

Today's

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Havasu 4 Wheelers fence off mine shaft

By CHRISTINA CALLOWAY TODAY'S NEWS-HERALD | Posted: Friday, April 10, 2015 11:24 pm



Darryld Kautzmann & crew fencing off another dangerous mine shaft

Members of the Havasu 4 Wheelers recently worked on fencing off another dangerous mine shaft just east of the city.

Not everyone riding around town in ATVs is just having a good time; there is one local group who is turning four-wheeling into service. The Havasu 4 Wheelers, a 225 family member off-road club, recently fenced off another dangerous mine shaft just east of Lake Havasu City.

Eight members worked several hours re-fencing a deep vertical shaft at the J&J Mine, marking the fifth year the Havasu 4 Wheelers have worked to secure open vertical mine shafts near popular back country trails.

According to a press release from the club's Public Information Officer Bruce Speirs, the fencing process involved driving steel posts into the rocky ground and then stringing wire and warning signs. Speirs said the terrain featured difficult, steep slopes.

But Speirs said the club isn't new to the area, as this was their fifth time fencing this area. "This is frustrating," said Darryl Kautzmann, team leader of the work party. "Someone keeps coming out and tearing down the fencing. This is a dangerous 100-foot deep shaft. These folks don't realize that their actions not only re-open the danger to the next passerby but it may prompt trail closures by the (Bureau of Land Management)."

Speirs said the club plans to regularly re-inspect not only the area but other local mine sites fenced off over the prior four years. He said the club wants the public to understand the importance of keeping the mine fencing secure. Abandoned mines present a major hazard to unsuspecting desert visitors and those who enter mine shafts risk suffocation from poison gases, injuries from falling down vertical mine shafts, cave -ins, and unstable wooden shoring, according to Speirs.

The effort has been conducted in coordination with the BLM Lake Havasu Field Office, and Tread Lightly, an off-road nonprofit organization with a mission to promote responsible outdoor recreation through ethics education and stewardship programs. Over the years, club members have donated their own time, vehicles, tools, and equipment to re-secure several mine shafts which are a remnant of Lake Havasu's history of gold and silver mine workings. The BLM provides the fencing materials for this important project.

"We coordinate our work with Assistant Field Manager Amanda Dodson," Kautzmann said. "This is all part of our mutually shared goal of making the desert safe for its visitors."

Another wonderful desert conservation and trail maintenance effort by our folks. This effort was conducted as part of Darryld's Highline Run that day. They took an hour out of their fun 4X4 trek to perform this vital task. Here are the participants – Kautzmann, Choate, Robison, Wirick, Leipart, Scholl, Reister, Weller, Melton, Cummings, Olson, Ostwald, and Yahrmarkt.

Other images of the crew:





