

the **RED ROCK RAG**

Volume 18 #1
Summer, 2016



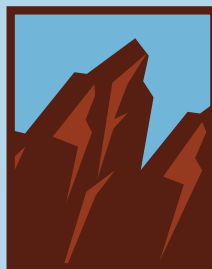
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FRIENDS OF

**RED ROCK
CANYON**

Reflecting Back *by David Schell*

I was sitting at a spot in Red Rock Canyon recently admiring the view. The water was still on the ponds except for a couple ducks paddling around the smaller pond. The red rocks towering above the pond reflected perfectly in the water. What an incredible place I thought, everything seemed perfect and just as it should be. And I had just left home less than 20 minutes ago. I couldn't help but think of the changes to the Canyon in just the last few years. Just three years ago Friends of Red Rock Canyon and the City had a celebration commemorating the 10 year anniversary of the opening of Red Rock Canyon open space to the public. The event was held at the Pavilion. The public was invited and we had help celebrating with a live band, Native American musicians and dancers, cake and punch. The Mayor was there and other dignitaries. Certificates of thanks were awarded to the many people who had so much to do with saving Red Rock Canyon from development and opening it to the public. We were still in a drought and all that was left

of the small pond at the pavilion was a murky large puddle. It looked quite sad. The larger pond had completely dried up years before. In fact Friends of Red Rock Canyon had been on a fund raising effort for a couple years to raise \$100,000 to fix and fill the small pond, the large pond was to be engineered to not hold water again. The Ceremony opened with a prayer by Native American "Eddie Three Eagles" and he ended the prayer with a "Blessing" he placed upon the parched, dry land. I can't say for sure it had anything to do with it but Mother Nature provided an epic drought breaking storm just a few weeks later bringing 10 inches of rain in just 3 days to the land. The ponds filled to the brim, more full and beautiful than they had ever been!

Since then the extensive damage caused by that epic deluge have been repaired, several new and wonderful trails have been built, the wildlife has returned and Red Rock Canyon is healed and whole. Better than ever!

www.redrockcanyonopenspace.org

Talk and Walks: Outdoor Education is happening in the Canyon

Invasive Plants

Jenine Ebersohl, with the help of Jan Malvern, are volunteers with El Paso County Community Services Department, Environmental Division - Forestry and Noxious Weeds. They presented on Invasive plants and native flora in Red Rock Canyon on Wednesday, July 27th. Their Talk and Walk started with a hands on demonstration of some local plants followed with an informative hike in Red Rock Canyon. They referred to the newest edition (updated 2016), El Paso County, Noxious Weeds and Control Methods, a short book with great pictures covering common invasive plants in our area. Everyone on the hike received their own copy of this resource.



Our presenters with Invasive Plants, Jenine Ebersohl (middle) and Jan Malvern (right)

Geology

The next evening Sharon Milito, who has worked in the open space for some years and really knows the geology of Red Rock Canyon, presented. She referred to a book called Ancient Denver, which greatly illustrated the life that



Sharon Milito talking about the Fountain formation

was once found in the various rock layers. Hard to imagine all the plants and animals that can be found with the fossils found in each of the stratigraphic section of rock. The out crops of rocks in Red Rock Canyon are usually found in the layers under the ground east of here, but are exposed here simply by Pikes Peak (granite) pushing upward. This pushing up of the Pikes

Peak granite works to expose the layers rocks which had been laid down over time, leaving a geologic history of the past. The oldest layers, starting with the Fountain formation (closest to the Pikes Peak Granite), are found at the western edge of the open space. As one heads eastward, the rock layers become younger in age. Many times we hear geologist say, you can see more different layers in the Red Rock Canyon open space hiking around, otherwise to see that many layers elsewhere you would need a car.



A fledgling raptor perched on top of the Fountain formation. Our best guess is it's a young red tailed hawk.

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The group hiked at least a couple of miles as Sharon pointed out features in the rocks, like the Lyons formation once made by wind and sand which still even looks like sand dunes today. The hike ended by the Codell Trail with a discussion about collecting fossils and rocks, which is illegal in Red Rock Canyon Open Space.

Sharon Milito, Don Ellis, and Ken Weissenburger authors of the book; *Geologic Folio, Red Rock Canyon Open Space, Colorado Springs, Colorado*.

Leave No Trace Talk and Walk

Thursday, August 11, 2016

Red Rock Canyon Open Space Pavilion

We heard LNT (Leave No Trace) workshops should be offered with our Talk and Walks educational series in Red Rock Canyon. Susan Jarvis-Weber with Friends of the Peak, presented the Basic - Leave No Trace awareness class. The Basic 7 principles were presented and discussed in depth. Much was common sense, but more was given on the reasons behind such rules, as; no camping near a body of water (especially a high mountain lake). Most of us believed it is only the risk of pollution, but more it can seriously affect the local wildlife. Camping close to the water could easily keep a deer, raccoon and other animals from a drink, possibly even longer, for days. A second workshop at the intermediate level is planned for next Thursday, August 11th. Some topic options with LNT include but are not limited to are:

Colorado Plateau - unique landscape concerns (intermediate), Preparing for Front country, Back country, Wilderness Hiking (intermediate), Recreational impact on declining ecosystem (intermediate), and LNT for the outdoor workplace{Trail workdays} (advanced). One focus of this Talk and Walk will be the ecological impacts on Red Rock Canyon Open Space.

The book, is offered for sale at the Old Colorado City Historical Center on 24th and Pikes Peak Avenue. OCCCHS has given a percentage of its proceeds from the sale of the book, to the Friends of Red Rock Canyon (thanks to one of the authors).



Doing a scavenger hunt based on the 7 Basic Principles, Susan Jarvis-Weber with the help of Antoinette help those on the hike.

Talk and Walks are announced to begin with, only by our Friends of Red Rock Canyon email list. If you know of others who might be interested in joining us, please share this email information with them. They can also sign up to receive these emails at our website by going to the bottom of our home page:

<http://redrockcanyonopenspace.org>

Light refreshments will be provided.

Please RSVP, as space is limited, via the Friends of Red Rock Canyon at friends@redrockcanyonopenspace.org (simply replying) or call David at 685-4792.

New Challenges for Mountain Bikers in RRCOS

Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, a local biking trail advocacy nonprofit volunteer group, has completed a new expert bike trail in Red Rock Canyon called the Upper Codell Trail. It is an extension of the popular Codell Trail, where all the marine fossils are on the East side of the park. It takes off west from the Lower Hogback Trail just after the southern junction of the lower Codell Trail. This new section heads east across the Hogback Valley trail where it meanders back to join the last section that climbs just under the hogback to gain the saddle above the dump.

The Upper Codell trail is very rocky and narrow with enough exposure to keep you paying attention if you are on a bike. Not many riders have been able to go up the trail without putting their feet down. There is some risk so be careful.

It was built using a combination of a paid contractor using a small bulldozer and hundreds of hours of volunteer hand labor. Countless large rocks were moved and positioned to make the upper portion stable and challenging.

It is a multi-use and bi-directional trail, so while it is popular with riders, it also provides a great additional option for hikers and runners on the East side. Hikers and bikers will find it a challenge to pass each other on this new narrow trail. Hikers and runners should pay attention to who is coming down. Dog walkers should keep their dogs on a short leash.

It is a unique trail in our Red Rock Canyon and Medicine Wheel deserves a big THANK YOU!

Stewardship in our Parks *by John Stark, Park Ranger Supervisor*

Summer 2016 has been a very exciting time for Colorado Springs Regional Parks. A new stewardship initiative began this summer and we have hired six Conservation Technicians and Park Rangers to provide an increased presence, maintenance, data collection, habitat restoration, trail work, interpretive programming and outreach. Work is performed at Red Rock Canyon along with other TOPS properties including Blodgett Peak, Bluestem Prairie, the Incline, Stratton, University Park and Ute Valley.

Some of the projects completed in Red Rock Canyon so far include GPS mapping of all existing rogue trails, data collection of various noxious weeds, dog waste data collection, multiple rogue trail closures, landscaping and trail pruning. More staff presence also allows for more contact with the public and opportunities to provide education about park rules and resources.

Additionally, Park Rangers are leading interpretive programs on weekends until the end of summer focusing on various themes including cultural history, geology and noxious weeds. If you are interested in attending a program be on the lookout for signs posted in the parking lots on days programs are being offered or visit the City of Colorado Springs Regional Parks, Trails and Open Space Facebook page for meetup information.

Conservation Technicians and Park Rangers are working collaboratively to promote stewardship of our amazing parklands and natural resources. If you see them out in the parks take the opportunity to say hello and meet some of these passionate outdoor professionals.

Fossil Brewing Company Supports the Friends of Red Rock Canyon

Fossil Brewing Company, in their support of the Friends of Red Rock Canyon, gave \$1509 upon the completion of their sales of their Evolution Ale: Generation 3 in 2014. Each beer sold had 25% of the profits going to the Friends. The base recipe for Evolution Ale: Generation 3 features toasted malt and caramel character. The third generation featured vanilla beans and cherries with an ABV:5.6 % and an IBU:23.



Some of our Board receiving the check from Josh Bye, Co-Founder and Head Brewer, with Fossil Brewing Company.

Fossil Brewery's Evolution Ale Series is one of the ways they give back and get the community involved in the brewery. For each generation, ballots are given to everyone that comes in and gets a beer. The ballots include 4 ingredients to pick from to add to the current beer as well as a



choice of a local charity to donate part of the profits to. After 2 generations the ingredient will be retired from the beer.

Once a month (usually the third Thursday) Fossil has an event called **Talk Nerdy to Me**. Each talk is given by a local expert and the topics can vary from fossils to brewing microbiology to ancient cultures. The talks are around 30 minutes. They recommend getting to the tasting room early because it quickly fills up to standing room only.

Fossil Brewery has 8 taps – one is a non-alcoholic ginger ale made from scratch and the rest are beer. Their flagship beers are: Megalodon Blonde, Mammoth IPA, Evolution Ale, and Stone Age Stout. Other smaller batch beers are rotated on the other taps, usually tapping those small batches on Thursdays.

They are currently open:
Wednesday-Friday from 2:00-10:00,
Saturdays from 12:00-10:00 and
Sundays from 11:00-7:00.

If people want to know what they're tapping or upcoming talks/events, they can visit www.fossilbrewing.com. They are also on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and have a monthly newsletter that they send out as well. Fossil Brewery can be found near Red Rock Canyon, just south of Highway 24 by 31st Street, just east of Rudy's Restaurant (2845 Ore Mill Road, Unit 1).

Bristol Karma Hour

Bristol Brewery hosted a Karma Hour for the Friends of Red Rock Canyon on Tuesday, April 26th. A dollar for every pint sold that evening went to us, totaling \$115. The evening was well spent planning trail work and education programs for the Friends for the summer.



RRC Major Trail Improvements Workday

Sunday, August 14, 2016
8 AM to 1 PM

Manitou Trail Cats will be working with Friends of Red Rock Canyon to rebuild the second turn on the East Fork Trail.

Manitou CATS does Trail maintenance the second Sunday of every month.

The trails need our help, so come out and volunteer.

For more information and volunteer registration go to

www.Manitoucats.com



November Landslide

The rock slide pictured to the left was off the Red Rock Canyon Trail. Though not large in size, the height of the rock fall looks to be somewhere around 60 to 70 feet from the canyon floor. Note the white scratches left from the rocks falling.

Dog off Leash Tickets

The city is enforcing the law that dogs must be on leashes in RRC (except in the designated area) with tickets that amount to \$50 per dog. Officers may be on bikes.

Gazette Recognizes Friends

The Out There section of the Gazette recognized the Friends in their article "Here are 16 wonderful outdoor pursuits to explore in the year ahead." Number 12 was "Take a guided hike at Red Rock Canyon Open Space". The Friends of Red Rock Canyon do offer guided hikes through the Educational Series of Talk and Walks. Many were delayed this past summer with the closure of Red Rock Canyon due to flood damage, but several were offered in August and September. We hope to continue with our

Educational Series this year. If you are interested in a certain topic to cover, or know of someone (even you) who would be interested in presenting, please share with us by either calling David at 685-4792 or emailing us at

friends@redrockcanyonopenspace.org

Please let anyone know that might be interested in doing our Talk and Walks, they are announced primarily on our email list and website for reservations. Thanks!

Membership Form for Friends of Red Rock Canyon

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ Work Phone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Newsletter Delivery Preference: Via email (full-color, recommended) ☐ Via postal mail ☐

☐ Yes, I want to join Friends of Red Rock Canyon for the coming year

☐ Individual/Family membership (\$15) ☐ Organization / Business membership (\$30)

☐ I would like to help even more with a contribution of \$ _____.

☐ I would like to be involved in volunteer efforts Please describe your interest:

Please mail this membership for
with your check to:

Friends of Red Rock Canyon

PO Box 6754

Colorado Springs, CO 80904-6754

Note: Should you want to pay by credit card, go to
our website:

www.RedRockCanyonOpenSpace.org

(Friends of Red Rock Canyon is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
organization. Contributions are tax deductible.)

Board Meetings are held at the Westside Community Center, at 1628 West Bijou Street, on the
second Monday of each month beginning at 6:30pm.

Trail Work With the Board

Join the Board of Directors of FoRRC and
friends as we do repairs around our Open
Space park.

We work from 4:45 PM to about 7:30 PM
then go to have dinner and refreshments.
It is great fun to make a positive
difference and spend time with good
people. We meet at the gate of the picnic
area parking lot.

Our next work evenings are

- Thursday, August 18
- Thursday, September 15
- Thursday, October 20

Join us!



The Red Rock Rag

Friends of Red Rock Canyon
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RENEWAL DATE**

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It's hard to believe it's been a year since Red Rock Canyon Open Space was mostly closed due to a dam breach. The city and partners worked very hard to get our park safe and back open. Many partners including Rocky Mountain Field Institute, SoCoVelo, VOC, Medecine Wheel, Pikes Peak Climber's Alliance and Friends of the Peak have worked to repair flood and storm damage, clear trail corridor, repair the BMX area, pull invasive weeds and create sustainable access to parts of the park. Section 16 was the recipient of a State Trails Grant and will see work on existing trails, as well as new

connectors and the closure of some renegade trails. RMFI has recently been awarded an Environmental Stewardship grant to help the City on larger RRC projects, and our own board is participating with volunteers to dedicate at least one evening a month as crew leaders to tackle some projects that just don't seem to otherwise get done.

You may notice the old trash and recycling bins have left our parking areas. This was because the City determined both that the general public was abusing them for their residential recycling needs as well

as to change the pickup contract. Though this may make it slightly less convenient than before to dispose of trash, we still would like to encourage our members and users of RRC to please take some time to pick up a piece of trash that you might encounter on your walk and pack it out. While one piece of garbage in our large park may seem like a drop in the bucket, hundreds of instances of doing this, pulling trailside toadflax and mullen, or even picking up dog poop while on your walk will go a long way in keeping Red Rock Canyon beautiful well into the future.



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