



**PETE COWGILL, SAHC FOUNDER  
1958-2018**



## **THANKS PETE FOR 60 YEARS HIKING!**

### **Pete Cowgill, founder of Southern Arizona Hiking Club, honored on 60th anniversary**

By Doug Kreutz Arizona Daily Star Dec 17, 2018

An idea popped into Pete Cowgill’s head 60 years ago: Let’s start a hiking club in Southern Arizona.

It seemed like a pretty good idea in this region of mountains, canyons and deserts crisscrossed by enough trails to keep a hiker rambling for a lifetime.

So Cowgill, who was then a reporter at the Arizona Daily Star, suggested in his weekly “Tucson Trails” column that people interested in forming a hiking club meet at Hutch’s Pool in the Santa Catalina Mountains.

Eleven hikers showed up at the pool on Dec. 16, 1958. “We figured that if 11 of us showed up, that must be enough to start a club,” said Cowgill, who recently celebrated his 93rd birthday and will be honored at a Dec. 18 event as a founder of the Southern Arizona Hiking Club.

The club has grown and endured for six decades — attracting thousands of members over the years and guiding them to practically every conceivable hiking destination in Southern Arizona and hiking meccas in other states and countries as well.

#### **PROUD FOUNDER**

“I’m happy and proud to be the founder of the club,” said Cowgill, who is articulate, fit and still as active as his age allows. “It’s a good outfit.” Although he no longer hits the trail for long hikes — such as one of his favorite treks up 9,453-foot Mount Wrightson south of Tucson — he gets regular exercise.

“I still do some walking around, but I’m 93,” he said in a recent interview with his wife, Judy, by his side. “The desire to really exert myself? Well, I’ve done it.”

Cowgill said he maintains his weight at 150 pounds.

“I do some stretches and sit-ups and lift weights,” he said. “I try to eat pretty well. I still try to stay in pretty good shape. I don’t want to be a fat old man.”



### **New Year Means New Road for Tumamoc Hill** Jan. 1, 2019

TUCSON, Ariz. — Tumamoc Hill is undergoing a transformation in the new year. The University of Arizona will undertake a complete repaving of the mile-and-a-half road up Tumamoc Hill later this month to make it more passable for walkers and researchers and to preserve the ecological and historical elements of the property.

Beginning Jan. 22, Tumamoc Hill will be closed to walkers for two weeks. UA crews will pulverize the current road to create a base for the new 3-inch asphalt road. The process is expected to take two weeks, with the road anticipated to reopen on Feb. 1.

“We see this as a huge opportunity to improve a road that has outlasted its time,” said Ben Wilder, director of Tumamoc Hill. “After more than three decades, the new road will look and feel better to those who use it to exercise and it also will assist with the Desert Lab’s mission of research and education.”

Tumamoc is an 860-acre ecological reserve and U.S. National Historic Landmark owned and operated by the University of Arizona in partnership with Pima County. The Desert Laboratory at Tumamoc was created in 1902 by Andrew Carnegie beginning more than 100 years of ecological research on the hill, which is a rich resource for scientists and other researchers, who study its plants, animals and other features.

The cost of the new road is approximately \$200,000. The UA will invest half, with the UA College of Science raising the rest through a crowdfunding campaign at [crowdfund.arizona.edu/tumamocroad](http://crowdfund.arizona.edu/tumamocroad). To incentivize giving, Edith Sykes Lowell and David Lowell are providing a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$50,000. Edith Sykes Lowell is the granddaughter of Godfrey Sykes, one of Tumamoc Hill’s early scientists.

Wilder is using the crowdfunding opportunity to launch the Friends of Tumamoc with a goal of engaging a larger community interested in sustaining the hill for future generations.