

Desert Dwellers

Volume 13, Issue 46

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Holey Streets!



Where do we live? In a 21st century American city, or a third-world backwater village? Hard to tell based on the state of our streets. Rattling along on the well-worn roadbed, swerving to avoid the potholes, I often wonder about this. Our neighborhood streets are but another example of America's deteriorating infrastructure, the victim of neglect over many years, and now, of course, we can blame the recession. Governments, upon whom we depend to take care of such things, are in dire financial straits and crying poverty. No fix is in the foreseeable future. So, we bump along, complaining all the while, wondering where in the world do we live.

In an attempt to pry some action out of Pima County, the OFNA Board of Directors recently sent a letter to the Department of Transportation and our county Supervisor, Ann Day, asking, at a minimum, to have the gaping holes repaired in a more permanent manner and, hoping beyond reason, for all the streets to be repaved over a reasonable period of time.

The county's reaction was predictable. The pothole patching truck made a quick pass through lower Genematas, throwing black material at the most egregious holes, then moving on to the next squeaky wheel. If past results are any indication, this short-term fix will last only a couple of months, leaving motorists once again to play the slalom game to avoid dropping a wheel in a gaping hole while hoping that no car is coming from the other direction. The purpose of the letter was partly to get the transportation people to understand the futility and economic absurdity of this very temporary fix.

If you are angry about the condition of our neighborhood streets, please write or call. Many voices have greater impact. Your concern and participation are greatly appreciated. Take the time to let your government officials know how you feel. Please request that tax dollars intended for street repair and repaving be retained for this purpose, and not be redirected to the general fund as we believe is currently happening.

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Tucson, AZ 85701
520-740-2738
520-740-8489 fax
annday@pima.gov

Community Relations
Pima County Department of Transportation
201 N. Stone Ave., 4th Floor
Tucson, AZ 85701
520-740-6410

Get to Know Your Neighbors

A Family Affair

Whose afraid of a recession? Not the intrepid Hay-Cooks of Yvon Drive. Their shop/gallery **Deco**, located at **2612 E. Broadway**, just east of Tucson Blvd on the south side of the street, opened its doors a little over a year ago.

It was a delight to visit with Monica at Deco recently. Don't be fooled when you walk in – I thought the store was a one-room affair – but it's much more than that. Besides two rooms filled with beautiful art as well as unique gifts and a variety of beads, there's a craft room where they offer classes.

I'm not a big shopper. but I couldn't resist some eco-natural earrings, a lufa (never tried one before) and two VERY cool felted purses – but the best for me? A bag I couldn't refuse – created with Indian newspaper by a non profit “whose main objective is to provide education and shelter to street children.”

Why start another small business now?

“This store front once housed Jude's sign business, but he outgrew this location,” Monica explained. “We've been renting the space until recently. When the last renter moved out, Jude mentioned opening up our own store. The idea grew on me, so we did. It took us a while to paint the entire inside, including the floor, find store fixtures and merchandise. We worked on it for months before it was ready to go.”



How do you find your merchandise?

“At first we thought it would be difficult to fill the store, even though it is not that big. We even thought about renting out some space, but it filled faster than we thought. We put out the word to artists in the community, because we consign lovely items created by local artists, like jewelry, paintings, candles, purses, etc.

“But we also change our shows every couple months to maintain a fresh look and to bring in new artists and items. For example, right now our current show is *Ignite: Neon and Light* which runs through the end of December.”

Monica's personal favorite thing in the store now?

“We have so many neat gift items. Our graphite objects are quite unique. These pencils write, but they are also works of art. They come in many different shapes, there's an owl, a flower, leaves, and even a snake. A hummingbird pencil sits in a cup of rice beside my computer at home. It's functional, yet artsy.”

Are you accepting artists or craftpersons who would like to show at Deco?

“Artists can contact us at the store: monica@decoarttucson.com or 319-0888. We have an email list of artists and send word to them about our upcoming shows.”

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How has this new business meshed with/impacted your family?

"It's definitely a family affair. My sister Marlies brings her experience and talents as a jewelry and bead artist; Jude, my husband has many talents. He created many of the neon and lights in the current show. I started taking art classes at the Art Institute at the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum several years ago and enjoy painting. Some of my art hangs in the store. Even our daughter, Erika, is becoming an artist. She's taking a jewelry class and wants to consign her items in the store.

Even Monica's 90-year-old dad Chris helped refurbish the antique display cases and in tearing material to make the way-cool curtains in the doorways and trend-setting scarves that are for sale. "He has been a tremendous help to us. He's truly done a lot."

Deco is a member of Local First Arizona, <http://www.localfirstaz.com>. The organization helps consumers find services and merchandise that supports local businesses. Monica shared in the store's most recent e-newsletter that a bigger percentage of your money stays in the community. When you shop at local stores like Deco -- \$43 of every \$100 spent remains in the local economy versus just \$13 when you purchase from chain retailers or on the web.

Monica says, "most Saturdays from 1-4 pm, we host a 'make it and take it' event, where people come in and make something. There's usually a small materials fee, but participants leave with something they've made, like a bracelet. The Saturday events are catching on and we have some individuals that keep coming back. They enjoy creating and socializing with other creators. We post these happenings on our website <http://www.decoarttucson.com> and on calendars around the city, like KXCI, Zocalo, and the Tucson Weekly."

Questions of your own? Call Deco 319-0888

Marge Pellegrino

Neighborhood Map

Copies of the neighborhood map depicting all the properties and their owners are now available. To request a copy, please contact:

Carole DeAngeli
caroledeangeli@earthlink.net
690-1107

A Note about Dues

A payment form is always included on the back page of the Desert Dwellers newsletter. I include this for the convenience of those who perhaps did not receive an invoice or have misplaced it.. If you have forgotten whether your dues are paid, please contact the membership chairman:

Jay DeAngeli
ejdeangeli@comcast.net
520-690-1107

OFNA Financial Report - Fiscal Year 2011

Balance Forward (9/1/10)	\$13,260
Income	1,350
Expenses	3,583
Current Balance (11/8/10)	\$11,027

Detailed financial reports are available at the Annual Meeting. Members may receive a copy at any time by requesting it from the Treasurer, ejdeangeli@comcast.net, 690-1107.

Weekly Neighborhood Update

If you want to receive weekly neighborhood updates via e-mail, drop a note to:

caroledeangeli@earthlink.net

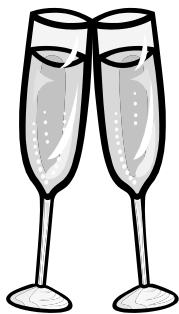
All residents are welcome to be on the list. If you've stopped receiving the updates, let me know and I'll add you back to the list. I've been having some computer issues and my list may not be complete.

CRIME

Several incidents of crime have occurred in the last couple of months, including two daytime burglaries, car break-ins, abandoned cars and vandalism. Please do your part to reduce crime in the neighborhood by being alert to suspicious activity, reporting any and all incidents to 911, and keeping your Neighborhood Watch Block Leaders and Area Leaders informed.

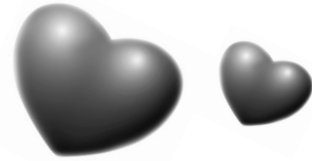
Neighborhood Watch Area Leaders:

Jacki Elder, elder@theriver.com, 292-6070
Bente Jensen, bentejaz@comcast.net, 744-7742



*Here's wishing all of you a peaceful,
 prosperous and joyful
 New Year!*

Picnic Thanks!



Year 12 of the Oracle Foothills Neighborhood Association Annual Picnic is in the books. Once again, the picnic was a tremendous success, thanks to so many volunteers.

Mark Andersen was this year's coordinator and had the help of his entire family—his wife Marie who assisted with decorating, set-up and clean-up, and his daughter Megan who helped with all of the above and also provided children's activities, where she was assisted by her boyfriend, David. The cooks—Angelo Delacona, Jay DeAngeli, Tom Scarborough and Mark Andersen did a fabulous job on the brats, baby back ribs and chicken. Many thanks to all those who helped with the set-up in the week prior and on the day of the picnic. Thanks to Carolyn Redmore for doing the piñata this year. Thanks to everyone who assisted in the clean-up efforts. Many hands make light work. We appreciated the use of the trailer loaned by neighbor Robert Smith, making the transportation so much easier. The diversity and quality of the potluck dishes was amazing! Thanks to everyone who brought all the goodies.

Others who deserve mention and thanks:

Greg Smith

George Grimm

Jacki Elder and Bente Jensen

Marge Pellegrino and Reggie Smith

Chip Boatright

Joan Scott and Bill Broyles

And all those whose names are not included here who were so much help!

Scooping the Neighborhood

By Diane Foray

I think I'd be preaching to the choir if I started to list all the wonderful things about living in our neighborhood. Certainly such a list would include: the abundance of flora and fauna, the convenient location, the privacy of our homes and the overall camaraderie of the neighborhood. This camaraderie is fostered and nurtured not only in person through our neighborhood meetings and picnics, but online, through our Web site and email communiqués. However, if you really want to meet your neighbors and learn more about the neighborhood, get a dog.

Now I realize that the moment you read the word "dog," your ears might have perked up and you became more interested in this article or you stopped reading. It seems that there are two types of people in this world (have you heard that line before?)—people who like dogs and people who don't. I have found this to be a subject that people have definite opinions on; when in the presence of a friendly, wagging tail they either have the compulsion to approach the animal, or they want nothing to do with it. But even if you are in the camp that believes that dogs are NOT our best friends, please don't give up on this article, it took me too long to write it to remain unread.

One of the best ways to see and maybe meet your neighbors is to take a walk on our streets. By owning a dog, you are nearly forced to pound the pavement because dogs just love, love, love to go for walks. And many will let you know, in not so subtle ways, when you have been remiss in your dog-walking duties. With a dog in tow, (or more likely towing you), you are likely to be noticed and spoken to more readily, especially if that neighbor you are passing also has a dog with him or her. Now, an interesting phenomena occurs when people meet a dog owner and dog together, names will be exchanged and 99% of the time the dog's name will be remembered and not the owner's. Maybe it's just because dogs tend to be much cuter than their owners or maybe because dogs will wag their tail when you say their name.



Our dog, Bella, who loves meeting everyone and every dog!

If you happen to pass a person with the same breed of dog as you, be ready to feel an instant bond. Instinctively you will gravitate towards each other, both dogs and owners alike, eager to share in your common traits. Immediately, stories will be exchanged about how the dogs were adopted, their habits and personalities. Dogs, not having the luxury (or is it a curse?) of speech, meet in their own special way which can embarrass even the most-seasoned dog owner.

Of course there is some etiquette to follow when you are dog walking, and one should always remember to BE PREPARED. If you have to ask "prepared for what?" then you are not ready to be a dog owner.

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Helping Youth Plant Trees vs. Tag Walls

From time to time in our e-letters from Carole, we find up-to-date information about the nuts and bolts of recycling or assisting in controlling invasive plants. Often such information comes from Tucson Clean & Beautiful, a non-profit whose goal is to educate and involve us in conserving natural resources and enhancing the quality of life in our area. At the 2009 OFNA Annual Meeting, Director of Programs, B.J. Cordova, brought us an informative power point presentation on TCB.



Some months later, B.J. emailed me about YARDS, a youth landscape training program that provides an alternative community service option for youth on probation. He requested financial support for the 2011 program. The 2010 year's three classes were fully funded by the Wolslager Foundation. Second year funding, however, was contingent on TCB raising matching funds.

The goals of the program--job training and certification in landscaping, reducing court costs and recidivism, providing a model to other communities--along with the success of the first two classes struck me as worthy of our neighborhood's support. The OFNA Board agreed to a modest donation to the 2011 program, which helped TCB proceed with plans for the next three classes.

As for those 2010 YARDS graduates: One went to work for TCB planting trees, another returned to community college, and others entered other job training programs. "Thank you," Tucson Clean and Beautiful for innovative service to our youth and our neighborhoods. And, "thank you," OFNA leadership for supporting TCB.

Carolyn Redmore
President, OFNA Board of Directors

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Here's a universal truth to keep in mind: The path to happiness does not include dog droppings on it. People do not want dog poop in their line of sight and definitely not on the bottom of their shoes. (Dogs, on the other hand, think it's the next best thing to lizard road-kill.) A dog walker must have a baggy or some other method to remove the droppings and dispose of them PROPERLY. Procuring a baggy while on a walk couldn't be easier as there are three dispensers throughout our neighborhood stocked with top-quality baggies ready to use. Ah, but judging from what I've observed in the neighborhood, the word "properly" means different things to different people. Is it proper to bag up the droppings but leave the baggy (and its contents) right next to the site where the poop dropped? Incredulously, I've seen this on more than one occasion in the past few months. So had one of our other neighbors who left a hand-written note next to one of the baggies that said something to the effect: I KNOW WHO YOU ARE. PICK UP YOUR BAGGY & THROW IT AWAY IN YOUR OWN GARBAGE CAN. I am happy to report that I haven't seen one of those roadside baggies since.

Dog-ownership has many joys, one of which is sharing your canine friend with others. What better way than to take him or her on a walk, meet new people and enjoy our wonderful neighborhood.

This is dedicated to all of our four-legged neighbors and their owners (whatever their names are) including: Louie, Fred, Ginger, Frankie, Ellie, Blanca, Tracy, Lady, Juneau, Kipper, Tiger, Sierra, Sydney, Sammy, Frankie, Tucker, Rain and especially, Bentley.

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