Creating New Digs for Mikey

Jace Hopper, a junior at Midland Christian School, spent several months at the Petroleum Museum working on his Eagle Scout Service Project. As a result, one reptile has a special place to live and visitors can relax on benches under a tree.

Jace came to the Museum in April of this year wanting to find a way to help us and the community. He developed, researched, fundraised, and implemented his plan.

Our sulcata tortoise, Mikey, has a much-improved habitat with a beautiful West Texas landscape and animal mural on the outside wall of his enclosure painted by Karen Winkler. Mikey is part of our Animal Outreach Program focusing on wildlife education pertaining to habitats, ecosystems, adaptations, and food chains. He is also an attraction for visitors to observe as they visit the Museum. Jace also added new picnic tables on pads located under a tree outside the Education Hall and Mikey’s enclosure. This area will welcome school groups, programs, and other visitors wanting to eat lunch, take a break on the grounds, or enjoy the beautiful art now displayed outside.

Thank you to Jace, Troop 232 – First Baptist Church, Karen Winkler, West Engineering, Silver Spur Construction, and other family and friends who contributed to this project. It looks amazing and we are so proud of it! So is Mikey.
Change is the word to describe the life of Billy Harris, a longtime Museum volunteer and member of the Board of Trustees.

Growing up on a farm in central California, Harris knew he didn’t want to continue the family tradition. A great-uncle who was an amateur geologist influenced Harris to study geology and the young man picked the Colorado School of Mines to major in geology.

“All my friends there were petroleum engineering majors,” Harris said. “They made a lot of money working as roughnecks during the summers. I was doing odd jobs and not making much money. I decided to work as a roughneck to make better money that would help me get through school. It turned out I liked that work.”

Harris changed his major to petroleum engineering after completing his junior year. The change “added to my college career,” he said with a laugh, “but also to my professional career. My deeper knowledge of geology has enhanced my ability as a petroleum engineer.”

He started working with ConocoPhillips in Midland in 1978, returned to the Rockies for a few years and then found his way back. His two sons grew up here and vowed they would not follow in Dad’s footsteps. “Well, they are working in the petroleum industry here and raising their families here,” he said.

In 2004 Harris was asked to help with the opening of the Museum’s new Transportation Wing, bringing another change in his life. That led to working with Family Science Nights and then involvement with updating a cable tool rig in the Oil Patch. His job with Wagner & Brown allowed Harris the freedom to volunteer with the Museum.

Two years later, the engineer joined the Board of Trustees and then was elected secretary of the body. “I love the industry and I love what I do,” Harris said. “And I’ve always been interested in education. I find the Petroleum Museum is a great merger of those two things I love. I like having some input into the direction of the Museum and helping out whenever I can.”

Harris’s volunteer career includes coaching baseball and soccer, judging science fairs, working with Midland Habitat for Humanity and Boy Scouts, and serving with Society of Petroleum Engineers, Society of Petroleum Evaluation Engineers, Society of Independent Professional Earth Scientists and American Association of Petroleum Geologists.

Another change popped up during the Museum’s recently completed renovation. Harris was asked to assist the developers with some of the technical content going into the new exhibits, including the geologic scenery and Permian Reef.

“My hopes for the Museum is that it continues to be a brilliant diamond in the Midland crown,” he said. “I want to see it continue to shine and to educate and give the people of the area a sense of where they have been and the possibilities awaiting them as they go forward.”

He is attracted not just to the story the exhibits tell about the area’s geology, but also the positive notes of the industry. “This industry brings together diverse disciplines, cultures and, most importantly, different ways of thinking about things and doing things.”
Aquamarine, March’s birthstone, is the green-blue to blue variety of the mineral beryl. The aquamarine’s name is derived from the Latin word for seawater. It was believed to calm the waves and keep sailors safe at sea.

The best gem quality aquamarines have a high clarity and are blue to slightly greenish blue. Like many beryls, aquamarine often forms in large crystals making it suitable for large cut stones and carvings. Aquamarine mines in the United States include Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho and California. Brazil, Colombia, Zambia, Madagascar, Tanzania and Kenya also produce aquamarines.

The largest gemstone quality aquamarine ever mined was found in Brazil in 1910. It weighed over 240 pounds and was 19 inches long and 17 inches in diameter.

This aquamarine is in a matrix of quartz and albite. Quartz is the second most abundant mineral on earth. Feldspars, which include albite, are the most common mineral and are important rock-forming minerals. First found in Sweden in 1815, albite takes much longer to crystallize than other feldspars, enabling it to form in large crystals.

This and many other minerals are featured in the Museum’s Mineral Gallery.

Energy Law

Texas Tech Energy Law students visited the Museum on October 14 as part of an oil and gas law field trip planned by the school and supported by several local companies and individuals. We were honored to be included on their busy itinerary and enjoyed helping them discover the industry through our new petroleum exhibits and the Oil Patch.
Robots invade Museum...from competitions to exhibits

Challenge Almost Here

The Petroleum Museum and Midland High School are hosting a First Tech Challenge – Panhandle Plains South League Event involving 16 teams from seven schools competing in robotics. The robotics competition will be held at the Museum on Saturday, December 10, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Students are participating from Midland High School, Midland Lee High School, Greenwood High School, Midland Classical Academy, UTPB STEM Academy, Post High School and Andrews High School.

Spectators are welcome and admission is free. To learn more about the competition’s parameters, visit www.firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc.

The event is sponsored by NorthStar Operating Company.

Playing with Robot Zoo

Engage in biomechanics with Robot Zoo, a traveling exhibit on display at the Petroleum Museum through mid-May 2017. Interactive animal robots combine mechanical engineering with wildlife characteristics and adaptations. For information about scheduling group tours that include a focus on the Robot Zoo, contact Olivia Thompson at 432-683-4403 or othompson@petroleummuseum.org.

Youngsters enjoy the creativity the Zoo brings in the tours.

Family Science Night: Space Wars

Thursday, January 26, 2017
6:30 to 8 p.m.

3...2...1...BLAST OFF to the Petroleum Museum for “Space Wars” Family Science Night on Thursday, January 26. Channel your inner astronomer as you experiment with moon craters, journey through outer space, and create your own rockets. Admission is FREE. Family Science Nights are brought to you by our generous sponsors at CHEVRON. Museum Members will enjoy the added bonus of EARLY ADMISSION to explore out-of-this-world science from 6 to 6:30 p.m.

Outreach: Have Programs, Will Travel Anywhere

Let our educational programming come to your school! We offer science and history based interactive programs that are great opportunities to supplement school curriculum. These programs, aligned with state standards (TEKS), are for all ages. Choose from six topics: Animals, Dinosaurs, Fossils, Geology, Native Americans.

Our newest outreach program, Astronomy, uses a portable planetarium that allows students to travel into outer space or to the center of the earth. Our Education Department is also working diligently to expand our outreach program offerings to include robotics and energy in the coming year. Don’t miss this chance to pet a prairie dog, feel a buffalo hide, become a geologist-in-training, sit among the stars, or go back in time with creatures of land and sea.
Rent Early!

Consider the Petroleum Museum for your company’s holiday get-together. We offer a variety of spaces from which to choose. The galleries provide a perfect balance of sophistication and adventure. The auditorium offers many amenities to enhance your experience. The indoor café area and adjoining outdoor terrace offer excellent semi-private space options for intimate events in a setting that meshes glamour with rustic oil patch charm.

Don’t wait! Contact Carey Behrends to reserve the Museum for your special event at 432-683-4403, cbehrends@petroleummuseum.org.

Spring Wanderers to Head East

From the culturally stimulating sites of the Metroplex to the extraordinary boom-town days in east Texas, West Texas Wanderers will experience the diversity that Texas offers March 30 through April 1. Get your name on the list to “wander” to Fort Worth, Dallas, Kilgore and Tyler.

One afternoon will be spent touring sites in Fort Worth’s Cultural District, choosing from the Kimble Art Museum, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Science & History Museum and the Modern Art Museum. An evening is planned at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden.

Our next stop will be the Perot Museum of Nature and Science near downtown Dallas followed by The George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum, which reveals the life and career of our nation’s 43rd president and 46th governor of Texas. A short drive to Kilgore will take our Wanderers to the East Texas Oil Museum. Visitors can enjoy Boomtown, USA – a full scale town full of stores, people, animals, and machinery depicting the lively activity of a town booming in the oil industry.

Next, we will visit the world-famous Tyler Rose Garden Center which preserves and displays the story of Tyler’s rose-growing trade. Wanderers will also stop at the Vintage Grill & Car Museum in Weatherford to experience farm-to-table southern style cuisine, plus an eclectic collection of vintage automobiles. For more information, call Carey Behrends at 432-683-4403 or email cbehrends@petroleummuseum.org.

ASK Dr. Petro

How Did Industry Begin in West Texas?

A: Much of the Permian Basin was home to the Comanche Indians until they were forced out by the U.S. Army in the mid-1870’s. Because of the rich grasslands, most of the area was inviting to both ranchers and farmers. Surface water, however, was almost non-existent. Ranchers and farmers drilled water wells to sustain themselves and their livestock, often finding evidence of oil or gas.

A newly installed museum exhibit describes the “birth of an industry” on this vast terrain. Here museum visitors are reminded that the true discovery well of the Permian Basin “came in” in February of 1920, forever changing the course of West Texas. It was the moment in history when a shallow discovery well struck oil at a depth of 450 feet in Mitchell County.

Truth be told, the W.H. Abrams No.1 only produced a negligible 10 barrels of oil per day at first. Five months later and 2,000 feet deeper, however, the well was blasted with nitroglycerin. The first commercial well of the Permian, oil, gas, and water exploded through the derrick daily. The W.H. Abrams No. 1 in the Westbrook Field led to one of the most prolific black gold rushes in U.S. history in the Permian Basin.
Looking Back: YOU Made This a Great Year!

Thank YOU for making this year the best so far! 2016 has been one of reflection on what we accomplished over the past 40 years, and it has been a year of new beginnings with the grand re-opening of the new petroleum exhibits.

The Museum offered a variety of programs in 2016. Kindergarteners through high school students explored the world of robotics. Teachers from around the Permian Basin attended informative and educational workshops. Local colleges and universities used the Museum as an educational resource for a variety of classes. Area adults were engaged by world-class speakers. YOU helped many generations see the tremendous value in what the Museum has to offer!

Industry Professionals, the local community and visitors from all over the world came to learn about the petroleum industry and left with a new appreciation for what the Museum strives to achieve. YOU allowed us to continue the legacy of all the Permian Basin represents.

As 2016 comes to a close, we hope you will consider a donation to the Permian Basin Petroleum Museum. Your donation will be used for meeting the Museum’s most pressing needs. If you choose to donate privately, check for matching funds through your employer.

We are your advocate for the industry to all who experience, discover and realize how important the petroleum industry is to each of us. Send your tax-deductible contribution to 1500 Interstate 20, Midland, TX 79701 or donate online at www.pbpetro.org. Contact Luanne Thornton for questions at 432-683-4403 or lthornton@petroleummuseum.org.

Best wishes to you and your family this holiday season.

41st Birthday Sponsors

Thank you for making our 41st Birthday a real bash. Don Bishop won the Tom Lovell print and the Permian Basin tribute rifle went to Jim Woodcock. Congratulations Don and Jim! Special thanks to Norman Johnson for his fun Birthday Bash artwork and to Flowerland for floral arrangements.

UNDERWRITERS:
Concho – Music by Ransom Rhodes
Winnie Kidd – Decorations
Nancy & Joe Liberty – Libations

LEGENDS:
Concho
Ferrell Davis
Vicki & Clint Hurt/Claire & Jim Woodcock
NorthStar Operating Company

INNOVATORS:
Mindy & Joe de Compiegne
CrownQuest Operating, LLC
Frost
Parsley Energy

EXPLORERS:
Basic Energy Services
Laquita & Dennis Johnson
Leslie & John Kennedy
Karen & Roy Williamson

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Rudolph “Rudy” Kuzmich
Nancy & Barry Beal
Kenneth V. Terrell
Sarah Flautt
Experiment: Snow Slime

**MATERIALS:**
- Two Bowls
- 2 Cups of White School Glue
- Water
- Glitter
- ¾ Teaspoons of Borax

**PROCEDURE:**
1. In one bowl, mix together the two cups of school glue, glitter, and 1 ½ cups of very warm water.
2. In the second bowl, mix together the borax and 1 1/3 cups of very warm water.
3. Mix the ingredients in both bowls very well and then mix the ingredients of both bowls into one.
4. Mix the ingredients with your hands for a few minutes and the snow slime will start to form!
5. To make the slime cold, store it in a Ziploc bag in the refrigerator before and after play!

**HOW DOES IT WORK?**
You just made a polymer. Polymers are unique because they have qualities of both a solid and a liquid. It takes the shape of its containers like a liquid does, but you can pick it up and hold it like a solid. The glue has an ingredient called polyvinyl acetate, which is a liquid polymer. The borax links the polyvinyl acetate molecules to each other, creating one large, flexible polymer. This kind of slime will get stiffer and more like putty the more you play with it.
Our Mission: We will share the petroleum and energy story and its impact on our lives.

Meet George...our Elf on the Shelf who gets into mischief and saves you money this holiday season. Catch all of George’s antics on the Museum’s Facebook page or come find him in the Museum Store for special discounts. We are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 2 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. You can shop online at pbpetro.org/shop anytime. Make a difference this Christmas and support the Museum by shopping in the Museum Store.