

Magical Journeys

Origin and Concept of the Sedona Village Creative Initiative

In November, 2008, Morocco Night successfully launched an innovative new series of events in the Sedona Village called **Magical Journeys**. This program is the brainchild of an informal group, "The Sedona Village Creative Initiative." The group is committed to creating a strong alliance between residents and the business community by designing and fostering events that will enhance the community's economic, social and cultural well-being.

The initiative started when a small group of community-minded friends came together in late summer 2008 to brainstorm ways to give our community an identity, to make it a destination, or at least a stopping point, for visitors and to create an even more vibrant and fulfilling place for "locals" and local businesses. After taking inventory of the marvelous assets that surround the Sedona Village area, the group began working on an action plan.

The group discussed many ideas, including: (1) creating a distinct identity for the Sedona Village area; (2) building bridges and initiating activities that will support the local business community while enriching the quality of life for residents and visitors; (3) developing innovative ways to incorporate more cultural elements, (such as the area's Native American heritage); and (4) facilitating opportunities for greater social interaction among residents.

Additional concepts include: (1) building linkages with surrounding communities; (2) expanding participation in the effort to a larger number of residents and property owners; and (3) finding creative ways to promote the programs and events more effectively within the community and surrounding areas.

From the brainstorming sessions emerged the first undertaking of the group:

"Magical Journeys" ~ Sedona Village *Creative Initiative* ~ Residents *Supporting Local Businesses*. The first program in this series focused on the country of Morocco, a fascinating place where residents Mel and Beverly Copen toured late last year. They are both ardent photographers, and were then exhibiting at the Canyon Moon Theatre Gallery. Consequently, the group proposed that both Canyon Moon Theater and nearby Marketplace Café partner with the group and host the event. The sold out event occurred on Sunday, November 16th, with a Moroccan dinner at the Marketplace Café (including performances by Gypsy Chicks Belly dancers), followed by a presentation of Morocco by Mel

Copen, featuring photographs by both Mel and Beverly, at the Canyon Moon Theatre. All proceeds went to support the restaurant and especially the theater. A half page article on this initiative and the background was featured in the Red Rock News, December 5, 2008; as well as in www.sedona.biz

The December event was the FULL MOON WALK, when the group helped that event in a variety of ways.

2009 Magical Journeys are well underway. January featured a Tuscan Dinner and wine tasting with Cucina Rustica and A'roma wine shoppe. February promoted An Affair to Remember with an Aphrodisiac Dinner and March highlighted the St. Patrick's Day event at Marketplace Cafe. April in Paris was our April event, a fine six course French meal with wines at Alan and Brenda McClean's Fork in the Road restaurant. A special event is being developed for every month, and will involve many of the business organizations in the Sedona Village area. Input from the community is welcomed. Journeys may be to exotic sites on the globe, near and far away; or they may be journeys of the mind. Some may be journeys into music and other creative art forms. Each will be intended to enrich our living environment and to strengthen relationships, within the community, between the residents and the businesses, and with the public at large.

In summary, the initiative was created to make life here even more interesting and rewarding for the residents, and to encourage our many visitors to want to stay - for a few hours, or for a few days, or even to settle in for a lifetime.

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A Series of Community Events

A Big Park Creative Initiative of Residents Supporting Local Businesses

For more information, or to volunteer, contact:

MagicalJourneys@bigparkcouncil.org

Website now under development