

The Cave Creek Museum

From horse soldiers to resort developments, the desert foothills have been a spectacle of historic and prehistoric dimensions.

Set in the shadow of looming Black Mountain, the Cave Creek Museum offers a view to the past.

Thousands of years ago, Hohokam farmers dug 2,000 miles of irrigation canals to water their crops. Tools, pottery, jewelry, and other artifacts in the Museum collection give insight into these productive, innovative people.

In the late 1800s, people returned again to farm, ranch and prospect for gold, silver, copper, jasper and other mineral riches. See the implements, home goods and special exhibits describing the lives and experiences of our most recent predecessors.

The first church of Cave Creek and the last tubercular cabin in the state, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, are among the outside exhibits. An impressive ten-stamp ore crushing mill, reconstructed and revitalized to its original use, is now operational and runs on specific dates during the year.

Cave Creek Museum Docents share anecdotes and additional information to enrich the extensive exhibits and your experience ---or enjoy the Museum on your own.

The spectacular history of the Desert Foothills is yours to see and enjoy at the Cave Creek Museum.

Museum hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.; early opening on Fridays at 10:00 a.m. Closed holidays.
Admission: \$10 adults; \$8 super adults and students.
Children under 12 admitted free.

The Museum is open for the season from
October to May.

For more information: Call (480)-488-2764 or
visit www.cavecreekmuseum.org

Cave Creek Museum

Annual Report

2023—2024



Koshare, Contemporary Clay

**6140 East Skyline Drive
P.O. Box 1
Cave Creek, Arizona 85327-0001**

Phone: 480-488-2764

Email: info@cavecreekmuseum.com

Website: cavecreekmuseum.org

***The Cave Creek Museum is a 501 (c) (3) organization
Federal Identification: 94-2404270***

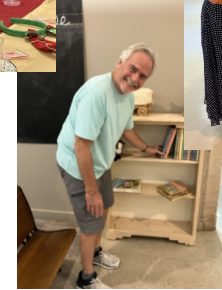


Mission Statement of the Cave Creek Museum

The Mission of the Cave Creek Museum is to preserve the artifacts of the prehistory, history, culture and legacy of the Cave Creek Mining District and the Cave Creek/Carefree foothills area through education, research, and interpretative exhibits.

Annual Report Editing and Layout: Stephanie Bradley

*Cover Photo: This charming koshare, created by artist **Randy Chitto**, is a sacred Pueblo clown who holds the important job of teaching and protecting proper social conduct. At ceremonies, he may call out to members and, using sarcasm, chastise them for some unacceptable behavior.*



Memories



GRANTORS

- * American Society for the Preservation of U.S. History
- * Arizona Historical Society
- * Arizona Commission for the Arts
- * Desert Mountain Desperados
- * Four Peaks Questers
- * Griffith Foundation
- * Kiwanis Club of Carefree
- * Town of Cave Creek
- * Johnson Historical Museum of the Southwest



AFFILIATIONS

- * American Association of Museums
- * American Association of State and Local History
- * Central Arizona Museum Association
- * Carefree/Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce
- * Museum Association of Arizona

WEB-BASED COLLABORATIONS

Arizona State Library and Archives: Arizona Memory Project

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Remembering Dear Friends Who Have Left Us

In Memoriam...

- ♦ **Mary Bonnell**, passed away July 6, 2023 at age 97.
- ♦ **Dee Dee Woods**, Hollywood choreographer, passed away on April 26, 2023, at the age of 95.
- ♦ **Sharron Cooper**, volunteer and great friend of the museum. September 29, 2023.
- ♦ **Ann Engdahl**, who passed away in May, and **Herb Engdahl**, who passed away in September.
- ♦ **Connie Allred**, passed away February 8, 2024

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2023-2024

PRESIDENT

Darlene Southern

VICE PRESIDENT

Tammy Causey

TREASURER

David Smith

RECORDING SECRETARY

Keith Otsuka

BOARD MEMBERS

Buck Columna

Marcia D'Alessandro

Steve Greenberg

Brandon Hamilton

Chris Kempster

STAFF

Evelyn Johnson, Executive Director

Christine Perry, Museum Administrative Assistant

VOLUNTEERS

DEBBIE CLEMENT

We have about 90 volunteers this year, including docents, and added about a half dozen active people since our opening in the fall. Additionally, we have a few high school students and a new “junior volunteer” who is a Girl Scout. Starting last summer and before season opening, we implemented a new interactive website calendar, Team Up, to centralize all museum activities and volunteer opportunities. In December we began a new tradition with a Christmas party for all volunteers and docents to express our appreciation for all they do.

Volunteers facilitated nine Cave Creek Museum Presents programs, monthly Arizona Gold Mine Experiences, 14 elementary school tours and eight Kiwanis Family Fun Days. Our two huge fundraisers were completely organized by volunteers who choreographed menus, silent auctions, entertainment and set up for both events that each hosted hundreds of guests.

Volunteers also stepped up and out of the museum site to participate in other events to help connect us with our community family. We were represented at The Scully Foundation Open House, Taste of Cave Creek, a Sears Kay Hike with local archaeologist Scott Wood, the Cave Creek Rodeo Parade and an Easter Egg Hunt to benefit AERO, one of our museum partners. We were asked to participate in the Terraviva Expo to bring awareness of the museum to current and new residents of that community. We were the proud hosts of a new event in April, **The Stroll Block Party** at Cave Creek Museum, sponsored by the local *Stroll* magazine.



PUBLICITY (MEDIA RELATIONS) AND MARKETING REPORT

FRAN BOOTH, ABC, BOOTH COMMUNICATIONS

Cave Creek Museum had an excellent year of coverage during 2023 through early 2024, dominating print and online media outlets weekly and monthly. In addition, most weeks the museum was in the local news multiple times...a record! In addition, frequently, the museum was the top feature story.

Tourism publications also featured Cave Creek Museum and its Arizona Gold Mining Experience. And the museum was featured on television news, further expanding its visibility in communities statewide.

The year started with a focus on the new board, then planning various ways to promote the museum by "breaking down" museum exhibits and history into small stories to build interest in the museum and to keep interest high throughout the summer months. Working closely with museum staff and volunteers, Booth created new avenues to promote the many nooks and crannies within the museum, its various exhibits and its volunteers. Booth continued to take quality photographs of museum activities to help garner an enhanced inventory for future events.

Booth worked closely with the Arizona Gold Mining Experience (AZGME) Dream Team and others to increase traffic to the twice-monthly demonstrations. AZGME was promoted as a whole entity but more times with a focus on various aspects of its history and its experts to generate maximum interest in this exhibit. The AZGME crowds grew in size and popularity and a mine tour was added, which brought focused interest on the overall gold mining experience. The demonstrations were full much of the year and a majority of the workshops and special events sold out.

Working closely with the museum, Booth placed some 300 stories (645 stories to date) in Arizona newspapers, social media sites, magazines and television outlets. The value of the marketing and media outreach efforts resulted in thousands of dollars worth of publicity and funds for the museum.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2024-2025

Income:

Admission	\$39,000.00
Donations	\$123,684.00
Fundraisers	\$46,350.00
Grants/Foundations	\$112,500.00
Membership	\$20,000.00
Museum Store	\$20,400.00
Interest Income	\$4,500.00
Restricted Income	\$80,000.00
Total Income	\$446,434.00

Expense:

Administrative	\$49,825.00
Marketing & PR	\$18,350.00
Education	\$15,000.00
Collections	\$7,875.00
Exhibits	\$7,750.00
Facilities	\$181,150.00
Fundraisers	\$15,000.00
Grants	\$53,700.00
Hospitality	\$3,600.00
Membership	\$3,650.00
Museum Store	\$11,500.00
Newsletters	\$600.00
Payroll	\$142,333.00
Professional Development	\$2,400.00
Utilities	\$6,000.00
Technology Improvement	\$2,000.00
Volunteer	\$1,300.00
Total Expense	\$522,033.00
Net Deficit	(\$75,599.00)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DARLENE SOUTHERN

Dear Membership:

It has been an honor to serve on the Cave Creek Museum's Board of Directors for the past three years. For two years, as president, I had the pleasure of working with a board of dynamic individuals who bring

breadth of vision and ambitious goals to the table and follow up with the energy and passion to pursue those goals. This board continues to amaze me with its dedication to the museum's best interests. I am excited to watch the board continue to pursue the objectives of the museum's strategic plan.

During my time on the board — and in the preceding 10 years as a volunteer — I have served side-by-side with committed and enthusiastic volunteers, and it's awesome to watch these volunteers step up and fulfill the many roles and responsibilities that they are called to. It's amazing how quickly an "interest" becomes a passion once you sign up at the Cave Creek Museum. Our volunteers are truly invested in seeing that members, guests, and our community understand and enjoy the treasure that is our small institution.

I value the friendships I have made through the museum. When we describe ourselves as a "family," we truly mean it. The shared affection and devotion for the museum has knit us together in a happy, cooperative, supportive group.

Thank you to **Evelyn Johnson**, who serves the museum with love and devotion as its executive director. All gratitude to **Chris Kempster** and **Tammy Causey**, my fellow board members who are also stepping down, and many thanks to **Marcia D'Alessandro**, **Buck Columna**, **Keith Otsuka**, **David Smith**, and **Steve Greenberg**, who will continue to guide the museum toward an amazing future. Thank you to **Tamsin Wolff**, **Pat O'Brien**, **Wendy Whitman**, and **David Griffith**, who will be the next leadership to work toward fulfillment of our strategic plan. I am sorry I am not here to personally thank you all, or to welcome aboard our new directors, but I am comfortable that the new board members will bring to the table the same passion and vision for the museum's future as those departing.

With the greatest affection and appreciation for the museum, our volunteers, membership, and community, I sign for the final time:

Darlene Southern
President

Cave Creek Museum Board of Directors

★January saw us with our own Antique Appraisal Fair with **Sean Morton** to ferret out local antique discoveries from attics around the area.

Also in January we had our own geologist, **Stephanie Bradley** talk on the geology of Black Mountain, a program so in demand we scheduled a second performance.



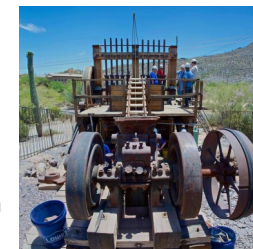
★February we presented a program on the Archaeology of the Tonto Forest with **Scott Wood**. This vast area was colonized over a thousand years ago.



★In March, **Steve Hoza** gave us a history of the POW camps from WWII that were located at the base of Papago Buttes and relatively unknown.

★And as a second program in March, **Stephanie Bradley** gave another of her sold out presentations of the geology of Black Mountain and still had visitors wanting more.

★April, we learned about the history of Spur Cross Ranch with **Kraig Nelson** and how it became a conservation area due to a grassroots movement.



Twice a month on the second and fourth Saturdays we offered our **Arizona Gold Mining Experience (AZGME)**. **Gold Fever Adventure**, which is always sold out, is a collaboration with **Rackensack Canyon Tours** in which they support our mission by donating the proceeds to the Cave Creek Museum. The total revenue from our **Cave Creek Museum Presents programs** came in at \$4,030.00 and the revenue from the **AZGME** was \$6,150. **Gold Fever Adventure** grossed \$10,440.00

	A	B	C	D	E
1	PROGRAM/DATE	MEMBER TICKETS	NON-MEMBER TICKETS	TOTAL	REVENUE
2	WHO SHOT BILLY GRAHAM 10/14/2023	13	11	24	\$ 110.00
3	HAUNTED HISTORY 11/17/2023	N/A	N/A	26	\$ 1,170.00
4	STORY OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER 11/18/2023	4	7	11	\$ 70.00
5	200 AMAZING FACTS ABOUT AZ 12/9/2023	18	23	41	\$ 230.00
6	BLACK MOUNTAIN: BLACK & WHITE 1/17/2024	25	28	53	\$ 280.00
7	ANTIQUE APPRAISAL 1/20/2024	N/A	N/A	51	\$ 1,020.00
8	TONTO FOREST 2/3/2024	23	28	51	\$ 280.00
9	GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR 3/2/2024	18	35	53	\$ 370.00
10	BLACK MOUNTAIN: BLACK & WHITE-REPRISE 3/23/2024	19	30	49	\$ 300.00
11	HISTORY OF SPUR CROSS 4/13/2024	26	28	54	\$ 290.00
12	TOTALS	146	190	413	\$ 4,120.00
13					
14					

well done to travel with her husband.

Those computer big keys are now filled by **Joelle Paleologou**, who refers to herself as a Canadian snow fledgling. She and her husband have had a home in Carefree in 2018 with future retirement and assumption of full snowbird status in view.

Joelle is a design aficionado, with formal and informal training in many areas of design. For the last 10 years she has served as both Co-Chair and Creative Director for her local hospital's annual fundraising gala. With a strong team of equally creative individuals, she produced multiple award-winning events several years in a row.

Last summer, she retired. Cave Creek has captured her heart and curiosity, so she could not resist the opportunity to volunteer her time and talents to the museum as layout editor for the *Nuggets*.

Welcome, Joelle! Happy Trails, Nina!

PROGRAMS: CCM PRESENTS

(statistics as of March 30, 2024, provided by **Mollie Tufts**. With nine of the ten programs for this year completed, total attendance was 389 for a revenue of \$3,830. Attendance was approximately 43% Museum members and 57% non-Museum members.)

CHRISTINE PERRY

The 2023-2024 season provided our visitors with a wide variety of programs. All but one were at capacity and sold out.

★ In October, **Kraig Nelson** shared Cave Creek's wild and wooly history and delved into the dark and mysterious past of one of the Town's Founding Fathers.



★ November, saw us delving into the paranormal with our local ghost hunting team for a night of local Historical Hauntings and Paranormal Happenings.

In addition, in November we celebrated our Veterans with **Matthew Scott's** presentation on the history of the tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

★ December, author **Roger Naylor** shared facts and commentary from his newest book "Awesome Arizona: 200 Amazing Facts about the Grand Canyon State", and signed books to start the holiday shopping spree.,

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

EVELYN JOHNSON



This year brought more visitors to the Museum than last year with whom we shared the amazing adventures that life brought to our early settlers. While we have increased the number of visitors, we have also increased our exposure in many other areas such as social media, program attendees, marketing, and events such as Arizona Gold Mining Experience and Gold Fever. We have hosted special presentations and opportunities to get to know your neighbors. We partner with Cave Creek Unified School District as an organization where students can learn valuable life skills, have fun, and satisfy student volunteer requirements.

We have connected with equine organizations, AERO and Bray, to educate visitors and participants on the importance of animals in the mining industry, capture the cuteness factor of these kind animals, and selfishly enjoy their gentleness.

Most of the event planning for the coming season is done in the summer when we are closed to the public. At the same time, exhibits are being reset for the coming season, so our quiet little museum is NOT quiet at all. Come join the managed chaos and put your personal touch on exhibits and help make decisions on what comes to our public next season.

We could not do what we do without the help of all our volunteers, members, and guests. Each year we add more programs, events and happenings so you have even more opportunities to learn about the past, enjoy the present, influence the future of the Museum and our community.

Veterans Memory Garden has paved the way for changes to the front of our building and grounds. As plans come together for this incredible space honoring veterans, which will be represented in art, first person spoken words, and tributes to loved ones, we invite you to be engaged in each stage by visiting the gardens in person. Follow the progress on our website and social media and support the project financially with donations and through fundraising events. If you are interested in serving on the committee, please contact me.

Christine Perry joined the Museum as administrative assistant on January 15, 2024. While she loves history, she is new to the museum world. Christine is enjoying learning and working with our volunteers.

ADMISSIONS REPORT

MOLLY TUFTS

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1		CULTURE PASS 18+	CULTURE PASS <18	ROAM	GUEST PASS	ADULT	STUDENT	VETERAN	SUPER-SENIOR	MEMBER	TOTAL	REVENUE
2	MONTH											
3	OCTOBER	70	10		11	100	7	5	144	3	350	\$ 2,228.00
4	NOVEMBER	67	6		3	134	21	3	169	7	410	\$ 2,842.00
5	DECEMBER	55	8	4	5	101	27	11	116	6	333	\$ 2,242.00
6	JANUARY	70	2		5	125	10	12	238	2	464	\$ 3,323.60
7	FEBRUARY	109	4	6	3	109	6	12	296	2	547	\$ 3,602.00
8	MARCH	101	5	12	12	164	20	13	235	8	570	\$ 3,784.00
9	APRIL										0	
10	MAY										0	
11		472	35	22	39	733	91	56	1198	28	2674	\$18,021.60

ARCHAEOLOGY REPORT

GWEN HARWOOD



The exhibit drawers in the Archaeology Wing were redone. The artifacts and descriptive material from the former display were examined and decisions were made to revise the display. The purpose of the revision was to illustrate the context of the artifacts in the Hohokam Culture of the Phoenix Basin. The Archaeology Wing revised exhibit has been well received by our visitors.

This summer, the Dunn Pottery Collection that is on display in the Archaeology Wing should be accessioned and catalogued in Past Perfect Software. Comments from visitors with educated experience in archaeology have been favorable on our Archaeological Collection.



NEWSLETTER AND OTHER EDITORIAL

STEPHANIE BRADLEY AND NINA SPITZER

The *Nuggets* newsletter, both digital and print, continues to be a lively source of information, calendars, and history for readers.

The digital version has taken the Museum's method of communication to a new level where readers have convenient access to Museum news, upcoming events, and articles on any device, with easy links to additional information. Each month 1,982 people receive both the Save the Date publication and the Museum's e-newsletter version of *Nuggets*. This year each monthly header image highlighted artwork by Sonoran Arts League artists in celebration of the Museum's "Art Across the Foothills" exhibit. The MailChimp fee for the Museum's season totaled \$410.54. (\$41.54 per month). Paper copies of the newsletter are available at the Museum to visitors and members.

In addition to sharing information about monthly events, the newsletters also included excellent feature articles, Museum historian Kraig Nelson's wonderful look into history, monthly greetings from our president and executive director, shout-outs about amazing volunteers, and news from the Museum Store. Thanks to all our Editorial contributors to the newsletter include **Fran Booth, Buck Columna, Evelyn Johnson, Kraig Nelson, Darlene Southern, and Stephanie Bradley.**

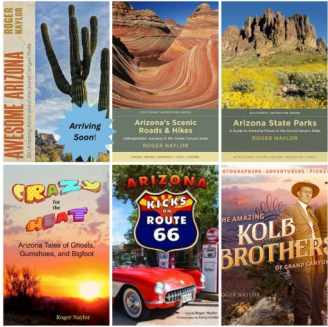
Additionally, Stephanie has written/formatted the Gallery Guide, this Annual Report, and other miscellaneous assignments.

Working with Museum staff and volunteers continues to bring us great pleasure, and serving our Museum is a source of great pride.



CHANGING OF THE COMPUTERS

Since 2021, the museum has had the benefit of the skill of **Nina Spitzer** as its digital designer. Nina's talent and diligence have moved the *Nuggets* from expensive print/mail format to digital. Her tenacity and analytics brought her success wrestling with Mail Chimp and other challenges that only computers can bring. Nina is retiring from a job



Over the year we increased the array of books the Store offers, as well as adding new products, notably a gold-panning kit, “dynamite sticks” and other items that are excellent upsales for the Museum’s largest event, The ARIZONA GOLD MINING EXPERIENCE.

Although the Museum saw record visitors, we saw a flat-line of sales in the Store. It is believed to reflect current economic con-

ditions — guests are more cautious in their discretionary spending than they were in 2021-2022 and 2022-2023.

The Store did start charging a 3% “convenience charge” for guests using credit cards. This has been accepted without a lot of comment on the side of our visitors and helped in offsetting the burden of credit card processing fees.

Over the 2023-2024 Season, **Stacy Holland** has stepped into the Store co-manager role, which has been incredibly helpful. She is familiar with systems and inventory, so now docents have multiple sources for assistance and the Museum has taken an essential step forward in ensuring a redundancy in personnel.

As ever, deepest appreciation to all the volunteers that make the Museum Store an income producing arm of the Museum. There is not an area at the Museum that you dedicated folks do not touch!



BUILDING AND GROUNDS

EVELYN JOHNSON

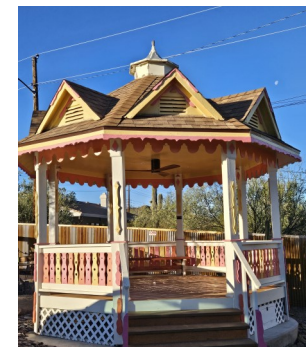
We started out the season with a clear view of the front door, a new view to many since trees near the front of our building obscured the entrance. The Veterans Memory Garden will continue to change the entrance to the Museum for years to come as construction and modifications take place. Be sure to visit often.

We no longer need to place a ‘hot pad’ on the front door handle as we have a covered entrance that protects the sun from heating up the metal door handle to cooking temperatures. I’m sure we could have fried an egg on the handle during the summer months. Once construction is finished, we will have beautiful sconces and a hanging light at the entrance to illuminate the steps and covered areas for evening events and security.

The Gazebo got a new roof just in time for the Miners’ Dinner. The Gazebo has been the most loved collection item for the past two years with a new floor, lights, and a fan, and now a new roof. The Gazebo should be set for another lifetime with regular maintenance.

Access to the upper parking lot is now a whole lot safer and easier thanks to a new stairway built by Paul Hauelsen and Mark Kelbley

The Dream Team continues to provide the care and trimming of the plants and grounds. Thank you.



COLLECTIONS

GWEN HARWOOD

The extensive Geoffrey Platts Collection was assessed and placed in Storage. Mining artifacts continue to be donated to the museum. Storage for Collections continues to be a problem. Supplies for accessioning and packing of items need to be ordered. There is a backlog of artifacts from the previous displays in the Pioneer Wing that need to be processed to determine which items are appropriate to be returned to Collection storage.

We have three new volunteers who have committed to Collections. Training the volunteers on Past Perfect Software is going well and they will soon help with the records that need to be catalogued. Accession procedure training is starting this month.

DESERT AWARENESS COMMITTEE (DAC) PARTNERSHIP

DIANE VASZILY

This year DAC celebrates 50 years of educating about the Sonoran Desert. We love partnering with the Cave Creek Museum for several “family days.” Families and kids love the hands-on activities as well as the opportunity to learn something new about desert life. The museum is the perfect venue for these events!

Watch for our community wide Pre-Harvest Seminar and the famous Walk, Talk, and Taste in the park held every April at Desert Awareness Park in Cave Creek.

Earth Day is another good time to join us for backyard landscaping advice with native plants. October brings our annual Prickly Pear Fest where you will learn the health benefits locked in every part of this prickly plant!

Although we have been training new members, we always have the welcome sign out for those who love sharing their love of the desert and have a little free time to join in our many community endeavors.

Thank you Cave Creek Museum for your eternal support!



MEMBERSHIP

MOLLY TUFTS AND CHRISTINE PERRY

Different membership categories with number of members are listed as follows:

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL	NUMBER OF MEMBERS
Agave	21
Charter	2
Cholla	65
Lifetime	20
Ocotillo	7
Sage	35
Saguaro	6

Total members = 156

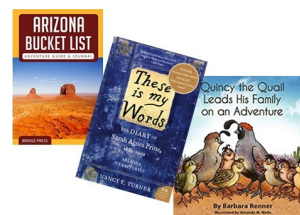
New Members = 25

Business Members = 2

*Please help support our Museum by promoting it in your conversations with friends and neighbors.
Our sincerest thanks to you for being part of our museum family.*

MUSEUM STORE

DARLENE SOUTHERN, STORE MANAGER



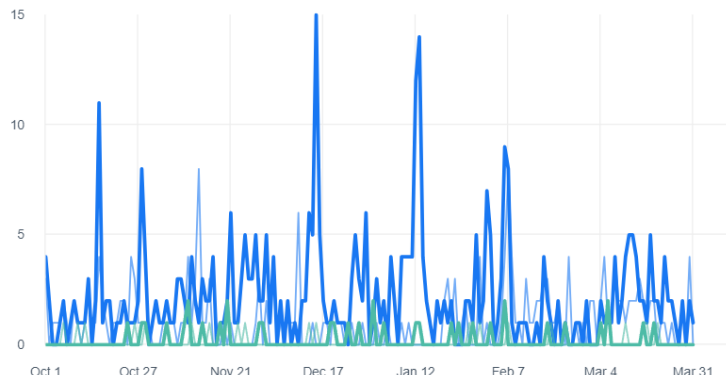
Over the summer of 2023, the new Point-of-Sale system, Lightspeed, was installed. Thanks to the technical expertise of **Molly Tufts** and with the unstinting aid of volunteers **Linda Vareha**, **Stacy Holland** and **Judith Hatsell**, immigration of product from Quickbooks POS to Lightspeed was accomplished in a timely manner. Stacy and Linda were also invaluable in making sure that the Store started the 2023-2024 season with an accurate inventory, displayed attractively.

Gene Bouldin stepped up and trained new and returning docents on Lightspeed for the 2023-2024 season. Docent reviews of the Lightspeed POS have been generally positive.

Oct 1, 2023 - Mar 31, 2024

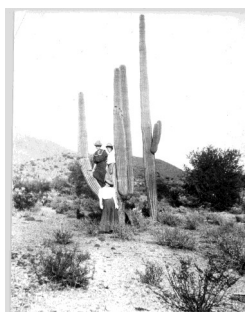
396 New followers 204 Previous period 34 People who unfollowed

20 Previous period



Debbie Clement has joined the SM team so posts featuring students, children and volunteers are much more immediate. These posts garner the most engagement, as well as posts that share Cave Creek history. The Marketing Committee also uses Social Media to market programs, events and other areas of interest with great success. Additionally, CCM shares posts and events from other local non-profits and attractions, solidifying partnerships and gaining “likes” from their followers. The more engagement our FB and IG posts have, the more the SM platforms will feature them.

Both FB/IG work closely with CCM’s publicist, **Fran Booth**, to engage the community in news, stories, events and programs. **Karen Bullard** has stepped up to primary role in maintenance of the Cave Creek Museum website, keeping it up-to-date. The website team plans to continue to tweak the website until after our May 31, 2024 closing, when a broader remodel of the website will occur.



DOCENTS

CHRISTINE PERRY

In January of 2023, I joined **Debbie Clement**, who is a veritable font of information, to share the job of Docent Coordinator.

To date, we have 41 volunteer docents who have provided services to the Cave Creek Museum. Quite a few of the Docents have a set schedule of hours that they have signed up for every month. They are an invaluable part of the Cave Creek Museum family and provide a service to our visitors that is critical to enhance the experience of visiting the Cave Creek Museum. They are committed and a pleasure to work with and bring personal experiences to share as well.



We do have some challenges with filling weekend positions, especially during holiday. If there is no one available, I fill in as docent, which has helped me learn the history of Cave Creek.

A grand total of 1,776 docent hours have been filled this year, not including special programs.

Our volunteers are unique in that many have history with the Cave Creek Museum as well as the Cave Creek area and can talk about the beginnings of the museum, its growing pains and expansion of not just the building but the exhibits as well.



EVELYN JOHNSON

Holidays and events always involve lighting talents ranging from roof climbing to placing Santa and his sleigh to lighting the step and driveway for after dark offerings and providing special event Arizona Gold Mining Experiences.

What A Dream of a TEAM!



So much history here. I had no idea what stamping was. Gordon Lightfoot's song, Carefree Highway, it is on the cover album. From miners, ranching, dude ranching, American legion's (sic), rodeos there is a lot to do in this area. Don't forget to check out the original historic first church, the gold panning exhibit, and the tubercular cabin. Craft day I got to make a turkey and a beaded ear of corn. lol. Loved it. Diane, Caroline, Debbie, Buck Debbie Carolyn, Mia Mia, Audra & Evelyn, thank you for making our visit so informative and fun. Craft day I got to make a turkey and a beaded ear of corn. (sic) lol. Loved it.

DARLENE SOUTHERN

Social Media (SM) in the form of Facebook (FB) and Instagram (IG) posts continue to be a primary form of communication with our community. From October 1, 2022 to May 31, 2023, we gained 204 followers. From October 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024, we have added an additional 396 followers, an increase of 96%. The Museum Facebook page currently has 4,506 followers; Instagram is at 1,358.



We decided to go heavily “electronic” and did most ticketing online as well as placing the entire auction on line. While these had a few “start-up glitches” overall it seemed quite successful.

It’s been an honor to serve as co-chairs for this terrific event.

MARKETING

DARLENE SOUTHERN

Thanks to Fantastic **Fran Booth**, Publicist Extraordinaire, the Social Media Team and the efforts of the Marketing Committee, the Cave Creek Museum reached thousands of new people through consistent coverage in print media and entertainment websites, social media posts, and dozens of positive Google reviews. Facebook and Instagram posts with highly ranked reviews means the Cave Creek Museum is prioritized as an attraction if someone Googles: “what to do in...”

SOME OF OUR REVIEWS (as written by visitors):

Remember — PR, Social Media and Marketing may bring

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Great Little Slice of Local History

May 2023

We made a visit to the Cave Creek Museum as part of a day trip to Cave Creek and were glad we did! It’s small but packs a lot of info into the indoor and outdoor space, with attractive displays and a wealth of knowledge shared by the dedicated and enthusiastic museum staff and volunteers. A nice stop to make if you’re in the area!

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Great little local museum!

Jan 2023

A resident-first time visitor and we really enjoyed this little local museum. We found our docent (Stephanie) very friendly and knowledgeable. Museum is nicely organized. We had a GREAT time! We hope to return in the near future and enjoy the “gold” event! What a neat little museum!

EDUCATION / KIWANIS FAMILY FUN DAYS

AUDRA BOTWIN

This museum season, my Education Co-coordinator **Debbie Clement** and I continued with field trips for school age students.

In December we hosted a Homeschool group all the way from Surprise. The students ranged from first through sixth graders. We also hosted fourth graders from Pinnacle Peak Prep for the first time this year. All the students, teachers and chaperones had a great time and learned about Cave Creek and Arizona history. We welcomed back the third graders from Stepping Stones Academy, the fourth graders from Annunciation Catholic School, and the third graders from all of the CCUSD schools this year. Since some of the CCUSD schools had more third grade students than we could accommodate in one field trip, we divided them into two separate days, so we hosted 14 field trips in total.



We also continued with the monthly **Kiwanis Family Fun Days**.

★ In **October**, Southwest Wildlife came to speak about their wonderful sanctuary and the rescue and rehabilitation work that they do.

★ **November** brought us “Little House in the Desert” where we learned what it would be like to be a child growing up in the past where there was no electricity or running water. We had old-time games for the kids to play and we also taught them how to make butter by hand.

★ **December’s** theme was “Meet a Miner.” We had a photo op station where the participants could use props and a backdrop to take “old time” photos. We decorated horseshoes and even made “flapjacks” and bacon for the kids (and adults) to enjoy.

★ **Desert Awareness Committee** was our presenter for **January**. They brought their expert volunteers to set up six different stations for the kids to rotate through. The kids learned all about the plants and animals of the desert. They also learned about local archaeology and ruins. It was a fun and educational day for all.





★ **Bryan Hughes** from Rattlesnake Solutions was our presenter for **February**. He gave a presentation on snake safety and how his company humanely relocates rattlesnakes that find themselves on homeowners' properties. The kids were able to see many different species of snakes up close (through protective glass) and were also able to pet a snake that Bryan had with him as a snake ambassador. This was one of

our most attended family fun days to date.

★ **March** brought us Archeology Days. Our museum hosted six different local non-profit groups on our grounds that day. The Cave Creek Museum table had multiple activities for the attendees. We had examples of Native American symbols that they could "carve" into clay discs, we had animal scratch drawings and coloring sheets with pottery examples. One of the most popular activities was trying to put a clay pot puzzle together.

★ In **April** we hosted Daisy Mountain Fire and Rescue. They brought a fire truck so the kids saw a fire engine up close. **Jeremy Kennedy**, the Community Relations Officer, was on hand to discuss fire safety and had fun giveaways for the kids. We had fire truck coloring sheets, mazes, crossword puzzles and even a temporary tattoo station!



★ In **May** we are hosting a Mother's Day tea. We will be doing an old-fashioned English Tea. Each child will have the opportunity to design a small terracotta pot and choose his or her own succulent plant to take home as a gift to mom. In addition, guests can enter a drawing to take home a gift certificate from the **English Rose Tea Room in Carefree**.

Between the field trips and the Kiwanis Family Fun Days, the Education Committee (and the volunteers) have been very busy. We work hard to offer a variety of different activities each month so there is something for everyone. It has been a great season so far.



appropriate year to become collectors' items.

★ A "table gift" was developed: A "gold bar" box held gold-flake chocolate candy in gold silk bags, a small flashlight with the Cave Creek Museum (CCM) logo, and wooden refrigerator magnets with the CCM logo. These gifts seemed well received.

★ Our goal was to "elevate" the menu from its prior tasty offerings. This was ably accomplished by **Butcher Block Catering**, which served excellent

food at a good price and was a very cooperative partner. Overall, the food received rave reviews.



★ The table decor was simple but attractive, which was a blessing given the downpour.

★ We wanted to entertain and engage our guests. **Kevin Causey** served as MC and provided lovely, fun, upbeat music. We engaged a line dance leader, hoping to get guests to participate. Most chose not to dance but watch.

To increase revenue we decided to try for sponsors.

★ We ultimately got four, though slightly fewer than we'd hoped for. In retrospect, since this is a one-time event, much higher amounts were likely unrealistic. Kudos to **Darlene Southern** for snaring three of the four and most of the revenue.

★ To reinforce sponsorship, should future chairs decide to try this, we invested in banners identifying each sponsor. The graphic flags will be offered to each sponsor while the bases are kept by CCM for future uses. New graphics can be created. Sponsors seemed pleased and the banners did bring them visibility.



★ We chose to have fewer than usual items in the Silent Auction and sought a balance of prices skewed toward the high end. The items seemed well received and almost all sold at good or decent prices, netting \$15,000 plus.

★ We managed to snare prominent local artist **Lance Headley**, who agreed to paint a picture on site to be auctioned in the Silent Auction. Bidding was "tense."



FOX 10 News on air personality **Cory McCloskey** and his camera crew added a new level of professionalism to the evening with live feeds and hilarity broadcast throughout the evening's proceedings.



Continuing well-loved traditions and layering exciting innovations into Spaghetti Western, *Dinner with a Side of History*, contributed to the event bringing in \$16,000 to the museum's annual budget, exceeding its fundraising goal by

\$6,000.

FUNDRAISING

2024 *Cave Creek Museum Miners' Dinner*

MARCIA D'ALESSANDRO AND KATHY RIEMER

A financial summary of this year's Miners' Dinner is provided in a separate segment of this report. The following is an overview, highlighting the event itself plus what worked well and what did not.

The event largely followed on the very successful pattern established by the prior years' chairs, **Diane Dollison** and **Jane Heidel**, who had done a fabulous job.

The decision was made early on to limit the number of tickets sold to 130 and increase the per-person ticket price to \$100. The date was set for March 19, 2024, and starting out we would not have recommended changing it. We sold out quickly and could have sold more had there been room to serve more people.

With an increased ticket price, we felt we should provide a little something extra for our guests.

★ We decided on a "signature cocktail" (ultimately two). Each guest received a cocktail glass with the CCM logo etched on the side and "Miners' Dinner 2024" on the bottom. These were well received. These might be issued again in the future with the



	A	B	C	D
1	MONTH	SIGN-UPS		PROGRAM
2		CHILD	ADULT	
3	OCTOBER	18	5	AZ WILDLIFE
4	NOVEMBER	23	20	LITTLE HOUSE IN THE DESERT
5	DECEMBER	31	20	MEET A MINER
6	JANUARY	37	35	STICKS, PRICKS & BONES
7	FEBRUARY	42	31	SSSSSNAKES
8	MARCH	44	37	ARCHEALOGY EXPO
9	APRIL			FIRST RESPONDERS
10	MAY			MOTHERS' DAY TEA
11	SUBTOTALS	195	148	<i>Statistics by Molly Tufts; walk-ins unrecorded</i>
12	TOTAL	343		



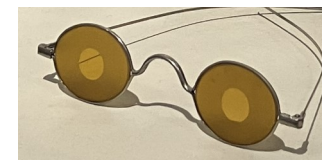
EXHIBITS

STEPHANIE BRADLEY

History Wing

Enhancements were made to exhibits around the History Wing gallery. The cave has opened up with figures placed for scale and also large "volunteer-built" boulders to frame the scene. The early settlers area features the TB cabin with old medicine bottles and remedies displayed, plus photos of the cabin and old photos from similar encampments. Visitors seem to take particular interest in the photos, gaining understanding of palliative care of patients.

The Sonoran Art League celebrates 50 years in the foothills and is feted with a display featuring art, sculpture, brushes and easel from the early days.





In the back center of the room a model of Black Mountain includes an explanatory video as well as rock samples from the mountain.

Contemporary Clay, in the front center of the room, is an array of stunning pottery by award-winning Native American artists whose various techniques and materials make for an arresting display. Thanks to an anonymous supporter for the loan of these beautiful and instructive pieces.

Ansbaugh Auditorium and Mini-Wing

The Desert Awareness “cubes” of desert life are now part of a greater display of natural history, including astronomy, geology, as well as flora and fauna. The school house has been very popular with young and old; the young are captivated by chalkboards and ink-well desks while adults reminisce about their days in the classroom. The south end holds Southwest Bling III, a colorful array of southwest-style jewelry, on loan to the museum for the season. Our thanks to kind individuals for the loan of their treasured pieces.

The Mini-Wing features “Faces of Cave Creek,” individuals of renown and affection.



FUNDRAISING

2023 Spaghetti Western Dinner at Harold's

Dinner with a Side of History

BUCK COLUMNNA

This year's Spaghetti Western fundraiser, *Dinner with a Side of History*, exceeded expectations in attendance, fundraising, and sponsorships. For the second year in a row, the event fell on an election day, Tues-



day, November 7, but did not impact the success of the evening. In the spirit of bipartisan museum supporters left their differences in the parking lot and came together to break garlic bread, twirl spaghetti and hit the dance floor.

Ticket sales were consistently strong and closed within a week of the evening and the sold-out event hit the venue's capacity of 250 guests. The decision to increase ticket prices from last year's tiered \$22 and \$24, based on date of purchase, to \$28 and \$30 did not deter attendance or enthusiasm.

Event Sponsorship levels were implemented in 2022 to place more community and corporate value on our events. **Asset Protection Concepts / Chris Kempster CFP** stepped up as inaugural \$1,000 Spaghetti Western Signature Sponsor. The momentum continued in 2023 with local businesses and community supporters — **Arizona Natural Concepts, Carefree Spirits Distillery, Moonstone and Muro Salon**, and **UPS Cave Creek/Carefree/Terravita** — joining as \$250 individual event sponsors. **Asset Protection Concepts / Chris Kempster CFP** generously agreed to a second year as Signature Sponsor bringing this year's event sponsorship to \$2,000.



Other added value elements to this year's Spaghetti Western included the return of local favorite troubadour **Kevin Causey** with special guest musicians, including board member **Steve Greenberg** on guitar. Members of **Parasols** and **Petticoats** added period perfect authenticity to the pre-dinner promenades and selfies taken throughout the evening.

Board Member **Marcia D'Alessandro** introduced a well received museum volunteer bake sale and balloon pop into the event's offerings, adding considerable excitement and revenue to the event. **Greg Barnhart** and **Karen Chatfield-Barnhart**, sacrificed valuable vacation time to donate their exclusive Sedona getaway for the premier event raffle.

