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 (OK, 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 more 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 bumber crop of chiles last year which created opportunities for numerous scout and school-roads-they 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 are who 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 the 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 join us on the land and participate in the community model of collaborative stewardship. Many describe their experiences 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 contributions, becoming a member and lending your time and talent or both.

ADD YOUR VOICE TO OUR VISION! cascabelconservation.org

To:

Cascabel Conservation Association 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 and/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 Riparian and Research Center (pictured here) is ready for use. I want to thank the anonymous donor and all the Sangor 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 financial contributions.

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 SJ and CCA and the 10,000 acres stewardship by these two associations in Hot Springs Canyon. The Center is designed to accommodate the three entitlements of stewardship in the SJ Covenant: Promote, which was largely authored by Jim’s mediation, study, and wildland integration (Robert stated); solitary, 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 Leiner 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 solo self. [My experience... driving away from the city, and especially getting north of Tucson... when I started to see saguaros again... all of it was simply a mouthful... I continued to build as I met Daniel... and we headed out here... and the joy of arrival to my home was a breeze from once I 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... and 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 when the final aloneness of age will feel like. My intimacy with him will now wane until I am his history keeper, and eventually his memory...

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

Gail Loveland, Education program

The 17th Annual Mesquite Milling and local food potluck lunch was held on October 30, 2015 at the Cascadel Community Center with over 60 attendees. This summer our focus will be group outings in the Valley to demonstrate best methods for collecting and storing stumps before milling. In 2015 we also added several educational events.

On March 14, 2015, Anna Lands lead a “Plant and Archaeology Walk” on the upper terraces of Balcataen. 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 Balcataen. 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 Callagery 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 gailloveland@gmail.com, who is chair of the Education Committee since the departure of Brandon Wet to Singapore. We miss you Brandon!

Alex Binford-Walsh, Balcataen Land

The camping area at Balcataen continues to be used by friends and acquaintances of CCA members. Over the past year, the camp has had a few fires near it and the area around the fire rings. The camp has also been set up for a few small groups and one group a week. The camp is a great place 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 Balcataen 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 the street. If you would like to invite someone to stay there, you can contact Alex at alexbwalsh@gmail.com in order to discuss a time that works 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://cascaletconservation.org/guest-info/

Deb Lindsay, Community Garden

My husband and I are a few weeks away from completing our first year here in Cascadel. We are two of your newest neighbors, three to be exact, having been introduced to the Cascadel 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 didn’t remember, of course. It was the first time, every face was unfamiliar, and so this person remains unremembered to this day. But I do remember my question upon hearing that “we work there on Wednesdays?” “Oh, Wednesday? 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 might 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.)