

2010 ARIZONA MAIN STREET AWARDS
ORGANIZATION
Business Excellence Award
Sedona

Sedona Main Street Program proudly nominates the Red Rock News (RRN) for the Business Excellence Award. You might ask why a newspaper. The following is a little history of the Sedona Red Rock News and their importance to Sedona Main Street Program and the community at large.

The Sedona Red Rock News was started in October of 1963 by Robert and Loretta Larson, Sr. They moved from Montana to Uptown Sedona, and after a short time living here felt that the small community of Sedona needed a way for the community to come together, keep informed and spread the word about things going on in Sedona and Oak Creek Canyon. The Red Rock News originally was a small tabloid-sized publication that was published once a week out of the Larson home in Uptown and mailed to each resident in Sedona. With the help of family and a few employees they were able to produce a quality product week in and week out.

As the town kept growing, so did the paper. In 1979, the paper moved into the old Post Office building on Van Deren Road in the Main Street District they had previously purchased, and in 1980 they added the press room. The newspaper switched to a broadsheet, full size newspaper in 1985 – that is 21 inches tall. In May of 1989 the Sedona Red Rock News officially began printing twice a week. The switch to 2 days per week, Wednesday's and Friday's, was due in part to the growth of the Sedona market and the substantial business and tourist growth in the 26 years since inception; that publication frequency continues today.

This family owned business that has been passed on for 3 generations. The Larson family has lived in Sedona for almost 50 years and continues to serve the Sedona community. Robert "Bob" Larson, Jr. began working in the business at nine years old, set ads and worked the News while attending Northern Arizona University, became Assistant Publisher in 1973 and Publisher in 1976. Prior to Sedona's incorporation in 1986, he served on the Yavapai County Parks and Recreation Commission and then served three years on the City of Sedona Parks and Recreation Commission. He was also president of the Chamber of Commerce Board for three of the six years that he served there, and during his tenure was one of the three founders of the Sedona Main Street Program. Bob served on the SMSP Board for its first five years and was one of less than a dozen that bought an initial lifetime membership to the organization.

Sedona Red Rock News is the voice of the community and certainly for the Sedona business community. The Larson family remains staunch supporters of the Sedona Main Street Program. Kyle Larson, son of Bob Larson Jr., is the Advertising Director of the Red Rock News, Board Treasurer for Sedona Main Street Program and member of its Business Enhancement Committee. As such, he contributes in both the decision making process of the organization and project implementation.

Over the past years Sedona Red Rock News has donated over \$1 million dollars to the community. Some of the big ones were \$100,000 to the Cultural Park, \$40,000 to the new Chamber Visitor Center in Sedona Main Street District and \$30,000 for the press box at Red Rock High School. Their support is found not only in monetary donations but in press coverage the paper offers in the "Scene" and "News" and "Living" sections of the paper. They've been instrumental in promoting and supporting all the events and activities of the Main Street Program and played a key role in the rejuvenation of the Uptown business community. These contributions result in a tremendous financial savings not only to Sedona Main Street Program but to the entire business community.

The paper has always been located in Uptown, is an integral part of the Sedona Main Street District and is an example of the importance of giving back to that community in which we live, which is the very foundation of the Main Street Approach. Sedona Red Rock News and the example set by the Larson family is a model for business excellence and is what community is all about.

ORGANIZATION

Business Excellence Award

The Main Street programs are dependent upon local business leaders to sharpen the competitiveness of new and existing business owners. The nominations in this category have demonstrated leadership that has been a model for other Main Street businesses. These nominees are committed to working to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs.

*Nominations are due to the Arizona Main Street Office
no later than September 3rd, 2010*

Arizona Department of Commerce

**Arizona Main Street Program
1700 W. Washington, Suite 620
Phoenix, AZ 85007**

PERSON/ORGANIZATION MAKING NOMINATION:

Pud Colquitt, SMSP Board Director
c/o Sedona Main Street Program
450 Jordan Road, Suite B
Sedona, AZ 86336
928-282-1998 Pud; 928-204-2390 SMSP

LIST ALL PERSONS/ORGANIZATIONS WHO SHOULD RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THIS PROJECT:

Name and Title: Robert Sr. & Loretta Larson, Sedona Red Rock News founders
Role in Project: Original Owners

Name and Title: Robert "Bob" Larson (and family), Publisher
Role in Project: Publisher, 2nd generation Larson family, Sedona Main Street Program Founder

Name and Title: Kyle Larson, Advertising Director
Role in Project: 3rd generation Larson family, Sedona Main Street Program Treasurer & Business Enhancement Committee member