

# WELLSPRING NEWS

## Winter 2017

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

Tucson, Arizona

### From the President:

Dear Friends of Agua Caliente,

The Friends of Agua Caliente is a non-profit tax exempt organization dependent on new and renewed membership and generous donations. These are used by FOAC in support of a variety of projects for Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation (NRPR). This past year, your generous support made many park improvements possible. Thank you.

2016 saw major changes at our "Oasis in the Desert", mainly the magnificent redesign of Pond 2 (see *From the Bunkhouse* on page 2). For FOAC, we saw a growth in membership and donations, increasing our contributions to the popular environmental education and Park interpretive programs. For example, FOAC supports speakers for the Lecture Series (which I personally enjoy), and supplies for the school children programs for History Day, Nuts about Nature, and Earthkeepers, among others. Thousands of school children attend these enrichment programs. FOAC also provided digital cameras for the Pollinators and Wetlands Wildlife school program, as well as benches, sign frames and bases which interpret Park features. Some opportunities still exist for donations for additional benches throughout the park. The fully paved pathway around Pond 2 offers joggers, wheelchair visitors, and walkers a

magnificent view of the Catalina Mountains.

FOAC also encouraged the development of the NE sector of the Park in what is now the proposed Nature and Birding Trail near the Bunkhouse (brown building). FOAC Board members helped in planning the concept for the project and laying out the path. The proposed budget is expected soon to determine components for FOAC support. This will be a major FOAC contribution over the next couple years of implementation.

The new NRPR/FOAC annual budget and approval process adopted in 2016 provides clear management plans outlining the role of FOAC support. FOAC was one of the first Friends groups in Pima County to complete this new process.

This past year, more people in the community are hearing about FOAC through our social media outreach on our website and Facebook page (search Friends of Agua Caliente Tucson).

We want to thank Peggy Denny for her role as President and Treasurer. Under her exceptional leadership and hard work, FOAC was recognized by NRPR as a strong, engaged group of volunteers.

Maura Brackett

### Annual Meeting

The Friends of Agua Caliente **Annual Member and Supporter meeting** will be [Monday January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 at 7 PM](#) in the Bunkhouse (brown building near the north end of the parking lot). **Robert Padilla**, NRPR Deputy Director will address Park developments and the new Nature & Birding Trail. **Jessie Byrd**, Native Plant Nursery Manager, will discuss integration of native plants in the Park. We will also vote on the FOAC Slate of Officers and Board Members.

**This meeting is open to all Members and Supporters.**

### Nominations

**Slate for FOAC Board Positions:**

**President:** Maura Brackett  
**Vice Pres:** Jan Baker  
**Secretary:** Sylvia Olberding  
**Treasurer:** Jim Knoll

**Board Member Renewal (2017-2020)**

Jim Knoll  
Sylvia Olberding  
Misha Farinech  
(voted onto Board at November meeting)



Yellow-Rumped Warbler

Photo by Susan Knoll

## From the Bunkhouse: Pond 2 Redesign

As you may remember, the Pima County Bond initiative back in November 2015, was not approved. The renovation of the Agua Caliente Park main pond was part of that initiative. Pima County NRPR still plans to accomplish the renovation once funding is secured.

In the meantime, in order to renovate the main Pond, Pond 2 also needed some renovation so that the aquatic wildlife could be relocated from the main pond. NRPR worked with Regional Flood Control District to renovate Pond 2. Regional Flood Control District put together the project scope, engineering design, landscape plan and oversaw the project installation. That work started last summer and is now complete.



Pond 2 Island

The Pond 2 Island has been opened with land access from the east and south. Plants & trees have been planted on the island and a crushed granite pathway has been laid down.

Several benches will also be placed on the island. The pond on either side of the island was lined to hold



Pond 2

water when available and reduce water loss. The portion west of the island is not lined and will not be filled with water but will be a marsh area. The path around Pond 2 has been paved and additional benches will be installed.

If you have not walked out to Pond 2 recently, check it out. From the walkway near the Rose Cottage (pink building), walk west through the mesquite Bosque to Pond 2.

Once the main pond is renovated (reduced in size with the bottom sealed), the County should be able to maintain water in both ponds with less water than is used now for only the main pond.

*Jim Knoll*

## Fundraising

Agua Caliente Park is a contemplative Park, a place to enjoy the pond, trails, birds and much more.

As reported in the Summer 2016 Newsletter, we are working with NRPR to develop and raise funds for a Nature and Birding Trail and Ramada on the north side of the park (just north of the Bunkhouse). We should have cost estimates soon and will develop plans to raise the necessary funds. Hopefully, you can support this significant endeavor by volunteering on the committee or donating funds. We will put additional information on our website, send out via Facebook, and include in the next newsletter (Summer 2017) when we have details.

## Website

FOAC website can be accessed by scanning the QR code here. The web address is also located on the bottom of page 2 & 3 of the newsletter.

The website has the key history of FOAC & Agua Caliente Park, current significant issues affecting the Park, and current events for the month. You can also send an email to any board member and find links to other related websites.



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

Standing Committee Chairpersons annotated in ( ) below

- Maura Brackett, **President**  
(Fundraising, Nominations)
- Jan Baker, **Vice President**
- Sylvia Olberding, **Secretary**
- Jim Knoll, **Treasurer**  
(Newsletter, Website, Membership)
- Tina Baker  
(Facebook, Website)
- Cass (Catherine) Bartlett
- Misha Farinech
- Pete Filiatrault  
(Co-Founder)
- Judy Gray
- Vaughn Johnson  
(Fundraising)
- Joyce Roughton
- Sandy Sarah  
(Co-Founder)
- Linwood Smith  
(County Liaison)

**Board Member email addresses are:**  
FirstLast@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org

## Electronic Newsletter

Sending the newsletter to our members & supporters electronically saves FOAC postage and you receive it in color. If you did not receive an electronic version and would like to, please send an email to [info@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org](mailto:info@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org) to be placed on the electronic distribution (we do not release our database to anyone).

## Thank You to FOAC

Pima County NRPR would like to thank the Friends of Agua Caliente and all the generous supporters for the funding assistance for our environmental education and park interpretive programs. We could not offer what we do without your help!!



Photo by Susan Knoll

## Nature Corner by Judy Gray (Naturalist / FOAC Board Member)

**Migratory Bird Treaty** is celebrating 100 years of Migratory Bird Conservation (1916 – 2016). In Arizona, we have more than 550 bird species. By 1900, millions were killed for their feathers, food, science, and private collections.

**Sandhill Cranes** have come back to Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area around Willcox, AZ. They stay from October through March or early April then migrate north to their nesting grounds. Rarely, you may see a few Whooping Cranes or Common Cranes with them. Sandhill Cranes are a stately bird that stand 40-48 inches tall with a wing span of 6 – 7 feet. They are bald with red crown, bristle-like tail, long legs, gray bird often stained with rust. Flying, the neck is extended. Immature ones are brown. Their voice is a shrill rolling (garoo-a-a-). If you camp near them, they will keep you awake all night!

## Membership in the Friends of Agua Caliente

### Join Friends of Agua Caliente

The 2017 membership year is underway and once again, I want to thank all our loyal supporters of *the Friends of Agua Caliente* and the Park! If you have not yet renewed, please consider supporting *FOAC*. Our ability to support NRPR with funding and items they cannot normally accomplish within their budget cycle is tremendous and we owe it to all of you. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 we have a total of 165 supporters (members and donors).

It is not too late to join *FOAC* or renew your support. We would love to have you on our team.

The Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Corporation, therefore all donations are tax deductible. Membership is based on the

Habitat: Marshes, ponds, fields & prairies. Food: Frogs, crustaceans, lizards, grasses. To learn more, go to <https://www.azgfd.com/wildlife/view/webcamlist/sandhillcrane/>  
**Common Raccoon**. Raccoons are good climbers and swimmers, social, and nocturnal. They can sleep for several days but do not hibernate. They can climb a tree forward and come down backwards. Their color is gray-brown or orange-brown. Face mask is black outlined in white. Tail is bushy with 4-6 rings of black, brown, and gray rings. Size: 18 to 28 inches long with an 8 to 12 inch tail. Weighs 12 – 48 lbs. Mates January-March with a litter of 1-8 kits in April or May. Habitat: In Arizona, they den in trees along waterways, reservoirs, or wetlands. With their claw-like hands, they can open garbage cans, cabinets, and outside refrigerators. Food: Grapes, nuts, cherries, pawpaw, grubs, grasshoppers,

following schedule:

Individual	\$15
Family	\$25
Organization	\$50
Donation (any amount appreciated)	

Please send name, address, phone number, and email along with a check to: Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc., PO Box 32005, Tucson, AZ 85751-2005 or contact Jim Knoll at [info@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org](mailto:info@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org). Additional membership information is also on the *FOAC* website listed at the bottom of the newsletter.

Your dedication to the Park and *FOAC* is greatly appreciated. We can't do what we do without great members and donors!

Jim Knoll

crickets, deer mice, and squirrels, small mammals and bird eggs. They love to climb Agua Caliente's palm trees for bats and birds. **Do not** make into pets!!

## 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. We will post current events & pictures so please "like, comment, and share" to expand our following!



## Volunteers Needed

**Agua Caliente Park is seeking volunteers!** Do you love the Park? Enjoy talking with people from all over the world? Then consider volunteering with us! We are heading into our busy season and could use your help.

**Ranch House Volunteer:** Greet visitors and lead informal tours of the historic Ranch House for small groups, individuals, and families.

**Park Tour Guide Volunteer:** Lead hour-long scheduled outdoor tours that include the spring, Ranch House, Rose Cottage, and Bunkhouse, as well as some of the ornamental plantings. All volunteers will receive appropriate training and free access to the majority of our public programs and activities (a \$50 annual value).

Email [education@pima.gov](mailto:education@pima.gov) or call (520) 615-7855, ext. 4 for additional information.



## Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

P.O. Box 32005

Tucson, AZ 85751 - 2005

Annual Meeting January 23, 2017  
7 PM in the Bunkhouse

## Tucson Audubon at Agua Caliente Park

Tucson Audubon inspires people to enjoy and protect birds through recreation, education, conservation, and restoration of the environment upon which we all depend. Pima County generously donates space in the Ranch House for our Nature Shop. The shop is a great place for birding essential items, natural history items, children's books, games, and jewelry. Next time you need the perfect gift, come check us out! Join the weekly Pima County bird walk Thursday mornings and shop afterward to receive a 10% discount on all items. Proceeds from the Nature Shop benefit Tucson Audubon programs.

Tucson Audubon's **Habitat at Home** program helps you create safe, sustainable bird habitat in your yard. Yards with bird habitat also beautify the neighborhood and create shade, cooling our city and reducing air conditioning costs. Learn how to

enhance your yard for birds and other wildlife by signing up for the *Habitat at Home* program at [www.tucsonaudubon.org/habitatathome](http://www.tucsonaudubon.org/habitatathome). Have your yard certified and we will recognize your efforts with a beautiful sign!

Nature Shop volunteers provide a wealth of information to visitors to the Nature Shop and Ranch House. Tucson Audubon has a variety of opportunities to volunteer. Whatever your interest, we have a role for you! We can always use more volunteers in our Nature Shops. To learn more, email [volunteer@tucsonaudubon.org](mailto:volunteer@tucsonaudubon.org) or call (520) 209-1811.

For the winter, the shop is open Thursday (9 am to 2:30 pm), Friday (10 am to 2:30 pm), and Saturday (10 am to 1:30 pm). We look forward to your visits to our shop.

*Liz Harrison*  
Nature Shop Volunteer



Photo by Susan Knoll

Thursday Morning Birding Group  
Agua Caliente Park

## Postcards

FOAC sells Agua Caliente Postcards at the Audubon Shop in the Ranch House. This is a great way to take home memorable pictures of the Park. We appreciate your support of *the Friends of Agua Caliente*.

