

(garden, cont)

And so that is what it is. Of course we grow stuff, and it is amazing and very edible and tonight we are eating soup made from some of some of the veggies harvested by many hands including mine, and slices of a dead cow's tail (oxtails, right?) from our next door neighbors. But growing stuff is only half the thing we do. The other half is the together part. That is (if you ask me) the most real thing about this garden. It's a *community* community garden.

Sometimes the mere thought of the way everyone works together toward a common end, which is feeding each other, makes me shed tears of gratitude for this remarkable place. I am pretty sure that when I was given the assignment to write this piece, it was assumed I would be naming off the vegetables we grow, the bumper crop of chiles last year which created opportunities for numerous fun and social chile roasts, the wonderful orchard that was just planted, the bounty that is harvested and distributed every single week to the members of this community. All that is true, yet all that is merely the outcome of the other part, which is that we do this together and we do it for each other. We are people who are in service to meet not only our own needs, but to feed each other, as well. So that is what I wanted to say about this garden. It's a *community* community garden, and that is a rare and precious thing.

Invitation to Support CCA

At the beginning of each CCA meeting, our mission and values are affirmed 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.

We 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!

cascabelconservation.org



To:



Conservation, Community, Contemplation

Cascabel Conservation Association's 2016 Newsletter

Dear Friends of CCA,

Warm greetings from Cascabel, Arizona. We write to update you on this past year's activities, give thanks for the many ways you support CCA, and invite your participation an/or feedback. The following pages offer a glimpse into each of our programs, written by various CCA members. Enjoy!

I am happy to announce that the Jim and Pat Corbett Retreat and Research Center [pictured here] is ready for use. I want to thank the anonymous donor and all the Saguaro-Juniper and CCA members who have made this Corbett Center possible. Not least among those are David and Pearl who, by virtue of their skills and values, always donate so much more than their paltry remuneration.

I also wish to thank the kind anonymous donor who contributed a little plaque to the hermitage naming my contribution. My real thanks however is seeing this land, which feels like home to me, continue as home to the wild plants and animals living there to be cherished by and shared with others.

The Corbett Center is a fitting location to honor the contribution of Jim and Pat Corbett to the founding of S-J and CCA and the 10,000 acres stewarded by these two associations in Hot Spring Canyon. The Center is designed to accommodate the three entailments of stewardship in the S-J Covenant Preamble, which was largely authored by Jim: meditation, study, and wildland integration (loosely stated).

Solitaires, couples and small camping groups can schedule the area. The cottage features a rainwater harvesting system and along with the campground's composting toilet provides sojourners one example of an integrated homestead. The canyon remains open to hikers and horseback riders as before, with just a small walking circuit around the Center when sojourners are present.

The Corbett Center provides a gateway to Hot Springs Canyon and a relatively safe venue for sojourners in the Sonoran Desert. In addition the Hermitage Committee is actively working to provide and service more remote hermitages like the Gonzales-Leitner Hermitage. Expect to hear more about that soon. - Gratefully, Daniel

Daniel Baker, Hermitage program

...from a hermitage guest I came down to Arizona to attend a professional event.... As I imagined this journey... outside Alaska, I realized that I wanted solitude – retreat to my soto self. [M]y experience... driving away from the city, & especially getting north of Pomerene – when I started to see saguaro again – all of it was simply a mounting joy. It continued to build as I met Daniel & we headed out here, & the joy of arrival to myself was bursting from me once he drove away.

What is true this time – ten years after the last solo – is that solitude is much different than it was before I had a child. ... Though I am away from him, I am never gone from him, & I carry his heart in my heart.

And this crossing over time as a mother has been the blessed opportunity to come to the hermitage, to rediscover the bounty of solitude, not as a person alone in the world, as I was in my twenties, but as a person anchored in the world through relationships. I often wonder how I will continue to change as [my son] grows older... and what the final aloneness of age will feel like. My intimacy with him will now wane until I am his history keeper, & eventually his memory....

Certainly, there is this moment & this web of relationships, & this solitude among the saguaro. All of it a priceless gift. Thank you, Cascabel Conservation Association, & especially my shepherds on this journey, Daniel & Pamela.

Mick Meader, Conservation program

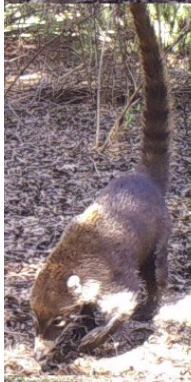
The year's most positive news was the CCA's successful nomination, with others, of the San Pedro Valley as a pilot area for a Landscape Conservation Design, a requirement for future federal conservation in the valley.

This past year saw both the hiring and loss of Scott Wilbor as Conservation Director for the CCA. The funds to maintain his position did not materialize, and Scott moved on to become Director of the Desert Rivers Initiative at the Arizona Land and Water Trust. Scott's efforts helped strengthen our ties with the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Alex Binford-Walsh continues with our remote wildlife photography [pictures shown here] and ORV monitoring project, sponsored in part by the USFWS.

We took our struggle against the SunZia Transmission Project to the Arizona Corporation Commission, losing by a disheartening 3-2 vote, which leaves us few options on the regulatory front to stop the project. We are still working on several other approaches to stop the project and keep the Valley from becoming a major utility corridor. We have also been a strong voice against the proposed 28,000-home Villages at Vigneto development in Benson, a new threat to the San Pedro River.

We again had information tables at the Lower San Pedro Ecofest at Winkelman in April, Tucson Audubon's Bird and Wildlife Festival in August, and the Cascabel Christmas Fair in December.



Gail Loveland, Education program

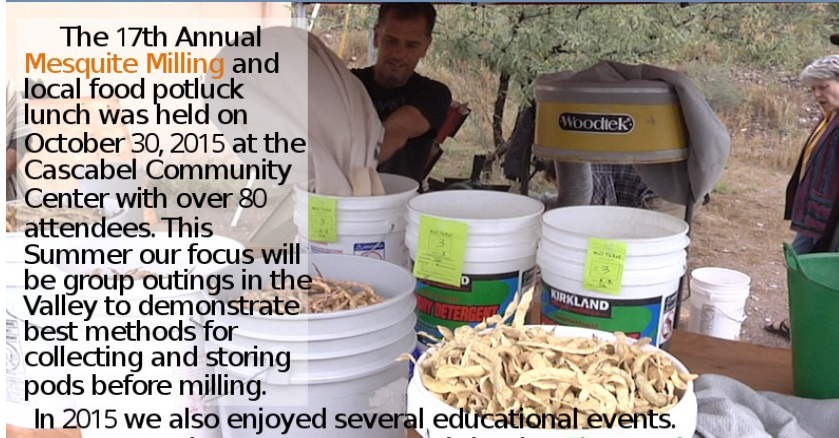
The 17th Annual Mesquite Milling and local food potluck lunch was held on October 30, 2015 at the Cascabel Community Center with over 80 attendees. This Summer our focus will be group outings in the Valley to demonstrate best methods for collecting and storing pods before milling.

In 2015 we also enjoyed several educational events.

On March 14, 2015, Anna Lands lead a "Plant and Archaeology Walk" on the upper terraces of Baicatcan. The archaeological aspect was presented by Dr. Jeff Clark of Archaeology Southwest. Jeff presented historical information as well as recent research that has been done at Baicatcan. We were reminded of protocols for being in the midst of archaeological remains: Watch where we step so that we avoid pottery shards; take absolutely nothing; after examining something, replace it exactly.

Later last March, CCA members Dr Chis Eastoe and Dr. James Callegary lead an event "A Water Workshop in Two Movements." Chris first presented his research on the relationship between rainfall and well water levels. Next James led a field study about water movement and its effect on the environment.

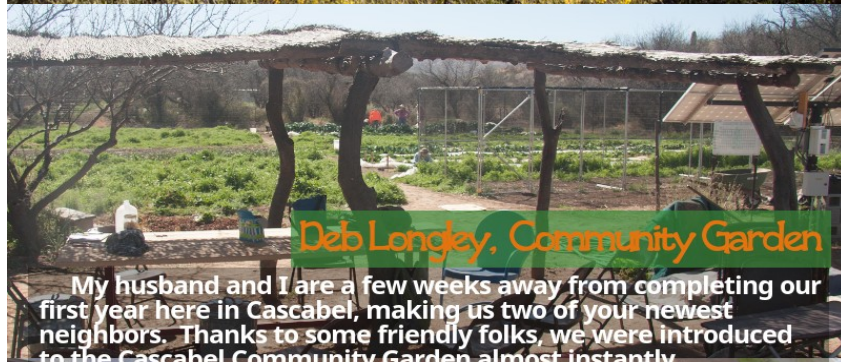
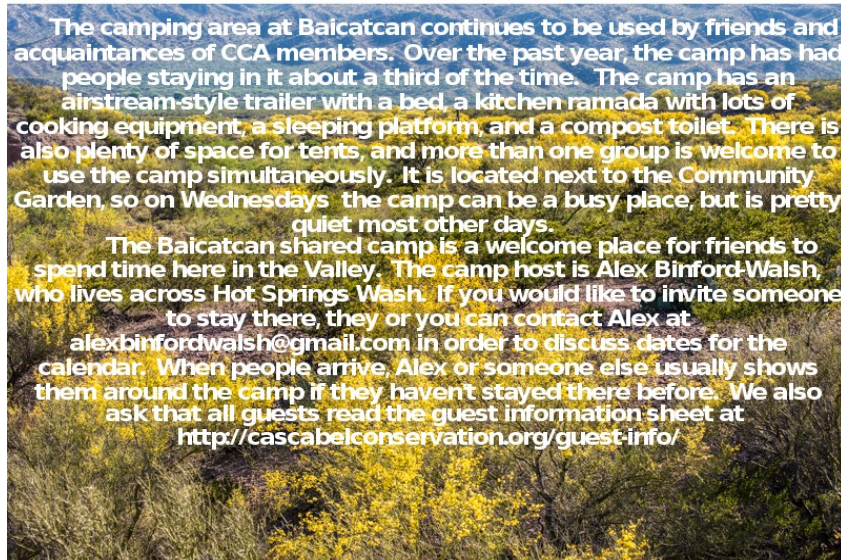
If you have ideas for educational events, please contact Gail Loveland at gail.loveland@gmail.com, who is chairing the Education Committee since the departure of Brandon Wert to Singapore. We miss you Brandon!



Alex Binford-Walsh, Baicatcan Land

The camping area at Baicatcan continues to be used by friends and acquaintances of CCA members. Over the past year, the camp has had people staying in it about a third of the time. The camp has an airstream-style trailer with a bed, a kitchen ramada with lots of cooking equipment, a sleeping platform, and a compost toilet. There is also plenty of space for tents, and more than one group is welcome to use the camp simultaneously. It is located next to the Community Garden, so on Wednesdays the camp can be a busy place, but is pretty quiet most other days.

The Baicatcan shared camp is a welcome place for friends to spend time here in the Valley. The camp host is Alex Binford-Walsh, who lives across Hot Springs Wash. If you would like to invite someone to stay there, they or you can contact Alex at alexbinfordwalsh@gmail.com in order to discuss dates for the calendar. When people arrive, Alex or someone else usually shows them around the camp if they haven't stayed there before. We also ask that all guests read the guest information sheet at <http://cascabelconservation.org/guest-info/>



Deb Longley, Community Garden

My husband and I are a few weeks away from completing our first year here in Cascabel, making us two of your newest neighbors. Thanks to some friendly folks, we were introduced to the Cascabel Community Garden almost instantly.

I wonder how the look on my face was interpreted by whomever it might have been that I was talking to on that very first Wednesday morning that I spent at coffee hour. I can't remember, of course, because every face was unfamiliar, and so this person remains unremembered to this day. But I do remember my question upon hearing that "we work at the garden on Wednesdays." Um, only Wednesdays? No other time? Well of course you can work anytime you want to, it was explained to me. But everybody is there on Wednesdays. Now I have worked in community gardens before. Everybody has a plot, and you go when you can. Sometimes you see someone that just maybe you think you remember seeing before, once.

So the look on my face, was it incredulity? Non-comprehension? Oh, so this is...a...community community garden? Like, everybody grows food for everybody? Yeah, like that, says the unremembered one. (cont...)

