

McAllen Heritage Center – 2017 Highlights & Accomplishments

Great things happened at our museum this year! We look forward to the future and ongoing goals to preserve and educate about McAllen's colorful past.

- MHC held two significant fund raising and “awareness-raising” events for the museum again with our participation in the 2017 PalmFest Folklife Celebration which was the 12th anniversary of the festival which was held in October visited by approximately 32,000 attendees! Our Chuckwagon Dinner was held “off premises” starting in 2014 when we partnered with Tony Roma's of McAllen and which has proven a hugely successful endeavor! We will continue to seek and maintain community sponsors and partnerships.
- Over 5,200 visitors came into the museum during the year representing various countries along with US states and Texas cities.
- LEADERSHIP- MHC founding board member and Past President, Elva M. Cerda continues to serve in the position of Managing Director on a volunteer basis but after her retirement from banking at the end of 2017, she will join our staff in the same capacity. She will be at the museum during our hours of operation during the week or by appointment. Elva has been a driving force in our success and will continue to handle financial operations and the general management of the museum. Spud Brown, another founding board member serves as museum historian and handles our museum tours.
- MHC enjoyed new interns and volunteers which continue to be a priority. We are grateful for our staff and core of long-term dedicated MHC volunteers. Mr. & Mrs. Maynard Kreidler, long term volunteers are on a sabbatical as Mr. K recovers from a recent illness. Virginia Hall is our ongoing newspaper archivist and she continues to do a fine job for us.
- The City of McAllen donated the auditorium seats from the McAllen Civic Center after it was demolished. We also have many artifacts at the museum and will work to develop a new exhibit about the Civic Center's history soon. The seats are available for purchase in groups of 2 or 4 and proceeds will benefit our mission at MHC.
- Our Mother's Day outdoor Concert last May was another success with our visitors enjoying traditional serenatas followed by a reception inside the museum.
- The “Artists Corner” committee selected local artist Gabriel Salazar for an art show of his work in late 2016. The opening reception was held in February 2017 to a standing room only audience. The exhibit will run through February 2018.
- Throughout the summer months, Saturday's were dedicated to our younger visitors with watercolor classes, collage making classes, coloring table and the Kids Book Nook. Book donations have kept our Kids Book Nook shelves full!
- Our museum area at PalmFest held the first weekend in October 2017 was a big hit...we displayed McAllen history in chronological order and had McAllen High School yearbooks for viewing! Of course, our Lonesome Dove stage was very popular with local musicians providing entertainment throughout the weekend. We estimated at least 4,000 visitors came by the display area during the festival which is a wonderful accomplishment!
- MHC worked diligently on a grant application with the Heritage Foundation of Hidalgo County to help us remodel our restroom facilities area which will result in about 625sf of added exhibit space. The City of McAllen Development Corp awarded us \$150M towards that project which we hope will begin in mid 2018. The Heritage Foundation also awarded a grant to the City for badly needed roof repairs.
- The McAllen Federation of Women's Clubs surprised us at their October meeting where they announced that MHC is the chosen recipient of their endowment as the club will be closing their operations in early 2018. The endowment is a substantial amount and we are extremely grateful for being chosen and look forward to completing that process in 2018.
- “La Tiendita”, our museum gift shop which opened in February 2013 continues to bring additional revenue for the museum's benefit. Inventory includes varied items for purchase such as historical books, DVDs, artifacts, MHC tee shirts, Palm hats and head bands and bookmarks, commemorative Christmas ornaments, decorative hats and artful post cards. Door donations have also been very successful as we continue to maintain a free admission policy.
- Our new “Oral History” project is off and running in partnership with the City of McAllen Cable Network (MCN). To date, one series has been completed with our very own Spud Brown and we are developing our list of interviewees. The website hosts the application for anyone interested in providing us their memories of McAllen.
- The holiday season was Merry at MHC...goodies were offered to visitors which included homemade “pan de polvo” and a festive holiday party was held for our board and staff in mid December.
- Advertising increased during this year to include “Welcome Home”, “Texas Border Business”, McAllen Liveability magazine, McAllen Parks & Recreation magazine, South Texas Adventures and the Field Trip Guide. Our facebook page has been busy with visitors and inquiries and we hope to continue the momentum.
- Finally, our museum will celebrate 10 years since we opened in June 2008! We plan to host a luncheon in conjunction with the McAllen Chamber of Commerce in celebration of our anniversary and other special events! We are proud and in awe of all that has been accomplished in the name of McAllen history!

Thank you to our constant supporter—The City of McAllen and to all of our corporate sponsors including Tony Roma's and our many, many friends in the community. We hope you are proud of our accomplishments and we welcome you at the Center!