

El Chorro Lodge celebrates 5 years of 'green' practices

Staff reports

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The El Chorro Lodge, 5550 E. Lincoln Drive, has produced over 1.1 million kilowatt-hours of energy since Valentine's Day 2010.

On that date, the landmark celebrated the completion of a renovation and technological retrofitting aimed at exceeding modern energy and operational standards while retaining its classic ambiance and design charm. Feb. 18 marks the 5th anniversary of the official public reopening of the sustainably retrofitted and renovated El Chorro Lodge, according to a press release.

Desert Star Construction made the announcement about El Chorro, which is the first-ever LEED Gold Certified full-service restaurant Arizona.

In aggregate, the energy savings achieved as a result of the 2010 renovation is equivalent to any of the following: annual greenhouse gas emissions from 1,666,667 miles driven by an average passenger vehicle; CO2 emissions from 78,767 gallons of gasoline consumed; or from 1,628 barrels of oil saved, the release states.

"We are thrilled with the end result that



Photo courtesy of Mark Boisclair

A view of the El Chorro Lodge.

has enhanced the natural beauty of Paradise Valley as well as provided a sustainable source of economic return for the city," stated Jacquie Dorrance, philanthropist and El Chorro Lodge owner.

"We made the commitment early on

to embrace and preserve the history and charm of this Valley icon, and I feel good about what we have accomplished in making El Chorro Lodge more relevant now than ever before."

Despite significant wear and operational

inefficiencies found throughout the property, Dorrance purchased El Chorro Lodge in 2009 and was joined by operating partners Kristy Moore and Tim Moore. Mark Candelaria (architect, AIA) of Candelaria Design Associates and Jerry Meek (builder) of Desert Star Construction were retained by Dorrance on Memorial Day 2009 to complete a multifaceted renovation by Valentine's Day 2010.

Sustainable building practices were introduced early on by Desert Star Construction with the goal for the entire renovation team to work together to achieve the state's first LEED Gold certification for a full service restaurant.

"The aim of sustainable construction and design is to achieve a higher degree of occupant comfort and control not only for the guests of the venue, but also for the organization as a whole," stated DSC President Jerry Meek.

"Overall, the renovation has created a healthier environment while reducing the cost to maintain that environment, leading to greater productivity and an enhanced corporate identity that has proven it cares about the health of its occupants and the environment."