



# PRONGHORN

*4th Quarter 2018*  
*Volume 24 Number 4*



# ARIZONA ANTELOPE FOUNDATION, INC.

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### **AAF Mission Statement:**

The Arizona Antelope Foundation is an organization dedicated to the welfare of pronghorn antelope. The Foundation's Mission is to actively seek to increase pronghorn populations in Arizona through habitat improvements, habitat acquisition, the translocation of animals to historic range, and public comment on activities affecting pronghorn and their habitat.



### **ON OUR COVER**

**THIS IS WHAT WE HOPE TO SEE RESULT  
FROM OUR PROJECT EFFORTS!**

**PHOTO BY BETTY DICKENS.**

*Pronghorn is a quarterly newsletter for the members of AAF. Letters, comments, news items, articles, pictures and stories are all welcome and will be considered for publication. Address all such items to:*

*Lenée Landis, Pronghorn Editor, PO Box 12590, Glendale, AZ 85318, or by email at [info@azantelope.org](mailto:info@azantelope.org).*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Winter 2019 issue of the *Pronghorn*, the quarterly publication of the Arizona Antelope Foundation.

We have a number of things to cover in this issue of the PRONGHORN; the first thing I want to mention is this is my final President's message. On January 1, 2019 Ken Meadors will be taking the reins as the AAF President, Ken is a former President of the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society and has been an AAF Board member for the last few years.

It has been a joy and an honor to have had the privilege of serving in this capacity and I look forward to remaining active with the AAF for years to come! Also leaving the Board of Directors this year is Tice Supplee who was Past President the last several years and Connie Taylor who has been a dedicated Board Member and Project attendee since Forever and Eddy Corona, who has been a fixture on the board as well and has been instrumental in the success of the Banquets! Tice, Connie and Eddy, Thank All of You for your unwavering commitment to Arizona's Antelope!! New to the Board of Directors are Robert Velasco and Dave Cagle, the AAF Welcomes you aboard!

I also want to Thank all the current and past BOD members for helping making this an easy job and for their commitment to the AAF and for making the BOD meetings, projects, and events a fun filled adventure. If it wasn't for the fun nature of these members I wouldn't look forward to going to the meeting like I do!

Lastly, I would like to Thank Glen Dickens. If it wasn't for him, the success of the AAF wouldn't be nearly what it has been the last 7 years! I have never seen a work horse like Glen, at least not one that wasn't getting Paid!

On some sad news, we recently learned that Jimmy Mehen passed away. "Jimmy" was a retired United States Air Force Captain, Life Member of the Arizona Antelope Foundation, a former President of the AAF, and was our Treasurer for many years. Jim was active in many conservation groups and donated thousands of hours to his beloved causes, the AAF appreciates that we were chosen to be the beneficiary of so many of those precious hours!



Thank You Jimmy!!

In this issue we will have Glen's great assessment on the final project of the season over in Bonita as well as the goings-on at the Quail Festival down in Sonoita where the AAF had a booth, as well as an updated listing of the 2019 Projects.

Earlier this year we had an ONLINE AUCTION of two Antelope Hunts donated by Travis Adams, the owner of "*Bucks and Bulls, Guides and Outfitters*" on a great ranch over in New Mexico that he manages for quality antelope. I want to take this opportunity to Thank him again for his support to the Arizona Antelope Foundation!! The two hunters both had a great time and each took an excellent antelope and we look forward to an article on the hunts in the next issue of the *Pronghorn*, so keep your eyes peeled for that article.

(continued on page 19)

# BONITA GRASSLAND RANCH BOUNDARIES FENCE MODIFICATION

BY GLEN DICKENS, VP/GRANTS/PROJECTS MGR.

Another successful AAF fence modification/removal project was completed by 23 volunteers in Southeastern Arizona on September 28 and 29, 2018 in the northeast end of game management unit 32 near Bonita.

We modified 3 miles of existing boundary fence north and south of the High Creek Road. We removed the bottom barbed wire strand and replaced with smooth, along with installing replacement stays along the fence line. Friday's work day was spent removing mesquite that had grown up along the fenceline. During the project weekend, multiple sightings of rutting pronghorn occurred by most everyone traveling to the camp site on USFS land at the western end of the High Creek Road.

This effort is in direct proximity to ongoing mesquite removal for the Bonita Grasslands NRCS/G&F restoration project with a goal of improving an additional 10,000 acres in the next 4 years. Over the past 8 years, the areas adjacent to and within this project have been grubbed and new waters and boundary fence installed. These projects will help ensure resident pronghorn and mule deer can safely utilize open grassland corridors without interference due to fence line obstructions. It assisted in accomplishing a key portion of the overall Bonita Plains pronghorn travel corridor improvement project.

This project effort benefits the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant in that all labor hours, materials and mileage from this project were used to match the AAF's \$430K 8-year grant for our "Southeastern Arizona Grasslands Pronghorn Initiative". The grant has a goal of improving up to 100,000 acres of "Pronghorn habitat connectivity." This goal was met in April 2018 at Elgin and we are continuing to add to that total through the end of the grant period in calendar 19.

Dinners were served on Friday and Saturday nights with the sides provided by our newly elected President Ken Meadors and Past President Joe-Bill Pickrell and they hosted Saturday and Sunday morning breakfasts as well. Thanks Ken and Joe-Bill!

Thanks go out to several folks who contributed to this successful project:

-Representing the AAF Board: Ken Meadors, Gary Boyer, Al Sue, Joe-Bill Pickrell and yours truly.  
-Other AAF members and volunteers: Betty Dickens, John Millican, Dale Maas, Ron Day, Dave Cruce, Jason Angell, Cameron Becker, Jeff Gillon, Clyde Morris, Joelle Buffa, Dave Laird, Darrel Wood, Rene Dube, Warren Adams, Bill McClendon, Jeff Hannum, and Steve Tritz. Thanks, everyone for your efforts!



*Photos on pages 4-7 by Betty Dickens*







## 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL QUAIL FESTIVAL, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS SONOITA, ARIZONA

DECEMBER 8, 2018



*Kara, Glen, and Robert man the information stations*

by Glen Dickens

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual “Quail Festival” was held on Saturday December 8<sup>th</sup> from 1-4PM at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds in Sonoita, Arizona. Formed last year from a partnership with the Southeastern Arizona Quail Forever chapter lead by President Zack May and the Tucson office of the Arizona Game and Fish Department and local Wildlife Manager Brittney Oleson. It was again a rousing success and well attended with over 300 participants and 20 vendor and organizational booths.

The official start of Mearns Quail Season opened on Friday December 7<sup>th</sup>. Mearns quail hunters from across the country converge annually on the area filling every available trailer rental space in the local community of Patagonia as well as all the local campgrounds and many motel rooms to pursue their quarry. Every conceivable bird dog breed is represented with some hunters having as many as four dogs. A quick walk through the parking lot revealed truck license plates from Idaho, Montana, Indiana, Minnesota, South and North Dakota, Wyoming, Alaska, and of course Arizona.

A local bird dog club was on hand to keep the crowds well fed with grilled hot dogs and hamburgers for a \$3 donation and there was a bird cleaning station and wing aging identification by the AGFD. One display by Kerby Bristow of the AGFD included examples of Arizona’s quail “Big 4” with carcasses of Mearns, Scalies, Gambles and California quail available to examine.



Kara Jensen, AAF Board member, Robert Velasco newly elected AAF Board member, member Betty Dickens, and yours truly manned a dual booth representing both the AAF and Arizona's oldest wildlife conservation organization—the Arizona Wildlife Federation. Many questions were answered about both and multiple folks took the available handouts and quarterly magazines. Both the AAF and the Southeastern Arizona Chapter of Quail Forever are affiliates of the AWF.

*Andy the Antelope* was on hand to be “adopted” and sales were made for family stocking stuffer for the upcoming Christmas Holiday. It was a great time and the AAF and AWF will be represented again next year.



*Photos clockwise from top left:*

*Adopt an Antelope Family—As you can see, adopting an antelope will light you up with smiles! An irresistible antelope stocking stuffer. Kara and Robert share information with an attendee.*

Thanks much to Kara and Robert for making the drive from Phoenix with our respective organizations' materials and booth displays!

*Photos by Betty Dickens*



# GLASSFORD HILL CAPTURE FENCE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT NOVEMBER 14, 2018

BY GLEN DICKENS, VP/GRANTS/PROJECTS MGR.



On November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 44 Arizona Game and Fish Department personnel, Arizona Antelope Foundation Board members, and other volunteers met in Prescott Valley to construct the capture fence wings of a pronghorn trap. The trap is to be used to capture urbanized pronghorn on January 24-25, 2019 for translocation to three areas north and northwest of Wilcox Arizona to bolster the population with additional numbers and genetic diversity.

Each of the three releases will have 5 pronghorn that are radio-collared to provide seasonal habitat use information for 24 months post-release. The Data is to be uploaded at least 4 times daily and analyzed by a GIS specialist periodically. The focus will be on learning where pronghorn are fawning, breeding, and the key zones they utilize in the winter and summer months for foraging. The last time pronghorn were reintroduced to this area was in the 1940's.

Thanks go out to several groups of folks and individuals that contributed to this successful project.

-Representing the AAF; Al Sue, Dave Laird, Robert Velasco, Earl Polvent, Betty Dickens, Jay Leadabrand, Lou Horvath, Sue Moeller,

-Representing the AGFD; Dustine Darveau, Mike Richins, Karen Kilma, John Bacorn, Rana Tucker, Jeremy Smith, Ben McClure, Amber Munig, Virginia Gouldsbury, Cody Johnston, Noah Silva, Jesse Baker, Duane Aubuchon, April Howard, Justin Espino, Glen Wood, Brandon , AJ Lander, Darren Tucker, Velma Holt, Elizabeth Johnston, Tom Bagley, Devin Skinner, Erin Butler

-Representing the Sun City Sportsmen; Wally Brambilla & Judd Keithley

-Representing the Wild Turkey Federation; Craig Dorn

-Other AAF members and volunteers: Tanner Davis (GCU), Anne & David Schnell, David & Gloria Hutchinson, Dave Pence, Wes Siegert & John & Kathy Ritter,

*Project photos by Betty Dickens*





# SONORAN PRONGHORN UPDATE



BY JILL BRIGHT AZ GAME & FISH  
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2018

## *Captive Breeding:*

### Cabeza Pen

During observation periods all the pronghorn have been seen in both pens on a regular basis. Visitors to the feeders have become less regular since the rains, and they have been spending most of their time grazing the fresh forbs throughout the pen. Alfalfa consumption has been drastically reduced. Everyone appears to be in great health. Both pens usually consist of one large herd and usually a small group located elsewhere in the pen. Now that they are easier to classify in the large groups we have adjusted the fawn sexes to 6 males and 6 females in north and 6 males, 4 females in south.

The bomas on the west side of the pens used for capturing the pronghorn for the annual release were padded and made ready for this year's capture on 10-11 October. The pronghorn adjusted well to them. The shift to feeding on the west side halfway through the month did not affect south herd, but north herd took a few days to start coming to the west side feeders. Feeding within the first cell of the boma began in the last week of October. However, due to green-up in the pen, pronghorn have dropped their alfalfa consumption to less than a third of what they were eating and some days no alfalfa is eaten. In an effort to lure them into the bomas, the amount of pellets being fed has been cut back, in the hopes that they will continue to crave pellets leading up to captures in December. In the last week of November, alfalfa consumption seems to have increased a bit and we hope the trend continues as we move closer to captures. Most of the boma activity begins as early as 10:30 am and continues until around 3pm.

The Corid treatment took place 19 - 24 November. After treatment was complete we decided to keep the east side drinkers covered in an effort to force the pronghorn to use the west drinkers, closer to the new feeding areas and bomas. The closed drinkers will be reopened after captures.

An additional 0.68 inches of rain fell in mid October, and 0.2 inches on 30 November. Damage was minimal. With the great forage conditions in the pen no irrigation has been necessary.

Now that we have the 2 new technicians and are fully staffed at the Ajo pen, they have been making great progress on getting the pen into good shape including cleaning up and removing the degraded shade cloth from the perimeter fences, fixing irrigation, placing game fence squares as added support in the perimeter fence where it has been damaged, removing material in washes that collected on the debris fencing, installing additional debris fencing upstream in washes to prevent build up on the perimeter fences, trimming vegetation to increase visibility from the scoping hills for captures, removing old irrigation lines that are no longer being used, and have started working on installing the new top layer of fencing around the pen in the hopes of preventing bobcats from getting over the perimeter fence.

NORTH HALF		SOUTH HALF	
Adult Females	9	Adult Females	10
Yearling Females ( <i>b 2017</i> )	8	Yearling Females ( <i>b 2017</i> )	10
Adult Males	3	Adult Males	6
Yearling Males ( <i>b 2017</i> )	7	Yearling Males ( <i>b 2017</i> )	5
Fawns ( <i>6M, 6F, b 2018</i> )	12	Fawns ( <i>6M, 4F, b 2018</i> )	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Total Pen</b>	<b>80</b>		

## **Kofa Pen**

All the animals in the Kofa pen are doing well, and are accounted for. The Kofa pen is green and alfalfa consumption has been reduced. Preparations for the Kofa capture and release are underway, with the bomas being padded and set up November 14-15. Personnel started moving feeding to the boma area on November 20, and started to feed some alfalfa inside the first boma on the 24th. Pen crew are transitioning the pronghorn to the boma and their last feed at the northeast feeders was on the 28th. There has been signs of pronghorn activity in all 3 bomas. The Kofa pen capture and release will take place January 8 - 9.

Corrid treatment took place November 12 - 16. Kofa pen received 1.55 inches of rain on October 13 -14, and an additional 0.17 inches of rain on November 30 with minimal damage.

The Kofa crew has been busy getting ready for captures, continuing to clean up the pen from the storms, and adding debris fencing upstream in the washes outside the pen to stop debris before it can get to the perimeter fences. They have also been working on solving issues with the Kofa well and realigning the solar panels to the proper orientation for the winter season to increase the productivity of the pump.

Adult Females	11
Yearling Females ( <i>b 2017</i> )	5
Adult Males	3
Yearling Males ( <i>b 2017</i> )	4
Fawns ( <i>2M, 5F, b 2018</i> )	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>

**Wild Pronghorn Cabeza/ORPI/BMGR Herd:** Range conditions are excellent in this area. The pronghorn have been moving around more frequently, likely exploring now that conditions are so favorable. Nothing new or unusual to report.

**Wild Pronghorn Kofa Herd:** The Kofa herd has also started moving around more; conditions on Kofa/YPG are also excellent. The large groups that had been in the vicinity of the pen have moved further south into King Valley or northwest of the pen. Two collared does, a yearling doe, and doe fawn are often on the west side of Kofa near Highway 95. Several large groups are using YPG. They seem to have moved away from the agricultural pivots with the good forage conditions elsewhere. On the latest flight, 71 pronghorn, including 4 fawns were seen.

There were 2 mortalities in the Kofa herd. One 4 year old male was heard on mortality during a September telemetry flight northwest of the pen, but was believed to have been seen alive with the group at the location. He was again on mortality on the next October flight; not seen and by himself. The investigation we conducted could not determine any cause of death as too much time had passed, and it had rained substantially since he died. A 4 year old doe was also heard on mortality on a November telemetry flight. She was located east of Clancy Tank and signs at the site indicated she had likely died from bobcat predation.

*Continued on page 17*

## AZGFD CAPTURE AND COLLAR FOR MIGRATION PROJECT

WENDY HOWELL, WILLIAMS-GRAND CANYON NEWS

Reprinted with permission, Originally published November 6, 2018 at <https://www.williamsnews.com/>



Biologists from Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Forest Service work with Quicksilver Air to capture and collar pronghorn in the Garland Prairie area near Williams. The purpose of the project is to track pronghorn and determine the impacts of fences and roads on their migration. (Photos/AZGFD)

**WILLIAMS, Ariz.** — Forget about the cheetah, the pronghorn is one of the fastest land animals in the world and lives right next door. The sprinting pronghorn is a marvel to see with its sleek and slender build and tiny deer-like body that is perfectly adapted to reach speeds of 60 mph while blending in with the sage colored grasslands of northern Arizona.

Pronghorns are capable long distance runners that can travel for miles at high speeds, but the zigzag of roads and fences that cross the paths of these animals is keeping them from completing their migratory routes, according to the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

“We’ve seen historically they move quite a bit through this area,” said Scott Sprague, a wildlife biologist with the AZGFD. “It’s a pretty robust population.”

### Capture and collar

Sprague and other wildlife biologists from AZGFD and Kaibab and Coconino National Forests joined with volunteers from the Arizona Antelope Foundation for a recent project to capture and collar pronghorn in Garland Prairie near Williams Oct. 23-24.

The project is designed to allow biologists to monitor the movements of pronghorn and study the impacts of roads and fences on the migration of the species.

“The collars record locations every few hours, and we can see as they approach a fence or a road,” Sprague said. “Then we can see where they failed to get across that fence or road.”

Sprague said the data gathered from the collared pronghorn is used to determine which areas AZGFD and the US Forest Service can alter to improve access for the animals.

“We can look at that information and focus fence treatments there or use it to direct habitat treatments,” he said.

Besides the impediment of roads and fences, biologists can also determine how juniper and pinyon tree encroachment in grasslands is affecting pronghorn migration.

“Pronghorn are grassland species,” Sprague said. “They are found primarily in open areas. What used to be grasslands is being converted into junipers because of different ways people are utilizing the land.”

With pronghorn’s keen eyesight, which some people say is the equivalent to an 8-power binocular, they rely on open grasslands to keep predatory coyotes, bobcats and mountain lions at bay.

Sprague said the encroaching junipers limit pronghorn mobility and make them more susceptible to predation. The data collected from the collars will help land managers determine target areas to remove junipers that are encroaching and open it back up for better grassland habitat.

### **Mending fences**



Volunteers modify range fences in the Spring Valley area north of I-40 in August 2017. (Wendy Howell/WGCN)

For the past few years, AZGFD, with the help of the Arizona Antelope Foundation and the US Forest Service, has conducted fence altering projects in select areas in Kaibab National Forest and private ranches near Williams. The most recent project was in September, when more than 60 volunteers joined with Kaibab National Forest and AZGFD specialists to modify fences to allow pronghorn to pass through them.

Research has shown that pronghorn rarely jump fences and prefer to go underneath them, so workers on these projects remove the bottom barbed wire on the fences and replace them with smooth wire at a height of 18 inches from the ground.

### **Animal safety**

Careful planning and coordination is taken by Sprague and his colleagues for safely trapping and collaring the pronghorn. This year, the AZGFD contracted with Quicksilver Air for the collaring project.

“The helicopter pilots we use are extremely experienced,” Sprague said. “The biggest thing is not putting too much stress on the animal during processing.”

Quicksilver Air is a certified Part 135/133 helicopter company that specializes in wildlife capture for research, disease testing and translocation. They have bases in Alaska and Colorado with personnel trained and experienced in aging and weighing animals, monitoring temperature and condition, obtaining required biological samples and measurements as well as phlebotomy, fitting of collars and transmitters.

Sprague said the procedure for safely netting and collaring is different for pronghorn than other animals. “One of the biggest things is limiting chase time,” Sprague said. “The animals are extremely good at running, but they expend so much energy that they get heated pretty quickly.”

Sprague said the technique involves allowing the animals a chance to stop or slow down before netting the animals. “When you put a net on animals running pretty fast, there is certainly a danger when they fall,” Sprague said. “They’re built for speed, not for roughness. They can be injured easily if they fall wrong.”

Once the netting is completed, the helicopter crew and biologists quickly blindfold and hobble the pronghorn to minimize their movement. The pronghorn’s temperature is then taken and monitored as biologists fit the animals with a collar. Some of the animals have blood drawn to check for specific ungulate diseases, and then the animal is released. “They take the blindfold and hobbles off and send them on their way, it probably takes 5-10 minutes,” Sprague said.

The group collared 40 animals, 23 does and 17 bucks, in the late October effort. Biologists estimate 250 pronghorn roam the Garland Prairie area.

### **Using the data**

Biologists will track the GPS locations from the collared pronghorn from their office desktop computers. “The data itself are generated by the collars,” Sprague said. “They each have a GPS unit in it and a simple satellite phone. Once a day it will send its data and that will update a web page we can check.”

As the GPS collar data is collected, biologists will use the data to identify and correct barriers to pronghorn movement. This data will affect the planning and implementation of forest and grassland restoration work. The pronghorn project is a collaborative effort between state and federal agencies along with funding from sources such as the Arizona Antelope Foundation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program.



**Wild Pronghorn BMGR East of Highway 85 Herd:** Range conditions in this area are excellent. These animals continue to use the same general areas, with 3 groups north of the Saucedas and 3 groups south of the Saucedas on the latest flight. The animals south of the Saucedas have moved further west, where it is more open, since they do not need to rely on the waters that are further east and in slightly denser habitats. On the latest flight 46 pronghorn were seen and we believe there are still 2 fawns.

**Water Projects:** We have completed the environmental and cultural resource related reviews for two high priority water projects within the Saucedas project area. However, we have not made any progress applying for a water right even though we initiated the process over a year ago. We were hoping to build those waters this spring, but that seems unlikely now. We will be forced to continue to haul water next year to both experimental tanks in this area to meet the high demands of mule deer and Sonoran pronghorn.

**Forage Enhancements:** The forage enhancements received good amounts of rain and have good green forage; irrigation has been discontinued for now. Technicians continue to monitor pronghorn use, which has dropped off at all the sites.

**Other Projects:** We are getting ready for the biennial range-wide survey of the original Arizona herd, taking place December 8 - 16. Cabeza capture and release will follow right after with processing starting on December 18.

Written December 4, 2018



## **AAF Events/Projects Schedules and Locations**

**January 19—Vekol Valley Fence Removal Project**

**April 13—Bonita/Wilcox Fence Project**

**June 8—Big Lake/Greer Fence Project**

**June 22—Banquet Tempe**

**August 10— Williams South of I-40 Fence Project**

**September 28— Bonita/Wilcox Fence Project**

**To volunteer, email [info@azantelope.org](mailto:info@azantelope.org)**

**Note: This year both our June 8th Project and June 22nd Banquet avoid Fathers Day. Our April 13th project date avoids Easter weekend. The September 28 avoids the archery elk season.**

# MEMBERSHIP

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77. Billie Bechtel, Show Low, AZ
78. Betty Dickens, Tucson, AZ

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Jamie Watkins, Phoenix  
Charles Wilmer Jr, Phoenix

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

James Klingensmith, Gilbert AZ

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(continued from page 3, President's Message)

Joe-Bill Pickrell will continue ramrodding the raffles in 2019 and his efforts in keeping the raffles fresh and new are greatly appreciated! The raffles are becoming a steady source of funding for the AAF so your support by buying raffle tickets is greatly appreciated by the entire AAF Board! Hopefully, if we can continue growing the raffle we will be able to actually have an Antelope Hunt as a raffle item in 2019, so let's keep our fingers crossed.

In closing, I am sure that Lenée Landis our Editor is relieved to have a new President that won't be chronically sending her articles a bit past deadline. Lenée, Thanks for your patience!

If anyone has any thoughts or comments regarding this issue of the Pronghorn, please write or email us at [www.azantelope.org](http://www.azantelope.org)

Sincerely,

**Brian R. George**

President

**“LIBERTAS AD VAGOR”....  
FREEDOM TO ROAM**



### **2019 Board of Directors**

**Ken Meadors-President**  
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**Terry Schupp-Director**



## **GREETINGS!**



I don't really believe in good byes but thank yous are another story. Thank you Brian for your commitment in your position as President, and for positive energy and attitude...and of course, your sense of humor for I doubt "patience" is actually one of my virtues...it takes a special brand of people to roll up sleeves and jump into the middle of a job and take on the responsibility and you have done it well. Welcome to Ken Meadors in Quarter 1, we look forward to it!

Take a look on the [azantelope.org](http://azantelope.org) website to keep up with immediate opportunities and see the info above if you'd like to volunteer. Be sure to get on the email list for the raffle notification because apparently our members are descendants of Quick Draw McGraw...tickets disappear quickly.

Thank you for your support of the Arizona Antelope Foundation.

Best to you, Lenée