

## **Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Night**

*by Heather Duchow, Newsletter Writer*



The warmly lit Museum was an appealing destination on the crisp and clear evening of Tuesday, November 29. Two successive events combined to draw visitors. The Annual Meeting took place from 5:00 - 6:00 pm, and it was immediately followed by Member Appreciation Night.

Members, volunteers, and staff crowded into classroom A, where the Chair of the HDM Board of Trustees, Josh Newton, thanked members for their support and introduced Dana Whitelaw, the executive Director of the Museum. Dana presented highlights of the Museum's year and presented a summary of budget and membership numbers. Membership rates for 2016 were second only to 2013 (the year of the

butterfly and hummingbird exhibit), and more than 170,000 people visited the Museum this year.

While visitor numbers are highest in the summer, the current time of year is the busy season for Membership Coordinator, Rachael Greenwalt. Many Museum memberships are renewed or gift memberships are purchased right before the holidays or the end of the year. In fact, Member Appreciation Night coincided with Giving Tuesday, which, according to the Giving Tuesday website, "kicks off the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving." It is a fitting time for the



Museum to show its appreciation for its members.

All attendees seemed to appreciate the delicious food, which was catered by the manager of the Rimrock Café, Cathy Lang. She and the café staff prepared lovely savory appetizers. Various cookies and desserts surrounded an enormous gingerbread house.

Young Museum members enjoyed a number of activities. At tables in the Desertarium, teen volunteers helped member kids with crafts. Some assembled popsicle-stick puppets, while others concentrated on making holiday greeting cards or paper bag luminaria. In classroom A, chil-



children (and adults) sat entranced by Raven Tennyson's storytelling. The highlight for many youngsters was the opportunity to meet Father Christmas (volunteer Frank Graham) and share a holiday gift wish or two. Volunteers John Williams and Wayne Heuple monitored the line in the Spirit of the West exhibit and kept general order by making sure parents had their cameras ready to capture the moment. Volunteer Todd Cary circulated throughout the event, documenting the many activities and moments with his camera.





In the Silver Sage Trading store, members took advantage of special shopping opportunities such as 20% discounts. A giftwrapping table stood outside the store, with volunteers ready to wrap gifts for free.

While some gifts can be wrapped up and put under a tree, others cannot. These gifts, exchanged between the Museum and its members, of curiosity piqued and satisfied, of interests inspired and nurtured, of continuing support for the history, art, science, and wildlife sheltered under the many roofs of the High Desert Museum, were what the evening was really all about.



Photos by Todd Cary

## High Desert Museum Staff and Volunteer Holiday Party

by Siobhan Sullivan, Newsletter Editor



Though the weather outside was frightful, classroom A was warm and toasty with a room full of volunteers and staff members. The table full of neatly wrapped gifts was ready for the white elephant exchange. Two tables with cookies to be shared or exchanged tempted participants. There was a nice lunch featuring wraps, croissant sandwiches, chips, and three different soups .

There were a wide variety of gifts available to open or exchange during the gift exchange. Gifts included socks, candles, sculptures, baskets, bowls, plates, mugs, decorations, scarves, a DVD player, and BBQ, travel, and garden accessories. The two items "stolen" the most during the exchange were a kit to make your own ugly Christmas sweater and jewelry made from moose droppings. There was a lot of laughter associated with these exchanges.



Don & Darla Mercer

Several volunteers were recognized for their work at the Museum at this event. Don and Darla Mercer, who work in Collections, received a Director's Award. Darla has been volunteering at the Museum for ten years. She has worked in the café, at special events, and, most recently, in Collections. Don started volunteering in 2015 and works alongside his wife and "the ladies" in Collections. The Mercers are appreciated for their work in organizing the Collections prep room. They always go above and beyond and often stay late to finish what they started. Laura McWhorter,



Laura McWhorter

who works behind the scenes with the Museum's wildlife, also received a Director's Award. She has been working for two years at the Museum and has already put in more than 1,000 hours. Despite a grueling college course load, she has been dedicated to coming into the Museum regularly to help out. She recently filled in for a staff member who was out sick and without her help, Wildlife would not have been able to get by. Muriel Carbiener, who works in Living History, was also recognized at this event. She has put in more than 13,000 hours of volunteer work at the Museum.

Congratulations to the award recipients and thank you to the staff who helped put this event together. Staff at the café deserve a big thanks for the great meal.

# 2016 - The Year in Review



Volunteer of the Year Linda Meurer



Barbara Sharp Outstanding Service Award Carmen West (pictured on right) being presented award by past recipients.



Making Sally Bags



High Desert Ranger Station



Art for a Nation exhibit



Father Christmas



Volunteer BBQ



Lazinka Sawmill Demonstration



High Desert Rendezvous



Buzzsaw Sharks of Long Ago exhibit



Senior Day



Photographing ants in the wild



Museum Hall of Fame recipient John Maloney  
January 2017



Hidden Life of Ants exhibit



Museum Hall of Fame recipient Mike Ford

# Snakes, Scales, and Lizard Tails: An Overview of the Desertarium

by Jessica Stewart, Associate Curator of Herpetology and Ichthyology



Snakes and lizards and toads – *oh my!* For those interested in the cold-blooded and scaly residents of the High Desert, the Desertarium is the place to be. The department is home to over 30 species of native and exotic reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates. Desertarium volunteers provide daily care for nearly all of the animals in the collection by preparing diets and assisting with exhibit upkeep. The associate curator trains new volunteers one-on-one in reptile husbandry and handling.

A volunteer's day begins with diet preparation. All produce is stored and chopped in the Bird of Prey (BOP) kitchen. Diet prep in the BOP kitchen gives volunteers the opportunity to interact with the other wildlife staff and see some of the birds of prey up close. It's a great opportunity to learn about the care and training of the Museum's birds. Once the produce is prepared, it is portioned out and distributed to the animals along with other delicious reptile foods like



Desert Tortoise

crickets and mice. While feeding the animals, volunteers also change water and clean the exhibits. There are always extra projects such as redesigning exhibits, cleaning aquariums, and gathering fresh browse for the tortoises.

Desertarium is more than just caring for the animals, however. Though volunteers are designated as "Behind the Scenes", there are also ample opportunities throughout the day to interact with and engage guests. While feeding and working on exhibits, visitors will often have questions about the animals. This is the perfect opportunity to strike up a conversation and help create a more memorable and personal experience. If comfortable with public speaking, volunteers can train to lead the daily *Reptile Encounter*. The *Reptile Encounter* allows guests to touch and interact with reptiles while learning about their characteristics and conservation. This unique encounter fosters a connection between people and reptiles by dispelling common myths and showing guests that scaly animals can be just as charismatic as their furry counterparts.



Western Toad

Volunteering in the Desertarium is caring for fascinating animals while creating memorable learning experiences for guests. There is nothing that quite compares to the feeling of seeing a guest light up at the sight of these often underappreciated animals. "You will see the kids going from one exhibit to the next excited to see a frog, lizard, the turtles, a favorite, the tortoises and even the snakes," explains Sylvia Collins, a Desertarium volunteer since 2012. "Their excitement will help you realize how important these animals are to the visitors and how important your volunteer help is to the animals' care."

Special thanks to current volunteers Sylvia Collins, Brandy Fischer, Jean Drzyzgula, Alyssa Scheppegrell, Jennifer Frazier, and Rhianna Axon. Your hard work and passion for animals is invaluable to the department. I truly appreciate you!



Sonoran Mountain Kingsnake

Photos by Jon Nelson, Jessica Stewart, & John Williams



Season's Greetings  
and Happy New Year  
from the Newsletter Team!



# High Desert Museum Area Updates from December 2016

by Siobhan Sullivan, Newsletter Editor

**Collections** – They continue to work on the condition reports for the upcoming exhibit related to WWII. They are using a lot of artifacts from the Museum’s collection. The team recently completed cleaning out the Resource Room and will begin working on the Registrar’s Room next.

**Silver Sage Trading Center** – They have new long and short sleeved t-shirts with a Bend logo on them in adult and children’s sizes. There are also hoodies for kids. There is a soft fleece jacket with a High Desert Museum logo on it. Be sure to check the store for last minute gift items.

**Photography** - This year they tried a different approach for pictures with Father Christmas. They brought in a good quality lighting rig and had volunteers guide the families and tell them when to take their cameras out to take pictures. It worked out well.

**Naturalists** – Nature walks have been kind of slow due to the weather conditions. Some have not had any participants and others had very few.

**Birds of Prey** - The Museum has two barred owls and one has not been eating well. It has been moved behind the scenes and the other owl has been placed in the exhibit area.

## Kudos Korner

by Siobhan Sullivan, Newsletter Editor

Several staff and volunteers were thanked for their work in December. Thanks to **Todd Cary** for the photography at Member Appreciation Night and other events. Director of Communications **Sandy Cummings** provided her own personal light set up for Father Christmas at Member Appreciation Night. It would have been too dark without it to get good photos. The work that **John Williams** did “wrangling” people in line to get pictures with Father Christmas was also appreciated. **Heather Duchow** was thanked for filling in for Thad Grudzien while he was out of town. **Shannon Campbell** was thanked for coordinating getting Andy Jordan to come to the VAC meeting to discuss safety-related issues at the Museum. **Steve Magidson** was thanked for making sure safety issues were addressed at a meeting for volunteers. Kudos to all of you!



### A Fond Farewell...

High Desert Museum volunteer, John Maloney, recently passed away. His children let us know that he requested no obituary or memorial service. He was a long-time volunteer at the Museum, dedicating over 16 years and 8,000 hours of service. His family suggested that in lieu of flowers, a donation to the Museum in John's name would be a great honor.



### High Desert Voices

**Editor:** Siobhan Sullivan

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*High Desert  
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2017



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**Kitchen Patrol:** Clean up after yourself

January	February - Save the Date!
<p>6 <b>Evening Event: Ladies' Night Out: An Evening of Music and Cowgirl Poetry.</b> 6:00 - 8:00 pm. No-host bar. Members \$5, Non-members \$10. RSVP.</p>	<p>4 <b>Lecture: Oregon Eagle Foundation.</b> 2:45 pm. Donald M. Kerr Birds of Prey Pavilion.</p>
<p>7 <b>Weekend Workshop: Wildlife Photography.</b> 10:00 am - 3:00 pm. Members \$100, Non-members \$150. Registration and pre-payment required.</p>	<p>4 <b>Off-site Event: Winter Raptors.</b> 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. Members \$15, Non-members \$25. Registration and pre-payment required.</p>
<p>8 <b>Exhibit closing: Ansel Adams: Masterworks.</b></p>	<p>11 <b>Thorn Hollow String Band.</b> 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.</p>
<p>10 <b>Off-site Event: Natural History Pub: Environmental Migrations: Disasters, Climate Change, and the Rise in Refugees.</b> McMenamins. Doors open at 5:30 pm. Program starts at 7:00 pm. Free. RSVP.</p>	<p>12 <b>Exhibit Closing: Smokejumpers: Firefighters from the Sky.</b></p>
<p>14 <b>Thorn Hollow String Band.</b> 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.</p>	<p>14 <b>Off-site Event: Restoring the Range.</b> McMenamins. Doors open at 5:30 pm. Program starts at 7:00 pm. Free. RSVP.</p>
<p>14 <b>Mining Day.</b> 11:00 am - 3:00 pm. Museum admission plus \$2 per miner.</p>	<p>18 <b>Weekend Workshop: Finding Fossils.</b> 10:00 am - 3:00 pm. Paired pricing for one adult and one child; Members \$10, Non-members \$15. Registration and pre-payment required.</p>
<p>19 <b>Lecture: Biodiversity Begins with a Bee.</b> 6:00 - 8:00 pm. No-host bar. Members \$3, Non-members \$7. RSVP.</p>	<p>18 <b>Museum Event: Scrapbooking with the Millers.</b> 11:00 am - 3:00 pm.</p>
<p>21 <b>Free Day.</b> 10:00 - 4:00 pm.</p>	<p>25 <b>Free Day.</b> 10:00 am - 4:00 pm.</p>
<p>27 <b>Members' Exhibit Opening: World War II: The High Desert Home Front.</b> 6:30 - 8:00 pm. No-host bar. Members free, Member guest \$5. RSVP.</p>	<p>27 <b>Lecture: A Daughter's Reflections.</b> 6:00 pm. No-host bar. Members \$3, Non-members \$7. RSVP.</p>
<p>28 <b>Off-site Event: Stomping with Snowshoes.</b> 9:30 am - 12:00 pm. Paired pricing for one adult and one child; Members \$10, Non-members \$15. Each additional \$5. Registration and pre-payment required.</p>	<p><b>To RSVP:</b> <a href="http://www.highdesertmuseum.org/rsvp">www.highdesertmuseum.org/rsvp</a> or 541-382-4754</p>
<p>28 <b>Exhibit Opening: World War II: The High Desert Home Front.</b></p>	<p><b>To pre-register:</b> <a href="http://www.highdesertmuseum.org/program">www.highdesertmuseum.org/program</a></p>
<p>28 <b>Museum &amp; Me.</b> 4:00 - 7:00 pm. Free for individuals, friends, &amp; family. RSVP.</p>	