

WINKELMAN NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

June, 2016

PO Box 486, Kearny, AZ 85137 WNRCD.org

From the Frog Pond by Bill Dunn

Just heard that long time cooperator and really good man, Stan Yoder has passed away. We send our heartfelt condolences to Stan's wife, Molly and family. Stan and Molly both have been on the District's Ed Center committee for many years.

As you read this letter, your district will have made a FEMA grant application through the State Forestry to clean up the river bottom that burned last summer around Kearny. The grant will also allow us to clear some defensible fire-space up and down the river. If you have property along the Gila, San Pedro or Aravaipa, we will be putting out a call soon to see if you need help with that. We hope to begin work by this fall. The grant will be for around a quarter of a million dollars with the District and partners contributing another nearly quarter million. We have been talking to The Upper Gila Watershed Alliance to grow locally adapted plants to replace some of the salt cedar we will be eliminating on approximately 160 acres around Kearny. Our plan is to hire the State Forestry's Inmate Wildland crews to do the hand clearing that will have to be done on a lot of the other properties up and down the river. Hopefully, this project will be the impetus for other groups to join with us and make a major effort to clean the salt cedar from the river. It is a highly invasive species that consumes a lot of our precious water. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is requiring consultation to remove it because it has become habitat for the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. As the drought drags on, there might come a time pretty soon when we will have to choose between water and protecting habitat. I don't think it should come to that choice, for there is

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Frog Pond, Bill Dunn	1
Supervisor Gary Vinson Bio	2
Moving on Down the Trail	3
ASU Landscape Architecture Design Studio	4
BLM's Planning 2.0 Rule	5
News Briefs	5
Mark Your Calendar	6

plenty of middle ground to have both, but with our polarized society today, the battle lines are being drawn.

The District's Resource Management Center (RMC) this year has paid for 10 local students to attend CAC Aravaipa's College for Kids at \$210 per student. It also is sending one of our local teachers to Ag In The Classroom training this summer. It is an outstanding continuing education course that gives teachers a much better understanding of where our food comes from and help him/her teach that to their students. The RMC also sponsored 3 field trips for Ray Elementary grades (1-3) and also will send students to Natural Resources Camp for Arizona Youth this July.

The Legislature is out of session now. They passed and the Governor signed a bill that defines the powers and duties of the Ed Centers. Some of our Rural Ed Centers have had a hard time getting their local schools to let them in to help provide science-based, natural resource education. As a consequence, these monies are not being used. The new legislative authorities include sponsoring scientific research and publishing scientific literature.

(Continued on Page 2)

From the Frog Pond (Continued from Page 1)

This would include things like this district's Best Management Practices For Grazing in Sonoran Desert Tortoise Habitat and our Plant Identification Guides.

The Water Protection Fund was saved from being axed this year and was appropriated \$250,000. Quite a bit lower than what we had asked for but happy that it isn't gone. I found it interesting that a program that is beginning to do a lot of good conservation work around the state to eliminate invasive species and restore grasslands was opposed by the Sierra Club. Another instance of our polarized society, I think.

The Arizona Association of Conservation Districts summer meeting will celebrate 75 years of locally led conservation and will be held on August 9 thru 11 at the Twin Arrows Casino and Resort east of Flagstaff. This summer meeting's theme will be forest health to go along with the grand partnership it is putting together with BLM, NRCS, AGFD, Arizona State Forestry and hopefully several others by then. This partnership will go into priority areas around the state for the next several years doing landscape scale conservation work through the local conservation districts. Each year large amounts of money will be spent in an area them move to another. We have commitments for the next five years and as the partnership expands hopefully it will grow in size and timeframe. Winkelman will have its turn in 2 or 3 years. We have our priority concerns identified and will be ready when the money gets here.

Anyway, if you have an interest in attending the Summer Meeting, let us know. The Ed Center has money for cooperator education to help with the fees.

Until next time.



Meet Your Supervisor, Gary Vinson & his wife, Megan

Serving as a supervisor for the past 7 years, Gary was born in Raton, New Mexico on November 24, 1982. He was raised on the Willow Springs ranch, working on the Goff ranch during high school. He attended college at ASU, working at the family A Diamond Ranch during the school year and at the Cottonwood Ranch in Nevada during the summers. He received a Bachelors in Agribusiness (Range Management) in 2004 and a Masters (Ecological Restoration) in 2006. Currently, Gary manages the A Diamond and Dripping Springs (acquired in 2014)

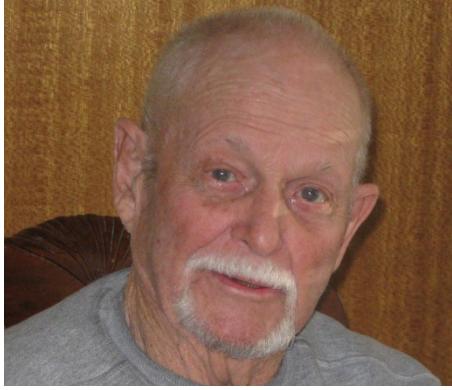
While Megan was attending Central Arizona College, Gary met Megan thru her cousin in Kearny and working at Buzzy's. She obtained her Bachelors (Education) from NAU and teaches elementary school in Kearny. Gary and Megan were married on May 30, 2015 and just had a baby girl, Genevieve (7 lbs 4 oz) on May 17. Congratulations to the growing Vinson family.

Movin on Down the Trail



Ralph Stone Wilson passed away Sunday, August 31, 2015. He was surrounded by his family on the ranch he owned and operated. He was 74 years young. Ralph was born in Tucson, Arizona. He lived his younger years at Rancho Linda Vista, when it was operated by his grandparents, George H. Wilson and his wife, Carlotta, his father, Boyd M. Wilson and his uncle, Tomas H. Wilson. Ralph used to say "Live everyday as if it were your last...because someday you will be right." Ralph put his blood sweat and tears into what he loved, his family, his ranch, Falcon Valley and his cattle. He would have given the shirt off his back for a friend in need. He is survived by his wife, Nancy Jan Fritz Wilson; his daughter, Jennifer Hudson Wilson and his son, James

He influenced us all to never stop searching the skies above for rain headed our way. He will be missed more than the sun misses the sky at night. The cowboy way is to see life as a journey not a destination. You never want to end up at your grave without having been able to shout "What a ride!". As Dad would say...."Adios" .Published in the Arizona Daily Star on Sept. 27, 2015.



Mick Johnson, WWII POW, Bronze Star & Purple Heart recipient
by Chris Postel, WNRCD Clerk & WNRCD Cooperator

On June 22, my step-dad passed away unexpectedly, he was 95. He moved to Kearny in 1959 and worked at Kennecott until his medical retirement in 1979. After my dad died in 1967, my mom married Mick in 1969.

In 1941, he joined Morris-Knudsen as a construction worker on Wake Island. On December 8, 1941, the Japanese attacked Wake, Mick was shot and bayoneted during the battle. He was a POW for 44 months.

Graveside services will be on July 11 at 9 a.m., Mountain View Memorial Gardens, 7900 E. Main, Mesa, AZ. Following the service, a reception will be held at the Golden Corral, 1318 N Cooper Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85233, at 10 a.m. Later in the afternoon (July 11), a potluck-celebration-happy hour will start about 4 pm at the Kearny GKI.

In lieu of flowers, please make your checks payable to: Chris Postel (Mick Johnson on check bottom) and take to RayFCU or mail to: Chris Postel, PO Box 296, Kearny AZ 85137. These funds will be used to: create a Veteran Memorial (individual pictures/bios) in the Kearny Library and purchase books, supplies, furniture, shelves, etc. for the library. He was a great supporter of the library, read 5 books/week. Below is a link to the last of 5 articles on his POW experience that appeared in the Copper Basin newspaper last fall.

<http://www.copperarea.com/pages/mik-johnson-coming-home/>



ASU Landscape Architecture Design Studio Students & Reviewers

The Winkelman NRCD would like to thank Dr. Chingwen Cheng and her senior design students for all of their work on the Gila River Restoration & Recreation Study/Plan for Kearny, AZ. Based on input from Kearny area residents and other stakeholders (Asarco, Arizona State Forestry, etc), they have developed a restoration and recreation plan/vision. The District submitted a FEMA grant application to create a defensible fire space around the Kearny area. Per the plan, this fire space will also be utilized as nature trails and access points to the planned recreation corridor while encouraging growth of native species of trees and plants. This plan will be used to support future grant applications.

Three meetings were held to define requirements and discuss the potential plans. The final student presentations were conducted on April 28 by Dr. Cheng and her students at ASU. Once their final report is completed, Dr. Cheng has volunteered to continue to be involved in the refinement and implementation of the plan.

In terms of background information, the Town of Kearny experienced a fire (man-made Kearny River Fire) on June 17, 2015 that consumed over 1400 acres along the Gila River watershed. In July, 2013, the Shipman Fire burned over 500 acres but nothing was done by the Federal or State agencies to restore the land. Now, the Arizona State Forestry department recognizes that the watershed area from Mammoth to Kelvin (5 miles south of Kearny) is one of the highest risk fire areas in Arizona. Also, over 50 percent of migrating birds that travel into the United States come north along the San Pedro River watershed. This bird habitat needs to be preserved. In addition, work on the project needs to be scheduled when endangered species like the Willow Flycatcher and the Yellow-billed Cuckoo are not in our area. Copper Basin articles regarding the project are below

<http://www.copperarea.com/pages/wnrcd-meets-in-kearny/>
<http://www.copperarea.com/pages/asu-herberger-institute-facilitates-planning-kearny/>
<http://www.copperarea.com/pages/final-review-asu-kearny-project/>

BLM PLANNING 2.0" RULE

What is BLM (Bureau of Land Management) Planning 2.0?

The BLM is engaged in rewriting the regulations and policies that apply to the use of public lands. This effort is called "Planning 2.0." and is intended to implement recent presidential and secretarial orders and agency guidance documents. It will override existing law, and substitute a centralized planning and management approach that marginalizes the roles of States and local governments.

BLM's Proposed Land Use Planning Regulations

The centerpiece of Planning 2.0 are new BLM, proposed rules that will govern how public land is managed. The Proposed Rules will implement Interior Department and agency guidance on climate change, "landscape-scale" management, mitigation, adaptive management, and other recent pronouncements. This guidance was issued without notice or public involvement. Most critically, the Proposed Rules would significantly reduce the role of coordination and involvement of State and local governments in land use planning and management.

Coalition 2.0

Organized by the American Stewards of Liberty, 37 local & county governments and conservation districts, including the Winkelman NRCD, have joined this Coalition to protect local control and decision-making and private land ownership. We believe that a large group of like-minded local governments coming together to oppose the revision will send a powerful message to the Agency as well as elected leaders in Washington DC. The purpose is to develop a strategy for preparation of a robust and comprehensive set of comments that will substantiate the reasons these rules cannot be approved. These comments would insist that the agency withdraw the rules, and if not, to challenge their implementation in court. Link to Stewards of Liberty Briefing paper:

<https://www.americanstewards.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Briefing-Paper-2.0.pdf>

News Briefs

Election/Supervisor Update: Bill Dunn was elected to the open supervisor position and was reappointed by the Board as chairman. Gary Vinson and Carol DuBois were nominated for the two appointed supervisor positions.

Tonto National Forest Plan Revision: They are still working on the Forest Revision Plan, focusing on Wilderness and Recreation. The District will be scheduling a meeting to ask questions about how the Plan is consistent with our concerns and policies.

Local Workgroup: A meeting was held on April 11 and a follow-up meeting needs to be scheduled. The meeting notes were sent to the attendees asking them to prioritize resource concerns, which then will be used to create projects.

Kearny River Fire Project: If you want to participate in the removal of salt cedar from your property, please send an email to: clerk.wnrcd@gmail.com. Funding for this would be from the FEMA grant that was discussed in the Frog Pond.



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Loans - Auto (GAP Insurance Available), Signature, Debt Consolidation, Mortgages

Services - ATMs (Kearny, Hayden), Notary, Money Orders, Cashier Checks, ACH Origination, Wires

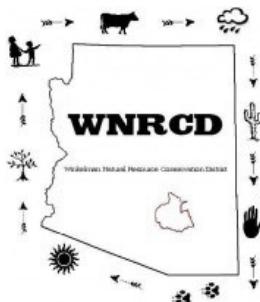
Mark Your Calendar

WNRCD Quarterly meeting on Jul 20 at 10 am, General Kearny Inn

Kearny River Fire Initiative on July 20 at 1:30 pm, General Kearny Inn

Arizona Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) Annual Summer Meeting on August 9-11

Lower San Pedro Initiative - Need to schedule a meeting in August



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