

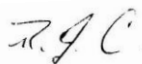


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MEMORANDUM

Date: November 13, 2012

To: Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

From: R.J. Cardin, Director 

Re: Director's Summary of Current Events

Listed below are issues the department has been involved with since the October 9, 2012 Director's Summary.

From the Office of the Director

- **Bowtie Property Sale Update** - Progress continues on selling this 11.6 acre remnant property located between SR 51 and the PV Golf course to the Arizona Agriculture and Equestrian High School. A public meeting was conducted by Commissioner Lynch on October 29, 2012 at 9:00 am as part of the Parks land disposal process for the sale of park property. The Park Commission, at a special meeting on October 30, 2012, voted to recommend the sale of the property to the Boards of Supervisors and on October 31st the Board of Supervisors voted to sell the property to the Arizona Agriculture and Equine High School for their Paradise Valley Campus. The School has 90 days to close of escrow.
- **Spur Cross Land Acquisition** – The Trust for Public Land has offered assistance in potentially purchasing some of the privately held land in holdings in the conservation area. TPL staff is in contact with several property owners to determine their desire to sell and their asking price. More to come.
- **Performance Plans and Pay** – All performance Plans must be completed by November 15 for staff to be eligible for a performance bonus. The bonus will be approximately 2.75-3% and will be a one-time bonus as the county does not currently have sufficient revenue to make this a permanent increase. Bonuses should be received by employees in the early December paycheck.
- **All Hands**—Staff gathered for a fun and inspiring time at the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center just south of downtown Phoenix along the Salt River. County Manager Tom Manos welcomed staff and talked about his years with the Parks Department and the value our parks bring to the quality of life for county residents. A series of video presentations was used to update staff on the various projects and progress that has taken place during the past year, along with a discussion on the “State of the Parks” for the upcoming year. Kudos to all of the employees who helped make this a memorable event and learning experience.

Budget

General Fund (100) – Agency 300:

- On the expenditure side, the General Fund (Fund 100, Agency 300) was under budget by \$20,083 or 9% under the year to date (YTD) budget.
- There are no revenues collected within the General Fund.

Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305:

- Enhancement Fund (Fund 241, Agency 305) reported revenue 6% or \$39,468 under the YTD budget.
- Enhancement Fund reported expenditures 8% or \$79,037 under the YTD operating budget for expenditures.

Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302:

- Lake Fund (Fund 240, Agency 302) reported revenues 18% or \$92,104 over the YTD budget.
- Lake Fund reported operating expenditures under budget at 4% or \$18,970.

Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306:

- Spur Cross (Fund 225, Agency 306) reported revenues at -28% or \$16,094 under the YTD budget. This shortage is due to below expected payments by the Town of Cave Creek.
- Spur Cross reported operating expenditures over budget at 6% or \$3,294.

Information Technology

- Network upgrades for the Administrative Building are in progress. Test/Pilot users have been testing and using the new network since Oct. 22. Testing of the network printers were Oct. 29/30.
- ADP technical staff scheduled a time clock system update at each park (coordinated with each location to complete this).
- Commission Bylaws were added to the Board of Supervisors for approval and are scheduled to be on the Nov. 14 meeting agenda.

Human Resources

Personnel news to note:

- The following positions are open for recruitments and/or are waiting to be filled:
 - Accounting Specialist (HQ) – Interviews are underway.
 - Volunteer Coordinator (HQ) – A candidate was selected and accepted the position. Tentative start date in November 26, 2012.
 - Contact Station Assistant (Lake Pleasant) – Interviews are underway.
 - Executive Assistant (HQ) – Interviews are underway.
 - Interpretive Ranger (Estrella) – This position is currently on hold.

Finance Program

With the Accounting Specialist Vacancy, staff is managing to stay on top of revenue reporting and invoice payment. Revenue reporting is currently running approximately one week behind.

Central Reservations

Employee Annual Pass purchases continue to roll in. The program is now up to 148 employees who have purchased their discounted annual park passes.

Souvenir Fund

Increased activity at the park means the Souvenir Fund is hopping!

- Park logo shirts are in and most are out to the parks. There have been some challenges with the vendor, but the new shirts are receiving a positive response.
- The parks have been placing big orders to get ready for our Holiday Season sale. This year, we will start the sale on Black Friday (11/23/12) and run it through Christmas Day (12/25).

Superintendent Reports

Cave Creek Regional Park – The park hosted 10 interpretive programs with 93 participants, including a docent lead program with 18 attendees. The programs highlights were Fitness Hike, Reptile Feeding, Venomous Creatures, Bug Theater, Introducing the Desert, Archery 101, Clay Mine Hike and Tiny Tumbleweed Trekking.

The 3rd Annual Cave Creek Thriller Run was held with the course utilizing the Jasper, Slate, Flume, Go John and Overton trails. Participants had a choice to run 10km, 30km, or 50km (multiple loops of similar courses.) The total number of participants for this run was 181 with 97 participants completing the 10km, 59 participants completing the 30km and 25 participants completing the 50 km.

The Park Supervisor and Trails Crew Supervisor recently met with Hands on Phoenix to schedule volunteers to conduct trails maintenance at Cave Creek and Spur Cross this fall.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park – October's cooler weather brought more hikers and ramada reservations. On several weekends the park had all the ramadas reserved for picnics and events.

Rodeo Arena building and facility repairs have paid off with the vendor utilizing the facilities for horse rentals and events. Rodeo Arena Vendor and Horse Operations Managers had a Fall Festival for the month of October with Hay Rides, pumpkin decorating, a hay maze and games.

The October 7th Bike/Run Race (AZ Trail - XTERRA) went well. There were nearly 400 participants enjoying the race.

In mid-October, the Gladiator Rock N' Run Mud Obstacle Race went very well. There were nearly 2,000 participants and many spectators enjoying the weather and the muddy fun.

The Centennial Trail committee continues to meet with Park staff. Final phases of branch removal are being completed with use of a Chain Gang from Maricopa County Sheriff Office (MCSO) and a Ladies Crew from the Perryville Prison. Prisoners and the MCSO Sheriff's Chain Gang will be filling Hickman Farm Dumpsters with Salt Cedar branches from the non-native trees being cut down in the trail area.

The Parks Trails Division continues to renovate and construct new trails in Estrella Park. Several have been completed, others are in progress. The Youth Corp was in the park in late October to help repair trail maintenance issues on various trails.

County Board of Supervisor Andy Kunasek visited the Buckeye Hills Joe Foss Shooting Range Complex. Supervisor Kunasek was greeted by the Estrella Park Supervisor, Parks Contract Administrator and Members of the Buckeye Sportsmen's Club for a tour of the facilities.

The Park had two cross country races and a large company picnic that all together drew an additional 2,000 people into the park during October.

Desert Outdoor Center – Met again with Maricopa County Department of Transportation reps, along with Parks staff to discuss paving road at entrance and re-setting gate sensors, will attempt work during Christmas break.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park – There were 14 programs, the program participant numbers have not been completed for the month of October. Highlights for the month included: Archery, Pleasant Paddlers, and Pipeline Canyon Exploring Hike.

Desert Tortoise - Bajada Loop Campground restroom facility is currently experiencing issues with regards to the septic pumps continually getting clogged with debris, causing the system to go down. Repair estimates are being generated by the 7-Crew.

A maintenance worker attended an International Mountain Bike Association Trails Training Course through the Town of Cave Creek.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park – The Park conducted two volunteer trail improvement days in October. The volunteers descended on the competitive track to repair damage caused by the monsoon rains. The work was done to prepare for the fall competitions.

The Interpretive Ranger conducted 18 interpretive programs in October including four new programs. The 331 participants who attended those programs was more than double the attendance from last October.

Park Supervisor attended the International Mountain Bike Association's World Summit in Santa Fe, NM. As the only land manager to attend the Race Promoters workshop he was able to describe the unique operations of this department and made important national and local contacts for future events.

The last weekend of October the park hosted the 10th Javelina Jundred 100 mile foot race. This event has become the 3rd largest ultra-marathon in the U.S. This year's event had approximately 364 runners.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area – The Park hosted 11 interpretive programs with 172 participants. A few of the programs included: Fitness Series, Dragonfly Trail Exploration Hike, Ruins of Spur Cross, Sunset Walk, Plants of Spur Cross, Moonlight Hike, Elephant Mountain Fortress Hike and Exploring Spur Cross.

Usery Mountain Regional Park - The Park offered 15 interpretive programs in October totaling 833 participants. The highlight of the month was the Scorpion Hunt (160) which included a brown bag lecture All About Scorpions (90) before the event. The Full Moon Hike saw great numbers again with 157 participants, and the Goofy Ghost Walk was filled the nature center with 116 creative ghost costumes from all ages which helped get everyone into the Halloween spirit.

16 of the 21 hosts at Usery have returned to the park excited and ready to lend a hand during the winter season.

A maintenance worker attended the International Mountain Bicycling Association's Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crew workshop in Cave Creek to learn sustainable trail building techniques.

The 2012 FITA Field State Championship was held at the Usery Mountain Regional Park Archery Range. Over thirty archers competed in the two day contest with many challenging shots over rugged terrain.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park – The park provided 15 interpretive programs with 425 program participants. The launch of a new Kids VS Wild program attracted 72 participants.

This year's HOWLoween Bash was a huge success! Continuing with the growing tradition, San Tan entertained over 1200 people with a family fun night of events including our trick or treat trail, spooktacular trail, haunted house, creepy critter coral, costume contest face painting, snacks, fun photos and a special visit from the Phoenix Zoo.

San Tan hosted the MCSO Mountain Rescue training. With Pinal and Maricopa County Sheriff Office's on board, Mountain Rescue was able to set up a mock mission to help better prepare their team for a possible rescue in the south end of the park.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park – The ranger had 10 programs this month, including the *Stargazing for Everyone*. This month was the most popular we ever had with over 400 people attending including many 7th graders looking for extra credit.

The new host sites at the Maricopa Trail head are complete and we will be moving hosts in to these sites in November. Soon these hosts will be working hard to keep the Maricopa Trail in good shape for all of our visitors to enjoy. The work in the Family Campground has been started again and wires are being pulled and panels installed.

The Wildland Fire Crew has just started to assist us with trail repair on the South Trail on a weekly basis and have been hauling dirt along the trail in preparation. A group from Luke Air Force base and Hands On have also contacted the park wanting to assist us with trail repairs. With these 3 groups, we plan to make repairs on the popular Black Rock Long Loop as well.

Vulture Mountains Cooperative Recreation Management Area – Continue to wait on Bureau of Land Management for final approval from their attorney on the amendment to the Memo of Understanding and initial Cooperative Management Agreement.