

WHERE **SCIENCE****HISTORY****AND****ART** CONNECT

To: Raven Hill friends

From: Cheri

Date: July 6, 2024

Re: *Encouraging an open mind*

Albert Einstein is often quoted as saying, "The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size." This captures the transformational experiences found at Raven Hill Discovery Center. Raven Hill achieves its mission by providing a diverse array of interactive exhibits and hands-on activities that introduce visitors to new scientific concepts, artistic expressions, and historical insights, encouraging everyone to form new connections. Engaging with these diverse experiences expands the mind and broadens a visitor's understanding of the world. The Center emphasizes learning through direct experience, which often has a more profound and lasting impact than traditional learning methods.

For example, the Periodic Table of the Elements display provides practical insights into how scientific principles impact daily life. The Periodic Table offers a rich array of learning opportunities, making abstract chemical concepts concrete, fostering interdisciplinary connections and encouraging inquiry. By highlighting raw ores from the earth, visitors can directly observe the natural state of elements, providing a tangible connection between the abstract symbols on the Periodic Table and their real-world forms. Displaying products that contain specific elements illustrates the practical applications and importance of these elements in daily life. The Periodic Table makes chemistry more accessible and relatable. Understanding real-world applications through the Periodic Table of the Elements can inspire new ways of thinking and problem-solving.

Three dimensional Periodic Table of the Elements



Each element on the Periodic Table has its own 12" cubical box that contains the element's symbol, the element as it comes from the earth, and products containing that element.

Writing with a graphite hand!



Graphite contains the element Carbon and is the "lead" in pencils. This hand is sculpted from graphite & paraffin, so you can actually write with the hand itself.

Bird's eye view of the Obelisk



An aerial view of the Obelisk shows the arcs to the south in the summer, when the sun is in the north and arcs to the north in the winter, when the sun is in the south. The straight line in the middle represents the two equinoxes.

Summer Solstice at the Obelisk



The arcs close to the Obelisk are the summer months and arc to the south because the sun is in the north.

Checking date & time at the Obelisk



Pictured above is a closeup of the shadow at 11am on June 21st.

Another example is the Obelisk in the Ancient World where visitors actively engage and internalize ideas & concepts in a way that permanently expands their horizons. The Obelisk serves as a powerful educational tool, broadening visitor perspectives in several ways by illustrating the cyclic nature of time and highlighting the knowledge of ancient civilizations. The changing shadows of the Obelisk help visitors visualize the cyclic nature of both the day and the year. This tangible representation of time's passage deepens their understanding of natural rhythms and astronomical cycles, which are fundamental concepts in both science and history. By recognizing that ancient civilizations used similar methods to track time, visitors can appreciate the ingenuity and observational skills of early civilizations. This connection fosters a greater respect for ancient cultures and their contributions to our understanding of the world.

A third example of the transformative experiences found at Raven Hill is the Treehouse. Visitors find a deeper appreciation for nature and its innate beauty there. The Treehouse embodies the principles and solutions proposed by Richard Louv in his book, "Last Child in the Woods," by providing a practical and enjoyable place to connect visitors with nature. Louv advocates for nature-based education as a way to enhance learning and creativity. The Treehouse offers opportunities for hands-on learning experiences. It is a unique space that encourages visitors to explore, observe and interact, expanding links to both science and nature.

Raven Hill Treehouse—only one of its kind!



The Treehouse is built in the shape of a maple leaf. Visitors are challenged to think about whether that leaf is from a red or sugar maple tree.

Observe and compare



This sign at the door of the treehouse encourages visitors to compare a red and sugar maple leaf and use their powers of observation to figure out the shape of the Treehouse itself.

The dynamic and ever evolving nature of the exhibits at Raven Hill encourages visitors to adopt a lifelong learning mindset. This ongoing pursuit of knowledge ensures that the mind remains open and continually expands with each new idea encountered. Different fields such as science, art and history are integrated, encouraging visitors to see connections between disciplines. This interdisciplinary approach helps break down silos of thought, leading to a more holistic and expansive understanding of our world. The Center's emphasis on curiosity-driven exploration encourages visitors to ask questions, seek answers and think creatively. By designing a space where people of all ages can learn together, Raven Hill fosters a community of shared knowledge and experiences. This community aspect of learning helps individuals grow by exposing them to diverse viewpoints and collaborative problem-solving, once again expanding the mind.

Raven holds the light!



Ravens symbolize intelligence, curiosity, transformation and are capable of complex problem-solving. Lightbulbs represent innovation, ideas, enlightenment and are a common symbol for a moment of insight or a new idea. A raven holding a lightbulb symbolizes the act of gaining wisdom and insight. The raven, already a symbol of intelligence, is illuminated by the lightbulb, representing the transformative power of innovative ideas. Once the raven (or the mind) has grasped the lightbulb (a new idea), it is forever changed, enlightened and expanded and can never revert to its former, more limited state.

Raven Hill Discovery Center embodies the essence of Einstein's quote by providing experiences that open minds to innovative ideas, leads to intellectual growth and offers a broader, more enriched perspective on the world for all visitors. This mindset of continuous learning and innovation supports the idea that an open mind is always growing and evolving.

Raven Hill is currently open to visitors seven days a week—10am to 4pm on weekdays, noon to 4pm on Saturdays and 2pm to 4pm on Sundays. Call 231.536.3369 or email info@miravenhill.org to make appointments to visit other times, including major holidays.

Classes are available for both children and adults. The **Summer Adventure Classes for Kids (SACK) Program** is held Monday through Thursday from 10:30am-12pm and 12:30pm-2:00pm.

Kids can come for a four-day class session or for just one day. Children attending both classes in a day can bring a lunch. Pre-registration is appreciated. Adults have the flexibility of scheduling individual or group art and other classes at their convenience. There is no minimum number of participants for adult classes.

Be sure to mark your calendars and visit Raven Hill's new exhibit **Under Michigan & Beyond**. The exhibit will be open during Raven Hill's regular hours through the end of 2025. Visit more than once! The exhibit is ever evolving, as we continue to add new displays about the rocks & minerals that come from our earth. When you come, bring a rock and replace a flag outlining the new Labyrinth in the Ancient World. Become a member of the "Labyrinth Builders Club" get your Club bracelet. Help us build a legacy.

Have a wonderful week and we hope to see you soon,

Cheri

