

President's Corner



Kevin Sullivan, President and CEO of The Children's Museum

Well, with summer over, it's a good time for some reflection. Will it soon be two years here for me already? I'm glad to say, thanks to a supportive Board of Trustees and great staff, we are doing well. In this short time, The Children's Museum has produced a small operating surplus to reinvest this year and turned around years of creeping long-term debt. We look forward to a time when we can do more with more, but at least we have successfully done more with less. Attendance and membership are steady. Contributed revenue from our corporate and foundation friends is up, although individual donations from members and friends are lagging - *hint, hint*. But all together, these are no small accomplishments at a time when so many others are struggling, even those unlike The Children's Museum that are publicly financed.

This past summer, our vacation science camp was strong, including a special Rocket Day with help from our friends at Hamilton Sundstrand and more focus on the environment. Science educators went out to Camp Courant for the first time. We added a new show in the Travelers Science Dome at the Gengras Planetarium and brought back laser rock shows for a limited run (they'll be back next summer). Croc Night and Birds of Prey were fun, and we have some new rescues at the Wildlife Sanctuary, including an Egyptian Deathstalker scorpion. We also partnered in a new professional development program for priority school teachers focused on bringing telescopes and astronomy into the classroom. What's ahead? There's Wolf Night, a new series of astronomy programs, and expanded science outreach to schools and youth groups.

Beyond all the family fun, our educational mission is more important than ever.

This year's statewide science assessment results make it even clearer that our schools cannot do it alone. While having somewhat improved, 42% of 5th graders and 39% of 8th graders performed below goal in science. As for 10th graders, 57% were below goal. These results are well behind performance in math, reading and writing. Statewide results also mask huge disparities in high-need school districts. In Hartford, for example, 84% of 5th graders, 78% of 8th graders, and 90% of 10th graders perform below goal in science. Focusing on children from preschool through early middle school, The Children's Museum is uniquely positioned to help get science education right from the start - helping kids from preschool to middle school, hands-on, to appreciate the natural world and develop a lifetime of science awareness, achievement, and attainment.

See you at The Children's Museum this fall.

United Way Community Campaign

The United Way is conducting its annual Community Campaign during the next few months. If you contribute, please remember that you can designate your funds to be directed to The Children's Museum. You can be sure that your dollars will go toward helping children learn about the wonders of science.

Back to School with Science Achievement For All

Touching the scales or fur of a live animal while learning about its habitat and adaptations, or seeing a planetarium simulation of what the night sky will look like above their homes that night, is the kind of hands-on, minds-on science learning that not only helps improve children's science achievement, but also gets them excited about learning more on their own, pursuing advanced science education, and maybe even considering science as a career.

The Children's Museum's continuous commitment to improving science literacy in Connecticut's schools is the main purpose of the *Science Achievement For All* (SAFA) program, now in its 14th year. Whether it's through the classes offered at the Museum or the outreach programs taught in schools, SAFA makes the Museum's brand of science learning



available to 6,000 Connecticut children who otherwise would not have access to Museum programs.

SAFA was the first program in the state to offer science learning programs free of charge to high-need schools and school districts. According to the *U.S. Department of Education 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress*, Connecticut has the largest achievement gap between urban and suburban student populations in the nation.

"Education research and test results tell us that science achievement is falling and our schools cannot do it alone. Especially for younger kids, smaller scale and more hands-on learning that is also fun makes all the difference in science comprehension and achievement. The Children's Museum is passionate about

closing the science achievement gap for the state's neediest children and this is what drives *Science Achievement For All*," said Kevin Sullivan, President and CEO.

The Children's Museum is a leader in working with the state and with schools to meet students' needs and align its education programs with the state's Science Curriculum Standards. The Museum's hands-on, minds-on informal education programs teach children not only the principles of science, but also the processes of scientific investigation and inquiry.

The Museum seeks funding from a consortium of corporations, foundations, and individuals to fund SAFA. Teachers and parents who want to learn more about the program are encouraged to call the Museum at 860.231.2830 x44.

Science Achievement For All is made possible thanks to generous support from



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If so, you can visit the Museum and Roaring Brook Nature Center for free. Bring friends and family with you and receive \$1 off each admission fee. Receive 15% off membership fees, too. Just show your company ID at the admission desk. Corporate membership is a great way to support the Museum while providing benefits to your employees. Visit the Join Us section of our website for more information.

Vacation Science

Join us for action-packed days of scientific investigation, crafts, games, Museum exploration, amazing planetarium shows, up-close encounters with live animals, and more.

Monday September 28, Yom Kippur

Construction Zone

Design it, build it, and demolish it! Explore the capabilities of both common and unusual building materials as we test the strength of some super structures.

Monday October 12, Columbus Day

Sail the Ocean Blue

What floats your boat? Dive deep into oceanography to study currents, learn how boats stay afloat, and discover weird ocean creatures, as we explore the wonders of the sea.

Tuesday November 3, Election Day

Stealth Science

Learn the secrets to cracking any case. Create a disguise to go undercover, make and break codes, and construct and use spy gadgetry as we uncover the science behind spying.

Wednesday November 11, Veterans Day

Fantastic Flight

Fly up, zoom down, and hover with machines that go up, up and away. Test out planes, hovercrafts, and other flying devices as we soar into the principles of flight.

Monday December 28

Science All Stars

Experiment with physics, chemistry, combustion, electricity, and more as we investigate the discoveries of some famous scientists.

Tuesday December 29

Animals Under Cover

Take a peek at how animals spend their winters as we uncover their tricks to staying under the radar. Learn about camouflage and hibernation and meet some of the animal experts.

Wednesday December 30

Freezer Burn

Freeze stuff, melt stuff, and make stuff go pop! Put solids, liquids, and gases to the test as we create crazy compounds and perform amazing chemical reactions.

Thursday December 31

Frogtastic

It's a frog's life. Hop to it and discover their habitats, diets, and where they live in the wild as we get up close and personal with a variety of our Museum amphibians.

WHEN	9:00 am to 4:00 pm
WHO	Children in grades 1 to 5
COST	\$60/day for members \$70/day for non-members

To register, call 860.231.2830 x44. For details, visit our website.



Travelers Science Dome at the Gengras Planetarium

TELESCOPE ABC'S

Friday October 9, 2009 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

October 4 to 10 is World Space Week, so get your telescope out of the attic! Bring your scope to The Children's Museum for a night of telescope tutoring, or use one of ours. We'll watch our newest planetarium show, *Two Small Pieces of Glass*, and our staff astronomers will teach your family how to set up and use telescopes to discover the night sky.

\$8/person for members, \$10/person for non-members. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged. Call 860.231.2830 x44 or email Events@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org.



NEW SHOW TWO SMALL PIECES OF GLASS

Join us Wednesdays at 3:30 pm for our newest planetarium show, *Two Small Pieces of Glass*. While attending a local star party, two teenage students learn how the telescope has helped us understand our place in space and how telescopes continue to expand our understanding of the Universe. Explore the Galilean Moons, Saturn's rings, and spiral structure of galaxies. Learn about discoveries by Galileo, Huygens, Newton, Hubble and many others. View the complete Travelers Science Dome schedule on our website.

HOST A TRAVELERS SCIENCE DOME TELESCOPE PARTY

Invite your friends over for an evening of stargazing. View the sky through large, professional telescopes guided by an expert astronomer. Spend three hours or more scanning the stars with up to thirty friends. Telescope parties are perfect for birthdays or anniversaries. To register or find out more, contact Kristie Mazzoni, Planetarium Director, at 860.231.2830 x40 or kmazzoni@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org.

ADOPT A STAR

Support the educational mission of the Travelers Science Dome by "adopting" one of our stars for a small donation. Unlike star registries that claim to name a faint, distant star after a friend or relative, we've chosen only the brightest stars on our indoor sky to be adopted. It would make a wonderful tribute for a birthday or anniversary. Each adopter will get a colorful certificate of adoption, a star chart listing the star's location in the sky, and recognition on a new donor wall. For a five-year period, the adopter may come to the planetarium during regular Museum hours to see his or her star. Adoption prices vary based on the size and location of the star. For more information, e-mail Planetarium Director Kristie Mazzoni at kmazzoni@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org.

A Morning for Children on the Autism Spectrum

Sunday October 4, 2009 • 9:00 am

The Children's Museum will open early on October 4 for families with children on the Autism Spectrum. We encourage your children to come and be themselves as they explore our exhibits and see the stars in the Travelers Science Dome. Families are welcome to come just for the morning or to stay after the Museum opens to the general public at 11:00 am.

FREE for members, \$12/person for non-members. Pre-registration is required for all participants. To register, call 860.231.2830 x44 or e-mail Events@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org

Travelers Employees Dig Into Volunteering

Over 30 participants in the Leadership Development Program at The Travelers recently picked up landscaping tools and spent a sunny afternoon weeding, digging, and planting - all to make the Museum's grounds an even brighter place. The event was part of a community outreach project funded by Travelers, who also donated \$3,500 to the effort. Next time you visit, enjoy the new raised flower beds above Conny and the other plantings around the Museum. Many thanks to Au Bon Pain for feeding the volunteers.



UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

Wildlife Sanctuary

Atka Returns for Wolf Night

Friday November 13, 2009 • 6:30 pm

The Children's Museum, Connecticut Public Television, and the PBS series *Nature*, are partnering to bring you Wolf Night, our last special Nature Mania event of the year, featuring a special visit from Atka, an Arctic gray wolf from The Wolf Conservation Center. Nature Mania includes a showing of PBS's acclaimed wildlife series *Nature* in the Travelers Science Dome, live animal demonstrations, and a related make-and-take craft activity for families. There are also special animal activities throughout the afternoon in the Museum.



\$7/person for members, \$9/person for non-members

To register, call 860.231.2830 x44 or e-mail Events@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org.



Join the Junior Keepers Club

Go behind the scenes and learn what it takes to be an animal keeper. Work with the Wildlife Sanctuary Director, curators, and volunteers. You will help feed, groom and learn general animal husbandry. Get a private animal demonstration and have your picture taken holding an animal at each session. The program is for ages 10 to 14 and has a limit of 10 participants.

Four Wednesday Sessions

3:00 pm to 4:00 pm

October 21, 2009

November 18, 2009

December 16, 2009

January 20, 2010

Prices for 4 sessions: \$80/person for members, \$100/person for non-members.

To register, call 860.231.2830 x44, e-mail Events@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org, or visit our website to register online.

Have a Back-to-School Birthday Party

A new school year means new classes and new friends. Plan a birthday with hands-on fun that will bring new and old friends together in celebration of your child's special day.

- New, longer party times give you and your guests more time to enjoy the Museum. We'll work with you to plan a schedule that best meets your needs.
- A private animal meet-and-greet is included with every party.
- Enjoy supervised exploration in our hands-on exhibit areas.
- Special activity packages with take-home materials are available.
- Each party concludes with a show in our Travelers Science Dome theater.



Call us today at 860.231.2830 x44. We will help you select your birthday child's favorite Museum activities and create the perfect package of discovery and fun.

Shop at Macy's and Support TCM

The Children's Museum is participating in Macy's Shop for a Cause on Saturday, October 17. The next time you visit us, pick up an All-Day Shopping Savings Pass for a \$5 donation (at the front desk), then head over to any Macy's on October 17 to shop.

Your exclusive shopping pass entitles you to save 10-20% on most items, plus a day of special events and entertainment. Get passes for your friends, too, and make a day of it shopping for your favorite cause - The Children's Museum! Please note: in order to support the Museum, you must purchase your shopping pass from us. See the FUNdraiser page on our website for information and more ways to support the Museum.



kids KORNER

EVEN CARROTS GET THE BENDS

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 2 zipping sandwich bags
- 6 baby carrots (or 2 to 3-inch slices of a bigger carrot)
- Teaspoon
- Salt

WHAT TO DO

- 1) Put 3 carrots in each bag.
- 2) Add a teaspoon of salt to one of the bags.
- 3) Zip both bags and shake the salty one well.
- 4) Wait a half-hour and then observe.

WHAT'S GOING ON

You'll see that the bag to which you added the salt now has water in it, too. Try bending the carrots from both bags. The salted carrots are much bendier. The reason: when there are more particles (in this case, salt) outside the carrot than inside it, water moves out of the carrot. All living things (carrots, people, cats, etc.) are made of tiny pieces called **cells**, which are surrounded by a skin called a **membrane**. This membrane lets water move in or out of the cell, in a process called **osmosis**. When water leaves the carrot, its cells shrivel up, and the carrot is easier to bend.

TD Banknorth Brings Science to Schools

Thanks to a \$10,000 grant from TD Banknorth's TD Charitable Foundation, The Children's Museum will bring more science education to students in East Hartford, Hartford, Waterbury, and other priority schools throughout the state. The grant supports science education through outreach programs taught directly in the schools, as well as classes and activities at the Museum. This partnership brings important hands-on learning straight to the classroom and will help close the science achievement gap in Connecticut.

The Children's Museum Preschool

Inspire a Joy for Learning

It's not too late to register your child for The Children's Museum Preschool this fall. Class schedules are flexible to accommodate your 3, 4 or 5-year-old. Your child will meet an impressive barred owl or learn about the stars and planets under the evening sky in the Travelers Science Dome planetarium. To learn more about the preschool or to tour our newly remodeled facility, call 860.523.7449.

Tales & Tails

Our animal-themed, eight-week toddler program will be offered once again this fall. Meet exciting animals; explore Critter Crossing, the Museum's toddler space; participate in hands-on art activities; and relax with a story. Children ages 20 months to 3 years, accompanied by a parent/caregiver are welcome to attend. Classes are on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 am to 10:15 am beginning September 30.

To register, call the Museum at 860.231.2830 x44.

In the Green Gallery: Sept 21 to Nov 5, 2009

Long Island Sound Foundation Annual Drawing Contest

The winning drawings from the Long Island Sound Foundation's annual contest for students in grades K-6 is the latest installation in the Museum's Green Gallery on the Mezzanine Level. This year's theme is "What It Means to Me." The winning drawings will appear in the Foundation's 2010 Calendar. For more information on the Foundation, visit www.lisfoundation.org.

Volunteer Spotlight

As an intern with the Museum's Education Department this summer, Kathy Peters spent six weeks creating and teaching lessons for summer camp and observing and assisting with other camp activities.



Why do you volunteer?

This experience is a great opportunity for me to practice my teaching skills and I am learning new ways to teach science and incorporate elements of fun and personal exploration into each of my lessons.

Why would you encourage others to volunteer?

The Museum has a great atmosphere that encourages children to learn through hands-on activities and play. Also, every member of the staff is extremely friendly and accommodating.

The Children's Museum is looking for volunteers to help in several departments. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Jennifer Parker at 860.231.2830 x38 or jparker@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org.

the children's museum

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ROARING BROOK NATURE CENTER



FALL 2009

70 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019

860.693.0263 www.roaringbrook.org

Nature Center Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sunday, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Trails through Werner's Woods open daily from dawn to dusk.

All costs are per person unless stated otherwise.

ANNUAL HOBGOBLIN FAIR

Saturday October 31

Join us on Halloween for a track-and-treat walk, children's crafts, and a delicious lunch of homemade soup, bread and apple cider. For children ages 3 to 8 accompanied by parents, the event costs \$5/child for members, \$6/child for non-members. This includes track-and-treat walk and two activity tickets; extra activity tickets will be on sale at the Fair. Pre-registration with payment is required. Choose the 10:00 am to 12:00 pm session or 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm session. Children are encouraged to wear costumes suitable for walking in the woods and making crafts. There are no refunds.

BIRD SEED SALE

Saturday November 14

Call the Nature Center at 860.693.0263 for an order form.

HOLIDAY GIFT & CRAFT FAIR

Sunday November 22 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Start your holiday shopping with our nature-related gifts for all ages. There is no cost to attend.

WEEKEND EVENTS

EVENING WALKS

Friday September 25 and Friday October 2

7:30 pm to 8:45 pm

An evening walk provides a relaxing end to the busy work/school week. Observe a wide range of animals that become more active on cool autumn evenings. Dress for cooler weather and bring a flashlight. Cost: \$4/members, \$6/non-members, and half-price for children. Pre-registration is not required.

MORNING BIRD WALKS

Saturday September 26 and Saturday October 3

7:30 am to 9:00 am

Join us as we wander the trails through Werner's Woods during the fall migration season. Binoculars and footwear for wet ground conditions are all you'll need. Geared for all levels of birding expertise, these walks are not for very young children. Cost: \$2/members, \$3/non-members. Pre-registration is not required.

MUSHROOMS WITH MUSHROOM MARLENE

Saturday September 26 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Join Marlene Snecinski of the Connecticut Valley Mycological Association for a talk and stroll along the trails of Werner's Woods. Learn fascinating facts about fungi, such as which are sought after as delicacies and which are not to touch. Photography is encouraged. Cost: \$6/members, \$10/non-members. Pre-registration is requested.

MONARCHS ON THE MOVE

Sunday September 27 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Monarch butterflies are flying to Mexico, an extraordinary journey for such a delicate creature. Learn about the monarch's life cycle and take a short hike to the field to look for monarchs moving southward. Cost: \$4/members, \$6/non-members, half-price for children. Pre-registration is not required.

REPTILES GET READY FOR WINTER

Sunday October 4 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Learn what our native turtles and snakes do to prepare for the winter season. Cost: \$4/members, \$6/non-members, half-price for children. Pre-registration is not required.

FAMILY CONCERT WITH MUSTARD'S RETREAT

Sunday October 11 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

This Michigan-based duo represents everything that is great about folk music. "Their music is community music. It is music that speaks to people's hearts and lives and binds them together as an audience." - Garnet Rogers. Advance tickets: \$6/members, \$7/non-members. Remaining tickets will be sold at the door for \$8.

FALL FOLIAGE DAY

Saturday October 17 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Join us for a guided fall foliage walk through Werner's Woods and the Nature Center's gardens. Learn why the spectacular fall color show happens each year. Collect the prettiest of the leaves, make a leaf craft, and enjoy hot cider and leaf cookies. Cost: \$4/members, \$6/non-members, half-price for children. Pre-registration is required.

BEYOND BIRD FEEDERS: GARDENING FOR THE BIRDS

Sunday October 25 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Concerns about black bears destroying your expensive bird feeders? Many area residents have stopped feeding, and miss the enjoyment of seeing birds from their windows. Learn what you can plant in your yard to provide food to an even wider variety of birds throughout the year while promoting biodiversity in your neighborhood. Cost: \$4/members, \$6/non-members, half-price for children. Pre-registration is not required.

FAMILY NATURE QUEST

Saturday November 7 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Discover what fall treasures can be found as you brush up on basic orienteering skills and follow clues deciphered through riddles and rhymes. For families with children ages 8 and up. Cost: \$4/members, \$6/non-members, half-price for children.

PREPARING FOR WINTER

Sunday November 15 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Find out how plants and animals prepare for the coming winter season on this leisurely hike along the trails through Werner's Woods. Cost: \$4/members, \$6/non-members, half-price for children. Pre-registration is not required.

STORY HOURS

September 21, October 19, November 16, December 21

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Story hour for children ages 2 to 5 returns this fall with one-hour programs on the third Monday of each month. There is no charge for this program, however pre-registration is requested. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Wednesdays, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm October 7,14,21,28

Develop your drawing, sketching and journaling skills as a tool for learning about the natural world with wildlife artist Kathy Goff. This program is geared to all skill levels, but participants must be a freshman in high school or older. Bring a sketchbook, HB graphite pencil, and any drawings you may wish to share with the class. Cost: \$60/members, \$80/non-members. Pre-registration is required.

DISCOVERY DAYS

Discovery Days is the Nature Center's enrichment series for children in grades PreK-3. A 4-week session costs: \$40/members, \$50/non-members except for Nature for Little Ones (see below). Discounts are extended to families with multiple children attending during the same time period.

NATURE FOR LITTLE ONES

For 2-year-olds, accompanied by parents

Fridays, 9:30 am to 10:30 am

September 25; October 2,9,16,23,30; November 6,13

Eight Friday-morning programs provide the young child with an introduction to the world of nature through seasonal autumn topics. Register for all eight sessions at a cost of \$70/members, \$100/nonmembers, or register for one or more individual dates at \$10/members, \$15/non-members.

EXPLORING TOGETHER

For 3 and 4-year-olds, accompanied by parents

Thursdays, 10:00 am to 11:00 am or Fridays, 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm

Sept/Oct Session: September 24/25; October 1/2,8/9,15/16

Oct/Nov Session: October 22/23, 29/30; November 5/6, 12/13

Nov/Dec Session: November 19/20; December 3/4,10/11,17/18

This program introduces preschool children to seasonal changes in the natural world and gives parent and child an opportunity to learn together. A younger sibling may attend for a \$10 discount. There is no charge for siblings under age 2. Dress for the outdoors.

Programs for 4 and 5-year-olds, without parent

Thursdays, 10:00 am to 11:00 am or 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm

SEASON OF THE INSECTS

September 24; October 1,8,15

Autumn provides a wealth of insect activity from the singing of crickets and katydids to the migration of monarch butterflies and green darner dragonflies.

THE COLORS OF AUTUMN

October 22,29; November 5,12

The beautiful colors of autumn leaves, fruits and flowers last but a short time. Perhaps that's what makes fall a special season? Why do they turn color? What happens to them after they fall to the ground?

ANIMAL INNS

November 19; December 3,10,17

Animals live in a wide variety of homes, some up in the trees, some underground. Explore the woods and fields around the Nature Center to learn how some animals are getting their homes ready for the winter.

Programs for Grades 1-3

Thursdays, 3:45 pm to 5:00 pm

MIGRATION

September 24; October 1,8,15

Animals don't need to worry about the price of gasoline, but there are many other obstacles in their way as they travel southward. Learn about the migration of birds, bats, butterflies and a bunch of other creatures.

THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE TAMARACK TREES

October 22,29; November 5,12

Tamaracks have needles and cones, but, unlike evergreen pines, their needles turn golden brown and fall late in late autumn. Find out about this and other mysteries in the plant kingdom.

GEOLOGY OF THE FARMINGTON VALLEY

November 19; December 3,10,17

What forces shaped our Farmington Valley landscape? What kind of rocks and minerals can be found here? Why can't we pan for gold or find precious gems?