



Mountain Lines

Vol.14, No. 5 June, 2007 Preserving Our Desert and Mountains www.mcdowellsonoran.org

Unique Partnership Serves Preserve Well

“Are there maps for these trails?”

For a long time now, Pathfinders and other stewards patrolling the McDowell Sonoran Preserve have had to hem and haw and make excuses in trying to answer that frequent question, but such no longer will be the case. By early June maps aplenty—both the permanent and portable varieties—will be available for trail users.

The most prominent of these will be the five permanent ones, furnished by the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. MSC sets aside money to buy equipment for the Preserve, and \$12,000 of those funds have been donated for this purpose to the city, which designed the maps and will oversee their installation. To acknowledge the gift, the MSC logo will be affixed to each map.



Scott Hamilton

The fixtures are scheduled for placement at the Lost Dog Wash, 128th Street, Sunrise, Quartz and WestWorld trailheads. The detailed, full-color maps will be anchored to steel posts and set in durable frames. They will be impressed on a heavy-duty laminate that resists the fading due to the intense heat and sunlight that eat away just about everything left outdoors in the desert, and coated with a substance that deters graffiti. Their manufacturer, Folia Industries Inc., warrants them against damage for 10 years.

This year, MSC has provided over \$18K in funds for equipment for the Preserve and \$296K in volunteer service. The estimated valued of various volunteer activities is provided by the Points of Light Foundation.

Fold-up versions of the maps will be available free to hikers, bicyclists and equestrians in the information boxes at the trailheads. Larger and far sturdier than previous paper maps, they trace and measure the five major,



Pathfinder Bill Thomas and hiker Jim Hawkins look over a recently printed map of Preserve trails from the City of Scottsdale. MSC is donating permanent trailhead maps to replace temporary maps such as the one in the background.

official Preserve trails (Lost Dog Wash, Ringtail, Sunrise, Quartz and Taliesin), plus the 136th Street Spur, the Old Jeep Trail between the Ringtail and Lost Dog Wash trails and the off-Preserve the WestWorld Trail that parallels the Central Arizona Project canal from the

WestWorld parking lot north of Thompson Peak Pwky. to Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd. Insets with the elevation profiles of each of the major trails will be on both the permanent and paper versions. The backs of the paper maps contain Preserve rules along with trail-etiquette tips and photos of Sonoran Desert wildlife.

The mapping project “answers a need,” said City Trails Planner Scott Hamilton. “It will tie together the South trail system in a way that previous maps haven’t. There’s been a demand for this for some time.”

MSC’s contribution to the project was lauded by Scottsdale Mayor Mary Manross. “This is another good example of the strong commitment the Conservancy has made to the Preserve and how deep the partnership between the City and Conservancy has become,” she said. 🙌

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Looking Back and Moving Forward

note from outgoing Chairman...

For the last 18 months, I have had the honor and pleasure of serving as the Chairman of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. In a few short paragraphs, I can't begin to share what an amazing group of individuals we have leading this organization.

Our Accomplishments

In June 2006, we hired Ruthie Carll as Managing Director of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. She brings great experience and knowledge with her after 10 years with the Education Department at the Desert Botanical Garden. We moved into an office at The Promenade graciously underwritten for 10 years by the Pederson Group. We hired several new staff – including Debbie Frey, Annette MacLean and Sandra Kurlander.

We recruited seven outstanding new directors: Les Conklin, Con Englehorn, Erik Filsinger, Howard Myers, Wali Naibi, Craig Palmer, and Oliver Smith. Since my term began in January, 2006 we have graduated over 70 Stewards from our program. In total, our stewards have given over 20,000 hours of service to our organization and the Preserve since January 2006.

Our Challenges

We were optimistic about the passage of Proposition 106, and disappointed with its defeat. However, with the diligence and drive of Carla and the balance of the conservation community, we are encouraged that efforts continue in the legislature that will provide us with the tools needed to realize the Preserve Vision of 36,000 acres set aside within the City of Scottsdale for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve..

Looking Ahead

With the current staff leadership and the incoming volunteer leadership, our organization will increase our volunteer service to MSC and the Preserve. We will provide rich and meaningful educational programs and exciting hikes for residents, visitors and students. We will work diligently to see the Desert Discovery Center be a point of pride for Scottsdale, the Preserve and the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. We will make important steps towards the completion of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. And, we will bask in the leadership of our new Executive Committee: Len Marcisz, Chairman; Christine Kovach, Vice Chair; Wali Naibi, Treasurer; and Craig Palmer, Secretary. I will remain on the Executive Committee as the Immediate Past Chair.

Special Thanks

And some special words of gratitude. In the last 18 months, our organization has grown and changed. Leadership in our organization is widespread. Every member of the Steward leadership and our Committee Chairs give of themselves selflessly. In addition, the members of our board have worked tirelessly this year to move our organization forward. There are many others who provide leadership to our organization and I am grateful for their service.

There are several in our organization whose contributions to MSC are extraordinarily notable. Bernie Finkel has served as the steward Chair for several years – he's motivating, he's organized and he's fun. Thank you for your inspiring leadership for our army of volunteers. Len Marcisz is a calm, conscientious leader who has served as a Steward, the IT Committee Chair and the Secretary to the Board. He's visionary and he's diligent. We are in good hands with Len at the helm of our organization. Christine Kovach has served as Chair twice, is the current Treasurer and has served in numerous other capacities for MSC. Her attention to detail, creativity and follow through are commendable. Dan Gruber has served as the Education Chair, the Desert Discovery Center Committee Chair, a member of the work crew, a hike leader, an education program provider – he attends most board meetings and every McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission meeting. He has also graciously shared his business acumen, facilitative leadership, critical thinking and his ear with me throughout my term. Thanks Dan.

My sincerest gratitude to each of you for your contribution to the success of MSC. It has been an honor to serve as Chairman.

Melinda Gulick

**2006-2007 Chairman, Board of Directors
McDowell Sonoran Conservancy**



About The MSC

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy's commitment to the community is to champion for the preservation of the Sonoran Desert and its mountains, facilitate the community's relationship with preserved land, and develop a culture of stewardship within the community.

It is our goal to secure for future generations their unique environmental and archeological heritage.

Mountain Lines

Official publication of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy.

MSC Staff:

Ruthie Carll, Managing Director
Debbie Frey, Office Manager
Annette MacLean, Program Asst.
Sandra Kurlander, Data Manager

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The best part of being chairman of the board of MSC is working with stewards. Everything else is just work.

MSC is the stewards. It's about stewards who volunteer to campaign for preservation initiatives, patrol and maintain Preserve trails, restore damaged desert, remove invasive plants and greet Preserve visitors. It's about stewards who develop ideas, take the initiative to translate the ideas into action, and encourage others to join them to better serve the Preserve and the citizens of Scottsdale. Our themed hiking, trail building, bike patrol and Pathfinder programs are examples of ideas developed by creative stewards and made real through stewardship teamwork.

This environment of creativity and teamwork did not happen by accident. It was nurtured over the years by our steward leadership – particularly Chet Andrews, Bernie Finkel and Fred Klein. They, in turn, were supported by the MSC Board and particularly by board chairs Melinda Gulick and her predecessor, Christine Kovach. I am mindful of the example set by Melinda and Christine and intend to provide strong support for the stewardship program from the chair. Creativity and teamwork will be encouraged. That's because we are going to need it.

The next twelve months will present challenges to each of our three major missions.

Advocacy for state land reform and for saving Preserve-delineated land scheduled for public auction will require us to develop teams of advocates and lobbyists within our stewardship ranks. The city of Scottsdale expects us to be strong partners in the fight to maintain the integrity of the planned Preserve boundary. We previously relied on a single individual to do public battle on behalf of the Preserve. Now we must develop a self-sustaining team approach to do this. We have the necessary creativity and experience— we just need to wake it up.

Education for the public regarding Preserve issues is an important ingredient in effective advocacy. We need to more effectively broadcast what our stewards do, so that we are not perceived as an extension of a single individual. We need to recruit, because...

Preservation is going to be a significant challenge over the coming years. Dan Gruber, our resident statistical modeler, has estimated that we will need several hundred more stewards by or before 2010 to meet Claire Miller's and Bob Cafarella's projections for needed support in the Preserve. New trailheads and trails will open. Invasive plants will continue their assaults. We must find innovative ways to meet the Scottsdale Preservation Department's expectations for field support.

Board chairpersons don't solve these problems or address these challenges themselves, stewards do. Smart chairpeople facilitate a creative and enjoyable environment

and then get out of the way to allow our volunteer's efforts to flow. I learned this from Chet.

It's not about me. It's not about any single individual. It's about you, as a steward, working within a motivated team.

See you on the trail!

Len Marcisz
2007-2008 Chairman, Board of Directors
McDowell Sonoran Conservancy



Clockwise from lower left: Les, Con, Erik & Howard

New Board Members

Les Conklin, A Peek at the Peak Magazine.

Mr. Conklin is the Founder of the Friends of the Scenic Drive and currently serves as President of the Greater Pinnacle Peak Association. As a former commissioner on both the Pride Commission and the Preserve Commission, he was awarded the Scottsdale Pride Citizenship Honoree in 2003.

Con Englehorn, Headquarters West.

Mr. Englehorn has been a resident of North Scottsdale since 1991. He is a licensed Real Estate Broker and Appraiser, and has served in a variety of leadership positions within his professional community. In addition, Mr. Englehorn has served on the boards of the Valley of the Sun YMCA and the Stepping Stone Foundation, and he enjoys daily hikes in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

Erik Filsinger, Ph.D., Site Consultants Inc.

Mr Filsinger has been a long-time advocate for the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and currently serves as the Vice Chair of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission, as well as the Chair of the Commission's Planning Committee. Mr Filsinger is an avid rock climber, and currently serves as the President of the Arizona Mountaineering Club.

Howard Myers, Sensor Technologies & Systems.

Mr. Myers, an 11 year resident of North Scottsdale, is an avid preservationist and is involved in a wide variety of community activities. He currently serves as a member of Scottsdale's Board of Adjustment and is the President of the Desert Property Owner's Association. He is a former McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commissioner, and currently serves on the Commission's Planning and Promotions subcommittees.

Advocacy, Education and Stewardship, the Three Pillars of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy

by Melinda Gulick, Chairman, Board of Directors

As noted anthropologist Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Years ago, our community envisioned setting aside one-third of our city as open space through the creation of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. There were many thoughtful, committed citizens in that effort then. There are many thoughtful, committed citizens involved in that effort now.

To a person, the members of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy are committed to our vision and mission: completing and protecting the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. In addition, Carla, the Conservancy’s former executive director who has been a driving force behind our advocacy efforts, has stated that she isn’t leaving the cause. Scottsdale will



MSC’s Bike Patrol volunteers monitor over 100 miles of trail on a regular basis.

benefit from the united and ongoing support of those who helped begin the effort and all of us who have such a strong stake in the success of preservation.

Out of the vision created decades ago, the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy was founded to “preserve the Sonoran



Trail Crew volunteers like these shown at work on Sunrise Trail, build and repair trails throughout the year.

Desert and its Mountains for the benefit of this and all future generations” with a three-fold mission of Advocacy, Education and Stewardship. Our mission manifests itself in many ways within our organization and this community.

Advocacy

From inception, the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy staff and Stewards have been the chief advocates for the creation of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. In addition, we advocate for safe public access and responsible management. Our Stewards, along with many community leaders, have collected signatures, given speeches and attended events in support of securing city votes for the Preserve and for various state land reform measures.

Education

Annually, our organization provides dozens of free public education programs at our trailheads, local libraries, senior centers and other community outlets to teach our citizens and visitors about the unique ecology of the Sonoran Desert. Every encounter we have with a member of the public is an opportunity to share our passion for the Preserve and plant a seed for advocacy. It works!



Stewardship

The City’s Preservation Department has two field employees allocated to Preserve management. They rely on an army of Conservancy Stewards to care for our Preserve. In the last year alone, Stewards spent more than 14,000 hours caring for the Preserve by building and maintaining 109 miles of public trails, patrolling, orienting Preserve users at the trailheads, leading public hikes and a myriad of other activities.

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy is led by a 14-member board of directors who is diverse in their backgrounds, professions and interests. Among our members we have a

banker, a management consultant, an equestrian enthusiast, a rock climber, several community activists, a planner, a jeweler, an engineer, a publisher and many more. As diverse as we are, we remain united in our commitment to the preserve vision which sets forth a 36,000 acre Preserve that, when complete, will protect nearly one-third of the City of Scottsdale as natural, public open space.

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy is committed to the Preserve vision – and thankfully, so are many others. Join me in thanking Carla for her inestimable contributions to the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy during her tenure and for her continuing commitment to Preservation in our community. And while you're at it, join me for a hike in the

Preserve or, better yet, on a work project to see our outstanding Stewards in action. You'll be inspired by each of these community trustees' commitment to the stewardship of



Jane shows off one of her many teaching tools.



Horse Patrol volunteers help monitor trails that are remote or difficult to access. Board Member Sue Livingston, shown here, also coordinates

our community's greatest treasure, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Work with us – together we will realize a vision that indeed changes our world. 🙌

Year End Savings (YES!) Endowment Gift

MSC's fiscal year ends on June 30. This fiscal year, our expense budget almost doubled the previous year's due to hiring, opening the office, and activities like buying the City of Scottsdale an ATV for trail maintenance and trail signs for the Preserve.

We have great news! For the first time in MSC's history, we will be able to make an end-of-year gift to our endowment. And there's more! Board member Jane Rau was so pleased with our financial success that she has given \$40,000 to increase this endowment gift.

You may be wondering exactly what an endowment is. An endowment is an account in which the principle funds are never withdrawn and the interest generated supports the operating costs of the organization. Thus, endowments create a reliable, permanent source of operating funds and allow the organization to focus more attention on meeting its mission. Endowments are vital sources of income for non-profits, particularly to those that do not have revenue streams. For example, a museum may have admission fees, a gift shop and café, and more. MSC has always committed to providing free programming to the community. While

you will see that some of our activities that do require a fee, they will always be balanced by a wide array of no-cost opportunities.

Endowments of a significant size can be hard to build. Donors may think, "Why don't I keep my money and just give the organization the interest?" The reason is simple. Giving to an endowment is critical because it takes a large amount of principle to generate enough interest to have an impact. For example, a \$1 million endowment usually provides about \$50,000 annually. Giving to an endowment enables your gift to work together with others to create more than what any of the gifts could do alone.

If you would like to contribute to MSC's first ever YES! endowment gift, please use the enclosed envelope and form to make your gift. **Don't wait to long!** We will make this gift on June 30th!

Desert Cooking



Did you know that the Mesquite tree in your yard can provide a tasty treat? Mesquite beanpods can be dried, ground, and used as a type of flour. You can purchase flour at the Desert Botanical Garden or in other specialty stores around the valley. Steward and Chef Richard Robinson tried a few favorite recipes he found online and these are our favorites. Enjoy!

Richard Robinson, Chef and Steward

Mesquite Banana Bread

from Martha Darancou Aguirre of Rancho la Inmaculada

3/4C Mesquite meal	1C Mashed banana
1C All purpose flour	1/3 C Butter
2/3 C Sugar	1/2 C Milk
2 tsp Baking powder	2 Eggs
1/2 tsp Baking soda	1/4C Chopped nuts pecans
1/4 tsp Salt	

Mix mesquite meal, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, eggs and salt. Add mashed banana, or butter, and milk. Beat on low speed until blended then on high for 2 minutes. Add remaining flour. Beat until blended. Stir in nuts. Pour into greased 8x4x2 inch loaf pan. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 55 to 60 minutes until toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes. Remove from pan. Cool thoroughly.

Sonoran Oatmeal Cookies

2 cups whole wheat flour	1 cup sugar
1/2 cup mesquite meal	2 eggs
1 cup oats	1 cup margarine or butter
2 teaspoons baking soda	1/2 cup chopped nuts
2 teaspoons baking powder	

Preheat oven to 400°F

Blend first five dry ingredients (flour, meal, oats, soda and baking powder) in medium bowl

Blend margarine (or butter) and sugar, add eggs

Combine all ingredients until well blended

Drop on un-greased cookie sheet

Bake by rounded teaspoons for 12 minutes or until lightly browned

Ask a Expert

MSC is lucky to have people from many walks of life who have joined together to support the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. If you have a question about the Preserve, be it science, scenery, recreation, or policy, send it to info@mcdowellsonoran.org and we'll answer them all – and a few will make it into the Mountain Lines each quarter.

Q: "I'm a mountain biker who is new to the area. Back east I had to worry about ticks and soft spots on the trails. What should I be worried about out here? What is a good introductory-level trail?"



*Tommy Collins,
Chair of the Bike
Patrol Team*

A: In Arizona we have a mix of terrain depending on where you ride. You shouldn't have to worry about ticks unless you're riding in an evergreen forest in the north part of the state. In the desert regions you should worry more about snakes, scorpions and javelina hogs. However, it's fairly unusual for most mountain bikers to encounter any of those creatures. Please remember, you are a guest in their environment, so the less contact with them the better off you will both be. Once you're

comfortable with the bike paths around the valley you can work your way onto one of the easier trails in MSC. I would suggest starting from the Lost Dog parking area and taking Lost Dog north toward Taliesin. If your riding skill level allows, you can go

up to the Taliesin overlook, enjoy the view, and then turn around for a nice downhill trek back to Lost Dog. Soft spot? The only soft spot on our trails would be from my last crash over the bars. Otherwise, please think seriously about a full suspension bike to tackle the copious amounts of rock we all know and love.

Q: It so hot in the summer but I still want to hike! Can I hike in the Preserve in the early morning or in the evening?



*BJ Tatro,
Chair of the
Pathfinders*

A: The Preserve is open from sunrise to sunset. Why, you might ask, is that? Our McDowell Sonoran Preserve is just that – a Preserve, not a park. Its primary purpose is to protect the land and its flora and fauna. Sonoran Desert animals are most active at dawn, dusk, and nighttime – this helps them to survive in our dry and hot environment. They need this time to move about freely without our intrusion.

You might be wondering how one knows when sunrise and sunset are. The times change throughout the year. You can find them on the National Weather Service website (www.nws.noaa.gov). For example, on June 1, sunrise is at 5:19 a.m. and sunset is at 7:32 p.m. There are plenty hours of sunlight – so get out there and hike. And be sure to take an adequate supply of water and wear sunscreen and a hat.

on the trails

Hikes

MSC ANNOUNCES 5 BBB (BACK BEFORE BREAKFAST) SUMMER HIKES

Yes, it's hot in our area during the summer, but legs still must be stretched, so the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy will conduct a series of 5 free, early-morning hikes between mid-June and mid-July.

All will begin at 6 a.m. and be completed by 9 a.m. No reservations are required.

Hikers should wear sturdy, covered shoes or boots and bring plenty of water. Hats, sunscreen and snacks are suggested.

For detailed directions to the trailheads go to www.mcdowellsonoran.org.

Saturday, June 16. Ringtail Loop. A 2.5-mile hike past fine specimens of Sonoran Desert plants. Mild inclines only. Allow ± 2 hours. Meet at the Lost Dog Trailhead lot at the end of 124th St. north of Via Linda.

Saturday, June 23. Cactus Trail. A 3-mile loop along Little Granite Mountain through a saguaro forest. A few steep sections but mild inclines otherwise. ± 3 hours including carpooling. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Blvd.

Wednesday, July 4. Balanced Rock. A 4-mile roundtrip to a striking rock formation. Mild inclines only. ± 3 hours including carpooling. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Blvd.

Saturday, July 14. Taliesin Overlook via the Lost Dog Trail. About 4 miles total to a saddle overlooking the East Valley and Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural complex. Mild inclines only. ± 2 hours. Meet at Lost Dog Trailhead lot at the end of 124th St. north of Via Linda.

Saturday, July 21. Brown's Ranch. A 4-mile roundtrip through the former working ranch. Mild inclines only. About ± 2 hours. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Blvd.

Hot Tip–

Here's a tip from the National Park Service: Do not wait until you start feeling thirsty to start replacing lost fluid. By the time you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated! Your body can absorb only about one quart of fluid per hour. Drink one-half to one full quart of water or sports drink each and every hour you are hiking in the heat. Carry your water bottle in your hand and drink small amounts often.



Steward Dick Benson leads a hike on Sunrise Trail

Classes

Hike Right

Day: In Class on June 19 and 21, (at DC Ranch Desert Camp), On the trail June 23 (TBD)

Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Saturday 6:30 to 9 a.m.

Max People: 20

Description: Take this 3-session workshop to learn how to be a smart, safe hiker. During the first 2 sessions, we'll discuss hiking "dos and don'ts" as well as dispel some of the common myths about desert plants and animals. The third session will be on the trail for an early morning hike. This workshop is taught by Stewards (trained volunteers) of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. Their passion is infectious so be ware!

Cost: \$18 (\$15 for DC Ranch residents and MSC volunteers)

Instructor: MSC Stewards

To Register: 480-998-7971 x100

Desert Survival

Day: August 13 & 15, (DC Ranch Homestead)

Time: 6 to 8 p.m.

Max People: 40

Description: There isn't a polite way to say this so here it goes: In the first session of this class you'll "die" and in the second session you'll find out why and how to avoid it happening again. This fun, light-hearted class should be required for all new to the desert residents.

Cost: \$18 (\$15 for DC Ranch residents and MSC volunteers)

Instructor: MSC Stewards

To Register: 480-998-7971 x100

Naming Geographic Features in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve

(A Bigger Task Than You Might Think)

by Don Meserve (right), City of Scottsdale Preservation Planner

Managing the Preserve sometimes requires work on little known tasks like ensuring that recognizable rock formations, passes and peaks have official names. If you've ever named a child or pet, you know that picking the right name can be a daunting task. Fortunately, members of the community got together and tackled this lengthy process a few years ago. Community members from the Preserve Commission and its Planning Committee, City of Scottsdale staff, MSC, Arizona Mountaineering Club, and local property owners worked together to formalizing the naming process. Here is a glimpse at the path taken to secure names for 19 geographic features within the proposed boundary of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.



In March 2003, the Planning Committee recommended 19 names to the Preserve Commission. This list and maps of their locations were made available to the public. After discussion at several Commission meetings that, as always, are open to the public, the Preserve

Commission unanimously approved the recommended names of all 19 features. On August 30, 2004, the Scottsdale City Council held a public hearing at which, Jamie Buchanan, daughter of Herb Drinkwater, expressed thanks for honoring her father's memory and read comments into the record from her mother, Jackie Drinkwater. City Council also voted unanimously to approve all 19 names.

Next, Preservation staff had the extensive task of writing and submitting the name application forms and other required materials to the Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names. The first 3 names, Taliesin Wash, Lost Dog Wash and Taliesin Overlook, were submitted in December 2005 and approved on July 18, 2006 – about six months later. These names could now be used on city, county or state maps and on revised USGS topographic quadrangle maps (topo quads).

In April, 2007, 10 more applications were submitted including Drinkwater Peak, Bell Pass, Windgate Pass and Horseshoe Ridge in the central area of the mountains, and Tom's Thumb, Gardener's Wall, Morrell's Wall, Sven Slab, Mesquite Canyon, and Ochoa Wash in the north of the McDowell Mountains within the Preserve land. Mesquite Canyon is commonly thought to have been named by Greg Woodall, one of the founders of MSC.

The remaining names have not been prepared for submittal yet. When ready, this next group will include names for 6 features north of Dynamite Blvd. on city or state land.

And you thought it took you too long to name your pet. Try naming a 'geographic feature' on a whim and you will find the process of getting a name officially recognized anything but whimsical. This process requires collaboration in order to ensure that the names we have for the future are names that we will be proud of and that represent our heritage. This is yet another example of the synergetic relationship between MSC, The City of Scottsdale, our peer organizations, and our community. 🧗



A climber ascends Sven Slab; Photo by John Nystedt



Tom's Thumb; Photo by Cathy Cope



Gardner's Wall; Photo by John Nystedt

Most proposed names had been used by the local community for a long time, some for decades, but never officially approved. For example. Local rock climbers know Sven Slab even though it doesn't "officially" exist.

The Women of World Headquarters

MSC's office is lovingly called "World Headquarters" by staff and volunteers. This center of activity is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. One these days, three terrific women work together to keep MSC going. Meet the Women of World Headquarters:



left to right: Sandra, Annette, Debbie

generation later, Pace University. She has taught in the NYC public schools and, after completing her degree from Pace, worked as a computer programmer. Sandra has served two terms as corresponding secretary for the Volunteer Friends of KAET, coordinated the marketing to seniors for the Phoenix Film Festival and has been a volunteer educator for the Phoenix Zoo. Sandra is a proud member of MSC Steward Class #5.

Annette MacLean – Programming Assistant

Annette is originally from Cardiff in South Wales, where she worked as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. She also works at the DBG guiding tours for school children. Annette also graduated from the DBG's Desert Landscaping School. She teaches children from pre-K age through 8th grade on subjects ranging from a basic introduction to plants as living things to the strategies living things have for survival in our arid environment. Prior to moving to Arizona in 2005, Annette and her husband Andrew lived in New Jersey for 20 years where they raised 2 sons. There, she was an active member of the Warren County Garden Club and raised guinea hens and other exotic poultry for fun and profit. Annette graduate in Steward Class #10.

Debbie Frey – Office Manager

After Debbie Frey graduated from Syracuse University with a B.A. in History of Art, she worked in retailing in New York City and Phoenix as a buyer for Goldwater's

Department Store. She decided to make a career change to education. After getting her teaching certification, Debbie worked in the Paradise Valley Unified School District for over 25 years teaching grade levels 1-6. She received her Masters in Learning Disabilities from Arizona State University. After Debbie retired from teaching in the public schools, she redirected her abilities for teaching to the Desert Botanical Garden where she was employed in the Education Department as a school guide and a Day Captain. Debbie enjoys reading, traveling, gardening, and playing with her dog Sarah.

Debbie graduated with Steward Class #10. 🏡

Memorials

In memory of Wilfred Passow

donation given by Scottsdale Y-Trekkers

In memory of Leisa Lewis

donations given by:

B J Tatro	Donald & Mary Baier
Dan & Elaine Gruber	Leon Joyce Smith
Dick & Crystine Benson	General Dynamics Corp
Karen Silva	Len Marcisz
Bob Freund	Mary Palmquist
Denise Carpenter	Gerald Hafermann
Mary Elbert	H.S.B.C. Abbotsford (Kelly P)
Judith Fivecoate	Carol Kaplan
Virginia & Ludwig Heller	James & Leslie Smith
Barbra Anderson	Paramount Imports
David & Connie Link	Ella Davis
Judith Wire	Michael & Judith Schachter
Brokersmart Solutions LLC	John & Alice Demetra
Richard & Key Thomas	Brenda Davis
Marilyn Van Tine	Ruthie & Phil Carll

In memory of Timothy James Donovan

donations given by:

MSC Pathfinders	John and Alice Demetra
Joni Millavec	David, Rita Kay, & Wendy Ryan
Deborah Frey	Ruthie & Phil Carll
Annette MacLean	

In memory of Rodney Daeffler

donations given by:

Nancy Howe	John and Alice Demetra
BJ Tatro	David, Rita Kay, & Wendy Ryan
MSC Pathfinders	Ruthie & Phil Carll

preserve up close

Desert Wildfire

By Chris Stalzer (right), MSC Steward and Type II Wildland Firefighter

As desert residents, our minds turn to thoughts of wildfires as the weather gets hotter and drier. Is wildfire a threat for the Preserve? The answer is yes and no. While fire is a serious issue in any dry climate, naturally caused wildfires are not part of the long-term history of the low desert. “Desert fires are a very recent phenomena — we’ve been seeing them since about the late ’70s,” said Cecil R. Schwalbe, a research ecologist for the U.S. Geological Survey’s Desert Research Station in Tucson.

Vegetation is the fuel for wildfires. During much of the year there isn’t enough dry vegetation in a given area to allow a fire to spread or to burn extendedly. This changes in summer when native spring annuals and landscape plants that have taken root in the Preserve die off. Dry weather, wind, this source of fuel and a spark are the recipe for a wildfire.



A dry lightning strike in the Preserve; Photo by Brian Mayeux

What causes a wildfire?

There are two main causes of wildfires: humans and lightning. cigarettes thrown from vehicles or dropped on trails, construction equipment, vehicles brushing against plants on roadsides, improperly extinguished camp fires, dumping or burning trash in natural areas, and arson. Lightning is the main natural cause of wildfire.

Have there been wildfires in the Preserve?

Small lightning-caused fires happen each year. The largest wildfire incidents in the Preserve occurred in 1995. A lightning strike began the fire, named the Rio Fire, that burned more than 23,000 acres both in the Preserve and the McDowell Mountain Regional Park.



If I could do one thing to help protect the Preserve, what would it be?

Homeowners can help save the desert – their houses too — by clearing nonnative plants, particularly bunch grasses, from their yards. Nonnative plants have greatly increased the destructive potential of wildfires in recent decades, adding fuel in a place where there had been little to

burn until humans arrived. Ornamental grasses, commonly called fountain grasses are a major culprit. Sadly, the seeds of these grasses are easily spread by the wind allowing them to migrate into the Preserve. MSC spends thousands of hours trying to rid the Preserve of invasive fountain grasses. We are not winning this battle.

If I live near natural desert, what can I do to protect my home?

Begin by creating a defensible space around your property. This doesn’t mean creating a plant-free yard! A live vegetation zone can be your best protection. The type of plants and their condition are the key to success. Native plants, including small bushes, cacti and other succulents, and even groundcovers can reduce fire danger if the plants are well maintained and healthy. Leaving open ground, preferably with gravel topdressing between plants limits fire’s ability to spread. Removing dead branches from trees, cleaning out plant litter from beneath shrubs, pruning dead flower stalks, and generally removing old plant material within 15 feet from your property line will help. For more information on “Defensible Space” visit the City of Scottsdale website at the following link: <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/safety/Fire/Default.asp>

Will this be a bad year for wildfires?



Because of the long-term drought we are experiencing, there is a significant potential for an active fire-season. The Preserve has been forced to close

East Valley Tribune Photo: 2005 Cave Creek Fire

in the past due to extreme fire conditions. Trespassing in the Preserve during these closures is prohibited. Stewards monitor the Preserve during closures and throughout the night on July 4th in order to keep people from accidentally starting a fire.

What should I do if I see a fire in the Preserve or other natural area?

If you witness a wildfire, notify the Scottsdale Fire Department immediately by dialing 911 and be prepared to give a location as best as possible. 🚒

from the managing director

The Nature / Human Connection

by Ruthie Carll, Managing Director



Photo by Ruthie Carll



Photo by Renee Immel

My mother called me after receiving her membership renewal request with a question. It began with “Honey, you know I support you in whatever you do.” This is the kind of opening line that raises the hair on the back of all adult children’s necks.

“You often say in your letters that we need to support MSC because of the importance of natural, open spaces. You know that I’m a shopper not a hiker.” (*Beads of sweat are now dotting my forehead.*) “I was telling my book club friends about you (*Oh no - not the book ladies*) and they wanted to know why natural open spaces were so important (*a little dizzy now*) and I didn’t do a good job explaining it to them.”



Photo by Ruthie Carll



Photo by Gene Almendinger

Oh - that isn't so bad after all. Actually, it is a good question. Here are few things the experts have to say about this subject.

—Richard Forshier, author of *Paradise Valley Outdoor Education Guidebook*:

In our times of shopping malls and video games, life’s pace is often expected to be furious. To slow down, to examine at leisure is often thought of as not a valuable use of time. But we must not forget the children (and ourselves) need to wonder, to examine, to recognize the unique, to see beauty in the normal. The development of an inner peace, a love of beauty, a love of natural and wild places is a tremendous gift that we owe our children. We need to provide opportunities to experience nature in all of its fragility and harshness. We need to allow nature into our children’s lives.

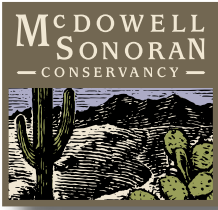
—Stephen Kellert, Harvard professor and author of *Building for Life, Designing and Understanding the Human-Nature Connection*:

Despite evidence that children form deep connections with the natural environment essential in their physical and mental development, data suggests children today encounter substantially fewer opportunities for direct, satisfying contact with

healthy natural systems.

—Robert Pyle, noted conservation author and retired Yale professor:

One of the greatest causes of the ecological crisis is the state of personal alienation from nature in which many people live. We lack a sense of intimacy with the living world. The extinction of experience implies a cycle of disaffection. As cities and metastasizing suburbs forsake their natural diversity, their citizens grow removed from personal contact with nature, awareness and appreciation retreat. Intimate association is necessary. A face-to-face encounter with a banana slug means much more than a Komodo dragon seen on television. Electronic mediation may effectively convey facts and impressions and reinforce interest, but when the world comes edited for maximum impact and bundled into quick bites and bytes, it fails to convey the everyday wonder of the much-maligned ordinary. Just as real life does not consist of car chases and exploding buildings, nature is much more about grasshoppers in the pigweed than rhinos mating on a pixelated screen.



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