

# Spring 2010 Newsletter

## ELGIN PUBLIC MUSEUM *Of Natural History & Anthropology*

# COLLECTIONS

*Learning Through Adventure*

### OUR PURPOSE

*To promote an understanding and appreciation of the natural world and other cultures, both past and present; and to increase our awareness of the decisions human cultures have made.*

### EPM Hours

**Labor Day to Memorial Day**

Saturday & Sunday 12 - 4 pm

**Dec 21st through Dec 31st**

12 - 4 pm - Touching on Traditions

**Memorial Day to Labor Day**

Tuesday thru Sunday 12 - 4 pm

Closed Mondays

**For additional information or to register in advance for an event or program please call : 847-741-6655**  
Visit our website for more information at [www.elginpublicmuseum.org](http://www.elginpublicmuseum.org)

**90 years ago, on March 28, 1920, the Palm Sunday Tornado ripped through Elgin.**



Supplementing our *Deep Roots - Green Future* exhibit, we've dug out some archival photos of the destruction this deadly storm caused. These photos of the aftermath of that day and the old pictures of the Elgin Public Museum and Lords Park will adorn the walls where we are currently showing the Nature Photography of Tony Moline.

### **New Exhibit Opening April 3rd** **DEEP ROOTS-GREEN FUTURE:** **City Planning in Elgin**

According to the City Parks Alliance, "Urban parks are dynamic institutions that play a vital, but not fully appreciated or understood role in the social, economic and physical well-being of America's urban areas and its residents...these green spaces provided relief from urban intensity for residents and bring people together across social, economic and racial divides." One of the missions of the Elgin Public Museum is: *Anchor for Lords Park: The existence of the Museum and its active schedule of family-oriented events helps encourage families to use and enjoy Lords Park.* We are thrilled to have this traveling exhibit created by the Elgin Area Historical Society displayed at the Museum for 2 months showcasing Elgin's urban development and the influence of Chicago architect Daniel Burnham.



Daniel Burnham

### Summer Prairie Program Preview

**June 17th - The Initial Evaluation of the Illinois Prairie, 1815 - 1840.**

**July 22nd - Bring them Back Alive: The return of the Swamp Metalmark Butterfly to Illinois.**

**August 19th - Secret Lives of Honeybees**

### **Elgin Museums Display at the Poplar Creek Library.**

During the month of March we shared a display cabinet with the Elgin Historical Museum in the Children's section of the re-modeled Poplar Creek Library in Streamwood. They were looking for something to promote the Macy Museum Adventure Pass program, a year-long promotion for area museums and zoos. We looked for objects that would **Wow!** the kids and have them begging their parents to take them here. Our portion of the display consisted of a Common Merganser; a Northern Pike head with toothy jaw open; a 300 million old fossil; a beautiful piece of Fluorite, our state mineral; the vertebrae of a Mammoth and white-tailed deer for comparison and finally a Cherokee Booger mask. If that doesn't entice the public, I don't know what will.



## *From the Director - Margaret "Peggie" Stromberg*

**H**appy 2010 to all of our members and friends. I hope you are all doing well and looking forward to Spring. Lords Park is always so beautiful when things begin to turn green and the early flowers bloom along Willow Creek, even the skunk cabbage.

2009 was not without sorrow. Dakota, the bull bison at the Lords Park Zoo, died Christmas week end. He was 18 years old and much loved by our visitors and park personnel. A memorial service was held for him, conducted by White Earth Ojibwe Joseph Standing Bear Schranz. The much beloved and visited Children's Farm Zoo was shuttered and the baby animals were not brought in for the first time in many decades. A lot of Elginites were devastated by that decision made by the City. There is a support group called Friends of the Lords Park Zoo, and they are working to secure funding for the bison, elk and deer, as well as the farm zoo. Last year and this year we are unable to hold our Junior Farmers camp. We are sorry for any inconvenience to our members.

We have some great programs coming up in 2010, in spite of our greatly reduced funding. We have started off with a nature photograph exhibit which will be followed by an exhibit about Daniel Burnham. Local historian Bill Briska and retired city planner Tom Armstrong will both speak about Burnham and his city and park planning. We are especially proud to be working with Elgin Climate Change Organization for a series of lectures. ECCO will also be meeting at the Museum.

We plan a series of programs this summer about the prairie and plants, butterflies and bees. Watch the website for dates and times. Which leads to the news that we have a new, updated and interesting website. The address is the same, [www.elginpublicmuseum.org](http://www.elginpublicmuseum.org), but the content is all new and we are very proud of what our webmaster, Diana Lord, was able to accomplish. We also have a Facebook page and we would love to have you become a fan.

The support of our members and donors is more important now than it has ever been. This year the City of Elgin is choosing not to fund at an operating level, so we are using our reserve funds to stay open. When your membership comes due, please renew and encourage your friends to also become members. People can donate and become members right on our website. Many of our programs are free or reduced for members, and we are planning member only events. Please visit the Museum and shop in our store. We really appreciate your support!

## **COLLECTIONS**

As you see, our electronic newsletter has finally materialized. We're calling it Collections because that is what this place is all about. Museums have the real stuff. Besides continually working on presenting new temporary exhibits throughout the year, we're going to designate a case in the main hall that rotates every month. It will showcase one of our objects or artifacts that seldom get out. Believe me, there are a lot of neat things in the basement.

## **Vandals and Thieves Strike Again**

The Museum is still a target. Several months ago two laptop computers and a projector were stolen. Two weeks ago someone vandalized the Ice Age Mammals exhibition on the 2nd floor, stealing a cast of a beaver tooth and damaging the tooth cast of a sabre-toothed tiger and dire wolf. Our community suffers with the loss of these learning tools and our small budget doesn't allow for continually replacing things. It's a shame.

## **MUSEUM GOLD**

**A special THANKS to all those who support our mission. We couldn't do it without you!**

### **New and Renewed Membership**

William & Alice Moring  
Marc & Anna Moeller  
Donald Quillman  
George & Laura Honig  
Edward & Artis Whitcomb  
John & Marlene Shales  
Willaim Barnes  
Mary Jo Vargas  
Vera Vasudevan  
Jan & Chris Glintborg  
John & Martha Yochum  
Bob & Debbie Sargent  
Bob & Carolyn Malm  
Ron & Mary Conley  
Thomas & Karen Durkin  
Sigi Psimenos  
Jerry & Kathleen Turnquist  
Harry Blizzard  
Terry Gabel & Sue Brigham  
Dr. Clare Ollayos  
Gary & Dana Vierck

### **Donors**

Donald Quillman  
John & Marlene Shales  
Wayne & Jeannette Russell  
Write Hand Help  
Laurie Faith Gibson  
Sigi Psimenos  
Michael Surerus  
Moirra Savel  
Ann Surerus  
Gary & Dana Vierck  
Earl & Laverne McGrath  
Betty L. Meyer  
John & Elizabeth O'Toole  
Wayne Heinmiller  
Bob & Carolyn Malm  
Terry Gabel & Sue Brigham  
A T & T (Howell Matching)

**Remember, you as members and donors are very important to us. And, our staff is always receptive to your ideas and opinions. Want a behind the scenes tour, give us a call. Have an idea for programs, give us a call. Have a suggestion on how to make the Museum more inviting to the public, give us a call. We value your input!**

# Up Coming Events and Programs

## Natural Egg Dyeing

**Saturday, April 3rd, 12 - 2 p.m.**

Get your colors from nature and not out of a box. Dyes are extracted from plants and eggs colored the way pioneers children did it.

\$2 for 2 hard boiled eggs. A drop in program, no reservations required.

## From Burnham to Today: Elgin City Planning

**Friday, April 9th, 7 p.m.**

Historian Bill Briska will present a lecture on the historical context of the city planning in Elgin. In 1909, what were the issues and what actions were taken. How has city planning matured over the years and what kind of open green spaces are in our future.

Admission \$6, Members \$5  
Reservations Required.

## Bison Feeding at the Lords Park Zoo

**Saturday, April 10th, 7 a.m.**

A family favorite, up close and personal with the Bison, Deer and Elk. Learn about their natural history and what is required to maintain healthy animals. An extremely popular program, call early.

Admission \$2, Members FREE  
Reservations Required.

## Science Night Under the Sea

**Friday, April 16th, 6 - 8 p.m.**

70% of our planet is covered with water. Most often we only view its surface. What's lurking beneath? Learn the facts while conducting experiments, watch demonstrations, join discussions and have loads of fun.

Admission \$2, Members FREE.  
A drop in program, no reservations required.

## Earth's Changing Climate Lecture & Discussion Series

**Starting April 7th and continuing  
every other Wednesday for  
6 sessions from 7:00 pm until ?**

Whatever your views on climate change, it's important to understand how the current scientific consensus on global warming evolved out of basic physical principles and a broad range of observations. In a lucid presentation designed for nonscientists, you will learn about: energy balance, greenhouse effect, the carbon cycle and much more. The Elgin Public Museum is partnering with the Elgin Climate Change Organization (ECCO) for a lecture and discussion series at the Museum. The programs will include program lectures from the Great Learning Series, with ECCO moderating a coffee and discussion afterwards. Feel free to come to one discussion or join us for all.

Registration is not required, but if you call the Museum at 847-741-6655 or email [epm@cityofelgin.org](mailto:epm@cityofelgin.org), we can be sure to have enough chairs. Donations always welcome!

## **Program Schedule**

### **April 7th**

- Is Earth Warming?
- Butterflies, Glaciers, and Hurricanes

### **April 21st**

- Ice Ages and Beyond
- In the Greenhouse

### **May 5th**

- A Tale of Three Planets
- Global Recycling

### **May 19th**

- The Human Factor
- Computing the Future

### **June 2nd**

- Impacts of Climate Change
- Energy and Climate

### **June 16th**

- Energy - Resources and Alternatives
- Sustainable Futures?

## Earth Day Celebration The Oak King

**Saturday, April 24th, 12 - 2 p.m.**

The Celts believed that the oak was the King of Spring and with their towering heights, ancient age, and spring foliage it's easy to see why. But did you know that oaks are endangered? That of every 10,000 acorns only 1 becomes a tree? Celebrate Earth Day by learning more about these trees and planting acorns so future generations can enjoy them too.

Admission \$5, Members \$4  
Reservations Required.

## Science Night Wacky Weather

**Friday, May 7th, 6 - 8 p.m.**

Mother nature can pack a wallop. Learn the physical science behind tornadoes, lightning, rainbows and more. Hands-on experiments, watch demonstrations and be sure to ask plenty of questions.

Admission \$2, Members FREE.  
A drop in program, no reservations required.

## Toward Green Urbanism Reimagining Elgin in Collaboration with Nature

**Thursday May 13th, 7 p.m.**

Retired Elgin Senior Planner Tom Armstrong will be here to talk about how Elgin was impacted by Burnham's "Plan of Chicago" and how Elgin embraces parks and open space now and for the future.

Admission \$6, Members \$5  
Reservations Required.

We have a lot more programs and events planned for the summer. Continue to check our website for the latest in

*Learning Through Adventure.*

**F** - Family Program

**A** - Adult Program

[www.elginpublicmuseum.org](http://www.elginpublicmuseum.org)

# WHAT NEW IN EDUCATION PROGRAMING FRIDAY SCIENCE NIGHTS

By Sara Russell

*The 2010 year is off and running!* This year we are working hard to provide the public with programming that is both entertaining and informative. One of the programs we are most excited about is our monthly Science Night Series. This drop-in program aims to bring a little bit of science into kids' lives in a fun, exciting way.

In January what better time to focus on The Ice Age. It was a huge success - over 80 people attended! Kids learned about the art and clothing of Paleo-Indians from Beth O'Toole, as they tried their hand at creating their own art in our "cave," using the same materials people would have used 12,000 years ago: paint made of grease and ground up rock for pigmentation. I did cheat in grinding up the rock, though. I tried grinding it against another rock, as the Paleo-Indians would have. It took too long, with too much effort, so I employed a cheese grater instead . . . Perhaps not the most authentic method.

Marge Fox talked about the animals that people lived among; afterward people measured themselves next to Woolley Mammoths and the Saber Tooth Cat. We had a few flintknappers in the making that night. Clovis points, the type of large stone arrow that the Paleo people would have used to top their spears, was the weapon of choice for big game hunting. The kids were chipping away some of a chert rock with an antler to re-create the trade of flintknapping, or making stone tools.

Finding a Paleo-Indian archeological site has been compared to finding a needle in a haystack. To illustrate the point, volunteer Robin Getzelman asked people to look for the lone modified paperclip in a bowl of 3,000. One little girl was having none of it. "And why are we looking for a paperclip?" Robin explained again. Exasperated, our young archeologist was not convinced. "But you have the paperclip in your hand!" Difficult to argue with that logic.

Geology Science Night followed in February and would not have been possible without the help of our dedicated volunteers. Much thanks to Beth O'Tool, Theresa McFadden, Robin Getzelman, Amanda Wolfe, Phil Steder, Alan Stromberg, Leigh



Modern Paleolithic Cave Paintings

Roberts, Lucy Elliott, and the Elgin Rock & Mineral Society for all your support. Grossology in March was a hit and a mess. If you're interested in volunteering for these events or other programs please contact me at 847-741-6655 or russell\_epm@cityofelgin.org. Upcoming Science Nights include: Under the Sea on April 16th, and Wacky Weather on May 7th.

## EPM STAFF

### Executive Director

Margaret "Peggie" Stromberg

### Museum Coordinator

Michael McGrath

### Education Coordinator

Sara Russell

### Educator

Marge Fox

### Museum Attendant

Rachel Camacho

### Collections Supervisor

Elizabeth O'Toole

## MARGE FOX IS HEADING INTO THE BUSH!



Our own Marge Fox, is on her way to Africa. With a new digital camera in hand, she will be recording the cultures and natural history in all its splendor, on the one continent she has yet to set foot on. She'll be logging 50 hours of flight time and endless hours riding in a jeep on unpaved roads. Hopefully, when she's back and rested, we can entice her to present a program, in a travelogue format, of her experiences.

## One of our Chickens is Missing



From the beginning of April to the end of August a female Greater Prairie Chicken, that has been here at the Museum for over 60 years, will be visiting the West Chicago City Museum to partake in an exhibition titled: **A Prairie Primer: an exploration of the intersection of art, history and stewardship.** If you are in the neighborhood stop by and say hello.

## EPM BOARD MEMBERS

Martha Yochum

Gilbert Nore

Dwight Armistead

Mark Havemann

Clare Ollayos

Diane Ramsey Shedd

Willaim Barnes

Sal Camacho

Don Quillman