

Tucson Mountains Association – Ballot for Election 2016 (See candidate biographies)

Please note: under our By-Laws, the new Board will meet in January and select one member to serve as president, one as vice-president, one as secretary and one as treasurer. The membership elects the Board members and they, in turn, select officers from among them. You may vote for up to three Board members if your membership is current.

Board Members: Choose three (3)

Peter Chesson _____ or write in _____

Judith Meyer _____ or write in _____

Paul Eckerstrom _____ or write in _____

Please return your ballot to TMA, P.O. Box 86117, Tucson, Az 85754 by October 14th, or bring it to the annual meeting and potluck at the Milagro Community Center by 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 16, 2016.

Thank you to all who have recently renewed your membership!

Now is the time to Renew your membership \$ 30.00 (household) annual Fee, and invite your neighbors to join! Just print and Cut out this form, fill out and mail with a check to:
TMA, PO Box 86117, Tucson, AZ. 85754-6117

Name _____ Business Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Evening Phone _____

E-mail _____

The Tucson Mountains Association
PO Box 86117
Tucson, AZ 85754-6117



September 2016

E-mail: TMA@TucsonMountainsAssoc.org

Annual Meeting

Mark Sunday, October 16 on your calendars NOW!

We will hold our Annual Meeting and Potluck at

Milagro Co-Housing (3057 N. Gaia Pl.)

5:00 pm with a tour of the grounds at 4:30 pm.

The silent auction was successful last year, so we have decided to hold it again! This year we will be auctioning locally-sourced native plant seedlings too, just right for restoring your property. Of course we plan to have live music provided by the band, Uncommon Folk. They'll be soft dinner music and toe-tapping sounds while you peruse our auction items. Don't miss our fun event. Oh, by the way, if you have something you would like to donate to the Silent Auction, please contact Charlene Pesquiera at 520-358-1783 or cb1202mail@gmail.com We need your help and support!

It's a potluck, so bring a side dish or dessert (entrees and beverages will be provided).

River Corridor Initiative

The Silverbell Golf Course and adjacent land

The Camino De Oeste Wash comes all the way from the Tucson Mountain Park, through Feliz Paseos Park and across private well-cared-for lands to the Silverbell Golf Course, which belongs to the City. But the City golf courses are losing money, and the City is thinking of closing the Silverbell Course. What else might it be? Evidently, houses are one possibility, but TMA is strongly arguing that it be restored to wildlife habitat and made into a park. It is right on the Santa Cruz River where the Camino De Oeste Wash exits. This means it was once, and could again be, valuable habitat. Moreover, the City owns undeveloped land immediately to the south, and has two parks consisting of undeveloped land immediately west on Silverbell Road. Combined, these parks are

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Fall Newsletter

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October 16, 2016

**Board Bios for election
at Annual meeting**

**TMA board members
and contact**

Your TMA Board Members:

Peter Chesson, President
pchesson@u.arizona.edu
626-1451

Paul Eckerstrom, Vice President
eckerstrom2@gmail.com
743-1380

Debbie Hicks, Treasurer
debhicks@mindspring.com
743-3906

Jackie Day, Secretary
azjday@aol.com
(602) 670-8568

Ivy Schwartz, Member
ischwartz3211@cox.net
237-6530

Charlene Pesquiera, Member
cb1202mail@gmail.com
358-1783

Judith D. Meyer, Member
Judithdmeyer3785@gmail.com
743-8058

a substantial addition to the viability of the Santa Cruz River Corridor as wildlife habitat and wildlife corridor. The connection with the southern Tucson Mountains along the Camino De Oeste Wash is a unique and valuable feature.

Sunset Road Property

Another major wash connecting the Tucson Mountains with the Santa Cruz River is East Idle Hour Wash. This wash coalesces from other washes including one coming out of the Sweetwater Preserve. This wash also connects broadly across developed but low density well-preserved private land to the Saguaro National Park. The Desert Senna development is 78 acres of land on Sunset Road crossing this wash at a strategic point on the way to the Santa Cruz. It was originally platted with 22 homes, but the developer proposed to increase that to 46 in exchange for a cluster arrangement that would permanently preserve substantial land on the property. Both TMA and the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection fought to keep the developed area away from washes, and minimize its impingement on important habitat areas. But TMA also fought to have the number of homes reduced to allow for better wildlife corridors. A reduced number of homes was also important to local residents who were dismayed by the proposal to more than double the number. The developer did make some concessions on habitat and washes, but we were unsuccessful in having the number of homes reduced, as the Board of Supervisors at the July 5 meeting approved their new plan with 46 homes.

Advice to the County

We continue to talk to the County about how to spend the small amount of money that they have to purchase natural areas in the Tucson Mountains. Here our focus has been how to connect existing preserved areas. The Sweetwater Preserve is not far from the Saguaro National Park, but is not connected to it or other preserved areas. We are looking to see how property might be purchased that would allow the Sweetwater Preserve to be connected across Sweetwater Drive, where it is closest to the National Park. Connecting it would mean that preserved areas would connect all the way to the broad lower reaches of Sweetwater Wash where it provides a valuable connection to the Santa Cruz River at Columbus Park.

The big picture

This is all about protection and restoration of land that connects the Tucson Mountains with the Santa Cruz River, and protection and restoration of the land along the Santa Cruz River itself. The reasons are simple: rivers and washes are special places in our desert landscape and the eastern foothills of the Tucson Mountains have diverse habitat contributing to the health of it all. Can you imagine a future where development is constrained, everyone looks after their properties to preserve nature, and all the trashed land along the Santa Cruz River is restored to beautiful habitat connecting across to the Tortolitas and the Catalinas? This would be wonderful for nature, but also wonderful for the people who live here who could experience the beauty and stimulation of vibrant nature all around them. This can happen with the will of the community.

Habitat competition

It is never too late to enter the habitat competition, but it would be really great if you can enter soon so that pictures of your property can be shown at the picnic and annual meeting. And do not forget, there is now a kids' competition. Encourage your kids to take an interest in the environment, and pride in your own property. It would be a great activity for them, and might just be the beginning of something big for them.

The idea of the habitat competition is to encourage care, restoration and pride in the natural values of privately owned land. Why? The publicly owned protected areas of the Tucson Mountains, although extensive, are just not enough to keep them biologically healthy into the future. If we all look after our properties with pride in their natural values, the Tucson Mountains can thrive. They can remain one big beautiful ecosystem. So consider entering the competition, even just to make it a success, as that contributes to our goal of having everyone think about what they can do for nature on their own property in the Tucson Mountains.

Go to this link for the details of the habitat competition

<http://www.tucsonmountainsassoc.org/habitat-competition.html>

Endorsement

As most of you probably know, the Pima County Supervisors who represent the Tucson Mountains Association's geographic region, Sharon Bronson and Richard Elias, are both running for reelection this year. We are pleased to endorse both of them.

Sharon Bronson currently chairs the Pima County Board of Supervisors, and her leadership has been exemplary. She spearheaded the decision to sue the Arizona Legislature for passing too much of the cost of traditionally state-funded programs to local property owners. You may know that the sole Republican seeking to remain on the Board, Ally Miller, was the lone voice in opposition to that lawsuit. But the suit went forward, Pima County won, and this Board has managed once again to keep our property taxes reasonable. Ms. Bronson has shown herself to be pro-business development, even as she has championed land conservation and services for our people.

Richard Elias was originally appointed in 2002 to replace Raul Grijalva when Mr. Grijalva went to the US Congress. He was then reelected in 2004, 2008 and 2012, and we think for good reason. Mr. Elias has always been a friend of conservation, helping enormously in the effort to protect the Painted Hills and to expand Tucson Mountain Park. Mr. Elias had always been a friend to Pima County families, including our children and our LGBTQ community.

TMA has often had reason to advocate before the Board of Supervisors and other County officials and boards. We have not always won every battle, but we feel we have always been treated with respect, and our suggestions have been seriously considered even when not adopted. We wholeheartedly endorse both of these excellent candidates for continued service on our Board of Supervisors.

Candidates for the Board of Directors of Tucson Mountain Association: Vote at the Annual Picnic October 16, 2016, or mail ballot by October 12, 2016.

Peter Chesson:

Peter has lived in the Tucson Mountains for eleven years and has been on the TMA board for about eight years. For the last two years he has served as president. Peter is a professor of Ecology at the UA, and also serves on the Pima County Parks and Recreation Commission. He is dedicated to nature conservation in our region, and as a board member will work to further this goal. During his time as president, he has been working to promote the preservation and restoration of the Santa Cruz River Corridor as a critical wildlife connection within our region.

Judith Meyer:

Judith D. Meyer moved from the northeast USA to the Tucson Mountains foothills a dozen years ago, upon falling in love at first sight of this greenest desert on earth. She is a past president of TMA. When a former board member had to resign a year ago, she rejoined as a substitute. She is happy to continue fostering the organization's mission, using the advocacy skills she developed as a lawyer, now retired.

Paul Eckerstrom

Paul Eckerstrom grew up in the Tucson Mountains on Painted Hills Rd. and lived in the Tucson Mountains most of his life. He has been a vocal activist for many causes in our community, but is most passionate about preserving the rural character and the beautiful Sonoran Desert of the Tucson Mountains. That is why he has been a board member for TMA since 2003 and wishes to continue in that role.

Board Member Recruitment:

Are you interested in advocating for preserving open space and our beautiful Sonoran Desert, and west-side community? Join our board! We'd love to have you. Please contact Paul Eckerstrom at 520-743-1380 or, eckerstrom2@gmail.com.