

# ANNUAL PMPC DINNER



**Annual PMPC Dinner included David Gironda, Leslie Spencer-Snider and Carol Ann Muller.**

Jean Anderson photograph.

Unfortunately “secret” speakers were listed on the invitation so you may have missed an excellent presentation about Phoenix’s ancient prehistory at the Annual PMPC Dinner.

Covering the elements within South Mountain Park and the Mountain Preserves, archeologist Todd Bostwick (City of Phoenix), provided a clearer understanding of what these areas signify. In nearly two decades of research, Mr. Bostwick has uncovered details about the Hohokam’s regional communities, extensive canals, and the accurate solar calendars made from rock formations.

The archeologist also described recent research at the Phoenix Convention Center remodeling site. There elements found range from the historic period back to prehistoric components that are over 2,900 years old.

Another group of speakers were representatives of the Arizona Rangers. That group occurred for eight years in the early 1900’s, while Arizona was still a territory. Many remember the Rangers when the group was reenacted on early television shows. Today volunteer Rangers still provide a wide range of needed services to Arizona.

Honorary members of PMPC were announced in March. They are Attorney Jay Dushoff, and John Driggs, a former Mayor of Phoenix.

## CALENDAR

**MAY 7th** - Monday, 7:00 p.m.  
PMPC Board Meeting  
Desert Botanical Garden  
1201 N. Galvin Parkway  
Phoenix, AZ

### LOOKOUT

Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council, Inc.  
P.O. Box 26121  
Phoenix, Arizona 85068-6121

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*The Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council is dedicated to protecting our Phoenix Mountains Preserves.*

<http://www.phoenixmountains.org>

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## Rare Jewels Inside Mountain Preserves

An odd entry into a fantastic place may sound like a children’s story. But in Phoenix an underground keyhole is a surprising way into one of the Mountain Preserves.

The keyhole reaches what some consider an original trail. Others, like Board Member Ken Gometz, remember a nearby route that linked horses and stables with Phoenix’s rural mountain trails. So it depends if you think about today or yesterday.



Either way we’re lucky now that the underground keyhole was made possible by those who decided that a new freeway should not block the easy access enjoyed by so many - for so long.

If you find the keyhole, take a short walk, and enter a new part of the Preserve. Due to shade, your eyes will need a moment to adjust. Then with better focus you will see a crisp view of the soft layer of Sonoran plants that cover the sharp rocks of this mountain vista. So opposite are the elements of the known city, that for a few minutes you will have to adapt to the vision at Trail 1A. What you see will appear almost too perfect.

Once through the keyhole the trail splits in two directions. Either route begins a kaleidoscope of natural views. Plus it only takes a minute to discover the shadowed mountains and the rare desert environment *within* the city. Some might consider the new name of one mountain hard to remember. |But after 30 years they would be relieved to see that the mountain view is still as spectacular - even after changes have occurred nearby in the nation’s sixth largest metropolitan region.

If I could tell you how to reach the keyhole, I would, well maybe. But the path remains unknown to me. The hidden entry, through a middle aged neighborhood, is not easy to find. Still, some can locate it since it roughly follows the same latitude that the horses once trekked.

Plus, some know the keyhole leads to the Perl Charles Trail and a plaque dedicated to the “one who worked endlessly for the Preservation of the Mountains he loved”. Other gems exist in the Mountain Preserves and South Mountain Park So if you know of another place as unique as the keyhole please e-mail me so we can plan a hike - for next fall; (craig@cybervault.com).

Spring 2007



## Land sale accents need for preservation

these recent sales. There's only so much land left. And fine land for generations to come.

## Buffelgrass is no match for the Weedwackers

Phoenix group pulls out plant harmful to Piestewa Peak

desert more rapidly. "The only thing that the buffelgrass," Bloom said. As of now, the only buffelgrass is to pull it out of Phoenix parks, said Waehner said.

## Piestewa Peak trail gets badly needed repairs

50-foot section near summit

### Sonoran Preserve

Phoenix park officials are working to assemble as many as 21,000 acres in the northern flank of the city to create the Sonoran Preserve.



## Valley preserves, trails coming at a high price

president of the Phoenix Mountain Council. "It will

## Freeway delays concern MAG

Napolitano may be asked to negotiate South Mountain alignment

2008," according to a draft letter obtained by *The Arizona Republic*. A spokesman for the Arizona Department of Transportation said it

"Please do not consider an alignment through the South Mountain Park...to be a done deal, as such a route will be challenged."

David Girona, public comment at March 3, 2007 Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) meeting.

Recent articles in the *Arizona Republic* show a long list of problems in the Mountain Preserves, South Mountain Park and with the planned Sonoran Preserve. While PMPC's concern about a few acres of a preserve is important, the current problems affect tens of thousands of acres in the old preserves and in the planned Sonoran Preserve.

The problems range from spending hundreds of millions of dollars more for the new preserve, to homeless residents camping inside the existing preserves. The lack of maintenance on old trails and the constant problem of

dangerous, unleashed, dogs are the two most mentioned concerns by hikers, horseback riders, and mountain bike riders. Most recently the growth of fountain grass and buffel grass inside existing preserves is a threat that the Parks & Recreation Department plus many volunteers have successfully been removing. But the challenge of invasive weeds has only reached the first step thus it is far from over.

So it is easy to understand that concerns over a few acres in one area is nothing when compared to the many bigger threats that could destroy everything loved about the most beautiful type of desert in the world.

## Issues of Concern for Mountain Preserves, Sonoran Preserve, and South Mountain

Held at the North Mountain Visitor Center, the Spring Trek event allowed city staff to explain current efforts and PMPC members asked questions with about key issues.

City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation staff and rangers listed the following as important preserve issues:

- 1.) Buffel grass and the desert fire hazard.
- 2.) Vandalism including spray painting.
- 3.) Dogs running loose and hurting people.
- 4.) Trail maintenance & rehabilitation.
- 5.) Homeless camping inside preserves.
- 6.) Education about Sonoran desert.

Added concerns are the issues of easements of city land near Preserves and the future of the Edge Treatment Guidelines. The guidelines would apply to the new Sonoran Preserve, plus a version was being created so it could be applied to the existing Mountain Preserves and South Mountain Park.

Last November's passage of Proposition 207, sponsored in Arizona by the Farm Bureau Federation and Cattlemen's Association now creates concerns by city staff on issues like the edge guidelines and it has already begun affecting long term protection of Luke Air Force Base.

Likewise, the same groups worked against protection of State Trust Land for areas like the Sonoran Preserve. By defeating Proposition 106 protection of only 690,000 acres (out of over 9 million acres of State Trust Land) did not pass. This means that the remaining, outstanding, parts of our state may not be saved for future generations. Areas like the proposed Sonoran Preserve could be seriously affected by a lack of State Trust Land constitutional reform.

While the City of Phoenix attempts to purchase small parts of the Sonoran Preserve's proposed 20,000 acres, it is becoming increasingly difficult, since it appears that developers may want nearly every acre of State Trust Land. Developers could outbid the city on large parcels that Phoenix attempts to purchase. Sadly, if fragmented, these lands will not become the preserve envisioned by Phoenicians.

The freeway through South Mountain still remains a critical issue since Arizona Department of Transportation continues to prefer damaging thousands of acres of South Mountain Park. Now Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) also appears to prefer a dozen lane freeway more than preserving a square inch of the undamaged Sonoran desert.