



## *Happy Jack Chalk Mine Association*

[www.happyjackpeakandchalkmine.org](http://www.happyjackpeakandchalkmine.org)

### **Happy Jack Peak and Chalk Mine November Newsletter**

The Chalk Mine Has reached the season finale of tourism for the year. After the rush of activity, Kenny Bloom the HJCMA President asked if I would update the public through our new website on this year's accomplishments.

I know this newsletter is labeled "November", but to get the full effect of HJCMA first year back into the Tourism industry. We need to start from the beginning of this venture.

Let's say this story did not start with "Once upon a time". It actually started on a late summer day with a phone call from a concerned local patron. The concern was that the Chalk Mine at the conclusion of the 2024 Tourist season would be closing its doors for good.

This statement had been made before and the life of the project had exceeded many other doubts of failure, in fact 2024 would have established 28 years of being a Tourist attraction in Nebraska and a destination attraction. So, one would understand how this addressed statement would fall on deaf ears. I hung up the phone and sat in my backyard enjoying the atmosphere and the weather.

Calls were made and decisions were made and discussions followed. More information was gathered and more research accomplished, until the day come to either "Go Big or Go Home". The Three individuals selected for the approaching task, Kenny Bloom, from Hampton, Nebraska. Kathy Bolich, from Loup City, Nebraska, and Steven Goldfish, from Van Buren, Arkansas.

You say "WHAT!" That is correct, three individuals from three different locations with the incentive to turn the Chalk Mine Project around and prepare it for the 2025 tourist season.



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Arrangements were made and on October 10, 2024, the trio was introduced to the current board members. Chris Johnson from Farwell, Nebraska was President of the Chalk Mine Association conducted the meeting. Discussion was had amongst current Board members and votes were cast.

Reinstated Kenny Bloom, Kathy Bolich, and Steven Goldfish to Chalk Mine Board. After the trio was voted back on board, Chris Johnson moved to elect officers. Motion carried. Kenny Bloom, President, Steven Goldfish, Vice President, and Kathy Bolich, Secretary/Treasurer. The Trio had acquired the Happy Jack Peak and Chalk Mine. I'm not going to bore you with the legal and foot work it took to reestablish the preparations for opening tourist season 2025. Let's just say it was work.

Opening day, May 20, 2025, we were ready. It did not matter; we were ready and there was no looking back. For the next 144 days it was going to work, our staff had to learn our abilities as we had to learn theirs. All in all, things worked themselves out and the visitors started coming. What we learned was the visitors really enjoyed the tours and the tour guides. We opened the doors and kept them open with the personnel that we chose to assist us with operations of the attraction. Which HJCMA is very Grateful for, we Thank you.

### **Stats for 2025**

Opening day .....May, 20,2025

Tourist Season end....October 10, 2025

After October 10<sup>th</sup> appointment only Tours, Information on Website

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Total days open.....144 Consecutive days

### **Team Members**

- Kari Harmon      Daryl Jorgensen      Emilee Leth      Josh Stoural
- JoAnne Jensen      Johnny Lucero (JP)      Laretta Davis      Brian Shafer
- Bobby Rojo

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### **Tour category Cost**

Adults...age 16 up to 65.....\$15.00

Children...age 7 up to 16.....\$10.00

Child.....age 6 & under.....Free

Seniors,,age 65 & 65+.....\$12.00

Veteran.....Free

Tour Bus (large Groups).....\$12.00 ea.

School Groups.....\$8.00 ea.

### **Attendance for 2025 tourist season**

- Total Mine Tour Gate Tally..... 1965
- Gross Sales..... \$31,965.02
- Net Sales..... \$29,590.70
- Labor Cost..... \$22,745.20
- Labor percentage of net sales....76.87%
- Taxes..... \$2,374.32
- Collected by Credit Card..... \$18,174.41
- Collected by Cash.....\$13,789.11

### **Category Sales**

- Merchandise.....\$2,980.00
  - Food.....\$665.30
  - Donations.....\$398.00
- Total          \$4,043.30**

### **Event Promotions**

- Puttin Off The Peak.....\$5,533.18      July 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> , 2025
  - Ghost Story Tours.....\$6,760.00      October 17-18 & 24-25
- Total      \$12,293.18**

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### **Awarded Grants 2025**

• State Bank Of Scotia.....	\$1,000.00	Capital Funding
• NE-NSGP FEMA Grant.....	\$23,964.00	Security Funding
• Heuermann Foundation Grant.....	\$2,500.00	Educational Funding
• NSHSF.....	\$1,500.00	Educational Funding
• Hirschfeld Family Foundation.....	\$5,000.00	Programing Funding
• Hart Family Foundation.....	\$8,000.00	Preservation Funding
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$41,000.00</b>

### **Gross Proceeds Collected for 2025 Season (287 Days)**

- **Grand Total**      **\$85,258.20**





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### **Happy Jack Peak and Chalk Mine**

#### **Improvements 2025 (287 Days)**

##### **Improvements to 7 acres on site exterior**

• Visitor Center Awning & Roof Repair	\$8,000.00	Cash
• 16 Channel NVR 4K security system	\$2,834.00	Grant Funds
• Backup Generator installation	\$12,750.00	Grant Funds
• Visitor Center Security Dome Camera	\$3,628.00	Grant Funds
• Alarms, Lighting, and building Control	\$3,735.00	Grant Funds
• Renovation of Donor Stairway	\$5,326.45	In Kind, Volunteer
• Grounds Maintenance/Equipment	\$8,688.66	In Kind, Volunteer
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$44,962.11</b>	

Due to lack of funding, Grounds Maintenance was in dire need of updating and refurbishing. Workdays were organized by Kenny Bloom and Kathy Bolich. Once the task of updating and refurbishing was completed a total of 35 personnel were on staff with total of 230 working hours.

Work was performed upon the Parking lot, access ramp, lower grounds, Visitor Center, West Stairway, Old RR tie stairway to peak. Loads of brush, tree limbs, dirt and debris were hauled away.

Equipment was provided, 2 Dump Trailers, 2 pickups, Generator, Chainsaws, weed eaters, and leaf blowers.

The Value of In-Kind labor per hour in Nebraska is often valued for statistical purposes or grants at non-profit rate of \$34.07 per hour. Equipment is valued at machine hour of use by hour rental rates. Hand tools are graded and valued as rental supplies and hardware.



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### **Improvements to Underground Facility**

• East Portal Renovation	\$6,677.72 In Kind, Volunteer
• Restoring/developing 620' of Tunnel	\$7,906.08 In Kind, Volunteer
• Installation of Camera's Lights	\$2,781.00 Grant Funds
• Equipment, Skid loaders, Two	\$3,000.00 In Kind, Volunteer
• 80lb Jack hammer, electric	\$ 150.00 In Kind, Volunteer
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,514.80</b>

Developing and expanding another 620 ft of the underground Tour route produced a total length of additional 1050 ft. By adding additional footage, HJCMA has increased the educational and historical part of the tour. By exposing points of interest, such as Fossils and ancient burrows left by the mammals of that era.

Increasing the ability to have Scientific groups come to make studies within the mine for research. HJCMA has increased in measurable accounts with the study of the Brown Bat they take refuge within the mine.

Brown Bat population has been under studies by University from Kearney and Lincoln Nebraska since 2003.