On May 7, Morrill Hall and Mueller Planetarium hosted Astronomy Day. Visitors of all ages enjoyed demonstrations and hands-on activities on planets, space travel, physics, telescopes, meteorites, optics, the Moon, and more. This event was part of a year-long celebration of the Museum's 140th anniversary. Read more about Astronomy Day on pages 12-13!
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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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(402) 472-3779  
Museum Information Line  
(402) 472-2642  
School Program Reservations  
(402) 472-6302  
Friends Office  
(402) 472-3779  
Mueller Planetarium  
(402) 472-2641  
Nebraska Hall Office  
(402) 472-2643  
Ashfall Fossil Beds  
(402) 893-2000  
Trailside Museum  
(308) 665-2929

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**Morrill Hall Calendar at a Glance**

**August 21**  
1:30-4:30 p.m.  
Sunday with a Scientist  
“Climate Change”

**September 18**  
1:30-4:30 p.m.  
Sunday with a Scientist  
“Plants”

**September 30**  
5:7:30 p.m.  
Grand Opening:  
“First Peoples of the Plains: Traditions Shaped by the Land and Sky”  
*Friends members will receive invitations by mail. RSVP required.*

**October 16**  
1:30-4:30 p.m.  
Sunday with a Scientist  
“Fossils”

**October 26 & 27**  
5-9 p.m.  
“Fright at the Museum”  
A spook-tacular two-day Halloween event for families!

**November 6**  
1:30-4:30 p.m.  
“NaturePalooza Nebraska”

**November 20**  
1:30-4:30 p.m.  
Sunday with a Scientist  
“Viruses”

**December 18**  
1:30-4:30 p.m.  
Sunday with a Scientist  
“Minerals”

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**Official University of Nebraska State Museum Website**

www.museum.unl.edu

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**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA STATE MUSEUM STAFF**

Director: Priscilla C. Grew  
Associate Director: Mark Harris

Informal Science Education: Judy Diamond, Curator  
Amy Spiegel

Education Coordinator: Kathy French  
Museum Associates: Ann Cusick, Cindy Loope  
Annie Mumgaard, Ina Van der Veen

Research Partnerships Coordinator: Brett Ratcliffe

Anthropology: Alan Osborn, Curator  
NAGPRA/Collections Assistant: Susan Curtis  
Nebraska Archaeological Survey: Alan Osborn

Botany: Robert Kaul, Curator  
Collection Manager: Thomas Lobezd  
Collections Assistant: Linda Rader

Entomology: Brett Ratcliffe, Curator  
Collection Manager: M.J. Paulsen

Geology: R.M. (Matt) Joeckel, Curator  
Museum Geological Specialist: Karl Baumgarten

Parasitology: Scott Gardner, Curator  
Collection Manager: Gabor Racz

Vertebrate Paleontology: Jason Head, Curator  
Rass Secord, Curator  
Collection Manager: R. George Corner  
Preparators: Gregory Brown, Robert Skolnick, Ellen Stepleton  
Highway Salvage Paleontologist: Shane Tucker  
Highway Salvage Preparator: Nicholas Famoso

Zoology: Patricia Freeman, Curator  
Collection Manager: Thomas Lobezd

Affiliated Courtesy, Adjunct, and Emeritus Faculty:  
Anthropology: Thomas Myers  
Entomology: Mary Liz Jameson  
Geology: Robert Diffendal, Samuel Treves  
Invertebrate Paleontology: David Watkins  
Parasitology: John Janovy, Mary Lou Pritchard  
Vertebrate Paleontology: Robert Hunt, Jr., Michael Voorhies

Zoology: Hugh Genoways, Paul Johnsgard

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Research Collections Staff Secretary: Gail Littrell  
Scientific Illustrator: Angie Fox

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**MORRILL HALL**

South of 14th and Vine Streets  
University of Nebraska  
Lincoln, Nebraska  
(402) 472-2642

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**ASHFALL FOSSIL BEDS**

86930 517 Avenue  
Royal, NE 68773  
Located seven miles north of Highway 20 between Royal and Orchard, Nebraska.

Open Seasonally.  
For schedule, visit ashfall.unl.edu

**TRAILSIDE MUSEUM**

PO Box 462  
Crawford, NE 69339  
Located on Highway 20 at Fort Robinson, Nebraska.

Open Seasonally.  
For schedule, visit trailside.unl.edu
DEAR FRIENDS,

The Museum has been very busy with international scientific activities this year. Curator Scott Gardner and his team of parasitologists are back in the field in Mongolia. In the Entomology Division, Collection Manager Matt Paulsen did collecting in Japan for three weeks in May, and Curator Brett Ratcliffe collected and did research in Guatemala for two weeks in June. Matt and Brett’s former PhD student, Andrew Smith, will be guest curators at the Natural History Museum in London for 3 weeks in August. Also, the Division just received the gift of a large Kansas private collection of beetles and butterflies from New Guinea which Brett brought to the Museum on July 29. Brett has also been invited to teach a scarab beetle course in the Peruvian Andes in January.

This summer I was head of the U.S. delegation at an international geophysics convention in Australia and also attended the International Symposium on Antarctic Earth Sciences in Edinburgh, Scotland, where UNL’s Antarctic drilling program, ANDRILL, was prominently featured in the technical program and in workshops. The photo shows me offering visitors macadamia nut chocolates in the Hawai’i bid booth in Melbourne—botanically appropriate, since macadamia trees are actually native to Australia! For the past 11 years, I have been a member of the U.S. National Committee for the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) and have chaired the Committee since 2003. IUGG focuses on the geophysics of the grand Earth System: atmospheric sciences, meteorology and climatology, cryospheric sciences (snow and ice), geodesy, geomagnetism and aeronomy, hydrology, physical oceanography, seismology, and volcanology. I was appointed Chair of the U.S. Delegation to IUGG in Melbourne by the Executive Director of the Policy and Global Affairs Division of the U.S. National Academies.

The purpose of U.S. National Committees is to promote and enhance the involvement of U.S. researchers and students in international scientific activities. For example, we convene symposia and help facilitate travel grants for early career scientists to attend international meetings so they can get involved in the global geophysics research community. The IUGG meeting had special sessions on 2011 geophysical events with major societal impacts: the Japanese earthquakes and tsunami, the Brisbane floods, and the Christchurch, New Zealand earthquakes. It also included sessions on volcanic ash hazards for jet aircraft—particularly timely since some delegates were delayed flying to the meeting because ash plumes from the June eruption of Chile’s Puyehue volcano were still drifting at high altitudes on their second and third pass around the Southern Hemisphere.

After months of work on the preparations, our U.S. National Committee submitted in December 2010 a major venue bid proposal to bring the next IUGG convention to Honolulu in July 2015. We assembled strong support for the bid from the Presidents of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and the American Geophysical Union, and from the State of Hawaii. Even the active volcano Kilauea on the Big Island inflated a bit, just in time for our bid presentation in Melbourne! The photo shows me with Lee Conching, Associate Director of Sales for the Hawai’i Convention Center, as we staffed the U.S. venue booth at the IUGG meeting—trying to persuade the delegates to choose Hawai’i (Waikiki Beach and Diamond Head are shown in the background). The U.S. team made the semi-finals—we were chosen over Argentina, Denmark and India, but then in the final session we lost the 2015 venue bid to Prague in the Czech Republic by only 4 votes! It was a great disappointment, but on the bright side Prague will be a wonderful venue too, and our booth and efforts to bring an international meeting to Hawai’i greatly enhanced the U.S. profile at the Melbourne meeting—plus everybody loved the macadamia chocolates!

— Priscilla C. Grew, Director
FROM THE PRESIDENT

GREETINGS FRIENDS MEMBERS!

It has been an unusual year for Nebraska with above average precipitation in many parts of the State and historic flooding on the North Platte River and the Missouri River due to heavy snowfall in the Rockies and historic rains in the upper parts of the watersheds. It appears that the temperatures are going to stay up for a while and it would be great to take the kids, grandkids and neighbors to the State Museum. Enjoy the air conditioning, great exhibits and some of the special events coming up.

The State Museum (Morrill Hall) is open late on Thursday nights from 4:30-8:00 p.m. The Sundays with a Scientist continue to be very popular and are held from 1:30-4:30 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month. There are new planetarium shows and the gift shop to visit while you are there. “Fright at the Museum” event, “First Peoples of the Plains: Traditions Shaped by Land & Sky” exhibit, the Wildlife and Nature Photo Contest photo exhibit, “Life in the Past Lane” highway paleontology exhibit, and more are coming to Morrill Hall.

The State Museum is celebrating its 140th anniversary this year, and there continues to be many exciting events for everyone to enjoy. I bet the first Board of Regents in 1871 had no idea of what their $1,000 allocation to create the museum would become. The Friends of the University of Nebraska State Museum are very proud of what the museum has become and the staff that curate the collections and manage the facilities.

While traveling the state this summer, be sure and stop by Trailside Museum inside Fort Robinson State Park near Crawford and Ashfall Fossil Beds near Royal. My 12-year-old daughter and I stopped by Ashfall recently, and she just loves seeing all of those animal skeletons frozen in time, and she was thrilled to ask questions of the scientists there working the site. Because most of the site is now inside a large building and the visitor’s site, it doesn’t matter if it is raining or extremely hot outside. Have a great rest of the summer.

— Mark A. Brohman, Board President
Friends of the University of Nebraska State Museum

A newly renovated gallery celebrating Native American cultures of the past and present.

Celebrating Life in the Past Lane

Morrill Hall • 2nd Floor
Exhibit extended through November 2011!

“Life in the Past Lane” highlights amazing fossils salvaged over the last 50 years through Nebraska’s Highway Paleontology Program.
The University of Nebraska State Museum’s 3rd annual

Wildlife & Nature Photo Exhibit

Thank you to everyone who participated in our statewide amateur photography contest this summer! All 350+ entries will be on exhibit at Morrill Hall through Labor Day.

See the First Place Ribbon Winners on museum.unl.edu

Get Ready for...

Fright at the Museum

October 26 & 27
5-9 p.m. (each night)
Morrill Hall

Have you ever wondered what the creatures in Museum look like after the sun goes down? Children and families are invited to visit Morrill Hall after hours to explore the spook-tacular exhibits and hands-on activities during this two-day Halloween celebration. “Three Tiers of Terror” will feature games, music, candy giveaways, haunted hallways (if you dare), and more!

An exhibit by National Geographic Photographer
JOEL SARTORE

Amphibians: Vibrant and Vanishing

On display in Morrill Hall’s Cooper Gallery through November 2011
www.joelsartore.com

At the University of Nebraska State Museum

From historic Morrill Hall – home to “Archie the Mammoth” on the University of Nebraska–Lincoln campus – to Ashfall Fossil Beds near Royal and the Trailside Museum at Fort Robinson, the University of Nebraska State Museum enriches the lives of more than 100,000 visitors and students each year, creating lifelong memories and inspiring a love of science and learning.

The University of Nebraska is involved in a campaign to raise $1.2 billion to support students, faculty, research and programs. You can choose to help the museum by making a contribution to the Friends of the University of Nebraska State Museum Fund.

To learn more about the museum and the campaign, contact Connie Pejsar, cpejsar@nufoundation.org, 402-458-1190 or 800-432-3216.

To give online, go to nufoundation.org/friendsofthestatemuseum
Gary Gabelhouse, age 11.

In an overgrown, vacant lot on 22nd Street, just off of Sheldon, an 11-year-old boy took a blood oath. He made a promise to himself that he would one day...become an adventurer.

Many things came to bear on the boy’s obsession with adventure. Among other things, he had done substantial research into adventuring at Morrill Hall—Nebraska’s State Museum. The Museum was within a long walk from his Clinton-Malone neighborhood—and it was free to the public. He had certainly put in his research time in that Museum throughout the 1950s and on into the 1960s. Morrill Hall had been initially discovered by the boy as a Cub Scout, and its effect on him made it become a veritable touchstone in his life. Both he and his brother spent hours nearly every weekend just gazing at the treasures that were the bounty of adventure. Each time upon entering the Museum, the boy would immediately go to the same exhibit where he would stand and stare at...the shrunken head. He would get almost nose-to-nose with the grisly relic. Next, he studied the ancient mummy lying peacefully prone in his sarcophagus. For the boy, every trip to Morrill Hall was an adventure, albeit an adventure by proxy.

The boy and his brother would save their pennies to spend at the Museum. They slid their coins across the glass display case that functioned as the Museum’s retail front. The boys could not afford to buy much, but each modest acquisition was treated like the treasure it really was.

Along with their diligent study at Morrill Hall, the boy and his brother acted upon what knowledge they had gathered at the Museum and mounted their own field expeditions in search of fossils, artifacts and...adventure. These field expeditions were generally staged at the large gravel and sand piles of the Redi-Mix Concrete Company located between 22nd and 19th and ‘Y’ Street—just behind their Grandma and Grandpa’s house. The boy’s adventures on the dunes of the Great Redi-Mix Desert yielded a flint arrowhead, numerous fossil crinoids, bivalves, and shards of teeth and bone from unknown Pleistocene critters. Once or twice the boys found fossil sharks’ teeth. The two searched not only for fossils but also for...neat rocks.

After hours of searching on the gravel piles, they would come home, pockets full of treasure. The boy transferred his stash of treasure from his pockets to the patio for final culling and analysis. The treasures were then finally transferred into a drawerstring pouch he made in Cub Scouts. After numerous expeditions, the sheer number of study specimens demanded more storage space. Study specimens—those not achingly cool—were placed in empty coffee cans and warehoused in the garage next to the family’s Kaiser.

For a number of years the boy pursued his study of natural history at Morrill Hall while gaining his field experience on the Redi-Mix Desert. The library on 27th Street off of ‘Y’ Street also fed the boy’s hunger for all things adventurous. He checked out a blue, cloth-covered book called, Archaeology...
over thirty times. He also read and re-read *Aku-Aku* by Thor Heyerdahl along with a host of other natural history and adventure titles. *King Solomon’s Mines* by H. Rider Haggard completely captured him and literally changed his life, as the Dark Continent went to the top of the short list of places the boy planned to go to and seek...adventure. He also read and re-read the stories of the discovery of Troy, the excavations of the Great Pyramids, the Valley of the Kings, Babylonian temples, and Easter Island—places the world usually denied access to for a young boy growing up in a poor neighborhood.

But that day in May in the vacant lot, the boy took matters into his own hands, and exerted his own will. He was no longer totally content with looking at the displays of other people's adventures. And he was no longer completely fulfilled by their discoveries in the Redi-Mix Desert. The boy knew that somehow—just somehow—he would have to go on his own adventures—real adventures. He would no longer be content to only read about Schielman, Hillary, and Heyerdahl. Some day people would be reading about his adventures.

The boy knew that somehow—just somehow—he would have to go on his own adventures...

real adventures.

– Gary Gabelhouse

Despite the realities of the Clinton-Malone neighborhood, and all of what that meant in the real world, the boy took his oath. With unusually serious intent, he drew the blade of the pocketknife across the palm of his hand and watched the crimson line appear. He licked the wound...and made the vow.

Eleven Years Later—1973: Malindi, Kenya

I sat in the shade under palms and fig trees looking at a stone pillar left by Vasco da Gama in 1498. I was burned darker than a Somali and had dust in my hair and stubble. My Third-World eyes were shot with red. I felt light and raw-boned. I sat drinking a cup of chai poured from a tall brass urn for me by a white-robed Sikh. Calls to worship floated on the hot air as dhows with their shark-fin sails set out to fish for Jack Mackerel off from Ras N’gomeni.

I realized then that perhaps I had gone too far. I was perfectly at home in a world beyond the belief of even the most imaginative, young boy from Lincoln, Nebraska. At that point in my first international adventure, I had spent some months

FROM TOP: Gabelhouse with three Morani—Maasai warriors while backpacking in the Maasai Mara Reserve of Kenya; Samburu warriors; Gabelhouse on the North Face of Mt. Kenya
Gary Gabelhouse of Lincoln, Nebraska could stay in this new home of Africa for the rest of my life. And then, sitting there in Malindi, I realized that I and qualor, disease, danger, and death. I had seen Africa in all its splendor. I saw landscapes and life vignettes of nearly painful beauty. And I saw the dark underbelly of a world full of hunger, disease, danger, and death. I had seen Africa in all its splendor and squalor.

And then, sitting there in Malindi, I realized that I could stay in this new home of Africa for the rest of my life. I was at a cusp: Either go back to America—and do so very quickly—or stay in the Dark Continent...forever. It was that afternoon on the coast of the Indian Ocean that I realized I had fulfilled my boyhood oath. I had finally and truly become...an adventurer. And I was never the same, again.

— Gary Gabelhouse of Lincoln, Nebraska

Art, Piccolo Players, and a Mastodon Tooth

I grew up on T Street in Lincoln, Nebraska, attended Hartley Elementary School, Whittier Jr. High, Lincoln High School, and graduated in 1962 from the University of Nebraska with a degree in architecture. While in elementary school they would take us to visit Morrill Hall as well as the art museum then located on the upper floors. We loved Elephant Hall with its modern and ancient elephants as well as other strange animals from around the world. My parents would also take me to this interesting place where there would be a new discovery around every corner.

While attending Whittier Junior High, I was selected to attend a Saturday morning art class in the art school, which at that time was on the upper floor of the Museum. I would ride my bicycle to the Museum and attend the class where we would often go downstairs to draw and paint tiger bears and giraffes. After class I would sneak into the college art classes watching the college students working on their paintings. The best part, though, was wandering through Morrill Hall’s back rooms where graduate students were studying rocks, bones, and other things. Sometimes they would let me look through their microscopes. What an education for a junior high school student.

As a Boy Scout, we often hiked around Lincoln. On one such hike I found what turned out to be a mastodon tooth among the rocks of Salt Creek. My Boy Scout leader recommended that I bring it to Morrill Hall for identification. They were very impressed with it, and it was displayed in the Museum for many years with me listed as the finder.

During college, I played in the Cornhusker marching band, and, after graduation, and three years in the Air Force, settled in Connecticut where I practiced architecture for forty years and have now retired. On one of our trips back to Lincoln to see my brother and visit the University, we were walking across campus while tryouts were taking place for membership in the latest Cornhusker marching band. As we approached Morrill Hall for our annual visit, we found about sixty piccolo players sitting on the front steps tuning up and preparing for their tryouts. What a racket they made, but Elephant Hall and my mastodon tooth were still there.

— Roy Cook of East Granby, Connecticut

Gabelhouse has worked as a naturalist, biology teacher, dock worker, pastor, hod carrier, Swiss climbing guide, martial-arts instructor, magician, door man, gambler, river guide, security consultant, musician, writer, sales executive, and is currently an active author of thrillers. He resides in his hometown of Lincoln, Nebraska. Learn more about his adventures at www.gabelhouse.com.
Morrill Hall’s stegosaurus sets the stage for love

Morrill Hall was where much of the courtship for my husband and I occurred between 1981-1982. I was a teaching assistant in the Spanish department, working on my PhD. Jeff was finishing his degree in political science. He was an older student, and we had met when he took the ten-hour intensive Spanish course I was teaching the previous semester.

Throughout the winter and spring we would meet each day at noon in front of the Stegosaurus on the third floor of Morrill Hall. We would each bring something to share for lunch and would picnic on the bench there, gazing at the dinosaur. It was a quiet, peaceful place to meet, and our relationship grew. We continued meeting all through the spring semester at the Stegosaurus and ultimately became engaged and then married in June.

“It is nice to know that this creature will still be there in Morrill Hall and we will always be able to return to visit where it all began for us.”

—Dr. Millie Park Mellgren

This is our 30th year together. Maybe the dinosaur gave us the gift of longevity and endurance which keeps us going each year of our marriage. It is nice to know that this creature will still be there in Morrill Hall and we will always be able to return to visit where it all began for us.

—Dr. Millie Park Mellgren, Superintendent of Roscommon Area Public Schools, of Roscommon, Michigan

SHARE YOUR MUSEUM MEMORIES

If you would like one of your Museum memories to be considered for a future issue of The Mammoth, please send write-ups and JPEG photos to morrillhall@unl.edu. Visit our website for more information on the Museum’s history, along with upcoming events and exhibits.

museum.unl.edu/140

The stegosaurus remains on display in Morrill Hall’s Jurassic Gallery today.
Morrill Hall inspires a lifelong love of music

The only pictures I own of Morrill Hall are in my mind. They go back circa 1941 when I traveled with my father, C.A. Weddel, to Lincoln from “The Boy’s Training School” in Kearney to make arrangements for obtaining his Master’s Degree in Education. While at the university campus we visited Morrill Hall. Upon entering the Museum, I was mesmerized by “Archie” and the mammoth leg bone that greeted us. My eyes grew as big as saucers. I was also in awe of the dioramas with their beautiful murals by Elizabeth Dolan.

Having lived my short life on the prairie in Arcadia, Beldon, and Broken Bow, this exposure to another time immediately opened a door to a new world. To this day, I am fascinated by paleontology, archeology, and anthropology as a result of this visit.

While visiting the exhibits, I wandered away from my father and was perusing a display in the basement of a curious object… a xylophone made of fossil bones. I had begun studying piano at age five and anything resembling a musical instrument acted as a magnet drawing me closer to the display. At that time there was a radio show called “Hobby Lobby.” It was one of my favorite programs and I remembered a xylophone being played that was made out of fossil bones.

Little did I realize it was the same one in the showcase! Shortly a man in a white lab coat appeared and asked me questions. He was the paleontologist who created it! (Henry Reider). After learning of my interest in music, he invited me into the room where he worked with the fossils and plaster casts. I couldn’t believe my eyes! He told me how he discovered pitches while working with fossils, then explained that as a result he created the xylophone by sawing rib bones into different lengths to create a diatonic scale. He used very hard mallets to play it. The sound was most sonorous and bright. Before leaving, he gave me a fossil fragment to keep. I was thrilled and kept it many years.

My father soon found me in this room. We thanked the gentleman and then left the museum to return home to Kearney. Little did the paleontologist know how much he influenced my musical career! During the 6th grade I began playing tympani in the Kearney H.S. Orchestra and also continued my pursuit of piano at Kearney State Teachers College. For some reason, unknown to me, I was later drawn to the marimba (lager cousin of a xylophone) and my parents bought the last “Deagan” four-octave one with metal pipes. (It was during the war and the next ones off the assembly line had cardboard pipes.) Undoubtedly the experience at Morrill Hall had inspired me to explore this instrument. I played the marimba several years, even won some contests, but then was drawn to the harp. While in Jr. & Sr. high school I also played the orchestra bells, xylophone, glockenspiel, and any mallet instrument in the percussion section.

In the 10th grade, I began taking piano lessons at the UNL School of Music after we moved to Seward (where my father was the high school principal) and also became the principal harpist with the Lincoln Symphony as well as the NU symphony. During this time, the Lincoln Symphony performed the famous, “Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra” by Benjamin Britten. In it was a solo for xylophone, but no one in the orchestra could play the instrument. I ended up playing it plus the harp solo.

Strange as it seems, the pursuit of the harp also led me to Morrill Hall. When I enrolled at the University of Nebraska School of Music as a freshman, there was no harp department, but a puppeteer named Marjorie Shanafeldt (who played the harp in her earlier life) said she would teach me for a year totaling one credit! Miss Shanafeldt was the assistant manager of a department at Morrill Hall and worked in the gift shop located near the main entrance. I met her there many times to arrange our next lesson. Her fame as a puppeteer was well known and I believe she was mentor to the famous Baird Puppets. Very talented lady!

All this leads to the fact that Morrill Hall had influenced my musical career. As I approach 80 this November, I continue performing and bringing musical entertainment to others. Needless to say I am grateful for the discoveries of the scientists, dedication of the staff, loyal patrons, and the University of Nebraska for this prestigious institution that inspired me as a small child to a lifetime pursuit of music and learning. — Bonnie Dale Weddel Caplan, Harpist, of Sarasota, Florida (www.bonniecaplan.com)
FASHION MEETS FOSSILS

UNL students showcase haute couture in Elephant Hall May 7

On May 7th, the University of Nebraska State Museum hosted UNL Textile and Apparel Design students’ “Senior Fashion Show.” Elephant Hall was transformed into catwalk for the very first time. The setting provided a wonderful contrast between past history and modern trends. Nineteen students showcased a culmination of their work over the past four years. The show included 120 garments ranging from daywear to formalwear with some dramatic artistic pieces displaying the range of talents. The show opened with an innovative crossover between fashion and technology with a garment integrated with LED lights designed by Jacie Ochsner. It then closed in runway tradition with a wedding gown designed by Erica Cardenas, one of our very own Museum staff who also organized the event. The students were sponsored by Wendy Weiss, a professor in the UNL Textile, Clothing, and Design department.

— Erica Cardenas, Morrill Hall Student Worker

Model Jessica Smith wears “Zipped,” a dress designed by Erica Cardenas.

Erica Cardenas, Morrill Hall Student Worker

MUELLER PLANETARIUM

The fall schedule will begin September 1.
Visit www.spacelaser.com for previews and schedule updates.

NEW!
LIGHT YEARS FROM ANDROMEDA

Saturdays & Sundays at 2 and 3 p.m.

A story of cosmic distances, and humanity’s quest to understand the universe.
Take a journey of epic proportions across space and time!

Both of these shows are made possible by the generosity of the Friends of the Museum!
On May 7, approximately 500 people came to Morrill Hall to enjoy Astronomy Day, a fun-filled day of astronomy, aerospace, and physics in the Museum.

Astronomy Day, founded in 1973 by the Astronomical League, is a celebration of amateur astronomy in the United States. Beginning in 1990, Lincoln's Prairie Astronomy Club (PAC) brought the event to Morrill Hall where it has continued to flourish. Today, it involves not only amateur astronomers, but physicists, engineers, and students in aerospace programs.

In addition to the PAC, other participants this year included, the UNL Department of Physics and Astronomy, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Hyde Memorial Observatory, the Nebraska Center for Materials and Nanoscience in the UNL Department of Physics and Astronomy, the Ninety-Nines: International Organization of Women Pilots, the UNL Microgravity University team from the UNL Department of Engineering, and others.

The UNL chapter of the NASA Microgravity University program had just returned from Johnson Space Center and took part in a flight on the parabolic flight aircraft which simulates microgravity. They flew a new experiment again this year.

The State Museum is the only site in Nebraska recognized by Astronomy magazine as an Astronomy Day host. Several years ago, thanks to a recommendation from the late Jack Horkheimer, Director of the Miami Space Transit Planetarium, Mueller Planetarium and Museum joined the Astronomy magazine group of locations when it was in its infancy. The publication currently partners with Celestron Telescopes, which provided a “Firstscope” ($70 value) to be given away at the event. It was won by Abi Combs of Lincoln. The PAC gave away a 6-inch “Dobsonian” telescope ($250 value), which was won by Nicholas Vanek of Lincoln. Both telescope winners were also given free one-year membership in the PAC. We were especially happy that both telescopes in this year’s prize drawings went to young visitors with their families. Hopefully, the telescopes will spark their curiosity in science.

Mark your calendars: Astronomy Day 2012 will be celebrated April 28! —Jack Dunn, Mueller Planetarium Coordinator
The computer video service from the Space Telescope Science Institute, located in the lobby of Mueller Planetarium, is now being presented in 1080p high definition video. The upgrade to the software was provided at no charge from STScI in May and was installed by Planetarium Coordinator Jack Dunn. Visitors can now enjoy new Hubble images, the “Astronomy Picture of the Day,” observations of planet Earth from space, and many other features of ViewSpace in their new digital sharpness.
A WALK THROUGH TIME

Since its founding in 1871, the Museum has captured the imagination of those who have entered its hallways. Dynamic exhibits, events, and people have shaped it into what it is today. Here are selected activities from the past 140 years.

July

1881 The first vertebrate fossil specimen, a fish vertebra, was catalogued into the Vertebrate Paleontology research collections.

1893 Charles Morrill funded paleontological expeditions led by Museum Director E.H. Barbour to the badlands of northwest Nebraska and south-central South Dakota. The immense weight of their finds caused the floors of "Old" Nebraska Hall to sag which required major structural repairs to the building.

1927 German war relics used during the Battle of Argonne in World War I were temporarily displayed in Morrill Hall.

1928 A tornado ripped through C.B. Schultz's camp near Orleans while he and his crew worked just a few miles away. One year later, another twister hit his camp in Custer County while they excavated the Cumro Mammoth. No one was injured in either storm.

1941 Government funding for archeological and paleontological projects through the Works Progress Administration (WPA) ended. WPA field crews excavated more than 250,000 fossils from 1938-1941.

1957 Ground was broken for the Mueller planetarium. Ralph Mueller funded the 125-seat "Theater of the Stars" that was dedicated on March 23, 1958.

1961 Trailside Museum at Fort Robinson State Park was dedicated on the Fourth of July. The museum occupies the former Post Theater.

1963 Don Martin and Ivan Burr mounted one of the Crawford Mammoth skeletons inside Trailside Museum. Student interns collected these one-of-a-kind specimens on their own time during the 1962 field season.

1967 The world’s largest collection of photographs taken from space was displayed in Morrill Hall. NASA sponsored this 500-square foot exhibit featuring images shot during the Gemini manned missions (1962-1969).

1978 The National Geographic Society funded excavations at Poison Ivy Quarry (later named Ashfall Fossil Beds). More than 100 rhinoceros skeletons were recovered from 1977 to 1979.

1983 Trailside Museum honored with the award for "Best Attraction" by the Nebraska Travel Industries.

1995 The Anthropology Division received the Buros Collection consisting of 1,200 ethnographic items from Africa and the American Southwest.

1998 Ground was broken for the Lloyd G. Tanner Plaza in front of Morrill Hall. The bronze sculpture of Archie was installed in October.
2006 The Division of Vertebrate Paleontology started a year-long move of specimens and unopened field jackets from the Reunion Building to the Nebraska Hall basement. Approximately 1.5 miles of shelving and 152 tons of fossils were moved across the street on push carts (2.5' x 5'). Upon completion, it was the first time that all of the museum collections were housed in same building since 1891.

2010 The Botany Division entered its 100,000th specimen into their electronic database.

August

1900 E.H. Barbour collected an *Apatosaurus* femur in the Freeze-out Hills of Wyoming. This specimen is displayed in the Dinosaur Gallery on the third floor of Morrill Hall.

1946 The Museum and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission shared the Natural History Building at State Fair Park. Eventually, the Museum took sole possession of the building and exhibits changed annually featuring specimens from each of the research divisions. More than 2 million visitors viewed these exhibits and many new acquisitions were obtained during the Museum’s 45-year tenure.

1948 The Museum collected a 39" x 39" stony meteorite from Furnas County. It weighed 2,350 pounds and was discovered when a tractor nearly fell into the six-foot wide crater during the wheat harvest. The landowner donated it to UNL and the Institute of Meteoritics at the University of New Mexico where it is stored today.

1952 The Nebraska Bureau of Animal Industry awarded its Grand Champion Purple Ribbon to the Museum for its giant "pig" (*Dinohyus*) that was displayed in the Natural History Building. The 19 million-year-old fossil was the only hog at the State Fair because of the vesicular disease outbreak.

1958 Nebraska Hall, formerly occupied by the Elgin Watch Company, was purchased by the University for $725,000. In 1968, all of the research collections were moved into their current locations on the fourth and fifth floors.

1972 The Apollo 009 unmanned test capsule was displayed on the second floor of Morrill Hall. In 1997, the Strategic Air and Space Museum borrowed it for display.

1985 Budget cuts forced Morrill Hall to close on Mondays, marking the first time in the Museum's history that it was not open every day of the week.

1989 Approximately 62,000 visitors viewed "Dinosaurs Live on Tour", an exhibit held in association with the Folsom's Children's Zoo.

1989 The University rented the second floor of the Reunion Building to house unopened field jackets and oversize specimens. These materials were moved from the University's Agricultural Research and Development Center near Mead.

1992 The Education Department created several new hands-on kits for classroom learning. Subjects included dinosaurs, rocks, insects, animals, and Native Americans.

2004 The Ashfall Chapter of the Friends organization raised nearly $100K for visitor center expansion at the park. This construction created an additional 1,300 square feet for the gift shop and exhibit area.

‘Sunday with a Scientist’ events are held the 3rd Sunday of each month from 1:30-4:30 p.m. at Morrill Hall. Join us to interact with scientists and explore new topics!

FISHES of NEBRASKA

On July 17, UNL School of Natural Resources Fisheries Ecologist and Associate Professor Mark Pegg (pictured above) provided hands-on activities to help visitors learn about the diversity of fishes in Nebraska and how to identify them. Visitors also investigated the techniques that fisheries biologists use to gather data from fish to determine the status and health of Nebraska’s fish populations.

TISSUE MECHANICS

The program on June 19 got to the heart of science. “Engineering Better Heart Health” was led by UNL Department of Mechanical Engineering Assistant Professor Linxia Gu, Lincoln Public Schools science teacher Mark James, Nebraska Heart Institute staff, and various graduate students. The scientists explained how they are working to save lives using engineering technologies known as tissue mechanics. Advances in tissue mechanics help to prevent and treat cardiovascular problems.

— Dana Ludvik, Public Relations Coordinator
NEBRASKA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY PROJECT CONTINUES

The field crew led by State Museum Anthropology Curator Alan Osborn continues excavations at Nebraska’s Red Willow Reservoir this summer.

The University of Nebraska State Museum’s Nebraska Archaeological Survey is conducting further archaeological investigations at several prehistoric sites this summer at Red Willow Reservoir (Hugh Butler Lake) in Frontier County, Nebraska. Additional funds were granted recently to continue this field work, which began in 2010. Support for this project is provided by the Department of Interior’s Bureau of Reclamation under a new five-year cooperative agreement with UNL. These investigations will enable archaeologists to assess the scientific potential of cultural resources within this area of the Great Plains. The project will continue through 2015.

The Nebraska Archaeological Survey is directed by Dr. Alan J. Osborn, Curator of Anthropology at the University of Nebraska State Museum. (In August, Dr. Osborn will begin a new faculty appointment at the University of Nebraska-Omaha while continuing his curatorial role at the Museum.) Crew members include Bran Mims, graduate student at East Carolina University; Steve Reynolds, formerly liaison for UNO’s Bethsaida Project in Israel; as well as Matt Marvin and Steve Sarich, who are both undergraduate anthropology majors at UNL.

Test excavations are being conducted at six prehistoric archaeological sites within the boundaries of Red Willow Reservoir. This testing program is built upon recent archaeological surveys within the reservoir area carried out by the Nebraska Archaeological Survey in 2007 and 2010 and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in 2005.

One of these sites contains bison bones, chipped stone tools, and several small cooking pits. This site may represent a small meat and plant processing location near Red Willow Creek. Evidence suggests that Plains people visited this location several times between 200 B.C. and 1200 A.D. The reservoir is managed jointly by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Reclamation.

Past archaeological investigations at Red Willow and Medicine Creek Reservoirs, as well as neighboring lands administered by the Bureau of Reclamation, have made significant contributions to our knowledge and understanding of Native American life throughout the Great Plains region. The Nebraska Archaeological Survey is an important part of the museum’s archaeology and anthropology program.

— Alan J. Osborn, Associate Professor and Curator of Anthropology & Dana Ludvik, Public Relations Coordinator
The Trailside Museum of Natural History at Fort Robinson State Park marked and celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. It has already been a busy and interesting year at the Museum.

In June, staff and visitors at Fort Robinson State Park watched from the doorstep of the Museum as officials dedicated Highway 20 to Hay Springs as Crazy Horse Memorial Highway.

The Travel Channel filmed at the Museum in June for an upcoming segment of its “Mysteries at the Museum” television program. Dr. Mike Voorhies, Curator Emeritus for Vertebrate Paleontology, was interviewed for the segment. Trailside staff enjoyed meeting Mike and his wife Jane, as well as Museum Highway Paleontologist Shane Tucker, who helped the film crew with outdoor locations. The program is expected to air in October. (Check travelchannel.com for air times.)

The year started in April with the annual Boy Scout tree planting at Fort Robinson. The Museum was visited by 400 Boy and Girl Scouts and their leaders. The Museum was also visited by a group from the Tate Museum in Casper, accompanied by Kent Sundell and Larry Martin. During the Fourth of July weekend, the Moody family (ranch where fighting mammoths were discovered and excavated) had a reunion and many family members stopped by the Museum to revisit the mammoths. Articles in the local newspapers about Trailside have also renewed hometown interest in the Museum.

The Trailside staff used Museum slides to put together a slideshow of Toadstool Geological Park and it is viewed daily by visitors. Our staff is also putting together slideshows to showcase the Harrison Formation and Nebraska Panhandle wildflowers. With all the rain this summer, it has been a great year to see all the wildflowers in the Pine Ridge area.

Barnie Sherman and Michelle Haynes joined the Trailside staff this summer and have been a great addition to the team. Barnie is a substitute teacher during the school year, and Michelle is an Education student at Chadron State College. A rock shop is a new addition to the Museum as well, filled with rocks from around the world. It has been enjoyed by visitors of all ages.

This summer at the Trailside Museum has been filled with interesting events and people. The one thing that we are always reminded of by our visitors is how wonderful Trailside is and how lucky this area is to have such a well done and informative museum of natural history.

— Pattie Norman, Trailside Museum Staff Assistant
ASHFALL KEEPS BUSY DURING 20TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

The busy summer season at the Ashfall Fossil Beds has been in full swing for the past couple of months, and everyone here is amazed that August is just a round the corner. Even after twenty years, I am still astounded by how fast the months of June and July zip by here. Ashfall has a great summer staff this year... four David B. Jones Interns, one Explorology® Intern, one Morris Skinner Fellow, one student preparator, one student to help in the office, and a seasonal employee who also helps at the front desk. This is an unusual year, with five of the nine summer staff returning from prior years. It’s nice to have return employees who are familiar with the park, yet each year is different, and there are always new things to learn.

The summer interns learned the ropes and got used to the ins and outs of the daily routine through the first half of June, and then we mixed things up for a week while we hosted the Explorology® students from Oklahoma. Again, we settled into a bit of a routine as the Fourth of July ushered in the truly hectic time of year, with lots of families out vacationing and traveling. The Friends Excavation the third week in July broke routine again, as each intern had an opportunity to work off-site with the dig participants. And with that, here we are, almost into August.

The intern’s days are filled with excavating in the Rhino Barn, prep lab work, geology talks, and sorting micro fossils in the Discovery Pavilion. As the summer progresses, they perfect their digging techniques and their skills cleaning and repairing fossils. They hone their interpreting skills, seeking clear ways to express concepts that might be unfamiliar to people, and learning how to discern what information visitors are really looking for. They talk to folks who are informed about geology and fossils, and they talk to folks who really don’t know much of anything at all about those things. They talk to older folks and to little children. They answer a lot of personal questions about where they are from, where they go to school and how they ended up working at Ashfall for a summer. They often answer the same questions over and over in a single morning or afternoon, but they do it with a smile and with patience. This can make for longs days, especially when the temperatures are soaring, yet they all agree, the summer is flying by. Already their thoughts are turning to school and the semesters that lay ahead of them.

The front desk is always a busy place, with admissions and bookshop sales, answering questions about everything under the sun that travelers could possibly ask, restocking books and gifts, answering the phone, checking in new inventory, and that’s just scratching the surface of it all. Needless to say, there isn’t any “down time” for the office staff.

Everyone pitches in at the end of the day to make sure that the park is clean and ready for the following day. That means cleaning display cases, windows, and doors, sweeping, vacuuming, cleaning up around the sandbox, and thoroughly cleaning the restrooms.

Visitors to the park enjoy the clean facility, knowledgeable office staff, friendly, competent interpreters and, of course, watching the delicate excavation of wonderfully complete skeletons in the ash layer now protected by the Hubbard Rhino Barn. We know we are doing it right when folks tell us what a great experience their visit was without ever realizing all that goes on behind the scenes to make it that way. The seasonal staff at Ashfall has to be a willing, well-rounded, hard-working group to make things run smoothly, and this has been a truly smooth summer... no wonder it’s going so fast!

Don’t miss out. If you haven’t made a plan to visit the park yet this season, be spontaneous, hop in the car and come see how our great summer staff makes for your great Ashfall experience. — Sandy Mosel, Ashfall Fossil Beds

ASHFALL FOSSIL BEDS HOURS

Summer (through Labor Day)
Monday-Saturday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Fall (Sept. 6-Oct. 9)
Tuesday-Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday: 1 p.m.-4 p.m. (Closed Monday)

ashfall.unl.edu
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