Dear Friends,

It has been a tremendous honor to guide the Rochester Museum & Science Center (RMSC) team over the years! I have learned so much from our community and have enjoyed working side-by-side with our many partners toward a common goal of creating a stronger, more vibrant community. As I prepare for my next stage, I want to share some of our favorite accomplishments in this issue.

We are delighted to have recently announced the selection of our new CEO, Hillary Olson. A native of Ogden, Hillary will be coming back home to craft and execute the vision for the place that first inspired her.

Kate Bennett, CEO

ENGAGING EXHIBITS

At the time I joined the RMSC team, there was only one kind of permanent interactive exhibit in the building: the elevators! When guests came to the RMSC, they wandered and wondered through our halls, taking in the information presented in our permanent exhibitions, often in quiet contemplation. We had had a long tradition of bringing in traveling science exhibitions, and there we saw real excitement and engagement. Our goal, the one the Board of Trustees charged us with, was to turn us into a science center in more than just name by increasing opportunities for our guests to have engaging experiences. As our team worked on these changes, we discovered that we really loved hearing our guests engage in conversations and share their experiences, incorporating this social interaction to stimulate science thinking. Seeing exchanges like a parent and child working through an interactive together, figuring out how it works and talking about what it means, or witnessing one child seeing another interact with an exhibit and rushing over to join in was such a reward.

We did our research, often going so far as to use a stopwatch to time how long our guests would interact with one another in regards to an exhibit, and our first permanent interactive science gallery, AdventureZone, opened in 2000. In the years since, the RMSC has opened many more science interactive galleries and permanent exhibitions, including Expedition Earth, the Inventor Center, and Illumination: The World of Light and Optics, just to name a few. We had early successes helping visitors understand this region we call home, incorporating collections into exhibits to evoke a sense of place with RMSC Unwrapped, Rochester’s Frederick Douglass, and Flight to Freedom: Rochester’s Underground Railroad.

Continued on page 2
ENGAGING EXHIBITS (CONTINUED)

More recently, we have begun to create our own in-house headlining exhibitions, including 2016’s *Elements of the Extreme* and our 2018 fall headliner, *SoundSense*. With these exhibitions, the RMSC has implemented our Signature Learning Model, which brings together hands-on interactives that illustrate specific concepts, historic and ethnographic objects from our museum collection that provide historical and contemporary context, and in-exhibition programming, including live demonstrations by staff and outside presenters. This combination of offerings helps add layers to the exhibition experience, vividly bringing each story to life. The RMSC is now home to more than 200 interactive exhibit experiences, and that number will only rise from here. I’m so proud to have had the opportunity to lead the wonderful team of staff and volunteers at the RMSC into this new era of engagement and interactivity, and am so looking forward to seeing what other heights of engaging education we can reach in the future.

VOLUNTEERS

Returning to Rochester after 25 years of working in Museums in other cities gave me a new perspective on Rochester’s strengths. When I joined the RMSC in 1996, something that stood out to me about the Rochester community was the strong presence of the “volunteer gene.” We are home to an unbelievably dedicated network of volunteers who bolster the work of our community organizations.

The RMSC is lucky to have more than 500 volunteers contribute their valuable time to our mission each year. Our largest group of dedicated volunteers is the RMSC Women’s Council, a group originally formed in 1942 with the charge of assisting the move of our collections from the Museum’s original building to our current home on East Avenue. Now focused on raising funds for the RMSC through community events, the Women’s Council has been one of the Museum’s top contributors for nearly 20 years straight!

I’m also proud to have been at the helm of the museum during the creation of another of our dedicated volunteer groups, the Technical Advisory Group (TAG). When Jim Meyer became board chair a few years after my arrival, he and I toured the Ithaca Sciencenter in our exploration of strategies to achieve increased interactivity at the RMSC. Their volunteer group of engaged exhibit advisors gave us the idea for TAG. Jim became the driving force in getting this group off the ground and ensuring the focus of the work was on building interactive exhibits to enhance our spaces. Today, you can’t walk a few feet through the RMSC without coming across an exhibit interactive that our TAG members worked on. A few crowd favorites include the ball launcher in our Wilson Lobby and the Erie Canal Lock in AdventureZone. Some of the enhancements that were incorporated during the restoration of our beloved *Rochester in 1838* diorama - the stump puller and the street and building lights – were thanks to two of our TAG volunteers, Haines Lockhart and Ed Mauro.

Elsewhere at the RMSC, you will find volunteers assisting in the care of our extensive collections and volunteer educators, including our docents and our Ask-It volunteers. Volunteers assist us at the Cumming Nature Center, as well as at the Strasenburgh Planetarium, thanks to the Rochester Academy of Science’s Astronomy Section. It’s truly amazing how much credit we owe to those who have donated their time and talents to this institution. Thank you to our wonderful volunteers for their many contributions to the RMSC!
THE GREAT AND GIFTED TEACHER

I may have spent the past 20-plus years as CEO of the RMSC, yet my interactions with this institution go back much further. I remember coming here as a young girl and pressing my nose against the glass of the Native American dioramas, being filled with wonder.

When I reflect on all of my experiences with the RMSC, the idea of the great and gifted teacher keeps coming to mind. It’s what our institution has been for 106 years – a place where people can come, ask questions, and explore their curiosities. Yet it’s not just our exhibits which allow people to discover, it’s really our people.

The most memorable great and gifted teacher I encountered at the RMSC was Director Emeritus, W. Stephen Thomas. This was when I was an intern here in 1971 and 1972, when he and Lynn Poirier-Wilson ran the museum internship program. Steve had an enthusiasm for learning that was contagious. I treasured his Monday museum philosophy chats and believe the entire staff benefited when he sent us interns out to experience other departments by doing hands-on work in those areas. He was wonderful at guiding us to learn lessons on our own, to become knowledgeable by talking to colleagues, and during his tenure at the RMSC, he encouraged staff and volunteers to interact with museum visitors and extend that same guidance to our guests in their explorations. The stories he told about his career were illuminating, and his philosophy of museums’ role in learning included plenty of groundbreaking ideas, all of which got the team thinking about the possibilities of what museums can be.

Today, our staff members include a range of talented individuals who are now serving as the great and gifted teachers for our community. Steve Fentress encourages Strasenburgh Planetarium visitors to let their ambitions extend to the far reaches of the universe. George McIntosh serves as a walking encyclopedia of our vast collections, and thoroughly enhances many experiences with his deep understanding of Geology. Nathan Hayes inspires us all with his video vignettes at the Cumming Nature Center and his passion for outdoor learning. Janet Finch-Levy and her gifted team provide strong, loving educational foundations in our RMSC Preschool. Calvin Uzelmeier develops exhibits that have multiple entry points for learning, and brings the crowds to life with experiments that defy reason. Tim Cawley guides visitors and school groups through engaging experiments that feel so much more like fun than learning. Sue Layton helps students visualize the meaning behind complex datasets with her Science On a Sphere presentations. Our entire Education Team designs and delivers fun and immersive programs to supplement each visitor’s experience at the RMSC. Our wonderful Docents, Floor Staff, and Ask-It volunteers help people get their hands on objects, much as I did as a child. The teaching even extends to our Marketing and Development team members, who help relay lessons and stories to our donors, members, and social media followers. I could use the entirety of this newsletter to tell you what amazing people we have at the RMSC who serve as the great and gifted teachers who get people thinking about things in new ways. We really are so lucky as a community to have these wonderful people serving as a resource.

This institution has seen a great many changes in its 106 years of serving the Rochester community. There have even been many changes in my time here as CEO of the RMSC, but what has remained constant since 1912 is the unwavering enthusiasm of the people who work here. It is their work that serves our community and helps guide the next generation of learners to ever brighter futures.

Former RMSC Director Stephen Thomas was Kate Bennett’s teacher in a training program from 1971-1972 at the RMSC. “Steve would tell us he was hoping to create museum directors,” Bennett recalls. Pictured are Thomas and Bennett on April 22, 1996, when Bennett’s position was announced.

Credit: David Fahrer, RMSC 1996
A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

A bright and excited intern at the RMSC, 1971-1972

Profile in the Rochester Business Journal, 1996

RMSC’s 100th Anniversary Celebration in 2012

Celebrating her years of service at an RMSC team meeting in 2016.

With husband Wayne Hermanson as Chairs of the 2018 Innovation Celebration Gala

Ribbon cutting for the ArtWalk extension in 2012

Celebrating the opening of Dinosaur! in 2006

With Representative Louise M. Slaughter
PARTNERSHIPS

It’s now in our DNA to partner to get the job done. Early in my Presidency, we identified the importance of providing more science experiences to young people, and when the Challenger Center needed a new home, we worked with Monroe #1 BOCES to bring them on campus in 1997. That led to simulators for the BUBL project as part of our creation of AdventureZone.

We’ve had a number of partnerships help our community and also transform our campus, including the Water Education Collaborative and ARTWalk. Some partnerships helped transform our galleries, such as our work with the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor on our canal exhibits. Because the community was concerned about the state of city schools, we partnered with Genesee Community Charter School to offer more students an opportunity to learn in a stimulating setting. It’s hard to say which partnership stimulated us the most. Our work with Action for a Better Community, RIT, and the Rochester Area Community Foundation to bring RACE: Are We So Different? was particularly powerful because we stimulated so many important community conversations, which are still continuing today.

Thank you to all of our partners for what you have enabled us to achieve together – so much more than any of us could do alone.

RMSC RECEIVES GRANT FROM KEYBANK FOUNDATION IN SUPPORT OF YOUTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

RMSC received a $10,000 grant from the KeyBank Foundation to support its Career Ladder program, which offers workplace experience to at-risk youth ages 15–19 who are currently enrolled in school. Career Ladder participants serve as members of RMSC’s daily operations team by engaging visitors, assisting with events and programs, and maintaining exhibits. The program teaches basic job expectations and communication skills, builds confidence, and encourages students to look for future educational and employment opportunities.

“KeyBank is proud to help support the fun approach to learning that the Rochester Museum and Science Center is known for,” said KeyBank Rochester Market President James Barger. “The Career Ladder Program provides teens with valuable, unique experiences that will help them and help our community grow and develop for years to come.”

The KeyBank Foundation supports organizations and programs that prepare individuals for thriving futures. Its mission is advanced through three priorities: Neighbors, Education, and Workforce.

“The Career Ladder program is an important program that provides transformative skills and workplace confidence that help participants throughout their lives,” said RMSC CEO Kate Bennett. “RMSC has long-standing experience in engaging youth of all ages in valuable learning, volunteer, and work opportunities. Career Ladder builds upon that foundation, resulting in youth with greater interest in science and math, as well as a love of learning.”

Now in its seventh year, Career Ladder serves approximately 15 students annually, many of whom graduate college, maintain jobs in STEM fields, and/or continue to give back to the community where they reside. For the full press release please go to RMSC.org/press-news.

Photo left to right: James Barger, KeyBank Rochester Market President; Amy McConville, former RMSC Floor Supervisor; Kawanza Humphrey, KeyBank Vice President, Corporate Responsibility Officer; Kate Bennett, RMSC CEO; Richard Owens; KeyBank Vice President, Middle Market Business Banking Relationship Manager
Your membership supports the transformation and growth of the RMSC, and enables us to offer new hands-on, interactive experiences at the Science Museum, present amazing star shows and spectacular giant-screen films at Strasenburgh Planetarium, and provide hours of outdoor recreation at Cumming Nature Center. We thank you!

*Deceased

Every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of this listing. Please contact the Development Office for any corrections, 585.697.1938

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**Current Corporate Partners**

**As of June 30, 2018**

**Rochester Software Associates, Inc.**

**Rochester Regional Health**

**OppenheimerFunds, Inc.**

**Navitar, Inc.**

**LaBella Associates, D.P.C.**

**Genesee Brewing Company**

**Flower City Glass Company, Inc.**

**The Lifetime Healthcare Companies**

**Excellus BCBS**

**Doyle Security Systems Inc.**

**DeCarolis Truck Rental Inc.**

**Chaintreuil Jensen & Stark Architects**

**Advantage Federal Credit Union**

**Technology Partner**

**Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.**

**Thomson Reuters**

**SPIE**

**Rochester Coca-Cola**

**Harris Corporation**

**ESL Federal Credit Union**

**EMCOR Services Bedien**

**C.P. Ward, Inc.**

**City Blue Imaging Services**

**Normandy Corporation**

**Stuart’s Spices**

**UGI Energy Services, Inc.**

**Bosch Security Systems**

**Brown & Brown of New York**

**Corning Tropel Corporation**

**M&T Bank**

**Optimax Systems Inc.**

**The Pike Company**

**Wright Beverage Distributing**

**Terra Science Education**

**Current Leadership Level**

**As of June 30, 2018**

**President’s Circle $5,000+**

Mr. and Mrs. John H. Bruning

Ms. Catherine B. Carlson

Betsy and John Carver

Daryl Dear Cubitt and Colin Cubitt

Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Cunningham

Mrs. Richard J. Garrett, Sr.*

Dr. and Mrs. Michael G. Hirsh

Dr. and Mrs. Anthony J. Leone, Jr.

Mr. James R. Low

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Maier

Ms. Perry Mascia

Dr. and Mrs. James W. Meyer

Mr. and Mrs. Percival D. Oviatt, Jr.*

Mr. and Mrs. Victor Salerno

Mrs. Kathryn M. Schuster

Mr. and Mrs. Alan Stone

Mrs. Robert J. Strasenburgh

Ms. Alice Swett

Mr. Ben Swett

Mr. Steve Swett

Mr. Walter Swett

Mr. and Mrs. Walter T. Parkes

Mr. George W. Peters

Kerry and Jake Pierson

Jane R. Pitt and James T. Bruen

Jay and Margaret Rachfal

Mr. and Mrs. David S. Ross

Mr. Lewis Rothberg and

Ms. Shelby Nelson

Mr. and Mrs. Jon L. Schumacher

Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Tait

Mrs. Georgiana T. Thoman

Ms. Carol Tometsko

Miss Helen A. Vogel

Mrs. Gretchen A. Voss

Mr. Philip K. Wehrheim

**Entrepreneur Level**

$2,500-$4,999

Mr. and Mrs. George Hamlin, IV

Dr. Jocelyn Hicks-Brody

Mr. and Mrs. Chris E. Holliday

Mr. and Mrs. Christopher J. Husson

Mr. and Mrs. James M. Lamb

Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Meggs, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Mitchell

Mr. and Mrs. John R. Riedman

**Honors and Memorial Gifts**

**April 1 – June 30, 2018**

In Memory of Mrs. Louise M. Creatura

Carole M. Bianchi

Myrma Bianchi

Víctor E. Salerno

In Honor of Catherine A. Ramirez

Richard V. Smerbeck

In Honor of the Marriage of Craig and Hannah Santo

Thomas L. Swartz

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**Foundations**

**As of June 30, 2018**

**Ames-Amzalak Memorial Trust**

Bright Funds Foundation

Brighter Days Foundation

T.M. and M.W. Crandall Foundation

Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation

EDMAC Foundation, Inc.

Max & Marian Farash Charitable Foundation

Friends & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library

The Joseph and Anna Gartner Foundation

The Hallowell Fund

The Japan Foundation

KAP 508 Foundation, Inc.

Konar Family Foundation

Mashomack Foundation

Masse Family Fund

J. M. McDonald Foundation

NYSCA-Theatre Development Fund, Inc.

OppenheimerFunds, Inc.

The Guido and Ellen Palma Foundation

The Rochester Area Community Foundation

The Saunders Foundation

Seneca Foods Foundation

The Summers Foundation Inc.

WVR Foundation

Waldron Rise Foundation

Elaine P. and Richard U. Wilson Foundation

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**Inventor Level**

$1,000-$2,499

Mr. Robert D. Baden

Mr. and Mrs. Bruce J. Baker

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard R. Bayer

Ruth H. Bennett

Mr. and Mrs. Allen C. Boucher

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph C. Briggs

Mr. and Mrs. Dennis S. Buchan

Mr. and Mrs. John M. Buzawa

Mr. Alan L. Cameros

Stephanie and Doug Dickman

Dr. Eric M. Dreyfuss

Mr. and Mrs. Sherman Farnham

Mrs. Joan L. Feinblom

Mr. and Mrs. C. Benn Forsyth

Mrs. Irving Germanow

Mrs. Joan F. Hallenberg

Mrs. Nancy W. Hare

Mrs. Barbara H. Hargrave

Robert and Catharine Healy

Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Hermanson

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Humphrey

Mrs. Frank M. Hutchins

Mr. Norman Ishler and

Ms. Elizabeth Gordon

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Judson, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. Warren B. Knapp

Mr. Roger Kuntz

Miss Alicia C. Lamprich

Mr. Raymond A. Landor Jr.

Dr. Sophia A. Maggelakis and

Andreas Savakis

Mr. and Mrs. Richard F. Massie

Mr. and Mrs. James R. McMillen

Mr. Clayton Millard

Dr. Duncan Moore and Ms. Gunta Liders

Karen and Gary Muisus

Mrs. Melvin B. Neisner

Mr. and Mrs. Walter T. Parkes

Mr. George W. Peters

Kerry and Jake Pierson

Jane R. Pitt and James T. Bruen

Jay and Margaret Rachfal

Mr. and Mrs. David S. Ross

Mr. Lewis Rothberg and

Ms. Shelby Nelson

Mr. and Mrs. Jon L. Schumacher

Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Tait

Mrs. Georgiana T. Thoman

Ms. Carol Tometsko

Miss Helen A. Vogel

Mrs. Gretchen A. Voss

Mr. Philip K. Wehrheim

**Scientist Level**

$500-$999

Mr. and Mrs. Anthony J. Adams Jr.

Carol Adler

Mr. and Mrs. James Alexander

Ms. Susan Baechle

Mr. and Mrs. Mark Balsamo

Mr. and Mrs. Bruce B. Bates

Mrs. Frederick D. Berkeley

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas A. Berno

Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey H. Bowen

Mrs. James T. Briggs

David J. and Margaret M. Burns

Dr. Thomas V. Caprio

Barbara Carlson and Donald E. Mass
DISCOVERING MARTHA’S MAGIC

Did you know the first person to start a modern retail franchise lived in Rochester in the 19th century?

Martha Matilda Harper was a poor Canadian servant until she was able to emigrate in 1882 from Ontario, Canada, to Rochester. In 1888—after six more years of servitude in Rochester and the same year that George Eastman launched Kodak—Harper started her own business in the Powers Building selling healthy haircare for women and using her own mane of luxuriously long hair to advertise it. Her proprietary products and the method by which they were used—called the Harper Method—led Harper to operate a string of 500 hair salons around the world. Highlights in the shops included the reclining shampoo chair and a cut-out sink to more comfortably wash people’s hair—both of which Harper invented! In addition to creating a new business method and innovating haircare, Harper pioneered social entrepreneurship by selling the first 100 of her shops only to poor women to enable them to change their life options. Strongly embraced by the suffrage movement and Susan B. Anthony, the Harper concept also charmed world royalty, U.S. presidents and their families, leading performers, and even George Bernard Shaw!

The Rochester community celebrated Harper’s legacy with authors Jane Plitt and Sally Valentine—who wrote Martha’s Magical Hair (Plitt) and Martha the Hairpreneur (Plitt/Valentine)—at RMSC’s Discovering Martha’s Magic event on Saturday, June 23. Visitors that day had the opportunity to learn more about Harper during a Martha’s Magical Hair story time, to get up close to Harper Method hair and skincare innovations from RMSC collections, to create their own beauty products and share their own business ideas through hands-on activities, and to enjoy a presentation exploring how Rochester enabled Harper’s business successes. In addition, 13WHAM/WUHF Fox Rochester’s Good Day Rochester broadcast live from the Museum with Girl Scout Troop 63113 the day before, to share Harper’s story.

If you missed Discovering Martha’s Magic, never fear! You can find Martha’s Magical Hair, Martha the Hairpreneur, and a third book, Martha Matilda Harper and the American Dream: How One Woman Changed the Face of Modern Business (Plitt)—each for different age levels—in the Shop at RMSC to learn more about the incredible life of Martha Matilda Harper.
Stephanie Ball – Archivist/Librarian
Stephanie has been around the RMSC for quite some time as the Patricia Black Collection Consultant Archivist. Stephanie’s strong interest in local Rochester history motivated her to become an archivist. Altogether, Stephanie has worked at five different area institutions including: the Rochester Public Library/Office of the City Historian with Christine Ridarsky, George Eastman House, Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Rochester Historical Society, and the RMSC. We are most fortunate to have Stephanie join the RMSC team on a full-time basis.

Joan Dallis – Volunteer Coordinator
Joan Dallis retired from a career in banking in June and set a goal of obtaining a position with a cultural organization in order to give back to our community. Her experiences range from managing a staff of bank officers which included hiring, training, and evaluation, as well as program development and implementation, customer care, and problem resolution. She is eager to support the RMSC’s robust volunteer base.

Jessica Slentz – Grants and Government Relations Manager
Jess brings a wealth of grant writing experience, most recently as an Assistant Professor at Ithaca College where she taught an upper level service learning course in Proposal and Grant Writing. In this role at the RMSC, she will be focusing on major and competitive public grants from local, state, and national agencies as well as private grants from national corporations and foundations.

Olivia Shamon – Floor Staff Supervisor
Olivia will help RMSC continue to develop the quality of our visitor experience through engagement with floor staff, Career Ladder students and Ask-It volunteers in the Museum galleries. Olivia comes to us from a management position at Family Video, where she was able to engage with customers and staff, create business-to-business relationships, hold community fundraising events, and share her passion for movies! We are excited about Olivia’s interest in working with diverse audiences, as well as her customer service experience, proven leadership capabilities, and her passion for the museum field.

SOUNDSENSE IS OPEN!
The RMSC team is so excited to present our fall headlining exhibition, SoundSense. This unique interactive exhibition explores music – the interaction between the physics of sound and human physiology – and the way in which it creates profound psychological experiences that enhance communication. Better put: this is your brain on music!

Guests will move through five topic areas to explore the nature of sound and how we sense it, the science and art behind the tools we use to create different types of sound, and discover how humans use this compression of air molecules we call sound to create the emotional experience we call music.

We’re especially proud of this exhibition because it has been taken from concept to reality in-house by our talented team of staff members and volunteers. Many hours of dedication have been put into this experience to ensure it is fun, educational, accurate, and accessible to all. We thank our Technical Advisory Group and our Inclusion Advisory Board for their dedication of time and talent in making this experience engaging for everyone. We can’t wait for you to explore the world of sound and music with us!
VELUXSYS BY PRECISION OPTICAL TRANSCEIVERS IS MAKING WAVES IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Veluxsys by Precision Optical Transceivers, an affiliate of PrecisionOT, is helping to shape the future of radio communication technologies. By acting as the pioneers for integrating photonics into radio communication technologies, Veluxsys aims to pave the way for the next generation of cutting-edge 5G network solutions.

By using light on a Veluxsys-developed integrated photonics chip, radio signals can be more precisely created, controlled, and distributed to and from antennas. Veluxsys’ technological developments will play a significant role in development of next-generation 5G technologies, which will ultimately allow for faster data rates, faster download speeds, higher definition video capabilities, and more. These high-speed radio over optical fiber (RFoF) technologies can be implemented in devices used in both military and commercial applications, including wireless home broadband and information distribution for self-driving cars.

With the amount that technology increasingly impacts our day-to-day lives, Veluxsys understands the importance of educating our youth and local community on the fundamental concepts of telecommunications and integrated photonics. In order to continue making vast improvements in the way our world functions, Veluxsys hopes that people will not just appreciate the amazing technology regularly at our fingertips, but will be inspired by it to learn more.

To achieve this goal, Veluxsys is proud to partner with the RMSC and excited to connect with guests and students through their support of the RMSC’s Illumination: The World of Light and Optics exhibition. Veluxsys looks forward to working with RMSC staff to develop an exhibit component which will teach important concepts involved in Veluxsys optical technology. Both agencies are energized at the prospect of involving local engineering students in this project. “We want to be able to provide back to our greater Rochester family and share in our passion for science and engineering by making it accessible to everyone,” says Veluxsys CTO Bryce Tennant, who hopes that inspiring and exciting young minds about the leaps forward that can be made with new technologies in the telecommunications sector will help them see new possibilities for their future careers.

Tennant is optimistic about Rochester’s future, thanks to its status as an optics hub and for opportunities like those at the RMSC, where kids can learn about this important growing field. “Rochester has a tremendous optical, photonic, and radio background and we are proud to be a part of that legacy,” Tennant says. “Veluxsys is a Rochester grown communications company and our love is not only in the science and technology of integrated photonics, radio communications, software and signal processing, but also for our greater community and the local history in which Veluxsys resides.”

The RMSC is grateful for our partnership with Veluxsys by PrecisionOT and for their support of Illumination: The World of Light and Optics.

PLANNING TO VISIT ANOTHER MUSEUM?

The RMSC is conducting research into Behind-the-Scenes Tours, and we would really appreciate your help. All you need to do is take a Behind-the-Scenes Tour at another museum – a tour of collections not on public display – and complete a very short survey. (Check that museum’s website or give them a call to see if Behind-the-Scenes Tours are available.)

Contact Stephanie Ball, RMSC Archivist/Librarian, at 585.697.947 or sball@rmsc.org, to get a copy of our survey form. Stephanie can also help you with any questions you may have about the survey or this project.
GROWING WITH THE ROCHESTER MUSEUM & SCIENCE CENTER

Our parents, John and Nancy Swett, saw the Museum as a terrific community resource. They were proud to support it with their hearts, minds, and time. They first joined the RMSC in 1977. Our father, who served on its board in the 80s, had great respect for Dick Schultz’s leadership, and appreciated the Museum’s early commitment to developing more complex representations of Native Americans. Our mother valued her decades on the Women’s Council and loved the people she met in connection with the Museum’s vital community outreach, especially Rochester’s school children. Our parents took great pleasure in sharing the Museum with visitors from places like Ethiopia, Japan, and Pennsylvania.

Our family grew up with the RMSC. We all loved the Planetarium with its big black tip-back chairs and that fantastic deep, clear voice that magically explained the boundless limits of our galaxy from tiny speakers that were practically right in our ears (long before anyone had heard of headphones). Ben remembers attending an all-night art film program there with our Dad. Steve worked with Ralph Campbell and Dave Gotham at the Cumming Nature Center, building the Beaver Trail, learning to milk a cow, and keeping a respectful distance from Duke and Dan when they were busy plowing or hauling. Alice remembers the Museum’s old-school, life-size, natural history dioramas, and more recently the excellent Rochester’s Underground Railroad exhibit. Walter, a proud and happy alumnus of the RMSC Pre-School, remembers playing with a white hard hat marked with the RMSC logo and our Dad’s name at a ground-breaking for the building’s 1988 expansion. He also enjoyed joining our parents at some of the Distinguished Scholars Lectures.

The Cumming Nature Center held a special place in our parents’ hearts. They took us and their grandchildren there to learn about forest critters, pond life, homesteading, and making maple syrup from approachable interpreters who treated us, the flora, and the fauna like friends. Mom volunteered at Pancake Breakfasts for 20 years, and the whole family enjoyed hikes and cross-country skiing. On Mom’s last visit there we were thrilled to use the Nature Center’s light wheelchair with huge rubber wheels, which enabled us to go on a trail in the woods.

Through the decades, the Museum helped our three generations explore the complexity and fragility of life on our planet, the struggles and triumphs of the people who have lived in upstate New York through the centuries, and the worlds that exist beyond our own experience.

Our parents knew that the RMSC was created, run, and sustained by people who make a commitment to supporting the exploration and discovery that brings out the best in all of us. They were always pleased when the Museum was crowded, because they believed all people should take advantage of what it offers. We’re grateful to be able to honor our parents by supporting the museum’s programs that welcome and engage urban schoolchildren.

Ben, Steve, Alice & Walter Swett

John and Nancy Swett, early 1980s
CITIZEN SCIENCE

The RMSC Cumming Nature Center (CNC) has had a busy year of citizen science! What is citizen science? Public contributions to data collection are referred to as citizen science — a participatory model designed to increase public engagement and the scale of scientific research.

How does the CNC use citizen science? The installation of an internet-linked weather station now allows the public real-time access to weather data at the Nature Center via the Weather Underground website. The weather station tracks and analyzes data over time, painting a picture of local weather patterns and improving local awareness and responsiveness around data literacy. By tracking weather over time, CNC staff and visitors can eventually analyze long-term climatic trends on the property.

Changes in climate have an impact on both native flora and fauna, and a vital citizen science project studying the impact of a changing climate on bird migrations is the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s Project FeederWatch. This year, CNC joined their team of citizen scientists, contributing to over 30 years of nationwide data on migration patterns.

In July, at CNC’s annual BioBlitz citizen science project, we documented species on our property with the help of experts joining us from 13 partnering organizations. More than 400 species were recorded, including a coal skink—a lizard species not commonly found in the area. A BioBlitz is an informal and fun way for participants to develop a snapshot of the breathtaking variety of life that can be found in their region. To help preserve the native flora and fauna documented during our BioBlitz, we have been spending the summer mapping invasive plants along our 15 miles of trail. This information will guide our removal and maintenance strategies in the coming years. Be sure to stay tuned for more exciting, hands-on citizen science opportunities at the Cumming Nature Center!
Women’s Council “Night at the Museum”

In appreciation of the hard work and dedication of the RMSC Women’s Council, we recently treated their members, friends, and family to a “Night at the Museum,” an evening when RMSC was open exclusively for them. The night started with light refreshments and a social hour followed by two hours of Museum exploration. Special *Science on a Sphere* and *Electricity Theater* shows were offered, along with simulator rides and special live science shows. More than 50 Women’s Council members and guests came to enjoy the evening.

*Photo left to right: Women’s Council Members Nancy Samuelson, Stephanie Gulla, and Steve and Laurie Adams with Sue Layton, Floor Supervisor, after a Science on a Sphere show*

*Women’s Council Holiday Bazaar takes place November 16-18, 2018!*