

WELLSPRING NEWS

January 2010

Published by the Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

Tucson, Arizona

From the President:

Friends of Agua Caliente. Happy New Year! There has been quite a lot happening at the Friends and Agua Caliente Park. As you will see later in this issue, Agua Caliente Park was awarded status on the National Register of Historic Places on July 9th. We also purchased a bench in honor of Audrey Watts, a long-time Board Member who passed away several years ago. It is now installed and located near Pond One. We are also in the process of pur-

chasing a spotting scope for use observing the variety of waterfowl and wildlife frequenting the park and it should be installed this year.

As you will see under "Fundraising", we are putting together some Grant applications for additional equipment for the Park. Unfortunately, they are not of sufficient size to accommodate the cost of a new bridge. The funding raised to support replacement of the old wooden bridge with one

that is ADA compliant is still well short of the mark. The Friends have raised \$6,133. We thank all the generous donors that have contributed to our bridge fund and we still have that funding set aside for use when applicable. Pima County also has \$4,348.67 set aside in the "Parklands Foundation". Although Pima County as spent approximately \$40,000 for engineering and other preparatory costs, the remaining estimate to complete the bridge is still about

\$100,000. We will need to seek a significant Grant or have some generous donors provide funding. We would appreciate any help to complete this project to open the island while minimizing the impact to our local residents. As you know, Pima County funding is extremely tight and we do not anticipate any allocated towards the bridge in the immediate future. Thanks and see you at the Park.

Jim Knoll

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Ever want to get involved in a special project supporting your community and see the fruits of your labor?

FOAC could sure use your help. We have several openings on the Board of Directors and could use some help in several of our standing committees. New and fresh ideas keep us moving forward and in the right direction. No matter what your talents, we'd love to have you an active part of the Friends of Agua Caliente. What an opportunity to help shape one of the most unique

Parks in Pima County. **Please join us at the annual meeting on February 1st at 7 PM in the Bunkhouse at Agua Caliente Park.** You can also contact any Board Member or drop me a note at foac@q.com.

Jim Knoll



FOAC Bench

National Registration Nomination Update

We made it. On July 9th 2009, Agua Caliente Park was officially recognized on the National Register of Historic Places. This designation will help preserve this great "Oasis in the Desert" for generations to come. This effort is the result of significant work by Pima County and the Friends. A commemorative plaque will soon be installed. We'll send out an email alert and update the website if a ceremony is scheduled. Thanks to everyone that has been involved throughout this process!!

From the Bunkhouse: Winter 2009

Whether this is your first time visiting Roy P. Drachman Agua Caliente Park or you have been there many times, when you turn into the Park you immediately notice a big change from a desert to an "Oasis". That's what I felt on June 13, 1951 when I first saw the Ranch. At that time the driveway came across the small bridge over the stream that flowed from the spring. Now what you see is a path that you can easily imagine as a circle driveway. At the time we moved into the Agua Caliente Ranch, there was a "Date Palm Grove" in what is now a grassy area with a few palms still in it. You did not have the Palm trees that lined the stream bed and go around the lake as we have now. The island was smaller and had no trees on it. The bridge was there and it was in good condition, lacking only a new paint job. The lake you see in front of you was smaller and where you see a wall of reeds blocking the view of the rest of the lake there was a strip of land about 6 ft. wide separating two lakes. The larger one, which was closer to the road was 14 ft. deep in the center and at

one time had a white sand bottom. This lake also had a diving board and steps to get out of the lake. It was called the swimming lake. In front of the "Rose Cottage" (north side) you can see a large sunken area. That was also the largest of our seven lakes.

When we moved into the Ranch the buildings and grounds were kind of run down. My Dad immediately started having it restored to its original condition or better. We added a swimming pool that had separate men's & women's rest-rooms. We added stables, corrals, tack room and a hay barn. We had 14 horses and 30 to 35 cows. We also owned 1200 acres of land. My Dad was a natural born gardener. He had the place beautiful with flowers everywhere. The Ranch reached its peak in 1954 and we maintained it that way until my parents had to sell the Ranch due to declining health.

People would see the lakes from Mt. Lemon Highway and would stop to see the place. My Dad always welcomed anyone who just stopped in. He always gave them a tour and offered drinks and sometimes sup-

per. He was a very outgoing man who loved almost everyone. Agua Caliente was the place to be. It was gorgeous and everyone was welcome. It was a very sad day when the Ranch was sold. My Dad returned once, about two years after they sold the place. He was heartbroken how the current owners had allowed it to deteriorate, but their only motive was to make a quick buck by subdividing it or making it into a resort.

Thanks to Chuck Ford, then a Tucson City Councilman, who suggested to Roy Drachman that he put up the money for the down payment, allowing the Ranch to be purchased by Pima County. Since 1993, when I helped form "The Friends of Agua Caliente" I have worked diligently with the many volunteers to keep the ranch at least as it was when the County purchased it. I can't speak for the other volunteers, but my motive has always been to keep my parents dream alive.

Pete Filiatrault
"The ghost of Agua Caliente"

Upcoming Events at Agua Caliente Park

Check the FOAC web site (Park Events) for up-to-date events and times: www.FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org

Wake Up with The Birds

8:30 — 10:00 am (Every Thursday)

Nature Walks/other events

(most Saturdays)

Historic Speaker Series — Generally twice per month on Sunday, 1 - 2 PM

Ranch House Gallery:

December 11—January 21: Arizona Postcards by Lynette Smith, Plein air landscapes in oil; Gary Holbrook works in charcoal & oil.

January 23—March 3: Flight & Feathers, by Contemporary Artists of S Arizona.

To volunteer at Agua Caliente Park with Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation, call (520) 615-7855.

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. Board of Directors

Standing Committee Chairpersons annotated in () below the name

Jim Knoll, President (Newsletter, Website)	760-7609	sjknoll@q.com or foac@q.com
Chuck Ford, Vice President (Park Liaison)	748-7612	cfordjr@juno.com
Peter Filiatrault, Treasurer	577-8202	azghost@comcast.net
Donna DeHaan	760-1331	donnadehaan@msn.com
Mary Jane Dyson	749-5245	afroirish@msn.com
Judy Gray (Donors Wall/Walk)	749-1159	
Lynda Nash (Fundraising)	751-7478	carolyndanash@yahoo.com
Sandy Sarah	885-7466	sandyjsarah@yahoo.com
Paula Stoner (Historian)	591-0764	pjluvshky@gmail.com
Richard Watts (Park Liaison)	529-4637	

FUNDRAISING NEWS

FOAC is currently pursuing grants from several private charitable foundations in order to enhance the environmental education programs that are held at the park for school groups as well as for our adult visitors. In addition to the one which FOAC is purchasing, we are requesting additional binocular viewing scopes, a display case for historical artifacts for the Ranch House, and additional benches at strategic areas around the first and second ponds.

On Saturday, February 6th, we will be hosting a delicious dessert reception as a way of thanking our members and donors. Vince Redhouse, renowned Navajo flutist, will provide the entertainment as we present this Valentine to you, our new and old members, and our generous donors. Watch for your invitation in the mail in early January and save the date for a special afternoon!

We are also working on a design for a donor wall to commemorate donations for Agua Caliente Park. Let us know if you have any special ideas. Check the website for updates.

Lynda Nash

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) Corporation, therefore all donations are tax-deductible.

Electronic Newsletter

We would sure like to send you this newsletter electronically and save FOAC postage. The benefit to you is you get it quickly and in color. If you received this edition via mail and would like to get it via email, please let me know at foac@q.com. I will not give your address away and you will not get spammed by me. We only send the newsletter twice per year. You can also access the newsletter on-line at the FOAC website listed at the bottom of this page. The website also has lots of current activities taking place at the Park. Bookmark and visit it often.

Jim Knoll

New FOAC Website

The new FOAC website is: www.FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org. If you have suggestions for new or improved content, please let us know via the "Contact FOAC" link.

Water Flow / Pond Level

If you have visited Agua Caliente Park lately, you probably noticed the reduced water level. The Park has been affected by our continuing drought and decreased water table. The flow rate lately has been around 10 Gals/minute,

down from around 45 Gals/minute in early 2009. The main pond level has risen lately due to decreased evaporation, but the flow continues to be low. Hopefully we'll get some good winter rains that will improve the flow and help sustain the main pond. Pima County makes every effort to maintain the main pond. Ponds two and three are filled only by overflow from pond one or rainfall.

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!

Current membership roster:

Family Memberships:	49
Individual Memberships:	<u>28</u>
Total Memberships:	77

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



Kingfisher

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

Nonprofit
Organization
US POSTAGE
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**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
FEBRUARY 1ST, 2010
7 PM at Agua Caliente Park**

Mailing Label

Tucson Audubon at Agua Caliente Park

Tucson Audubon Society weathered some challenging times and made some great changes and additions. Our last year was very bullish with a greater emphasis on activism and commitment to our regions environmental needs. Thanks to continued community support, a growing membership and committed volunteers we can forge ahead with our mission to improve the quality of the environment by providing education, conservation, and recreation programs, environmental leadership and information.

My added responsibilities as Tucson Audubon's first Volunteer Coordinator has given me a real appreciation for the gifts of energetic volunteers in the Ranch House and Nature Shop. Many of these volunteers also give their generous time to the Pima County Environmental Education programs as well. Our working together can make a profound difference on the thousands of citizens of Pima

County and thousands of visitors when we can share the conservation message and history of our unique place in the Sonoran desert.

This past December the annual Christmas Bird Count was taken by volunteers, eager to tally bird species and numbers, an important part of citizen science. Vivian Mackinnon, the former nature shop manager led the team for Agua Caliente Park. Tom Rehm a volunteer for our Tucson Audubon's Nature Shop has compiled our monthly bird list into a spreadsheet covering our almost five years here in the park. This information is largely updated by participants at the weekly Thursday "Wake up with the Birds" bird walk in the park. If you haven't experienced the excitement of gathering with birders on a walk and searching out the latest birds and sometimes rarities, you don't know what fun is! It's free and a great family centered

event. We at Tucson Audubon Society are pleased to be working collaboratively with Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation to make sure our bird walk leaders are the very best.

I'm looking forward to your visits to our shop, which has an ever expanding and exciting product line and don't forget, as members of Tucson Audubon Society, you receive a 10% discount on all purchases over \$15.

Becky Aparicio, Nature Shop Manager and Volunteer Coordinator

Shop Hours:
Thursday, Friday and Saturday
9:30 am – 3:30 pm
(520) 760-7881



Agua Caliente
Turtles