

Carefree Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce
Story of Incorporation and Accomplishments

Incorporation Year: March 4, 1965

Founding Fathers of the Chamber: Lester Maitland, Leslie Rhuart and Billy Burk

Articles of Incorporation:

The name: Cave Creek-Carefree Chamber of Commerce

The general nature of the corporation is to promote and foster the civic and economic welfare of its members and of the two separate and independent communities which will be compatible with and complementary to each other, and to hold and dispose of property and to do any and all things necessary or suitable to those ends.

Lester Maitland Accomplishments:

- Served in World War 1 & 2
- Career officer in the United States Army Air Forces
- Received a Silver Star and the Distinguished Flying Cross and Five Air Medals, elected to the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame and Maitland Drive near Oakland International Airport is also named for him.
- Maitland Field, an airport in Milwaukee is named after him
- Aviation Pioneer
- One of two men completing the first transpacific flight from California to Hawaii
- Aide to General Bill Mitchell & selected as one of the pilots to take part in the sinking of the battleship Ostfriesland, a military experiment set up to prove the effectiveness of air power against ships
- As an aviator he competed in air races and pioneering flights
- He and Charles Lindbergh were invited together to the White House to meet President Calvin Coolidge
- He was an author writing of early aviation
- Appointed Wisconsin's first state aeronautics director in 1947
- Accepted a similar post with the State of Michigan and in 1951 became Michigan's Director of Civil Defense for which he rose to a Brigadier General in the Michigan Air National Guard
- In the mid-fifties his career goals shifted and began seminary studies
- Installed as the first Rector at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in 1962
- During the years that Father Maitland served Good Shepherd, the Gold Mine developed from the rummage sales of the 1950s and early 1960s into a thrift shop
- In December of 1971, Father Maitland retired

- In 1974 Nelson Hall was replaced with a larger space and was named Maitland Hall in honor of Lester Maitland

Leslie Rhuart Accomplishments:

- 1959 became GM for Tom Darlington & KT Palmer
- President of the Carefree Development Corporation
- Saw the Carefree Inn to completion
- Led the organizational meeting that chartered the Carefree Kiwanis Club
- Filed petition to rename Black Mountain Rd to Carefree Highway-Carefree planners felt the name change would bring in more travelers to the area & benefit the economies of Carefree & Cave Creek
- One of the founders of preservation of the Scenic Drive
- Served on the Cave Creek Improvement Association Road Committee to preserve the scenic right-of-way along Cave Creek & Scottsdale Roads, assisted in recommendations that would pave the way for economic growth. Among others serving on the committee was K. T. Palmer
- The Cave Creek Improvement Association was made up of business folk from Cave Creek and Carefree. They had 4 objectives:
 - Preserve the natural desert area
 - Plan for the future roadways leading into Cave Creek, Carefree and the Tonto Forest
 - Prepare a strip map suggesting minimum setbacks on the Scenic Drive that included Cave Creek and Scottsdale Roads
 - Cooperate with State & Federal Governments in an effort to halt the sale of their lands in the area.

Billy Burk (no information found)

Current Chamber History

The Chamber has operated continuously for almost 55 years. We have had a few name changes over the years but objectives have stayed the same as they were in 1965...to promote and foster the civic and economic welfare of its members and the two separate and independent communities which will be compatible with and complementary to each other... In 2019 the Carefree Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce accomplished the following:

- More than 765,000 visitors visit our website annually
- These visitors viewed more than 3,242,000 pages on the website
- 70% of these visitors are from the greater Phoenix area
- Mailed the Chamber Community Guide to over 38,000 homes and businesses in our community within 7 zip codes
- We have an additional 2000 available in the Carefree Info Center as well as the Cave Creek Info Center

- We sent 105,600 e-mails to our subscriber base for our weekly E-Blast/Newsletter in 2019
- We have 3000+ daily followers on our Facebook page
- We welcomed 70 new members to the Chamber

What We Do

- Strengthen members businesses through educations, networking, advocacy & marketing
- Provide value and support to our member businesses
- We are the primary resource for our community
- We have given back over \$96,000 to our community in goods, services and jobs
- Have raised \$3000 in scholarship money for a Cactus Shadows student
- Created a 501c3 Foundation to administer education programs and award scholarships

What We Offer

- Advocacy through ACE (Arizona Chamber Executives) and EVCCA (East Valley Chamber of Commerce Alliance)
- Monthly Evening Mixer –networking and promoting business. Businesses in Cave Creek and Carefree take turns hosting each month. We are currently booking hosts for 2021. Approximately 40-50 business owners attend each month
- Monthly Business Breakfast –networking and informative guest speaker offering hands on learning with the insight to help grow your business. We meet the last Thursday of the month at Harold’s Corral at 7:30am. Approximately 60-70 business owners attend each month
- POWER Hour-May through September a large group of business owners get together once per month at a local restaurant for friendship, networking and infusing cash into our restaurants when they need it most...the summertime!
- Ribbon Cutting – Promotion and Celebration of a new business, expansion or a milestone anniversary.
- Business Referrals
- E-blasts and Newsletters sent out weekly to 2200 subscribers with information of sales/events/programs our members are offering
- Social Media promoting our business community
- Website marketing
- Member only Advertising opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities
- A robust community event calendar on the Chamber website

Source for historical data: A Peak at the Peak On-Line Magazine, Pinnacle Peak Association (GPPA) and Friends of the Scenic Drive.