

BRAZOS VALLEY MUSEUM



of Natural History



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Director's Leadership Letter

Dear Friends,

Up, Up, and Away, is a good phrase to describe the Museum's trajectory right now! Many exciting things have been happening with exhibits, educational programming, and our efforts to secure a space shuttle.

AND, of course, 2011 marks 50 years of Museum service to the Brazos Valley and the State of Texas! We closed out 2010 with a float in the Christmas parade, thanks to **Henry Mayo** (aka Daniel Boone) and his beautiful Model A Ford reproduction car. A bison was sighted in the front seat (??) and with an "astronaut" (**Zach Cummings**) in back, we had natural history, cultural history, and science covered! **Maria Lazo** and our teachers also did an excellent job with our Winter Mini Camp in late December.

We opened 2011 with an entertaining tribute dinner, **Penny's From Heaven**, in honor of Penny Zent, the local KAMU radio station manager. The event was held at the Miramont and was a wonderful evening full of laughter, music, and great food.

January also saw the opening of **The Bison: American Icon**. We were extremely proud to host this nationally touring exhibit from **NEH on the Road**. **Bess Manning**, our curator, did an outstanding installation. We also have additional items on display from **Dr. Floyd Jones** and **Dr. Robert Schiffhauer**. In celebration of this exhibit and our anniversary, we received a spectacular shoulder mounted bison from **Mr. and Mrs. Parten Wakefield**. It looks majestic on our Discovery Room wall. Many thanks also to **Dr. Fred Smeins** and **Dr. Alston Thoms** for their informative and entertaining presentations at our opening reception.

The Museum now hosts several groups in the evenings. **Sweet Strings on the Brazos** now meets at the Museum to rehearse and eventually we hope to have evening hours on that day so the public can enjoy their music while visiting the Museum. The

Audubon Society continues to meet at the Museum on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, and the **Texas Master Naturalists** meet here on the 2nd Thursday of each month. Their meetings, with interesting guest speakers, are free and open to the public. A recently formed group, **Friends of Lick Creek Park**, has also begun to meet at the Museum. We are becoming a center of activity!

In January/February, we hosted our **Educators' Showcase** display and it was bigger and better than ever! It ended with an outstanding teacher workshop, **No Student Left Indoors**, taught by **Dr. Carolyn Schroeder** and **Maria Lazo** and funded by the Barbara Bush Literacy Corps.

February continued to be busy as we wrote grants, hosted birthday parties, participated in outreach events, got ready for Spring Mini Camp, and worked hard on the shuttle project!

Dr. June Scobee Rodgers (widow of the shuttle Challenger's Commander Scobee) offered a talk and book signing at the Museum on February 21. Later in the month, we met with **Congressman Bill Flores** and his entire Washington staff at the Museum! I also accompanied the local Chamber of Commerce to Austin to meet with state representatives there.

Zach and I were interviewed about the Shuttle Project by **Nell Greenfield-Boyce** on **Morning Edition, NPR**, (see our website!). We have also been on **KBTX, WTAW, KAMU**, and in the *Eagle*. It is exciting for the Museum to have such national recognition.

Of course, none of this would be possible without your support! Many thanks to YOU, our members, for supporting your Brazos Valley, YOUR Museum!

Best Wishes,

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

◆ Temporary and Traveling Exhibitions:

Wrapped in Pride: Ghanaian Kente Cloth and African American Identity

◆ Summer Nature Camp details to be announced soon...

◆ Save the Date: BVMNH's 50 Birthday Bash on April 2, 2011!



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SPRING & SUMMER EXHIBITIONS & NOTICES

Wrapped in Pride: Ghanaian Kente and African American Identity



April 6-August 11, 2011

The brightly colored, geometrically patterned fabric called kente, made by the Asante peoples of Ghana and the Ewe peoples of Ghana and Togo, is the best known of all African textiles. In African American communities across the United States, kente has become much more than mere cloth: it is a symbol of pride and a powerful cultural icon.

Visitors to *Wrapped in Pride: Ghanaian Kente and African American Identity* will explore kente-weaving traditions as well as extraordinary historic and contemporary examples—including some set out for hands-on examination.

Photographs and video depicting the many uses of kente

explain the fabric's journey across an ocean and the symbolic transformation that occurred when kente was embraced around the world, worn by luminaries such as W.E.B. DuBois, Muhammad Ali, and Nelson Mandela. A final section examines the cloth's prevalence during the months of Christmas, Kwanzaa, Martin Luther King Day, and African American History Month, each an occasion for African American communities to consider the power, strength, and faith represented by vibrant, symbolic kente.

This program made possible in part through Hotel Tax Revenue funded from the City of College Station through the Arts Council of Brazos Valley.



This exhibition has been made possible through NEH on the Road, a special initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. It is brought to you by Mid-America Arts Alliance. Additional funding was provided by the Arts Council of Brazos Valley and the William Knox Holt Foundation.

The BVMNH Exhibits Program is underwritten in part by the William Knox Holt Foundation

Protect Our Heritage for Future Generations

The Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History is dedicated to preserving cultural and natural history for future generations. Supporting the Museum is making an investment in the future. A one year membership gives you free admission all year long to educational and entertaining exhibits AND the peace of mind that comes with knowing that the Museum is working hard to preserve YOUR heritage, while providing affordable and engaging educational programming that the entire family can enjoy.



Still, BVMNH can't exist on admission and program fees alone.

We depend on public and private granting agencies, and especially on the generosity of individual supporters, to fund the many activities that fulfill our mission. When you join our circle of Friends, you give a gift that gives back to you. In return for your contribution, you enjoy special benefits including: Free admission to the Museum · Subscription to the Museum's quarterly newsletter · Discount coupon for the Museum shop · Discounts for special programs, children's activities and camps, and lectures · and, Invitations to openings and special events!

You can learn more about membership in the Newsletter insert, by visiting our website at www.brazosvalleymuseum.org, or better still, come see us at the Museum! Thank you for your generosity...



SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Museum's 50th Birthday Celebration

Rockin' and Rollin'
*A 50s Style
 Birthday Celebration!*

**Saturday
 April 2, 2011
 7 - 11 pm**

\$25 Adults
 \$10 Students

*Brazos Center
 Ballroom*

You are cordially invited to join us in celebrating the Museum's 50th Anniversary at this year's spring fundraiser: **Rockin' and Rollin' 50th Birthday Celebration** on **Saturday, April 2, 2011** from 7 to 11 pm at the Brazos Center. This exciting 1950's theme event will feature desserts, dancing, prize drawings, classic cars, the Brazos Valley Troupe, and more. If you like 50s music—you will LOVE this event!

All proceeds will benefit the Museum's annual operating fund. Tickets are on sale at the Museum and may be purchased over the phone. Individual tickets for the dinner and dance are \$25 for adults and \$10 for students and may be purchased in advance or at the door the night of the event. Please join us as we celebrate 50 years of service to the Brazos Valley!

Educational Programs

SUMMER NATURE CAMP 2011 is coming soon

*Our most exciting, educational
 adventure EVER is just around
 the corner...*

Watch your mail and our website for details and registration information - your child will thank you!



BRAZOS VALLEY MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
WHERE YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS

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Up, Up and Away!



SHUTTLE PROJECT GAINS MOMENTUM!

The Brazos Valley Shuttle Project recently picked up steam with a supportive television spot featuring President George H.W. Bush; Dr. June Scobee Rodgers, widow of the late Commander Scobee of the Challenger, has endorsed us; Congressman Flores and other local officials have signed on; the Texas A&M Student Senate has passed a resolution in favor of our effort.

Area school children have engaged in a letter writing campaign, thousands of people have sent emails, the University is working on a land agreement for the new museum, architecture graduate students are working on designs for a building, and rumors are flying that we **ARE** getting a space shuttle. There is no better place than the Brazos Valley, home of Texas A&M University and the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, for a space shuttle and spectacular new museum of science and history to house it!

Join us at the Museum on **April 12**, for a **SPACE SHUTTLE WATCH**, as we await NASA Administrator Charles Bolden's announcement of the decision.

In the meantime, tell everyone you know to send letters of support—visit our website: [www.bring the shuttle.com](http://www.bringthe shuttle.com) for more information.