



**Jim Strickler: Arizona Trail Association Outstanding Volunteer Service Award**



*John Rendall presenting Jim Strickler with the Outstanding Volunteer Service Award from the Arizona Trail Association*

"Jim Strickler here...."

This is how he usually introduces himself. And if you have not met him, you should. A kind and gentle man, he is....full of wonder. "I wonder how this works?" "I wonder where that came from?" Once an engineer, always an engineer 'they' say.

Jim Strickler and his wife, Helen, became a part of the SaddleBrooke community in 1996. They moved here from California. Jim brought with him his keen interest in hiking. After all, he had already spent time hiking and backpacking in the Sierras, including some of the John Muir Trail. His hiking and backpacking experiences would also lead him in and through the Grand Canyon several times.

So it was without hesitation, in the fall of 1999, that Jim became a part of the adventurous group that formulated the beginning of the SaddleBrooke Hiking Club, led by Bill Leightenheimer.

Jim was elected as the club's first chief hiking guide. Eight years later he took a second term at that position. He served as President of the club from 2004-2006. And all along the way, he was a frequent guide for hikes...becoming known for his famous words of encouragement..."It's only three-tenths of a mile further." As a matter of fact, Jim would really prefer to sweep on the hike. That way he could do all the "wondering" he desired, but then at times falling out of sight of the group. This would result in an often-repeated question by John Rendall,...."Where's Jim?"

In the spring of 2002, the SBHC joined hands with the Arizona Trail Association in an attempt to help monitor trail conditions and coordinate volunteer activities on a couple of the trail segments. Jim became very involved in this activity along with his good friend, John Rendall. In 2005, Jim was named Segment Trail Steward. With faithfulness and sincerity, Jim guided the regular work parties on Segment 14A - the Black Hills for the SBHC for nine years. It is for this faithfulness that Jim is being recognized and thanked by the AZT Association.

Jim's connection to and fondness for the AZT goes even deeper because he has thus far completed about 650 miles of the trail, done mostly alongside his friends Bill Leightenheimer, Kathy Gish, and the late Kathy Martin.

Thank you for your dedication, Jim Strickler.



*John Rendall, Jim Strickler, Bill Leightenheimer  
& Kathy Gish celebrating Jim's Award*