



# Maricopa County Parks & Recreation Department

41835 N Castle Hot Springs Rd  
Morristown, AZ 85342-9887  
Phone: 602-506-2930  
Fax: 602-372-8596  
www.maricopa.gov/parks

## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** November 7, 2018  
**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 **September and October 2018**.

### From the Office of the Director

- After years of planning, acquisition, and construction, the Maricopa Trail is complete and the trail dedication will be held on November 17, 2018 at Cave Creek Regional Park at 10:00am. The dedication coincides with National Take a Hike Day where park admission is free for the day and many activities are planned at the all Maricopa County Parks for the day.
- At the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors meeting on November 7, 2018, the Supervisors proclaimed November 2018 as *Maricopa County Parks and Trails Month* in celebration of the completion of the 315-mile Maricopa Trail Loop and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission's efforts to protect Maricopa County's natural and cultural resources for future generations to enjoy (see attached). On Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, a dedication ceremony to celebrate the completion of Phase I of the Maricopa Trail will be held at Cave Creek Regional Park from 10:00 am to noon. In addition, the department will waive vehicle entrance fees into all County regional parks to celebrate "National Take a Hike Day."
- The Department has hired its first Natural Resource Specialist. Juanita Armstrong-Ullberg started October 22 and reports to headquarters at Lake Pleasant Regional Park. Juanita comes to Arizona from the Will County Forest Preserve in Illinois. Juanita has a Masters Degree in Environmental Biology and had already been out visiting parks and engaging with park staff to better understand the parks issues and concerns. Juanita will work to appropriately conserve Maricopa County's natural heritage for our residents and future generations.

### **Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:**

Date/Status	Tracking Number	Summary
9/19/2018 Approved	C-06-19-075-7-00	<b>Donation Report for August 2018:</b> Cash value of \$402.59
9/19/2018 Approved	C-30-19-004-D-00	<b>Memorial Benches:</b> \$1,000 donations each for memorial benches to be placed in Utery (1) and San Tan (2).
9/19/2018 Approved	C-30-19-002-2-00	<b>Goat Camp Trail Rehabilitation:</b> Appropriation adjustment resulting in an expenditure increase of \$40,000 and a revenue increase of \$40,000 in FY19. This increase is the result of the grant reconciliation process.
9/19/2018 Approved	C-30-19-003-V-00	<b>Vehicle Reduction:</b> Approve a reduction of fleet size for: 1) 1992 Chukar Trailer and 2) Water Pump unit. These vehicles are not necessary for the effective operation of the department.

Date/Status	Tracking Number	Summary
9/19/2018 Approved	C-30-15-004-M-05	<b>Amendment to Monopole Use Agreement with Crown Castle:</b> Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute a Consent Request for the approval of modifications to the Crown Castle monopole communications tower at Lake Pleasant.
9/19/2018 Approved	C-30-11-041-3-04	<b>Amendment to AZ Outdoor Adventure:</b> Approve amendment to CMCA that will allow concessionaire to expand their outdoor hiking education guided tours for the Maricopa Trail system.
10/10/2018 Approved	C-30-08-034-1-07	<b>Wet 'n Wild:</b> Approve and execute the Consent to the Assignment and to an Amended and Restated Sub-Use Agreement to consent to the change in management operations of Wet N Wild to Six Flags Phoenix LLC.
10/10/2018 Approved	C-30-18-019-M-01	<b>Maricopa Trail ROW:</b> Approve Arizona State Land Department Right of Way (ROW) for the completion of Maricopa Trail Segments 11, 12, 14, 33 and 35.
10/10/2018 Approved	C-30-19-006-6-00	<b>Park Land Disposal Policy Revisions (A2610):</b> Exclude from the Policy easements utilities for the benefit or support of park lands consistent with approved park master plans and provide other administrative updates to the 1997 Policy language.
10/10/2018 Approved	C-06-19-141-7-00	<b>Donation Report for September 2018:</b> Cash value of \$341.05

**Administration**

The purpose of the Administrative Division is to provide strategic direction, leadership, administrative and financial support to the Director and employees of the department so they can produce the results necessary to achieve the departmental mission and vision. The following information is provided as a high-level overview of the activities of the Administrative Division:

**Financial/Budget Status through September 2018:**

SEPTEMBER			YTD	YTD
Fund Name	Fund	Type	Actual	Budget
General Fund	100	Expenditures	219466.92	\$218,238.00
			Budget to Actual Amount	\$1,229
			Budget to Actual Percentage	-0.56%
Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Fund	225	Revenue	\$56,958.58	\$60,206.00
			Budget to Actual Amount	\$3,247.42
			Budget to Actual Percentage	5.39%
	225	Expenditures	\$66,489.65	\$65,821.00
			Budget to Actual Amount	-\$668.65
			Budget to Actual Percentage	-1.02%
Lake Fund	240	Revenue	\$823,997.70	\$744,836.00
			Budget to Actual Amount	-\$79,161.70
			Budget to Actual Percentage	-10.63%
	240	Expenditures	\$698,272.08	\$799,269.00
			Budget to Actual Amount	\$100,996.92
			Budget to Actual Percentage	12.64%
Enhancement Fund	241	Revenue	\$1,234,828.73	\$1,376,253.00
			Budget to Actual Amount	\$141,424.27
			Budget to Actual Percentage	10.28%
	241	Expenditures	\$1,224,742.02	\$1,459,586.00
			Budget to Actual Amount	\$234,843.98
			Budget to Actual Percentage	16.09%

GREEN Positive variance, no concern  
 RED Negative/under budget - watch

**Contracts:**

- **Adobe:**

Special Use Permits Issued:

- Sahuaro Central Railroad Preservation Society
  - January 2 – 20, 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Operations Meet
- Victory Lane
  - December 15, with 4 Peaks Racing will be hosting annual Jingle Bell 5K Run
- Arizona Karting Association
  - December 26 – 30, Annual Holiday Classic

Phoenix Kart Racing Association was the selected respondent for the Invitation to Negotiate issued in March to promote, manage, operate, maintain and improve the existing kart racing complexes, or provide an alternate recreation facility. PKRA's response selected by the Evaluation Committee will be to manage both the PKRA and AKA facilities under one management agreement. Our first meeting with PKRA to start negotiating an agreement has been scheduled for the first week of November.

- **Buckeye Hills (Joe Foss Shooting Range):** Arizona State Rifle and Pistol Association reported attendance in August at 402 shooters, September at 406 shooters, and October at 363 shooters.

**Human Resources:**

- Welcome New Employees:

- LaNella Gaines, Volunteer Coordinator, HQ – 9/10/18
- Bailey Powers, Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant – 9/10/18
- Laura Manzanarez, Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant – 9/10/18
- Juanita Armstrong, Natural Resource Planner, HQ – 10/22/18
- Jake Carpenter, Park Maintenance Worker, Lake Pleasant – 10/22/18
- Delson Alexander, Park Maintenance Worker, Lake Pleasant – 10/22/18

- Promotions/Transfers:

- Christopher Matthews, Contact Station Asst-Lake Pleasant to Office Assistant-Hassayampa – 10/8/18
- Jim Apthorp, Park Maintenance, transfer from Lake Pleasant to White Tank – 9/10/18
- Aldo Gonzalez, Contact Station Assistant, Temp to Full Time, Usery – 9/10/18
- Shayla Gunn, Park Supervisor, Transferred from McDowell to Usery – 9/21/18

- Departing Employees:

- Dan Wilson, Park Supervisor, Usery

- Open positions and recruitments:

- Park Office Assistant Specialized, Cave Creek – Candidate selected, scheduled to start 11/5/18
- Park Office Assistant Specialized, Lake Pleasant – Interviews held, selection in process
- Contact Station Assistants, (x) Lake: 2 Candidates selected, scheduled to start 11/5/18  
 1 Recruitment open
- Park Maintenance, Estrella – Candidate selected, scheduled to start 11/19/18

**Volunteer Program:**

- FY19 Year-to-Date Volunteer Hours:

	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	FY19 YTD Total
<b>FY19 Total Dept. Hours</b>	2754	2824	2968	4373	12919
<b>Financial Savings</b>	\$67,996	\$69,725	\$73,280	\$107,969	\$318,970
<b>Financial Savings YTD</b>	\$67,996	\$137,721	\$211,001	\$318,970	\$735,688
<b>% Diff comparison/prev. FYTD</b>	-2%	-4%	-20%	-23%	
<b># of Volunteers-current month</b>	95	75	94	105	369
<b># of Park Hosts</b>	23	26	25	45	119
<b>Park Host Hours</b>	2140	2216	2217	3565	10138
<b># of Community Volunteers</b>	34	33	38	49	154
<b>Community Volunteer Hours</b>	485	547	610	712	2354
<b># of Episodic Volunteers</b>	36	16	31	10	93
<b>Episodic Volunteers Hours</b>	129	61	141	96	427
<b>MCSO Prisoner Service Hours</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>FY18 Month Total Hours</b>	3506	4936	4911.5	6682	
<b>FY18 Financial Monthly Savings</b>	\$69,384	\$143,504	\$263,966	\$411,994	\$2,250,828
<b>Current Value-\$24.69</b>		\$212,888	\$476,854	\$888,848	
<b>Previous Value-\$24.14</b>					

## Planning and Development Division

### **Vulture Mountain Recreation Area Update**

- Staff is currently working on the 60% - 100% final design phase proposal review and specifications to complete the construction document set. Staff have reviewed and commented on the Environmental Assessment administrative draft for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The EA has a target date of February 2019 for completion with the Recreation and Public Purposes Act land lease approval shortly thereafter.

### **Project Management**

- Estrella Park renovations are moving forward and initial ramada construction is complete. Phase I of the water system improvements have begun with additional utility location including back flow prevention, water system isolation valves, and turf area and irrigation system renovations. Major electrical renovations are in progress for the east side of the park. New ramadas have been ordered. Grill station foundations have been poured and the block work will begin soon.
- The electrical design for the Usery Mountain Regional Park campground electrical system will begin this month. The design will have new 600 amp electrical service sections and new individual conduits to each camp site. Work is expected to take place in late spring and early summer after the camping season.
- Work on the Usery Mountain Regional Park new horse staging septic system began this month. A new ET bed is under construction followed by the new restroom site utilities and finally the new modular pre-engineered restroom building.
- The new potable water treatment system for nitrate removal had been permitted by ADEQ for San Tan Regional Park. The park well water will be treated for all park guests, volunteers, and employees.

### **Park and Open Space Planning**

- The McDowell Mountain Regional Park Master Planning process is progressing. To date, there have been seven internal meetings with various public/partners and staff/volunteer meetings and a second stakeholder meeting was held in July. In the overall planning process, we are currently in the public input stage and approximately 30% of the way through the planning process. To date the planning process has been smooth with great input from the public, stakeholders, and partners. The final public meeting was held November 5, 2018. Public comments via the website will continue to be accepted through December 6, 2018.

### **Trades Crew**

- The Trades and Trails Crew continues working on sections of pipe rail fencing at the Hassayampa River Preserve. Staff is currently working on the fencing of the parking lot area and the fence around the new evapotranspiration bed next the host site. This internal fabrication and installation is saving valuable capital improvement funding for the department.
- The Trades Crew moved and reset Ramada #134 as part of the Bajada Loop electrical project at Lake Pleasant Regional Park. The electrical project funded by Maricopa County Facilities Maintenance Division, replaced all the campground electrical pedestals at the Bajada campground.
- The Trades Crew assisted Estrella Park to assemble new picnic tables for Ramada 5 at the Park. The new concrete tables were placed for participants of a program offered by the interpretive ranger at the park.
- Trades Crew Electricians replaced lighting at the campground host sites and restroom building at White Tank Regional Park. The new LED lighting is more energy efficient and provides better lighting than the previous light fixtures.

### **Trails Crew**

- The Trails Crew is working with the American Conservation Experience (ACE) trail crew for the Goat Camp trail tread maintenance at White Tank Mountain Regional Park. The ACE crews will be working on this project to redefine the trail footprint, fill in erosion, and make the trail more hiker friendly while still maintaining its rugged character and reputation. The project is made possible by an Arizona State Parks and Trails grant.



### **Maricopa Trail, Sun Circle and Trail Facilities:**

- The following trail segments are currently in progress – 11, 12, 18, 27, 29, 32, 33, 77 and 78.
- Agreement preparation/negotiations:
  - Estrella Community – Segment 33, new route. Waiting on developer attorney.
  - Bureau of Land Management – Waiting for the Travel Management Plan completion on the proposed route between Estrella Mountain Park and Buckeye Hills Park.
  - Queen Creek – Re-route of trail to existing trail systems. Received permit October 2018; waiting for post placement and direction by Town of Queen Creek personnel.
  - City of Phoenix – Installation of equestrian gates (2) and kiosk at Tres Rios were completed in October 2018.
  - Bureau of Reclamation (SRP) – Kiosks at the Arizona Canal and the intersection of the Consolidated and Western Canals.
  - Gilbert – Installation of the kiosk at the intersection of the Consolidated and Western Canals was completed in October 2018.
  - Scottsdale – Installation of the kiosk on Arizona Canal was completed in October 2018.
  - Maricopa Water District (MWD) – Trailhead on Segment 35 at Northern Avenue. Approved by MWD in October 2018, waiting on MCDOT and developer NW of site.
- Construction
  - Segment 11 – Arizona State Trust Land (ASLD) parcel, construction scheduled for November 2018.
  - Segment 12 Arizona State Trust Land (ASLD) parcel, construction scheduled for November 2018.
  - Segment 27 – Inside Utery Mountain Park, construction started 10/29/18.
- Maintenance
  - The following segments had maintenance completed this period. This includes grooming the tread, brushing and signage:
    - Segment 35 – Missouri Avenue to White Tank Mountain Park.
    - Segment 11 – Greenway Road to Westwing Substation.
    - Segment 2 – Sign maintenance – Pima Road to Granite Reef Dam.
- Trailheads
  - Segment 35 – Northern Avenue – waiting for MCDOT & developer.
  - Segment 11 – Sun Valley Parkway – waiting on Flood Control District.
  - Kiosks – Installed seven single post kiosks for Maricopa Trail + Parks Foundation (MT+PF) in September with funding provided by REI.
- Sign Installation, Inventory and Mapping
  - Working on the following Segments (partially completed): 2, 7, 11, 27, 29 and 30.
  - Completed the following Segments: 8, 9, 20, 22, 31 and 35

### **Parks Operations Report**

#### **Cave Creek**

- The park hosted seven interpretive programs in September with 76 participants and one outreach program with 100 attendees. The highlighted program for the month: *Scorpion Safari* with 41 attendees
- In October, the park hosted six interpretive programs with 90 participants and one outreach with 26 attendees. The highlighted program for the month: *Scorpion Hunt*
- The park hosted the *4<sup>th</sup> Annual Halloween Howl* with 140 children and parents in attendance.
- Camping reservation are sky rocketing due to the Buy-One-Get-One (BOGO) promotion. The campground has been full every weekend.
- The park crew is working diligently on the construction of the wildlife pond. Most of the equipment is in; the underlay, liner and overlay has been installed. Also the pumps and filters have been installed and the river rock is being placed. The pond will be functional by Nov. 17, the crew will continue to groom the area with landscape and hardscape throughout the next few months.

### **Desert Outdoor Center (DOC)**

- In September, three groups visited the DOC with a total of 384 visitors including one of many Kairos hosted by Notre Dame Preparatory School; the school has held this event at the DOC since 2003. In October, ten schools visited the center bringing 1,055 students. The facility also hosted 150 Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) employees for their annual Wildlife Management Division awards and a private wedding with 100 guests. Lastly, the Center was proud to host the annual Parks Department All-Hands Meeting on Oct 24<sup>th</sup> for a day full of camaraderie, training, fun team-building games and good food.
- The Desert Outdoor Center and the Maricopa County Air Quality Department are working together to develop an air quality program at the Desert Outdoor Center. The DOC has partnered with Jenny Frank, AQD Education Outreach Coordinator, and her team to adapt existing programs to fit the needs of students and visitors of the DOC. We are very excited to roll out this program and are hoping to introduce it to schools starting in January 2019.

### **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**

- Estrella Park had 20 programs with 294 attendees during September. The most impressive numbers came from the Homeschool Happenings group which is meeting twice a month on Thursdays and Fridays. Each class has maintained 35-50 participants every day the program has been offered. Interest and enthusiasm for the class continues to ensure its success at the park. With the last warm nights of summer, the final *Scorpion Hike* brought 15 people to the park. Many visitors have said they enjoy the smaller night hike groups at Estrella because it allows them to fully interact with the ranger and experience the desert in a more intimate way.
- The recent rains have greatly benefited the park and the desert. Along with the wonderful rain, high winds did damage trees around the park and turf area. Park staff is continually working on the cleanup.
- The newly constructed ramadas received nearby trench work and the addition of electricity for lights and plug-in appliances.
- Estrella Park's new dedicated 10 acres and 3 acres of Bermuda grass are improving each week.
- With the greening up of the desert and turf in Estrella Park after all the recent rains, there were 17 programs with a total of 670 visitors during October! The Halloween event was the largest ever recorded with approximately 450 people and was incredibly successful on the new turf concrete walking path. Visitors loved having a place for strollers, wheelchairs, and walkers for those attendees who need more assistance. Homeschool Happenings is continuing to draw large amounts of families. More hikers are attending the fitness hikes as the cool weather approaches. The archery class season began this month with full classes for each time slot.
- Estrella Park had two running races this month at the Competitive Track. The two races combined had about 300 runners.
- Park Supervisor, Don Harris, represented the Parks department at an annual fund raiser for the Arizona State Rifle and Pistol Association (ASRPA). The ASRPA is currently setting up public shooting days on the Joe Foss Shooting Range at Maricopa County's Buckeye Hills Regional Park. Mr. Harris spoke of appreciation for past and current staff and volunteers who help safely provide recreational shooting on the gun range. Gratitude was given to the club and acknowledgement of the good attendance numbers they are drawing.
- New concrete picnic tables continue to be assembled. Park staff continue to stay ahead of the ongoing CIP projects by attending pre-construction meetings to provide contractors with park facility knowledge and conduct repairs that come along with so much construction.
- Corral West Horse Rentals and Wagon Rides began their season on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Patrons have begun to enjoy rides in the fresh desert air.

### **Lake Pleasant**

- Lake Pleasant offered 32 interpretive programs during the months of September and October to 480 program attendees. Highlights for the month included *Hiking in a Desert Forest*, *Full Moon Hike* and *Full Moon Easy Paddle*.
- The new interpretive ranger has been lending assistance and observing the Desert Outdoor Center rangers at several program days during the month of October. The ranger will now be able to lend assistance should needs arise in the future. In addition, the ranger has successfully received certification in archery, kayaking and social media training.

- In September, the park hosted the annual National Public Lands Day cleaning event. We had approximately 150 volunteers come out to the park for a day of fun, picking up trash along the shoreline and various areas around the park. Approximately 90 large bags of trash, a myriad of broken pop-up tent remains, and other miscellaneous large debris left by park visitors were removed from the park. It was a huge success and a tremendous help.
- Lake Pleasant has teamed up with the AGFD and Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to establish a live feed game camera near one of the bald eagle nest sites within the park. We hope to be able to display the live feed at the Discovery Center and further help spread the conservation and nature appreciation message to our visitors. Special thanks to the maintenance and interpretive ranger teams that assisted AGFD raptor management team with carrying the heavy equipment up the mountain.
- BOR conducted an environmental site inspection of the lake and the park passed with flying colors. Kudos were given by Reclamation for the efforts made by park staff to maintain the facilities and expressed their understanding of the tremendous undertaking it can be to manage a park/lake of this size.
- The ACE Corp has been working to repair the barb wire fence line along the boundaries of the park and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. The effort will help curtail cattle and burros from overgrazing the land and keep out other uninvited guests from entering the park.
- Conservation efforts continue to build momentum. Various agencies such as AGFD, Yavapai County, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, the City of Peoria, BOR, BLM, and others are helping to provide assistance and support with the process. The team is currently reviewing efforts to fence the northern boundary and identify proper roadway strategies. Also, the Central Arizona Conservation Alliance hosted a special informative education and onsite review session at Lake Pleasant in October to provide representatives from within the field of recreation and land management to learn more about the conservation efforts being made in the area and to sit in on a special presentation by an ASU college student, from the City of Phoenix Parks, regarding rehabilitation efforts.
- Efforts to establish a government dock continues to progress at Scorpion Bay Marina. The government dock will serve as a multi-agency docking station to house boats for our navigational aide operations, wildlife and law enforcement response needs.
- In response to the repairs performed by the Central Arizona Project on several pumping stations, lake water levels were low this year (around 1,635 ft in elevation). The navigational aide technicians, maintenance supervisor and interpretive ranger were able to perform an inspection dive on the old dam (around the 1600 ft elevation level). The old dam has been underwater since the early 1990's and was originally built in 1927 (the largest multi-arch dam of its time). Carl Pleasant, the original architect for the Old Dam and for whom the lake is named after, appears to have designed a remarkable dam as it is holding up well throughout the years despite being engulfed by water now.

## McDowell

- In the month of September, seven interpretive programs were offered at the park.
- Our last *Summer Night Ride* for 2018 took place on Saturday, September 22 at Pemberton Trailhead area (Pemberton Trail) with approximately 200 people participating. Fountain Hills Bikes is a partner of this program and provides after ride snacks and a movie. This particular ride was dedicated to Doug Carlson, owner of Fountain Hills Bikes, who passed away unexpectedly on August 22, 2018.
- One special event took place during the month of September, *Javelina Jangover*, which is an overnight series of trail runs involving different lengths on the Pemberton and Scenic Trail(s). 348 runners participated plus nearly 200 spectators were in attendance.
- In the month of October, 11 interpretive programs were offered at the park with 79 people in attendance.
- Three special events took place during the month of October:
  - New to McDowell Park, *American Endurance Ride* took place on Saturday, October 6 which is an equestrian endurance ride of 50 and 75 miles, 49 riders participated.
  - AZ Interscholastic Cycling league hosted a Middle School/High School Mountain Bike race with approximately 625 participants and 450+ spectators.
  - *Javelina Jundred* took place, participants had the opportunity to compete in either a 100 mile or 100K trail run with 30 hours to complete both, approximately 850 total runners participated plus 500+ spectators were in attendance.
- Western Spirit Cycling hosted a guided mountain bike trip (totaling 3 days) at McDowell Mountain Park; approximately 9 people participated with 2 guides.

## San Tan

- In September, San Tan hosted 18 programs with a total of 287 participants.
- Twenty-three park patrons participated in our first Trailwork Volunteer Day of the season. Peter led the group on a repair project to remove slough along a portion of western San Tan Trail to allow for safe passage in the Kubota. The group also cleared drainages along the way.
- The annual Nathan Martens Arizona Memorial service drew 70 members of the community to honor his memory and that of all fallen Arizona service people. Special tributes were given by representatives from the armed services, local government and Nathan's family.
- Another highlight for the month was *Tortoise Day*, a family-friendly event with a tortoise feeding and special book reading with Tempe author Carol Hageman. Thirty people enjoyed meeting our animal ambassadors, Santana and Shelly, listening to a story about an adopted desert tortoise and his friends, and making a tortoise bookmark.
- October saw 454 visitors attend 23 programs at San Tan.
- At the beginning of the month, a 100 Miles Challenge info session brought in 60 people who were interested in learning more about the program. Among this group was a software developer who offered to create a free Challenge app for our department. This month also saw the seasonal return of *Sunset Yoga* and *Intro to Archery*, drawing 21 and 27 participants respectively.
- A highlight for the month was a Trail Etiquette Day, a pilot program covering trail safety awareness. The topic of this trailhead discussion was equestrian encounters. A longtime park friend and her horse were at the trailhead with the ranger for a meet and greet with our visitors, including hikers, runners, bikers and other equestrians. Scout groups, families with children and adult visitors learned how to properly engage with an equestrian on the trail. The discussion focused on what it means to yield and how making their approach known via an audible clue is a best practice. Visitors also had an opportunity to pet Rocky the horse and take a photo with him.

## Spur Cross

- In September, the park hosted 10 interpretive programs with 110 participants in attendance. The highlighted program for the month: *Moonlight Hike* with 42 participants.
- Trail volunteers continue to help with restoring rain-damaged trails and other regular maintenance tasks.
- In October, the park hosted 14 interpretive programs with 146 participants in attendance. The highlighted program for the month: *One Again Moonlight Hike* with 34 attendees.
- The Trades' crew is in the final stage of fabricating the security door and shutters for the entry station. Once they are installed volunteers and staff will set up merchandise and educational displays for the season.

## Usery

- Usery Park offered 12 interpretive programs in September totaling 379 participants and 14 interpretive programs in October totaling 713 participants.
- 102 participants participated in the Ranger's *Full Moon Hike* on September 22, 2018 and 61 participants joined "Ranger B" for the *Scorpion Hunt* program on September 28, 2018.
- 174 ghosts joined our "ghost ranger" on our annual *Goofy Ghost Walk* held on Saturday, October 20, 2018. Families came to the park dressed in costumes and participated in a quarter-mile hike, a costume contest, and an educational critter presentation by the Phoenix Zoo. The event finished with some ghost stories, a bonfire and s'mores.
- 121 participants joined "Ranger B" for the *Full Moon Hike* on October 23, 2018 despite the inclement weather throughout the day.
- Channel 3 News featured our *Scorpion Hunt* program held on October 12;  
[https://www.azfamily.com/news/cooler-weather-brings-moonlight-adventures-in-the-desert/article\\_81f84a6c-d307-11e8-a1bc-53cc4cbd4052.html?fbclid=IwAR2Z8Ngc1UgHMJNpxjPMA7GB8eQQIDVBYT\\_vQZK5Pdpvo2Ds0noWayCpGHg](https://www.azfamily.com/news/cooler-weather-brings-moonlight-adventures-in-the-desert/article_81f84a6c-d307-11e8-a1bc-53cc4cbd4052.html?fbclid=IwAR2Z8Ngc1UgHMJNpxjPMA7GB8eQQIDVBYT_vQZK5Pdpvo2Ds0noWayCpGHg)
- The Buckhorn Campground was nearly 60% full during the first two weekends (Fr/Sa/Su) in October and 100% full the last two weekends due to the BOGO camping promo offered each year. Campers get one free night per seven days with purchase of at least one night camping. Many local campers use this opportunity to stay the weekend at the park.
- Park Staff and Park Hosts received their required annual training on Thursday, October 25, 2018 by our previous Volunteer Coordinator (Kim Richards) along with the new Volunteer Coordinator, LaNella Gaines.



### **Vulture Mountains Recreation Area and Hassayampa River Preserve**

- Visitation to the Preserve has picked up as fall officially begins with attendance for the month reaching approximately 650 people. The interpretive ranger, volunteers, and guest presenters offered 11 programs during the month which were attended by 138 people.
- Bats N' Buzzards! The Preserve proposed and partnered with the Town of Wickenburg for a wildlife viewing event. The first annual *Bats and Buzzards on the Bridge* event was held at the pedestrian bridge in Wickenburg to view roosting and migrating Mexican free-tailed bats and Turkey Vultures. The Preserve, Town of Wickenburg, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Wickenburg Conservation Foundation, and Sonoran Audubon Society hosted educational and informational tables. In addition to the wildlife appearances, one of the stars of the evening was Mojo the turkey vulture, brought by Wild at Heart animal Rehab Center and even Batman made an appearance. The evening was a great success with over 300 estimated visitors. The Town of Wickenburg was extremely pleased with the turnout and the Preserve staff hopes to make it an annual event.
- The Preserve also hosted the Environment session of this year's Town of Wickenburg Leadership Institute with the Park Supervisor and Interpretive Ranger both being featured speakers at the session. Preserve staff also participated in an Operations Day where all Parks Operations staff met and discussed plans for the current fiscal year as well as reviewed our department's mission and vision.
- With the end of monsoon season, the river trails were re-opened with the placement of the foot bridges. This was a short-lived re-opening however, as the bridges had to be pulled again at the end of the month for anticipated weather effects from Hurricane Rosa. The Preserve received 2.32 inches of rain from the storm. The rain was a slow and steady allowing for saturation without the river flooding.
- Cooler October weather brought increased visitation to the Preserve with 997 visitors for the month, an increase of almost 50% over October 2017 (670 visitors). The interpretive ranger and volunteers presented 14 programs including several group outreaches to a total of 238 visitors. The Preserve debuted a new family Halloween event similar to the successful White Tank Halloween event. A number of families enjoyed trick-or-treating around the luminary-lit trails while they visited various "Creature Feature" stations highlighting nocturnal wildlife. All who attended enjoyed the event and thanked the staff and volunteers for providing such a unique event to the Wickenburg area. The Preserve staff hopes to grow this event in years to come.
- The Preserve also reached out to the local community by hosting a table at the "Wickenburg Walks to Boot Breast Cancer" event joining other local entities and businesses that focus on health and wellness promoting the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of spending time in nature.
- October also brought more rain than the entire monsoon season (approximately 3.5 inches), which kept staff and volunteers busy repairing fencing damaged by river flooding. Everyone enjoyed seeing the increased river flow and the river even had water in several overflow channels that had not seen water in many months. The vegetation loved all the rain and the Preserve is now seeing a second spring with lots of green grass.
- The maintenance worker attended a Kubota Train-the-Trainer course, enabling him to train other Parks staff and volunteers to drive these side-by-side utility vehicles. The maintenance worker also assisted MCSO with an incident investigation involving an ATV that had been abandoned and possibly hit on the railroad tracks adjoining the Preserve. The ATV had been discovered while checking Preserve fence lines and due to the remoteness of and limited access to the area, the maintenance worker led deputies to the scene and assisted with a plan to retrieve the ATV with minimal impact to the Preserve resources.
- Work continues on the host site RV pads with trenching for the electric service scheduled next.

### **White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

- White Tank Park offered 13 interpretive programs with a total of 503 in attendance in September. The night-time scorpion hike brought in 172 adventurous visitors, and the full moon hike 158 attendees!
- On September 12<sup>th</sup> the White Tank team joined the operations staff from all of the Maricopa County parks in an exciting day of collaboration between parks staff. Each job division met as a group and discussed things that could improve their jobs and then divided into breakout groups to discuss ideas that could improve their respective parks. Due to the size of Maricopa County and how far spread its parks are, this was an amazing opportunity for staff to brainstorm ideas and work together.

- September brought yet another expansion to the White Tank staff, as Jim Apthorp officially transferred from Lake Pleasant into the new full time maintenance position. White Tank Mountain Regional Park now has three full time park maintenance staff, bringing the total full-time staff to seven team members.
- October offered 15 interpretive programs with a total of 1,203 guests attending. Ranger Williams was busy all month planning one of White Tank's largest events of the year, the *Spooktacular Howl-o-ween Fest!* This event included a luminary-lit half mile barrier-free trail, trick or treating stations, educational animal stations, a bonfire with scary storytime, face painting, yard games, arts and crafts, and much more! Sixteen amazing volunteers plus park staff made this event possible and the number attending almost doubled from 2017's attendance, with 884 guests! It was a beautiful night with many creative costumes and an epic moon rise over the Phoenix valley.
- October's attendance sky rocketed due to the large amount of precipitation the park received and the cool fall weather. The waterfall at the end of Waterfall Trail flowed consistently for the first time in over a year! During a particularly large storm the second weekend of October, the park even had to be temporarily closed due to flash flooding. Park staff is hoping that all of the fall precipitation leads to a spectacular wildflower season in the spring. The entire park is currently blanketed in a beautiful sea of green as the desert explodes in color with all of the recent moisture.
- October brought the return of many new and returning park hosts to White Tank. The park is still waiting on a couple stragglers arriving in November, but is very thankful for the volunteers that were able to arrive earlier in October since the park saw such a huge increase in visitation with the cooler weather and storms moving in.
- The ASU Visitor Use Survey started off in full swing this month. Park staff has been handing out the surveys at the entry booth, nature center, and out in the park. Most visitors seem very receptive to filling out the survey and we are excited for their opinions to be heard!

# PROCLAMATION

## Maricopa County Parks and Trails Month

### November 2018

**WHEREAS**, the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors (Board) established a County regional park system in 1954 to meet the recreational needs of a rapidly expanding metropolitan region and conserve a part of the County's natural heritage for current and future generations; and

**WHEREAS**, Maricopa County's regional park system has grown to become one of the largest regional park systems in the nation, with more than 120,042 acres of park land and 872 miles of trails; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board is committed to conserving the unique characteristics of the County's natural heritage while providing visitors and local resident's quality recreational services, facilities, trails, programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board approved and adopted the Maricopa County Regional Trail System Plan in 2004 to provide a shared use, non-motorized trail system to connect the Maricopa County Regional Parks; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board authorized the development of an initial 315-mile loop known as "the Maricopa Trail" and dedicated the first segment in April 2007 that connected Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area with Cave Creek Regional Park; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board desires to recognize the completion and dedication of the full 315-mile Maricopa Trail.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** that the Board:

1. Applauds and values the former Maricopa County Trails Commission members, partners and stakeholders, previous and current Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission members, and previous and current members of the Board of Supervisors for their vision and proactive approach in providing a regional trail system.
2. Recognizes the dedication and commitment to ensure that the Maricopa Trail was constructed thus providing users a gateway to metropolitan areas, municipal trails, communities, and neighborhoods with multi-modal corridors.
3. Reaffirms the Board's commitment to a robust system of trails both in the County Parks and throughout the region.
4. Encourages Maricopa County residents to visit a Maricopa County regional park and/or recreate on the Maricopa Trail on National Take a Hike Day on November 17, 2018.

The Board therefore proclaims November 2018 as Maricopa County Parks and Trails month in celebration of the completion of the 315-mile Maricopa Trail loop and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission's efforts to protect Maricopa County's natural and cultural resources for future generations to enjoy.

**ADOPTED** by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, Maricopa County, Arizona, this <sup>17<sup>th</sup></sup> day of November 2018.



  
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Steve Chucri, Chairman of the Board

Attest:   
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Fran McCarroll, Clerk of the Board