

# WELLSPRING NEWS

## Winter 2013

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

Tucson, Arizona

### From the President:

### Board of Directors

Dear Friends:

**Happy New Year!!** I hope you had a great holiday season. As many of you have probably noticed, the stream flow is virtually non-existent and the water level in the main pond is down significantly. The County is pumping from the well to keep the main pond from drying up. Hopefully, with the cooler temperatures and some good winter rains, the flow will increase.

**Our annual member/**

**donor meeting will be January 28th at 7 PM in the Bunkhouse**

(brown building near the parking lot). I hope some of you will be able to attend. It is an opportunity for us to review what we have done in 2012 and have planned in 2013 and to obtain input from our members and donors on what you would like accomplished. **If you attend, please arrive between 6:30 and 6:55 PM.** This time of year, the gate is already closed, so we'll

have someone there to let you in. I want to personally thank all our current member and donors for supporting the *Friends*. Our 2013 drive is going well (see membership report) and without the loyal support of our many *Friends*, we would be hard pressed to support Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation (NRPR).

If you are interested in becoming a Board member or Officer of the Friends of Agua Caliente, please

attend the Annual meeting on January 28th, 2013 or let a Board member know via email. The current 2013 Slate of Officers is: President—Jim Knoll, Vice President—Maura Brackett, Secretary—Lynda Nash, and Treasurer—Peggy Denny. Additional nominations can be made at the Annual meeting. We also have several Board positions open and we'd love to have additional talent as part of the Board to help shape the future of Agua Caliente Park.

*Jim Knoll*

### FUNDRAISING NEWS

FOAC was pleased to install a new nine bike commercial bicycle rack, sponsored by the

**Jim Click Automotive Team**, for our many cycling visitors. It was placed



across from the public restrooms and will enhance the health and wellness experience at the park. A plaque attached to the rack identifies the donor. A special thank you to the Jim Click Automotive Team.

FOAC is purchasing two **forged steel sign bases** for NRPR in order to update and enhance signage around Agua Cali-

ente Park. Intent will be to purchase additional bases in the future as required.

The *Friends* group is once again providing funding in support of the NRPR Sunday afternoon **history lectures**, which have a loyal following among our park visitors. The lectures vary greatly in content and presentation style and are entertaining and informative. Please join us at 1 PM in the Rose Cottage for the last four presentations of the season:

Jan 13—Wild Horses of the West

Jan 20—Germain Jesuits as Founders of Arizona

Feb 10—History of Vail, Arizona

Feb 17—Historic Water Holes of the Sonoran Desert

FOAC will again provide funding support to the many volunteers for the **Arizona History Day** and **Earth Day** activities at the park. Both days serve hundreds of local students.

The two **donation boxes** acquired last year and located in the Ranch House and the Rose Cottage, have been well utilized. Thank you to all our visitors that donate using these boxes.

Let us know if you have any suggestions for amenities within the Park or any leads on foundations to which we can apply for grants. We greatly appreciate your continued support.

*Lynda Nash & Maura Brackett  
The Fundraising Team*

## 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 15-20 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. 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 1200-1400. 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"

### FOAC Website

The FOAC website is a great source of information on the history of the Friends group, event and park pictures, and current events at the park. The web address is at the bottom of the newsletter or can be accessed using this QR code.



## Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. Board of Directors

Standing Committee Chairpersons annotated in ( ) below the name

Jim Knoll, <b>President</b> ( <b>Newsletter, Website, Membership</b> )	jimknoll@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Chuck Ford, <b>Vice President</b> ( <b>Park Liaison</b> )	chuckford@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Peggy Denny, <b>Treasurer</b>	peggydenny@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Maura Brackett, <b>Secretary</b>	maurabackett@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Pete Filiatrault	petefiliatrault@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
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Cole Quilliam	colequilliam@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
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Sandy Sarah	sandysarah@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Linwood Smith	linwoodsmith@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.org
Richard Watts (Emeritus)	

## Volunteer your Time & Talents

Do you like to interact with other people and me, the Great Horned Owl? Would you like to learn more about nature and the environment. How about supporting the many gems we have right here in Tucson?



Photo by Susan Knoll

If you would like to volunteer at Agua Caliente Park or any of the other Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Parks, call (520) 615-7855.



## Nature Corner

### Red-eared Slider Turtle

A semi-aquatic turtle native only to the southern United States and northern Mexico. They have become established in other places as an invasive species because of pet releases, which can outcompete other native species. They are not native to Agua Caliente Park.

Red-eared sliders get their name from the distinctive red patch of skin around their ears. The “slider” part of their name comes from their ability to slide off rocks and logs and into the water quickly.

Red-eared sliders are almost entirely aquatic, but leave the water to bask in the sun and lay eggs.



You will frequently see them resting on logs in the Agua Caliente pond but are also deceptively fast and decent swimmers. They do not have saliva and, like most aquatic turtles, have fixed tongues, so they must eat their food in the water.

Females grow to be 10-13 inches in length and males from 8-10 inches. They are omnivores and eat a variety of animal and plant materials.

### Ring-Necked Duck

Ring-necked Ducks are small to medium sized diving (vs dabbling) ducks. Males are slightly larger than the females. Males have two white rings surrounding their gray bill, a shiny black angular head, black back, white line on the wings, and a white breast.

The adult female has a grayish brown angular head and body with a dark brown back, and a dark bill with a more subtle lighter band than the male.

Females also make a noise like “trrr”. The cinnamon neck ring is usually difficult to observe, which is why the bird is sometimes referred to as a “ringbill”.

Ring-necked Ducks are winter visitors to Agua Caliente Park. They feed mainly by diving for submerged and emergent plants.



Camouflage at its best —  
Great Blue Heron

Enjoying the view —  
Northern Cardinal



## Membership in the Friends of Agua Caliente

### Join Friends of Agua Caliente

Another year has come and gone and once again I want to thank all our loyal supports of *Friends of Agua Caliente* and of the Park. Our ability to support NRPR with funding and items they cannot normally accomplish within their budget cycle is tremendous and we owe it all to you. We closed out 2012 with a total of 194 supporters, a 22 percent increase from 2011.

Our 2013 membership/donor drive is well underway and you all have come through once again. We already have 127 member/donors and we are only 3 months into the drive. If you are still contemplating renewing your support to *the*

*Friends* or would like to join our team, we would love to have your support and participation. Please let me know if you would like to join the Board of Directors or volunteer your time and talents.

*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
Donation (any amount appreciated)	

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 the email address listed on page 2. Additional membership information is also on the *FOAC* website listed in the margin below.

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 great members and donors!

*Jim Knoll*

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

**ANNUAL MEMBER / DONOR  
MEETING  
JANUARY 28th, 2013  
7 PM at Agua Caliente Park**

## Tucson Audubon at Agua Caliente Park

Tucson Audubon connects people to their natural environment. Focusing on birds and other wildlife, we inspire and motivate people to conserve natural resources in southern Arizona for use and enjoyment by all. Tucson Audubon Society runs two Nature Shops, as well as an online shop. These specialty stores offer books, optics, and other natural history items. Proceeds benefit Tucson Audubon programs. Nature Shop staff and volunteers provide a wealth of information to many visitors and callers every day. The Nature Shop at Agua Caliente Park is an all volunteer run store. This is our first year on our own and we're doing great. Join the weekly Thursday morning "Wake Up With the Birds" bird walk at the park and receive a 10% discount on our purchases.

A great and fun way to support Tucson Audubon is to come celebrate Tucson Audubon's Fifth Annual Gala on Wednesday, January 30, 2013 at the fabulous

Hilton El Conquistador Resort. The evening will feature keynote speaker David Wilcove, Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Public Affairs, Woodrow Wilson School of Princeton University, author of *The Condor's Shadow* and *No Way Home*. Tony Paniagua will be our Master of Ceremonies. For questions or to register online, go to [tucsonaudubon.org](http://tucsonaudubon.org) or call Jean Barchman at 209-1802.

We look forward to your visits to our shop. Come check out our birding and nature items. The shop is a great place to shop for gifts and a great place to visit for out-of-town visitors.

*Liz Harrison, Nature Shop Volunteer*

November—April Hours  
Wednesday 10 - 1  
Thursday 9:30 - 2:30  
Friday & Saturday  
10 - 2:30



**Great Egret**

## 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, access us from our FOAC website, or scan the QR Code here.



## 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.



**Photos by Susan Knoll**