



Maricopa County

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM

Date: March 10, 2016
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 January and February 2016.

From the Office of the Director

- Carl Yoshioka was appointed to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission in July 2008 as a Member at Large. Over the past seven years, Carl has provided advisory guidance to Parks' staff in budget and capital improvement recommendations, development of a revenue and fee philosophy and policy, an ASU Economic Impact Study and numerous ASU Visitor Surveys. During his tenure, Carl served as the Parks Commission Chairman in 2013. He has been a strong supporter of the Department's mission to provide recreational and educational opportunities to our park visitors while continually protecting our park resources for future generations.

With Carl's term expiring in December 2015, Parks would like to thank Carl for his dedicated service on the Parks Commission and to the citizens of Maricopa County!

- Legacy Sports' development team has hired Sports Facilities Advisory to complete an independent feasibility study. The results of this analysis will evaluate the financial viability and assess opportunity and constraints for the proposed development. The study will be finalized mid-April. Upon a positive response, Legacy anticipates full funding to be allocated within 90-120 days; with construction to begin the winter of 2016; a soft opening during the winter of 2017 and grand opening early 2018.
- Phoenix Speedway Corporation (PSC) dba Phoenix International Raceway has an agreement for exclusive camping at Estrella Mountain Regional Park's competitive track site for their two NASCAR races (March and November); for which Parks receives an annual fee and an additional fee based on the number of campers using the site. Over the past several months, PSC has been working directly with County Management for renegotiating a flat-fee annual payment with no additional camping fees. The agreement includes acknowledgement of a dedicated easement through PSC to the competitive track site and eliminates the need to count camping numbers on a daily basis. An amendment to the agreement is pending Board of Supervisor approval.
- A Cooperative Agreement with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has been finalized to establish a cooperative relationship and mutual objectives to achieve management of Vulture Mountain Regional Park Hassayampa Preserves area that emphasizes its natural, cultural, historic, and wildlife resources and the sustainability of traditional uses, while embracing compatible recreational, educational, and commercial visitor services. This agreement outlines the requirements for 1) the development of a master plan; 2) TNC will transfer a portion of land to the County for a visitor center; 3) the County encumbering the visitor center parcel with a conservation easement in favor of TNC; and 4) responsibilities of each party including management and development by Parks. This agreement is tentatively slated for Board of Supervisor action in late March or April.

Administration

The purpose of the Administrative Division is to provide strategic direction, leadership, administrative and financial support to the Director and employees of the department so they can produce the results necessary to achieve the departmental mission and vision. The following information is provided as a high level overview of the activities of the Administrative Division for January and February, 2016:

Budget Status (through January 2016 close):

- Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305:
 - Enhancement Fund reported revenues 10% or \$279,788 over the YTD budget of \$2,701,773.
 - Enhancement Fund reported expenditures of 10% or \$266,983 under the YTD operating budget of \$2,717,041.
- Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302:
 - Lake Fund reported revenues of 5% or \$79,358 under the YTD budget of \$1,472,625.
 - Lake Fund reported operating expenditures at 16% or \$253,134 under the YTD budget of \$1,567,967.
- Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306:
 - Spur Cross reported revenues at \$752 under the YTD budget of \$150,910.
 - Spur Cross reported operating expenditures at \$611 under the YTD budget of \$156,996.
- Souvenir Fund (239) – Agency 303:
 - Souvenir Fund reported revenues 12% or \$19,801 under the YTD budget of \$164,844.
 - Souvenir Fund reported operating expenditures 8% or \$18,680 under the YTD budget of \$226,786.
- Donation Fund (243) – Agency 304:
 - Donation Fund reported revenues \$43 over the YTD budget of \$14,779.
 - Donation Fund reported operating expenditures 4% or \$347 under the YTD budget of \$9,275.

Budget Forecast:

- All funds remain structurally balanced. The year-end expenditure forecast for all funds is currently below the budgeted amounts. The year-end revenue forecast for Enhancement fund (241) is \$290,000 above the adopted budgeted amount, while the revenue for Lake Fund (240) is \$38,000 below what was budgeted for the year. The spring time wildflowers should boost revenues even higher than what is currently forecasted.

Accounting Services:

- Staff attended Grant Conversion training for CGI, the new system for financial and procurement services that Maricopa County will be using starting in June 2016 (also known as Advantage 3X). After training, several spreadsheets with Parks grant information were completed. Parks revenue is current with revenue week 02/15-02/21/16 being reported to the Treasurer's Office on 02/25/16.

Procurement Services:

- February has seen no major issues or complications. The bi-annual contract meeting with the Office of Procurement Services (OPS) was held on 2/5/16. Both Parks and OPS are reviewing purchasing contracts that are set to expire prior to 7/1/16. Wild flower spring billboards were procured with the bid awarded to Catapulta Strategic Design. The electronic billboards are at seven locations across the valley and will run February 22nd through March 6th.

Contracts:

- **Adobe Dam Regional Park:** Staff previously reported that The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) has approved the 500 Club's concept plans for the expansion and new banquet facility (upgrading the pro shop and removing the modular building, which will be replaced by the banquet hall, approximately 6,000 sf). A road block has occurred with the City of Phoenix and Flood Control District in regards to the sewer requirements for the new facility. The existing modular building and club house are currently on a septic system. It is the intent of the 500 Club to connect to the existing septic system that will be updated to meet code requirements. The City of Phoenix may require the 500 Club to connect to the city sewer system. If the city mandates a city sewer connection, the plans for the new development will be terminated as costs will make the expansion infeasible.

Wet 'N Wild received a Letter of No Objection on February 17th from the ACOE for the two new slide attractions to be added within the footprint of the existing facility. They are finalizing the drawings and intend to start construction on or before March 15th.

Upcoming Special Use Permits at Adobe:

- Phoenix Kart Racing Association – Spring Showdown April 13-16, 2016
 - Maricopa Live Steamers – Annual Spring Meet March 13-21, 2016
 - Maricopa Live Steamers – Boy Scouts Webelos Ceremony April 1-3, 2016
- **Estrella Mountain Regional Park (EMPR):** The equestrian concessionaire who manages the arena and horseback riding/western cookouts at Estrella has informed us of their retirement effective May 1, 2016. At this time, we feel it is the Parks and County's best interest not to find a replacement concessionaire. The main reasons are: 1) lack of Park funding necessary to bring the arena to modern standards for proper use and safety; 2) BLM restrictions for third party concessions at the arena site; and 3) the proposed EMPR Master Plan Update envisions repurposing the arena for other recreational opportunities.
 - **Lake Pleasant Regional Park:** The Scorpion Bay Grill and Store are open for business. The grill has a rotating menu and will be enhanced as the need arises. The communication that we have received from Parks visitors has been very positive.

Human Resources:

- **New Hires :**
 - Charles Fink, Trades Specialist
 - Carl Fuller, Trades Specialists
 - Sally Morrison, Souvenir Fund Coordinator, (Temp)
 - Kitty Lincoln, Contact Station Assistant, White Tanks (Temp)
- **Transfers:**
 - David Chatfield, Office Assistant Specialized, transfer from Lake Pleasant to White Tank
 - Thomas Rychtik, Park Maintenance Worker, transfer from Lake Pleasant to White Tank
- **Departures:**
 - Lloyd Anderson, Park Maintenance Worker, White Tank
 - Sarah Steele, Park Supervisor, San Tan
 - Rand Hubbell, Park Supervisor, McDowell
 - Paul Schlenker, Trades Specialist
 - Lindsay Burns, Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant
 - Patti Telin, Office Assistant Specialized, White Tank
- **Open positions and recruitments:**
 - Park Supervisor, San Tan – interviews pending
 - Park Supervisor, McDowell – interviews pending
 - Office Assistant Specialized, Lake – open for internal transfer
 - Contact Station Assistant, Temp, Lake Pleasant – open for recruitment
 - Park Maintenance Worker, Estrella - Offer Pending
 - Park Maintenance Worker, Usery – Offer Pending
 - Park Maintenance Worker, Lake Pleasant – open for recruitment

Information Technology:

- Replacement Point of Sale (POS) computer units for the parks (Cave Creek, DOC, Estrella, Lake Pleasant, McDowell, San Tan, Usery, White Tank) have been ordered and are pending delivery. Once received, the units will be reimaged by Office of Enterprise Technology (OET). Anticipated change-out dates for units is mid-March with all new unit installed by mid-April.
- A Technology Roadmap was developed with OET for Parks and Recreation. The Roadmap is being done to align technology endeavors and future purchases with Parks strategic business needs. The five identified projects are:

- Completion of Hosted Web Site and Content Management System
 *New website will launch in March 2016.
- Implement Hosted Asset Management System
 *Contract negotiation with HiperWeb is underway.
- Circuit/Bandwidth Assessment at four parks
 *This project involves a study and improvements for slow bandwidth at Estrella, White Tank, McDowell, and Cave Creek (Fiscal year 2017)
- Vulture Mountain Assessment
 *Pending budget approval from Board of Supervisors (Fiscal Year 2017)
- Establish a Service Level Agreement with OET to define expectations and responsibilities.
 *Complete by July 1, 2016

Volunteer Program:

- The Prickly Pedal Mountain Bike Race took place on January 23rd along the Maricopa Trail. The race required the help of almost 200 volunteers with trail maintenance prior to the even and race weekend assistance. The weekend of the race saw 150 volunteers for a total of 500 hours of service. The event wouldn't have been possible without the help of the many individual volunteers from all over the County including many Maricopa County employees. Additionally, several groups were able to offer assistance including: The Conservation Alliance, Desert Foothills Mountain Bike Association, Maricopa County Emergency Communications Group, Desert Foothills Land Trust, Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation, and the Daisy Mountain CERT team.
- Although intended to assist with the race preparation, the work done on the Maricopa Trail by volunteers on January 16th helped to repair many unused areas of the trail. With the support of the Maricopa Trail Manager, the volunteers improved numerous areas of the trail for future users.
- Year-to-Date Volunteer Hours:

	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16
Total Dept. Hours	3,739	2,949	4,568	6,828	11,319	11,966	14,240
Financial Savings	\$86,264	\$68,022	\$105,383	\$157,510	\$261,135	\$276,066	\$328,517
YTD Hours	3,739	6,688	11,256	18,083	29,402	41,369	55,609
YTD Savings	\$86,264	\$154,286	\$259,669	\$417,179	\$678,314	\$954,380	\$1,282,896
Prev. Year Month Total Hours	2,708	3,304	3,083	6,102	9,726	12,287	12,682
Prev. Year YTD Hours	2,708	6,012	9,094	15,197	24,923	37,209	49,891
Prev. Year Financial Savings	\$61,065	\$74,494	\$69,516	\$137,596	\$219,321	\$277,072	\$285,979
Numb. of Volunteers-current	78	71	414	361	480	235	444

Planning and Development (Engineering) Highlights

- **Estrella Master Plan:** Staff is fine tuning the draft master plan chapters and recommendations. The draft master plan and its recommendations were presented to the public on January 30, 2016, to gauge their level of support. The public comment period concluded February 29, 2016. The public comment period is officially over. Very briefly, summary of comments:
 - 36 people signed in for the meeting
 - 45 Survey Monkey responses
 - 10 comment cards from park
 - 1 email
 - 155 unique comments
 - 82% of respondents were mountain biker
 - 47% of respondents were hikers
 - **76% of comments prefer Alternative B**

Next steps are to complete the final draft for internal review and present these findings and the final draft master plan at the March 2016 Parks Commission meeting and seek their approval recommendation to forward to the Board of Supervisors.

- **Vulture Mountain Update:** Staff is working with MCDOT engineers on a realignment to Vulture Mine Rd as well as interior park roadway designs. MCDOT's goal is to define the preferred alignment(s) by the end of June 2016. The land lease application remains at the BLM state office for edits and has been further delayed by unforeseen procedural changes internal to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); this delay has impacted the start date of the Environmental Assessment (EA). A completed EA is required before any construction or management activities may begin.
- **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 ~\$4 million. With the help of "Job Order Contracts" (JOC) contractors, staff is working to standardize interior and exterior finishes and hardware improvements throughout the park system. 43 restroom facilities are currently completed with 9 additional units expected to be completed by June 30, 2016. We will complete a total of 18 restrooms this fiscal year; two of them are complete demos and 16 units remodeled.

Current Status:

Usery:

- Completed Work
 - C & D restroom complete
 - Archery restroom structure complete,
- Upcoming work
 - Archery restroom sewer line replacement begins March 21st
 - Restroom room #2, #3, #4, and #6 will be starting middle of March 2016
 - Demo of #7 and remodel of Wind cave restroom will start in April 2016

Estrella:

- Completed Work
 - Restroom #5 is complete
 - Restroom #7 is complete
- Upcoming Work
 - Restroom #3 starting 4/1/2016
 - Restroom #2 starting 4/18/2016
 - Restroom #1 demolition starting 4/18/2016
 - Playground improvements will start in April 2016

Lake Pleasant:

- Completed Work:
 - Roadrunner Water side bathroom complete
 - Pallet Loop restroom complete
 - Bajada Loop restroom complete
 - Scute Loop 1 restroom complete
 - Scute Loop 2 restroom complete
- Upcoming Work
 - New LED lights for Bajada, Pallet, and Scute loop campground restrooms 1 and 2. March starting 4- lane existing ET bed repair
 - April Starting new 4-lane ET bed
 - Demo of existing playground will start in April
 - Desert Outdoor Center front patio entry project will start April 18th
 - 4-lane boat ramp ET bed repair starting March
 - 4-lane boat ramp new ET bed design completed bidding out construction

- **Trades Crew:**

- In February, two new Parks Trade Specialists were hired. Charles Fink and Carl Fuller will bring the Trades Crew up to full strength to assist in the specialized maintenance projects in our parks and facilities.
- In February, our Trades Crew began excavating excessive grade and removing material from site 164 Pallet Loop to prepare for a concrete drive. Lessening the grade and pouring concrete drives will make these sites safer and more camper-friendly.
- In February and March, Trades staff has been assisting in general facility clean up at Estrella Park. Staff has been working on the irrigation system electrical system, removing failed tables and debris from the park, removing old light poles along the park sidewalks, and filling in wash outs along the road way.
- In March, the Trades Crew completed a re-route of a 6" irrigation line to clear playground improvements in Estrella Park.
- In March, Trade staff have been coordinating repair of a major water line leak on Stetson Valley Drive north of Adobe Dam Recreation Area. The line provides water to the 500 Club golf course on the property.

- **Trails Crew:**

- The Trails Crew has been doing storm damage cleanup and repairs at Cave Creek, McDowell, Estrella, Lake Pleasant, Spur Cross and the Desert Outdoor Center. Most notable was the washout of Overton trail at Cave Creek Park. Repairs to the trail required a tractor to replace the rocks and soil washed away in a storm.
- The crew has also been busy at Estrella constructing the trail layout for the connector from the Gadsden Trail to the Competitive Track Parking lot. This connector has been a common topic among trail users, especially the mountain biking community.
- The Trails Crew will be working with the AZCC to make improvements on the Estrella Park Competitive track this month.

- **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.
- Environmental Assessment continues on:
 - Segment 22 – Tonto National Forest – Bronco Trailhead to Scottsdale City Limits – 15.5 miles
The biological survey was completed in early November and the archeological survey completed 12/22/15. Multiple sites are conflict with the alignment. A meeting with the Tonto National Forest NEPA Coordinators was held in January 2016 and we will be allowed to build all trails on old roads, regardless of conflict. Three sites required a re-route of the trail and that was completed 2/24/16.
- The following portions of the Maricopa Trail are in process for purchase from the Arizona State Land Department:
 - Segment 35 – North and south of I-10 on the Tuthill Road alignment
 - Segment 12 – North of SR303 on Lake Pleasant Road.
 - Segment 11 – East of SR303 on Happy Valley Parkway.
- Construction Progress:
 - Segment 11 Happy Valley Parkway – 1.5 miles – completed February 2016.
 - Segment 12 Maricopa Water District – 1600 feet – trail completed February 2016, fencing to be completed March 2016.
 - Segment 35 Bullard Wash Outlet to Estrella Park – 1.5 miles – trail completed February 2016.
 - Segment 35 Goodyear – 7.1 miles – trail to be completed March 2016.
- Construction preparation:
 - Segment 9 Estrella Park – 3 miles – requires archeological survey – expected construction April 2016.
 - Segment 9 Tres Rios – 0.5 miles – expected construction April 2016.
 - Segment 12 – C.A.P. Waddell Canal – 5.7 miles – expected construction April – May 2016.
 - Segment 35 – Verrado – 3 miles – expected construction May 2016.

- Agreement preparation/negotiations:
 - City of Phoenix – Segment 9 – March 2016 Board of Supervisor agenda
 - City of Goodyear – Segment 35 – Approved January 2016
 - City of Scottsdale – Segments 23, 24 25 and 26 – in review
 - Verrado – Segment 35 – March 2016 Board of Supervisor agenda
 - U.S. Bureau of Reclamation – Segment 27 – Formal revised application to be submitted March 2016.
 - City of Buckeye – Segment 35 – in review
 - City of Avondale – Segment 9 and Segment 1 – part of Avondale Master Plan
- Installing additional signage
- Performing maintenance in preparation for the Prickly Pedal Race in January 2016
 - Segment 35 – White Tank 3
 - Segment 35 – White Tank Park to White Tank 3
 - Segment 11 – McMicken Trail
 - Segment 14 – New River to Black Canyon Trail

Park Operations Report

Cave Creek Regional Park:

- In January, the park hosted 16 interpretive programs with 190 participants attending, which included 46 repeat attendees. Four docent led programs with 28 participants attending which included 2 repeat attendees.
- The highlighted programs for the month: *Clay Mine Adventure* with 27 attendees and *Cave Creek to Spur Cross Hike* with 15 attendees.
- In February, the park hosted 26 interpretive programs with 267 participants attending, which included 58 repeat attendees. Five docent led programs were also conducted 138 attendees.
- The highlighted programs for the month: *Feeding Frenzy* with 79 attendees and the *Fireside* program with 38 attendees.
- The Park also hosted one event in February: the *Annual Elephant Mountain Run* with a total of 312 participants running along Cave Creek Trails, Maricopa County Trail and Spur Cross Trail.

Desert Outdoor Center:

- Interpretive Ranger Adam continues to establish and maintain an educational presence in Wickenburg. He is working with the Wickenburg Area Outdoor Education (WAOE) committee, which have met twice since last October, to coordinate environmental education efforts. These meetings have covered the following:
 - Conservation Alliance Coordinator from Desert Botanical Garden initiated a discussion that centered on phenology being used to engage people in nature
 - The archaeology trail at Vulture Mountain Elementary was repaired
 - Stargazing event at Everett Rodeo Grounds was held
 - An orienteering class was presented at Boyd Ranch
 - Interpretive Ranger Adam presented a Desert Survival Class at Sophie's Flat trailhead
 - An Intermediate Desert Survival class was presented at Sophie's Flat trailhead

WAOE continues to grow as more outdoor recreation / education opportunities are coordinated.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park:

- Estrella Park had 27 public programs in January with 605 people in attendance. The interpretive ranger presented another new "Believe it or Not!" program and guests still love the series.
- The hugely popular new Passport Estrella program wrapped up in January. This ranger-led program guides and encourages participants to hike every trail in the park. All involved celebrated their accomplishment with a party at the Nature Center. Hiker comments included making new friends, increased fitness levels, and confidence to explore the back country trails on their own. The program also has inspired new levels of interest and commitment to Estrella Park with several Passport interested in becoming park volunteers or

joining CEMP (Citizens of Estrella Mountain Regional Park). The Interpretive Ranger is developing a beginner, intermediate and advanced Passport Estrella program for next year.

- Early in the month, the first of the two-part program with the Goodyear Library occurred. These programs include a workshop that takes place at the library during the week and a guided hike and presentation at Estrella on the weekend. The staff at the Goodyear Library commented that the interest and feedback they have received on this program are off the charts. One guest reportedly told them "on a scale of 1-10, this program was a 20!" The library has scheduled the next two-part program with the park for April.
- Bike and Runner events included: Sonoran Cycles mountain bikes demos; the Mountain Bike Association of Arizona (MBAA) competitive track cleanup day; Aravaipa Running's *Coldwater Rumble Run* with nearly 400 runners participating; MBAA's bike race with 250 riders; and Cub Scout Pack 64's fund raiser running event.
- Estrella attendance picked up substantially in February. The nice weather and previous rains have made for good hiking. Wildflowers and poppies are appearing and are especially strong along stretches of the Rainbow Trail.
- Estrella Park had 25 public programs in February with 469 people in attendance. It is nice to have so many happy customers enjoying the programming and hiking in the park. Saturday February 13th, Liberty Wildlife displayed raptors for the public. Many happy customers were excited to be up close to the birds of prey and learn more about them.
- Estrella Park has been keeping up with the turf mowing using pull behind mowers to lower mowing costs. The mowers have already paid for themselves with the cost savings.
- "XtremeAir" held an inflatable obstacle course run on the Estrella turf area on Saturday, February 27th. The obstacles are made from large, colorful air-filled bounce house-type systems. About 500 people enjoyed the run as people cheered them on and enjoyed the spectacle. The park did see impact from the event in regards to the irrigation system getting damaged by event vehicles. Assessments are being conducted on the extent of the damage.
- Estrella Park hosted a "100 Miles in 100 Days" celebration. A total of 47 guests hiking in Estrella and other County parks completed their challenge and were honored and celebrated at Estrella! Many of the participants raved about what a wonderful program it has been and appreciated the acknowledgement for their accomplishments.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park:

- Lake Pleasant offered 26 interpretive programs during the months of January and February to the excitement of 618 program participants. The highlights included the *New Year's Day Scenic Hike*, *The Maricopa Trail Story*, *Desert Awareness*, and *Hiking the Scenic Yavapai Point Trail*.
- The Prickly Pedal bike race in January was a HUGE success. The eager riders started their adventure from the Castle Creek Boat Ramp area at Lake Pleasant and embarked on a thrilling journey along the Pipeline, Wild Burro, Cottonwood and Beardsley trails, heading out of the park and onto the Maricopa Trail, finishing into the Spur Cross Conservation Area and winding down with festivities in the Town of Cave Creek.
- Scorpion Bay Marina is currently under new management by Desert Troon. Recent renovations were made to the restaurant sparking quite a bit of interest among park visitors as they explored a new, high quality food menu and improvements to the restaurant area at Scorpion Bay Grill.
- The final renovation touches on the ceiling and light fixtures are being completed at the Scute, Bajada and Pallet Loop restrooms within the Desert Tortoise Campground. Campers have regularly complimented and expressed their satisfaction with the renovated restrooms.
- The recently renovated Discovery Center is scheduled to open for business this summer. A new print production company has been selected to produce the exhibit items more efficiently.
- A new project is currently underway at the Desert Tortoise Campground to improve the grading challenges currently impacting several campsites within the Pallet, Bajada and Den Loops.
- The Lake is expecting a number of new additions to the family...from mama and daddy bald eagles around the park. Approximately four baby bald eagles are currently growing stronger with each passing day.
- A special host and volunteer appreciation day was held to recognize the hosts and volunteers from Lake Pleasant and the Desert Outdoor Center. The contributions made to the parks and the impact they leave on the park patrons is phenomenal. Staff alone would not be able to maintain the high level of service that is

expected at our parks without their support and effort. Thank you to all of the park hosts and volunteers serving with Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department!

McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- During January, McDowell provided 20 interpretive programs with 153 program participants. Of the 153 program participants, 30 were repeat attendees. The highlighted program for the month was a full moon hike which attracted 55 participants. The Interpretive Ranger also did an outreach program at the Fountain Hills Library on desert animals with 41 people in attendance and participated in the Adventure Day program at White Tanks Park.
- Special events in January included the State Championship Mountain bike race with 712 participants and the six Mountain Bike Demos with various bike shops throughout the month.
- During February, McDowell provided 19 interpretive programs with 223 program participants. 55 participants were repeat attendees. Two programs that were particularly well attended included a *Reptiles of AZ* program with 55 participants and *Wolves in AZ* with 51 participants.
- February was a busy month for special events. Events included a Road Cycling Criterium Race (242 participants), the Xterra Trail Run (392 participants), the 16th annual Pemberton 50K (85 participants), the Desert Classic Duathlon (153 participants) and two mountain bike demos. In addition, the Ragnar Road Relay with 286 teams hosted a relay transition point at McDowell's Competitive Track.
- Maintenance items include addressing water leaks at the trailhead staging area restrooms, vandalism of a porta-potty at the Four Peaks Staging Area, and the construction and replacement of three new picnic tables at the visitor center.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park:

- We welcomed the New Year for our 4-legged friends with games, such as the *You Can DOO Obstacle Course* and *Dog on Parade*. Environmental Services provided fun and informative educational games for kids and adults alike. Maricopa County and Central Arizona Animal Rescue provided the opportunity to adopt canines of all sizes and ages. Over 100 park visitors and dog owners attended the event. Five dogs were adopted on site with several inquiries occurring at later dates.
- The sun was bright and 23 photographers of all experiences attended the *Desert Photography* program. Several beautiful photos were taken while confidence in use greatly increased at the culmination of the event.
- The most popular hikes at the park are the full moon hikes. We had 85 attendees of all ages and stages enjoy a beautiful evening under the moonlit skies for Full "Wolf" Moon Hike.
- We had 50 excited children and adults attend the *Reptile Care and Feeding* program. This was the perfect opportunity in which to learn about the care of reptiles.
- Believe it or not, mostly boys attended this super fun class in *Archaeology and Basket Weaving!* Highlighting Hohokam archaeology, along with viewing actual pottery shards and different types of baskets. Using folded newspaper strips, they learned how to weave their own basket.
- *Treasures of San Tan Scavenger Hunt* allowed participants of various ages to have some fun while hiking our trails at San Tan. A few challenges included "Find a Saguaro with 8 arms," "Take a picture of yourself with a horseback rider," and MORE! They had so much fun that parents were showcasing their children's photos of just about every item listed.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area:

- The Park hosted 14 interpretive programs in January with 237 participants attending and 11 docent led program with 217 attendees.
- The highlighted programs for the month were: *Full Moon Hike* 33 attendees, *Elephant Mountain Fortress Hike* 29 attendees, and *Rock Art of Spur Cross* with 29 attendees.
- The Park also co-hosted the first Annual *Prickly Pedal Race* with the mountain bikers starting from Lake Pleasant Regional Park continuing along the Maricopa Trail and finishing at Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.
- The Park hosted 20 interpretive programs in February with 249 participants attending and 12 docent led programs with 212 attendees.

- The highlighted programs for the month were: *Moonlight Hike* with 61 attendees, *Rock Art of Spur Cross* with 37 attendees and *Elephant Mountain Fortress* with 37 attendees.

Usery Mountain Regional Park:

- The park offered 16 interpretive ranger programs in January totaling 1,133 participants, and 26 docent lead programs totaling 584 participants.
- In February the park offered 12 interpretive ranger programs totaling 911 participants, and 27 docent lead programs totaling 559 participants.
- The *Hikers Choice Full Moon Hike* was the most attended during both months with 292 participants in January and 277 participants in February.
- 328 archers from around the state competed in the *Cactus Classic Archery Tournament* hosted by the Usery Mountain Archers. The tournament was held on the walking courses at the archery range and showcased archers of all ages ranging from pee wee to seniors. The Cactus Classic is the first of a four leg archery series held in Arizona.
- The park congratulated the *100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge* finishers and treated them to cake at their celebration party. 26 finishers attended the party to talk about their experiences during the challenge and pick up their official t-shirt for completing the task.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park:

- The park ranger and volunteers provided 23 programs and outreaches in January with 780 attending with approximately 240 attending the *Stargazing for Everyone*.
- The park ranger and volunteers provided 29 programs and outreaches in February with 670 attending total. *Wildflower Wednesday* hikes once again are very popular this year.
- On January 2nd, the third annual *Outdoor Adventure Family Day* was held and is the largest event every year with approximately 2,000 in attendance. Liberty Wildlife, DSU Posse, Wildlife World Zoo, Environmental Services and Animal Control all came out to set up booths. The Friends of White Tank Park and the White Tank Mountains Conservancy (WTMC) helped with handing out brochures and the Kids Adventure Quests. The White Tank Library provided great kids games and programs. Several interpretive rangers from other parks presented quality programs such as birding, furs and tracks and archery. The highlight of the day was a longline rescue demo by the MCSO and Central AZ Mountain Rescue. There were 1,042 people who visited the Nature Center and staff handed out 80 junior ranger badges. The White Tank Stables conducted 100 rides. Planning has already begun for another successful event in 2017.
- On January 10th, Xterra Arizona put on their annual trail race here for 344 racers.
- The Art Fair put on by the Friends of White Tank Park was very exciting this year. Over 4,000 people came out to shop with about 60 vendors over two beautiful spring days.
- The Arizona Site Steward Program held a land managers meeting on February 4th. The state program is going through some changes, but they now have a coordinator for the White Tank region.
- On February 12th and 13th, International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) conducted a 2-day training event at White Tank Park on trail maintenance and trail building. The first day was for Land Managers and the second day was to train volunteers on building and maintaining sustainable trails. After the morning indoor class, the volunteers went out in the field and rerouted a small part of the technical loop on the competitive track. They also added a few technical rock features for experienced riders to practice their skills.
- The Maricopa Trail and Parks Foundation conducted a trail training seminar in the classroom the end of February. They had about 35-40 volunteers for the Maricopa Trail as well as a few WTMC volunteers and a few park volunteers.
- On Saturday, February 27th, Todd Hornbeck, President of the WTMC took several donors from the organization, Experience Matters, on a hike up the Waterfall trail to show off this signature trail.
- White Tank Park hosted a "100 Miles in 100 Days" celebration. A total of 71 guests hiking in White Tank and other County parks completed their challenge and were honored and celebrated at the end of February.
- The MBAA conducted trail work on the competitive track to prepare the track for their race in March.

- The *Spring Cactus Flower 7K Run* went very smoothly with around 200 runners this month and the Sonoran Cycles Bike Shop conducted a bike demonstration of the latest bikes, customers were allowed to test them on the trails.
- Tortoise enclosure work continued with the help of hosts, the WTMC, and a tractor, staff completed the two dens and a mound. Maintenance staff finished the water lines and the ranger led eight students from the Helping Animals Club at a local high school to plant several globe mallow plants inside the enclosure. As soon as the tortoise wakes up from hibernation, she will be transferred here from Cave Creek Park.

Vulture Mountains Recreation Area:

- Park staff met with The Nature Conservancy staff in January and February to revisit the plans for the Hassayampa Preserve operations and to finalize the Memorandum Of Understanding Agreement.
- Park staff has been conducting site visits to the proposed development areas for the project to walk and draft out more detailed placement for day-use facilities and campgrounds.