Welcome These New Volunteers!

Please congratulate these 70 volunteers who reached 100 hours or more of service during the second quarter of 2009. Each volunteer received four coupons for free entrance into fee-based exhibits. The total number of hours (rounded) served since April 1, 2005 is listed in parentheses. Junior volunteers are indicated by JV.

Florida Museum of Natural History volunteers contributed 11,294 hours during this quarter.

Volunteers recognized for 100 hours or more of service

- William Adams (110) (JV)
- Jennifer King (120)
- Maurow Anderson (100)
- Bradd Baker (100)
- Katey Rachal (104) (JV)
- Andrea Baillie (100)
- Joyce Berger (160)
- Mark Berger (100)
- James Biello (1500)
- Jane Blanchard (100)
- Michael Breeding (100)
- John Broklin (100)
- Martha Cade (500)
- Albert Casasola (100)
- Brian Caswell (100)
- Linda Gochran (100)
- Bob Crenshaw (100)
- Keely Rachal (100)
- Russell Hodson (100)
- Janet Corbin (100)
- Amanda Croxton (100)
- Samantha Crosby (100)
- Joshua Alexander Hull (100)
- Crox Danson (100)
- Drayna Duffy (100)
- Robert Eisele (100)
- Elizabeth Esmeralda (100)
- Kimerigio Elion (100)
- Allison Elson (100)
- Celena England (100)
- Andy Lott (100)
- Chad Lott (100)
- Joyce Berger (100)
- Ashley McQueen (100)
- Lorraine McPhail (100)
- Elizabeth McWilliam (100)
- David McWilliam (100)
-4 - 5:30 p.m.

Feb. 9 – Wingding!

This is a fun annual event with amateur collectors and for classes and certain individual memberships, parking permit today to prevent disruption in your parking area. It is important to note that all volunteer parking permits expire on 1/1/10. If you have not yet received your 2010 permit from your staff contact, please let them know and arrange for pick up right away. Please get your new parking permit today to prevent disruption in your service or having to “feed the meter” in 2010! I also encourage you to nominate a fellow volunteer for the James Pope Cheney Volunteer of the Year Award. Please contact me for more information.

Mark Your Calendar!

- Jan. 22 – Collectors Day Volunteer Orientation
  4 - 5:30 p.m. | For anyone interested in volunteering for the Collectors Day event. Table set-up and general preparation and training.
  Call (352) 273-2061.

- Jan. 23 – Collectors Day
  10 a.m. – 3 p.m. | This is a fun annual event with amateur collectors from all over the state. Volunteers are needed! Call (352) 273-2061.

- Feb. 6 – Quilting Natural Florida II Public Opening
  10 a.m. – 3 p.m. | Exhibit docents volunteers are needed for this beautiful exhibit of quilts depicting scenes of Florida nature and environments. The exhibit runs through April 25, 2010. If you are interested in volunteering, call (352) 273-2061.

- Feb. 9 – Wingding!
  10 a.m. – 2 p.m. | Second annual training and enrichment program for all Butterfly Rainforest volunteers (horticulturists, interpreters and plant sales) for those interested in becoming a Rainforest volunteer. Call (352) 273-2043.

- Feb. 11 – James Pope Cheney Volunteer of the Year Nomination Deadline
  10 a.m. | Nomination forms are available in the Powell Hall break room or from your staff contact at Dickinson Hall. Call (352) 273-2055.

- March 1 – Junior Volunteer program applications available at www.fmnhs.ufl.edu/volunteers or at the Powell Hall front desk. For volunteers age 12 to 17. Deadline to submit completed applications: 4/05/10. Call (352) 273-2055.

- March 18 – New Volunteer Orientation
  1 – 3:15 p.m. | Invite interested friends and family to attend and become Museum volunteers! Register at www.fmnhs.ufl.edu/volunteers or call (352) 273-2055.

- March 31 – Volunteer Recognition Reception
  5:30 – 7:30 p.m. | For all active Florida Museum volunteers. Call (352) 273-2055.

- April 5 – Deadline for Summer 2010 Junior Volunteer Applications
  5:00 p.m. | Applications must be postmarked or hand delivered to the Powell Hall front desk by 5 p.m. April 5. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Call (352) 273-2055.

The Volunteer Newsletter of the Florida Museum of Natural History • WINTER 2009

Volunteers Support Another Successful ButterflyFest

By Ashley Valdes, Volunteer Program Intern

Visitors flatted, flipped and flew in droves to participate in the fourth annual ButterflyFest on Oct. 24-25. The objective of ButterflyFest is to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators in the environment.

Preparations began early the day before, as a group of eager volunteers led by junior volunteer Michael Brodsky tagged more than 200 monarch butterflies in preparation for their release during the festival.

The festival opened amid a buzz of activity and the extensive volunteer force went into action. Over the course of the weekend, 123 volunteers served in 13 stations. Little pollinators emerged from the indoor children’s area in butterfly and bat wings. Volunteers were hard at work helping children decorate costume pieces while outdoor volunteers ushered excited children through a butterfly obstacle course on the lawn. Visitors also enjoyed lectures and activities about pollinators and their environmental impact, hosted by classroom assistant volunteers who helped with room set up and keeping count of attendees. Elsewhere, exhibit volunteers assisted various organizations with their public education booths. An indigo snake, bats, a baby alligator and a pair of spotted salamanders were among the many highlights of the educational exhibits. Costumed pollinator volunteers waited their turn for beautiful face painting by staff member Jeanette Carliste. After receiving this final touch they emerged as butterflies, with treats in tow for children who could answer pollinator trivia questions. Greeters inside the front entrance beckoned visitors with friendly smiles and information. The plant sale is a highlight of the festival and benefitted from dozens of plant sales assistants who braved the rain, heat and hair-curling midday humidity to help customers find the perfect butterfly-attracting plant to take home to their garden.

The festival volunteers continue to impress with their dedication to this event, which would not be possible without them. For those who are planning that long, wonderful weekend with us — thank you! For those who could not attend this year, we invite you to flutter-by next year’s ButterflyFest, set for Oct. 23-24, 2010.
Happy Birthday!

JANUARY
4 Dong-Pu Cada
7 Rob Swain
8 Stephanie Tyler
8 Sandy Ghanian
10 Mary Lou Merkner
10 Robert Marcinko
10 Hongjiang Li
10 Allen Reif
12 William Moore
13 Iziane Izir Pants
13 Greg Gepson
13 Martha Cade
24 Raul Bartol
24 Catharine Aldka
25 Neil White
26 Melanye Wilcox
26 Cindy Gove
26 Verda Naylor

FEBRUARY
1 Nannay Rogers
2 Mary Rondols
3 John Matosilo
3 Miyon Strand
4 Sue Pape
6 April Swany
7 Richard Walker
8 Monique Harrison
12 Ruth Seward
16 Felicia Goldstager
16 Megan Helinski
19 Bruno Martin
24 Matthew White
24 Chris Honey
24 Lucy Cade
24 Andrea Almonone
25 Glyn House
27 Cora_rgina Caracausa
28 Jennifer Lancer
29 Gloria Comstock
30 Giphiyem Ogiehinde
30 Mary Fiscer
24 Eve Coo Harper
26 Gay Donaldson-Fortier
27 Marti Berger

MARCH
2 Eric Togebtto
4 Michael Boll
5 Shaim Han Tao
6 Pat Smot
7 Linda Goshom
8 Michael Cho
8 Samson Spider
9 Joan Pickman
9 Christine Abe
11 Christina Hysan
12 Lei Xiao
13 Sally Goothis
13 Helen Kieler
13 Kristen Acosta
13 Kristin Rosselli
15 David Lawson
20 Russell Henderson
22 Amanda Southall
23 Luciana Ferreres
24 Virginia Annable
24 Paul Roth
25 Tim Buxlack
25 Gwen Thompson
25 Bisharda-David Hassif

Volunteering at the Florida Museum...

VOLUNTEER PROFILE:
Janet Cornelius
By Ashley Valdes, Volunteer Program Intern

Janet Cornelius’s life has taken her from frigid Nova Scotia to sunny Florida with plenty of excitement along the way. Following retirement after working more than 30 years in UF’s Department of Pathology, Janet became a Florida Museum volunteer in January 2009 and has served more than 500 hours. As volunteer assistant to the archaeology registrar, she coordinates paperwork for artifact loans and helps with the storage of artifacts in the ethnographic collection.

Janet grew up in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, where she completed her undergraduate education in the early ’60s before moving to the US. Since then, she has lived and worked in Delaware, New Jersey, and Florida. “In 1972, I took a hiatus from work and traveled through the North American continent for about one and a half years,” Janet said. In 1975, she settled into her career at UF.

Janet is also an avid singer. President of the Gainesville Civic Chorus, she also sings in a small acapella group and a church choir. She is also a fan of the scenery in western Canada, “The Canadian Rockies are hard to beat for scenic beauty and majesty, whether snow-covered or bare. Fortunately I get to see them quite often as I have family living in Calgary.”

Although primarily engaged in medical research on autoimmune disorders for much of her life, Janet has always been interested in archaeology. Her favorite part of museum work is “continually learning new things.”

New Volunteer Opportunities in 2010

Several new opportunities are available for anyone wishing to add another volunteer position or try out a different position. Please contact Julie (juliec@fmnh.ufl.edu) for more information about any of these opportunities:

Membership Sales Assistant – Staff a membership table during events. Answer questions and circulate to promote membership sales. Customer service/sales skills are helpful and must be physically able to walk/stand for several hours. Volunteers will not be responsible for accepting payments. Training will be provided and is required.

Visitor Services Self-Guided Group Leader – Greet, queue, organize, assist and direct large self-guided visitor groups. Help keep Museum traffic flowing! Minimum time required is 2.5 hours per week, 9:30 a.m. to noon, M-F.

Visitor Services Receptionist – Greet and welcome visitors at the reception desk; provide information about exhibits, answer the phone and assist staff with coordination of traffic. This is a good position for volunteers who need to be seated. Position is available eight days/week for a minimum of two hours per week.

Website Assistant – McGuire Center – Note: This is a virtual volunteer opportunity that may be completed from any location by a volunteer with access to the internet. The volunteer should possess good computer skills, web software knowledge and design, and personal access to the web.

Exhibit Docent – Interact with visitors of all ages inside the temporary exhibits, Quilting Natural Florida II (Feb 6 - Apr. 25) and CSI: Crime Scene Insects (May 8, 2010 – Jan. 17, 2011). Interpret the exhibit, share information and answer general questions. Volunteers should be able to move around or stand for at least two hours. Shifts are available 10 a.m. – noon, 1-2 p.m. and 2-4 p.m., Monday-Saturday, and 1-3 p.m. and, 3-5 p.m., Sunday. Training will be held Feb. 5 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Act as if what you do makes a difference.
It does.
— William James

VOLUNTEER PROFILE:
Mary White
By Ashley Valdes, Volunteer Program Intern

As a Florida Museum volunteer for six years, Mary White has shared information with scores of visitors in multiple exhibits. This retired elementary school teacher says she learns something new with every exhibit. Her favorite permanent attraction is the Hall of Florida Fossils, and her favorite traveling exhibits were Megalodon and Hunters of the Sky.

A Michigan native and alumna of Michigan State University, Mary lived in the Northeast while her husband was in school. They moved to Gainesville when he became a UF math professor in 1973 and have been here since.

Mary was inspired to become a volunteer when, as a fifth-grade teacher, she brought her students on field trips to the Museum and saw that “the docents seemed to be having so much fun.” She has volunteered as a docent, plant sales assistant and Butterfly Rainforest interpreter. It’s certainly the teacher in her speaking when she says that her favorite part of volunteering remains seeing kids in the exhibit halls, learning and observing with wide-eyed wonder.

“Students always have fun while exploring and learning about the Museum exhibits with Mary,” said Jeanette Carlisle, school programs assistant. “She has a beautiful smile for everyone.”

STAFF PROFILE:
Lacey Blanhak, Visitor Services
By Ashley Valdes, Volunteer Program Intern

A Museum employee for more than three years, Lacey works at the front desk assisting visitors with purchasing tickets and answering questions about exhibits. She said her favorite part of the job is “getting to meet all the visitors from around the world,” including John Travolta when he visited the Butterfly Rainforest!

Born in New York, NY, Lacey moved to North Carolina at age 10, and then to Florida at 36. Later, she moved to Maryland where she met her husband, Michael. The two later moved to Florida, and Michael is a security guard at the Museum.

In her spare time, this former computer science major hand makes personalized trinket boxes and photo frames. The time-consuming effort involves careful painting and decorating. “I made boxes for my own wedding,” she said. “People kept asking where I bought them!” She hopes to someday start a business selling her handmade art, which she currently sells by commission.

Still a child at heart, Lacey says that her favorite theme park is Disney World because it makes her “feel like a kid again.” She is also a fervent dog-lover and has rescued four dogs, Lottie, Francine, Major and Hope.

Lacey Blanhak, Visitor Services Ticketing Associate
Photo by Jen Duerden.
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Mary White, Docent, shares shark fossil information with school children. Photo by Diane Milner.

Lacey Blahnik, Visitor Services Technician. Photo by Jen Duerden.
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McGuire Center for Lepidoptera & Biodiversity (352) 392-5894 Research & Collections (Dickinson Hall) (352) 392-1721

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Museum Contact Information
Exhibits & Public Programs (Powell Hall), (352) 846-2000
Volunteer Program .......................... Julie Crosby, 273-2055
Research & Collections (Dickinson Hall) (352) 392-1721

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The Florida, Fauna, & Fossil Flash