

**Accession # 2010.58**

Rim Country Museums  
Marguerite Noble Library  
700 S. Green Valley Pkwy  
Payson, AZ 85541  
(928) 474-3483

**Title**

The Payson Wildlife Preserve/Association Papers

**Dates**

1986-1998

**Extent**

2 Boxes : 14.5 linear inches (1.2083 linear feet) textual material

**Creators**

Payson Wildlife Preserve/Association Board of Directors

**Administrative**

The Payson Wildlife Preserve/Association (PWP/PWA) grew out of an effort to assist the Payson Zoo, which was established circa 1979. The Zoo was located six miles east of Payson and was run by Randy Ferry. Randy took in injured and orphaned animals as well as animals previously used in movies and commercials. He worked closely with the animals to keep them stimulated and in excellent condition, and continued to use some in commercials. In late 1986, conditions at the zoo had deteriorated due to lack of funding. Conditions got to the point that Randy was advised to sell or euthanize the animals. Payson area residents formed a board to raise funds for an animal park and started a program so people could "adopt" an animal to provide food through the winter.

The Payson Wildlife Preserve, Inc. was a non-profit corporation formed in 1986 by Payson residents to promote the establishment of an animal park and botanical garden. The nucleus of the park was to be the animals owned by Randy Ferry. It was the goal of the Preserve to acquire land where new animal enclosures could be built in a park-like setting, to be operated as an environmental recreational and educational facility. The facility would include the animals, hiking and biking trails, access for handicapped individuals, and educational opportunities. The proposed size of the preserve was 1300 acres located north and west of town (west of Highway 87). Maps of the proposed site are contained in the collection.

Due to delays in establishing the new Preserve, at the end of 1987 Randy Ferry decided to move his animals to the Prescott Animal Park (this move ultimately did not happen). Until the animals could be moved, Randy's zoo would be considered separate from the Preserve. The Preserve board decided to continue their plans to build a nature preserve to focus on local flora and fauna, educational programs and nature trails. This plan ran into difficulties with the Forest Service and the State of Arizona regarding acquisition of the land.

In mid-1990 PWP decided to concentrate efforts and resources on establishing and operating a wildlife rehabilitation center. By the end of 1990, the board decided the rehab center would be too costly to operate and returned their focus to nature trails and environmental education facilities. Also, federal regulations prohibited keeping caged animals on federal land.

By early 1991, the PWP planned to have nature trails and educational programs but no live animals (the Payson Zoo continued as a separate entity, and later closed in 2001). Apparently some of the change in focus was a result of conflicts with Forest Service plans for the area. In early 1992, the PWP agreed to help the Forest Service with their plans regarding Houston Mesa Campground trails and continue fundraising for PWP so the project could be pursued in the future. The name of the organization was changed from Preserve to Association in 1993; it was felt that the word Preserve was no longer appropriate as the organization would not have any live animals on the property.

Over the next few years, the PWA continued to be involved in community events, fundraising, and supporting other pro-environment/wildlife groups. There is no further documentation on attempts to acquire land from the Forest Service. October 1998 is the first mention of discussion to disband the PWA. It seems that meetings were held less frequently, the membership was aging, and there was trouble filling board member positions. The Board approved disbanding the PWA at the December 1998 board meeting.

### **Scope and Content**

The collection consists of materials related to the activities of the Payson Wildlife Preserve/Association. Materials include bank statements, income statements, correspondence, notes, records of board meetings, tax records, membership lists, notes on plans for the Preserve/Association including efforts to acquire land, and correspondence with State and Federal officials on wildlife and environmental issues.

### **Conditions Governing Access**

Collection is open for research.

### **Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use**

Unpublished and published manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

### **Languages and Scripts of the Materials**

All materials are in English.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition/Provenance**

All materials were donated to the Northern Gila County Historical Society, Inc. by the board of the when the organization dissolved. The date of donation is not on file.

### **Accruals**

No further accruals are expected.

**Preferred Citation**

Bibliographic citations must cite the title of the collection, the box number (or other location) and the Northern Gila County Historical Society, Inc. Please use the following example:

Doris Sturgis to Senator Barry Goldwater, Box 1, Folder 1, the Doris Sturges Harger Papers, Marguerite Noble Library, Northern Gila County Historical Society, Inc.

**Description Control**

Finding aid written by Lisa Rasley, February 2010.

Revised by Christine Solymossy using *DACS2*, February 2016.

**Access Points (Access Terms)**

Adrian, Donna  
Burns, Ruth  
Clark, Homer  
Clark, Jean Bonita  
Cox, Carroll  
Dryer, Beverly  
Ewbank, Lorraine  
Ferry, Cathe  
Ferry, Randy  
Fleischmann, Pearl  
Flood, Laura  
Hallman, Alan, DVM  
Haugh, Sue  
Hitzhusen, Ben  
Hitzhusen, Rochelle  
Joyce, John  
Joyce, Tipi  
Loftfield, Kay  
Parker, Nancy  
Partch, Max  
Payson Zoo  
Rohrbach, Roger  
Sanders, Pat  
Seley, Joe  
Sweitzer, Belle  
Vincent, Vincent  
Whitehouse, Katy

## Container List:

### Box 1:

- Folder 1 Board meeting notes 1986; articles of incorporation; receipts for donations; 10-year budget
- Folder 2 Board meeting notes 1987; receipts; cancelled checks; tax return; membership list
- Folder 3 Board meeting notes 1987; bank statements/checks; income statements; tax return
- Folder 4 Board meeting notes 1988; receipts; bank statements; tax return; income statements
- Folder 5 Board meeting notes 1989; receipts; tax return
- Folder 6 Board meeting notes 1990; receipts; tax return; income statements
- Folder 7 Board meeting notes 1991; receipts; tax return; bank statements; by-laws
- Folder 8 Documents regarding tax-exempt status
- Folder 9 Board meetings notes 1992; bank statements; Proposal Plan; notes/letters on PWP plans including cooperation with Forest Service
- Folder 10 Board meeting notes 1993; bank statements; letters from Payson students to Arizona Governor Symington regarding Heritage Fund; newsletters
- Folder 11 Board meeting notes 1994; bank statements; receipts
- Folder 12 Board meeting notes 1995; bank statements; various letters
- Folder 13 Board meeting notes 1996; receipts; financial statements; letters to State representatives
- Folder 14 Board meeting notes 1997; newsletters; receipts; bank statements; various letters; articles of incorporation
- Folder 15 Board meeting notes 1998; receipts; bank statements; various letters to/from organizations/representatives
- Folder 16 Information on Houston Mesa Nature Trail; Forest Service grant request for Houston Mesa Campground; newspaper articles on PWP assistance with Nature Trail

Loose materials – Applications for membership in the Payson Wildlife Preserve; receipts for donations to the Preserve; ledger for Payson Wildlife Preserve 1986-87; check receipts for Payson Wildlife Association 1994-1997

### Box 2:

- Folder 1 17 scrapbook pages with newspaper clippings
- Folder 2 Mogollon Advisor, October 22, 1986
- Folder 3 1999 documents/minutes/checks
- Scrapbook Payson Wildlife Preserve—The Beginning 1986