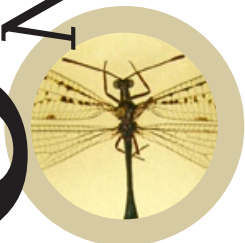


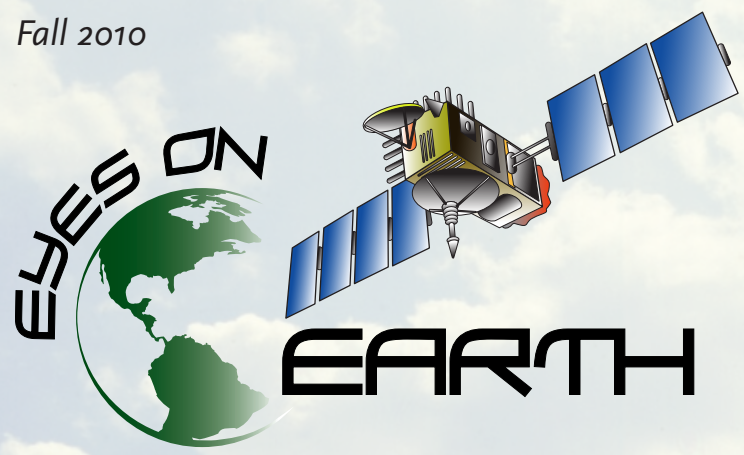
Virginia

Naturally!



Newsletter
of the
Virginia
Museum of
Natural
History

Fall 2010



Eyes on Earth opening October 2

The exhibit *Eyes on Earth* is open from October 2, 2010 to January 8, 2011 at VMNH. Far beyond the atmosphere of Earth, at orbits ranging from 290 to over 35,400 kilometers (180 to over 22,000 miles) above sea level, circle the satellites of the Earth Observing System (EOS), NASA's primary satellite mission. This small group of human-made scientific observers is constantly scanning our planet—tracking weather, monitoring pollution, creating

maps, and gathering information that helps scientists predict storms, monitor forest fires, and study the holes in the ozone layer. *Eyes on Earth* is a highly interactive science exhibition that focuses on the EOS and examines how satellite observations are made and what we can learn about the Earth using space technology.



IN THIS ISSUE

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- 3 EVENTS AND OPENINGS
- 5 EDUCATION PROGRAMS
- 8 UPCOMING EVENTS

Hahn Hall of Biodiversity

The *Hahn Hall of Biodiversity* opened August 27 with an unveiling reception in celebration of this new permanent exhibit gallery. *Hahn Hall* features the spectacular

African mammal collections of Dr. T. Marshall Hahn Jr., President Emeritus of Virginia Tech. Dr. Hahn generously donated his extensive collections to VMNH for the enjoyment and education of countless future visitors of all ages.



Most of the animals on display are African antelopes that demonstrate an extraordinary diversity of behavioral and physical traits. The species on display represent nearly the entire spectrum of behavioral and physical variation in the group, with 26 of the 75 different species of antelopes included in the exhibit. Species are arranged so that close relatives are near each other, and many species are represented by more than one specimen. This arrangement invites observation of similarities and differences within and between species. This exhibit also features three predators: lion, hyena, and leopard,

HAHN

HALL OF BIODIVERSITY

Hahn Hall of Biodiversity continued on page 3.

We are now open
on Sundays.

Now through December 26,
visitors can take part
in behind-the-scenes tours
at 2 p.m. on Sundays.





Director's Message

Dear VMNH Community,

Natural history museums are often seen as musty places with a lot of old, dusty stuff on display. The 21st century museum needs to not only provide a sense of wonder and awe about the world around us, but also needs to keep a fresh perspective. New events and discoveries push our understanding of nature and the universe forward every day, and museums must respond to these changes to best serve our audiences.

The Virginia Museum of Natural History is pleased to showcase three new visitor experiences! We opened the Hooker Furniture Discovery Reef, located off our *Harvest Foundation Great Hall* in August. This is an area designed for our younger visitors to play and learn basic concepts of science. It has seating and free wi-fi so parents can relax with a cup of coffee from our PALEO Café while their children explore a simulated sunken ship, search for treasures in a dig pit, or create their own puppet show with marine animals.

Also in August we opened the *Hahn Hall of Biodiversity*. 2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity, so the opening of this hall is indeed timely! This new exhibit features 50 mounts of African mammals along with interpretation designed to support Virginia science standards of learning.

Before the end of 2010, we will also open a new exhibit on the second floor celebrating fossil life, including the original research we do in house at VMNH. Not only will we exhibit our own materials from our vaults, but we will also have a special case dedicated to showing off fossil specimens from the Smithsonian Institution that will change out regularly. As a Smithsonian Affiliate, we are one of a select few museums in the country that have this opportunity.

We hope you come and visit and join us in the excitement of new experiences!

Sincerely,
Joe B. Keiper, Ph.D., Executive Director

Young Friends' Endless Summer

The Young Friends of VMNH hosted "Endless Summer," a festive evening to honor the educators of Martinsville, Henry County and Carlisle School on Thursday, September 23. This event was proudly sponsored by Bassett Office Supply and El Nortenō. The Young Friends of the Virginia Museum of Natural History is a membership group of the museum for members in their 20s, 30s and 40s. The program aims to raise awareness of the museum among the region's young professionals and to help attract and retain new museum members. The Young Friends group also supports and promotes the mission of the Virginia Museum of Natural History through a variety of educational, social and fundraising activities which will provide new audiences and support for museum programs such as exhibits, acquisitions, conservation and expeditions. For more information, call 276-634-4162 or e-mail charlotte.harter@vmnh.virginia.gov.



Jurassic Pork BBQ & Chili Cook-off October 23

Tickets and team slots are still available for the museum's *Jurassic Pork Barbeque and Chili Cook-off* to be held outside the museum on Saturday, October 23 from 5 to 10 p.m. The event will allow the public to sample some of the region's best barbeque and chili.

The event will feature live music by the *Part-time Party Time Band*, an icon in Southeastern entertainment for nearly three decades. In addition, college football fans will be able to watch the Saturday night games on an outdoor screen throughout the event. Tickets to this year's event are available in the Museum Store and the museum's online store at www.vmnh.net. Tickets are also available for purchase at the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and at the Martinsville Uptown Revitalization Association. Advance tickets are \$8 per adult and \$5 for children 12 and under. Adult tickets are \$10 at the door. To participate in this year's event or to inquire about sponsorship opportunities, call the museum at 276-634-4166.



VMNH takes part in Smithsonian Museum Day

The museum took part in Smithsonian magazine's 6th annual Museum Day on Saturday, September 25. Visitors with a Museum Day pass received free admission to VMNH and its many new exhibits. In addition, VMNH members received free behind-the-scenes tours of selected scientific labs and collections storage areas.

To become a VMNH member, call 276-634-4162 or e-mail charlotte.harter@vmnh.virginia.gov.

Hooker Furniture Discovery Reef

The Hooker Furniture Discovery Reef at VMNH is a hands-on, interactive play and discovery area for children. The target age for the Discovery Reef is 8 and under, although the interactive elements in the space accommodate learners of all ages.

The centerpiece of the Discovery Reef is a wooden ship that serves as a hands-on play area for children. This ship features multiple decks and climbing areas and also includes an extensive interior space that serves as an additional play area. Additional interactive elements in the Discovery Reef include a coral reef-themed puppet show, as well as a hands-on, educational water table. The Reef also includes a variety of books, games, and puzzles.

The Hooker Furniture Discovery Reef is made possible through support from Hooker Furniture Corporation, the Charity League of Martinsville-Henry County, and donations from the staff of the Virginia Museum of Natural History.



HAHN HALL OF BIODIVERSITY

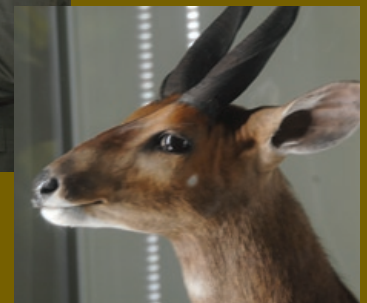
Hahn Hall of Biodiversity continued from page 1

that are from Africa. Predators have traits that allow them to hunt successfully; prey animals, including antelopes, have traits that allow them to escape from predators. This exhibit compares physical traits in a predator and an antelope.

Scientists classify animals using physical traits such as horn size and shape. Animals that are close relatives usually share many similarities in their physical features. The highlighted taxidermy mounts are arranged so that visitors can compare horn size and shape, as well as body color and distinctive markings. Despite the diversity displayed by this group, they are all close relatives, classified as members of the family Bovidae. The Hahn Hall of Biodiversity is made possible through generous support from the Dr. T. Marshall Hahn family of Blacksburg, Virginia.



VMNH Executive Director Dr. Joe Keiper; Dr. T. Marshall Hahn Jr.; Ms. Jean Quible; and Secretary of Natural Resources Doug Domenech discuss the collection.



Bushbuck.



Lion.



Hyena.

Exhibit Spotlight

Eyes on Earth

October 2, 2010 to January 8, 2011
Special Exhibit Hall

Eyes on Earth is a highly interactive science exhibition produced and developed by the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) that focuses on NASA's Earth Observing System (EOS). The exhibit examines how satellite observations are made and what we can learn about the Earth using space technology.

Presented by



Hahn Hall of Biodiversity

Now Open
Permanent Exhibit Hall

The *Hahn Hall of Biodiversity* opened August 27 with an unveiling reception in celebration of this new permanent exhibit gallery. *Hahn Hall* features the spectacular African mammal collections of Dr. Thomas Marshall Hahn Jr., President Emeritus of Virginia Tech. Dr. Hahn generously donated his extensive collections to VMNH for the enjoyment and education of countless future visitors of all ages.

Documenting Diversity

Opening November 2010
Harvest Foundation of the Piedmont Great Hall

Biodiversity is the variation of life forms on Earth and within ecosystems. *Documenting Biodiversity* explores how scientists document and study issues related to Earth's diversity and shows why such research is important and how it is applied in various disciplines. This exhibit also focuses on the importance of diversity on a global and local scale.

Animal Secrets

January 22 to May 7, 2011
Special Exhibit Hall

What do raccoons eat? How does an eagle care for its young? Where does a chipmunk sleep? In *Animal Secrets*, children and parents will find the answers to questions like these as they explore the hidden habitats and secret lives of forest animals. Through imaginative role-play and multi-sensory, hands-on activities, families will discover nature from an animal's point of view as they explore immersive, naturalistic environments, including a stream, a woodland, a meadow, a cave, and a naturalists' tent. *Animal Secrets* is designed for children ages 3 to 8 and their families.

Presented by



Museum Public Education Programs

Museum public education programs are held in the museum's Suzanne M. Lacy Education Center and in area parks. Programs are \$5 per participant (unless otherwise noted). Pre-registration is required one week prior to each program by contacting the museum at 276-643-4185 or discover@vmnh.virginia.gov. Programs are subject to cancellation if minimum numbers are not met. Send questions and inquiries to discover@vmnh.virginia.gov.



VMNH offers children ages 3 to 5 the opportunity to experience natural history first-hand with the Doodle Bugs! program. The hour-long programs include imaginative stories, fun activities, games and crafts that spark creativity and curiosity. Programs are held at 10 a.m. and repeated at 3 p.m. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Simply Spook-tacular

October 27, 2010
Have some non-scary Halloween fun as we make creepy crafts and listen to a frightfully fun story.

Eyes on Earth

November 17, 2010
Blast off and have a spacey good time exploring planet Earth. Make a telescope and explore our newest exhibit, *Eyes on Earth*.

Holiday Helpers

December 15, 2010
Get ready for the holidays by creating festive crafts and even some easy and fun holiday food!

SPECIAL SATURDAYS

VMNH Special Saturdays programs make learning fun. Each program explores a different natural history topic through games, crafts, and fun-filled activities. Fee is \$5 and pre-registration is required.

Creepy Crawlies!

October 2, 2010
10 a.m. – noon, Ages 8 – 11
Ooey, gooey creepy crawlers! Learn about insects and their unique defense mechanisms. Did you know some create their own slime? Learn which insects do and make your own slime!

Gravelly Graves

October 2, 2010
3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., All ages
Gravelly Nature Preserve, Ridgeway, VA
This program is part of the Virginia Archaeology Month "Written in Stone: Exploring the Commonwealth's Historic Cemeteries" program. Children and adults will join a VMNH educator at the Gravelly Nature Preserve to hike the Jones Cliff Trail to the Burgess Family Cemetery located on the property. Dress appropriately for hiking and the weather. Pre-registration is required. (Fees must be pre-paid or paid in cash on the day of the event.)

Fairy Houses and Gnome Homes

October 9, 2010
10 a.m. – noon, Ages 5 – 8
Build tiny houses and towns out of materials found in nature.

Eyes on Earth

October 16, 2010
10 a.m. – noon, Ages 8 – 11
Space is an amazing place! Blast off with us as we explore the latest exhibit and find out how NASA satellites are used to observe Earth from space.

Fright Night

October 22, 2010
7 p.m. – 9 p.m., All ages
Join MHC Community Nature Initiative on a night hike in Frank Wilson Park and learn how to navigate through the spooky night without a light! Along the way learn about the history of Halloween and hear spooky stories of Martinsville-Henry County.

Scrumdiddlyumptious Spooky Treats

October 30, 2010
Noon – 2 p.m., Ages 5 – 8
Love food? Love art? Love Halloween? Combine the three by making artwork that is good and scary enough to eat. Come join us in this fun-filled activity that will tickle your taste buds!

LEGOs: 3D and Beyond

November 6, 2010
10 a.m. – noon, Ages 8 – 11
Participants discover how to create a blueprint using math and measurement. After completing the blueprint, participants will construct their project using LEGOs and combine each project to create a community.

Fall into Fun

November 13, 2010
10 a.m. – noon, Ages 7 – 9
Join us as we explore Frank Wilson Park to discover what wonderful Fall transformations are happening. Dress appropriately for walking trails.

Seasons and the Sun

November 13, 2010
10 a.m. – noon, Ages 9 – 11
Learn why it gets colder in the winter, and why the days seem shorter. Learn all about our planet's journey through the seasons while traveling around the sun.

Day in the Life of Native Americans in the 1600s

November 20, 2010
10 a.m. – noon
Join us in Frank Wilson Park in our walk back in time to learn about Native Americans and how they lived without cell phones, cars, and computers!



A Night Under the Stars

December 4, 2010
7 – 8 p.m.
Ages 10 and above accompanied by an adult.
Find out what's up tonight in the nighttime sky. Participants will learn how to navigate around the sky and locate some of the more common objects. Pre-registration required. The location will be announced. (Fees must be pre-paid or paid in cash on the day of the event.)

Scrumdiddlyumptious Holiday Treats

December 11, 2010
10 a.m. – noon, Ages 5 – 8
Love food? Love art? Love the holidays? Combine the three by making artwork that is good enough to eat. Come join us in this fun-filled activity that will tickle your taste buds.



Sleepovers

Earth and Sky and Rocks Rock: Brownie and Junior Girl Scouts

November 5–6; 6:30 p.m. – 9 a.m.; \$40 per scout
Join other Girl Scouts for a night of Earth-rocking fun!
Come to the museum for a night of activities and earn
either your Brownie Earth and Sky Try-it or the Junior
Rocks Rock Badge.

Geologist Sleepover: Cub Scouts and Webelos

November 12–13; 6:30 p.m. – 9 a.m.; \$40 per scout
Love rocks? We do, too! Join museum staff and other
Boy Scouts for an evening of adventure and discovery.
Both sleepovers include a pizza dinner, evening
snack, and a continental breakfast. Scouts will receive
a sleepover patch and certificate. Pre-registration
is required. Scouts may come as a troop or as an
individual. Adult chaperones are required. Contact the
museum for more information and sleepover forms.

Night at the Haunted Museum

October 30–31, 6:30 p.m. – 9 a.m.
\$40 per child and one adult;
additional children \$25; Ages 9–11
Come uncover the mysteries of the
museum with our Night at the Haunted
Museum Sleepover. Spook-tacular
activities are bound to occur with this
exciting event. Discover all there is to
know about the goop lab, explore the
museum in the dark, and munch on scary
sweets and tricky treats.
Visit www.vmnh.net for more details.

Jammy Jams

Are your young children dressed for bed
but won't go to sleep? Well bring children,
ages 3 – 5 years, to the museum to enjoy
some “fun-ertainment.” Come in your
pajamas and enjoy the excitement of a
nighttime quest without spending the
night. Join us for the first Jammy Jam,
The First Thanksgiving, on November 19,
2010 from 6 to 9 p.m. \$20 for one child
and adult; additional child (3 – 5 age group
only) or adult is \$10. Pre-registration and
payment is required one week in advance.



VSSI

The 15th Annual Virginia Science Standards Institute grew into four sessions this year. The institutes were held at Westmoreland State Park, Twin Lakes State Park (two sessions), and Hungry Mother State Park during July and August. The institutes were organized in collaboration with several Virginia departments including Education, Conservation and Recreation, Game and Inland Fisheries, Forestry, and Environmental Quality, along with the Science Museum of Virginia, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and VMNH. Forty-four fourth and fifth grade teachers representing 27 school districts attended the institute.

Birthday Parties

Let VMNH help you celebrate by having us host your party. The museum provides the perfect setting to entertain all ages. Sign up today! To learn more visit www.vmnh.net.

Join the VMNH Youth Volunteers

VMNH is looking for motivated youth members of the community to volunteer for the upcoming school year. Assist museum staff with special events, animal care, and various other projects. To become a volunteer visit www.vmnh.net.

Outreach Across the State

Central Virginia/Charlottesville

To learn more about this outreach site go to www.vmnh.net

Eastern Virginia/Hampton

This area is our newest addition to VMNH's outreach programs. For more information contact Outreach Coordinator Susan Walton at susan.walton@vmnh.virginia.gov or our main office at 276-634-4185.

Curators' Corner

Mammalogy

Dr. Nancy Moncrief recently presented results of her research on fox squirrels at the annual conference of the American Society of Mammalogists. Dr. Moncrief also attended that organization's Systematic Collections Committee meeting as a member of that standing committee.

Dr. Moncrief's intern from the summer of 2009, high school student Ameya Chumble, was recently chosen as the winner of the Best Student paper in the Zoology Section of the Virginia Junior Academy of Sciences. His presentation was based on research he performed with Dr. Moncrief at VMNH. Ameya also won the Virginia Biology Educators' award for outstanding zoology research in 2010.

PALEO Café

Tazo® Chai Eggnog Latte



Celebrate the holidays with unique gifts and delicious treats in the Museum Store and PALEO Café.

Visit www.vmnh.net for PALEO Café hours and listings of delicious specials.



The Virginia Museum of Natural History at 21 Starling Avenue, Martinsville, VA is the state museum of natural history for Virginia, seeking to preserve, study and interpret the wealth of Virginia's natural heritage. The museum promotes research, education, exhibits, publications and programs in natural history.

VMNH ADMISSION
\$9/Adults, \$7/College Students and Senior Citizens, and \$5/Children and Youth 3 to 18. Children under 3 and VMNH members are always free with membership card. Group rates are available.

VMNH HOURS
Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Please call ahead for current hours of operation.

The museum is within easy driving distance of the Blue Ridge Parkway and Roanoke, Lynchburg, Danville and Greensboro, NC. For more information about membership, museum exhibits, group tours, or special events, please visit our Web site at www.vmnh.net or call 276-634-4141.

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Virginia Museum of
NATURAL HISTORY

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The Virginia Museum of Natural History is accredited by the American Association of Museums and is a member of the Association of Science-Technology Centers, Southeastern Museums Conference, Natural Science Collections Alliance, Virginia Association of Museums, and Museum Store Association.

VMNH is an agency of the Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia. The VMNH Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization.

Holiday Open House

The museum will host a Holiday Open House on Tuesday, November 30 from 4 to 7 p.m. Santa Claus will greet children and families in *The Harvest Foundation Great Hall*, where he will present a book reading and take gift requests from children of all ages. The open house will also include refreshments and performances for families. The Museum Store and PALEO Café will offer free samples and a variety of holiday specials.

VMNH Board Updates

New Board of Trustees' Officers

- C. Novel Martin, III**
Roanoke, VA
Chairman
- Sammy Redd**
Martinsville, VA
Vice-Chairman
- James W. Severt, II**
Washington, DC
Treasurer
- Melissa D. Neff**
Richmond, VA
Secretary

New Foundation Board Officers

- Gail D. Smith**
President
Belville, NC
- Kelly Cain**
Vice-President
Martinsville, VA
- E. Larry Ryder**
Treasurer
Axton, VA
- Manly Boyd**
Secretary
Martinsville, VA

New Foundation Board Members

- Gayle F. Barts**
Sutherlin, VA
- Paige Frith**
Martinsville, VA
- Anthony Jackson**
Collinsville, VA
- Richard Lawhon**
Martinsville, VA

Employees of the Month

May: Donnie Jones

June: Tena Bullins

July: Frank DeShazo

August: Jill K. Harris

Volunteers of the Month

May: Evelyn Clark

June: Evalyn Chapman

July: Nick Coleman

August: Brenda Hundley

Start Planning Your Holiday Parties at VMNH Now

8 VMNH • Virginia, Naturally

Corporate Members

Bassett Furniture Industries Foundation, Bassett Office Supply, BB&T, Blue Ridge Packaging Corp., Building Supply Company, Inc., Carter Bank & Trust, CenturyLink, El Nortenō, Gardner, Barrow, Sharpe & Reynolds, P.C., Hooker Furniture Corporation, Kings Mountain Animal Clinic, Lester Group, Inc., Marjorie Sutton Memorial Fdn., Martinizing Dry Cleaners, Martinsville First Savings Bank, M-HC Economic Development Corporation, Memorial Hospital of Martinsville, Norfolk Southern, Norris Funeral Services, Inc., Ntelos, Pigs-R-U's, Inc., Quality Inn/Dutch Inn, Ratatouille Catering LLC, Rising Sun Breads LLC, S & K Office Products, Inc., Sam's Club, State Farm Insurance, Stifel Financial, SunTrust Bank, Susan Critz Catering, Tacoma, Inc., The Eye Site, Virginia Lottery, Vistar Eye Center, Wal-Mart

As part of VMNH's Green Initiative, the newsletter is printed on recycled paper. In addition, it is printed with vegetable-based ink.



Upcoming Events

Learn more at www.vmnh.net

October 1 – VMNH Foundation Golf Tournament.

October 2 – Opening of the *Eyes on Earth* exhibit.

October 23 – Jurassic Pork BBQ & Chili Cook-off.

November 30 – VMNH Holiday Open House.

December 16 – Young Friends of VMNH Christmas Party.

January 8, 2011 – Closing of the *Eyes on Earth* exhibit.

January 20, 2011 – Opening reception for the *Animal Secrets* exhibit, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

January 22, 2011 – Dog Days of Winter festival.

January 22, 2011 – Opening of the *Animal Secrets* exhibit.

April 2, 2011 – VMNH Foundation Spring Gala.