POSITIONED FOR THE FUTURE

CONNER PRAIRIE 2019 IMPACT REPORT
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POSITIONED FOR THE FUTURE
OUR MISSION

Conner Prairie is a unique historic place that inspires curiosity and fosters learning by providing engaging and individualized experiences for everyone.

OUR VISION

Conner Prairie will expand the boundaries of our historical and natural resources by exploring, celebrating, and improving the human experience.
A NOTE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Looking back on the past year, I see both challenges and opportunities. We overcame challenges outside of our control – weather and road construction – to finish 2019 with the second-highest attendance on record by creating unique, individualized experiences for over 414,000 guests.

*In the true spirit of Conner Prairie innovation, our staff continued to find new and exciting ways for guests to experience our grounds that have ultimately transformed the way they view and use our Museum.*

We remained committed to our DEAI Promise by providing more opportunities than ever for all members of our community to engage and connect with history and nature. We broke new ground during our festival season, with a record-breaking Headless Horseman and a successful A Merry Prairie Holiday. Our staff continued to develop Conner Prairie’s national presence in the museum industry through its innovative programming - changing the way people view and use museums. Thank you to our devoted staff, volunteers, members and community supporters for making 2019 another successful year.

Norman Burns, Conner Prairie President & CEO
OUR YEAR IN REVIEW
BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER

An important facet of Conner Prairie’s 1,046 acres is its ability to bring the community together. We expanded this capability in 2019 by activating the grounds in new and innovative ways, providing a space for guests from near and far to engage with history, connect with curiosity, and celebrate community. Our two largest festivals – Headless Horseman and A Merry Prairie Holiday – have become some of our largest attractions, creating engaging and individualized experiences for everyone.

Headless Horseman, presented by Bank of America, returned in 2019 with record-breaking attendance. Over 37,000 people visited Conner Prairie during the month of October for Central Indiana’s perennial favorite fall festival. Guests supported the museum through the Apple Store, enjoying delicious hand-dipped apples and apple cider slushies. Adults and children alike took an adventure on the classic Haunted Hayride, explored our 12-acre nationally-renowned Corn Maze, and experienced the tale of Sleepy Hollow.

Conner Prairie closed out 2019 with its inaugural A Merry Prairie Holiday. Friends and family from all over Central Indiana stepped into the story to experience this new holiday tradition. New winter memories were made in the month of December at the Reynolds Christmas Lights display, the North Pole Village, Blitzen’s Bandstand, and Prairietown as guests were wrapped in the warmth of the holidays through history and fun. On December 31st, we rang in the new year with over 1,100 community members with a special New Year’s Eve celebration and fireworks display.

2019 PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Attendance:</th>
<th>Symphony on the Prairie:</th>
<th>School Tours:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headless Horseman:</td>
<td>A Merry Prairie Holiday:</td>
<td>Summer Campers:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Public Attitudes About History & Museums

In 2019, we executed a Public Opinion Poll with the goal of understanding how the public values history and the importance of museums. The results were clear: Americans are more curious than ever about history, and turn to museums for opportunities to learn.

96% of Americans believe it is important to look at our history to inform our future.

91% of Americans agreed: it is important to learn about history to build a strong foundation for the future.

8 in 10 agree that increasing interest in genealogy – tracing family history – shows that more people long to connect with their past to better understand their own personal journey, values and who they are.

79% of Americans think it is important that museums demonstrate a sustained commitment for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion.

92% of Americans believe it is important to look at our history to inform our future.

42% of Americans have a higher level of curiosity in history as compared to this time last year.

47% of Gen Z
55% of Millennials
42% of Gen X
28% of Baby Boomers
26% of Silent Generation

42% of Americans have a higher level of curiosity in history as compared to this time last year.
ACTIVATING CONNER PRAIRIE

Conner Prairie is proud to have partnered in the community to activate nearly all of its 1,046 acres.
OUR MISSION IMPACT
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Preschool on the Prairie, the museum’s newest early childhood initiative, began its first school year in August. With a strong emphasis on play, discovery, and nature, children ages three to five learn through emergent curriculum – points of learning that emerge based on the children’s interests and how they explore in their play.

Brandy Zollman, our Senior Manager of Early Childhood Programs, emphasizes each day the concept of play as an integral part of Preschool on the Prairie.

"Conner Prairie is making a statement that play is enough, and this philosophy is beginning to filter up through our Interpretation and Exhibits teams, aligning with Opening Doors to Inclusion and the Conner Prairie mission statement."

With 30 preschoolers learning and growing through play in its inaugural year, Preschool on the Prairie received overwhelmingly positive feedback from parents. Except for those moving onto kindergarten, every family is returning to the Preschool in 2020.

"Play is the work of childhood."
SCHOOL PROGRAMS

2019 was an exciting year for Conner Prairie’s school programming, as the museum expanded its opportunities for learning and partnership. Conner Prairie continued working to transform the educational landscape through its partnership with Hamilton Southeastern Schools (HSE). “Adventures on the Prairie” brings learning to life for over 1,500 local fourth-graders, giving them the opportunity to work alongside teacher-in-residence Amy Murch for a two-day “study trip.” The program is based in the Prairie House – a $1.2m newly-renovated and expanded capital investment in a scenic, natural setting on Conner Prairie’s grounds. Students have unprecedented access to all 1,046 acres of the Museum’s property and are able to interact with our historic interpreters, creating engaging lessons in history and STEM. Through this partnership, students are a part of a truly dynamic educational environment where learning is both visible and meaningful.

The Prairie Mobile, with support from the Duke Energy Foundation and Ball Brothers Foundation, traveled to provide free outreaches for dozens of schools around Indiana, covering topics such as flight and electricity through history and STEM education. Conner Prairie’s diversity of scholastic programs and partnerships continue to make the Museum an educational hub where learning takes place for all.

“The HSE 4th graders utilize the Prairie House classroom and the 1,046 acres of land for instruction and explorations each day. This partnership has brought learning to life for so many families in our community.” - Amy Murch, HSE Teacher-in-Residence

In 2019

- **53,555** students, teachers, & chaperones visited on school tours
- **3,527 at 51 schools** impacted through the Prairie Mobile Outreach Program
- **1,573** HSE fourth-grade students participated in Adventures on the Prairie
ECONOMIC IMPACT

Conner Prairie serves as an important economic driver for Central Indiana, drawing tourists from around the country and providing them with further opportunities to explore the region. Visitation and spending at Conner Prairie create an economic ripple effect across 23 Indiana counties through both tourist and non-tourist businesses and infrastructure.

On the national level, museums in the 21st century continue to make positive and impactful contributions to the tourism economy. According to an economic impact study conducted for the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), museums contribute $50 billion to the U.S. economy each year and support more than 726,000 American jobs. The economic activity of museums generates more than $12 billion in tax revenue – one-third of this going to state and local governments. Furthermore, travelers participating in cultural or heritage activities spend 60% more on average than other leisure travelers.

As of January 2020, Conner Prairie employs:

114 full-time | 63 part-time | 294 seasonal

Total Economic Impact*:

Indiana: $44 mil+ | Hamilton Cty: $25 mil+ | Fishers: $10 mil+

Conner Prairie generates:

$2.4 mil in Indiana state taxes | $1.3 mil in local taxes

*2017 Certec study
NATIONAL MISSION IMPACT

Conner Prairie welcomes guests from all 50 states and is proud to have programming and leadership that gives us a national presence in the museum landscape.

Interpretation staff traveled nationwide in 2019 to give presentations at Portal to the Public, a program facilitated by the Institute for Learning Innovation designed to connect museum audiences with current science in their own communities through conversations with local STEM experts.

CEO Norman Burns represented Conner Prairie at conferences and events around the country, promoting the organization’s focus on diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

Analysis of Conner Prairie’s search engine optimization (SEO) and web activity found significant traffic from California accessing the museum’s educational resources.

Our corn maze at Conner Prairie was recognized with the 2019 USA TODAY 10Best Readers’ Choice award for Best Corn Maze, making it one of the top 10 attractions of its kind in the country.
OUR
PARTNERSHIPS
Conner Prairie continued its commitment to its DEAI Promise in 2019 with an emphasis on inclusive programming at its core. Partnerships with the Central Indiana Community on Aging (CICOA) and Dementia Friendly Indiana supported Conner Prairie's Memory Cafés – welcoming, safe, spaces for individuals with Alzheimer’s and/or dementia and their loved ones designed to engage the five senses and create opportunities to connect with the world in ways that evoke past memories. Themes of Memory Cafés in 2019 included music of the past, our Agriculture and Heritage Breed program, 19th century cooking, and Storytelling. Our Memory Cafes were graciously supported by the Hamilton County Community Foundation.

Kelsey Van Voorst, Conner Prairie’s champion of inclusive programming, sees firsthand the positive impact that Memory Cafés have on guests.

“In March, we took groups out to our Animal Encounters Barn. I noticed one man who was quiet for most of the morning, but when we entered the barn began speaking and recounting memories from his experience growing up on a farm,” Van Voorst said. “Experiences like those remind me of the power of inclusion.”

Conner Prairie also introduced Sensory-Friendly Mornings in 2019 to serve guests with autism. The Museum opened early on eight mornings throughout the year, during which all exhibit components that make noise are turned off – creating a nurturing environment for guests to explore and learn. In partnership with Anthem, Conner Prairie created designated Quiet Spaces throughout the museum grounds, providing a space for those with autism to visit when feeling overwhelmed or in need of a break.

Inclusive programming became a standard element of Conner Prairie's mission in 2019, and we see a bright future for these programs in 2020, emphasizing opportunities for innovation and growth in the Museum’s commitment to inclusion.
Jimmy Kiefel and his family relocated to Fishers from Australia in 2011 to enroll him in the Behavior Analysis Center for Autism (BACA), an organization whose mission is “to provide the most efficacious applied behavior analysis services to children and young adults with autism”. Through Conner Prairie’s partnership with BACA, Jimmy began volunteering at Conner Prairie doing data entry. His focused and meticulous efforts quickly became clear. As Jimmy formed friendships with Conner Prairie staff, his strengths and talent became even more apparent: Jimmy is a prolific artist who draws from a variety of inspirations and methods in his work.

Jimmy started making art in 2011, mostly printmaking cards for his friends, and exhibited his works in public for the first time at the 2016 Autism Society of Indiana Expo. Enjoying routine and repetition in his artistic process, he learned to create stencils and relief printing blocks from his photos using a graphics software and a plotter cutter. He now displays and sells his work at No Label at the Table Bakery and Gallery in Carmel and at the Hope Gallery in Bargersville.

Kiefel’s exhibit, Through Jimmy’s Eyes, colorfully and beautifully brought Conner Prairie to life through 62 works inspired by his time on the grounds, and was displayed in the Welcome Center from March 1 to May 12. Conner Prairie is proud to recognize and showcase Jimmy’s astounding artistic abilities and celebrate its partnership with BACA.

When we asked Jimmy:

- How did it feel to see your art on display at Conner Prairie?
  
  ”It felt good to see my art on display at Conner Prairie. I liked to show my friends.”

- What is your favorite part about working at Conner Prairie?
  
  ”I like to check in with Kate. I like to say hi to Patricia. I like to sit in the break room.”

When we asked Jimmy’s mom, Wendy:

- How have you seen Jimmy grow - both as an artist and as a person - through his work at Conner Prairie?
  
  ”Jimmy has become more independent as a person through working at Conner Prairie and he looks forward to the time he spends at Conner Prairie. He has developed confidence as an artist and takes pride in his work. He enjoys the compliments and affirmation. I think Jimmy sees himself as an artist now rather than a kid who does art.”

- Your family made a big life move in the interest of working with BACA. What role has Conner Prairie played in such a big life change?
  
  ”Conner Prairie has been a very important part of Jimmy’s life because it has been a place of opportunity to grow. Jimmy has experienced wonderful encouragement and friendship there and as a family we have seen that our son can have a place in the community. That feels really great.”
ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility remained an important point of Conner Prairie’s mission impact in 2019. Conner Prairie’s Access Pass program provided families participating in state assistance programs with highly reduced admission. The Military Admission Relief program gave complimentary admission to active duty, retired, and veteran military members. A new partnership with the Hamilton County Youth Assistance Program allowed local families with youth facing challenging life circumstances complimentary admission and access to seasonal festivals. Conner Prairie also opened its doors for free on three days in 2019, giving all community members more opportunities to engage and connect with history.

“...Through the generosity of our donors, we are able to offer discounted admission to those who might not otherwise be able to visit. Whether a subsidized school field trip, an Access Pass guest, or a family utilizing our Blue Star Museum affiliation, keeping admission affordable to all is one simple way we make a positive difference in our community.”
- Carol Emmert, Guest Services Representative

A total of 3,106 Military ID holders received free admission through the Military Admission Relief and Blue Star Museums programs.

A total of 5,692 guests attended Conner Prairie for free on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President’s Day, Smithsonian Museum Day, and through the First Responder program.

A total of 4,507 Hoosiers participating in state assistance programs visited Conner Prairie for $2 through the Access Pass program.

A total of 191 guests facing challenging life circumstances visited Conner Prairie and attended major festivals through the Youth Assistance Program.

Conner Prairie subsidized a total of $178,878 in admission costs in 2019.
OUR SUPPORTERS
To our cherished supporters and Conner Prairie family – we couldn’t do any of this without you.

Thank you!

OUR SUPPORTERS

Donors and supporters are at the heart of every experience here at Conner Prairie. It is because of their support that the unique experiential learning opportunities at Conner Prairie are accessible to everyone. Because of them, people of all ages and backgrounds can come to reconnect with nature as they visit River Lookout and see the White River twisting through our land, or climb to the top of Treetop Outpost catching views of the woods that surround us. This exploration encourages new ideas, new opportunities, and builds the future leaders of our communities.

Beyond making each visit memorable, they help Conner Prairie work for a brighter tomorrow. Each year, philanthropic support enables us to care for over 140 animals showcasing four rare heritage breeds, provides special opportunities for over 50,000 of Indiana’s school children and train a new generation of 116 youth volunteers to carry the spirit of our mission far beyond our 1,046 acres.

2019 FUNDRAISING TOTALS

- Conner Prairie donors gave $1,712,157 to the Mission Impact Fund in 2019
- Individuals: $999,971
- Grants and Foundations: $223,900
- Corporate Sponsorships: $497,887
- Special Projects: $944,000
The Conner Prairie Alliance is a dynamic women’s volunteer organization that fundraises to transform Conner Prairie. Nearly every program and exhibit area on the Conner Prairie grounds has been supported by the hard-working women of the Alliance. The Alliance made a truly historic impact in 2019 by fundraising through the Apple Store and providing substantial support for the Museum’s programs.

- Raised $147,000 for Conner Prairie programs
  Distributed to A Merry Prairie Holiday, Heritage Breeds, Textiles, Makesmith, Youth Spinning, and YAC

- 250,000th Apple dipped at the Apple Store by First Lady Janet Holcomb

- Presenting sponsor of the inaugural season of A Merry Prairie Holiday
VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a vital part of Conner Prairie’s programs and festivals. Whether it’s providing tours, gardening, facilitating school tours, or serving as core experience interpreters, volunteers make Conner Prairie a special place to be. The passion and dedication our volunteers have for the museum puts them at the center of the action – a place where history, science, nature, and art come to life.

“When we moved to Hamilton County over 15 years ago and then retired, we were looking at how to give back to the community. It’s been a perfect fit for us. Trying new options and finding the “just right” fit with the activity and people you enjoy is one of the big reasons we like volunteering at Conner Prairie.”

- Jim and Maddie Bromley, volunteers since 2014

“Conner Prairie is woven into the fabric of our local community, our state, our nation and beyond. Take a look at how many years our Staff and Volunteers have been here. You will soon notice that many have been here more than 10, 20 or even 30 years. It didn’t take me long to figure out why. Simply, Conner Prairie is Amazing!”

- Mark Chase, volunteer since 2008
HORIZON COUNCIL

The Horizon Council, Conner Prairie’s young professionals group, had a banner year in 2019. Council members found new ways to connect their colleagues to Conner Prairie, cultivating new corporate relationships and strengthening community partnerships. They also served as strong advocates for our museum in their personal and professional communities.

The Horizon Council planned and hosted a highly successful History on Tap in 2019, presented by Bank of America. History on Tap is an evening of craft beer and history where guests can sample historic beer brewed on site, learn about craft brewing through demonstrations, meet with local craft beer experts, and enjoy live music – all in Conner Prairie’s 1836 Prairietown. History on Tap 2019, in addition to having the most brewers ever and introducing food trucks to the event, brought in the highest gross revenue of any History on Tap event to benefit Conner Prairie’s programs. This contribution from the Horizon Council helps our museum remain accessible to all members of the community.

The Horizon Council also hosted a networking event that gave young professionals and the business community an opportunity to learn about the past, present and future of the White River. Attendees listened to local business leaders on the importance of water conservation and reclamation, as well as the river’s role in the future of Conner Prairie, Central Indiana, and the state as a whole.

“The Horizon Council achieved tremendous success in 2019. The Horizon Council perpetually exceeds our own expectations, and our accomplishments are a testament to our members’ commitment to Conner Prairie. I am personally very grateful for and proud of our board members.”

- Ed Bukovac, Horizon Council President

HISTORY ON TAP 2019

1,435 Tickets Sold

$46,200 in Sponsorships

$96,565 in Total Cash Revenue
2019 CONNER PRAIRIE LEADERSHIP

Conner Prairie Museum

**Chair:** Rich Thrapp  
**Vice Chair:** Christine Altman  
**Secretary:** Jill Grossman  
**Treasurer:** Alan Cohen

Jane Niederberger  
Don Orr  
Mike Rechin  
Jay Ricker – *Immediate Past Chair*  
Dick Ristine  
Phil Scarpino  
Jenny Schalliol  
Shawn Smith  
Brian Timmerman  
Randy Wilson

**Conner Prairie Foundation**

**Chair:** Chris Cooke  
**Vice Chair:** Bill Batt  
**Secretary:** Hilary Salatich  
**Treasurer:** Jay Ricker

Kevin Schmidt  
Jerry Semler  
Rich Thrapp

**Director Emeriti**

Doug Church  
Berkley Duck  
Pat Garrett Rooney  
Stan Hurt
**CONNER PRAIRIE MUSEUM, INC. (OPERATING FUND 10)**  
Summary Statement of Activities for the  
12 Months Ending December 31, 2019  
*Unaudited numbers*

<table>
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<th>Source</th>
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<td>Endowment Support</td>
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<td>Admission &amp; Program Fees</td>
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<td>Gifts, Grants &amp; Sponsorships</td>
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<td>Food &amp; Retail</td>
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<td>Rental &amp; Other Income</td>
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<td>Management &amp; General</td>
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<td>Public Affairs &amp; Marketing</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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<td>Membership Services</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
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**Net Surplus**  
$11,723

**CONNER PRAIRIE FOUNDATION, INC. (OPERATING FUND 10)**  
Summary Statement of Financial Position for the  
12 Months Ending December 31, 2019  
*Unaudited numbers*

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<tr>
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<td>Restricted</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$136,370,080</strong></td>
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2019 FINANCIAL REPORT

*Unaudited numbers

REVENUE & SUPPORT
Conner Prairie Museum, Inc. (OPERATING FUND 10)

Expenses:
- Programs & Guest Experience: 72%
- Membership Services: 1%
- Endowment Support: 41%
- Fundraising: 7%
- Membership: 6%
- Food & Retail: 11%
- Admission & Program Fees: 20%
- Rental & Other Income: 9%
- Public Affairs & Marketing: 10%
- Fundraising: 7%
- Membership Services: 1%
- Programs & Guest Experience: 72%
- Management & General: 10%
- Gifts, Grants & Sponsorships: 13%
- Endowment Support: 41%
- Fundraising: 7%
- Membership Services: 1%
- Programs & Guest Experience: 72%
- Management & General: 10%
- Gifts, Grants & Sponsorships: 13%
- Admission & Program Fees: 20%
- Food & Retail: 11%
- Rental & Other Income: 9%

Leadership & Financials | 6.3
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