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Almanac debuts at Verde River Days

BY CAROL KEEFER
 Staff Reporter

Cottonwood council member Diane Joens has worked for two years on what promises to be a great resource book on the Verde River.



Staff photo by Carol Keefer

DIANE JOENS has been working on the book for two years. She is hopeful it will educate the public about the Verde River.

The new softback "The Verde River Almanac" is scheduled to debut this weekend at Verde River Days in Cottonwood Saturday.

"The book was designed," she said, "to help people learn more about the Verde River and to cherish it."

Flowing through the Verde Valley, the 195-mile Verde River is first visible near Paulden, one mile from the Sullivan Dam, running to the Salt River confluence, 35 miles northeast of Phoenix.

Joens, as editor/publisher, believes as many do, "It's a privilege to have a river in a desert." She lovingly describes the finished product as "a gift to my community."

She said the idea was born when friend John Parsons — "Old Man River" — shared his vision of a river almanac suggesting she put it together as a work study internship with Project CENTRL.

You will find the history of the Verde River watershed, why the Salt River Project (SRP) was formed, the Hohokam Indian legacy, Arizona water rights, settlement of water disputes, the river's many names, its history, how nature created the river, geography of Arizona water, geology and hydrology of the upper and middle Verde River watersheds, springs, river studies, Arizona's watershed precipitation and runoff, weather, river recreation, birds and animals of the Verde, the Indian creation story, what the river meant to early settlers, an extensive directory and a sprinkle of cartoons.



Joens describes the book as a “community project” extending special thanks to all its many contributors, writers and researchers.

She expresses gratitude to the Town of Camp Verde “who stepped up to the plate in support of the project” and other financial supporters — the Salt River Project, the Verde Watershed Association, the Sierra Club, the Phoenix Cement Company, Hauser & Hauser Farms, Sedona area citizens and APS.

Joens, who grew up in Sierra Vista, previously served four years as assistant to the District 3 Yavapai County supervisor, was a past Cottonwood Planning and Zoning member and a Parks and Recreation commissioner.

The Verde River Almanac debuts Sept. 27. With a similar look to the Farmer’s Almanac, the fact-and-resource publication will be available at Verde River Days Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Dead Horse Ranch State Park in Cottonwood. The cost for the book is \$5 and can be found at the T-shirt sales booth.

Verde River Days promotes the value of the habitat along the Verde River with over 50 exhibitors, entertainment, and hands-on activities, a perfect venue for Joens’ book premier.

The Verde River Watershed will be project manager for future sales, 827 N. Main St., Cottonwood; or you can contact Joens at 634-4112 to purchase a copy.

“When you think about it, there are three key words about this project — Water is Life,” said Joens.

Why and how of the Verde River Almanac

Water is life! Most residents of the Verde River watershed express concern about the river and water issues. They would like to understand more about the river and its watershed. The Verde River Almanac will educate the public about a precious life-sustaining resource: The Verde River, its tributaries and watershed. It will focus on the people, plants and animals that rely upon this resource for daily existence.

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