

OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE COMPLETES ITS MISSION AND 'CLOSES'

March 2018 – George Sheats – President
Open Space Alliance of Central Yavapai
County

After over 20 years of community involvement Open Space Alliance has decided to 'close its doors'. OSA's mission has been to protect our natural areas and landscapes as well as collaborate with other organizations with similar interests. Early OSA leadership members were able to gather as many as 25 non-profits and environment protection advocates together and develop a synchronized vision for Prescott's future. OSA was instrumental in getting the voter approved local tax passed in order to purchase and protect certain properties and create open spaces or vacant land within the commercial and residential areas as we grew. Areas around both Watson and Willow Lakes and parcels within the Dells are good examples of where the money has been used to provide recreational amenities while protecting the viewsheds. The City of Prescott established the Open Space Acquisition Advisory Committee in the early 2000's to investigate various properties for possible protection and develop public policy related to Open Space. The plan was completed and approved in 2009 and has been incorporated in the City of Prescott 2015 General Plan and its Recreational Services department procedures. In addition, the City Land Development Code also includes the policy for setting aside Open Space within Planned Area Developments. The directions and policies established by Open Space Alliance have now been institutionalized within the City.

The past year Open Space Alliance has continued to host the Earth Day celebration in conjunction with the Wildland Fire Expo. In order to continue collaboration among similar non-profits the Greater Prescott Outdoors Fund was initiated by OSA and then established within the Arizona Community Foundation/Yavapai County. Most non-profits have been strug-

continued on page 3



Trail Tracks

March 2018

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

George Sheats, YTA President's Message – March 2018

This past year has seen a lot of accomplishments in trail construction. We've added several miles of trails within Pioneer Park making it a destination for mountain biking and running competitive events. A section of the Prescott Circle Trail below 'P' Mountain was completed to bypass the 'challenging' Turley and Boy Scout trails. The new trail is named the Badger Mountain Trail. The City of Prescott and the Prescott National Forest have officially joined together to help each other plan, construct, and maintain area trails. This includes sharing volunteers, tools, and mechanized equipment. This collaboration has accelerated the completion of the Ranch #62 re-route and about half of the planned Emmanuel Pines area trails off of Iron Springs Road. The EP area trails will be named Spence Springs Trails. We have also improved the urban trails such as bridge installations along the Greenways and Acker Park. New trails have also been added within Acker Park.

Besides the construction projects, there has been extensive planning and preparation for the upcoming trail projects. The City of Prescott has continued to work with developers to prepare for trail systems within their planned area developments. A majority of home buyers now choose to live in a neighborhood that has easy access to trails. Besides the convenience of trails within a development, the connectivity to trails and trail systems outside the development is desired by the new residents and is included in the planning. Communities like Prescott Lakes and Granite Dells Estates (The Dells) have installed trail networks within their common areas, which also connect to trails outside the development. Several upcoming developments such as Deep Well Ranch, Walden Farms, Storm Ranch, and Yavapai Hills have been working with trail advocates and City staff in preparation of having both 'interior' trail systems and connectivity to other networks.

The following are some of the trail projects currently on the horizon:

- Approximately 6 miles of trails within the recent 160 acres Storm Ranch purchase in the Dells.
- Loop trail within the Veterans Administration with outside connectivity.
- Peavine Trail extension from near the Airport to the Peavine in Chino Valley.
- Glassford Hill Trail from Peavine connecting with the Prescott Valley Glassford Summit Trail and the Iron King Trail.
- Connection to the Prescott Circle Trail from Gateway Mall.
- Completion of the Spence Basin trails.

To work with the Forest Service contact Tpapa@fs.fed.us

To work on City of Prescott trails go to www.prescotttrails.com

Hope you enjoy our Greater Prescott Trails.

To donate to area trails, go to www.azfoundation.org/yavapai collaborative funds.
Phone 928-708-9632. Fund brochure is available at www.PrescottTrails.com.



**YAVAPAI
TRAILS
ASSOCIATION**

**ARIZONA RECREATIONAL USE
STATUTE – A.R.S. 33-1551**

Early representatives such as Jan Alfano from Yavapai County and Yavapai Trails Association worked with Arizona State Parks and other state agencies to establish the Arizona Recreational Use Statute. This protects public and private property owners from liability when providing public access for recreational use such as hiking, horseback riding, or biking on their land. The statute supports the recreational use of public and private lands to encourage tourism and active lifestyles. This is similar to the Arizona ranchers' approach for cattle grazing and 'open range' without fences. Land owners who don't allow access to their property are not protected against liability, should someone become injured by a hazard within their property. The City of Prescott's General Plan encourages non-motorized connectivity throughout the community. Trails and overall connectivity works best when everyone participates and we are all good neighbors.



Prescott Community Garden fence gets Over the Hills Gang Paint, July, 2017.

**NEW ENTRANCE FOR THE
CONSTELLATION TRAILS**

By Mike Gulley

The City of Prescott has a network of short trails across from the Phippen Museum that have become one of the most popular and highly used trails in the city system. Currently, there is a widening project on Highway 89 near the museum that will include a roundabout. The parking lot for the Constellation Trail has been moved to the west side of the highway with easy entrance and exit from the future roundabout. The project will continue into the new year but even with current construction, entrance to the parking lot and trailhead is not difficult.

The Constellation Trails were constructed in 2011 by the "Over The Hill Gang", a crew of volunteers under the direction of City Trails Specialist Chris Hosking. Hosking named the network of trails for a U.S. Air Force Lockheed Constellation that crashed in 1959 during a routine training mission killing all five U.S. Navy crewmembers on board. Residents of Prescott in 1959 said the crash sounded "like an atom bomb." A number of people on the highway and in the fields witnessed the crash and said the exploding fireball spread flaming wreckage over a half-mile area, the burning debris set fire to the trees and underbrush in the Dells.

It was the lead story in the Prescott Evening Courier and the Arizona Republic for several days. For weeks it was the main topic of conversation among Prescott residents and the subject of speculation and mystery for many years. Now days it is unusual to find many residents that have any knowledge of the tragedy.

That lack of awareness about the crash and the death of the five crew members was the motivation for an Eagle Scout project by Cody Walker, Troop 10, Old Capital District, Grand Canyon Council. The project provided a memorial at the trailhead including an impressive circular concrete bench and podium with a plaque giving a short account of the mission and listing the names of the five navy crew members.

The Constellation Trails show off the stunning landscape and geology of the Granite Dells. Most people hiking these trails would be astounded to learn that the rocks under their feet have been age-dated by radiometric methods at about 1.4 billion (1,400 million) years old. Remember Mr. Peabody, Sherman and the Wayback Machine? Well if we could travel with Sherman back 1.4 billion years ago we would find ourselves on the flanks of an active volcano situated above the magma chamber that eventually formed the granite dells. Shazam! Sherman better get us out of there before we become part of the total magma melt down.

Now lets have him set the time machine for 1927. WOW!! We are watching Tom Mix and his wonder horse, Tony galloping through the Dells making one of his 300 western movies. He made 100 of those silent movies right here in the Granite Dells. Mix actually won the bull riding competition at the Prescott Frontier Days Rodeo in 1913. He lived in Prescott on and off from 1913 to 1928



Constellation Trails Parking Lot, February 2018.

Today in real hiking time the outside loop (2.7 miles) can be accomplished in about 1 & 1/2 hours. Weaving in as many or as few of the interior trails as you like hiking time can be extended or shortened to your convenience. Most trails are rated easy with a little more elevation gain on the south end of *The Lost Wall Trail*. Be sure to include some of the interior trails that traverse small canyons. Perhaps eat your lunch on the *Ham and Cheese* and get your groove on and do *The Hulley Gulley!* The scenery is incredible throughout the entire network.

How fortunate and wonderful that we can hike and ride in such a beautiful place that is also full of history. The geology beneath our feet 1.4 billion years old, Tom Mix riding and shooting silent bullets at the bad guys, a mysterious and tragic crash of a U.S. Air force Lockheed Constellation. Come on out, pay attention, feel the history and walk in beauty.

OPEN SPACE ALLIANCE COMPLETES ITS MISSION AND 'CLOSES' *continued*

gling to raise funds for advocacy and projects, so the Fund was established to help with fundraising. OSA has also been carrying Liability and Volunteer Medical Insurance used for events and volunteer efforts such as trail building by the Over the Hill Gang. These insurances have now been transferred to the Yavapai Trails Association, which has always worked alongside OSA. This past year OSA was awarded a Community Development Block Grant to upgrade Tom Pettit Park by adding picnic tables and benches. Included in the grant was funding for tables at the Boys and Girls Club in the upstairs general purpose room. The Park and the Club have been no-cost venues for various groups and organizations to hold their meetings and other activities. This year's Earth Day on April 21 will be OSA's last contribution to the community. Thanks to all those who have contributed to OSA's success over the years, with a special thanks to Elisabeth Ruffner, who established and led OSA's mission for many years.



Fain Park Bridge completion, July 2017.



Tom's Bridge, Acker Park Summerfield, April 14, 2017



Bridge Upgrade, Tom Pettit Park, December 2017.



Miller Creek Sonora Garden Bridge, July 2017



Bridge Upgrade, Willow Creek/Willow Lake, January 2018



Yavapai Trails Association
 P.O. Box 403
 Prescott, AZ 86302

For memberships visit
www.yavapai-trails.org or send
 \$15 for family membership.

We're on the Web at:
www.
yavapai-trails.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Individual or Organization Name (s) _____
 Street address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone: Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____ E-mail _____
 What related organizations do you belong to? _____
 How do you use trails (horseback, hike, bike)? _____
 Do you have time or skills to contribute? ____ How? _____ Want to volunteer _____
 If you did not receive this newsletter in the mail, where did you pick up this copy?
 Retail store _____ Public facility _____ Friend _____ Organization _____
 Annual membership fee: \$15.00 for individual/family; \$30 Organization/Business
 Date _____ Membership Fee Amt. _____ Additional Donation Amt. _____

Please make checks payable to: YTA

Please clip out this coupon and send to:

Yavapai Trails Association, P.O. Box 403, Prescott, AZ 86302

To donate to area trails, go to www.azfoundation.org/yavapai collaborative funds. Phone 928-708-9632
 Fund brochure is available at www.PrescottTrails.com



Over the Hill Gang and Parks Rangers ready to walk in the Rodeo Parade, July 1, 2017.



Over the Hill Gang on February 5, 2018. The first day of Dells Storm Ranch trail construction.