westerners noticed that what had once been a flask of Kirsch was now doing service as a water bottle for Mousie.

After a rock scramble up a sandstone slope, the group left the canyon and headed east to a hillside for a snack break and a great view. Bill Baker served slices of the banana yucca fruit. The firm flesh had a sweet, subtle taste. Jack Leahy pointed out Wilson Mountain, Munds Mountain, Brins Mesa, The Fin, Soldier Heights and Capital Butte.

After the break, the hikers began the return loop. Along the way, they decided to follow a dry wash diversion that ran from a wash to Earls Tank. The tank was full of muddy red water. Bob Dameret tossed a stone, and the gallery counted 5 skips.

The last stop was Earls Cabin and the nearby root cellar. The Earl in question was Earl Van Deren, a member of the Sedona pioneer Van Deren family. The Mangum's Sedona hiking guide affirms that Earl built the cabin in the 1890s.

But, according to the Sedona Historical Society, Earl was born in 1906 and took over a relinquished homestead on Dry Creek in 1927. By building the cabin, living there and meeting other requirements, he gained title to the 42 acres.

The affable Westerners returned to their vehicles, happy to have spent the afternoon hiking together in the sublime Sedona landscape.

Upcoming hikes and events

Saturday, Nov. 24, 9 a.m., Scout-led hike to Parsons Trail, 8 miles, 300 feet of elevation change, rated difficult with rock scramble.

Sunday, Nov. 25, 1:30 p.m., two Drover-led hikes to Red Tank Draw, 2 miles, 100 feet of elevation change, rated easy; the other hike to Cibolla Mittes, 2 miles, 200 feet elevation change, rated easy.

Tuesday, Nov. 27, 9 a.m., Dogie-led hike to Boynton Canyon Portobella, 6 miles, 700 feet to 1000 feet of elevation change, rated difficult with steep rock scramble.

Thursday, Nov. 29, 9 a.m., two hikes: Ambler-led hike to Baldwin Trail, 2 miles, 150 feet of elevation change, rated easy; a members only archaeology hike to Loy Canyon, limited to the first 20, 3 miles, level, rated easy.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions (ranging from no less than a quart with temperatures in the 50s, and adding another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase), and are urged to bring a lunch for all day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday Hikes. Optional gloves and walking sticks are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact the Westerners Trail Boss, Charles West at 282-9007 or Wagon Boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from September into mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Fridays and is written this week by Harry Schermer.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Charles West.

SEDONA WESTERNERS

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Traces of mankind found in Long Canyon

Nooks, crannies were home to moonshiners, focus of movie crews

THE WESTERNERS were split into two small groups at the Long Canyon trailhead by cactus dodger Bob Dunaert.

The first group headed out at a brisk pace, led by ranger Don Hooven. The second group's leader was assistant cactus dodger Dan McKnight.

About a mile up the trail, the hikers' attention was drawn to a ladder in the distance leaning against a rock wall and leading up to a small cave in the rock.

We were told that this ladder had been used in a movie set at one time and was left there. It has since then had a few runners reinforced and is still climbable, although our group didn't make the side trip to it.

Our leader also pointed out a formation high up in the distance in the Coconino sandstone layer that is known as "the Bear."

We noted a silhouette of what appeared to be a bear leaning against a tree, getting honey.

Like so many formations that have been given names around the Sedona area, it takes a certain degree of imagination to agree on what these rock formations look like.

It is believed that Californians have a definite advantage having spent hours in the freeway traffic figuring out vanity license plates.

After the morning coffee break, the group hiked past several caves that had soot on the ceilings, indicating the use of fires in previous years.

It is believed that at one time this is where moonshiners stayed and made sour mash whiskey as witnessed by old barrel staves and rusted wagon parts that were present.

Both groups met for lunch in a scenic area and enjoyed the warm sunshine and friendship.

Once again after lunch, the two groups split and continued on a circular route that brought us to many more interesting and beautiful areas of this lovely canyon.

Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, Dec. 1 — Bear Mountain; a dual hike, either six miles with 1,500-foot elevation gain or eight miles with 1,900-foot elevation change; rated moderate, rock scramble and steep.

• Sunday, Dec. 2 — Two hikes: Twin Buttes Saddle, four miles, 300-foot elevation change; rated moderate and steep; or Schnebly Mountain; three miles, 900-foot elevation change; rated moderate.

• Tuesday, Dec. 4 — Bell Trail-Wet Beaver Creek; seven miles, 500-foot elevation change; rated moderate.

• Thursday, Dec. 6 — The Amblers will hike to Long Canyon; three miles, 450-foot elevation change; rated easy. Also, the Mustangs will hike the Jim Bryant Trail, five miles, 900-foot elevation change; rated moderate.

• Thursday, Dec. 13 — Holiday Party at St. John Vianney Catholic Church.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions.

Hikers should bring no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and add another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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Woodchute Mountain provides fall spectacular

ON THE FOURTH Tuesday of October, an enthusiastic group of Westerners and one guest in several vehicles left to enjoy a wonderful fall day hiking up Woodchute Mountain. Woodchute Mountain presumably derives its name from old logging operations, which used a chute to send the logs down to the Prescott area.

After stopping briefly at the Jerome firehouse to regroup, the caravan continued to the Woodchute Trail 102 parking area, with the trailhead a few truths of a mile beyond the point where we parked.

The trail took us through beautiful stands of ponderosa mixed with juniper, even an occasional alligator juniper, and Gambel oak. The oak wore their autumn shades of yellow and red, with occasional brilliant color displays almost reminding one of New England fall colors.

At higher elevations, mountain mahogany were quite common. Very shortly, the trail opened on the right onto wonderful vistas north of the Mogollon Rim area and the San Francisco Peaks, and even beyond where the smoke from the fires on the north rim of the Grand Canyon could be clearly discerned. There also was smoke from some controlled burns to the east, but their location wasn't known by anyone in the group. And vistas on the left opened onto views of Prescott Valley, with Granite Mountain in the distance. On this crystal clear day, both views were absolutely beautiful.

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Led by Carol and Larry Dreyfuss, with Sandy Unger as the tailgater, our morning breakfast break was taken at a tank, largely dry, about 2½ miles into the walk. For those unfamiliar with the term, a "tank" is a natural or artificial pool or pond used as a water supply, and in this area they were used mainly to provide water for cattle.

Following our break came the only modestly difficult portion of the hike, a stretch of 0.8 mile of 10-percent grade, which took us to the top of the plateau. We proceeded to the edge of the plateau, where we had an unhindered view over Clarkdale and the cement plant, which, we were told, was the sole source of cement for the Glen Canyon Dam during its construction.

Nearby the place where redwall limestone was quarried for the cement plant was clearly visible. The view continued to Tuzigoot, the Verde River and Cottonwood. After taking in this view, we continued to our lunch spot on a similar ridge at more than 7,700 feet in elevation, which was marked by three recently blooming agaves whose dead stalks reached to about 15 feet.

After a nice lunch break, we retraced our steps on an uneventful return, marred only by one "soft" fall; enjoyed the vistas once more; and completed the 8.6 mile trip by about 3 p.m. I think everyone agreed that this was a virtually perfect fall day and that better hiking weather would be hard to come by.

Upcoming hikes:

• Saturday, Dec. 15, 9 a.m., Sycamore Pass/Creek, 10 miles round trip with a 900-foot climb, rated moderate; contact Cactus driver Bob Dannert, 204-2473, or assistant cactus driver Dan McKnight, 284-9839.

• Sunday, Dec. 16, 1:30 p.m. — choice of the Bell Rock/Courthouse loop, 4 miles, easy, or the Soldier Pass/Three Arches walk, 4 miles with an 800-foot climb rated moderate driver. Contact Martha Leach, 282-0220, or assistant driver Kathleen Enz, 639-0838.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions (ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the fifties, and adding another quart for each ten degrees of temperature increase) and are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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BEAR:

Punishing uphill hike offered the hardy payoff at top

Mountain was 'bear' of a hike

Red Rock News 12/21/01

THE CRISP, cool air on a Saturday morning in early December found the skies beautifully clear after three consecutive days of "an-Sedona-like" weather.

It was a great day for the Sedona Westerners to tackle the eight-mile, 1,900-foot climb to the top of Bear Mountain.

They met at the usual parking site and were particularly attentive as hike leader Dave "Pink Floyd" Singer described what would lie ahead.

A steep, almost vertical, rocky, slippery and occasional brushy (sharp things) trail and tired muscles were promised. However, the reward for those who chose to accept the assignment would be spectacular 360-degree views.

Our leader proclaimed these views are reserved only for those who work for them.

With that, the hikers departed for the trailhead, inspired and convinced that nothing would stop them from reaching the top.

Before leaving the trailhead, leader Singer appointed Don "The Enforcer" Hooven as tail-gater. It was Hooven's task to keep the hikers between himself and the leader and to minister to those who might need assistance.

Additionally, he could, however, ignore any whining, heavy breathing, expressions of reluctance to go farther or anything else he deemed to be a distraction that might prevent the group from reaching the top.

After a short stretch of level, sandy terrain, the previously promised rocky vertical trail began. It didn't take long for our wise leader to call for a drinking break.

No, no, it's not what you might be thinking. This was simply a short break to take off the extra lightweight jacket, sweater or shirt hikers were convinced they would need when they were at several hundred feet lower elevation. Oh, yes, a few gulps of water are a good idea, too.

As the group continued toward the, as yet unknown, coffee break destination, some of the promised views began to emerge: The Cockscomb, Courthouse Butte, Airport Mesa and Bell Rock, to name a few.

Along the way, Jim Ambler said: "We're sure going to earn this merit badge."

Pat Sexton replied: "They should rename this a mountain climb, not a hike."

Was that whining or what?

During the coffee break, the discussions were priceless. They included varying topics, such as bald jokes, digital photography, yoga, George Harrison and The Beatles.

Gary Methfessel said he found "zero-percent financing on a pair of hiking boots." Say what?

Before the hikers resumed the trek, Tom "The King of FLAB" Hager told the group that the Bear Mountain Trail was initially, literally, carved out by pioneers who were looking for a way to move cattle.

They actually cut a notch through the rock for the cattle to pass through. Now, those were serious ranchers.

In the early 1980s, the trail was further developed by the Westerners, spearheaded by Bob Watts and his wife, Virginia. They made the trail more user-friendly for the two-legged animals, as well as the four-legged variety.

Onward and upward, the hikers went until they reached the top. Then, it was lunchtime.

The lunch conversations weren't as varied as those at the earlier break. They tended to revolve around views, food and nature.

For example, leader Singer pointed out an eagle-hawk soaring overhead.

An eagle-hawk is a large bird that no one can agree on as to whether it is an eagle or a hawk. Hence, it's an "eagle-hawk."

Comments about the food had nothing to do with whose peanut butter and jelly sandwich was the best. This was serious stuff, about who had eaten such delicacies as moose, elk or bear meat or venison.

The discussion really headed south when Methfessel said he'd eaten whale meat and that "it tasted like drinking 10W/40 motor oil."

What led him to try 10W/40 in the first place was never revealed. Having consumed their share of food and folklore, the hikers began their trip down the mountain.

The return to the trailhead included a detour that took the hikers to the ledges along the Fay Canyon overlook, including a farther side trip to the Bootlegger Cave.

Convinced that, yes, there probably were illegal, distilled spirits made in the cave in the distant past, the hikers continued back to the trailhead parking lot.

It was here that Jimmy "Silk" Ambler revealed that, according to some kind of high-tech instrument that he had strapped to his wrist, the actual distance the hikers covered was 8.4 miles.

The overall total climb was 2,250 feet, four inches, and the hikers did it all in six hours, three minutes. Amazing device, Jim.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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November 8, 2001

Member Bob Dannert gives Westerner's program detailing one of his canoe trips

Photo by Charles Hoot

Westerners hikers experience

THE SEDONA Westerners recently hiked up, over and down Mt. Wilson, the highest point in the Sedona area. The hike was led by Dave Jackson and Bob Shuman, who also alternated as tailgaters.

The experience was most enjoyable for a small group of members and two visitors, on a glorious day with a near cloudless sky and cool temperatures. The climb up traversed the North Wilson trail to Wilson Bench and on to the approximate summit, a climb of 2,400 feet in elevation. The decent was via the South Wilson trail to Midgely Bridge. Both trails originated for the purpose of moving cattle.

The lower portion of this hike took place in the cool early morning and passed through a very attractive ponderosa pine-Douglas fir forest, with some views of late, red-turning canyon maples. The steep uphill climb led to a pine and Gamble oak forest, where the nearly vertical cliffs across the canyon edging Mt. Wilson show a red streak of cinder-cone rock.

Our leader, Jackson, explained that this cinder cone is the remnant of a volcanic vent that was active some six million years ago. That cliff and the canyon below is a split branch of the Oak Creek fault. Geology indicates that the area east of this fault became 800 feet lower than the west side, which includes the higher parts of Mt. Wilson, our ultimate goal.

Our first escape from the steep grade of this trail was when we reached this broad, nearly level area known as Wilson Bench. This is that part of Mt. Wilson that is 800 feet lower than the summit, having become depressed because it lies to the east side of the split branch of the Oak Creek fault. We crossed this bench through chaparral, past a former rancher's watering tank, where deer can often be seen.

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Red Rock News
12/28/01

At the top of the last steep climb, at the approximate summit, the hikers split into two groups. One group hiked to a south-looking overlook, passing through a six-year-old burn where the vegetation is recovering. The view took in Sedona and its spectacular topography in the foreground, and the broad expanse of near and distant mesas, buttes, ridges and rocks that enhance our area.

The second group hiked along a trail in a northerly direction, passing through a medium-size ponderosa forest, replete with grassy openings. In one large opening, we found eight cautious deer, apparently all does, who eyed us with curiosity as they slowly crossed our trail. After a mile or more, we passed Lake Christiansen, named after a former Westerner who proposed selling lots there. We then terminated our expedition at one of the finest viewpoints in the area. This was at the north face of Mt. Wilson, atop a deep, descending cliff, which from great height overlooks Sterling Pass, East Pocket, a diminutive Vultee Arch, the San Francisco Peaks and many formations of the Mogollon Rim surrounding Dry Creek Canyon. Here we feasted on lunch and the magnificent panorama. On our return, we detoured slightly to view the seldom-climbed Lost Wilson Mountain. We retraced our route and rejoined our other group at our point of separation.

We descended to Wilson's Bench, where we chose to take the South Wilson trail for our trek to Midgely Bridge and Hwy. 89A. This route is about one mile longer than the North Wilson trail.

the beauty of Mt. Wilson

It also has a greater elevation change, and features very long switch backs across steeply, sloping chaparral. The trail is well laid out with a reasonable gradient, but much rock rubble. Hikers to the Sedona overview went about nine miles; while the group that went to the north overlook hiked at least 10 miles. Both groups traversed a 2,500-foot elevation change.

Upcoming hikes:

• Saturday, Jan. 5, 9 a.m. — Scout led hike to Lost Wilson Loop, seven miles, 700-foot elevation change, moderate difficulty, including rock hopping and one-ledge climb. Contact Cactus Dodgers Bob Dannert, at 204-2473, or Dan McKnight at 284-9839.

• Sunday, Jan. 6, 1:30 p.m. — Two Drover hikes: No. 1, Bear Sign Canyon, four miles, 500-foot elevation change, moderate; and No. 2, Rachel's Knoll, two miles, 200-foot elevation change, easy. Contact Drovers Martha Leach, at 282-0220, or Kathleen Ezar, at 639-0858.

• Tuesday, Jan. 8, 9 a.m. — Doggie hike to Doe Mountain/Cook's Comb combination, seven miles, 500-foot elevation change, moderate difficulty. Contact Dogies Dick Elbeck, at 203-0219, or Sandy Unger, at 204-1169.

• Thursday, Jan. 10, 9 a.m. — Amblers hike to Sugar Loaf via Soldier Pass, five miles, 600-foot elevation change, easy. Contact Amblers John Mezera, at 284-5395, or Bob Allison, at 284-2981.

• Thursday, Jan. 10, 9 a.m. — Trail boss' favorite hike to Long Canyon, six miles, 500-foot elevation change, moderate and steep hike. Contact Bill Baker at 203-4126.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat; bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the fifties, and adding another quart for each ten degrees of temperature increase; and are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

Wilson Mountain

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Fred Johnson.

Hike to Norm's Notch review of Westerner's Work

Where are 'the ducks' along the Sedona loop?

Norm Herkenham left trail of hard work through forests around Sedona

WHILE THE LEADER and scribe for today's hike was on the original crew that constructed this route, honors go to Norman Herkenham, a trailblazer and pathfinder, if there ever was one.

This is the same Herkenham who planned the loop trail around Sedona in conjunction with the Forest Service and the city of Sedona. He now has five benches around the trail named in his honor.

Years ago, there were many large and unusual "ducks" that pointed out the route.

Unfortunately, weather, plus maybe a few "duck destroyers," have all but eliminated these monuments of duck construction. A keen observer can visualize their remains and wonder how high and unique they once were.

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Soldier Heights or Pass Loop climbs about 500 feet. It is a moderate hike. There are rocky areas and plenty of ledges.

A recent party of Westerners traveled eight or nine miles down the trail.

The weather reports prior to day's hike predicted cold weather and a chance of snow. You guessed it — a cloudless sky and moderate temperatures, which meant an ideal day for a hike.

The group of seasoned Westerners, plus two out-of-town guests, left the parking area with Don Hooven as the leader.

Chief scout Elyse Holland was the backup, and Fred Johnson was the tailgater. The first stop was the old grave site, first honored with a plaque reading "Quiere Sabe," or "Who knows?" and a fence built by the Westerners many years ago.

Just recently, a group of Westerners headed up by ex-trail boss, Tom Hager, cleaned up the site and placed a new metal plaque near the old wooden one.

After a few moments, the group then proceeded up to the pass, and, by that time, few were wearing jackets. Just another beautiful day in Sedona.

Hooven left the main trail for the heights and to Norm's Notch, which is named for Herkenham, of course. The views were just outstanding: Mormon Canyon, Wilson Mountain, Steamboat Rock, The Fin and so on, all Westerners' hikes.

After the climb up to Norm's Notch, one of the guests on the hike became concerned about the ledges and could not go on.

True to Westerner tradition of taking care of hikers and guests, tailgater Johnson and wagon boss Dave Jackson led the guests, minus the ledge hiking route, back to the parking lot. Yona of Sedona then took over the job of tailgater for a special reason, which shall remain a secret.

Ledge hiking continued, with Devil's Bridge in the distance and more great views. One was of Bear Mountain, which was the subject of recent column written by Westerner Jack Leahy.

One could also spot "the Bear" on Secret Mountain plus many other well-known trails, but Reno Pamintuan insisted that the hikers immediately hike at flank speed so he could make a 2 p.m. appointment.

It was already 1:30 p.m., and the hikers had about three miles to go. Hooven then was at full throttle and arrived at the parking lot just a few minutes before guests and escorts arrived.

The two guests were especially grateful for the way they were treated by the Westerners, and they really enjoyed the day's hike.

The regular Westerners meeting is on Thursday, Jan. 10, at 7 p.m. at The Church of the Red Rocks.

• Saturday, Jan. 5, 9 a.m. — Scout-led Lost Wilson Mountain loop; seven miles; 700-foot climb; rated moderate, rocky and ledges, high-clearance vehicle. Call Bob Dannert at 204-3473 or Dan McKnight at 284-9839.

• Sunday, Jan. 6, 1:30 p.m. — two Drover hikes: Drover No. 1 — Bear Sign Canyon; four miles; 500-foot elevation change; rated moderate. Drover No. 2 — Rachel's Knoll; two miles; 200-foot elevation change, easy. Call Martha Leach at 282-0220 or Kathleen Ezar at 639-0838.

• Tuesday, Jan. 8, 9 a.m. — Dogies to Doe Mountain/The Cockscomb combination; seven miles; 500-foot elevation change, moderate to difficult. Call Dick Eibeck at 203-0219 or Sandy Unger at 204-1169.

• Thursday, Jan. 10, 9 a.m. — Ambers to Sugarloaf via Soldier Pass; five miles; 600-foot elevation change, easy. Contact John Mezera at 284-5395 or Bob Allison at 284-2931.

• Thursday, Jan. 10, 9 a.m. — Mustang , trail boss favorite to Long Canyon; six miles; 500-foot elevation change, moderate and steep. Call Bill Baker at 203-4126.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat and bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions.

Hikers should bring no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and bring another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

They also are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes.

For club information, call Charles West at 282-9007.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Don Hooven.

Flagstaff hike reveals beauty of aspens in the fall

A tailgaters experience following a Westerners hike

BEING A TAILGATER on a Westerner hike is an awesome responsibility.

A tailgater is the last person in the queue of hikers and is responsible for making sure that the group stays together on the trail.

While Fred Johnson led a group of Westerners on a wonderful loop trail in the Flagstaff area in late fall, Larry Dreyfuss fulfilled the responsibilities of the tailgater.

After driving up the Elden Lookout Road, the hiking group began to climb up the Brookbank Trail.

They were surprised by a vista of golden aspens that had not yet lost their leaves.

As the hike progressed, one of the participants speculated that the group must have climbed thousands of feet in elevation, but in reality the trek was quite moderate.

With the encouragement and patience of Ron Schneider, the weary hikers were able to keep going. A timely coffee break rejuvenated all so they could maintain their pace until lunch, where the Sunset and Little Bear trails intersected the Brookbank Trail.

The group continued along the Sunset Trail as it wound its way over a catwalk-like trail to the Elden summit. Astounding aspens, sprouting out of the ground where fire had damaged much of the terrain a number of years ago, came into the hikers' view. Green-and-yellow trees interspersed with red dirt under a puffy, clouded blue sky made everyone grateful to be in this special spot.

They were also grateful to be under the watchful eye of a tailgater who was subjected to much abuse by those in front. They playfully teased with queries as to whether Larry the tailgater could really count the number of hikers and whether he would even notice if anyone had actually disappeared from the hike.

Then, they put a really tall hiker in front of the tailgater so he could not even see what was going on in front of him.

Little did they know that the wild bear, elk and horned toads, who lurked in the shadows and kept a constant watch on the group, were only kept at bay by the protective eyes and threatening posture of Larry the tailgater.

Leader Fred Johnson gave the group the option of returning to the cars along the Elden Lookout Road or skidding down the steeper and rockier Upper Oldham Trail. Six people made the less-than-courageous choice, which prompted the tailgater to do some quick arithmetic and compute that he then only had to watch out for six fewer people.

At one point, Johnson turned the group around, and Larry the tailgater had the privilege of becoming Larry the leader for a few feet, until he noticed that nobody was following him.

Then, more abuse!

Everybody soon met back at the cars, and the tailgater's awesome responsibility was fulfilled.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat on Westerners hikes. They must also bring sufficient water for the expected hiking conditions (ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s to another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase).

They are urged to bring a lunch for all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to call trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 284-8961.

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Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, January 12, 9 a.m. — Scout-led hike Sedona Loop I; 10 miles; 500-foot elevation change, rated moderate. Call Cactus Dodger Bob Dunteri at 204-2473 or Dan McNight at 284-9839.

• Sunday, January 13, 1:30 p.m. — Two Drover-led hikes. Robbers Roost; 1.5 miles; 200-foot elevation change, rated easy with steep rock scramble; and the other to Doe Mountain; three miles; 500-foot elevation change, rated moderate. Call Drover Martha Leach at 282-0220 or Kathleen Ezar at 639-0838.

• Tuesday, January 15, 9:00 a.m. — Dogie-led hike up Bear Mountain; seven miles; 1,900-foot elevation change, rated difficult, steep and ledges. Call Dick Elbeck at 203-0219 or Sandy Unger at 204-1169.

• Thursday, January 17, 9:00 a.m. — Two hikes. The first, an Ambler-led hike to Secret Canyon; four miles; 400-foot elevation change, rated easy. The second, which is a members-only Mustang special hike to Grief and Juniper hills, 7 miles, 1800-foot change in elevation, rated moderate. Contact John Mezera at 284-5395 or Bob Allison at 284-2931 for Secret Canyon hike and Bill Baker for hills hike at 203-4126.

The Westerners column is published on Fridays and is written this week by Larry Dreyfuss.

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THIS BENCH IS DEDICATED TO THE EFFORTS OF
NORM HERKENHAM - PATHFINDER
A PIONEER AND LEADER IN CONSTRUCTING THE
TRAIL THAT CIRCLES OUR COMMUNITY

Westerners legend honored for work

Norm Herkenham, renowned botanist and former trailboss of the Westerners, has been the driving force for the establishment of a 26-mile trail around the city of Sedona.

He first came up with the concept while serving as a city parks and recreation commissioner from 1989 to 1995, according to a news release from members of the Westerners.

After the idea was approved by both the city council and the Forest Service, Herkenham studied topographical maps, hiked the areas between existing trails and proposed routes, which took into account natural barriers, such as hills, creek beds and roads.

With Forest Service supervision, along with many volunteers from the Trail Resource Access Coalition of Sedona, Friends of the Forest and the Sedona Westerners, most of the trail has now been completed.

The Sedona city council recently honored Herkenham by placing five benches at various locations on the loop trail.

Red Rock News 1/18/02 Courtesy Larry Dreyfuss

SEATED ON one of Norm Herkenham's benches, left to right, are Westerner's trailboss Charles West, Don Hooven, Herkenham and John Mezera. Standing, left to right, are Barbara Mezera, Martha Leach, Ernie Strnuch, Steve Nahmanson, Bill Baker and Larry Dreyfuss.

A plaque has been placed at one of the benches, and it reads, "This bench is dedicated to the efforts of Norm Herkenham — Pathfinder, A Pioneer and Leader in constructing the trail that circles our community."

Hike offered great views

THE SUNDAY Jan. 6 hike to the very top of The Cockscomb formation was only a round trip of two miles, but the 500-foot elevation change in one mile was a slight challenge to the hardy group.

Included in the group were one with a total knee replacement, at least one afraid of heights and one who had just completed a fantastic Italian meal with garlic (breathing heavily).

Each "disability" was overcome with good humor, and all made it to the top without incident.

Hike leader Sandy Unger called the hikers to order with a new "predator" whistle.

Unger had hoped for the sound of a mountain lion — instead, he sounded something akin to a wounded (rabbit?). The clear, bright and warm, for January, afternoon proceeded with tidbit after tidbit delivered during the many breath-catching and photo-opportunity stops.

John Mezera, the tailgater, did his usual excellent job of boosting the shorter-legged hikers to the next level.

On one stop, hikers were regaled with how an episode from the Walt Disney film, *Fantasia's* "Night on Thunder Mountain" complete with a lightning storm, was supposedly inspired by a similar event involving Sedona's own Thunder Mountain. Unger pointed out the Lost Thunder Mountain Remains, as an evident piece broken away from Thunder Mountain itself.

Arriving near the summit, after some creative stair-building from loose rocks, Unger and Mezera provided us with history of the Robbers Roost formation, which stood out to the west.

It's Sedona's own version of Australia's Ayer's Rock, and perhaps just as mystical. The group heard how outlaws of the old west had used Shaman's Cave, which was easily defended at the end of a narrow ledge. Baby Roost, a smaller rock outcrop in the vicinity, was also identified.

Stopping for a snack on a pinnacle, a few fascinating disclosures of hippie-commune activities from the 1960s were reported in the Summers Spring area of Sycamore Canyon. The juicy details will remain for another hike to a Sycamore Canyon overlook or the canyon itself.

Shifting gears smoothly from hippies to geology, the group was enthralled to learn about the missing 800-foot, Schnebly Hill Formation (rock layer) that exists only in the Verde Valley area, but not at the Grand Canyon. Why? A mystery with several possible answers, as yet unsolved.

Did you know that Sedona currently exists on top of the Hermit Formation, which was deposited 270 million to 275 million years ago, when Sedona was near the equator and close to the coast of the mega-continent, Pangaea?

Then, you probably didn't know that the Schnebly Hill Formation that forms most of the visible rock layer we look at daily in Sedona is eroding at a rate of one foot per 650,000 years.

All this great information and we haven't yet enrolled in Botany 101 — on the way down, the quick course.

The tree farm right below the hikers on the way down had contained a grove of Mondell pines, which originated in Afghanistan.

Only a few are left, but they have been planted throughout the Sedona area. The hollyleaf buckthorn is not a holly at all, as there are no native varieties of holly existing in Arizona. A jojoba plant along the trail is used to great extent in cosmetics and skin creams.

The velvet mesquite, not a true mesquite, is a signature plant of

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the high desert, sometimes growing a taproot up to 60 feet, straight down. It is a member of the legume family, at certain times of the year a coyote's diet consists almost entirely of the nourishing stringbean-looking seeds.

Approaching the terminus parking lot ... a final lesson. The cryptobiotic surface was brought to the Westerners' attention.

No, Unger had not been reading too many comic books, cryptobiotic means "hidden life."

It is that friable surface layer in which plant life first exists from bare ground, providing necessary nitrogen and capable of retaining water like a sponge. Crushed by stepping off a marked trail, the land is significantly wounded. Lessons, well-learned.

HIKE: The Cockscomb's views all-encompassing

Jarod Dorr/Sedona Red Rock News

THE WESTERNERS' trip to The Cockscomb came complete with the history of Robbers Roost and hippie communes.

Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, Jan. 19, 9 a.m. — Scout-led hike to House Mountain; 10 miles with 1,000-foot elevation change; difficult, steep with rock scrambling. Contact Bob Dunnett 204-2473 or Dan McKnight 284-9839.

• Sunday, Jan. 20, 1:30 p.m. — Two Drover hikes: No. 1, Mayan Maiden; three miles; 400-foot elevation change, moderate, steep; and No. 2, Mescal Mountain; three miles; 500-foot elevation change, moderate, steep. Contact Martha Leach 282-0220 or Kathleen Ezar 639-0838.

• Tuesday, Jan. 22, 9 a.m. — Dogie hike to Brins Ridge loop; seven miles; 1,100-foot elevation change, moderate, steep, ledges. Contact Dick Elbeck 203-0219 or Sandy Unger 204-1169.

• Thursday, Jan. 24, 9 a.m. — Antelers hike the Girdner Trail (new); four miles; 300-foot elevation change, easy. Contact John Mazura 284-5395 or Bob Allison 284-2981.

• Thursday, Jan. 24, 9 a.m. — Archeology field trip, members only.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Ernie Strauch.

Westerners find Grief Hill

Views of Verde Valley were worth struggle up hill and mountain

By Bob Feuge

THE DESTINATION of this hike was Juniper Mountain via the historic Grief Hill Road, which once was a route used by early Verde Valley settlers and, for a while, provided the only link between Prescott and Camp Verde.

From the south, the old road passed through a saddle between Juniper Mountain and Grief Hill, descended steeply along the eastern flank of Grief Hill until it bottomed out in Grief Wash.

Most people believe that Grief Hill was named by wagoners who had to drive heavily loaded wagons, drawn by mules, down that "certain terrible hill — that has been impossible for a team to get down" (Arizona Miner, 1868).

They dragged heavy logs behind the wagons to break speed, lest the wagon overtake the stock and "cause ruination." No telling how much grief was caused by such runaway wagons.

Alternatively, some believe that Grief Hill got its name from four skirmishes between Apaches and soldiers that occurred in the vicinity. No one knows who or when the road was built, but it was in use during the 1860s.

Because of the dangers involved in negotiating the hill, alternative routes via Cherry and Copper canyons were eventually established in the 1870s, allowing Grief Hill Road to fall into disrepair.

The road was rediscovered by horsemen in 1991, and they have been mostly responsible for creating the hiking and horseback trail on the old roadway.

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Hike leader Norm Taylor selected this hike as his Trail Boss Favorite because of its historic significance and because it has not been done by the Westerners recently.

Grief Hill does figure into Westerner history because on Jan.

Road lives up to name

14, 1976, it was the site of the largest hike in club history: 119 hikers.

The Westerners made their way via Hwy. 260 to Forest Road 9603, a high clearance rough road that deadends in a corral in Grief Wash.

After donning boots and packs, the leader led the group up Grief Wash to the trailhead.

The tailgater was Larry Dreyfuss. Climbing up out of the wash, and ascending, the group soon began to notice parallel rock piles that defined the sides of the old road. Excavated rocks were used to fill in the downhill side and washes and, thus, level the road bed somewhat.

Over the last century, erosion and plant growth have masked this old road from all but the most earnest seekers.

Still, looking along its extent, one can still see a "road." One has to marvel at the effort it must have taken to build this road without machinery.

As the hike progressed, the road became steeper and rougher and caused the group to string out a bit.

After ascending more than 1,000 feet, the group reached a saddle where the road vanishes. At this point, the leader took the group off trail toward Juniper Mountain, which loomed overhead to the east.

After some bushwhacking and climbing through basalt ledges, the hikers emerged on Juniper Mountain's first "top" at 5,362 feet.

Here, they had lunch in the warm, January sun and began to appreciate the wonderful view.

To the north, one could see the snow-capped San Francisco Peaks above Flagstaff, seemingly floating over the Mogollon Rim. Just below the rim, in the same direction, lay the beautiful red rocks of Sedona; to the northwest, Bill Williams Mountain; and more west, the Black Hills and Mingus Mountain.

To the southwest, the Bradshaw Mountains were visible. To the south, was I-17, as it turns and begins to descend into Copper

GRIEF: Westerners bushwack to reach Juniper Mountain

Canyon. To the east, were Camp Verde and Squaw Peak.

Quietly, the group ate and stared at the view, appreciating the Arizona winter.

All too soon, Taylor sounded the two-minute warning, and everyone packed up. As an additional treat, Taylor led the group over to the second "top" of Juniper, which is slightly higher, but has a less commanding view than the first top.

Two U.S. Coast and Geodetic survey markers were found on the second top. Bushwhacking back down the basalt, the group was soon back in the saddle again and heading down the old road. Good grief, what a hike.

Upcoming hikes and events

• Saturday, Jan. 26, 9 a.m. — Scout led, Sedona Loop-Part 2; key exchange; 600-foot elevation gain, nine miles and moderate. Contact Bob Dannert 204-2573 or Dan McKnight 204-9839 for information.

• Sunday, Jan. 27, 1:30 p.m. — Drover hike, Dry Creek to Soldier Pass; 300-foot elevation change, four miles, moderate. Contact Martha Leach 282-0220 or Kathleen Exar 639-0838.

• Tuesday, Jan. 29, 9 a.m. — Dogie hike, Soldier Pass Loop; 500-foot elevation change, five miles and moderate, steep and ledges. Contact Dick Elbeck 203-0219 or Sandy Unger 204-1169.

• Thursday, Jan. 31, 9 a.m. — Ambler hike, Chicken Point; 350-foot elevation change, 4.5 miles and easy. Contact John Mezera 284-5395 or Bob Allison 284-2981.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat. They should bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions, from no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s, and one more quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

They are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Bob Fenge.

Sedona Loop Trail a delight

ON SATURDAY, Jan. 26, the Westerners embarked on the second of three, planned segments of the Sedona Loop Trail.

This portion covered Broken Arrow to Soldier Pass. This was a key exchange hike, so half the group started at the Broken Arrow trailhead, and the other half began at the Soldier Pass Trailhead.

The logistics involved in a key exchange hike are only slightly less complicated than World War II. However, through the concise and explicit directions of Cactus Dodger Bob Dannert, the group started and ended in the right vehicles with the right companions.

The leader of the Broken Arrow-Soldier Pass segment was Norm Taylor, ably assisted by tailgater Pat Sexton, while the reverse group was headed up at the last minute by Jack Leahy. His tailgater was Ned Isom.

The two packs met up midway beneath Midgley Bridge on the banks of Oak Creek for lunch.

Due to the questionable behavior of some of the hikers, a powwow was held to negotiate the trade of certain hikers to the opposite group. No deal was able to be consummated so the packs remained intact for the balance of the hike.

This segment of the Sedona Loop Trail enables the hiker to traverse portions of seven different Forest Service trails. We started on the Margs Draw Trail, and after crossing Schnebly Hill Road, embarked on the Huckaby Trail.

This trail took us down to the creek, under Midgley Bridge and on to the Wilson Canyon Trail for a short distance. There we picked up the Jim Thompson Trail and followed it to its junction with the Cibola Pass Trail at the Jordan Road trailhead.

We then traveled a short distance on the Jordan Trail and ended our hike on the Soldier Pass Trail. The total elevation change on this nine-mile hike was approximately 1,400 feet.

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Upcoming Hikes

- Saturday, Feb. 2, 9 a.m. — Scout led hike to Wet Beaver Creek-Bell Trail; nine miles and 1,300-foot elevation change, moderate and steep.
- Sunday, Feb. 3, 1:30 p.m. — Drover hike to The Cockscomb; two miles; 400-foot elevation change, moderate, steep and ledges; or Bear Wallow; three miles; 200-foot elevation change and easy.
- Tuesday, Feb. 5, 9 a.m. — Dogie hike to Turkey Creek trail; eight miles; 1,000-foot elevation change, moderate and steep.
- Thursday, Feb. 7, 9 a.m. — Ambler hike to Huckaby Trail; five miles; 200-foot elevation change and easy.
- Thursday, Feb. 7, 9 a.m. — Trail Boss Favorite — Baby Roost-Sycamore Bluffs; six miles; 600-foot elevation change, moderate and rock scramble.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat. They should also bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions, ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and an additional quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

All hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Steve Nahmanson.

Courtesy Photo/Sedona Red Rock News

THE WESTERNERS hiked Sedona Loop Trail this past Saturday and traveled much of the city's eastern edge.

Palatki Ruins

March 2002

Diane Carson
Eppler Peak
Archeology
Hike

Sterling
Pass
Hike

Hikers find being 'lost' was worth it

Trip to Lost Wilson first hike of 2002 for Sedona Westerners

By Olga Ostrom
SPECIAL TO SEDONA RED ROCK NEWS

A BRIGHT, sunny day brought out the Sedona Westerners for the first Saturday hike of 2002 to the Lost Wilson Mountain Trail.

There were enough eager hikers to divide them into three small groups, so that they would have a better "wilderness" experience.

Hike leader Norm Taylor, with Michael Dally as tailgater, took his group down the trail at a brisk pace.

Fred Johnson, leader of the second group, went in the reverse direction, with Clyde Holland as his tailgater.

While hike leader Bob Shuman waited about 10 minutes to take his group down the trail. Tom Hager as the tailgater. Tom is well-known for his superb tailgating ability.

Tailgaters make sure that all hikers keep to the trail and, in this case, not wander off to find Lost Wilson Mountain on their own.

Conversations soon could be heard from the hikers, such as "How was your Christmas," and "Was Santa good to you."

It seems Santa was very good to Jack Leahy. He brought Jack new hiking sticks and a new hat.

Now the question was asked, will Jack put the old hiking "pole" over his mantel in a place of honor? But, Jack said he would still use it wherever he or anyone else needed to pole-vault a big puddle or stream.

The trail took the hikers in a northwesterly direction for a few miles and then came to a beautiful bluff overlook, where the group took a traditional coffee break.

Here the panorama opened with views of Soldier Pass and Airport Mesa. As the group resumed their hike, more beautiful red rock vistas emerged, such as Doe Mountain, The Cockscomb, Mescal Mountain and Mingus Mountain in the far distance.

Lunch was called by the leader at another view spot, with the warm sun keeping everyone happy as they ate their lunches.

After lunch the trail took the hikers toward a large green drainage and the leader attempted to tell the group about it.

A question was asked: "Is that why this trail is called Lost Wilson?"

The first answer: "No, it's because each time we scout this trail, we get lost and wander in the wilderness like Moses."

"The Secret Mountain Wilderness?"

Finally the right answer came. It's named Lost Wilson because the area is separated from North Wilson by a notch and a drainage, separating the two and creating its own formation.

As noted not only are these hikes educational but they are also filled with trivial information and answers to any question. The large green drainage turned out to be young Arizona cypress and mature Pringle's manzanita. Cypress are native to central Arizona and are quite prevalent in this area.

It was noted that some of the young trunks seemed to swirl clockwise, and some swirled counterclockwise as they grew. No one seems to know why.

At one point, the hike leader stopped the group and pointed out a formation and explained that it was the dividing line between Yavapai and Coconino counties. One of the hikers promptly took a GPS reading to confirm this information.

As the "tombstone" trail took the hikers to an old, no-longer-used cattle road, the group of hikers was soon back at the trailhead where they started that morning and knew that they, at least, knew where to look for Lost Wilson.

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Upcoming Hikes

• — Saturday, Feb. 9, 9 a.m. — Scout-led Sedona Loop 3; eight miles; 500-foot elevation change; rated moderate. Contact Cactus Dodger Bob Dannert at 204-2473 or Dan McKnight at 204-9839.

• — Sunday, Feb. 10, 1:30 p.m. — two Driver hikes: No. 1, Carrol Canyon; three miles; 200-foot elevation change; rated moderate, rocky. No. 2, Sugarloaf; three miles; 300-foot elevation change; rated easy. Contact Driver Martha Leach at 282-0220 or Kathleen Ezar at 639-0838.

• — Tuesday, Feb. 12, 9 a.m. — Dogie hike to Bear Sign and Secret canyons; eight miles; 800-foot elevation change; rated moderate, rocky, and steep. Contact Dick Eibeck at 203-0219 or Sandy Unger at 204-1169.

• — Thursday, Feb. 14, 9 a.m. —Amblers hike to Brins Mesa; five miles; 800-foot elevation change; rated easy. Contact John Mezera at 284-5395 or Bob Allison at 284-2931.

• — Thursday, Feb. 14, 9 a.m. —Trail Boss Favorite hike to Narrow Canyon loop; six miles; 700-foot elevation change; rated moderate. Contact Bill Baker at 203-4126.

• — Thursday, February 14, 7 p.m. — Sedona Westerners meeting at The Church of the Red Rocks.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat and bring sufficient water for expected hiking conditions.

They also are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes.

For club information, call Charles West at 282-9007.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May for hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Olga Ostrom.

Land Navigation with Al Cornell 1/31/02

Al introduces assistants Sherry and Ruth his wife. Fred Johnson, James Terry and others prepare to plot courses.

IN THE FIELD

Jim O'Brien, Sherry, Gini O'Brien, Charles West, Al Cornell, & ducking under barb wire. Ruth Cornell

Field Exercise Complete

Amblers hike Baldwin Trail for first time

By John Mezera
Red Rock News
2/18/02

ON A BEAUTIFUL November day last year, the Ambler group of the Sedona Westerners was led by Barbara Mezera on a hike of the Baldwin Trail. This is a new hike for the Amblers and was recommended by Barbara, who has explored this trail many times with her faithful companion Payson.

By means of a GPS, it was determined that the hike was a little more than three miles, with an elevation change of 220 feet. This is an ideal Ambler-level hike and will be in next year's Ambler schedule. Our group agreed with this but suggested that it be scheduled earlier to capture the peak fall colors.

Our leader showed great compassion for the group, with adequate stops for nature calls and photo opportunities. After one hour on the trail, we stopped for our coffee break. Normally we rely upon "Mousie" Staub to mention "Is it time to eat?" but she was not with us that day.

After a short break, we continued on the trail. In no time at all, we entered a wooded area, which offered shade but was not a requirement. Off to our left stood Napoleon's tomb, which has a top made of Fort Apache limestone. Its elevation is 4,300 feet.

Directly to our right was Cathedral Rock, with its saddle made of the same Fort Apache limestone but at a higher level of 4,800 feet. Since we are the Amblers, it was quickly decided not to climb either peak.

Our lunch spot was selected with great care by our leader. It was on a dry flat rock formation on Oak Creek. In the background was the beautiful view of Cathedral Rock.

She found this special spot while exploring with her dog, Payson, and shared it with us during this hike. All vowed to return to this location in warmer weather.

Many thanks to Barbara and Payson for a great hike.

Courtesy photo/Sedona Red Rock News

THE AMBLERS pose together for a group photo in front of Cathedral Rock.

Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, Feb. 16, 9 a.m. — Scout-led hike to H S/Secret Canyon Loop, six miles and 500-foot elevation change, moderate. Contact Cactus Dodger Bob Dunnert, 204-2473, or assistant Cactus Dodger Dan McKnight, 284-9839, for up-to-date hike information.

• Sunday, Feb. 17, 1:30 p.m. — Drover hike to Back O'Beyond Loop (key exchange), four miles, 400-foot elevation change, rated moderate with some rock scramble. Contact Drover Mathu Leach, 282-0220, or assistant Drover Kathleen Ezar, 639-0838, for up-to-date hike information.

• Tuesday, Feb. 19, 9 a.m. — Dogie hike to Woods Canyon via Hot Loop, six miles, 900-foot elevation change, rated moderate. Contact Dogie Boss Dick Eibeck, 203-0219, or associate Dogie Boss Sandy Unger, 204-1169, for up-to-date hike information.

• Thursday, Feb. 21, 9 a.m. — Ambler-led hike to H S Canyon, five miles, 400-foot elevation change, easy. Contact Ambler Boss John Mezera, 284-5395, or assistant Ambler Boss Bob Allison, 284-2981, for up-to-date hike information.

• Thursday, Feb. 21, 7:30 a.m. — Club member only Mustang Geology Hike to the Grand Canyon. Contact Mustang Boss Bill Baker, 203-4126, for up-to-date information. An additional geology hike to the Grand Canyon will be on Friday, Feb. 22.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat; bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions (ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the fifties, and adding another quart for each ten degrees of temperature increase); and are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

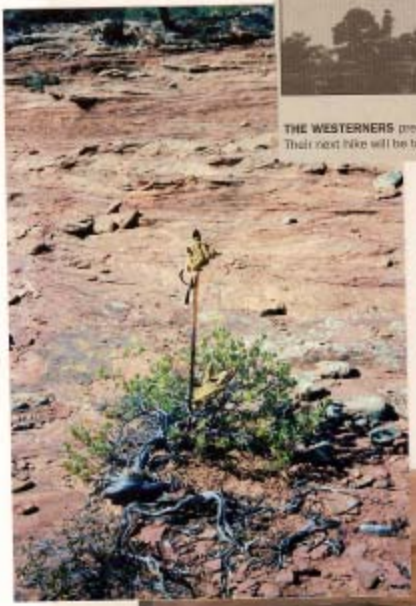
Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by John Mezera.

Break offered views of Cathedral Rock

Photo courtesy of Soldier Westerners

THE WESTERNERS prepare for a lunch break on Soldier Heights Loop. Their next hike will be to Starling Pass/Narrow Canyon this Saturday.



Is that all that's left of a hiker from the Soldier Heights Loop Hike? Ask Ron Schneider

Hike Weatherford in Fall

Courtesy of Sedona Westerners

THE WESTERNERS hiked Weatherford Trail last week. The trail led to Weatherford Canyon, which is home to an amazing aspen grove.

SEDONA WESTERNERS

• • •

Mountain hike offers aspen walk

By Kay Schneider

LAST FALL the Dogies gathered around Dick Elbeck, Dogie boss and professed hike leader of the day. The scheduled hike promised cooler temperatures as the hikers headed north to Flagstaff. We also hoped to find fall colors cloaking the aspens.

At the Weatherford trailhead, Elbeck appointed Bill Baker tailgater, and we were off, almost. Seems the leader needed to return to the car for his hat. The Weatherford Trail, Elbeck informed us, was established by the Weatherford Hotel in Flagstaff as a motor route for its guests in the 1920s.

The Great Depression ended the tours, but the trail has been well maintained over the years. This trail has a side branch called Weatherford Canyon, which is home to an amazing aspen grove. The hikers savored it as they took a break.

Feeling refreshed, the hikers found the aspens began to increase in density as they continued up the trail. At one point the aspens were so thick they were able to lose themselves in the experience. Immersing themselves in the scenery, the hikers disappeared quickly just as the scouting parties did in Hollywood Westerns.

The trees in this area were just beginning to take on the gold of autumn, which prompted Larry Dreyfuss to suggest the hikers walk slower to give the trees time to become more colorful. He looked a little sheepish as they walked on at a steady pace ignoring his comment.

ASPEN: Westerners reflect on the wonders of the fall season

Red Rock News 2/22/02

from Page 10A

The hikers happened upon a ponderosa pine that was dedicated as a memorial to David Hensley, as we approached the Weatherford Trail again.

Back on the Weatherford, the hikers connected with the Kachina Trail where they tested their ability to cope with repetition. Has anyone ever counted the number of time the elevation dips and rises on that trail?

When hikers broke out into the meadow below Humphreys and Agassiz peaks, Mother Nature rewarded the hikers' efforts with a glorious display of gold and red aspens dotting the middle ground of her wonderful natural painting. They paused for lunch to admire the view.

After eating, some of the hikers climbed higher to improve the perspective, while others caught 40 winks on the meadows soft grasses. The adventurers spotted a bristlecone pine and pockets of brilliant color from distant aspens.

The hike back was not as scenic, but was nonetheless enjoyable. This allowed the hikers time to reflect on the wonders of fall and how lucky they felt to be in such beauty.

Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, Feb. 23, 9 a.m. — Scout-led hike Jim Bryant Trail; 6 miles; 400-foot elevation change; rated moderate. Call Bob Dunnett at 204-2473 or Dan McKnight at 204-9839.

• Sunday, Feb. 24, 1:30 p.m. — Two Drover-led hikes: Snoopy Rock; 3 miles; 600-foot elevation change; rated moderate with steep rock scramble; or Munds Trail, a new trail along Schnebly Hill Road to Merry-Go-Round rock; 4 to 6 miles. Call Martha Leach at 282-0220 or Kathleen Ezar at 639-0838.

• Tuesday, Feb. 26, 9 a.m. — Dogie-led hike to Steamboat Rock from Soldier Pass; 6 miles; 700-foot elevation change; rated moderate with steep rock scramble and ledges. Call Dick Elbeck at 203-0219 or Sandy Unger at 204-1169.

• Thursday, Feb. 28, 9 a.m. — Two hikes: Ambler-led hike to Vultee Arch; 3.5 miles; 400-foot elevation change; rated easy. Call John Mezera at 284-5395 or Bob Allison at 284-2931.

Archaeological hike — Archaeology field trip (members only) to Dogas red rock art site; some boulder hopping.

Time permitting, we'll also visit a nearby hilltop fort site. Driving time one way abouy 45 minutes. We'll meet in the Village of Oak Creek behind the SuperVue Theater; 1.5 miles; minimum elevation change. Call Bill Baker at 203-4126.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat. They should bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions with no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s. They should add another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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Westerners' quiz on Sedona topography

Did you see Brins Mesa, Brindle Bull's gravesite or The Cockscomb?

Red Rock News
By P. Ronald Schneider
5/1/02

THIS WEEK'S Westerners hike report takes the form of a quiz to check both the knowledge of those who hiked with the Dogies on Feb. 19 and to relate to others what they missed had they been along.

The hikers divided into two groups to minimize their impact on the trail. Led by Fred Johnson and Sandy Unger, with respective tailgaters Jim Leavitt and Bill Gouin, the groups took off in separate directions.

Now for the quiz.

If your fortunate enough to join these groups you might have seen the following:

1. Wilson Mountain
2. Lost Wilson Mountain
3. Devil's Bridge
4. Long Canyon
5. Norm's Notch
6. Snow flurries
7. A boulder growing in a tree
8. Brins Mesa
9. Brins Ridge
10. Brindle Bull's gravesite
11. Van Deren Cabin
12. 200-foot high waterfall
13. Bear tracks
14. A three-legged dog looking for the man who shot his "Paw."
15. Coffee Pot Rock
16. Soldier Pass
17. Only seven other hikers and the Westerners saw them twice because they were disoriented.
18. Secret Canyon
19. A hiker trying unsuccessfully to remove the boulder so identified in No. 7 above.
20. The dividing point between East and West Sedona denoted by two boulders filling the void in a 150-foot chasm.
21. Balancing boulder
22. Doe Mountain
23. The Cockscomb

24. If you selected 1-5, 7-9, 11, 15-19 and 21-23, you were very observant, for there are few hikes that offer such a wide and elevated view of Sedona's rock formations in one outing.

A brief explanation of the others is below:

• No. 6 was observed by one member of the group, but after several consultations, it seems that although it was cool enough for snow flurries, none were specifically verified. Perhaps pollen or dandruff.

• No. 10 was the invention of one hiker who so named the high pile of rocks at the end of Brins Mesa after hearing the story of the brindle bull who died by gunshot at the hands of two eager cowboys attempting to retrieve their lasso.

• No. 12 was easily envisioned in several of the deep crevasses encountered were any runoff present. Unfortunately, the dry weather to date could only allow us to imagine what a spectacular sight it would be.

• No. 13. The tracks of a bear were spotted on a solid rock ledge and only by one hiker (The same one who thought he saw snow flurries) and the contents of his thermos were seized for analysis.

• No. 14 was the punch line uttered by a dog entering a saloon and approaching the bar. It was but one of several frivolities shared during the afternoon break.

• No. 20 was a name given to the spot where a deep chasm was crossed by stepping on small boulders wedged in the opening.

The hike took the form of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" with questions of the leaders increasing both in frequency and difficulty as we trekked the roughly five miles in a little more than five hours.

In "millionaire" fashion, the leaders answered all, but didn't hesitate to call upon experts who might have been in the group and in some cases to poll the entire group to see what they believed.

All agreed that they couldn't think of a more beautiful and educational way to spend a Tuesday.

Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, March 2, 9 a.m. — Scout-led hike to Sterling Pass/Narrow Canyon; six miles with 800-foot elevation change; rated moderate with rock scramble and steep spots. Key exchange for drivers.

• Sunday, March 3, 1:30 p.m. — Dual Drover-led hikes: Dumfino Canyon; four miles and 500-foot elevation change; rated difficult, steep and rock scrambling. Brins Mesa at four miles; 400-foot elevation change and rated moderate.

• Monday, March 4, 9 a.m. — Botanical hike for members only.

• Tuesday, March 5, 9 a.m. — Dogies hike to Rabbit Ears/Courthouse Butte; seven miles; 500-foot elevation change and rated moderate.

• Thursday, March 7, 9 a.m. — Amblers hike to Woods Canyon, five miles, 400-foot elevation change and rated moderate.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat.

They should also bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions, ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

They are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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'Uncertain weather' didn't keep hikers off trail

By Marsha Amon
Red Rock News
3/8/02

THE HIKERS began their recent journey with uncertain weather.

The sky was lavender-gray with an optimistic ridge of bright light along the horizon. A dim sun struggled to break through behind dense cloud cover.

The hikers started the ascent hoping that things would improve. The trail passed through juniper, scrub oak, prickly pear and agave, and amazingly, considering the area's dry climate, the hikers even spotted some tiny ground ferns.

Westerners all try to minimize the impact on these plants as they hike; however, the prickly pear cactus is not easily avoided. Early on, one of the hikers had a prickly encounter with just such a cactus.

The thorns went right through his thick jeans. They all hiked ahead to give him a moment to drop his drawers to pull out the thorns. More to follow about Dave later.

As the hikers continued the climb and hiked along the ridge of Fay Canyon, the heights revealed phenomenal views of Chimney Rock and Munds and Lee mountains. In the far distance, Bell Rock appeared to be a small mound tucked behind Courthouse Butte. Many of us were struck by the unusual perspective of the familiar Sedona red rocks.

The first stop reached a flat rock shelf directly facing a tall red rock stack similar in formation to Chimney.

Here you are able to walk out to the narrow end of the shelf and get a good view of the Fay Canyon Arch.

An optional detour was offered at this point to climb down and explore an old bootlegger cave. Here the hikers found rusty remnants of an old still hidden underneath the overhang. In one corner of the cave, some hanging ferns decoratively draped down the walls.

After a short rest, the hikers resumed the relentless ascent. This hike is quite aerobic and challenging in its elevation gains.

As they climbed, the hikers came upon an area of unique rock formations. They saw light tan Coconino sandstone in deeply creviced, concentric shapes contrasted against Disneyesque spires of intensely colored red rock.

While climbing on the sandstone, the hikers noticed brilliantly-colored lichen of russet and chartreuse splinkled in their path.

As they reached the summit, they passed snow mounds on the ground. They finally got to the top of Bear Mountain, and the lunchtime vistas were spectacular.

The hikers looked down at vast dark green hills dotted with sage and yellow vegetation against vermilion rock spires.

To the right, they could see the snowcapped San Francisco peaks. The mountain top was cold, and the hikers had to layer up but were grateful that they made it up without any severe weather.

As the hikers piled themselves away from the wonderful viewpoint and started the descent, they saw layers of overlapping mountains fading into the horizon. The way down was endlessly steep with much loose rock.

One hiker grumbled aloud, "Why do I do this?" Then he proposed some possible answers. "For the companionship? For the exercise? For the sweeping views?"

In shared silence, the hikers knew the answer was far more. Those who hike in Sedona share a special connection to the environment that is mystical, spiritual and fills them with an awesome experience that cannot be rationalized by simple explanation.

Halfway down, there was a tank directly below, and as the hikers continued, they could see Doe Mountain to the left with The Cockscomb behind it. The airport looked like a thin white line from this angle.

Below, the destination, the dirt road where the hikers began could be seen, and in the foreground there was a sage-green meadow, which becomes dotted with colorful flowers in the spring.

Shortly before completing the hike, Dave had another run-in with a prickly pear. This time there were many thorns, and the situation called for decisive action.

After escorting Dave to the parking lot, several women surrounded him and went to work on him with tweezers, removing the thorns from his jacket, shirt and jeans.

Interestingly enough, he did not seem to be in pain; in fact, he had a big smile on his face and was thoroughly enjoying the attention these women were giving him.

Dave handled his cactus encounters well, but if he tangles with any more cactus, the Westerners will have to wonder just how much of an accident-prone is.

Upcoming hikes, events

• Saturday, March 9, 9 a.m. — Scout-led hike to Sycamore Canyon Loop, 10 miles, 1,000-foot elevation change, rated difficult, steep sections with some rock scramble.

• Sunday, March 10, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 2; Encinos Loop; three miles; 350-foot elevation change; rated easy.

• Sunday, March 10, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 1; Huckaby Trail; three miles; 300-foot elevation change; rated easy.

• Tuesday, March 12, 9 a.m. — Dogies; Sterling Pass Saddle and Vultee Arch; five miles; 500-foot elevation change; rated moderate.

Hike into Grand Canyon reveals beautiful falls

Red Rock News 2/10/02

Westerners spend six days hiking in 'the big ditch'

By Norm Taylor

IT'S NOONTIME, and four hikers have just arrived via the Bill Hall trail at the site of what is to be their last campsite before the final assent out of the canyon, four days hence.

The view in the direction of the route just traversed is one of a sun-lit, near-vertical wall.

The view ahead so the south and southeast is of one red rock canyon after another culminating in the shadow cast by the south rim of the main canyon.

One can not help but be overwhelmed by the beauty all about. One can also not help but feel the relief that comes with the knowledge that at last 4½ pounds of the 18 pounds of water, with which each started the day, are to be dropped off for the last day of the trip.

No source of water exists along this route between rim and near-river level.

Then it's on to the first campsite at the top of the Redwall formation at 5,200 feet. It is really quiet.

The next day, the route is steeply down again and divided between two descents. The first, via the Thunder River trail, leaves the Redwall cliffs behind.

The second, the Deer Creek trail, traverses some very steep, sloping terrain and passes a lovely waterfall before arriving at the second campsite on Deer Creek, some four hundred feet above the river.

Water at last. The creek flows into the Colorado through a magnificent slot canyon, and the afternoon is devoted to experiencing its beauty.

People seem unable to travel anywhere without leaving their mark.

In this case, persons unknown, but apparently of large proportions, built some chairs of stone suitable for giants.

Then, too, the possibility exists that the gods who created the canyon built the chairs. In any event, climb into a chair and with the above noted falls to your back, contemplate the view. It's wild and rugged.

Day three is an upriver hike to the Lower Tapeats campsite on a wonderful sand beach. There are, of course, a few obstacles. The first, a nasty little spit of a mountain that has to be surmounted.

The second, an ice-cold, stony stream that has to be traversed to get into the campsite. Sharing the one pair of Tevas on the trip makes it easy; each in turn wades the stream and then tosses the shoes back across the stream to the next in line.

So what if they are size 14. Then last, but not least, is the matter of who is to get to use the campsite, the resident turkey or the hikers.

The hikers win, but not by much, and not before a mighty rumpus takes place in one of the tents and turkey feathers are seen to be flying everywhere. The fishing in the Colorado is for naught.

Day four, another beautiful day, starts out with a repeat of the day before stream crossing. It has been decided to hike the Tapeats along its western side.

This means a cliff walk, with the Tapeats being left farther and farther below, as the trail climbs to the north before descending to meet the stream near the campsite at Upper Tapeats.

There may be an alternate route, but for one stretch of trail, it is necessary to walk with pack hard against the wall, a balancing act not to be forgotten. Never mind though, the trail by this time has come down from perhaps 500 to some 50 feet above the stream.

This night's campsite is again gained shortly after the noon hour, and in plenty of time for a visit to the high point of the trip, Thunder River Falls.

Who would think that such a wonderful site would be found in the Grand Canyon of Arizona. The falls is located above the Upper Tapeats campsite and becomes Thunder River, as it cascades down alongside the trail for an overall drop of some 800 feet.

The climb to the falls is more than worth the effort, and for those not wishing to make the extra climb, the trail is also the trail back to the canyon rim.

Day five. It's up and out for first leg of the climb out of the canyon. The stashed water supply lies ahead for day six and final assent.

Dan McKnight was the leader. Great trip, Dan. And, yours truly usually tailgated if only because his pack weighed about as much as he does.

Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, March 16, 9 a.m. — Scout-led; Walker Basin (VOC) (HC); seven miles; 800-foot elevation change; difficult, rock scramble and steep.

Contact Bob Dannert 204-2473 or Dan McKnight 204-9839.

• Sunday, March 17, 1:30 p.m. — Drover No. 1; Lizard Head; three miles; 800-foot elevation change, difficult and steep; and Drovers No. 2; Cathedral Saddle; three miles; 400-foot elevation change, moderate, steep and rock scramble.

Contact Martha Leech 282-0220 or Kathleen Ezar 639-0838.

• Tuesday, March 19, 9 a.m. — Dogies; Narrow Canyon Loop; six miles; 700-foot elevation change, moderate and rock scramble.

Contact Dick Eiheck 203-0219 or Sandy Unger 204-1169.

• Thursday, March 21, 9 a.m. — Trail Boss Favorite; Boynton Canyon Mushroom (dual); six

Where have all the flowers gone?

By Trina Feldman

Red Rock News
3/22/02

Dry weather deprives forest lands of springtime splendor

A HARDY GROUP of Sedona Westerners gathered for the Sterling Pass-Narrow Canyon Loop Saturday hike. This first hike of March was expected to be approximately eight miles and moderately difficult.

Two visitors from Colorado joined the group, and they were welcomed, not only by the enthusiastic Westerners, but also by 20-degree temperatures with gusting winds from the north.

The Colorado couple was used to the conditions, but Sedona hikers donned unaccustomed warm layers of polar fleece, hats and caps. They commenced to wish for the predicted daily high of 45 degrees.

Elyse Holland and Len Ostrom agreed to lead the two groups and arranged for a key exchange in the vicinity of Vultee Arch.

The groups dispersed, and Olga Ostrom was selected as tailgater for the Narrow Canyon group.

The drought that has plagued Sedona this winter was in evidence by the total absence of spring flowers.

The scrub oak was pale and was dropping leaves. The manzanita seems late to blossom and there were only a few minute buds. The enduring Arizona cypress took advantage of the dry, windy weather to release their heavy burdens of pollen. Hikers suspected that the yellow haze in the canyon was composed chiefly of pollen.

Coffee break included macadamia nut cookies provided by the Westerners' own cookie chef, Bob Dannert.

Dannert's cookies were better than his botany, as he attempted to confuse the day's scribe with his attention to the rare Sedona Nuttall's banana yucca.

The unique range of this rare banana yucca is limited to the side of trails in the Sedona area. This plant is unusual because it lacks bilateral symmetry.

SEDONA WESTERNERS

Strangely, this yucca has blunted leaves on the side of the plant adjacent to the trail and bayonet-sharp yucca leaves on the opposite side of the plant.

After departing from the Bear Sign Trail and heading toward Narrow Canyon, Mick Simeon noticed some genuine bear "sign."

It seemed appropriate that the bear evidence was dropped on the trail in a thick stand of manzanita or Arctostaphylos (bear berry). All Saturday hikers reunited briefly near Vultee Arch and had lunch nearby. In the relative warmth of the afternoon, the hikes were completed.

Representative members of both Sedona Westerners hiking groups gathered at the end of the afternoon at a local coffee house to chat and laugh at their "cap hair," which had been shaped in comical fashions by the tight, warm headgear required by the day's unusually cold weather conditions.

Upcoming hikes

- Saturday, March 23, 9 a.m. — Scout led hike to Rabbit Ears; seven miles with 500-foot elevation change; rated difficult with rock scramble.
- Sunday, March 24, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 1, hike on Llama Trail. This is a new hike; five to six miles with a minimum elevation change and rated moderate.
- Sunday, March 24, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 2, hike into Woods Canyon; five miles with a 400-foot elevation change and rated easy.
- Tuesday, March 26, 9 a.m. — Dogies hike to Horse Mesa via Hot Loop Trail; eight miles with difficult downhill shortcuts and 900-foot elevation change.
- Thursday, March 28, 9 a.m. — Amblers hike to Wet Beaver Creek; five miles with 400-foot elevation change and rated easy.
- Thursday, March 28, 9 a.m. — Archeology Field Trip for members only and of moderate difficulty.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, and bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions.

Hikers should bring no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and bring another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, contact Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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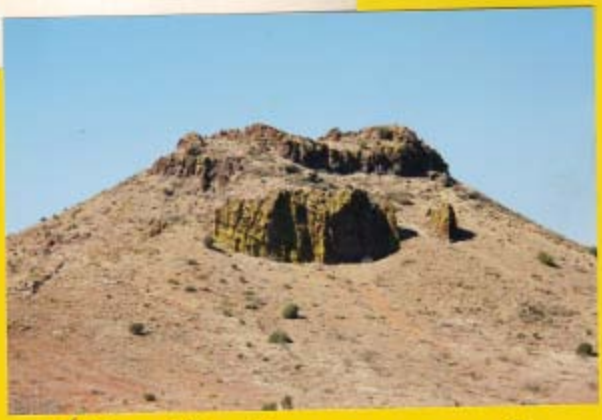


Hilltop Fort Site ~ Dugas Road

Sturgis receives archaeology award

Red Rock News 1/5/02

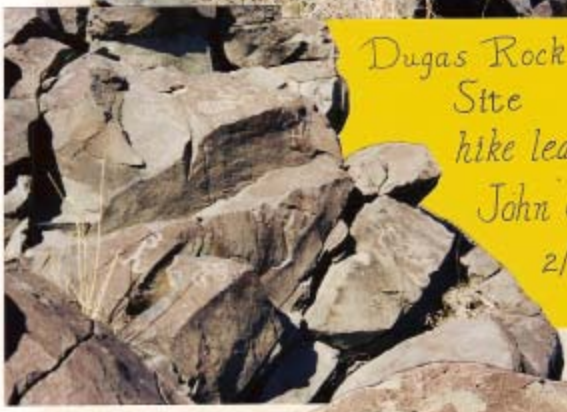
John Sturgis has been named the Arizona Avocational Archaeologist of the Year for 2001.

The award is given annually by the Governor's Archaeological Advisory Commission in recognition of contributions to Arizona's cultural preservation.

Sturgis has been a member of the Verde Valley chapter of the Arizona Archaeology Society and has been a principal force with the Arizona society's certification division. David Cushman, chairman of the governor's commission, presented the award to Sturgis at the annual Archaeological Exposition in Coolidge on March 3. Sturgis has been a driving force in Arizona avocational archaeology for some 14 years.

Sturgis has given many hours to the Friends of the Forest, the Museum of Northern Arizona, the Coconino National Forest, and the Site Steward program operated under the auspices of the State Historical Preservation Office.

Sturgis lives in the Village of Oak Creek with his wife Barbara, who is also an avid avocational archaeologist, with a primary interest in preserving and recording the rock art of the area.



Dugas Rock Art Site
hike leader
John Sturgis
2/28/02

Brins Mesa offers views

Hikers pass native Arizona cypress on way to mesa's top

By Bob Shuman

"ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL, sunny day for a hike in paradise," commented one of the Westerners.

The Sedona Westerners hiked Brins Mesa trail in early March. The hike, which began a short distance from Uptown, climbed 1.5 miles to a mesa sandwiched between Brins Ridge and Wilson Mountain.

Bob Shuman led the hike with the assistance of Helmut Larsen as the tailgater. This hike is popular because of its easy access and magnificent views. Most of Sedona's famous red rock landmarks are visible from this hike.

The climb began at the one-mile point, where the views were limited at best. The reward for completing the ascent became evident once the hikers reached the mesa's edge and beheld the vast panoramic view.

A new hiker, Mike Rinaldi, asked the hike leader whether the mesa had any vortex sites. The other hikers concluded from his question that Mike was evidently new to the Sedona area.

The trail began at the gate to the old shooting range, wound through Arizona cypress and pinyon trees. The Arizona cypress is unique to the Verde Valley.

Manzanita bushes lined the route and helped mark the easy path. The manzanita, noted for its maroon and silver branches in spring with delicate pink and white flowers shaped like bells, will bore tiny red-colored apples in the fall.

Manzanita in Spanish means "little apple," and they are favorites of javelina and coyote.

From the mesa, hikers could admire The Fin, with its triangular sail of cream-colored Coconino sandstone and Steamboat Rock, with its towering smokestack of reddish-orange hue, which had a beautiful glow in the Sedona sun.

SEDONA WESTERNERS

* * *

Both The Fin and Steamboat Rock are among the Westerners' favorite hike destinations.

As the trail meandered toward the mesa, Cibola Mitten and Brins Ridge guarded the western flank. The hike leader commented that the Brins Ridge hike was challenging, but not for those squeamish about heights.

At a low spot, about three-quarters of a mile long, the trail started to climb to Brins Mesa.

Brins Mesa was named in memory of a wily brindle bull that evaded a roundup on the mesa's high pastures. As the story goes, a pair of cowboys finally roped old Brin, but he dragged them into the brush.

Rather than continue the struggle, they shot him. They kept this fact a secret for a time because of their shame for letting old Brin get the better of them.

After about 45 minutes at a good clip, hikers reached a series of natural red rock steps leading up to a broad bench in the Schnebly Hill Formation. It was a perfect spot to pause, have a break, catch their breath and identify more of Sedona's rock formations.

Snoopy Rock, which overlooks West Sedona and Uptown, appeared to watch over Sedona in a protective manner. Further south loomed the mirror image, Twin Buttes.

Sharp-eyed hikers spotted the wagon train on top of Lee Mountain, as well as Courthouse and Bell rocks peeking out from behind Twin Buttes.

Near the base of Wilson Mountain, the highest peak in Sedona at 7,122 feet, the hikers viewed several red rock spires. The largest of the spires is dubbed "The Bishop," while the smaller two were named "The Nuns."

Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, March 30, 9 a.m. — Scout-led down A.B. Young Trail to crash site; four to six miles;

# of city and vortexes

Photo courtesy of the Sedona Westerners

THE WESTERNERS had a great view of The Fin off Brins Mesa Trail. *Red Rock News 4/20/02*

2,300-foot elevation change; rated moderate/steep. Contact Bob Danner at 204-2473 or Dan McKnight at 204-9839.

• Sunday, March 31, 1:30 p.m. — two Drover hikes. No. 1, Doe Mountain; three miles, 500-foot elevation change, rated moderate/rocky. No. 2, Fay Canyon; 4 miles; 500-foot elevation change, rated moderate. Contact Martha Leach at 282-0720 or Kathleen Esar at 639-0838.

• Monday, April 1, 9 a.m. — Trail Boss favorite botany hike; members only. Contact Bill Baker at 203-4126.

• Tuesday, April 2, 9 a.m. — Duggies hike to Secret Canyon and; six miles; 700-foot elevation change, rated easy, rocky and steep. Contact Dick Elbeck at 203-0219 or Sandy Unger at 204-1169.

• Thursday, April 4, 9 a.m. — Amblers hike to Sycamore Overlook; two miles; 300-foot elevation change, rated easy. Contact John Meszes at 284-5395 or Bob Allison at 284-2931.

• Thursday, April 11, 7 p.m. — Sedona Westerners' meeting at The Church of the Red Rocks.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat. They should bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions.

Hikers should bring no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and add another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

They are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Bob Shumm.

Cold waters, more found at monument

Agua Fria monument contains archaeological site in need of protection

By Dick Griesenbeck

AT THE SUGGESTION of yours truly, past trail boss Sandy Unger researched and led a small group on an exploratory trip into the newly designated Agua Fria National Monument, east of the Sunset Point rest area.

The day was blustery, but sunny, and an hour's drive got the group to the Badger Springs turnoff from I-17, and the parking area about a quarter mile to the east.

Other than a new kiosk and a brochure and rough map in the sign-in box, nothing signaled the elevated status of the area.

About a mile down a sandy wash, the hikers were startled by the briskly flowing, clear, cold waters of the Agua Fria River, about the size of upper Oak Creek, which had appeared dry when crossed north of Cordes Junction.

A meandering, at times disappearing, path upstream for about a mile, led to a rocky dike, which the group decided not to cross, having gotten a good idea of what was to see in this riparian belt.

Between mesquit-topped canyon walls, mainly a few beautifully polished outcrops of granite and typical vegetation of tamarisk and deep dry grass, it was seemingly a paradise for deer and javelina (and likely rattlers in season), though the hikers saw none.

At an elevated flat area on the walk back, the group's sharp-eyed leader commented that it seemed a good spot for an Indian camp or dwelling.

Within seconds, numerous petroglyphs on the rock wall above were spotted to prove his intuition correct. It was a quick walk to the car and a few miles back on I-17 to the Bloody Basin turnoff to reach the northern part of Perry Mesa. The road was, at times rough, dirt road with surprisingly heavy traffic, seemingly by quail hunters and ATV enthusiasts.

Eventually, one other party that came from the hikers' past, the La Plata pueblo ruin, helped us find it in somewhat of a maze of ranch trails.

Sadly, it is not yet more than an acre-sized mound of rocks, with a few ground-floor rooms partly excavated at the center, within a larger field strewn with potshards and flint chips.

About a one-third of a mile away is a related rock enclosure at the point overlooking the confluence of Silver Creek and the Agua Fria.

To become another Tuzigoot or similar attraction will require a lot of excavation and restoration work, a dubious prospect given present fiscal priorities.

That vision came in the form of a large white tent the hikers had noticed on the Four Seasons golf resort property on the way in, which was beckoning with sounds of music and signs of much coming and going as the hikers returned.

The hikers detoured to, and were ushered into, what turned out to be a reception tent bristling with patrons and hospitality personnel, who proffered food, drinks, massages and other services, and of course, Four Seasons information.

Not wanting to seem ungracious, the hikers did accept reluctantly various refreshments and studied project maps and charts.

As to the vision for the Westerners, the hikers should promptly look to acquire a tent, albeit a smaller one, and find a sponsor willing to cool off, water and feed returning dry, hungry and tired hikers at the Posse Grounds before loosing them into dangerous rush-hour traffic. I'll be glad to chair a committee to pursue this idea.

The Sedona Westerners gather regularly from mid-September to mid-May to hike and explore Northern Arizona. The Westerners column is published on Friday and is written this week by Dick Griesenbeck.

Red Rock News 4/5/02

SEDONA WESTERNERS

It is said to be one of many large sites, and one can only hope that monument status will enhance both protection and research of the area and possibly connecting the prehistoric to the present native population.

I want to briefly mention one of last fall's hikes into Long Canyon, only in part because of its great scenic and archaeological interest and physical challenges. But mainly, I wanted to mention it because it ended with a vision for the future of Westerner hiking.

File Photo/Sedona Red Rock News

WEST FORK is just one of the many local trails that the Sedona Westerners Hike.

Upcoming hikes

- Saturday, April 6, 9 a.m. — Scout led; Horse Mesa/Hot Loop; 10 miles; 1,000-foot elevation change; and difficult with rock scramble.
- Sunday, April 7, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 2; Mescal Mountain (Sun); three miles; 500-foot elevation change; moderate and steep.
- Sunday, April 7, 1:30 p.m. — Drovers No. 1; Bell Rock-Courthouse Rock loop; four miles; 200-foot elevation change and easy.
- Tuesday, April 9, 9 a.m. — Dogies; The Fin loop; four miles; 700-foot elevation change; difficult, rock scramble, steep and ledges.
- Thursday, April 11, 9 a.m. — Trail boss favorite; Walker Mountain; eight miles; 1,900-foot elevation change and difficult.
- Thursday, April 11, 9 a.m. — Amblers; Bear Valley; three miles; 250-foot elevation change and easy.
- Thursday, April 11, 7 p.m. — General membership meeting at The Church of the Red Rocks and "easy."

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, and bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions, from no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

Hikers are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves, and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9607 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

Red dust, rain drops on Hot Loop

By Phyllis Lindberg
Red Rock News 4/2/02

RAIN SHOWERS threatened as a group of intrepid Westerners assembled near the Jacks Canyon trailhead for the ascent up the Hot Loop Trail. Impending rain prompted suggestions to scrub this hike in favor of a snack at a local restaurant. But the intrepid contingent prevailed, and off everyone went.

The group welcomed two members of the Yavapai Hikers of Prescott, who came along to check out the route. Ironically, the hike leader, Bill Johnson, is a former weatherman. He was true to his calling, demonstrating a variety of weather phenomena that day.

Dan McKnight tailgated as the group climbed the half-mile up through red soil to the saddle.

Each footstep raising a puff of red dust, attesting to the dangerously dry condition of the forest.

Rain began to splatter the power-dry dust, a red puff with each splatter, until the surface was moist. Red dust still puffed from underneath the damp surface with each footstep.

Renta proved to be the most prepared hiker by producing an umbrella. Others more modestly produced raincoats and ponchos.

"How wonderful to have a cool, damp day for hiking," Renata said, and others agreed.

Hot Loop, named according to the Mangums' *Sedona Hikes*, in reference to a branding iron, can be a painstakingly hot trek. According to the map, the Hot Loop Trail continues on for miles, eventually looping around to join the Jacks Canyon Trail at Munds Mountain Saddle.

As the group continued uphill, they saw valley fog out to the southwest, lying along the foot of Mingus Mountain.

It was truly a lovely sight. About this time, the weatherman threw in a bit of hail, just for variety.

The trail swung across a lovely red rock wash and on up the valley, a nice variety of hiking before the not-easily-forgotten steady climb through weathered basalt.

Work has been done on this trail in recent years to much improve it. Drainage channels have been added. The trail has been cleared and smoothed.

If you'd like to be involved in this type of activity, at least two active volunteer groups work on local trails: Friends of the Forest, call Norm Herkenham at 282-4291 and TRACS, call Barry Gold at 282-0953.

As hikers toiled upward through the junipers, rain showers were persistent, forming the infamous muds in the weathered basalt soil of the Hot Loop Trail.

Soon each trodding foot was carrying a couple of extra pounds of gray, wet and moist soil. Sounds of slurping footsteps reminded this writer of schoolboys eating soup.

Soils formed from weathering basalt lava contain lots of clay, hence the clinging mud. The early Spanish explorers called regions of rough and barren lava flows *Malpais* (mál-pie), literally, *mal pais* or bad land.

Locally, the basaltic, dark building stone from lava flows is called malpais. The hikers attained flat land on the mesa top.

As showers settled in, agreement was reached that discretion is the better part of valor, and the group voted that they'd reached the destination for the day.

As heavy feet sloshed back down the trail, many were glad for the hiking sticks they used, an increasingly common item for Westerner hikers at all levels of ability.

Hikers were delighted that local areas have received moisture at last. All agreed, it was a stimulating and successful day.

Coming hikes

- Saturday, April 13, 8 a.m. (note time change) — Scout-led hike to Munds Mountain; 10 miles with 800-foot elevation change, difficult and steep with rock scrambles. Contact Bob Dannert at 204-2473 or Dan McKnight at 204-9839 for information.
- Sunday, April 14, 1:30 p.m., two Drover hikes — No. 1, Twin Buttes Saddle; 4 miles; 500-foot elevation change, moderate and steep; No. 2 — Baldwin Trail (a new hike); 3 miles; 200-foot elevation change and easy. Contact Martha Leach at 282-0220 or Kathleen Enz at 639-0838.
- Tuesday, April 16, 9 a.m. — Dogie hike to Munds Mountain, 7 miles; 800-foot elevation change and moderate with rock scramble.
- Thursday, April 18, 8 a.m. — Geology hike for members only (note early start time); a walking tour of Sedona geology; 6 miles; 400-foot elevation change and moderate. Contact Bill Baker at 203-4126 or Paul Lindberg at 282-1247.
- Thursday, April 18, 9 a.m. — Amblers hike along Bell Rock/Courthouse Butte Loop; 4½ miles; 200-foot elevation change and easy. Contact John Mezera at 284-5395 or Bob Allison at 284-2931.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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Munds Trail follows old wagon road

Forest Service, volunteers recently refurbished trail on city's eastern end

By Bob Shuman
Red Rock News
4/19/02

THE WESTERNERS offer a special hiking experience on Sunday afternoons for those who are busy during the week.

Allowing time for Sunday morning worship, these half-day hikes are the perfect way to enjoy not only the weather and the beauty of Sedona but also the companionship and conversation of fellow hikers.

In mid-February, the Sunday hikers tackled the Munds Trail, which roughly follows the Old Munds Wagon Road that runs parallel to Schnebly Hill Road.

The trail actually begins at the Huckaby trailhead where the pavement ends on Schnebly Hill Road. However, the hike was shortened due to the half-day time constraints. Therefore, this abbreviated hike began at the parking area near the trail for Dumfino Canyon.

The Forest Service, with the assistance of the two local volunteer trail groups, the Friends of the Forest, the Trail Resource Access Coalition of Sedona, and a national group call Youth Civilian Conservation Corps, recently helped complete this Munds Trail.

The trail roughly follows the old 1902 wagon road alignment that went to Flagstaff.

Due to the large number of hikers who turned out for the Munds Trail, the group was divided.

One group, led by Bob Dunnert, took a slower pace while the other group, led by Bob Shuman, hiked at a faster clip.

Fondly known as "Cookie Bob," Dunnert is renowned for his "hell bent for leather hiking pace." No doubt he found leading the slower hike to be a challenge. In addition, Shuman encouraged Cookie Bob to start bringing cookies on all the Scout-led hikes.

All the hikers agreed this should be Cookie Bob's goal. On the faster hike, Shuman was assisted by Reno Pamintuan who volunteered to be the tailgater.

The Munds Trail winds its way up to the top of Munds Mountain, if followed to its ultimate conclusion.

However, to shorten the hike, Shuman and Dunnert led the hikers to a rock formation known as the Merry-Go-Round. This formation is so named for its similarity to a carousel. The views of this interesting formation were particularly enchanting in the lovely winter sunlight.

Many of the hikers made inquiries about the names of other rock formations that were visible from Munds Trail. Shuman was able to call to mind the name of some, but not all.

Several hikers asked Shuman about Bear Wallow. He explained that Bear Wallow is another popular Westerner hike that leads to a canyon to the west of the Munds Trail and ascends to The Mitten Ridge.

The hikers all agreed that the Munds Trail hike was a perfect way to relax and enjoy a Sunday afternoon.

Coming hikes

• Saturday, April 20, 8 a.m. — Scout-led Telephone/Cookstove loop; four miles; 1,000-foot elevation change, rated difficult-steep. Contact Dunnert at 204-2473 or Dan McKnight at 204-9839.

• Sunday, April 21, 1:30 p.m. — Two Drover hikes: No. 1, Submarine Rock; two miles; 400-foot elevation change, rated moderate and rocky; No. 2, Capital Butte cave; three miles; 500-foot elevation change, rated moderate-rocky-steep. Contact Martha Leach at 282-0220.

• Tuesday, April 23, 9 a.m. — Dogie hike to Harding Springs-Upper Cookstove; four miles; 700-foot elevation change, rated moderate-steep. Contact Dick Elberk at 203-0219 or Sandy Unger at 204-1169.

• Thursday, April 25, 9 a.m. — Ambler hike to Schuerman Mountain; 2.5 miles; 400-foot elevation change and rated easy. Contact John Mezera at 284-5395 or Bob Allison at 284-2931.

• Thursday, April 25, 9 a.m. — Archaeology hike members only. Contact Bill Baker at 203-4126.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat.

They should bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions: no less than one quart with temperatures in the 50s and another quart for each 10 degrees of temperature increase.

Hikers are urged to bring lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

For information, call Westerners trail boss Charles West at 282-9007 or wagon boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961.

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A geologic history of Northern Arizona

By Mamie Larock McEwen
Red Rock News
4/26/02

WESTERNERS ENJOYED two related club-member-only Mustang geology hikes this year led by Paul Lindberg.

In February, on a bright, but very cold winter morning, hikers left Sedona at 7:30 a.m. for a geological tour of the Grand Canyon to learn about the history of the exposed ancient rock formations in the canyon.

An unexpected surprise for the Westerners was a stop in Cameron to see actual dinosaur foot imprints in the patio floor rocks of a building at the trading post, as well as other ancient imprints in the rocks on the side of the building.

Then, the first of several short hikes took the Westerners to an overlook of the Little Colorado, where Lindberg began his explanation, in geological terms, of the evolution of the great layering of the rock formations in the canyon. Everyone listened attentively.

And, many held their breath as their leader stood casually on the very edge of the canyon while he talked to them about the ongoing shifts and changes, uplifts and downlifts of the massive rock formations, which have been occurring for millions of years.

The Westerners learned that in ancient times the Colorado River actually had flowed in the opposite direction.

While traveling west along the south rim, several stops and short hikes were made to the edge, all chosen by Lindberg for their clear and unique view of the canyon's rock layers.

The final stop provided the hikers with a good two-mile walk to the rim among fresh smelling pines, along a trail covered with winter ice and snow. Lunch at the rim was mixed with ongoing oohs and aahs at the clear, colorful and most spectacular winter views of the canyon.

Two months later in April, on a bright and warm spring morning, the Westerners gathered at 8 a.m. for another geological tour.

Again, it was led by Lindberg and with Phyllis Lindberg as tailgater. But this time, it was a walking tour, like an Australian walkabout, to view the same rock types here in Sedona as are seen 80 to 90 miles distant at the upper strata of the Grand Canyon.

Common outcroppings and massive spires that are seen everyday in Sedona became more fascinating to the hikers as they learned how they were formed.

It was interesting to learn that during the Ice Age, Oak Creek had flowed at almost a continuous flood stage over what is now Sedona. Lindberg also pointed out to his eager listeners that the small pebbles they were walking over were once the remains of boulders worn down by streams throughout the ages.

In Uptown, most hikers did not realize that the handsome rock facade in front of the public restroom was designed in the 1980s by Lindberg.

He said the builders were known as The Can Co. A large percentage of the rocks had been personally collected by Paul and Phyllis to represent Sedona's various rock strata. The Westerners stood around just marveling at the work done on the wall in front of them.

Continuing on their walk, the Westerners hiked up to the top of a high knoll off the Jordan Trail.

Lunch at this sight was mixed with ongoing oohs and aahs at the clear, colorful and most spectacular spring views of their Sedona.

One of the hikers asked Lindberg the reason for the rock fall at Fay Canyon. His answer was that gravity would have been the main cause, but it could have been triggered by rainstorms.

"Odds are it was time to go," he said.

Walking over smooth rock, a Westerner commented on the unusual charcoal color mottling the rock's surface, instead of the rich red one usually sees. Lindberg answered, "Goodyear-ite," meaning tires did it.

Then onto a sinkhole, where again the fearless leader explained its story. This time, he was not standing on the edge.

At that very moment, someone called out "snake," and everyone backed away. There it was, a green Mojave rattlesnake, neatly coiled vertically into a crevice, a bright eye on the Westerners.

The group continued a little more soberly on their walkabout as they headed back to the beginning of their six-mile trek.

Phyllis had continuously kept her eye out for stragglers to make sure that the group kept together.

And, at the end of the day, the Westerners thanked Paul because they so appreciated the effort he had gone to in sharing his knowledge of the town's geological history.

They also had learned that spring's cautions had arrived; look-out for snakes.

Courtesy of Sedona Westerners

GEOLOGIST PAUL LINDBERG lives on the edge at the Grand Canyon recently. He led the Westerners on a tour of Northern Arizona's geologic history.

Upcoming hikes

• Saturday, April 27, 8 a.m. — Scout led hike to Woodchute; 6 miles with a 500-foot elevation change and moderate. Contact Cactus Dodger Bob Dannest at 204-2473 or assistant Dan McKnight at 284-9839.

• Sunday, April 28, 1:30 p.m. — Two Drover hikes: No. 1 — Earls Canyon Loop; 4 miles; 300-foot elevation change, rated easy and rock scramble. No. 2 — Carrol Canyon; 3½ miles; 200-foot elevation change and rated easy. Contact Drover Martha Leach at 282-0220 or assistant Kathleen Ezar at 639-0838.

• Monday, April 29, 9 a.m. — Mustang Botany hike, members only. Contact Mustang Bill Baker at 203-4126.

• Tuesday, April 30, 9 a.m. — Dogie led hike to Steamboat Rock from Soldier Pass; 6 miles; 700-foot elevation change, rated moderate, rock scramble, steep and ledges. Contact Dogie Dick Erbeck at 203-0219 or associate Sandy Unger at 204-1169.

• Thursday, May 2, 9 a.m. — Ambler led hike to West Fork; 4 miles; 200-foot elevation change and rated easy. Contact Ambler John Mezera at 284-5395 or assistant Bob Allison at 284-2981.

• Thursday, May 2, at 9 a.m. — Mustang archaeology hike; members only. Contact Mustang Bill Baker at 203-4126.

• Thursday, May 9, at 12 p.m. — Spring cookout — no hike. Contact Prospector Larry Dreyfuss to trail boss Charles West at 282-9007.

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SEDONA WESTERNERS

Red Rock News

4/26/02

SEDONA WESTERNERS

Witness to glory of nature

By Gail Shaw

Sunday afternoon following a rare, but glorious thunderstorm the day before, a small group of Westerners gathered to brave the short, but steep, trail to Mescal Mountain. They hoped to enjoy the cool air and fragrant desert scent that only fresh rain can bring without getting their own dose of the deluge that had caught some Saturday hikers.

It was a close call for a few minutes, as early on they were forced to find shelter from a few threatening drops under the overhang of a small ruin. It was fun to sit quietly and speculate what life would have been like living there 900 years ago. The group decided that they did find this particular ruin quite charming, with a beautiful view of Long Canyon and several nice trees sheltering the site. When the sun peeked through, however, they were eager to be on their way.

Actually, from the beginning, the hike held many surprises. Soon after leaving the trailhead and adjusting to the euphoric feeling of being in nature on a beautiful day, the hikers rounded a bend only to run smack dab into the shockingly green and manicured, new Four Seasons Golf Course. And shocked, many of the group were, even knowing that such a project was being built. The sight was almost surreal and stirred very mixed emotions.

Hike leader Larry Dreyfus got the hikers back on course and geared them up for the challenge of the day. With boulders to scale, loose, rocky footing to manage, twisting manzanita groves to wind through, it was fun and great exercise scrambling up the steep trail.

This writer caught her foot on a root and tumbled, inviting others to tell their own adventurous tales of falling into cactus and off cliffs, and the like. My misstep paled next to theirs, fortunately; and I did not feel quite so clumsy.

On this beautiful afternoon with the skies filled with dark clouds and brilliant rays of sun shining through, it was magical on the top of Mescal Mountain. A nice flattop mesa, each side of which offered the hikers different views.

The group enjoyed meandering along the edges and even found what we suspected as being an endangered Cliff Rose. The Westerners well-known botanist Norm Herkenhan had discussed this rare plant species at the Keep Sedona Beautiful Native Plant workshop the day before, and many of the group were excited to see it.

The most memorable sight of the day, however, was looking down on the Enchantment Resort, as its rooftops, and the rocks surrounding it, gleamed in the sunshine and misty rain. The group expected a big rainbow to appear at any second, but it just never did.

Oh well, one can only handle so much Sedona beauty in one day.

Unfortunately, the Westerner hiking season has come to an end for the 2001-02 season.

Be sure to watch for the last article to appear on May 17, next Friday. See you next September for the start of our next hiking season.

Hikers must wear lugged or cleated hiking boots and a hat, bring sufficient water for the anticipated hiking conditions (ranging from no less than one quart with temperatures in the fifties, and adding another quart for each ten degrees of temperature increase), and are urged to bring a lunch for the all-day Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday hikes. Optional gloves and walking staffs are frequently handy.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to contact Westerners' trail boss Charles West at 282-9007.

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Rays of sunshine at Mescal Mountain

Sedona Westerners to begin summer hiatus

By Charles West
Red Rock News
5/9/02

The four weather seasons have a beginning and an end, set by the calendar for a specific date. The Sedona Westerners, a local hiking club with a membership of 270 people, also have a season for hiking and social activities.

The current season, which started Sept. 6, 2001, was brought to an end at the spring cookout May 9 at the Red Rock State Park off of Lower Red Rock Loop Road.

New leadership was named; past leadership was recognized and honored. This cookout is just one of the three social events of the season. The first is a fall cookout in October; the second is a holiday party in December. There are monthly meetings, also, conducting the business of the Westerners and presenting programs of interest to the members.

But, of course, the main events are the weekly hikes of five hiking groups. These hikes are each tailored to different levels of activity on different days, including two on the weekends.

Different interests range from the slow and easy hikes on Thursdays to the more difficult and sometimes challenging hikes on Saturdays. Half-day Sunday hikes of various difficulties fill out the weekend card. Tuesday's all-day hikes are a mix of medium terrain and speeds. Thursday's schedule also includes a variety of specialized hikes and interests and almost always present some learning opportunity.

But, no matter what hike it is, the participant will see what the beauty of Sedona and Northern Arizona is all about, not from some slick video, not from the window of an automobile or from some viewpoint on a highway, but up close on a trail where it is felt, examined, smelled and experienced.

Not some paved landscaped walk, as might be experienced in a more developed area of the United States, but a rock and dusty trail tread by other who love the area as the Sedona Westerners do.

The sun beats down; the winds blow; the rain, snow and hail fall (sometimes). No matter, our hikers, welcome the challenge of nature secure in the presence of the hike leader and their fellow members. Returning to home and its comforts is the prize for winning one's personal challenges.

Now that the end of the spring season and the beginnings of the fall season will soon be upon us, it is time to rest, repair, reexamine and renew ourselves, our bodies, boots and gear.

During the summer months, our new leadership, primarily the five hike bosses, will propose, prepare and present new hikes and new hiking schedules for discussion, dissection and drafting.

Meeting programs will be sought out. That does not mean our members will be idle — far from it. They will seek out new places to go, new things to learn and new ideas to confront. They are Sedona Westerners; that's what they do.

Interested persons desiring more information about the club and its activities are invited to watch for this column in late August and early September and to contact Westerners Trail Boss Dave Jackson at 282-8961 or Wagon Boss Dave Singer at 282-8938.

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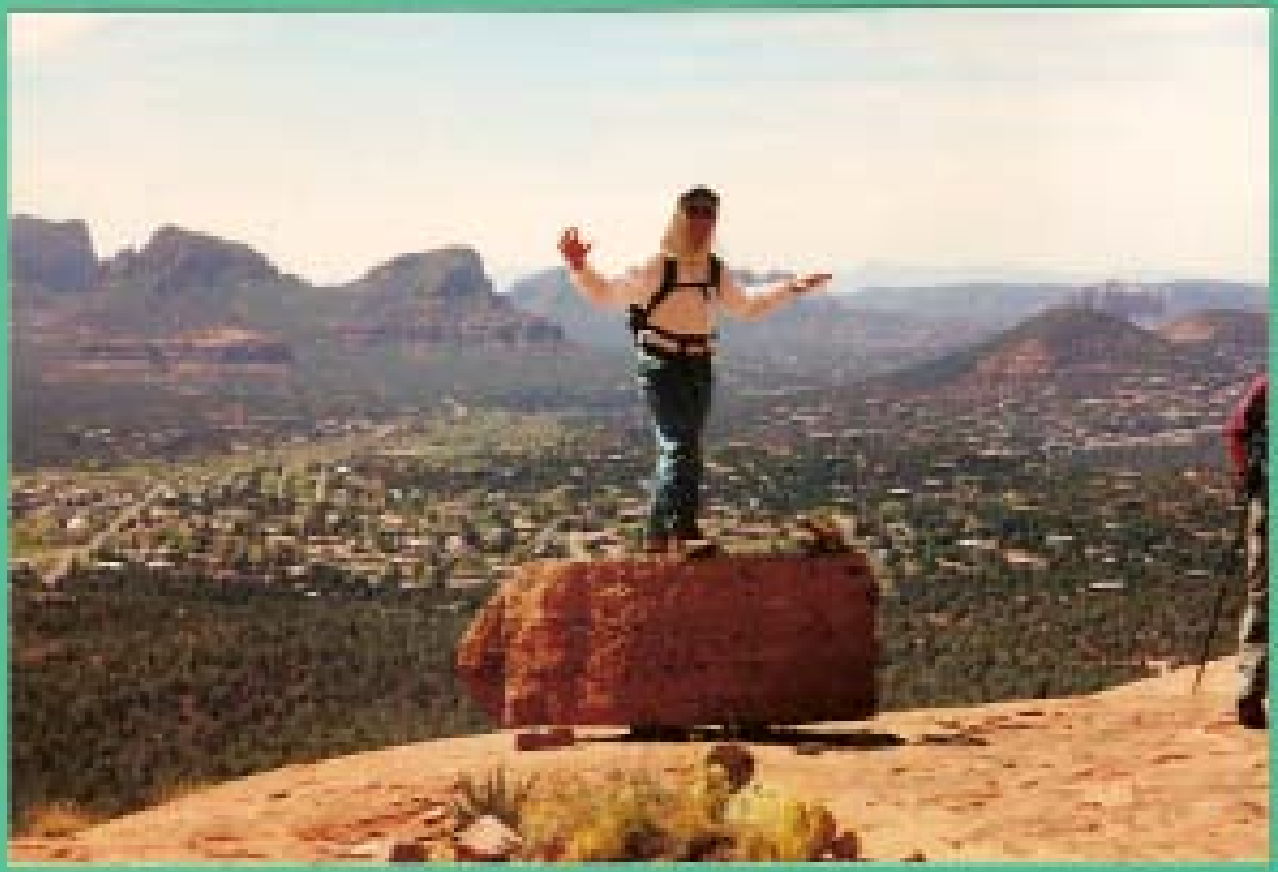
On The Trails

Weatherfield - Kachina Trail 9/25/01
Leader: Dick Eibeck
Tailgater: Bill Baker

Fin Loop Dogie Hike
4/9/02
Ron Schneider
Do Westerners Fly?
Just Ask...

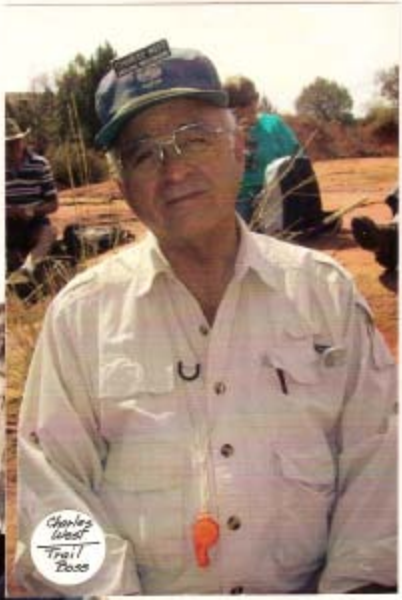


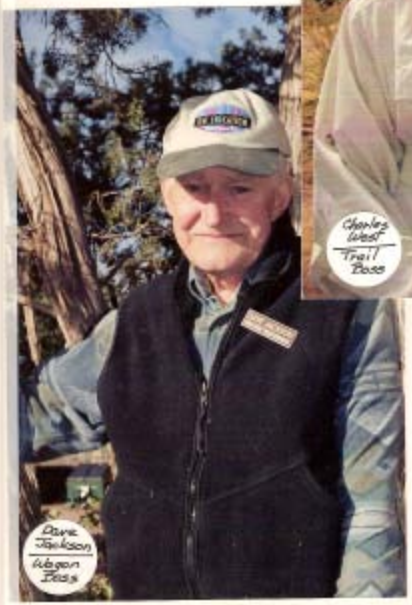
Ron Schneider wears pink bandana when he forgets hat for Sterling Pass Saddle / Vultee Arch hike. 3/10/02.

Kay Schneider, Ron Schneider, Helmut Larsen Photo By Judy Tagla

Backyard Art Instructor explains Canyon Geology on Field Trip to Utah

OFFICERS '02

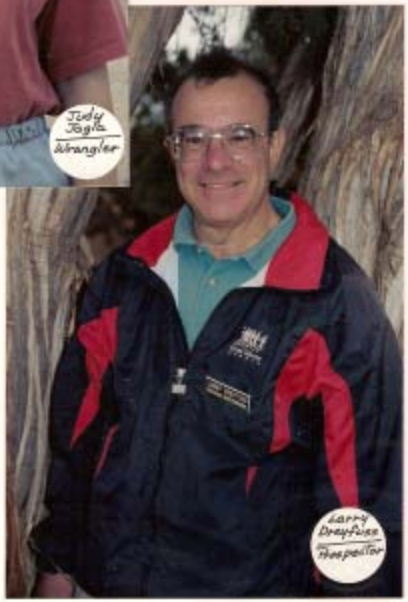




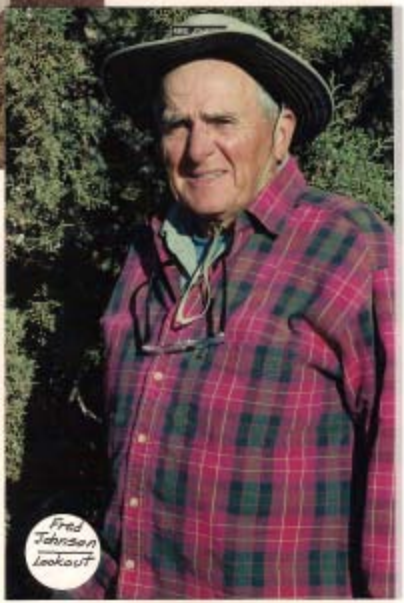
Olga
Eastern Immediate Past Trial Boss

VSP
Jim
Goodwin
Foreman

Judy
Jagla
Wrangler


Larry
Dreyfuss
Inspector

Bob Shuman
Round up Boss

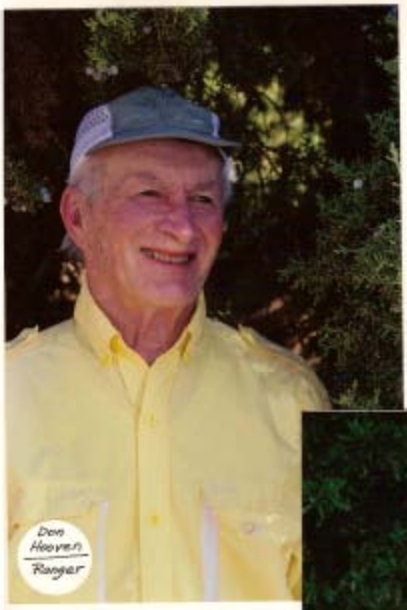

Fred Johnson
Lookout

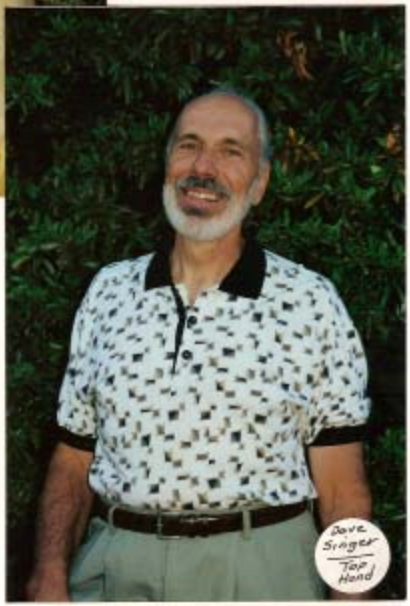
Sandy Unger
Asst. Dogie Boss
Dick Eibach
Dogie Boss

Linda Sabeyma
Asst. Drover Boss
Kathy Leach
Drover Boss

John Mexera
Ambler Boss
Bob Allison
Asst. Ambler Boss

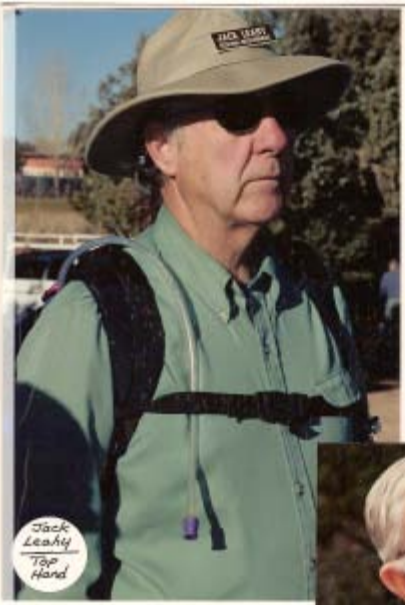
Dan McKnight
Asst. Coffin Dodger
Bob Dunnerd
Asst. Coffin Dodger


Don
Heaven
Ranger


Dave
Singer
Top
Hand

Diana
Carson
Top
Hand

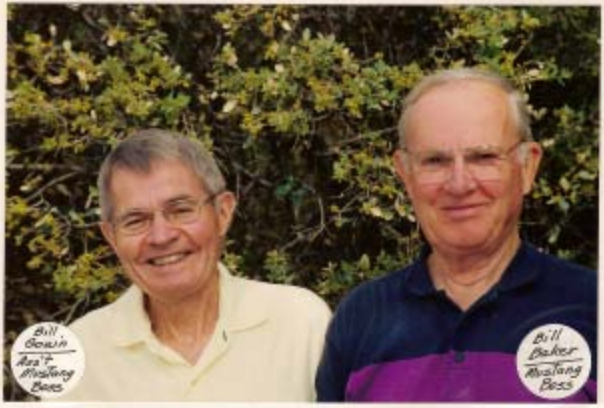
Kay
Schneider
Old
Timer


Jack Leahy
Top Hand

Bill Baker
Ringling Boss

Marge Schaeffer
Sunbeam

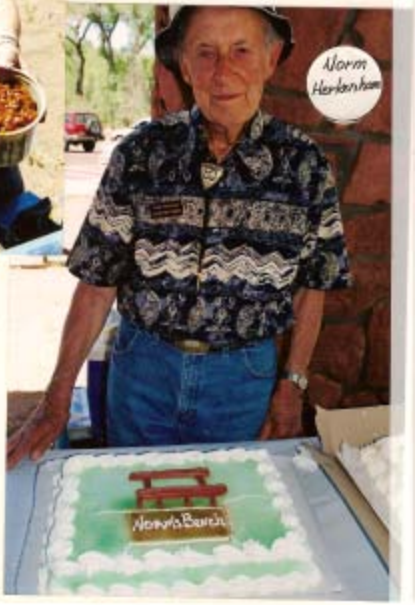
Sally Freeman
Chuck wagon
Bear


Bill Gowin
Asst Mustang Boss
Bill Baker
Mustang Boss

Bill Sexton

5/9/02

Spring Cookout



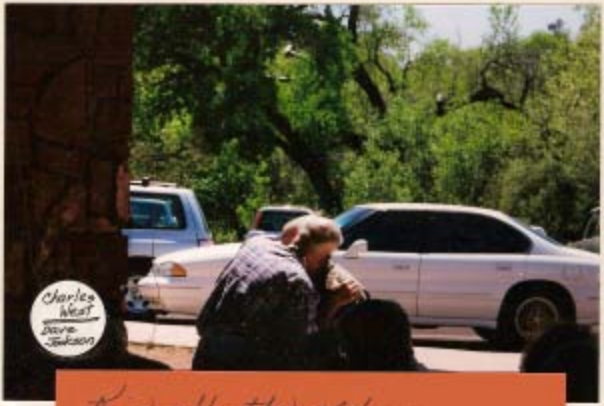
Let There
Be Lots of
CAKE

Come and Get It!

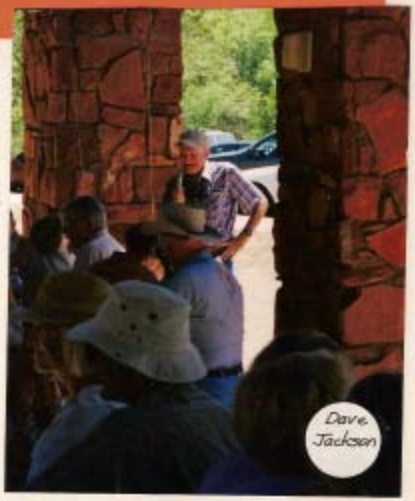
Beans
Cole Slaw
Burgers

Service with a Smile

Cake + Ice Cream Yum!

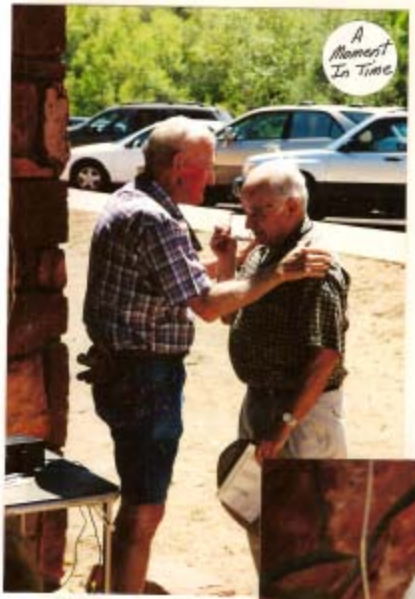


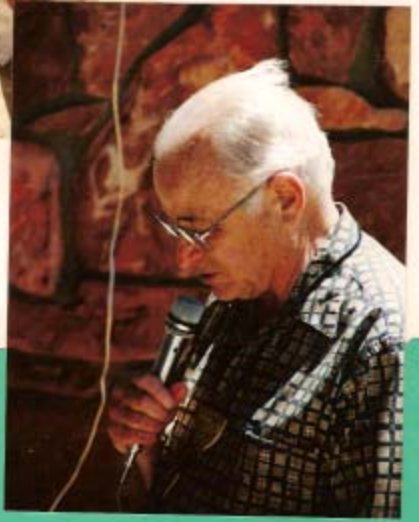
Kiss off the old...
Ring in the new!



Carol Dreyfuss
Larry Dreyfuss
Charles West

Fred Johnson
Bob Dannert





Thanks Charles For Your Leadership & Humor

Past Trail Bosses

Standing - Left to Right:

- Clyde Morgan
- Norm Herkenham
- Harry Brown
- Jack Stratton
- Tom Hager
- Marge Herkenham
- Don Hooven

Seated - Left to Right

- Jack Coombs
- Norm Taylor
- Harold Kirkley
- Jim Tanis
- Len Ostrom
- Olga Ostrom
- Charles West

Westerners On the Trail Beyond...

Rose L. Hager

Rose L. Hager, 79, a 21-year resident of Sedona, hiker and backpacker extraordinaire, took off on her last trail into the sunset on Aug. 27.

Born in Kansas, Mrs. Hager was an enthusiastic member of the Sedona Westerners since 1980. She actively hiked with the Scouts over the past 15 years. Her favorite backpacking ventures were into the Grand Canyon, while Secret Canyon was her favorite local hike and A.B. Young trail was the hike she most enjoyed leading. Mrs. Hager always looked forward to the annual challenge of hiking to the top of Mt. Humphreys, elevation 12,600 feet.

She was a volunteer with the NACOG Area Office on Aging, working as a Medicare counselor and legal advocate at the Sedona adult center. It brought her great pleasure to be able to help others in this way.

Mrs. Hager is survived by Tom, her husband of 60 years; daughters Valerie Carter and Karen Gates; sisters Mary Lagee and Claire Dell'Orfano; a brother, Lawrence Diebolt; and three grandchildren, Thomas, Jamil and Khalil Carter.

Her family appreciates, as did Rose, the time and caring and the many kindnesses of her friends, which helped enormously during the past year. At her request, no service is planned, but friends are invited to hike a favorite trail in her honor and cherish the memories. Memorials may be sent to the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, the Association of Arizona Food Banks, or the American Cancer Society.

'Ageless' woman passed love of nature on

Center of Sedona's nature community was 84 years old

By Terri Likens
Sedona Red Rock News

One special day this spring, a group of birders will gather on Mingus Mountain when the migrating warblers are coming through.

As their often descriptive names indicate, warblers tend to be colorful birds — red-faced, olive and yellow-rumped. Even so, this group might have trouble seeing the birds clearly through their binoculars and scopes.

It won't matter.

Their focus will be on a woman who won't, physically at least, be with them.

Virginia Gilmore has flown.

Gilmore, 84, was the center of the nature community in Sedona. She died Dec. 21.

She was a founding member of the Northern Arizona Audubon Society and hiked with the Sedona Westerners, even into her 80s.

She also, after much pestering, her birder friends say, wrote the definitive guide to finding birds in the area. Her book, *Birding Sedona and the Verde Valley*, was published in 1999.

Gilmore died alone in her Sedona home just a few days before Christmas. Her only surviving blood relatives were a grandniece and grandnephew in California.

In a sense, though, Gilmore did have family here.

A big family.

Friends and members of the Northern Arizona Audubon Society came together to write her obituary. It's a moving tribute to the shy, quiet woman who, like so many of the birds she loved, just wanted to blend into the background.

They said she was a woman who, despite her shyness, was always willing to share.

Gilmore taught Christie Van Cleve to bird.

"The greatest tribute I can pay her was that I never thought of her in terms of age. She was ageless," Van Cleve said.

Van Cleve said she saw many species for the first time when she went birding with Gilmore.

> "We just thought that she would go on forever."
>
> *Anita MacFarlane, Sedona birder*

Red Rock News 1/9/02

She recalled one outing together when they were looking up a tree at the first ringtail cat Van Cleve had ever seen.

At the same time, a red-faced warbler, Van Cleve's first, flew right in front of their faces.

Good birders seem to have a knack for attracting wildlife.

"I can tell you that I'm going to miss her," Van Cleve said.

Anita MacFarlane, Sedona's vice mayor and an active birder, remembered how Gilmore had stood by her when her husband was ill and eventually died.

"Anything that needed to be done, she'd be there to help out," MacFarlane said. "We just thought that she would go on forever."

Gilmore had made arrangements for her death. Among them, she requested that no formal memorial services be held.

She must have sensed, however, that her many friends would need some way to say goodbye, preferably together, and she made one allowance.

"If her friends wished to gather in a special place and tell stories about her, she supposed that would be all right," the obituary said.

Gilmore also stipulated that the gathering be held in the spring, when the warblers come through.

Van Cleve wasn't sure if she would attend.

"I know I'll cry," she said.

But the more she talked about Gilmore, the more one thing became clear. She would be taking one more outing with her mentor.

Virginia H. Gilmore

Red Rock News 12/12

Virginia H. Gilmore, 84, a longtime Sedona resident, died Dec. 21 in her home in Sedona Shadows.

A 1939 graduate in microbiology from the University of California, Berkeley, Ms. Gilmore spent many years in the medical field in California, Massachusetts, Arizona and abroad.

Among other assignments, she worked with the Red Cross in Europe during World War II and in the Pacific during the Korean Conflict. Locally, she worked as a microbiologist at both the Marcus J. Lawrence Hospital, now Verde Valley Medical Center, and the Sedona Medical Center.

Coming to the region from the Boston area in the mid-1970s, Ms. Gilmore found Sedona an ideal place to pursue her passion for birds, birding and the natural environment.

This commitment culminated in the 1999 publication of her definitive guide to local birds and birding, *Birding Sedona and the Verde Valley*.

She and her late friend, Alma Greene, were known to spend hours and days searching out special places for birds, and they always seemed to find spots that others didn't know about — until Ms. Gilmore told them. No one knew the birds, lands and wildlife of Sedona as did Ms. Gilmore, and she enjoyed sharing her knowledge as much as gaining it.

She was founding member of the Northern Arizona Audubon Society, the first, and long-term, editor of its newsletter, and a perennial head of the Audubon field trip program. She is responsible for the definitive bird listings of Red Rock, Deadhorse Ranch and Slide Rock state parks, the Forest Highlands subdivision and Kachina wetlands in Flagstaff, and Page Springs and the Sedona wastewater area.

Many Audubon members speak about a day in the field with Ms. Gilmore as a high point in their birding experience.

Other reflections from fellow Auduboners: "She was a gracious woman with a vast store of knowledge that she was always willing to share" ; and "I admired her as an expert birder, and loved her as a friend" ; "Virginia always gave far more than she took, both from her friends and the environment" ; and "She was the root and stem — we are the leaves and fruit."

Ms. Gilmore is survived by a niece, Ann Curtiss, and a grandnephew, Erik Dodds, both of Walnut Creek, Calif., her birthplace.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Northern Arizona Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1496, Sedona, AZ 86339.

Ms. Gilmore requested that no formal memorial services be held, but added that if her friends wished to gather in a special place and tell stories about her, she supposed that would be all right — which gathering will be held in the spring when the warblers come through.

Irma P. Masvidal

Irma P. Masvidal, 81, a resident of Sedona, died Nov. 8.

Born in Brooklyn, Mrs. Masvidal moved to Arizona in 1972 from California. She worked at the Kings Ransom, The Turtle and Birds Catering.

Mrs. Masvidal was a member of the Westerners, the Audubon Society and St. John Vianney Catholic Church.

Preceded in death by a sister, Mrs. Masvidal is survived by her husband, Paul A. Masvidal; a daughter, Barbara D. Masvidal of Portland, Ore.; and a son, Paul "Tony" Masvidal of Chino Valley.

Visitation and services were held Nov. 13.

The family suggests memorial contributions may be made to Northern Arizona Hospice in Cottonwood.

Arrangements were handled by Sedona Funeral Home. 11/14/01 Red Rock News

Ruth E. Cook

Red Rock News 12/12

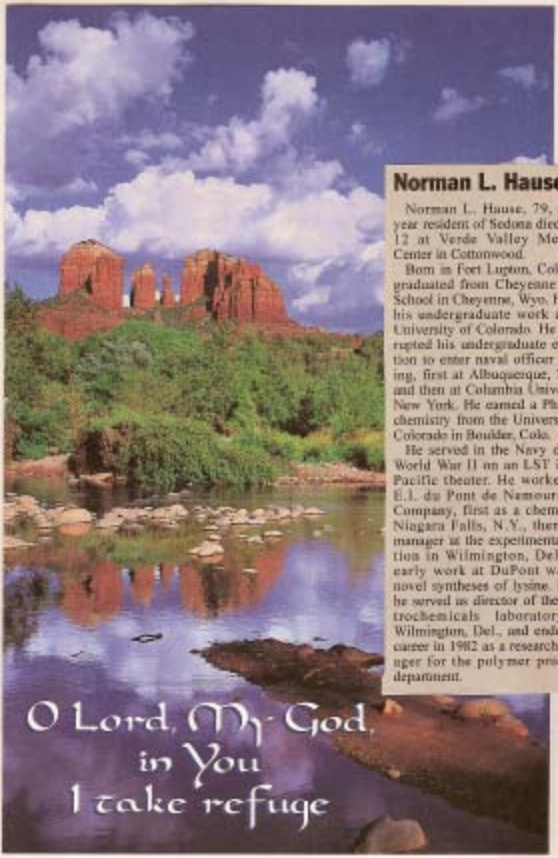
Ruth E. Cook, 89, a resident of Sedona, died Dec. 5 at the home of her daughter in Omaha, Neb.

Born in York, Neb., Mrs. Cook had been a resident of Sedona since 1978. She was a member and past Deaconess of The Church of the Red Rocks, P.E.O., The Order of the Eastern Star (50-year member), the Westerners, the Red Rock Rovers and the Sedona Weavers Guild.

Mrs. Cook married Marshall G. Cook in 1936. She enjoyed reading, weaving and making all kinds of handicraft projects. She owned several looms, including two Pennsylvania-built floor looms. She occasionally exhibited her work at the Sedona Art Barn.

Mrs. Cook was preceded in death by her husband, Marshall, and is survived by her children, Janelle R. Davis of Omaha, Neb.; Sydney K. Bowersox of Somerset, Pa.; and Marshall S. Cook of Lenore, Idaho; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be sent to The Church of the Red Rocks or to the Sedona Public Library. The family has scheduled a memorial service for her at The Church of the Red Rocks, Saturday, Jan. 26, at 2 p.m.



Norman L. Hause

Norman L. Hause, 79, a 20-year resident of Sedona died May 12 at Verde Valley Medical Center in Cottonwood.

Born in Fort Lupton, Colo., he graduated from Cheyenne High School in Cheyenne, Wyo. He did his undergraduate work at the University of Colorado. He interrupted his undergraduate education to enter naval officer training, first at Albuquerque, N.M., and then at Columbia University, New York. He earned a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colo.

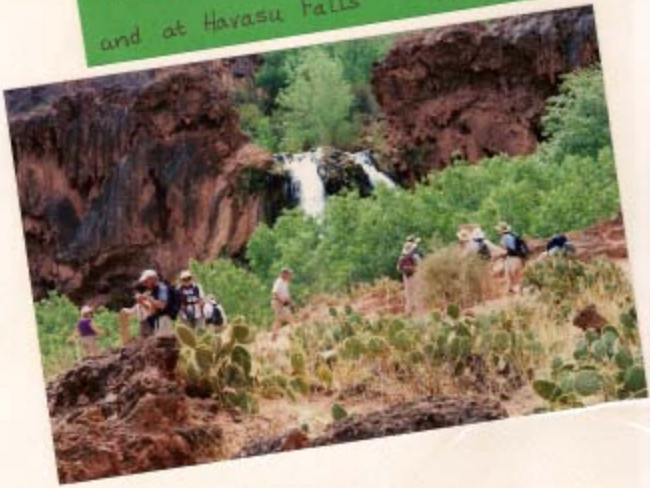
He served in the Navy during World War II on an LST in the Pacific theater. He worked for E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, first as a chemist in Niagara Falls, N.Y., then as a manager at the experimental station in Wilmington, Del. His early work at DuPont was on novel syntheses of lysine. Later, he served as director of the electrochemicals laboratory in Wilmington, Del., and ended his career in 1982 as a research manager for the polymer products department.

During his retirement in Sedona, Mr. Hause was active in the Westerners hiking club and the Red Rock Rovers. He served as trail boss of the Westerners (1988-89) and president of the Red Rock Rovers.

Mr. Hause was preceded in death by his wife, Marjorie Clinton Hause; and is survived by [illegible] Providence, R.I., Robin Hause of Fort Collins, Colo., and Pamela Scales and her husband, John, of Golden, Colo.; two grandchildren, William and Emma Scales; a sister, Phyllis Wilgus of Richmond, Calif., and her husband, Donovan; three nieces, Valerie and Jeri Wilgus and Julie Bradford; and cousins.

[illegible] orial services will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday, May 15, at The Church of the Red Rocks.

Memorial contributions may be made to The Church of the Red Rocks, 54 Bowstring Drive, Sedona, AZ 86336, or The Nature Conservancy, 4245 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 100, Arlington, VA 22203.

Westerners enjoy an unofficial hike in Havasu Canyon 2002

Westerners in Supai
and at Havasu Falls 2002