



Friends of the
Palo Alto Junior
Museum & Zoo

2011– 2012 Annual Report



Dedicated to supporting and enhancing the Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo

President's Message

I'm pleased to report the activities and accomplishments of Friends of the Palo Alto Junior Museum over the past year. We renovated the lobby of the JMZ, began work on two new exhibits, and continued our Science Outreach Program in East Palo Alto. In addition, our membership program is robust and our members enjoyed another great year of events with Moms & Muffins, Halloween Zoo Night, Dads & Donuts and BugFest.

This year, we continued to work on a master plan to address the Museum's ongoing need for an updated facility that will better serve our current and future visitors, collections, and operations. We have worked closely with an architectural firm and museum planning group to work with a broad array of stakeholders to address the JMZ's current state and plan for the future.

Friends of the Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo accomplished so much this year thanks to your support. Your membership, donations, and involvement mean more than you know to the Friends, and more importantly to the children and families who visit the JMZ and benefit from our programs. Thank you!

Aletha Coleman
President, Board of Directors



Introduction

The Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo shines as a community gem which strives to engage a child's curiosity in science and nature. In the heart of Palo Alto, the JMZ continues its mission with the support of the Friends of the Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo and its donors and members. During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, the Friends continued to support this mission through educational outreach programs, infrastructure improvements, and a vibrant event schedule and membership program. In addition, this year we continued to work on a master plan for the years to come so that we can continue to serve the needs of our constituents.

None of this work would have been possible without the support of our donors. Thanks to our generous supporters, the Friends had another successful fundraising year. This year we raised \$108,402 from our lobby donation barrel, which continues to be an important source of revenue for the Friends. Membership donations totaled \$28,560 and we raised \$47,359 in annual giving.

Our largest expenditures this year can be broken down into three categories: science outreach, facility improvements, and architectural/master planning services. We spent \$29,622 on science outreach classes for East Palo Alto students and \$39,782 on facility improvements including a lobby update and work on new exhibits. We also invested \$215,989 in architectural and master planning services in order to begin to plan for the future of the JMZ.

Science Outreach Program

The JMZ's Science Outreach Program provides high quality science education to students in low income areas. This year, the Friends provided \$30,000 for the program. As a result, the JMZ was able to serve 500 students at Willow Oaks in Ravenswood and 200 students through afterschool programs at the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula in East Palo Alto.

In addition to funding this year's program, the Friends were awarded grants from Palo Alto Rotary and Palo Alto Community fund totaling \$15,000, which will ensure this valuable educational opportunity for kids in need continues next year. These grants will fund a new field trip program for the students served by the Science Outreach Program.



Infrastructure & Exhibits

Lobby Improvements

This year, the lobby area of the JMZ benefitted from a variety of functional updates courtesy of the Friends. The lobby received a fresh coat of paint and carpet was installed on the walls of the lobby in order to help control the sound level in the building.

The Friends installed a video kiosk in order to increase communication from both the Friends and the JMZ staff to visitors about our membership program, upcoming events, and educational opportunities. In addition, the video kiosk provided a new stewardship opportunity by allowing us to publicly recognize our donors on site.



Weaverbird House

This year, work began to convert the JMZ's old owl aviary into a new exhibit, Weaverbird House. When complete next year, it will house a colony of Taveta Golden Weaverbirds who weave complex nests to hide babies and fool predators.

Raccoon Creek

Construction on Raccoon Creek began this year. The exhibit will provide the JMZ's raccoons, Aigon and Loki, with a wonderful new home. The new exhibit features the Discovery Tree, an up-close experience for kids.

Both Raccoon Creek and Weaverbird House were made possible by support from the Brin Wojcicki Foundation and are expected to be completed in fall 2012 .



Master Planning

This year, we made significant progress with our master plan. We engaged Gyroscope, a museum development consulting firm, and Cody Anderson Wasney (CAW), an architectural firm, to work with us on creating a vision for our master plan and future site plans. To begin, CAW and Gyroscope worked with JMZ staff, Friends board members, and other key stakeholders on a needs assessment.

A series of meetings were held in order to gather information regarding the current issues the JMZ is facing as well as the vision for the future of JMZ. Stakeholders including the City of Palo Alto's community services department, local residents and leaders, representatives of neighboring facilities within Rinconada park, visitors, and donors were all included in the needs assessment process. Including a broad range of stakeholders allowed the Friends Board, Gyroscope, and CAW to understand the perspective and needs of the greater JMZ community as we develop a long term plan for the institution.

Using what they heard from the different stakeholder groups, Gyroscope and CAW then were able to begin to pull together a more comprehensive list of needs and requirements for a potential new building. These needs and requirements were then incorporated into a more visual interpretation for the future of the JMZ including initial drawings of a new and improved museum and zoo.

As we move forward, we are looking to the future and investing in the Zoo habitats and Museum exhibits and continuing to support the JMZ's excellent science education programming throughout the region.



Events

The Friends held four successful events this year. In addition to our annual Moms & Muffins, Dads & Donuts, and Halloween Zoo Night events, this year the Friends and the JMZ co-hosted BugFest, a public event celebrating bugs. The highlight of BugFest was the critter photoshoot, where member kids donned beautiful bug costumes and had their portraits taken in front of a themed background.

We are so appreciative of the local business sponsors whose support made these events possible: Pizza My Heart, Lucky Supermarkets, Peet's Coffee & Tea, Safeway, Izzy's Brooklyn Bagels, Piazza's Fine Foods, Whole Foods, Cannonball Wine Company, House of Bagels, and 4imprint.



Membership



The Friends are thankful for the support of the 225 households that are part of our membership program. Members receive benefits including invitations to special events, access to exhibit openings, and enhanced museum and zoo experiences.

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