Annual reception celebrates Museum volunteers

By Julia Uthmeier, Spring 2012 Volunteer Program Intern

Museum volunteers mingle at the annual recognition reception.

Most people associate Friday the 13th with bad luck and mishaps. However, the Annual Volunteer Recognition Reception held Friday, April 13, was anything but scary. The reception is one of the many ways the Florida Museum says “thank you” to its volunteers for their incredible dedication.

The reception planning committee, including Virginia Dolder, Gail Garcia and BJ Hodge, complemented the event with superstitions themes from around the world. Each table had items and explanations of different superstitions, ranging from black cats to chopsticks. Guests enjoyed learning about the superstitions while mingling and enjoying music from Butterfly Rainforest employee Mike Boulware and his acoustic guitar. It was clear the attendees were thrilled to be in the presence of food, friends and Museum family.

After a group photo orchestrated by Museum photographers Jeff Gage and Kristen Grace, attendees enjoyed a variety of delicious foods prepared by Celebrations Catering. As everyone finished their dinner, Museum Director Doug Jones gave opening remarks. He emphasized the vital importance of volunteers, especially in these times of budget cuts, and wowed the audience with this year’s volunteer numbers - 482 individuals donated 34,981 hours of time from April 2011 through March 2012. He ended his comments with a heartfelt thank you on behalf of all Museum staff and Associates Board members.

Volunteer Coordinator Amy Hester hosted the awards portion of the reception, beginning with the presentation of service pins. Many department managers attended to say a few words about the recipients and their accomplishments. The following service pins were presented:

5 years: Anita Battiste, Ron Bertie, Jim Beville, Shirley Beville, Nancy Hanfman, Paul Hanfman, David Nassif, Susan Nassif, Barbara Ornstein, Sue Paper, Sandra Pozetta, Ruth Sherwood

10 years: Brack Barker, Jackie Fried, Mary Lou Merkner, Helen Jane Pridgen

15 years: Helen Kiefer

25 years: Pat Smart

James Pope Cheney Volunteer of the Year Awards were presented to a volunteer from Exhibits and Public Programs and from Research and Collections. Museum staff or other volunteers nominate those who go above and beyond their volunteer duties. This year, the awards were presented to Joyce Thompson for her outstanding commitment to Visitor Services and the Butterfly Rainforest, and to Janet Cornelius for her invaluable service in Anthropology. Nominees also included Jon Anderson (Dickinson Hall), George Edwards (Education), Mike McCowan (McGuire Center Collections) and Marilyn Martin (Center for Informal Science Education).

We must have found a penny with our fingers crossed or had a rabbit’s foot in our pocket to be as incredibly lucky as we are to have such committed and talented volunteers at the Florida Museum of Natural History.
Volunteering at the Florida Museum…

Greetings from the Coordinator

Dear Volunteers,

2012 is half over and, as always, you all have accomplished a lot! Besides regular volunteer activities, the Museum volunteer corps has contributed to the success of Can You Dig It?, Earth Day BioBlitz, Cruisin’ the Fossil Freeway’s opening day, Girl Scout evenings and more. However, it’s not all work and no play. We’ve also had the annual recognition reception and the Education Department recently hosted a volunteer picnic. It sounds like we have plenty to keep us busy!

Luckily, the Junior Volunteers have joined us for the summer to lend a helping hand. This well-established program is more popular than ever with more than 190 applicants. This summer you will see 120 youth ages 12-17 helping in many capacities, including the Butterfly Rainforest, as camp assistants and docents, and in the Paleo Prep Lab. Please help us welcome them into the Museum and feel free to give them friendly pointers.

Also, planning for October’s ButterflyFest is underway and recruitment appeals will be coming shortly. ButterflyFest will be held Oct.13-14, so please mark your calendars and let me know if you are interested in helping.

Finally, Jennifer and I recently moved offices and are now located on the first floor of the McGuire Center. We still love to talk to volunteers, so please don’t hesitate to have the front desk personnel call us to the front.

Have a great summer,
Amy

Volunteer Martha Cade receives Florida Archaeology Council Stewards of Heritage Award

By Elise LeCompte and Amy D. Hester

On May 11, Florida Museum of Natural History volunteer Martha Cade received the Florida Archaeological Council’s Stewards of Heritage Award. This biennial award is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to aid archaeological preservation, further research and education or otherwise promote public awareness of Florida archaeology.

Cade started volunteering for the Florida Museum Anthropology Division in 1996 as the assistant curator for the Museum’s Down Like Lead: 400 Years of Florida Shipwrecks exhibit. She was involved in every aspect of the exhibit’s creation, from artifact selection and mounting to case design and layout, label writing, packing, shipping and other tasks. Once that gargantuan job was completed, she began volunteering as assistant Anthropology Division registrar, a position she still holds. Cade’s knowledge of the archaeological and ethnographic collections and the workings of the Anthropology Division allows her to find collections and documents, organize loans, and most importantly assist Museum visitors and students with their research.

Cade’s enthusiasm for her work is demonstrated in many ways. No task is too small or too insignificant. She never complains about any assignment and completes all tasks she is given. After the move of the ethnographic collection, Cade nearly single-handedly reorganized the entire collection to make its storage more efficient in terms of space and cultural groupings. She also performed a new inventory of the room containing more than 4,000 objects, including updating the collections database. Her can-do, positive attitude and enthusiasm encourages employees to work harder as well.

Cade serves as a leader within the Museum and as an ambassador for Florida archaeology across the state. Her dedication helps fulfill the Museum’s legal and ethical mandate to care for the archaeology collections it holds in trust for the state and citizens of Florida. The Florida Museum of Natural History is fortunate to have this James Pope Cheney Volunteer of the Year and Florida Archaeological Council Stewards of Heritage Award recipient contribute her time and talents to the Museum.
Staff Profile:

Elise LeCompte

By Kelly Schindler, Spring 2011 Volunteer Program Intern

Elise LeCompte has been a part of the Museum since 1984, when she began as a graduate student in the work-study program. LeCompte now holds the positions of Museum Registrar, Assistant to the Department Chair for Natural History and Health and Safety Coordinator.

Although she enjoys working with people, LeCompte loves the order and organization aspect of her job as registrar.

“It is an awesome feeling to hold an artifact knowing that it was touched, used and maybe even revered by someone so long ago,” LeCompte said.

In addition to her job at the Museum, she teaches courses in museum ethics and collections management for the University of Florida’s Museum Studies program, and works as a consultant for issues related to museum exhibition and governance.

Outside the Museum, LeCompte enjoys singing and is a member of both a barbershop choir and an a cappella choir. Her barbershop chorus has toured in Europe for several years and her affiliation with the group has allowed LeCompte to pursue her love of traveling, something she hopes to continue when she has time.

Volunteer Profile:

Maureen Anderson

By Kelly Schindler, Spring 2011 Volunteer Program Intern

Growing up in London, volunteer Maureen Anderson was raised in a museum environment. Though she had worked in banking, insurance and retail, she was drawn to the Florida Museum, as it was one of few museums in Gainesville when she arrived in 1969.

As a public programs volunteer, one of Anderson’s favorite aspects of her work is the opportunity to “give back to the community and to children.” She enjoys being involved with children’s programs and summer camps, as well as events such as Collectors Day.

In addition to her work at the Museum, Anderson also volunteers at the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank, the Hippodrome State Theatre and the Gainesville Community Ministry Thrift Shop. She has one son, a university professor in Connecticut, and twin grandchildren.

If I didn’t have my job at the Museum, I would be a professional singer,” she said. “It is what I’ve wanted to do all my life.”

During her time at the Museum, LeCompte has held several positions, including Capitalize Collections Manager, Exhibit Registrar and Conservation Technician. When asked what advice she would give someone aspiring to be involved in the museum field, she encourages people to “volunteer and intern – get as much exposure to as many different things as you can.”
Volunteers recognized for 100 hours or more of service

Please congratulate the following volunteers who reached multiples of 100 hours of service during the first quarter of 2012 (Jan. 1 thru March 31, 2012). Each volunteer received four coupons for free entrance into a fee-based exhibit for every 100 hours of service. The total number of hours (rounded) served since April 1, 2005 is listed in parentheses. Junior volunteers are indicated by ‘JV.’

1st quarter 2012
Jon Anderson (900)  
Brack Barker (300)  
John Beaman (900)  
James Bevillé (3,000)  
Jane Blanchard (1,400)  
Rosvel Bracho-Sanchez (JV) (100)  
Jack Brown (500)  
Martha Cade (1,900)  
John Cherry (100)  
Sarah Clarke (JV) (100)  
Janet C. Cornelius (2,000)  
Lesleyanne Drake (400)  
George Edwards (1400)  
William Eschmeyer (700)  
Ronald Feagler (100)  
Barbara Fennelly (400)  
Mary Fischer (300)  
Jaimie Foster (100)  
Jackie Fried (1,100)  
Libby Furlow (1,100)  
Jeanne Gossman (100)  
Jan Graf (500)  
Anthony Gray (100)  
Bob Gwin (1,500)  
Charles Hall (600)  
Emily Hambly (800)  
Nancy Hanman (200)  
Paul Hanman (400)  
Austin Hendy (100)  
Amber Hodges (400)  
William Keeler (1,000)  
James Kendrick (100)  
Leslie Klein (1,000)  
Alyssa Lai (100)  
Ronald Lange (700)  
Sheila Lucas (100)  
Mary Lynch (800)  
Mike McCowan (2,200)  
  Judy McCollough (400)  
  Kathryn McGill (100)  
  Barbara Mullan (300)  
  Scott Myers (JV) (100)  
  Linda Nichols (100)  
  Risa Patarasuk (200)  
  Jorge Perez-Gallego (100)  
  Mary Ranade (600)  
  Jeff Shapiro (300)  
  Christopher Simeur (300)  
  William Smith-Vaniz (300)  
  Susan Sorrell (100)  
  Robert Tarnuzzer (2,100)  

Carlos Tenorio (100)  
Barbara Toomey (1,000)  
James Toomey (400)  
Julia Uthmeier (100)  
Phillip Whisler (500)  
Neil White (300)  
Evan Whiting (100)  
Sarah Widiansky (100)  
Pat Williams (400)  
Bonnie Wise (100)  
Ting-Bing Wu (100)  
Neza Xiuhetcutli (100)  

Happy Birthday!

MAY
1 Jake Jeong  
3 Arianna Harrington  
5 Gena Anderson  
5 Marcia Philips  
5 Julie Walter  
8 Ashley Wilt  
9 Victoria Collins  
9 Ting-Bing Wu  
9 Risham Sidhu  
9 Thomas Sidhu  
11 Evan Whiting  
11 Giovanna Avello  
12 Andy Tseng  
12 Jessica Barrand  
13 James Kendrick  
14 Thomas Wood  
16 Bronia Lowenstein  
16 Benjamin Holliday  
16 Tatum Norell  
17 Aliya Miranda  
17 David Liu  
17 Whitney Humphrey  
17 Vanna Yang  
18 Pedro Mendez  
21 Debra Cannon  
22 Mary Lynch  
23 Nicholas Lutz  
28 Yuchen Wang  
29 Jerry Hessels  
30 Brack Barker  

JUNE
1 Sarah Clarke  
1 Andy Tan  
2 Mary Searle  
2 Dagmarick Fick  
2 Yasel Urgelles Alfonso  
2 Gardiner Spickard  
3 Teresa Barrand  
4 Gabriella Foster  
5 Madelon Van de Kerk  
6 Susan Nassif  
7 Amani Hasona  
8 Johanna Tjeenk-Willink  
9 Barbara Mullan  
9 Xinyan Ai  
10 Leslie Klein  
11 Andrew Brodsy  
12 Helene Wack  
12 Kathryn McGill  
13 Avery Katz  
14 Marcella Ruppert-Gomez  
16 Jay Weber  
17 Anna Considine  
18 Robert Tarnuzzer  
18 Giana Astengo  
19 Betty Haeseker  
20 John Beaman  
20 Edmund Woo  
21 Laura Varon  
22 Anna Montmarquette  
22 Jack Brown  
25 Jacqueline Kessler  
27 Margaret Stuebe  
29 Lissa Campbell  

JULY
1 Deesa Patel  
2 Jim Merkner  
2 Devin Cadden  
3 Katarina Gravenstein  
4 Maureen Anderson  
5 Darrell Hartman  
6 Annette Perry  
6 Jerry Donaldson  
6 Nicholas Coutu  
7 Shirley Bevillé  
7 Jan Graf  
7 David Auth  
7 Davys Lopez  
7 Sylva Wenzel  
8 Frances Seiler  
9 Janet Cornelius  
9 Sharon Thomas  
12 Alex Harker  
12 Brooke Pennington  
15 Jackie Fried  
17 Susan Corbin  
18 Pauline Eldred  
19 Mary White  
20 Claudia Colom  
20 Nezahualcoyotl  
20 Xiuhetcutli  
24 Scott Myers  
28 Carolina Rosales  
28 Polina Tarabuckchina  
29 Jane Blanchard  
29 Austin Hopkins  
30 Taylor Remley  
30 Gwen Williams  
30 Sadaf Milani  
30 Alexia Acosta  
30 John Hatchett  
30 Emanuela Torres-Marquis  
31 Anita Battiste  
31 Rayna Wallbrunn  
31 Emily Schaefer  
31 Rupesh Bhomia  
31 Stephanie Tran  

AUGUST
2 Tina Chen  
3 James Bevillé  
5 Aliya Rusinchik  
5 Marccio Simmons  
7 Terry Arbogast  
10 Max Agrios  
11 Bonnie Ogle  
11 Niyah Blal Hayes  
12 Nate Fairrow  
13 Tomas Bustamante  
14 Genell Bond  
14 Ronald Lange  
15 Andrew Rollins  
18 Sharon Castner  
18 Ga-Eun Lee  
20 Sarah Allen  
20 Patricia Gilliland  
22 Minja Zhong  
22 Marilyn Martin  
27 Jon Anderson  
28 Beverly Ge  
29 Brian Diaz-Rosario  
30 Hanna-Li Byrne  
30 Alec Shoalson  

Museum Contact Information
Exhibits & Public Programs (Powell Hall), 352-846-2000  
Director of Education, Betty Dunckel, 352-273-2088  
Volunteer Program, Amy Hester, 352-273-2055, ahester@flmnh.ufl.edu  
Public Programs, Catherine Carey, 352-273-2064  
School Programs, Dianne Behringer, 352-273-2036  
McGuire Center for Lepidoptera & Biodiversity, 352-392-5894  
Research & Collections (Dickinson Hall), 352-392-1721

Mark Your Calendar!

August 10  
Junior Volunteer Recognition Reception  
5:30 – 7:30pm  
Powell Hall and McGuire Center  

September 12  
New Volunteer Orientation  
2:30 – 4:30pm  
Powell Hall Classrooms  

October 13-14  
ButterflyFest