



## Footprints Matter from Gold Canyon to Superior

**Footprints Matter** is a community-wide effort dedicated to providing an environmental stewardship opportunity along the foothills of the Superstition Mountains. The first clean-up event in 2010 was on Arizona State Trust Land on and around Peralta Road. Since that first day, the cleanup efforts over the years have included 1500 volunteers and more than 200 TONS of accumulated trash! The effort each year continually increases the square miles included in these significant cleanups.

It's all about the volunteers - We know we are making a difference because the initial identified areas in the State Trust Land along Peralta Road to the Superstition Wilderness trailhead have continued to remain relatively clear of trash. The larger areas are now minimally impacted with long term debris, mostly credited to the monthly trash cleanups being done by ranchers and other permitted users in that area. The two

years of concentrated efforts at Hewitt Station/Whitlow Dam in the northern foothills of the Superstition Mountains, has made notable gains with the support of education and agency enforcement following the cleanup efforts. This fall, *Footprints Matter* extended their outreach to Superior with a community-supported cleanup, including the historic Arizona Trail, which resulted in 5 full dumpsters.

**Lesson Learned** - The message has become clear that we can 'Learn and Live By Example.' If there is no debris or trash in the desert, then the permitted users are much less likely to leave trash. The many acres covered and cleaned with this concentrated effort have brought forth a sense of pride and stewardship which is evident by the self awareness and self stewardship of all users. There is minimal to zero trash on many sites and trails which were once covered in debris.

**Join In The Effort** - The third Saturday in January has been designated by the community as 'Footprints Matter to all of Us' day. January 16th will find volunteers from many organizations, businesses, governmental agencies, ranchers, hikers - and hopefully you - spending a few hours participating in this feel good event. From light activity to challenges, there are ample opportunities for every volunteer's preference. If there is an area that is special to you, please email us and we will assign you to that area. Sign in at 7:30 am, with coffee and donuts, work your assigned area, and do not miss the donated lunch at Hewitt Dam starting at 11:30 am for all volunteers. Sign up stations will be at Peralta Elementary School and Hewitt Station Road north of Queen Valley Road. We will appreciate your RSVP to [info@footprintsmatter.org](mailto:info@footprintsmatter.org) for the cleanup and especially for the lunch count. Be sure to bring your tools, gloves, sun screen, your friends and a positive attitude.

The goal for 2016 is to continue the 'Polish and Pride' efforts of maintaining the area from Peralta Road to Entrada del Oro. The main Queen Valley and Hewitt Station area cleaned the past two years requires further attention, as well as new larger sites with target shooting debris discovered further up the Forest Service Road toward the wilderness. Other areas between Gold Canyon and Superior may be added if enough volunteers RSVP.

This endeavor to be more conscientious and caring of our own backyard reminds us that we are all responsible for our environment. Education, Signage, Reporting and Individual awareness and action are the key to positive stewardship. With our responsible 'footprints', the magnificent Superstition Mountain foothills can be protected and enjoyed for generations to come.

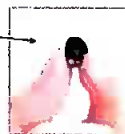
*Footprints Matter to Us is a Community Effort for Stewardship. Superstition Area Land Trust & Pinal Partnership, Northern Open Space Group along with numerous businesses and organizations support this effort. Visit [www.footprintsmatter.org](http://www.footprintsmatter.org) for the rest of the story.*

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# It's Simple to Shop Local with Gold Canyon's Community Connection

by: Sue Schaffer

Modern buzz words, like 'shop local' and 'local first' are not a new concept for Gold Canyon's Community Connection, a compiled listing of local businesses. The volunteer-created and published listing of businesses in Gold Canyon was established 16 years ago as a way for the community to become familiar with local opportunities. The intent of this local directory is that all businesses will be treated equally and fairly. Not only will store-front businesses, including local chains be listed, but this is a place where home-based businesses will have an opportunity to promote themselves.

If you are a business located in Gold Canyon, we urge you to fill out our free-listing form, currently available for the 2016 directory. Yes, it's FREE. Your participation in this directory allows the community to 'shop local first'. Currently, about 1600 copies are printed and distributed. For an added advertising opportunity, consider ordering copies with your business name on the back. Deadline for submitting a free listing form is January 10th, 2016. Find the form at [www.goldcanyonconnection.com](http://www.goldcanyonconnection.com) or email a request to [info@goldcanyonconnection.com](mailto:info@goldcanyonconnection.com) or call 480-983-2171.

We have seen Gold Canyon's local business environment grow, change and prosper - from 16 to more than 320 business listings - A true success story!



The new 2016 directory will be available the first week of February at participating businesses or stop by the Gold Canyon Community Connection's Visitor Center, located within Canyon Rose Storage, 6405 Kings Ranch Road. Carry a printed version in your car, leave one by your phone, and give one to a friend. If you prefer an electronic option, the entire local business directory is interactively found online at: [www.goldcanyonconnection.com](http://www.goldcanyonconnection.com)

We believe that Gold Canyon is a great place to live and the Gold Canyon Community Connection works hard to compile this listing of businesses. It is the perfect tool to begin your 'shop local' adventure. Local businesses simply make our town a better, more interesting place to live. Shopping at local businesses gives neighbors a chance to connect with each

other. It's easier to get to know someone you see often at a local coffeehouse than someone you only wave to on your way in and out of your house. When you invest money in your local economy, you're not just helping local business owners - you're also helping yourself. You're making your town a better place to live in, with a rich character, a thriving economy, and a tightly knit community. And the more local businesses prosper, the more new ones will open - making it even easier to continue shopping locally in the future.

Don't miss out - Get your free listing and pick up a free directory.



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