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## Hedrick Acres Neighborhood Association Newsletter

### WANTED

- Web designer
- District Reps
- Tucson Clean & Beautiful Lead for Navajo Wash
- Volunteers to help pick up trash in Navajo Wash 8amish on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month

### HANA 2023 Board Members

Chair: John Pendolino  
Treasurer: Judith Weiser  
Co-Treasurer: Allison Bradford  
Secretary: Adrian Wurr

### Communications

Though our annual newsletter reaches everyone, there are other ways to communicate with HANA and/or each other throughout the year.

HANA Listserv: [hanatucaz@googlegroups.com](mailto:hanatucaz@googlegroups.com)  
HANA Neighborhood Association Email:  
[hanatucaz@gmail.com](mailto:hanatucaz@gmail.com)

*Please send an email to sign up for our Listserv!*

### Neighborhood Meetings

We meet officially twice a year: Elections are in March and other business and social activities occur in September. Our next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 28, at 6-7pm in Navajo Wash (near Hedrick Drive). Look for postcards in your mailbox and/or announcements on our listserv with specific dates a few weeks prior to each meeting.

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## LONG-TIME RESIDENTS OF HEDRICK ACRES

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One of the residents who has lived in Hedrick Acres the longest, **Johanna Billingsley**, died last year at the age of 93. Her loss led me to seek out others in the neighborhood who have lived here for a long time and record their stories before they, too, pass on. The project turned out to be a really fun walk down memory lane for everyone involved.



Johanna bought her house on Santa Rita Ave. in the 1960s for less than the cost of a new car today. She grew up in Germany, and later emigrated to the United States to work on Sandra Day O'Connor's family ranch in New Mexico. She eventually moved to

Tucson with her husband and worked for many years at Circle K. She enjoyed yard work, cocktail hour, and watching Judge Judy. She faithfully walked her Dachshund Hound, Lucky, around the neighborhood every day. After her death, Lucky was adopted by one of the many neighbors who checked in on Johanna daily in her later years.

**Ken Hill** moved to Hedrick Acres in 1985, before the neighborhood association was even established. The area was alternately known as Catalina Poultry Acres because there were several large chicken farms in the area in the 1940s-1950s when most of the housing was originally built. The name Hedrick Acres stuck, but the association adopted the image of a chicken as its logo to honor its historical roots. Ken was active in HANA in its early days, serving as co-Chair with Linda Drew for many years. Both were instrumental in helping to develop Navajo Wash Pocket Park in 2007. Ken identified this and other infill projects as being the most notable change in the neighborhood since he moved here.

**Allegra Heslep** moved to the neighborhood with her family in 1972. They were the 2<sup>nd</sup> owners of their home, which was built in 1942. Allegra and her husband were both teachers, she working at Holloway Elementary and he at Amphi High School.

sat down with Allegra with her neighbors, **Ron Reed** and **Chuck Downs**. They have shared a fence for almost 40 years. Everyone recalled the neighborhood as being friendlier and more bicycle-friendly back then. People used to ride their bikes to work and school from HANA. Most people owned their homes, too; there were fewer rentals than there are now. Another long-time resident, **Barbara Boscoe**, noted that when she moved here in the early 1980s, "you could trust most people to be nice and not dangerous." It was safe to walk to the Mini Mart at night then, but not now. All agreed crime is worse now.

Everyone remembers businesses that had come and gone in the neighborhood: The Lucky's in Amphi Plaza; the rib joint next door, where the Hookah Lounge is today on Ft. Lowell, that advertised the best ribs ever and lived up to it. Long John Silver, Popeye's Tokyo Bowl, and Old Chicago are other examples people mentioned of businesses that came and went in HANA.

Some people I spoke to thought the arrival of CODAC, a substance abuse treatment clinic on Ft. Lowell, began the neighborhood's decline. Others noted the loss of businesses at Amphi Plaza; the arrival of halfway houses for AA, runaway teens, and domestic violence victims; and the homeless camps in Navajo Wash. Probably all have chipped away at the quality of life in the neighborhood in their own ways. But with many long-term residents still living in the neighborhood, and enthusiastic newer arrivals setting down roots, HANA still has much to offer.

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## BRUSH-CLEARING IN NAVAJO WASH PARK

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After working in relative obscurity for almost 20 years, the Hedrick Acres Neighborhood Association found itself in the middle of a public uproar over work conducted in Navajo Wash Park. Headlines in the *Arizona Daily Star* and other local media blasted a "destruction" of 50, then 75 trees in the wash. Ward 3 Councilman Kevin Dahl claimed that the trees cut were "lovingly planted" (Star 9/29/23) by residents before going on to describe the action as a "massacre." His battle cry was repeated almost

verbatim by the Executive Director of Tucson Clean and Beautiful in a later *Star* article (9/30/23) that responded to the neighborhood association's assertion that the work was done transparently and according to long established procedures with residents and the City. Online commentary on *Nextdoor* went so far as to call it a "hate crime" under the assumption that the trees were cut to discourage homelessness in the area, while other critics suggested the work was done by "vigilantes." None of these reports were fact-checked, even though HANA provided the *Star* with evidence refuting Councilman Dahl's assertion about the origin of the trees cut. So, what really happened? The history of Navajo Wash Park has been a common feature article in this newsletter for many years. In brief, the park was collaboratively developed from an empty lot 16 years ago by The City of Tucson, HANA, and the University of Arizona. The Drachman Institute at the University of Arizona drafted the Master Plan, the City approved the plans and gave HANA a Neighborhood Grant to fund the work, and HANA volunteers planted trees and shrubs in passive rainwater harvesting catch basins made with landscaping rock rings lining each side of the wash.

Oversight and responsibility for the Wash was shared by many stakeholders. Since Navajo Wash is a waterway on City property, Tucson's Department of Transportation was charged with keeping the wash clear of debris that could impede the flow of water into the large storm drain located at the southern end of the wash at the intersection of N. Mountain and Hedrick Drive. HANA "adopted" the Wash in an agreement with Tucson Clean and Beautiful (TCB) wherein neighborhood volunteers picked up trash and reported this and other issues requiring attention to TCB.

HANA volunteers typically cleaned the wash every month, picking up trash first, and when time allowed, pruning trees and shrubs, removing graffiti, and undertaking other small projects such as installing and maintaining a community message board; installing, painting, and emptying garbage cans; and painting a mural on the wall bordering the Southwest side of the University's Park and Ride Lot under the direction of a local artist.

All work was done under the direction of the neighborhood's Tucson Clean and Beautiful lead, who not only had the responsibility of reporting the work to TCB so trash and debris would be collected in a timely manner, but also to ensure the work conformed to the Master Plan for the wash.

The Master Plan for Navajo details site-specific analyses of the soil, topography, floodplain, watercourse, and native vegetation. The plan served as the blueprint for development and maintenance of the pocket park. All stakeholders, including Tucson DOT and Tucson Clean and Beautiful, approved the plan prior to permitting its development.

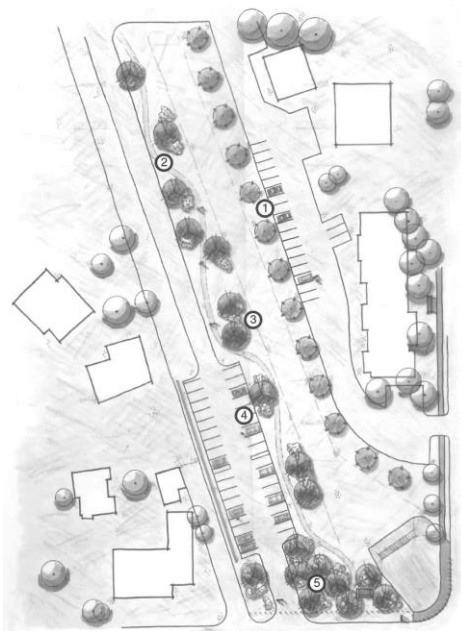


Figure 1: Master Plan for Navajo Wash, p. 13

While TCB's Executive Director Katie Ganon's statement in the *Arizona Daily Star* that the "nonprofit does not provide groups with pruning tools" is true, it is also true the TCB had collected the tree trimmings and brush volunteers cleared from the wash for over 17 years. Their unilateral decision not to pick up the debris after volunteers and a landscaper cleared the brush from the north side of the wash in October was clear departure from established precedent and procedures. Unfortunately, the decision was made without consulting HANA first, and was likely based on false statements made by Councilman Dahl's office that the cut trees had been planted by HANA. As shown in Figure 1 and clearly visible in the wash today, the

only trees and shrubs planted by HANA were placed in rock-rings along each side of the wash.

The Master Plan states, “The city of Tucson has labeled the Navajo Wash as a disturbed watercourse. In particular it is noted as having sparse vegetation. The area cannot host a high volume of vegetation because of the possibility that this vegetation could hinder or divert water flow. But certainly the site can play host to thoughtful placement of vegetation clusters. The clusters are recommended to be placed on the higher elevation parts of the site and out of the wash channel. The banks of the channel can host single trunked trees placed in a direction parallel with the water flow” (p. 9). *The only trees and shrubbery removed from the wash were volunteers, not the trees and shrubs planted by HANA in rock-rings along each side of the wash.* Far from destroying the wash, as some have claimed, we believe the work helped restore the wash to its intended purpose and scope: as a waterway, first and foremost, and as landscaped pocket park secondarily.

Unfortunately, TCB has refused to work with the neighborhood association anymore, and the volunteers who used to pick up trash each month suspended their work temporarily in order to research ways to dispose of collected trash that the City used to pick up for us. Several generous souls have since stepped forward to offer space in their garbage cans, so the 2nd Saturday of the month cleanups have resumed in Navajo Wash, provided it is safe to do so. Look for updates and announcements on the listserv:

<https://groups.google.com/g/hanatucaz>

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## **HANA SUES THE CITY OVER HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS IN NAVAJO WASH PARK**

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Hedrick Acres Neighborhood Association has sued the City of Tucson over homeless camps in Navajo Wash Park. HANA’s Board of Directors voted to pursue legal action against the City of Tucson to resolve the ongoing problems associated with homeless camps in Navajo Wash once and for all. We have engaged the same team of lawyers that successfully argued the Brown v City of Phoenix case about homeless camps in “The Zone.” The two

cases bear many similarities, so we are hopeful for a quick and favorable outcome to our case in March. The goal of the lawsuit is to have the City ban camping in the wash permanently so that the neighborhood can once again enjoy the pocket park safely.

We want to thank all of you who shared your photos, experiences, and letters to City officials with us. This evidence has strengthened our case tremendously and allowed our legal team to move much faster than would otherwise have been possible. Some of you have asked about contributing financially, too. While it’s true that lawsuits are not cheap and HANA only has a few hundred dollars in its accounts, it is also possible that the courts will require the City to pay our legal fees if we win. That isn’t guaranteed and donations are always gratefully accepted, so if you want to make a financial contribution to HANA, you may do so by writing a check to “Hedrick Acres Neighborhood” and sending it to our treasurer, Judith Weiser, at 1117 E Blacklidge Dr 85719.

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## **NEIGHBORHOOD LISTSERV**

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Did you know HANA has a listserv to keep up to date with what’s happening in the neighborhood? The purpose of the listserv is to provide HANA members a means to communicate with each other about issues of concern to the neighborhood without all the ads and crazy comments on *Nextdoor*. The listserv is moderated, but all members can post to the group; new members can be added by emailing [hanatucaz@gmail.com](mailto:hanatucaz@gmail.com).

To find the listserv, enter the URL <https://groups.google.com/g/hanatucaz>

Then click on the URL/hotlink in the group name, and the message board should open to show all messages to date. Members can also find the listserv by going to Google Groups and clicking on “My Groups.” The Hedrick Acres group should be listed there.

You can adjust your settings to receive all emails individually or as a daily digest of emails. To post or reply to a message, email [hanatucaz@googlegroups.com](mailto:hanatucaz@googlegroups.com).