



## **Children's Museum awarded Connecticut Humanities Grant for Community Whale Celebration**

WEST HARTFORD, Conn (June 10, 2016) – The Children's Museum was awarded a \$2,006 grant from Connecticut Humanities in support of the 40<sup>th</sup> birthday of Conny the Whale, an iconic 60-foot replica built in honor of Connecticut adopting the sperm whale as its state animal.

Connecticut Humanities provides opportunities to explore the history, literature, and the vibrant culture that make our state, cities, and towns attractive places to live and work. Conny's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration will feature activities that explore the human-cetacean relationship and Connecticut history. The event will feature several special guests including the Cetacean Society International, educators from Mystic Seaport, Don Sineti and Friends, and the Connecticut River Ramblers. Activities will include classes on what it was like to be a 19<sup>th</sup> century sailor or cobbler, animal demonstrations, live sea shanties, arts and crafts, a special live planetarium show, and more. Additionally, the Museum will honor the original builders of Conny, which included hundreds of volunteers from the region.

"We're very grateful for the support of Connecticut Humanities, without which we would be unable to offer this wide array of educational and cultural activities for families throughout our region," stated Michael Werle, Executive Director of The Children's Museum. "We anticipate that hundreds of families will enjoy the festivities as they learn and celebrate what Conny means to the Museum, the local community, and the state."

The birthday celebration will take place on Saturday, June 25 at 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. All activities are included with the price of general admission. Weather pending, some activities will be held outside.

Conny (short for Connecticut) is a life-size sperm whale replica located on the front law of The Children's Museum. Built in 1975-1976, Conny is the result of hundreds of hours of volunteer labor, generously donated materials, and a partnership with the Cetacean Society International. Conny has become the face of the Museum, an icon in the West Hartford community, and a symbol of Connecticut. Conny also serves as a key science educational tool for families and school groups that visit The Children's Museum.

Connecticut Humanities, a nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, supports cultural and historic organizations that tell the state's stories, build community and enrich lives. Learn more by visiting [www.cthumanities.org](http://www.cthumanities.org).

For more information about sponsoring an educational program or community event, contact Julie Barnofski Portfolio at [jportfolio@thechildrensmuseumct.org](mailto:jportfolio@thechildrensmuseumct.org) or (860) 231-2830 x510.

The Children's Museum and Roaring Brook Nature Center are the region's premiere destinations for exploration and education. Home to over 100 live animals, the Museum features hands-on exhibits, out-of-this-world digital planetarium shows, and programs for young children and families.

The Children's Museum and Preschool are located at 950 Trout Brook Drive in West Hartford and Roaring Brook Nature Center is located at 70 Gracey Road in Canton. More information is available at [www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](http://www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org).

###

Editorial Contact:

Tessa Rickart

(860) 231-2830 x320

[trickart@thechildrensmuseumct.org](mailto:trickart@thechildrensmuseumct.org)