

Friends of the Sandia Mountains

Fall Newsletter, September 2006



Friends of the Sandia Mountains
PO Box 1832,
Tijeras, New Mexico 87059

Remaining Meetings of 2006:

7:00 pm at Sandia Ranger Sta.

Tuesday, October 3
Program: To Be Announced

Tuesday, November 7
Program: Bob Julyan & Carl
Smith discuss their book, *Mountains of New Mexico*

December: No meeting

Welcome to Our New District Ranger

The new Sandia District Ranger is Cid H. Morgan. She is transferring from the Angeles National Forest in Region 5 where she was the District Ranger on the Santa Clara Mohave Rivers Ranger District. (Sam Beard)

From The President

The summer of 2006 will unfortunately be remembered as another season marked by the now all too frequent specter of the dreaded *Forest Closure*... But with the assistance of the skilled fire fighters on our Ranger District and all those welcome helpers from other areas, plus the timely arrival of the monsoons, major problems were once again averted. While the closure resulted in alteration of some of the Friends' activities (just like everyone else's!) there was no shortage of work to do.

As the long drought and resulting insect and disease infestations continue to take their toll on our forest, the resulting die-off of trees has been a major factor in the scope of work performed by our organization. Many hours have been devoted to clearing fallen trees from trails and removing dead snags that pose a hazard to life and property in the picnic areas. As this cycle of nature continues, there will likely be many more opportunities for members to participate in this necessary activity in the future.

This year the Friends reissued the long out of print

Auto Tour Guide to the Sandia Crest National Scenic Byway. This booklet provides a brief overview of the Crest area and contains information corresponding to each of the Auto Tour signposts along the Crest Road. A tabloid newspaper style Sandia Mountain recreation guide, similar to those available at many National Parks and major recreation areas, has been developed by the Friends and submitted to USFS for approval. Our *Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains*, published last year, continues to enjoy great popularity and sales.

Someone jokingly suggested that we change our name to "Publishers of the Sandia Mountains", but our activities include so much more than that, as the following list will attest. So far this year, in addition to those cited above, Friends activities have included participation in conducting the USFS National Visitor Use Monitoring Survey; maintenance of the Auto Tour signposts on the Crest road; administration of the Adopt-A-Trail Program; sealing of old hazardous mine shafts on the District; invasive plant removal; periodic repair of the Kiwanis Meadow fence; administration of the Junior Ranger Program; participation in National Trails Day; removal of obsolete barbed wire fences on the District; semi-annual clean-up, mowing and pruning around the Ranger Station; semi-annual mowing, pruning and debris removal from the handicap-accessible nature trail at Cienega Picnic Ground; Tijeras Community Wild-fest; and removal of dirt and mud inflows from sidewalks and table pads at Sulphur Canyon Picnic

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 Ground, among others.

Early this year, the Friends were honored to receive the 2005 Regional Forester's Partnership Award for our work in supporting the mission of the United States Forest Service. It was a thoughtful recognition and was greatly appreciated.

Thank you to all who have contributed in any way to the mission of the Friends, whether through time, material or financial support. Without your help the Sandia Mountain experience would be diminished for everyone.

My special thanks and appreciation go to Vice-President Gerry Sussman for his support and outstanding work in scheduling our popular meeting speakers (August attendance was 65!); to Treasurer Don Carnicom for keeping the books, writing the checks and administering the Adopt-A-Trail Pro-

gram; to our Secretary Margaret Furman for her diligence in recording our minutes; to our Board members for their guidance and direction; to Projects Chairman Sam Beard who somehow is able to coordinate a myriad of projects and volunteers; and to our associates at the Sandia Ranger District, whose support and encouragement is invaluable.

See you on the mountain. (Bob Lowder)

FOSM Awarded First Place in USFS Region-Wide Partnership Competition

In April, volunteers Gerry Sussman (FOSM) and Nancy Woodworth and Andy Rukiewic (Friends of Tijeras Pueblo) accompanied Mary Bean, Dana Howlett, and Susan Johnson (Sandia Ranger District) to the USFS Southwest Region Partnership Conference in Sedona, Arizona. Mary entered our Field Guide Project in the annual regional partnership competition, and FOSM was awarded the first place plaque. Gerry and Nancy are on the committee to plan the 2007 conference in Albuquerque. (Gerry Sussman)

National Visitor Use Monitoring Project

The principal Friends project this year was assisting the Forest Service with the National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) Program. The Cibola National Forest was selected to participate in this nationwide survey of National Forest visitors. The information collected will help the Forest Service better serve our visitors by knowing which activities they do, how long they stay, and how satisfied they are with the facilities and services provided. On the Sandia Ranger District, one hundred and thirty-seven survey-days were scheduled from October 1, 2005, to September 30, 2006. The survey sites included Sandia Crest, Four Seasons Visitor Center, Sandia Peak Ski Area, Ranger Station, picnic areas, campgrounds, and approximately 15 trailheads. Several survey-days were scheduled for Sandia Crest and Tree Spring Trailhead.

Two or three volunteers or USFS employees were assigned to each site for a six-hour period. As a group of people was exiting the National Forest, one visitor in the group would be interviewed and asked 27 to 45 questions depending on the type of survey form being used. In addition to the basic survey form, a second type of form focused on the econom-

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	Don Peterson

ics of the trip, and a third type included a section on how satisfied the visitor was after the National Forest visit. Most of the survey-days were scheduled for the summer months, but a few were conducted during the winter in all types of weather. Approximately two dozen volunteers were trained and helped conduct surveys. (Sam Beard)

Landscape Maintenance around Ranger Station

A multi-day effort which may become an annual project is maintenance of the landscaped areas around the Sandia Ranger Station. In FY2005, we worked one day there, but in FY2006, Friends did fall, winter, spring, and summer cleanup.

On Saturday, October 8, Friends of the Sandia Mountains members and two Sandia Ranger District employees completed the first day of fall clean-up around the ranger station. Members Don Carnicom, Margaret Furman, Chris von Huene, Walter Kearns, and Sam Beard pruned one-seed juniper and piñon trees along Cedro Creek on the north, east, and south sides of the ranger station. Trees were pruned to remove dead wood and improve shape. Several large clumps of elm brush and a few small elm trees were cut. Numerous large weeds were also pulled.

Bill Metz hauled 11 big loads of branches and trunks on a USFS pickup to a pile near the shop for chipping later by the fire crew. The equivalent of about 4 loads was piled along the shop road near the vehicle security gate for chipping. Dana Howlett, SRD Interpretation Manager, pulled weeds and provided valuable experience-based advice concerning pruning chamisa and Apache plume plants for better visibility at the south exit of the parking lot. Louis Gonzales, SRD employee, completed his Forest Service duties for the day and then helped load and haul the cut material. Thanks to Rick Atwell who teaches the pruning class for volunteers and to the ranger district staff who trusts us to do pruning on the district.

On Wednesday, Feb. 22, eight volunteers from the Friends of the Sandia Mountains cut and chipped brush around the Sandia Ranger Station. We cut clumps of elm brush (a noxious weed) in the dry Cedro Creek streambed, pruned one-seed junipers and piñons on the stream bank, and removed one small elm tree. After lunch we fed the SRD chipper six large piles of branches and brush under the watchful eye of chipper operator and fire crew member, Michael Williams. In addition to pushing brush

into the chipper mouth, we helped clear a jam in the massive steel cutting mechanism. The volunteers (Bob Moore, Chris von Huene, Bill Metz, Dan Benton, Don Carnicom, Tim Brown, and Anne Hickman) especially enjoyed the many oatmeal cookies baked by Anne.

On April 26 seven volunteers continued with spring pruning at the Ranger Station. Between the north parking lot and the highway, Bob Moore, Bob and Sally Lowder, Frank Larson, and Sam Beard cut elm brush that grew last year. Bill Metz and Chris von Huene used a brush cutter to cut large weeds on the south and east sides of the Ranger Station until the motor stalled just before the 10 a.m. deadline for use of gasoline engines during the fire restrictions period.

On May 3, Bill Metz and Sam Beard cut several large clumps of elm brush and a few small trees in Cedro Creek streambed behind the Ranger Station.

On July 22, 2006, during the final summer cleanup, Sam Beard, Anne Hickman, and Walter Kearns cut elm brush in Cedro Creek south of the bridge and near the road shoulder. Bill Metz and Chris von Huene cut weeds and elm brush behind the Ranger Station and between the north parking lot and highway with Bill's new Stihl clearing saw. Jane Harrison, Phyllis Grein, Geraldine Furlan, Janet Duran, and Tim Brown cut and pulled weeds and pruned flowers and shrubs on the west and north sides of the ranger station. (Sam Beard)

Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains

In the spring of 2005, the Friends of the Sandia Mountains and UNM Press published the *Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains*, which received excellent reviews, and almost 6000 copies of the initial 10,000 copies printed have been sold. We receive a royalty of 75 cents for each copy sold at the retail price of \$19.95 in bookstores, but when the Friends sells a copy, we also get the wholesale-to-retail markup of about \$8.00. The Friends of the Sandia Mountains sold well over 500 copies and, as a result, this income has allowed us to fund a number of projects on the district. Included are the forthcoming tabloid covering essential information for visitors to the Sandia Ranger District, publication of an updated version of the *Auto Tour Guide to the Sandia Crest National Scenic Byway*, and a \$500 contribution to support National Trails Day. (Gerry Sussman)

Programs at FOSM Monthly Meetings

We have had a very interesting and varied group of presentations so far this year. Keep in mind that our programs, which are held on the first Tuesday of each month (except in December) at 7:00 pm, are open to the general public and are considered training for SRD volunteers. Starting at the beginning of our current fiscal year we had the following guest speakers:

Oct. - Don and Adair Peterson talked to us about their years with the Albuquerque Mountain Rescue Council.

Nov. - Ernie Giese talked about butterflies in the Sandias and put together three wonderful butterfly boxes for display.

Jan. - Jenny Goode talked about Hawkwatch International.

Feb. - George Duda gave a talk about trees in the Sandias and the effect that the drought has had on them.

Mar. - David Hammack presented a program on the old La Luz Trail.

Apr. - Mike Coltrin reviewed his exciting climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro and showed some wonderful slides.

May - Tom Silva, Assistant Director of the Albuquerque Biopark, talked about their plans for the Zoo and the acquisition of a group of Tasmanian Devils.

June - Jim Koehler told us the story of a military C-47 airplane crash near Placitas during WWII.

July - No program because the first Tuesday was July 4th.

Aug. - Hugh Prather reviewed his extensive research into the tragedy of the TWA airliner crash in 1955 in the Sandia Mountains in what is now TWA Canyon.

Sept. - Kurt Menke, Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Coalition, will tell us about the plans for the safe passage corridor for animals between the Sandia and Manzanita Mountains. FOSM is a member of the TCSPC.

Oct. - To be announced.

Nov. - Writer Bob Julyan and photographer Carl Smith will talk about their book *Mountains of New Mexico*. (Gerry Sussman)

National Trails Day Projects

National Trails Day is always on the first Saturday in June. This summer 183 volunteers gathered at Elena Gallegos Picnic Area on June 3 at 8 a.m. for fresh breads, hot coffee, and snacks before selecting one of the 15 projects on City Open Space land or the San-

dia Ranger District. In the afternoon after the projects were completed, volunteers went to the large picnic shelter for door prizes and more snacks. This year NTD was organized by the City Open Space Division in cooperation with REI, Friends of the Sandia Mountains, and the U. S. Forest Service.

Several FOSM members led and worked on projects. Some of these projects were:

- Maintenance of Foothills Trail 365; Led by Bill Velasquez – Bill emailed the following report. Debbie Velasquez, Dick Traeger, Phillip Peterson (USFS), and two others worked on 0.8 mile of trail from the FT230-FT365 sign to the north along FT365. We concentrated on hardening edges and user trail obliteration. We did some minor erosion control and pruning, as well. Bill also reported seeing a collared lizard.
- New Roof on North Crest Trail Kiosk at Tunnel Spring Trailhead near Placitas; Led by Bill Geck – Bob and Sally Lowder and Don Carnicom replaced the old leaking roof to better protect the wooden structure and information displays on it. After removing the old shingles, they reattached some of the plywood sheathing and tacked down a layer of black felt paper. They completed the roof by using screws to anchor the new wooden shingles.
- Short Bridge at Lower La Luz Trailhead; Led by Sam Beard – Friends working on the project were Tim Brown, Bob Moore, Chris von Huene, and Stan Upchurch (down from Buena Vista, Colorado, for the NTD event). A short, four-foot stone bridge was constructed from the parking lot to the pay station over a small ditch. The volunteers squared the sides of the ditch and built a foundation on each side with sandstone and mortar provided by Rick Atwell, USFS. The bridge surface was a heavy, flat, 4-foot by 3-foot piece of sandstone that was set in mortar at each end.
- Gerry Sussman was at the FOSM table selling copies of the *Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains* and telling everyone about our organization.
- Sandia Ranger District personnel working on the projects were Rick Atwell, Manny Chavez, Chris Michel, Phillip Peterson, and Louis Gonzales.

(Bill Velasquez, Bob Lowder, and Sam Beard)

Hazard Tree Removal Project in Scenic Byway Picnic Areas

Each year FOSM members work one day each week for several weeks on one major field project, such as rebuilding Kiwanis Meadow fence or painting large group picnic shelters. The major project this year was felling hazard trees in six picnic areas. By the middle of August, we had cut several dozen trees. The follow process was used to remove dead trees that could have been hazardous to visitors: (a) Rick Atwell or another USFS forester selected the hazard trees, (b) information about each tree, such as location and species, was entered on the Hazard Tree Form, (c) these trees were felled and limbed by volunteers, (d) the limbs and other slash were piled for use in fire grates, and (e) permits were sold to families who collected the tree trunks for use as fuel wood at home.

We used a cross cut saw one day during the fire restrictions period. On other days during the restrictions, one or two fire crews accompanied us so we could use chain saws. We appreciate the support of Jon Boe, SRD Assistant Fire Management Officer, members of the SRD Fire Crew, and the Fire Prevention Teams from other states. All the volunteers enjoyed the many delicious brownies baked by Sally Lowder each week.

The dates when volunteers worked in each picnic area were: Sulphur Canyon - 4/19, 4/26; Cienega Canyon - 4/12, 4/13; Doc Long - 4/13; Balsam Glade - 3/1, 3/23, 8/2, 8/9, 8/16; Capulin - 5/10, 5/17, 5/24; and Nine Mile 5/17, 5/24. Volunteers working on this project were Bob and Sally Lowder, Bob Moore, Dan Benton, Bill Metz, Don Carnicom, Bill Geck, Chris von Huene, Anne Hickman, Frank Larson, Ed Miller, and Jennifer Morgan (Lowder's daughter). (Sam Beard)

Program to Provide Fuel Wood to Seniors and Needy Families

A new volunteer project developed in December 2005 as a result of the fuel break clearing behind the Sandia Ranger Station. The Sandia Ranger District Fire Crew and inmates in the N. M. Forestry Department work program thinned a large area behind the Ranger Station and piled the small branches for burning. The piñon and juniper trunks and large

branches were placed in separate piles. Karen Takai, Public Affairs and Fire Information, and the SRD management decided to make several cords of this wood available at no cost to seniors and needy families in the Tijeras area. Volunteers from other local organizations collected and piled the wood beside the road to the shop just inside the vehicle security gate. Volunteers worked four days (Dec. 14 to 16 and 20) cutting this wood to fireplace length with chain saws. The USFS certified volunteer sawyers were Bill Metz, Don Carnicom, and Sam Beard. Other volunteers who worked on this project were Dick Kunzer, Newton Garland, Anne Hickman, Tim Brown, Chris von Huene and Dan Benton.

During the winter, the approximately 11 cords of wood were donated, and on February 15, five volunteers (Anne Hickman, Chris von Huene, Bob Moore, Dan Benton, and Sam Beard) collected the bark and wood remnants and raked and swept the wood storage area. They also moved elm brush and a small dead elm tree from near the Tijeras Pueblo bridge into piles to be chipped later. (Sam Beard)

Brush Cut at Two Highway Intersections to Increase Sight Distances

The Friends cut a large area of willow brush at the intersection of the Cienega Canyon Picnic Area Road (FR 190) with the Scenic Byway (NM 536) after observing the short uphill sight distance and hearing about a near-accident there when a USFS law enforcement officer was chasing a motorist. On July 5 Bill Metz, Sam Beard, Bob and Sally Lowder, Chris von Huene, and Bob Moore used hand saws to cut some of the brush between the highway shoulder and streambed. On July 14, Bill used a chain saw and his Stihl clearing saw to complete cutting the small trees. Sam Beard and Chris von Huene piled the brush for chipping later.

On July 22, while other volunteers were working on the landscaping around the Ranger Station, Anne Hickman, Walter Kearns, and Sam Beard cut and piled second-growth elm brush between Cedro Creek and shoulder of NM 337 south of the Ranger Station. The cutting of two large clumps of elm brush increased the sight distance to the south to the highway curve for drivers exiting the Ranger Station grounds on the bridge road. (Sam Beard)

Barbed Wire Fences Removed in Fuel Break behind the Ranger Station

Many years ago the Sandia Ranger District kept horses in small corrals on the low ridge behind the Ranger Station and in pastures on the adjacent hills. After the piñon and juniper forest here was thinned to form a fuel break, the corral fences became very noticeable. After obtaining permission from the Forest Service, the Friends on April 5 removed the wire, rolled it, and pulled the wood and steel posts with the FOSM and SRD pullers. On April 8 additional unneeded and damaged fences to the east were removed. Volunteers, some with extensive fence removing experience, were Newton Garland, Dean Tooley, Bob and Sally Lowder, Dick Baumann, Bill Metz, Walter Kearns, Sam Beard, Tim Brown, Dan Benton, Chris von Huene, Bob Moore, and Don Carnicom. (Sam Beard)

Maintenance of Cienega Canyon, Sulphur Canyon, and Doc Long Picnic Areas

In addition to cutting hazard trees in all the picnic areas along the Scenic Byway, the Friends completed various maintenance tasks in Cienega Canyon, Sulphur Canyon, and Doc Long Picnic Areas.

Cienega Canyon PA, April 12 – Volunteers Bob and Sally Lowder, Anne Hickman, Bob Moore, and Sam Beard cut the tall grass and weeds and pruned trees along the paved nature trail with the Braille interpretive signs. Dirt, leaves, grass, and vines were removed from the pavement, and the sidewalk was swept in preparation for opening the PA for Easter Weekend. Bob Lowder cut the tall grass and weeds beside the trail with his large, gasoline-powered two-wheel nylon cord grass/weed cutter.

Again on July 8, volunteers performed maintenance on the nature trail, and Bob cut the tall summer growth of grass and weeds with his cutter. Bob and Sally, Sam, Jane Harrison, Tim Brown, Chris von Huene, and Walter Kearns worked on this date.

Sulphur Canyon PA, July 8 – The crew from Cienega Canyon PA moved to Sulphur Canyon PA and pruned branches over the picnic tables, and swept pine needles from sidewalks and paved picnic table

sites. The very strenuous work was shoveling mud from the sidewalks and paved sites. The 10-inch deep mud at one bench was due to erosion on the bare hillside and may have resulted from several rains. Due to fatigue and the lack of wheel barrows, not all the muddy areas were cleared. (Sam Beard)

Doc Long PA, July 22 – After helping clean up around the Ranger Station, Jane Harrison, Janet Duran, and Sam Beard painted over the graffiti and chipped areas on the large upper group reservation picnic shelter. (Sam Beard)

Abandoned Mine Closure Project

Our most unusual project this year was helping a USFS expert, John, close two dangerous abandoned mines with foam. These mines are located about one-half mile east of the loop road in the Bernalillo Watershed area west of Placitas. On March 3, a horse and mule carried the chemicals from the road to a vertical mine shaft having a depth of about 50 feet. At the site the two components in a plastic bag were mixed to form expanding foam. An approximately 8-foot by 8-foot "mattress" of foam was made and allowed to solidify. This plug was lowered with ropes about 15 feet into the shaft. Numerous boxes of foam were poured onto this plug until the rapidly solidifying foam filled the upper part of the shaft and was anchored to the rough shaft walls. At the end of the day, John was walking on the top of the firm foam. Volunteers who worked on this project at the request of Rick Atwell, USFS, were Jerry Grayson, Frank Larson, Dan Benton, Bob and Sally Lowder, Don Carnicom, Bill Metz, and Sam Beard. On the following day, dirt was pulled down over the foam to protect it from decomposition by solar ultraviolet radiation.

Also on the next day, a horizontal mine, known as an adit, was closed with foam. John made a backstop to hold the foam in the mine a few feet from the mouth. Only two cubic yards of foam (two boxes) were used to close the entrance. Dirt and large rock were moved over the foam plug. Volunteers working on this second day were Bill, Jerry, Frank, and Dan. Rick plans to return later with a team to carry in topsoil and seed the areas with native vegetation. (Dan Benton and Sam Beard)

Volunteer Trail Maintenance Crew Activities

The Volunteer Trail Maintenance Crew consists of Friends Don Carnicom, Bill Geck, Bob and Sally Lowder, and occasionally others. They work with Chris Michel, Louis Gonzales, and other members of the Sandia Ranger District seasonal trails crew. Bill and Don work year-round in all weather conditions removing fallen trees from trails and maintaining many types of trail signs. Lynn Bender, one of our members, is our chief sign maker. I (Sam Beard) joined them for a typical workday on March 30, and my report for the day follows.

As we say each year, "It may be spring in Albuquerque, but it is still winter on top of the Sandias." The temperatures were below freezing, and we were walking in about four to eight inches of powder snow on the north slopes and in the shade. The very sunny places were dirt or ice. Crest Trail 130 was ice covered by about one inch of fresh snow, and it was very easy to fall. The wind was strong along the rim in the morning.

Bill rode the tram up and made a list of signs at both nature trails in an effort to decide the topics of missing signs and to help with future maintenance. Don and I took the highway to the Crest area. All of us worked on repairing one of the Crest Nature Trail signs by installing an information panel and assembling the aluminum frame with an ingenious design and special tamper-proof screws. Don recovered a vandalized Kiwanis Meadow Closure Sign on which the plastic had been broken. We removed two small trees from the Crest Trail near Kiwanis Meadow.

We then hiked to the north on snow-covered Survey Trail to the junction with 10K Trail. On the return trip we removed two 10-inch trees and two 4-inch trees from the trail.

Don and Bill usually go out each week to perform various types of maintenance. If you are interested in joining them, please contact Don at d-mcarnicom@att.net. (Don Carnicom and Sam Beard)

Sandia Ranger District Recreation Tabloid

Gerry Sussman, Sam Beard, Dan Benton, Paul Stubbe and Don Carnicom have been working on a tabloid-style paper that will be available at no charge

to visitors to the Sandias. It will carry basic information about the Sandia Ranger District, and we will tuck in lists of forthcoming events and meetings scheduled by the Forest Service and the two Friends groups. This is a basic informational paper that we will be able to reprint many times with few changes. We are including information about such things as picnic areas, camping, volunteer work, parking fees and passes, wilderness restrictions, temperatures, precipitation, map of the Sandia and Manzanita Mountains, list of trails (length and difficulty), Leave No Trace policy, etc. Many articles and pictures have been prepared by individuals from throughout the community covering most of the recreational opportunities available in the District such as bicycling, skiing, hiking, horseback riding, climbing, hang-gliding, etc. The first draft and a graphic art layout have been completed, and the Forest Service Staff is presently finalizing their inputs. Completion is scheduled for this fall. (Don Carnicom)

Adopt-A-Trail Program

This year the Adopt-A-Trail Program added two new members, balancing out the two we lost, keeping the total at 27 groups. The new groups were: (1) the Middle Rio Grande Back Country Horseman which adopted the Osha Loop Trail and (2) the Alpha Phi Omega Group which adopted the 10K North Trail. So far this year, all of the groups together have put in a total of 433 volunteer hours. During the year, Chris Michel with the USFS converted our VHS Trail Maintenance tapes to a DVD format. These are provided to the AAT Groups and are available to anyone else that needs them. (Don Carnicom)

Kiwanis Meadow Fence Maintenance

During FY2004 and FY2005, the major project over many days was rebuilding the buck and pole fence around Kiwanis Meadow. This year and in the future, volunteers expect to do just annual maintenance of replacing broken poles and bucks. Late in FY 2005 and in FY2006, the maintenance was:

September 13, 2005 – Dan Benton and Sam Beard repaired damage caused by vandals, replaced poles and bucks, and bolted poles between the fence and a couple of adjacent trees to make pushing the fence over more difficult.

September 23, 2005 – Bill Geck, Don Carnicom, and

Louis Gonzales (USFS) installed eleven signs around the meadow explaining the reasons for the closure (protection of plants and wildlife). Lynn Bender made the sign frames and covered them with Plexiglas.

May 31, 2006 – During the annual summer maintenance, Bob and Sally Lowder, Dan and Pat Benton, Bob Moore, Chris von Huene, Sam Beard, Bill Metz, and Chris Michel and Louis Gonzales (USFS) replaced a few poles in the north and south sections of the fence. They also added a section near Kiwanis Cabin in an attempt to discourage hikers who were going around the end of a part of the fence. (Sam Beard)

Sandia Crest Scenic Byway Auto Tour Guide Republished

Over the years, many USFS staff members and volunteers working at the Sandia Crest Visitor Center would be approached by people who had driven up the mountain and asked, "What are those little numbered signs along the side of the Crest Road?" It was then explained to them that a guide booklet had been available that presented information about the signs and related subjects, but that it had been out of print for many years. The usual visitor response was, "If there is no guide booklet available, why haven't the signs been taken down?" Good question! Early this year, the Friends began to explore the possibility of reprinting the booklet.

Upon investigation, it was determined that the original booklet had been published as a collective effort by the Forest Service, the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and what is now known as the Public Lands Interpretive Association (PLIA). After many phone calls to individuals at the participating organizations, we were able to track down the original printing company in Albuquerque. A long-time employee there had a vague recollection of the book from "many years ago" and agreed to check company records. She was unable to find anything in current records or in archives, but on a hunch, checked some boxes out on the dock. There she found the original proofs for the booklet in a box of outdated material about to be taken to the dump! Talk about luck and good timing!

With the consent of the original participants, the Friends had the booklet updated and reprinted. It is now available for sale for \$1.50 at the Ranger Station, Tinkertown Museum, the Sandia Crest House and Friends functions. (Bob Lowder)

Junior Ranger Program

Last year we had too much snow to start the Junior Ranger Program on time. This year, 2006, we had a drought, and all the trails were closed except Crest Trail 130 between the Tram and the Crest. This worked to our Program's advantage. With no other trails open, parents and children were enjoying the hike and the two nature trails. While the number of new Junior Rangers has been about average at the Crest Visitor Center, the Four Seasons Visitor Center at the Tram has had a very busy summer. Donations to the Program are also on the increase. As of August 18, we have had well over \$120 in donations and have given out 487 badges and 280 patches to our new Rangers. We are now using the new gold badges we obtained during the winter to replace the silver-colored ones as the supply was depleted. We have had a favorable response to the new badges.

We feel we are missing many potential Junior Rangers at the Crest due to the lack of signage announcing the program; therefore, a new large sign has now been installed on the security door at the Crest House. It can be easily removed and stored for the winter. After the new amenity stations (restrooms) are completed at the Crest, we will be able to post new signs announcing the program farther out where visitors can see them as had been done in the past. We are missing many children whose parents do not come into the Crest House to shop.

I appreciate the efforts of our USFS Summer Interns who have been wonderful to our visitors and especially the children. They have added to the Junior Ranger experience. (Sally Lowder)

News Items

The Friends contributed to the Sandia Ranger District Public Lands Day event on September 24, 2005, by having a booth in the Sandia Peak Ski Area Lodge where Gerry Sussman, Don Carnicom, and Bob and Sally Lowder provided information about

the SRD and FOSM to visitors. Dan Benton and Bill Geck led a Trail Maintenance Demonstration for attendees on Tecolote Trail, and Pat Benton provided cookies for snacks. The Friends adopted Tecolote Trail shortly after we were organized in 1997.

On November 4 and 5, 2005, Dan and Pat Benton and Sam Beard accompanied Mary Bean, Recreation and Wilderness Staff on the Sandia Ranger District, to the Volunteer Wilderness Workshop for Southern Colorado in Durango. Mary made a presentation about the Friends of the Sandia Mountains and the Field Guide. The event was coordinated by the San Juan Mountain Association, the very active friends organization on the San Juan National Forest.

On March 28, 2006, Anne Hickman, Tim Brown, Bob Moore, and Sam Beard cleaned the two wildlife water troughs at the mouth of Embudito Canyon by removing about two dozen rocks, some head-size, and 3 or 4 inches of gravel. The water flow was strong, and we were shoveling the gravel up through about 12 inches of water. During the afternoon we completed a strenuous hike along the route of the south boundary of the Elena Gallegos Grant where we had removed a fence in 2005. While on a fire patrol later in the summer, Dan Benton and Sam Beard hiked to the Jaral wildlife drinker near the Tramway Trail east of the La Cueva Picnic Area and found that the equipment was in good condition but the drinker was dry.

On May 18 four Friends installed roof trusses on the Education Center being constructed by the Friends of Tijeras Pueblo near the Ranger District shops. Bill Metz directed the installations, and Andy Rukiewicz presented the safety talk in the morning. The volunteers were Bob Moore, Tim Brown, Chris von Huene, and Sam Beard.

On July 5, six volunteers marked hazard trees selected by Rick Atwell for felling in Balsam Glade Picnic Area. Later, near the Crest, the volunteers pruned Trail 94 (Kiwani Meadow Road) and performed maintenance on the Crest Nature Trail which had been requested by Manny Chavez in the SRD shop. The volunteers were Sally and Bob Lowder, Chris von Huene, Bob Moore, Bill Metz, and Sam Beard.

Management of Two Volunteer Email Groups

The two Yahoo email groups, Sandia-Volunteers-and-NMFOF and Cibola Trail Rangers, continue to be managed by the Friends. Margaret Furman manages the moderated SVANMFOF Egroup which primarily transmits official information to volunteers from Sandia Ranger District personnel and the Friends board. The CTR Egroup is managed by Don Carnicom and is a more informal unmoderated Egroup used to communicate trail conditions and maintenance information among the volunteers who frequently hike and remove fallen trees from the trails. The number of members in each group is: SVANMFOF, 275, and CTR, 100. Contact Margaret at springazure@flash.net to join the SVANMFOF Egroup and Don at 281-3421 or d-mcarnicom@att.net to join the CTR Egroup. (Don Carnicom and Margaret Furman)

FOSM NEEDS HELP WITH A WEB SITE

FOSM would like to establish a web site to describe its mission and its activities in pursuing that mission. If you have the computer skills to help us reach this goal, FOSM is seeking YOU!

Our first need is to create the Web site. We think that once it is created, the content would not require frequent updating, so that maintenance wouldn't be a major effort. But we are looking for anyone who is willing to help with any aspect of the Web site. If you wish to help us, please call Bob Lowder, 821-9640.

Membership Status

We ended the year with 82 members. During this year, we added seven new members plus one Life Membership, Dan & Pat Benton. The other new members were:

Karin Stenaae Chris von Huene
Dustin & Nancy Huntington
Robert Julyan Brian Danowsky
Joy & Matt Bosquez C. Ann LeBeau

Welcome aboard everybody. (Don Carnicom)

Treasurer's Report

We began FY 2006 on October 1, 2005, with a balance of \$9379.40, and on August 10, 2006, the balance was \$9942.69. The largest expenses were \$412.94 for Field Guides for resale, \$1810.00 for Scenic Byway Guides for resale, \$1323.70 for the first graphic art layout of the SRD Recreation Guide,

and \$500.00 for National Trails Day T-shirts. The largest income sources were \$2721.22 from Field Guide sales and royalties and \$1708.19 from memberships. If you would like a detailed Treasurer's Report, call (281-3421) or email me at d-mcarnicom@att.net. (Don Carnicom)

Refreshments

We owe a big THANK YOU to Anne Hickman, refreshments coordinator, and all the members who brought refreshments to the monthly meetings during FY2006. Anne will again be in charge of finding members to bring refreshments. The social/refreshments period is an enjoyable and important part of each meeting when attendees meet new people, discuss FOSM business, talk with Forest Service personnel, and relax with friends sharing common interests. If you would like to bring refreshments one month, please contact Anne at 292-7025 or LaSasha198@aol.com. Members are reimbursed for the cost of the refreshments.

BALLOT: OCTOBER 3, 2006, ANNUAL MEETING

We appreciate the contributions of those board members whose terms are expiring at the end of September: Sam Beard, Paul Stubbe, Anne Hickman, Tim Brown and Bob Moore. The continuing board members are Dan Benton, Sally Lowder and Don Peterson. The members listed below have been nominated for officer and board member positions. (Officers are also members of the board.) Other nominations are encouraged. If you are interested in serving as an officer or board member, please contact Dan Benton, 797-1941.

President:

1. Bob Lowder _____
2. _____

Vice President:

1. Gerry Sussman _____
2. _____

Treasurer:

1. Don Carnicom _____
2. _____

Secretary:

1. Margaret Furman _____
2. _____

Board members: (Vote for five)

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Sam Beard _____ | 2. Tim Brown _____ | 3. Anne Hickman _____ |
| 4. Bob Moore _____ | 5. Paul Stubbe _____ | 6. _____ |

Notice to members of FOSM: If you are unable to attend the annual meeting, you may vote by mailing this ballot to:

Friends of the Sandia Mountains
P. O. Box 1832
Tijeras, NM 87059

FRIENDS OF THE SANDIA MOUNTAINS

If you hike, bike, ride a horse or use the Sandia Mountains in any way, we know you enjoy what nature has given us. As you know, all this traffic takes a toll on our forest lands. Working in conjunction with the **United States Forest Service** as a volunteer organization, we provide many services in support of the Sandia Ranger District.

WHO WE ARE

Friends of the Sandia Mountains is a non-profit organization of local volunteers. We are dedicated to working in partnership with the USFS, other groups, and individuals to maintain, protect and restore the natural, cultural and scenic resources of New Mexico's forest lands for the enjoyment and use of present and future generations. Our focus is conservation and education within the Sandia Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest and adjacent lands.

WHAT IS THE NEED

This uniquely beautiful land can't wait another minute. It truly needs our help! As USFS funds are inadequate to handle the increasing demands on the forest land by the public, the Friends of the Sandia Mountains will work to help meet the forest needs. Learn more about how you can be a part of this vital effort.

WHAT WE DO

Conservation
Education
Restoration
Site Stewardship
Wildlife & Habitat Monitoring
Trail Construction & Maintenance
Junior Ranger Program
Visitor Services
Fundraising
Adopt-A-Trail
Co-publisher of **Field Guide to the Sandia Mtns.**

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN OR RENEW:

You can be part of this effort; work with friends, visitors and USFS personnel.

Tell us briefly how you would like to Participate & we will get back to you.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone & Email

Dues:

- \$10 Student
- \$15 Individual
- \$20 Family
- \$30 Organization
- \$50 Sponsor
- \$100 Benefactor
- \$250 Life Sponsor
- \$500 Corporate Sponsor

Please make your check payable to:
Friends of the Sandia Mountains

Mail To:

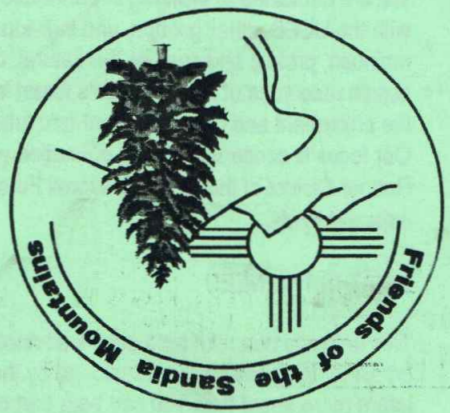
Friends of the Sandia Mountains
P. O. Box 1832
Tijeras, NM 87059

FOSM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible.

712231404 0001

Sam Beard
374 Juniper Hill Rd. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87122

Friends of the Sandia Mountains
PO Box 1832,
Tijeras, New Mexico 87059



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