STEAM TOWN!

People who grew up with the Lori Brock Discovery Center always enjoyed playing in the "Kid City" room with its interactive exhibits and play equipment. The room was disassembled in a remodel several years ago and the room was renamed the Discovery Zone. Initial support for the new project came from the Junior League of Bakersfield.

Feedback from the community said that the room was missing the "fun factor." The museum staff rolled up their sleeves this winter with the help of Chevron and created "STEAM Town," an interactive play space that invites children to learn about careers in science, technology, engineering, arts and math in a fun hands-on environment. STEAM Town now has a fire station, police crime lab, credit union, farm, hospital with a Hall Ambulance, construction site, and gas station. Already the most popular vignette is the recreation of Luigi’s iconic East Bakersfield restaurant along with an adjacent Italian grocery store.

The community pitched in to support the re-do including Kyle Carter, Dignity Health, and Alta One Credit Union. Children up to age nine can dress up like a fire fighter, cook pasta in Luigi’s Kitchen or perform an operation in Dignity Hospital. The CTE classes from Foothill High School did much of the construction and design work.

“We want to thank the Junior League of Bakersfield for their very generous donation to get this project started,” said Executive Director Mike McCoy. “We are so very grateful to our friends at Chevron for their support of STEAM education and our other private donors. I know Kern County’s youngest residents are going to love STEAM Town!” The museum also appreciates local contractor Frank Juarez for his work on the project and talented artist Roy Goldstein.
When the kids move out of the house and begin their professional careers, a lot of folks find the time and money to finally travel, enjoy hobbies and be a little bit selfish. And many Americans invest in that most personal of all hobbies...classic cars. The Hagerty Insurance Group estimates there are five million collector cars in the United States of which 58% are owned by Baby Boomers. And this market is surging right now along with membership in classic car clubs.

The Kern County Museum is part of this excitement hosting several car shows each year and creating a showcase for our own enviable collection of vintage automobiles and horse drawn vehicles. Car enthusiasts love to park their classic cars on our tree shaded grounds, roam around to see what other folks are driving and talk about the time consuming process of restoration. One day last spring for example, the DeSoto Club of California showed up unexpectedly with 25 beautiful cars and asked permission to drive around the village. Permission granted!

Father’s Day this year on June 16th will find Pioneer Village lined with sports cars for the second year in a row. “We are having food, music, vendors and of course lots of incredible cars,” said event organizer Dave Wolin. “This is a great family event that Dad will enjoy.” Dave sees this growing into a regular event and providing a special focus on sports cars.

The Bakersfield Car Club Council is a non-profit that connects car clubs and groups in Central California and provides a forum for the passionate pursuit of all things automotive. Spokesperson Chris Addington has been very supportive of the Kern County Museum and works hard to make sure the calendar is coordinated. There are now several dozen local car shows a year and the group makes sure that the events are successful.

As for me? I just finished the mechanical restoration of a 1950 Plymouth Deluxe that was my first car. If I can get the paint and interior completed this summer, I will be sitting ringside at the Vintage Limited Street Rods “Fun in the Sun” Car Show at the museum on September 15th. It will be the 19th year we have hosted this show and I look forward to taking part as a classic car owner!
Frank Amestoy, Jr. was born to Basque immigrants Francisco and Anselma Amestoy in 1915. His parents managed the Noriega Hotel on Sumner when Frank was a child. In the 1930s, Francisco and Anselma purchased the Cesmat Hotel on East 21st Street renaming it the Amestoy Hotel. Frank married his wife, Marie, while serving in the military during World War II. In 1948, Frank and Marie Amestoy opened the café and bar named Amestoy’s On The Hill at 2303 River Boulevard in East Bakersfield. The Amestoy’s would operate this establishment for 37 years before their son took over operation.

Frank Amestoy, III was born in Oakland in 1943. He graduated from East High School and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force serving as an aircraft mechanic. After his military service ended, Frank got his pilot’s license and started working as a crop duster. His career as a crop duster lasted for 26 years. In 1985, he and his wife, June, took over the day-to-day operations of Amestoy’s On The Hill. The name of the bar officially changed to Frank and June Amestoy’s On The Hill in 1996. Tragically, Frank died of a heart attack when he was 62-years-old.

Mike Miller started working at Amestoy’s On The Hill washing dishes in 1986. He eventually took over the operation of the bar. Mike spearheaded the effort to donate the historic Amestoy’s sign to the Kern County Museum. This past Memorial Day, Frank Amestoy, IV officially donated the iconic sign to the museum. In June, Amestoy’s will close its doors after 71 years of serving patrons from its East Bakersfield location.

The Ben H. and Gladys Arkelian Foundation, The Harry and Ethel West Foundation, and an anonymous donor paid for the removal, restoration, and installation of the historic sign in its new location at the Kern County Museum.
Last year the Museum launched an effort to bring the fun back to Lori Brock. The popular children’s museum hosted parties, events and activities but the interior space needed some help. As Debra Patrick in Guest Services said, “We needed to put some wow back in that place.”

The first project was the creation of “Arts Express,” a room where its ok for children to get messy with art and to create miniature masterpieces. Previously a reading area, the room was transformed with the vibrant art of Roy Goldstein. Roy, a Stockdale High and Bakersfield College grad, just finished a full year at CSUB pursuing a degree in Computer Science. Roy’s parents knew when he was three years old that he had the art gene and they supported his development with private lessons and an endless supply of art supplies. Roy has been working as an artist professionally since he was in high school and won recognition in the Via Arte street art contest.

Trained as a realist, Roy learned how to cartoon and do muraling for the first project in Lori Brock’s Arts Express. The room turned out wonderful and now has led the museum to unleash Roy’s talent on the larger STEAM Town project. For STEAM Town, Roy and his friend Gabby Steiger, created seven large murals that range from fruit trees to a fire engine to a bank vault to a hospital. Roy and Gabby’s greatest challenge was recreating the famous Luigi’s kitchen with Luigi making meat balls and pasta.

Roy said he enjoyed working in Lori Brock because “It was a good opportunity to dive into a different style of art than I am used to. This is a new subsection of art for me...cartooning and muraling. I have a whole new respect for the artists who do murals now.”

Roy has decided to take a break from school and is taking a computer science job in Miami. “I will come home and visit...I am so glad the project turned out so well,” Roy said.
THE PERFECT BACKDROP!
The Kern County Museum offers remarkable inside and outside venues for weddings and special events. There’s no need to limit your guest list, as we have options for every size group up to 5,000 attendees! Your guests will be able to stroll down the lovely lamplit, tree lined streets of the village, past beautiful historic homes and businesses, into the simpler time of a bygone era.

Our Band Stand Green is a charming space in the center of our property. It has its own picturesque white gazebo and beautiful hanging chandelier, as well as plenty of space to sip champagne and dance the night away!

Just around the curve is our Neon Courtyard. Famous local business signs and a vintage gas station light up the night and give every celebration a warm glow. Through the courtyard is the delightful Trolley Station. Inside this inviting space are colorful travel posters, vintage suitcases, antique cocktail bar, and Bakersfield’s own original Trolley.

Batey Garden is a unique private space with room for both a ceremony and reception, a gala, or a large corporate event. With views of the renowned Beale Clocktower and historic Howell House, this gated venue has a fountain, gazebo, and pleasant walking paths. The mature trees and dreamy vines offer lovely spots for dining, as well as the perfect backdrop for event photography.

Show your wedding slideshow or play your favorite movie for your guests in our classic Oppenheimer Theatre. There are porches perfect for cake cutting backdrops, guest books signings, or as a place to open gifts. Our lovely Chapel is just waiting for your vows.

Included in your venue rental are the services of a professional wedding coordinator with years of experience, the tables, chairs, and ivory linen for a standard-sized party (additional items may be rented, as needed), and both bride and groom dressing areas.

Is it too hard to choose the perfect venue? You may rent the entire outdoor space for just $6,500! Come and explore all the opportunities the Kern County Museum offers. Set up your tour today!
For more than 80 years, the classic water tower stood over Bakersfield High School and became a famous landmark and unofficial symbol of the school. The tower was moved in August 2016 to the Kern County Museum when Griffith Field was renovated. Since then the retired tower has stood at the back of Pioneer Village waiting for the next chapter of its long life.

Several alumni approached then BHS Principal David Reese two years ago about creating a plaza at the base of the tower to recognize its long history and therefore the history of Kern Union High School later known as Bakersfield High School. Some plans were drawn, meetings held but the project just didn’t move forward.

Class of 1957 alumni John Rous passed the hat at a reunion in 2017 and then brought down an $800.00 donation to get the fund raising started. The school agreed on a concrete plaza with benches and landscape. Working with the museum, the plan was approved and then again waited for funding.

John’s daughter in law Jenny Rous (Class of 1988) got involved in the project connecting the Parent Teacher Student Organization with the newly minted Alumni Association headed up by Keri Gless. A hard working committee then raised the $30,000 needed for the project in literally three weeks.

Working with landscaper Dan Penney and A.C. Electric, three classic Bakersfield city streetlight poles were added to the design and extra power added for events. The entire project was completed within a six week time frame and was dedicated at an alumni gala on May 18th. One of retiring principal David Reese’s last official duties was cutting the ribbon on the Alumni Plaza. “It was very nice to see things happen that I have been looking forward to,” said Reese. “The alumni group is going to do great things.”
Running a sixteen acre property with 80,000 visitors, 60 historic buildings and an almost weekly calendar of special events is a near impossible task especially with a professional staff of only 12 people. Keeping the rose bushes pruned, helping with school tours and just keeping an eye on the property is the work of a lot of dedicated volunteers. And the Kern County Museum’s secret weapon are local high school students.

"We have been using local high school students as volunteers for decades," said Executive Director Mike McCoy. "I was a volunteer here myself when I was a student at North High School. We couldn’t support all of the tours, programs and events without our Drillers, Rams, Blades, Stars and Trojans."

High school students help with special events like Safe Halloween, Frontier Days and California History Days often as costumed docents. They answer questions about Kern County History, lead activities, and help with hands on learning stations. "These kids are terrific," said museum costume coordinator Linda Ward. "They really make our buildings come alive."

The museum is looking to expand the use of volunteers as new projects and programs are developed. The recent remodel of the Lori Brock Discovery Center and the proposal to create a hands-on agricultural experience for children will provide an opportunity for more students to become involved. The museum has also organized a number of work projects suitable for the Boy Scouts of America and their Eagle Award candidates. A new sidewalk and landscape project adjacent to the Howell House was the handiwork of Frontier High student Nathan Van Dyke for his Eagle Project.

Bakersfield High School’s Archiving Class led by teacher Ken Hooper, has been especially helpful in reorganizing the museum’s artifact collection and assisting with the construction of the Ray Watson Transportation Exhibit. "This one class has donated thousands of hours of volunteer time," said museum curator Lori Wear. "We provide the donuts and they go to work."
Every Saturday in Summer

Saturday Morning Stretch

8am
Standard School
-Kern County Museum Members Only-

JULY
July 6
Plein Air Public Event - 8am
Saturday Morning Stretch - 8am
Kern County Museum Members Only
July 13, July 20 & July 27
Saturday Morning Stretch - 8am
Kern County Museum Members Only

AUGUST
August 3
Plein Air Public Event - 8am
August 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31
Saturday Morning Stretch - 8am
Kern County Museum Members Only

JUNE
June 1
Plein Air Public Event - 8am
Saturday Morning Stretch - 8am
Kern County Museum Members Only
June 8
Saturday Morning Stretch - 8am
Kern County Museum Members Only
June 15
Saturday Morning Stretch - 8am
Kern County Museum Members Only
June 16
Fathers Day Car Show-12-4pm
June 22 & June 29
Saturday Morning Stretch - 8am
Kern County Museum Members Only

NOW ENROLLING

SUMMER CAMP

JUNE 3 - AUGUST 9TH

2019 SUMMER EDITION

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