

Portal Rescue News

February 2005

Portal Rescue, Inc., P.O. Box 16331, Portal, AZ 85632
Emergency Number: 520-558-2222
Non-emergency: 520-558-2206; Fax: 520-558-2473

State of the Organization Report

By Tom Hays, President

I am proud of Portal Rescue! Both the community and the members of Portal Rescue have the right to be proud of this organization. We have seen it grow from a handful of founders and a single vehicle with buckets and tools in the back to a well-equipped and well-trained force.

The Fire Department's current equipment and manpower include:

- * One structure fire engine;
- * One heavy-duty and one-light duty wildfire off-road vehicle;
- * Two water tenders with capacities of 1,500 and 2,000 gallons respectively (i.e., our portable fire hydrants);
- * One water trailer for wildfire use; and
- * Nineteen trained firefighters.

This year, under the leadership of our proactive Chief, Dennis McAvoy, Portal Rescue began accumulating a good collection of bunker gear and SCBA packs for structural firefighting. And, for the first time, Portal firefighters are being trained and certified in structural firefighting.

Also this year, three water storage tanks were donated to Portal (see "Fire Chief's Report" on this page). Between the two water tenders and the new storage capacity, Portal is almost ready to approach the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) to amend our community's rating from our current 9 to an 8.

If the ISO grants this rating, local residents' home insurance rates could drop by up to 15% depending on their insurance company.
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Fire Chief's Report

By Dennis McAvoy, Fire Chief

Portal Rescue's fire division significantly improved its fire readiness in 2004 by adding crucial vehicles and obtaining water storage equipment.

For the first time Portal Rescue acquired a brand-new vehicle, a 2004 Kenworth water tender.

In addition, Phelps Dodge donated from its dismantled Playas Smelter a 34,000-gallon tank -- which has been installed next to the Portal Rescue building -- and a 19,000-gallon water tank (see related story, p. 11). Last year I fabricated a steel frame on my property to hold the smaller of those tanks.

When the Tucson company Marco Crane was here for a job with the Forest Service, it donated its service set the 19,000 gallon tank on its new frame. It also donated a 16,000-gallon tank and installed it on Portal firefighter Jeff Gee's property.

In January, Portal Rescue volunteers took
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EMS Chief's Report

By Jeff Gee, EMS Chief

As EMT Chief, I make the same statement every year in the annual newsletter: Portal Rescue needs more emergency medical technicians (EMTs)! Well, the future is looking better, because at this point I have a list of about 10 possible students for EMT training.
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Mark Your Calendars for The 2005 Annual Meeting

Residents of Portal, you have a vote -- so use it! The 2005 Portal Rescue Annual Meeting will be held March 8, 2005 at 7 p.m. at the Portal Rescue Building. Residents who are not members of Portal Rescue will nominate and elect four community members to the board. Portal Rescue is YOUR organization, and this is a crucial way to participate in its operation!

Portal firefighters and EMTs will nominate and elect their respective chiefs and also nominate and elect three other active members of the organization to the board. A quorum of each department (i.e., a majority of current members) must vote in order to elect the chiefs.

Once the board members have been elected, they vote to elect the organization's president, vice president, secretary and treasurer.

This is important. See you there! ☀

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Why Does Portal Rescue Need A New Building?

By Doug Julian, Board Member

The disastrous fire season two summers ago illustrated to every community in the Southwest how critical it is to have an effective array of firefighting vehicles.

Since that time, Portal Rescue has taken advantage of a 90/10 Federal Emergency Management Agency grant (i.e., the agency provides 90% and the community provides 10% of the funds) to obtain a new 2,000-gallon water tanker. In addition, through donations and trades we also added a first-class brush truck to our fleet.

Both units are essential for firefighting in the area, and both replace old, second-hand vehicles. As a result, the Portal Rescue fleet now consists of six vehicles, including the rescue vehicle.

We were also given several sets of turnout gear for fighting structure fires, and we have trained firefighters so that they can enter burning homes to rescue inhabitants and fight fires inside.

It is imperative that we protect all of our vehicles and equipment from the sun, freezing temperatures, and pack rats. The latter quickly invade the engine compartments of vehicles left outdoors, building nests and chewing wires and hoses. Only a secure garage will provide this level of protection; however, our current building has space for only two of our six vehicles.

To date, this situation has forced Portal Rescue to house four vehicles off site, which makes it difficult to gather our resources in a timely manner when responding to a fire.

The Portal Rescue Board of Directors formed a Building Committee consisting of Doug Julian, Dan Rehurek, Jeff Gee, Dennis McAvoy, and Pi Irwin. This committee developed plans for the building, contacted suppliers, and determined costs. Rene and Delane Blondeau agreed to head up the Fundraising Committee.

Thanks to their intensive fundraising efforts (see story, p. 3), we have reached our building fund goal! ☀

Fundraiser for New Building a Huge Success

By Rene Blondeau, Board Member

Nearly 150 property owners in Portal Rescue's service area opened their wallets to help build a garage for our new firefighting vehicles. In just over two months, we attained our goal of \$40,000 in donations for the new building, with several pledges still pending.

What a wonderful community response! We asked and you gave. But we couldn't have done it without our 10 fundraising teams who reached out by phone, letter, or personal contact to ask you to donate.

Portal Rescue has ordered the steel building and has begun site preparation. In March, volunteers with various building skills will pour the concrete slab and begin construction.

The process is off to a great start, but we need community members to continue their commitment in order to complete this new and crucial building.

If you are able to donate time/labor to the construction process, please contact Jeff Gee at 558-2458. Thank you! ☀

Soup Kitchen Serves Community In More Ways Than One

By JoAnn Julian

The 9th Annual Portal Rescue Soup Kitchen will be held on February 21, 22, & 23 at the Portal Rescue Classroom between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Once again, for only \$5.00, guests will enjoy two savory soups, two delectable breads, a dessert, and a beverage.

This year's raffle will offer superb prizes: artwork by Narca Moore-Craig and David Utterback, jewelry by Chris Rogers, a bird carving by Bill Rhinebold, \$100.00 worth of gasoline at the Rodeo General Store, an airplane ride with Chamberlain Aviation; meals at local restaurants; \$100.00 in AZ Lottery tickets; and more.

In 1997, Barbara Miller and women of Portal and Rodeo launched the Soup Kitchen, scheduling it to coincide with the closing of the

Soup Kitchen Donations

In addition to the many excellent cooks who provide dishes to the Portal Rescue Soup Kitchen, the following organizations and individuals have donated goods to the Soup Kitchen and Raffle in 2004 and/or 2005:

Safeway - Douglas
ACE Hardware - Douglas
Valley Mercantile - Animas
Chamberlain Aviation
Portal Peak Lodge and Café
Rodeo General Store
Rodeo Tavern
Janice Hurd and Marv Goldfogel
Dr. Michael John (Douglas)
JoAnn and Doug Julian
Roger McKasson
Narca Moore-Craig
Bill Reinbold
Chris Rogers
Dave Utterback



Portal Store & Café for annual spring cleaning. Since then, the endeavor has grown steadily: in 2004 this event -- under the direction of JoAnn Julian (soup kitchen) and Janice Hurd (raffle) -- raised over \$4,000 for Portal Rescue. Eighty-four local cooks from Portal and Rodeo donated soups, breads, and desserts, and over 32 volunteers kept the meals and the raffle tickets flowing for three days. Over the years, local artists and businesses have donated wonderful prizes for the raffle. This popular annual event has drawn people from all over our region.

This year the mobile Arizona Medical Eye Unit will be open on the grounds of Portal Rescue from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the 21st, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the 22nd, and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the 23rd. The unit offers FREE diabetes screening, blood pressure checks, and glaucoma and eye disease screening to the public on a walkup basis. This service is sponsored by The Friends of the Congressional Glaucoma Caucus Foundation and the Arizona Ophthalmological Society.

It's an unbeatable combination: a great lunch at the Soup Kitchen, free health screenings, and contribution to Portal Rescue! ☀

State of the Organization (Cont.)

The Emergency Medical Services Department's current equipment and manpower includes a state of the art ambulance and seven well trained EMTs.

Training is crucial in an organization like Portal Rescue; all our firefighters and EMTs are now being trained to national standards for their duties. Over the past year I have learned to greatly appreciate the time our EMTs and firefighters put into this task. They take days and weeks each year to prepare for rendering services.

This year I accompanied three Portal Rescue EMTs to the Southern Arizona Trauma Conference in Tucson. This conference is the primary training session each year for EMTs, providing up to 14 hours of the credits each EMT needs to remain certified. I found the quality of training superb. It was provided by some of the finest trauma experts from the best hospitals and universities in the nation (or possibly the world).

I am greatly comforted to know that this knowledge is available to the residents of (and visitors to) Portal and Rodeo. While all of us should be relieved to know that our members have this kind of training behind them, we must not forget one major fact: **the men and women undergoing this training are VOLUNTEERS, donating hundreds of hours** to be prepared to help us when emergencies occur.

I thank -- and encourage the community to thank -- these individuals, showing our appreciation in all ways possible. Let's not forget the dedication of these fine, selfless people.

We've made great progress improving our buildings as well. Recently the Portal Rescue classroom was made handicapped accessible with the addition of a new portable ramp. This year the Board of Directors voted to build a new garage facility to house our firefighting equipment (see stories, pp. 2 and 3). Portal Rescue members and other volunteers from the community will construct the building.

While attending regional and state meetings on behalf of Portal Rescue, I've been very gratified to hear that many people admire our organization. By attending these regional and state meetings we demonstrate that our organization is serious about providing services to our com-

munity; as a result, other departments and agencies have been willing to donate gear and supplies to our departments. We are now well equipped to handle fire and medical emergencies in our service area.

We have, I believe, an unmatched array of equipment and volunteers, considering the size of our community. We now have sufficient capability to meet the needs of this growing community for the next five to ten years, as long as Portal Rescue can retain, as well as recruit, members. This is an organization in which the members and the people of the Portal area can be proud. ☀

Fire Chief's Report (Cont.)

advantage of the heavy flow in Cave Creek to fill the three new tanks, as well as a 5,000-gallon tank at the Rescue building and the two water tenders. We now have approximately 80,000 gallons of water stored -- an outstanding resource for fire emergencies!

As a result of these important improvements, we've completely outgrown the original Portal Rescue building, which was built in 1991 and has only two vehicle bays.

To protect our growing fleet from freezing and pack rat damage, we have finalized plans to construct a new building that includes three vehicle bays (see related articles pp. 2 and 3).

The next fire season will soon be here. Upcoming training includes an annual refresher course for wildland firefighting, and training in First Aid and CPR. The crew will also receive training on tactics using engines, tenders, and water tanks.

In addition, every year the Portal firefighters attend the Arizona State Fire School in Mesa; many will also attend the Arizona Wildland Training Academy in Prescott in March. They come back from these sessions with new skills and a new pride in their organization's ability to get the job done.

I would like to thank all of the firefighters for their hard work and dedication to duty. I also want to thank the Board of Directors and everyone who supports Portal Rescue in so many ways. It continues to be a pleasure and an honor to serve as fire chief of this fine organization. ☀

EMS Chief's Report (Cont.)

I feel confident that many of these will complete the basic EMT course and pass. The basic training consists of 140 classroom hours (usually over the course of three to four months), ER clinicals (which include 12 hours testing skills in a hospital emergency room), homework (the extent of which depends on the trainee's ability), and a three-part final exam. All of our current and past EMTs have scored 90% or better on their final exams; 70% is a passing score.

However, training for the newest group of possible recruits has been delayed by difficulties getting an instructor to come to Portal and teach the class. All of the current EMTs have agreed to help teach and to attend many of these classes, both to continue their training and education, and also to encourage these new students.

Think of it this way:

- One non re-breather oxygen mask: \$1.35
- A few liters of O₂ for a patient waiting for the helicopter: \$2.00
- A cervical collar for an injured neck: \$5.25
- Use of Portal Rescue resources and the services of an unpaid, volunteer EMT who just saved a life: PRICELESS!

Thank you for your support! ☀

Wear Your Seat Belt or Else....

By Jeff Gee, EMS Chief

....You may end up looking up at the Portal Rescue EMTs! We respond to a wide variety of EMT calls every year. Some calls concern medical problems, such as illness, disease, or problems with medications. Often the patient has little or no control over medical problems. Other calls are due to traumas such as falls, cuts, or motor vehicle accidents (MVAs).

In 2004, seven MVAs resulted from hitting cows on Portal Road (typically black cows on a dark night). Your best defenses are driving a safe speed, watching the road and the shoulders, and -- above all -- buckling up!

If you are driving 45 mph and you suddenly hit something -- e.g., a big black cow standing in your lane -- you will experience three or more

collisions all happening at the same time: first, your vehicle hitting the cow; next, your body (still traveling at 45 mph) hitting the steering wheel, windshield, and dashboard; and third, your internal organs (brain, heart, liver, spleen, etc., all still traveling at 45 mph) hitting the inside of your skull & ribcage.

In addition, there could be a fourth collision, if the cow crashes through the windshield and lands in your lap. There's another scenario to consider: if you try to swerve to avoid the cow, you could roll your vehicle or hit an oncoming vehicle head on.

Portal EMTs have seen all of these scenarios occur. If you are very lucky, you can walk or maybe drive home. If you are less lucky, an ambulance ride to the hospital is in order. If you are unlucky you may get a helicopter ride to the trauma center (a one-way flight costs \$8-14,000, and you don't get frequent flyer miles). If you are really out of luck -- well, the county coroner needs work too.

So please remember to buckle up. I would prefer to see you all on the porch of the Portal Post Office rather than on one of our spine boards being pulled out of the broken window of your rolled over vehicle. Have a safe 2005. ☀

2004 Portal Rescue EMS Calls

Total: 44

Type of Problem		
Medical	27	61%
Trauma	17	39%
Mode of Transportation		
Air	17	39%
Ground	17	39%
Refused	7	16%
DOA	3	6%
Residence		
Arizona	13	30%
New Mexico	16	36%
Visitor	8	18%
Undocumented Alien	7	16%

EMTs' Persistence Saves Hiker's Life

By Bob Grey

In October 2003, Portal EMTs treated Bob Grey of Albuquerque while he was visiting the area. His experience illustrates the crucial role our EMTs play when dealing with unexplained, but potentially life-threatening incidents.

As my brother John and I left Albuquerque for a week of camping and hiking in the Chiricahua Mountains, a medical emergency was the last thing on my mind. I have been coming to the Portal area at least once a year since 1985, and for many years John has come from St. Louis to join me. We have always thought of Portal as being a gateway to one of our all-time favorite places.

Some time ago we learned that there was an emergency medical team that provided services in the area -- but being in our 40s, active, and physically fit, we never gave it much thought.

By the morning of October 8th we had been camping and hiking in Cave Creek Canyon for several days. Our hikes included going to the top of Silver Peak to see the old fire lookout and take in the views. I got out of the tent early and soon realized I didn't feel quite myself. John needed to make a business call, so we drove out of the canyon a bit to try and reach a spot where his cell phone would work. As he made his call I started feeling progressively worse. I took a couple of aspirin, and we returned to camp.

It's difficult to describe precisely how I was feeling. I had some tingling in my hands and feet and felt a little light-headed and nauseous. The simple act of stuffing my sleeping bag into its sack left me drained and short of breath.

John became worried about my condition and suggested that perhaps we should head home a day early. As I rested and tried to will myself to feel better, John quickly threw our gear into the truck. On the drive out of the canyon John suggested that we stop in Portal and see if the EMTs were available to check me out. I reluctantly agreed. He stopped at the Portal store to report the problem, returning a

couple minutes later to say that the EMTs were on their way.

In a very short time Jeff and Kim Gee, Nancy Hays, and Jackie Lewis arrived. They informed me that I might be having a cardiac event and that they had already requested a helicopter to be dispatched from Tucson.

A number of thoughts raced through my mind. I recalled what I knew about heart attack symptoms; I didn't have crushing chest pain or pain coursing down my left arm. I was reluctant to cut short our wonderful trip, thinking that I probably was just suffering from a touch of stomach flu or something similar. I also worried that I was wasting the EMT team's time. I was concerned about the cost of a helicopter trip to Tucson and whether my health insurance would cover it.

The EMTs moved me into their rescue vehicle, put me on oxygen, and started monitoring my vital signs. The team was professional, friendly, and reassuring. They constantly talked to me about how I was feeling, and explained to me what they were doing and why.

About 10 minutes after going on oxygen, I began to feel much better. I told the EMT team that I felt well enough to go with my brother on the seven-hour drive home. I was feeling a bit foolish, thinking that I had put a lot of folks through some unnecessary work.

The EMTs' response was friendly but firm: I should really go to a Tucson hospital and be checked out, they said, because the drive to Albuquerque goes through some very empty country with few medical facilities. As it turned out, their persistence saved my life.

A short time later the helicopter arrived bearing a pilot, a paramedic, and a flight nurse. The Portal team explained to me that I would probably go to the University of Arizona Medical Center's Heart Saver Institute, the best in the area for cardiac care.

The one-hour flight went smoothly for a while. Then, about 20 to 30 minutes outside Tucson, I started feeling much worse. I had severe pain in both my elbows and my right shoulder; it felt like someone had hit me with a baseball bat. I started sweating profusely, was
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Telescope Raffle Will Benefit Portal Rescue

Arizona Sky Village is raffling off a Meade Auto Star ETX105, computer-controlled telescope to benefit Portal Rescue. Proceeds will go to the Building or General Fund, as necessary.

The telescope, valued at \$1,000, has a 105-mm (roughly 4") optical lens. It has been programmed to locate about 17,000 celestial objects. The telescope can also be used for birding. A camera adapter can be purchased for your camera to use this scope as a telephoto lens. The telescope comes with a field tripod.

The raffle will be held on the AZ Sky Village website; the draw for the winner will take place on Feb. 23. Tickets will cost \$10 each, or three for \$25. The scope will be set up outside Portal Rescue during the Soup Kitchen. For more information, or to purchase tickets, contact Alice Newton at 558-1143. ☀

Hiker Saved (Cont.)

short of breath, and had a feeling of impending doom.

The flight team gave me a nitroglycerin tablet and, through an IV they had started before we left the ground, a shot of morphine. This gave me substantial and immediate relief. The medics said if the discomfort returned I should signal them, because they could give me the same regimen again.

After a short time, the distress returned. I had two more rounds of nitro and morphine, but the regimen was less effective each time. As we landed, I remember feeling that I didn't know if I would live to see the inside of the hospital. I was taking in deep breaths of what seemed like air with no oxygen in it. I was placed on a gurney and quickly wheeled into the emergency room.

An ER team performed an ECG, and within a few minutes a doctor came in to tell me that I was having a heart attack. I was rushed to the cardiac catheterization lab, where the doctors discovered that my left anterior descending (LAD) artery was 100% blocked. Immediate surgery was necessary to save my life.

I have since learned that cardiologists often refer to the LAD artery as the "widowmaker,"

not only because it's a major artery, but also because blockage is often sudden and severe.

The doctors performed a balloon angioplasty to clear the blockage and inserted two cardiac stents. During this time my heart stopped, and the doctors had to use a defibrillator to restart it. The procedure took a little over an hour; then I was placed in the cardiac intensive care unit.

When I awoke my brother John was there after driving over from Portal. My wife flew in the next day, and I was released from the hospital the day after that. After returning to Albuquerque I entered the care of a local cardiologist and have been fine since.

I was extremely fortunate that day. At every critical juncture people sensed the danger I was in and persuaded me to do the right thing. First my brother John recognized in camp that something serious was going on. Then the employees at the Portal Store responded quickly to dispatch the EMTs.

Next, the Portal Rescue team made all the right decisions and convinced me to go to the hospital when I was not inclined to do so. The flight crew administered drugs that kept me alive on the way to the hospital. Finally, the medical staff at UMC did a great job of taking care of me.

Talking to several cardiologists since then, I came to realize just how many circumstances had to operate in my favor in order to achieve such a positive outcome. During my procedure, the cardiologists surmised that I had had a plaque rupture.

Over the next few hours, the plaque in my bloodstream coalesced into a complete blockage, reaching 100% just about the time my helicopter landed. At that point I had only minutes to live without serious medical intervention.

Portal Rescue EMTs often have to make instant decisions based on both their training and their instincts, but perhaps without full knowledge of the condition. It is because of their dedication and intelligence that I am here to write this story.

The people of this community are truly fortunate to have such volunteers living among them. I fervently hope that the community will continue to support this team of dedicated individuals. I know that my family and I will be forever grateful to Portal Rescue. ☀

Thoughts of a Former EMT

By Gerry Hernbrode

Back in 1993 when I began the training, I intended to serve as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) for a couple of years – just to help out. But a funny thing happened: I stayed on for 10 years because the work gave me as much as I gave to it.

For one thing, there was the satisfaction of making a difference. Even now I see people around Portal and Rodeo who wouldn't be alive if our EMS team hadn't helped out. It was good to bring comfort and calm to folks whose bodies refused to cooperate in the best interests of their owners.

I had the privilege of working with a first-rate team. Our ongoing training was rigorous and focused. A nurse monitor at Tucson Medical Center analyzed all our "First Care Forms" and radio telemetry, which were mandated for all calls; this monitor gave us feedback that helped us maintain the highest standard of patient care.

In the 10 years I served as an EMT, we handled six mass casualties involving 10 to 30 patients each. The morning after one of these incidents, a pile up on Interstate 10, I attended a Southern Arizona EMT meeting. Walking up behind Dr. Richard Carmona --then a trauma surgeon at Kino Hospital and now the U.S. Surgeon General – I heard him say, "Portal Rescue's a volunteer unit, but they sure know what they're doing."

You've got that right, Dr. Carmona.

I also liked the challenge of the job. We never knew exactly what we were getting into when we set out in the rescue vehicle. But with faith in our training and the team's collective experience, we knew we'd make things a whole lot better for the folks we were helping. That was satisfying stuff.

I'd recommend becoming a Portal EMT, even if you tell yourself it will only be for a couple of years. Then, see what happens! ☀

A Newcomer's View

By Vicki Beno

After arriving in April 2004 to live in this village, I was wondering what medical facilities were available to us. We had just moved from a well-populated area of Florida where the doctor's office was a five-minute drive and the hospital was 15 minutes away.

I was pleasantly surprised to learn that Portal has a team of EMTs, as our current doctor and hospital are in Douglas. It's wonderful to know that this group is dedicated to, and specially trained in, bringing life-saving services to those of us who choose to live in a rural area in the high desert.

Back in Florida, one just had to dial '911' to receive emergency service. Here we learned that the telephone number for Portal Rescue is **558-2222**. It rings at the Portal Store, the houses of both store owners, and at the Jensens', so that someone will immediately radio the EMTs and launch a rescue response.

However, for the first 12 weeks we lived on our property at Arizona Sky Village, we didn't have a telephone, and our cell phone service was unreliable. We decided that in case of an emergency we would have to drive ourselves to the Portal Store. Now that we have a phone, we're relieved that we won't face such a drive.

After we moved in, representatives from Portal Rescue drove to our place to determine its exact location. We learned they were adding us to the Household Locator System, a notebook full of mile-by-mile, turn-by-turn descriptions of how to find each resident's home. The importance of being included in this can't be overemphasized; precious minutes can be lost if your house can't be found by the EMTs and fire-fighters.

We are truly grateful for the dedicated and loyal EMTs who offer this service to their neighbors in Portal. We feel comforted in knowing that we will get immediate, expert medical attention if the need arises. ☀

☀ Who Pulled This Issue Together? ☀

Editors: Lisa Bender, Jackie Lewis, Helen Snyder

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On a Dark, Stormy Night, Can a Rescue Team Get to Your Home?

By Nancy Hays, EMT

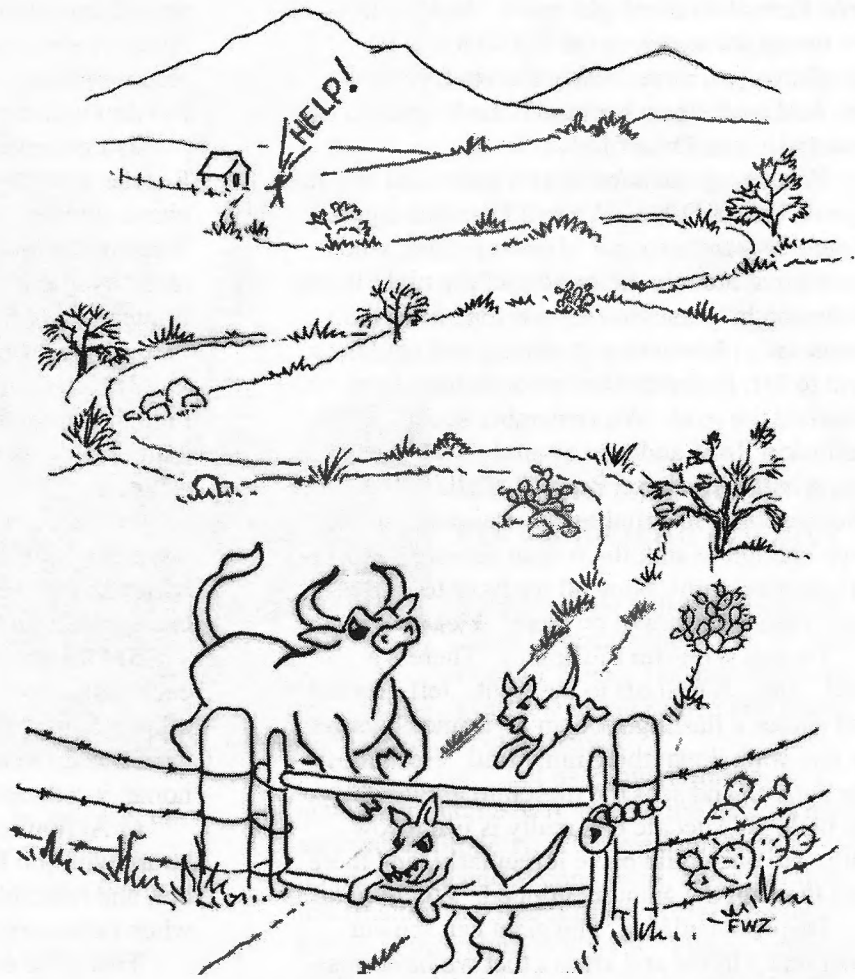
It's two a.m. and I'm dreaming of bird watching from my favorite chair.... eeeee... what kind of bird is calling.... eeeee. Tom, my husband, shakes me not so gently and says, "I'll call you in as available. Get up! Get dressed! Move! Move!"

I'm the first EMT to arrive at the firehouse, so I call Portal Dispatch for information. It seems that Jack was chasing javelinas away from his beanstalks when the giant decided to climb down. In the confusion Jack has been hurt, and the giant doesn't know what is wrong with him. I glance at my watch; even though it runs on a battery, I swear I can hear it going tick-tock as the seconds pass.

I ask Portal Rescue Dispatch for directions to Jack's house. They've already looked it up in the locator book. I ask Dispatch to confirm the directions with the giant because several new houses have been built in the area recently – probably with accompanying new roads.

The giant replies, "just look for the bean stalks. You can't miss them." I look out the door of Portal Rescue: a layer of clouds is hiding the moon and stars. It is one dark night!

My fellow EMTs arrive, and off we go to help Jack. According to the directions, we take Woodcutter's Lane for about a half-mile, take the first left, and go another half-mile. Then we'll see a road sign, "Cow Path." Follow that road to the second driveway; the house is about a quarter-mile back. Great! We will be there in no time! My watch goes tick-tock again.



Road Hazards on the Way to the Patient

As we approach Woodcutter's Lane, we notice that there is a gate across the road. Jeff hops out and discovers that the gate is locked. This is not a simple chain lock that we might consider cutting through; it is a professionally installed security gate. Jeff checks both sides of the gate and sees that the ditches are too deep to take the rescue vehicle through, so there is no point in cutting the fence. Tick-tock.

We call Dispatch, asking them to call the giant to see if there is another way in, or if we can get the gate opened. The giant reports that the woodcutter's children, Hansel and Gretel, were concerned about security and had the gate installed. As giants rarely use roads, he had forgotten this fact. The giant then tells us to go to Dwarf Drive, take a left on it, go half a mile, turn right, keep going until we see the sign for

Cow Path, then turn right again. Jack's will be the fourth driveway on the left. Tick-tock.

On we go, more slowly than before so we can read road signs, because nobody can tell us how far it is to Dwarf Drive.

We have gone another two miles and still no sign of Dwarf Drive. We call Dispatch again. Dispatch decides to call Miss Rapunzel, who knows that area, in the middle of the night to see if she can help us. She reports that, after the seven dwarf brothers quit mining and sold their land to Mr. Rumpelstiltskin for a straw farm, he renamed the road. We remember seeing Rumpelstiltskin Road and turn around. Tick-tock.

A half-mile down Rumpelstiltskin Road -- after carefully negotiating several mud puddles deep enough to sink the rescue vehicle -- we find a right hand turn! Now all we have to find is Cow Path and we will be there! Tick-tock.

Dennis slams on the brakes. There's a road...um...a trail off to the right. Jeff gets out and shines a flashlight down it. Some cows get up and walk down the...um...trail. He shines the light up and sees the mesquite growing over the path. We decide this really is just a cow path. No one could drive it regularly, and there isn't the sign the giant mentioned. We drive on.

Dispatch calls us. The giant can see our emergency lights and knows that we have missed the turn-off to Cow Path. Again we have to find a wide spot to turn around. Tick-tock.

On our way back we do find the road sign for Cow Path -- knocked it over and sitting in the middle of a mesquite. We have to go slowly. The mesquites have grown into the road, making it almost impassable for our large rescue vehicle. Getting stuck won't help Jack. Tick-tock.

That has to be the house! We can see lights on, and not many people have their lights on at this time of the morning. As we jump out the giant roars, "WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG?" Apparently his watch was going tick-tock, just like mine.

Despite the use of fairy tale characters, the problem described is REAL. Every EMT knows that response time is critical in patient care. We want to get there as fast as we safely can! Here is a list of the things you can do to help us help you:

1) Keep the wonderful volunteers who spend many hours updating the locator informed about

any changes to the directions to your house. New driveways and new gates could affect our response time. Landmarks that are evident in full daylight may not be clear at night.

2) Let new neighbors know about Portal Rescue, give them our 558-2222 emergency phone number, and explain the value of being listed in the locator. This information is not made available to anyone but Dispatch, firefighters, EMTs, and the locator personnel (while they are updating the information).

3) Keep your road clearly marked. Although the county is responsible for road signs, many residents erect private signs to clarify routes.

4) Please keep your "cow path" cleared and big enough for Portal Rescue vehicles, all of which have a very high profile and are considerably wider than a passenger car.

5) Make a pact with your neighbors that each will help Portal Rescue find the way to the other's house. When neighbors open gates, meet us at a main road, or otherwise lead us to your home, it reduces response time immensely.

6) At home, keep the directions to your house with the Portal Rescue emergency number, and remember to update the instructions when necessary.

Thanks to everyone who has shown appreciation for what we do by donating time, money, and talent. We really appreciate your help! ☀

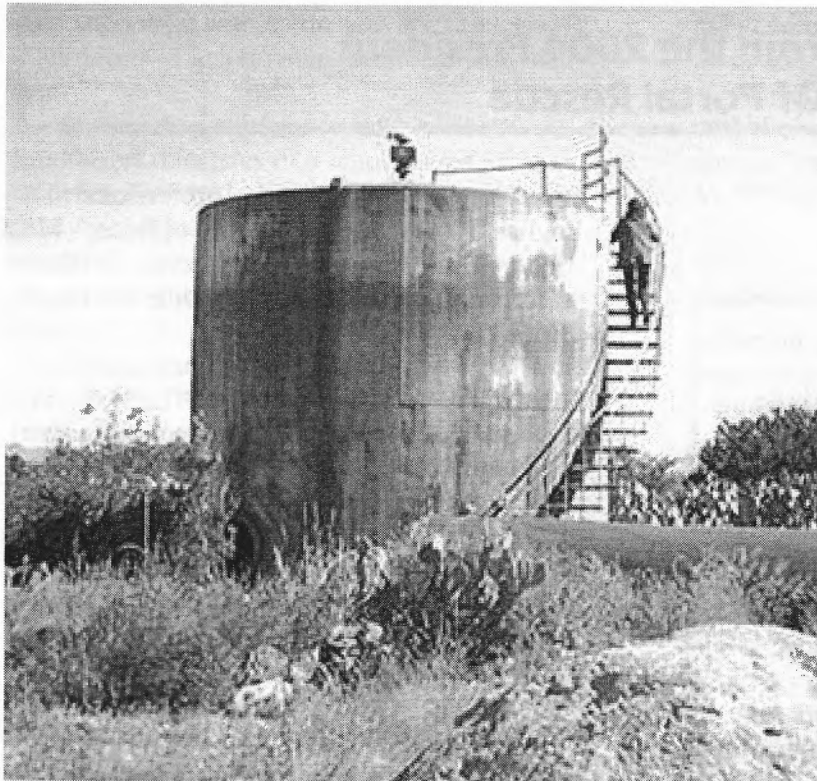
Contest Calls Local Artists to Beautify New Water Tank

By Lisa Bender

Have you climbed it, pondered its broad and blotchy belly standing stalwart on the northern horizon, or just tried to avert your eyes whenever it came into view?

The new water storage tank next to the Portal Rescue building fulfills a long-standing need, and it was free (see story, p. 1). But that doesn't mean we have to accept a homely structure on our otherwise beautiful skyline.

Shortly after the tank was erected, Barbara Miller and Geoff Bender found out that they both had the same idea in mind: to transform the



Next fall, Portal Rescue will hold a BBQ and paint-a-thon to apply the designs (with the help of local volunteers). Barbara and Geoff will provide more information on the submission requirements, as well as the design and painting process, to anyone interested. There are so many great artists in this community; together, we can turn a utilitarian structure into a work of art! ☀

It's Time to Update the Portal Rescue Locator

Susanne Dyal will spearhead the effort to update the Portal Rescue Locator Book. Locator forms are available at the Rodeo and Portal Post Offices.

Let us know if you are in a newly built home or if you are the new owner of an existing property. List everyone living in the home, their medical conditions, and any other information that might assist Portal Rescue EMTs in providing treatment. This information remains confidential. Be sure to include your phone number.

Susanne or another member of Portal Rescue will be calling and possibly driving to your home to verify the directions given on the locator form. If you have any questions, please contact Susanne Dyal at 558-0010 or email her at leeandsusi@direcway.com. ☀

tank from eyesore to eye candy. In January, the Portal Rescue Board approved Barbara and Geoff's plan to beautify the tank while raising money for Portal Rescue.

First, the tank will be painted with industrial green paint the same color as the Portal Rescue building. Then two sections of the structure's face -- one facing the bridge over Cave Creek, and one facing the Post Office -- will be designated as the "canvases" for painted designs.

Barbara and Geoff will collect contestants' renditions of the concept and submit them anonymously to the Portal Rescue Board. In May, the board will choose three to five semifinalists. Their designs will be posted at various public sites so that the community can vote for two winning designs. Votes (one for each "canvas") will cost \$1 apiece. The proceeds will go to Portal Rescue, of course. The voting period ends June 1, 2005.

The chosen artists will win a bit of immortality and a lot of free publicity. Portal Rescue will send press releases on the tank project to regional newspapers. The winning artists can place their signatures somewhere within their designs and can reproduce the images for their own promotional needs.

MAILING LIST NOTE

If you wish to be removed from the Portal Rescue mailing list, please contact:

Jackie Lewis
2225 W. George Walker Lane
Portal, AZ 85632
winjac12@vtc.net
520-558-2287

Letter From the 2004 President Of Portal Rescue

You'll Never Walk Alone

By Tom Hays, President

Like many birders in this country, my wife, Nancy, and I first made a pilgrimage to this area in 1977 in pursuit of the trogons and hummingbirds. The beauty of the area prompted future trips; later, a budding interest in reptiles and amphibians enhanced the area's appeal.

In 1994, I was given the chance to run the U.S. Forest Service's Visitor Center in Cave Creek Canyon. Because this position was seasonal, my wife and daughter remained at our home in South Dakota.

During this time I learned how very special the people of this area are. I recall with fondness the day six local ladies came into the visitor center bearing a plate of cookies and welcoming me to the community. The locals encouraged my involvement in the area's activities; and when I missed my family they helped by simply being there and allowing me to vent. I knew then that this was where I wanted to live. After several more trips, my dream came true in October 1999, and I could call this fabulous place home.

For those people who do not know me well, I am a huge soccer fan. I could watch soccer games 24/7, but TV scheduling limits me to about 10-12 games per week. Like most sports

fans, I have a favorite team: a professional English team called the "Liverpool Reds." Most soccer clubs (teams) have team crests on their uniforms. Liverpool's crest includes the slogan, "You'll never walk alone."

For years I wondered what that meant and how it applied to a soccer team. Then I found out it was based on a major incident the team experienced.

Some years back Liverpool won a major tournament, and after the final game the families of the coaches and players came down to the field to celebrate. However, a number of thugs wielding weapons -- who apparently did not share the winners' joy -- also came onto the field. In the melee that followed, many people were injured and 14 people were killed, including the wife and daughter of an assistant coach.

During a memorial attended by over 80,000 fans from all over the world, this coach broke down while telling of his terrible loss. Then someone in the crowd shouted, "You'll never walk alone. We are with you." Then, over 80,000 people stood and chanted this statement of support. The phrase was later incorporated into the crest of a team that went on to a storybook future, much as the Yankees, Packers, and Lakers did in the U.S.

Since our move here, Nancy and I have witnessed every imaginable aspect of the "milk of human kindness." The people of the area have accepted us and our idiosyncracies (yes, we really do like snakes), and have included us in the activities and life of the area. We have seen an untold number of individual acts of generosity and kindness toward others here. We have seen people lined up to provide food, company, caring and even a place to stay to those returning from surgery or recovering from illness who otherwise might have been alone. When a catastrophic illness hits a family, the people of this area come through with fundraisers and help in other ways.

The same is true for those suffering other losses -- such as that from fire. When residents experience a death in the family, others have

Fact or Fiction?

FICTION: Portal Rescue EMTs respond only when they want to.

FACT: Portal Rescue is a volunteer unit. There are times when all or most of the members are out of the area. We are required to have two EMT's with the rescue vehicle to respond. You must call Portal Rescue Dispatch at 558-2222 -- not your friend/neighbor or an EMT -- in order for us to be sent to assist you.

inundated them with cards, prayers, food, and other forms of help to help them deal with their loss.

Outstanding attendance at Sew What fundraisers translates into scholarships for area students, projects benefiting nursing homes, and funding for Portal Rescue, the Rodeo Community Center, and the Portal Library. Indeed the people of this area are special in their generosity.

While a member of this giving and caring community, I am also a member of another team. The Portal Rescue "team" is comprised of three very important groups: the volunteer firefighters and EMTs who provide our services, the volunteer board of directors who manage the organization, and the residents who support our work through generous donations of time and money.

Each group is equally important in providing timely, high quality emergency medical care and fire protection to our area. Without any one of these groups, we could not continue to fulfill the vision of the Portal residents who started this organization. That vision? YOU WILL NEVER WALK ALONE.

Which of the three groups are you in? There is room for everyone to contribute. We need bookkeepers, vehicle mechanics, carpenters, people to clean our classroom, people to assist at the landing zone for medical airlifts, and those with a host of other skills -- as well as firefighters and EMTs.

Even those with skills not obviously applicable to this organization have assisted in fundraising. Whatever your skills are, there's a good chance Portal Rescue can make use of them to support the provision of services.

Remember, we are all members of a team; but are you an active member? What are you doing to assure that you and your neighbors and friends WILL NEVER WALK ALONE?

Over the years, people move in and out of our area. Newcomers arrive, probably with the same appreciation for the beauty of the area and the special qualities of its residents that I had when I came here.

I challenge the people of this area to accept these newcomers as you once accepted me. Continue to show them and everyone else here

the generosity of spirit that makes you and this place so special.

Together we can make Portal Rescue grow with the community; and we can continue to tell anyone here that, regardless of what happens, YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE. ☼

Fact Or Fiction?

FICTION: Portal Rescue receives "kick-backs" for flying a patient by helicopter to a medical center rather than transporting via ambulance.

FACT: Portal Rescue relies on your donations, government grants, and firefighting pay for funding. Neither Portal Rescue nor its members receive any money or gifts from other rescue services. A helicopter transport is protocol for serious medical emergencies if you are more than 45 minutes from medical care. However, if your illness or injury is not life- or limb-threatening, you may be transported by ground to Douglas, Silver City, or Willcox. Of course, the final decision to be transported by helicopter rests with the patient.

FICTION: It is Portal Rescue's responsibility to cover the greater Portal area.

FACT: Douglas Fire has the responsibility to cover this area and receives funds to do so. Portal Rescue is a volunteer service trying to provide aid in a more timely manner; otherwise you would have to wait at least one hour for medical assistance.

Portal Rescue does not charge for time, transportation, or equipment used during your medical or trauma emergency. Portal Rescue volunteers donate their time for training and to provide EMS services. We use our personal vehicles and gas to get to the station or scene. ☼

Treasurer's Report and List of 2004 Contributors to Portal Rescue

By John Bush, Portal Rescue Treasurer

Portal Rescue's financial picture remained bright in 2004. Our organization continues to operate in the black, even though local donations are our major funding source. State and federal grants account for only a small percentage of our total revenues.

The organization spent over \$120,000 in 2004. Most of these funds were used to purchase capital assets, such as one new and one used water tender, and to clean and equip donated water tanks. A portion of these expenditures covered the ongoing training of our EMS and firefighting teams.

The various fundraisers that residents developed and ran last year had a significant impact, collecting a total of \$10,926. The 2004 Soup Kitchen raised \$4,282; Portal Rescue cookbooks brought in \$1,205. In addition, the Magic Brush Painting Class brought in \$700, and Barbara Miller's Garden Tour and Party raised \$2,241. The annual Bird-a-Thon raised \$1,698. And finally, the Saturday Farmers' Market/Plant Sale and recycling of aluminum cans pulled in \$800.00. That's over \$10,000 from a variety of residents' creative efforts!

Last year, Portal Rescue received grants and other funds for the new water tender, the end of the 2003-2004 Fuel Reduction Project, the Summer 2004 Severity Patrol, and the new water tanks. This year, we expect to receive grants for the completion of the 2004-2005 Fuel Reduction Project and grants for fire training and tools. As noted in other articles, Portal Rescue was given over \$40,000 in donations for the construction of a new building.

Donations to the Building Fund up to Jan. 24, 2005 will be listed here; however, only those donations to the General Fund and Memorial Fund made by December 31, 2004 are noted here.

Memorial Fund Donations in 2004 totaled \$2,130. These memorials were contributed in memory of Connie Finnerty, Eduardo Fraijo, Stace Green, Lee Griffiths, Alfred Hands, Norman Hessler, Louis Kreie, Pete Rawdon, Mary Reece, Joe Schatz, Sally Spofford, J. Standish, and Norman Westrum.

Thank you to all who have supported Portal Rescue's many fundraisers with your money, time, and donated items – the organization couldn't exist without you! Those listed below have given to one or more of the following funds: General (G), Building (B), and Memorial (M). Bird-a-thon donations were moved to the Building Fund by recommendation of the Portal Rescue Board. We sincerely apologize if any names are misspelled. If your donation has been inadvertently omitted, please let us know. ☀

Peg Abbott (B,G)
Acorn Exhibits, Inc (G)
Bob & Jean Addison (B)
Elizabeth Ames (G)
Carl Anderson (B)
Anderson's Ranch (B)
Anonymous (B)
Virginia Appelt (B,G)
M. Scott Arena (B)
Bob & Sheri Ashley (B)
Pete & Norma Beltran (B)
Geoff & Lisa Bender (B,G)
Richard & Vicki Beno (B)
Robert & Debra Bernard (G)
Charlene Blaker (B)
Rene & Delane Blondeau
(B,G,M)

Mr. & Mrs. Boettcher (B)
Martha Bogert (B,G)
Helen Bolle (G)
Jens Brastad (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Brenneman (G)
James Brown (B,G)
Allen Brown (M)
Torrence & Diane Bryant (M)
Dee Burns (B)
John Bush (B)
Matthew Caron (B)
Carolyn Cazier (B)
Tony & Jane Celaya (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Chau (M)
Victor & Eva Chavez (B,G)
Bob & Alice Chew (B,G)
James & Gloria Childress (B)

Bill & Nancy Cloudt (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Collazo (G)
Columbus Electric Co-op (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Contway (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Corstales (G)
Jim & Shirley Cox (B,G)
Alan Craig (B)
Janet Crowley (B)
Pat Crowley-Mauzy (B,G)
Virginia Cutler (B)
Michael & Jessie Cyr (B,G)
Diane Davidson (G)
Edward & Ann Davis (B,G)
Orchid Davis (B)
Bob & Carolyn Dearing
(B,G,M)
Boyd Dennison (B)

Mr. & Mrs. Dollison (M)
Tony & Rene Donaldson (B,M)
Roderick Drewien (B)
Kirk & Susan Dryden (M)
Elbrock Water Systems (G)
Ed & Patty Encinas (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Enriquez (B)
Teofilo & Annie Escarcega (G)
Bob & Marge Fagan (B)
James & Kay Farris (B)
Bob Freel (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Freeman (M)
Roy & Elise Furman (B)
Larry & Terry Gates (B)
Jan Gee (B)
Jeff & Kim Gee (B)
Sharon Gee & Joan Turgeon (B)
Greg Gibbons (B)
Janice Hurd & Marvin
Goldfogel (B)
Russell & Jane Green (M)
Hair Affair (B)
Rebecca Hamilton (B)
Richard & Margaret Hamilton
(B,G)
David & Billie Hardy (B,G)
Mark & Rhonda Hart (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Harwood (B)
Hatch Realty (B,G)
Robert & Nancy Hawkes (B)
Eric Hayes (B)
Bob & Verna Hays (B)
Tom & Nancy Hays (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Helbing (B)
Col. Russell & Betty Heller (B)
Thomas & Jaclyn Hendrix (B,G)
Gerry Hernbrode (B,M)
Richard & Cecilia Hessler (B,G)
Paul & Linda Jackse Hirt (B)
Esther Hollowell (B)
Richard & Margo Howells (B)
Mr. & Mrs. Hoyt-Whitkar (M)
Robert & Ruth Hucks (M)
Jon Huston (B)
Fred & Gayle Jandrey (B,G)
Dave Jasper (B)
Paula Jenkins (B)
Chuck & Joan Jensen (B,G)
Michelle McDonald & Bob
Johnson (B)
Penny Johnston (B,G,M)
Albert & Maxine Jones (B)
Betsy Jones (B)
Jay Jones (B,G)
Doug & Joann Julian (B)
K & K Dental (B)

Luther & Edith Killion (B)
Rolf Koford (G)
Don & Ivy Korleski (B)
Jeffrey & Jean Lacross (M)
Joseph & Diane Lawrence (G)
Winston & Jackie Lewis (B)
William & Rena Mason (G)
George & Lynne May (G)
George McBride (B)
Roger & Scottie McKasson (B)
Jim McLendon (G)
Bill Meloy (B)
Ray & Joy Mendez (B,G)
Pete & Barbara Miller (B,G,M)
Bert & Helen Mills (G)
A. & D. Mitchell (M)
Mike & Joyce Moore (B)
Dr. Moorhouse (B)
Rafaela Morillas (M)
Hal & Pat Mortensen (B)
Dan Murphy (B)
Debi Galloway & Sherri Nelson
(B)
Dave Newton (B,G)
Dave M. Newton (B)
Jack & Alice Newton (B)
Octoberfest cash donation (B)
Charles & Sherri Osgood (B)
Willis & Pat Owens (M)
Jerry & Pi Irwin Parks (B,G,M)
Mr. & Mrs. Pickering (B)
Portal Store (B)
Eileen Potter (B,G)
William Preston (G)
William Queen (G)
Ron & Barbara Quinn (B)
John & Sue Rauzy (M)
Cecilia Reed (B)
Dan & Yvette Rehurek (B,G,M)
William & Catherine Reinbold
(B)
James & Sally Richards (G)
Dean & Joan Richardson (B,G)
Devaun & Lillian Richins (B)
Quentin Roark (B)
Chris Rogers (B,G)
John & Carol Roser (B,G)
Barbara Roth (B,G)
Findlay & Marilyn Russell
(B,G)
Bob Sandine (B)
Joseph & Joyce Schatz (G)
Robert & Catherine Scholes
(B,G)
Sew What Club (B,G)
Smith Ford (B)

Rick Snure (B)
Ben & Florence Snure (G)
Noel & Helen Snyder (B,G)
Peggy Spofford-Wallace (G)
Robert & Evelyn Squier (B,G)
Glen & Terrie Stoller (B,G)
Zola Stoltz (B)
Alex Stone (B)
Javier & Maria Tarin (M)
John & Wendy Tate (G)
A.T. Test (B)
Bobby & Addie Tollison (B)
Carol Simon & Howard Topoff
(B,G)
Charles & Ruth Travers (B)
Ted Troller (B,G)
Valley Telephone Co-op (B,G)
Donald & Jean Wadsworth
(B,G)
Clarence & C.W. Walker (B,G)
Bill Walters (G)
Maurice & Roberta Ward (B,G)
Diane Hadley & Peter Warshall
(B)
Katherine Waser (B)
Peter & Mary Waser (B)
Richard Webster (B,G)
Patrick & Margaret Wilch (B)
Jeanne Williams (B)
Michael & Cecil Williams (B)
Mike Williams (B)
W.D. Williams (B)
Pat Willy (B,G)
Mary Willy (G,M)
Rich & Mary Winkler (G)
Wonder Dog Corp. (G)
Ellen Wooten (B)
John & Patricia Wurdeman (M)
Henry & Joanne Yeomans (B)
Richard & Frances Zweifel
(B,G,M)
☼

**Please place stickers on
your telephone for quick
reference.**

Current Firefighters And EMTs

Geoff Bender (FF), Harold Bradford (FF), Shane Burchfield (FF), John Bush (FF), E.T. Collingsworth (FF, EMT), Jeff Gee (FF, EMT), Kim Gee (FF, EMT), Nancy Hays (FF, EMT), Tom Hays (FF), Jackie Lewis (EMT), Todd Malone (FF), Dennis McAvoy (FF, EMT), Nancy McAvoy (FF), Kay Ralston (EMT), Larry Rivers (FF), Barney Tomberlin (FF), Bill Webster (FF), Misty Webster (FF), Mitch Webster (FF), Gary Wisdom (FF), Sharman Wisdom (FF)

Building Maintenance

Thanks to everyone who helps with the up-keep of the Portal Rescue Building. If we inadvertently omitted you from this list, we sincerely apologize!

Upkeep Volunteers: Ginny Appelt, Rene & Delane Blondeau, Mickey Bogert, Eva Chavez, Alice Chew, Carolyn Dearing, Rene Donaldson, Gerry Hernbrode, Pi Irwin, Yvette Rehurek, Joan Richardson, Bob & O'Leary Squier, Don & Jean Wadsworth, Roberta Ward, Jeanne Williams, Shirley Zent, and Fran Zweifel.

Calendar Coordinator: Yvette Rehurek
Grounds Maintenance: Pete Miller

Portal Rescue, Inc.
P.O. Box 16331
Portal, AZ 85632