



# NEWSLETTER

of the

## FRIENDS OF ROCKHOUND STATE PARK

April  
May  
June  
2011

### THE POWER OF FOR

*Yep, I stirred the pot with everything I could!* MaryKay Brady replied when asked if she had a role in the tremendous public response to the proposed Rockhound State Park Management Plan. One of the controversial issues was that the new plan would no longer allow rock-hounding within the park.

Immediately after the Draft Management Plan was released in mid-March, MaryKay sent dozens of emails and made phone calls. Among those contacted were Matt Robinson at the *Headlight*, Candee Sweetser at KOTS Radio, Mayor Silva, County Manager John Sutherland, Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Mary Galbraith, Dona Irwin State Representative, Deming Gem & Mineral. All members of **Friends of Rockhound State Park (FOR)** were sent a copy of the document and asked to send responses to the powers that be.

The Deming headlight published articles complete with photos of families enjoying rock collecting, they also printed letters-to-the-editor from **FOR** members asking valid questions, such

as how the sparse Rockhound State Park staff could enforce such rulings.

**FOR** received pages and pages of e-mails from folks all over the nation. County commissioner Ruben Diaz said he received so many e-mails it overflowed his system at the courthouse.

Approximately 100 **FOR** members and interested citizens attended the March 29 meeting for Public review of the management plan. State Park representatives commented than in meetings such as this in other State Parks, only a handful of folks might attend. After the meeting State Cabinet Secretary for EMNRD, John Bemis, said he was impressed with the Friends of Rockhound organization overall, and was quoted as saying that Rockhound was his "favorite park"

On April 14, Luna County Board of County Commissioners Resolution No. 11-24 was passed, urging New Mexico State Parks Division to adopt in its 5-year Management Plan that Rockhound State Park "continues to allow rock-hounding in the Park."

Concerned people continued to send comments to Santa Fe. Gene Jercinovic furnished a complete list of 275 plant species documented in Rockhound State

Park and Spring Canyon. On April 18, public comments were closed and compiled. Ranger Robert Apodaca received a copy of the revised plan and returned his comments in May. Finally, on June 16, Secretary Bemis wrote; "The process has never slowed down here because the group had a due diligence ... that requires digesting all the comments and the meeting info and considering them and integrating where necessary in the new plan. The good news is the system works--I have the new plan on my desk and I am going through it now."

Secretary Bemis signed the new management plan on June 17 and it is now available to the public. Below is a summary of some of the major changes.

To all of you who helped give a voice to our unique Rockhound State Park and to keep rock-hounding in Rockhound, MaryKay Brady says:

*It appears quite clear that lay folks CAN make a difference and I thank each and every person who helped in this fight.*

Removed from the plan

- Reference to land management zones page 13
- Reference to park resources (rockhounding) page 24
- Reference to plants commonly seen page 15
- Budget number chart was replaced with pie charts
- Botanical inventory and protection of rare plants
- Park name change was removed entirely



- To create and establish rules to better manage rock collecting
- To create improvements for education, safety and resource protection
- To develop educational programs and materials related to rock collecting
- To determine the land management zones within the park.

Added to the plan



# MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

## April 27 Meeting

The Board of Directors is complete once more. The office of secretary had been vacant since Shelley Perkins resigned in January. The board welcomed Veronika Barnes as our new secretary. Veronika has been a member of FOR since its formation, and has been the organizer of the Music in the Parks programs.

It was announced that The Deming Chamber has printed 10,000 membership directories. Friends purchased an ad for \$260.00, which shows prominently in the publication.

\* \* \*

Our speaker for April was Val Sena who presented a fascinating history of the Civil War in New Mexico. His presentation included maps and detailed accounts of battles fought here.



### **Our Officers**

Board Member MaryKay Brady, Secretary Veronika Barnes, President Art Vasquez, Board Member Nancy Grinnell, Vice President Sally Allen, Treasurer Donna Whitten  
*Not pictured: Board Member Jim Hazelton and Board member at Large Derek Brady*



The meeting was followed with a presentation by Laura Simmons of NM Raptors. She had a full house, including a class of school children from a private school in Deming. Laura shared three of her raptors with us, including a Great Horned Owl named Naru, which means "night" in Swahili, as well as Aeolus, her Turkey Vulture, and Cree, her Swainson's Hawk. Laura and her beautiful birds of prey are always an audience favorite!

One of the audience members wrote:  
*I just wanted to let you know that the program this a.m. was great. I, and my granddaughter, really enjoyed it. She was a terrific speaker, funny, great interaction and very informative.*

## June 29 Meeting

Robert displayed a copy of the new Management Plan Draft (see p.1)

\* \* \*

It is always such informative fun when Rink Somerday of the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park is our presenter! In spite of technical difficulties, she gave a great description of the Chihuahuan Desert creatures, plants and dangers. We passed around a live & quite intimidating vinegaroon. (NO it doesn't jump!)



## May 25 Meeting

Walmart presented Friends of Rockhound with a check for \$500. Thank you, Art and Brenda, for pursuing this grant money! It will help greatly toward Music in the Park expenses.

The Chamber of Commerce will be incorporating its monthly newsletter into the Deming Headlight. MaryKay reported that she and Sally made an executive decision to place a Friends of Rockhound ad, on a 6-month trial basis, for \$35 per month..

# HAPPENINGS

## Plant Sale

The Friends of Rockhound April 9 plant sale was a great success. It grossed approximately \$6000. On Thursday 23 folks were on hand to unload the truck (It actually arrived early!) The day of the sale 23 FOR volunteers helped.

There were 150 or so leftover plants which were made available for sale at the Home & Garden Show in Deming on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Special thanks to Shelley Perkins who loaded them in her van and kept retrieving them for customers at the Rockhound booth inside the center!

Of the 150 native plants available for sale 38 were left at end of day. Eventually all but 25 plants were sold. Later MaryKay adopted these 25 for a Country Club Estates project and gave a donation of \$50 to Friends.

At the HomeShow Friends of Rockhound State Park, Inc. was represented by 20 members as well as half a dozen Deming Garden Club members. The booth had some great handouts--Xeriscape, Xeriscape 101, Tips for Gardening in NM along with bookmarks and note pads provided by the Luna County Cooperative Extension office and NMSU. Children were gifted with the Dr Carol Sutherland "Let's Color Some Insects" along with a box of crayons. Another boost was 2 new members and one renewal by a Best Friend. There was lots of interest in our brochure and labyrinth as well.

Between the Desert Alive! and Native Plant sale about \$3,000 profit was earned.

We are already planning for next years event, and have decided to have Fall sale, too!

Friends of Rockhound State Park, Inc.  
FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE  
**Accepting orders**

**Thursday: 8/18, 8/25, 9/1**  
9-11 a m Luna County Extension office  
210B Poplar Street 575 546 8806

### **Sales Prices**

1 gallon size mostly \$6  
5 gallon size mostly \$16

### **Pickup orders**

Saturday, September 24th  
Rockhound State Park  
8:00 a m to noon

Coffee and homemade goodies will be available for purchase also.

Sale benefits Friends of Rockhound State Park, Inc., a public benefit Nonprofit 501 C3 New Mexico Corporation

## FOR Helps Head Start

Head Start had pre-ordered 36 plants at a 10% discount. April 14 found MaryKay and Jerry Owens helping the dozen or so Head Start folks planting at the site.

The Head Start Program sent certificates of appreciation to MaryKay Brady and Jerry Owens for their guidance and efforts in planting the native garden at their facility. The certificates were awarded at April's general meeting.

## School Children Visit Rockhound

The school field trips, with 62 Memorial Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup>-graders on May 6<sup>th</sup>, and 75 Ruben Torres 4<sup>th</sup>-graders on May 13<sup>th</sup> were a great success. The children were divided into groups and visited seven different stations. David Shephard, Charlene LeMaster helped with owl pellets; Barb Hansen did rocks and geology; Cheryl Fontane and Deb Gwin led hikes and labyrinth tours while Art and Robert did animal tracks and a scavenger hunt in the visitor center.

A hectic time, but the kids were energetic and just great. Thanks to all the volunteers!



# EVENTS



**Music in the Park**  
FRIENDS OF ROCKHOUND  
MUSIC IN THE PARK SCHEDULE 2011  
(ALWAYS THIRD SAT, MAY THRU AUGUST)  
FREE! DONATIONS WELCOME!

ALL PROGRAMS ARE FROM 6 – 8 PM, ROCKHOUND STATE PARK, GROUP SHELTER IN CAMPING AREA. BRING A CHAIR.  
REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE. (IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER, WE WILL MEET IN THE BUILDING BEHIND THE VISITOR CENTER)

SAT, JULY 16: Mike Moutoux, "The Enchanting Cowboy." Cowboy songs and poetry. Truly an enchanting entertainer!  
SAT, AUG 20: Raised by Wolves. July McClure and Willy Jones. C/W and lots of other fun stuff.

QUESTIONS??? Contact Veronika at [verchab@netzero.net](mailto:verchab@netzero.net)  
PHONE: 575-543-8344

## MARIACHI PERFORMANCE

SEPTEMBER 17

Mariachi Corazon del Desierto will be performing for us in September. The group is made up of former Deming High School students who are now pursuing various degree programs in music at NMSU.

There will also be folklorico dancers



This event is co-sponsored by First New Mexico Bank with liability insurance provided by the Deming Lions Club.

## Memorable Music in the Park

The Music in the Park performances for both May and June were a **huge** success!

On May 21, 54 folks enjoyed Floyd Utterback's return engagement (he was our very first Music in the Park performer!) It turned into quite a sing-a-long. There were many teary eyes as the crowd stood and sang God Bless America as the final number. Cheryl Fontane and Jackie Rankin of Angel Wings Catering served their yummy home-made salsa and chips...what a treat!

The June 18 concert featured The Canfields, a very accomplished husband/wife duo who now make their home in Columbus. They entertained us with musical stylings of classic country, western, mountain and more. The backdrop of the brilliant red-orange sky made the performance even more memorable. Sadly, the intense colors were a result of recent forest fires in Arizona.

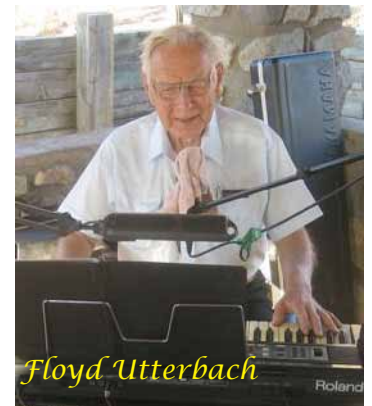
Ron Wolfe was taking photos and Scotty McKennon was taping the June event for the Chamber of Commerce and TDC (Tourist Development Committee)



Cheryl & Jackie  
Angel Wings



The Canfields



Floyd Utterbach

# PROGRAMS FOR JULY, AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

## July 27 PICNIC

No program this month, just a great picnic with a Mexican buffet from Amigo's. (It's just too hot to grill!)

**11:30 A.M.** All Friends members, volunteers and Park employees are invited to attend our yearly "Thank you" picnic at the Group Shelter at Rockhound State Park.

For dessert, we will have a Big "Thank you" cake for all the help everyone has put forth over the year to make us the best Friends group in the state.

Friends will provide water, lemonade and Coors light--if guests want anything else it is BYOB



Please RSVP to MaryKay by July 22  
546-1931 or email [jmranch@gmail.com](mailto:jmranch@gmail.com)

## August 31 Gene Jercinovic

### *Desolate to Some: Desert Plant Curiosities & Strategies*

See and hold the 9 pound root of one of our familiar desert plants, watch time lapse photos of a "dead" fern rejuvenate with a drop of water. Gene, who is a botanist, botanical historian, and member of FOR will share a Powerpoint presentation highlighting some of the remarkable survival techniques and adaptations of our desert plants.

## September 28 Sonny Hale Rock-Art Hound

Sonny Hale, from near Hillsboro is a real character, almost folk hero. Sonny Hale hunts New Mexico's petroglyphs and pictographs with his camera. He was featured in an award-winning documentary entitled *In Place Out of Time*.

*"Since his quixotic quest began in the late 1990s, the self-taught photographer has captured over 4,300 images of Native American rock art. His collection includes a remarkable array of designs painted, chipped or scraped upon stone surfaces centuries ago throughout southern New Mexico"* (Excerpt from Desert Exposure Magazine, March 2010)  
He is sure to have some of his amazing work to display or sell.

## RANGER ROBERT'S REPORT

- Robert reports that fire restrictions in the park have been in effect since April.

- Our new full-time Park Technician, Carlos Tafoya, was hired and came on board on May 14. Carlos is a Deming native! He has a background in landscaping and previously had a business with heavy equipment. Carlos was chosen over 32 applicants, eleven of whom interviewed for the position.

- The park's seasonal hire is Jeff Montes.

- The crew is focusing on renovation. After the harsh winter, many dead cacti and other plants have to be cleaned up.

- The Polaris utility vehicle finally had repairs done at The Power Center in Las Cruces. Final cost: \$658.28. (No local repair source available.)

- Rockhound's camping occupancy has been at 112%, and it is hoped that the new management plan includes expansion of certain facilities and increased camping space.

- June 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Rockhound State Park hosted the Unified Archers Tournament. Approximately 50 participants competed in Spring Canyon. Events like this require a special use permit and bring in extra revenue.

Friends of Rockhound State Park, Inc. meets on the last Wednesday of the month.

Board Meeting 9:00 AM

General Meeting 10:00 AM

Program 10:15 AM

Programs are free to the public.

3005 Driver Rd SE  
Deming, NM 88030-7314  
Phone: 575-546-1931

Friends of Rockhound State Park, Inc.  
is a non-profit 501-C3 New Mexico Corporation

We're on the web:  
[www.friendsofrochound.org](http://www.friendsofrochound.org)

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

|                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Art Vasquez     | President             |
| Sally Allen     | Vice President        |
| Veronika Barnes | Secretary             |
| Donna Whitten   | Treasurer             |
| MaryKay Brady   | Board Member          |
| Nancy Grinnell  | Board Member          |
| Jim Hazelton    | Board Member          |
| Derek Brady     | Board Member at Large |

#### CHAIRPERSONS

|                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Entertainment Program | Veronika Barnes |
| Publicity             | Carol Wootton   |
| Newsletter            | Sally Allen     |
|                       | Betty Griffin   |

#### MEMBERS AND SPONSORS

Friend \$25

**Greg Scarpella & Sandy Zalecki**

Good Friend \$50

**Enchanted Tea Room**

**Skip & Pat Sherman**

**Princess & Delbert Thompson**

**Ron & Sue Wolfe**

Best Friend \$100

**Baca's Funeral Chapels**

**Three Chips Construction**

**Tinley Tee Tire Company**

Bill & Sally Allen

Jeanne Marie Banderet

Charles & Veronika Barnes

Phil Barrett

Leslie & Mary Bass

Derek & Katha Brady

MaryKay Brady

Ellis & Shirley Breckenridge

Betsy & Wayne Clark

Kevin & Lori Coleman

John & Marilyn Cornfoot

Tom & Sherrill Davis

Eugene "Roscoe" Dorriere

Peter & Polly Edmunds

Nan & Donald Fitzgerald

Robert & Patricia Floyd  
Cheryl Fontane & Joe Sena  
Larry & Joan Foster  
David & Marilyn Goble  
Tom & Hazel Gonzales  
Greg & Nancy Grinnell  
Bob & Barb Hanson  
Gary & Nancy Hawthorne  
Jess Hays & Debbie Gwin  
Jim & Sandy Hazelton  
Craig & Russ Howell  
Gene Jercinovic & Betty Griffin  
Charlene & Dale LeMaster  
Gary & June Loudon  
Connie Martin & John Sutherland  
Sam & Sally Ann Miller  
Gustavo & Frances Morales  
Pamela A Morgan  
Ric & Linda Morgan-O'Connor  
David & Judy Mueller  
Helen Noury & Dan Ryan  
Julie & Armand Orban  
Jerry Owens  
Lee & Sharon Pattison  
Ellen Pelton  
Shelley & Perk Perkins  
Gene & Joyce Peterson  
Jim & Jackie Rankin  
Robert & Gayla Rochambeau  
Keith & Mary Schwarzer  
David & Ruth Shephard  
Jack Smith & Janet StCyr  
Ruth Smith  
Jimm Thomas & Barbara O'Leary-Thomas  
Floyd & Janice Utterback  
Art & Brenda Vasquez  
Pete & Mickey Vincken  
W. Lowell White  
Donna Whitten  
Will (Wayland) & Marty Willis  
Peggy Wion  
Dick & Carol Wootton

#### Honorary Members

All park volunteers

#### Park Staff

Robert Apodaca  
Art Benevidez  
Carlos Tafoya  
Jeff Montes (seasonal)



#### NEWSLETTER NEWS

You've probably already noticed that the name of our newsletter has been changed to **Newsletter of the Friends of Rockhound State Park**. This was to eliminate any confusion with the unrelated yearly Rockhound Roundup event.

*The Logo in our new header was designed by Debbie Gwin. Thanks, Deb!*

The big news is that beginning with our next issue, we will publish the newsletter electronically. It will be available early October. This decision will save Friends of Rockhound about \$400 per year in printing costs and postage. We hope to have the newsletter in a pdf file (easy to print your own copy!) on the FOR website. Members will be sent an email with a direct link to the newsletter. Postcards would continue to be mailed in a monthly fashion.

If you do not have access to email or the Internet, just let us know and we'll be glad to send you a copy the traditional way.

*Do you have suggestions, comments, corrections or an article you wish printed in the Newsletter?*

Contact Betty: [betgrif42@gmail.com](mailto:betgrif42@gmail.com)

#### We have lost one of our Friends.

**Keith Smith** died April 23rd. His widow is Ruth, his wife of 55 years. Both he and Ruth have always been active contributors to our group. They were always great help at the Easter Egg Hunts and Bluegrass Festivals--their favorite Friends events as well as greeters at Holiday Lights. He will be missed.

We have retired his name tag with a copy of the Headlight obituary in the Friends scrapbook.