



Maricopa County

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 15, 2015
To: Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
From: R.J. Cardin, Director
Re: Director's Summary of Current Events

Listed below are activities the department has been involved with during November and December 2014.

From the Office of the Director

- **Trust for Public Land:** In early January, Director Cardin met with a representative from the Trust for Public Land (TPL). The Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance Program provides professional technical assistance services to state and local government officials, legislatures, and public agencies, such as Maricopa County, that need to research and evaluate conservation finance options and strategies.

Between 1996 and 2014, The Trust for Public Land helped state and local governments generate over \$47 billion at the ballot box to protect special places for parks, trails, open space and natural areas, historic landmarks, forests, watershed, and working farms and ranches. With this history of work, TPL has built a reputation of working in partnership with state and local governments to help address their conservation agenda and achieve their goals.

TPL has indicated a willingness to discuss such a working partnership with Maricopa County Supervisors. Initially, TPL would be happy to make a presentation to the Parks and Recreation Commission since they are the advisory body to the County Supervisors on park and conservation related matters.

- **The 100-Miles in 100 Days Challenge**, originally developed as a way to celebrate Arizona's Centennial, is a program that challenges participants to hike one-hundred miles in one-hundred days. The primary goals of the program are: 1) to entice park visitors to explore Maricopa County's regional park system's extensive trail system while experiencing Arizona's pristine Sonora Desert; and 2) challenge park visitors to either begin or expand exercise regimes.

The program kicked off on November 1st. During this time, participants must trek and log one-hundred miles in at least three Maricopa County parks. While participants are encouraged to come-up with their own trail plans, and include the Maricopa Trail in their strategy, sample trail plans are available. Upon completion of daily hikes, participants are asked to have a member from the park sign-off on their mileage.

To help keep participants motivated, staff launched a Facebook page in 2014 and encouraged participants to become part of the Challenge community. On the page, participants can post photos of their hikes, search for hiking buddies, obtain trail and hiking recommendations from staff and fellow hikers, and push each other when the going gets tough.

Once participants complete their one-hundred miles and turn in their log, they are eligible for the grand prize drawing (an Annual Park Pass and gift shop voucher) and are invited to a park celebration on February 28th where they receive a complimentary, limited edition tee-shirt. To date, around two dozen participants have completed the Challenge and on January 11, one member celebrated completion of his 406th mile!

From the Office of the Director continued

- **Central Arizona Conservation Alliance:** Maricopa County Parks is a founding member of the Central Arizona Conservation Alliance, which is housed at the Desert Botanical Gardens. The Alliance is working to connect academic research with useful application for land management agencies. This spring, they are working on a new project in partnership with Arizona State University's CAP LTER (Central Arizona-Phoenix Long-term Ecological Research) program and Dr. Sharon Hall from the School of Life Sciences, to establish a pilot Community Wildflower Survey as part of CAP's efforts to monitor the long-term ecological impacts of the urban environment in native Phoenix-area Sonoran Desert preserves.

Researchers and citizen scientists (volunteers) will work to botanize the spring annual wildflower community in established 20m x 20m plots across 11 sites both inside our Phoenix metro desert preserves system and slightly beyond to adjacent regional parks. This new project is an expansion of CAP's internationally recognized Carbon and Nitrogen Deposition (CNDep) project which aims to explore the indirect effects of the urban environment on native Sonoran Desert ecosystems. The findings will be compiled with previous years' findings after which CAP students and scientists will develop interpretive and outreach materials to connect with land management and the public. The goal is to link knowledge into action.

Administration

Budget Status (through December FY15 close – 2nd Quarter):

- **Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305:**
 - Enhancement Fund reported revenues at 6% or \$134,392 over the YTD budget of \$2,126,610.
 - Enhancement Fund reported expenditures at 2% or \$32,291 under the YTD operating budget of \$2,143,413.
- **Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302:**
 - Lake Fund reported revenues at 19% or \$204,996 over the YTD budget of \$1,265,427.
 - Lake Fund reported operating expenditures at 10% or \$125,672 under the YTD budget \$1,203,686.
- **Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306:**
 - Spur Cross reported revenues at \$121,336. This is less than 1% under the YTD budget of \$121,603.
 - Spur Cross reported operating expenditures at 4% or \$127,252 under the YTD budget.

Finance Program:

- The souvenir ordering process has been shifted to our Procurement Specialist to align the Souvenir Fund purchasing with all other purchasing done by the Department.
- Program staff has started the initial phases of FY16 budget preparation (due 2/6/15).
- Staff is creating accounts at Fry's Grocery stores for the purchase of critter food. This will allow staff to pick up needed supplies without having to become procurement card (P-card) holders. If successful, this will eliminate several P-cards in the department, saving work time by eliminating reconciliation for several employees each month.

Contracts:

- **Lake Pleasant:** The Maricopa County Real Estate Department has set a public meeting on January 21, 2015, at 6:00 pm at the Desert Outdoor Center for the county radio communication system facility upgrades necessary for public safety. Upgrades to the existing system will occur at the Desert Outdoor Center and Lake Operations Building.
- **Estrella Mountain Regional Park** Negotiations for development of the Use Management Agreement with Estrella Youth Sports are progressing with some new developments involving the City of Goodyear. The City of Goodyear has renewed interest in our sports fields and is also working with the Bureau of Reclamation to potentially bringing in wetlands to the Park which could enhance the irrigation necessary for the additional sport fields and provide some beautification to the golf course.

- **Paradise Valley:** Demolition of our cell tower will start in January. This 1.5 acre parcel of land will become available for lease in February. Unfortunately, the site cannot be used for cell-towers sites as determined by the Maricopa County Attorney, due to the conveyance restrictions placed on the land when acquired by the county. Currently, *Casey at the Bat* has an interest in placing another ball field at this site.
We have an existing easement with the Flood Control District on a retention basin piece of land that is no longer used by Parks. Flood Control has asked for us to release this easement to them so they can sell this land to Maricopa Community College District. This release falls under our land disposal policy (Park Land Acquisition and Disposal A-200) and the Commission will be required to hold a public hearing for this disposal.
- **Adobe Dam Regional Park:** We received one response on December 16, 2014, for the Request for Expressions of Interest for a Public Private Partnership for Development, Expansion, Financing and Operation of the existing Sports Complex at Adobe Dam Regional Park. The response is currently under review by management.
The Maricopa Live Steamers (part of the Sahuaro Central Railroad Preservation Society) had an outstanding year in 2014, providing 21,181 train rides along 14 miles of track at Adobe. This represents an increase of approximately 20% more rides than 2013.
Upcoming Special Use Permits processed for January through March at Adobe Dam Park include:
 - January 11–18, Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society/Maricopa Live Steamers will hold their ninth Annual Operations Meet.
 - February 6-16, Phoenix Kart Racing Association will hold the *Challenge of The Americas Race*
 - March 15–22, Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society/Maricopa Live Steamers will hold their Annual Spring Meeting.
 - March 27-29, Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society will host the *2014 Boy Scout Webelos Crossover*.
- **Maricopa Trail:** The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Parks and Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) for the cost-sharing, design, construction and maintenance of trails that parallel MCDOT roadways and are located within MCDOT right-of-way has been executed.
Two separate Challenge Cost Share Agreements between Parks and US Forest Service (USFS) were executed to document the cooperation between the parties for trails crossing between the Tonto National Forest and Cave Creek and Usery Parks.
A Non-Exclusive, Non-Motorized Recreation Easement between Parks and the Flood Control District to provide permanent rights to Parks for the Maricopa Trail at McMicken Dam has been approved by the Board of Supervisors.
An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Goodyear has been drafted to connect the Maricopa Trail from White Tank Mountain Regional Park to Estrella Mountain Regional Park. This IGA will be for portions of the trail that lie within the boundaries of Goodyear.
An amendment to the IGA with the City of Peoria has been drafted to re-route the trail around the Happy Valley Road and Lake Pleasant Parkway intersection, moving it out of the commercial development areas.
- **Commercial Management Concessions Agreements (CMCA's):** New CMCA's include one mountain biking concession and one kayak concession.

Human Resources:

- **New Hires or Promotions:**
 - Congratulations to Chris Simpson, promoted to Administrative Staff Supervisor (Lake Pleasant)
 - Welcome to Nora Lee Taylor, Administrative Assistant (White Tank).
- **Farewells:**
 - Farewell to Gerald Miller, Maintenance Staff Supervisor (Lake Pleasant).
- **Open positions and recruitments:**
 - Contact Station Assistant (Temporary/Lake Pleasant) – Pending hire action.
 - Administrative Support Specialist (HQ) – New hire (starts 1/20/15).
 - Administrative Assistant (Cave Creek) – Interviews pending.
 - Park Maintenance Worker (Lake Pleasant) – Interviews pending.
 - Park Maintenance Worker (Temporary/San Tan) – Interviews pending.

Information Technology:

- A complete review of all Parks and Recreation telecom charges has been completed. On average, Parks spends approximately \$15,000/month on phone and internet services. A few small incorrect charges were identified and sent to OET (Office of Enterprise Technology) for credit. Multiple phone lines have been identified that may or may not be needed (i.e. old credit card lines, fax lines, etc.). Requests for information on these phone lines have also been sent to OET to ensure the lines are not dedicated to fire alarm panels or other operating requirements.
- The RFP (Request for Proposals) for a new Point of Sale/Reservation System was released to the public in October and four organizations have responded with interest. The RFP committee was established and review of the proposals to select a vendor was held in December. The selection committee has narrowed the field to two companies. Final selection will take place in January 2015.

Souvenir Fund:

- We have worked very hard to consolidate the product line. Duplicate products, very slow selling products, and products that do not reflect well towards the overall mission and vision of the department have been eliminated. This will make the product line more manageable and ordering will be a smoother process.
- Park logo shirts and hats have come in and are available for purchase.
- Research is underway for new products for FY16.
- Spring ordering was opened in December. We have added hummingbird feeders to the product line. They have started to arrive in the parks and we are excited to add them to our Nature Centers.

Volunteer Program:

- Twenty (20) volunteers participated in National Family Volunteer Day at Cave Creek on November 15th. They painted all of the gates in the park as well as posts and other items that were in need of a new coat of paint. The Conservation Alliance continues to be an awesome partner with donated paint brushes, drop cloths, paint containers, snacks, and drinks for the event.
- Lake Pleasant is still looking for a few more Park Hosts volunteers. However all of the other parks are now fully staffed for the season.
- The Desert Foothills Land Trust, Anthem Community Council, Conservation Alliance, and Parks held a trail stewardship event on December 6th to promote the use of the Maricopa Trail as well as maintain their adopted segment in Anthem. They had 50 participants who came to learn about the trail as well as attend the dedication of the Adopt-A-Trail sign.
- On December 6th, 23 volunteers also assisted in cleaning up near the river at Estrella. The volunteers picked up 25 bags of trash, 13 tires, and pulled down an outdated kiosk.
- Volunteer Hours for November and December 2014:

	Nov 2014	Dec 2014
Total Dept. Hours	9,726	12,287
Financial Savings	\$219,321	\$277,072
YTD Hours	24,922	37,209
YTD Savings	\$561,993	\$839,065
Prev. Year Month Total Hours	9,401	9,194
Prev. Year YTD Hours	26,450	35,644
Prev. Year Financial Savings	\$585,600	\$789,159

Planning and Development (Engineering) Highlights as of January 12

- **Estrella Master Plan:** Progress is on-going. The overall master plan process should take approximately 18-24 months. Staff is continuing to coordinate with *Estrella Youth Sports* (EYS), a concessionaire interested in using the ball fields and establishing multi-purpose fields. A "back country" visit was rescheduled to January 22nd.

- **Vulture Mountain Update:** Staff is continuing to process the Hassayampa River Preserve Action Plan with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and a comprehensive site management has been presented to them for review. Transfer of the Preserve Property to Parks is scheduled for January 2016.

- **System Wide:** The refurbishment of all (~75) restrooms (RRs) for all the parks began in January 2014. The project is expected to take four years and cost approximately \$3 million. With the help of two "Job Order Contract" (JOC) contractors, staff is working to standardize interior and exterior finishes and hardware improvements throughout the park system.
Current Status: 7 RR's (all) have been completed at Cave Creek; 1 RR, which includes major septic maintenance, is underway at Estrella; 7 RR's are nearly complete at McDowell; 2 RR's have been completed at Usery; 10 RR's (all of the "older" ones) have been completed at White Tank; and 1 RR has been completed, and Scopes of Work (SOWs) are in process for 4 more at Lake Pleasant. Additionally, septic pumping and necessary septic upgrades have been completed at several of the parks. Approximately \$980k was spent in FY 2014 and approximately \$560k has been spent thus far in FY 2015. New playground equipment is on order for Estrella and Usery. The Department is also looking at "testing" specialized outdoor fitness equipment.
Staff is researching various methods of refurbishing existing ramadas. The "demonstration" ramada is complete at McDowell and is being evaluated.
Staff is also working on construction of electrical hook-ups for individual camp sites at Cave Creek; chlorination systems for Lake Pleasant; and tank cleaning at the Desert Outdoor Center (DOC). It has been decided that a well will be the best water supply solution for San Tan. Drilling should begin soon.

- **Maricopa Trail and Trail Facilities:**
 - The following trail segments are currently being worked on: 9, 11, 12, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 33, 35 and 78.
 - The following segment now has a perpetual easement on Flood Control Department (FCD) property:
 - Segment 11 McMicken Dam – 17 miles
 - The following portions of the Maricopa Trail are in final agreement stages for perpetual easements on FCD property:
 - Segment 35 White Tank 3 Dam – 2.1 miles
 - Segment 35 White Tank 3 Outfall Channel – 2 miles
 - Planning new trails in the Tonto National Forest – Cave Creek and Mesa Ranger Districts, the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and on the Central Arizona Project – south of Lake Pleasant Park, El Rio, Tres Rios, and the Fort McDowell Indian community.
 - Completing sign location and inventory
 - Installing additional signage.

- **Trades Crew:** Trades Crew completed major maintenance work to the Bajada septic system in time for the Christmas holiday. After a minor delay due to City of Peoria review, progress is continuing on a major fire alarm upgrade project at the DOC. Emergency septic work, including cleaning 11 manholes, was completed at the DOC. The Crew has also been assisting with plans for major electric system maintenance at the White Tank maintenance compound and plans for installing chlorinators for the water systems at the Lake.

- **Trails Crew:** The Trails Crew helped prepare for the grand opening event held November 16th for the new Cottonwood and Yavapai Trails in Lake Pleasant Park. With the help of the Arizona Conservation Corps Crew (AZCC), the Trails Crew has nearly finished all planned trail maintenance and new construction at the Lake. Work will be starting soon in the Morgan City Wash area.

Park Operations Report

Cave Creek Regional Park:

- In November, the park hosted ten interpretive programs with 209 participants, two outreach programs and three docent programs with 70 participants. Two *Clay Mine Adventure* programs were highlighted with a total of 67 attendees for the first program and 87 attendees for the second program.
- In December, 14 interpretive programs were conducted with 103 participants and four docent programs with 31 attendees. The *Clay Mine Adventure* with 32 attendees and *Fireside with the Ranger* with 26 attendees were the highlighted programs.
- In November, the *annual Cactus Classic* was held with a total of 242 bikers participating in racing along the Cave Creek Trails, the Maricopa County Trail and the Spur Cross Trail.
- In December, the annual *Luminaria Run* was held with a total of 290 participants participating in the lighted run along the park roads.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park:

- The interpretive ranger and volunteers conducted 41 programs in November and December with a total of 373 attendees. *The Stargazing for Everyone* program continues to be extremely popular. In November, stargazers witnessed such marvels as an exploding star, Mars, Neptune, Uranus, and The Seven Sisters!
- The interpretive ranger kicked off a new program, the *Family Mystery Hike* in December and was well-received. Families had a great time finding clues left by the Estrella "monster."
- The interpretive ranger has been collaborating with Corral West Arena on homeschool programs and making connections with homeschool groups. The ranger also promoted the Parks Department at the Wildlife Educator Resource Fair hosted by the Arizona Game and Fish, which had 5,100 attendees.
- *National Take a Hike Day* was celebrated at Estrella Park in November with free park admission. Two hikes were well attended and several attendees have since become "regulars" to other programs.
- Estrella Park staff made plans and set up for a big park cleanup day on Saturday December 6th. Staff partnered with the volunteer coordinator on the project. 23 people worked with the coordinator and staff for over 3 hours of concentrated clean up. Altogether, volunteers and staff removed several bulk items, tires and 25 bags of trash. Several bushes and trees were also trimmed along the trail in the area.
- Phoenix International Raceway (PIR) held its annual fall NASCAR race. The main park housed many campers the week before NASCAR. During the NASCAR race weekend (November 6-9), there were up to 667 RVs and trailers per night camping on Estrella Park property near PIR.
- The consistent winter rainfall in November and December has been advantageous for the plants and wildlife at Estrella Park. Tree growth is visibly evident and many shrubs and plants are showing signs of sprouting and blooming.
- Park staff has continued to examine the park fence line and make repairs on cuts at various locations. Park staff has made some trail repairs as well.
- In November, the irrigation pump system had to be shut down due to a large broken valve located at the golf course pump house. This particular pump moves water from the golf course location to the Park's turf area. In December, the department's trade crew restored the pump to working order.
- The Three Rivers Historical Society has notified Parks they will be withdrawing from the Centennial Trail project. Parks will evaluate the status and continue to work to develop an interpretive trail in the same area.
- Park Host annual volunteer training took place at the Estrella Park Nature Center in November.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park:

- Lake Pleasant offered 19 interpretive programs to approximately 204 program attendees during the month of December. Highlights for the month included: *Family Wildlife Fun*, *Reindeer Stories and Campfire S'mores*, *Fish Talk*, and the *Yavapai Point Scenic Hike*.
- The Lake Pleasant Facebook page continues to draw and build interest through an array of diverse and intriguing posts by the park's interpretive ranger. During the last week of December, the Facebook page reached 3,359 people with 549 engaged in submitting posts. The park is nearing 1,000 "Likes."

- 30 volunteers from the Northwest Christian School arrived at the park to provide trash cleanup services. The group worked diligently to remove litter along the shoreline between the 10-Lane Boat Ramp and Ringtail Day-Use Area. Their efforts were greatly appreciated and helped make the shoreline look pristine.
- Park staff participated in the department's annual training to learn about various work-related topics to include hazard communication, suspicious packages, and defensive driving.
- Special thanks to the Trades Crew for their hard work installing a new septic holding tank at the Bajada Loop within the Desert Tortoise Campground. The ground was very hard, but they made it look easy. This was an important addition, as the park has experienced various issues in the past that have impacted park operations and the camper's experience in this area. The Trades Crew also replaced a damaged pump at the Pipeline Trailhead. Their efforts are greatly appreciated.
- Progress is continuing to be made on the design (roughly 60% complete) aspects for the Nature Center renovation project. The Nature Center will be closed February 2nd while repairs are made and we anticipate reopening in the fall of 2015.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- The McDowell interpretive ranger offered 17 programs in November with 138 participants. In December, 17 programs were offered with 102 participants.
- November has evolved into the busiest month of the year for special events. This November, epitomized that fact with not only an event every weekend, but also the biggest event of the season.
- *The 12th Annual Javelina Jundred* began on the first Saturday in November when a sell-out crowd of 700 participants began their assault on runs of either a 100 miles or 100 kilometers.
- The second weekend focused on the return of the *Ragnar Trail Run*. Only in its second year, registered participants doubled to 3,056 participants from last year.
- The third weekend moved away from foot races and turned to equestrians with endurance rides of 25, 50 or 75 miles. Over 100 horses competed while being carefully monitored by on-site veterinarians.
- While the horses were competing, park staff, park hosts, and McDowell Park Association volunteers all helped staff a booth at the Fountain Hills Fall Arts and Craft Fair. Beautiful weather prompted big crowds for each of the three days of the fair.
- The last weekend before Thanksgiving provided an opportunity for the mountain bikers to compete in the *12 Hours of Fury* on the competitive track. Again, good weather and lots of trail work earlier in the month made for good racing and fast times around the 10.2 mile single track racing circuit.
- December continued the special event schedule with the *McDowell Mountain Frenzy* and good weather continued with runners having a beautiful day to run through the desert.
- Wrapping up the fall special event schedule was the *Dawn 2 Dusk*, a 10 hour mountain bike race on the Pemberton Trail. Good weather gone, the cold rainy day made the racing more memorable for the competitors, support crews and vendors as 576 riders rode.
- The year ended with a full campground, a couple of RV's in overflow, snow in the mountains and freezing temperatures in the desert.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park:

- During the month of November, San Tan provided 25 interpretive programs with 1,114 program participants. The highlight programs for the month was *Stargazing for Everyone* with 170 participants and our *Cub Day Camp* where the staff led multiple archery 101 classes to help scouts earn their badges for over 250 scouts.
- During the month of December, San Tan provided 20 interpretive programs with 691 program participants. The highlight programs for the month were *Desert Holes* which attracted 50 participants and *Desert Cuisine: Poms and Persimmons* which attracted 45 participants.
- San Tan hosted their first *Xterra Trail Run* competition which included a 7k run and half marathon. The event was a huge success with over 286 participants!
- We have had five Eagle Scout projects completed for the month. All projects focused on trail maintenance, illegal trail closures and re-vegetation efforts throughout the park. All Eagle Scout projects combined, contributed 300 volunteer hours for the month.

- The San Tan interpretive ranger and park supervisor, along with several park volunteers, led a field trip for 95 nature seeking Ben Franklin Elementary School students. The youth were led on an interpretive hike, conducted a scavenger hunt and were excited to meet some of our critters inside the visitor center.
- The 7th Annual San Tan Wonderland event was a huge success! The event attracted roughly 355 people. Event goers were treated to a number of fun activities such as reindeer games, arts and crafts, wagon rides, pony rides, a self-guided luminary hike, pictures with Santa and so much more. Special thanks to the Friends of San Tan, park volunteers and the partners of the event such as the Silver Rein Horsemanship, Pinal County and the team from the Nathan Martens Arizona Memorial for their assistance with the event.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area:

- The park hosted 12 interpretive programs in November with 431 participants attending and five docent led program with 52 attendees.
- The highlighted program for the month: *Desert Discovery Days* with 267 attendees.
- The park hosted 17 interpretive programs in December with 217 participants attending and six docent led programs with 63 attendees.
- The highlighted program for the month: *Find the Ranger* with 34 visitors attending the program.
- In November and December the park host sold over \$3,000.00 in souvenir merchandise (at the gate).

Usery Mountain Regional Park:

- The park offered 15 interpretive ranger programs in November with 952 participants and 60 docent programs with 749 participants. In December, the park offered 16 interpretive ranger programs with 461 participants and 60 docent programs with 440 participants.
- Parks & Recreation and Animal Care & Control kicked off the *Wag & Walk Adoption Hikes* again this season. The program is designed to provide hikers the opportunity to meet potential canine hiking companions, while enjoying one of the county's most beautiful parks. The one-mile trek takes participants, human and canine, on a wide, barrier-free path along Merkle Trail.
- Aravaipa Running hosted the *Pass Mountain Trail Run* as part of the Desert Runner Trail Series. 324 runners participated in the event.
- The *International Round Spot Shoot*, *Ham & Turkey 3D Shoot*, and the *Field-Hunter Round* archery tournaments were hosted at the archery range bringing in 86 archers from around the valley to participate.
- Park maintenance staff has been hard at work fixing major water leaks that kept springing up. The leaks have been repaired just in time for the busy season.
- The park received and installed a Memorial Bench donation which was placed on Merkle Trail.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park:

- The interpretive ranger and volunteers conducted 37 programs and outreaches in November and December reaching 1,009 people. A few of the favorite programs included the *Desert "General Store"*, the *National Take a Hike Day* trailside program and the *Winter Solstice Sunrise Hike*. Matt Haberkorn, a local scientist, presented an interesting talk on his study of the washes and plant ecosystems in the park that was attended by 15 people.
- The new *Hike with the Supervisor* was kicked off in December for all interested hosts and volunteers. The hardy group hiked the Goat Camp Trail loop at 10.5 miles to assess trail conditions and increase knowledge of the park's trail system. The next *Hike with the Supervisor* is scheduled on the Ford Canyon Trail in January.
- November events included the *Arizona High School Bike Race* and a new *Ultra Marathon Trail Running Race*. The high school bike race was well attended and utilized the entire competitive track parking area for racing teams, campers and families coming out to cheer on the young racers.
- On Thanksgiving weekend, the new *Ultra Marathon* event had 75 runners racing 6-hour, 12-hour and 24-hour races on the park's competitive track. They even had some runners racing a 100-mile race.
- December events included the annual *Luminary Walk*, the *Outdoor Adventure Family Day* and the *Sassy White Tank Women's Run*. The popular *Luminary Walk* had 454 participants walking around the holiday lighted trail. Park staff, along with the help of the Friends Group, served the walkers refreshments after the walk while they enjoyed the campfire and stary evening. The first Saturday after Christmas, the *Outdoor Adventure Family Day* was in full swing by 11 am. Many participants enjoyed the offerings of Liberty

Wildlife's live birds, the Balloon Lady, face painting, pony rides, Archery 101, Maricopa County Animal Control and Maricopa County Environmental Services. There were 68 pony riders, 93 archers, and approximately 1,500 people overall enjoying the program over the course of the day. Junior ranger badges were given to the 76 youngsters who completed the passport program. Thanks to the User and DOC rangers and park hosts who assisted on this day.

- Park Host annual volunteer training took place at the White Tank Nature Center in November.

Vulture Mountain Regional Park:

- Staff had a meeting with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to review the draft park master plan, business plan, and trails plan. We are awaiting comments back.