

PACIFIC GROVE
MUSEUM
of **NATURAL
HISTORY**

Inspiring discovery, wonder, and stewardship of our natural world

Looking Back to Look Forward



“What makes the Museum’s community science programs so great is that they nurture everyone’s love of the natural world through hands-on experiments and field observations.”

– Terry Smith, Science Teacher

Impact Report 2023

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Interim Executive Director

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Director of Exhibits & Collections

Liese Murphree

Director of Education & Outreach

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OUR VISION

We envision a community of curious minds, engaged in discovering the natural heritage and cultural legacy that exist today on the Central California Coast. The Museum is a catalyst for conservation and a valued learning resource in this region, facilitating active inquiry for all ages.

Times of Transition

On behalf of our board of directors and staff, we are pleased to present our Impact Report describing the Museum's

accomplishments and activities in 2022 and 2023. As we come to the close of our landmark 140th anniversary year, our Museum continues to inspire discovery, wonder, and stewardship in people of all ages both inside our walls and out in our community, whether that be in schools, in our local watersheds or intertidal areas, or in the iconic Monarch Sanctuary.

The past two years have seen dramatic and exciting transformations in our permanent and temporary exhibit spaces, prestigious statewide awards to our community science education programs, and a post-Covid rebound of our public event offerings, while also being a time of financial austerity as non-profit funding resources contract nationwide. Our 140th year has also been an important time of transition as we anticipate the arrival of our new Executive Director, Dr. Rachel Miller, in March 2024.

Looking back to look forward, we share immense gratitude for our support from the City of Pacific Grove, our members and donors and the many foundations that fund and support our work. We also share deep appreciation for our new and long-standing community partners who've enriched our programming. Finally, we share profound thanks to our dedicated staff, board, and volunteers who bring their passion and commitment to the Museum's mission every day.

The Museum anticipates an exciting 2024 and beyond. Mid-year we will be launching our new strategic plan with the support of our board, staff, and incoming Executive Director, which embraces the Museum as a center of both natural history and cultural heritage. We look forward to new leadership that will both refine and elevate the role of the Museum within and beyond Monterey County while strengthening our financial position. On behalf of the board of directors and the museum staff, we thank you for your continued and renewed support as we chart our path forward.

Lisa Max, Interim Executive Director



“As with so much of the world around us, we’ve experienced many changes in these last two years and several successes that the Museum Board is extremely proud of. On a more somber note, museums across the country are still experiencing financial hardships from the pandemic, and most studies predict it will still take years for museums to fully recover. We greatly appreciate your historic financial support and hope it will continue as we move forward. All of us should be proud of how our Museum fills such a critical role in our community.”

— John O'Sullivan, Board President



Award Winning Programs

Our education department was honored and ecstatic to win the highly coveted 2023 California Association of Museum's Superintendent's Award for Excellence in Museum Education for our Watershed to Sea Program. We were one of only six programs to be chosen out of hundreds of entries! Funded by the California Coastal Commission, the Watershed to Sea Program involves middle and high school students in scientific field studies and includes two key initiatives: LIMPETS (Long-term Monitoring Program and Experiential Training for Students) which studies sandy beaches and rocky intertidal ecosystems, and Watershed Guardians which focuses on river and stream ecosystems.

Both initiatives inspire tomorrow's scientists through hands-on data collection and analysis to solve real-world research questions. The student data are used both in the classroom and to inform long-term monitoring studies that impact county, state, and national environmental policies. In 2023, students were trained to run analyses and present their findings in the inaugural bilingual Student Research Symposium (SRS), which included 23 students and eight research projects. Please watch for our second annual SRS in April 2024 that is graciously funded by the California Coastal Commission, YLACES, and an anonymous individual donor.



Education Programs Inspire

"I notice, I wonder, I hope..." are the prompts for children working on their nature journals at summer camps and in our Junior Naturalist programs. Looking for insects in the garden, making a monarch kite, and following the path of a migrating bird are some of the activities that thousands of children and families engage in each year during school field trips, in camps, and while enjoying free Science Saturdays. All our Science Saturday activities, our Preschool Curiosity Club, and our outreach programs, are designed to encourage multi-generational families to explore together while supporting bilingual learning in both English and Spanish. We look forward to bringing these engaging activities and educational programs to new locations throughout Monterey County and particularly along the Salinas Valley with our Wonder on Wheels mobile museum.



“I wanted to reach out to thank and commend you and the team for an amazing program today. Olivia came home with the biggest grin on her face and said it was by far the best and most exciting hands-on experience she’s ever had. I have never seen her so excited and eager to learn more and have such a passionate desire to continue to participate in this program. Thank you for helping her find her spark! We are so looking forward to the next Junior Naturalist event.”

– Sandra E. Jones, Ecstatic Parent



Climate Action Continues

Excitement for learning knows no bounds at the PG Museum. While we often focus on youth programs, we are lucky to teach higher level science too. Twenty students graduated from our inaugural Climate Stewards course in 2022. This intensive study of the science, communication, and community planning aspects of climate change attracted people working and volunteering in environmental science and conservation. Their graduating projects covered a wide variety of subjects, all with the through line of building climate resiliency in their communities.

Climate Stewards is modeled after the California Naturalist class that has been offered by the Museum for over ten years. In 2023, 22 naturalists graduated from this long-running course, and we look forward to the next class starting in March 2024. Our classes positively impact the community and we are hopeful to receive grant funding to support the students who are interested in California State Parks' careers.

“The Museum has been a leader in elevating a narrative of place that is more truthful and honors the complex history of our region. It has been a leader in evolving the public narrative, for example through partnering to sponsor the Walk of Remembrance and participating in Walking the Path of Right Relations, A Learning Journey for Monterey. A go-to partner for county schools, and a trusted voice in the community, the Museum is well-poised to help our county think critically about our past, present and future.”

— Erin Myers-Madeira, DEAI Trainer



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Walk of Remembrance

When Gerry Low Sabado and her husband Randy started the Walk of Remembrance in the spring of 2011, it was with the hopes that she could honor her family. Gerry, a descendent of Quock Mui, the first Chinese-American woman born in California, began the Walk of Remembrance as a peaceful way to remember the residents of the Fishing Village at Point Alones who had been burned out of their homes and forced to flee the area in 1906. A mile-long walk between the Museum and the area where the village stood at the current Hopkins Marine Station, the Walk came to symbolize Gerry's message of changing minds through kindness and grew over time to over 50 people in 2019.

In 2021, before the Walk could return from the pandemic, Gerry sadly passed away. The impact of her loss was felt deeply in the community, and with the help of Randy and a newly established Walk of Remembrance Committee, the Museum was honored to deepen our support of the Walk. In May of 2022, over 300 people came to the Museum to begin the Walk again, where an apology resolution by the Pacific Grove City Council was read to a crowd that included Betty T. Yee and Gerry's family members. We are honored to support the Walk of Remembrance since its beginning and are thrilled to continue to work with the committee and the newly formed Quock Mui Foundation to remember and celebrate the lives and work of Gerry and the members and descendants of the Chinese Fishing Village. Join us for the next walk on May 11, 2024.



Volunteer **Dedication Soars**

It is hard to imagine a group of people more dedicated to wonder and stewardship than the Museum's steadfast volunteers. They truly are the glue that holds the Museum together with their institutional knowledge. Participation continues to increase every year at the Museum, with 2023 showing a 35% increase in volunteer hours from 2022, which saw its own growth, and a 52% increase in the number of volunteers. We strengthened our volunteer community with highly popular volunteer celebrations, potlucks, and enrichments. With this support, and by increasing volunteer programs for college and high school students, we managed to boost our volunteerism to new heights.

The Museum's first high school volunteer program, the Naturalists in Training (NITs) internship, finished its inaugural year in April 2022 and every intern reported benefiting from the program. The dedication of our second NITs group went above and beyond our highest expectations, with one NIT, Claire Kim, winning the Central Coast's National Philanthropy Day Youth Philanthropic Award in November of 2023. Every single NIT has embodied the concept of youth leadership, and we look forward to expanding this highly successful program with support from the American Water Charitable Foundation.



National Philanthropy Day
FOR THE CENTRAL COAST



Community Science Work

2022's Western monarch population was the highest recorded in 20 years across California! Monarchs made the news everywhere: the Museum was featured in CBS, ABC, USA Today, the SF Chronicle, Business Insider, podcasts, radio, local news sources, plus books and documentaries. However, climate change impacts including historic storms took their toll. 2023's monarch population was less than half of 2022's. This count reflects the complexity of insect populations and the need for sustained environmental protections in a rapidly changing world. Fortunately, the work we do at the Museum with and for monarchs has greatly assisted their conservation, and we plan to continue conserving monarchs and other pollinators in 2024 and beyond.

In addition, the 2023 population for the Black Oystercatcher Monitoring Program (BLOY) was the highest recorded, giving us great hope for their future. 2024 will continue the long-running BLOY monitoring program to help conserve this special bird. Altogether, the data from our community science programs shows what great things can be achieved when the community rallies towards stewardship of our planet.

“Within two months Claire contributed over 200 volunteer hours to the Museum’s summer camp programs. What the numbers can’t show are the children Claire mentored, played with, engaged in science experiments, and helped to understand and appreciate the natural world. The kids came for the fun activities, but they left with memories of Claire inspiring them to be naturalists.”

– Natalie Johnston, Museum Volunteer Coordinator



Valued Community Partners

Without our many community partnerships, the Museum would be a very different place! First and foremost, the Museum values our relationship with the City of Pacific Grove; we are so thankful for the financial support and many infrastructure services that the City provides us as stewards of the city-owned collections.

The Museum has many other strong local partners. These include local foundations and nonprofit organizations, our business members, our many educational partners (teachers, schools, and scientific experts), Indigenous partners and the UCSC Master Gardeners. The Master Gardeners bring new life to our native plant garden, tending it with zeal while sharing their botanical knowledge. Our Indigenous tribal partners help us to better represent their perspectives and cultural identity in our exhibits and in caring for the museum's collections. Finally, we appreciate our relationship with our local county residents who often flood through our doors during our monthly Science Saturdays. We're lucky to work with our diverse partners and we look forward to continuing these collaborations as well building new ones in Monterey County and beyond.

“The Master Gardeners are proud of our work to return the Museum’s native plant garden to a healthy habitat for birds, pollinators, and other animals. We are thrilled the Museum is taking the garden to the next level by creating multiple exhibit spaces that will encourage discovery and cultural understanding to grow in the garden and in our community.”

– Julie Lorenzen, Master Gardener



New Exhibits Impress

The Museum ushered in a new chapter with two permanent exhibit installations. Nature Exchange, created by Science North and launched in March of 2022, is designed to educate our community about responsible curation and sharing of natural objects. As one of 13 Nature Exchanges throughout North America, the Museum's exhibit encourages exploration of nature and is especially popular with our Science Saturday and camp families. This past year, Nature Exchange had 934 new naturalists participate, with nearly 2,500 interactions with our docents, NITs, and staff, helping the next generation learn to respect and appreciate nature in fun and engaging ways.

Wonder opened in January 2023 to the delight of the community. Created by Blue Rhino Studios in collaboration with Collections and Research Manager Nate King and former Executive Director Carla Bitter, Wonder was initially conceived as a space for our early childhood learners. However, as the idea grew and began to take form, it became much more. Featuring fun natural and cultural objects from throughout the world, Wonder gave us the chance to showcase our diverse collection and create an oversized cabinet of curiosities that inspires visitors of all ages. Even better, we can periodically rotate in collections items that have never been seen by the public. We're thrilled with these new exhibits and the joy they bring the community.



Celebrating 140 Years

2023 marked the 140th year of the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History. This landmark anniversary allowed us a unique opportunity to reflect on our storied history and our influence on the local scientific community. From important figures instrumental to the institution’s founding like our first curator Mary E.B. Norton, *Celebrating 140 Years of the PG Museum* highlights the diverse human stories that weave together our historical tapestry.

For this exhibit, we are excited to display new, high-quality scans of our historical collection photos. Also on display is a seven-foot wall gun donated to the Museum by First Lady Lou Henry Hoover and a harbor porpoise sculpture by the original creator of Sandy the Whale, Larry Foster. The 140-year exhibit has been a fantastic way to look forward to what’s next. We invite you to come and experience some of the lasting memories that were created over the years and maybe even share some of your own!



Wonder on Wheels

Community outreach is where the Museum excels by bringing exceptional science education programs to Monterey County residents. We began to think, what if we could reach even more people? With a generous grant from the Monterey Peninsula Foundation and overwhelming support from our 2022 MCGives community campaign, we raised \$200,000 to create Wonder on Wheels (WOW), our mobile museum van. After sourcing a van and outfitting it to be completely electric, we are now in the design phase of the vehicle. Initial ideas include thematic rolling carts, a digital display, interactive panels, access to collection items, a weaving station, whiteboards, and more. Watch out for WOW in 2024 at your local library, farmers’ market, and community event.

“My goal when I was on the board, and I know it’s a goal of the Museum, is accessibility. I want to get people engaged from the towns north and south in the County. I want everybody to know it’s their museum too.”

– Julie Veitch, former Board Member



Illustrating Nature

What do science, nature, and art have in common? Lots if you're a student in California State University Monterey Bay's Department of Science Illustration. This intensive certificate program graduates the most impressive science illustrators, and their capstone project culminates in a stunning 5-week long *Illustrating Nature* exhibit, sponsored by a grant from the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and the Arts Council for Monterey County. Running now for fourteen years consecutively, this is one of our flagship exhibitions that you don't want to miss. The 2024 *Illustrating Nature* exhibit will showcase at the Museum from May 15 – June 16 so add it to your calendar.



Emily C. Mitchell

“We have been financial supporters of the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History for many years. First as a Board Member, then as volunteers both in the field and hands on with exhibit construction. Most importantly, we have always been impressed with the quality of the staff as they continue to bring exceptional educational experiences both for museum visitors and the community at large.”



Monarch Society Returns

Back by popular demand, we reimagined the Monarch Society with a new twist. The members are our most dedicated advocates and financial supporters. Their historic commitment has helped us grow into the thriving museum we are today, and their impacts have been deeply felt on our exhibits, programs, and outreach efforts. In recognition of their support, we refocused the Monarch Society, and now offer special access to the museum, its collections, and host exclusive events each year that dive deep into the museum's mission and future. Our most recent event in December had over 50 attendees who were given early access to our 140 Year Exhibit and met our new Executive Director, Dr. Rachel Miller. Interested in joining? Go to www.pgmuseum.org/monarchsociety.

– Dede Bent & Gordy Kauhanen, Monarch Society Members



Revitalized Member Events

Our members are an integral part of our museum family, and throughout 2022 and 2023 we celebrated their support and contributions with over 130 events on an array of natural history topics. Members enjoyed artist workshops, field sketching, bird walks, special exhibit previews, family movie nights, exclusive talks, and much more. Our museum staff and partners had a wonderful time curating and leading these unique and memorable experiences. We are making plans to give members another year of discovery and fun in 2024. Members make it possible for us to keep doing the work we love and we look forward to celebrating them in the future. If you'd like to be part of our membership family, please consider joining today with the QR code. Your support helps the Museum immeasurably!



Science on Tap

The Museum has been a source of learning and sharing of scientific discoveries throughout our 140 years. In 2023, we decided to transform our Hardcore Natural History series into Science on Tap: a larger community event that fosters partnerships with local breweries and scientists. With the tagline *Tap into Knowledge*, Science on Tap ushered in a new era for our museum events with a wide variety of visitors excited to enjoy great brews and learn about cutting edge scientific work. 2023 saw four events, each with 60-90 visitors, learning about conservation, predators, botany, and climate change impacts while enjoying beers from Dust Bowl Brewing Co, Alvarado Street Brewery, Peter B's Brewpub, and Other Brother Beer Co. We're excited to share that in 2024 we're going to continue this special series with more talks focusing on both science and history. We hope you'll join us at one soon; we'll be sure to save you a drink!

“The museum’s exhibits, programs and collections have been a part of our life for two generations, and we want to be sure future generations have that same access to the opportunities this museum provides. The best way we know to do that is to leave a bequest to continue the good work the museum accomplishes. It’s an investment in our future community.”

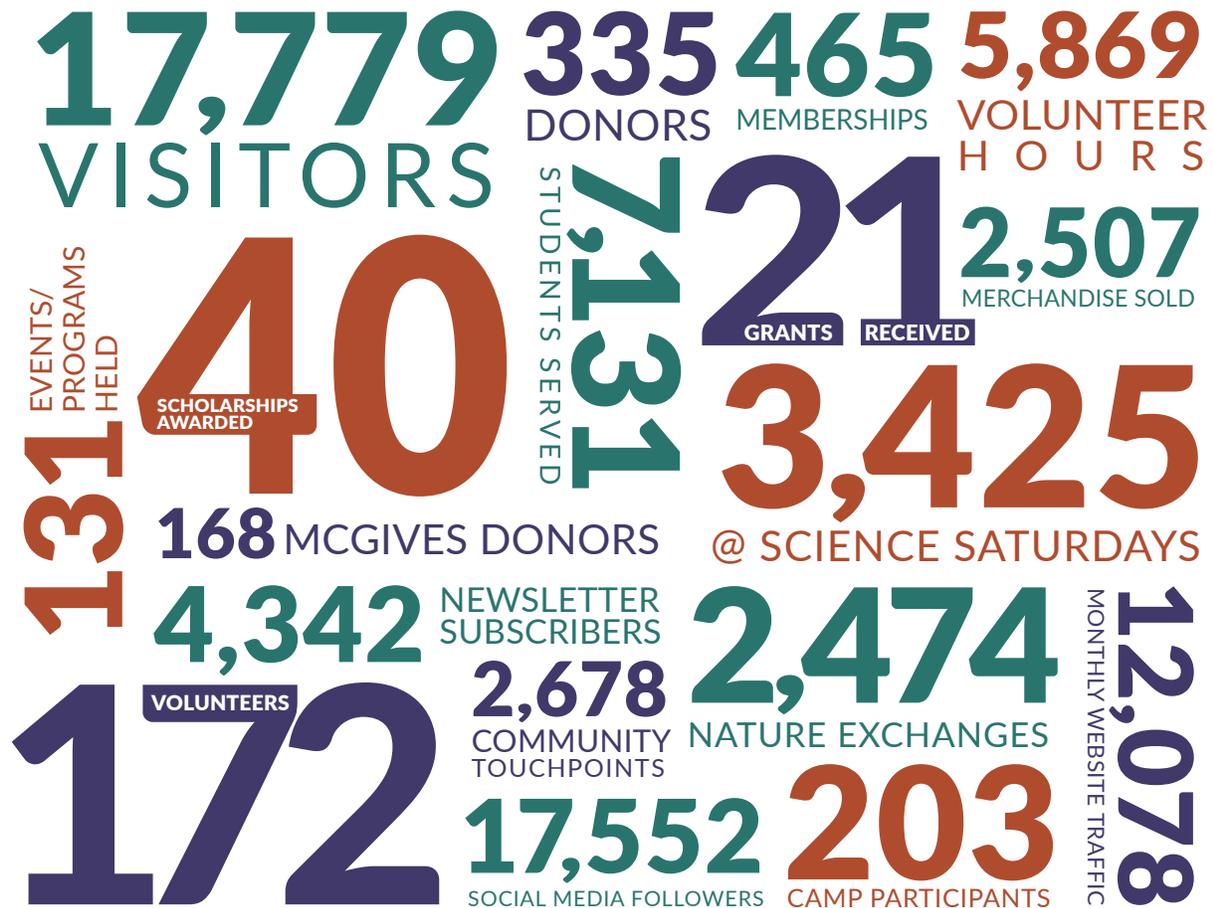
— Jim Covell & Christine Revelas, 1883 Society & Monarch Society Members



Night Owl **Astounds**

There was always a big buzz about Night Owl, but we all know Covid squashed so many community events. Recently, growing demand encouraged us to rethink Night Owl and what it could become. Never in our wildest dreams did we think we could triple our attendance and triple the community support! It returned in 2023 with a bang that included partnerships with AFRP cat adoptions, beer selections from Alvarado Brewery, tequila tastings from the Tequila People, tacos from Mando's restaurant, classic rock from DNA Entertainment, along with a Makers' Market highlighting local artists and craftspeople. We are so grateful for the 350+ people who came to support the Museum. Keep an eye out for Night Owl in 2024.

Engagement Overview 2023



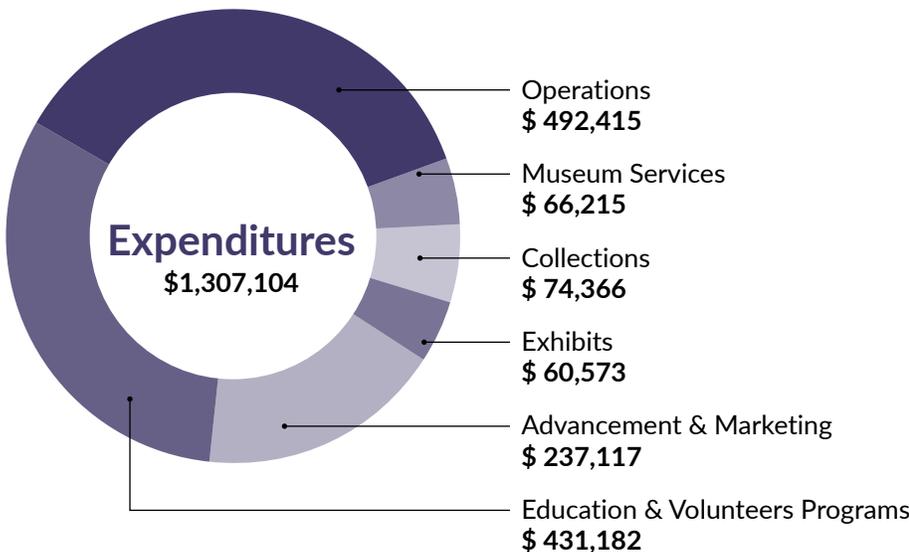
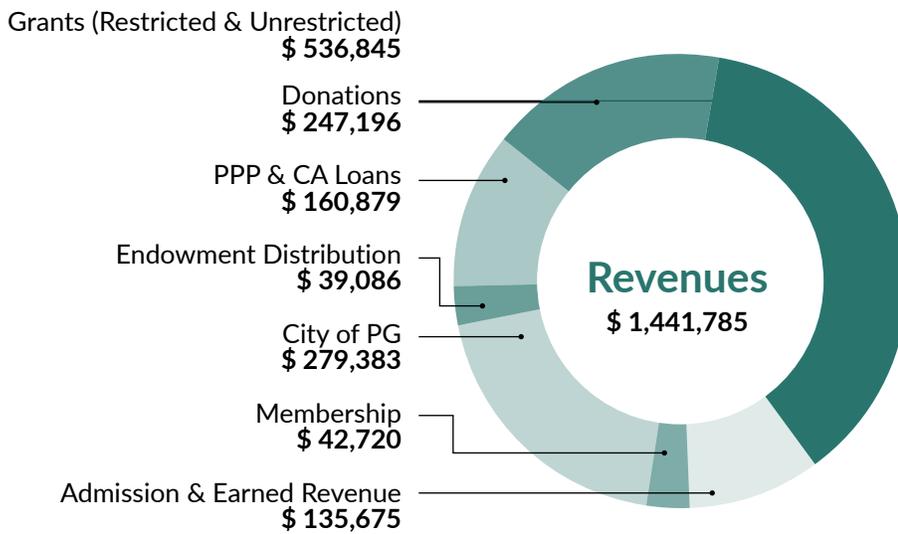
2022 & 2023

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE FOLLOWING GRANT SUPPORT:

- American Water Charitable Foundation
- Anonymous Donor
- Arts Council for Monterey County
- California Coastal Commission
- California Relief Fund
- City of Pacific Grove
- Coastal Quest
- Community Foundation for Monterey County
- Harden Foundation
- Helen Johnson Endowment Fund
- Justice Outside
- Kiwanis Club of Monterey
- Monarch Joint Venture
- Monterey Bay Aquarium
- Monterey County Fish & Game Advisory Commission
- Monterey Peninsula College
- Monterey Peninsula Foundation
- Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District
- Monterey Waterkeepers
- Nancy Parker Benham Endowment Fund
- NOAA B-WET
- Parks California
- Pebble Beach Company Foundation
- Santa Cruz County Office of Education
- Shelby Cullom Davis Charitable Fund
- The David & Lucile Packard Foundation
- Union Bank
- US Bank
- Walmart
- YLACES
- Xerxes

Financial Overview 2022

Nonprofit budgets can experience both flush years and some austere years, as was the case in 2023. As a small nonprofit community museum, we're proud of the work we've accomplished over the past two years, and we hope to maintain this momentum. To sustain our growth, we continue to need support from the community, be that admission fees, membership dues, donations, or grants. Thank you for helping the Museum inspire wonder, discovery, and stewardship of our natural world.



We appreciate everyone involved in producing this annual report. If you notice any omissions or errors, please contact us at (831) 648-5716.

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- *Become a member or renew/upgrade your membership*
- *Shop for gifts at our Museum Store*
- *Join our 1883 Society by including us in your estate planning*
- *Make a donation at pgmuseum.org*
- *Share your time and talent as a docent or volunteer*
- *Subscribe to our e-newsletter for the latest events and happenings*
- *Tell your friends about our exhibitions and events*
- *Follow us on social media and repost*



**Monterey County Herald
Readers' Choice Awards
Best Museum 2023**

