

The Verdes Volunteers Tonto National Forest Work Day- February 27, 2016

As many of you are aware, volunteers living in the Verdes communities work with the Tonto Nation Forest, Cave Creek Ranger District throughout the year. Their final work day of this season was on Saturday, Feb 27th. Crews split into two teams to accomplish all the tasks; one team worked on the new parking lot at the end of Box Bar Road, removing vegetation to prepare for the leveling and surfacing of the parking lot for horse trailers.



Cutters and Choppers (left to right: Paul Hofmann, Scott Thiss, Bill Otteson, Diane Newcomb, Roger Miller, Rod Muilenburg, Birdie Pasenelli)

The second team completed the restoration plantings and watered the new plants that have been transplanted over the past few months.



Planters and Waterers (left to right Denise Madaline, Jim Urban, Gail von Drasek, Dick Heisler, Jan Gruel, John Burke, Mary O'Sullivan, Diane Spang)

The Forest Service presented awards to the group and several individuals for their service at a luncheon that Pamm Torrance, one of our volunteers, prepared and hosted for the group. The Verdes' Neighborhood Partnership was awarded a Certificate of Excellence in recognition of 3 years of outstanding volunteer service, assisting with multiple events, including trash pickups, forest restoration and two large scale pipe rail projects for the Cave Creek Ranger Station.



Volunteers Birdie Pasenelli, Rod Muilenburg and Diane Newcomb we presented with certificates for their efforts in specialized areas.



Eric Norman, Recreation Assistant with Cave Creek Ranger District, presenting a Certificate of Excellence to Rod Muilenburg.

The Forest Service expressed their gratitude for the volunteers' service and dedication. They said many other districts are jealous of the great group of volunteers the Verdes has and even asked if some of the volunteers would like to venture out into other areas, further from the community, to help with other projects.

As has been done in the past, cleanup days are scheduled for Box Bar and Needle Rock Beaches on the Mondays after Easter (March 28th) and after Memorial Day (May 31st). Volunteers are welcome to help us pick up trash to prevent it from blowing into the forest and river, contact Diane Newcomb at dnewcomb1957@cox.net.

Plans for next year are being discussed and include helping the National Forest build a picnic area in the center of the big parking lot at Box Bar after it is graded and doing work in the area of Box Bar Beach and Needle Rock picnic areas.