

OUR VIEW

Havasu 4 Wheelers keep roamers from falling in holes

Desert wanderers in the Lake Havasu City area rarely fall in deep holes in the ground. That's mainly because the Havasu 4 Wheelers have amended approximately 100 abandoned mine shafts on public land by posting warning signs, fencing and other access controls.

We aren't the only ones who appreciate these good deeds in the wilderness. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management noticed it, too. The Havasu 4 Wheelers recently were singled out by the BLM to receive its "Fix a Shaft Today" award in recognition of the group's efforts to fence off wide open, abandoned, dangerous mine shafts in

the Havasu area. Many of the shafts are vertical ones where miners were seeking for gold, silver and copper.

The local club - which boasts a membership of somewhere in the neighborhood of 250 families - beat out hundreds of other outdoors organizations and mining companies to win the national award. For that, the Havasu 4 Wheelers deserve a hearty round of applause.

The club's close working relationship with the BLM extends beyond mine shafts. The group stages massive desert cleanups each year, removing trash and discarded appliances from the desert surrounding Havasu. Members

also check on remote watering holes built for desert big horn sheep. Further, the 4 Wheelers log locations of abandoned vehicles and eventually yank them out of the desert with the help of Camel Towing.

Because too many thoughtless people view the desert as their personal dumping ground, keeping the wilderness clean is difficult, dirty work that is ongoing.

Knowing that hard work and no play is a bad policy, the Havasu 4 Wheelers make plenty of time for recreation. The group went on approximately 150 runs in 2016 to explore areas around Havasu and beyond, including travel to

the Hualapais, Sedona and Moab, Utah. A trip to Cottonwood is in the works.

If that sounds like fun, learn more at havasu4wheelers.org. The club, founded in 1993, meets on the fourth Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Realtor Center, 2293 Swanson Ave. Annual dues are \$45 per family.

Most members drive Jeep-type vehicles. Every vehicle must pass a safety inspection and no alcohol is permitted on runs. The outings are rated "easy," "moderate" or "hard." Beginners are welcome.

But be prepared - you may get your hands dirty.

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