

# WELLSPRING NEWS

Winter 2023

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

Tucson, Arizona

**Annual Meeting January 31, 2023**

7 p.m.—Virtual (Online)

## From the President

Dear Friends of Agua Caliente Park,

Well, what a year the park had in 2022! In March we finally got to properly celebrate the work on Pond 1 and installation of a new bridge to the island. By the way, the clay liner in Pond 1 continues to result in conservation of both water and power.

You may remember that we put rare Gila Topminnow into Pond 1 because they are native Arizona fish and love to eat mosquitos. These tiny fish have been doing very well, reproducing and keeping our mosquito populations low. Unfortunately, someone introduced an invasive aquatic species (mosquitofish) into the pond that may result in the demise of our native topminnow. If you want to know more about these two fishes follow this link [Arizona Game and Fish - Gila Topminnow](#).

Top in everyone's minds is the fate of all those palm trees that burned when lightning struck one tree near the spring in September. 225 palm trees burned and 40 have been removed. The County continues mitigation of the erosion concerns and evaluates whether more trees will need to be removed. FOAC is looking forward to helping with the restoration effort. We have already earmarked \$8,600 to help support the County's efforts. We'll post information on our Facebook page and website as we have it.

We want to thank our approximately 250 members for contributing to us being able to help support this beautiful Park. Our FY 2023 budget includes \$8,700 for Education and nearly \$15,000 for Park and Ranch House equipment and fire restoration. Some of our education support includes nature study backpacks, Living River of Words (Youth Arts and Science), and a transportation scholarship fund for community and school groups to travel to Agua Caliente Park for natural or cultural history programming. We also support the county's environmental education program by helping to support speaker's fees and program equipment.

The Ranch House is now open with volunteers five days a week (Wednesday – Sunday) and the Gallery will begin to feature work from artists again!

Our Annual Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 31 at 7PM on Zoom. We'd love to have you join us and ask that you email [info@friendsofaguacaliente.org](mailto:info@friendsofaguacaliente.org) to receive the link.

**Pam Rossetter,  
FOAC President**

## The Power of Nature

On the afternoon of September 28th, a severe thunderstorm rolled through Tucson and the Tanque Verde Valley. At about 3:00 PM the crack of a lightning strike could be heard throughout the Agua Caliente neighborhood. Palm trees nearby the spring had been struck. High winds blowing through the long skirts of the palms enabled the fire to spread rapidly along the stream. Thankfully, the fire department responded to the scene quickly and the fire was extinguished before crossing over to the palms alongside Pond One.

According to Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, in addition to 225 palm trees that were burned, 40 other tree species including mesquite, willow, and hackberry were damaged by the fire. The Park Staff removed approximately 40 of the burned palm trees as well as some of the other tree species either because of safety concerns or because they were too burned to recover. Although charred, the fibrous trunks of California Palms are difficult to ignite and almost impossible to flame. Three months after the fire, the crowns of the impacted palms are already showing substantial new growth with birds returning to their familiar habit amongst the fronds.

The fire filled the spring and stream with ash and debris, which has since been cleaned up, and the spring has been surrounded by additional rock for erosion control. Erosion mat and wattles have been placed on the steeper slopes where vegetation will be planted to help stabilize the area. With the support of the



Photo Courtesy of Pima County



December 31, 2022

FOAC, the grassy area along the entry road south of the stream is being replaced with desert landscaping, which will help to reduce water usage. Additionally, a pump system is being installed to allow water from Pond One to supplement the stream flow when the flow from the spring is reduced or not flowing at all. Cleanup and rehabilitation of the area is expected to continue into May.

## 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](mailto:info@friendsofaguacaliente.org).

We do not release our database to anyone.

## Membership

Join Friends of Agua Caliente! Thank you to all of our loyal supporters. If you have not yet renewed, please consider supporting FOAC. We will be mailing out our 2023 requests in October. 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 December 20, 2022, we have 194 supporters for the 2022-2023 year and through your generosity, we have raised \$17,167. This includes 160 renewals (53% renewal rate) and 34 new supporters. FOAC is a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit and donations are tax deductible.

Membership is \$15 for an Individual, \$25 for a Family, \$50 for Organizations and Donations of any amount are 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**

## FOAC Board of Directors

**Pam Rossetter, President**

**Jan Baker, Vice President**

**Jim Knoll, Treasurer (Membership)**

**Joanne Triplett, Secretary**

Tina Baker (Social Media)

Maura Brackett (Fundraising)

Peggy Denny

Judy Gray

Mary Karrels

Jerry Martin

Sylvia Olberding

Shannon Phillips

Joyce Roughton

Sandy Sarah (Co-Founder)

**Board email addresses are:**

FirstLast@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org

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

## Winter Lecture Series

The Agua Caliente Park Winter Lecture Series is open for registration! The lecture series, which is made possible by your contributions to FOAC, will be presented in person in 2023 (with the exception of one lecture noted below). Lectures will take place in the Rose Cottage Education Building on Saturdays throughout January and February from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Online registration is required along with a \$5.00 fee. Participation is limited so don't wait too long to register. For further details and registration information, visit [www.pima.gov/NRPR](http://www.pima.gov/NRPR) and click on the orange "Register Now" button.

### **The Shadow Catchers: 150 years of Arizona Photography with Jim Turner**

January 7, 2023

### **Miners, Cowboys, and Washerwomen with Dr. Craváth**

January 21, 2023

### **LGBTQ+: A History in Arizona with Marshall Shore**

January 28, 2023

### **Caretakers of the Land: A Story of Farming and Community in San Xavier with Jacelle Ramon-Sauberan**

February 4, 2023

### **Set in Stone but Not in Meaning: Southwestern Indian Rock Art with Allen Dart**

February 11, 2023

(This program is presented online via Zoom)

### **Assembling the Southwest: The History and Geography of a Region with Scott Warren**

February 18, 2023

### **Specters of the Past – Ghost Towns That Built**

**Arizona with Jay Mark**

February 25, 2023

## Nature Programs

### Birding Agua Caliente Park

Explore the ponds, mesquite bosque, and surrounding desert of Agua Caliente Park in search of its rich bird life. We expect to see woodpeckers, flycatchers, warblers, vireos, and wintering waterfowl. \$5 fee.

Online registration required.

*Wednesdays, January 4 and 18, February 1 and 15, 8:30-10:00 a.m.*

### Paint Out in the Park

Join the Sonoran Plein Air Painters for a plein air art demonstration by Virginia Belser and Judy Johnson to learn some soft-pastel and oil paint techniques for capturing landscape scenes in the open air. "Meet the Artists" reception and Paint Out in the Parks exhibition opening to follow the demonstration. All ages welcome. Free.

*Saturday, January 14, Paint Out 9:00-11:00 a.m., Demonstration 11:00 a.m., Reception Noon-1:30 p.m.*



Main Pond

Photo courtesy of Susan Knoll

### Historical Tour of Agua Caliente Park

Enjoy a guided walk around the lush grounds and historic buildings of Agua Caliente Park to gain insights into the rich farming and ranching history of the site. Designed for ages 12 and up. \$5 fee. Online registration required.

*Sundays, January 15 and February 5, 10:00-11:00 a.m.*

### Birding For EveryBODY: Agua Caliente Park

Join Marcia OBara for a leisurely birding experience designed for nature lovers with accessibility challenges; wheelchairs, walkers, or other assistive devices are welcome. The pace is slow, distance short, and terrain even. Explore beautiful Agua Caliente



Green Heron

Photo courtesy of Susan Knoll

Park where we hope to see waterfowl, woodpeckers, sparrows, finches, and more. Each registered participant is welcome to bring a support person. This program is offered in partnership with the Tucson Audubon Society. Free. Online registration opens Saturday, December 10; visit <https://tucsonaudubon.org/go-birding/birding-field-trips/> *Thursday, January 19, 8:00-9:30 a.m.* *Friday, February 17, 8:00-9:30 a.m.*

### Stargazing Agua Caliente Park

Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association volunteers provide an introduction to the night sky and set up telescopes for celestial viewing. Feel free to bring your lawn chair. Family-friendly fun. Weather permitting. Free. Online registration required; visit <http://pima-county-nrpr.eventbrite.com>

**Saturday, January 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

### Fledgling Birders: Birding for all Ages and Abilities

Are you new to birding? Need help getting started? Birding is a great way to get outside to explore nature, learn more about wildlife and wildlife behavior, hone your observation skills, reduce stress, and connect with others. Join naturalist Jeff Babson for a casual birding experience to familiarize yourself with birding basics. Loaner binoculars available. All ages encouraged. Free. Online registration required. **Saturday, February 18, 8:00-9:30 a.m.**

[Visit "Public Programs" Now](#)

## Call to Artists

Pima County's Agua Caliente Park Ranch House Art Gallery is accepting applications from artists for consideration to display their work during an approximately five-week exhibition period in 2024. Original artwork must reflect nature, wildlife, landscapes, southwestern themes, or local cultures that are in keeping with the park setting.

To be considered for a session during the January - December 2024 exhibition period, please submit (via postal mail or email) the following by **March 15, 2023**:

1. Cover Sheet with your name or name of organization, contact information including phone number, email address, and mailing address
2. Up to ten photographs representative 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
5. Stamped, self-addressed envelope if you want application materials returned

Email to: [aguacalientepark@pima.gov](mailto:aguacalientepark@pima.gov) (use 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.

For more information, contact:

Julie Strom, Environmental Education Program Coordinator

Phone: 520-724-5375 ext. 2

Email: [aguacalientepark@pima.gov](mailto:aguacalientepark@pima.gov)

**Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.**

P.O. Box 32005

Tucson, AZ 85751-2005

## **Annual Meeting — January 31, 2023**

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of Agua Caliente will be held on Tuesday, January 31, 2023 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](mailto:info@friendsofaguacaliente.org).

We will review funding, other business and vote on the current Nominations Slate for continuing Directors as well as Vice President and Treasurer.