

RIDE FOR THE SALT RIVER WILD HORSES



Ride For the Salt River Wild Horses is a family-friendly event that serves as a fundraiser and awareness rally on behalf of the historic wild horses of the Lower Salt River. This year, the event took place on Saturday January 28. Admission was free & the gathering was open to the public. Everyone is welcome to come out & learn about these iconic animals. Thank you to our friend Skeeter, event coordinator for this gathering, for her help with this article.

Sign-in for this unescorted ride took place at American Legion Post 58, 16837 E Parkview Ave in Fountain Hills. The scenic route took riders out Hwy 87 to where the wild horses call home ~ through the Lower Salt River on Bush Highway in the Tonto National Forest. Stops included 2 well-known gathering spots ... Butcher Jones Beach and Coon Bluff. Active volunteers from the Salt River Wild Horse Management Group were available at those locations to answer questions about the Wild Horses. The overall ride was roughly 40 miles and 1.5 hours with the stops.

Last stop was at Superstition Harley-Davidson 2910 W. Apache Trail Apache Junction, with activities from 11a-4pm. There were educational & fundraising booths on behalf of the SRWHMG. Numerous vendors were set up ~ including event sponsor Law Tigers; plus Bar H Designs yard creations, Clip Man, Discount Biker Supply, Girl Scout Troop 1651 was selling GS cookies, Maximized Living health Screenings, Perfectly Posh, and Super Shox. There were food vendors and a booth for face painting and airbrush temporary tattoos, and others with

jewelry ~ some sparkly { :o } & some made of leather ~ neat.

The band 'Mojo Rats' performed & did a good job. A lot of people who were there enjoyed their music. The 'Born to be Wild' song was a hit with the Salt River Wild Horses volunteers.

We met Larry Stimeling, an interesting fellow who is a Viet Nam Veteran & photographer. He's used photographing these Wild Horses as his PTSD therapy. He has created 2 books dedicated to the Salt River Wild Horses. "Horses of Butcher Jones" contains 200+ photos that he has taken of the horses over time. "Diamond - Free and Wild" is about a horse who was born in the wild but not long after sustained a life-threatening injury. The Salt River Wild Horse Management Group rescued Diamond, brought him back to health and found him a home when it was determined he would not be able to return to the wild. Both of these books are available through Amazon.com, with proceeds going to the Salt River Wild Horse Management Group.

There was an extensive collection of raffle items ~ two long tables full.

The Original 13 MC donated \$100 to the cause, with a pledge to support the SRWHMG going forward. Very cool.

We learned from Skeeter that there were 200 riders; with over 400 participants at Superstition H-D. The day raised \$3247 for the SRWHMG. These monies are used for awareness & education campaigns, road signs, medical care for rescued founs, permits and/or licenses, tools & supplies to maintain fences & clean up trash, birth control programs, science & research projects, & more. This is entirely

a volunteer organization. No one gets paid. Every penny donated gets used directly on behalf of the horses.

She sent along thanks to Law Tigers, Superstition H-D, Brina Brown - promotions and events coordinator @ SH-D, Mojo Rats, BioART face painting & temp tattoos, Clip Man, & Discount Biker Supply for their support. Skeeter followed with this, "Thank you to our sponsors and Rider Magazines for supporting the Salt River Wild Horses... Bob Moellman Law Tigers, James Moore Biker Information Guide, Justin B. Umbs, Brina Brown Superstition Harley-Davidson, Betsy & Bruce Newkirk from <http://azridersouthwest.com/>, Marion Richter Cartland @ Arizona Veterans Connection, John Schwab - Commander at American Legion Post 58 Fountain Hills, John Weedo - President for the American Legion Riders Post 58, Ken Couture - American Legion District 12 Representative, Shannon Lorance & Mike McFadden of <http://aztrailriding.com>, and the Apache Junction Mounted Rangers <http://www.ajmountedrangers.org/>."

The Salt River Wild Horse Management Group (SRWHMG) is an Arizona 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting, monitoring, studying, and - when necessary, rescuing the Salt River wild horses. Donations are tax deductible. Learn more about this organization and how you can get involved at <http://saltriverwildhorsemanagement-group.org>, to help these beautiful animals stay PROTECTED, WILD & FREE!

Betsy & Bruce
Add'l photos from Skeeter

