

Volunteer Cookie and White Elephant Cookie Exchange

by Heather Duchow, Newsletter Writer

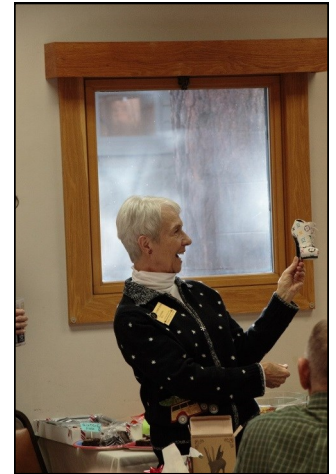


Almost sixty festively dressed High Desert Museum (HDM) volunteers and staff members turned out for the *Volunteer Cookie and White Elephant Gift Exchange* on December 9th. Red sweaters and holiday sweaters abounded. An 1826 Hudson's Bay Company trapper's kit was also among the festive attire. Two tables full of cookies and one table stacked high with cheerfully wrapped packages added to the celebratory mood. The Rimrock Café provided a tasty lunch of soup and wraps, special thank you to Elisha Zellner, Rimrock Café Manager. After Volunteer Coordinator, Shannon Campbell, reminded us that we are cherished as HDM volunteers, Associate Curator of Education, Erica Pelley, stepped up to serve as white elephant gift exchange instigator, "er", excuse me, facilitator. Under her enthusiastic

guidance, participants and observers enjoyed the spirited gift exchange.

The traditional stealing of gifts proved entertaining. Admissions volunteer, Fran Weaver, lost at least three different gifts: a large ceramic rooster, a set of Hobbit Pez dispensers, and a "Twelve Dogs of Christmas" kitchen towel. At the end, Fran had two adorable wooden rolling toys (a lion and a mouse), which she kindly passed on to Curator of Living History, Linda Evans. The person with the best luck picking gifts went home with nothing more than the rest of us: a good story and (presumably) cookies.

I'm already looking forward to next year's white elephant, and I've got an entire year to find just the right gift. I wonder what could possibly be more fun than a giant ceramic chicken?



Introducing Charlie Smith, Wildlife Specialist

by Dave Gilbert, Newsletter Writer



The High Desert Museum's new wildlife specialist has settled in quickly since he began work in September. He says of his five wildlife co-workers "we're all good friends," and he already has a favorite animal: Gilbert, the turkey vulture.

The vulture's fan is Charlie Smith, a tall, slender man of 26, who has a reddish moustache, infrequently shaven cheeks, and wears tiny black studs in his earlobes.

Charlie was born in Yakima, Washington, and spent his first 18 years on a 42-acre apple orchard run by his father, Steve. His mother, Kirsten, owns an equestrian tack supply shop. He has a sister and a brother, both younger.

He says little about his early life, but candidly admits that he got into trouble while in high school and never graduated.

"I made different choices then," he says quietly.

The turnaround happened when he experienced the Catherine Freer Wilderness Therapy program, a grueling endeavor that takes kids far from their comforts, supports, and familiar lives. For Charlie, it was an inspiration.

"I knew I had to be involved in outdoor leadership," he says. That ambition brought him to Bend and Central Oregon Community College (COCC), which offers a program in that very thing.

He made his pitch and the college allowed him to take courses even though he lacked a high school diploma or General Equivalency Degree.

While studying at COCC, Charlie's friends introduced him to a woman named Lindsey.

"I knew she was the one," he says, smiling broadly. In June 2012, Charlie and Lindsey were married. They live in west Bend.

After completing his coursework at COCC, Charlie moved seamlessly to Oregon State University-Cascades, which allowed him to continue his outdoor leadership studies.

Charlie is an avid snowboarder and snowshoer. "I love winter," he says, and he has led month long expeditions for OSU students in the Central Oregon Cascades.

As part of his degree program, Charlie had to complete an internship, and his was at the High Desert Museum, working with wildlife. He completed this final requirement for graduation in September and was immediately offered a part-time job. The other half of his income comes from teaching snowboarding.

His main tasks are to help care for the animals and give talks about the reptiles and birds of prey.

What Charlie values most in his work with the Museum's animals and visitors is "the interpretive side of things."

He feels free to be creative in his talks, he says. His hope is to "inspire people to understand environmental issues, such as climate change, pollution, and habitat loss."

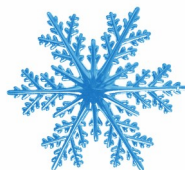
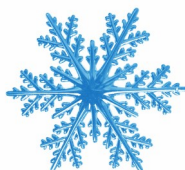
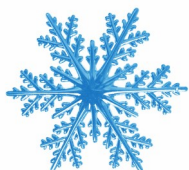
Asked how Museum visitors react to this, Charlie thinks a bit, then says "there's no antagonism. I try to inspire them to be curious and ask questions. I don't try to tell them what to think, but to care about these issues."

The "cool thing," he says is to see people "find a greater appreciation of these issues and this area."

That fits right into Charlie's mission in his own life.

"I hope to pay the rent, provide for my family, live a long healthy life in the Pacific Northwest, and leave the world in a better state than I have found it."

Photo by Damian Fagan



2015– The Year in Review



Spirit of the West Day



Mining Days



Volunteer of the Year Thad Grudzien



Miller Ranch



Picnic in the Past



Mammal Team Presentation



Art of the West



Birds of Prey Behind the Scenes



Brewing Culture: The Craft of Beer



High Desert Rendezvous



Volunteer Appreciation BBQ



Tales of Hallows Eve



Senior Day
December 2015



Growing Up Western

Introducing Laura Ferguson, Curator of Western History

by Lynne Schaefer, Newsletter Writer



“My office is a work in progress,” Laura Ferguson said. “Let’s talk downstairs in the rock room. It’ll be quieter and more comfortable.”

The Museum’s recently hired Curator of Western History bounded down the stairs and led me to the room with the volcanic rock wall where we both agreed it was too cold this below-freezing December day. We settled in the warm and empty café during late afternoon.

Although Laura was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, she considers herself almost a native Oregonian because three years after her birth March 11, 1982, she moved with her parents to Portland, Oregon. Her father’s occupation as an environmental consultant required another move to Longview, Washington, for four years, then the family returned to Portland.

A graduate of Sunset High School, Laura was a member of the fall water polo team and the winter swim team. The 500-yard freestyle was her favorite event. She flashes her contagious smile remembering the fun times she and the teams had enjoyed.

Laura worked six summer vacations as a lifeguard and a swim instructor at Beaverton public pools.

In the 1990’s, Laura’s maternal grandparents rented a Sunriver home for family reunions where they discovered the paved pathways for biking and the Deschutes River for rafting and canoeing. Visits to the High Desert Museum sparked young Laura’s interest in Western history. Museum visits continued when she and her parents visited Bend for winter ski weekends.

A grad school friend accompanied Laura on a three-week tour of London and Paris museums in 2006. Her favorite: Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

In 2012, Laura earned her Ph.D. in U.S. History from the University of Michigan. She lived in San Francisco from 2008 to 2012 pursuing research at the Public Library and the Bancroft Library on the Berkeley campus of the University of California and writing her dissertation. She is amazed that the San Francisco Bay shoreline reached what is now Montgomery Street when sailing ships brought the ‘49er gold seekers. Their abandoned ships in the bay eventually became landfill for the growing city. Ship relics continue to halt present-day construction for archaeological study.

A post-doctoral fellowship at the Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies brought Laura back to teach at the University of Michigan from September 2012 to August 2013. This was followed by a position as a visiting assistant professor to teach U.S. History and the history of the American West at Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington.

For her first project with the High Desert Museum, Laura is eager to work on the *Art for a Nation* exhibit focusing on the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program that hired unemployed artists during the Great Depression.

During leisure hours, Laura’s three-year old yellow Lab named Zoe is “a great companion for exploring Bend’s hiking and running trails.”

Photo by Damian Fagan



Member Appreciation Night

by Siobhan Sullivan, Newsletter Editor



Your way to the Museum's entrance on Member Appreciation Night was lit by soft flickering light from luminaries placed along the path. Holiday lights glowed near the entrance and on decorated trees inside. There were lots of activities inside for visitors young and old.

There was a steady line of eager kids waiting to tell Father Christmas exactly what they wanted this year.

He listened with a patient ear and offered them some friendly advice. After seeing him, families listened to stories to get them in the mood for the holidays.

Visitors went to several stations and made festive holiday decorations, cards, and ornaments. They had a lot of fun decorating cookies with dollops of frosting covered with sugary sprinkles. Visitors

paused in their activities to get a few light snacks and drinks.

The Silver Sage Trading store had 20 percent off everything in the store for members. Visitors were busy browsing and buying. There was also a booth set up with local crafts near the Museum entrance. Volunteers were ready to wrap purchases near the store.

After the recent wintery storms, visitors appreciated the warm and inviting atmosphere created by the Museum. There were lots of smiles on the faces of visitors, staff members, and volunteers alike at the event.



Photos by Todd Carey



Father Christmas
paid a visit to the
High Desert Museum!



Photos by Todd Carey & Siobhan Sullivan

Edward S. Curtis “Fever”
by Siobhan Sullivan, Newsletter Editor



Chief Joseph – Nez Perce
by Edward S. Curtis. 1903.
[http://
curtis.library.northwestern.edu/
index.html](http://curtis.library.northwestern.edu/index.html)

In September and October 2015, events and exhibits about Edward S. Curtis could be found throughout Bend. I attended most of the events and wrote about the experience. The more I learned about Curtis, the longer the article became. The following is a short excerpt. The rest of the article will be featured over a period of a few weeks on <http://bendbranches.com/>

“What makes Curtis so special that so many events and exhibits related to him took place in Bend? With the advent of the Internet, the images he created seem to appear fairly often but not everyone knows him by name. If you have looked at some of his portraits they have probably brought emotions to the surface that you weren’t expecting. The photos go beyond the usual portraits and capture a time and spirit lost to us now. His use of light, shadow, and composition brings his subjects to life. The expressions in the portraits range from bold and noble to young and vulnerable. Some of the pictures are of a more serious anthropological nature while others are pure art. While he was best known for his portraits, his scenic pictures and still lifes were also remarkable. His work later influenced well-known artists such as filmmaker, John Ford, and photographer, Ansel Adams.

Curtis may be best known as a photographer but he also was an accomplished printer, bookmaker, writer, ethnographer, and cinematographer. He hired writers, editors, anthropologists, translators, and other personnel along the way but always oversaw the work to ensure its quality. In order to cover the many facets of his work, A6 Studio & Gallery enlisted the help of several venues to showcase his work.”

High Desert Museum Area Updates from December 2015

Naturalists – The team has three new volunteers and is losing one volunteer. The fish talks have been very popular.

Collections – The team has been busy with condition reports for artifacts that will be used in an Oregon Historical Society exhibit. Three new volunteers are busy learning things about Collections. The firetruck that was at the Museum, and then was gone for a while, has returned. It is located near the Desertarium. *Tough by Nature* closes January 10 and the new exhibit about ants opens January 23. Blanket donations for the WPA exhibit are needed by January 16. *Tough by Nature* was recently featured in an insert in the Bend Bulletin.

Mammals - They have a new volunteer that will be ready to give porcupine and carnivore talks soon. He has been shadowing staff.

Living History - Wilson Wewa has blessed items in the collection honoring the life of the artifact and of the maker. They are working on the schedule for holiday break and could use more volunteers. Volunteers can work inside at *Spirit of the West* but some may prefer the *Miller Ranch* which is a peaceful place at this time of the year.

Photography - The team has been busy covering local events. They have been happy with the work of new volunteers.

Admissions/Greeters – A written weekly update by staff has helped the team. Copies are kept in a notebook for reference. Attendance has been a little lower due to the recent wintery weather.

Birds of Prey - There are three new people being trained and there may be one additional volunteer.

Kudos Korner

by Siobhan Sullivan, Newsletter Editor

Several staff and volunteers were thanked for their work in December. **John Goodell** was thanked for his service at the Museum. It was noted that he brought much to the Museum and was involved in things that benefitted us all such as the Natural History Pub programs. **Rachel Greenwalt** did a great job setting up the Member’s Night and Father Christmas event. There were so many things going on at the event! Father Christmas was busy and saw 165 kids in about two hours. Special thanks to **Frank Graham** for his realistic portrayal. The new large display panels in the café were variously described as “great”, “fantastic”, and “beautiful.” Thanks to staff members who did the graphics and volunteer photographers including **Abbott Schindler**. **Heather Duchow** and **Jean Noosinow** were thanked for helping the Naturalist’s team while Thad Grudzien was away. **Steve Tosi** and **Mary Schaefer** were thanked for helping the Newsletter team in the past, present, and future. Teen volunteers **Jessica Bernardi** and **Samantha Freitas** were thanked for the work they did with kids waiting in line to see Father Christmas. They kept them busy and entertained. **Jessica** showed a level of maturity far beyond her years as she encouraged reluctant children to sit with Father Christmas. Kudos to all of you!



High Desert Voices

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The
High Desert
Museum, Inc.
 59800 S. Highway 97
 Bend, OR 97702

2016



2016

Kitchen Patrol: Clean up after yourself

January

- 2 **Thorn Hollow String Band.** 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.
- 8 **Special Event: Ladies Night Out: An Evening of Music and Cowgirl Poetry.** 6:00 - 8:00 pm. Members \$5, Non-members \$10. No-host bar & light snacks. RSVP.
- 9 **Off-Site Field Trip: Winter Mule Deer and Raptors.** 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. Members \$10, Non-members \$20. Registration & pre-payment required.
- 12 **Natural History Pub: Panel Discussion: Collaborative Forest Restoration.** Doors open 5:30 pm, program 7:00 pm. RSVP.
- 14 **Lecture: Know Before You Go.** 6:00 pm, doors open at 5:30 pm. No-host bar. Members \$3, Non-members \$7. RSVP.
- 16 **Family Activity: Explore Snow Safety.** 9:00 am-12:00 pm. Members \$10, Non-members \$20. Maximum class size: 16. Ages 8+. Registration & pre-payment required.
- 16 **Weekend Workshop: Reptile Care.** Paired pricing for one adult & one child. Members \$10, Non-members \$15. Each additional \$5. Registration & pre-payment required.
- 16 **Mining Day.** 11:00 am - 3:00 pm. \$2 per miner.
- 18 **Special Event: Gala at The Riverhouse.** 6:00 - 10:00 pm. Individual tickets \$125 or \$250 per couple. Sponsorship levels and tables range in price from \$1,000 to \$10,000. To purchase tickets or sponsorships, go to <https://hdmuseum.wufoo.com/forms/m1fb4cj40uu7etx/> For more information, contact Heather Vihstadt at hvihstadt@highdesertmuseum.org or at 541-382-4754 Ext. 248.
- 22 **Members' Exhibit Opening: Farmers, Warriors, Builders: The Hidden Life of Ants.** 6:00 - 8:00 pm. No-host bar. Members free, guests \$5. RSVP.
- 23 **Free Day.** 10:00 am - 4:00 pm.

January - continued

- 23 **Exhibit opening. Farmers, Warriors, Builders: The Hidden Life of Ants.**
- 30 **Family Activity: Discover the Thrill of the Chill.** 8:00 am - 1:00 pm. Members \$10, Non-members \$20. Registration & pre-payment required.

February - Save the Date!

- 3 **Museum & Me.** 4:00 - 7:00 pm. Free. RSVP.
- 6 **Off-Site Field Trip: Winter Mule Deer and Raptors.** 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. Members \$10, Non-members \$20. Registration & pre-payment required.
- 6 **Thorn Hollow String Band.** 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.
- 9 **Natural History Pub: Navajo, New Dealers, and the Metaphysics of Nature.** McMenamins. Doors open at 5:30 pm. Program starts at 7:00 pm. RSVP.
- 13 **Weekend Workshop: Snow School.** Paired pricing for one adult & one child. Members \$10, Non-members \$15. Each additional \$5. Registration & pre-payment required.
- 13 **Central Oregon Symphony: Winter 2016 Concert.** 7:30 pm. Bend High School Auditorium. 230 NE 6th St., Bend. Go to www.cosymphony.com/tickets.htm for tickets.
- 14 **Central Oregon Symphony: Winter 2016 Concert.** 2:00 pm. See above for location & tickets.
- 15 **Central Oregon Symphony: Winter 2016 Concert.** 7:30 pm. See above for location & tickets.
- 17 **Lunch & Lecture: The Plow that Broke the Plains.** 12:00 pm. Free with Museum admission.
- 20 **Free Day.** 10:00 am - 4:00 pm.
- 24 **Lecture: Grouse of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.** 6:00 pm, doors open at 5:30 pm. No-host bar. Members \$3, Non-members \$7. RSVP.
To RSVP: www.highdesertmuseum.org/rsvp or 541-382-4754 ext. 241
To pre-register: www.highdesertmuseum.org/program