

WELLSPRING NEWS

Winter 2019

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

Tucson, Arizona

From the President

Dear Friends of Agua Caliente,

Thank you for being part of the Friends of Agua Caliente team, a non-profit tax exempt organization dependent on memberships and donations. You join a team 264 strong — up 360% from a decade ago. Your membership and donations make it possible for FOAC to be a strong supporter of Agua Caliente Park.

This year was especially active and rewarding for FOAC. Foremost was planning for restoration of Pond 1 including a community presentation at the Kirk-Bear Canyon Library. More detailed information about the Pond 1 restoration is included in this newsletter and on the FOAC website. Our objective is to ensure membership and the community are aware of restoration plans.

You ask “How does FOAC coordinate their support with Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation (NRPR)?” The answer is a three year contract with Pima County partnering on coordinated and cooperative fundraising, park conservation, and park management activities. The FOAC/NRPR Annual Work Plan identifies FOAC projects which are financed with your membership and generous donations. Our Fiscal Year (2019) goes from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. This Fiscal Year we are supporting

NRPR with \$5,950 to Education programs and \$18,969 to the Park (\$12,600 for a Nature & Birding Trail & \$6,369 from our Bridge Fund).

2018 has been a year of progress for our Desert Oasis. Here are some highlights:

Project 1. Fundraising and community outreach through membership and donation drives, newsletter production and mailing, and social media. Much effort has gone into improving the sites under the leadership of Jim Knoll, Treasurer and Social Media Chair. We plan to have an updated website in 2019 that will strengthen community outreach.

Project 2. Education programs for youth and adults including a lecture series and school programs (History Day and equipment for education programs). Thousands of youth attended the school programs and hundreds of adults enjoyed and learned from the Sunday Lecture Series. Also supported were Agua Caliente Park signs to include one listing activities for the day at the Park and, with the help of Tucson Audubon, a new sign base to support the Monthly Bird List.

Project 3. When Pond 1 Restoration is implemented, FOAC will commit funding from our Bridge Fund (currently at \$6,369). These funds were specifically raised many years

ago when the initial restoration plan called for a new bridge. We maintained those funds in a restricted account to use if the plan came to fruition. We will now use those funds to help Pima County pay for the new bridge to the island. Thanks to all the previous donors that supported this worthwhile cause.

Thank you for your confidence in and support of the Friends of Agua Caliente. 2019 will be a historic year with the restoration of Pond 1.

Maura Brackett

Annual Meeting

The Annual Member and Donor meeting will be Monday January 28, 2019 at 7 PM in the Bunkhouse (brown building near north end of the parking lot). The Pima County Natural Resources Director, Karen Simms, will provide an update on planned Park improvements to include Pond 1 Restoration.

FOAC will also review the status of funds, and will nominate Officers and Board Members for the next Term of Service. Since the room is small, **Please RSVP: info@friendsofaguacaliente.org**.

From the Bunkhouse: History of Agua Caliente (Part 3: Fullers Orchard)

March 1873 the first troops arrived at the New Camp Lowell in the northeast part of the Tucson basin at what is now Fort Lowell Park. From October 1875 to January 1891 the area of the Agua Caliente ranch was included in the Fort Lowell military reservation. The land was reserved for military use and no homestead claims were allowed. The federal government allowed prior occupants to remain, use the land, and retain improvements. This explains why only improvements were transferred during this time.

The first recorded “development” of Agua Caliente Park by settlers was Peter B. Bain in July 1873. He filed a 160-acre homestead claim but did not complete it. In the July to October 1873 timeframe, the first adobe house was built at Agua Caliente. In May 1874 Bain abandoned the cattle business and was reportedly

involved in other enterprises in the state. Bain sold the “Agua Caliente Rancho” improvements in March 1875 to James Fuller for \$300.

The Fullers planted ornamental trees and shrubs. They later added the fruit orchard for a total of around 3,000 trees. There were a variety of fruit trees including orange, lime, guava, fig, pomegranate, apricot, and quince. They also had an extensive garden growing a variety of fruits and vegetable including grapes, melons, raspberry, gooseberry, potatoes, onions, cucumbers, beets, and tomatoes. Since they had substantial water to irrigate with, they could grow a greater variety of trees and crops than is typical for the climate. They operated the ranch as “Fuller’s Springs Health Spa” offering meals and hot spring baths and sold excess produce in

Tucson markets. In January 1872 James Fuller transferred some property, including Agua Caliente Ranch, to his sister Eliza Jane Fuller Watson due to his failing health. She continued the operations of the ranch and resort with other family members. Newspaper articles were highly complimentary of the resort and noted the availability of comfortable sleeping apartments. In 1882, a travel writer William Bishop visited and described the property as “a number of unpainted adobe houses” each a single room with cactus strip roofs, a “summer dining room” with ocotillo walls and roof and a “winter dining room” with tight walls and a fireplace. When Jane Fuller Watson died in 1885 she left the property to her daughters. Some reports are that the property was foreclosed upon due to prior debts from James Fuller. Other reports are that Elizabeth and Dr. John Achenbach bought the property improvement for \$1,000.

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@.....)

(Membership / Social Media)

Tina Baker

(Social Media)

Misha Farinech

Pete Filiatrault

(Co-Founder)

Judy Gray

Jerry Martin

Pam Rossetter

(Social Media)

Joyce Roughton

Sandy Sarah

(Co-Founder)

Mike Sprung

(Social Media)

Joanne Triplett



Great Horned Owl Chick

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 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, follow, comment, and share”.



The Winter season has arrived! Many desert animals change living areas for warmth & food.

The **Whitetail Deer** in winter

eats twigs, grasses, buds of fruit trees, maples, & birches.

Both

Whitetail and Mule Deer are found in the mountains surrounding Tucson. Weight: Male 150-310 Lbs. Female 90-211 Lbs. Mule Deer tend to be larger than Whitetail. Color: Tan or brown in summer, grayish in winter. Tail brown-edged with white above. Habitat: Brushy areas, woods, suburbs, and gardens. Bed: Shallow oval body size depressions in leaves or snow. Raises white tail (flag) in danger. They are good swimmers and a great runner at



speeds of 36 MPH and can leap 30 feet horizontally. You will see both in Agua Caliente Park.

Harris' Hawk stay in Arizona all year. Weight: 3-5 Lbs. Color: Black with chestnut shoulders & thighs.

White on rump, base of tail, and tail tip.

Habitat: Scrub with mesquite, cactus & yucca. This

hawk is fearless. You will see them perched everywhere.



Remember "**Wings Over Wilcox**" January 17—20, 2019 for the Sandhill Cranes.

Judy Gray, Naturalist

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 are in the process of redesigning the website.

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 FOAC 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 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 NRPR public programs and activities (a \$50 annual value).

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



Photo by Susan Knoll

Membership in the Friends of Agua Caliente

Join Friends of Agua Caliente!

We concluded the Fiscal Year (FY) **2018** membership year (Oct 2017—Sept 2018) with 264 supporters!!

The FY **2019** membership year is underway and once again, I want to thank 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 *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 December 20, 2018 we are at 199 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 Corpo-

ration, 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 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

Annual Meeting January 28, 2019
7 PM in the Bunkhouse
RSVP: info@friendsofaguacaliente.org

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 essentials, 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 on Thursday mornings and shop afterward and 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!

Help out desert birds by putting up **nest boxes** made locally specifically for our cavity nesting birds such as the American Kestrel and the Lucy's Warbler. These nest boxes are available in our nature shops or you can see how to make one at www.tucsonaudubon.org, click Get Involved then Habitat at Home then Desert Nest Boxes.

The next Southeast Arizona Birding Festival is **August 7-11, 2019**.

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 or call at 520-209-1811.

Winter hours: Thursday 9 AM to 2:30 PM, Friday 10 AM to 2:30 PM and Saturday 10 AM to 1:30 PM.

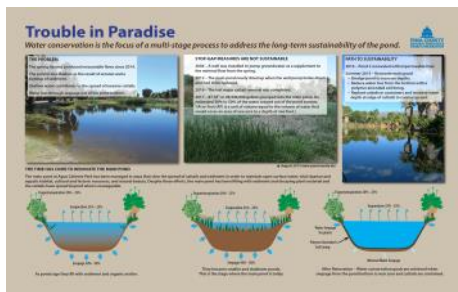
Liz Harrison Nature Shop Volunteer

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*.



Agua Caliente Park Main Pond Restoration



Information Panel

Details available on Pima County Website

The restoration of Pond 1 at Agua Caliente Park should begin this Spring (February or early March 2019). The current state is not sustainable. Pima County is pumping well water in amounts that vary seasonally from 60,000 to 100,000 gallons a day.

The pond will mostly retain its



current look with vegetation around the edges but cleaned out in the middle. The current depth is minimal with sediment that has accumulated over the years. The new depth will be deeper and variable to accommo-

date various waterfowl requirements. A bridge to the island similar to one that used to be there is also planned.

Greater visibility of the pond surface will result from the removal of selected palms and cattails. These changes will improve wildlife habitat and provide more open water for migrating waterfowl. The historic character of this Tucson treasure will be restored.



As the restoration evolves, Pima County will place information signs near the main pond with updates and FOAC will put information on our website, Facebook page, and will email our current members/supporters.

The restoration will begin in February or early March by stopping the pumping of water into the pond. It will take several months to dry the pond. During this process, fish and other aquatic wildlife will be removed or relocated. Once drained, dredging will remove the sediment and place it near Pond 3 to dry. During the heavy equipment portion of this process, the

Park will be closed for 4—6 weeks. Timing and duration will depend on Monsoon activity and should happen over the summer months. Once cleaned and contoured, a polymer product will be used to seal the pond by binding to the soil to prevent any water seepage. The edges will not be sealed to allow some seepage for landscaping around the pond edge. Assuming no changes to the projected timetable, the restora-



tion should be complete in the Fall of 2019.

All the **information panels** (Trouble in Paradise, Concept Plan, Water Conservation, and Construction Plan) provide in-depth background of the current situation and are **available to view on the Pima County website at the link below**. You can also access the County website through the Friends of Agua Caliente website address below.

Pima County Website: <http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/one.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=1503>

then select the links under the Pond 1 Restoration Tab.

Friends of Agua Caliente Park Website: <http://friendsofaguacaliente.org> then select the link on Main Pond update.