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On December 3rd, 2006, PMPC held their annual holiday party at Ian and Susanne Rothwell's home which is nestled right next to the Mountains Preserve. What a marvelous setting to hold our party.

There were 34 members and guests in attendance. Since it was a pot luck, we had some really great side dishes. The turkey and ham, PMPC supplied, and everyone agreed, they were just delicious.

The main speaker was Sara Hensley, Director of Phoenix Parks and Recreation. She spoke to us about her being new to the Department and to Phoenix; her concerns for the Preserves; and the edge guidelines for the whole of Phoenix.

Director Hensley added that she, Don Larson, Assistant Parks Director, or Kathy Reichert, the new Natural Resources Director, would be attending monthly PMPC

meetings. Both Don and Kathy spoke, too. PMPC appreciated all of our guests coming to speak.

All in all, we really had a great time. Thank you both again, Susanne and Ian, for supplying your home for our party. *By Jean Anderson*

EVENTS CALENDAR

Carraro Cactus Tours now at Tovrea Castle

The city of Phoenix will offer guided, one-hour tours - on selected weekends - of the newly renovated Carraro Cactus Gardens surrounding the landmark Tovrea Castle. There will be five tours per day between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. with a maximum of 20 people per tour. The cost will cost \$15 per person. Those interested can register for the tours online by going to the Classes and Programs link at phoenix.gov/parks. Proper clothing and footwear for a desert environment are suggested. Those interested also can call (602) 256-3155 for more information.

From City of Phoenix, (www.phoenix.gov/PARKS) coming events listing..

LOOKOUT

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

Executive Board:

Leslie Spencer-Snyder, *President*
Tice Supplee, *Vice President*
Robin Salthouse, *Treasurer*
Jean Anderson, *Recording Secretary*
Susanne Rothwell, *Corresponding Secretary*

The *LOOKOUT* is published by the Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council; Craig Weaver, Editor.

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

<http://www.phoenixmountains.org>

Winter Schedule for Visitor and Education Centers

North Mountain - Visitor Center

Operating hours for the winter, October through April are: Wednesday through Saturdays - Open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sundays Open - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Closed Monday & Tuesday.)

South Mountain - Education Center

Operating hours for the winter, October through April: Wednesday through Saturday - Open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday Open - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Closed Monday and Tuesday.)



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TO:



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PLAN ON ATTENDING THE UPCOMING PHOENIX MOUNTAINS PRESERVATION COUNCIL ANNUAL 'SPRING IN THE MOUNTAINS' MEETING AT NORTH MOUNTAIN VISITOR CENTER MARCH 3, 2007.

SEE DETAILS INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER FOR THE BREAKFAST INVITATION AND TIME FOR THE MEETING WITH CITY OFFICIALS THAT WILL INCLUDE DISCUSSIONS ON ISSUES THAT ARE AFFECTING THE PARKS AND PRESERVES.



PAST, PRESENT, and FUTURE?

By Tice Supplee

While walking my dog in North Mountain Preserve, enjoying the singing of cactus wrens and curve-billed thrashers and the "rain" scent of creosote bush, I paused to reflect on what a special gift the Phoenix Mountains Preserve really are. The Preserves are the inspiration of dedicated citizens, including PMPC founder Dottie Gilbert, who then organized Phoenix residents and city officials to raise the money through bond elections and pass the laws to make the Phoenix Mountains Preserves a reality. The citizen advocacy for the Preserve system has continued through the work of the Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council (PMPC).

It is PMPC's belief that the process of preserving and maintaining these desert preserves is ongoing, and we invite you to attend the first coalition meeting to discuss issues of importance to us all, and to write the first plan of action for the future of the Preserves. It is our concept to hold regular meetings to follow up on these plans.

PMPC is rallying a new coalition of neighborhood associations, block watch groups, and conservation organizations that are invited to a hosted workshop at North Mountain Preserve Visitor Center on March 3rd from 9AM to noon, on 7th Street, south of Thunderbird. The 2007 Spring in the Mountains get-together is designed to provide a venue of active citizen groups. We want to brainstorm the Preserve acquisition program, and figure out how these citizen groups can help in the protection of our Preserves. The emphasis this year is the threat of invasive Buffelgrass, Edge Guidelines, encroachments, maintenance, public usage and other issues that are of importance to all of us. Arizona Republic reporter Kathy Ingle has alerted readers to the threat of invasive plants in the past. The Desert Botanical Garden, as an asset is providing samples of native grasses on March 3rd that residents can use in home landscapes in place of invasive plants and grasses.

The thousands of acres were envisioned for a Preserve system in the 1960's and 1970's, before many of us called Phoenix "home". Today we accept the Mountains Preserve as wonderful natural treasure in our midst and treat them as our city's crown jewel. Phoenix voters repeatedly say "YES" to bond elections to acquire mountain land; \$23.5 million in 1973, \$10 million in 1979, \$61 million in 1984, \$6 million in 1988. Phoenicians

protected the Mountains Preserve with Chapter 26 of the City of Phoenix Charter. Voters approved the Phoenix Parks and Preserve Initiative in 1999, which authorized a one-tenth of one percent increase in the privilege (i.e. sales) tax to fund acquisition. The duration of the tax is ten years, and is expected to generate \$256 million in revenue. The City plans to purchase lands in the northern reaches of Phoenix to complete the dream of a new Sonoran Preserve, adding more open space to the Preserve system. New arrivals to the Valley of the Sun try to buy homes tucked up against the mountain preserves, but are they? Until land is formally purchased from the Arizona State Land Department these lands are not officially part of the Preserve system. We have a lot of work to do to maintain the Preserves that we have and to ensure that the future growth of our city is similarly accommodated with these fabulous Preserved native desert areas.

The Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council remains active: Acting as the voice of the citizenry in the best interest of the Preserves; members regularly attend Parks Board and City Council meetings, organize volunteers to help the City P&R with trail maintenance and hosts an annual Spring in the Mountains and other annual events to acquaint elected city officials and Phoenix residents with the beauty and wonder of our Mountains Preserve. Save Our Mountains Foundation (SOMF), originally incorporated in 1972 to acquire and hold the largest single parcel in the preserve until the first bond issue could be passed, is another group continuing to work to save more open space. The two groups work together on a common cause; helping the Phoenix Mountains Preserve system.

PMPC would like to enlarge and empower these organizations with a more comprehensive alliance of user groups.

Today the Preserve is professionally managed with beautiful education and visitor centers at South and North Mountain Preserves. PMPC is re-invigorating the partnership with the Natural Resources Division of Phoenix Parks and Recreation to help them deal with new threats facing Our Preserve. Citizens must be the eyes, ears and volunteer forces that will assure a Mountains Preserve legacy for Phoenix.

We invite you to come to this March 3rd meeting, to share your ideas and concerns.

**You're invited to the
Annual SPRING IN THE MOUNTAINS Event
Saturday, March 3rd!**

Join PMPC members, conservation group members, and block watch organizations for a breakfast followed by an informative meeting with officials from the City of Phoenix Parks & Recreation Department plus staff from the Natural Resource Division.

At 8:00 a.m. enjoy a breakfast hosted by PMPC members at the historic Sheriff Posse Clubhouse. (The Posse Clubhouse is located on the east side of 7th Street - see the map below.)

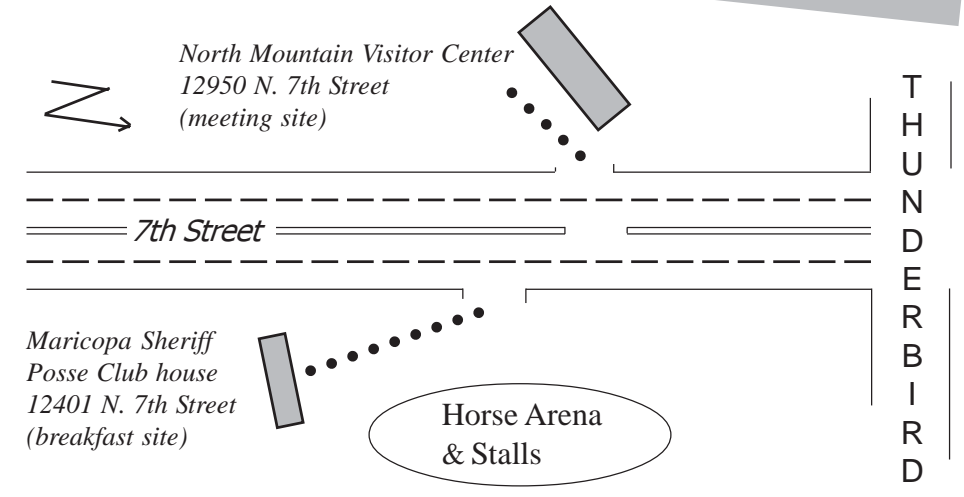
At 9:00 a.m. join a symposium at the North Mountain Visitor Center (located nearby on the west side of 7th Street). The meetings will cover issues that face South Mountain, the Mountain Preserves, and the proposed Sonoran Preserve.

A highway proposed for a portion of South Mountain Park, growing problems with invasive plants like buffel grass, along with issues like the edge guidelines are some of the planned discussion points..

So plan on attending the PMPC "Dutch Oven Breakfast" then join the symposium sessions with City representatives at the nearby North Mountain Visitor Center. Space is limited to 70; so please contact us today.

RSVP to Jean Anderson at (480) 570-4901 or redbug@hughes.net.

Please RSVP before March 1.



SPRING in the MOUNTAIN event sites for Saturday, March 3.