

Trail Tracks

Spring 2009

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Presidents Message

Yavapai Trails Association faces many challenges in 2009. The rapid pace of development in the Prescott area threatens existing trails and makes promoting new ones more difficult. The voice of motorized trail users is becoming stronger and this will make the preservation and creation of non-motorized trails more complex. Non-motorized users need to be very vigilant and more verbal! Yavapai Trails Association needs many more members and volunteers to accomplish our "goals of preserving, promoting and maintaining trails in and around the Prescott Area".

Some immediate concerns for Yavapai Trails Association are the Peavine Trail which is threatened by both Fann and Cavan developments, who wish to put roads and stoplights over the trail. YTA is working for tunnels or bridges that are horse friendly. Prescott Unified School District has chosen The Circle Trail in Pioneer Park as one of its possible sites for a new school.

The City of Prescott currently leases this land from the BLM at a very small fee, which is the reason for the districts choice. YTA is asking the City and the School District to remove this site from the possible choices for a new school.

YTA received a donation of \$ 3460. 00 from the Prescott Cycling Club for the Circle Trail fund, thanks to Nigel Reynold's presentation. Many thanks to the Cycling Club for this generous donation.

The City of Prescott received a grant of \$64,570.00 from the Arizona Sate Parks Trails Heritage Fund for the Prescott Circle Trail, thanks to the efforts of Rob Hehlen. However, recent legislative budget cuts have forced Arizona State Parks to discontinue all state funded grant programs until further notice. This includes grants awarded last year and will affect the Circle Trail. The completion of the Circle Trail has been a 15 year project for YTA and we will continue to work on it.

YTA will hold its annual National Trails Day Fundraiser on Saturday, May 9 , from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. All proceeds will go to the Circle Trail Fund. Please check our website for more information.

Hope you have a great year hiking, biking or riding, whatever your pleasure, and many more trails to go on.

—Joyce Mackin

Our Mission

Yavapai Trails Association is dedicated to protecting, preserving, and developing recreational, non-motorized trails. We are an all-volunteer group that represents the interests of hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

YTA evolved from the Yavapai County Trail Advisory Committee appointed by the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors in 1989. One of the chief reasons for forming was to find ways to prevent the loss of access to existing trails as the county becomes increasingly urban.

There was also a need to help individual communities develop and coordinate their trail systems and to work closely with developers and others to secure new trails and maintain continued access to existing trails.

We are a non-profit corporation with federal 501(c)3 designation, and our operating expenses are funded by dues and donations. We are supported by many other organizations and recognized by the cities of Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Chino Valley, as well as Yavapai County, the USDA Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the state of Arizona.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Beginning with the winter issue of this newsletter, YTA is inviting businesses, non-profits organizations, or other groups to submit to us business card sized ads. The fee will be \$25 per issue. The ads will be randomly placed throughout the newsletter. We ask that the ads be print-ready as hard copy or digital file.

For more information, please contact YTA at the address or phone number listed below. Ad copy may be sent by e-mail to rsmith1712@gmail.com in GIF or JPG format

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Call Membership Chair
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or go to:
www.yavapai-trails.org

Join Us!

If you are not yet a member of YTA, we welcome you to join us in active participation. We have many different projects requiring a variety of skills. We need help with everything from making phone calls to constructing trails. Individual/family memberships are only \$15 a year, and organizational/business memberships are only \$30 a year. Please keep in mind also that all monetary donations, excluding dues, are tax deductible.



PRESCOTT PEAVINE TRAIL

(A RETROSPECTIVE)

The Prescott Peavine is now officially a National Recreation Trail, part of a system of trails envisioned in 1988 by the President's Commission on American Outdoors, a system that would eventually tie our country together with threads of green

This trail project began in 1994 with funds provided by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The intent was to convert existing but abandoned railroad rights-of-way along a line of the Santa Fe Railroad of approximately 6.6 miles into a non-motorized walking, biking, and equestrian trail for broad public use. The right-of-way was acquired from a Salt Lake City company who had purchased the right-of-way and reclaimed the original materials for salvage. After purchase by the City of Prescott, it took several more years of back-breaking labor by city staff and thousands of volunteer hours to clear debris and rotten railroad ties to make this trail. It is now combined with the Prescott Valley Iron King Trail into what is Arizona's finest Rails-to-Trails project.

The name taken for the trail refers to an older section of the Santa Fe, Prescott, and Phoenix rail line that lies in ruins some miles west of a later alignment called the Hell Canyon cut-off. This later alignment to Prescott from Ashfork was completed in 1893 and was constructed to reduce maintenance costs and to better serve agricultural interests in the Salt River Valley. The abandoned section to the west was affectionately known as the "Peavine Railway." It resembled a peavine because of its torturously curving route. Nonetheless, the align-

ment that constitutes the Prescott Peavine Trail is a part of the original rail right-of-way (Prescott and Arizona Central Railroad) that first reached the town of Prescott in 1886.

Still later, a by-pass alignment was constructed that doomed passenger service to Prescott. That alignment, completed in 1961, went from Ashfork to Drake, then west and south through Chino Valley, Williamson Valley, and south to Skull Valley and Kirkland. Though passenger service to Prescott was gradually, a spur line of 28 miles remained connected from Drake to Prescott and carried freight until October 1983 when rain seriously damaged a bridge north of Prescott. Apparently too costly to justify rebuilding, this line was abandoned in March 1984. The Prescott Peavine and the Chino Valley Peavine Trails lie along this section of rail right-of-way, which was common to both the original "Peavine Railway" and the Hell Canyon cut-off

This is a trail for everyone. It affords a close-up look at some of the most spectacular scenery in all of Yavapai County, or for that matter, the entire state. A lush riparian community of willows, sycamore, and cottonwoods within the Watson Woods Preserve borders the southern extent of the trail. As it heads north, Watson Lake comes into view, where, especially in fall and winter, hundreds of waterfowl and shorebirds can be identified with binoculars. Once past the lake, the trail cuts through a most dramatic landscape—the rocky granite spires of Granite Dells, before finally heading out into open rangelands to the north.

The integrity of this wonderful much-used and enjoyed trail will be threatened in the near future by residential and commercial development. For more information on this, read on.

— Ron Smith

SAVE THE PEAVINE TRAIL

Calling all non-motorized trail users!

There are several construction projects that are currently being proposed or being planned that will impact the Peavine Trail. These projects will be presented here and any questions can be directed to the YTA Committee. YTA needs your help in voicing support for the Peavine Trail. Several at-grade trail crossings are being proposed for several roads that would cross the Peavine Trail. These are crossings where pedestrians cross a road at a traffic signal or four-way stop. Please contact your local City council-member, or Yavapai County government and provide constructive feedback by saying 'no' to building any at-grade trail crossings!

There are many alternatives to at-grade trail crossings. Bridges over the road, or tunnels under the road, are the best examples. There are also other alternatives such as re-routing the trail to avoid road crossings completely. There are several grants for trails available that would provide matching money needed to build an alternative to an at-grade crossing. However, because of current economic conditions, the cutbacks in City staff and budgets for potential matching funds are very limited.

The Peavine Trail connection that would cross Hwy. 89A and travel north to the existing portion of the trail in Chino Valley

Continued, col. 1, next page

has not yet been built, but it is being planned. Projects #2, #3 and #4 listed below would cross that portion of the Peavine Trail.

Projects planned to cross the existing Peavine Trail:

#1. The planned development south of 89A: Several roads through commercial areas that would cross the existing Peavine Trail.

Projects planned to cross the future connection of the Peavine Trail:

#2. The planned development north of 89A: Several roads through commercial areas that would cross the planned Peavine Trail.

#3. The proposed Great Western Extension: A proposed road that would connect 89A, east of Prescott, to 89, south of Chino Valley.

#4. The proposed Chino Valley Corridor: A proposed highway that would connect 89A, east of Prescott, to 89, somewhere in Chino Valley or south of Chino Valley.

Who and how to contact:

City of Prescott Council:

<http://www.cityofprescott.net/leadership/officials> or 928-777-1100

Town of Chino Valley Council:

<http://www.chinoaz.net/council/index.shtml> or 928-636-2646

Yavapai County: <http://www.co.yavapai.az.us/default.aspx>

or 928-771-3214

— *Christina Jan*

FAIN PARK

When most of you think about a place to hike, you probably tend to think of the Prescott National Forest first, with Prescott Valley low on the list. Well, there is a great place in PV, little known, called Fain Park which is definitely worth visiting. Don't go just for the hiking but because of the history that you can find there, including many interesting mining artifacts. There is not enough space in this article to cover both, so I will focus on the history in this article, and the hiking in the next issue – but that second article will include some of the historical remains that you will pass on your hikes.

First, how do you get to the park? As you enter PV on highway 69 from Prescott, turn right (south) at the third traffic light, onto Prescott East Highway. Next, turn left at the T-junction (just past the nursery) onto Second Street and then take the first right onto Fifth Street. This street soon drops down into the valley of Lynx Creek. Follow it down the steep hill, curving to the right near the bottom,

into the parking lot. The park and the scenic lake are on your left across the grass.

The lake is there because a dam was built across Lynx Creek back in 1927 to provide water for mining operations downstream. To see the dam, take the concrete path to the far left along the edge of the lake. As you go by the lake, notice the massive steel sluice gate on your right, which was used to control flows. The path ends at a metal platform, looking back at the dam. You will realize how deep the canyon is there by the height of the dam – about 60 feet. The dam has the date imprinted at the top. There were earlier dams built in this area that were washed away.

Look behind you on the platform and note the large rusty pipe that continues along the edge of the canyon. This 30" diameter pipe, constructed from metal plates riveted together, predates the dam and was used for hydraulic mining. This is a very destructive technique where



Fain Lake

Continued on next page



Reconstructed Stamp Mill

water under pressure is directed through a hose with a nozzle attached to wash away the rock and sediment of the creek banks that have accumulated during floods over millennia. This material contain placer gold. Placer (rhymes with passer) is gold nuggets or flakes that have been slowly eroded out of the original bedrock, and washed down by the flow of water. If you pan for gold, this is what you hope to capture.

To visit the mining artifacts, cross the floating bridge over the lake – this is to the right as you walk down from the parking lot. The exhibits start a short distance past the end of the bridge, on your right. The most impressive item here is a reconstructed stamp mill – its original site was about ½ mile upstream, just past the Stoneridge bridge. A fire burnt the original wooden support structure, but the metal parts were salvaged by Jerry Munderloh and Jean Cross– local residents who have a love for history and education. Stamp mills were used to crush the ore, allowing further pro-

cessing to extract the valuable metals. Since mining began in this area about 140 years ago, \$19 million in gold has been recovered. Next to the stamp mill, there are many other mining artifacts that Jerry has rescued. He has labelled them to help you understand what they were used for.

As you drove into the park, you may have noticed a recently built chapel to the left of the road. This chapel was built with funds provided through the late Mrs. Fain (Johnny Lee). It has some beautiful stained glass windows, designed and built in Europe. They were rescued from the Sisters of Mercy Convent Chapel in Prescott, which was located where Prescott College now stands. The chapel is usually open to the public at weekends.

For more information, send an e-mail to: PrescottValleyHistoricalSociety@Yahoo.com.

— *Nigel Reynolds*

THE PANORAMA TRAIL

A cooperative residential trail project within the Prescott Lakes community.

Prescott Lakes residents have successfully teamed with the City of Prescott to produce one of Prescott's most scenic hiking trails. Completed by October of 2008, the main trail, the "Panorama Trail," climbs from the City's Vista Park on Sarafina Dr. to basaltic heights above the grassy open space within the Prescott Lakes residential development. It affords grand views to the north and east of Prescott including Watson and Willow Lakes and the growing nearby communities. At the summit of the volcanic rock butte, the original developer, M3 Companies, created a series of mini petroglyph parks of inscribed basalt

stones. The petroglyphs were photographed, inventoried, and moved moved to this site from their original locations with help from the Yavapai Tribe, Sharlot Hall Museum, and the Stasack family. The rock art sites are traversed by a series of loop trails comprising the Vista View Mesa Loop Trail. Another natural surface trail, named the Vista View Discovery Trail, traverses just below the rim of the butte. It passes several small caves and a few *in situ* petroglyphs.

The trails are all open to the public. They have resulted from a multi-dimensional effort of many volunteers, principally from the local community and the Prescott Lakes Trails Committee. The City of Prescott Parks and Recreation staff assisted in the design, training of volunteers and construction of the trails.

I walked these trails this past month with George Sheats, a volunteer of the Prescott Lakes Trails Committee, and found it an easy 1.5 mile trek with many rest stops at benches overlooking the landscape of homes, undeveloped open space, and the lush grass of golf fairways. The benches were provided through donations from local community residents. *See map and photos on next page.*

If you would be interested in further assisting with the development of this trail system, contact George Sheats (602-361-7857) or Paul Mazade (928-442-2360).

— *Ron Smith*



To reach the Prescott Lakes trails from north Prescott, take Miller Creek Road north to the Conoco Station at Smoketree Lane. This street is at a traffic signal just before reaching Willow Lake Road. Continue east on Smoketree across the residential area to the very east side of the development to Sarafina Dr. Turn left and go a short distance to the City picnic ramada and the Vista Trail.



Rock art on Vista View Mesa Loop Trail



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Individual or Organization Name (s) _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

What related organizations do you belong to? _____

How do you use trails (horseback, bike, hike)? _____

Do you have time or skills to contribute? _____ How? _____ Want to volunteer? _____

If you did not receive this newsletter in the mail, we would like to know where you picked up this copy:
 Retail Store _____ Public Facility (e.g. Library) _____ Friend _____ Organization _____

Date _____ Membership Fee Amt. _____ Make checks payable to: YTA

If you would like membership in the YTA Historic Trails Committee, please check here (no added fee) _____

Annual Membership Fee: Annual \$15.00 for individual/Family; \$25 Organization/Business

Please clip out this coupon and send to Yavapai Trails Association, P.O. Box 403, Prescott, AZ 86302

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY **FUND RAISER**

**MAY 9, 2009 – PIONEER PARK,
PRESCOTT**

Co-sponsored by

City of Prescott and Yavapai Trails Association

(National Sponsor: American Hiking Society)

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT PRESCOTT CIRCLE TRAIL

MORNING: HORSE/HIKER/BIKER RELAY - Registration from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

There will be teams of three, usually horse/hiker/biker, but any combo is acceptable, (i.e. 2 hikers/one horse, or 3 bikers). Each entrant will pick up a number at a designated spot along the trail, and the numbers of each team will be added to determine 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. There is an entry fee of \$15.00/person and prizes are \$75.00 for first place team, \$60.00 for second place team and \$45.00 for 3rd place team. Participants will each receive a t-shirt along with a power bar and water.

There is absolutely no need for speed as there will not be any advantage. This is not a race and horses are limited to walk or trot – it is a fun event bringing together various non-motorized trail users. Youngsters under the age of 18 are required to wear an ASTM-approved helmet. No stallions or dogs allowed on the trail.

For more information or if you need team members, call Joyce at 778-4985, give your name, phone and type of partner(s) you need. Get your name in early so we have time to work on matches and get the correct t-shirt size. Or find your own team and register with Joyce as soon as possible. Limited to 25 teams. Anyone wishing to extend their trail experience is welcome to use these public trails after the relay is completed.

11:30 A.M. Presentation of President's Award

INFORMATION: Watch our website, www.yavapai-trails.org for updates and application/liability forms. You can call Joyce at 778-4985. Bring the family, a lunch, a folding chair, sunscreen; come and enjoy getting together with fellow trail users.

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

A coalition of non-motorized trail users

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

