

Science Happenings

6th Annual Festival of Science in Moab September 22-26, 2021

The Festival Committee has organized a variety of fantastic and free events showcasing the wonders and value of the science on the Colorado Plateau. The goal of the event is to connect and inspire citizens and visitors of southeastern Utah with the societal importance of our regional research and the thrill of scientific discovery.

The Festival kicks off during the week with a few evening events, with the number of activities increases Friday through the weekend.

Wednesday, Sep. 22

What was that? It's a bat! At 6:30 pm Scott Gibson of the Division of Wildlife Resources, Utah Department of Natural Resources will give a presentation (Grand Center) and activity (Matheson Wetlands) related to bat biology and echolocation. Attendees will have a live demonstration of how biologists use high-tech acoustic equipment to survey for bats.

Thursday, Sep. 23

Extra, extra, extraterrestrial! Dr. Martin Fisk of Oregon State University will present at 5pm in Star Hall on the potential for the existence of life, including intelligent life, elsewhere in universe, and implications for how we should act to protect our planet and the life on it.

At 7 pm there will be a showing of the film, *Picture a Scientist*, at Star Hall, featured by the Grand County Public Library, followed with a discussion panel with local women scientists. This film presents information of a sensitive nature and is not recommended for younger audiences.

Friday, Sep. 24

Friday's events kick off at 11:30 am: Science Moab will feature "Perspectives from a Hopi Archaeologist: A conversation with Lyle Balenquah" live on KZMU radio followed by a live discussion.

Join Zachary Lowe (Recreation Specialist) and Daniel Lay (Forest Hydrologist) of the US Forest Service talk about the Pack Creek fire. The event will start with a presentation at Star Hall and continue with a field trip to the Pack Creek Campground where the fire started.

Please gather with us on the Museum Lawn for a social mingle that will give community members the chance to chit-chat with local and regional scientists all while enjoying light refreshments.



Immediately following the Mingle head on over to Star hall at 6pm for the Festival's keynote Speaker: Katharine Hayhoe. Dr. Hayhoe is an atmospheric scientist and professor of political science at Texas Tech University, where she is director of the Climate Science Center. She will highlight topics from her new book, *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World*, that will be released in September.

Later that night, Crystal White, NASA Solar System Ambassador, and Moab Astronomy Tours will host A Night Under the Stars starting at 8:30 pm. Discover the cosmos while learning about deep space objects like nebula, galaxies, stars, star clusters, planets and moons. Please register with stargazemoab@gmail.com to reserve your spot and receive location information.

Saturday, Sep. 25

Saturday morning features a diversity of hikes/activities! From 8-11 am, National Park Service and Leave No Trace have teamed up for the Erase Our Trace Volunteer Stewardship Event: Volunteers will gather during this National Public Lands Day service project to learn about and apply Leave No Trace principles.

Speaking of damage to our natural landscapes, Dr. Steve Leavitt of Brigham Young University (BYU) will guide a hike in the La Sal Mountains (9 am, location TBD), exploring forest lichen ecology, and the impact of fire on lichens.

Also at 9 am, join returning favorite, William Leggett of the National Park Service, for a hike along Moab's Old Mail Trail to discuss how geologic forces forged Moab's unique landscape – (this hike is strenuous!).

Join us for the start of STEMonstrations kids' activities at the Sun Court on Center Street at 11 am! The STEMonstrations will include multiple booths and hands-on kid-friendly science activities. Each booth will be hosted by a different organization or scientist so there will be something for big and little scientists alike!

Gather all the facts you have learned and head over to the Museum lawn at 1pm for an exciting round of Kid's Trivia then grab your Nature Walk bingo sheet and head out to the Mill Creek Parkway marking off plants, insects, birds, lizards, and more along the way for a chance to win prizes! The Parkway will lead you directly to the Grand County High School Youth Garden where you can participate in the annual Harvest Festival from 3-7 pm.



Dinosaur tracks on display



Willow leaf fossil



Big marine snail fossil



Take a break from being in town and head out to Moab Giants at 5 pm to learn about Utahraptor from Utah State Paleontologist Jim Kirkland and hear about Utah's newest state park from Park Manager Joshua Hansen and SE Region Manager Megan Blackwelder. Stick around after learning about the past to hear about the future! At 7pm, Dr. Bruce Bugbee, Utah State University professor, talks about NASA research for food production in a closed system on Mars.

Sunday, Sep. 26

At 9 am, join Dr. Steve Leavitt, Assistant Professor and Curator of the Lichen Herbarium at Brigham Young University, will lead a slickrock hike at Sand Flats to look at the amazing diversity of rock and soil lichens in our desert ecosystems.

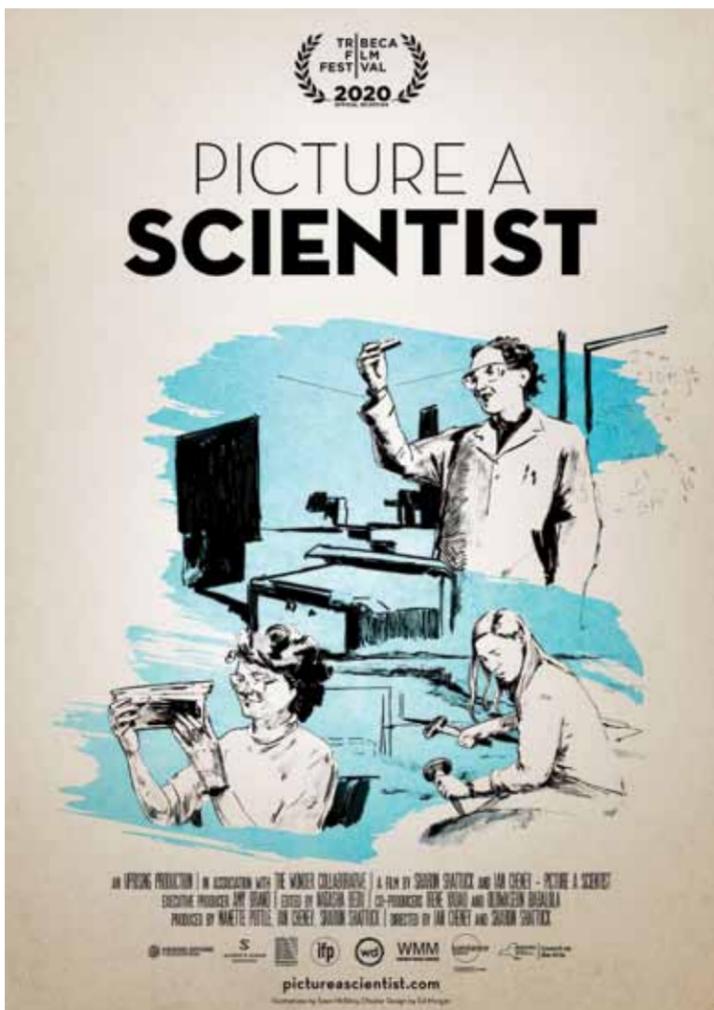
We will wrap up this year's Festival at 4p with a Science Trivia Night on KZMU! Gather clues throughout the week and compete in the final trivia hosted by Bobby Hollahan.

For more information and a complete schedule of events, please visit www.moab-scifest.org, facebook.com/moab-scifest/ or contact the organizers at moab.scifest@gmail.com.

Some events are limited – see website for events where registration is required via email. Please check our website at the dates approach to see any updates to locations or times, any new events added, and guidance related to Covid-19 and Festival events.



Steve leading trip



Ready, Set, Science!

The Grand County Public Library is partnering with the Moab Festival of Science to present a free outdoor film screening of *Picture a Scientist*. This award-winning documentary explores the experiences of women scientists working in a field long-dominated by men.

Picture a Scientist chronicles the groundswell of researchers who are writing a new chapter for women scientists. Biologist Nancy Hopkins, chemist Raychelle Burks, and geologist Jane Willenbring lead viewers on a journey deep into their own experiences in the sciences, ranging from brutal harassment to years of subtle slights. Along the way, from cramped laboratories to spectacular field stations, we encounter scientific luminaries - including social scientists, neuroscientists, and psychologists - who provide new perspectives on how to make science itself more diverse, equitable, and open to all." (www.pictureascientist.com/)

In one story, geomorphologist and geology professor Jane Willenbring recalls how excited she was to be selected for a team of researchers working in the field in Antarctica, only to be tormented cruelly by the male scientist in charge. The only woman on the team, she



did her best to ignore him and focus on the work, which became increasingly difficult. Later, Jane describes bursting into tears the day her 3-year old daughter said she wanted to grow up to be a scientist just like her mom. "I was thinking about someone treating her like trash in 20 years, like I had been treated like trash." Jane's story is one of many in this compelling film. Other brilliant and dedicated female scientists describe their experiences working in environments where subtle slights, biases and double standards are the norm.

Join us for this free, inspiring and timely film about making science and academia welcoming and inclusive for everyone.

Thursday, September 23, 7:30 pm Center St. Ballfields
*Bring your own chair/blanket

Call the library for more info @ 435-259-1111 or go to www.moablibrary.org

Explore Moab Festival of Science's schedule of exciting events and activities for all ages at <https://moab-scifest.org/2021-moab-scifest-schedule/>