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SEDONA'S UPTOWN ECO TRAIL RECEIVES
2004 KEEP SEDONA BEAUTIFUL AWARD

EcoTrail Recognized for Improving Experience for Uptown Sedona Visitors

SEDONA, Ariz. (December 6, 2004) – The Sedona Center and the Institute of EcoTourism are proud to announce that the Uptown EcoTrail has earned the 2004 Keep Sedona Beautiful Award. Every year since 1983, Keep Sedona Beautiful (KSB) has invited residents of the greater Sedona area to submit nominations for the KSB Awards of Excellence.

The purpose of the KSB Award is to honor individuals, organizations and businesses that have demonstrated excellence in public or commercial architecture, exceptional landscaping or signage, or have contributed special services to the community.

As part of its commitment to the mission of building a Main Street experience, Sedona Center and the Institute of EcoTourism developed a natural, outdoor history museum comprised of a quarter-mile trail connecting the popular Uptown Sedona area to the banks of Oak Creek, which was unveiled on October 30.

“The people of Sedona have desired creek access for many years. The Uptown EcoTrail grants visitors a picturesque pathway, complete with nature signs explaining the plant and wildlife of the region, which extends through Amara Creekside Resort to Oak Creek,” said Catherine Moore, chairman of the Keep Sedona Beautiful Awards. “The trail is a great public contribution by a private developer, and we felt that it was important to recognize that.”

The Uptown EcoTrail is an interactive, educational walkway providing information about Sedona’s natural and cultural history, including native plants and animals, geology, and the story of the Oak Creek watershed. It is the first attraction of its kind in the Uptown Sedona area – an area predominately visited by tourists passing through the popular destination along Highway 89A.

“There are so many who walk through our property and ask about the area – people who come directly to Uptown and miss most of the visitors centers and state parks. Now we have a place to direct them – as well as a great complement to local tourism efforts. We are so pleased that Keep Sedona Beautiful has recognized this worthy project,” said Dina Spector-Gomez, chief operating officer of Sedona Center and Amara Creekside Resort.

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Featuring a free high-powered viewer similar to those found at Niagra Falls and Universal Studios Hollywood, visitors can experience magnified panoramic views of Sedona's famed red rocks. EcoTrail is also peppered with fascinating trivia about the area's geological formations, plant and animal life – interesting facts little known to visitors and residents of the area. Answers to commonly asked questions about the red rocks, the biodiversity and the Native American history of the area can all be found on The Sedona Center EcoTrail.

Much of the information was gathered and compiled by the Sedona-based Institute of EcoTourism.

"This has been a very inspiring project to work on," says Jonathan Duncan, the Institute's Executive Director. "The mission of the Institute is to promote a new level of environmental awareness within our community, and being recognized by Keep Sedona Beautiful has helped us secure that goal."

The EcoTrail travels through the Gallery On Oak Creek Restaurant, located in the Amara Creekside Resort, a 100-room luxurious resort set against the beautiful red rocks in the heart of Uptown Sedona.

The Keep Sedona Beautiful Awards were presented on December 5, 2004 at a special awards ceremony at the Keep Sedona Beautiful building, in front of an audience of more than 120 community members.

About the Sedona Center

Sedona Center includes Canyon Portal and Sinagua Plaza shopping centers, Canyon Breeze and Vista Cantina restaurants, and the recently opened Amara Creekside Resort. It is one of the busiest shopping destinations in Uptown, located within the Sedona Main Street Program (SMSP) District. Amara was recently recognized by the Governor's Office as the Arizona Main Street Best New Building Project. More information on Amara can be found at <http://www.amararesort.com>.

About the Institute of EcoTourism

The Sedona-based Institute of EcoTourism is a non-profit entity dedicated educating and inspiring children, travelers and travel professionals to rediscover their relationship to the environment and their commitment to community. More information can be found at <http://www.ioet.org>.

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