

WELLSPRING NEWS

Winter 2024

Published by the Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

Tucson, Arizona

Annual Meeting January 27, 2024
2 p.m. in the Rose Cottage Education Building

From the President

Dear Friends of Agua Caliente Park,

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Pete Filiatrault, one of the co-founders and the first president of Friends of Agua Caliente Park (FOAC). Pete's family owned the property from 1951-1959, Pete lived there from 7th grade through High School when he commuted all the way to Tucson High. In 1993, Pete and some friends and neighbors learned that County plans for a new park at Agua Caliente included tearing down many of the historic buildings. As a result, FOAC was created to advocate for preservation of the buildings, and the group worked closely with the County to earmark funds for a 1997 bond to help preserve historic buildings and other landscape features at the park. In 2009, FOAC helped get the park on the National Register of Historic Places. For years, Pete wrote a series for our newsletter called "From the Bunkhouse". We feature one of the articles about a fire started by a caretaker in 1951. Newsletter archives are available on our website if you are interested in more musings From the Bunkhouse.

New Desert Garden

Speaking of fires, you may have noticed a lot of activity in the front of the park where palms near the spring burned in September 2022 after being hit by a lightning strike. This garden is going to be lovely, with native and low water use plants that will add interest for butterflies and other pollinators as well. If you'd like to see the design including plant selections, please visit our website <https://friendsofaguacaliente.org>.

The county expects to complete installation of this new garden by the end of January. Cost for restoration and installation of this new garden space is estimated to be around \$55,000, with about \$13,000 covered by insurance. The FOAC Board voted to help cover the outstanding \$42,000 by committing \$20,000 and working to obtain matching funds. To date, we have received approximately \$16,000.00 in matching funds! Thank you for your incredible generosity and commitment to keeping this amazing park so beautiful for both humans and wildlife.

Wildlife

In 2021 FOAC partnered with Sky Island Alliance for their Fotofauna project. This project uses data from wildlife cameras all around Tucson and Southern Arizona to document presence of wildlife and to determine their range and frequency of occurrence. At our park we see both mule deer and Coues white tailed deer, raccoons (see photo),

From the Bunkhouse: Fire at the Ranch by Pete Filiatrault

We arrived at the Agua Caliente Ranch on August 25, 1951 with all our belongings. It took some time to get everything settled in the house. My folk's bedroom was at what now is the East end of the Art Gallery. My sister's room was at the West end of what is now the Art Gallery. There was a bathroom and sitting room between the two bedrooms. My brother and I slept in the old adobe building, just east of the main house. It was built sometime in the late 1870's or early



The Ranch House

Photo courtesy of Susan Knoll

1880's. You can see the structure in some of the pictures in the signs in front of the house or in the house itself. We enjoyed the end of the monsoons and sat every evening on the porch on the lake side of what is now the Audubon store. We listened to the creatures of the night, particularly the bull frogs. We got where we could identify the various different ones by their calls. We gave them names, such as Chicago, New York, Boston etc. We were all enrolled in school. I went to the Tanque Verde School, which had just been enlarged to four rooms, instead of two. We had around 40 to 45 students in grades one through eight. I was in grade seven. The Tanque Verde School was swallowed up by what is now known as the Lou Sorenson Center. In mid-October, my parents flew back to Fond du Lac to tie up loose ends. One night, my brother & sisters were all out doing things. I stayed at the house with Ruth, who had been my invalid Aunt's house keeper. When my Aunt died, my parents felt they owed Ruth a job, as she had taken care of my Aunt for many years, so they brought her with us to Tucson. Ruth & I left about 6:00 pm to drive to Swan Drugs which was located where Ambassador Diamond Jewelers now is, at the corner of Speedway & Swan. The only things east of Swan were the Redwood Gay 90's Restaurant & the Original Casa Molina's. On our way home, less than one hour later, we were traveling North on Soldiers Trail. When we reached what is now the intersection of Ft. Lowell & Soldiers Trail, we could see smoke coming up from the Ranch. We hurried home and found that the old adobe building, where my brother and I lived was on fire. There were many neighbors there, fighting the fire with a fire hose that we had on the property. The caretaker that my Dad had hired got a little drunk and went into our room to "have a little fun" with his wife and dropped a cigarette. By the time the neighbors arrived, they found him with a garden hose trying to put out the fire in the adobe house, whose roof had already caved in. Thanks to the quick thinking of our neighbors, they got the fire hose on the main house and kept it from burning to the ground. In those days, neighbors really helped each other. If it had not been for them, we would have lost everything. As it was, my brother and I lost everything we had except the clothes we were wearing. We lost all our childhood mementos. But we built the addition that is now the caretaker's quarters, at the east end of the house and my folks took one room and my brother & I the other. This was our introduction to Tucson and the welcome given to strangers by your neighbors. While the loss of our little Adobe house was sad, the friends we made of the neighbors who came to help was priceless.

"The Ghost of the Agua Caliente Ranch"

Friends of Agua Caliente

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM!




\$1000 to \$5000 scholarship for
graduating high school seniors entering
college, trade or vocational school!

**APPLICATION DEADLINE
MARCH 15, 2024**

for more details on application
procedures and documents required
please contact us at

SCHOLARSHIP@FRIENDSOFAGUACALIENTE.ORG

•••••

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 Pima County cannot normally purchase is tremendous and we owe it all to you.

As of December 20, 2023, we have 186 supporters for the 2023-2024 year and through your generosity, have raised \$16,498. This includes 152 renewals (53% renewal rate) and 32 new supporters. FOAC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation 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., P.O. Box 32005, Tucson, AZ 85751-2005. You can also securely support FOAC with PayPal or Credit Card from our website.

**Jim Knoll,
Membership**

President's Letter, cont. (from page1)

coyotes, a coatimundi, foxes, javelina, and a lot of amazing birds. One of our photos made it into the 2023 Highlights from Sky Island Alliance. Check out this video link [SIA - Fotofauna summary 2023](#) and watch for the Great Blue Heron taking off!

Bat Research

Many Tucson residents are familiar with the nightly draining of hummingbird feeders that occurs every fall (roughly August through October) by migrating nectar feeding bats. Last summer Dr. Ted Flemming, along with Arizona Game and Fish, conducted some research on foraging behavior of the Lesser Long Nosed Bat as they gear up for migration back to Mexico. The research team captured 46 bats (8 adults and 38 juveniles and yearlings) for the purpose of radio tagging them to see how far they would forage every night. They were also interested to see how long it took the bats to find a new nectar resource so, new feeders and cameras were set up at Agua Caliente Park as well as Bear Canyon Trail, and Tohono Chul. Only the feeders at Agua Caliente Park were found by bats. The researchers felt this may be because these feeders were closer to their roosting areas in the Catalina and Rincon mountains. These bats can travel up to 20-30 miles foraging on hummingbird feeders during an evening. Here's a video about the project produced by Arizona Bats [AZGFD Foraging Behavior of Bats](#).

The entire board wants to wish you all a Happy New Year and thank you all for your generous support. We hope to see many of you at our Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 27, at 2:00p.m. in the Rose Cottage.

Pam Rossetter, FOAC President



Raccoons scouting at the park in October

Native Peoples, Native Voices

2024 Winter Speaker Series

The Agua Caliente Park Winter Lecture Series, which is made possible by your contributions to FOAC, is open for registration! Lectures will take place in the Rose Cottage Education Building on Saturdays throughout January, February and March (see program times below).

FOAC members may attend free of charge. Send an email to Julie Strom at julie.strom@pima.gov to reserve a spot. Online registration is required along with a \$5.00 fee for non-members. For further details and non-member registration information, visit <https://bit.ly/NRPRregistration>.

Participation is limited so don't wait!

Yoeme Cultural History

Saturday, January 6 • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Presenter: Felipe Molina, Yoeme Singer / Author / Native Cultural Preservationist

Yoeme Traditional Arts Demonstrations and Workshop

Saturday, January 13 • 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Join acclaimed Yoeme woodcarver Louis Valenzuela along with jewelry maker Andres Flores, and paper flower artist Tina Cowboy for an afternoon of stories and traditional art demonstrations. Participants will have an opportunity to try their hands at sculpting, beading, and shaping paper to create their own Yoeme-inspired art to take home. Demonstrations are free; donations gratefully accepted to defray materials cost.

Metalsmith Matriarchs:

Makers, Memory, and Reciprocity

Saturday, January 20 • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Presenter: Nanibaa Beck, 2nd generation Diné jeweler



Rose Cottage

Photo courtesy of Susan Knoll

More than Pocahontas and Squaws: Indigenous Women Coming into Visibility

Saturday, February 3 • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Presenter: Laura Tohe, Navajo Nation Poet Laureate, Academy of American Poetry Fellow, and the 2019 American Indian Festival of Writers Award

Preserving Language Through Poetry with Ofelia Zepeda

Saturday, February 17 • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Presenter: Ofelia Zepeda, Tohono O'odham poet, linguist, author, Regents' Professor, and MacArthur Fellowship recipient

Building Partnerships for Agricultural Sustainability

Saturday, February 24 • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Presenter: Dr. Andrea Carter, member of the Powhatan Renape Nation and Agriculture Outreach & Education Manager for Native Seed Search

Growing the Desert:

The History and Culture of the Tohono O'odham

Saturday, March 2 • 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Presenter: Dr. Jacelle Ramon-Sauberan, Member of the Wa:k O'odham, 2023 Graduate of the University of Arizona American Indian Studies PhD Program

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 3 and 17, February 7 and 21, 8:30-10:00 a.m.

[Visit “Public Programs” Now](#)

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 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.

*January 9, January 20, and February 13
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.*

Online registration opens on month before program; visit <https://tucsonaudubon.org/go-birding/birding-field-trips/> For more information, email lsafford@tucsonaudubon.org, eeducation@pima.gov or call 520-724-5375

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; <https://bit.ly/ticketsEE>

*Saturday, January 13
6:30-8:30 p.m.*

Birding 101: 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.

*Saturdays, January 27 and February 3
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.*

[Visit “Public Programs” Now](#)



Vermillion Flycatcher Photo courtesy of Pima County NRPR

FOAC Board of Directors

Pam Rossetter, President
Jerry Martin, Vice President
Peggy Denny, Treasurer
Joanne Triplett, Secretary

Janet Baker
Tina Baker (Social Media)
Maura Brackett (Fundraising)
Judy Gray
Mary Karrels
Jim Knoll (Membership)
Sylvia Olberding (Scholarships)
Joyce Roughton
Sandy Sarah (Co-Founder)

Board email addresses are:
FirstLast@FriendsOfAguaCaliente.Org

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

P.O. Box 32005

Tucson, AZ 85751-2005

Annual Meeting — January 27, 2024

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of Agua Caliente will be held on Saturday, January 27, 2024 at 2 p.m. The meeting will take place in person in the Rose Cottage Education Building at Roy P. Drachman Agua Caliente Park.

Please RSVP at: info@friendsofaguacaliente.org.

We will review funding, other business and vote on the current nominations for new and continuing Directors. Hope to see you there!

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.

To find us on Facebook, search “Friends of Agua Caliente Tucson” within Facebook or scan this QR code.

