



The Preserver

September 2012

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy champions the sustainability of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve for the benefit of this and future generations. As stewards, we connect the community to the Preserve through education, research, advocacy, partnerships and safe, respectful access.

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From the Office of the Executive Director



Executive Director Mike Nolan

Welcome to a new season in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve! There are some superb additions to the Preserve this year – including a new trailhead at Tom's Thumb and a new trail to the Marcus Landslide – that you need to experience. By mid-October, signs will be in place around the Tom's Thumb trailhead building and along the Marcus Landslide trail that will describe the geology of the Preserve and the possible causes of the landslide. This is destined to become a popular gateway into the Preserve.

The key challenge I see to the Conservancy over the next few years is to adapt efficiently to growth in the Preserve. Consider what's coming:

- Shortly before Thanksgiving, Scottsdale hopes to purchase 6,400 acres of State Trust land in the far north of the Preserve, land that will connect the existing Preserve to the Tonto National Forest, one of the most important ecological goals we could achieve. With that 10 sq. mi. addition, all but about 3,600 acres in the north area will be Preserve land.
- Construction is already underway on the Brown's Ranch trailhead, to be finished by late spring or summer 2013.
- A revised trail plan for the north area, recently approved by City Council, will bring some organization to the web of trails currently found there.
- New boundary fencing will help keep motorized vehicles out of the Preserve and allow us to begin restoration of disturbed areas.

The addition of two new trailheads will require the Conservancy to double the number of pathfinders from current levels. (Brown's Ranch will be staffed at Gateway levels and Tom's Thumb at the same levels as Lost Dog.) Stewards currently patrol about 55 miles of trails in the McDowell Mountains; the north area will add more than 100 miles of trails. That will require more stewards and a more robust patrol program encompassing expanded bike and equestrian patrols to cover such a large area. More trail miles means more trail maintenance. More Preserve acreage means more habitat to restore and monitor.

From the Office of the Executive Director, cont

As a result of the growth of the Preserve, a key focus this year is on steward recruitment. We need the help. We're offering five new steward orientations with a goal of attracting a minimum of 150 people over the year. We are working on a consistent recruiting effort involving ads, flyers, and one-on-one contact with Preserve users. Please reach out to your network of friends and associates who share your passion for the Preserve and encourage them to consider becoming stewards.

On a separate note, this is the first opportunity to introduce two new Conservancy staff members. Melanie Tluczek is our Research Program Coordinator, overseeing and coordinating the biological inventories and historical studies taking place in the Preserve under the McDowell Sonoran Field Institute. Michelle Kass is our Annual Giving Manager, who will help us generate the financial resources we need to expand our stewardship and research efforts to protect the ever-growing Preserve. I hope you get to know both of them soon.

Scottsdale Reorganizes Preserve Staffing

by Mike Nolan, Executive Director

To respond to the rapid expansion of the Preserve and accommodate increasing demands, the City recently revised the organizational structure of the Preservation Division.

Kroy Ekblaw is the Preserve Director, overseeing the acquisition of land for the Preserve. Liz Hildenbrand-Crossman is now serving as the Preserve Manager, overseeing the operations and maintenance of the Preserve. Claire Miller, John Loleit, and Robbin Schweitzer now report to Liz.

- Claire Miller will be responsible for the northern area, including the Brown's Ranch trailhead and all the Preserve lands north of Dynamite/Rio Verde Road.
- John Loleit will coordinate work in the central area of the Preserve (Tom's Thumb trailhead area and the "gooseneck" between the south and north parts of the Preserve) in addition to his duties at Pinnacle Peak Park.
- Robbin Schweitzer will be responsible for the south area, including the Gateway, Lost Dog, and Sunrise trailheads.

Scott Hamilton will also report to Liz, and is responsible for the trail and trailhead planning.

These changes may affect Patrol, Pathfinder, and Construction and Maintenance stewards as we move forward. Your program chairs will keep you up to date on any changes to phone numbers or other contact information, and any other impacts on our steward programs.



Board of Directors Report

by Tom Headley, Board of Directors Chair and Steward

Each year we have one to three directors drop off the board due to their term limit being reached or a change in their personal circumstances. Virginia Korte and Wali Naibi are no longer on the Board. Both have been long-term members and strong supporters of the Conservancy. Please join me by thanking them for their dedicated service over the years and for what we hope will be their ongoing service to the Conservancy in different roles in the years to come.

The flip side is that each year we add new members to the Board of Directors that arrive with new energy and fresh ideas of how to make the Conservancy a stronger, more effective organization. This year we were proud to add:

- Dana Garmany is the Chairman and CEO of Troon Golf. He is an extraordinary strategic thinker and has been a long-time supporter of the Preserve and of the Conservancy. He has personally been responsible for raising an amazing amount of money for the Conservancy.
- Greg Kruzel is a practicing attorney and shareholder of Braun Siler Kruzel here in Scottsdale. As an attorney Greg's clients include individuals, businesses, and charitable organizations. As an individual Greg is an avid hiker and has personally helped build and repair many trails in the Preserve while working as a Boy Scout leader.
- John Simpson is a CPA and a tax expert. Having retired from working in other parts of the country while maintaining a home here, he is now setting up a local office. His clients include both businesses and individuals. John and his family enjoy hiking in the Preserve and he is looking forward to becoming a steward.

This year 70% of the returning board members are stewards. I am sure the new board members will soon join those ranks. Most importantly, however, we need to have a board skilled in doing what our board needs to do, that is, to provide strategic direction for our organization. We work hard to have a board of exceptional people that have a wide variety of skills, experience and knowledge. Specifically we look for people with skills and experience in the following areas:

Organizational Management
Financial Management
Fundraising
Marketing

Legal
HR Management
Tourism/Hospitality

Science Management
Academia
Community Activism/Politics

and/or with strong connections to the following groups:

Foundations
Governments
Media

High Net Worth Individuals
Industry/Utilities
Neighboring Communities

Community Leaders
Land Developers

Clearly many people who are currently stewards have the skills and experience we need on the board. What could be better than to have an active steward apply for a board position in the coming year? This coming year Jack McEnroe, Board Vice-Chair and steward, is leading the committee responsible for nominating new board members. If you have any interest or know anyone that has or should have interest in serving the Conservancy on the Board of Directors, please let Jack or Core Leadership Team Chair Steve Dodd know.

As always - thank you to all stewards and to all board members for all you do for the Preserve.

From Research: Fall Flora and Fauna Surveys

by Melanie Tluczek, Research Program Coordinator

You may remember several research projects last spring for flying insects and ground dwelling arthropods (such as spiders and beetles). These will resume in October, and there will be opportunities to learn about the insects in the field as well as learn new skills for photography and identification. On October 6 Ron Rutowski from Arizona State University will be teaching a workshop on photographic techniques for flying insects. Also in October Stevan Earl from ASU will begin a workshop series on how to identify ground dwelling arthropods using microscopes.

We have ongoing projects involving the larger fauna as well. By setting field cameras at water holes around the Preserve, we have captured photographs of numerous animals that come to drink. The mammal surveys will start again with a training workshop on September 13 that will teach live trapping techniques. In addition to using the live traps, we will also hold a workshop on using track plates to capture the footprints of small mammals. This is an exciting new addition to the surveys, so stay tuned for details.



Deer at Tom's Thumb Spring, August 27 survey

Walter Thurber from the Desert Rivers Audubon Society will lead bird surveys this month. In October we will open up these surveys to larger groups of beginning-to-intermediate birders. The bird group has detected 99 species so far, including a clay-colored sparrow (*Spizella pallid*), which is rare in Arizona.

Herptile (reptiles and amphibians) surveys will continue as long as the weather is warm; so far we have detected over 26 species. The August survey yielded diamondback rattlesnakes, tiger rattlesnakes, red spotted toads, side blotched lizards, and a long-nosed snake.



Long-nosed snake near Little Granite Mountain, August 25 survey

The flora survey is now up to 295 plant species out of the 349 that we expect to see. However, the dry conditions make it difficult to find the less common monsoon species. Many desert plants have seeds that lie dormant in the soil for years waiting for heavy rains, and may not emerge in years of average or below average precipitation. To document these plants, we will be collecting soil and growing out the seeds in a greenhouse at Scottsdale Community College. By providing the seeds contained within this soil with adequate water and light, we hope to discover species that would normally escape detection in the survey.

If you are interested in becoming a Citizen Scientist and participating in any of these surveys, please contact Melanie Tluczek at Melanie@mcdowellsonoran.org

Community Relations Report

by Barbara Pringle, Community Relations Chair and Master Steward

Volunteers for the Community Relations program reach out to the public to engage and educate them about the importance of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and the work of the Conservancy. We communicate with the larger public via four subcommittees that share the story of our Preserve and Conservancy in different ways: Photography, Mountain Lines newsmagazine, Outreach events and Speaker's Bureau. Here are highlights of our initiatives and challenges for the coming season.

Photography

Photography is an incredibly effective tool for sharing the beauty of our Preserve and its unique value to our community. The committee, led by steward and photographer Barb Jabara, is busy with new season activities. We are upgrading our traveling photo exhibit with new frames and mountings and will be exploring future exhibition venues. Currently, Mayo Clinic's oncology floor has a collection of our photos, which have garnered positive feedback from people there for treatment, something that makes us feel really good and reinforces the notion that photography can reach out to people in ways that other mediums cannot.



We launch this season's photography contest October 1st. The new Conservancy website will allow entrants to simply click on a link at the site and upload their photos, and so we expect to be sifting through lots of entries.

Our popular photography workshops will be back again under the expert leadership of Richard Buchbinder. The first workshop is scheduled for November 8 and 10, with another set for spring 2013

and we welcome assistance with these sessions. Enjoy taking or viewing photos? Come help out!

Mountain Lines Newsmagazine

Over the years, this publication has grown from a small, informal four-page newsletter to a 20-page newsmagazine with content and photography that cover a wide range of issues and activities related to our Preserve, our volunteers and our environment. We are fortunate to have great photographers and have added talented new writers to the team this year. We always welcome more voices!

Speaker's Bureau

Steward Jack Leonardo has taken on the big job of team lead for this committee. His team is tasked with helping to plan and implement thematic talks that build awareness and support for the Preserve and educate the community about our activities. Right now, our small group of speakers does a great job with our ongoing series, as well as providing occasional customized talks. We have a couple of big initiatives and challenges ahead of us. One is to identify and expand the number of community groups that we speak to; the other is to grow the number of stewards who can give talks to these groups. We want to develop a brief overview talk that nearly any steward could give, as well as expand our 'expert' topics and speakers. We could really use your help here, so if you'd like to talk to the community about the Preserve and the Conservancy, contact us!

Outreach

Outreach is our largest committee group, yet they have at times been underutilized because of the limited number of events that we can attend due to time, staff and budget constraints. We would like to utilize these volunteers for outreach tasks that include distribution of collateral materials to local businesses, libraries and community centers; afternoon trailhead outreach activities; hosting of events such as trailhead grand openings; and doing school visits to encourage children and parents to get involved with the Preserve's activities.

Community Relations Report, cont.

Outreach volunteers will continue to host our booth at public events such as AZ Game and Fish, Tour de Scottsdale, Kids Fest, Cook-Out at the Ranch, and



2011 Tour de Scottsdale

Wings over the Preserve. We are happy to have a new team lead, steward Anne Boehler-Bosch, who is jumping into this challenge with both feet. We have purchased another booth so will be able to attend more events. We welcome your ideas and participation in these fun and important community events!

As you can see, Community Relations offers lots of different programs under its umbrella, yet all have the overriding goal of engaging, educating and stimulating the local community to support our wonderful Preserve and the many volunteers like you who work very hard to protect it for future generations.

Join us!

Volunteer Support

by Nancy Howe, Steward

For the first time, Volunteer Support, the youngest Conservancy program, boasts strong leaders for each of its key task areas as we launch our 2012-2013 season. Volunteer Support reflects our recognition that stewards thrive in a sense of shared community; Volunteer Support ensures that our shared experience is fun, meaningful, and responsive to steward concerns.

Volunteer Support has been engaged for weeks since we have two key events coming up soon:

Mentoring Orientation Become a Mentor!
Fri, Sept 14, Flo Nelson, 6 pm.

2012-2013 Season Kick-Off!
Wed, Sept 19, Homestead, 5:30 pm.

Who is helping to organize our events? Here's the slate of our new steward leaders (in alphabetical order), their roles in helping you, and their emails, in case you'd like to know more or join our team:

Alice Bauder, abauder@cox.net: editor of this monthly steward newsletter, *The Preserver*

Rich Cochran, rkcochran@cox.net: responsible for steward retreats

Bernie Finkel, fencil@aol.com: responsible for steward recognition

Larry Person, lperson5@cox.net: responsible for steward recruitment

Paul Staker, pstaker@sbcglobal.net: responsible for mentor orientation and assignment

John Cassidy, Volunteer Support Chair, johncid600@gmail.com, makes sure that everything gets done, and also serves as our Conservancy ombudsman. If you have concerns or questions about "why" or "how" things are the way they are, he's your Go-To steward.

See you at the Kick-Off!

Great Loss to Steward Community: Marcy Kiefer

by Alice Bauder, Steward



Marcy Kiefer

One of our most active and beloved stewards died May 11, 2012 at age 69 from cancer.

Marcy Kiefer was born July 15th, 1942 in Freeport, Illinois. She attended nursing school at Freeport Memorial Hospital, at the University of Wisconsin and Northern Illinois University. She received her post masters in Midwifery

at the University of Illinois. She appreciated the opportunity to teach nursing students and to act as a consultant to medical centers in medical risk management which she did until her retirement in 1997.

Marcy married steward Karl Haviland on March 20, 1982. After their retirement, Marcy and Karl began spending winters in Arizona. Marcy was very involved in quilt guilds in both Arizona and Illinois. Her favorite activities were being in nature, sewing quilts and being with friends and family.

Marcy became an active steward who participated in many Conservancy activities. She regularly assisted in the office, served as pathfinder at the trailheads, and contributed in many ways to the steward education program. She patrolled the trails even when she became very ill. She loved her volunteer work with the Conservancy.

Marcy's warmth and ever-present smile will be missed and remembered by all those who knew and loved her.

In Celebration of Jane Rau's 90th Birthday

by Peggy McNamara, Steward

On July 24th, the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy hosted a 90th Birthday Party for Jane Rau at the Desert Camp Community Center. Jane received hugs, kisses and best wishes from more than 60 people who gathered in the hall decorated with balloons and flowers.

Halfway into the festivities, Tom Headley, Board of Directors Chair, spoke to the gathering on behalf of the Conservancy. He thanked Jane for her valuable contribution in helping to found the McDowell Sonoran Land Trust (the precursor to the Conservancy) and for all her volunteer work supporting the Preserve.

Jane related an amusing story about a stranger who saw her at the side of the road with a flat tire. "You're Jane Rau!" he said. He insisted on changing her tire because of all the work she does for The Preserve. "So," Jane explained, "you can receive some benefits for working as a volunteer."

Next, the 90 candles on Jane's birthday cake were lit as Jim Lane, Mayor of Scottsdale, wished Jane a "Happy Birthday" and also thanked her for her work.



The Mayor presented Jane with a **Certificate of Proclamation** that declared July 24 as Jane Rau Day.

Everyone sang Happy Birthday as Jane effortlessly blew out all 90 candles and cut the first piece of cake. Punch and cake were served to all guests to round out the celebration.



Meet Steward Hayden Siros

by Peggy McNamara, Steward

Hayden Siros is a native Arizonan and she's lived here all her life. She is also our youngest steward!

Hayden began hiking when she was just eight years old. Some of her first hikes were in the Phoenix Mountain Preserve. So, it is not surprising that she chose to become an MSC steward.

Hayden has hiked various portions of the Arizona National Scenic Trail which runs through the central portion of Arizona from the border of Mexico to the border of Utah. In September of 2011, Hayden backpacked to Havasu Canyon with her family and friends. They camped near Mooney Trail for three fun-filled days and enjoyed romping in the nearby turquoise swimming hole. They also went exploring and found the caves near the swimming hole and by Mooney Falls.

Hayden is a freshman at Paradise Valley High School. She already knows that she wants to have a career in writing when she graduates from college. She is working toward that goal. In April 2012, she contributed an article to *The Preserver* about her experience of hiking the Tom's Thumb trail.

Hayden has a younger sister and two very loving parents. Her father, Adam, is also a steward. Both of them attended Steward Training in October 2011. They are graduates of the Sturdy 30 class.



Hayden and friend doing trail work



Steward Hayden Siros

As a steward, Hayden tries to do as much volunteer work with the Conservancy as possible. Mostly, she works with her dad on Construction & Maintenance projects. Sometimes she brings a friend to help. Hayden also enjoys going out with her dad on patrols, especially when they bring their large dog. Since participating in those Conservancy activities, she says, "I have become much closer to my dad because we both go out into the Preserve and do something we love and enjoy."

Through school, Hayden does volunteer work with the elderly. She participates in activities such as playing games with the elderly and painting women's finger nails. Hayden also works on school cleanup projects.

When she is not volunteering, Hayden enjoys reading, writing and spending quality time with her family.

Hayden says, "I am proud to be a part of the Sturdy 30 class with my dad. I joined MSC to be closer to nature while giving back to it at the same time." Giving back as a steward is important to Hayden. When she hikes in the Preserve, she likes knowing that she is helping to preserve the mountains for future generations to also enjoy.