

2017 Volunteer Recognition Event

by Siobhan Sullivan, Newsletter Editor



Volunteers filled the tables near the entrance of the Museum on the evening of September 12. They had gathered at an event to recognize their work over the past year. As people grabbed a seat, slides of volunteers working at the Museum were projected in the background.

Dinner and beverages were provided by the Museum on this special night. Volunteers received one ticket for beverages and they had a choice of pop or local wines and beer. The catered dinner included lasagna, vegeta-

bles in a creamy sauce, sliced meat, green salad, and fresh fruit and vegetables.

Volunteer Coordinator Shannon Campbell was the first speaker. She noted the record number of people attending the event this year. Shannon also noted several other things that made this year special such as record setting snowfall, ice dams on the roofs, smoke from numerous wildfires, and a solar eclipse. Despite all of these unusual events, attendance at the Museum reached an all-time high. New programs included the Gallery Attendants and Birds of Prey Attendants. Ten volunteers went through the Certified Interpretive Guide training this year. There were 45 new volunteers who joined the Museum.

Teen volunteers were the first to be recognized for their work. There are about 50 teens that participated in various areas of the Museum this year. The teens recognized this year were **Sophia Thomas, Jaden McCabe, Tanyen Brown, and Rylee McConnell**. They were thanked for their work with visitors young and old. The award winners show initiative and have served as role models for all of the teens. Some have worked at the Museum for several years and they have “grown up” there. **Sara Schneider** was recognized for working 500 hours in one year at the Museum.



Lifetime Membership recipients - David Fry, Don Lind, Lee Schaefer, & Elaine Berry



Teen Volunteer **Sara Schneider** volunteered 500 hours in a single year

Volunteers who worked a certain number of hours were given **Milestone** pins and gift certificates. Recipients this year included: one person with 1,000 hours, four with 2,000 hours, two with 3,000 hours, one with 4,000 hours, one with 9,000 hours, and one with 13,000 hours. Linda Meurer volunteered 500 hours in a single year - for the third consecutive year. There were four volunteers who received a **Lifetime Membership** with the High Desert Museum. These volunteers have worked at least ten years at the Museum and put in 2,000 hours or more.

Executive Director Dana Whitelaw was the next presenter. She thanked all of the volunteers and said how she loved seeing all of the different areas of the Museum represented. She handed out two **Director's Awards**. One went to **Denice Blake** and the other went to the **Thorn Hollow String Band**. Both deserved special recognition for their work above and beyond the call of duty. Denice is always the first to respond for requests for help. She has worked in a variety of jobs at the Museum ranging from shredding documents to helping with store inventory. Thorn Hollow String Band performs regularly once a month at the Museum and they

Volunteer Recognition - continued



Director's Award - **Thorn Hollow String Band**

The Seasonal Volunteer of the Year is **Dick Connelly**, of the High Desert Ranger Station. He and his wife, Linda, have worked on preserving the ranger station building for many years. Dick and the rest of the High Desert Ranger Station team worked hard this summer and they had their highest attendance ever.

The Couple of the Year is **Burt and Carol Douglass**. The two of them together have worked more than 7,000 hours at the Museum. **Carol** has made important contributions to the By Hand Through Memory exhibit such as procuring samples of native plants. **Burt** has constructed many amazing items for the Museum out of wood.

Drzyzgula. She volunteers in the Desertarium and is fast and thorough in her work. She is there several days a week and she has been a big help with special projects.

The Rookie of the Year is **Lydia King**. She has done extensive work with organizing the Museum database. She is becoming very familiar with the Razor's Edge program and has helped make the data system work much more efficiently.

The Volunteer of the Year is **Heather Duchow**. She works with the Nature Team, Photography Team, and Newsletter Team. She also helps out on field trips when an extra adult is needed. Her work on putting together the nature table for the Naturalists Team has been invaluable. She also recently gave input for the new *Innovation Lab* exhibit. Her knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm have been appreciated by all who work with her.

All the volunteers were thanked at the end of the evening for their amazing contributions to the Museum. Special thanks to all of the staff members that helped put this event together.

The Behind the Scenes Volunteer of the Year is **Jean**



Director's Award - **Denise Blake**



Heather Duchow, Volunteer of the Year; **Lydia King**, Rookie of the Year; **Jean Drzyzgula**, Behind-the-Scenes Volunteer of the Year; **Dick Connelly**, Seasonal Volunteer of the Year; **Carol and Burt Douglass**, Volunteer Couple of the Year



Teen Volunteer of the Year - **Sophia Thomas**



Behind the Scenes Teen of the Year - **Rylee McConnell**



Rookie Teen of the Year - **Jaden McCabe**



Kids Camp Volunteer of the Year - **Tanyen Brown**

Innovation Lab: Design Inspired by Nature Exhibit

by Heather Duchow, Newsletter Writer



If you've been to the *Raptors of the Desert Sky* flight show you know how silently a barn owl flies. You may have marveled at how its highly specialized wings and feathers allow it to be so stealthy. However, you may not have known that this natural wonder inspired a design for a quieter and more efficient fan blade. I didn't know until a recent visit to the new exhibit in the Brooks Gallery.

Innovation Lab: Design Inspired by Nature, which opened on September 2 and runs through February 17, showcases what happens when engineers and inventors take their cues from nature. In some cases, designs are a direct copy of nature (biomimicry), like the hooks on Velcro mim-

icking the hooks on burrs. In other cases (bioinspiration), a designer takes a general idea from something found in nature. For example, an octopus displays a flashing color pattern when startled. Designers may adapt that to a new purpose, like a jacket for cyclists that lights up and flashes when a car gets close. Curator of Education, Carolyn Nesbitt, and Donald M. Kerr Curator of Natural History, Louise Shirley, included biomimicking and bioinspired products that are on the market as well as ideas in earlier stages of development.

The exhibit highlights innovations in four categories: color and camouflage, vision, motion, and structure. There are several examples in each section. A number of hands-on interactives (all built in-house) engage kids and adults alike.

Many critters display highly effective camouflage methods. For instance, several types of insects blend into the patterns on tree bark. You can try your hand at assembling a well-camouflaged moth from different colored puzzle pieces on one of four different bark backgrounds.

At a nearby interactive display, insulation is your camouflage. Stand in front of an infrared sensor and TV monitor to experience how a pit viper could "see" you in the dark using its thermal radiation-sensing pit organs. Hide the heat coming from your body and you hide yourself from the predator. The realization that various organisms "see" differently from humans has led to the development of new types of cameras and sensors.



In the structure section, you can use magnetic tiles to design and construct a building to withstand an earthquake. Then you can test your structure on the earthquake shake table. You may have more success if you incorporate some characteristics of trees. Wide-spreading roots provide stability for tall trees, and a structure that mimics this feature has a better chance of standing through an earthquake.

An interactive small-scale suspension bridge invites you to explore the similarities between spider webs and suspension bridge design. The road deck and cables on the bridge model are all moveable, and the challenge is to see whether incorporating design ideas or construction methods from spider webs can help in building a stable bridge.

Innovation Lab makes it clear that nature is an almost endless source for the innovation needed to solve engineering and design challenges. Carolyn

explains, "One of the goals of this exhibit was for visitors to see nature in a different way, not just the beauty of it, but observing how it works and functions." Sure, otters are cute, but go see why mechanical engineers are looking at otters' fur to help develop lighter and warmer wetsuits. You'll come away wanting to explore ideas further. I'll be looking up more about how random patterns inspired by fallen leaves on the forest floor have influenced carpet tile design, reducing the cost and waste involved in replacing worn carpets. This is a good example of a particular role Louise sees for biomimicry – helping to find "real solutions to human problems. By emulating nature we may be able to develop more sustainable ways to live on this planet." It's merely a bonus that I find the carpet patterns attractive and oddly soothing.

Photos by Todd Cary & Abbott Schindler

Introducing Jessica Powers, Associate Curator of Wildlife

by Dave Gilbert, Newsletter Writer



Jessica Powers carries a 15-pound tortoise into the High Desert Museum hall where snakes, lizards, spiders, and other dry-land dwellers are on display. She invites the scattered crowd together for her afternoon talk. They range from very young to well-along.

She invites all to pet the creature's shell "but not the head or feet...that makes him pull into his shell." Her talk is fast-paced and informative, mixed with humor. She smiles often; her long brown hair, parted slightly to the left, flows well below her shoulders.

To the inevitable question about the tortoise, she says, "His name is Tank, but he doesn't answer to that." Everything she says is tinged with an obvious affection for the creatures that many people would rather avoid.

Jess, as she is known in the Museum, is the associate curator of wildlife, and specializes in reptiles and fish.

She is an Oregon native, who was born in 1989 and grew up in Talent, south of Medford. From the outset, she says she was "outdoorsy," and enjoyed fishing, hunting wild mushrooms, and studying the creatures that have given her life its trajectory.

Jess says she was always a "diligent student," but also admits to being a first-rate, avid, card-carrying "Nintendo nerd."

Her parents, Scott and Tracy, met in Hawaii where he was in the U.S. Navy. They moved to Oregon to begin their family. Jess has a younger brother, named after his father, who is also serving in the Navy.

Both parents encouraged their daughter's interest in science even though, as Jess says, "it was not a girly thing, even in the 90s."

After graduation from Phoenix High School, she struggled to find direction and initially settled on dental hygiene "until I saw inside someone's mouth."

After studying at community colleges in Medford and Eugene, she followed her passion into fisheries and wildlife at Oregon State University. She completed her degree in 2015.

Along the way, Jess did internships at the Cascades Raptor Center in Eugene, the Chintimini Wildlife Center in Corvallis, and, briefly, at the Oregon Zoo's programs department. In 2015 she took a seasonal position at the High Desert Museum. When that ended, she found her "first full-time gig" at Wildlife Safari in Winston.

About nine years ago, mutual friends in Eugene introduced her to a man named Dillon. They became a couple, but Jess made it clear that "we couldn't marry until after graduation."

"He's been supporting my passion since Day 1," she says, smiling broadly. Her almond-shaped eyes sparkle.

When Jess worked at Wildlife Safari, Dillon was able to get hired there in the maintenance department. She jokes, "He fixed things I broke during the day."

Two elements of clarity began to emerge. Bend, with its high desert location and its abundant outdoor recreation, was where she wanted to live. She wanted to be an advocate for the creatures she loves.

"We can't have healthy animals without a healthy environment," she says. Her conviction is obvious.

Jess and Dillon have made the first of those desires a reality. They live in a home in south Bend. Dillon is "currently a landscaper," Jess said, "but he does anything so I can pursue my passion."

That passion is to become what Jess calls an "animal ambassador," taking her message to Museum visitors, school classrooms, on TV, and any other venue that puts her in touch with the public.

Her goal is to encourage people to be "good stewards of the land." She often senses what she calls "a disconnect between people and the environment."

"It's easy for people to not care about what they don't understand," Jess says. "I want to show how amazing these animals are, and ultimately to make people care."

Jess describes her work at the High Desert Museum as "some of the most meaningful work I've done."

She talks about a woman visitor who deeply feared snakes, which happened to be the animal Jess was displaying that day. She actually got the woman to touch the snake. The woman returned later to tell her that the experience had changed her life.

On May 20, Jess and Dillon were married at the Museum in front of the Plateau Indian tepee. Among the family and friends were a red-tail hawk, a great horned owl, and a golden eagle. Tank, the 15-pound tortoise, was the ring bearer.

Photo by Dave Gilbert

High Desert Museum Area Updates from September 2017

by Dave Price, VAC Secretary

Mammals - Jim Payne is taking Cynde Magidson's place on the VAC. Jim reminded everyone that the *High Desert Hooves* talk has replaced the fish talk in the daily schedule. Thad Grudzien said the staff is also considering developing a new program on migratory water fowl and shore birds that pass through the high desert.

Naturalists – Thad Grudzien said the team's new display table is almost done. The team is now looking for images to be used in the display. Thad will be out of town for a number of weeks starting in mid-October.

Birds of Prey - Claudia Nix said this would be her last VAC meeting.

Silver Sage Gift Store – Nancy Gill passed around cider mix, a cocoa tin, a blown art glass object, a new music CD, a winter scarf, a coaster set, tea towels, a napkins pack, a popcorn bag, and a kid's sweatshirt. These items are all available in the Museum store.

Wildlife - Jean Drzyzgula said the wildlife team was looking for volunteers to replace the summer interns who have now returned to school. The team needs volunteers to do scheduled interpretive talks. The team is also doing some modification to the badger enclosure. Jean pointed out that the schedule sign in the *Desertarium* shows the wrong time for the program.

Photography - Heather Duchow said the photography team continues to document events as requested. They also supported a recent photography workshop held at the Museum.

By Hand Through Memory – Aldine Thornton said the teepee in front of the BHTM exhibit is coming apart in several places. Shannon Campbell will pass that information on to Linda Evans.

Gallery Attendants - Jean Noosinow said that the team had a good training session last week.

Collections – Nancy Horton said candidates for the Museum collection manager position are currently being interviewed.

Kudos Korner

by Dave Price, VAC Secretary

Several staff and volunteers were thanked for their work in September. Jean Noosinow wanted to recognize Wednesday's admissions greeter, **Ellen Milam**, for her excellent work introducing visitors to the Museum. Heather Duchow wanted to recognize **Siobhan Sullivan** and her newsletter team for their comprehensive and informative newsletters. Kudos to all of you!

Saturday, October 14th is a Special Day at the Museum!

Thorn Hollow String Band will be playing from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Fur Trading Experience and Harvest Festival from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm



Discover Nature Festival

by Siobhan Sullivan, Newsletter Editor



Riverbend Park was filled with the sounds of happy kids on September 23 as they participated in fun activities at an event celebrating nature. Booths representing various organizations lined the trails. There were about 30 activities that children could participate in.

Kids could learn about wildlife at several of the booths. The High Desert Museum displayed animal pelts from several local carnivores. They also had sheets laid out on the ground showing different animal gaits that kids could try to imitate. Sunriver Nature Center had a live snake and owl that served as ambassadors for the Center. East Cascades Audubon had

small plush toy songbirds that were part of a game demonstrating the perils of migration. Other booths focused on bats and birds.

At Wildheart Nature School's booth, kids learned about dyes made from native plants while making friendship bracelets. Colorful swatches of fabric showed the different colors made from these dyes. Several of the groups focused on teaching kids to be responsible while out enjoying nature. Deschutes 4-H taught kids about leaving no trace when out recreating. The importance of carrying the 10 essentials and knowing how to use a map and compass were highlighted by Camp Fire Central Oregon and REI.



Outdoor activities were highlighted at several of the booths. There was a long line of kids waiting to do a little rock climbing on a tall tower set up for the event. Some of the older kids tried their hand at archery. Children could test their balance by walking on a short slack line at the Slackrobats booth. They could also test how strong they were by trying to use a crosscut saw at Heart of Oregon Corps' booth. Many kids tried out a bike obstacle course at Bend Endurance Academy's booth. Oregon Adaptive Sports demonstrated adaptive cycling and kayaking.

There was a big turn out for this event and it was a great day to celebrate being a kid in Central Oregon. Thanks to the Children's Forest of Central Oregon, Bend Park and Recreation District, and Deschutes National Forest for putting on this event. Thanks also to the many local sponsors.



Discover Nature - continued



Photos by Abbott Schindler and Siobhan Sullivan

Teachers Night Out!



Photos by John Williams

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**HIGH
DESERT
MUSEUM**
BEND, OREGON

*High Desert
Museum, Inc.*
59800 S. Highway 97
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2017



2017

| October | October—continued |
|---|---|
| <p>2 Museum Event: <i>“The Chinese Must Go!” Immigrants, Exclusion and the Vision of America.</i> 6:00 pm, doors open 5:45 pm. Members \$3, non-members \$7. No-host bar. RSVP.</p> | <p>28 Museum Event: <i>Tales of Hallows’ Eve.</i> 6:00-8:00 pm. Members \$3, non-members \$7. RSVP.</p> |
| <p>4 Museum Event: <i>Lives of Museum Junkies: A Book Talk with Marilynne Eichinger.</i> 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm Free. RSVP.</p> | <p>November- Save the Date!</p> |
| <p>7 Museum Workshop: <i>Introduction to Canning.</i> 10:30-12:00pm. Members \$15, non-members \$20. Registration and pre-payment required.</p> | <p>1 Winter hours begin. 10:00 am - 4:00 pm.</p> |
| <p>10 Natural History Pub: <i>The Pacific Lamprey: Old Fish, New Insights.</i> 7:00-9:00 pm. Doors open at 5:30 pm. McMennamins, Bend. Free. RSVP.</p> | <p>2 Museum Event: <i>The Origin and Evolution of Feathers and Flight.</i> 6:00 pm, doors open at 5:45 pm. No-host bar. Members \$3, non-members \$7. RSVP.</p> |
| <p>13 Members’ Preview: <i>Dinosaurs Take Flight: The Art of Archaeopteryx.</i> 6:30-8:00 pm. No-host bar. Members free, guests \$5. RSVP.</p> | <p>3-4 Museum Event: <i>A Night at the High Desert Museum.</i> Friday, 5:00 pm through Saturday, 9:00 am. Members \$75, Non-members \$85.</p> |
| <p>14 Exhibit opening: <i>Dinosaurs Take Flight: The Art of Archaeopteryx.</i></p> | <p>4 Museum & Me. 4:00-7:00 pm. Free. RSVP.</p> |
| <p>14 Off-site Field Trip: <i>High Desert Raptor Watch.</i> 8:00 am - 12:00 pm. Members \$10, non-members \$20. Registration and pre-payment required.</p> | <p>9 Museum Event: <i>Cowgirl Poetry Night.</i> 6:00 - 8:00 pm. No-host bar. Members \$7, non-members \$12. RSVP.</p> |
| <p>14 Museum Event: <i>Fur Trading Experience.</i> 11:00 am-3:00 pm. Free.</p> | <p>11 Thorn Hollow String Band. 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.</p> |
| <p>14 Museum Event: <i>Harvest Festival.</i> 11:00 am-3:00 pm. Free.</p> | <p>11 Museum Event: <i>Mining Day.</i> 11:00 am - 3:00 pm. Museum Admission plus \$2/miner.</p> |
| <p>14 Thorn Hollow String Band. 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.</p> | <p>14 Natural History Pub: <i>Sagebrush Steppe Restoration: Challenges and Opportunities.</i> 7:00 - 9:00 pm. Doors open at 5:30 pm. McMennamins, Bend. Free. RSVP.</p> |
| <p>15 Museum Event: <i>Fur Trading Experience.</i> 11:00 am-3:00 pm. Free.</p> | <p>18 Off-site Field Trip: <i>Mule Deer Migration.</i> 7:00 am - 12:00 pm. Members \$10, non-members \$20. Registration and pre-payment required.</p> |
| <p>17 VAC meeting. 2:00 pm in the Board Room. All volunteers are welcome!</p> | <p>18 Weekend Workshop: <i>How Dinosaurs Came to Fly: Drawing the Clues.</i> 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. Members \$10, non-members \$15. Registration and pre-payment required.</p> |
| <p>18 Senior Day. Free admission for visitors 65 and older.</p> | <p>21 VAC meeting. 2:00 pm in the Board Room. All volunteers are welcome!</p> |
| <p>25 Bend Design Conference. Museum members get 20% off & an invitation to the opening reception at 5:30 - 7:30 pm. Get more info on this 2-day event at Bend Design.</p> | <p>23 Museum Closed. Happy Thanksgiving!</p> |
| | <p>29 Museum Event: <i>Learning From Nature: Biomimicry in Action.</i> 6:00 pm, doors open at 5:45 pm. No-host bar. Members \$3, non-members \$7. RSVP.</p> |
| | <p>To RSVP: www.highdesertmuseum.org/rsvp or 541-382-4754. To pre-register: www.highdesertmuseum.org/program</p> |