



ANNUAL REPORT

2021



ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Palmer Museum of History and Art is a 501(c)3 nonprofit contracting with the City of Palmer to provide museum and visitor center services for the greater Palmer area. On average, we serve approximately 30,000 visitors each year. The building and much of the collection are owned by the City of Palmer, and PMHA manages the facility. The organization was founded in 2005, originally providing only museum services. PMHA acquired the visitor center contract in 2012. We create exhibits, plan programming, and provide frontline concierge and destination marketing services for the Palmer region. About half our annual budget (Proposed as \$302,705 for 2022) comes from our contracts with the City of Palmer. In the summer (May 1 through September 15), we are open seven days a week from 9am to 6pm. In the off season, we are open Tuesday through Friday from 10am to 4pm.

MISSION STATEMENT

“Our work inspires, enriches, and cultivates our community’s connection to the unique history, culture, and art of the Greater Palmer Area.”

VISION STATEMENT

To be the touchstone of our community, celebrating our unique culture, art, and history of the Greater Palmer Area.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS AREA

Greater Palmer Area including the Matanuska River Corridor and the Core area of the Mat-Su Borough.

CORE VALUES

Elegance, Accuracy, Integrity, Relevance, Joy

ORGANIZATIONAL LONG-TERM GOALS (SET IN 2019)

- 1) To have a beautifully designed facility with community gathering spaces, exhibit halls, and archival storage.
- 2) To increase staff capacity to include the Executive Director, Curator, Educator, and Visitor Services Manager, and a part-time Archivist

OUR COLLECTIONS

We collect objects and art that help us tell the story of the Greater Palmer Area. Our collection currently includes over 2,500 objects and over 13,000 photographs. Each part of our collection is cataloged and stored in our collections management software program, PastPerfect. Our photo collections are digitized, and the best of those images are uploaded to our online photo database for easier access by our community. The best of our object collections are utilized in our permanent exhibits upstairs.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our work at PMHA is made possible each year by dozens of volunteers. Since 2019, many of our regular volunteers and board members serve on committees or lead tours in the summer. Our current committees and members are:

Board of Directors: Pat Chesbro (President), Mari Jo Parks (Vice President), Margaret Adsit (Treasurer), Erin Saunders (Secretary), Felicia Desimini, Amber Lindstrom, Jim Brown, Dean Phipps

Art Committee: Erin Saunders (Chair), Felicia Desimini, Emily Longbrake, Richard Estelle, Becky Oviatt, Dylainie Nathlich, Matthew Akers, Sam Dinges

Collections Committee: Richard Estelle (Chair), Pat Chesbro, John Moosey / Brad Hanson, Pat Garley, Sam Dinges, Dylainie Nathlich

Education and Outreach Committee: Mari Jo Parks (Chair), Erin Saunders, Pat Chesbro, Matthew Akers, Sam Dinges, Dylainie Nathlich, Jill Warner

Events Committee: Amber Lindstrom (Chair), Mari Jo Parks, Erin Saunders, Jim Brown, Matthew Akers, Sam Dinges, Becky Oviatt, Ailis Vann, Jill Warner, Michele Harmeling

Finance Committee: Margaret Adsit (Chair), Pat Chesbro, Jim Brown, Sam Dinges

Untold Stories Committee: Mari Jo Parks (Chair), Sam Dinges, Vicki Randolph, Emily Forstner

Visit Palmer Committee: Margaret Adsit, Sam Dinges, Matthew Akers

OUR STAFF

The Palmer Museum currently employs four permanent staff (two full time and two part time), and hires three to four temporary summer staff each year.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SAM DINGES

Sam Dinges is the Executive Director at the Palmer Museum and Visitor Center. He joined the museum as director in 2018, having previously worked at the University of Alaska Anchorage Consortium Library, the Wasilla Museum, and the Anchorage Museum. Sam earned his Bachelor's degree from University of Alaska Southeast, majoring in history and sociology, pursuing research on Alaska's Cold War era radar sites. He finished his Masters in Library and Information Science through Clarion University of Pennsylvania. Sam grew up in Palmer, and loves learning and sharing the deep, unique story of this place. While not in the office, he enjoys hiking and cross country skiing, playing piano, and spending time with his wife and four dogs.

Employment Type: Permanent Full Time (40 hours / week)

Hours: Admin (30%), Fundraising (25%), Programming (45%)

Started at PMHA: February 2018

Duties:

- Manage the museum and visitor center, hire and manage staff
- Represent PMHA to the community, develop museum / visitor center exhibits and programs
- Advocate for grant / contract / donor funding
- Create the budget, and track spending, payroll, accounting
- Other duties as assigned (IT, greeting visitors, oversee volunteers, clean toilets & more)



VISITOR OUTREACH COORDINATOR - MATTHEW AKERS

Matthew Akers is the Visitor Outreach Coordinator for the Palmer Museum and Visitor Center. Born and raised in Palmer, he has a broad work background including farm work, retail management, and museum/tour experience with the Wasilla Museum. He joined the museum in 2020, working largely with the Visitor Center and gift shop, and the Palmer Visitor Guide. Matthew enjoys Palmer's sense of community and the beautiful mountains in the area. In his off-time, he unwinds with his spouse and their friends playing various card/board/video games, watching movies, or trying craft projects.

Employment Type: Permanent Full Time (35 hours / week)

Hours: Admin (15%) Fundraising (25%) Programming (60%)

Started at PMHA: July 2020

Duties:

- Supervise and train summer staff and manage the museum gift shop
- Create and publish the Palmer Visitor Guide
- Update the Palmer Community Calendar / Visit Palmer website
- Other duties as assigned (lead tours, help at museum events, clean, greet visitors)

OUR STAFF CONTINUED



COLLECTIONS MANAGER – RICHARD ESTELLE

“I was born in Anchorage, Alaska and grew up on a small farm on the northern outskirts of Palmer, Alaska. Upon graduating from Palmer High School I attended the University of Alaska, Fairbanks and graduated from Oregon State University with a BS in Horticulture with emphasis on Landscape Architecture. Upon graduation I embarked on a career with the USDA Forest Service as a Forest Landscape Architect & Land Management Planner. Most of my career was spent on the Tongass National Forest in SE Alaska. After retirement from

the Forest Service I returned to the Palmer area and was employed for several summers with a major tour company, driving motor coaches and conducting visitor tours. In 2009 I was employed as a Visitor Information Specialist at the Palmer Visitor Center and at the end of that summer season I was employed as a part-time manager of the associated museum collections. That arrangement continued much the same for several years and has evolved with my continuous employment into a focus mostly as the Collections Manager position on a half-time basis to date in 2021. I continue to live in the Matanuska Valley. I have two grown children of whom I am very proud.”

Employment Type: Permanent Part Time (20 hours / week)

Hours: Admin (0%) Fundraising (0%) Programming (100%)

Started at PMHA: May 2009

Duties:

- Review new donations, Ensure collection is professionally cared for and developed
- Digitize images for the photo collection, and manage the Photo Project website content
- Train and supervise collections volunteers, and answer Palmer history reference questions



COLLECTIONS SPECIALIST – DYLAİNIE NATHLICH

Dylainie Nathlich is the Collections Aide for the Palmer Museum of History and Art. She joined the team and moved to Alaska in September of 2021 after working with Museum of Alaska Transportation and Industry over the summer as their Collections Management Intern. Dylainie has also worked for the Marin Museum of Bicycling, The Lyle Tuttle Collection, ArtTable, and many other non-profits in

the San Francisco Bay Area. She received her Bachelor’s degree in Art History and Studio Art from San Francisco State University in 2019, and is currently finishing her Master’s Degree at San Francisco State University in Museum Studies later this year. Her thesis work involves curating a virtual exhibit of the Marin Headlands in California for the National Park Service and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Dylainie is passionate about her community, wherever that may be, and is looking forward to learning and sharing the many stories that Palmer’s history holds. In her spare time, you can find Dylainie in her art practice or running / hiking nearby trails.

Employment Type: Permanent Part Time (20 hours / week)

Hours: Admin (0%) Fundraising (0%) Programming (100%)

Started at PMHA: September 2021

Duties:

- Catalog new items into the collection, and pack objects into archival materials
- Develop new exhibits and displays, and digitize documents and images for the collection
- Create educational materials to connect the Palmer community to their museum

OUR STAFF CONTINUED

VISITOR SERVICES SPECIALISTS (3-4 SUMMER STAFF)

We have had a number of wonderful visitor services specialists since PMHA took over the visitor center side of operations in 2012. Linda Llewelyn is currently our longest serving front desk employee, at three years. We typically hire retired / active school teachers and high school students.

Employment Type: Temporary Part Time (20 hours / week)

Hours: Admin (0%) Fundraising (0%) Programming (100%)

Started at PMHA: Since 2012

Duties:

- Greet visitors to the museum and visitor center
- Keep the building clean and the displays well stocked in summertime
- Staff the front desk, and provide frontline concierge services to travelers
- Assist PMHA staff with museum / visitor center projects and events.

PROGRAMS, EXHIBITS & FUNDRAISERS

AHTNA CULTURAL GUIDES

Every Friday in the summer, we host Cultural Guides from Chickaloon Native Village, who educate visitors about traditional Ahtna Athabascan culture, language, and values.

ARTIST OF THE WEEK

Every Friday in the summer, we debut the work of a new Palmer artist to our visitors and community. We do a live streamed interview with the artist, and their work is on display for a week at the museum, exposing them to an average of 1,000 unique visitors. At the season's end, we choose 1-2 pieces from the display and purchase them to grow our museum art collection.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Once a year, we host an art exhibit featuring the work of students from MSBSD high school classrooms. We make donations to participating art departments, and award two \$1,000 scholarships to two students. Each student receives juried feedback on their work.

GUIDED TOURS

Six days a week in the summer and two in the winter, we offer guided tours of Palmer's historic district. Tour guides include staff and volunteers, and we talk about the history of the Palmer area from the story of the Ahtna to the Gold Rush to the Colony Project.

PALMER BEER & BREW GARDEN

During Colony Days, we serve local beer and Kombucha in the garden as a fundraiser for our museum programs.



Ahtna Cultural Guides



Artist of the Week
Richard Estelle

Beyond the Classroom



Guided tours



Beer & Brew Garden

Showcase Garden

PROGRAMS, EXHIBITS & FUNDRAISERS CONTINUED



Palmer Photo Project

PALMER PHOTO PROJECT

Since 2016, we have been actively soliciting and collecting historic images of the Greater Palmer Area. We collect the photographs and the stories that go with them, digitize the images, and share the best with our community for research and connection to Palmer's story.



Permanent Exhibits

Untold Stories

PALMER VISITOR GUIDE

Each year, we write, fundraise for, and produce the Palmer Visitor Guide. This 44 page booklet has maps, activities, directories, and day planning. We distribute 30,000 copies annually to high traffic visitor locations around the state.

UNTOLD STORIES

A long running storytelling event, where local storyteller volunteers share stories on a stage or virtually based around a theme. Stories are recorded and collected.



Museums Alaska grant for a new scanner

PALMER SIP AND SHOP

A new major fundraiser, similar to the Wine Walk, but held in February. This event has five stops, with two wines at each.

TRAVELING EXHIBIT

In 2022, we are constructing a traveling exhibit for display in local schools. Exhibits will help educate youth about Palmer history, Alaska agriculture, and food security.



Visit Palmer

VISIT PALMER

Working with the Palmer Chamber, Mat-Su CVB, and the City, we have been developing digital destination marketing materials for the Greater Palmer Area.



Wine Walk



Youth Art Workshops

PROGRAMS, EXHIBITS & FUNDRAISERS CONTINUED

WINE WALK

Every July, we host a wine walk around Palmer as our major annual fundraiser. This is the museum's largest fundraiser, and we partner with ten different local businesses to make it happen.

YOUTH ART WORKSHOPS

This summer, we plan to offer a series of free art workshops for youth. Classes will be offered in June and July at the museum to provide affordable opportunities for arts education for young people in our community.

BUDGET

The PMHA budget cycle runs from January to December each year. The Finance Committee prepares the budget, and the board of directors modifies and approves it. We have a diverse array of funding sources. Highlights for the 2022 budget are outlined in the items below.

HIGHLIGHTS

About half our revenue each year comes from our museum contract (MUS \$55,400) and our visitor center contract (VIC \$75,115) both with the City of Palmer.

We are being gifted six bicycles to begin a visitor bike rental program next summer at the museum. This is a brand new revenue source, we are estimated at \$5,000 for this year.

Our staffing costs are increasing this year, as we have committed to hiring a second permanent part-time position for the museum side of the organization.

BUDGET CONTINUED

BUDGET LANGUAGE

A few notes on some of the terms used in the budget materials below:

Restricted Revenue is money from grants or contracts that we are required to spend in a certain way on certain expenses. We also count the Visitor Guide ad sales as restricted revenue, though there is no contract that says we must.

Unrestricted Revenue is money that we are not required to spend in a certain way. It includes funds from the gift shop, fundraisers, membership, donations, and our bike rental program.

Admin Costs are funds spent on administrative activities, such as insurance, utilities, human resource or IT costs, and general cost of doing business expenses.

Fundraising Costs are funds spent on making money. Product for the gift shop, materials and staff time spent on fundraisers and the gift shop and donation drives, and supplies for fundraisers are all fundraising costs.

Program Costs are funds spent directly on programs that advance our mission. Money for supplies, money for staff time spent planning and staffing programs, and money for collection care are all program costs.

2022 BUDGET OVERVIEW

UNRESTRICTED REVENUE - \$104,500

Money that we can spend how we choose: there is no requirement for what it must be spent on.

Gift Shop · \$46,200	Wine Walk · \$20,500	Membership · \$6,000
Bicycle Rentals · \$5,000	Winter Fundraiser · \$12,000	Donations/Board · \$5,500
Tours · \$1,000	Other Fundraisers · \$6,500	Sponsors · \$2,000

RESTRICTED REVENUE - \$203,205

Money that we can spend how we choose: there is no requirement for what it must be spent on.

City of Palmer VIC Contract · \$75,115	Art Acquisition Grant · \$10,000	Visitor Guide Ads · \$20,000
City of Palmer MUS Contract · \$55,400	Collections Management Grant · \$13,390	MVHF Grant · \$3,000
City of Palmer Visitor Guide · \$0	GPCC Visit Palmer Grant · \$2,300	Project Savings · \$24,000

EXPENSES - \$305,850

Our anticipated budget expenses for 2022

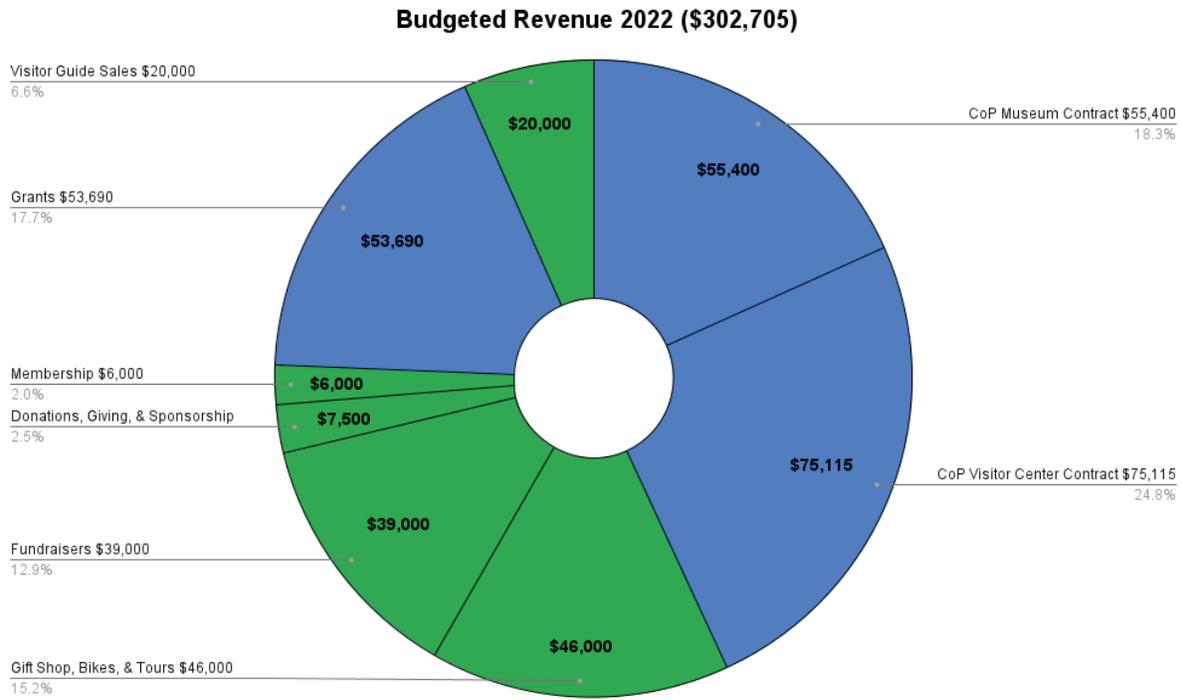
● Paid with Unrestricted Funds

● Paid with Restricted Funds

Director Salary · \$44,000 ●●	Gift Shop · \$20,000 ●●	Office/Utility/Janitorial · \$9350 ●●
Staff & Payroll · \$111,600 ●●	Fundraising Expenses · \$12,500 ●●	Credit/Bank Fees · \$3,000 ●●
Visitor Guide · \$31,500 ●●	Programs & Exhibits · \$11,000 ●●	Insurance · \$3,500 ●●
Visit Palmer · \$3,800 ●●	Collection Care & Dev. · \$49,600 ●●	Advertising · \$6,000 ●●

The above shows our anticipated unrestricted revenue (Green, \$104,500), restricted revenue (Blue, \$203,205), and anticipated expenses (Red, \$305,850).

2022 ANTICIPATED REVENUE · \$302,705

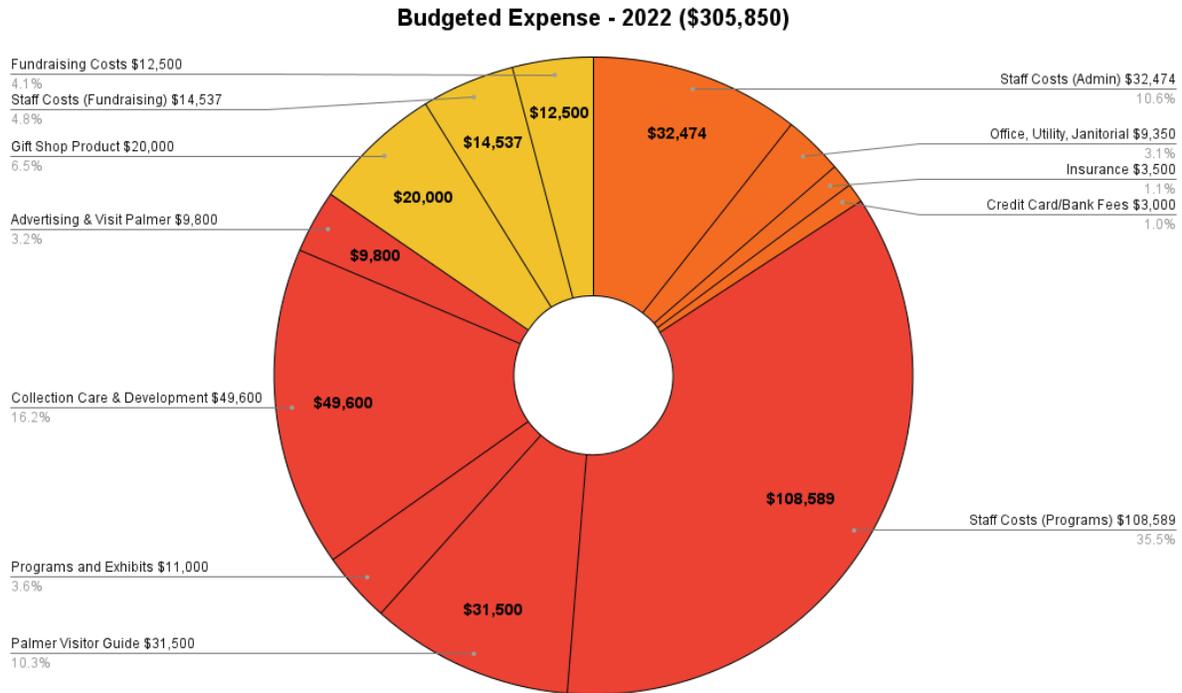


The above pie chart shows our anticipated revenues for 2022, with unrestricted revenues in green and restricted revenues in blue.

Restricted Revenue is money from grants or contracts that we are required to spend in a certain way on certain expenses. We also count the Visitor Guide ad sales as restricted revenue, though there is no contract that says we must.

Unrestricted Revenue is money that we are not required to spend in a certain way. It includes funds from the gift shop, fundraisers, membership, donations, and our bike rental program.

2022 ANTICIPATED EXPENSES - \$305,850



The above pie chart shows our anticipated expenses for 2022, with admin costs (\$48,324) in orange, fundraising costs (\$47,037) in yellow, and program costs (\$210,489) in red.

Admin Costs are funds spent on administrative activities, such as insurance, utilities, human resource or IT costs, and general cost of doing business expenses.

Fundraising Costs are funds spent on making money. Product for the gift shop, materials and staff time spent on fundraisers and the gift shop and donation drives, and supplies for fundraisers are all fundraising costs.

Program Costs are funds spent directly on programs that advance our mission. Money for supplies, money for staff time spent planning and staffing programs, and money for collection care are all program costs.

2022 BUDGET

	BUDGETED REVENUE	ACTUAL REVENUE (2021)
CoP Museum Contract	\$55,400	\$41,200
CoP Visitor Center Contract	\$75,115	\$75,115
CoP Visitor Guide Funds	\$0	\$0
Gift Shop, Bikes, & Tours	\$46,000	\$47,200
Fundraisers	\$39,000	\$23,600
Donations, Giving, & Sponsorship	\$7,500	\$9,860
Membership	\$6,000	\$7,600
Grants	\$53,690	\$0
Visitor Guide Sales	\$20,000	\$10,075
TOTAL REVENUE	\$302,705	\$214,650

	BUDGETED EXPENSE	ACTUAL EXPENSE (2021)
Payroll, Accounting, & Taxes	\$155,600	\$135,628
Palmer Visitor Guide	\$31,500	\$5,491
Gift Shop Product	\$20,000	\$19,025
Programs and Exhibits	\$11,000	\$11,044
Collection Care & Development	\$49,600	\$26,765
Fundraising Costs	\$12,500	\$10,686
General Advertising & Visit Palmer	\$9,800	\$8,483
Office, Utility, Janitorial	\$9,350	\$10,363
Insurance	\$3,500	\$2,307
Credit Card/Bank Fees	\$3,000	\$3,774
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$305,850	\$233,567

2021 PROFIT & LOSS OVERVIEW

	ACTUAL REVENUE	BUDGETED REVENUE
CoP Museum Contract	\$41,200	\$46,200
CoP Visitor Center Contract	\$75,115	\$75,115
CoP Visitor Guide Funds	\$0	\$5,000
Gift Shop & Tours	\$47,200	\$14,000
Fundraisers	\$23,600	\$17,500
Donations, Giving, & Sponsorship	\$9,860	\$4,500
Membership	\$7,600	\$4,000
Grants	\$0	\$10,500
Visitor Guide Sales	\$10,075	\$20,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$214,650	\$196,815

	ACTUAL EXPENSE	BUDGETED EXPENSE
Payroll, Accounting, & Taxes	\$135,628	\$125,830
Palmer Visitor Guide	\$5,491	\$31,500
Gift Shop Product	\$19,025	\$5,000
Programs and Exhibits	\$11,044	\$6,500
Collection Care & Development	\$26,765	\$7,200
Fundraising Costs	\$10,686	\$6,000
General Advertising & Visit Palmer	\$8,483	\$4,800
Office, Utility, Janitorial	\$10,363	\$6,550
Insurance	\$2,307	\$4,000
Credit Card/Bank Fees	\$3,774	\$2,800
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$233,567	\$200,180



FOR MORE INFORMATION

More information about this report is available upon request from the Palmer Museum:

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palmermuseum.org