



# Keep Sedona Beautiful 2023 Annual Report



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Photo by Derek Von Briesen



Platinum  
Transparency  
2024

**Candid.**



## President's Message

To Our Members and Supporters,

On behalf of the Officers and Board of Trustees of Keep Sedona Beautiful, it's my honor to share with you our 2023 Annual Report. This past year feels like a turning point for Keep Sedona Beautiful (KSB).

While continuing our long-standing and successful programs like litter lifting, speaker series, dark skies and awards of excellence, we increased our advocacy into the Off Highway Vehicle crisis, intensified our effectiveness in general communication and initiated extensive renovations to our grounds. We became certified as a Gold Level Sustainable Business by The Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization and certified by the Friends of the Verde River as a River Friendly Silver Level business. These efforts along with becoming a net provider of electricity to the grid in 2022, will result in KSB becoming a model for sustainability – the KSB EcoHub.

But these successes were only possible with the support of our members, business sponsors and donors. You make our work possible.

Thank you!



President, Keep Sedona Beautiful



Photo by Derek Von Briesen



## Who We Are

Keep Sedona Beautiful, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, is a vehicle for positive change in Sedona and the Verde Valley. We aim to preserve the wonder of the Sedona area's scenic natural beauty now and in the future. Our activities range from education and advocacy to hands-on tasks such as litter lifting and preserving the quality of our ground and surface water to maintaining the Verde Valley's dark, star-studded night skies.

Incorporated in 1972, we are a dedicated group of volunteers, people like you who share an appreciation for our natural beauty and environment and who are committed to working with the city, county, state and federal governments, as well as civic and business leaders to promote dialogue and encourage sustainability and balance in the face of our area's growth.

### Our Mission

*To protect and sustain the scenic beauty and natural environment of Sedona and the Verde Valley.*

### Our Vision

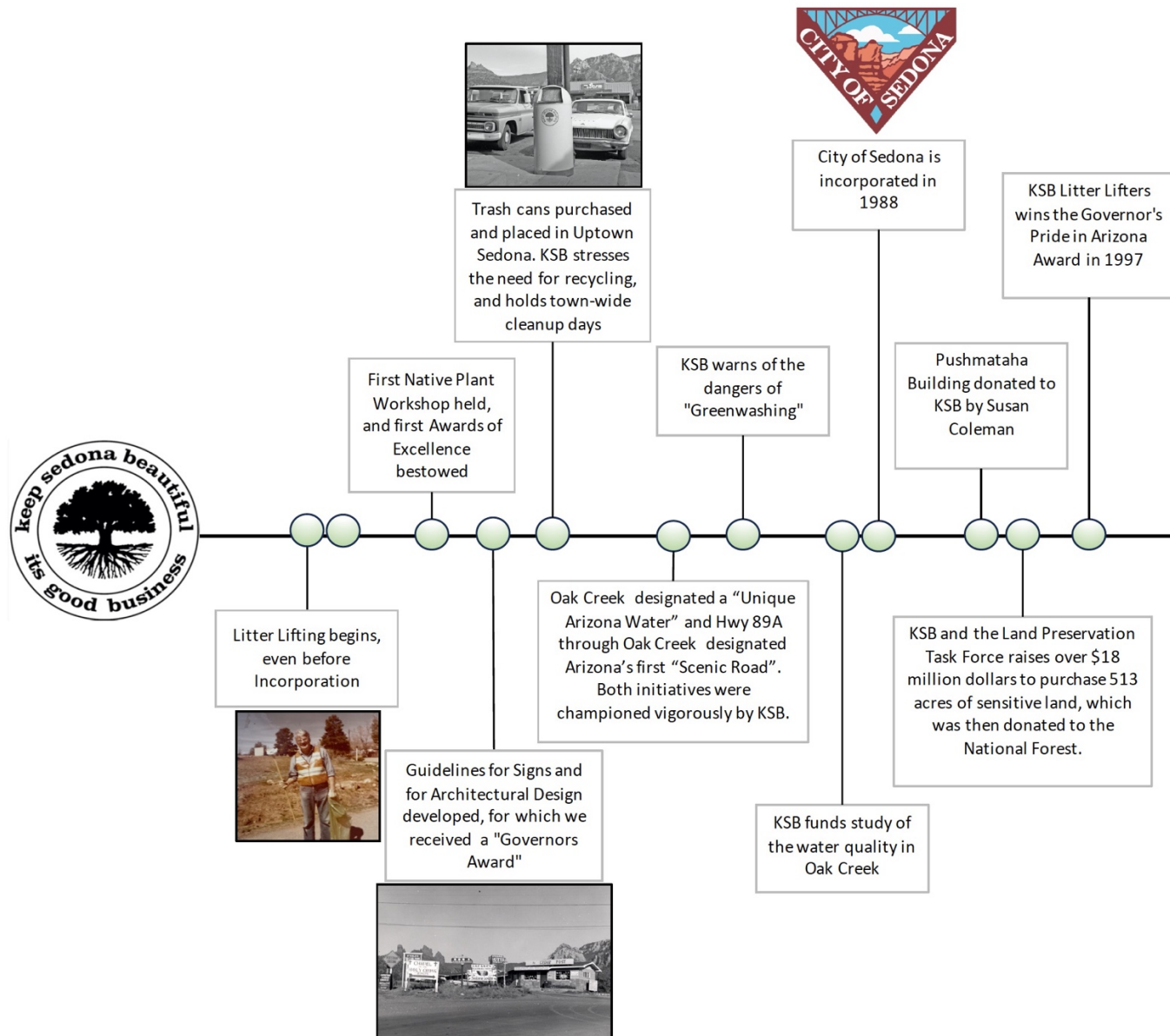
*The Verde Valley will model how diverse communities can effectively collaborate to preserve a sustainable and beautiful environment for future generations.*

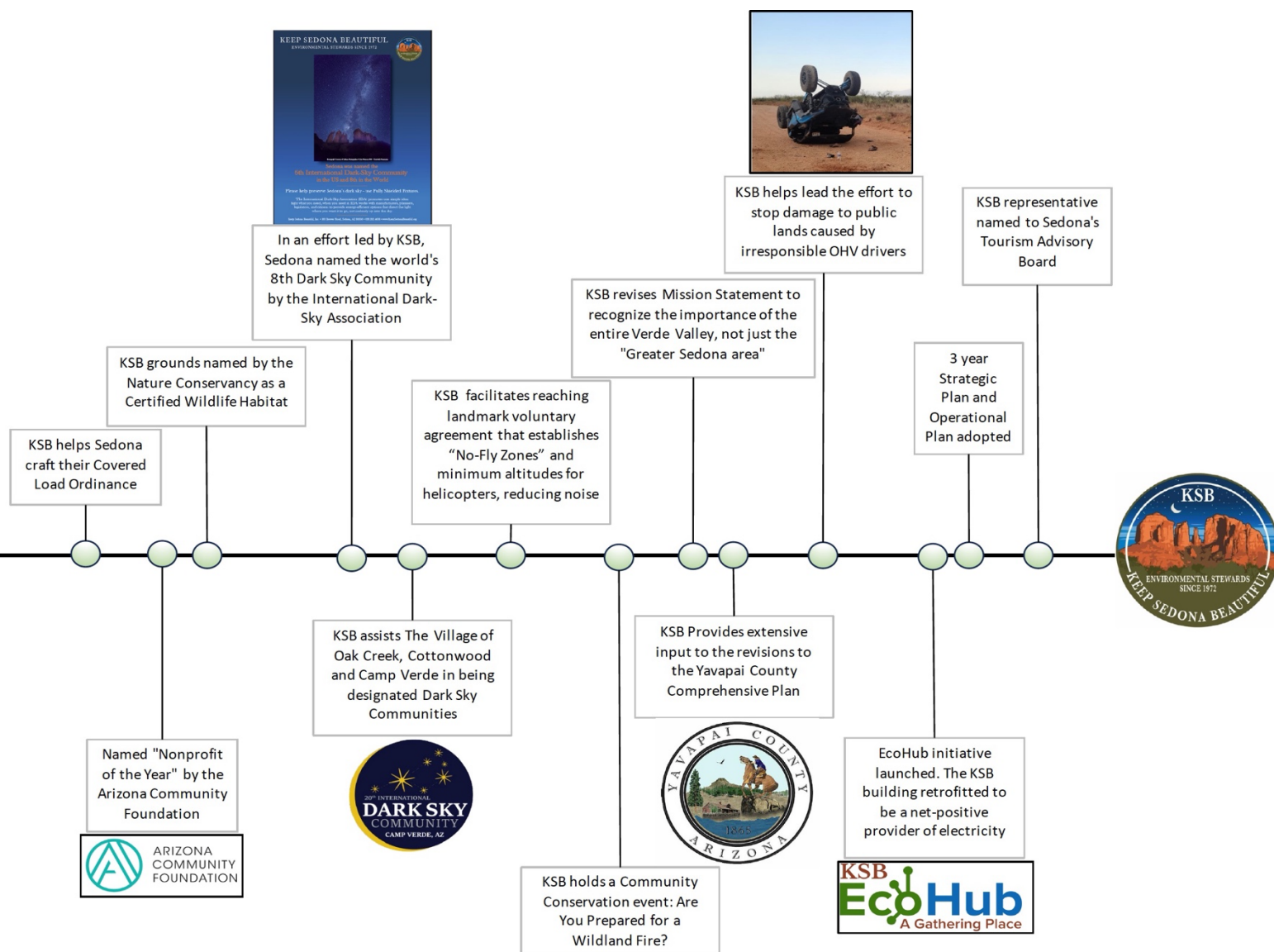
We envision a region where:

- The night skies remain dark and clear, connecting residents and visitors alike to the wonders of the universe.
- Scenic viewpoints and vistas are preserved without development or obstruction, retaining the heart-stirring beauty that makes our region like no place else.
- Local communities collaborate to safeguard our natural treasures through education, advocacy and a shared commitment to sustainability.
- Native plants, wildlife and the overall natural environment are protected and flourish for generations to come.



# The History of KSB





## Our Priorities

### **Recognizing Excellence**

Each year since our founding, individuals, organizations and businesses demonstrating outstanding contributions to our community and contributing to achieving our mission are recognized.



1972 Awardees



2023 Awardees

-from left to right: Chip Norton, Tim Elinski, Colleen TeBrake, Jennifer May, Michael Stevenson, Steve King, Kevin Adams, Craig Swanson, Doug Copp, Ben Burke, Kathi Feher, and Michael Lindner.

Photo by Derek Von Briesen.



## Preserving and Enhancing Dark Skies

KSB has long advocated for preservation and enhancement of our dark skies. We're currently advocating for our lodging establishments to become approved by Dark Sky International as "DarkSky Approved Lodgings."



Photo by Jim Peterson

## Supporting Sustainable and Rational Development

While development will continue to occur in the Verde Valley, we steadfastly oppose inappropriate or intrusive development that will endanger our environment or overwhelm rural areas.



This responsible development...

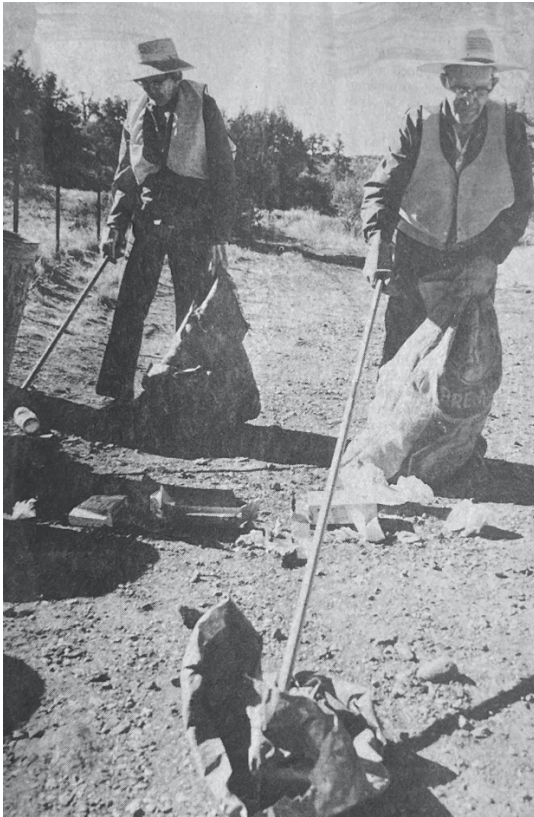


Rather than this one.



## Keeping Our Roads Clean

Litter lifting began even before incorporation in 1972, and is our most visible program. As of 2023, more than 70 volunteers keep 50 miles of roads and highways clean.



## Fostering Education

The KSB Speaker Series is free and open to the public, providing the community with informational and engaging presentations on topics like water resource conservation, night sky, wildlife prevention and flora and fauna of the Verde Valley.

Recently, we melded Native Plant Workshop events into the Speaker Series, which began in 1976.

### 2023 Speaker Series Events

January		<b>Steve Ayers</b> , Camp Verde's Director of Economic Development Director, spoke on "Managing Growth, Wisely and Effectively."
March		<b>Mike Dechter</b> , NEPA, Appeals, and Litigation Coordinator at Coconino National Forest and Executive Director of the Arizona Mushroom Society, discussed "The Fungi Kingdom and Sedona Specific Fungi and Edible Mushrooms."
April		<b>Tom O'Halloran</b> , former US Representative from Arizona's 1 <sup>st</sup> Congressional district and Past President of KSB spoke about "How Congress Does and Doesn't Work – Misperceptions and Changes Needed."
May		<b>Jason Coil</b> , Assistant Chief of the Sedona Fire District talked about "Preparing for Wildfires in Sedona: Insights from a Seasoned Firefighter."
September		<b>Janie Agyagos</b> , Wildlife Biologist in the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest discussed, "Human-Caused Effects to Flora and Fauna in the Verde Valley."
October		<b>Charlotte Hosseini, Kevin Adams, Craig Swanson and Ann Kelly</b> participated in a panel discussion on "Community Activism – How to Get Involved."
November		<b>Dr. Tom Ginn</b> , Environmental Toxicologist, spoke on "Sedona Water – Sources, Discharges and Quality."



## Preserving and Protecting Public Lands

We consider ourselves to be an important watchdog in protecting public lands. We oppose any attempt to privatize National Forest land. In particular, our public lands protect the Native American cultural artifacts that are found throughout the area. [The indigenous heritage of the Verde Valley](#) goes back over 10,000 years and is incredibly rich.



Photo by David Starke

## Promoting and Practicing Sustainability

KSB believes sustainability and protection of the environment are prerequisites for responsible growth. We strive to continually educate the public on how they can live more sustainably and how our region can become more resilient.

Our **EcoHub** initiative will result in our grounds and building becoming a model for the community of sustainability.

The Verde Valley benefits economically from tourism but suffers the negative consequences of excessive or poorly managed tourism. We will continue to play a role in educating visitors on how to recreate responsibly and have a representative on the City of Sedona's Tourism Advisory Board.





### KSB eNews Today

*Celebrating Our First 50 Years*

January 8, 2024



#### KSB PRESERVING THE WONDER SPEAKER SERIES

**ISAAC DUDLEY, "RAIN WATER HARVESTING FOR A RIVER FRIENDLY HOME"**

**WEDNESDAY JANUARY 17, 2024, 5:00PM**

**KSB ECOHUB, 360 BREWER RD, SEDONA**

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Keep Sedona Beautiful will hold its next Preserving the Wonder Speaker Series event on Wednesday, January 17 at 5:00 pm. This month's speaker is Isaac Dudley, Project Manager at Friends of the Verde River. His topic will be "[Rain Harvesting for a River Friendly Home](#)."

During Isaac's talk, he will share various examples of rain harvesting techniques, including both Active and Passive systems. He will also share resources that are offered by Friends of the Verde River, such as grant funding that can support these projects.

Isaac Dudley is an avid lover of the outdoors and has been working as a conservation professional for 6 years. As a project manager for Friends of the Verde River, Isaac assists all levels of our community in their efforts to protect the Verde River system, including Oak Creek. Isaac specializes in water sustainability practices such as rainwater harvesting, efficiency projects, stormwater control, and groundwater recharge.

The Preserving the Wonder Speaker series is held on the third Wednesday of each month at the KSB EcoHub, 360 Brewer Rd., Sedona.

For over 50 years, Keep Sedona Beautiful has been dedicated to protecting and enhancing the scenic beauty and natural environment of Sedona and the Verde Valley. For more information about Keep Sedona Beautiful, please visit [www.keeppedonabeautiful.org](http://www.keeppedonabeautiful.org).



## Controlling Environmental and Noise Pollution

We recognize the damage done to wildlife, the environment and people by the flood of plastics that cannot or are not recycled. We educate the public on how to reduce plastics. We forcefully advocate to limit the damage caused by OHVs by placing limits on their use. We serve on a stakeholder group charged with identifying and implementing solutions to the OHV crisis. KSB continues to monitor the voluntary agreement to restrict helicopter flight paths, set minimum altitudes and reduce the noise impact of OHVs. We will work to limit noise pollution from commercial drone operations.



Photo by Craig Swanson



Photo from Google Earth

## Protecting Water Resources

KSB has worked since our founding to protect our precious ground and surface waters. The current long-term drought makes these efforts even more important. Since other organizations work exclusively on water issues in the Verde Valley, KSB focuses primarily on education and advocacy.



Photo by Fred Parsons



## Combating Climate Change

In the Verde Valley, the threat of wildland fire has increased dramatically in recent decades. Through speaker series events, quarterly magazine articles, website postings and social media connections, we educate residents on how to prepare for and respond to a wildland fire, including the realities of climate change.



La Barranca Fire, 2006 - photo from Wikimedia Commons



Photo by Tami Pivnik

## Our Leadership



**Craig Swanson**  
President



**Carla Williams**  
Executive Vice-President



**Abbie Denton-Landers**  
Treasurer



**Lynn Zonakis**  
Secretary



**Jan Wind**  
Office Manager



**Wendy Heald**  
Executive Assistant



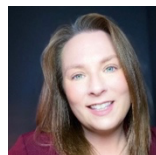
**Rob Adams**  
Trustee



**Mark Lawler**  
Trustee



**DeAnna Bindley**  
Trustee



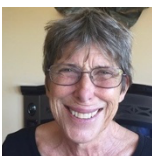
**Alicia Peck**  
Trustee



**John Black**  
Trustee



**Norris Peterson**  
Trustee



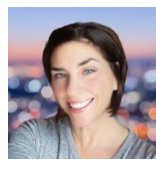
**Peggy Chaikin**  
Trustee



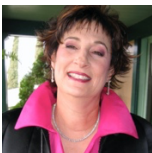
**Bob Rothrock**  
Trustee



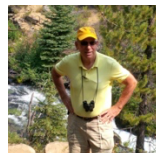
**Kevin Cook**  
Trustee



**Micheline Welch**  
Trustee



**Hollace Davids**  
Trustee



**Marshall Whitmire**  
Trustee



**Donna Hadland**  
Trustee

## 2023 Accomplishments

### **OHVs**

We're helping lead the effort to identify and implement solutions to the environmental damage and threats to public health and safety caused by OHV overuse and misuse on Forest Service roads and trails. Our representatives served on the Greater Sedona Recreation Collaborative whose mission is to help solve the OHV Crisis.

### **KSB Eco-Hub**

After becoming a net-positive contributor of electricity to the local grid in 2022, we began extensive renovations to our grounds to make them a showcase for responsible landscaping. You can contribute to this effort at: [www.keepsedonabeautiful.org/donate-to-ksb/](http://www.keepsedonabeautiful.org/donate-to-ksb/).

### **Sustainability and Certifications**

KSB is now a Gold Level Sustainable Business by The Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization and were by the Friends of the Verde River as a River Friendly Silver Level business. Each of these demonstrate our commitment to practice what we preach about sustainability.

### **Dark Skies**

We worked with both Steakhouse 89 and Nick's Restaurant to replace their non-compliant lighting with dark-sky compliant fixtures. These projects were funded by grants from the Arizona Community Foundation and the City of Sedona.

### **City of Sedona Community Plan**

KSB provided extensive input to the Sedona Community Plan update.

### **Single-use Plastics**

We continued to emphasize the critical need to reduce plastic production and consumption.

### **Governance**

The KSB Board of Trustees developed and approved a 3-year Strategic Plan and an accompanying Operations Plan. We also completed revisions to our Bylaws.

### **Litter Lifters**

Over 70 KSB litter lifters removed litter and trash from over 50 miles of streets and roadways.

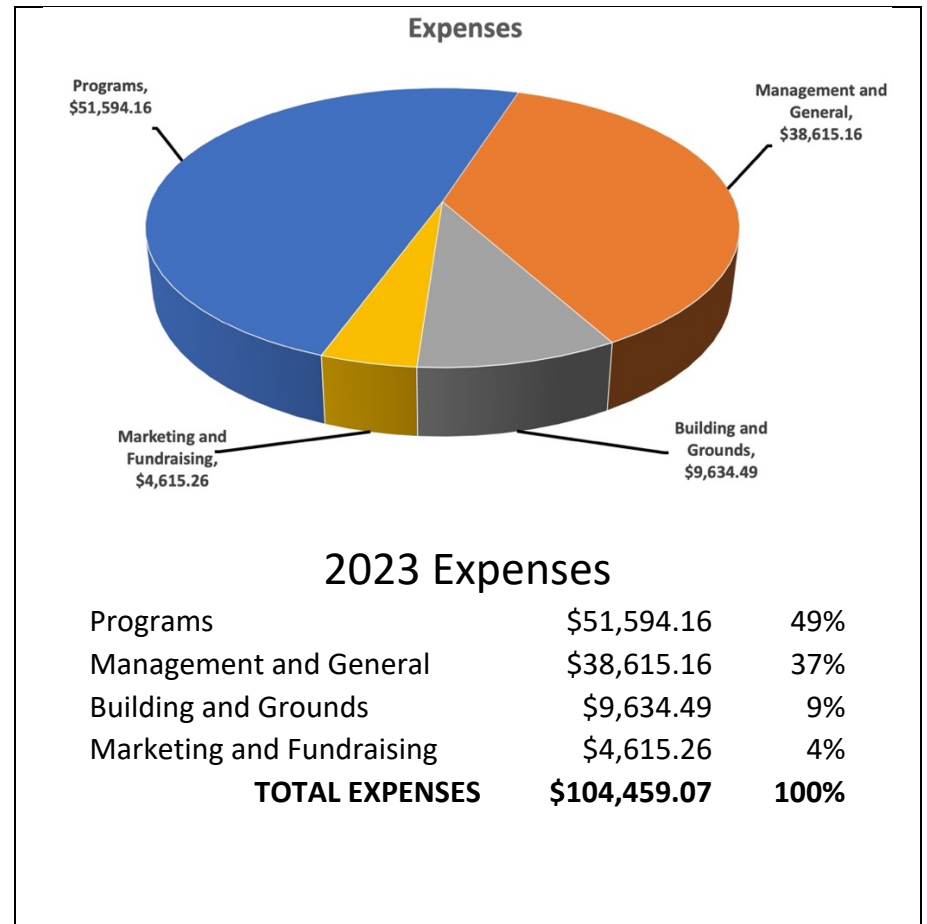
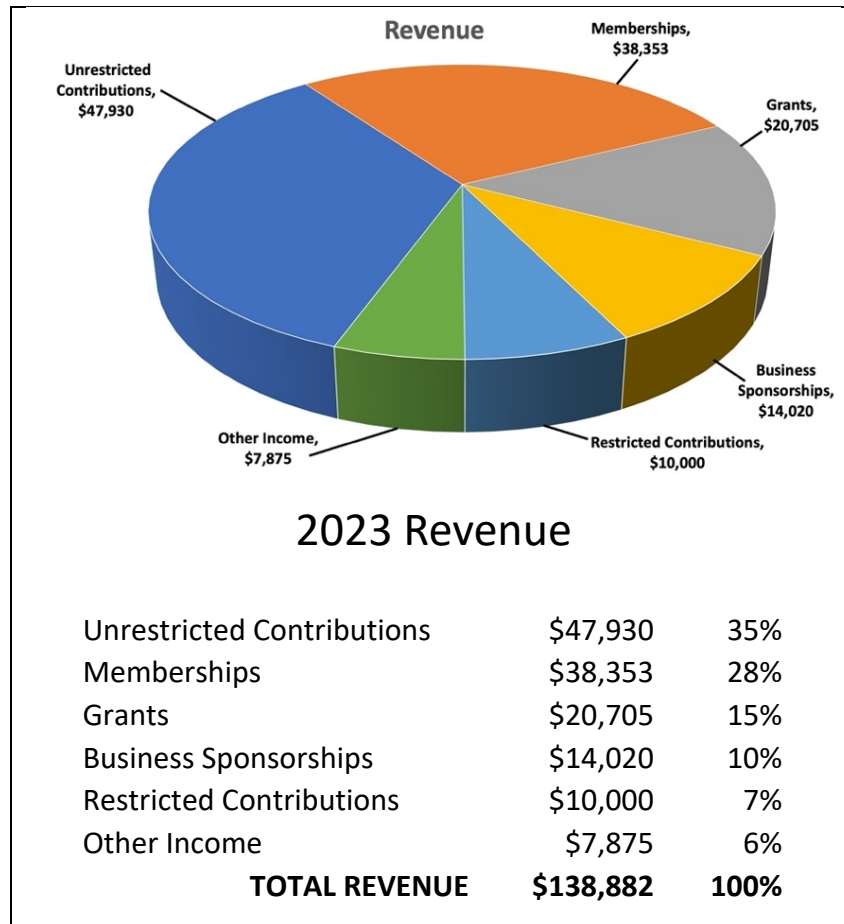
### **Awards of Excellence**

Awards were presented to Ambiante, a landscape hotel in Sedona for dark-sky lighting, the Clarkdale Historical Society and Museum for cultural heritage, Doug Copp for sustainability, Kevin Adams and the Sedona Red Rock Trail Fund for environmental stewardship, Manzanita Outreach for Community Service, Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District Superintendent Steve King for Education and Cottonwood Mayor Tim Elinski for community Service.

### **Speaker Series**

The KSB Preserving the Wonder Speaker Series hosted speakers on a variety of subjects of interest to our members

## Financial Summary

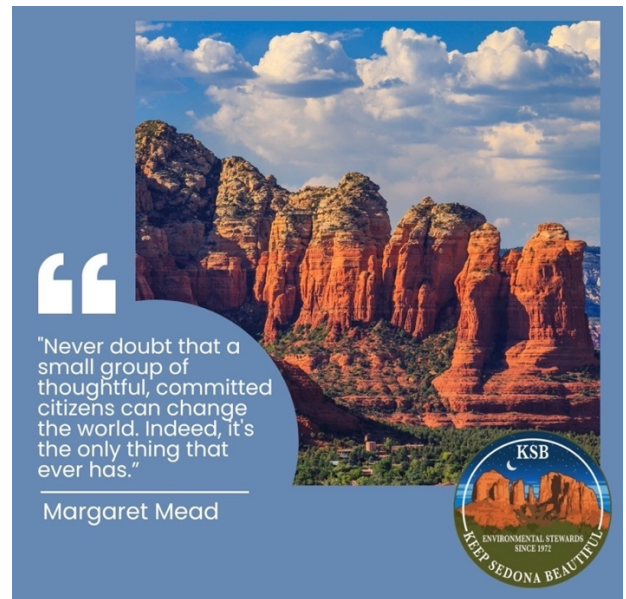


Except for our two part-time office staff employees, Keep Sedona Beautiful is an all-volunteer organization. Our volunteers, including the Board of Trustees donate thousands of hours of their time each year. Nearly all of these hours directly support our programs.



## By The Numbers

**50** miles of roads and highways kept free of litter  
**70+** litter lifting volunteers  
**4** issues of our quarterly magazine sent to our mailing list  
**35** blog entries posted  
**10** press releases issued  
**7** speaker series events held  
**71** eNews communications sent  
**2** new sustainability certifications achieved  
**2** businesses' lighting upgraded to be DarkSky compliant  
**104** comments supplied as input to the draft update to the City of Sedona's Community Plan  
**245** comments supplied in response to the draft recommendation for how to solve the OHV crisis  
**7** grants applied for and **6** received



## Rising to New Challenges

Future decades will bring new challenges. Electrification of OHVs will increase their power and capacity to damage the land; eventually, personal flying machines will disrupt our tranquility in ways we can barely imagine and the negative impacts of climate change will become undeniable. Our community needs to prepare to meet both the foreseen and unforeseen challenges ahead.

Our community is already seeing the effects of climate change as temperatures in the Verde Valley steadily creep higher. The mega-drought only makes the situation worse. We all must focus even more on protecting and conserving our water resources and preparing for wildland fires.

In order to address the existential threat posed by climate change, a rapid transition away from fossil fuels and to an all-electric infrastructure is needed. An all-electric economy will require enormous investments in renewable and non-carbon energy sources. However, these investments will stimulate economic growth and provide enormous employment opportunities.

Tourism is the primary economic driver in the Verde Valley and will remain so for the foreseeable future. As the Phoenix area continues to grow, more day-trippers will escape the heat and come to the Verde Valley. Social media will continue to extoll the desirability of visiting Sedona and the Verde Valley, regardless of any other advertising that's done. KSB will increase our messaging on the importance of the Leave No Trace ethic, the Tread Lightly philosophy and on respecting the land. It's also imperative that the entire community joins together to successfully address the OHV crisis.

Both visitors and residents will, unfortunately, continue to toss litter out of their vehicles, but KSB will continue to keep our roads and highways clean. We invite you to contact us and volunteer to help.

Growth for its own sake or to enrich developers cannot continue unabated. Our community will fight for rational limits to growth and its environmental impact as a primary consideration when considering new development projects. Working with local communities and residents, KSB will analyze development proposals and vigorously oppose those threatening our environment, our resources or the rural character of the Verde Valley. However, we look forward to supporting well-planned proposals providing workforce/affordable housing.

Our most important work lies ahead.

## Giving to Keep Sedona Beautiful

To become a member or business sponsor of KSB or to make a donation to support our efforts, visit:  
[www.keeppedonabeautiful.org/donate-to-ksb/](http://www.keeppedonabeautiful.org/donate-to-ksb/)

### **Contact Us**

360 Brewer Road  
Sedona, AZ 86336  
Tel: 928-282-4938

Email: [info@keeppedonabeautiful.org](mailto:info@keeppedonabeautiful.org)

Website: [www.KeepSedonaBeautiful.org](http://www.KeepSedonaBeautiful.org)

We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. EIN: 23-7313508



[Instagram.com/keeppedonabeautiful](https://www.instagram.com/keeppedonabeautiful)



[facebook.com/keeppedonabeautiful](https://www.facebook.com/keeppedonabeautiful)



[youtube.com/keeppedonabeautiful](https://www.youtube.com/keeppedonabeautiful)



Photo by NASA



## Our Business Sponsors

**Bell Rock Level - \$5,000**



**Thunder Mountain Level - \$2,500**



**Wingfield Mesa Level - \$1,000**



**VERDE SOLAR POWER**



**Bear Mountain Level - \$500**



Northern Arizona Healthcare



Sedona Resort Apartments

**Chimney Rock Level - \$250**

Bedrock Landscape Materials & Supplies

Make Sedona My Home Realty

RE/MAX Sedona

Sedona Recycles

Sinagua Plaza

Andrew Bailor of State Farm

Verve Events & Tents

Canyon Portal

Pioneer Title

Sedona Candle Magic

Sedona Trolley

Snap Fitness VOC

Taylor Waste