



MCDOWELL Messenger

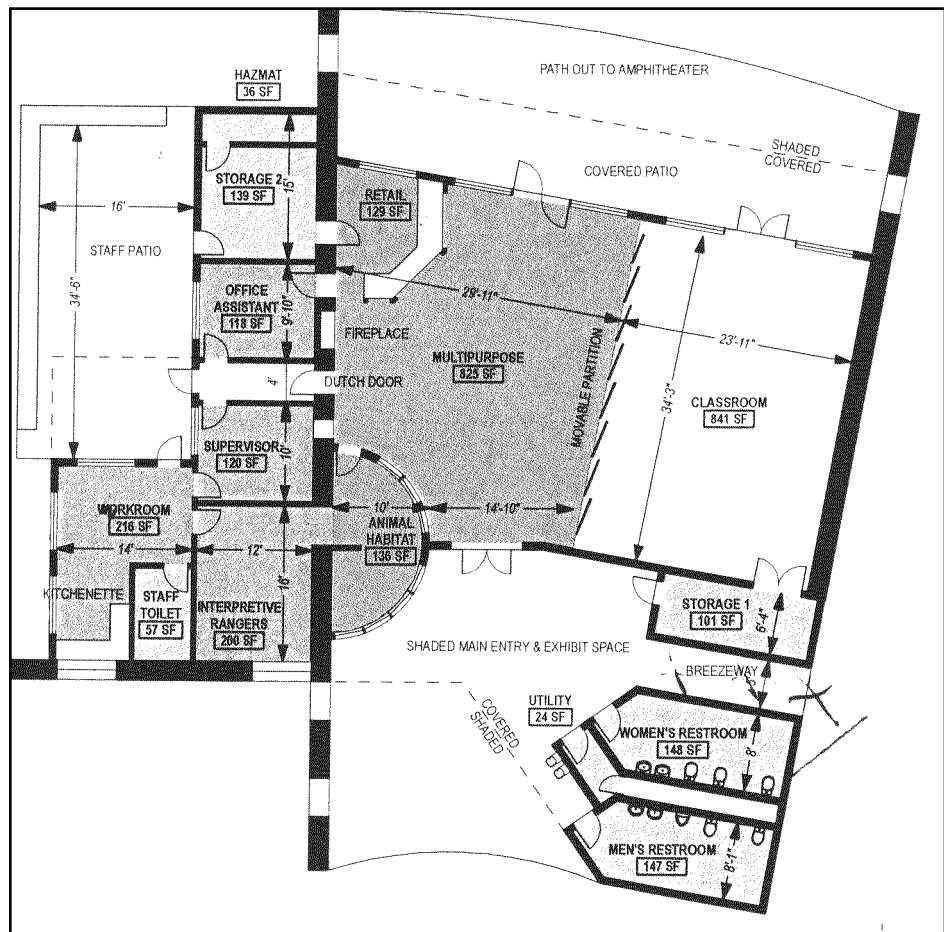
MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA ♦ FEBRUARY 2007

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MCDOWELL PARK ASSOCIATION & FRIENDS OF THE MCDOWELL AREA

County Parks Dept. to add Visitor Centers to most parks; McDowell construction to start fall of 2007

Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department is preparing to add Visitor Centers to most of their desert parks. Plans are well underway to add five visitor centers all of a single design to Estrella, White Tank, Cave Creek, Utery and McDowell Mountain Regional Parks.

Over the past four months several floor plans have been presented to the department and both Superintendents and Park Supervisors have offered changes and new ideas. In late December all agreed on a final version and final construction drawings are being prepared. The Parks Department currently is planning to begin two visitors centers in June or July, two months later two more centers will begin construction and finally the fifth, the McDowell Visitor Center, will begin construction in the fall of 2007. — Rand Hubbell



Floor plan of new Visitors' Center which will be built at McDowell Regional Park in fall 2007.

2 | Grant sought for equipped blind at the new Pemberton Pond

By RAND HUBBELL, *Park Superintendent*

The staff at McDowell Mountain Regional Park have submitted a grant to the Arizona Game and Fish Department asking for the money to build and equip a blind at the new Pemberton Pond. The blind will be built using wire to form a blind supported with wooden posts and a packed dirt floor. The blind will be covered with camouflage material; chairs, binoculars, night vision glasses and a solar panel for temporary light will complete the blind. A camera, activated by motion will be set up near the pond and occasionally moved to photograph game trails in the area. The pictures taken by the camera will provide information about when and what animals frequent the pond. That information will allow guided groups to go to the blind at specific times with some knowledge about what might be seen and when to expect them to visit. The park anticipates that the Interpretive Ranger will lead programs to the blind and also, that park visitors will be able to check out the equipment and go out on their own to view wildlife during the day and at night.

McDowell Park working with Game and Fish to introduce endangered species fish to pond

By RAND HUBBELL, *Park Superintendent*

The park is working with Arizona Game and Fish Department to introduce two endangered species of fish (Gila Topminnow and Desert Pupfish) to the Nursery Tank Pond and the Pemberton Pond. The new additions will likely be added this spring if all the paperwork can be completed and the T's crossed and I's dotted. Before new species can be added to the Pemberton Pond, the pond will have to be drained, pumped dry to ensure that all the mosquito fish now in the pond have been removed. Last fall, after the pond was established, Mosquito Fish were added to ensure that the pond would not be a breeding site for mosquito larva. If all falls into place, you may see the pond dry from mid February until mid March. Once refilled, the new species will be added and perhaps a sub-species now extinct in the wild but being maintained in a lab at the U of Arizona, waiting for a suitable site for reintroduction to the wild.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



New members are sent a short questionnaire. The new members mentioned below responded to that questionnaire.

Don and Lynn Cooke are winter residents of Tonto Verde and both enjoy biking in the park. Don is a retired contractor and land developer.

Former Minnesota residents **Jim and Judy Spinner** have lived in Tonto Verde for seven years and are retired.

Mountain biking in the park is a favorite activity of **Jack and Marie Kubitz** who lay claim to being snowbirds from Wisconsin living in Tonto Verde for the past nine years.

Dale and Linda Humiston have lived in Tonto Verde for six years and moved here from Iowa.

Steven Distel and Suzanne Freidrichs from Rio Verde moved here two and a half years ago from Minnesota. They look forward to enjoying the park.

Part-time residents from Cleveland, **Jon and Jean Lynch** of Tonto Verde said that they enjoy the park.

Tonto Verde residents **George and Birdie Pasenell** have been down here for three years and want to be sure we keep ATV's out of the park.

Fred and Ursula Gmehlin are Tonte Verde residents and moved here from Rockford, Illinois and want to work to preserve the park for the future.

For seven winters **Bill and Sabra Otteson** have been Tonto Verde residents and enjoy mountain biking in the park. They spend their summers in Minnesota.

Tonto Verde has been home to **Dale and Jeanne Vogel** for the past seven years and joined MPA through a friend.

Bill and Kathy Berry came to Tonto Verde from Sacramento, California. Kathy is a retired school teacher and Bill was Chief of Operations for the California State Park System.

Retiring from an automobile dealership in Minnesota, **Dave and Judy Burns** moved to Tonto Verde seven years ago and enjoy the park for hiking and biking.

Larry Ernst moved to Tonto Verde from Fountain Hills three years ago and is a retired Navy captain. He enjoys biking in the park.

Former San Francisco Bay residents **Ed and Merry Klein** have lived in Tonto Verde for 10 years. Ed was a former engineer.

Andrew Ries a retired attorney and CPA moved to Tonto Verde eight years ago from St. Louis, MO.



President's MESSAGE

Jim Urban

More park access in 2007?

We are cautiously hopeful that 2007 will bring significant progress toward getting additional official entrances to the McDowell Park – specifically at the northeast corner (to serve Rio and Tonto Verde) and later at the northwest corner (to serve the Rio Verde Foothills area). The Maricopa Country Parks and Recreation Commission is considering improving park access system wide. The need to do so has been brought to attention by the recent fence construction around San Tan Park (in the southeast part of the county). Adjacent residents, who previously had open access to that park, are now restricted to using the main entrance because of the fence. The new (to the Maricopa Park System) Eastside Superintendent is currently also serving as interim supervisor at San Tan, and she is in favor of adding several pedestrian and equestrian access points, to encourage park use.

Rand Hubbell, McDowell Mountain Park Superintendent will be presenting this issue to the Parks Commission in February. He will also be presenting McDowell Park's needs separately, to the Eastside Supervisor and the Assistant Director of the Parks Commission. As many of you know, Fred Reams (a Tonto Verde resident) has donated funds to McDowell Park for construction of a spur trail to the anticipated northeast entrance.

The Parks Commission has hired consultants to work on a new Park System master plan. As part of this process, the consultants are conducting focus group discussions with the various interested parties. Several MPA board members will attend these meetings.

"Invader grasses" have been in the news recently, with projects to remove them going on in several areas of Maricopa County. They are present in McDowell Park as well. Plan to attend the MPA general meeting in Rio Verde on February 21. We will discuss an upcoming day (or days) for volunteers to help with removal of grasses and other noxious weeds.

**MPA MEETING:
FEBRUARY 21 — 7:00 p.m.
Rio Verde Community Center**



February's MPA speaker, Don Caum, with his mountain lion friend at the Southwest Wildlife facility.

At our February meeting we'll learn about the Southwest Wildlife organization—a next door neighbor to the Verdes. It is a 10 acre, wildlife rehabilitation facility. The organization also serves as an educational outlet to inform young and old about our desert wildlife and how to live with them. It is an accredited wildlife sanctuary.

Our speaker will be Don Caum of Tonto Verde who is a volunteer with Southwest Wildlife. Don moved to Tonto Verde eight years ago and has been a volunteer with Southwest for six years. Last year he put in 150 volunteer days (and in previous years, more than that!). He is one of about 60 volunteers.

Find out the dos and don'ts of feeding wildlife, learn about the various animals that roam our neighborhood. This will be a fascinating program. Be sure to attend it on February 21, at Rio Verde.

...about Jack Fraser

By FAY SCHLOTFELDT
RETIRED MPA FOUNDING VICE PRESIDENT

We've lost one of those rare "irreplaceable individuals" in Jack Fraser.

Before founding the MPA in 1993, Jack and I met by telephone. He had found my name from Rio Verde's public efforts to stop the studied extension of Rio Verde Drive, across the river and through the Tonto National Forest, to the Beeline Highway. Both he in Fountain Hills, and some of us in Rio Verde, had just come across surveyors in orange vests. They raised our joint ire when they said they were surveying for a potential swap of sections of parkland to developers. The scope of their "shopping," and the advanced stage of this complex "land grab" made us think that this was a "done deal."

It was in the subsequent meetings, phone calls, letters to the press, with public officials locally and in Washington, and with environmental groups, that I was most impressed with Jack's "bulldog determination".

When that "done deal" was finally "undone," Jack, in his wisdom, felt that Fountain Hills, Rio Verde and surrounding Scottsdale folks should join interests and form an organization to protect and advance the McDowell Mountain Regional Park. Of course he was right. It wasn't long before the next big land swap proposal came about; this one with even more political players. It was the joint effort that staved off this one too. His environmental work with Arizona Game and Fish gave us the pro bono contacts to later make the MPA into a 501(c)3 organization.

What was most impressive about Jack, however, was his willingness to "export" and share his passion about preserving this high Sonoran land. If some folks had an interest in forming protective groups (or he could make them interested), he was right there with his time and efforts. He felt no constraint

By ROY KINSEY

Those who spent time with Jack Fraser soon learned that he had a broad international experience in conservation and a joy of outdoor life. Thus, he was a true preservationist. Further, he was a determined preservationist. His vision was far broader than McDowell Park.

Soon after Governor Symington pushed through the Arizona Preservation Initiative Spring of 1995) Jack and Fountain Hills Town Manager, Paul Nordin, both followed the legislatures progress in defining the details of the bill. They both wanted to petition the State Land Department for consideration of 1313 acres of state land located between Fountain Hills and Rio Verde. Jack wanted to preserve the land for it's natural beauty and animal shelter. Paul wanted the land to preserve the small town atmosphere (no more development). During that same time period Jack and Paul contacted the Fort McDowell Indian Community to invite them as neighbors of the land to join in a three-way commitment to petition the State Land Department. They did just that.

In October 1998 representatives of MPA, Fountain Hills and the Indian Community met in a ceremony held on state land to receive the official classification proclamation that acknowledged the land suitable for conservation purposes under A.R.S. ¶ 37-312. This classification was limited to a 5-year period for the petitioners to provide an acceptable plan for funding a purchase acquisition of the land.

The state Conservation Advisory Committee report states their reason for reclassification as follows: open space values, viable and manageable parcel size to conserve resources for the protection of wildlife values, scenic values and adjacency to McDowell Mountain Regional Park.

Now the true mark of Jack Fraser: he sent a letter to all MPA Board members announcing the de



Continued next page—Schlotfeldt

Continued next page—Kinsey

Keith Clayton, recruits 34 new members into MPA

New MPA Board member, Keith Clayton of Tonto Verde recruited 34 new members during the past fall. He spoke at the Tonto Verde Men's Golf Breakfast recently and told the group about MPA and had application blanks in hand!

We invite other members to give a presentation to organizations they belong to. You can get application blanks from Secretary-Membership Chm., Merideth Hale, 471-1003. Great job Keith!

Schlotfeldt on Fraser

on how far he could reach in solving a problem or reducing a threat. In addition, there was not much political action regarding parks or preserves that escaped his notice. It was hard for someone to slip a stealth move past Jack Fraser.

Jack was the kind of guy I would pick to "walk the river" with. You wanted him by your side.

We are better for his being here. We'll be less secure since he is gone.

Kinsey on Fraser

tails of this reclassification and outlined the work ahead to develop the plan that will allow this trio of partners to purchase or lease the state land. (At this time the land had been valued at around \$23,000 an acre and there was an opportunity to apply for a matching fund grant via Growing Smarter/State Parks Dept. program). With only a few thousand dollars in the MPA bank account Jack ended the letter as follows: "The next step may be difficult but it will be a really fine accomplishment. I'm confident we can do it."

Unfortunately, during the next five years the health of both Paul Nordin and Jack and Pat Fraser declined and the Indian Community never followed thru with specific interest to proceed. Sadly, Jack retired from MPA in 2002 and the following October our conservation classification expired and in 2006 the Town of Fountain Hills annexed that same state land platted for a future housing development.

Crash leaves McDowell; 15 faces new challenges at Estrella Park

Crash Marusich left McDowell Park last November to take on the Park Supervisor position at Estrella Mountain Regional Park. After giving some 700 hikes during his six years at McDowell as the Interpretive Ranger, Crash said he'll miss all the fine people but he looks forward to the new challenges.

He said he'll remember his time at McDowell with good memories. Marusich related that the most interesting aspect about his work at McDowell was meeting new people and trying to see the desert through their eyes as he interpreted it for them. "For many people, the desert is an experience like no other they have had," Marusich said. He further stated, "Their sense of wonder keeps it all very fresh and exciting for me,"

Marusich felt that without a doubt the Visitors' Center was the biggest change and improvement he has seen at McDowell Park during his tenure.

Asked about the challenges facing him at Estrella, he said, "I've had two great supervisors that have taught me much about park administration." Marusich stated that, "Armed with what I've learned from them and from working with a great bunch of professionals that staff McDowell (both paid and volunteers), I feel ready for any challenges."

He mentioned that Estrella Mountain Regional Park will offer some new challenges in that it is different from any park in the system since it has a large turf area and a full sized rodeo arena.

In related news, McDowell Park Superintendent Rand Hubbell expects that it will be two months before a new Interpretive Ranger will be hired at McDowell Regional Park.



McDOWELL PARK ASSOCIATION

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Email the editor: editor.messenger@yahoo.com

61 STATE TRUST LANDS Where do we go from here?

By BOB EIDSMOE

When Arizona became a state, the 1910 Federal Enabling Act granted Arizona more than 10 million acres of federal lands that were designated as State Trust Lands. The federal act required that the Arizona Constitution specify that all proceeds of sale of those lands or proceeds from leases must go for the support of the “common schools”.

State Trust Lands are located across the state. Much of them are in rural areas and are used for grazing. But a considerable portion are located in or adjacent to urban areas. There is no provision in the Federal Enabling Act or the Arizona Constitution for preservation of State Trust Lands for open space.

The rapid increase in population in Arizona, particularly in the Phoenix and Tucson areas, have resulted in several efforts to change the Enabling Act and the Arizona Constitution to allow the sale of State Trust Land to municipalities and counties for use as open space. Such a proposal failed in the November 2000 election mainly because the voters felt that the designation of only 3% of the State Trust Lands amounting to only 270,000 acres, was not sufficient. A proposal by the so called Fox Commission in 2003 failed to obtain enough support to even get on the November 2004 ballot, mainly because it provided for preservation of only 300,000 acres of State Trust Lands.

In the November 2006 election, what was known as “Conserving Arizona’s Future”, sponsored by the McDowell Sonoran Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy, some land developer organizations and some education organizations, was narrowly defeated in spite of spending over \$2,500,000 to campaign for it. Failure was due to a number of causes. It was a complex 5 page addition to the Arizona Constitution which contained specific benefits to the sponsoring organizations. Its major fault was that it would preserve only 330,000 acres of the 9,200,000 acres

of State Trust Land. Part of the land preserved was designated for use of the sponsoring organizations, leaving little for the rest of the state and little to fulfill the changing future needs for open space for fastest growing state in the nation. The 1300 acres of State Trust Land north of Fountain Hills was not included for open space, but it was probably too late for that to occur in any event. Special benefits were bestowed by the proposal on land developers and certain educational interests. If, in the future, there is the need for a change of course, the complex process of getting the federal congress to change the Enabling Act, and then the Arizona Constitution, would have to be repeated.

There is little question that there needs to be a change in the laws governing the use and management of State Trust Lands. “Conserving Arizona’s Future” was better than the existing situation. But, for a majority of the voters, apparently not good enough. Fortunately, a group of conservation groups, including the Sierra Club and Audubon groups, are again at work trying to formulate another, but far simpler proposal. This proposal would simply provide that the Federal Enabling Act and the Arizona Constitution would state that conservation and open space, in addition to education, is also an approved usage of State Trust Lands and for that purpose State Trust Lands may be transferred to municipalities and counties for less than an auction price would bring. It would be simple to understand and provide flexibility for the future. The group has been discussing this course of action with some key legislators and the Governor in the hope that the legislature will place the proposal on the ballot, eliminating the necessity of an expensive voter petition campaign.

It is too early to tell how this will develop. Stay tuned in on this issue. Perhaps later this year there will be another article with an update.



Eidsmoe is a past president of MPA.

Membership REPORT

by Merideth Hale
Secretary & Membership Chairman

This Membership Report has many names for several reasons. Thanks to Keith Clayton, a new Board member, who has recruited many Tonto Verde residents as new members.

In addition, the response to the late fall and January post-cards has been very positive. So, thanks also to each of you for renewing so promptly.

Donations: H=to \$49; T.B.=to \$99; M.C.= \$100+

Bob Mason, T.B.

NEW MEMBERS TO JANUARY 16, 2007

Max and Lee Allen
Bill and Kathy Berry
James and Evelyn Bowersock
Dave and Judy Burns
James and Mary Ann Campney
Donald and Linn Cooke
Steven Distel and
Suzanne Freidrichs
Larry and Roberta Ernest
Michael and Sandra Gleeson
Fred and Ursula Gmehlin - H
Stan and Betty Hannah - H

Harry and Sharin Holden
Earl and Joyce Holmes
Dale and Linda Humiston
Al and Maureen Keeley
Ed and Merry Klein - H
Ed, Dixie and Susan Kraght - H
John and Rose Marie Kubitz
Jim Laskowski and Barb Rowan
Jon and Jean Lynch
Robert and Gloria McCoy
Ed and Jan Olson
Len and Linda Olson

Bob and Phyllis O'Roark
William and Sabra Otteson
George and Birdie Pasenelli
Andy and Mary Ries - H
Bob and Jan Rohloff
Richard and Linda Shore
Jim and Judy Spinner
Tom and Karie Stupek
Ed and Wanda Sweeny
Manny and Ann Tharp
Gerd and Hannsi Toepfer - H
Dale and Jean Vogel

RENEWALS TO JANUARY 16, 2007

Chet Andrews
Robert Barbanica
Rosi Brandorff and Ernst Hierschbiel
William and Ardis Brandt
Bill and Delora Bridwell
Arthur, Jeanette and
Mark Carpentier - H
Don and Susan Caum
Harriet Crotty
Burt Davidson and Jolene Chou
Robert and Leone Eidsmoe - H
Charles and Ellen Erickson
Pat Fraser - H
George Frazier
Corrine and Jim Gaughan - H
Charles and Gail Gauthier - H
Gordon and Joan Griffes - M.C.
Jack and Merideth Hale - T.B.

Harris and Lois Hawkins
Marjorie Hearne
Tom and Linda Hefter - H
Kimberly Hines - H
Phil and Susan Horltd
Sudelle Irons
Steve and Marie Jacobs
Frank and Grace Jakubs
Diane Kalis
John and Linda Kavanagh
Ed and Dolores Kehe - H
Roy and Bev Kinsey - H
John and Ann Kovacs
Bob and Marcia Krane - M.C.
Penny Kuehn
Phyllis Lowell
Lin Lundgaard

Mike Maggio and Jill Martin - H
Robert and Edith Malone - H
John and Denise McCarthy
John and Pam McNeill
Tom and Lisa Miller - H
John and Jane Mooty
Ron and Mary Morton
Dick and Ann Nordholm
Jim and Nancy Otte - H
Gary and Mary Ellen Prosper
Janet Runkel
Earl and Ann Stavely
Peter and Janice Strand
Mark and Maria Van Boeckel
Robert and Nancy Warden - H
John and Barbara Wyman
Jim and Robbi Urban - T.B.

Renewal notices go out the first of each month, January - May; September - December. Membership increases our ability to enhance the park by supporting needed projects. It gives us a voice in advocating for appropriate recreational uses of desert open space. It gives us a voice in protection issues. All persons who enter the

Park must pay a \$5 per car fee or have in their possession an Annual Pass - \$75 or \$65 for seniors. Hikers and Bikers who walk in must pay \$1 per person to the "Iron Ranger" at the entrance. Any questions? Please feel free to contact me, Merideth Hale, 471-1003.



McDowell Park Association
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name(s): Please
print names of family
members to be
included. (List one
if individual
membership.)

Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Tax deductible donations, in addition to membership, will be most welcome!

ENCLOSED: Individual (\$15) _____
Family (\$20) _____
Donation \$ _____
Total \$ _____

Please send this form with check payable to:
McDowell Park Association. Mail to:

McDowell Park Association
P. O. Box 18613
Fountain Hills, AZ 85269

McDOWELL
Messenger
P. O. Box 18613
Fountain Hills, Arizona 85269

**New Visitors'
Center in
McDowell's
future**

SEE FRONT PAGE



February's meeting
speaker talks about our
neighbors / p. 3