

WELLSPRING NEWS

Summer 2018

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

Tucson, Arizona

From the President

Dear Friends of Agua Caliente,

The Friends of Agua Caliente (FOAC) is dependent on new and renewed memberships and generous donations. We use these funds in support of projects Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation (NRPR) does not have funding to implement. Your support, which continues to grow (92 in 2009 to 260 in 2018) means a great deal to activities for thousands of youth and adults visiting the park. Thank You!

In 2018, FOAC continues our focus on education programs. Your donations support the popular environmental education and interpretive programs which adults and thousands of school youth enjoy, including speakers for the Sunday Lecture Series at the Rose Cottage education center. Supplies were provided for the school children programs including "Nuts about Nature" and History Day. Digital cameras and binoculars supplied by FOAC greatly enhance the Pollinators and Wetlands Wildlife programs for school children. A 6th grade teacher at Agua Caliente Elementary School indicated "*These programs are truly gems and have greatly enhanced my curriculum, as well as fostered an appreciation for the environment for my students*".

The big question is "What is the story on the main pond restoration?"

At the May FOAC board meeting we received an update by Pima County Natural Resources Division Manager Karen Simms on the strategy for the project, status of work, and an estimated timeline. The strategy is to protect all animals and fish, to leave vegetation and pond size similar to what exists, to build a walkway bridge to the island, and to develop outreach educational programs



focusing on native fish. NRPR will also work in close collaboration with Arizona Game and Fish and the U of Arizona fishery department on creative approaches for education programs, especially for children. There will be public meetings later this year (in the Fall) with construction planned for summer of 2019. Construction entry will be off Roger Road so as not to disturb the rest of the Park.

FOAC and Tucson Audubon will provide permanent Kiosks in front of the Ranch House for a list of park activities and the birding list. These are in production. Consider joining the popular weekly Birding Walk Thursday morning (timing and registration procedures on the FOAC website events page). Your support also provid-

ed the benches, sign frames, and bases which interpret park sites.

Our Board is strong and now has a full contingent of 15 members with the addition of Joanne Triplett, Pam Rossetter, and Mike Sprung. Welcome Joanne, Pam, and Mike. A Social Media committee is also working on redesign and updating the website.

Volunteerism is strong. This past year, FOAC was fortunate that graphic artist Anna Petronella from the U of Arizona volunteered and developed a delightful



illustrative map of the park. You can see it on the website. Also Board members developed a PowerPoint presentation for presentation to community groups. Let us know if your group is interested.

Again, thank you for your incredible support of FOAC and Agua Caliente Park!!

Maura Brackett

From the Bunkhouse: History of Agua Caliente (Part 2: Tucson Established)

Some of the local history influencing the establishment and development of Tucson.

In 1687 Father Eusebio Francisco Kino began exploring the general area to include the Pimeria Alta (now northern Sonora and southern Arizona). He was in the Tucson area for the first time in 1692. Father Kino taught native Americans Christianity and farming, brought fruits and grains from Europe, and established a chain of missions and visitas. Some of these missions still exist and are well known to us today such as San Xavier del Bac and Tumacácori. This is also the time frame that the old mesquite tree on the east side of the ranch house is thought to have begun growing.

In August 1775 Tucson was established by Irishman Hugh O'Connor. In 1777 Spain began construction of the Presidio San

Agustin del Tucson. Tucson was ruled under Spain until 1821 when it was ceded to Mexico. This explains some of the cultural difference between Tucson and Phoenix since although there was a Hispanic influence throughout the region, Tucson actually belonged to Spain and Mexico until relatively recently.

In 1848 the war with Mexico was concluded with US Army dragoons leaving Mexico and reaching Tucson in October on their way to California. Gold was discovered in California at Sutter's Mill in 1848, greatly influencing the numbers and type of people traveling through Arizona and this migration is thought to have started the mining chapter of local history.

The Gadsden Purchase was made in 1853. President Franklin Pierce wanted to insure US

possession of extreme southern New Mexico and Arizona south of the Gila River as this was the most practical southern route for a railroad to the Pacific Ocean. James Gadsden negotiated the purchase of about 30,000 square miles from Mexico for \$10,000,000.

In 1856 Mexican troops abandoned Tucson and the first American troops arrived. In this time frame there were reports of Army troop encampments at what is now Agua Caliente Park while they were patrolling the area and on their way to and from the "soldier's camp" in the Santa Catalina Mountains. The road named Soldier's Trail was actually the trail they used and predates 1870's development. This was the western boundary of Agua Caliente Ranch. Over many years there were other ranches established along the route and many of the existing homes were built in the early ranch period.

Susan Knoll

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. Board of Directors

Standing Committee Chairpersons annotated in () below

Maura Brackett, **President** (president[at]friendsofaguacaliente.org) (Fundraising, Nominations)

Jan Baker, **Vice President** (vice_president@.....)

Sylvia Olberding, **Secretary** (secretary@.....)

Jim Knoll, **Treasurer** (treasurer@.....)

(Social Media, Membership)

Tina Baker

(Social Media)

Misha Farinech

Pete Filiatrault

(Co-Founder)

Judy Gray

Jerry Martin

Joyce Roughton

Pam Rossetter

(Social Media)

Sandy Sarah

(Co-Founder)

Linwood Smith

(County Liaison)

Mike Sprung

(Social Media)

Joanne Triplett

Board Member email addresses are:

FirstLast@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org

FOAC Website: <http://www.FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org>



Egret

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 to be placed on the electronic distribution (we do not release our database to anyone).

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 website, or scan the QR Code. We will post current events & pictures so please "like, comment, and share".



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

Welcome to Spring in the Sonoran Desert — it is beautiful!

Have you seen the little Gambel Quail, small doves, desert cotton-tails, coyote pups, fawn of White-Tailed and Mule deer — all following their parents around? Baby season is here!



Quail with chicks

Desert wild flowers and cactus are in full bloom. Also in bloom our state flower on the giant Saguaro, ocotillo, hedge hogs, pin cushions, prickly pear, and many more.



Pied-Billed Grebe

In the family of Grebes, there are nine species. The Western Grebe has been sighted at Agua Caliente Park a few seasons ago. They have a swan like neck that is

white in front and a bill that is a gray yellow with a dark ridge on top. The body color is slate gray with a white front. They tread water together in a dance before mating. Nests float and are anchored to reeds. They lay 3-4 bluish-white eggs. You will see young riding on their parents backs. Western Grebe often fall victim to oil spills and to insecticides in their food which reduces the breeding success.

Kit Fox (Swift Fox). Length 24-31", weight 3 1/8—6 lbs. Body color is yellowish buff and whitish below. Tail has black tip and black spot on upper base. Large pointed ears. Mates January / February with a litter of 3-5 born March / April. Under-ground den with several entrances ~8" wide. Has a mound of earth at entrance with scatters of small bones of rabbits, ground squirrels, rats, mice, birds, and insects (also berries for dessert!). They have a shrill

yap and several whines, growls, and purrs. They are the size of a large house cat. In March a rabid one was found in Sabino Canyon.

Please be careful of rattlesnakes when outside walking or hiking.

Judy Gray, Naturalist

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. We will be redesigning the website over the next year.

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.



Volunteer

Agua Caliente Park is seeking volunteers!

Do you love the Park? Enjoy talking with people from all over the world? Then consider volunteering. There are several opportunities available with lots of flexibility.

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 eeducation@pima.gov or call (520) 615-7855, ext. 4 for additional information.



Photos in this issue by Susan Knoll unless otherwise indicated.

Membership in the Friends of Agua Caliente

Join Friends of Agua Caliente!

Thank You to all of 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 the park & NRPR with funding and items they cannot normally purchase within their budget cycle is tremendous and we owe it to all of you. **As of June, 2018 we are currently at 260 supporters** (members and donors) and through your generosity, we have raised over \$15,000 this fiscal year

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 follow-

ing 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. 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 cannot do what we do without great members and donors!

Jim Knoll

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

P.O. Box 32005

Tucson, AZ 85751-2005

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 to shop for birding essential items and books and activities for the kids to keep them busy during the summer. Next time you need the perfect gift come check us out! For the month of June receive 20% off sun shirts and hats! Join the weekly bird walk on Thursday mornings and shop afterward to receive a 10% discount on all items. Proceeds from the Nature Shop benefit Tucson Audubon programs. Nature Shop volunteers provide a wealth of information to visitors to the Nature Shop and Ranch House.

Tucson Audubon's **Habitat at Home** program helps you create a beautiful, water-saving, landscape that attracts birds and wildlife. Learn how at

www.tucsonaudubon.org, click Get Involved then Habitat at Home. Have your yard certified and we will recognize your efforts with a beautiful sign!

Save the date for the next South-east Arizona Birding Festival, August 8-12, 2018. There will be field trip workshops and a FREE nature expo. Headquarters this year will be the Hilton Double Tree at Reid Park. The keynote speaker will be Bill Thompson III, a lifelong birder, author, and co-publisher of Bird Watcher's Digest.

Tucson Audubon has a variety of volunteer opportunities. 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 or call at 520-209-1811. We are open Thursday 9 AM to 1:30 PM this summer.

Liz Harrison
Nature Shop Volunteer

FOAC 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*.

