



## MY STORY

### **Alice Bauder**, *Legacy Steward*

Alice Bauder came to Arizona (from CA) in 2002 when her employer asked her to move. In 2007 she retired after a long career in educational publishing during which she witnessed a number of major corporate changes and developed some well-informed views on effective organizational communication. After meeting Conservancy volunteers on Lost Dog trail, Alice became intrigued and decided to become a steward. She began an extended period of post-retirement involvement in the Conservancy in which Alice defined a unique niche that was both impactful and very personal.

In her professional life, Alice had a natural interest in making organizations work effectively and developed an ability to identify obstacles to smooth organizational functioning. Prior to assuming management positions, Alice had been a technical writer, which she believes helped give her the ability to explain technical issues to non-technical people.

Early in her tenure with the Conservancy, Alice noticed that the organization lacked consistent internal communication. Taking matters into her own hands, she conceived of, designed, and implemented the first regularly published newsletter, *The Preserver*, for which she remained responsible for seven years. The newsletter addressed a gap in the Conservancy's operations by providing a vehicle for each of the Conservancy's programs to communicate with each other. In this way, stewards learned about the work of the entire Conservancy even though they might be focused on only one or two aspects of its work.

Alice's skill in communications led to other related roles within the Conservancy. She became the Secretary to the Core Leadership Team responsible for taking minutes of the meetings. She was involved in the preparation of the first Steward Manual, the Stewardship 2020 report, and today is still responsible for the production of the weekly Thursday E-newsletter, in which Conservancy staff keeps stewards apprised on matters of interest.

The Conservancy is not the only cause to which Alice devotes time and energy. She describes her motivation for her volunteer work as coming from a simple desire to "make the world a better place." This desire has led her to do volunteer work for, among other places, Phoenix Children's and Honor Health hospitals, Hospice of the Valley, and Lutheran Social Services.

It takes all kinds of people with all kinds of skills to effectively run a growing organization. Most organizations need visionaries, strategic thinkers, marketers, salespeople, managers, teachers, development professionals, laborers, technical experts, government and public relations specialists, and so on. One of the defining characteristics of the Conservancy from the perspective of its volunteers is the opportunity it provides for people to define roles that match their own skills, experience, personalities, and goals.

Alice Bauder is a great example of someone who came to the Conservancy at a point in her life when she had time and energy to give, and whose skills and interests addressed a distinct organizational need. She was more than content not to assume a leadership position, but instead to work diligently on improving communication, a vital organizational competency. In doing so, like many other stewards, she developed what she calls “true friendships” derived from “common passions.”

Alice is proud of the Conservancy’s expanding mission and its growing worldwide status as a model for conservation and environmental education. When asked what she hopes for the future of the Conservancy, she says that she hopes it also maintains focus internally--on the wonder of and care for the land itself, which brought us together in the first place.