



# Mountain Lines

Vol.14, No. 2 October, 2006 Preserving Our Desert and Mountains [www.mcdowellsonoran.org](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.org)

## MSC finally has a permanent home

Thanks to a generous donation from The Pederson Group, The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy has a home for the next ten years.

Beginning October 1, the MSC will be headquartered in the Scottsdale Promenade Corporate Complex on the corner of Scottsdale Rd. and Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd. The Pederson Group has generously donated an office suite that will house the MSC for the next 10 years. The office suite is made up of seven rooms, including four offices, conference room, workroom, and lobby.

"This could not have come at a better time," explained Ruthie Carll, MSC's managing director. "We've been growing dramatically, with new staff, more volunteers and more need within the Preserve. Before this, the organization was loosely housed in volunteer, staff and board member's garages and homes. That arrangement did not foster the synergy that a common location can bring."

You are encouraged to attend a special open house to celebrate our grand opening on October 26, from 5 to 8 p.m. There will be food, fun and prizes. Scottsdale Mayor Mary Manross will speak, sharing her support of the Preserve and the MSC. The event is free, but please RSVP to [rsvp@mcdowellsonoran.org](mailto:rsvp@mcdowellsonoran.org) so that we can plan for food and beverage.

The new office address:  
McDowell Sonoran Conservancy  
16435 N. Scottsdale Rd.  
Suite 110  
Scottsdale, AZ 85254

Mark your calendar to attend  
the Oct. 26 Grand Opening.  
5 - 8 p.m.

### inside this issue

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Prop 106.....               | Page 2 |
| New Managing Director.....  | Page 3 |
| Fall Hike Schedule.....     | Page 4 |
| McDowell Sonoran Month..... | Page 5 |
| Preserve Up Close.....      | Page 6 |
| Steward Corner.....         | Page 7 |

Visit Our Website At  
[www.mcdowellsonoran.org](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.org)



If you believe future generations should also have the opportunity to marvel at the majesty of our desert and mountains, your "yes" vote on Proposition 106 is essential. See Carla's column on Page 2 for even more reasons why.

## from the executive director



It's simple...  
yes on 106,  
no on 105,  
no on 207.

Yes indeed, it has been one heck of a busy summer!

Thanks to the hard work of many of you, we turned in over 300,000 signatures gathered to put the citizen's initiative, Conserving Arizona's Future, on the November ballot.

I'm pleased to report that the top signature gatherer in the whole state is MSC volunteer Kathy Howard, Second place belongs to another Scottsdale resident Inge Vairo of the Coalition of Pinnacle Peak. Many MSC volunteers turned in over ten petitions each and qualified as Super Volunteers. You all did a wonderful job and we cannot thank you enough!

Our initiative will be listed on the ballot as Proposition 106. Unfortunately the ballot will be crowded with many other propositions including, sad to say, a spoiler state lands bill that Legislature put on at the very last minute.

This spoiler - Proposition 105 - is designed solely to create confusion amongst voters and defeat Prop 106 - and any meaningful state trust land reform. It preserves barely any land and does not provide the planning tools necessary for local communities to properly manage growth on state lands nor does it allow the trust's education beneficiaries to participate in growing our state's education funds.

### **Plain and simple: Prop 105 is a sham but Prop 106 saves land!**

For your convenience we have inserted an information flyer from the YES on PROP 106 campaign in this newsletter. On the back of it you will find a map that shows which Scottsdale lands will be preserved when you VOTE YES on PROP 106.

In the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, PROP 106 will immediately protect 5,177 acres of state land in the McDowell Mountains and Granite Mountain; it will provide the opportunity for Scottsdale to sign a long-term purchase agreement without going to auction for an additional 9,347 acres that were reclassified as suitable for conservation under the Arizona Preserve Initiative; and this will maximize use of the existing preservation tax as Scottsdale works with the state to purchase the remaining 4,500 acres within the voter approved Preserve boundary.

### **This is going to be a tough fight and we need your help - Without PROP 106 we won't have any tools available to save this land!!**

I'm also pleased to report that the MSC Board of Directors has chosen to oppose Proposition 207 on the same ballot. This measure is masquerading as a private property rights bill that will "protect the little guy". In reality, it will gut all local zoning ordinances and prevent your elected officials from acting on your behalf to purchase land for parks, roads and yes, conservation. Please visit the [www.noprop207.org](http://www.noprop207.org) website to learn more about this bad idea.

As we welcome the cooler weather and all the events planned for October's 12 Annual McDowell Sonoran Month, I urge you all to visit the Preserve. Take in the magnificence of this natural treasure we are blessed with and then do your part to protect and appreciate it!

## 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.

### Special Thanks To **Steve Maniscalco**

for the use of his beautiful  
Preserve landscape photos

## Mountain Lines

Official publication of the McDowell  
Sonoran Conservancy, published  
four times per year.

### **MSC Staff:**

Carla, Executive Director  
Ruthie Carll, Managing Director  
Debbie Frey, Office Manager

### **MSC Board of Directors:**

Melinda Gulick, Chairman  
Bob Freund, Vice Chairman  
Christine Kovach, Treasurer  
Len Marciz, Secretary  
Bernie Finkel, Sue Livingston,  
Wali Naibi, Jane Rau,  
Oliver Smith, Tom Walsh

### **Ex Officio Directors:**

Bob Cafarella, Claire Miller

McDowell Sonoran Conservancy  
16435 N. Scottsdale Road  
Suite 110  
Scottsdale, AZ 85254  
480-998-7971  
[www.mcdowellsonoran.org](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.org)  
[info@mcdowellsonoran.org](mailto:info@mcdowellsonoran.org)

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy  
is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

## Ruthie Carll Named To New Managing Director Post

Ruthie Carll grew up a tomboy in a rural neighborhood on the New Jersey shore. Her home, with its large yard on the Beaver Damn Creek, came equipped with muskrats, fireflies and all sorts of water birds. She spent hours on her dock with her bird book and binoculars and kept a list of everything she could identify.

When the time came to go to college, biology was a natural fit, and she was graduated with a BS in the subject. Her love of growing things lead her to ASU, home of one of the few plant science departments in the country. As she drove away from the shore she pledged to return to the coastal region she loved. That was more than 15 years ago. Little did she suspect that she was a desert rat at heart.

Ruthie's odyssey has taken her to the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy, where in late June she became the first managing director.

She brings to the post her academic background in the sciences and 11 years of employment at the renowned Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix. In 2002 she became the DBG's education director, in charge of an array of desert-education courses for adults and children as well as for the group's large docent force. She instituted new programs and expanded existing ones, in the process quadrupling the organization's income from education programming to almost \$500,000.

She left the Garden, she says, because she sees herself as "primarily a builder, not a maintainer" and wanted a leadership role in a younger, growing organization. She admits that leaving a secure post to find such

a position in a restricted field was a long shot. The odds against her were longer still because she limited her search to the Valley, where she and her husband, Philip Carll, make their home. Thus, when MSC approached her about the job it was creating, she considered it an "absolute

miracle" and snapped it up.

Her MSC responsibilities include managing operations and programming, fund raising and administering volunteer programs. Ruthie says that the opportunity to work with volunteers was a main reason she took the MSC job and that she's been impressed with those she's met here. "We have a great group of people, full

of expertise, experience and enthusiasm," she says. "I want to tap into those qualities and create new, interesting ways for these dedicated volunteers to contribute to our mission."

She continues: "I'm going to work hard to improve communication within the organization. If information and ideas are flowing, we can't help but accomplish our goals. I'm not much for organizational hierarchy. I find that teams of people who all contribute accomplish more than in a top-down organization. I'm the first to admit that I don't know everything.

My motto is 'All of us together are smarter than any of us alone.'"

MSC's primary objective until November is to ensure that Proposition 106 passes; this would allow the completion of the Preserve as planned.

After the election, she'll concentrate her efforts on knitting the Preserve and MSC more firmly into the fabric of the Scottsdale community. "I'd like to see us complete the Preserve Access Plan and make the Preserve a greater resource for education and recreation for people of all ages. We formed to serve the community and I see my job as facilitating that."

Meantime, she's doing what she can to keep her green thumb from fading, zealously landscaping around her Shadow Mountain home and agitating her neighbors to rip out their lawns and install native plants.

Sometimes I'll sneak onto their property and plant cacti and agave pups," she confesses.

Any complaints?

"Not so far."



# Fall Is A Great Time To Get Back In The Hiking Habit

*People who sign up with the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy as volunteers or Friends do so for love of the outdoors, but that feeling easily can turn into an abstraction. The best way to make it concrete again is to take a hike.*



*MSC offers guided public hikes just about every Saturday and Sunday from the start of October to the end of April, a program as extensive as that of any in the Valley. All are free and open to anyone. We have short hikes (about 3 miles) and long ones (more than 13 miles), ones with mild inclines (there are no flat hikes in the desert) and ones*

*with more serious ups and downs. Our trails in the Preserve and in the state trust land north of Dynamite Road that has been designated for preservation pass through some of the prettiest land anywhere. You can travel many miles and not see anything better.*

*In the spring of 2004 we offered two off-Preserve outings exclusively to Friends at the \$100-a-year-and-above annual support level. We plan to resume the practice this fall with a hike over the scenic Go John trail in Cave Creek on Saturday, Nov. 18. The hikes present a chance to get off our usual paths and commune with our fellow preservationists. Plan to attend. We'll also be conducting special hikes for community groups and begin offering hikes to groups of out-of-town visitors.*

*Once you set foot on the trail you'll recall what drew you to MSC and why we go to the trouble we do to protect our desert heritage. There's a land that time forget out there and it's closer than you think.*

Except where noted, there is no need to register for these hikes. Plan to arrive at the meeting place about 15 minutes before departure time. Hikers are required to bring adequate water and wear sturdy, covered shoes or boots. Hats, sunscreen and snacks are suggested, and lunch, where noted.

For descriptions of hikes and directions to the assembly points please visit our website at [www.mcdowellsonoran.com](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.com).

**Oct. 7, 7:30 a.m. Ringtail Loop.** 2.8 miles, about 2 hours. Meet at the Lost Dog Trail Head ramada at 124th St. north of Via Linda.

**Oct. 8, 7:30 a.m. Brown's Ranch.** 4 miles, about 2 ½ hours. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Rd.

**Oct. 14, 7:30 a.m.-Taliesin Overlook via the Lost Dog Trail.** 4 miles, about 2 ½ hours.

Meet at the Lost Dog Trail Head ramada at 124th St. north of Via Linda.

**Oct. 21, 8 a.m.-Geology Hike on the Amphitheater Trail.**

5.7 miles, about 3 ½ hours. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Rd.

**Oct. 22, 8 a.m. Scenic Trail in McDowell Mtn. Regional Park.**

4.7-miles about 3 hours. Meet at the Trail Head Staging Area parking lot in the park, off Fountain Hills Blvd. about 7.5 miles north of Shea Blvd. There's a \$5-a-car admission fee to the park.

**Oct. 29, 8 a.m. Balanced Rock.** 4 miles about 3 ½ hours including carpooling. Meet at end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Road.

**Nov. 4, 1 p.m. Ringtail Loop.** Program plus 2.8 mile hike, about 3 hours. Reservation required for this hike; call 480-998-7971, box 2, or visit our website, [www.mcdowellsonoran.com](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.com).

**Nov. 5, 8:30 a.m. Ironwood Wash.** 7.5 miles, 800-foot elevation gain, about 4 ½ hours. Lunch suggested. Meet at the lot at 104th St. just south of McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd.

**Nov. 11, 8:30 a.m. Cactus Trail.** 3 miles, about 3 hours including carpooling. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Rd.





**Nov. 12, 8:30 a.m. Dixie Mine.** 5.5 miles, about 4 hours, including carpooling. Meet at the end of 128th St. north of Via Linda.

**Nov. 19, 8:30 a.m. Big Saguaro Loop.** 5 miles, about 3 ½ hours, including carpooling. Meet at end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Rd.

**Nov. 25, 8:30 a.m. Sunrise Peak via 145th Way Trail Head.** Climb about 900 feet in 1.5 miles, good level of fitness required, about 3 ½ hours including carpooling. Meet at the end of 128th St. north of Via Linda.

**Nov. 26, 8:30 a.m. Cathedral Rocks.** 5.5 miles, about 3 ½ hours. Reservation required for this hike; call 480-998-7971, box 2, or go to our website at [www.mcdowellsonoran.com](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.com).

**Dec. 2, 8:30 a.m. Cholla Mountain Loop.** Rugged 8 miles, about 4 hours. Bring Lunch. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Rd.

**Dec. 3, 8:30 a.m. Photo Hike.** How to improve your desert- photography skills on the 2.8-mile Ringtail Loop, about 2 ½ hours. Bring your camera. Meet at the Lost Dog Trail Head ramada at 124th St. north of Via Linda.

**Dec. 9, 8:30 a.m. New Little Granite Loop.** 7.5 miles, many steep and slippery sections, about 5 hours including carpooling. Bring lunch. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Rd.

**Dec. 10, 8:30 a.m. Sunrise Peak via 128th St. Trail Head.** Climb about 1,000 feet in 2.3 miles, about 3 1/2 hours. A good level of fitness is

required. Meet at the end of 128th St. north of Via Linda.

**Dec. 16, 8:30 a.m. The Human McDowells at Rio Verde.** 3 miles along the Verde River, about 3 hours. Reserevation required, call 480-998-7971, box 2, or visit our website at [www.mcdowellsonoran.com](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.com).

**Dec. 17, 8:30 a.m. Two Mountain Loop.** Rugged 8 miles, many steep and slippery sections, about 4 ½ miles. Bring lunch. Meet at the end of Alma School Rd. north of Dynamite Rd.

## New Steward Course Starts Oct. 12

A new Steward certification course begins Oct. 12. The six session, once per week course is free, with classes taught at the Via Linda Senior Center.

For registration information email [volunteer@mcdowellsonoran.org](mailto:volunteer@mcdowellsonoran.org)

## events

# October Events Set To Celebrate 12th Annual McDowell Sonoran Preserve Month

October is McDowell Sonoran Preserve Month. MSC's line-up of programs contains something for everyone.

### Five Free Guided Hikes

Ringtail Loop, Brown's Ranch, Taliesin Overlook, Amphitheater Trail, and Balanced Rock

### One Great Ride

Tour de Scottsdale at DC Ranch,

### Two Interesting Classes

The Human McDowells, Mining the McDowells

### One Grand Event

MSC's Grand Opening of our brand new office

### Ten Informative Talks

Everything you want to know about the Preserve and the plants and animals that live there

### One Volunteer Training Program

Become a VIP – Volunteer in the Preserve

### One Community Work Day

Help us keep the Preserve in tip top shape

*Check the complete calendar at [www.mcdowellsonoran.org](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.org) or call 480-998-7971 for further details about a specific event.*

## Is That Rain I Smell?

When the desert smells of rain, what you really smell are creosote bushes. Throughout most of the year, the shiny resin that coats the creosote bushes' leaves traps most of the water inside while still

allowing some water and gasses to leave. The resin on creosote bush leaves is water soluble, so when it rains, the rain washes it off. The resin dissolves, evaporating into the air producing the "rain smell" that Valley residents love.



The pores on the leaves now are open so water is taken into the roots, up the stems, through the leaves and finally back out into the air. On this journey through the plant, the water picks up new resin which is left behind on the surface of the leaf as the water evaporates, re-coating the leaves. When you are hiking, stop to look closely at the creosote bushes' shiny, resin-coated leaves. If you are carrying water (and you always should be), sprinkle some on the leaves and enjoy the smell of rain.



## Stuck On You.

If you've had a run in with a cholla ball, or more accurately called a cholla joint, you know how hard it is to remove. Hikers often wind up with a joint of the Teddy Bear Cholla shown here, in their ankles and lower legs. Your first instinct is to grab it and try to pull it out. All this accomplishes is getting your hand stuck to the joint that is still stuck to your leg! Carrying a couple of simple everyday items in your pack is all you need to take care of this dilemma. The first item is a small pocket comb. Put the teeth of the comb over the spines stuck in your leg, and give it a quick flick away from you (just make sure your hiking partners are standing behind, not in front of you). Next, carry a tweezers or small needle-nosed pliers to use on any spine that may have broken off and still be in your skin. Firmly grip the spine and pull it out. This may be hard as the spines have barbs that keep them firmly attached, but often a quick, firm tug will do the trick. Sometimes a spine breaks off or you just can't get it out. Although it may be sore for a few days, after a number of showers or baths, most will work their way out.

## Don't Frighten Me.

The desert tortoise stores water in its bladder, reusing it until fresh water is available. This system is highly efficient - unless they become frightened. When this happens, the tortoise will release the contents of its bladder, perhaps as an attempt to startle its attacker. Unless they find water or a succulent

plant to eat, they may soon die of dehydration. If



you are ever lucky enough to see a desert tortoise in the wild please do not disturb it! These long-lived animals are just one of the special animals that make the Preserve their home.

## steward corner

### Larry Levy New Southern Region Lead Steward

Larry S. Levy has been named as lead Steward to head MSC's Southern Region corps of Steward volunteers.

A lifetime avid outdoorsman and environmentalist, Levy became active in MSC upon retiring to Scottsdale.

"Having such a treasure as the McDowell Sonoran Preserve almost at my doorstep was a surprise I had not known I was going to find when I moved to Scottsdale," said Levy.

Levy also serves MSC as a hike leader, Pathfinder, and presents public programs.



### Preserve Paintings Exhibit Scheduled For Oct. 28 - Nov. 13

A series of oil paintings by noted Scottsdale artist Larry Cremeens will be on display Oct. 28 through Nov. 13 at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library.

The paintings depict some of the most beautiful landscapes of the Preserve, which Cremeens identified with the help of MSC Stewards.

You are invited to meet the artist at a special opening evening reception which will be held from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Oct. 28 in the Civic Center Library Community Room. No reservations are necessary.

---

## become a freind of msc

### Join Our Circle of Friends

Your tax-deductable membership contributions help preserve a unique ecological treasure that otherwise would be lost. Your gift can make a difference today and for generations to come.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle Amount Enclosed:

\$40    \$90    \$150

\$300    \$500    \$1000

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks Payable  
To MSC

Mail to MSC, P.O. Box 14365,  
Scottsdale, AZ 85267-4365

Thank You For  
Your Support

Or Make Your Contribution Online At  
[www.mcdowellsonoran.org](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.org)

## McDowell Sonoran Preserve Field Guide Now Available

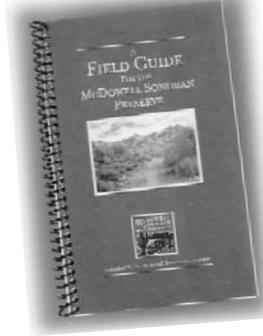
The first field guide written especially for Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve has been published by the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy.

The 140-page guide contains information not only on the plants and animals found in the Preserve, but also on the geological history and cultural history of the area as well.

"We designed the guide to be a hands-on reference book for use at home or on the trail,"

explained Fred Klein, an MSC Steward who served as editor for the guide. "It was written by MSC stewards and volunteers who not only have expertise in the areas they are writing about, but also have many hours of experience on Preserve trails, leading hikes and patrolling."

Cost of the Field Guide is \$15, plus \$4 for shipping and handling. Order online at [www.mcdowellsonoran.org](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.org), or mail your check for \$19 made payable to McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Field Guide to MSC, P.O. Box 14365, Scottsdale, AZ, 86267-4365. Be sure to include your name and address for return mailing.

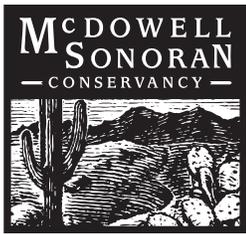


## Tour De Scottsdale Set For October 18

One thousand cyclists are expected to participate Oct. 18 in the annual Tour De Scottsdale which starts from DC Ranch. Proceeds support MSC. The event includes a 70 mile road ride, 2.5 mile family fun ride, bike support, biking expo, awards, music, food, merchandise and more.



To learn more or to register to ride, go to [www.active.com](http://www.active.com).



McDowell Sonoran Land Conservancy  
P.O. Box 14365  
Scottsdale, AZ 85267-4365

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
SCOTTSDALE, AZ  
PERMIT NO. 807