

Desert Mountain's Land Preservation Group Supports Neighboring Community with Grants

The Desperados Contribute to Open Space Preservation and Cultural Enrichment Efforts

SCOTTSDALE, AZ, UNITED STATES, November 13, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Desperados](#), a nonprofit organization committed to land, wildlife, and environmental conservation, as well as cultural enrichment in and around the Desert Mountain community, announced two significant philanthropic grants to [Carefree Park](#) and to the [Sonoran Arts League](#). The presentations were made during a November 10th event in Desert Mountain.



L to R: John Crane, Carefree Mayor; Troy Gillenwater, Desperados; Sharon Wong, Desperados; Wendy Mattes, Carefree Park; David Court, Sonoran Arts League; Robert Borsch, Desperados

The Desperados contributions support two worthwhile efforts in the neighboring Desert Mountain community. Carefree Park is working to acquire the last remaining 48-acres of accessible Sonoran Desert in Carefree and preserving it for all to enjoy. The Sonoran Arts League is an arts organization dedicated to actively advancing art, artists, and art education for the benefit of all those who appreciate the arts.

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The Desperados are proud partners of both organizations and support the great work they are doing throughout the Desert Foothills community.”

*Troy Gillenwater, Desperados
Co-Founder and Vice
President*

“The Desperados applaud the efforts of both Carefree Park and the Sonoran Arts League,” said Desperados co-founder and vice president Troy Gillenwater. “Carefree Park’s work to preserve a pristine parcel of desert and the Sonoran Arts League’s mission of advancing the arts are in perfect

alignment with our values. The Desperados are proud partners of both organizations and support the great work they are doing throughout the Desert Foothills community.”

“There is a sense of urgency to save this parcel of land in Carefree,” said Carefree Park co-founder and president Wendy Mattes. “We are especially grateful to the Desperados for their financial support, and perhaps more importantly, for their encouragement and moral support.”

“The Sonoran Arts League’s vision is to inspire a life of art in our community,” said Sonoran Arts League president David Court. “The generous support from our friends, the Desperados, helps make it possible for us to provide high-quality art and helps to fund educational programs for a broad spectrum of constituents, including free classes for Veterans and youth.

Since the Desperados were formed in 2016, the group has supported neighbors who share and promote its mission with more than \$200,000 in grants, including regional museums and art organizations, land trusts and government agencies, wildlife and environmental conservancies, and outdoor recreation associations.

ABOUT THE DESPERADOS

The Desperados were founded in 2016 when two outdoor enthusiasts realized the potential to protect a 3,000-acre wilderness preserve for the Desert Mountain community by establishing a carefully developed trails system. The trails were master planned and developed over a decade, modeled after the highly regarded McDowell Sonoran Preserve trail system. The result is a magnificent, private 25-mile stacked loop trails system that won the national “Best New Trails” award from American Trails. Since then, many other trails amenities have followed. Over the years, the Desperados grew into an outdoor enthusiast group with several hundred members. In time, Desperados philanthropy extended into the Tonto Foothills region, supporting 17 like-minded philanthropic organizations dedicated to preserving the natural environment. Today the Desperados are a 501(c)(3) organization comprised of volunteer leaders, active steward members and celebrated contributors all focused on furthering the Desperados’ mission.

ABOUT CAREFREE PARK



Location of proposed Carefree Park



Works of Sonoran Arts League artists on display

Carefree Park is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with the mission of acquiring, preserving, and making accessible to the community the last remaining 48-acres of accessible Sonoran Desert in Carefree, Arizona. Supporters are volunteers who love the natural look and feel of the Sonoran Desert, and who are firmly committed to preserving the land as open space for all to enjoy. Co-founded by Wendy Mattes, the organization's primary objective is to acquire the land for the benefit of future generations. Carefree Park is cultivating public and private partnerships, conducting fundraising activities, and accepting donations and pledges from individuals, corporations, and foundation grants. Carefree Park's strongest commitment is toward preservation of this land, which is home to hundreds of ancient saguaros, natural Sonoran Desert vegetation, and is a thriving wildlife habitat and wildlife corridor which must be preserved.

ABOUT THE SONORAN ARTS LEAGUE

The Sonoran Arts League is a non-profit 501(c)(3), volunteer-based, arts service organization dedicated to actively advancing art, artists, and art education. The League, celebrating its 50th year, began in 1975 as an informal gathering of local artists who put on art shows under the Tamarisk groves in Cave Creek, Arizona. Today, the organization has grown to over 550 members. The League offers high quality art activities, including education and programs for a broad spectrum of constituents. Notable programs impacting target groups include: Hidden in the Hills Artist Studio Tour, our signature event that offers opportunities for the public to learn about artists' techniques from 165 artists at 41 studios; Empty Bowls, benefiting the Foothills Food Bank; scholarships for graduating high school Seniors, year-round free youth art classes; art events, mentoring and workshops for youth; Art in Public Places, bringing free art events and exhibits to the general public; a Veteran Art Program with free art classes and exhibits for military veterans; and art classes and workshops for community members.

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