

WHAT WILL YOU **DISCOVER?**

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



MONTSHIRE
MUSEUM OF
SCIENCE

Dear friends,

At the Montshire Museum of Science, we think a lot about our role in society and how this institution can help make the world a better place. Ultimately, it comes down to science and community.

Our exhibits, education programs, outreach activities, and special events all engage people in the joy of science and help to foster a lifelong love of learning. The whole community benefits from stronger schools, families learning together, and a local economy that is bolstered by more than 180,000 participants each year.

The past year has been an especially exciting one at the Montshire. We began implementing Montshire's new strategic plan a year ago, and made significant progress. In addition to adopting a new logo and visual identity, we developed a master plan for the 100-acre landscape, introduced four new Montshire-created exhibitions, and served as a local hub for national celebrations of science, such as the solar eclipse in August and the march for science in April.

In a year when science is more important than ever, the trustees are tremendously proud of and thankful for what the volunteers and staff have accomplished. All this work is in service to you, your friends and neighbors, and the wider community.

Over the past two years, the Museum benefited greatly from Philip McCaull's leadership as chair of the board. I look forward to continuing this important work. On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, thank you for supporting the Montshire.

JAY BENSON

Chair, Board of Trustees



Jennifer Brooke

DISCOVER THE POSSIBILITIES **Understanding the Montshire Master Plan**

The future development of the Montshire's 100-acre landscape has been under consideration for many years. With a strategic goal to "elevate our outdoor experience," the Montshire team partnered with Lemon Brooke Landscape Architecture this year to develop a new master plan to help guide the next 5–20 years of outdoor development. Montshire Executive Director Marcos Stafne sat down with landscape architect Jennifer Brooke and asked her about the process of working on the plan for the Montshire.

What exactly is a master plan?

I like to describe a master plan as a road map. Decisions about where you want to go meet the decisions about how you want to get there. It looks at existing natural and constructed resources, then apprais-

es them for development, given a certain set of planning goals. Those planning goals are often generated in the master plan process and are considered one of the more valuable aspects of such a project. Being the progressive institution that it is,

the Montshire Museum of Science already had a strategic plan, which outlines the desired direction of the Museum philosophically and establishes an attitude about future modifications or expansion.

The master plan takes that direction and layers it over the actual landscape to see how those goals might be achieved empirically. A master plan is an opportunity to see how current and future pieces of a “site” puzzle might fit together.

How is the Montshire project different from other projects?

A specific site’s condition certainly guides the outcome of a master plan, but so do the goals and ideals of the individual clients. The Montshire master plan is distinctive in terms of both process and design. There is so much institutional knowledge at the Montshire. Every person we spoke with had a story to share and something to teach. It became clear that this was going to be an exciting and intense collaborative process.

This master plan needed to keep the visitor’s experience at the forefront, which required a much finer grain of planning. Understanding the site vegetation and topography of the site, while important, wasn’t going to mean much if we couldn’t articulate the value these things had to the hands-on capability for present and future scientists! This is a less common approach for a master plan and has a greater emphasis on human experience.

What is unique about the Montshire landscape to you?

What stands out to me is the outstanding array of edge conditions at multiple scales! Edges are the most diverse and interesting places to explore. Think of how compelling the beach is for many, or a walk along a river bank. Humans are drawn to edges. They are often places with views and allow people to get oriented with the landscape.

What possibilities do you see in the Museum’s landscape?

The Connecticut River presents opportunities for the future Montshire experience. It is a special place for a museum to be located and the possibilities for experiences that foster learning, family-time, exploration, and scientific inquiry run deep.

When one imagines the kind of activities and events that could happen with a better connection to the river, it creates a set of circumstances that cannot be duplicated by many other institutions.

What do you look for in a spectacular museum experience?

Because I have a predisposition that I am going to learn something at a museum, I particularly enjoy when the learning comes with whimsy and inventiveness. I want a museum experience to be challenging in some ways, like a visually arresting sculptural figure in an unexpected place, but not in others, like when I can’t easily find the restroom or read the map.

I like spaces that don’t have a singular intention, but allow for multiple interpretations and keep me coming back over and over, places that let me reinvent my own experience,

depending on my mood and who I am traveling with.

What’s been your experience working with Montshire staff and community members?

I’ll miss the steady interaction that I’ve had with the staff and community over the past year at the Montshire. Of all the client groups that I have worked with over the years, this one has so much respect for each other’s point of view, and that benefits the process enormously. In addition to being courteous, this group is extremely detail oriented and interested in every angle of an argument.

I had to adjust my own pace to accommodate the space needed to really dig into a crazy number of ideas and considerations that bubbled to the surface about the look and feel of the future visitor experience at Montshire. This was exciting and I believe very particular to the gestalt of the Montshire.

I feel lucky to have been able to participate in this universe of mindful people who have such a passion for this institution.

To read the full interview, visit www.montshire.org

TELLING OUR STORY

This past summer, we launched a new visual identity to help us deliver our message in a clear voice that rallies around the wonder of science. We partnered with Burlington-based branding firm Place Creative Company to design and implement a new logo and communications strategies that effectively tell the Montshire's story.

Our new logo, comprised of three colorful triangles, communicates the joy of science by conveying the passion and energy of the community, the Museum’s natural wooded landscape, and the tranquility of the Connecticut River. Combined, these vibrant triangles evoke optimism, excitement, and discovery.



MONTSHIRE
MUSEUM OF
SCIENCE

DISCOVER CONNECTIONS

Linking a Family's Experiences Between Home and the Museum

This summer, my six-year-old twins started their own science museum: a “nature table” on our front porch. From May to September, my little naturalists found beautiful leaves and rocks, several abandoned bird nests, and a large rodent skeleton. A table originally intended to hold glasses of lemonade became crowded with acorns, pinecones, granite, and feathers. It was a mess—a wonderful, curious mess. How thrilled my kids were, then, to travel to the Montshire and find the new exhibition, *Discovering the Natural World*, devoted to the natural wonders of the Upper Valley—one giant “nature table.”

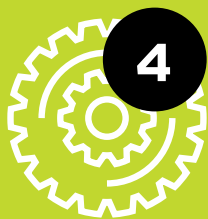
The kids compared the size and shape of the bones of the rodent skeleton they found with the one on exhibit: they matched. They found a beaver! They thought about the shapes of the bird nests they discovered in the woods as well as the ones on display and learned that they had one Robin nest and one Dark-eyed Junco nest. They discovered snakes hidden in drawers, weighed antlers (“whoa! 10 pounds!” my daughter marveled), and measured themselves against an adult moose. My son has become an expert at identifying poison ivy on our hikes—a direct result of *Discovering the Natural World*. They examined turtle scutes and feathers under a microscope—amazed by a whole new, microscopic world. All the while, the busy and determined leaf-cutter ants mesmerized me and my wife. One day, I thought, I’ll spot the queen.

We quickly passed through the beautifully designed and thoughtfully arranged *Solve It!* exhibition—undoubtedly a place where we will spend hours upon hours as my kids grow with the Museum—and made our way to an exhibition that has become a family favorite: *Making Music: The Science of Musical Instruments*. This summer, a well-loved family piano was moved into our home and my kids were amazed to see how the inside of the piano actually works. They didn’t just play the cello and the drums; they learned how to explore different sounds through experimentation. It occurred to me that the basics of science—asking questions, testing hypotheses, and understanding cause and effect—can be (and are) beautifully illustrated through music. “What happens if I do this?” my son asked as he moved his hand over the theremin.

My family eventually packed up our lunches and hiked into the trail system to fulfill a summer goal: a journey to Pluto in the Kuiper belt. We were thrilled to see the planets along the *Planet Walk* updated with new information and images, demonstrating the dynamic and exciting pace of scientific discovery. In the vastness of space between the planets, we stopped to listen to the Blue Jays. A butterfly caught my son’s attention just as we approached the deep blue of Neptune. And, eventually, we did make it to the Kuiper belt, our pockets full of acorns, leaves, and rocks—the latest additions to our nature table.

Jeremy DeSilva (Member, Scientist, Dad)

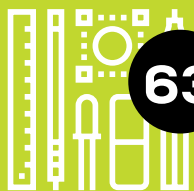
EXHIBITION DEVELOPMENT



4

NEW EXHIBITIONS

Making Music
Solve It!
Discovering the Natural World
Playing Around



63

PROTOTYPES DEVELOPED

Each exhibition is based on months of research and original models created to inform the final product

OUTDOOR AREA IMPROVEMENTS



95

Feet of hand railings added

76

Feet of trails resurfaced

18

Foot extension of the Steppingstone Bridge

2.5

Miles of trails raked twice



156

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES

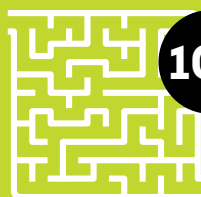
Interactive pieces that encourage engagement with science



48

EXPERTS ENGAGED

Outside advisors in the community were consulted during the development of each exhibition



10k

SQUARE FEET MODIFIED

10,650 square feet of exhibit galleries changed over the course of the year



DISCOVER OPEN DOORS

Making Science Accessible for All

Montshire's Warm Welcome program helps ensure that families of all income levels have access to the Museum and its programs. Participants receive reduced membership and admission fees, as well as scholarships for summer camp and other education programs. Three participants share their stories.

HALLIE

"The Montshire provides a safe place. It's a friendly environment. I would prefer my kids to be here than somewhere else because they're learning, they're safe, and everybody is welcoming here."

SHEILA

"One of my kids was born hearing impaired. And one of his favorite places to come is the Montshire because it has so many different things for all the different senses. Now that I have a membership, I come often. Even if I don't have a car to use that day, I can hop on the bus. It's been huge. We wouldn't be able to come otherwise. I wouldn't be able to afford to come with all my kids."

AMBER

"I am able to bring my son all of the time. We don't have to wait for a special occasion or a school trip. Anytime he says 'let's go to the museum,' we know that we can just head on down and explore all day long."



**WARM
WELCOME
PARTICIPATION**

22,458
TOTAL WARM
WELCOME VISITS

17,183
WARM WELCOME
MEMBER VISITS

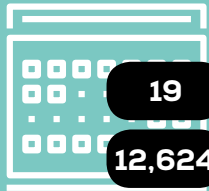
3,328
FREE VISITS THROUGH
AGENCY REFERRALS

1,304
WARM WELCOME
MEMBERSHIPS

1,947
SINGLE DAY
VISITS

55
SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENTS

SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT



SPECIAL EVENT DAYS

19

Special event days

12,624

Visitors at special event days

SCIENCE DISCOVERY LAB

1,014

Hands-on science workshops

65

Lab Coat Investigations
(For older children and adults)

648

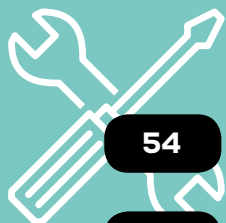
Participants in
Lab Coat Investigations

15,299

Participants in
Family Science Activities

15,947

Participants in staff and
volunteer-led workshops



TINKERING LAB

54

Days of activities facilitated by
Museum educators

2,500+

Participants in
engineering activities

SUMMER CAMP

15

Summer programs offered

529

Participants in summer
programs



VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

3,000

Volunteer hours supporting visitors
through the Explainer program

20

Summer program staff members

4

Seasonal staff explainers

6

Camp-in staff members

DISCOVER Teaching

When School's Out for the Summer

The Montshire Camps have become a seasonal favorite with many families in the area, thanks to engaging lessons, a unique space for learning, and a highly-trained staff that brings their knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion for teaching. Summer camp staffer Kara Garrow shares her thoughts on the program and on her work as an educator.



How did you first get involved with the Montshire?

Growing up in the Upper Valley, I visited the Montshire often as a child and into my teens. One of my sisters and one of my brothers-in-law worked at the summer camp over

the years and convinced me to apply. I'm glad that I listened to them because I've learned much, met great people, and spent a lot of time in nature.

Can you talk about your role in the field of education and how your work at the Montshire connects with that?

I work as an English teacher at Hartford High School and am also a licensed special educator. Since I spend the majority of my year with teenagers, the summer is a great time to work with a different age group. What I love about working with the younger campers is their sense of imagination. All of the Montshire programs do a fantastic job drawing out and expanding on the natural curiosity of young children. I think that the counselors would be lying if they said that they weren't excited and curious during the activities that they plan. The work I do at the Montshire makes me a better teacher and reinforces my belief that learning is fun!

This last summer was your third summer teaching at the Montshire Summer Camp. What brings you back to the program year after year?

I keep coming back for two big reasons. First, the people I work with are amazing. The permanent Montshire employees are fun and helpful. The other counselors have been great to work with on a daily basis and some have even become close friends. I'm always saddened by the end of each summer, knowing that I will not be seeing these friends every day. The second reason is that it is the only job I have ever had that allows me to be outside all day long. We live in the most beautiful area in the world, and I love working with people that embrace nature to the fullest extent.

NEW WAYS OF LEARNING

Beyond the Classroom

Teaming Up for Tinkering

“Tinkering coaxes educators to apply science concepts through projects that are personally satisfying, challenging, and creative,” says Tracy Truzansky, Project Manager for Training/STEM Initiative at Vermont Afterschool, Inc. “It’s a less threatening pathway for many afterschool providers to enter the world of STEM learning.”

In 2016, the Montshire and Vermont Afterschool teamed up to encourage student engagement and learning outside the normal hours of school—specifically through tinkering. Vermont Afterschool provides professional development, communication, and advocacy for afterschool and summer learning professionals across the state. The combination of Vermont Afterschool’s professional network and

the Montshire’s expertise in developing tinkering programming presented an opportunity to better serve educators and their students.

Both organizations recognize that tinkering, making, and engineering are especially well suited for afterschool and summer programs. They are open-ended, creative, challenging, and they develop science knowledge and confidence. Furthermore, they build essential skills, such as communicating as a team and solving problems creatively.

Since their partnership, Vermont Afterschool and the Montshire have worked together to train over 200 providers and distribute 23 class-size tinkering kits to support over 500 Vermont youth in afterschool and summer tinkering programs. Jointly supported professional development sessions offer afterschool providers

the content, pedagogy, and facilitation guidance needed to lead exciting tinkering projects that introduce students to science concepts like circuits, gravity, balance, and energy.

Data from the PEAR Institute reveal the impact of tinkering for youth in programs such as these: “Overall, Vermont Afterschool youth reported significant gains in subscales relating to science interest (82%), critical thinking (81%) and perseverance (79%).”

As the interest in tinkering grows, Vermont Afterschool and the Montshire continue to receive more requests for professional development workshops—increasing their network of teachers and enhancing the education experience.

*Rachel Donegan
(Montshire Science Educator
and Program Manager)*



SCHOOL OUTREACH



22 Schools visited by Montshire education staff

45 VT and NH communities visited by Montshire education staff

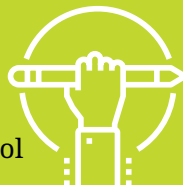


73 Days Montshire staff spent on the road in schools and communities

6k 6,056 learners engaged in science in their communities through Montshire programming

76 Classroom teachers in the School Partnership Initiative

1k 1,501 K-8 students whose science curriculum is supported by the School Partnership Initiative



282 VT and NH educators participating in professional development activities

79 Educators reached, beyond VT and NH, through professional development



DISCOVER THE WORLD

Building Partnerships Across the Globe Through *Weaving Strands of Knowledge*

The Montshire has the opportunity and responsibility to engage people with current issues in science that impact society. Arguably, climate change is one of the most challenging problems we are facing as a region, a nation, and a global community.

Weaving Strands of Knowledge: Connecting Culture and Science to Climate Change was a project that allowed us to engage new audiences in important conversations about the environment, and to incorporate personal stories into the hard data and science of climate change. Earlier this year, the Museum led an international team that included students and

faculty from the University of New Hampshire and Bhutan's Royal Thimphu College, as well as colleagues from the Folk Heritage Museum of Bhutan (administered by the Tarayana Cultural Foundation). *The Weaving Strands of Knowledge* team spent over 25 days in the field, collecting stories from Vermont, New Hampshire, and Bhutan, focusing on people who spend much of their lives outside, connected to the land: farmers, hunters, hikers, skiers, and loggers. Over 80 interviews were recorded, with a variety of individuals ranging from ski area operators in Vermont to market farmers and village leaders in rural regions of Bhutan.



The interviews were then edited and produced into short audio stories, connected to the actual science of climate change, and shared with visitors at the Montshire and with members of the community in Bhutan. Working with university students allowed the Montshire to strengthen connections with this demographic and to support their development as future environmental leaders locally and abroad. In addition, we engaged members of our community who do not frequent the Museum or participate in our many programs. These shared experiences are critical to increasing climate change awareness and finding solutions to this pressing societal problem.

This international project, the Museum's first, was funded through the Museums Connect program, an initiative of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Culture Affairs and managed by the American Alliance of Museums.

*Greg DeFrancis
(Director of Education)*



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COMMUNITY-BASED COLLABORATION

Children's Hospital at Dartmouth (CHaD)
The Family Place
Hanover Garden Club
Hopkins Center for the Performing Arts
Hypertherm Associates
Listen Community Services
NH & VT Council of Charitable Gift Planners
Norris Cotton Cancer Center (Prouty)
Norwich Public Library
Northern Stage
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Dartmouth
Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth
Upper Valley Haven
Upper Valley Trails Alliance
Vermont Institute for Natural Science

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Association of Science-Technology Centers
Children's Museum of Pittsburgh
Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory
Crossroads Academy

Google
Dartmouth College, Department of Education
Dartmouth College, Department of Anthropology
Dartmouth College, Department of Physics and Astronomy
Hanover Improvement Society
Hanover School District
Maker Ed
National Informal STEM Education Network
Schweitzer Fellows Program
Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth
U.S. Ice Drilling Program
University of Vermont
Vermont Afterschool, Inc.
Vermont Center for the Book
Vermont Department of Libraries
Vermont Space Grant Consortium

LEARNING SCIENCE INITIATIVES

AAA Lab, Stanford University, CA
American Alliance of Museums, DC
ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, VT

Education Development Center, MA
Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium, VT
Folk Heritage Museum, Bhutan
Gulf of Maine Research Institute
Maine Discovery Museum
Rochester Museum and Science Center, NY
Royal Thimphu College, Bhutan
Squam Lakes Natural Science Center, NH
Tarayana Foundation, Bhutan
University of New Hampshire
The Wild Center, NY

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

Barnard Academy, VT
Barnet School, VT
Danville School, VT
Peacham Elementary School, VT
The Prosper Valley School, VT
Rivendell Interstate School District, NH/VT
Thetford Elementary School, VT
Tunbridge Central School, VT
Unity Elementary School, NH
Walden School, VT

DISCOVER THE IMPACT OF OUR COMMUNITY

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The board and staff of the Montshire are grateful for every contribution. Thank you for supporting science, families, and a better tomorrow!

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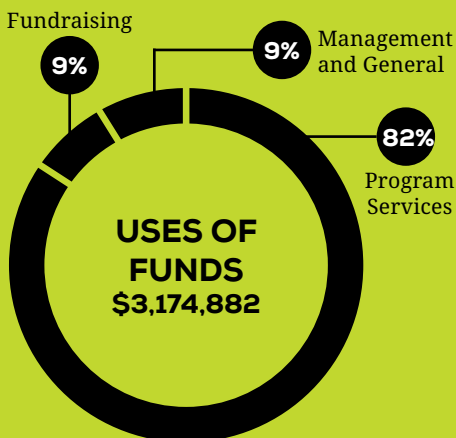
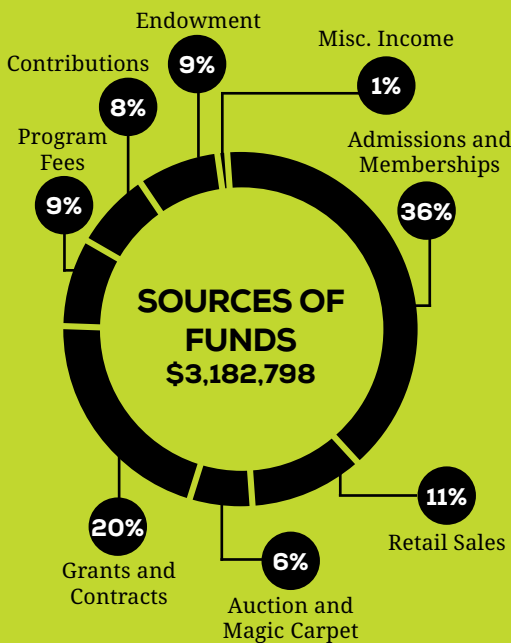
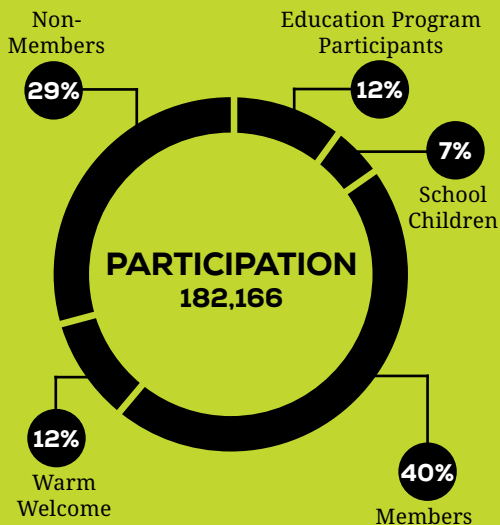
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These charts illustrate major sources and uses of funds comprising the Montshire's operating budget for the fiscal year that ended 9/30/17.

Note: "Use of Funds" does not include capital depreciation. This information is taken from our preliminary year-end financial report. Copies of our completed financial statements, prepared by our auditors, Tyler, Simms & St. Sauveur, P.C., will be available soon. Please contact the Development Office at the Museum to request a copy.

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These donors made gifts in memory of Richard “Dick” Birnie, a long-time friend of the Museum. His family established the Richard W. Birnie Science Teaching Fund to help support the Montshire’s School Partnership Initiative, which strengthens science education in K-8 rural schools in Vermont and New Hampshire.

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If you have left the Montshire a provision of any kind in your estate plan and would like to be recognized for your generosity, please contact the Development Office for a confidential conversation at 802-649-2200, ext. 225.

IN MEMORIAM



Windsor Hunter, a former trustee, Corporation member, and devoted supporter of the Montshire, passed away on March 1, 2017. He was an accomplished engineer, busi-

nessman, photographer, hiker, and outdoor enthusiast. Together with his wife, Marilyn, Win established an endowment to support the Montshire's School Partnership Initiative, which strengthens science education in K-8 rural schools in Vermont and New Hampshire. The Montshire is grateful to those donors who made memorial contributions to this fund in his honor.

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ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Montshire Museum of Science is a hands-on museum in Norwich, Vermont. Located on a 110-acre site near the Connecticut River, the Museum offers over 150 exhibits relating to the natural and physical sciences, ecology, and technology, as well as an outdoor space that features miles of trails, the David Goudy Science Park, and nature exhibits.

HOURS

Open daily, 10am to 5pm

Closed Thanksgiving
and Christmas

ADMISSION

Free for Members and
children under 2 years old

Adults: \$15 \\ Children: \$12

Summer rate

Adults: \$17 \\ Children: \$14

ACCESSIBILITY

First floor exhibit spaces and bathrooms are entirely wheelchair accessible. Second floor exhibit spaces can be reached by elevator. Several nature trails on the Quinn Nature Preserve are also wheelchair accessible.

