

WELLSPRING NEWS

January 2012

Published by the Friends of Agua Caliente (FOAC), Inc.

Tucson, Arizona

From the President:

Dear Friends:

Happy New Year!! I hope you all had a great holiday season. Agua Caliente Park looks good with all the recent rain we have had. Still not much water in pond two and none in pond three though. The current water flow is about seven gallons per minute, up from its summer low of less than one gallon/minute.

Our 2012 membership drive is well underway. For those that have renewed their support to

Agua Caliente — Thank you!! For those that have not yet renewed, please consider supporting this wonderful “oasis in the desert”.

The birds, waterfowl and wildlife throughout the park are all doing great. The Great Horned Owl chicks have left, but Mom and Dad Owl are still at home in the park and doing well.

As you see throughout



the newsletter, the *Friends* have been busy supporting Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation and Agua Caliente Park. We appreciate the support from our members and donors providing the funds necessary to help put on the great programs and provide amenities throughout the park.

If you haven't been to the park recently, you will notice the bridge to the island has been removed.



In the near future we hope to place a plaque near the old bridge location with a historic picture of the bridge.

Our annual Membership Meeting will be January 23rd at 7 PM in the Bunkhouse at the Park (brown building near the parking lot). Please arrive by 6:45 (the gate is normally closed at sunset, but we'll have it open until 6:55).

Thanks again for another great year at Agua Caliente Park!!

Jim Knoll

FUNDRAISING NEWS

The *Friends* group is pleased to see our visiting families and school groups using and enjoying the new additions to Agua Caliente Park. The dual-base binocular scope near the entrance is a big attraction for all our visitors and provides remarkable views of pond life as well as the Catalina's in the distance. The scope was a generous donation by the Martha R. Neff Foundation. We have four beautiful new picnic tables which were donated by the Freeport McMoRan Foundation. All of our tables are heavily used by picnickers as well as the many school groups that visit the park for

educational programs conducted by Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation. Several new benches have been installed throughout the park for the comfort of our visitors. These have been funded by private donations.

The *Friends* group has installed two donation boxes in the park. One is located in the Ranch House and the other in the Rose Cottage. We appreciate donations in support of the *Friends* group, the Ranch House tours, and the history lectures in the Rose Cottage.

We continue to work on grants for acquiring a large bicycle rack for our many cycling visitors. The rack

will be placed next to the public restrooms so their bicycles are nearby and secure. We are also hoping for a grant to acquire additional forged steel sign bases.

We are pleased to invite our members and donors to a dessert reception from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, February 4th. Our Valentine theme is “We love our members and donors!” We hope to have a beautiful day so that we can enjoy the Ranch House patio. Please RSVP to foac@friendsofaguacaliente.org. We'll also send out a separate invitation (email/mail). We hope you can join us.

Lynda Nash

From the Bunkhouse: The Flying V

When my parents came to Tucson to look for a place to buy, they temporarily stayed at the "Flying V Guest Ranch". The Flying V is now part of Lowe's Ventana Canyon Resort. While they were staying there, they became friends with a gal named Hope, who was in charge of housekeeping. She visited us at the Ranch often.

One evening, my folks were sitting in their barrel chairs in the living room near the bay window overlooking the lake when they heard a knock on the window. They looked out and saw Hope. My Dad opened the front door to let her in. She informed him that she had a slight problem. Her boyfriend, who had a little too much to drink, had failed to negotiate the little bridge across the creek (flowing from the spring). This was our driveway. You drove across the bridge and right up to the front door. We all walked out toward the bridge and all you could see was a single light shining toward the house. When we got up to the bridge, there was Hope's boyfriend's car,

lying on its side in the creek. Thank goodness no one was hurt. As you can imagine, Hope was very embarrassed. Her boyfriend was beyond embarrassment. We turned off the car lights and ignition and invited them into the house. After several cups of coffee, my Dad gave them a ride back to the Flying V. The next day, a wrecker came out and lifted the car out of the creek. It was not seriously damaged.

That bridge is now the footbridge you walk across to get from the entrance area to the house. Now the driveway goes around the spring to the parking lot.

*Pete Filiatrault
"The ghost of Agua Caliente"*



Ranch House

Photo by Susan Knoll

Wake up with the Birds at Agua Caliente Park

The Thursday morning *Wake up with the Birds* birding walks at the park are in full swing with an increasing number of birders attending the walks. American Robins, Yellow-rumped Warblers, a Summer Tanager, and two Great Horned Owls (the pair nested and raised their young at the park last year) have been spotted in the palm trees near the stream.

In early winter, the male great horned owls establish territories and call for mates with their low, muffled hooting. Once paired, the male and female roost together and nesting begins as early as January. The female lays



Photo by Susan Knoll

two eggs, or sometimes more if food is abundant. After about a month, the white, helpless chicks hatch. At six weeks, the nestlings begin to venture out on branches but aren't able to fly until they are 10-12 weeks old. The young owls depend on their parents for food until fall, so you'll often hear their loud begging calls throughout the summer.

Sandy Reith

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. Board of Directors

Standing Committee Chairpersons annotated in () below the name

Jim Knoll, President (Newsletter, Website, Membership)	jimknoll@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Chuck Ford, Vice President (Park Liaison)	chuckford@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Peggy Denny, Treasurer	peggydenny@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Maura Brackett, Secretary	maurabackett@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Terry Bonbrake	terrybonbrake@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Pete Filiatrault	petefiliatrault@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Judy Gray (Donors Wall/Walk)	judygray@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Lynda Nash (Fundraising)	lyndanash@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Joyce Roughton	joyceroughton@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Sandy Sarah	sandysarah@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Paula Stoner (Historian)	paulastoner@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Richard Watts (Emeritus)	

Upcoming Events at Agua Caliente Park

Check the FOAC web site (Park Events) for up-to-date events / times:
<http://FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org>

Wake Up with The Birds

8:30 — 10:00 am (Every Thursday)
(check website for updated times)

Historical Tour of the Park, Nature Stories, Sonoran Desert Kids Club, and other events

History Lectures in the Rose Cottage: Jan 8 & 15, Feb 5 & 12

Ranch House Gallery:

Cool Water (January 6-February 1)

Our Arizona (February 3-29)

To volunteer at Agua Caliente Park with Pima County NRPR, call (520) 615-7855.

A Small History of the Park

A month ago I received some information pertaining to the ownership of Agua Caliente Park. Member Annie McGreevy sent some genealogical research about her great-grandparents who owned the ranch from August 1885 until August of the following year.

Her great-grandparents were John George Achenback, an itinerant Methodist minister and homeopath, and his wife Elizabeth Christina Achenbach.

The Achenbachs purchased the property from Fanny E. Jones and Hattie Anderson, daughters of former owner Eliza Jane Fuller Watson. Watson died on August 21, 1885 and the property was sold to the Achenbachs four days later. The land was sold with farming tools, furnishings for the house, and livestock for a total of \$1000.

In May of 1886, a little bit of excitement happened during the Achenbach's ownership. A group of Apaches raided the Telles ranch of the Cienega area. In an effort to protect the Agua Caliente ranch, W.J. White got a group of civilians to come to the ranch and lay ready in case the Apaches would attack the ranch. They never showed up.

The Achenbachs stayed on the ranch until August 10, 1886. They sold the ranch to stable owner Ed Bullock for \$500.

Mrs. McGreevy's grandmother Dora Achenbach was eight years old when she lived on the ranch with her parents. She told the family that she had a swing hanging from a large mesquite tree just east of the ranch house. The tree is still standing in the park today.

Even though it was a short-lived history at the ranch for the Achenbachs, it was such a joy to read the notes that were sent to me. I know that when I am at the park and walk past that mesquite tree, I will be able to picture that little girl swinging with joy and excitement.

*Paula Stoner
Historian*



The Bunkhouse gets a screened-in addition

Photo by Susan Knoll

Nominations / Board Positions

The Friends of Agua Caliente Officer nominations for 2012 include: Jim Knoll (continuation for one year as President) and Terry Bonbrake for Vice-President (three-year term). Any additional nominations should be raised at the annual meeting. Peggy Denny (Treasurer)

and Maura Brackett (Secretary) will continue serving in their respective positions. Board members up for renewal for another three-year term include: Judy Gray, Lynda Nash, and Joyce Roughton. During 2011, the fol-

lowing members were approved for three-year board positions: Peggy Denny, Terry Bonbrake, and Trina Mickells. There are three board positions still vacant.

The Board would like to thank Chuck Ford for his service as Vice President for many years. His leadership was instrumental in the many FOAC accomplishments. Chuck will continue serving as a Board member.

Membership in the Friends of Agua Caliente

Join Friends of Agua Caliente

Come join us to help preserve our wonderful Park. As birders, or those who like to picnic, or stroll the grounds, you know the significance of this "Oasis in the Desert."

Your time, talents, and donations will be the contributions that make the difference at this historic time in the life of our organization and the Park. We can use your talent as a Board Member, Committee member, or to just help out. If you can't spare the time to volunteer, how about at least joining FOAC to help us protect what we all treasure so dearly?

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Corporation, therefore all donations are tax

-deductible. Membership is based on the following schedule:

Individual	\$15
Family	\$25
Organization	\$50

Please send Name, Address, Phone Number, and Email along with Check to: Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc., PO Box 32005, Tucson, AZ 85751-2005 or contact Jim Knoll at jimknoll@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org for more information.

Welcome to our new members and thank you to our renewing members & donors.

Your dedication to the Park and FOAC is greatly appreciated. We

hope you will choose to become involved in the Friends of Agua Caliente and Agua Caliente Park. If there is anything we can do, let us know. We can't do what we do without a great membership and donors!

We closed out the 2011 year with 131 members. For 2012, we currently have 126 members, three months into the membership year. Hopefully we can expand well beyond last year's total.

Please consider supporting the *Friends of Agua Caliente* to help preserve and protect this wonderful Oasis!! Check the website for details.

Jim Knoll

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.
P.O. Box 32005
Tucson, AZ 85751-2005

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
JANUARY 23rd, 2012
7 PM at Agua Caliente Park**

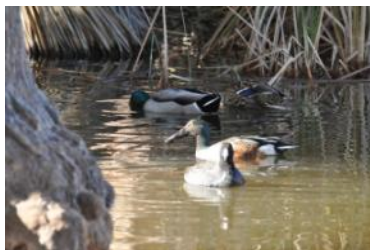
Tucson Audubon at Agua Caliente Park



Tucson Audubon Society nature shop at Agua Caliente Park is a great retail store for nature oriented materials and a wonderful outreach in the community to spread the word about our activities and local environmental concerns. In addition, we have a growing database on all things “birdy”. Next time you visit, ask to see our “bird book” which will give you a better understanding of the species and numbers of birds that have visited the park.

Becky Aparicio, long-time Agua Caliente Shop Manager and Volunteer Coor-

dinator recently retired. Her dedication and support to the Tucson Audubon Society is deeply appreciated and will sorely be missed. Liz Harrison, a Tucson Audubon Volunteer, will assume Becky’s duties at Agua Caliente Park. Please stop in and check out the shop on your next visit to the Park. For current operating hours, call the shop at (520) 760-7881.



**Northern Shoveler (center)
with Coot (foreground) and
Mallards (background)**

Photo by
Susan Knoll

Facebook

FOAC is on Facebook. Follow us to stay abreast on late breaking and current events. To find FOAC, search “Friends of Agua Caliente Tucson” within Facebook or access us from our FOAC website.

Postcards



FOAC sells Agua Caliente Postcards (as a fundraiser) at the Audubon Shop in the Ranch House. We appreciate your support of the Friends of Agua Caliente..