



WELLSPRING NEWS

Winter 2022

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

Tucson, Arizona

Annual Meeting January 24, 2022

7 p.m.—Virtual (Online)

From the President

Dear Friends of Agua Caliente Park,

In January 2021 we hoped for much needed rain, and boy did we get it! We've seen plants we haven't seen in decades and parts of the park were underwater for much of the summer. There were so many fabulous sounds of native spadefoot toads and red-spotted toads along with the invasive bullfrogs.

Currently, volunteers are staffing the Ranch House Thursday through Saturday from 10-2. The old Audubon shop has been transformed into a lovely general reference room furnished with some very nice Mission Style furniture reminiscent of Tucson homes in the early-mid 1900s. FOAC purchased the furniture with funds from your donations, and it makes a nice place to rest for some comfortable reading. Please go check out the Ranch House. It is a wonderful snapshot of earlier times and has a lot of interesting information about this part of Tucson. The Living River of Words: Youth Poetry and Art exhibit of works created by local children is currently displayed in the Ranch House Gallery.

The Park remains a haven for wildlife. On our FotoFauna cameras we see bobcats, javelina and coyote families, raccoons, mule deer, great horned owls and screech owls, and a variety of birds, bats, and lizards. In person activities are picking up at the park, with some historic, stargazing, and birding tours being scheduled. See the FOAC or County website for details.

Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation (NRPR) with financial assistance from FOAC, has opened a new Nature and Birding Trail. The path starts just west of the Mesquite Bosque and goes south into the trees then west to re-emerge near the second pond. Currently there are not any benches, but soon we will be installing some fun "critter" style benches and flat rocks to rest on. Next time you are at the park, take a stroll on the new trail. Who knows what you will see!

**Pam Rossetter,
FOAC President**

Nature Corner: Crested Caracara

What kind of bird is that?

The first time you see a Crested Caracara you will be impressed. It is a member of the Falcon family, however it is very different from most falcons in structure and habits.

We are in the very northern part of their range, which extends south to the tip of South America. Caracara adults are colorful, with a black body and long yellow legs, bare orange skin around their face and a black cap that looks a bit like a toupee. They are big, weighing about 4 pounds (twice the weight of a great horned owl) with a wingspan of 4 feet. One or two clutches of 2-3 large eggs with blotches of brown on them are laid in the spring. Around southern Arizona, Crested Caracaras nest in isolated tall trees and often in the crook of saguaro arms.

Being omnivores and scavengers, they feed on pretty much anything: pecans, small animals, reptiles, insects, and carrion. One can often see them competing with vultures for roadkill. They are known to walk on the ground to hunt and have been seen turning over cow pads to eat the insects underneath.

Want to see one in person?

Although they have occasionally been spotted at Agua Caliente Park, a good place to find them is in agricultural fields west and northwest of town, and at Saguaro National Park. An adult Caracara flies during Raptor Free Flight at



Photos by Dan Weisz

the Desert Museum. Bring your camera, it's a great photo opportunity.

For a short description of caracaras with their odd call, paste this URL in your browser:

<https://tinyurl.com/yckn75py>

Judy Gray
Naturalist and FOAC
Board Member

Electronic Newsletter

Sending the newsletter electronically saves *FOAC* postage and you receive it in color. If you did not receive an electronic version and would like to be placed on the electronic distribution, please send an email to:

info@friendsofaguacaliente.org.

We do not release our database to anyone.

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc. Board of Directors

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Board email addresses are:

FirstLast@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org

History Online Lecture Series

The history lecture series, which is made possible by your contributions to FAOC, will again be presented online in 2022. The events are free but registration is required and participation is limited. To check event times and register, go to <https://www.eventbrite.com> and use the search function to find the lecture you would like to attend.

- ◆ *Cultural History of the Tucson Basin*
- ◆ *The Antiquity of Irrigation in the Southwest*
- ◆ *Arizona from Conquistadores to the Railroad*
- ◆ *Tasting History: The Kino Heritage Fruit Trees Project and Mission Garden*
- ◆ *The Pershing's Chinese, Asylum Seekers Amid Chinese Exclusion*
- ◆ *Birds, Lizards, and Bighorns: The Hohokam and their Animal Icons*
- ◆ *Geology of the Rincon Mountains*

Information about how to access the Zoom session will be emailed to participants after registration.

FOAC Website: <https://friendsofaguacaliente.org>

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of Agua Caliente will be held Monday, January 24, 2022 at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held online. The meeting URL, login and/or call in information will be sent in advance to anyone requesting to attend. Please RSVP at: info@friendsofaguacaliente.org.

We will review funding, other business and vote on the current Nominations Slate. To review the current Slate, paste the following link into your online browser:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p865ash>

Membership

Join Friends of Agua Caliente! Thank you to all of our loyal supporters. If you have not yet renewed, please consider supporting FOAC. Our ability to support the Park with funding and items they cannot normally purchase is tremendous and we owe it all to you.

As of January 1, 2022, we have 214 supporters (members and donors) for the 2021-2022 year and through your generosity, we have raised \$16,875. This includes 170 renewals (64% renewal rate) and 44 new supporters. FOAC is a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit and donations are tax deductible.

Membership is based on:

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

Please send name, address, and email along with a check to Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc., PO Box 32005, Tucson, AZ 85751-2005. You can also securely support FOAC with PayPal or Credit Card from our website.

Your dedication to the Park and FOAC is greatly appreciated.

Jim Knoll
Membership

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

P.O. Box 32005

Tucson, AZ 85751-2005

FOAC Scholarship

FOAC is offering a scholarship of up to \$5,000 to seniors graduating in 2022 from Sabino High School and/or Tanque Verde High School.

The scholarship, offered to seniors in good academic standing, will provide financial assistance toward the first year of college, or any institution of higher learning. In order to attract the best students, the scholarship is available to students pursuing study in a variety of subjects including, but not limited to, Education, Natural and Environmental Sciences, Engineering, Social Sciences, Business Administration, Public Administration and Communications.

Recipient selection and the amount of award(s) will be made at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Interested students should contact their school counselor for more details.

Important Dates:

- March 15 – Deadline for all applications to be in the hands of the FOAC.
- March 31 – Scholarship recipient selection and notification

In recognition, scholarship recipient(s) and their family will be invited to attend the May Board of Directors Meeting.

Scholarship funds will be distributed on or before August 15, 2022.

CALL TO ARTISTS

Pima County's Agua Caliente Park Ranch House Art Gallery is accepting applications from artistic members of FOAC for consideration to display their work as part of a group show in Spring 2022. Original artwork must reflect nature, wildlife, landscapes, southwestern themes, or local cultures that are in keeping with the park setting.

To be considered for inclusion, please submit (via email or postal mail) the following by February 12, 2022:

- 1) Cover Sheet with your name, contact information including phone number, email address, and mailing address
- 2) Up to ten photographs of the work you propose to exhibit *
 - Email submissions should be jpg or pdf attachments
 - Physical submissions should be 4"x 6" to no larger than 8"x 10" prints
 - Images should be labeled with artist name, title of work, dimensions of the piece as it would be displayed, and art medium
- 3) A brief resume or biography
- 4) An artist's statement and description of work

Email to: aguacalientepark@pima.gov (as jpeg or pdf attachments)

Or send by mail to:

Agua Caliente Park Ranch House Art Gallery
Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation
3500 W. River Road Tucson, AZ 85741

* For the purpose of socially-distanced jurying, electronic submission is preferred. Submitting your work physically will not affect your prospects of being selected.

This call-to-artist is for exhibition only; art on display in the Agua Caliente Park Ranch House Gallery is not to be offered for sale.

For more information, contact:

Julie Strom, Environmental Education Program Manager

Phone: 520-724-5375 ext. 2

Email: aguacalientepark@pima.gov