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Raven Hill Discovery Center, incorporated in 1991, 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.

To: Family and Friends everywhere

From: Cheri and Raven Hill

Date: October 15, 2022

Re: Storytelling

The last few weeks have been full of storytelling, so it just seems a natural topic for this week's update! Stories link us to our heritage and other cultures. They are memories of those who have passed. Illustrator and product designer Edward Miller says, "Stories are our primary tools of learning and teaching, the repositories of our lore and legends. They bring order into our confusing world."

Raven Hill's Evolving Technology Building celebrates communication by dedicating one entire wall to demonstrate ways humans have used to convey information, including written, audio, visual and numbers. Since the dawn of man, storytelling has been how cultures pass on shared beliefs and values. Some of the stories told today come from stories our ancestors were sharing thousands of years ago.

Cave dwellers used pigment to paint on walls with well-preserved cave drawings dating back to 30,000 years ago. These prehistoric paintings are life stories of hunting mammoths, lions, and rhinos. Over the centuries, the art of the written word and storytelling evolved from tales and lessons that people learned through orally speaking long before those stories were written down. The Ancient Greeks communicated in times of sorrow, war, and celebration through oral storytelling, as well as writing. The Greeks were so passionate about the art of storytelling that many of their stories were written as poems to help the storytellers remember and perform the whole story. Added to those early developments in storytelling was the invention of the printing press, printed photos, radio and television. Now, much of what we read is digital, but the tales and myths that are created to preserve the past, all use the same basic traditions of storytelling.



Gayle Levengood, volunteer and artist extraordinaire, created a limestone cave painting for the Evolving Technology Building to illustrate this prehistoric form of storytelling.

"Stories create community and enable us to see through the eyes of other people..." – Peter Forbes, photographer and author

'Stories are the way we understand and make sense of the world we find ourselves in.' –Clare Patey, Director of the Empathy Museum.



No pictures of 11-year-old “zoologist” Brie exist from the 1990’s, but whenever she comes from Alaska to visit, she spends time here at the Center with Milo, her niece and Spike, the bearded dragon.

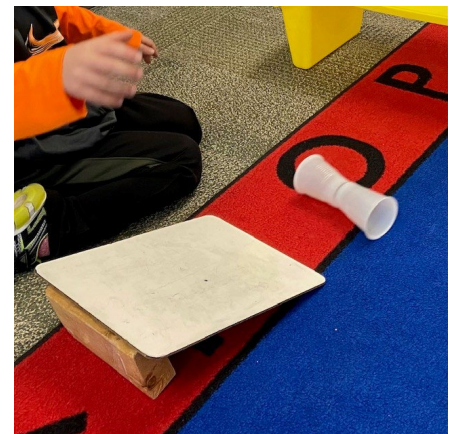


An atmospheric chemist, Brie still treasures her early memories of Raven Hill. She wears her Raven Hill t-shirt as she works with husband, Stefan, to build their dream house outside Fairbanks, Alaska.

We love hearing stories about Raven Hill Discovery Center! They celebrate how the Center touches people and their lives. For examples, Brie VanDam recalls spending her summers at the Center. “One of my favorite places at Raven Hill was the animal room. I loved to spend time there learning about the snakes, letting the ferrets crawl up my sleeves, talking to the birds, and letting the spider walk across my palm. While I didn't end up as a zoologist like my 11-year-old self imagined, I did recently receive my PhD in atmospheric chemistry. I credit

the time I spent at Raven Hill as having a significant influence on my development as a scientist: learning to always ask questions, to look at the simple things with curiosity and amazement and to have confidence in my own intelligence.”

Charity Patten shared this story: “My preschooler came home very excited to show me something she learned at school. She proceeded to pull two plastic cups from her backpack and tell me that she made a big wheel. Scanning the living room, she selected two items to help her build a ramp. She stuck the cups together, placed a piece of red tape on the floor as a destination line, and began experimenting what would happen to her big wheel as the ramp inclined or declined. My husband and I found great pleasure in seeing our daughter excited about sharing the science she had learned from you. As the days and weeks have passed, the Big Wheel has been placed in a safe spot where Erin still pulls it out and experiments with it to see how far she can send it and at what speed. I have caught her teaching it to her dolls. As parents, we cannot thank you enough for exposing our daughter to the wonderful world of exploration and science. It is intriguing to watch her as she discovers answers to her questions on her own. We are hopeful that Raven Hill will be able to visit her classroom again to help fulfill her hunger for knowledge and her sense of wonder.” Thank you, The Proud Parents of Erin Patten - Brian and Charity Patten



A “Big Wheel” can be easily fashioned from two cups taped together at the bottom. Along with a simple ramp, it is a great way for kids to explore motion, distance and slope for hours.

Good stories are emotional and they are personal. They help us learn and communicate. Through oral or written storytelling, your voice has a place and a purpose. We invite you to become **storytellers** and ambassadors for Raven Hill. Now is the time to bring the storyteller out in you. Share your favorite story of Raven Hill with us, so that those special memories can remain for future generations.

Hope to hear from you soon,

Cheri