

WELLSPRING NEWS

January 2011

Published by the Friends of Agua Caliente (FOAC), 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, we have been busy writing grants and soliciting funds to improve the Park. We intend to support Pima County to an even greater extent in 2011. If you have suggestions, let us know through the FOAC website. Input from our members and visitors is critical to ensure we provide the level

of support you expect.

As many of you know, Agua Caliente Park [Ranch] was added to the National Register of Historic Places on July 9th, 2009. FOAC purchased a plaque to commemorate



the National Registry and, on October 30th, 2010, we hosted a ceremony to install it in front of the historic Ranch House (ceremony pictures are on the FOAC website). I would like to again congratulate everyone that diligently worked toward this achievement. It will help protect Agua Caliente Park for many generations to come!!

We have reported in the past that we have not been able to

secure the funding necessary to replace the bridge and open the island. The current bridge is unsafe and detracts from the beauty of the park. Pima County will remove the old bridge in the near future and plans to install a historic plaque/photo to remember the bridge until (hopefully) a new one can be installed.

Please join us for our annual meeting on January 24th @ 7 PM in the Bunkhouse (arrive before 7 to access the park).

Jim Knoll

FUNDRAISING NEWS

On February 6th, 2010 about thirty members of the Friends were treated to a Member and Donor Reception held on the Ranch House patio. Since the theme was "We Love Our Members and Donors", the refreshments consisted of a wide array of desserts and sweets. We were treated to an afternoon of enchanting Navajo flute playing by Vince Redhouse, who generously donated his time and talents to FOAC.

Although we have not held any special fundraising events this year, the committee has been hard at work writing grants to private foundations appealing for funds to enable us to enhance and improve the park. We

are thrilled to announce that we have been the fortunate recipient of a \$5,000 grant from the Martha R. Neff Foundation, which is administered by the Lohse family of Tucson. This grant will go toward the purchase of a dual height binocular viewing scope that will be permanently mounted at the south end of the main pond (installed March 2011 timeframe). The double binocular scope, which will rotate 360 degrees, will enable adults, children, and wheelchair users to view the wildlife in the pond as well as the vegetation and nearby mountains. We are extremely grateful to the Neff Foundation and to the Lohses for their interest and generosity. We are awaiting responses from

other foundations regarding our requests for a large bicycle rack next to the public restrooms for our many cycling visitors, a locking display case in the Ranch House for a rotating exhibit of artifacts found on the grounds of Agua Caliente which date back to the Hohokam Whiptail Site, and more benches for the enjoyment of our many visitors. Your membership in Friends of Agua Caliente also enables us to purchase items that the county cannot in these tough economic times. You can also remember Agua Caliente Park by making a donation to FOAC or through your estate planning. We are grateful for any support you may be able to provide!

Lynda Nash

From the Bunkhouse: The Whiptail Site

Many of you may have heard that Hohokam Indians once lived near the Park. The area of their village is called "The Whiptail Site". In a bulletin of *Old Pueblo Archaeology Center*, it mentions that the first scientific excavations at the site were conducted in the 1950s, but whoever did that work apparently had a falling out with researchers from the University of Arizona and the excavations were abandoned. We have been unable to find any records of this early work.

Apparently no one talked to me. In 1952 or 1953, I was building a road on the Agua Caliente Ranch and came across an interesting site. There were 15 to 20 rectangles with pointed rocks (like teeth) marking the outline of each rectangle. I went home and got my folks to follow me out to the site. We brought shovels and began to dig inside one of these rectangles. We discovered that it had a hard packed floor, almost like cement. There was a fire pit in the center and postholes around the side of these rectan-

gles. We found pieces of pottery and other artifacts.

My parents called a friend, Howard Johnson, who owned a western store called Corral Cowboy Outfitters. Howard was an amateur archeologist. He came over and, along with my Mother, did more digging that confirmed these were early Indian "Pit Houses". Howard called the University of Arizona and they came out and did extensive excavations. They told us that this was a Hohokam Village occupied from approximately 1200 to 1400. The village was near a wash that possibly was a running river at the time. This village was located on the Agua Caliente Ranch, which encompassed approximately 1200 acres at the time. The village was south of what is now Roger Road. The University worked the site for some time. They told us the village had been burned as they found petrified burnt wood at the site. They said it could have been burned by other Indians or possibly some disease killed a lot of the inhabitants so the village was

abandoned. The University told us that when they were finished, we would receive a report on what they found. We never heard another word from them. We tried to find out what happened to the artifacts they removed from the site, but we never got an answer.

Apparently from the article I quoted above, they never found any records of any work I am here to tell you that I found the village and participated in the excavations. Further excavations were done by the University in the early 70's and no one can find the records from that dig either.

Pete Filiatrault
"The ghost of Agua Caliente"



Photo by Susan Knoll

Robin (Agua Caliente Park)

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
Peter Filiatrault, Treasurer	petefiliatrault@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
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Sandy Sarah	sandysarah@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Paula Stoner (Historian)	paulastoner@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Richard Watts (Park Liaison)	

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)

Nature Walks/other events

Historic Speaker Series — Generally twice per month on Sunday, 1 - 2 PM (reservations required)

Ranch House Gallery:

December 11—January 19: *Art by Four Hands*, Mixed media works

January 21—March 2: *Beyond Audubon*, contemporary mixed media and acrylic works depicting birds / landscapes.

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

WELCOME—WINTER VISITORS

A glimpse at the pond yields clues that the “winter visitors” have returned for another bountiful season at Agua Caliente Park. The water in the main pond is a vital resource for the resident wildlife and a variety of waterfowl will spend the winter months on the pond. The resplendent mallards have been joined by ring-necked ducks, American widgeons, and an occasional Northern shoveler. Come out to the park in the crisp cool mornings to watch the mule deer does and fawns as they parade through the mesquite grove. In the next month or so the bird watchers will be craning their necks to search the palms for this year’s great horned owl nest.

At the same time, the Environmental Education staff and volun-

teers ramp up the number and variety of activities to engage the human visitors at the Park. Advance reservations are now required for the ever-popular Agua Caliente Park History Lecture Series, continuing through February 2011. You can make a reservation by phone (520-749-3718) or email (aguacalientepark@pima.gov). The Thursday morning “Wake up with the Birds” attracts birders from beginners to experts. During the busy winter months, volunteer bird guides and staff divide the birders into small groups to get the best looks at the avifauna while on a leisurely stroll through the park. On weekday mornings, you may encounter one of the many school groups learning about life in the pond, or

honing their observation skills while viewing wildlife with binoculars.

If you are part of a local club or civic group, perhaps you will make a reservation for your groups to enjoy a guided tour of the Ranch House and grounds? Visit www.pima.gov/nrpr or www.FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org for a complete listing of the environmental education and interpretive programs.

Consider becoming a Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation volunteer today! We are currently looking for friendly people to interact with visitors in the Agua Caliente Park Ranch House Visitor Center and to meet and greet visitors on the grounds of the Park. We will provide necessary training. Contact Volunteer Coordinators, Meg Quinn at eeducation@pima.gov (email) or (520) 615-7855 (phone).

Electronic Newsletter / FOAC Website

Stream Flow Rate

The current underground flow rate feeding the stream and ponds is at 17 gallons per minute. Rate varies depending on environmental conditions.

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@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org. I will not release your email address to other agencies and you will not get spammed by me. We only send the newsletter twice per year. You can access archived copies of the newsletter on 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.

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.

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 760-7609 or 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!

2010 membership roster:

Family:	54
Individual:	30
Organization:	1

Total: 85



Photo by Susan Knoll

Vermillion Flycatcher

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

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
JANUARY 24th, 2011
7 PM at Agua Caliente Park**

Mailing Label

Tucson Audubon at Agua Caliente Park

Tucson Audubon, like most non-profits, has been beset with fiscal roller coaster rides and we are doing all we can to stay ahead of the challenges with fiscal responsibility, some cutbacks and creative funding. We remain committed to our education, conservation, and recreation missions, which includes supporting the Nature Shop at Agua Caliente.

This support depends upon a range of income sources, one of which is our annual Gala which has become a must attend event for those who love great dining, fun company, and silent auction. Please join us as we celebrate our third Gala with special guest Scott Weidensaul, who retraced the 30,000 mile trek of North America by Roger Tory Peterson and James Fisher. Tickets are \$150 each and \$1500 tables for 10. Save this date: January 18, 2011 at Loews Ventana Canyon. To reserve your seats, call Jean Barchman or Erin Olmstead at 629-0510.

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



Photo by Maggie Pearson

Story Time at
Agua Caliente Park

Facebook

FOAC is now on Facebook. Become a Friend to follow latebreaking and current events. To find FOAC, search "Friends of Agua Caliente Tucson" within Facebook or access us from our FOAC website.



Great Horned Owl Chick
Agua Caliente Park

Photo by Susan Knoll