

Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) Meeting
Tuesday, 17 December 2019
Board Room
2:00 pm – 3:05 pm

Officers Present

Jean Drzyzgula	Chairperson
Frank Graham	Vice Chairperson

Council Members Present

Steve Murray	BOP
Sigrid VonHurst	BHTM
Aldine Thornton	BHTM
Jim Boehlke	Living History
Jean Noosinow	Gallery Guide/Store
Heather Duchow	Photography
Thad Grudzien	Naturalist
Marge Trayser	Admissions
Siobhan Sullivan	Newsletter
Martha Henderson	Ranger Station
Barbara Wagner	Volunteer gallery guide

Staff Present

Christina Morales	Volunteer Coordinator
Jonathan Vedelli	Chief of Finance and Operations

1. Meeting called to order by Chair Jean Drzyzgula @ 1400 hrs, four bells in the afternoon watch, or 2 PM.

Staff Reports:

2. Jean D handed out copies of the “project proposal” project documents. Indicated later discussion to follow.
3. Christina reported that some areas of the museum website are now available in Spanish. This is an ongoing process. She indicated Jon Nelson is putting out a call for more wildlife interpreters. Jonathon Vedelli, new museum CFO was introduced. Christina also mentioned she would like to have the individual volunteer teams join her for coffee over the next several months so she could get to meet and better know the museum’s many volunteers. She asked team leads to coordinate a time to meet with them.
4. Jonathan Vedelli joins the museum from Hawaii where he had been CFO and Development Director for a private school on the Big Island. His family will join him once school is out. Welcome, Jonathan!
5. Team Lead Reports:
 - a. BOP: Recently finished some “landscaping” to better support Raptors of the Desert Sky summer program.
 - b. BHTM: Now holding quarterly team meetings. The team recently reviewed the results of a survey of visitors. The survey confirmed some of the team’s concerns

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about clarity/message of some of the displays. They also enjoyed Laura Ferguson working with the team to build better interpretive skills. Sigrid added a plea for new interpreters to join the team.

- c. Ranger Station: Martha is working with both Les Joslin and staff. Looking at ways to better integrate the Ranger Station story into the museum's programs. She is also recruiting for volunteers to staff the station over the summer months.
 - d. Living History: Father Christmas was a big success, with story telling and games added this year to keep kids engaged.
 - e. Gallery attendant: nothing new, all going well. Not many visitors to guide though.
 - f. Store: Julie is gearing up for spring and support for upcoming new exhibits. Still time to get last minute Christmas shopping done!
 - g. Naturalist: Quiet times. Thad invited Christina and Jonathon to join him for a naturalist tour.
 - h. Photography: gearing up for an indoor workshop in January. Heather and Abbott Schindler will present.
 - i. Admissions: quiet season for visitors. Highlighted "Museum and Me" program coming on Saturday, 21 Dec. Opportunity for special needs kiddos to meet with Father Christmas.
 - j. Desertarium: Blue tailed skink has reached training plateau but Ragar, the Bearded Dragon is doing well. Burt Douglass has built a ramp that allows team to condition reptiles to "touch consent", a requirement for ongoing AZA certification efforts. Dimitri, the Russian tortoise has been rehoused. Lily is a newly arrived Russian tortoise. Burt D is building a tortoise paradise filled with greenery and digging dirt for her. Jean added a plea for more interpreters and mentioned the 3 Feb Natural History Pub will feature a wildlife training presentation from museum staff.
6. Old Business:
- a. The project to present a process by which volunteers can bring a project to the staff for approval and implementation was discussed extensively. Jean's very well done draft was mentioned positively with a number of generally agreed changes presented. Jean suggested they would quickly revise the proposal to incorporate changes. Thad moved and Frank seconded a motion to formally move the project forward by accepting Jean's revisions for review and final acceptance. Motion approved unanimously. Jean indicated they would have revisions to the Committee soon.
7. New Business:
- a. Siobhan passed around a wonderful wee horseshoe forged and inscribed for her years ago in Williamsburg, VA. Something our newly joined blacksmith could do at the ranch?
 - b. Siobhan also passed out copies of the volunteer website address for team leads to distribute within their teams. The address is: HDM-gems.net
8. Kudos:
- a. Jean D. for the fantastic effort putting the "project project" together and seeing it through.
 - b. Burt Douglass for his many amazing carpentry contributions all over the museum.

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9. Meeting was adjourned at 1503. Next meeting: 21 January 2020.

Frank Graham
Vice Chair and very temporary Scribe