

Asombro Insights

Science education for eager minds

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 24, Issue 2 (April - June 2015)

Board & Staff

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Justin Van Zee - President

Mary Beth Harper - Vice President

Mark Sechrist - Secretary

Donna Yargosz - Treasurer

Gene Gant - Board Member

Gil Tellez - Board Member

STAFF

Stephanie Bestelmeyer, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Rink Somerday
Program Coordinator

Paul Harper
Site Coordinator

Stephanie Haan-Amato
Science Education Specialist

Anna Keener
Science Education Specialist

CONTACT US

Asombro Institute for Science Education

PO Box 891
Las Cruces, NM 88004

575-524-3334 (voice)

575-646-2315 (fax)

information@asombro.org

www.asombro.org

Asombro Wins Governor's Award

The Asombro Institute for Science Education won the 2015 Governor's Environmental Excellence Award! The award was presented by Governor Susana Martinez to Asombro Executive Director Stephanie Bestelmeyer and Program Coordinator Rink Somerday on Earth Day - April 22, 2015.

The award recognized Asombro's commitment, collaboration, and innovation in environmental education. In particular, the award acknowledges Asombro's Stepping Out for Science Education program for middle school students. Students first engage in hands-on science projects to learn about the desert ecosystem and then participate in innovative science communication or stewardship action programs to put their new knowledge into practice.

"We're honored to be selected for this award," said Stephanie Bestelmeyer, Asombro's Executive Director. "We've put a lot of effort into developing engaging, effective programs, and it's wonderful to receive statewide recognition. But the real winners are the thousands of students who get to participate in Stepping Out for Science Inquiry. And to be honest, our staff feels very lucky to be part of students' science discovery process too!"

The Governor's Environmental Excellence Award program is a cooperative effort of

the NM Environment Department, NM Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, Department of Game and Fish, Office of the State Engineer, and Office of the Governor. It was open to



Rink Somerday and Stephanie Bestelmeyer receive the Governor's Environmental Excellence Award from NM Governor Susana Martinez.

businesses, nonprofits, federal agencies, regional governmental organizations, tribes and pueblos, land grants, and civic organizations who work to benefit New Mexico's environment.

Program Coordinator Rink Somerday said, "Receiving this prestigious award on our silver anniversary year not only allows us to look back and be proud of our achievements, but also forge ahead for the next 25 years with high expectations."

Awards were given for seven major categories, including waste reduction, energy, water, land management, wildlife conservation, environmental education, and youth projects.

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendar now for fun, family-friendly events at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park.



Kids' Passport to the Desert

Saturday May 30, 9:00 AM - Noon, \$1 admission
Visit stations, participate in hands-on activities, and collect "passport" stamps as you learn about the desert.

Nighttime in the Desert

July 10, 8:00-9:30 PM (reservations required), \$3 admission
Take a guided tour through the desert at night, experiencing the beauty of the desert after dusk. Reservations are required for this unique experience. Call the Asombro office (524-3334) to reserve your spot today.

Butterfly Flutterby

Saturday August 15, 9:00 AM - Noon, \$3
Celebrate the wonder of all things butterfly at this popular annual event.



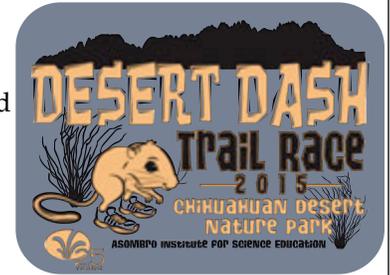
Bioblitz

Saturday September 19, Schedule of events coming soon, Free
We're inventorying the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park to collect a list of the many plants, animals, rock types, and soils that call the Nature Park home. Learn from local experts how to survey an area and add to our list.

Desert Dash Trail Race

Saturday November 14,
Races start between 8:15
and 9:15 AM

Sign up now for the third annual Desert Dash 5K, 10K, half marathon, or children's 1-mile trail race. To register and for more information, please visit <http://asombro.org/dash.htm>.



Education Programs

Thanks to your support, Asombro staff provided 286 hours of science for 5,916 students so far in 2015!

12-Jan MacArthur Elem - weather	3-Feb Arrowhead Park HS - Data Jam	24-Feb North Valley - life cycles
13-Jan University Hills Elem - weather	4-Feb Sunrise Elem - animals	25-Feb Sierra MS - radio telemetry
13-Jan Sierra MS - Wildlife CSI	4-Feb Vista MS - biodiversity game	25-Feb Desert Hills Elem - field trip
14-Jan LC Catholic - weather	5-Feb Sierra MS - science fair	26-Feb Picacho MS - Wildlife CSI
14-Jan LC Catholic - soil organic matter	5-Feb Lynn MS - Wildlife CSI	26-Feb Camino Real MS - Biodiversity game
14-Jan Sunrise Elem - animals	9-Feb MacArthur Elem - life cycles	2-Mar J Paul Taylor Academy - decomposition
15-Jan Lynn MS - carbon cycle	10-Feb University Hills - life cycles	3-Mar East Picacho Elem - Earth movers
15-Jan J Paul Taylor Academy - weather	11-Feb Picacho MS - radiotelemetry	4-Mar LC Catholic - Earth movers
15-Jan LC Catholic - soil organic matter	11-Feb Mesa MS - Wildlife CSI	4-Mar LC Catholic - plant life cycle
16-Jan Lynn MS - carbon cycle	12-Feb Desert Hills Elem - science night	5-Mar J Paul Taylor Academy - Earth movers
16-Jan Trinity First United - science night	12-Feb Picacho MS - biodiversity game	7-Mar Desert Superpowers
16-Jan Camino Real MS - Data Jam	12-Feb Sierra MS - field trip	9-Mar MacArthur Elem - Earth movers
19-Jan Asombro Annual Member Meeting	12-Feb Picacho MS - Wildlife CSI	11-Mar Sierra MS - decomposition
20-Jan Vista MS - food web	13-Feb Camino Real MS - field trip	11-Mar Vista MS - Wildlife CSI
20-Jan East Picacho Elem - desert plants	17-Feb Mayfield HS - Wildlife CSI	12-Mar Sierra MS - decomposition
21-Jan Picacho MS - food web	17-Feb East Picacho Elem - solar system	17-Mar Sonoma Elem - weather
21-Jan Sunrise Elem - animals	17-Feb Vista MS - radio telemetry	18-Mar Conlee Elem - field trip
21-Jan LC Catholic - arthropod i.d.	18-Feb La Union - science fair	19-Mar Conlee Elem - field trip
21-Jan LC Catholic - biomes	18-Feb LC Catholic - life cycles	20-Mar Sonoma Elem - field trip
26-Jan Fairacres Elem - weather	18-Feb LC Catholic - See it Little/Big	24-Mar North Valley Elem - Earth movers
27-Jan Sunrise - field trip	18-Feb Camino Real MS - Wildlife CSI	24-Mar La Union Elem - arthropod & plant diversity (part 1)
27-Jan North Valley Elem - weather	19-Feb J Paul Taylor Academy - science fair	26-Mar La Union Elem - arthropod & plant diversity (part 2)
28-Jan Sierra MS - food web	19-Feb Sierra MS - radio telemetry	26-Mar La Union Elem - habitat stats
28-Jan Sunrise Elem - animals	19-Feb J Paul Taylor Acad. - life cycles	30-Mar Fairacres Elem - Earth movers
28-Jan Sierra MS - food web	19-Feb Zia MS - Wildlife CSI	31-Mar MacArthur Elem - Earth movers
28-Jan Las Montañas HS - data jam	20-Feb Sierra MS - vegetation measurement	
29-Jan J Paul Taylor Academy - food web	20-Feb Lynn MS - field trip	
29-Jan Vista MS - field trip	23-Feb Lynn MS - biodiversity game	
30-Jan Mayfield HS - Data Jam	23-Feb Fairacres Elem - life cycles	
30-Jan Sunrise Elem - field trip	24-Feb Conlee Elem - desert plants	

We Need YOUR Support!

Did you know that more than 25% of Asombro's annual budget comes from donations and fundraisers? These are critical funds that support all of the educational activities and events you see listed in this newsletter. There are lots of ways you can help:

- 1) Donations - More than 90% of your tax-deductible donation goes directly to our programs.
- 2) Volunteer - Join our amazing volunteer corps and help us save money by pitching in on an activity that is fun for you.
- 3) Amazon Smile - When you shop at Amazon, enter the site through smile.Amazon.com and choose Asombro as your cause. A percentage of your purchase is donated to us.
- 4) iGive - Hundreds of other popular online stores can be accessed through iGive.com. When you check out, a donation goes to Asombro.
- 5) Albertsons - We've challenged ourselves to hand out 50 Community Partners cards in May and June. Call us to get one sent to you (524-3334). Show it to the cashier when you check out and a percentage of your purchase is donated.

Asombro Garage Sale



The Board of Directors is holding a garage sale on Saturday October 31. All proceeds will support Asombro's education programs. As you do your spring or summer cleaning, please consider donating items to us. Call the office for details!

Two Events Delight the Youngest Desert Scientists

Two new Asombro programs at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park brought out the youngest desert enthusiasts this year!

Desert Superpowers

On March 7, we called on local kids to come learn about the amazing "superpowers" of desert plants and animals. As children and adults visited stations run by Asombro staff, volunteers, and Dr. Michaela



Superhero graphics were created by volunteers Theresa & Daniel Basaldua.



Visitors of all ages tried on the arthropod exoskeleton models.

Buenemann and her students from the NMSU Geography Department, they acquired superpowers they put to use in a final series of missions to defeat "Evil Mr. Drought."

Toddler Storytime

Can you think of a better place to spend a beautiful Earth Day morning than at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park? Toddlers and their parents enjoyed stories, a craft, and a snack as they learned about the desert on April 22.

THANK YOU!

We are grateful to the generous donors in the first quarter of 2015.

Monthly Donors

Stephanie & Brandon Bestelmeyer
Carolyn Gressitt & John Freyermuth
Anna Keener
Marcella Newman
Deb Peters
Justin Van Zee
Walt & Linda Whitford

Turquoise

Mark Sechrist & Beth Morgan
Donna Yargosz

Peridot

John Bunn
VFW Post 6917

Obsidian

Michael Weiss

Jasper

Carolyn Gressitt & John Freyermuth
Ginny & Jim Herrick
Melly & Brian Locke
John & Angela Mortland

Jasper (cont.)

Native Plant Society of NM - Las Cruces Chapter
Sun Country de Las Cruces Kiwanis
Norman E. Todd

Gypsum

Leoniece Beatty
Aravamudan & Champa Gopalan
Marjorie D. Little
Mesilla Valley Garden Club
Dr. Robert O. Pick
Pete & Gail Steen
Naida Zucker & Rich Spellenberg

Quartz

Anonymous
Elizabeth Arndt
Godfrey Crane
Mike Gilman
Nancy Greene
Robert Severance
Jay & Martha Sharp
Rink Somerday & John Holloway
Daisan E. Taylor-Glass & Mark Glass



PO Box 891
Las Cruces, NM 88004-0891

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Las Cruces, NM
Permit No. 2014



New Signs Highlight Native Plants at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park

Thanks to the hard work of our super-volunteer Justin Van Zee, there are 18 more plant identification signs to enjoy at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park. Justin spent many weekends at the Park planning, digging holes, and installing the new signs. This is a great time of year to head to the Park and enjoy the new signs and the wildflower display! The Park is open Tuesday through Sunday from 7 AM - 5 PM.



YES! I want to support the
Asombro Institute for Science Education!

Quartz (\$15 +) Obsidian (\$250 +)
 Gypsum (\$50 +) Peridot (\$500 +)
 Jasper (\$100 +) Turquoise (\$1000 +)

*Please make checks payable to **Asombro Institute** or charge to:*

Visa MasterCard
 Account Number: _____
 Expiration Date: _____
 Signature as it appears on card: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ Zip _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Check here if you do NOT want to be listed in Asombro publications _____

Asombro Institute for Science Education,
P.O. Box 891, Las Cruces, NM 88004