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A Discovery Museum Science & Space Center Newsletter

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Plans for Science Museum... Gain Steam

Published Saturday, Oct. 08, 2011
By Ryan Lillis

Sacramento just landed a new airport terminal and a major addition to the Crocker Art Museum. Could a science museum and planetarium be next?

Backers of the planned \$50 million Powerhouse Science Center on the Sacramento River north of downtown say they've nailed down enough money to break ground this year.

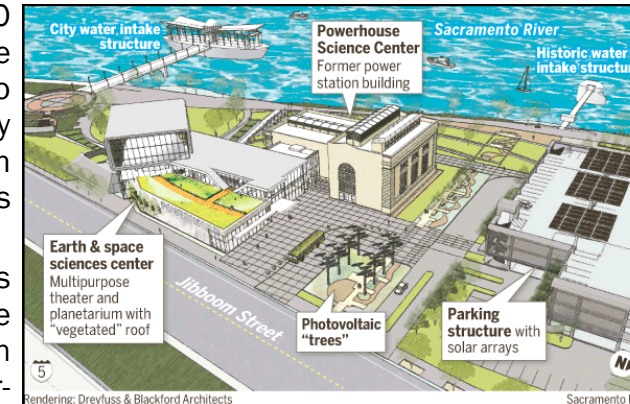
In April, the group was awarded a \$7 million state grant for nature education and research facilities. Organizers say more money is coming from undisclosed corporate donors. Naming rights are being negotiated.

"It's going to be a real amenity for the city and the region for generations," said Councilman Rob Fong. With the Crocker, Old Sacramento and the nearby State Railroad Museum, Fong said, "To have another big, world-class facility starts to give a great definition to that part of the city."

City Councilwoman Angelique Ashby, who represents the area, said the science center "will not only serve to activate our riverfront, but will also become a regional destination, providing a powerful educational experience for families."

The science center will be an-

chored by the nearly 100-year-old former PG&E powerhouse that sits empty along the Sacramento River next to Interstate 5. The neoclassical structure will be rehabbed to house biology and natural history exhibits.



effort. Altogether, the new complex will be roughly eight times the size of the current museum. Officials of the Discovery Center estimate it will attract at least 250,000 visitors a year – three times as many as the

current museum. "As a destination landmark building, people will now know where we are," said Beth Callahan, the museum's director of marketing and community relations. "We won't be tucked away in a suburban location, and we should attract a lot more tourists than we do now."

While museum officials are still well short of raising the total funding needed to complete the project, they are confident the remaining money will be brought in through grants, public financing available to the renovation of historical buildings and corporate naming rights.

Museum organizers are in discussions with major funders, including local corporations, to raise the remaining money, Callahan said. She said they have signed non-disclosure agreements in those negotiations, so she could not discuss specifics.

Design experts lauded the plan for maintaining the site's historical significance and including modern elements.

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Science Discovery Weekends 12:30pm to 4pm

NOVEMBER 5TH & 6TH - SUPERBUGS: NOT YOUR ORDINARY GERMS

In the last ten years, superbugs have appeared with greater frequency than ever before. These dangerous critters evade modern medicine and are a hot topic in the medical community. Visit the Museum to learn about these dangerous microscopic germs. Kids build a "superbug" of their own to take home as a souvenir.

NOVEMBER 11TH - 13TH - POOR PLUTO

In 2006, Pluto was declassified as a planet and then became known as a plutoid. Although it was demoted, Pluto is still an amazing part of our galaxy. Discover more about Pluto and craft a fun project to take home.

NOVEMBER 19TH & 20TH - THE HUMAN GENOME PROJECT

The Human Genome Project is an international 13-year effort formally

begun in October 1990. The project was planned to last 15 years, but rapid technological advances accelerated the completion to 2003. Project goals were to determine the complete sequence of the 3 billion DNA subunits, identify all human genes, and make them accessible for further biological study. Each family completes a DNA lab together.

NOVEMBER 25TH - 27TH - RAMBLIN' REINDEER

Kick off the holiday season with hooves and antlers, learning about the famous reindeer that pull Santa's sleigh. Mixing science with legend, this is a fun weekend for the whole family. Touch an actual reindeer pelt and study the hoof impressions they leave behind. Children craft a cute reindeer souvenir to start the holiday decorating at home.



Holiday Happenings

It's November and the Holidays are upon us! Once again our staff at the Discovery Museum would like to celebrate the season with you.

We invite you to come and do all your holiday shopping for those little budding scientists in your family on November 25th and save an additional 10% in addition to your regular 10% member's discount – for a full 20%!

A Discovery Museum membership makes a unique gift for those friends that have everything while increasing in value with every visit.

Save the date: The annual Discovery Museum Holiday party will be held Friday evening, December 9th. More information coming soon.

Expanding Your Horizons Conference



Educator Andrea Martin teaching the girls

Sacramento State's Center for STEM Excellence and the non-profit group Women of AT&T hosted the 5th Annual Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) Conference on the Sacramento State Campus on Saturday, October 8, 2011.

This event was a one-day science and math conference for 6th-8th grade girls, designed to encourage and empower young women to pursue education and careers in

science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Over 340 6th-8th grade girls were in attendance. The Discovery Museum was proud to have our Executive Director and successful local businesswoman Michele Wong deliver the keynote address.

Museum educators hoped to inspire the girls by conducting a workshop **Up Close and Personal: A Cellular Look at You** which directed the girls to examine their own cheek cells under a microscope as well as extract and make their own DNA necklaces. Three graduate students from UC Davis aided the girls with their experiments.

The Discovery Museum has always recognized the significance an education in science and math

makes for **ALL** students. However, women in particular are less likely to choose a career in the sciences. According to U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spelling, "Girls continue to be underrepresented in critical fields related to math and science. They make up only a third of AP physics students...and only 15 percent of AP computer science classes. At the college level, less than 20 percent of engineering majors are women. The number of women with computer science degrees has dropped 25 percent since 1985."

The Discovery Museum was honored to have participated in the conference and hopes to help increase young women's interest in science one girl at a time.

2011 The Great California Shake Out Recap



Emily Anderson & the crew of Sac Metro 103

Nearly 9 million Californians participated in the 4th Annual Great Shake Out. On Thursday, October 20 at 10:20 am fifth graders from Raymond Case Elementary, fourth and fifth graders from California Montessori School and museum volunteer family of the year, the Cuny's took

part in the largest earthquake drill ever in our state. Good Day Sacramento and CBS Channel 13 News were on hand to record our, "Drop, Cover and Hold On!" drill.

The museum hosted the American Red Cross, City of Sacramento Office of Emergency Services, Blood Source and Sacramento Metro Fire Station 103 over the weekend of October 22nd and 23rd to extend lessons on "Family Emergency Preparedness." Visitors took away valuable information on how to take action steps today that will prevent a disaster from becoming a catastrophe.

The museum is proud to serve as the inland region coordinating

institution for the Earthquake Country Alliance. As an EPI Center, Education and Public Information Center, the museum works as part of a statewide public-private-community partnership which links together the public education efforts of organizations that provide earthquake information and services.



Emily Anderson & Red Cross representatives

Plans for Science Museum

Continued from Page 1

The proposal has received the blessing of the city's planning commission.

"I really wanted to see something happen to that building (the PG&E station) that was respectful of the past," said Phil Harvey, an architect and planning commissioner. "From a broad perspective, it's really the kind of thing we need to do with our riverfront to make it more active."

The original powerhouse was designed to act as the centerpiece of a public park along the river that was never built. Instead, the building stood alone, operating until 1954 and then serving briefly as a junkyard. The state and federal governments spent a total of \$5.2 million to clean up toxic substances and get the land ready for re-development.

Today, the shuttered power station sits next to the levee bike trail, alongside a small park and the city's sparkling new water intake facility.

City officials are counting on the museum to act as a catalyst for growth in the nearby River District along Richards Boulevard and the massive rail yard site between the powerhouse and downtown. Rail yard plans include not only a new basketball arena but an expansion of the California State Railroad Museum.

The new science center "will create a destination location in that area," said Patty Kleinknecht, the executive director of the River District business association. "It's within walking distance of Old Sacramento and connected (by a bike path) to the Crocker. We're really building some momentum along the Sacramento riverfront."

For a complete listing of participating Merchant Club business locations, please visit our website at www.TheDiscovery.org.

Robots and Jell-O Shots

Food, music, Jell-O shots and a robotic Maitre D'!

No, this isn't the latest episode of *The Jetsons*, and *Cosmos*, not Rosie Robot served, the 300 plus guests (including Mayor Johnson and his wife) which partied throughout the night Friday, September 30th at the Discovery Museum Science & Space Center's annual fundraiser, Robot's and Jell-O Shots.

The party was aimed to raise money as well as community awareness for the Discovery Museum Science & Space Center which is growing into the Powerhouse Science Center within the next several years. When completed, The Powerhouse Science Center, which will be located along the river between Discovery Park and Old Sacramento, will become a tourist destination and a vital educational resource for Northern California.

At Bots n' Shots partygoers embraced their inner geek with rocket launches, cockroach races, beer pong, live music, a sushi chef and an open bar. Thanks to the generosity of event sponsors and guests, the museum raised \$15,000 toward the realization of the Powerhouse Science Center.



Carla Collins with Cosmos

Challenger Learning Center 2011/12 Community Mission Schedule

(For ages 9 and above!)

Select Fridays 5:30pm-8:30pm

Pre-registration is required:

- \$20 non-members
- \$15 for members

2011/12 Mission Dates:

- ✓ Dec 16th (Comet)
- ✓ Feb 17th, 2012 (Mars)
- ✓ April 13th, 2012 (Moon)

For more information, please visit our website, www.thediscovery.org or call (916) 808-3942 to make a reservation!

