



WELLSPRING NEWS

Winter 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 a non-profit tax-exempt organization dependent on new and renewed memberships and generous donations. FOAC uses 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, means a great deal to activities for thousands of youth and adults visiting the park. Thank You!

How do we accomplish our goals? Foremost, we have a strong, stable volunteer Board of Directors (Board) comprised of many professions and skills. This contributes to an action oriented Board which meets 5 times annually. It is healthy that we have interest from our members in joining the Board and we will add a new member in January. Another key is the partnership we enjoy with NRPR. This allows us to work together on a management plan which identifies the role for FOAC a year in advance, dependent on funding availability.

In 2017, your contributions supported the popular environmental education and interpretive programs which youth and adults enjoy. This included speakers for the Sunday Lecture Series at the Rose Cottage education center (see the current list

& dates on the FOAC website) and supplies 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. We plan similar support this year.

FOAC and Tucson Audubon will provide permanent Kiosks in front of the Ranch House with a calendar of park activities and the birding list. You might want to consider joining the popular weekly Birding Walk Thursday morning (timing and registration procedures on the FOAC website events page). You will also see the benches, sign frames, and bases which interpret park features throughout the Park, especially along Pond 2. Your support provided the funding.

Social media outreach continues through our webpage and Facebook page (see QR codes in the newsletter). This year, FOAC will initiate a Power-Point presentation for community groups titled "A Trip Through Agua Caliente Park". Let us know if your community group (homeowner's association, etc) would like to have such a presentation. Email us at info@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org.

This past year, FOAC was fortunate that Historian Robin Pinto prepared a research project on the influence of

FOAC on park development. She concluded that this *Oasis in the Desert*, now is in the hands of Pima County with the help of FOAC. This partnership will ensure the continued existence of this historic landscape. A history timeline is on the FOAC website.

Lastly, we never want to forget the importance of Roy P. Drachman, who in 1984 provided \$200,000 to local government to help purchase Agua Caliente.

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

Maura Brackett

Annual Meeting

The Annual Member and Donor meeting will be **Monday January 22, 2018 at 7 PM in the Bunkhouse** (brown building near north end of the parking lot). The new Pima County Natural Resources Director, **Karen Simms**, will provide an update on planned Park improvements.

Nominations for Board Member renewals will also be voted at the Annual Meeting. Officer positions for 2018 will remain the same as 2017 (three-year term).

From the Bunkhouse: History of Agua Caliente (Part 1: The Earliest Years)

Water has been at the park for as long as we can tell. Settlements have always depended upon reliable sources of water. This is especially true in the desert southwest where water could be scarce. With water and the wildlife that comes with it, ancient peoples have used this area for thousands of years.

Published data indicates that around 0-700 AD the Hohokam began to establish settlements in the area. Archeological digs found evidence of habitation and use



Whiptail Ruin excavations in the 1960s

over several settlement periods and by both residents and nomadic people. They hunted and grew crops in the area, but details of their life are otherwise known only by the information uncovered in archeological digs. The most recent dig was conducted in the 1960-1970's in an area south of the park that is on private property. The area is known as the "Whiptail" site. Evidence of a village of about 100 dwellings was uncovered. Many artifacts were recovered and some of these are on display in the park ranch house.

Other archeological surveys have been conducted throughout the park with evidence of use found in all of the areas studied. Around 1450 the Hohokam settlements disappeared from the area. As is true with many ancient cultures, why they disappeared is unknown. It is specu-

lated that incursions by other more hostile people may have driven them



After placing pottery vessels on the floor of this house, the Hohokam burned the house as part of an abandonment ritual.

to safer locations, but it is also possible that they simply exhausted the local food and building resources. There is evidence that the Hohokam reorganized with portions of the people going in different directions and assimilating into other groups. The cause is most likely due to multiple factors.

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@.....)

(Newsletter, Website, Membership)

Tina Baker

(Facebook, Website)

Misha Farinech

Pete Filiatrault

(Co-Founder)

Judy Gray

Vaughn Johnson

(Fundraising)

Jerry Martin

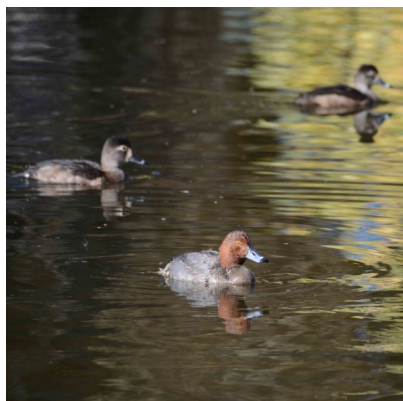
Joyce Roughton

Sandy Sarah

(Co-Founder)

Linwood Smith

(County Liaison)



Redhead & Ring-Necked Ducks

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".



Board Member email addresses are:

FirstLast@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org

Welcome to the year 2018!

Spring begins in the Sonoran Desert in February. Birding season begins in March and April as the birds begin arriving from the cold country and Mexico.

The **Gila Woodpecker** is well adapted to our Sonoran Desert's hot and dry conditions. Size: Length 8-10". Nests mostly here in giant Saguaro and mesquite trees. The



highest holes in the Saguaro are used because it likes peace and

quiet with no people noise. They also go south to the tropics and use thorny bushes, forests often

interspersed with Organ Pipe cactus. They lay 6-8 white eggs. Markings: Pattern of black spots on grey wings. Males have a red cap and females do not. White wing patches are seen in flight. Voice: Sounds like wicka-wicka-wicka or loud kleeer. Some say they sound like a barnyard hen.

Remember, more than 6,000 Sandhill Cranes winter here in the Willcox Playa Wildlife area. If you go, be sure to take water, good binoculars, and food since there are no accommodations there.

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 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 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) **2017** membership year (Oct 2016—Sept 2017) with 238 supporters!!

The FY **2018** 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 January 1, 2018 we are currently at 206 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 22, 2018
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 to shop 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 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 In-

volved 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. Headquarters this year will be The Double Tree by Hilton at Reid Park.

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. 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

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*.

