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00:00:02,470 --> 00:00:07,330

Come join us, explore the impact of small business here in rural Arkansas.

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00:00:07,330 --> 00:00:12,970

What challenges would you face? Who can help you meet those challenges? How do you get in touch with others like you?

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00:00:12,970 --> 00:00:21,820

This is CREATE BRIDGES Arkansas. And we invite you to come cross these bridges with us.

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00:00:21,820 --> 00:00:26,200

Hello, listeners, and welcome to another installment of Small Business Big Rural Impact.

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00:00:26,200 --> 00:00:33,940

My guest today is Gloriaann Sanders of Calico Rock. She wears many hats and is a de facto leader and community advocate for the town.

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00:00:33,940 --> 00:00:38,380

I asked Gloriaann to focus on her role as executive director of the Calico Rock Museum and

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00:00:38,380 --> 00:00:43,390

Visitor's Center and the impact it has had on the downtown and its revitalization.

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00:00:43,390 --> 00:00:49,300

The center also hosts the Calico Rock Artisans' Cooperative, which includes 29 local artists,

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00:00:49,300 --> 00:00:57,330

the Thomlinson Art and Science Center, the History Center, Arkansas Main Street of Calico Rock and the Marketplace Thrift Store.

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00:00:57,330 --> 00:01:02,540

If you're wondering how Gloriaann manages all these different organizations, she doesn't do it alone.

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00:01:02,540 --> 00:01:06,750

The community supports the center through philanthropic support and volunteering.

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00:01:06,750 --> 00:01:07,440

As a result,

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00:01:07,440 --> 00:01:16,740

the Museum and Visitor's Center has gone from 500 visitors annually in 2007 when it opened to nearly 2000 visitors a month during its peak season.

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00:01:16,740 --> 00:01:24,730

And if you look around the area, you'll see Main Street full of businesses like cafes, restaurants, shops, boutiques and guide services.

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00:01:24,730 --> 00:01:31,380

As a result, Calico Rock has seen growth in the last few years and a substantial increase in tax revenue for the city.

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00:01:31,380 --> 00:01:37,530

Gloriaann shared that the community is working on launching an entertainment district on Pepicello Street just behind Main Street,

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00:01:37,530 --> 00:01:41,370

where they intend on having more outdoor entertainment, dining and events.

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00:01:41,370 --> 00:01:46,020

Whether your community wants to do one or all of the things happening in Calico Rock right now,

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00:01:46,020 --> 00:01:51,900

Gloriaann is a great resource and you'll want to hear what she has to say as she shares her story and the lessons learned.

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00:01:51,900 --> 00:01:57,300

She also serves on our Create Bridges Regional Steering Committee and we are incredibly grateful to have her.

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00:01:57,300 --> 00:02:03,970

Without further ado, here's our conversation. Hello Gloriaann, thank you for joining me on the podcast today.

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00:02:03,970 --> 00:02:09,210

I appreciate you being here. I'm glad to be here and to tell you all about Calico Rock.

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00:02:09,210 --> 00:02:17,310

It's my thing. Well, good deal. Well, I have a lot of questions and hopefully we can cover a lot of ground in a short amount of time.

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00:02:17,310 --> 00:02:22,110

But for our listeners who didn't hear you on a previous episode, we've had you on before,

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00:02:22,110 --> 00:02:30,210

just give us a few details on who you are, what you do and what happens here at the Calico Rock Museum and Visitor Center.

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00:02:30,210 --> 00:02:38,700

Oh, my. You asked a lot. That's a mouthful right there. I am actually the executive director for the Calico Rock Community Foundation,

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00:02:38,700 --> 00:02:46,050

which is an umbrella for the Calico Rock museum called Rock Artists and Artisans Cooperative,

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00:02:46,050 --> 00:02:53,070

the Thomlinson Art and Science Center, the History Center and Arkansas Main Street, as well as the marketplace.

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00:02:53,070 --> 00:02:59,670

And I happen to be the executive director for all of that. So in my spare time, I try to do what I can.

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00:02:59,670 --> 00:03:06,510

Wow. Well, we could certainly have six or seven episodes there. Sspecifically focusing on the museum and visitor center,

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00:03:06,510 --> 00:03:10,440

can you share with our listeners what some of the amenities are that you offer to the community here?

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00:03:10,440 --> 00:03:15,060

And then what is something that tourists can look forward to that are traveling through the area?

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00:03:15,060 --> 00:03:23,610

First off, we we don't have a Chamber of Commerce here, so we have taken over that responsibility in some ways by having a visitor's center here.

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00:03:23,610 --> 00:03:30,570

The visitor center is where you can get all the information about what's going on, brochures, state brochures,

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00:03:30,570 --> 00:03:36,960

local brochures, that type of thing, to let people know what's actually happening in the area.

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00:03:36,960 --> 00:03:43,500

We maintain a good quality of books and different things to let people know what's happening in

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00:03:43,500 --> 00:03:50,490

Calico Rock. When you come in here or you're coming when you when you come into my building,

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00:03:50,490 --> 00:03:54,570

because we're actually three buildings we will show or four buildings now.

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00:03:54,570 --> 00:03:58,530

You're in three different ones. You're coming into the center.

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00:03:58,530 --> 00:04:07,260

The visitor center is our artisan cooperative also, which is 29 different local people that can make their items and bring them in for us to sell you.

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00:04:07,260 --> 00:04:13,950

Then you can take a left and go into our Thomlinson Art and Science Center, which is a gallery of our own,

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00:04:13,950 --> 00:04:23,910

which is museum based and owned, and also have an art center for local artists to bring their wares and sell them here.

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00:04:23,910 --> 00:04:29,850

We are well aware that there's a lot of artists out there. We just need to get them to understand we're here to try to help them.

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00:04:29,850 --> 00:04:34,950

That's what we're here for. We trying to do that with our cooperative as well.

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00:04:34,950 --> 00:04:41,280

And then you take a left and go into our history center, which isn't 100 percent.

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00:04:41,280 --> 00:04:47,220

It's like 98 percent finished, but there's still a little bit more left to be done, which is a new center.

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00:04:47,220 --> 00:04:53,130

We have 1400 square feet in this particular building that I'm in today, and that's a lot.

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00:04:53,130 --> 00:05:00,870

And which we have the one side is totally exhibit space, interactive exhibit space, all hand done by us.

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00:05:00,870 --> 00:05:04,050

We don't jury out or do anything. Let everybody come in.

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00:05:04,050 --> 00:05:10,530

We don't have a display company do it. We do it all ourselves. So it's a little more intense probably.

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00:05:10,530 --> 00:05:16,350

But it to me it just means a lot more because you can really get get involved in it.

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00:05:16,350 --> 00:05:24,990

So that's what we have on our side. And then on the other side of the street we have the marketplace and that is an antique store.

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00:05:24,990 --> 00:05:33,330

So we've kind of covered all gauntlets that we can, I think, you know, and then into that also comes to Pepper Sauce, which is a clothing store, too.

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00:05:33,330 --> 00:05:37,050

So that's what we've got here. It's a unique situation.

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00:05:37,050 --> 00:05:44,790

You have an awful lot going within the three within the two buildings we have the the

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00:05:44,790 --> 00:05:51,360

foundation has really taken as serious as far as bringing business into Calico Rock,

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00:05:51,360 --> 00:05:54,810

maintaining it and keeping it going.

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00:05:54,810 --> 00:06:01,540

And that's what we do. So how long has the museum and visitor center been operating?

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00:06:01,540 --> 00:06:08,080

We've actually started in 2007 and we started in a one room shack, actually.

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00:06:08,080 --> 00:06:13,930

The story goes that I had this dream and I thought that there are so many artisans

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00:06:13,930 --> 00:06:18,250

in this area that need to need to come out of the woods and make themselves known.

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00:06:18,250 --> 00:06:23,470

We have so many different facets and maintaining what's from the past.

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00:06:23,470 --> 00:06:27,490

To me, that's the thing that I keep reminding people come in.

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00:06:27,490 --> 00:06:32,050

This art that these people are doing has been passed down from generation to generation.

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00:06:32,050 --> 00:06:35,080

We don't have all that I wish we had. We don't have broom makers.

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00:06:35,080 --> 00:06:39,340

And I was very fortunate and just got a blacksmith person which thrilled me to death.

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00:06:39,340 --> 00:06:45,190

So I'm just, you know, things of the past don't need, they need to be kept going.

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00:06:45,190 --> 00:06:50,890

And that's what that's what our attempt is to do. But we started off with the concept.

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00:06:50,890 --> 00:06:54,310

I called a couple of people and said, look, the town's going down to pot.

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00:06:54,310 --> 00:06:58,240

We need to need to actually stop people on either side of the bridge,

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00:06:58,240 --> 00:07:03,940

those going into Stone County that are going through Calico so fast that they didn't they didn't want to stop.

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00:07:03,940 --> 00:07:08,200

And those coming through going to mountain home that we're going through here fast and it stop.

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00:07:08,200 --> 00:07:14,110

And so I told them, I said, you know, we need to do is we need to get them to say, hey, wow, this is a cute little town.

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00:07:14,110 --> 00:07:18,400

Let's get let's have people stop here and let's what do we have to do to do it?

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00:07:18,400 --> 00:07:24,850

And I did I did say this unfortunately. I did say, well, we need to clean up the place and we got to make it a cute place.

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00:07:24,850 --> 00:07:30,820

And we don't want people saying how fast kind of get through the dump. We want to say how, you know, wow, it's cute.

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00:07:30,820 --> 00:07:35,680

Let's let's stop and see what we have to see. And we've been able to do that.

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00:07:35,680 --> 00:07:40,090

We've been successful at it. It's been a continuous project.

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00:07:40,090 --> 00:07:46,180

It's something that I tell people that if you don't have a love for it and you don't have a passion for it,

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00:07:46,180 --> 00:07:51,860

don't even started because it takes over your life. Amen to that.

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00:07:51,860 --> 00:07:59,680

I'm thinking about other communities in the area say they want to start a visitors center or museum of their community.

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00:07:59,680 --> 00:08:02,950

Explain a little bit of what that was like for you all in the beginning.

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00:08:02,950 --> 00:08:08,350

Well, for us, in the beginning, when we purchased, we had a building, but we had nothing in it.

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00:08:08,350 --> 00:08:11,800

And you know what that means? I mean, the insurance has gone up. Everything is happening.

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00:08:11,800 --> 00:08:16,420

So I went to the board and I said, I have a project and I have a plan.

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00:08:16,420 --> 00:08:20,680

And they always roll their eyes because I know I am coming up with something again.

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00:08:20,680 --> 00:08:25,780

And what I had said is, I told you before, we need to have an artisan's.

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00:08:25,780 --> 00:08:33,280

I wanted to make this an artisan village similar to what they have all over the world and unique and different places.

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00:08:33,280 --> 00:08:37,870

This is not this is a destination. You're not just happening to drive through Calico Rock.

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00:08:37,870 --> 00:08:43,900

You know that. You know, those roads just don't you don't see signs that say Calico Rock right around the corner.

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00:08:43,900 --> 00:08:48,880

Now you're coming here. Not yet. I'm working on it.

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00:08:48,880 --> 00:08:55,480

So what I did is I said, I'll take the building over, but I'm going to put an artisan co-operative in it.

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00:08:55,480 --> 00:08:59,470

While the board was like, oh, wait a minute, this is this is a museum.

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00:08:59,470 --> 00:09:04,300

This we're not we're not going to let her take this over and do this. And I said, no, let's just see what happens.

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00:09:04,300 --> 00:09:09,130

And in actuality, what I do, because now I happen to be also president of the AMA.

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00:09:09,130 --> 00:09:18,310

And for the last two years, I was vice president and I went throughout the state and actually would talk to people about wanting to start museums,

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00:09:18,310 --> 00:09:21,460

because once you start a museum, how are you going to do it?

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00:09:21,460 --> 00:09:26,620

How are you going to do what? So my suggestion is always to open it with an artisan cooperative.

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00:09:26,620 --> 00:09:34,030

The way I did it was we had I had 12 vendors that I had that wanted to walk through the door.

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00:09:34,030 --> 00:09:38,950

I chargeD 25 dollars a month for the rent, which is cheap, as anybody will know.

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00:09:38,950 --> 00:09:40,660

And then I took 20 percent. Well,

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00:09:40,660 --> 00:09:50,080

that 12 people and that 25 dollars a month was enough to cover the water bill a little bit to cover the electric bill and was enough to do something.

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00:09:50,080 --> 00:09:57,490

But the best part is those 12 people became my employees because part of the deal was they had to put in one day a month.

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00:09:57,490 --> 00:10:04,540

Now I've got the employees didn't have to pay for it because to be part of the co-op, they have to put in the time.

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00:10:04,540 --> 00:10:10,990

So it's it's an it's a win-win situation. They really have they were really thrilled to do it.

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00:10:10,990 --> 00:10:14,800

They were able they were could get in dirt cheap as far as rent was concerned.

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00:10:14,800 --> 00:10:19,630

They had a nice, clean place and they had everything they needed and we supported them.

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00:10:19,630 --> 00:10:28,330

So that is why when the board years later said, well, you know, we really can't get rid of the co-op because the co-op is really made us, you know,

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00:10:28,330 --> 00:10:35,800

do what we were really wanting to do when we succeeded. The first year, the co-op brought in twelve hundred dollars and I was thrilled to death.

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00:10:35,800 --> 00:10:42,940

I thought that was just fabulous. Last year we did $39000. Well, so you're it changes.

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00:10:42,940 --> 00:10:48,910

You know, it you get more vendors, you get better vendors, you know, and you can pick and choose and do things.

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00:10:48,910 --> 00:10:55,900

I've waiting list right now for vendors to come in. I have 39 of them right now and I'm not waiting list for people to come in.

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00:10:55,900 --> 00:11:00,040

So it's to me that's the way you start, because now what have you done?

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00:11:00,040 --> 00:11:08,260

You've engaged the community. You've gotten the people that are in the community bringing their items in, becoming a part of something.

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00:11:08,260 --> 00:11:12,820

So they then and the city council then looks and says, wow, they're really doing something for us.

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00:11:12,820 --> 00:11:20,140

They're not just out there doing it. So then what we did is we went to city council and city council, said, well,

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00:11:20,140 --> 00:11:24,190

we were giving the chamber X number of dollars and you're providing what they are.

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00:11:24,190 --> 00:11:28,990

So then and there we go. That's how we can become a visitor's center and that helps us.

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00:11:28,990 --> 00:11:34,750

So you mentioned the size and growth of the cooperative, but can you share, you know,

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00:11:34,750 --> 00:11:38,860

how many visitors you guys have grown to in a year and just talk about maybe the

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00:11:38,860 --> 00:11:42,220

economic impact and what you guys have brought in addition to the community?

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00:11:42,220 --> 00:11:51,190

Well, first off, when the museum opened on Main Street, there were a lot of empty buildings and people then decided they wanted to move.

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00:11:51,190 --> 00:11:53,320

There's an antique store at the time, for instance,

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00:11:53,320 --> 00:11:59,560

and it wanted to move to Main Street because it was the museum was there and it brought in more people.

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00:11:59,560 --> 00:12:03,580

We knew that we needed to have a restaurant on Main Street.

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00:12:03,580 --> 00:12:06,040

You always have to have food if you don't have food for them,

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00:12:06,040 --> 00:12:10,510

even though you've got fifteen stores and there's no place for them to get a snack, you're you're done.

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00:12:10,510 --> 00:12:11,830

You've got to have something.

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00:12:11,830 --> 00:12:19,570

So we had opened a restaurant which we eventually sold because we really didn't I didn't need to have another thing going on at that point in time.

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00:12:19,570 --> 00:12:25,630

There were just a couple of other spots that were open and they're all full now.

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00:12:25,630 --> 00:12:33,100

Everything is full. Not just recently we have opened and two of them have opened and we've got people that are looking at those.

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00:12:33,100 --> 00:12:39,670

But this was a place where we were lucky to get, you know, mean the parking was never really a big issue because,

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00:12:39,670 --> 00:12:44,200

yeah, you had lunchtime when you were going to the restaurants, but the rest of the time, you know, you need it.

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00:12:44,200 --> 00:12:48,880

Now we're looking on how do we get more parking for Main Street? How do we do this?

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00:12:48,880 --> 00:12:53,980

We started out probably the first year that we were in existence,

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00:12:53,980 --> 00:12:58,180

probably at about 500 people coming through a year because we opened in the mid mid-year,

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00:12:58,180 --> 00:13:07,930

so 500 for that year, we average now between a thousand to 2000 people a month that come through here.

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00:13:07,930 --> 00:13:12,340

Just the visitors center. Just the visitors center. Yeah.

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00:13:12,340 --> 00:13:14,050

So that that's the big thing.

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00:13:14,050 --> 00:13:22,840

Now, we have learned that you have to do other things as far as Web sites, Facebook and all the other amenities that you need to do.

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00:13:22,840 --> 00:13:26,620

And and again, you have to come up with ideas and thoughts.

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00:13:26,620 --> 00:13:31,760

You just you just don't you can't just open a door.

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00:13:31,760 --> 00:13:40,550

And not have a thought behind it. You need to have a marketing thought and marketing ideas, we are on a main street.

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00:13:40,550 --> 00:13:46,130

You have to have that group work together. And, you know, you can't everybody can't go their own way.

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00:13:46,130 --> 00:13:49,820

You got to work together as a team you can do a lot. As an individual,

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00:13:49,820 --> 00:13:58,580

you really can't. Calico Rock has become a destination not as much as I would like for it to be, but it has become a destination.

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00:13:58,580 --> 00:14:01,970

So for your community, what does it mean to be a destination?

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00:14:01,970 --> 00:14:06,620

I know a lot of places may have a different definition, but for Calico Rock, what does that mean here?

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00:14:06,620 --> 00:14:14,480

For me it means that when you're thinking about going on a vacation that you think, OK, I've got Disney and I got Calico Rock.

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00:14:14,480 --> 00:14:20,270

You know, that's the kind of thing I want to become, you know, not not the Disney, but the Calico Rock.

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00:14:20,270 --> 00:14:26,210

I want them to come when I when people call and they ask, what am I going to do when I'm there?

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00:14:26,210 --> 00:14:32,900

And I say, well, basically, it's a big fishing town. It is. It's a very known well known for its for its trout fishing.

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00:14:32,900 --> 00:14:40,850

One of the other reasons that we wanted to start the museum was because we were no longer become we were no longer seeing the families coming in.

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00:14:40,850 --> 00:14:45,650

We had the cabins that people had built and everything with the concept of bringing people here.

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00:14:45,650 --> 00:14:50,990

But they didn't have anything to do while their husbands were out on the river unless they went with them out on the river.

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00:14:50,990 --> 00:14:59,390

So we needed to come up with something that they could do in the interim. So that was the other one of the other forces in trying to get things done.

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00:14:59,390 --> 00:15:03,200

I want to pivot and talk a little bit about the marketplace next door.

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00:15:03,200 --> 00:15:10,070

You mentioned it is an antique store, but just explain to our listeners a little bit more how individuals can get in there,

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00:15:10,070 --> 00:15:16,340

how you curate your stuff in your space and the impact it's had on the local economy.

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00:15:16,340 --> 00:15:27,500

Well, let's let me let me first tell you that when we we bought we bought an antique store on this side of the street when we opened the museum.

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00:15:27,500 --> 00:15:32,870

Now, the logical thing would be because it was turnkey would be just to turn the key and open that. No,

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00:15:32,870 --> 00:15:40,550

we transferred that all the merchandise and everything that we purchased and moved it across the street and opened up the marketplace.

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00:15:40,550 --> 00:15:47,540

And so we had an antique store that we merchandised that we needed, that we had anyway.

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00:15:47,540 --> 00:15:51,560

And then we let word go out that we were opening this.

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00:15:51,560 --> 00:15:56,150

And again, that has expanded. You said you went downstairs yesterday.

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00:15:56,150 --> 00:16:04,670

Well, that downstairs has only been open for about three or four months because before that we didn't have vendors to go down there.

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00:16:04,670 --> 00:16:09,770

So now, you know, we're beginning to fill that up.

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00:16:09,770 --> 00:16:15,500

There are like I think there's 20, 22 or 23 different vendors over there now, including us,

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00:16:15,500 --> 00:16:22,850

because we do have some merchandise that we had left over or that that has not been sold recently.

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00:16:22,850 --> 00:16:30,530

Our intent is not to ever become a buying entity of going in and hitting all the flea markets to replace it.

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00:16:30,530 --> 00:16:36,920

So that's what we'll be doing, is replacing it with additional new vendors to cover those those spots.

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00:16:36,920 --> 00:16:43,190

People that are in the antique business now are well aware of what where we are and what we're doing.

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00:16:43,190 --> 00:16:49,610

And we have gotten some of the what I call larger antiques dealers that are now in our location.

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00:16:49,610 --> 00:16:56,630

And they're very happy with it. It's a situation that you have to every area has to work its own system for it.

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00:16:56,630 --> 00:17:03,530

And we don't charge you rent. We do charge a commission. But the commission in is is twenty percent.

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00:17:03,530 --> 00:17:08,540

You know, in this world, this 20 percent is not much. Many of them are charging a whole lot more.

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00:17:08,540 --> 00:17:12,170

So you have to do with what you have within your town.

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00:17:12,170 --> 00:17:18,140

You can do I will tell people many times they'll come in and say, well, why are you why are you charging this?

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00:17:18,140 --> 00:17:22,670

You know? And I say, well, you're in Calico Rock. Well, up in Mountain View. Oh, there's a difference.

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00:17:22,670 --> 00:17:26,510

You know, the state park up there, they they have more people.

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00:17:26,510 --> 00:17:33,920

They've got, you know, so you have to take every every little individual part and put it. For the impact of the the town,

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00:17:33,920 --> 00:17:39,110

I will tell you that the sales tax end of it, which is really how the city looks at it,

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00:17:39,110 --> 00:17:43,910

because they're getting a greater impact of sales tax money that, you know,

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00:17:43,910 --> 00:17:49,280

when we sell things than we had before, it's doubled in the last two years.

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00:17:49,280 --> 00:17:52,190

They said, wow. So that's a big impact.

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00:17:52,190 --> 00:18:00,470

Gloriaann earlier you mentioned that the museum and visitor center has an arts and science center and some other amenities.

187

00:18:00,470 --> 00:18:06,770

Can you share a little bit about what that entails and what you'll be able to offer when that's all ready to go?

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00:18:06,770 --> 00:18:09,440

Well, actually, one thing I didn't tell you about, believe it or not,

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00:18:09,440 --> 00:18:14,180

it just hit me when you said that was we are opening a conference room downstairs.

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00:18:14,180 --> 00:18:17,840

And when we open that, that'll even that'll hold anywhere between,

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00:18:17,840 --> 00:18:21,890

we figured it out yesterday, to be about between 60 and 70 people.

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00:18:21,890 --> 00:18:27,290

So that'll be a big asset for us and that'll be on Pepper Sauce.

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00:18:27,290 --> 00:18:31,630

But we have two streets, by the way. We have Main Street and we have a back street.

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00:18:31,630 --> 00:18:37,480

The back street is called Pepper Ssauce, which was known actually for the moonshine, that was what they used to call it, Pepper Sauce.

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00:18:37,480 --> 00:18:44,980

So the alley is called pepper sauce. And now some businesses are opening with a back door on their front door being on Pepper Sauce.

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00:18:44,980 --> 00:18:51,220

But they are like the basement and some things. And we will be doing that with a Pepper Sauce.

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00:18:51,220 --> 00:18:58,540

So we here have conference rooms that we have available for people in different sizes.

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00:18:58,540 --> 00:19:04,810

We have a board room which seats nine people. They need to have a small, private, quiet meeting.

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00:19:04,810 --> 00:19:11,380

We have another one that I use for classrooms. And it's again, it's a sealed off, quiet area.

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00:19:11,380 --> 00:19:15,580

I also have a loft area that seats about 40.

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00:19:15,580 --> 00:19:22,090

You could you could put up to 40. It's a little crowded in 40. But, you know, we have the tables and chairs and I'm trying.

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00:19:22,090 --> 00:19:26,920

And one of the reasons that we have the loft is our hope is eventually we're going to be opening

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00:19:26,920 --> 00:19:32,710

an art art gallery for people to come up and paint and learn and teach classes and stuff.

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00:19:32,710 --> 00:19:41,650

So that's kind of one of our intents to do with that. So we have all of those rooms available for anybody who wants to use them.

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00:19:41,650 --> 00:19:46,930

They are community oriented. So and as long as are community oriented, that's all we worry about.

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00:19:46,930 --> 00:19:52,870

We do provide drinks for people taking the rooms or any of the rooms or doing what they need.

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00:19:52,870 --> 00:19:58,630

And hopefully eventually we will then be able to when we open the conference room,

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00:19:58,630 --> 00:20:05,140

we'll be able to cater out for that so that people can actually do things. To the future,

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00:20:05,140 --> 00:20:10,420

what we plan to do is off the back side of the building, which I just mentioned as Pepper Sauce,

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00:20:10,420 --> 00:20:15,610

there is another location going in fairly soon, which we don't know when yet.

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00:20:15,610 --> 00:20:23,890

So I'm not going to mention names or anything of that nature, but we are looking to do the back side as an entertainment district.

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00:20:23,890 --> 00:20:29,980

We have built two decks off the back so we can put music off and it's a small street that

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00:20:29,980 --> 00:20:36,160

we can block and be able to have street dances and street bands and do activities on that.

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00:20:36,160 --> 00:20:43,300

It's not the main street which I really like better, because what happens with that is people driving through Main Street,

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00:20:43,300 --> 00:20:46,480

if they see activities, they immediately stop where you are.

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00:20:46,480 --> 00:20:51,160

I'm not so sure how it's going to work on Pepper Ssauce, but somehow I'll figure it out.

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00:20:51,160 --> 00:20:57,760

Well, turning to a more somber subject, like to talk for a few minutes about the pandemic.

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00:20:57,760 --> 00:21:06,220

How has it been for the museum and visitor center and the marketplace and and all of what you guys have to offer here on Main Street?

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00:21:06,220 --> 00:21:13,180

How has it been for the reopening and getting people back out into the community and visiting again?

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00:21:13,180 --> 00:21:20,530

I think that's a tough one for anybody. We all we ended up shutting our doors for six months, and that was tough.

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00:21:20,530 --> 00:21:29,410

You know, we were concerned because any time you shut for any length of time and you reopen, people forget that you're there.

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00:21:29,410 --> 00:21:34,600

So it's always important for for us and for our restaurants or anything else for

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00:21:34,600 --> 00:21:39,610

people to be able to keep their doors open so that they don't don't forget,

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00:21:39,610 --> 00:21:46,780

you know, that you're there. There were some there were a lot of state mandates that we had to do the distancing, social distancing.

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00:21:46,780 --> 00:21:52,600

We had to sanitize things a lot more. And when you have a gift shop, that becomes an issue.

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00:21:52,600 --> 00:22:01,300

So we did not open everything. It gave us a good time to do some renovating and cleaning and doing the things that we needed to do.

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00:22:01,300 --> 00:22:06,850

We kind of close things down and didn't really open, you know, as much as we would have had.

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00:22:06,850 --> 00:22:14,740

So, yes, that affected us economically this year because as and last year was really a big concern for us,

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00:22:14,740 --> 00:22:21,070

too, because we were like I said, we were just not it just the numbers weren't there that we had expected.

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00:22:21,070 --> 00:22:26,110

And even after it reopened, the numbers weren't there.

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00:22:26,110 --> 00:22:32,380

The way people were telling everybody it was going to be everybody was going to go out there and do all these wonderful thing people.

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00:22:32,380 --> 00:22:36,370

The fear is still there and I think you'll always be there.

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00:22:36,370 --> 00:22:40,630

Is there something that you all implemented during the pandemic,

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00:22:40,630 --> 00:22:46,840

whether it's technology or a new program or something that has really taken off that you think you'll keep around?

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00:22:46,840 --> 00:22:54,100

I have to tell you, the pandemic made me learn some new things, and I really was not ready for that.

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00:22:54,100 --> 00:22:57,880

We did a lot more virtual. I mean, I learned how to do virtual.

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00:22:57,880 --> 00:23:02,800

I learned how to make my own videos or something, for instance, with a cooperative.

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00:23:02,800 --> 00:23:10,810

Just recently, it took me that long to figure out, you know, when we talk about a lot of these co-op members, there are elderly or older.

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00:23:10,810 --> 00:23:15,550

And so video is not their thing, you know. Well, how do you make one or how do I do this?

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00:23:15,550 --> 00:23:23,770

What I have done is each of the vendors has now done an individual video of themselves doing their demonstrations,

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00:23:23,770 --> 00:23:30,300

telling a little bit about themselves. I've placed that on Facebook and it's made an impact as far as people becoming

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00:23:30,300 --> 00:23:40,800

aware that of how to do things and what to do, so unfortunately, I'm going to be keeping that up as much as I didn't necessarily want to.

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00:23:40,800 --> 00:23:48,870

Oh, I love that. Well, and experts will say that the pandemic accelerated all kinds of technology and research about 10 years.

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00:23:48,870 --> 00:23:55,440

So welcome to 2030. Let me tell you what else the pandemic did for us.

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00:23:55,440 --> 00:23:57,630

We actually before the pandemic,

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00:23:57,630 --> 00:24:07,350

we were doing a magazine and we were doing it on a monthly magazine and the pandemic came and we actually had to put it on the hiatus because,

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00:24:07,350 --> 00:24:11,490

number one, people weren't advertising, people weren't really getting out there.

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00:24:11,490 --> 00:24:15,810

And the magazine was costing a lot of money for us to put together.

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00:24:15,810 --> 00:24:20,220

And when you when you have your advertisers, you know, back off and say, hey,

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00:24:20,220 --> 00:24:25,740

then it's something it's not something that we are not saying we will never do again.

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00:24:25,740 --> 00:24:29,430

It was a lesson learned. There's a lot of work to it.

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00:24:29,430 --> 00:24:32,790

And we would we've learned some good lessons from it.

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00:24:32,790 --> 00:24:40,710

We learned some bad lessons from it. But I think that but that is one of the things that COVID stopped. The COVID also stopped our our children's

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00:24:40,710 --> 00:24:47,700

activities that we had where I was doing a science class every Tuesday afternoon from three to four,

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00:24:47,700 --> 00:24:53,760

where they came into the museum, were actually able to go into the science center and they would do a project,

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00:24:53,760 --> 00:24:58,950

they would do some kind of a science experiment, and they would also do an art experience.

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00:24:58,950 --> 00:25:07,110

And then they would also do so. They broke them into three groups and each week a different group would do whatever they didn't do the week before.

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00:25:07,110 --> 00:25:12,480

So we had to cease that. They couldn't do that anymore. And and I have not picked it up again.

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00:25:12,480 --> 00:25:24,300

I don't know that I'm going to do it again next year yet, because the way things are looking today, we don't know what's what's really happening.

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00:25:24,300 --> 00:25:31,800

So what advice would you share if you have another community, another, uh,

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00:25:31,800 --> 00:25:38,100

involved individual activists in their community that wants to start a visitor center or museum or do this,

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00:25:38,100 --> 00:25:42,720

what would your advice or a word of caution rather be to them?

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00:25:42,720 --> 00:25:52,530

Well, as I had said earlier, I think I did anyway, is that if you don't have the passion or the time and the love for it, don't bother.

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00:25:52,530 --> 00:26:00,900

Don't start. The biggest problem I think, in communities is that people, the same people we've talked about this to,

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00:26:00,900 --> 00:26:10,500

the same people are doing these things over and over and over again. And that's because as again we talk, nobody else is going to do it kind of thing.

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00:26:10,500 --> 00:26:18,900

But with a visitor center and a museum and something of this nature, this is very community oriented.

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00:26:18,900 --> 00:26:24,720

And so, you know, if you're planning on doing it, then do it.

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00:26:24,720 --> 00:26:34,290

If you're planning on thinking that you are going to get other people to do it than don't do it because it takes one person and then that next person,

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00:26:34,290 --> 00:26:40,560

you know, once you start doing it and sees that, it'll it takes about five years really to get something going.

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00:26:40,560 --> 00:26:47,010

You know that with businesses, five years is the test. If you can't do it in five years, you're not going to make it.

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00:26:47,010 --> 00:26:50,820

If you're planning on just a while, do it for a year. It's not going to work.

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00:26:50,820 --> 00:26:58,950

You have to do it. I always recommend to people and I tell people this all the time, every community in this area has an artist out there.

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00:26:58,950 --> 00:27:04,470

All those artists are really want you to see what they have and what they're doing and how they're doing it.

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00:27:04,470 --> 00:27:08,850

So to me, having an artisan cooperative certainly helps.

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00:27:08,850 --> 00:27:13,230

You have to look at the community and you have to look at what's available to you.

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00:27:13,230 --> 00:27:19,410

What do they like? You know, you may have like we're close to Mountain View and music is there.

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00:27:19,410 --> 00:27:24,900

That's as we all know, Mountain View is big music town. So I don't want to compete in music.

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00:27:24,900 --> 00:27:29,070

Why would I want to do that? I it's not I need to come up with my own thing.

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00:27:29,070 --> 00:27:38,240

And that's why we came up with the museum. All right, well, where can our listeners find you online website, all that good stuff?

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00:27:38,240 --> 00:27:44,210

Well, we have the CalicoRockMuseum.com Web site.

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00:27:44,210 --> 00:27:48,470

We have the Explore Calico Web site.

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00:27:48,470 --> 00:27:55,430

And that Web site is gives you all the information about all the different events and not just events, but all of the housing,

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00:27:55,430 --> 00:28:01,220

clothing, anything and everything you want to know about Calico Rock is on that on that particular page.

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00:28:01,220 --> 00:28:06,050

We have five Facebook pages. We have the Calico Rock Artisans Cooperative.

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00:28:06,050 --> 00:28:11,360

We have the Thomlinson Art and Science Center. We have the artisan cooperative.

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00:28:11,360 --> 00:28:16,490

We have Main Street, Arkansas, and we also have the marketplace.

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00:28:16,490 --> 00:28:22,190

And then we have one another, I'm sure the museum.

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00:28:22,190 --> 00:28:25,970

That's enough, that's enough, and it's probably going to grow a little more.

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00:28:25,970 --> 00:28:31,220

Well, I'm in the process of working on a telephone app right now, so that'll add to it, too.

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00:28:31,220 --> 00:28:37,670

So that comes from mainstreet. Well, Gloriaann, I know I can sit here and talk with you for hours.

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00:28:37,670 --> 00:28:38,810

We've done that in the past.

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00:28:38,810 --> 00:28:46,520

But thank you so much for being on the podcast and just sharing about your town, your work and and all the amazing things happening right here.

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00:28:46,520 --> 00:28:49,880

And Calico Rock and Izard County. Yes. Thank you very much.

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00:28:49,880 --> 00:28:56,820

And Izard County supports us very well. And we got a quorum court. And every time I go, they go, wow, look what you're doing.

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00:28:56,820 --> 00:29:03,870

That's great. Well, thank you very much. Thank you.

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00:29:03,870 --> 00:29:09,510

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00:29:09,510 --> 00:29:15,780

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00:29:15,780 --> 00:29:23,070

Small Business Big Rural Impact podcast is made possible by a Wal-Mart grant to the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture,

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00:29:23,070 --> 00:29:37,397

Cooperative Extension, Community Professional and Economic Development Unit and White River Now Productions.