



Winter 2022



RVHA Board of Directors:

Carmela Lizzo .. President
Linda Vinson .. Vice President
Jenny Powers .. Secretary
Ruth Kaplan .. Treasurer

Directors:

Lori Bridwell Michael Miola
Kim Edwards
Terry Holmes-Stecyk

To contact the Board email info@rvha.us

Mission Statement: The Rio Verde Horsemen's Association is dedicated to protecting all horse properties, large and small facilities alike, and preserving horse privileges along with our rural lifestyle. The Association is committed to uniting our horse community in working toward these goals. Membership is open to all, horse owners and non-horse owners alike, who support our purpose. We are not a Homeowners Association, we do not restrict, regulate or police.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's been an interesting year, hasn't it?! Covid has changed the way we've lived since March 2020 and I think we're all hopeful that life will return to "normal" sometime soon. We miss our social events and are looking forward to being able to plan some outings and activities in the very near future. We were able to schedule our annual garage sale, a trail ride/tack sale and our roadside cleanups and appreciate everyone's participation in supporting those events.

We'd like to extend our deepest gratitude to former Board members Randy Goettsche and Judy Riley, our past treasurer. Judy had been on the Board for many years and was responsible for keeping our financials in order. Randy was a huge asset with his contributions to roadside cleanup and keeping us technologically up to date. We thank them for their continued support of the RVHA.

We'd also like to thank Ruth Kaplan for stepping up in her new role as RVHA treasurer. Ruth's background includes accounting and bookkeeping experience along with a love for horses as she competes in both local and national events. Mike Miola, of Silver Spurs Ranch, the largest privately owned breeding facility in the USA, is a great addition to the Board and brings a new perspective to the association with his expertise and experience in the horse industry.

There's been lots of changes in the hood, and many, many new homes and many new neighbors. We hope they join us in helping preserve our rural lifestyle. We encourage you to reach out and let them know about the RVHA and what we're all about – hopefully we'll get to see you all soon!

Carmela Lizzo

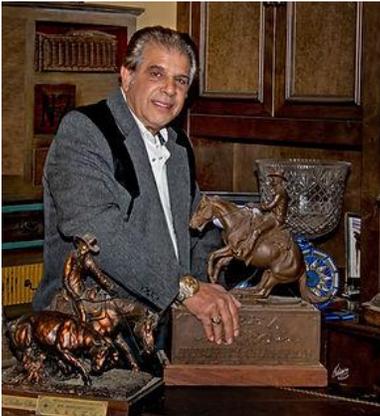


MEET THE NEWEST ADDITION TO THE RVHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:



In 2002, Michael and Michelle Miola and their children left New York and permanently relocated to Scottsdale, Arizona.

In 2004 Michael and Michelle decided to try their hand at breeding. They built a facility that would eventually house the finest breeding stallions - a place where every breeder could come, large or small, and be treated with kindness and respect. In December 2005, Silver Spurs Equine in Scottsdale, Arizona, became a reality. Silver Spurs is now the largest privately owned breeding facility in the USA.



Silver Spurs Equine's breeding program started around one stallion, the world famous NRHA Million Dollar Sire and Hall Of Fame Sire **Boomernic**.

In 2017 to truly compete in the prospect sale business and to finally own the most famous and highest producing living stallion in the history of the NRHA, the eternal Wimpy's Little Step, Silver Spurs purchased Xtra Quarter Horses, now called - Silver Spurs, Oklahoma.



From day one Silver Spur's ranch manager has been Brett Stone, the 1992 Futurity Champion who, on the immortal Boomernic, singlehandedly ushered in the modern era of reining. Today, Brett manages all ranch operations.

Silver Spurs has 37 of the finest stallions in the sports of Reining, Working Cow, Barrel Racing, and Quarter Horse Racing.

Silver Spurs breeds all of its famous stallions to special hand-picked mares offering the finest weanling and yearling prospects in the reining industry.

In the interest of letting you all know what sort of heart Michael and Michelle have, we want to let you know of their recent acquisition of recipient mares for their breeding operation here in Rio Verde Foothills. They went to a kill pen and purchased 40+ mares that would otherwise have faced an uncertain future at best. Those mares are now ensconced as valued members of the Silvers Spurs family. Welcome to the neighborhood, ladies.

We welcome Mike to the RVHA Board of Directors and look forward to his participation in helping us fulfill our goals of preserving and protecting our rural environment.

TIRED OF DODGING POTHOLES ON RIO VERDE DRIVE?

By Mike Oster, Area Awareness Committee



Despite occasional minor pothole repairs, the eastbound lane of Rio Verde Drive between 128th and 136th continues to deteriorate. Hitting these craters promotes tire and suspension damage, and fuels the potential to suddenly swerve away from them and into something worse.

If you would like to see this fixed, you can request that the City properly repair this hazardous condition. Open the notification form—

<https://eservices.scottsdaleaz.gov/ez/Request/Submit?code=Pavement01#detailsAndLoc>

In the **Description** box, you may inform them—

1. 'This section of City street has many recurring potholes that require sudden maneuvers to avoid.
2. It continues to damage tires and suspension and is an unsafe condition. The minor repairs to this roadway have been insufficient to address these issues. Please properly repair or replace this hazardous roadway.

In the **Location** box, advise that this is in regards to:

'The eastbound roadway on Rio Verde Drive between 128th & 136th.'

After you provide your contact info on the following page, you will receive a confirmation that your request has been made.

If enough of us ask this be addressed, perhaps we can get a road as nice as the new adjacent bike lane!

COMMERCIAL REZONING UPDATE

From Carmela Lizzo

According to one of the principals with Park West Partners, the proposed commercial development that was being considered at 174th Street and Rio Verde Drive is currently on hold due to the water situation in the Foothills. They have not submitted an application to the County for rezoning as they have been told by Maricopa County that until the water issue is resolved, the Board of Supervisors will not consider putting the rezoning case on the Board's meeting agenda.

SOUTHWEST WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CENTER VOLUNTEER WINS \$60,000 TO BENEFIT WILDLIFE!

By Jenny Powers



Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center volunteer Diane Vaszily *won* the Cox Conserves Heroes Award 2021 through an extensive voting and sharing process on social media!

Winning the Western nomination awarded Diane \$10,000 to gift to Southwest Wildlife. Then, this incredible community of wildlife lovers near and far banded together and voted, emailed, and shared with friends to Vote for Diane. Your efforts paid off. Diane will receive an additional \$50,000 to save our wildlife, one life at a time.

Diane Vaszily is a proactive community member who enthusiastically volunteers with two area nonprofits dedicated to conservation and environmental education. As a conservation center volunteer, she serves as a docent, education curriculum writer and mentor for new volunteers. She created a field program at the local park and secured a grant to transport local students to a hands-on education program, formed a team to author a children's book about desert animals, and leads a team that provides public seminars and classes for other nonprofits.

The Cox Conserves Heroes awards program is how Cox Enterprises and The Trust for Public Land honor the unsung heroes in our communities, as well as support the local organizations doing the important work of improving our environment. The program is designed to inspire more people to take an active role in community conservation. To date, the national Cox Conserves Heroes program has donated over \$1.1 million to environmental nonprofits and honored more than 200 volunteers. Part of the Cox Enterprises' national Cox Conserves sustainability program, Cox Conserves Heroes awards volunteers for their actions nationwide. Thank you to every single person who voted, and to everyone who cares for wildlife in their communities. This award will create such positive impact in the lives of animals - and people - in Rio Verde Foothills and beyond.

Southwest Wildlife offers educational programs onsite at the sanctuary in Rio Verde Foothills. [Click here](#) for information on some of the programs offered.

Rattlesnakes and Spring in the Rio Verde Foothills

From Rattlesnake Solutions



Lately, I've been to multiple homes to catch rattlesnakes in garages. That's normal and right on time. Which brings up the topic: when do rattlesnakes start moving again, and what should homeowners expect? Here's a quick summary of our predictions, based on 11 years of relocation hotline activity:

Early February: Rattlesnakes will start to "stage", or move closer to the entrance of, their winter dens. We will start to receive calls to remove small groups of rattlesnakes from garages, storage closets, sheds, and other out-of-the-way structures. Rattlesnake removal calls will frequently be multiple animals.

Late February: Rattlesnakes will start to appear out in the open near their selected dens. Garage removals will be more common. However, there will be an increase of calls to pool pumps, courtyards, and homes with rip rap and rock pile erosion control.



Early March: Snakes will start to make short movements from dens to hunt, drink, and engage in social behavior. They will be highly visible on the surface with peak activity occurring mid-morning before returning to the den or other nearby staging area. Mating activity is high, and multiple snake removal calls will be common.

Late March: Rattlesnake sightings will become common as they leave dens entirely. Peak activity will be between 3pm and 5pm.

April: Very high rattlesnake activity and sightings will be common. At this point they have entirely left the dens and sightings are more likely to be random encounters.

Other good rattlesnake safety stuff to keep in mind:

1. Don't worry. This is totally normal, even February sightings (don't listen to the local news about "coming out early" stories).
2. If you're a hiker or outdoorsy type, you're still not likely to see a rattlesnake in February. Be more watchful and aware in March, however.
3. Now is the best time to get to any maintenance or prevention activities you have on your to-do list. Landscaping, debris removal, fixing the snake fence, having the dog trained ... get it done before the snakes show up.
4. Rattlesnakes often den in the garage. If you are using these last mild-weather days to get to "that" side of the garage, use extra caution.

Spotlight on Wildlife: Spock



Here's someone you perhaps have never met: Spock the Bobcat. The oldest bobcat at Southwest Wildlife, this silver stoic is loved by all who care for him.



When he was young, a dog attacked him in Casa Grande. Southwest Wildlife rescuers were called in and able to save his life! He sustained injuries to his hind legs, and surgery required him to lose several digits on his back foot causing a slight limp that still persists.

Bobcats are typically solitary creatures, but the habituated group of six on the tour route happily cohabitate in their enclosure. Spock can often be seen sunbathing in the back of the enclosure, preferring to hide from tour crowds (which we respect and encourage!). Sometimes when it's cold, Rocket and Catalina (the youngest bobcats) snuggle up and nap alongside him.



Because of your support, Southwest Wildlife not only releases over 70% of the animals rescued, but also is able to care for those few who would not survive on their own.

We can never thank you enough.

MEET YOUR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Get to know your Rural Metro Fire Fighters, Station 826



This is the first article of its kind to introduce you to each one of us. Every Fire Fighter has an interesting story to share and we look forward to meeting you. We will also include a "Safety Note"

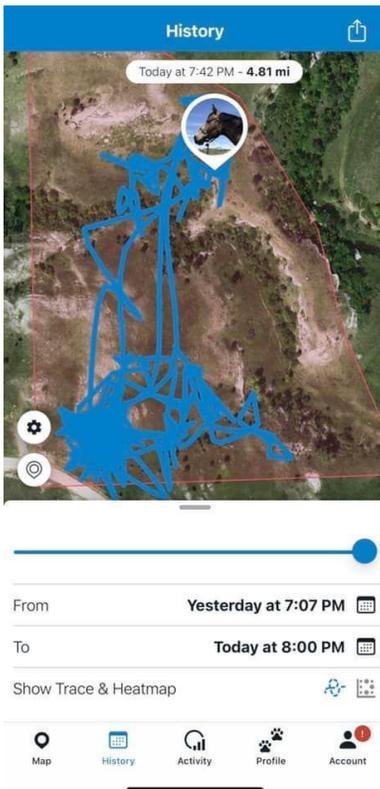
Please come by to say hello

Andrew Huxtable, Captain Paramedic

Hi, I am "Hux" and very happy to be here in Rio Verde Foothills. I attended the University of Arizona in Tucson and graduated with a degree in Chemical Engineering with minors in Chemistry, Biochemistry, and Mathematics. While in school and immediately after I raced in Cycling and Triathlon and shortly after went back to school to work as a Physician Substitute. I realized the type of service that I desired had to be dynamic to combine my interests.

Fire was it! I have been with Rural Metro Fire Department since 1997; I have been a member, trainer, and coordinator for our Special Operations. This includes Hazardous Materials, Advanced HazMat Life Support, and Technical Rescue.

I have a ranch in Queen Creek with goats and chickens, and recently donated 2 beautiful healthy horses. My wife and I are planning to expand our garden and create an orchard of fruit trees. We have 4 wonderful children; we are so thankful.



USING GPS TRACKERS ON YOUR HORSES

By Terry Holmes-Stecyk

Have you thought about using a GPS Tracker when ponying a younger horse or participating in an endurance or trail ride? We have all seen the lost horse posts on social media, some have taken months to find their horse, tragically another is still missing. I saw this posted on Facebook and thought, hmmm. Might be an easy safety measure, just in case of an unscheduled dismount.

Edited content from a social media post: How far do you think your horses travel in a day when out on pasture and they're not being ridden? A friend put a GPS Tracker on her horse (one that's meant to go on a dog's collar) so he's easier to find when out in her big pasture and so she'd know immediately if he broke through the fence somewhere. She found on average he travels 5 miles per day when on the 15 acre pasture and around 8 miles per day in a 120 acre pasture.

The device she used was a Tractive GPS for dogs. Let's hope it's never needed.

Happy trails!

TRUE CRIME IN THE RIO VERDE FOOTHILLS!

By Mike Oster, Area Awareness Committee

Tired of the well-meaning but unhelpful postings on local social media?

My all-time favorite is, "This car drove by my house at 3 a.m. Does anyone know who it is?"

Want to know what's *really* happening in our neighborhood? Open the LexusNexus **Community Crime Map**—

<https://communitycrimemap.com>



Enter your address in the box at the upper left. The site will take you to a map of our area with icons for recent crimes reported by official local agencies.

For example, clicking on the image of a car near 138th and Dove Valley tells us it was stolen vehicle on March 10th.

If you wish to be notified as events occur, click on the "Sign Up for Crime Alerts" box at the upper right of the screen.

You are now qualified to apply for your Junior G-Man Badge!

GRAND OPENING OF THE PIMA/DYNAMITE TRAILHEAD

By Jenny Powers



On Saturday November 13, the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve officially opened the Pima/Dynamite Trailhead, the 12th and final trailhead in the Preserve. The knowledge and experience gained in the construction of the previous 11 trailheads were applied to the design of this newest location and the construction reflects the respect for the environment and a focus on education and engagement of visitors. The Grand Opening featured the dedication of the educational amphitheater in honor of Dr. Arthur W. Cabooter in recognition of his 15 years as the founding chair of Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission and his role as catalyst, as he brought divergent passions and perspectives into productive discussions in the movement to "Save the McDowells."

The McDowell Sonoran Preserve is the largest urban preserve in North America and sets the standard for education, research, and community involvement. The Preserve covers one third of the Scottsdale city limits as open space and is dedicated to the preservation of the archeology, geology, and diverse flora and fauna of the desert environment. The Preserve covers over 30,000 acres and is cared for by 700 stewards involved in education, research and public engagement.

The Pima/Dynamite Trailhead features seasonal interpretive signs to adjust to what is happening throughout the year in the Preserve. The Trailhead features a dedicated horse trailer parking area with 16 spaces, a covered ramada with table and benches; trail suggestion signage with photos of typical trail terrain; a dedicated trail to access popular equestrian trails avoiding the congestion of the main building; and a separate trail to the side of the building to access restrooms and where horses can be tied safely out of the way hikers and bikers.

The main building contains the amphitheater for education events, orientation, and gatherings; restrooms; offices and storage spaces. There are benches to sit and enjoy the outstanding views and signage to assist in selecting trails for hiking or biking depending on ability and length of time one wishes to spend in the Preserve. Pathfinder stewards are knowledgeable and available to advise and assist visitors at all the Preserve trailheads.

GRAND OPENING OF THE PIMA/DYNAMITE TRAILHEAD Cont.



The Preserve offers guided hikes and bike rides from easy/beginner levels to more extreme fitness hikes and challenging technical bike rides and mountain bike skills clinics. Sonoran Sundays at the Gateway Trailhead offer educational programs for children with fun and informative presentations and hands-on experiences often including close-up encounters with desert insects and animals. Printed guides are available at the trailheads or on the website at McDowellSonoran.org/events for more information.

We are fortunate to have the Preserve neighboring our community. Take advantage of this opportunity to enjoy and learn about our desert environment and be sure to respect the Preserve during rainy periods to avoid damaging trails.

FUN CACTUS FACTS!

By Carmela Lizzo

Cactus Fact #1: The Thorns are Actually Spines

What we commonly refer to as thorns in the cactus are actually spines: real organs of the plant, namely leaves. At least that's how it used to be. In the course of evolution, spines have developed from this, which ensure the cacti survive even under the most extreme living conditions.



Cactus Fact #2: The Spines are Weapons, Sun Protection, Drinking Straw and Coat

In their barren habitats, cacti would literally be found food for animals. Their spines prevent this. But they can do a lot more - they reflect sunlight and thus protect the plant from sunburn. On the other hand, they keep out the cold on icy nights. Clouds of mist condense on the spines to form water, which the cactus can then absorb. They also get caught in the fur of animals that pass by. Elsewhere they fall out, and a new cactus can grow, which helps with the propagation.

Cactus Fact #3: Cacti are Musical

At least their spines. The largest specimens were previously used as gramophone needles.



Cactus Fact #4: You Can Eat Them

You can get the orange-red fruits of the prickly pear from the genus *Opuntia* in every delicatessen store. But the green parts of the plant

FUN CACTUS FACTS! Cont.



are also edible. Steamed or fried, they become a sour, tasty vegetable. The oldest cactus cultivation in the world, which has existed in Erfurt since 1685, shows what can be conjured up from the thorny plants and put on the table.

Cactus Fact #5: One Can Get Intoxicated with Them

The Native Americans discovered 3,000 years ago that some species of cactus were intoxicating. They chewed pieces of the plants, believing they were closer to the gods. The best known is certainly the peyote cactus, which contains mescaline. In 1896 Louis Lewin examined the peyote cactus and was able to extract a substance called “anhalonin”. Around that same time, Arthur Heffter was able to isolate the pure substance mescaline. Ernst Späth achieved the first total synthesis in 1919. With this he laid the basis for the synthetic production of the intoxicant. Since 1971 it has been declared illegal worldwide by the UN Convention. In the USA, mescaline possession is imprisonment for up to five years.



Cactus Fact #6: You Can't Drink It

The idea that a cactus can quench thirst in the desert came from the pen of adventure writers. All you find when you cut open a cactus is a thick gel that you can't drink. Extracting water from it on site is just as impossible as trying to extract water from a shower gel.

Cactus Fact #7: You Can Make Furniture Out of Them

Parts of the cacti can become woody over time. Column cacti in particular form large woody segments. This cactus wood has many advantages - it has no knotholes, it grew very straight. Due to its fiber structure, which is interspersed with cavities, it is flexible and yet very stable.

FROM OUR RECIPE FILES

By Linda Vinson

Ever wish for a desert that is a chocolate chip cheesecake surrounded by chocolate cake? Who hasn't? The chocolate cake part on it's own is a crowd pleaser and is lightening quick to make

Chocolate Surprise Cake

This has been a favorite in our family for at least three generations partly because you don't have to cream any butter or shortening, you just mix the dry ingredients, stir in the wet ingredients, mix and bake. Easy peaseie! Heat oven to 350 degrees.

White cake part:

1 8oz package of cream cheese	1/8 t. salt
1 egg	6oz chocolate chips
1/3 c sugar	



Bring cream cheese to room temperature, cream the cheese and add the above ingredients and beat well. Set aside.

Chocolate cake part:

1 ½ cup flour	1 cup water
1 cup sugar	1/3 cup vegetable oil
¼ cup cocoa	1 T. vinegar
1 t. baking soda	1 t. vanilla
½ t. salt	

Combine the dry ingredients and mix well. Add the wet ingredients and mix thoroughly.

Put the chocolate portion of the cake into a greased and floured Bundt pan or divide into cupcake tins. Put a heaping tablespoon of the white part of the cake into each cupcake tin or in a ring into the Bundt pan.

Bake cupcakes for 30 – 35 minutes. Bake Bundt cake for 50 – 55 minutes.