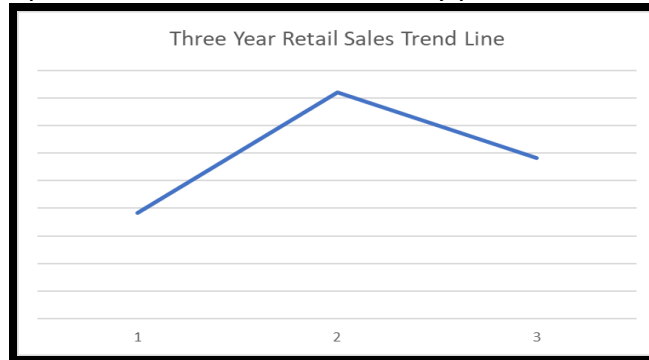


Comparison of Visitors	2021	2022
Total On-Site Visitors	18,133	20,294

Three-Year Comparison of Retail Sales

The following chart shows a three-year comparison of retail sales to give you an idea of the economic impact of the pandemic and the slow recovery process:



Living Windows & Lighted Christmas Parade

We held our final event of 2022 on December 10 with the Living Windows and Lighted Christmas Parade. It was a great event with a phenomenal crowd. Folk lined the streets for the parade and packed the sidewalks for the evening. It was a great night! Thank you to the Calico Rock Volunteer Fire Department for leading the parade, the sheriff's office, and the city of Calico Rock for their help in making this event so successful.

Goals for 2023

As we look forward to 2023, we have turned ownership of the original museum building that most recently housed The Marketplace over to a new owner that is planning to open a vintage clothing shop. We have rented the Bluff City Bank Building to Cooper's Antiques for an expansion of their retail operation. We are beginning work on restoring the Calico Hotel building and will relocate The Marketplace and Peppersauce on Main to this building (next door to the Printing Press Café) in March.

We plan to complete renovations to the upstairs of this building for use as an economic center and to complete the installation of the green parking lot/community park behind Main Street. Over the winter break, we are also installing new exhibits and completing some refurbishment projects at the museum in preparation for the 2023 tourist season.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to serve you. We are honored to work with you to serve our community and county. Happy New Year!

Respectfully submitted,



February 2023

Looking Forward to 2023

The Calico Rock Museum & Visitor Center will reopen for the 2023 tourist season on Tuesday, February 14. During the first week of February, the Center staff will be onsite refreshing exhibits and getting everything in order for new season. Our staff will also participate in an Engagement Staff Summit for professional development.

We have a lot of activities and events planned for this year.

Main Street Projects

We are continuing to work on The Marketplace building next door to the Printing Press Café. The project includes painting, new lighting, roof repairs, and work on the façade. The façade will include a new paint job and new exterior windows. We also plan to refurbish the façade on the Bluff City Bank Building, which is being rented to Cooper's Antiques for an expansion of their store.

Within the next few months, Riverside Pizza will be relocating to their new building and we will be looking to rent this location to a new business. Additionally, we are planning to work on the Enterprise Center in the second story of The Marketplace building and the new parking and green space behind Main Street.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to serve you. We are honored to work with you to serve our community and county. Happy New Year!

Respectfully submitted,



February On-Site Visitors: 339
The Nook Functions: 7

The Marketplace

We will reopen The Marketplace in its new location at 114 Main Street, next door to the Printing Press Café on March 7. We have completed our rehabilitation of the façade of this historic building, originally constructed in 1914. Over the years, it has been Wiseman Hotel, Hall Funeral Home, and Clinkingbeard Dry Goods.

The Nook

We have completed the transition in becoming the host for community functions having relocated the community room from City Hall to The Nook. We have already hosted seven functions and have nearly every weekend booked over the next few months. Reviews have been highly positive for the space. It has been so popular, we are planning the development of a science clubhouse that will serve the dual purpose of a science classroom and an event space for birthday parties.

Archives

We continue to process our archival material into our cataloging software. The items are then being preserved in conservation materials and stored. A fundraiser last month netted proceeds to buy four Gladiator shelves for storage. The preservation of these archives is critical to our community's future.

AMA Conference

Our staff will be attending the Arkansas Museums Association Conference in Little Rock later this month. This is an important networking and professional development opportunity.

Main Street Calico Rock

We continue to promote our area businesses through the Main Street Calico Rock program, which is part of the Arkansas Main Street Network. Through this program, we promote local businesses to visitors, provide relocation services, and offer grant programs for small businesses. In the near future, we hope to provide affordable rental space for start-up enterprises. It is our goal to recruit professionals to the community, if even on a part-time basis.

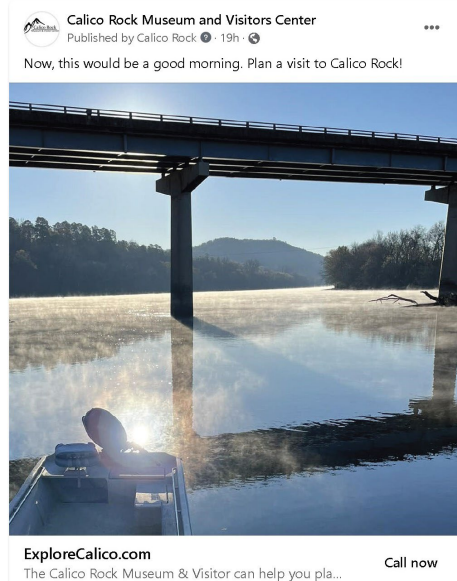
As always, thank you for the opportunity to serve you. We are honored to work with you to serve our community and county. Happy New Year!

Respectfully submitted,



March On-Site Visitors: 1,202
The Nook Functions: 9

COMMUNITY MARKETING



This month, we continued our ongoing marketing efforts with a Facebook/Instagram advertising campaign (at left). We targeted Germantown, TN; Dallas, TX; Little Rock, AR; Fayetteville, AR; Conway, AR; and Jonesboro, AR. Our objective was to entice affluent professionals to book a trip to Calico Rock for fishing, rest, and time with family.

We spent less than \$500 and engaged **23,192 people** over just 10 days.

Engagement was 69% men; 40% reside in Texas; 39% in Arkansas and 21% in Tennessee.

POPULAR PROGRAMS

Several popular programs are returning this year, including the **Rocket Into Science** day program on Saturday, April 29th. We will host a regular **Meet the Artist** on the first Saturday of every month from May to December.

WEBSITE UPDATES/BUSINESS LICENSES

We have completed updates to the ExploreCalico.com website. Every business licensed by the City of Calico Rock are listed on this website and promoted throughout the year.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Mark your calendar for the return of the **Calico Rendezvous** to be held off Main Street this year on September 8-9. Our annual **Living Windows & Lighted Christmas Parade** is December 9. The theme for the Living Windows will be "Rustic Cabin Christmas" and the theme for the Lighted Christmas Parade will be "Whimsical Christmas Wonderland."

We consider it a privilege to serve our community! Thank you for the opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,



April On-Site Visitors: 1,623
The Nook Functions: 12

ECONOMIC NEWS

The number of visitors to town increased 8% from April 2022, when we had experienced a sharp decline from the previous year. Local retail establishments are reporting strong sales for April. On an economic development front, the news has been a bit of a mixed bag. Izard Regional Hospital is emerging from bankruptcy as the change of ownership is being finalized, which is good news for the community. Meanwhile, the prison expansion that had been approved under the Hutchinson administration has been put on hold by the Sanders administration as the governor develops her own long-term plan. The expansion is on hold, not cancelled, at this time and we remain hopeful it will be approved.

ROCKET INTO SCIENCE

We held our spring Rocket Into Science on Saturday, April 29. There were 47 elementary-aged students who attended. They participated in fun learning sessions on astronomy, biology, and engineering. We provided a free lunch and hands-on activities that encourage a love for the sciences with an appreciation for our local environment. It was a highly successful and fun day.

SERVING LOCAL BUSINESSES

One of our most important functions is supporting our local businesses, providing the infrastructure that make our local businesses successful, and developing tools for them to use. These services are provided at no charge to the businesses that are licensed to operate by the city of Calico Rock. As new businesses are licensed throughout the year, they are added to these services on a quarterly basis. Of course, businesses are listed on our **ExploreCalico.com** website and we offer free business consultation services, and periodic grants for upgrading business storefronts through our **Main Street Calico Rock** program. And, this month, we are hosting our first **Business Mixer** since before the pandemic for businesses that were licensed by the first quarter of the year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We will host a regular **Meet the Artist** on the first Saturday of every month from May to December. We are also gearing up for **Lions Club Rodeo Weekend** and the **All School Reunion** on **June 9-10** (June 10 for Reunion) and for the **Community Day** in King City Park just ahead of the **Lions Club Fireworks Show** at on **July 3rd**.

We consider it a privilege to serve our community! Thank you for the opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,



June 2023

April On-Site Visitors: 2,117
The Nook Functions: 11

EXHIBIT UPDATES

Our staff are working on updates to the Steamboat, Main Street, Veterans, and other exhibits this summer. Some of these will receive minor tweaks and others will be completely redone. We are also adding an exhibit on Coach Harold Ray Jeffery.

GOOD MORNING ARKANSAS

Ansley Watson, the anchor on Good Morning Arkansas on KATV Channel 7, filmed a segment at our museum in mid-May which aired toward the end of the month. The interview that she conducted with Gloria was superb and has already benefited our community with increased interest and visitors.

BUSINESS MIXER WELL-ATTENDED

We invited every licensed business owner to attend a Business Mixer in The Nook in May. There were a number of events happening at the same time, but we had over 40 people in attendance. We considered this a huge success for our first mixer. Our plan is to host these somewhat regularly for local business owners to learn about each other, have conversations, and to share the resources we can provide for them.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We are hosting a regular **Meet the Artist** on the first Saturday of every month until December. We are also gearing up for **Lions Club Rodeo Weekend** and the **All School Reunion on June 9-10** (June 10 for Reunion).

We consider it a privilege to serve our community! Thank you for the opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,



On-Site Visitors: 2,257
The Nook Functions: 6

MUNICIPAL LEAGUE CONFERENCE

As part of our partnership with the City, Gloria Sanders attended the Arkansas Municipal League Conference with Mayor Hamby and Council Member My Kim Parnell. Sanders attended several sessions related to economic development and community promotion. It was a great networking, learning, and partnership activity for us.

MAIN STREET ARKANSAS

For three years, we have been an affiliate program of Main Street Arkansas. Through this program, we have been able to provide grants and support to our local businesses for new signage, operating assistance, and historic preservation. We have applied to become a full designated program. There have been no new designated programs in the past decade, so it would be a great honor for us to be accepted. Fully designated programs also receive access to lots more grant dollars and assistance programs for local businesses. Our application was over 100 pages long and includes details on what we have been doing for our community. Executive Director Gloria Sanders and Board Chairman Steven Mitchell presented our application to the Main Street Arkansas Advisory Board in late June and we should receive notification soon.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

We started construction on several projects to benefit our community. We completed the transformation of three lots behind Main Street into a green parking lot. This parking space will hold approximately 12 cars and includes space for a public garden. In the future, we have plans to add picnic tables and a pavilion. These lots were given to the Foundation by Mark Tew and Linda Boulton, longtime owners of the Riverview Hotel.

We also started work on transforming an area of the science center into Tommy's Clubhouse. This space will be used for science labs, art classes, and birthday parties. The walls will be washable and provide durability for children's events (like birthday parties) and will allow us to use The Nook for more elegant gatherings. And, it gives us two spaces at the same time.

NEW EXHIBITS

We have a new exhibit on the IZARD County Sheriff's Office and updates to several others. We invite you to come by the always updating Calico Rock Museum. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

Respectfully submitted,



On-Site Visitors: 2,395
The Nook Functions: 12

ECLIPSE PLANNING IN FULL GEAR

For over a year, we have been preparing for the Total Solar Eclipse on April 8, 2024. We are holding regular meetings to prepare for the 5,000 people the state estimates will be in the Calico Rock vicinity to view this once-in-a-lifetime event. We have applied for a grant through Main Street America to conduct science-related activities for visitors to town for the eclipse. We continue to be concerned about the lack of public restroom facilities if we do get the number of visitors the state has predicted, as well as camp sites, lodging, and more. Andrew McCrea who hosts American Countryside on RFDTV will be broadcasting RFDTVs coverage from Calico Rock, so the world is definitely coming and will be watching Calico Rock.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

The green parking space is largely completed and ready for some plantings. Framing is now complete at the new Economic Center and work is progressing on getting it ready to finish out. We are also completing work on Tommy's Clubhouse, a space that will be available for birthday parties and other functions just off the science center and sharing parking with The Nook.

SUMMER TOURISM REPORT

We have seen tourism numbers improving slightly and seeing very modest gains in the number of dollars being spent locally by tourists over July. As we see the economy leveling off or improving modestly on a national scale, we are feeling the effects locally. We are monitoring gas prices to determine their effect on fall tourism. We remain cautiously optimistic for Q3 and Q4 of 2024.

ExploreCalico.com

We continue to provide numerous services to our local businesses, including a free listing of all local businesses licensed in the city of Calico Rock. We typically update the list of businesses quarterly with the help of the staff at City Hall based on information given by the business owner at the time of the city license application. We recently completed this quarterly update. The website www.ExploreCalico.com makes a great directory for our local businesses.

Respectfully submitted,



On-Site Visitors: 1,631
The Nook Functions: 10

ARE WE PREPARED?

If the state's estimates are correct, between 5,000 and 10,000 people will descend upon our community on April 8, 2024 for the once-in-a-lifetime solar eclipse. We recognize visitors will watch the eclipse on the side of the road or anywhere they can find a spot, but we want to do what we can to welcome our guests and to mitigate any damage that a sudden influx of people could create. Are we prepared? Where do we even start?

Fortunately, a group of interested citizens, business owners and government officials have been meeting at the direction of our staff to plan for the solar eclipse. Where do 10,000 people park? Where do they use the restroom? What happens if they need gasoline or lunch? Where do they put their trash if they camp out over the weekend? How do we get an ambulance from one point to another if the roads are clogged? How do we treat patients with even minor injuries?

For our local businesses, will they allow folks coming in off the street to use the restroom? Do they have a plan to service their regular customers with an onslaught of visitors? These are just some of the many questions we are asking and we are encouraging the community to ask.

We always welcome the council's support and participation in these meetings, which are announced on our Facebook page.

ARPA FUNDS REQUEST

We have presented a request to the city for ARPA funds for an economic development project, including ways to mitigate economic pressures upon our local businesses. The pandemic's aftershocks continue to reverberate in our community and we appreciate your consideration of our request and proposal. We continue to see soft numbers in tourism and sales, and have heard from many local businesses that continue to struggle to get merchandise, parts and equipment.

PLANNING HAS BEGUN FOR CHRISTMAS

We are working on plans for decorating Main Street for Christmas, presenting our annual Living Windows, and staging our Lighted Christmas Parade! It's never too early to start planning for this event that will take place on Saturday, December 9.

Respectfully submitted,



October 2023

On-Site Visitors: 1,676
The Nook Functions: 16

THE NOOK

Over the past month alone, The Nook has hosted two memorial services, baby showers, birthday parties, and community meetings. We booked 16 events in The Nook this month, the highest number of events in one month since we opened about a year ago. Partnering with the city to provide a community event space is one of the highlights of the work we do for the community.

ECONOMIC CENTER PROGRESS

Renovating and preserving the second story of The Marketplace has proven to be one of the most challenging projects we have ever undertaken. Electrical service issues, roof leaks, structural support concerns, and just bringing a 100 year old building up to modern office standards has been difficult. These challenges have resulted in higher than anticipated costs. By the end of this month, we will have the structural components in place and be ready for drywall. We will also be out of money for the project. We have applied for grants to complete the job. If we secure funding, we can still meet our goal of having this new facility open by early 2024. This space has already attracted a lot of attention by professionals looking to expand their operations, to open a satellite office, or to open new services altogether.

TRICK OR TREAT ON MAIN RETURNS

We are excited for the return of Trick or Treat on Main, a safe zone supported by local Main Street partners and businesses for local residents to bring their children for Halloween fun. Halloween is Tuesday, October 31.

CALICO ROCK WILL HAVE THE LONGEST ECLIPSE IN U.S. HISTORY

Calico Rock really will be the best place to view the eclipse in the world! In fact, the time for total darkness in Calico Rock will be the longest total eclipse in the United States ever. The world is coming, are we prepared? Local businesses were personally invited to attend a meeting tailored just for them last month and it was very productive. We have worked closely with Izard County Office of Emergency Management, County Judge Eric Smith, County Sheriff Charley Melton, and Mayor Greg Hamby on our plan for the eclipse. Quorum Court and Council members are welcome to attend our planning meetings. If you'd like a personal briefing, give us a call at 870-916-2230.

Respectfully submitted,



On-Site Visitors: 1,945
The Nook Functions: 9

CHRISTMAS ON MAIN STREET

By the time you read this report, Main Street will be decked out for the holidays. Our Mistletoe & Holly event is planned for the second weekend in November in The Nook. Later this month, we are beginning a Artisan Holiday Auction on Facebook for items donated by the artisan vendors in our cooperative gift shop. And, we are finalizing plans for Small Business Saturday on November 25 and the annual Living Windows and Lighted Christmas Parade on December 9. Main Street at Christmas is a very magical place and we're excited about all of the activities.

ECONOMIC CENTER PROGRESS

Our electrician has been rebuilding the electrical service to The Marketplace and Economic Center building. This is a critical step to progressing with this project. Over the next month, we hope to install the windows, drywall, and begin the steps to finishing out the economic center. Our hope is to have the building ready to rent in the first quarter of 2024. We continue to work on funding options and our board has secured a line of credit loan to be able to complete the project and move forward. We believe this is a critical step forward for our community and county in economic development.

TRICK OR TREAT ON MAIN RETURNS

We were excited to welcome Trick or Treaters back to Main Street after the COVID hiatus. We had 350 Trick or Treaters on Main Street! It was a HUGE success and so much fun.

CALICO ROCK WILL HAVE THE LONGEST ECLIPSE IN U.S. HISTORY

Calico Rock really will be the best place to view the eclipse in the world! In fact, the time for total darkness in Calico Rock will be the longest total eclipse in the United States ever. The world is coming, are we prepared? We continue to plan and prepare for the eclipse, one of the biggest events in our area in our history.

Respectfully submitted,

