



Vistoso Hiking Club

Sun City Oro Valley

A BRIEF HISTORY By Rich Roelke, President November 1998

In 1993 Loyal Seinder and Hal Cutcher started talks about forming a hiking club within the Sun City Vistoso community. Loyal had been doing quite a few solo hikes in the nearby Tortolita Mountains; Hal had been a member of the Southern Arizona Hiking Club and a guide for several years

The first informal hike was held in December 1993 and led by Hal. It covered the Sutherland trail in Catalina State Park with about 45 people attending. Informal talks were held at the lunch break to determine if there was enough interest to initiate the process for becoming a chartered club within the SCVAC.

The first club picnic was held in October 1994. In March 1995 the second picnic was held setting the precedent of semi-annual picnics as social events. The March 1995 picnic was also originally set to include the election of new club officers. However, bylaw requirements made a second meeting necessary to complete the election procedure. Therefore, in April 1996 a Wine and Cheese party was added to the yearly events to serve as the election meeting.

Applications for membership and sign-up sheets were adapted from those in use at the time by the Southern Arizona Hiking Club. Before the end of the first board's term several policies were developed. The principal one was to require new members to go through a hiking orientation program. This is especially helpful since many new applicants had little or no previous hiking experience. The new member program gave some assurance to the guides that those who signed up for a hike would likely be capable of completing that hike and would not constitute a hazard to themselves and/or to the group.

Other actions taken by succeeding boards include: establishing a bi-monthly Newsletter, increasing the number of guides from the initial two to over fifteen, establishing patch awards for miles hiked, and taking an active part in volunteering to ensure the development and maintenance of trails and facilities on federal and state lands for hikers and others wishing to experience the outdoor beauty of Arizona.

And that original membership of 35 ?...has reached over 300.