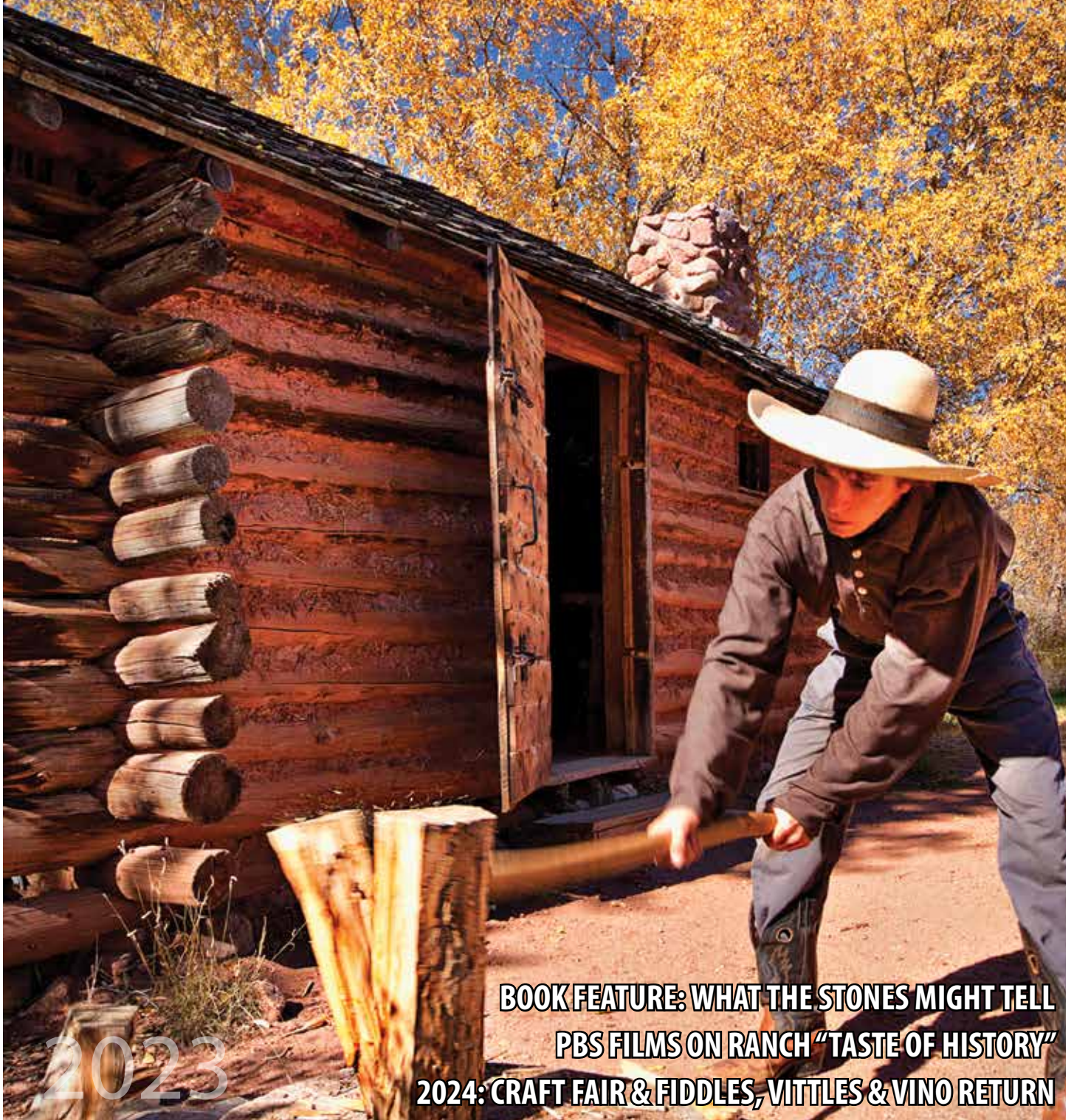


ANNUNCIATOR

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE ROCK LEDGE RANCH LIVING HISTORY ASSOCIATION



BOOK FEATURE: WHAT THE STONES MIGHT TELL
PBS FILMS ON RANCH "TASTE OF HISTORY"

2024: CRAFT FAIR & FIDDLES, VITTLES & VINO RETURN

2023

ROCK LEDGE RANCH FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello, Friends and Members of the Living History Association,



WHAT A GREAT SEASON AT ROCK LEDGE RANCH!

We're about to reach the end of a successful Living History season at Rock Ledge Ranch. Attendance is up across the board, and two of the major events reached near-record attendance! It sure helps to have the 30th Street repair work completed and the new signage that displays Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site on equal terms with Garden of the Gods Park. Combined with the new ranch gateway coming soon, we'll see even more people visiting the ranch next summer.

ROCK LEDGE RANCH GATEWAY...

The gateway should be up by the time of the Holiday Teas and the Holiday Evening events in December. Last week, Andy Morris and I picked out the three (massive) trees that will be used to construct the gateway. These were trees that were blown down by the recent tornado that moved through the forest on Pikes Peak. What a great find! Thanks to the City of Colorado Springs Pikes Peak staff for helping us locate and secure these trees!

HELP WANTED!

We have two officer vacancies on the Living History Association Board of Directors: Vice President and Secretary. Your LHA Board meets once a month on the 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 PM in the Carriage House. If you've ever thought about becoming more involved in ranch-related matters, now is an exciting time to step up. Drop a note or give me a call to learn more about these positions. Next year will be a year of growth as we forecast increased summer attendance, more school programs and the conclusion of the fund raising for the Chambers Family greenhouse project. Speaking of which...

CLIMATE BATTERY?

The latest greenhouse design will include using the earth below the greenhouse as a "battery" to store heat all summer to be used as the primary heating source all winter. Eco Systems Design, Inc. defines the climate battery as "a system that pushes warm humid greenhouse air underground through buried tubing to transfer heat to the greenhouse soil, storing heat energy for times of needed heating. We refer to the system of tubing, risers, manifolds, fans, and the insulated mass of soil it interacts with all as the climate battery. It is referred to as a battery for its capacity to store energy." We are excited to move forward with a state-of-the-art greenhouse design in much the same way the Chambers family implemented state-of-the-art agriculture practices when they lived on the property!

I hope to see you December 9th at the Holiday Evening event!

Respectfully yours,

Warren Wright

president@rockledgeranch.com

The Living History Association (LHA), a community based organization, members are friends who support Rock Ledge Ranch to produce immersive historic experiences to enrich life today by connecting the land, its people, history and nature.

COVER PHOTO: ROCK LEDGE RANCH, GALLOWAY HOMESTEAD SITE

CORRECTION: (SUMMER 2023 ISSUE)

Explore the Rock Ledge House and find the original doll of the daughter of Elsie Chambers, Eleanor - who grew up in this home in Colorado Springs during the late 1800s. Don't miss the General Store that sells era doll clothing to fit 18" dolls. These make wonderful holiday gifts! Crafted by our own volunteers.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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John Hulett, Historical Interpreter

Clay Evans, Maintenance Tech II

Donna Tomaselli, Period Clothing Librarian

Colorado Springs Parks & Recreation

Attn: Rock Ledge Ranch

1401 Recreation Way

Colorado Springs, CO 80904

WWW.ROCKLEDGERANCH.COM

ROCK LEDGE RANCH NEWS



HOLIDAY EVENING

December 9, 2023

We welcome you to our Holiday Evening at Rock Ledge Ranch where it will be transformed with the sights, sounds, and aromas of this traditionally festive season!

The evening features **St. Nicholas in the Barn, wagon rides, old-time musical entertainment, 1860s Homestead Cabin storytelling, Blacksmith Shop demonstrations, Victorian celebrations in the 1880s Rock Ledge House, and Edwardian festivities in the 1907 Orchard House.**

Purchase those extra special Ranch-made gifts at the General Store! Hot cider, cocoa, and other sweet treats will be available at several locations around the Ranch. Visit the Studio to make a special holiday craft. Members free. Don't miss this magical evening event!

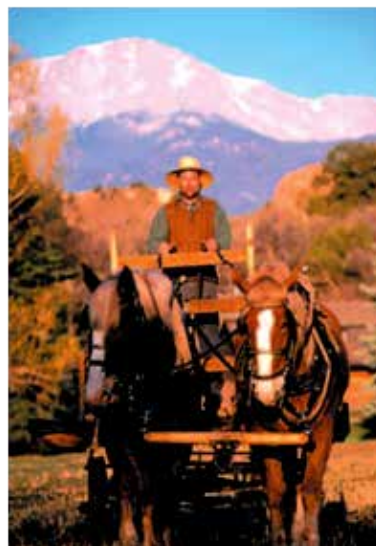


ROCK LEDGE RANCH NEWS

A JOB WELL DONE

Andy Morris, Rock Ledge Ranch's leading man, retiring after 26 years

By Danny Summers, Living History Association Board Member



In the summer of 1996, Andy Morris and his wife, Cynthia, were walking through Garden of the Gods Park when they reached a ridge separating it from nearby Rock Ledge Ranch.

"I didn't even know what this thing was," Andy recalls with his first encounter with the Ranch. "I saw the Rock Ledge House and the Orchard House. I saw the fields and I saw the pond. I remember saying, 'Wow, look at that place. How amazing would it be to live there?'"

A year later, Andy, who was working at a living history museum in Littleton, was contacted by the then director of the Ranch about his interest in applying for the foreman job. Andy quickly jumped at the opportunity and the rest, as the saying goes, is history.

On Dec 31, Andy will officially retire from the Ranch in order to pursue a blacksmith business, which will be out of his new home in Woodland Park.

"I became the lucky slob who was able to live at this Ranch," Andy says with a smile. "It's been labor love. It's never been a 9-t0-5 job. Here, you're on the clock all the time. But there's not a better job on earth."

Andy eventually became the Ranch's Parks Operations Administrator. He and Cynthia raised their two children, Parker and Casey, in the old house located on the Ranch's south side.

"I never thought about whether this would be a full-time career until I retired," Andy says. "I assumed it could be because I loved it here so much."

ROCK LEDGE RANCH NEWS



"There have always been a lot of challenges, but I felt it was worth it to make this a career. Living on this site. Living in that house. Raising my kids here has made it more memorable than I could ever imagine."

Andy believes the Ranch will continue to thrive.

"I feel like I am leaving the Ranch in a better place," Andy says. "We have more events, like the Harvest Festival, and a successful fall and spring school program, and a homeschool enrichment program."

Andy has been the face of the Ranch for a quarter century. He's grown the Ranch's highly important blacksmith shop and under his leadership, the junior docent program has reached an even higher level of prestige. He is quick to say that he couldn't have done anything by himself.

"My staff and the LHA (Living History Association) have been extraordinary," Andy says. "They have given so much to the Ranch because they love this place. Because of them, the Ranch is in really good hands."

Among his most trusted employees and confidants is Melissa Keown, the Ranch's lead interpreter who has worked with him for a decade.

"The best word to describe Andy is love." Melissa says. "Andy loves Rock Ledge Ranch and has dedicated his career to making it a preeminent living history site. He loves learning and lives to be a part of the 'aha moment,' especially with students who visit the Ranch. He loves sharing his passion for blacksmithing and making magic with metal in the shop. He loves telling stories and has caught most of us hook, line and sinker on more than one occasion."

"But most of all, Andy loves the ever-changing 'Ranch Family' – our term for staff and volunteers. He has been my friend and mentor during my time at Rock Ledge and I'm a better person for it. He will be missed and he can't be replaced."

Andy's catalogue of memories include a variety of wildlife, including catching hundreds of rattlesnakes. One memorable event Andy will never forget involved a large furry animal he originally thought was a dog.

"I saw someone walking a Newfoundland on the Ranch with no leash," Andy recalls. "I was busy in the blacksmith shop and when I finally had time I walked up behind the Rock Ledge House where I thought the dog and owner had gone. I got up there and came around a corner and the dog and I both got spooked. I took a closer look and it wasn't a Newfoundland at all. It was a bear. My heart skipped. It looked at me and I knew not to run. Fortunately, it spun around and ran off. Boy, was I relieved."

Andy and Cynthia have many great memories of their time at the Ranch. They have walked the grounds hundreds of times sharing about their days and contemplating life in retirement. He said he plans to take one final walk at the Ranch with Cynthia to the top of the ridge above the Rock Ledge House.

"I'll stand there holding my wife's hand and say, 'We've had a good ride.'"



RANCH EVENT CALENDAR 2023

FALL - EARLY WINTER 2023

OCTOBER

- 7 **HARVEST FESTIVAL**
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- 5, 12, 19, 26 **BARNYARD BUDDIES**
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (Oct. 5 only)
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
- 25 **FALL HOMESCHOOL DAY**

NOVEMBER

- 11 **EVERYTHING BUT THE OINK**
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 **BARNYARD BUDDIES**
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (Nov. 2 only)
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

DECEMBER

- 1,2,8, 15, 16 **HOLIDAY TEAS & TOURS**
- 9 **HOLIDAY EVENING**
4 - 8 p.m.

2024 events will be published online and announced in our Spring Issue.

PBS FILMS AT THE RANCH “A TASTE OF HISTORY”

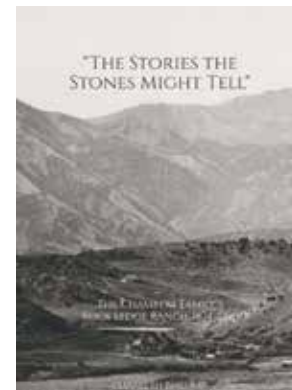
In August 2023, the film crew came to the Ranch to record Rock Ledge Ranch and it’s historical significance in American history. The episode will air the Fall of 2024!

Thank you to the Ranch staff for connecting the crew and everyone involved in the filming, cooking, and showcasing our beautiful location and historic culinary treats!

A Taste of History® is a travel and cooking public television series that explores America’s culinary beginnings. Host Chef Walter Staib brings history to life through 18th century recipe recreation. Filmed in international locations and historic kitchens of America, **A Taste of History** gives viewers an in-depth look into the culture and cuisine that shaped American history.

Fiddles, Vittles and Vino and Craft Fair Are back! We are proud to bring back the much anticipated **Craft Fair** and **Fiddles, Vittles and Vino**, a Rock Ledge Ranch fundraiser. Over these last 3 years we have not been able to host such large events, but the momentum has been building and we are confident to announce these beloved events are returning. If you have questions about being a vendor or participating please reach out to the Ranch directly.

ROCK LEDGE RANCH BOOK FEATURE: The Stories The Stones Might Tell



Author: Elizabeth Borders, published May 2022

Somewhere within the walls of the Rock Ledge House in the year 1885, Elsie Woolsey Chambers wrote a story. More than a story, a history. Pondering the removal of the original cabin on the Rock Ledge Ranch property, Elsie W. Chambers sat down with pencil and paper to write an account she titled “*What Happened While the Cabin Lived.*” The story, however, is not really about the cabin. Rather than dwelling on the ranch’s first occupant, Walter Galloway, and what happened within his cabin, Elsie used the cabin as a framework for the history of what happened outside it. Her account chronicles the events experienced by the first wave of settlers who had been making history in the Colorado Springs area. Perceptively, Elsie envisioned that the story of Walter Galloway and his property could be used as a window into the larger themes and history of the period. Their land had value beyond its borders. Their story could tell a broader story about their community, region, state, and even their country.

ROCK LEDGE RANCH BOOK FEATURE: The Stories The Stones Might Tell

Author: Elizabeth Borders, published May 2022 (continued)

This is the basic premise of microhistory. Microhistory perceives the unique ability of individual stories to reveal larger themes and ideas. It seeks to learn about the universals through the particulars. Individual stories can reveal elements of the past that historians would otherwise miss. Houses and homes of the past hold stories that textbooks, museums, and battlefields cannot. This is why house museums and living history sites like Rock Ledge Ranch are so essential—they show us truths that we might otherwise miss, put history in a perspective we might otherwise be blind to, and give us a personal connection to people we might otherwise never know.

The Stories the Stones Might Tell presents a continuation of the Chambers’ legacy. If the small Galloway homestead cabin can teach about the early history of the Colorado Springs region, how much more can the Rock Ledge House contribute! The Chambers were both exemplary and essential in their community, so the major themes of their lives reflect important themes in the Colorado Springs region. Like “*What Happened While the Cabin Lived,*” this story is not just about one family. It explores the larger history of the surrounding region of Colorado Springs and beyond through the lens of the Chambers’ family and their home here at Rock Ledge Ranch. *Excerpt from Introduction by Elizabeth Borders.*

About the Author

I first experienced Rock Ledge Ranch as a visitor on July 4th, 2011, and I’ve been hooked ever since. As a young junior docent in the Rock Ledge House, with my sunbonnet hanging down my back like Laura Ingalls, I reveled in helping with chores, baking, and games while dressed in period clothing. By the time I graduated high school, Rock Ledge Ranch had become a second home, and helped me find my direction in life. Seeing people’s eyes light up when something made sense, seeing a kid delight in a “new” game that was actually quite old, learning and demonstrating the old methods of cooking, cleaning, and handicrafts—it was essential. Essential to me, because I loved it, and loved the way it always challenged me to learn and try new things, but also essential to our culture.

So I headed off to the little town of Purcellville, Virginia, to study history at Patrick Henry College. To earn my B.A. in history at Patrick Henry College I was required to complete an 80+ page senior thesis based on original research. Growing in the back of my mind the first few years there was the idea of telling the Chambers’ story. And my senior year of college, I took the Ranch back with me. Every Thursday afternoon I’d find myself a quiet corner of a coffee shop, open my laptop, notebook, and yellow shipping envelope full of documents, and dive headlong into research and writing.

I’ve never enjoyed a project in my life more than writing that senior thesis. It was so immensely satisfying to have a focused research project where every week, whether I wrote my goal of words or not, I learned something new. Slowly, pieces I had never understood before fell into place. These were no longer facts and anecdotes that I shared as I gave a house tour—they were elements of a bigger story. Each fact recorded, each rabbit trail of research, each book searched through, each photograph and tax record and census report and letter, they spurred me on to find out more!

I’m not saying it wasn’t ever a struggle. Some days, the words just wouldn’t come, or the rabbit trails led nowhere. I had to labor to bring together the facts and chronologies into a story—but it feels right to have worked hard for the Rock Ledge House and the Chambers. Their story deserves to be told. It is one of the greatest honors I have ever received that I got to tell it.

I am sure, further down the road, this story will have more light shed on it as those who come after me unearth new things. Even in the past year, I’ve learned more details! But the Rock Ledge House has given me a passion for research and writing, storytelling and teaching. In a magnificent way, this book is Rock Ledge Ranch’s gift to me. It made a place I love into a place where I belong and am deeply rooted, for my story now intertwines with the story of Rock Ledge Ranch. Not just as an author, but as a historical interpreter in the Chambers’ home and the teacher for School at the RANCH. The Ranch has helped me find my calling, vocation, and mission—and it’s right here, at the intersection of history and education.

On Sale Now! Get your copy in the Rock Ledge Ranch General Store. Makes a great holiday gift!



LIVING HISTORY ASSOCIATION UPDATES

We support the Ranch with donations, volunteers, and looking ahead to the newest historic site on the Ranch, the replica of the Chambers greenhouse. Holiday season provides many opportunities for giving and giving back. Consider a donation to Rock Ledge Ranch for the end-of-year giving. We appreciate every dollar and maximize its benefits with volunteers and supporting staff. If you're looking for an experience we offer gift memberships and will take care of the shipping for you! See the form to the right to complete an order.

We wish you a happy holiday season! From all of us at the Living History Association

GREENHOUSE STRUCTURE PROGRESS

GREENHOUSE RENDERING AND ARCHITECTS UPDATES

The architect has supplied new renderings for the greenhouse. To maximize winter sun capture and potential growing space. The "boiler shed" classroom is envisioned as a lean-to greenhouse attached to the main greenhouse. This will allow additional flexible use space and reduce shading from the south – the orientation most important for capturing solar energy in the winter months. Shade cloth can be hung in the summer to reduce heat gain.

HISTORY & ABOUT THE GREENHOUSE

The Chambers family moved to Rock Ledge Ranch in 1874 and built a magnificent stone home today known as the Rock Ledge House. By 1880, they realized that a greenhouse was essential to protect the crops from insects and the harsh winter conditions in Colorado. The growing season was just too short without a greenhouse. The picture below shows the original 1880 greenhouse with the steam boiler shed just to the left of the residence.

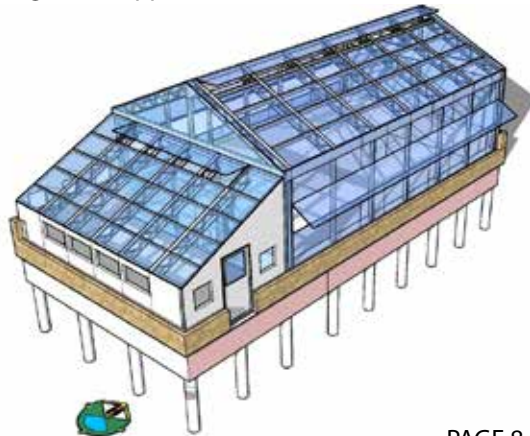
The original greenhouse has long been gone. The Rock Ledge House has been fully restored inside and out to represent life as the Chambers family experienced it from 1874-1900. Now is the time to rebuild the greenhouse in its original location!

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The new greenhouse will boost the curriculum of our current school (and homeschool) programs at Rock Ledge Ranch. Students will be able to "get their hands in the dirt". We are so excited to add this important feature to our school programs. From heritage seeds will grow the same varieties of food that the Chambers family raised. Food that can be seen, touched, tasted and canned (preserved) just as pioneers in the 1880-1900 time period.

BUILDING DETAILS

The new greenhouse will be 20X30' with a steam boiler shed set to the side. The stone facade will match the stone of the Rock Ledge House. This new greenhouse is designed to appear as it would have back in the heyday of the Chambers family.



SCAN QR
CODE
DONATE



LIVING HISTORY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP & SUPPORT

Yes, I WANT TO Support Rock Ledge Ranch

Membership Benefits include:

- Annual Pass: Admission to the *Living History Program* and most events
- Guest Passes at each level
- General Store 15% discount
- Newsletter, "Annunciator" Quarterly & eNewsletters

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

(plus GUEST PASSES)

2 GUEST PASSES:

SENIOR (55+)	\$25
SENIOR COUPLE	\$30
INDIVIDUAL	\$35
FAMILY	\$60

5 GUEST PASSES:

CONTRIBUTING	\$120
SUPPORTING	\$250
BENEFACTOR	\$500

10 GUEST PASSES:

LEGACY (5 YEAR)	\$1000
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CHECK ALL THAT APPLY: DONATION MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL GIFT

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DONATION - BARN YARD ANIMAL FUND

DONATION - GENERAL OPERATING FUND

GIFT MEMBERSHIP TO: _____

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ONLINE: WWW.ROCKLEDGERANCH.COM

BY MAIL: ROCK LEDGE LIVING HISTORY ASSOCIATION (or LHA)
PO BOX 6299 COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80934
CHECKS PAYABLE TO: "LHA"

VOLUNTEER IN 2024

Volunteers can help on many levels from helping out with extra hands at the Ranch. We welcome support during events even to getting fully certified and trained as a historic interpreter through the *City of Colorado Springs Parks & Recreation Department*. There is a opportunity to fit anyone's level of interest. Visit our website volunteer page for more information.

ROCK LEDGE RANCH Artisan Sewing Group - Volunteers Needed

Come show and share your sewing interests with the Rock Ledge Ranch Artisans. On the second Tuesday of every month, the group meets from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Carriage House to create handmade items to sell in the General Store. Sewing experience isn't necessary, but helpful, as the group makes dolls, doll clothes, aprons, embroidered tea towels, table runners, hot mats and more!

Bring your sewing kit and your lunch and help make neat items for the General Store which proceeds support the Ranch.

Please reach out to organizer:
Marsha Davis (719) 227-7713

LEARN MORE:

www.rockledgeranch.com/GETINVOLVED

Learn more inside this edition!

Holiday Evening at Rock Ledge Ranch

SAVE THE DATE:
December 9, 2023



PO Box 6299
Colorado Springs, CO 80934