

Tahquitz Creek: Picture a Parkway by April Hildner, TRENO chair

I couldn't really picture it when long-time neighborhood residents would tell me they used to take their kids down to the Tahquitz Creek to play and picnic. They did? Just recently someone described to me how they used to float down the creek on an innertube. Really??

Since moving to the neighborhood in 2000, I have spent time at the "Wash" riding my bike, listening to the frogs, and watching an occasional duck hang loose on the water. But I could never imagine how one could picnic alongside the creek, let alone allow their children to play there.

After seeing the photograph below, I finally got the picture.



Tahquitz Creek before it became a stormwater channel

Tahquitz Creek was clearly once a beautiful, natural stream; a rare treasure within the great expanse of a once seemingly endless arid desert.

But, as the City grew, there was a need to protect residents from flash floods caused by mountain runoff and an ever increasing volume of storm-water directed from the city streets. Eventually, the creek channel was deepened and lined with rock, a dam was installed, and bridges were built. The creek was no longer a place for people, it had a job to do.

Later, a parkway was added along N. Riverside Drive. Along S. Riverside Drive, an oleander hedge was planted, and a concrete pedestrian bridge replaced the old wooden bridge that kept washing away when the water ran high and fast.

After a time, the area began to suffer a slow decline, similar to the plight of the Oleanders aligning S. Riverside Drive. Trash, graffiti, homeless encampments, dog feces, and insufficient maintenance created an atmosphere of blight and neglect. Shameful, for a place that was once so special.

A Commitment to Renewal

After TRENO's annual meeting last November, the TRENO Advisory Council decided to make the "Wash" a priority project.

And so we started to build a plan that restored beauty to the area, made it a safer and more enjoyable place to run, bike, walk and yes, eventually to share a sandwich with a friend. A place that would be the nexus of a community pathway system connecting people to downtown and other parts of the City, mountain trail heads,

Continued on Page 2



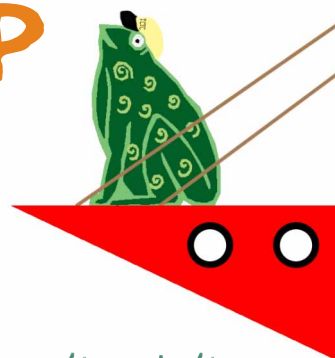
Trash in the Creek channel

All Hands on Deck for the TAHQUITZ CREEK YACHT CLUB'S CREEK CLEAN UP

Saturday, November 18, 2006
9 am - 1 pm

Call **318-2618** to sign up!!

Help make Tahquitz creek a better place for people and other wild things



- TRENO residents will join in the fun *immediately* following our annual meeting at Unity Palm Springs (see back cover).
- Sturdy shoes, long-sleeved shirts, long pants. Work gloves provided, but bring your own if you have them.
- Snacks and water provided.
- Hands are also needed to help with registration.



TAHQUITZ CREEK PARKWAY, continued from Page 1

Tahquitz Canyon, and perhaps one day all the way to the Salton Sea.

The Deepwell Estates and Warm Sands Neighborhood Organizations soon became active participants in the planning process. We are working on a landscaping plan for S. Riverside which calls for removing all of the oleander and installing a new, efficient irrigation system and desert plant species. We have secured partners to help with in-kind and cash donations and we have accomplished tangible improvements that are small in the big picture, but do make a difference.

- “No dogs allowed” ordinance was removed; new policy allows dogs on leash
- Doggie doo clean up stations installed near foot bridge
- Trash cans installed near foot bridge
- Foot bridge exterior painted (community volunteers will paint interior in November)
- Oleander trimmed

Tahquitz Creek Yacht Club

Together the three neighborhoods recently formed the Tahquitz Creek Yacht Club, a volunteer organization to lead clean up and fundraising events and to monitor the conditions of the Tahquitz Creek Parkway. A group of dedicated people who will ensure that the Parkway retains its value as a *treasured* area of the City.



City staff and freshly painted bridge across Tahquitz Creek

Community Support Necessary

Securing approval and funding for the Tahquitz Creek Parkway plan is not an overnight task. It has taken a lot of work to get this far, and it will take a lot more in the future. It will be worth it.

We need the whole community to rally around this effort. Write letters in support of our goals to City Council. Attend the TRENO annual meeting and participate in the Clean Up on November 18, become a member of the Tahquitz Creek Yacht Club. There are all kinds of opportunity for participation. **Join in! tcyc@yahoo.com or 774-6525 for more information.**



Failing berm and dead oleander

TAHQUITZ CREEK PARKWAY PROJECT GOALS

Work with the City, County, and Community to:

1. Create a scenic and safe park for people to meet, walk, bike, and relax
2. Establish new Parkway trails that link to:
 - City-loop Trail System and Coachella Valley Trail System
 - Downtown, neighborhood shopping centers, education and cultural centers
 - Mountain trail heads
3. Establish Tahquitz Creek Yacht Club, a volunteer group that conducts improvement projects and ensures Parkway is maintained
4. Develop connections between people, history and natural environment
 - Re-landscape using desert plants to conserve water and create bird and wildlife habitat
 - Protect natural features of creek and riparian areas
 - Install interpretive signage
 - Install chairs, tables, public art and other amenities
 - Engage students in learning activities



Protect Against Identity Theft by Joan Martin, TRENO Neighborhood Watch

We have discovered a great locking mailbox: Armadillo Mailbox. It is Postmaster General approved and is very strong.

It is shaped like a regular rural mailbox but has a very deep throat downward. It accepts a shoebox-size package and can have its locking door facing either the street or the house. The big advantage is that it is virtually impossible to reach down inside to steal mail; there is only a 1/2-inch clearance

at the back. The price compares favorably with other locking mailboxes on the market - approximately \$404 installed (in grey) in the Palms Springs area. If you want a color other than grey (black, green or white), it would cost \$20 more. If the mailbox interests you, contact Armadillo Enclosures, located in Escondido, for more information.

Armadillo Enclosures, Inc.
760-480-2354 www.armadillomailbox.com



Neighborhood PEOPLE...

Enjoy a Slice of Palm Springs Life and Leave with a Sparkling Car!

by Lorraine Becker,
TRENO Advisory Council

Desert 100% Hand Car Wash, located on Palm Canyon Drive is the place to kick back, visit with old friends, meet new folks and view the city scene. Desert Car Wash has been a fixture on Highway 111 for over 30 years.



Seven years ago, TRENO residents Larry and Patty Murray jumped in with great customer service and provide any type of wash or auto detailing to your exacting standards. Both Larry and Patty enjoy greeting customers and most become friends through repeat business.

Inside this unique slice of Palm Springs life, pictures of our desert community through the years are plastered on the walls, and Larry's penchant for mid-century Americana is evident throughout the facility.

Desert Car Wash has supported TRENO by providing coupons for free or reduced price car washes to help our organization raise funds.

Treat yourself and your car with a visit to Desert 100% Hand Car Wash. And let Larry and Patty know you appreciate their commitment to the neighborhood.

I REMEMBER...

Let me tell you about what Tahquitz Creek used to be. Once upon a time, early fifties, the City and the County had plans for the Wash. First it would be deepened and narrowed down, with the sides cemented and a chain link fence enclosing it. There would then be enough space to build homes on the south side. This would increase the tax base and the City needed the money. Sound familiar?

That didn't go over too well with citizens. We were all young families with small children and when the Wash was running, generally around six months of the year, that was our playground. So we decided to do something about it. We all chipped in and hired an attorney. I am talking about the families on North Riverside, San Lucas and Sunny Dunes. We were all very active members of the Junior Chamber of Commerce (JayCeEs.) Anyway, the whole idea was finally dropped.

Of course, the creek was changed eventually, and dramatically, when the channel was ripped and a flood control dam was built below Tahquitz Canyon.

Now, this is how I remember it. If anyone has a better memory, I would be interested in hearing from you!

Florence Ambler Klaasen 327-3261 or caflogo@aol.com



A New Friendly Face in the Neighborhood

Welcome to Brette MacLean the new principal at Cahuilla Elementary School. While her smile may be new to us, Brette is a "local," who attended Katherine Finchey Elementary, Raymond Cree Middle School and is a proud graduate of Palm Springs High School. Mrs. MacLean earned a Bachelor

of Arts degree at University of California, Santa Barbara, a Master of Arts degree in administration at Chapman University and will soon be Dr. Brette MacLean with a doctoral degree from the University of LaVerne. We have a life-long learner in our midst who continues to lead the excellence at Cahuilla!

Principal MacLean invites the TRENO residents to jump into life at Cahuilla Elementary School and suggests ways to get involved:

- Help the first graders plant a school garden
- Read to any student. They love to listen!
- Tutor or assist one or a small group of students in your favorite subject.

Call Suzanne Rouse, Volunteer Coordinator 416-8161.

See you at Cahuilla!

TRENO Disaster Plan UPDATE

By Barbara Villani & David Martin

The Disaster Preparedness Task Force has been meeting twice monthly throughout most of 2006. We have compiled the *TRENO DisasterReadiness Guide* to assist our neighbors in preparing their homes for a disaster and to know what to do in case such an event occurs.

We have also created a *Disaster Readiness Household Survey* to learn about who lives within TRENO, so we can account for everyone, including pets, should a disaster strike. We are creating a confidential database of emergency contact numbers; learning who has special needs; who has skills, resources, or equipment that can help if needed; and other vital information. If you have not yet completed your survey, we ask you to complete and return the enclosed survey without hesitation. This information will be our most impor-

tant resource in keeping our neighborhood organized in the event of a disaster, and will only be used in the event of an emergency.

Disaster Preparedness has grown to 13 members attending Task Force meetings and will merge with Neighborhood Watch so that we can better coordinate efforts. Additionally, we are coordinating our Disaster Plan with the Cahuilla Elementary School.

Current Disaster Task Force members are being trained to use Ham Radios and taking CERT and CPR training. You are invited to participate in these emergency training programs.

The neighborhood is seeking additional members to volunteer to help create our neighborhood disaster plan, collect emergency contact information, and respond in the event of a disaster. Everyone needs to prepare for themselves, and everyone can help

the neighborhood in this vital effort because in the event of a disaster, **EVERYONE** will be affected

If you are interested in trainings or joining the Disaster Task Force contact Joan at suncreek1@aol.com or David at dm333@mindspring.com.

ARE you READY?



If you have not yet completed your survey, we ask you to complete and return the enclosed survey without hesitation.

Personal Experience Contributes to TRENO's Disaster Response Plan

Sometimes the choice about where you finally plant roots comes about in ways you never expected.

David Martin and his partner, Artist Michael Stern, moved permanently to Palm Springs following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in New York City, where their home was located a mere five blocks from Ground Zero.

David saw firsthand how unprepared New York City was for disaster: The police didn't know what to tell people to do, or where to go. NYC's Disaster Command Center was destroyed when the building collapsed upon it.

"Thousands of victims stampeded up-

town causing thunderous earthquake-like vibrations that trembled and cracked the walls of our new 54-story apartment tower," remembers David. "Military tanks rolled down Broadway, yet the 'Emergency Alert System' never came on the TV. It was unexpected, unprecedented chaos. The island of Manhattan was locked-down, bridges and tunnels closed; we were quarantined for 72 hours in case there had been biological weapons. It took us a week to escape New York for the safety of Palm Springs."

"Since 9/11 our Tribeca neighborhood had to pull together to fight for health,



safety and legal rights," remembers David. Neighborhood residents lobbied politicians, paid for independent testing for dangerous substances, litigated

government agencies for falsifying and covering-up test results, and even sued their insurance companies for lost property. "Even relief agencies, like Red Cross and FEMA became part of the problem," he says, "I learned that it is essential that neighborhoods be organized and

Continued on next page

David Martin, Cont'd.

prepared because if a disaster or other catastrophic event occurs, the reality is we won't be able to rely on outside help for days or weeks." We'll have to take care of ourselves, and everyone will be needed to help or will need help themselves, and in most cases, both."

Since moving full-time to Palm Springs, David and his partner Michael have become very involved with the community as they feel passionately about giving back to the remarkable and beautiful place which helped them to heal from 9/11. David has served on the TRENO Advisory Council since its inception, and is a leading participant in the TRENO Disaster Preparedness Task Force.

We are thankful that he and Michael survived their 9/11 experience with their spirits intact. We are lucky to have them as a part of the TRENO neighborhood - for their invaluable

contributions to our neighborhood and the city, and in helping to develop TRENO's Disaster Readiness plan.

"Being prepared for a disaster doesn't mean that you're expecting the worst, it means you do not have to fear the worst... and that's a big difference," says David.

The World Trade Center attack isn't the only disaster David has worked on, although fortunately the only one he personally experienced. Following the Exxon Valdez oil spill, he and two partners mobilized within hours to provide a pair of 440 foot disaster relief ships to provide support, housing, mobile hospital facilities and generate power to 50,000 people each. He founded "the Children of Chernobyl" to bring medical aid to the victims of this catastrophe, and spearheaded the Chernobyl Children's Hospital, which will treat the next dozen generations of genetic birth defects from radiation. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, David set up a website which linked victims of the disaster (who had relocated to the Coachella Valley) with offers of housing, employment and necessary items for survival.

City and TRENO Working Together to Improve the Neighborhood

An example of the kinds of improved conditions occurring in TRENO and throughout the City.

before



after



If you have questions about code enforcement contact Becky.Clark@palm Springs-ca.gov or call Paul Crippan at 416-0992.

Notice anything different in the neighborhood?

TRENO has been working with our neighborhood's code enforcement representative, Becky Clark, to improve the look and feel of our neighborhood, as part of a city-wide effort by the City of Palm Springs to clean up our streetscapes.

"TRENO has been communicating with Becky about extreme situations where neglect spoils the impression of our neighborhood as a great place to live," explains TRENO Advisory Council Vice-Chair Paul Crippan. "We want to help improve the quality of our neighborhood by saying it's not okay to neglect properties or leave cars on the street for months on end," he says. "We also want to assist residents, who because of their health or financial situation might need a helping hand from the neighborhood."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Unity of Palm Springs

has resumed after a summer hiatus.
Sunday Service 11 am
Tuesday Meditation 7 pm
Wednesday Dr. William Kent Larkin
7 pm

Cahuilla Elementary is seeking a before school and lunchtime supervisor. Call 416-8161 for more information.

TRENO website!

www.pstreno.com

THANK YOU - You're the Best!

Builder's Supply a kind supporter and a terrific neighbor.
490 E. Sunny Dunes

Unity of Palm Springs for generously opening your doors to TRENO. 815 South Camino Real

Vic Eisenhut, TRENO resident, for his work in revitalizing the website.