



Maricopa County

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM

Date: March 11, 2015
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 2015.

From the Office of the Director

Go Wild for Flowers!



On Monday, February 23rd, the Parks and Recreation Department launched their Go Wild for Flowers campaign to help draw attention to the 2015 wildflower season. To help promote the campaign, the following tactics were used:

Digital Billboards:

On Monday, February 23rd, seven digital billboards around the valley were illuminated with the ad above. These ads ran for eight seconds, once every minute from the February 23 through March 8.

Electronic Media:

- **Websites:** Banners linking back to the Facebook album have been added to each park home page on the www.maricopa.gov/parks site.
- **Facebook:** A Go Wild for Flowers album was started on the MCParks Facebook account. This helps visitors learn about the various buds and see what is blooming in each park.
- **Pinterest:** A Pinterest wildflower album has been created for Parks. This option contains a map so visitors can see what is blooming near their residence.
- **Gov.Docs:** A news bulletin was sent out to 7,538 Parks subscribers alerting them to the wildflower promotion.
- **Video.** The Parks Department will be working with a video crew on Thursday to produce a new wildflower video. The footage will be shot at Cave Creek Regional Park.

Print Media:

A press release highlighting the *Go Wild for Flowers* campaign was distributed on February 23rd. To date, the *Arizona Republic* and the *West Valley View* have picked up the story.

Administration

Budget Status (through February FY15 close):

- **Enhancement Fund (241) – Agency 305:**
 - Enhancement Fund reported revenues of 15% or \$442,274 over the YTD budget of \$2,903,255.
 - Enhancement Fund reported expenditures of 3% or \$89,016 under the YTD operating budget of \$2,904,189.
- **Lake Fund (240) – Agency 302:**
 - Lake Fund reported revenues of 23% or \$305,859 over the YTD budget of \$1,358,751.
 - Lake Fund reported operating expenditures at 13% or \$210,542 under the YTD budget of \$1,631,228.
- **Spur Cross (225) – Agency 306:**
 - Spur Cross reported revenues at 13% or \$23,255 over the YTD budget of \$172,591.
 - Spur Cross reported operating expenditures at 5% or \$8,117 under the YTD budget.

Finance Program:

- The FY16 budget has been submitted to OMB for consideration. Here are two highlights from the operating submission memo/agenda:
 - Parks is seeking approval to increase operating revenue and expenditure authority based on revenue projections in four special revenue funds: Fund 241: Parks Enhancement Fund, Fund 240: Lake Pleasant Fund, Fund 225: Spur Cross Conservation Fund, and Fund 239: Parks Souvenir Fund. The proposed increase to operating revenue and expenditures is \$587,484 total. The increases are structurally balanced and sustainable based on fee increases passed in 2014 and an average increase in park attendance for FY13 and FY14 of 8% per year with FY15 currently forecasting at this same level.
 - In the General Fund, Parks is seeking approval to increase operating expenditure authority in the amount of \$325,953. The proposed increase is necessary to provide staffing, supplies, and services at the Hassayampa River Preserve, the first phase in the addition of Vulture Mountain Recreation Area to Maricopa County's Regional Park System. Parks will assume management and operating responsibility for the Preserve in January, 2016.

Contracts:

- **Lake Pleasant Regional Park:** The negotiations involved with the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN 12-02 issued September 2012) for the Development of the Resort and Commercial Properties with Red Rock was terminated in February 2014. During the early process of this negotiation, a Request for Proposal for a consultant to assist, advise and develop a concessionaire/developer agreement with Red Rock was awarded to Capital Hotel Management (CHM). As the contract with CHM is still intact, staff decided to amend the current scope to include a high level market, financial, investment and development analysis for the proposed improvements as stated in the original ITN. CHM will develop a summary report with the core findings from their analysis and recommendations at which time we will prepare a presentation to the Commission for their consideration in moving forward or discontinuing the potential development project.
- **Estrella Mountain Regional Park:** Negotiations for development of the Use Management Agreement (UMA) with Estrella Youth Sports is progressing. The UMA will include an Annual Management Plan (AMP) which will be reviewed annually. The purpose of the AMP is to identify management, operational procedures and methodologies to clarify responsibilities, understandings and actions as they pertain to the complex or projects in place for the year that advance the overall development of the project.
Paradise Valley: The Flood Control District (FCD) had asked for our release of an existing easement on property adjacent to the PV golf course. They are now selling this parcel to Maricopa County College District with Parks easement in place. FCD indicated the reason was the cost of the release and the delay involved with our timeline due to the requirements of the Land Disposal Policy (Park Land Acquisition and Disposal A-200). No further action will be needed at this time.
- **Adobe Dam Regional Park:** The response for the Request for Expressions of Interest issued in November 2014 has been reviewed by management. We are starting the negotiation process with Legacy Sports for a Use Management Agreement for a state-of-the-art premiere sports park in a partnership with our existing concessionaire, Victory Lane Sports.

Upcoming Special Use Permits processed for January through March at Adobe Dam Park include:

- March 15–22, Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society/Maricopa Live Steamers will hold their Annual Spring Meeting.
- March 27-29, Sahuaro Central Railroad Heritage Preservation Society will host the 2014 Boy Scout Webelos Crossover.
- March 27-29, Phoenix Kart Racing Association Spring Showdown
- **Maricopa Trail:**
 - ADOT: An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) has been drafted for various portions of the trail that lie within the right of ways of ADOT.
 - Flood Control District: A Non-Exclusive, Non-Motorized Recreation Easement between Parks and the Flood Control District has been drafted to provide permanent rights to Parks for the Maricopa Trail at White Tank 3 @ White Tank Mountain Regional Park
 - Verrado: A Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted for the Maricopa Trail within the corporate boundaries of Verrado in Buckeye.
- **Communication Tower Upgrades:** The public meetings for the County radio communication system facility upgrades for public safety facilitated by Maricopa County Real Estate received no public comments. These upgrades to the existing system will occur at the Desert Outdoor Center, Lake Operations Building, a new tower at Lake Pleasant (Cottonwood), and a new tower at San Tan. A Memorandum of Understanding for these improvements between the Parks Department and Office of Enterprise Technology has been drafted and is currently under review.
- **Commercial Management Concessions Agreements (CMCA's):** New CMCA's include one mountain hiking concession and one paddle board concession.

Human Resources:

- **New Hires or Promotions:**
 - Welcome to Mary Christopher, Administrative Assistant, Administration
 - Welcome to Peter Marsala, Maintenance staff at San Tan.
- **Farewells:**
 - No farewells to report in January or February.
- **Open positions and recruitments:**
 - Contact Station Assistant - 3 Temp positions (Lake Pleasant)
 - Park Maintenance Worker (Lake Pleasant) – Position declined, reposting.
 - Park Office Assistant Specialized (Cave Creek) – Interviews pending.

Information Technology:

- The selection committee for the department's new Point of Sale/Reservation System has selected a vendor and the contract is under negotiation. The new vendor feels they can have the system up and running by July 1, 2015.
- Staff continues to organize and verify the phone numbers Parks is being charged by OET. Several phone lines were found that were no longer needed and/or did not belong to Parks. Requests have been completed to terminate these lines and/or move them to the correct department for billing. This is expected to save the Department approximately \$300/month in unnecessary charges.

Souvenir Fund:

- Review of the FY16 product line is underway. One of the projects required, prior to making any changes to the product line, is to identify our top selling categories. The top selling areas are as follows: 1) Books (16% of sales); 2) Ice/Firewood (13%); 3) Specialty Shirts (10%); 4) Hats (9%); 5) Plush/Stuffed Animals (8%); and 6) Beverages (7%).

Volunteer Program:

- The Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service project had 24 participants. The volunteers assisted with trail maintenance on Mule Deer Trail as well as a trail inspection of an area of the Maricopa Trail leading out of White Tank Park. *Hands on Greater Phoenix* donated the use of work gloves, rakes, and shovels for the event. Additionally, the Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation's board members participated in the event and completed the inspection of their adopted trail segment. White Tank Park hosts assisted in leading the group as well as some safety and trail training.
- To celebrate Arizona's birthday on February 14th, the Conservation Alliance sponsored and assisted with design and research for the White Tank Butterfly Garden. The special project brought out 54 eager volunteers who pulled invasive weeds, dug out the new path, planted all local plants and seeds, and moved a ton of dirt and rock. In addition to attracting pollinators, the new garden will also become a certified Monarch Waystation.
- Volunteer Hours for January and February 2015:

	Jan 2015	Feb 2015
Total Dept. Hours	12,682	12,548
Financial Savings	\$285,979	\$282,954
YTD Hours	49,891	62,439
YTD Savings	\$1,125,044	\$1,407,998
Prev. Year Month Total Hours	10,204	66,029
Prev. Year YTD Hours	45,848	20,181
Prev. Year Financial Savings	\$1,015,084	\$1,263,392
Number of volunteers	213	253

Planning and Development (Engineering) Highlights as of March 5

- **Estrella Master Plan:** Progress is on-going. Staff is continuing to coordinate with the "Estrella Youth Sports" (EYS) concessionaire. An educational "back-county" field trip was held January 22nd and a well-attended stakeholder meeting was held January 29th. The first public meeting is scheduled for April 30th.
- **Vulture Mountain Update:** An Environmental Assessment (EA) kick-off meeting was held at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) March 2nd. Staff is working with MCDOT on roadway design for the day use, camping and OHV areas. Transfer of the Preserve Property to Parks is scheduled for January 2016.
- **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 ~\$3 million. With the help of two "Job Order Contract" (JOC) contractors, staff is working to standardize interior and exterior finishes, and hardware improvements throughout the park system.
 Current Status: 7 RR's (all) are complete at Cave Creek; 1 RR, which includes major septic maintenance, is underway at Estrella; 7 RR's (all) are complete at McDowell; 2 RR's have been completed at Utery; 10 RR's (all of the "older" ones) are complete at White Tank; 1 RR has been completed and work will begin in March for 4 more at Lake Pleasant. Additionally, septic pumping and miscellaneous upgrades have been completed at several of the parks. Approximately \$980k was spent in FY 2014 and approximately \$560k has been spent thus far in FY 2015.
 New playground equipment, including a "giant" mountain lion "climber/slide" is currently being installed at Estrella. A new scorpion slide for Cave Creek should also arrive in March. Staff is working on procuring specialized outdoor "circuit" fitness equipment to test at Utery.
 Permits have been submitted to dig a new well at San Tan and digging should begin in late March. Staff is also working on construction of new electrical hook ups for individual camp sites in the overflow area at Cave Creek; ramada refurbishment at McDowell; water chlorination systems for the Lake; and tank cleaning at the DOC. Staff is coordinating with SRP regarding installation of additional SRP communications equipment at several of the east-side parks.

- **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.
 - The following segments are now ready to start construction (3/9/2015):
 - Segment 27 Bulldog Trailhead to Usery Mountain Park
 - Segment 27 Pass Mountain Trail inside Usery Mountain Park
 - Segment 35 White Tank 3 FRS (Flood Retarding Structure) to White Park – reconstruction due to storm damage
 - The following portions of the Maricopa Trail are in final agreement stages for perpetual easements on FCD property:
 - Segment 35 White Tank 3 Dam – 2.1 miles
 - Segment 35 White Tank 3 Outfall Channel – 2 miles
 - Planning new trails in the Tonto National Forest – Cave Creek and Mesa Ranger Districts, the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and on the Central Arizona Project – south of Lake Pleasant Park, El Rio, Tres Rios, and the Fort McDowell Indian community.
 - Performing maintenance (weed clearing) on Segment 11 McMicken Dam – 17 miles
 - Completing sign location and inventory
 - Installing additional signage.
- **Trades Crew:** Trades Crew is nearly complete with major maintenance to the perimeter fencing at the 500 Club Golf Course at Adobe. The Crew is assisting with plans for major electric system maintenance at the White Tank maintenance compound, installing water chlorinators at the Lake and DOC, and reviewing plans for the visitor center upgrade at the Lake.
- **Trails Crew:** The Trails Crew, with the help of the Arizona Conservation Corps Crew (AZCC), has nearly finished all planned trail maintenance and new construction at the Lake. Work will be starting soon on reroute work at Usery Park.

Park Operations Report

Cave Creek Regional Park:

- In January, the park hosted 16 interpretive programs with 225 participants attending, which included 69 repeat attendees. Three decent led programs per held with 22 participants attending which included 16 repeat attendees. The park offered three (3) Survival Series programs with a total of 61 attendees. Staff also held a *Clay Mine Adventure* program with 41 attendees.
- In February, the park hosted 25 interpretive programs with 451 participants attending, which included 62 repeat attendees. Four decent led programs were also conducted with 33 attendees. The highlighted programs were: *Super Serpent Saturday* with 227 attendees and *President's Day Scavenger Hunt* with 52 attendees. The Park also hosted the *Annual Elephant Mountain Run* with a total of 308 participants running along Cave Creek Trails, Maricopa County Trail and Spur Cross Trail.

Desert Outdoor Center:

- Rangers at the DOC are incorporating technology into some of the programming, using green screen virtual reality background for students to practice broadcasting weather reports. The “teaching tool” staff is really excited about is the InFocus BigTouch learning screen. For the 20,000 students that visit the center annually, it really generates an excitement and eagerness to learn about topics that can be difficult to present; it enables rangers to present more material and is a 21st century tool kids can relate to.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park:

- In January, the interpretive ranger and volunteers performed 19 public programs for 194 guests.
- The new *Little Learners* program had its first run with the *Fun Loving Homeschoolers*. On this short hike, preschoolers play act different animals while learning how each animal uses their surrounding environment to survive in the desert. This activity proved perfect for this group of high energy youngsters!

- The *Estrella Coldwater Rumble Trail Run* took place on January 24th and 25th. The 400 runners enjoyed the park's 30 miles of trails. There were different length races offered to the participants and 72 runners of the total 400 entered in the 100-mile category.
- The *MBAA Bike Race* was held at the Estrella Park Competitive Track on January 31st. The 439 bike riders enjoyed the 10 miles of challenging trails of the Competitive Track.
- A wedding for the Poore Family, a family that has had close ties for many years with the park, was hosted at the Nature Center. By all accounts, it was a huge success and a good time was had by all.
- Park staff has continued to examine the park fence line and make repairs. Turf mowing has resumed with an interim county-approved vendor.
- In February, there were 21 public programs and hikes with 324 people in attendance. On our first *Nocturnal Animals* program, guests were excited to hear bats with the bat detector and find a few of the first scorpions emerging after winter.
- Park staff helped Girl Scout Troop 743 complete a Community Service Project. 16 Girl Scouts arrived at the park to paint 32 trash barrels to brighten up the park. The interpretive ranger brought over two of the animals from the Nature Center for the troop to meet as a thank you for their service. The girls were particularly excited to meet a real king snake!
- The 100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge celebration party was held on February 28th for 14 participants. Four of these participants hiked over 200 miles during the challenge. The public celebration was a festive event congratulating the successful participants who all enjoying snacking on goodies and being awarded a new "100 Mile Challenge" T-shirt.
- February 9th, PIR closed the Estrella Park Competitive Track gates in preparation for a Camping Rally and the NASCAR races. This year, PIR closed the gates a month in advance of the race, the earliest and longest closure to date.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park:

- Lake Pleasant offered 25 interpretive programs to approximately 371 program attendees during the months of January and February. Highlights for the month included: *Get Fit with a Lake View Hike*, *Archery 101*, *History Walk with the Ranger*, and *Valentine's Day Paddle*.
- Adobe Mountain Wildlife presented *Hummingbirds, Live!*; a special program showing off these fast, wing flapping critters to the Lake Pleasant visitors and providing a unique perspective to get up close and personal. It was a fan favorite among the Lake Pleasant visitors.
- A group of approximately 30 volunteers came out to the park from Northwest Christian School to offer assistance picking up trash along the shorelines.
- The nest watchers from the Arizona Game and Fish Department came out to begin their bald eagle nest watching season. The season appears to be promising early on and we are hopeful to have an eaglet or two in the coming months.
- Several staff members and hosts participated in the Department's annual training (make-up session) for work-related topics to include hazard communication, suspicious packages, and defensive driving.
- The final touches are being performed to the new trails in the southern portion of the park. The new trails are already being heavily used and parking at the trailheads is constantly full on the weekends. The Trails Crew (in collaboration with Arizona Conservation Corps) did a wonderful job building the trails and the rewards are paying off for the park and our visitors.
- For the past three weekends, the campgrounds have been at full capacity. Excellent customer service efforts are being provided by the contact station team, the interpretive ranger's programs and the maintenance of the facilities from our maintenance team.
- Progress is continuing to be made on the design (roughly 100% complete) aspects for the Nature Center renovation project. Renovations are anticipated to begin at the end of March. The Nature Center is currently closed while renovations are made and we anticipate opening the Center in October 2015. Special thanks to the Trades Crew for their assistance with clearing vegetation and boulders from the area and to the Lake Pleasant maintenance team for salvaging the old plumbing fixtures that can be utilized for repairs to other facilities in the future.
- The Lake Pleasant maintenance team also performed a large fence repair due to damage from the recent storms in the area of Morgan City Wash and the Maricopa Trail. Their efforts are greatly appreciated to maintain the integrity of the area and protect it for future generations to enjoy.

- Restroom renovations are in the process of getting started in March. The renovations will occur for the following locations: Four Lane, Roadrunner Campground Lakeside and Landside (both the upper and lower restroom). The updates are severely needed due to age of the facilities and the high volume/usage the park receives in these areas.
- The old floating restroom at Buzzard Neck had to be removed from the water due to the age of the facility. Special thanks to the maintenance team and Trades Crew for their efforts to break down the restroom for disposal.

McDowell Mountain Regional Park

- In January 2015, the park offered 19 programs which drew 150 participants of which 54 were repeat participants. In February, there were 16 programs offered to 126 participants and of those only 13 had attended previously.
- January began the calendar year's list of special events with the Mountain Bike Association of Arizona beginning their series of mountain bike races. These races will determine the state champion with 640 racers coming out to compete on the McDowell Competitive Track.
- Bike manufacturers will send vans filled with their new models out to locations around the country allowing the public to ride and experience the new models and changes in technology. In January and February, demos were held by Pivot, Trek, Scott, Yeti, Santa Cruz and Rocky Mountain bikes during the park's "Demo Days."
- On the morning of Super Bowl Sunday, 320 participants braved the cold misty weather for the Xterra Trail Run with a 7K and a 15 mile run. 231 road bikers came out for the *Criterion* put on by Team RPM. 121 trail runners completed the 15th Annual Pemberton 50K with two laps around the 15.4 mile Pemberton Trail. The *Powerman AZ* (duathlon) wrapped up the month with approximately 100 competitors. This new event was a late entry into the spring schedule, but is supported by both national and international races by the same organization.
- As has become the norm for spring in the county parks, the campgrounds in McDowell Park have been at capacity with just occasional openings in January and February. Advance reservations are almost essential to get into the campsites whether you're seeking a site with hookups for your RV or a tent site.

San Tan Mountain Regional Park:

- Between the good weather, friendly staff and beautiful sonorant desert, San Tan Park has seen a 30.4% increase in park visitor attendance in the last six months.
- During the month of January, San Tan provided 25 interpretive programs with 384 program participants.
- During the month of February, San Tan provided 27 interpretive programs with 610 program participants. The highlight program for the month was *Dig into Archaeology* which attracted 100 participants alone.
- The Aravaipa Running group held the 4th annual, *San Tan Scramble* as part of the Desert Runner Trail Series. The event brought in over 343 participants.
- San Tan hosted the 3rd Annual North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC), this is a non-speed event in which riders and horses competed as a team with an emphasis on horsemanship. Judges and a veterinarian were on hand to establish guidelines for a safe and enjoyable ride. A total of 24 participants who camped overnight for the event.
- San Tan hosted Equine Trail Sports (ETS), another non-speed event in which riders and horses competed as a team with an emphasis on horsemanship. Judges and a veterinarian were on hand to establish guidelines for a safe and enjoyable ride. The event brought in over 56 participants.
- We have had six Eagle Scout projects completed over the past two months. The projects were focused on unauthorized trail closures and re-vegetation efforts; in total, over 3 square miles of Sonoran desert was repaired. All six Eagle Scout projects combined contributed 300 volunteer hours for the month.
- The San Tan Friends group funded and installed three new wooden pergolas to our picnic area. The addition of the pergolas will help give our park visitors a beautiful location to enjoy a delicious picnic and reflect on the one-of-a-kind views San Tan has to offer.

Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area:

- The Park hosted 14 interpretive programs in January with 297 participants attending and 7 docent led program with 64 attendees. The highlighted programs were *Find the Ranger* with 52 participants and *Elephant Mountain Fortress Hike* with 43 participants.
- The Park hosted 19 interpretive programs in February with 270 participants attending and 5 docent led programs with 60 attendees. The highlighted program for the month were *Find the Ranger* with 43 attendees and *Moonlight Hike* with 41 attendees.
- In January and February the park host sold \$3,128 in souvenir merchandise from the back of the Chevy Blazer in Spur Cross.

Usery Mountain Regional Park:

- The park offered 18 interpretive ranger programs in January with 539 participants and 69 docent lead programs totaling 1,144 participants. In February, the park hosted 13 interpretive ranger programs with 829 participants and 70 docent lead programs totaling 1,184 participants.
- A new playground was installed replacing an older playground at the C & D Ramadas. The new playground features a giant tarantula and ant hill structures that blend into the desert surroundings. These lifelike structures provide free play opportunities for park users.
- *Stargazing for Everyone*, led by Tony La Conte, brought in 175 park visitors eager to learn about the night sky. Participants enjoyed a slide presentation about the stars followed by an opportunity to view the stars with a variety of high powered telescopes.
- The first annual *Girls Life Camp 5K Run* was held at the park with 82 participants.
- 322 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.
- 98% of the Buckhorn Campground was full during the two months.

White Tank Mountain Regional Park:

- January was a great month with many scheduled activities. The interpretive rangers and park volunteers performed 17 programs with 574 people attending. The *Desert General Store* and the *Dutch Oven Cooking Demo* were popular with the public as well as the regular snake feedings and moonlight hikes.
- The annual *Xterra Arizona Trail Race* was held on January 4th with 327 runners participating this year.
- On January 16th, six volunteers and hosts hiked the Ford Canyon Loop for a *Hike with the Supervisor* event. The group did 9.6 miles to view trail conditions and add miles to our *100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge*.
- On January 17th, over 20 volunteers and the Parks Director worked on several miles of the Mule Deer Trail as part of the Martin Luther King, Jr holiday Day of Volunteer Service. They all worked hard and the trail is in much better shape as a result.
- On January 30th, Radio KJZZ came out to do a story with the ranger about the waterfall on the Waterfall Trail. Nadine from KJZZ had been in contact with the park for weeks waiting for rain and for the water to run. The flow was only a good trickle, but the story was a success.
- February was a significantly busy month at White Tank Park. The interpretive ranger and park volunteers performed 25 programs with 1,017 people attending. The *Wildflower Wednesdays* have been very popular with 30-50 visitors each week. *Stargazing for Everyone* provided their bi-annual program with 325 stargazers attending on the night of 2/7/15.
- The Central Arizona Conservation Alliance and over 50 volunteers started building the first phase of the Butterfly Garden project on February 14. The volunteers from the Alliance, *Hands On Greater Phoenix*, and the *Friends of White Tank Park* pulled weeds, moved rocks and dug holes to plant 20 native butterfly-pleasing plants next to the Nature Center along a new short loop path. Everyone was very pleased with the work and a job well done.
- Old Pueblo Archeology Tours and the Sun City West Explore group came out for a morning tour of the park's petroglyphs on 2/21/15. In the afternoon, the archaeologist provided a public program in the Nature Center on petroglyphs.

- Over 40 hikers celebrated the *100 Miles in 100 Days Challenge* on 2/28/15. All the hikers celebrated with cake and donned the t-shirts they had earned.
- The Friends of White Tank Park put on their 5th *Annual Art Fair* the last weekend of February. Over the two days, 900 cars came to the fair to see 50 vendors selling their quality art. It is estimated that over 2,500 people came to the fair, most of them new to the park. We hope to see them back to see the wildflowers.
- The park projects currently being worked on this spring are the Butterfly Garden, the tortoise habitat construction, the redesigning of the exhibits in the Nature Center and the continuation of trail maintenance and improvements.

Vulture Mountain Regional Park:

- The Parks Department staff provided The Nature Conservancy (TNC) with drafts of the Hassayampa River Preserve's new master plan, new trails plan and new business plan the end of December. A successful meeting was held the end of February in which Parks staff received verbal and written comments back from TNC.
- Parks Department staff attended the annual appreciation dinner for the Preserve volunteers and Friends group in mid-February. The Director partnered with TNC Deputy Conservation Director to provide a presentation to the group about the County's involvement in the Preserve next year and how the transition will be handled. The Operation Manager and Westside Superintendent chatted with a number of the volunteers and Friends' members.
- The Westside Superintendent has been conducting site visits at the Hassayampa River Preserve once a week since the end of January. She has also been shadowing the interpretive programs and conducting trail and maintenance inventories. Each visit also creating relationships with TNC staff, Preserve volunteers and members of the Friends of Hassayampa.