

WELLSPRING NEWS

Winter 2026

Published by the Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

Tucson, Arizona

Annual Meeting January 26, 2026

6:00 p.m. in the Rose Cottage Education Building

From the President

Dear Friends of Agua Caliente Park,

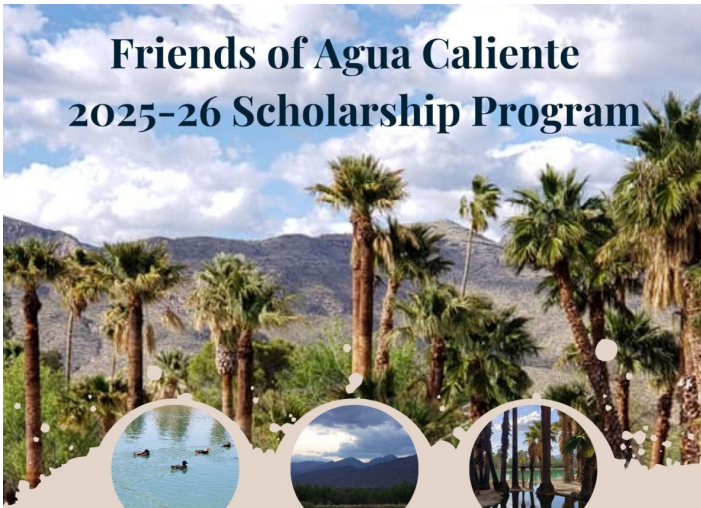
Happy New Year! Isn't it glorious having the winter rains visiting us this year? The park has had a very special visitor this winter. A rare Northern Saw-whet Owl has been hanging out for several weeks in one of the Eucalyptus trees by the bridge to the back ponds. It's clearly finding enough food (mice) and there has been a constant stream of birders delighted to see and photograph it.

The week before Thanksgiving we held a fun Member Appreciation Event and dedication of the Desert Garden where we had great food, got to talk to our members and neighbors, heard the amazing Tanque Verde Jazz Band, and watched folks win fantastic door prizes. The band played about an hour before lightning, thunder, and rain came. Thankfully the art gallery was open, and we could huddle under the Ranch House covered porches. It was cozy and fabulous to see so many people turn out even with the weather (or maybe because of the weather).

At the event, I shared this short chronology of humans messing with the spring that feeds the ponds. Initially there were two springs, a hot spring and a cold spring that produced about 500 gallons per minute (gpm) of water flow. In the 1930s it was decided to blast the subsurface to increase flow. This collapsed the local subsurface structure causing flow to decrease to between 150 and 300 gpm. Somehow, in the 1960s folks decided to blast again, reducing flow to about 100-125 gpm. The drought in the 1990s caused water flow to decrease further and the ponds began to shrink. In 2004, the county drilled a well, which pumps water to the ponds. This year, spring flow has been very low and the pump has been running quite a bit to supplement the pond water.

We love to support education! We'll be supporting SARSEF again (Tucson's regional science and engineering fair). We'll also be in our third year offering Scholarship opportunities for graduating High School seniors. Let us know if you'd like to be a part of the judging teams. It's quite fulfilling and exciting to see how creative Tucson's High School kids are!

Friends of Agua Caliente 2025-26 Scholarship Program



**Application Deadline
Friday, March 20, 2026**

\$1000 to \$10,000 scholarship for
graduating high school seniors entering
college, trade, or vocational school

For more details and application materials 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 for programs and items Pima County cannot normally purchase is tremendous and we owe it all to you.

As of December 24, 2025, we have 239 supporters for the 2025-2026 year and through your generosity, have raised \$27,845. This includes 226 renewals and 13 new supporters. FOAC is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation and your donation may be 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

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

Winter Speaker Series Desert Futures: Ecological Paths Forward Inspired by Footprints Past

Join us at the Park for the Pima County Conservation Lands & Resources Winter Lecture Series. This seasons' programs are funded by the Friends of Agua Caliente. Donations are appreciated, registration is suggested, and walk-ins are welcome when space permits. Lectures take place in the Rose Cottage Education Building on Saturdays in January, February, and March.

The Arizona Trail – A Natural and Cultural History of the Grand Canyon State

When: Saturday, January 10 • 11:00 - 12:30 p.m.
Presenter: Matt Nelson, Director of the Arizona Trail Association .

Arizona Water Use and Farming Cultures, Prehistory to the Present

When: Saturday, January 17 • 11:00 - 12:30 p.m.
Presenter: Jim Turner, Historian and Author.

Discovering Nature's Clues

When: Saturday, February 21 • 11:00 - 12:30 p.m.
Presenter: Pinau Merlin, author, lecturer, naturalist.

Your Backyard Is Changing; Help Document Nature's New Timeline

When: Saturday, March 28 • 11:00 - 12:30 p.m.
Presenter: Theresa M. Crimmins, PhD, Director, USA National Phenology Network and Associate Professor, School of Natural Resources and the Environment, University of Arizona.

At the time of publication, a fifth lecture to be scheduled was pending confirmation. For further details and online registration information, visit <https://explore.pima.gov> or follow us on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofaguacaliente> where we post all the environmental education programs.

President's Letter, cont. (from page1)

We're helping fund another interesting speaker series in the Rose Cottage this year. For younger kids, we'll continue to support school programs conducted at the Park with funds for teacher training, and children's programs.

Thank you for all you do to support the park, nature, and education.

Please join us at our annual meeting on January 26 at 6:00 PM in the Rose Cottage.

Pam Rossetter, President



Desert Garden Dedication Sign

Nature Programs at the Park

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 more.

Dates: Wednesday, January 21, February 4, and 18

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Cost: Free* Online registration recommended <https://explore.pima.gov>. Drop-ins welcome when space permits.

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 a Pima County naturalist for a casual birding experience to familiarize yourself with birding basics. Loaner binoculars available. All ages encouraged.

Dates: Thursday, January 22 and Tuesday, February 24

Times: 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Cost: Free* Online registration required <https://explore.pima.gov>.

Birding for EveryBODY

This outing is designed to be accessible and inclusive. 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. This program is offered in partnership with the Tucson Bird Alliance.

Dates: Friday, January 23 and February 13

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Cost: Free. Online registration required at <https://tucsonbirds.org/field-trips/>.

Stargazing

Join us to explore the wonder and unfold the mysteries of the cosmos. Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association volunteers provide an introduction to the night sky and set up telescopes for celestial viewing. Weather permitting – notice of cancellation emailed by 4:30 p.m. on event day.

Date: Friday, February 6

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Cost: Free. Online registration required <https://explore.pima.gov>.

*Now free thanks to generous support from FOAC

Friends of Agua Caliente, Inc.

P.O. Box 32005

Tucson, AZ 85751-2005

Annual Meeting — January 26, 2026

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of Agua Caliente will be held on Monday, January 26, 2026 at 6:00 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 Officers and Directors. Hope to see you there!

Link to Nominations Slate:

<https://friendsofaguacaliente.org/nominations-to-the-friends-of-agua-caliente-board-of-directors/>

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.

