

DESERT CABALLEROS WESTERN MUSEUM

EXPERIENCE THE OLD WEST, THE NEW WEST & THE NEXT WEST

MEDIA RELEASE

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Desert Caballeros Western Museum Receives National Endowment for the Arts Grant

-- Grant to support DCWM's cowboy poetry program --

Wickenburg, AZ – The National Endowment for the Arts has awarded the Desert Caballeros Western Museum a \$10,000 grant to support the Museum's annual student cowboy poetry educational programs. This marks the first time in over 20 years that the Desert Caballeros Western Museum has been directly awarded a federal grant from the NEA.

Each fall, the Museum collaborates with the Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce for a student cowboy poetry educational program, now in its 30th year. The student program is part of the annual Cowboy Christmas Poetry Gathering hosted by the Chamber of Commerce. The gathering is a place and time when cowboys, ranchers, and folks get together to celebrate the past and present through poetry, song, and storytelling, just as they have for over 140 years. Cowboy poetry is a type of folk poetry associated with the lifestyle of cattle ranching in Western North America. Poems reflect the composer's personal experiences and are often accompanied by guitar.

This grant will allow Museum staff to provide outreach to 13 elementary, middle, and high schools in Wickenburg and its surrounding rural communities, including eight Title One schools. 2,500 students will join in assemblies at their school or visit the Museum to experience and learn about cowboy poetry in person. DCWM is teaming up with Arizona's Singing Cowboy Gary Sprague and his horse Dusty to inspire students to compose and perform their own poetry - each student is invited to participate in a student cowboy poetry contest, with the winners chosen by experts from the Wickenburg community. The winning students are invited to recite their poems at the Museum during a Family Day on Saturday, Dec. 8.

"The National Endowment for the Arts is committed to ensuring all Americans have access to the arts, whether they are in a small or large, rural or urban area," said NEA Acting Chairman Mary Anne Carter. "We are proud to support organizations such as the Desert Caballeros Western Museum that are providing opportunities for more people to experience and engage in the arts in their communities."

The student contest winners will recite their poems in the Museum's Cultural Crossroads Learning Center at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 8. The event is free to the public and includes admission to the Museum's Learning Center's exhibitions, including "One Trader's Legacy: Steve Getzwiller Collects the West" and DCWM's annual holiday trains display, "Desert Caballeros Express".

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About the Museum

The Desert Caballeros Western Museum is an accredited museum by the American Alliance of Museums. The Museum is known as *Arizona's Most Western Museum*, and serves over 55,000 visitors a year. The Museum preserves and exhibits the art and history of the Southwest and the desert frontier, and is well-known for its innovative exhibitions and programming. Its world-renowned collection of American Western fine art, American Indian art and artifacts, and captivating interactive exhibits, together, create an unforgettable experience for visitors. The Museum's entire lower level is devoted to a re-creation of life in Late Territorial Wickenburg, including a fascinating permanent exhibit geared for children called *Out on the Ranch*. The Museum further enhances the visitor experience by offering a free audio guide tour system. The Museum also has two stores, The Museum Store and Ranch Dressing.

Visitor Information

The Desert Caballeros Western Museum is located in historic downtown Wickenburg at 21 North Frontier Street.

Current Hours of operation are:

Monday – Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m.

Summer hours of operation are:

(Memorial Day to Labor Day) Tuesday–Saturday 10:00 a.m.– 5:00 p.m.; Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m.

For more information, call 928-684-2272,
email info@westernmuseum.org or
visit www.westernmuseum.org.

General admission is \$12.00 for adults, \$10.00 for seniors (60+) and AAA members, and free for Museum Members, active duty military, and those age 17 and under.

About the National Endowment for the Arts

Established by Congress in 1965, the National Endowment for the Arts is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. Visit arts.gov to learn more about NEA.