



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Steve Dobbs

The Forest Service has issued a Decision Memo allowing us to build a shortcut loop on the Blue Ridge Trail. The shortcut will be about 3.4 miles long starting at marker BR1 going up the hill to the west. It will intersect the original trail at BR9. Shawn Gregory with Big Loop Trails will be our contractor and will probably start in mid-May. We for sure need to wait until our *Peanut Butter* mud has dried out! The Forest Service is now evaluating improvements to the Buena Vista Trail System. Last fall, there was a 980-acre land transfer from the Forest Service and the northern half of the Buena Vista was lost. Save the Buena Vista Foundation was able to raise enough money to pay a private contractor to conduct the initial NEPA on the proposed trail system. It has been submitted to the Forest Service and is now going through their process. Hopefully, construction will start in early fall. The City of Show Low has submitted a proposed mountain bike course north of the city to the Forest Service. We are in the very preliminary stage on this proposed build. 📍

SAVE THE DATE — NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

By Mreen Helm

National Trails Day Celebration at the White Mountain Nature Center hosted by TRACKS and the Nature Center is **JUNE 1**. Help celebrate the trails and learn about the Eastern Arizona Trails Collaborative ([easternaztrails Collaborative.net](http://easternaztrails Collaborative.net)) and Leave No Trace Principles ([lnt.org](http://lnt.org)). Activities include a Back Country Horsemen Cowboy BREAKFAST, guided nature HIKES, Outdoor Recreation YARD SALE, educational PRESENTATIONS, family-oriented ACTIVITIES, INFORMATION booths, VENDORS, RAFFLES and much more! **Mark JUNE 1** on your calendar and help spread the word. For more information or to volunteer, please email [mreenhelm@gmail.com](mailto:mreenhelm@gmail.com) or call 402-660-6149. 📍

TRACKS TRAIL CREW (TC)

By Jerry Good

The Trail Crew looks forward to another successful year working on the trails. Depending on the weather we hope to start trail work on April 1<sup>st</sup> (no fooling). We hope to regain our dynamic crew of last year and more volunteers are always welcome. Interested in joining us? Just sign up on the website and you'll get our notices. 📍



Happy Trail Crew at end of 2023 Season!



Devoted Trail Crew, repairing a kiosk this past March.



## TRACKS BIKING

*By Nick Lund*

Get your bike ready for our summer season, which begins soon. Bikes need to be in condition and ready to ride. Helmets are required. Our rides are social, not competitive, with distances determined by the leader and depending on who shows up. If you are not yet on the mountain bike list, please send an email to Suzanne Milligan at [suzanne.milligan@yahoo.com](mailto:suzanne.milligan@yahoo.com). 📧

## TRACKS HIKING GROUPS

**Starting in May 2024, TRACKS will have four organized hikes.** Trail distances are not always exact, and the difficulty rating is subjective. We care about your safety so please know your limitations; bring extra water, snacks, and anything else you need for your safety and comfort. TRACKS waivers are signed prior to each hike. For information about the trails, including downloadable maps, go to our website and click on Take a Hike. Depending on the hiking group, dogs are allowed if they remain on a 6-foot or shorter leash. Hikers with dogs will be asked to walk at the back of the group to minimize tripping and other hazards. We try to carpool/rideshare to save gas and the planet, but you are welcome to drive your own vehicle to trailheads. All hikes are subject to change/cancellation based on weather or circumstances beyond our control. Are you interested in leading a hike? Contact David Samala at [dssamala@yahoo.com](mailto:dssamala@yahoo.com) for Monday Mid-Day Trailblazers and Mid-Morning Saturday hikes, contact Heather Steiner at [steinerhm@aol.com](mailto:steinerhm@aol.com) for Tuesday Trekkers, or contact Lynn Krigbaum at 928-242-8814 for Up the Hill Gang hikes. 📧

## NEW MONDAY MID-DAY TRAILBLAZERS

*By David Samala*

**Monday Mid-Day Trailblazers** will meet at 1:15pm for 1:30pm departure at the WME Village 8 Movie Theatre in Lakeside at the southwest end of the parking lot near the white donation box unless otherwise noted in a hike description below.

**May 6: Flume Connector**, 5 miles. Difficulty-Moderate.

**May 13: Ice Cave**, 5 miles. Difficulty-Moderate.

**May 20: Show Low Meadow Bluff Trail**, 3-mile loop. Difficulty-Easy. Meet at 1:15 at the Bluff Trail Barn 560 S Rock Ridge Road in Show Low

**May 27: Old Hatchery and Springs Trails**, 5 miles. Difficulty-Easy/Moderate. Meet at 1:45 at the Old Hatchery trailhead in the AZ Game & Fish parking lot in Pinetop.

## NEW MID-MORNING SATURDAY HIKES

*By David Samala*

**Once-A-Month Saturday hikes** meet at 1:15pm for 1:30pm departure at the WME Village 8 Movie Theatre in Lakeside at the southwest end of the parking lot near the white donation box unless otherwise noted in a hike description. Contact David Samala at [dssamala@yahoo.com](mailto:dssamala@yahoo.com) with questions.

**May 4: Billy Creek Connector to the Blue Ridge marker #25 up to BR trail head #1.** 3.5 miles rated Easy/Moderate. Add extra 1/2 mile to Springer Mountain Lookout Tower.



**TUESDAY TREKKERS**

*By Heather Steiner*



The Tuesday Trekkers are getting ready for another summer of low impact hiking. Sincere kudos to Jim Meeker for all his TRACKS hiking contributions over the past 24 years, especially these past few years as he kept us mature folks active and safe on shorter and easier trails. He will be missed! Ironically, Jim’s first hike was with the Wednesday group in September 2000. Pat Calkins was the leader, and they hiked downhill from Winn Campground. Jim has passed the hiking stick to Heather Steiner, who will do her best to fill Jim’s hiking boots. The Tuesday Trekkers will most likely start no later than the first week of June. Further exciting information will be forthcoming. 🎉

**UP THE HILL GANG (UTHG)**

*By Lynn Krigbaum*



**May 1: Old Hatchery and Springs Trails**, 5 miles. Difficulty 2.0. Meet in the parking lot near China Express\* at 7:45AM. Suggested ride-share \$2. Alternatively, meet us at the Old Hatchery trailhead at AZ Game & Fish parking lot in Pinetop at 8AM.

**May 8: Show Low Meadow Bluff Trail**, 3 miles. Difficulty 2.0. Meet at the Bluff Trail Barn visible from Hwy. 260, 560 S. Rock Ridge Rd., Show Low at 7:45AM.

**May 15: Country Club and Pat Mullins Trails.** The CC Trail is a 3.5 mile relatively flat loop trail. Off the CC trail is the Pat Mullins Vista, a 1.0 mile up and back down trail that is optional. Difficulty 2.5. Meet in the parking lot near China Express\* at 7:45AM. Suggested ride-share \$2. Alternatively, meet us at the Country Club Trailhead at 8AM.

**May 22: Buena Vista Trail**, 6 miles. Difficulty 2.5. Meet in the parking lot near Arby’s at 680 W. Deuce of Clubs in Show Low at 7:45AM. Suggested ride-share is \$3. Alternatively, meet us at the Buena Vista trail head off AZ60 and FS300 at 8AM.

**May 29: Land of Pioneers Short Loop**, 5 miles. Difficulty 2.5. Meet in the back parking lot of the Social Security office 2500 E. Cooley in Show Low at 7:45AM. Suggested ride-share is \$5.

\*China Express, 44 E White Mountain Blvd, Pinetop (White Mountain Village).

**TRACKS MEMBER WINS BIG**

*By Cathy Purvis*



Long-time member, Kathryn Melsted won first place in her age group at the recent Desert Leprechaun 5K run in Tucson. Most of us would be preparing ourselves for months prior to such a race, but not Kathy! She said she doesn’t do much running anymore. It’s all that TRACKS trail work, hiking and cross-country skiing that got her in shape for such a feat! Congratulations to Kathy. She’s an inspiration to us all! 🎉



**LEAVE NO TRACE**

From: [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org)

Last June, TRACKS was honored to be the Spotlight Event by the **Leave No Trace/Subaru Traveling Team**. The organization accomplishes its mission by providing innovative education, skills, research, and science to help people care for the outdoors. Since then, we have been reviewing the *Principles of Leave No Trace* in the newsletters to keep the information front and center to our members.

The *7 Principles of Leave No Trace* provide an easily understood framework of minimum impact practices for anyone visiting the outdoors. The principles can be applied anywhere — from remote wilderness areas to local parks and even in your backyard. Each principle covers a specific topic and provides detailed information to empower you to minimize your impact. To refresh our members’ memories, the principles that have been reviewed are: 1) Plan Ahead & Prepare; 2) Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces; 3) Dispose of Waste; and 4) Leave what you Find. 🗡️

**Principle 5: Minimize Campfire Impact**

Once necessary for cooking and warmth, campfires are steeped in history and tradition. Some people would not think of camping without a campfire, but do you really need one? You can have fun camping **WITHOUT A CAMPFIRE**, so think twice before building one. Campfires can cause lasting impact on the environment and potentially damage natural landscape. If you must have a fire and where permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. And keep fires small. A better alternative is to use a lightweight stove for cooking, enjoy a candle lantern for light and put another sweater for warmth. 🗡️

**SHOW LOW MOUNTAIN BIKE COURSE**

By Steve Dobbs

The City of Show Low has announced plans for a mountain bike race venue north of the city. It will be built focused on young people and mountain bike races. NICA (National Interscholastic Cycling Association) and the ACA (Arizona Cycling Association) are two important organizations for youth cycling in Arizona and can use this system for their races. These events will bring in people from all over the state and contribute to local economic development, as well as enrichment for our youth. Show Low is working with the United States Forest Service (USFS) to get approval to build the trail system. A professional trail builder has been used in the design stage and will be used again for construction. The Show Low North trail system will serve as an anchor point for the White Mountain Trail System (WMTS). Longer range plans are to build a trail to the east to connect with other trails such as the Timber Mesa and Panorama. To the west of the Show Low North project, the vision is to build a new connector trail under Highway 260 at Bagnal Wash. From there it would tie into the Los Caballos Trail. Though it will take years of planning and effort this would provide a system of continuous trails from Buena Vista to the Land of the Pioneers. 🗡️

**White Mountain Happenings**

- April 2 RAPTOR SHOWS RESTART Nature Center
- April 5 White Mountain Audubon Meeting at Nature Center
- April 6 Tillman Honor Run Woodland Lake Park
- April 6 WM Symphony Concert Show Low School Auditorium
- April 9 Conversations with Council Pinetop Coffee House
- April 13 Falcons of AZ Nature Center
- April 27 DEA National Rx Takeback Various Locations
- April 27 MLK Day of Service Fool Hollow Lake

For more information on the above events and other events that are happening in the White Mountains, please visit the respective website and/or Visitor Center for more information:

**White Mountain Nature Center:** [www.wmnature.org](http://www.wmnature.org)

**Pinetop/Lakeside:** <https://www.visitpinetoplakeside.com>

**Show Low Chamber of Commerce:** [www.showlowchamber.com/](http://www.showlowchamber.com/)

**Snowflake/Taylor Chamber of Commerce:**  
<https://snowflaketaylorchamber.org/calendar/>

**White Mountain Audubon Society:**  
<http://www.whitemountainaudubon.org/>

**White Mountain Apache Tribe:** <http://whitemountainapache.org/>

**Sunrise Ski Resort:** <https://www.sunriseskipark.com/>





**MLK JR DAY OF SERVICE 2024** *(Updated from previous version)*

Show Low is sponsoring a MLK Day of Service on **Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>**. The original location at Fool Hollow Lake Park has been cancelled and replaced with work on **The Show Low Bluff Trail**. We will **meet at the Show Low (SL) City Hall at 9 AM and work until noon**. TRACKS is bringing their tool trailer and some guidance on trail maintenance. We are expecting a lot of youth to help with the various projects. Please dress appropriately for service in pants, closed toe shoes, gloves, sunscreen and hat. Several projects are planned to include building drainage, removing rocks on the trail and trimming bushes. **Lunch will be provided** afterwards at the SL City Hall. We hope to see you there! 🇺🇸

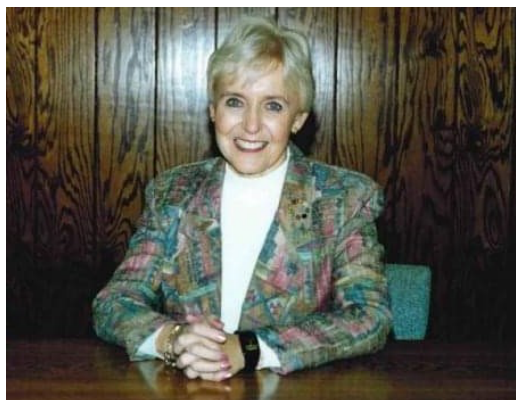
**We are very sad. TRACKS lost two dedicated members this year:**

**IN MEMORY OF PAT CALKINS** *By Kay Alderton*



**Pat Calkins** was a long-time member of TRACKS. She initiated the Up the Hill Gang hikes in 1995 at the prompting of John Vuolo, who was then Director of Parks and Recreation. She also worked on the trail crew and was active in Audubon. She knew her birds. Arthritis kept her from hiking the last few years. Pat moved to Tucson several years ago to escape the winters. Pat passed away in January 2024, but she left us with treasured memories. We will honor her contributions to TRACKS and the community by adding her name on the kiosk and planting a tree in our Memorial Arboretum behind the Nature Center. 🇺🇸

**IN MEMORY OFGINNY HANDORF** *By Lynn Krigbaum*



Ginny Handorf died March 16th in Mesa. She and her husband, Jerry, lived in Pinetop for many years and they were among the original members of TRACKS. Jerry actually planned the White Mountain Trail System as they were avid equestrians and the trails they rode were the gravel Forest Service roads. Ginny was Mayor of Pinetop-Lakeside and she was actually in office during the Rodeo-Chediski Fire. She was the voice of the Town especially on TV while we were evacuated. She was also the voice on the Trail of Many Tracks CD where she told much of the history of the area. She grew up in Ohio and was Miss Ohio “back in the day.” When she and Jerry moved to AZ she was active especially promoting Stage productions. Last August when TRACKS had a special meeting to honor early TRACKS Members, she and Jerry were not able to attend, but sent lovely flowers. She was a special person, who made a big impact to our community.

**APACHE SITGREAVES NATIONAL FOREST**

*By Stephanie Rainey*



My name is Stephanie Rainey. I am the Recreation Management Specialist for the Lakeside ranger district. I am the volunteer coordinator and liaison to volunteer groups. I also administer special use permits for outfitter guide permits and recreation permits such as the Tour of the White Mountains event. Other duties include managing and implementing recreation and trail plan objectives, applying for grants, participating in partnership meetings, and planning and presenting outreach activities. One of my favorite things to do on the job is patrolling the district and speaking to visitors. I enjoy sharing my 25 years of experience of traipsing around the forest in Lakeside to forest visitors in hopes of creating a fun and enjoyable outdoor experience for them. As a Forest Protection Officer, my role is to protect and conserve forest resources. To accomplish this, I work to educate the public about Forest Service rules and regulations in hopes of protecting our forest for future generations. One way we can all work together to protect our forest is to stay off wet trails until the trails dry out to avoid creating ruts and erosion. I look forward to working with TRACKS on trail maintenance and other projects. 🗣️

**TRACKS SCHEDULE**

GROUP	DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION / DETAILS
Trail Crew	Mondays, starting on April 1 <sup>st</sup> !	Trail Crew (TC). Beautify the Trails. Weather permitting.	To volunteer, subscribe and tick the checkbox for Trail Crew <a href="https://trackswhitemountains.org/about-contact/volunteer/">https://trackswhitemountains.org/about-contact/volunteer/</a>
Biking	Paused until spring/early summer		To receive biking information visit <a href="http://www.trackswhitemountains.org/subscribe">www.trackswhitemountains.org/subscribe</a> and tick the checkbox for Biking or email Suzanne Milligan at <a href="mailto:suzanne.milligan@yahoo.com">suzanne.milligan@yahoo.com</a>
Monday Mid-Morning Trailblazers	Beginning, May 6	Hikes of various distances and difficulty. See pages 2 and 3 for description.	To receive hiking information by email, tick the checkbox for hiking on the <a href="#">Become a member form</a> . For maps, newsletters, and additional information, please visit the TRACKS website: <a href="https://trackswhitemountains.org/">https://trackswhitemountains.org/</a>
Tuesday Trekkers	Beginning in June		
Up the Hill Gang	Beginning, May 1		
Mid-Morning Saturday Hikes	Beginning, May 4		
BOARD MEETING	Thursdays before the General Meeting at 1:00 PM April 11	TRACKS Board Meeting Members and visitors welcome	<b>New Location:</b> Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall, 325 W. White Mountain Blvd
GENERAL MEETING	Second Saturday of the month at 8 AM April 13	TRACKS General Meeting (visitors welcome)	<b>New Location:</b> Sal & Teresa’s on Woodland Road in Lakeside.