

# IT'S A BUSY TIME FOR THE CONSERVANCY

## SONORAN CONSERVANCY of FOUNTAIN HILLS

Starting with “Life in the Desert Fair” at McDowell Mountain Park, followed by our collective exhibits with McDowell County Park and Sonoran Conservancy of Scottsdale during our booth at

“Fountain Hills Fall Fair”, initiation of our “Fall/Spring Hiking Program”, and Trailblazer support for the Greening of Fountain Park, improvements to the Town’s

“Lakeside Overlook Trail”, maintenance work for the Fountain Hills Botanical Garden, plus, initial clearing and building the first section of our connecting trail to Scottsdale’s Sunrise Trail.



Volunteer Trailblazers at Work



Town View from Park's Lakeside Overlook Trail

### Here is the full Hike Schedule

Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> - WALK OFF THE TURKEY. This is a 7 mile hike with plenty of up/down thru washes. It requires prior arrangements to make plans for your ride back from Eagle Ridge Dr. to your start point at Golden Eagle trailhead. Bring

Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> - GEOLOGY OF THE McDOWELL MTS. Presented by Dan Gruber. Requires you to pre-register (call Carol

Jan 7<sup>th</sup> - WHAT'S IN THAT HOLE Presented by Amy Ford, Park Ranger. Meet at Golden Eagle trailhead for an easy 3

Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> - EARLY PEOPLE Presented by Len Marcisz. 3-4 mile A 3-4 mile hike over ancient home sights. Here you will

Feb 11<sup>th</sup> - DIXIE MINE Join with Steve Fleming to explore the area near the mine and it's surroundings. A moderate hike

### Get Ready for the Spring Flowers

Rain in November promises to bring Spring Wild flowers. To prepare for such a splendid event we suggest you invest in a copy of Marianne Skov Jensen's Flora Photo guide. The Conservancy offers this “must have” identification of the flowers and bushes found in the McDowell preservation. You may receive a FREE copy when you choose to become a FRIEND of the conservancy with a contribution of \$35 or more.

# Background on the Lakeside Overlook Trail

Previously the route followed by the current Lakeside Overlook Trail was a local footpath created by residents who wished access to the high ridge for a broader view. It soon became the favorite run for high school cross-country track coaches. When time came for the Planning Dept. to review a preliminary plat plan for half of the hillside development, the Town Planning director inserted a stipulation that as part of plat approval the developer must build a permanent, wide trail. Subsequently, the same stipulation was set when the second half of the hillside was approved for a different development company. One developer hired a landscape company to build the front half of the trail, while the second half lingered in partial completion. Eventually, the Town accepted the trail, and recognized it with a marked sign.

Because neither developer chose to design a trail and provided only limited land for it, the trail path ended by following on the natural fall line down the hill. This resulted in a trail that soon became a “ditch” created by erosion from rains. Early attempts at renovation have simply enhanced the high, sidewall encased, “half pike” like canal.

Because this trail is a significant element in our Fountain Park, it should offer safe, easy access for all, The Fountain Hills Sonoran Conservancy has volunteered to gradually bring some more improvements with their active group of Trailblazers. In November we saw the first major effort as part of Make a Difference Day. A collective group of 26 volunteers from local Mormon church Wards in Fountain Hills and North Scottsdale asked to help. This diligent group, working with conservancy guidance, repaired almost 1/3 of the trail. Similar work days are scheduled for the next few months using the Trailblazers, and inviting the Public to join in.

## Trailblazers are looking for more volunteers to join them

Look for a call for more volunteers to work with our trailblazers. Beside requests in tasks outlined to assist other town needs, our primary focus this fall and spring will be to regularly work on building the connecting trail through Adero Canyon that will eventually meet with the Sunrise trail in Scottsdale. To date, a specific route has been identified. Joint action with Scottsdale is progressing to complete necessary state and county authorizations. Most exciting, our trailblazer have begun the clearing and building in the first leg of a 3.0 mile loop circling the higher ridges of Adero Canyon until it connects to the Scottsdale Sunrise Trail.

Additional Volunteers are welcomed, and by registering with Bill Craig (wcraig3@gmail.com) you will be added to our communications. We believe in “on hands training”, so you will given tools and assignments working along more experienced trail builders.

To Be A Friend, complete the following

Name \_\_\_\_\_ e-Mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ P. O. Box# \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_, State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Your Contributions pay for Newsletters, trail tools, training programs, and support of the Preserve . Make checks payable to: Sonoran Conservancy of Fountain Hills  
!! Please mail to: SCFH, P. O. BOX 17733, Fountain Hills, AZ 85269-7733