

TRAIL TRACKS

A Publication Of Yavapai Trails Association

October 2004

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Goals

The primary goal of YTA is to assist in the development of a system of interconnecting trails for hikers, horseback riders, and bicyclists throughout Yavapai County; to foster cooperation and communications among all trails user groups; to promote communication and cooperation with all government agencies regarding trails; to create higher visibility for trail opportunities and issues; and to seek development of new trail resources.

Yavapai Trails Association is a nonprofit organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Service. Donations are tax deductible, but dues are not.

Notes from the President

Greetings,

What a wonderful time of year! If Spring is an awakening, then Fall is the abundance of life. This is my favorite time of year for hiking. The apples are turning red, the creekside aspens and boxelder are all in shades of gold, amber, and orange. The mornings are crisp, the shadows longer., but the days still warm. *Take a hike!!*

How about joining YTA and others in a celebration of Fall and a recognition of some who work the trails and help provide the array of hiking, biking, and horseback trails that lie at your back door. The event is Saturday, November 6 at Granite Basin Recreation Area. Mark your calendar and check inside story for details.

— Ron Smith, Pres., YTA



Collared lizard seen recently on Trail #347

Favorite Trails

Yaeger Canyon/Mingus Mountain Hike

This is one of my favorite hikes. Not only does it have great views, but it's also a loop trail so there's no backtracking. It's quite a strenuous hike, about 6 miles long and climbing up 1,200 feet. It's best in cooler weather, but enjoyable at any time of the year. I first did it in January 2000, then again this June on Father's Day with my son and his dog. Allow about 3 1/2 hours for the loop — more if you stop often to catch your breath or enjoy the views. The hike consists of three distinct parts: a steep climb on trail 28 up to the tall pines with little shade; a mainly level and shaded walk below the ridge on trail 111; then a slower descent back to your car on trail 533, again with little shade. There are good views looking back from 28, but the best panoramas are on the way down on 533.



Stephen Reynolds & his chocolate Lab Mousse, on the trail

The trailhead is at milepost 333.2 on the southeast side of Highway 89A, between Prescott and Jerome (mileposts are those little green signs every mile). For reference, Glassford Hill Road is about MP 322 on 89A, and the top of the pass is

MP 336.6. At MP 333.2, look for a dirt road that turns back sharply to the right off 89A, down to Yaeger Creek. Either park on the shoulder of 89A, or drive down and park by the creek. Despite the creek being dry most of the year, there is a profusion of walnut and ash trees along the banks, providing welcome shade in the summer. The Yaeger Ranger Station used to be on the far side of the creek, and you can still see some of the concrete foundations there. It became inactive in the mid-fifties and was dismantled about ten years later.

Trail 28 starts on your left at the bottom of the ramp down, just before the dirt road crosses the creek — look for the sign on the fence corner. Elevation here is almost exactly 6000 feet. The trail initially runs north next to the creek, soon going past a derelict bridge of the old main road. Shortly after this bridge, turn off the old road to the right (east) into a side canyon, past a sign that says “Allen Spring Road: 2.” The trail soon zigzags up above this side canyon through the chaparral, eventually reaching the ponderosa pines. On the way, you will notice broken white rocks on the trail — from a limestone formation deposited around 300 million years ago when this area was a sea! There are also crags of limestone, one of which is a good place to rest and enjoy the view. A neat carving in a dead juniper here proclaims it to be “Bear Lookout.” A little farther on you pass into an old lava flow, with a reddish color. Glassford Hill, a now extinct volcano, erupted about 14 million years ago, so



View of Lonesome Valley, looking west from Mingus

this lava is probably of a similar era.

It took me 60 minutes to reach the point where the trail flattens out at the top of the steep climb — five minutes after that, you'll reach a "crossroads" with various signs. This is the high point, a little over 7200 feet. Trail 111 goes to the right (old wooden sign says "Mud Flat: 2") — this is the one you want. You'll soon find out this is also trail 530 when, a couple of minutes later, you come to another sign at a less obvious T-junction. Turn right (southwest) here; 530 continues straight on. The hike then proceeds to the south, descending gently, with a couple of steeper switchbacks, through the shade of the pines, still on trail 111. It ends at forest road 105, about 45 minutes from the T-junction. Turn right along this well-used road — five minutes later, look for the start of trail 533. This is off to the right (northwest) at the point where the road bends left — signs soon confirm 533.

This trail climbs a little at first through the trees, then peaks at a barbed wire gate and drops down, emerging into a more open terrain, sadly with many dead pines. On the way down, notice more lava, but gray not red like that on the ascent. Along this stretch, you'll have wonderful vistas over Lonesome Valley — now "Filling up with Houses" Valley. In the distance you can spot both Glassford Hill and Granite Mountain. The trail winds its way down, finally reaching the starting trailhead. At one point in the descent, turn right and down at a switchback — do NOT go straight (on the more level path).

Having the 7.5' topo map of Hickey Mountain is helpful, showing the trails that are #28 & 533, but not # 111 or 530. The Prescott National Forest map is not good for details, but does define most of the trail & forest road numbers.

FOOTNOTE: If you are a mountain biker, my son biked this trail in the reverse direction with some friends in July. The climb up was hard work, but the downhill was awesome!

— Nigel Reynolds

YTA Activity

A Date to Remember: Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at Granite Basin

Bob Sutton, Derek Brownlee and Jan Alfano, YTA Board members, have been working to put together a celebration ceremony to honor YTA for the adoption of Forest Service Trails 341, 346 and 347. We want further to recognize some of the people who have worked on these trails with Bob Sutton.

We will be presenting certificates of appreciation to:

Pacer Bryant, Tony Beere, Bill Brown,
Doug Buck, Bob & Nancy Goodrich,
Wayne Hultberg, and Bob Sutton

This festive event will be held Saturday, **Nov. 6 at Cayuse Trailhead** in the Granite Basin Recreation Area from 10:00 a.m. to about noon. It will also be a chance to meet YTA Board members and learn more about the organization. We will be inviting a number of Forest officials, local political candidates, and City officials, and recreational organizations.

We plan to have light refreshments (chips, salsa, pretzels, trail mix, fruit, soda, and bottled water).

Bob Sutton Receives Forest Service Award

YTA Board member, Bob Sutton, has received a volunteer belt buckle from the Forest Service for his many hours of service in maintaining trails. He has recorded 286 hours since year 2000, but has put in many more that were not recorded. Ranger Bill Cook states, "He is an extremely important part of our trail team." Bob can be found at least once a week working on Trails #341, 347 and 346, all of which have been adopted by YTA. Initially we only maintained about one-half of Trail #347 as well as #341; these are both very rocky sections and subject to erosion. However, after getting them in great shape, Bob decided to extend YTA's obligation by

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taking over another portion of Trail #347 and adding #346. Bob is Chairman of our Trail Maintenance Committee and also a Team Leader.

Because we get requests to help with other maintenance projects, please contact Bob's assistant, Jan Alfano (445-2942) if you know of any individual or group (including Scouts, Honor students, college students interested in the environment, etc.) who would be interested in working on trail maintenance and construction. Because YTA is recognized by IRS as a tax-exempt organization, time spent would qualify as community service toward badges or scholarships.

Next time you are out on one of the aforementioned YTA maintained trails, please notice how well-groomed they are and encourage your friends to join YTA so that we can continue this public service. We will be happy to furnish you with applications.

— *Jan Alfano*

Local Government Activity

Greenways Trail System: A Progress Report

Some of the following information was reported in an article that appeared in the Daily Courier, Sunday, Sept., 26 and written by Cindy Barks. I have expanded on that information based on a presentation to Prescott City Council by Parks and Recreation Department Head, Jim McCasland.

The process of piecing together the system of trails along Prescott's creeks and parks has been a slow incremental process. Some additional pieces of the system appear to be in place and only await official approval from the Prescott City Council at an upcoming meeting. I watched proceedings of the recent study session on Tuesday, Sept., 21 on Ch 13 during which Jim McCasland outlined for Council the various trail sections for which ten private property owners have agreed to provide easements to the City.

The agreements include acquisition through fee simple land donations, donated easements, or, in one case, a land trade. These easements are critical to an integrated system of downtown trails for pedestrians, and cyclists, and are intended to link residential areas with shopping, schools, playgrounds, neighborhoods, businesses, parks and points of interest. They also provide protection for the creeks and natural creekside vegetation that are signature landmarks within the Prescott area. Two additional property owners have expressed an interest in donating 15-foot easements for the Mile-High Trail System. One of these easements would connect, by way of an existing trail, Acker Park to the Badger "P" Mountain trail system. The other would be a public trail through a subdivision and be constructed later.

The new easements will connect Granite Creek Park with Miller Valley Road near the McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Carl's Jr. restaurants. Another trail section will continue along Granite Creek from downtown to Mile High Middle School.

Much of what is being accomplished to date on the Greenways Multi-use Trail System has come through the assistance of a \$511, 970 Transportation Enhancement (TEA) grant (including the City's 5.7% match) through the Arizona Department of Transportation. Much of what has already been accomplished has come from the many volunteers who through sweat and pain of aching backs have done so much of the actual trail construction.

— *Ron Smith*

Yavapai County Trails Committee

In to a recent article in the Daily Courier Joanna Dodder reported that the Board of Supervisors during their September meeting in Cottonwood approved on a 2-1 split vote funding in the amount of \$10,000 for YCTC. The committee will use the funds for a variety of needs, not the least of which is an updating of the Master Trails Plan. This plan, approved in 1998, includes a number of provisions drafted and promoted by YTA. The plan has a goal of developing a county-wide system of non-motorized multi-use trails. One the most important provisions of the plan is that of

ensuring public access to existing and planned trails on public land. The mushrooming growth of new subdivisions on the fringes of the tri-city area has put the trail plan to the test. YTA and YCTC have been very active recently in trying to assure that proposed trails on private lands in the Williamson Valley area are adhering to the Master Trail Plan guidelines. These new challenges have created reasons for updating the plan.

The Master Trail Plan is available via the county's website at www.co.yavapai.az.us.

— Ron Smith

SHARING THE TRAILS: Horse Sense!

In recent years the Forest Service has done an admirable job of maintaining and expanding the non-motorized trails. Fifteen years ago the trails in Granite Basin saw little use, but with the population explosion in the Prescott area and the increasing popularity of mountain bikes there is a need to address safety and courtesy on the trail.

There is a universal symbol for shared trails in which horses (livestock) have the right of way over both bicycles and hikers; cyclists are expected to yield to both horses and hikers. The overwhelming majority of trail users are thoughtful, taking the safety and enjoyment of others into consideration. However, not everyone is aware of the impact that their actions might have on others, so some education is in order.

Equestrians are probably the most vulnerable to accidents because the horse is a prey animal whose main means of survival is flight. They can become nervous if suddenly startled by a person or bicycle coming rapidly up behind them and could buck, bolt or run. Being very perceptive, they also can become concerned about a strange object coming toward them. For these reasons, bikers or joggers should give a warning when approaching from the rear, and stop to let a horse approach them from the front. Horse owners have an obligation to work with their animals at home in an effort to introduce them to the situations that might be encountered on the trail. Remember, there are novice children riders on the trails as well as seniors. And of course, the only way a young horse will become accustomed to trail encounters is through exposure. On the other side of the coin, riders need to avoid the

trails when they are muddy because it isn't very comfortable for a jogger, hiker or bicyclist if the trail is rutted and full of deep hoof prints. If your horse kicks, tie a red ribbon in his tail. Courtesy among equestrians requires that you walk past another person or animal or ask permission to trot by.

In order to enjoy the trails safely we all must exercise restraint. Shared trails are not the proper place for horse or bicycle racing. Bicycles that race downhill can present a real threat to equestrians and hikers in addition to causing trail erosion. Many trails are narrow and winding with only short visibility. In the interest of safety and a pleasant experience for all, a moderate rate of speed is advisable on trails where various uses are co-mingled. If a bicyclist wants to speed, they should do it in an area with plenty of visibility (no curves, bushes or bumps). It could also be dangerous for hikers who may be elderly or have small children in tow. Leave sufficient distance if riding a bike or walking behind a horse for everyone's well-being. Most horses do not kick, but they could as a reflexive action if startled.

Hikers have a tendency to get off the trail and hide behind bushes or trees when they see horses approaching. While they mean well, the horses are aware that there is something alive up ahead and they are always alert to the fact that it could be harmful to them. Therefore, it is best if hikers stay in full view and talk to the riders as they approach. In this way the horses know that it is safe for them to proceed. Once the horses get close, it is best if the hikers move away from the trail and allow room for riders to pass. Horses also seem to have an inherent dislike of backpacks that stick up in the air, so please give them a chance to accept the situation. This is something that horse owners can work on at home too. Prop a folded lawn chair up on your shoulders and walk calmly around your horse in his corral until he accepts the strange sight. It is not a good idea for hikers to swing a walking stick or raise it in the presence of horses because some abused horses expect to be hit.

We all have an obligation to be courteous and thoughtful of other trail users. So let's enjoy the beautiful trails around Prescott, but do it safely.

— Jan Alfano

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Open Space Alliance Executive Committee Meeting
First Wednesday each month
12:00 noon, 119 Grove St., Prescott (white house,
3rd from Gurley on east side.

YTA Board Meeting
First Thursday each month
7:00pm, 119 Grove Av., Prescott

Citizens Water Advocacy Group/Open Space Alliance
Saturday, October 9, 10:00 a.m.
Granite Peak Unitarian Universalist Church building
882 Sunset Av., Prescott

Voluntary Recognition Ceremony
Cayuse Trailhead, Granite Basin Recreation Area
Saturday, November 6, 10:00 - ?

Websites of Interest

Yavapai County General Plan Review Draft
<http://www.co.yavapai.az.us/departments/ds/genplan/genplan.asp>

City of Prescott General Plan
<http://www.cityofprescott.net/General%20Plan/index.cfm>

Prescott Area Trail Maps, by Derek Brownlee
<http://www.sharlot.org/archives/maps/trailmaps/index.html>

Here are a few random websites that might be of interest to trail enthusiasts.

www.geocaching.com

This is a clearinghouse of GPS locations to geocache sites throughout the world — dozens of local ones.

www.arizonatrailspublishing.com

Kevin Leonard has written a book on horseback trails and trips. This site explains it all.

www.swlink.net/~ttidyman/hiking

One of my favorite sites with links to all kinds of hiking links.

www.azsrp.com/SRPhike.htm

A gazillion links to stuff on hiking in Arizona.

www.trails.com

Links to 717 trail descriptions.

Membership Application

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zipcode _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____

Membership in other groups _____

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

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

Date _____ Application Fee Amt. _____

Application Fee: annual \$12.00 individual/family; \$24.00 organization/business

Clip this coupon and send to: **Yavapai Trails Association P.O. Box 403 Prescott AZ 86302**

Yavapai Trails Association in cooperation with
Prescott National Forest, invite you to

JOIN US FOR A CELEBRATION

**HONORING TRAIL MAINTENANCE VOLUNTEERS
And Dedication of Trails #341, 346 and 347, adopted by
YAVAPAI TRAILS ASSOCIATION**

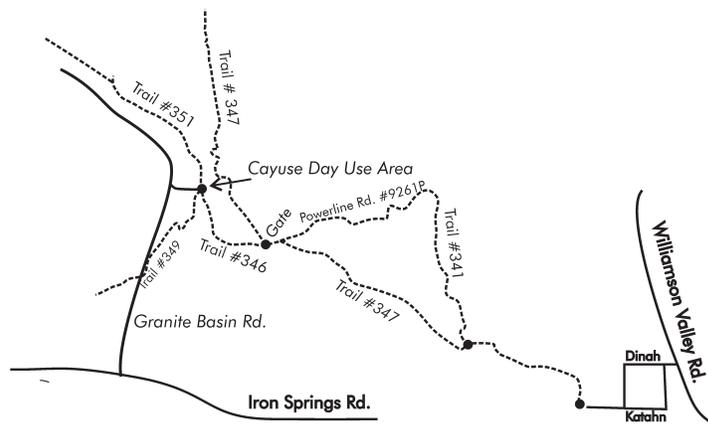
**NOVEMBER 6, 2004 – 10:00 A.M.
CAYUSE TRAILHEAD
GRANITE BASIN RECREATION AREA**

**Light refreshments will be available and there will be a brief program.
After the presentations you will have the following options:**

- **Bring your horse for a guided trail ride**
- **Take a hike with a Forest Service Ranger**
- **Join a bike ride with a YTA board member**
- **Learn trail maintenance with an expert**
- **Hang around and visit with friends**

This will be a family fun day and a chance to get together with other non-motorized trail users. All hikers, bicyclists and equestrians welcome. Come and see the work that has been done by volunteers to make trails safer and more enjoyable for everyone.

For further information, call YTA board members: Bob Sutton (777-8943) or Jan Alfano (445-2942). Directions: Take Iron Springs Rd. west to Granite Basin Rd., Then north to Cayuse trailhead sign.



**Yavapai Trails
Association**

P. O. Box 403, Prescott, AZ 86302

