

**Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) Meeting**  
**Tuesday, 15 October 2019**  
**Board Room**  
**2:00 pm – 3:15 pm**

**Officers Present**

Jean Drzyzgula	Chairperson
Frank Graham	Vice Chairperson
Dave Price	Secretary

**Council Members Present**

Jean Bennett	Collections
Heather Duchow	Photography
Thad Grudzien	Naturalist
Jean Noosinow	Store/ Gallery Attendants
Siobhan Sullivan	Newsletter
Sigrid Von Hurst	BHTM

**Staff Present**

Dana Whitelaw	Executive Director
Alysia Wolf	Associate Curator of Wildlife
Cathy Lang	Café Manager

**Other Attendees**

Jim Burrows	Volunteer
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1. The VAC meeting was called to order by the chairperson at 2:00 pm in Board Room.
2. Staff Reports:
  - a. Executive Director—Dana reported that the museum has been interviewing candidates for the volunteer coordinator position and an employment offer will be made soon. She also reported that museum attendance during the past quarter was excellent. Members of the VAC asked Dana to invite the new art curator and collections manager to speak at the next VAC meeting.
  - b. Associate Curator of Wildlife—Alysia said Vivi, the museum’s bobcat, is doing very well in her new home. The museum’s badgers are heading into torpor, so they are becoming irritable and lethargic. Also, the fall weather has encouraged the otters to increase their outdoor active. While attendants at the otter exhibit will continue to use the cart with pelts and other hands-on items to engage visitors, they will also be trained to share information about Warner suckers, Foscett speckled dace, and Pacific lampreys. Finally, the Oregon Zoo in Portland is using the High Desert Museum’s lamprey exhibit as a model for their new lamprey exhibit.
  - c. Café Manager—Cathy discussed the fall café menu. It includes several new lunch items including Reuben and turkey sandwiches as well as a special bread pudding desert that Cathy shared with the VAC.
3. Old Business: There was no old business brought up at the meeting.

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4. New Business and New Ideas: Jean Drzyzgula suggested that the VAC may be a good forum to review museum projects being proposed by volunteers. It was agreed that if the VAC took on this role, project proposals would need to be presented in writing. Proposals would need to include information regarding the purpose of the project, its benefits, methodology and/or work plan, participants, cost, and schedule. After discussing this idea, the VAC unanimously endorsed the concept of using the VAC to review volunteer projects prior to submitting them to the appropriate staff leaders for approval.
  
5. Team Lead Reports:
  - a. Newsletter—Siobhan said the newsletter is always looking for articles on history, nature , and/or art subjects.
  
  - b. Photography—Heather said the photography team is holding quarterly meetings. The team continues to support various events and projects, including photographing all the various interpretive talks that are held throughout the day. The team has also taken official portrait photographs of museum board members.
  
  - c. Collections—Jean Bennett said the collections team is helping to set up the new *Witness to Wartime* art exhibit. The team will do its condition evaluation after the art has been installed in the exhibit. The team is also working on an inventory of all the artifacts in the museum’s vault.
  
  - d. Naturalist—Thad said there have been several changes in the naturalist team, but all the daily talks are covered.
  
  - e. Gallery Attendants—Jean Noosinow said all is well with the gallery attendant team. It can be difficult to do gallery attendant-type work with some of the smaller exhibits consisting mainly of large panels so many gallery attendants focus their time on more complex exhibits.
  
  - f. Silver Sage Store—Jean Noosinow passed around some store items including fall cocktail napkins, writing cards, a snowball maker, holiday decorations, sample minerals, and glass jewelry.
  
  - g. BHTM—Sigrid said the new BHTM storage area is very useful for preparing artifacts. She also said that the BHTM team is planning a three-day trip to Pendleton and Walla Walla. The attendees will meet with leaders and historians from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. The trip begins on Wednesday/16 October.
  
  - h. Birds of Prey—Jean Drzyzgula said the female golden eagle that Jon Nelson was rehabilitating was released in late September. The wildlife team is now fully manned and the staff is preparing a list of projects to improve BoP areas.
  
  - i. Desertarium—Jean Drzyzgula said that volunteers interested in helping to station train reptiles should contact a member of the desertarium team.
  
  - j. Living History—Jean Drzyzgula reported that the blacksmith shop at the *Miller Ranch* opened last Saturday/12 October. It was very popular with visitors, especially young visitors.

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7. Something Nice to Say about Someone or Something:
  - a. Everyone on the VAC thanked Cathy Lang for sharing her excellent bread pudding!
  - b. The VAC also wanted to sincerely thanks Shannon Campbell for her years of work with the museum's volunteers.
8. Reminder: The next VAC meeting will be on Tuesday/19 November at 2:00 pm in the board room.
9. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Dave Price  
VAC Secretary