

January 2020

2019 Visitors

On-Site Visitors	28,770
Online Visitors	51,337
Total Visitor Contacts	80,107

Annual Report

Our annual report and Form 990 have been completed and is being printed. We will provide a copy of our 2019 Annual Report at your February meeting. Over the past five years, the Calico Rock Community Foundation has generated **revenues of \$1,073,000** that has been reinvested in the community. These revenues come from sales, donations, grants, program contracts, and fundraisers. We have had a **twelve-year economic impact of \$24,000,000**.

Expansion Update

We've made a lot of progress in a short period of time thanks to the support of the city. By the time you read this, we should have the drywall completed, all of the entries between the buildings cut, painting completed, and tin ceilings ready to install. By the end of the month, flooring should be installed, front windows and door installed, and be ready to start moving into the visitor center. The new visitor center will open and the art and science center will reopen by March 1. The Main Street Level of the Heritage Museum will open in the new center by Rodeo Weekend and the Peppersauce Level of the Heritage Museum will open by Native American Weekend.

The new center, as you know, will put everything under one roof with 14,000 square feet of space in the facility.

Once we get the visitor, art and science center opened, we will briefly turn our attention to The Marketplace to get that open in March, as well. This will generate opportunity for the community and sales tax revenue for the city, county and state. Our goal is to open this by mid-March so we can begin capitalizing on our tourists.

As always, if you have any ideas, questions or concerns, please call me at 870-373-0083.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Mitchell
Chairman
Board of Trustees

January 2020

January 2020

On-Site Visitors	507
Online Visitors	<u>1,892</u>
Total Visitor Contacts	2,399

Expansion Update

We are on-time and on-budget with our expansion plans. Outside, the three buildings are completed with new signage, doors and windows, memorial bricks, topiaries, and painting all completed and in place. Inside, we'll be ready to open the new visitor center, artisan gift shop, foundation offices, boardroom, expanded art center, and renovated science center on or before March 1.

Construction has even progressed ahead of schedule on the heritage center. By the time you read this, we will have completed the ramp leading from the Main Street level to the Peppersauce level. Once we get Phase 1 opened, we will complete major construction projects by building out the classroom in the heritage center. At that point, we will turn our attention to installing history exhibits. The first section of the heritage center is planned to open on Rodeo Weekend in June and the major part of the history museum will open Native American weekend in September.

The Marketplace

One of the key aspects of the expansion is converting the present museum and visitor center into The Marketplace. We have already started renting booths for vendors to sell antiques, new clothing, gifts, and much more. The two anchors for The Marketplace will be Wagon Wheel Antiques and Peppersauce on Main clothing boutique.

The Marketplace will offer new shopping opportunities and generate sales tax revenue for the city, county and state.

Main Street Calico Rock

The foundation intends to apply to become a Main Street Community with the Arkansas Downtown Network. Membership will provide local business owners many free services from the state and open new grant opportunities for our community and county.

As always, if you have any ideas, questions or concerns, please call us at 870-373-0083.

Respectfully submitted,



February 2020

On-Site Visitors	483
Online Visitors	2,085
Total Visitor Contacts	2,568

We Are Open!

We opened the new Calico Rock Museum & Visitor Center on March 2nd after just three short months of construction. With this first phase, we have opened half of the new facilities: the visitor center, artisan gift shop, foundation offices, art center, archives and learning center, and science center. The heritage center and classroom will be open in stages between now and September. When the new center is completely finished, we will have a 14,000 square foot facility.

In the first three months of this project, we have raised \$145,000 of the \$275,000 price tag (about 60%). We have completed all of the major construction projects. The work that is remaining is finishing out and installing exhibits in the remaining portions of the building. These record-breaking achievements could not have been possible without your support!

The Marketplace

The Marketplace is scheduled to open on March 14. It is located in the former museum building and will include antiques, collectibles, gifts and new clothing. Vendors are already moving into their spaces, painting, and preparing for opening. There is a real excitement in the air and anticipation for this new venue, which will generate sales tax revenue for the city, county and state.

Main Street Calico Rock

We have submitted our application to become IZARD County's first Main Street community. We will present our plan to the advisory board in April and should be notified by early May if we are accepted into the program.

Economic Growth

We believed our expansion efforts would generate interest and economic growth in Main Street Calico Rock, but we anticipated it would take a while for that to happen. Over the winter, three buildings have sold. We have several new businesses that are coming to Main Street this spring: Riverside Pizzeria, a sewing center, an expanded Curious Craftsman, a webhosting office-based business, and two retail sales locations. Exciting times.

Respectfully submitted,



April 2020

The First Half of March

We started March full of hope and promise! We opened the new Calico Rock Museum & Visitor Center with thirty-three artisans in our Artisan Gift Shop, great attendance, and strong sales. We opened The Marketplace on March 14 with rainy weather, yet again strong sales and every available vendor space rented and full. Eleven businesses were either relocating on Main Street or opening on Main Street. Good times, exciting times were ahead.

The Second Half of March

Then, a microscopic virus traveled aboard travelers from China across the oceans and entered our nation like a wrecking ball! The second half of March saw the beginning of a global pandemic that is carrying with it global economic devastation.

Governor Hutchinson has ordered all public venues, including our museum, closed until at least mid to late April. All the models are predicting the pandemic will not peak in Arkansas until May or June, which means we may remain closed until July or August. We are certainly praying for a miracle and hoping for the optimism we saw at the beginning of March, but we are preparing for the reality of a far different scenario.

In order to preserve our long-term success, we were forced to lay off all of our employees. We have rehired our executive director on a partial, emergency contract. Gloria is following the guidance of the CDC while also maintaining our operations.

While we are closed, we have partnered with Yelcot to offer free WiFi to local families helping their children with their school work, businesses and community members by making Main Street a hotspot. We have been helping local small businesses complete necessary paperwork, comply with regulations, and applying for small business loans and grants. We have also suspended rental fees and loan payments from three small businesses (including two restaurants) that have business relationships with us. Our goal is to have them open when this crisis is over. And, we are working to provide instructional videos to local students who were attending our weekly Adventures in Art & Science Program.

We will reopen, rehire our employees, grow our Main Street, and be better than ever! We appreciate your support in this very difficult time. May God bless our community, county, state and nation!

Respectfully submitted,



Facts and Figures

In the month of March, the Calico Rock Museum & Visitor Center was open 36% of the month and our sales were 34% of what they had been last year. From this data, we can extrapolate that our sales were on target for where they had been last year. Our visitor numbers, prior to the pandemic and forced closure were running ahead of last year.

We were able to open The Marketplace one day. For that day, we had sales of \$450. This is a very significant number and far ahead of our projections.

For website visitors, we have seen a 27% increase in web traffic for the Explore Calico website and 32% increase in traffic for the museum website. We are also distributing information on a regular basis, as well as creating virtual experiences, on the museum's Facebook page. The number of visitors and interactions to our Facebook posts are averaging 142% more than previous posts.

We believe this data indicates a very strong interest in our community and services. We truly believe, when this pandemic is over, Calico Rock is well positioned to have tremendous growth, tourism, and sales.

Our goal is to be prepared to reopen, whether that happens next month or in July. We also are positioning our local restaurants, hotels, and small businesses so they can reopen. We are helping them complete SBA loans, helping displaced workers apply for unemployment, and giving the community the information it needs to succeed.

This is global crisis the likes of which none of us have ever seen. No one was prepared for the magnitude of it. We are all working very hard, especially as a community, to overcome, survive and be in a position to thrive when it passes.

We stand ready to help in every way we can. If I can personally answer any questions or do anything to help you, please call at 870-373-0083.

Respectfully submitted,



Serving in a Crisis

We continue to do our part in serving our community during the COVID-19 global pandemic by providing regular updates on our Facebook page and through e-mails. We have been working closely with our small businesses to help them overcome unique challenges.

An area of real concern for us is the financial security of our restaurants, salons, hotels, and retailers. Most of these businesses are “mom and pop” operations that have a limited number of employees. These businesses are being devastated with greatly reduced sales or having to be completely closed. To make matters worse, the Federal Payroll Protection Program has been so restrictive that none of them have been able to get these forgivable loans at this point. Most of them are living off of their tax refunds or stimulus money.

They were promised unemployment benefits through the Federal self-employed program, but no state had ever offered unemployment to self-employed owners, 1099 or contract workers, or gig workers. Therefore, states are having to build websites to accept these applications. The website is supposed to finally be online in early May.

To complicate matters, businesses are being faced with mounting pressure to reopen, but there are serious concerns with meeting guidelines, providing personal protective equipment, and the fear of facing lawsuits for failure to protect their customers or staff. Many of them have acquired debt to remain open.

We are optimists and we still believe our best days lay ahead, but we are also realists. We are working to try to identify ways to help these small businesses reopen, survive this crisis, and be in a position to thrive. The Arkansas constitution prohibits cities and counties from providing loans or grants to individuals or businesses. Although you’ve probably seen news reports of Little Rock offering their own grant programs, they are not in compliance with the constitution.

We want to thank the city employees, clerk, city attorney, council, and mayor for providing solid leadership and service to our community. We have a great partnership and we will get through this together.

We do look forward to reopening and helping Calico Rock and Izard County to thrive again.

Respectfully submitted,



Reopening Plan

We continue to closely monitor the developments with the COVID-19 global pandemic. We announced a three-step plan to reopening:



Calico Rock
Community
Foundation

Re-Opening Plan

Gradually & Safely Moving Forward

The Marketplace
June 5

- Fridays & Saturdays
- 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Gradually Increase the Days Per Week Open
- Limited Visitor Center Services

Visitor Center & Gift Shop
Goal: July 1

- Fridays & Saturdays
- 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Gradually Increase Days Per Week Open
- Arkansas Should Be in Phase II for Reopening

Museum Exhibits
Phase III

- Visitor center open at least 5 days per week
- Museum exhibits open
- Public Restrooms open

By starting with **The Marketplace**, we are able to focus on retail shopping in a controlled environment. This will allow us to gauge foot traffic and willingness for guests to spend money before we reopen the museum building (which requires much greater scrutiny and sanitization practices). We will offer visitor center services at The Marketplace.

While we have been closed, we have continued to support our local businesses and community through public service announcements, assisting businesses applying for assistance, and running interference for businesses who have had to cut through red tape and regulations. These have been **critical services** for the town.

We are also very excited that we have been accepted into the **Arkansas Downtown Network**. This will provide promotion for our community, coaching and services for our businesses, and help bring our community together. So, we are very excited about these developments.

Thank you for your support for the services we provide to our community!

Respectfully submitted,



July 2020

We're Back!

The Calico Rock Museum & Visitor Center reopened on July 1. Our staff are excited to be back and ready to welcome visitors to our community. The visitor center and artisan gift shop are open to the public. For the time being, the museum exhibits and restrooms remain closed due to the sanitation requirements.

During the month of June, we opened The Marketplace on Main Street on weekends. The public was very cooperative and our sales were very encouraging. The Marketplace is now open Tuesday-Saturday, as well.

During the month of June, we had 2,276 unique visitors to our websites. We were able to serve the visitors to our community online while we were closed.

Through our Main Street Calico Rock program, we are working diligently to assist our local businesses as they continue to navigate the regulations and challenges during the pandemic. Our goal is to make life easier for these small businesses that are the lifeblood of our community.

Thank you for your support for the services we provide to our community!

Respectfully submitted,



Visitors

Onsite Visitors	603
Museum Website	2,122
<u>Explore Website</u>	<u>604</u>
Total Visitor Contacts	3,329

Opened for Business

All of the Main Street businesses are now open and serving customers. The visitor center is open, however we have not opened the public restrooms due to the very restrictive sanitation requirements. Museum exhibits also remain closed for the same reason. The visitors we are receiving are spending money. We had a much better than expected first full month of sales in The Marketplace.

Museum Exhibits

We are installing exhibits for the history museum. The Native American and Keelboat exhibits are completed. The early settlers/traders exhibit is in progress. We will work on the Trail of Tears and Gristmill exhibits this month. Our hope is to have the first section of the history museum completed by the end of August. We are also finalizing our exhibit plan for the Peppersauce level. Ideally, we would have all of the history exhibits completed and ready to open when we are able to reopen the museum in Phase III of recovery.

Main Street Program

As a newly approved Main Street community in the Arkansas Downtown Network, our local businesses are eligible for business coaching, design services, and grant programs. These are services that are exclusive to Main Street communities. We recently announced a grant program for small businesses that makes them eligible for up to \$5,000 in pandemic relief funds. We shared this information with our local businesses in July.

Rather than visit our local businesses during the pandemic, we are reaching out to them by phone to share with them some of the services they are eligible for, and to get a feel for how they are doing and what we can do for them. We believe this is a critical part of our work at the visitor center.

Thank you for your support for the services we provide to our community!

Respectfully submitted,



Visitors

Onsite Visitors	1,536
Museum Website	1,849
<u>Explore Website</u>	<u>574</u>
Total Visitor Contacts	3,959

The Marketplace

A year ago when we reported our plan to move the museum and visitor center across the street to our current location, we identified a number of benefits—increased square footage, room for growth, a state-of-the-art facility, and continued revitalization of Main Street. One of our concerns was what to do with the former museum building. Our plan was to convert the space into a marketplace that would allow lots of vendors an opportunity to have a retail presence on Main Street without the cost of building ownership. Although beset with many problems arising from the global pandemic, we are happy to report the incredible success of The Marketplace.

August sales have far outpaced our initial projections. The sales tax revenue generated from museum enterprises—the Artisan Gift Shop and The Marketplace—are 27% higher than we have ever generated before, including when we owned the Printing Press Café. Our neighbors are likewise reporting economic success, all while adhering to state guidelines.

This is an encouraging sign for our economic outlook and for your use in budgeting and planning for the future.

Museum Exhibits

We continue to work on museum exhibits during the pandemic closure. This month we are working on the gristmill and a large steamboat exterior. Stay tuned for more details.

Main Street Program

Calico Rock was the only community in Northcentral Arkansas awarded an economic revitalization grant through our Main Street Calico Rock program. The \$3,000 grant will be used to provide minigrants to our local businesses for restoration projects on their buildings, help for small businesses dealing with the pandemic, or other similar projects.

Thank you for your support for the services we provide to our community!

Respectfully submitted,



Visitors

Onsite Visitors	1,402
Museum Website	1,818
<u>Explore Website</u>	<u>388</u>
Total Visitor Contacts	3,608

Continued Reopening Progress

At the end of September, we reopened the Tomlinson Art Gallery to the public. We are showcasing two drawings by world-famous Andy Warhol during the month of October. We also opened the Birth of the Ozarks Gallery in the history museum. This includes Native American, early Traders, and Keelboat exhibits. We are finishing up the Trail of Tears, water-powered Gristmill, and a huge reproduction of the side of the *Ozark Queen* steamboat.

Within the first two weeks of October, we are reopening the public restrooms which will provide a needed service, especially with the coming winterization of the riverside park bathrooms.

Outlook

Across the country, 341 museums will not reopen after their closure due to COVID-19. Small businesses, especially restaurants and small retail shops, continue to face a struggling economy. In September, we saw a substantial decline in our visitors and retail sales from August, but also a sharp decline from last year. Without question, the effects of the pandemic are lingering.

In IZARD County, we have seen a sharp increase in the number of active COVID-19 cases. Despite these data, we are seeing signs of promise and hope. Several new businesses continue to prepare for opening on Main Street and we are seeing development throughout town. We know that it will be a long winter and we are preparing programs and services that are designed to sustain our small businesses. Our goal is to help our businesses survive and then be in a position to thrive next year.

Museum Exhibits

We have started work on our Peppersauce level exhibits including building an 1850's log cabin, outhouse, and smokehouse. We are also building the interior of the *Ozark Queen* steamboat including boiler room, crew galley, dining room, and promenade deck. You can follow our progress at <http://www.calicorockmuseum.com/expansion.html>.

Thank you for your support for the services we provide to our community!

Respectfully submitted,



Visitors

Onsite Visitors	1,326
Museum Website	2,400
Explore Website	406
Total Visitor Contacts	4,132

Construction Progress

We are continuing construction on exhibits for the heritage museum, including an 1870's log church/school, the Bartley Kennedy store (the first store in the area in 1851), the Depot, and a caboose. All of our exhibits will be immersive and interactive. We are on-target for all of our heritage exhibits to be completed and ready to open for tourist season in March, 2021.

Upcoming Events

We will be coordinating the Small Business Saturday and assisting our local businesses in attracting customers through the pandemic. We are also providing information and assistance to the Calico Rock and Pineville Fire Departments who are going to host the Annual Lighted Christmas Parade on December 12 at 6:45 p.m. Due to the pandemic, we will not be hosting the Living Windows this year.

Small Business Grants

We have begun our first round of grants for local small businesses as we promised in our AIJ grant application. This first round will help small businesses in the Main Street Historic District with utility bills, sponsored by Main Street Arkansas. Future grant programs will help small businesses throughout the community.

Main Street Improvement Projects

We are finishing up repainting the buildings owned by the museum and installing awnings. Our future improvement plans include fixing the sidewalks, painting handrails, installing rock work on the walls, and adding support structures. These projects are part of our promised capital investments as promised in our AIJ grant application.

With rising COVID-19 cases and the lingering hope for a vaccine, we are bracing for a long winter and preparing ways to support our local businesses. We have seen a slower September and October and anticipate slower tourism through February. Working together, we can get through this. Thank you for your support for the services we provide to our community!

Respectfully submitted,



Visitors

Onsite Visitors	1,041
Museum Website	1,847
<u>Explore Website</u>	<u>671</u>
Total Visitor Contacts	3,559

Local Business Promotion

In November, we unveiled our Shop Local initiative with Facebook and e-mail blasts promoting our local, small businesses. Small business owners have expressed their appreciation for the promotion and indicated it was successful in bringing in customers. The program will continue through the winter to do what we can to help them through these difficult days.

Economic Update

Riverside Pizzeria opened on Main Street in November. We were able to help secure a nonprofit shell company for Brenda Wolf so they may proceed with their application to open the sports bar in Peppersauce Alley. Finally, White River Health Systems has announced the closure of the Grasse Memorial Clinic. The Rural Health Clinic in the hospital will remain open with Dr. Robert Lane and Thelma Owens as practitioners. Baxter Regional Health System has welcomed Dr. Don O. Wright, Dr. Beth Knight, and nurse practitioner Kristie Branscum to their Hometown Clinic next to Harps. They are joining nurse practitioner Kari Lindsey at the practice.

Lighted Christmas Parade

The Calico Rock and Pineville Fire Departments will host the Annual Lighted Christmas Parade on December 12 at 6:45 p.m.

Small Business Grants

We have awarded \$3,000 in grants to six local small businesses to pay for one month's electricity. This project is supported by the Main Street Arkansas Downtown Network and our gift shop sales and investment.

Heritage Center Exhibit Construction

By the time you read this report, we will have completed construction in the exhibit spaces in the heritage center. We will begin finishing out these spaces and installing exhibits and should be ready to open this final portion of the museum expansion in April with tourist season.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

Respectfully submitted,

