

Raven Hill Discovery Center is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation.

Mission: Raven Hill provides a place that enhances hands-on and lifelong learning for all ages by connecting science, history & the arts.

May Day baskets

When we were kids, we loved to make small paper cone-shaped baskets on May Day, fill them with flowers and deliver them to the neighbors. We would sneak up to the front door, leave the flowers, ringing the bell and then running away! If the recipient caught you, they were entitled to a hug or kiss! May Day occurs annually on May 1st, so it is an easy holiday to remember. May Day, sometimes called May Basket Day is rich in history and folklore. May Day celebrates the return of spring. To make a May basket, simply take a paper plate cut to the center or a piece of paper and roll it into a cone and staple or tape. Decorate the cone with spring colors. Cut a handle out of another paper plate and staple or tape to the cone. Fill the cone with flowers or greens! Don't pick wildflowers as they are protected. If you don't have flowers, make your own paper ones! May Day has its roots in astronomy. May 1st is halfway between the spring equinox and the summer solstice! It's one of the Celtic cross-quarter days, which celebrated the midway points between all solstices and equinoxes of the year. Other May Day traditions include setting up a decorated May tree, or Maypole, around which people danced. People would weave floral garlands or crowns to wear. In parts of Ireland, people would make a May bush, which typically was a thorn bush or branch decorated with flowers and ribbons. Create your own May bush or tree by decorating with flowers, colored paper or colored ribbons! Or honor another May Day tradition: walk barefoot outside in the dew (or snow)! Happy May Day!



1 Gather supplies



2 Cut paper plate



3 Roll into basket



4 Decorate & fill



5 Deliver!



First lady Grace Coolidge receives a May basket
Credit: Library of Congress



Dancing around a May pole



Decorating a May bush