

# Trail Tracks

Spring 2008

## Feature Article: A New National Forest Trail, Goldwater Lake Trail.

by Ron Smith

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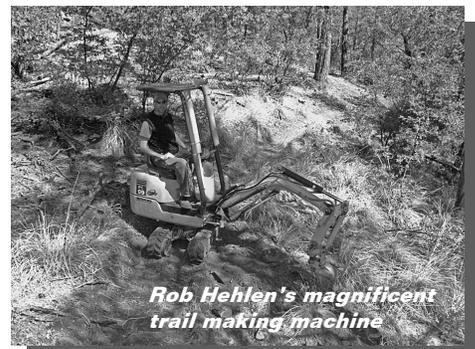
Due to the efforts of Rob Hehlen, then Prescott National Forest (PNF) volunteer coordinator, and a staff of volunteers, a splendid new trail has been built, the Goldwater Lake Trail #396. It completes a significant piece of the Prescott Circle Trail (PCT). This project is doubly important. It marks the completion of another non-motorized link in the PCT, connecting directly to another PCT link, the Watershed Trail, Trail #299 and replaces the various social trails originating at either White Spar Campground or the Hidden Valley residential area as public trail access to the lakes area.

The trail follows a sinuous course for 4.6 miles from White Spar Campground and ends just a few hundred yards southeast of Goldwater Lake at the Senator Highway. I hiked this trail with my son in mid-March and found it to be one of the most enjoyable hikes of all of the PNF trails. The elevation gain is only about 550 feet and is hardly noticeable because of the gradual contours of this path.

It is also so well signed that you can't easily stray from its path unless you are completely oblivious to the directional markers. Nonetheless, here are some specific notes on what you will encounter.

Begin on Schoolhouse Gulch Road adjacent to the entrance to White Spar Campground. There are many roads or trails that intersect with this route; simply look for the #396 signs at all of these junctions. At 1.4 miles, you will encounter a junction with Forest Road #61 which connects to the Hidden Valley residential area. At this juncture, the trail

crosses Bannon Creek (a.k.a. Banning) and turns right as it approaches a delightful riparian site and cascade. The pond below the falls is a popular picnic spot. For a really short hike, you could return in a loop back to the campground area from here on FR #61. At the falls, the trail climbs to the right just past the rocky outcrop overlooking the creek.



*Rob Hehlen's magnificent trail making machine*

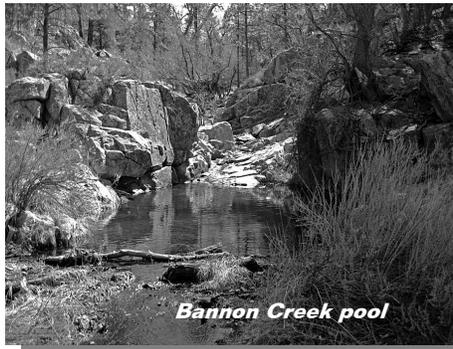
At 2.4 miles, we encountered a small herd of 5 mule deer. Just beyond this point lower Goldwater Lake can be seen through the trees. Our trail then crosses several intersecting trails, some of which probably go to the lake shore. We did not investigate.

At 4.3 miles Trail #396 crosses under a major power line and you enter a much more open forest canopy. The forest here is park-like. Much of the overly dense stand has been harvested, thinned, and in some areas, control burned.

Finally, at 4.6 miles we reached Senator Highway directly across from the highway sign for the Watershed. Exploring from here to other sections of the PCT or connecting PNF trails is limited only by your energy and time.

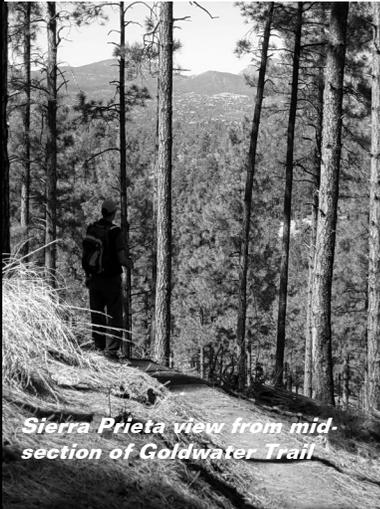
We made this trek in 2:44 including a snack break.

To make this a loop hike, one could return to Goldwater Lake and take the road (#61) west from the lake to either Hidden Valley or White Spar Campground. This would constitute close to 9 miles or travel.

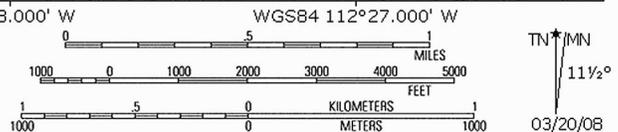
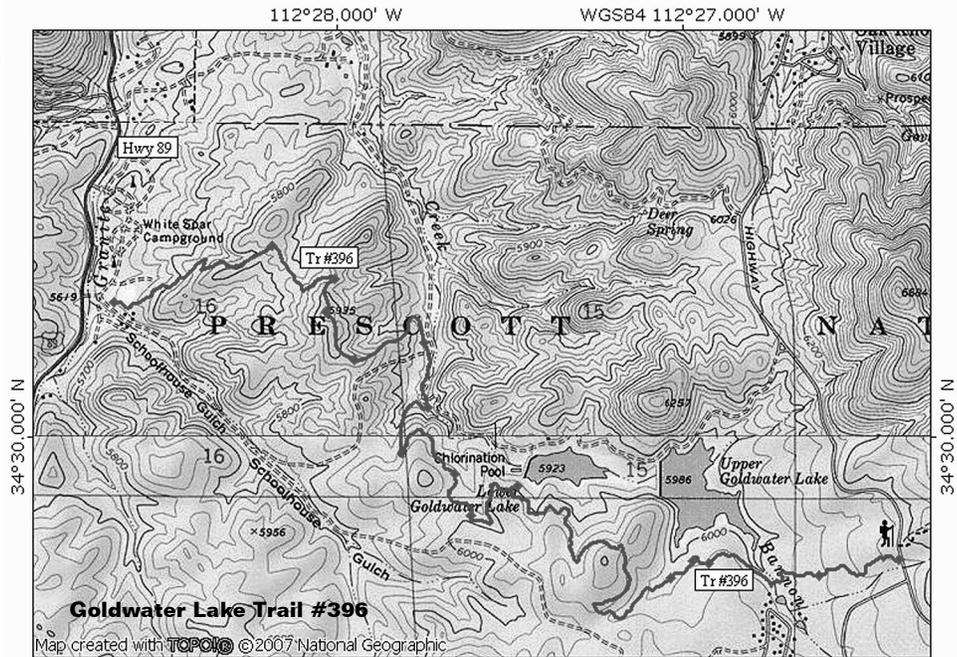


*Bannon Creek pool*

**Topographic Map of Goldwater Trail #396**  
 See article, Page 1



*Sierra Prieta view from mid-section of Goldwater Trail*



**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OUR SUPPORTERS**

**Beginning with the summer issue of this newsletter, YTA is inviting businesses, non-profits organizations, or other groups to submit to us business cardsized 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 [r.smith@earthlink.net](mailto:r.smith@earthlink.net) in GIF or JPG format**

**Yavapai Trails Association**



**Officers**

- Jan Alfano, President
- Ron Smith, Vice President
- Carol Stafford, Secretary
- Jim Pessin, Treasurer

**Contact Us**

Yavapai Trails Association  
 P.O. Box 403  
 Prescott, AZ 86302  
 928.445.2942  
[alftrail@cableone.net](mailto:alftrail@cableone.net)  
[www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org](http://www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org)

**Board of Directors**

- Nigel Reynolds, Historic Trails and Outreach
- Bob Sutton, Trail Maintenance
- Nancy Wolin, Yavapai Horseman's Association
- Cathy Schultz, Central Arizona Trails Partnership
- Joyce Mackin, Prescott Saddle Club
- Carolyn Mason, Senior Olympics

**Committees**

- Nigel Reynolds, Historic Trails
  - Rob Hehlen, Prescott National Forest Liaison
  - Ron Smith, Newsletter & Website
- Please send questions, comments, and suggestions to the editor, Ron Smith at:  
[r.smith@earthlink.net](mailto:r.smith@earthlink.net)

# **NATIONAL TRAILS DAY** **FUND RAISER**

**APRIL 26, 2008 – 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> place team. Participants will each receive a t-shirt along with a power bar and water.

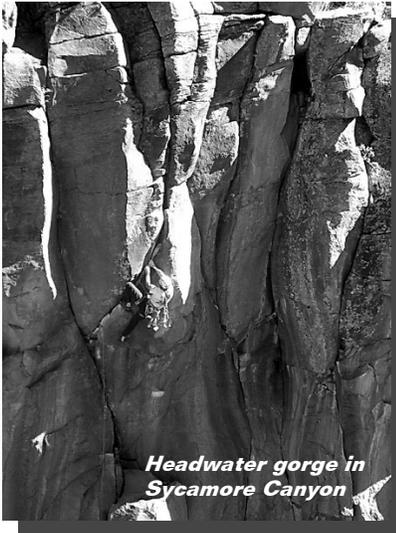
There is absolutely no need for speed as there will not be any advantage. This is not a race and horses are limited to walk or trot – it is a fun event bringing together various non-motorized trail users. Youngsters under the age of 18 are required to wear an ASTM-approved helmet. No stallions or dogs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

**NOON:** Award ceremony for: Trail Advocate of the Year; President's Award; plus a special recognition for Trail Volunteers that do trail construction/maintenance.

**INFORMATION:** Watch our website, [www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org](http://www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org) for updates and application/liability forms. You can call Joyce at 778-4985 or Jan at 445-2942. Bring the family, a lunch, a folding chair, sunscreen; come and enjoy getting together with fellow trail users.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:** Active Life Physical Therapy; Arizona Tile; Golden Insurance Services; Prescott Plastic Surgery; Manzanita Outdoor; New Frontiers Natural Foods; Ogg's Hogan; Prescott Saddle Club; Kent Ward, D.O



*Headwater gorge in  
Sycamore Canyon*

## An Introduction to Sycamore Canyon

*by Nigel Reynolds*

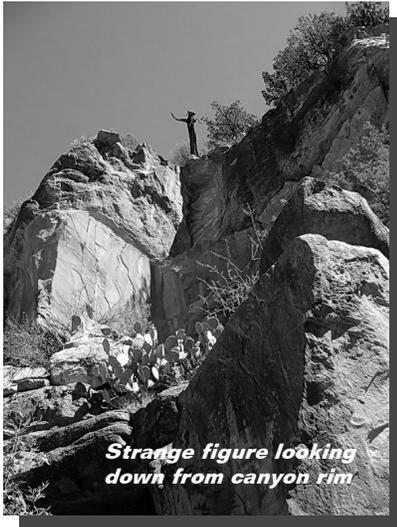
Just about everyone from Yavapai County knows Sedona and Oak Creek Canyon. If you are a hiker, you have probably enjoyed the West Fork Trail, a beautiful walk at any time of the year, but especially so in the fall when the maples there are changing color. There is another great canyon a few miles to the west, called Sycamore Canyon. It is much less known – mainly because it is a wilderness and there are no blacktop roads that go close to its boundary. It spans three National Forests: Prescott, Coconino and Kaibab. Having those forest maps will be a big help in exploring.

Oak Creek flows into the Verde River about five miles south of Cottonwood, whereas Sycamore Creek joins the Verde about ten miles upstream from that town – it's the first major creek to the north, though usually with a much smaller flow. There are a number of access points into Sycamore Canyon, this south end being one, along a county maintained dirt road near Tuzigoot. Western accesses all start from the Perkinsville Road north of the Verde Bridge, and include FR 181 (Henderson Flat) and roads to White Horse Lake, which is near

the northern end of the canyon. You can access the canyon from the north using forest roads going south from I-40, or from the east on obscure roads going west from highway 89A north of Sedona. To reach the various trailheads, you will need a vehicle that you are comfortable driving over dirt roads, some well graded, some quite rough! Then you can start your hike into the wilderness.

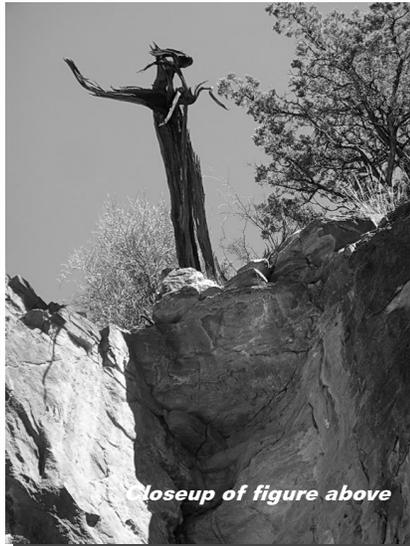
There is a lot of amazing scenery looking down into the canyon from its extensive rims, or looking up from the creek bottom. Man has ventured into the canyon over the centuries. You can find old cabins used by cowboys, or the many ruins left by the Sinagua Indians who moved away just before 1400, probably due to the decades-long drought that affected all the Indians of the Southwest at that time.

My photos show just a few of the wonderful places you can discover – to see them in glorious color and a larger size, go to the YTA website ([yavapairailsassociation.org](http://yavapairailsassociation.org)).



*Strange figure looking  
down from canyon rim*

*Singua Indian Ruin in  
alcove basalt cliff*



*Closeup of figure above*



*Inside ruin, with  
durable 600-year-old  
roof*

## Open Space Update- Granite Dells Site Purchase Approved!!

by Ron Smith

On March 25 at their afternoon voting session, the Prescott City Council unanimously approved a \$2.9 M purchase price for a 35-acre Granite Dells parcel. The property is owned and planned for development by Scottsdale developer Richard Hazelwood. In preparing the parcel for extensive residential development, the owner destroyed an existing man-made pond, concrete dam, and scalped clean of vegetation a portion of that site. In so doing he violated a number of Army Corp of Engineers regulations governing the treatment of "navigable" waters and their stream courses. The attendant penalties and necessary mitigation for the damage placed the City in a good bargaining position to negotiate a reasonable purchase agreement.

For almost 2 years, the Open Space Acquisition Advisory Committee (OSAAC) had been tracking the planning for this parcel and investigating the possibility of acquiring it with funds accruing from the 1-percent sales tax extension for roads and open space. Several members of this volunteer advisory committee, principally Chair Lora Lopas met periodically with the owner's agents and attempted to augment the City's bargaining position. When the terms became clearly to the public's advantage, they recommended to Council that the purchase be made.

This parcel is the lynch-pin for a number of properties in the Granite Dells rock and riparian corridor that OSAAC and city managers hope to acquire as contiguous public open space and eventually a magnificent streamside and boulders park.

*"Right now, with the real estate market kind of at a bottom, this is the time to buy. Once it's gone, it's gone forever."*

Lora Lopas,

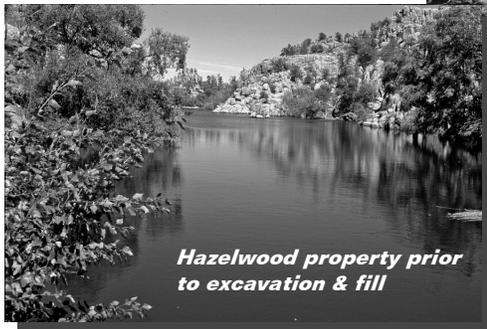
Prescott City Council

Quote from Daily Courier

March 26, 2008



*Hazelwood site after excavation & fill*



*Hazelwood property prior to excavation & fill*

## Check out these Trail User Websites

By Ron Smith

Trail users, if you have not already done so, you should consider downloading and installing a free copy of "Google Earth." It is an incredible window into the world of high-resolution aerial and satellite imagery, photos, elevation terrain, road and street labels, and more. I have found it not only fun, but extremely practical for trail use.

Let me give you an example. Early this year I took several grandkids and their friends on a Geocache treasure hunt in Phoenix South Mountain Park. But first I downloaded the GPS coordinates for a dozen cache sites into my GPS unit. These coordinates were taken from the clearinghouse website, [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com). Since I was unfamiliar with the rugged park area, I then transferred these coordinates to "Google Earth." The software uses a GPS file transfer facility and a file format common to a number of GPS units. For a mere \$10 annual license, you gain this and other GPS functions. I then zoomed to the general location, and then, *voila*, there were little flags marking my geocache sites. Then by using the software tools I got a realistic 3D view of the terrain from different aspects. The printed map then made the unfamiliar terrain much less daunting.

If you are a power user of GPS, you can do the same things with GPS tracks and routes in addition to individual waypoints.

Here are a couple more websites that I have used for information about local and regional trails.

[www.sharlot.org/archives/maps/trailmaps/index.html](http://www.sharlot.org/archives/maps/trailmaps/index.html). This will take you to an opening page index map of this region. Then by clicking on the specific area of interest, the particular 15 min. topographic quad opens where you will find in color most of the trails surveyed to date.

[www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks/trails](http://www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks/trails)

This site describes the attributes of 14 city trails, including photos, elevation, and distances.

Here are a couple of websites for trail mapping software:

[www.maps.nationalgeographic.com/topo](http://www.maps.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

[www.maptech.com](http://www.maptech.com)

[www.topozone.com](http://www.topozone.com).

## Watch for These Important Environment, Open Space or Trail Events

### GRANITE CREEK CLEANUP EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

APRIL 19, 2008  
CLEANUP VOLUNTEERS 8 - 10:30 AM  
CELEBRATE EARTH DAY 11-4 PM



#### Clean Up in the Morning!

- Celebrate & Clean up our Creeks!
- Pre-register your group, club, team or service organization.
- Free T-Shirt, snacks for All Volunteers.
- Hosted by Prescott Creeks

• *To Pre-Register your group or for more information on the Granite Creek Cleanup, call 445-5669 or e-mail [bdevries@prescottcreeks.org](mailto:bdevries@prescottcreeks.org)*

#### Celebrate in the Afternoon!

- Live Music
- Community Parade
- Food Vendors
- Hosted by Open Space Alliance of Central Yavapai County

• *For more information on the afternoon Earth Day celebration, call 778-1098 or e-mail [serpentbird@peacemail.com](mailto:serpentbird@peacemail.com)*

Cleanup Volunteer Sign-in Begins 8:00 a.m.  
At Granite Creek Park Ramada.

### Non Partisan Political Candidate Open House

Benefit for Morgan Ranch Nature Park, a member of Yavapai Trails Association

June 7, 2008 noon-5pm

CYFD Fire Station at Outer Loop Road and Williamson Valley Road

Meet Local, State and Federal Candidates- nonpartisan. Candidates will set up individual tables. They will be available to discuss issues that are important to you.

**15.5 miles north of Prescott** at the intersection of Williamson Valley Road and Nancy Drive

**\$5.00 per individual of voting age-suggested donation**

**Contact Kathy Lopez, at 928-541-0494, Sondra Haile at 928-443-1625 or Sharon Boler at 776-3018. Email us**

**at [MorganRanchNaturePark@q.com](mailto:MorganRanchNaturePark@q.com)**

Community organizations and businesses are welcome to setup a table, with prior arrangement. Food and refreshments available from noon-5pm by Our Place Restaurant, Chino Valley

#### Directions:

Park in the Old Stage Stop Country Store parking lot which is located: 9.5 miles north on Williamson Valley Road from Iron Springs Rd. in Prescott. 6 miles west on Outer Loop Road starting from Highway 89 in Chino Valley.

### YTA MEMBERSHIP ALERT!

YTA is in dire need of more active membership. Many of the people who were active in trail maintenance are now unable to do so and YTA is in danger of losing its adopted trails. We need volunteers to go out for a few hours a month to work on trail maintenance.

YTA also needs volunteers to help with our National Trails Day Fund-raiser at Pioneer Park on Saturday, April 26. You can learn more about National Trails Day by going to our website at [www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org](http://www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org).

Please contact Joyce Mackin at 778-4985 ( [email-joycemackin@gmail.com](mailto:joycemackin@gmail.com) ) or Jan Alfano at 445-2942 ( [email-alftrail@cableone.net](mailto:alftrail@cableone.net) ).

### YTA Ballot for Board Members, April 2008

The membership will elect the directors to the board. These members are running for the board. You may vote for all of them. The by-laws permit as many as 15 members to serve on the Yavapai Trails Association Board.

- Rob Hehlen
- Kathy Lopez
- Joyce Mackin
- Carolyn Mason
- Jim Pessin
- Nigel Reynolds
- Cathy Schultz
- Ron Smith
- Carol Stafford
- Bob Sutton

You may vote for write-in candidates who are YTA member and have agreed to serve on the board.

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### 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

## A Coalition of non-motorized trail users

**Yavapai Trails Association**  
**P.O. Box 403**  
**Prescott, AZ 86302**  
**928.445.2942**  
**[alftrail@cableone.net](mailto:alftrail@cableone.net)**

We're on the web: [www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org](http://www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org)



### **Yavapai Trails Association**

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.

### **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 -- but not dues -- are fully tax deductible.

Call Membership Chairman Jim Pessin at 928.771.2707 or go to [www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org](http://www.yavapaitrailsassociation.org)