

WHALE TALES

The Newsletter of The Children's Museum and Roaring Brook Nature Center

FALL 2011

Family Science Sundays Return in October

Northeast Utilities
Foundation



Connecticut
Light & Power
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In 2010 and 2011, more than 6,000 Museum visitors experienced the activities of Family Science Sundays – amazing demonstrations, hands-on experiments, take-home science activities, special guest stars, and more.

Thanks to a generous grant from **Northeast Utilities – Connecticut Light and Power**, another year of the monthly Family Science Sundays kicks off this October. Check The Children's Museum's website and our Facebook page for more info.

At right: The Children's Museum's "Mr. Science," Jonah Cohen, demonstrates how liquid nitrogen poured into warm water and soap can cause a "Sudspllosion," one of the Museum's many offerings during Family Science Sundays. Photo by Lindsay Stanford



A Special Announcement and a Fond Farewell from Interim Director Don Peterson

Just in time to go to press with this issue, I am delighted to tell you that the Board of Trustees has selected Robert Griesmer of Norwalk to be the President and Chief Executive Officer of The Children's Museum starting September 19. Bob served as the Chief Operating Officer of The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk for over 21 years. The search process was well organized, thorough, and national in scope. While we had a great selection of finalists with museum backgrounds, Bob is an experienced, successful museum pro who raised the money, worked with our legislative leaders in Connecticut and built exhibits — all the things we need from a leader as we move forward into the future with The Children's Museum. Stay tuned to learn more about Bob in the December issue of Whale Tales.



As I write my last column from this space, it's hard to believe summer is coming to an end. Having dozens upon dozens of children enjoy their lunches and outdoor activities just outside my office window each day has given me a terrific perspective on the memorable experiences that summer campers have both here at The Children's Museum and the Roaring Brook Nature Center. To see the sparks of interest in their eyes and the smiles on their faces is truly heartwarming. It has been a great summer for me here, and I will continue to come back and visit with my grandchildren.

As always I want to thank the Museum's dedicated, hard working staff and our many sponsors and donors who make this wonderful Museum possible. It's a very special place and it deserves your ongoing commitment and support. Thank you all!

What We Did This Summer by The Children's Museum

Every Thursday this past summer was Turbo-Charged Thursday, with extra activities and demonstrations free of charge. With a magical movie about to premiere, we had Wizard Day at TCM. TCM educator "Professor Pudmuddle" showed a smoking potion (courtesy of dry ice and soapy water) to her rapt students.



Campers attending Chem Kids week had fun choosing and mixing up their own bubble recipes and testing them with their new bubble wand designs.



After finishing their experiments, Chem Kids campers told TCM's iconic Conny the Whale all about their day.



Critter Keeper Week not only included face time with residents of the wildlife sanctuary, but the campers learned how to bandage an injured limb properly (practicing on their own stuffed animals) under the guidance of our guest, veterinarian Dr. Katja Hrones.



TCM animal caretaker Adam Meyers helped a participant in Junior Secret Agents Week look closely at Fido, a rose haired tarantula that came to TCM as an "accidental tourist" in an overseas shipment to the U.S.

Calendar of Events

Fall 2011 is Full of Science Fun

To register for the programs you see here (unless otherwise noted), call 860.231.2830 x44 or e-mail Events@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org.

Online registration is also available for many of our events and programs. Visit our website at www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org.

Member prices are for The Children's Museum/Roaring Brook Nature Center members. All prices are per person.

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 this fall. You'll have such fun, you'll want to come back for more.

9:00 am to 4:00 pm • For children in grades 1 to 5
\$60/day for members • \$70/day for non-members

September 29, Rosh Hashanah

Astroblast Glittering galaxies, blazing asteroid belts, shimmering shooting stars, and other mysteries of the universe await a junior astronaut like you.



October 10, Columbus Day Mad About Science

Explore, test, and create in this fun-filled day bursting with interactive experiments that will leave you mad with excitement.

November 8, Election Day

The Hungry Scientist

Even a scientist has to eat, but good scientists play with their food. Explore the science that goes on in your kitchen.

We're planning exciting explorations and awesome discoveries for December Vacation Week, December 26 to 30. Check our website in October for daily themes.

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 and 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 there is a limit of six participants.

Four Wednesday Sessions

October 5, 2011

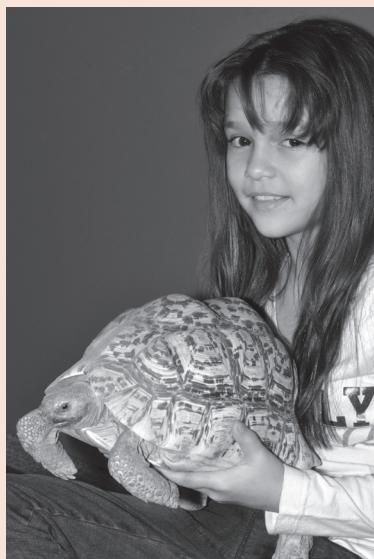
November 2, 2011

December 7, 2011

January 4, 2012

Prices for Four Sessions

\$80/members • \$100/non-members



the children's museum

Hours of Admission

Tuesday to Saturday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Sunday 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

The Museum is **open** on Columbus Day, Monday, October 10.

The Museum is **closed** on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 24.

Homeschool Happenings

**The next
Homeschool Day is
Tuesday
September 27
9:00 am to 4:00 pm**



Welcome to the start of another great year of our popular Science Education Days dedicated to homeschool families. As supporters of your family's choice for self-directed, home-based education, we invite children from five to thirteen years old who are home schooled to visit the Museum, tour our exhibits and take part in classroom programs.

This session's theme is all about building. The youngest students can be simple engineers, learn what it is like to live and work in space, and study and build habitats for animal survival. Children in the third through fifth grade-range create an eco-friendly habitat and learn about aerodynamics as they design and build a rocket for future space travel. Older children design and build a lunar base, learn about the human impact on wild habitats, and challenge themselves with their knowledge of energy, forces, and motion.

Due to the popularity of this program, we're hosting two additional homeschool days this fall, **October 25** and **November 29**. We are also planning three days after the New Year.

Visit our website for fees, program times and detailed information for the first session.



Mars Madness Continues Through the Fall

Invite your friends to our monthly community Mars evenings. There's free admission for everyone from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Each month, we'll have different space-related activities and planetarium programs to complement our Mars exhibits. Museum exhibits close at 4:00 pm. Activities continue in the planetarium and classrooms. No pre-registration needed.

September 28 • October 26 • November 23

Partners in Fun

Special Offer for Members

We're teaming up with A.C. Petersen Farms to make your renewed membership in The Children's Museum fun for the whole family. Renew your expiring membership between August 1 and October 31 and receive a complimentary \$20 gift voucher to be used at A.C. Petersen's, West Hartford's favorite family restaurant, and an A.C. Petersen's Kids Club membership for the children (age 12 and under) in your family. A.C. Petersen Farms Restaurant is located at 240 Park Road, West Hartford.

No cash value or remaining value. Gift voucher will be sent with Museum membership card. Show membership card at A.C. Petersen to receive Kids Club card (good for free ice cream with purchase of Kid Meal for each time you visit in 2011).



For All Our Guests

Visitors to The Children's Museum between August 1 and October 31 may take their receipt to A.C. Petersen Farms for a *free* Conny Cone for every paid admission on the receipt. During this time, customers of A.C. Petersen Farms may bring their receipt to The Children's Museum for a \$2 discount on admission.

The Children's Museum Preschool introduces children to science early in life with their unique programs during the school year and in the summer. The preschool program prides itself on being a place where children ages three to five play, explore and discover, complete with field trips and weekly visits to different parts of The Children's Museum.



Photo by Rick Harrington

Birthday Parties at the Museum

Fun for kids, easy for parents!

We offer a great blend of fun and educational activities that will entertain and inspire your children and their special guests.

Call 860.231.2830 x44
or e-mail Events@
TheChildrensMuseumCT.org
for more information.



ROARING BROOK NATURE CENTER



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.
Open on Columbus Day; closed on Thanksgiving.
Trails through Werner's Woods open daily from dawn to dusk.

All costs are per person unless stated otherwise.

Call **860.693.0263** for additional information on these programs.

Annual Hobgoblin Fair

Saturday, October 29

10:00 am to 12:00 pm or 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Our annual Hobgoblin Fair features the "track-or-treat" walk, children's crafts, and a delicious lunch. Suitable for children ages 3 to 8. \$5/members, \$6/non-members. Reservations are required.

Holiday Gift & Craft Fair

Sunday, November 20

12:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Start your holiday shopping with nature-related gifts. This is no charge to visit this day.

Saturday Morning Bird Walks

October 1 and 15

7:30 am to 9:00 am

Bring binoculars and watch for migrating songbirds. This program is geared for all levels of birding expertise. These walks are not suitable for very young children. \$2/members, \$3/non-members. Pre-registration is not required.

Friday Evening Walks in Werner's Woods

September 23 and October 14

7:30 pm to 8:45 pm

Look for nocturnal animals that come out in the cooler evening temperatures of autumn. Bring a flashlight. \$4/members, \$6/non-members, Half-price children 12 and under. Pre-registration is not required.

Field Trip to Litchfield Waterfowl Conservancy

Saturday, November 5

9:30 am to Mid-afternoon

This is a special guided tour of the Livingston-Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy followed by birding at Bantam Lake. We'll be carpooling to Litchfield. Bring a picnic lunch. \$20/members, \$25/non-members. Limited to 12 participants. Advance registration is required.

Family Nature Quest

Saturday, November 12

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Discover fall treasures in Werner's Woods as you follow clues and brush up on basic orienteering skills. This program is for families with children eight years old and up. \$4/members, \$6/non-members, Half-price children 12 and under. Pre-registration is required.

Fall Discovery Days Program Information

Enrichment programs are available for 2-1/2 and 3-year-olds accompanied by adults and for children in kindergarten readiness programs and grades K-3. Check our website for more information. **Classes begin in mid-September.**

Adventure Story Time

Mondays, September 19, October 17, November 21, December 19

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Adults and children may participate in a shared story with a craft and short walk. For children age 2 to 5. \$2/child, \$5/family. Pre-registration is requested.

Call the Nature Center today to receive an order form for our Fall Bird Seed Sale.



Where Science and Nature Are Fun

950 Trout Brook Drive
West Hartford, CT 06119-1437
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Visit us online at
www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org
and on Facebook to get the latest
news and event information.

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Inside Whale Tales

- Family Science Sundays Return
- Homeschool Day
- Junior Keepers Club



Peter shows campers how to build a shelter during Survivor TCM Week at Vacation Science Camp.

Volunteer Spotlight

Peter Dau spent his summer as a Vacation Science Camp counselor while completing an internship with the Education Department. A sophomore at Vassar College and biochemistry major, Peter is exploring a career in science education.

"Because I came here often as a child, I thought this would be the perfect place to do just that," he said.

When asked about his volunteer experience, Peter replied, "I've been having a blast! I really love working with kids, and I'm learning so much. Also, everyone at TCM has been so welcoming and helpful; it's really just made this such an overall wonderful experience."

If you are interested in volunteering, call Jennifer Parker at 860.231.2830 x38.

Science Achievement For All

The Children's Museum is committed to closing Connecticut's science achievement gap. That's why we offer high-quality, hands-on science and nature education programs free of charge to priority school districts and schools throughout Connecticut.

Science Achievement For All is made possible this school year thanks to generous support from:

The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc.

J. Walton Bissell Foundation, Inc.

First Niagara Financial Group

Fisher Foundation

Reid and Riege

SBM Charitable Foundation

TD Charitable Foundation

Travelers

PTAs, PTOs, and Teachers: To learn more about funding availability, please call our Registration Department at 860.231.2830 x44.

Hands-On Science

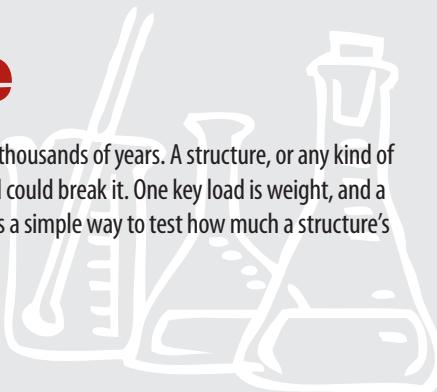
Arches have been used to help support bridges and other structures for thousands of years. A structure, or any kind of man-made object, has to deal with loads. Loads put stress on the structure and could break it. One key load is weight, and a structure's shape can determine how well a structure can handle weight. Here's a simple way to test how much a structure's shape affects how much weight it will hold.

What You'll Need

2 index cards

2 unopened cans of the same height (soda cans, soup cans, etc.)

A bunch of lightweight, identical objects (Flat erasers work perfectly; bottle caps or LEGO® bricks might do.)



What To Do

Place the cans about three inches apart. Place one card across the top, like a bridge. One at a time, place the erasers on the card.

Make sure they're not resting on the cans. How many objects can the card hold before falling?

Now use the card to form an arch. Wedge the ends between the two cans so that it forms an arch (a half-circle shape). Again, measure how many objects the arch-card can hold up before collapsing.

To learn more about structures, machines and a lot more fun stuff, come to The Children's Museum on November 20 for Engineering Sunday, part of the Family Science Sunday series.

The United Way's Community Campaign runs during the fall. If you participate where you work, please remember that you can choose to designate The Children's Museum as the recipient of your charitable contribution. Talk with your employer's personnel office to learn how.

Help introduce children to the wonders of science and nature. Designate your United Way contribution to The Children's Museum.

Gifts Honoring Any Occasion

As you plan your holiday parties for the fall and end of the year, please consider designating **The Children's Museum** as the recipient of gifts in honor of any occasion. Both donor and honoree will receive a handsome certificate and the pleasure of helping bring the fun of discovery to children throughout our region.