

Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) Meeting
Tuesday, 18 June 2019
Board Room
2:00 pm – 3:18 pm

Officers Present

Heather Duchow Chair/Photography

Council Members & Volunteers Present

Nancy Horton Collections
 Sigrid von Hurst BHTM
 Marge Trayser Admissions/Membership
 Steve Murray BOP
 Siobhan Sullivan Newsletter
 Frank Graham Volunteer

Staff Present

Shannon Campbell Volunteer Coordinator
 Sarah Baylinson Collections Manager and Exhibits Coordinator
 Aaron Rubin Associate Curator of Wildlife
 Kristi Wilson Assistant Director of Finance and Operations
 Laura Ferguson Senior Curator of Western History
 Bethany Lange Assistant Director of Development
 Linda Evans Curator of Living History

1. The VAC meeting was called to order by the Chair at 2:00 pm in the Board Room.

2. Staff Reports:

a. Collections Manager and Exhibits Coordinator—Sarah Baylinson was introduced to the volunteers by Volunteer Coordinator Shannon Campbell. She previously worked at the Bowman Museum in Prineville for the past four years so she is familiar with Central Oregon. She also volunteers with Mentor Corps, a state level mentoring program museums throughout Oregon. She is the Vice President of the Museum Association Board.

b. Associate Curator of Wildlife—Aaron Rubin was introduced next. He has previously worked at the museum for the past couple of years as an intern in Wildlife and as a seasonal employee. His degree is from Oregon State University in zoology and animal husbandry. He is passionate about working with animals. He will be working with the 18 raptors that are currently on display at the museum.

c. Assistant Director of Finance and Operations—Kristi Wilson was introduced by Shannon. She is a native Oregonian who grew up in Portland. Her degree is from Portland State University. She and her family lived in Roseburg for a while. Her family visited the museum and also fished and camped in the Bend area over the years. She moved to Washington State briefly with plans to build a sailboat and sail the world. Christy moved to Bend two weeks ago and has been working at the museum for a week.

d. Senior Curator of Western History—Laura Ferguson mentioned several upcoming exhibits. The exhibit team has been working on an exhibit that will open on July 6 based on Apollo astronauts

training to go to the moon in parts of Central Oregon. Lava Lands and Hole in the Ground were a couple of the places where training took place. This exhibit will mark the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission. *Witness to Wartime: Takuichi Fujii* is a traveling exhibit that will open at the museum in October. It will feature artwork created by Takuichi Fujii when he was incarcerated at Minidoka Internment Camp. Photographs taken at the camp will also be featured. Government photographers glossed over the reality of what occurred at the camps. There will be an exhibit related to renewable energy in the high desert in September. In January 2020, an exhibit on Burning Man will open. The immigrant scene in *Spirit of the West* depicts the Black Rock Desert area, where Burning Man occurs.

Laura also mentioned grants associated with the *By Hand Through Memory* gallery. The *Creating Together* grant from NEH involves tribes throughout the Columbia Plateau. The first meeting of participants takes place on July 1. As a result of the grants, there will be changes throughout the 20-year old gallery. These changes include things such as making display boxes more accessible for cleaning and rotating artifacts. Changes will be based on input from the advisory group. Indigenous peoples of this region have always had relationships with each other and the revised gallery will reflect those relationships by co-curating and sharing artifacts between institutions. The Doris Swayze Bounds collection in *By Hand Through Memory* is an important part of the museum and they will continue to work with her family.

e. Assistant Director of Development—Bethany Lange was introduced by Shannon. She is busy preparing for *High Desert Rendezvous*. The event takes place on Saturday, August 24. Proceeds from the live auction, silent auction, and dinner will benefit the museum. She is looking for volunteers to help in the days leading up to the event and at the event itself. One of the things she will need help with is collecting auction items donated from neighboring communities. Bethany is also looking for great new ideas for items to feature in auction packages. Contact her if you would like to volunteer or suggest items for the auction.

Last year *High Desert Rendezvous* brought in a record breaking amount of ~\$540,000. Established community members and new residents have enthusiastically supported the museum through this event.

b. Volunteer Coordinator—Shannon Campbell led a discussion about the upcoming VAC meetings. There will be a meeting in July but there will not be a meeting in August. We will need to find a different location as the board room and all classrooms are reserved.

A call for new VAC officers was recently put out to volunteers. Jean Drzyzgula will serve as Chair and Frank Graham offered to serve as Vice Chair. Dave Price will continue to serve as the VAC Secretary. The new term for officers begins in September 2019. Marge Trayser expressed interest in serving as Vice Chair in September 2020.

There was a discussion on how Team Leads and VAC representatives are chosen. Each team selects who attends the VAC meetings in the way most comfortable for them. There are no term limits. New leads and representatives are not chosen in a specific time frame and having them selected during a certain month was discussed. The VAC Secretary takes minutes during the meetings and is not there as a representative of their team. Shannon will mention considering to serve as a Team Lead or VAC Representative in upcoming communications. She advised us to check in with our teams to see if members would like to represent their teams at VAC meetings.

Nominations for Volunteer of the Year will begin on August 1. In the past, there have only been about 20 nominations. Volunteers could vote online or on paper ballots. Shannon advised us to impress upon people how important it is to vote. It was suggested that a prominent announcement could be put up on the Volgistics page. Printed announcements could also be placed near the computer used for sign ins. Shannon will be delivering ballots at an upcoming staff meeting.

There have been three recent random requests for volunteers to lead tours at the museum. Frank Graham offered to lead one group and his tour lasted two hours 45 minutes. He suggested having a Speakers Bureau in which certain volunteers could be contacted to lead these groups. There was a discussion on how long the talks could be and what the expectations might be. There may have to be training for this type of volunteer-led tour. Some suggested having two guides as an option. This idea was tabled for now.

3. Old Business:

a. Free passes given to Desert Sage Society members for the raptor flight programs were discussed. There is limited seating at these events and they sometimes sell out. Nicole Swarts, Admissions Manager, said that even if these programs are sold out, they will try to accommodate pass holders (if there are only a couple people). They must arrive prior to the cutoff time for purchasing tickets to an upcoming show.

4. New Business:

a. There was a brief discussion on providing places where nursing mothers can nurse in privacy. Visitors often ask at Admissions where appropriate places are located. Suggestions were made for current and future locations.

4. Team Lead/VAC Representative Reports:

a. Living History—Linda Evans said the sawmill will run on June 22 and it will run two other times this year. They are in the process of organizing the blacksmith and wood shop to get ready for visitors. The team has three seasonal employees—Isabelle Rice, who has worked at the museum in past seasons; Staci Louie, who previously worked at the Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park in California; and Kate Cate Carey, who is a school teacher. The teen volunteers are working at the Ranch now. They have all gone through training, including safety training. Linda recently returned from a Living History conference in Toronto.

b. Collections—Nancy Horton said the three women featured in the *By Hand Through Memory* gallery digging for roots scene will be outfitted with new dresses, moccasins, scarves, and belts. There is a lot of work yet to do related to the updates in the gallery. The team is getting to know Sarah Baylinson and they think she is really great. Sarah and Laura Ferguson plan to do a section of the inventory prior to the volunteers. The spread sheet they will create will help identify things that need additional work such as new photographs of artifacts, etc.

c. Admissions/Greeters—Marge Trayser showed a new plush otter that will be given to participants in the Adopt an Animal program that give donations of \$50 and \$150. This “eco-friendly” version features no plastic and it has a sewn-on nose and eyes. The otter will also wear a small, brightly-colored bandana.

There were 139 dads that were given free admission to the museum on Father's Day. Total admission on that day was 578. School tours are over until the school year begins again in the fall. Marge reminded everyone that the museum will be closed on July 4. Admissions are currently selling 50 tickets per day for the raptor encounter. This will increase to a maximum number of 200 participants as the season progresses. There are kennels available for temporary use in the front of the parking area. Visitors must come in to Admissions and fill out a form that includes their phone number. They are then given a key for the lock on a kennel.

A sensory bag was passed around. This *Brain Break Bag* includes items for visitors who may have sensory issues. Some are disturbed by sounds and sights and this bag includes tactile toys, crayons, paper, and noise-cancelling headphones. A laminated sign language sheet is also included. Visitors check out these bags to use while in the museum.

The Admissions/Greeter team needs a greeter for Fridays.

d. Birds of Prey— Steve Murray reported that all the interns and seasonal staff have been hired. Volunteers will take a break from their work in BOP over the summer. There may be special projects for volunteers later in the season. He also reported that work on the mews continues with lots of welding left to do. The *Raptors of the Desert Sky* program is going well. A new red-tailed hawk is coming to the museum. We are rehabbing a female golden eagle that will be released into the wild. The bobcat is doing well after being moved off exhibit. No word yet on what will go into her previous display space. Steve is now involved in work as an otter attendant. Shannon put the word out for 14 volunteers to work three-hour shifts and 16 expressed interest.

e. Photography—Heather Duchow said the team now has batteries for the LED light panels to help with lighting at events. The next team meeting is on August 6 at 1:00-2:00 pm.

f. Newsletter—Siobhan Sullivan said the team lost a member who moved away from Bend. The team has discussed taking two months off next year during the summer months.

g. BHTM—Sigrid von Hurst mentioned how great it was that the museum put money into renovating the teepee. It was dirty and badly in need of repair. The rebuilt teepee looks great.

6. Kudos - Something Nice to Say about Someone or Something:

a. Visiting children that participate in games and activities at the Miller Family Ranch often buy things at the gift store related to the activities. Hoops and sticks are popular as are bonnets. Volunteers working in the store often hear good comments about the fun the kids have at the Ranch.

7. Reminder: The next VAC meeting will be on Tuesday/16 July at 2:00 pm, location TBD. There will not be a VAC meeting in August.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 3:18 pm.

Siobhan Sullivan
Temporary VAC Secretary