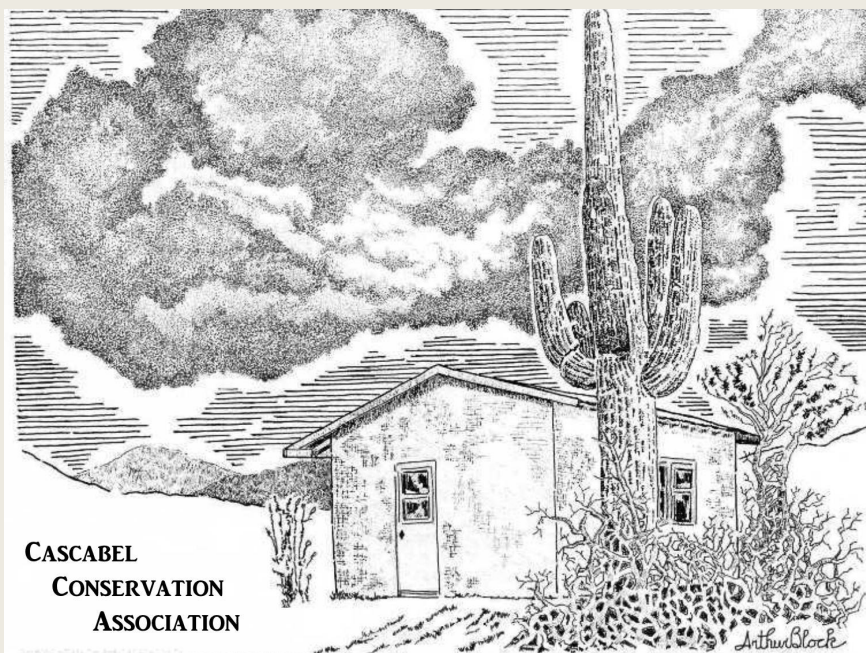


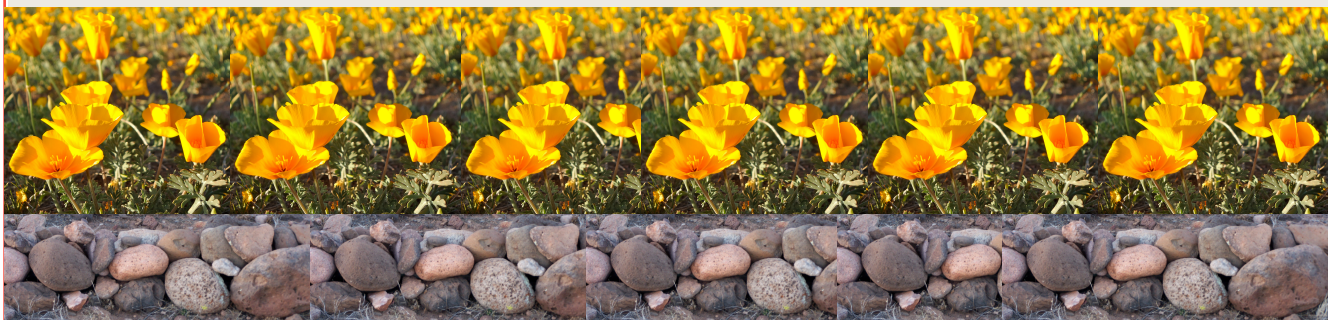
Cascabel Conservation Association

Supporting Conservation, Community, and Contemplation
in the Middle San Pedro River Valley



Greetings from Cascabel, Arizona! We hope this finds you well. Some exciting things have happened this year, and we want to keep you informed:

- History & Restructuring
- Name Change: CHA to CCA
- Land Purchase (Conservation Easement, Stewardship, & Partnership; Education & Shared Primitive Camp; Gardens & Orchards; Baicacan Sobaipuri Village & Vision for Archaeology Education)
- Invitation to Support CCA



History & Restructuring

By Mary Lou Gonzales



☞ In 1995, my late husband, Francis Leitner, went to the East coast to look for land to leave to our descendants. We were disappointed that all the development was devastating the land. Like an answered prayer, we received a copy of Jim Corbett's article, "It Takes a Community to Change the World." This article referred to the Saguaro-Juniper community Covenant to cherish the earth, water, plants and animals. We were determined to learn more. We were impressed by community efforts to prevent a militia from establishing a training facility in Cascabel. After a lot of soul searching and discussion, the Pima Friend's Community, Francis and I decided to help purchase the property to save the land "for our descendants," including the plant, water and animal life. The land was set aside for solitary reflection, conservation, and education.



☞ Over the last two to three years, the Cascabel community has been threatened by SunZia corporation's transmission lines, and the I-10 bypass. CCA has played an important role as a voice for conservation in these situations. We have recently acquired a property that has good, fertile ground for a community garden, and also archaeological sites that need to be preserved. In order to accomplish the tasks before us, we needed a working board, and to be true to our mission of conservation, education, and contemplation. During the last six months, we have redeveloped our board and committee structure to be more active in the work of CCA. We have re-written our by-laws, and changed our name to better reflect all the work of CCA.



Name Change: CHA to CCA

By David Omick

☞ The Cascabel Hermitage Association originated in the mid-1990's as an organization dedicated to providing a place for solitary desert retreats. In the 15 years since, its roles have expanded to include education and conservation programs. The latter, in particular, has become increasingly important to counter the threat of proposals for major infrastructure projects through the Cascabel area of the San Pedro Valley. By 2012, it had become evident to the board of directors that a conservation identity and orientation was needed to more effectively work toward conserving the biological diversity and scenic beauty of this Sonoran desert wild land treasure.



☞ Although the name has changed, the retreat program remains a vital part of the Cascabel Conservation Association. We believe this wild land connection and direct knowing of the earth is the foundation of all our conservation efforts.



∞ Land Purchase ∞

Conservation Easement, Stewardship, & Partnership

By Brandon & Jodi Wert



∞ In August of 2005, many members of the Cascabel community worked together to assist a cooperative purchase of a 130-acre parcel located at the intersection of Hot Springs Canyon and Cascabel Road.

∞ In 2008, after much work and negotiation, the BLM purchased a conservation easement on the parcel, establishing important perpetual protection for archeological features, as well as wildlife migration corridors and habitat. The conservation easement also limits development along the San Pedro River corridor, which safeguards ground water within its watershed. This set the stage for much of CCA's conservation work with private landowners in the Hot Springs Canyon Corridor.



∞ In March of 2012, CCA, Daniel Baker, and Brandon & Jodi Wert joyfully decided to enter into a partnership on the land, and renamed the parcel Baicatcan in honor of some of the land's more ancient inhabitants. A cornerstone of the land partnership is our dedication to conservation and education. We welcome the opportunity to share this land with a wider circle of students, sojourners and community gardeners; and we embrace the privilege of stewarding all of the invaluable features of such a special place for future generations.

Education & Shared Primitive Camp

By Pearl Mast



☞ The Baicatcan property has already been actively used as a site for archaeology and ecology education. It is uniquely positioned on Hot Springs Canyon near its confluence with the San Pedro River, offering panoramic views of the river and its tributaries with their wildlife linkages into the surrounding mountains. At the invitation of the former owners, CCA has taken groups on walking tours, using this vantage point to talk about the wildlife corridor CCA has promoted with the Lower Hot Springs Canyon Conservation Project, as well as demonstrating why the native peoples used this site so extensively. University classes have also used the site as a base to study conservation biology for this area.



☞ I see wonderful opportunities for expanding on that history, using this setting to host the many groups that come our way. There is a primitive camping area already established in a lovely mesquite bosque that can accommodate small groups, with plenty of room to create spaces for longer-term volunteers or Cascabel interns. It would also be an ideal site for workshops on all aspects of integrated living, including natural building, wild food harvest and preservation, and small-scale solar power systems, not to mention organic gardening.

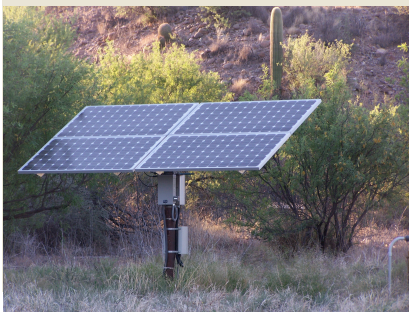


Gardens & Orchard

By Erik Revere



☞ Long time gardeners, garden supporters and new gardeners are all thrilled about the potential for gardening and orchards on the new Baicatcan land. What's available for gardening and farming is a beautiful wind-protected valley with deep clay, silt and loam soil that is about an acre and a half. Also, there is an upper protected valley with the same attributes and has about three acres for future community farming projects.



☞ Part of the land partnership agreement also allows for up to a three-acre orchard on one end of the former lower airstrip. This area has the potential to host an orchard and other plantings that need to be higher in elevation to keep them away from bloom-damaging late frost. We're also excited that some infrastructure is already in place including a well, a water storage tank, and a solar powered water delivery system to the first valley, and in close proximity to the other potential agricultural sites. We look forward to developing this community garden space with everyone!

Baicatcan Sobaipuri Village & Vision for Archaeology Education

By Daniel Baker



☞ Fr. Eusebio Kino visited the settlement of San Salvador de Baicatcan on the Lower San Pedro River in 1692, of which CCA's new land has been identified as a very likely location. The Sobaipuri were the resident Native Americans at the time, and there are four loci of their habitation on the property. The name Baicatcan is presumed to be of native origin but indeterminate meaning, though it may reference the two canyons that empty into the San Pedro at this juncture. The site also has archaic and Hohokam remains with at least a 5000-year history of occupation. These were flood plain farmers, but there is also significant evidence of dry-farmed agave fields.

☞ It is estimated that as many as 200 people occupied Baicatcan, as many as presently occupy 50 miles of the Middle San Pedro River Valley. This provides an excellent baseline from which to consider our contemporary efforts at sustainable living in a desert environ. We look forward to the possibilities of exploring educational opportunities with Southwest Archaeology, which has done significant research on the property.

Photos & layout by Sue Newman, Jim Flood, and Jodi Wert

☞ Invitation to Support CCA ☞

By Karen McKelvey

☞ As you can see, we have been busy, and this reorganization has been invigorating for long-time members. I have been on the board of CCA for more than a decade, and, for me, our mission and values are affirmed at the beginning of each meeting when we share the reflective comments of those who have come to sojourn on the land and participate in the community model of collaborative stewardship. Many describe their experience as "transformative" and "life-changing."

☞ The efforts to realize the unique vision of CCA for the Middle San Pedro Valley are not without cost. We are an organization supported almost entirely by donations and countless volunteer hours.

☞ I appeal to you to add your support to our efforts through monetary contribution, becoming a member and lending your time and talent, or both.

ADD YOUR VOICE TO OUR VISION!

(Please see enclosed materials for more information.)

Cascabel Conservation Association

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To:

