ORO VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

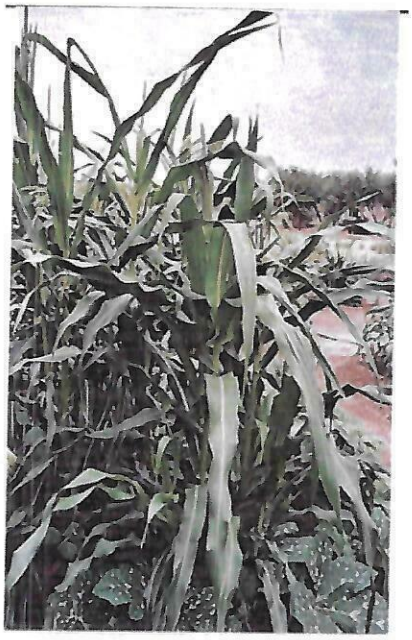
Newsletter of the Oro Valley Historical Society **September 2011**

Web: www.ovhistory.org

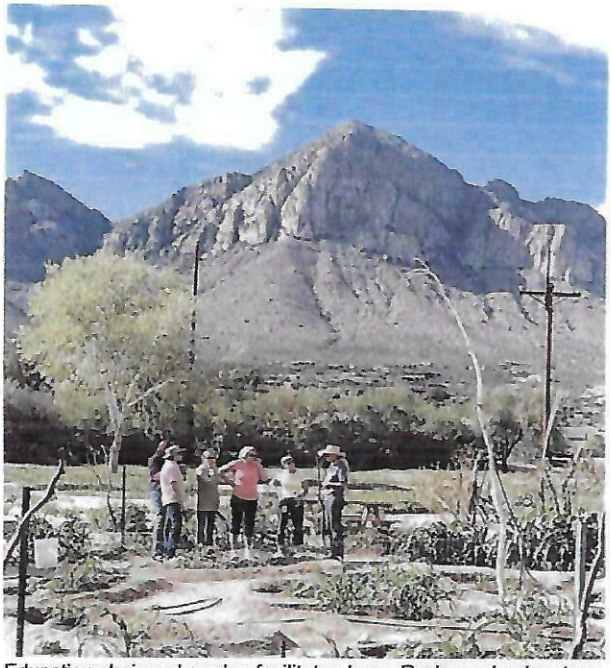
Update on the Steam Pump Ranch Native American Heritage Garden



Former OVHS President and garden enthusiast Pat Spoerl inspects the corn



October harvest is planned



Education chair and garden facilitator Joyce Rychener leads a tour and explains about the young plants

The corn we planted is the 60-day Tohono O'odham corn. The beans are tepary, which are the most drought - adapted beans in the world, and the squash is the Tohono O'odham squash.

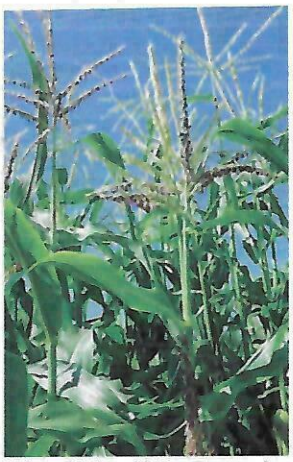
All seeds are from Native Seeds/SEARCH in Tucson, Arizona.

Next Events...

- Thursday, September 29th, 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM - Ethnobotany: Edible and Useful Plants of the Desert
- Thursday, November 3rd, 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM - Spanish Colonial Lecture

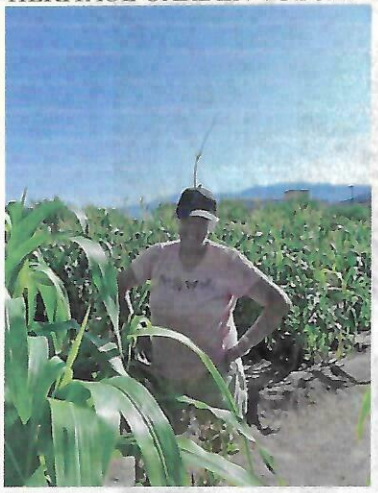


Sunken beds in a circular pattern to capture as much rainfall as possible



Tohono O'odham 60-Day Corn tassels

+HERITAGE GARDEN VOLUNTEERS



MARGARET PARNELL



PAT SPOERL



DEE CARTER

(Gabriella Davis not pictured, but will be next time)

Plans are underway with the Oro Valley Historical Society and the Town of Oro Valley Parks , Recreation, Library and Cultural Resources Department to develop educational programs for our youth and the community at large. Stay tuned!



STEAM PUMP RANCH HERITAGE GARDEN PROJECT

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE GARDEN

ORO VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

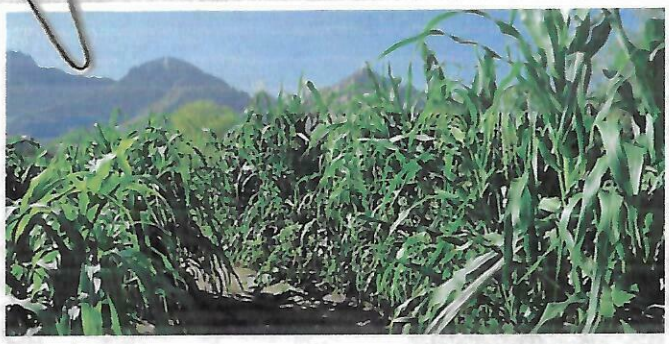


THREE SISTERS MONSOON GARDEN 2011

CORN , BEANS AND SQUASH

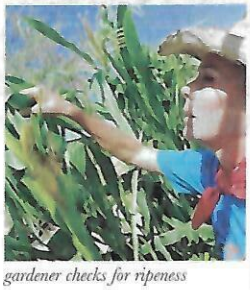
The Native American Heritage Garden at Steam Pump Ranch is growing well and surviving the intense heat, drying winds and onslaught of corn worms and grasshoppers. This Monsoon season we are growing three varieties of corn: Reventador Popcorn, Guarijio Sweet, and 60-day Tohono O'odham . Plantings have been staggered so that cross pollination doesn't occur between the different varieties. Tohono O'Odham Tepery Beans and Ha:l Squash are the other two sisters of the "Three Sisters" of Native American staple crops. These three companion plants help each other grow. All seeds originate from Native Seeds/SEARCH in Tucson. We have saved the seeds from each year's harvest and are planting them with each new season.

Joyce Rychener, Heritage Gardener, is happy to welcome our new garden volunteers: Dee Carter, Margaret Parnell, and Gabriella Davis, and of course is always glad to have her Assistant Gardener, Pat Spoerl round out the team. Stay tuned for more garden news as we grow these ancient seeds right here in Oro Valley!





Tohono O'odham Squash Blossom



gardener checks for ripeness

REVENTADOR POPCORN tassels full of pollen: a very ancient maize variety.



President's Message



Dear Historical Society Members,

Yes, we have almost an entire new board this fall. (You'll find the listing of board members elsewhere in the newsletter.) We have new folks at the helm of almost every committee and hope that with 'new blood' on the job, we'll get some fresh ideas.

Joyce Rychener's garden is beautiful again this summer. The corn is about 5 feet tall as of now (the end of August) and she has several dedicated volunteers working with her. They have planted a monsoon garden, which is a Native American Three Sisters Garden, of beans, corn and squash. An October harvest is anticipated.

We've had a couple of small garden tours over the course of the summer. However, this is difficult with no rest room facilities on site. We have to rent a port-a-potty for the day, and this is not the best arrangement.

We have gotten permission from the Town for a second small garden, which will be a Kitchen Garden. It will feature vegetables, herbs and flowers and it is the type of garden that the Pusch Family might have planted in the early 1900's. We are all very excited about this.

In the middle of September our OV Library display case will feature an exhibit of Joyce's Three Sister's Garden. Also, plans are well underway for an exciting Centennial Exhibit celebrating the statehood of Arizona on Feb. 14, 2012.

Everyone is looking forward to the talk by Jo Falls of Tohono Chul Park, on Edible and Useful Desert Plants. This will be on Sept. 29 at 1:30 PM at the Oro Valley Public Library.

We hope to see more of you at meetings this year.
Roxy Johnson

Don't forget when you are at the library to stop by our display cases for interesting exhibits. The cases are located just around the corner from the Program Meeting Room.

Oro Valley Historical Society

Officers:

President: Roxy Johnson (2012)
Vice Pres: Lois Nagy (2014)
Corres. Sec: Paul Loomis (2014)
Recording Sec: Krista Neis (2012)
Treasurer: Lyra Done (2012)

Directors:

Bob Baughman (2012)
David Clement (2013)
Marilyn Pincus (2013)
Josephine (Jo) Di Gennaro (2014)

Note: Officers are selected by Directors each year from the elected Directors. The numbers in parenthesis are the year the Directors term expires in March.

Committees:

Membership: Paul Loomis
Fund Raising: need help
Archival: Roxy Johnson
Program: David Clement
Publicity: Krista Neis
Education: Joyce Rychener
Volunteer: Jo DiGennaro
Oral Histories: need help
Historic Gardens: Joyce Rychener
Editor/Website: Joe Frannea

Donations:

Donations are always welcomed, much appreciated and needed. We are a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation with donations being tax deductible to the extent of the law.

Memberships:

Family: $25
Individual: $15
Student: $10
Corporate/Institution: $100

Life-Family: $400

Web: www.ovhistory.org
Email: info @ ovhistory.org

Ethnobotany: Edible and Useful Plants of the Desert

Thursday - September 29th - 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM - Oro Valley Public Library

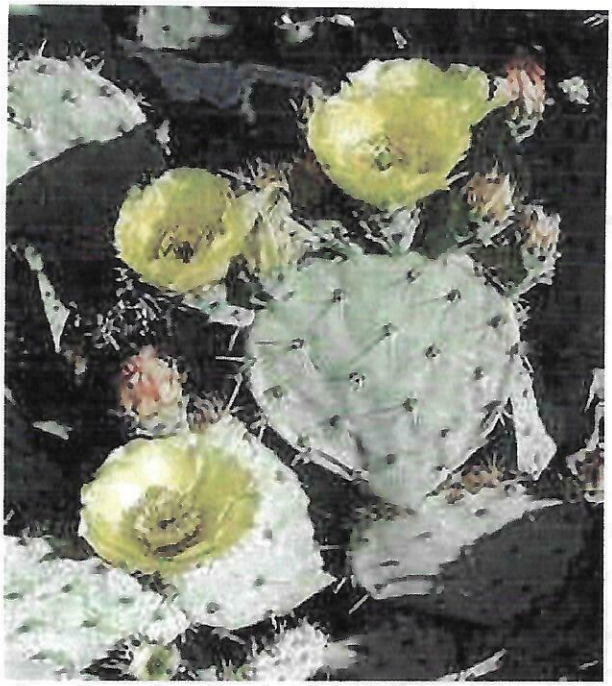
The Oro Valley Historical Society presents an afternoon talk, "Ethnobotany: Edible and Useful Plants of the Desert," at the Oro Valley Public Library. Jo Falls, Director of Education and Visitor Services at Tohono Chul Park, is the featured speaker. The program is open to the public at no charge. The OV library is located at 1305 W. Naranja Drive (at La Canada Dr.).

Ethnobotany is the study of the relationships formed between people (ethno) and plants (botany).

The use of plants gives us clues about a people's culture, as well as their relationship to the natural world. Long before man began to cultivate crops he made use of what grew around him. Some may think of the Sonoran desert as a barren, dry land, but it is actually a place of bounty.



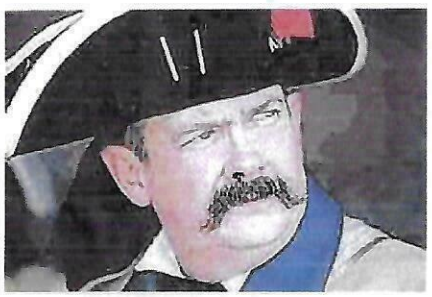
Agave palmeri - an important resource for Native American people for fibers and food



Opuntia engelmanii or just Prickly Pear important for fruit, pads and cochineal

Like Tohono Chul Park, Director of Education, Jo Falls has been connecting the nature, art and culture of the Sonoran Desert for members and visitors. In her 25 years with the Park, Falls has expanded the Park's educational offerings from the docent training program to travel ed-ventures throughout the Southwest and Mexico. TCP's Speakers Bureau was one of the first community outreach programs she developed, bringing a little bit of the desert to meeting rooms across the county.





Spanish Colonial Lecture

Life on the Edge: An Introduction to Spanish Colonial Arizona

by Rick Collins

Thursday Nov. 3, 2011 - 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Oro Valley Public Library

The lecture is Free and Open to the Public

OUR MISSION

❍ To promote research, preservation, education, and dissemination of historical information related to the greater Oro Valley area.

OUR PURPOSE

❍ Assist the Town of Oro Valley in protecting and preserving places of historical importance.

❍ Provide educational opportunities in our schools to encourage student awareness and interest in history.

❍ Sponsor informative programs to increase interest and knowledge of the Greater Oro Valley area history.

Printed copies of this newsletter and our OVHS brochure are available at the Oro Valley Library in the brochure rack located just inside the library to your right as you enter.

Fruits of Our Labor.... In the Summer of 2010 some members of our Society helped to clean, scan and archive old photos and documents. Copies of some of these will be on public display, for the first time, as part of the OVHS Centennial Exhibit.

You Can Help!
- Volunteer -

Right now we need a committee chairperson for fund-raising events such as a dinner.
or help with...

Professional archaeologists and volunteers giving tours of the Steam Pump Ranch (SPR).

Heritage gardener teaches volunteers at Native American Heritage Garden.

Professional historians and architects lead volunteer citizen group in master planning for SPR and Honey Bee Village.

ORO VALLEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 69754 - Oro Valley, AZ 85737

Next Presentation:
Ethnobotany: Edible and Useful Plants of the Desert
Sept. 29, 2011 - 1:30 PM
Oro Valley Public Library