

Science Fest Happenings

4th Annual Festival of Science in Moab

From September 18 - 22, 2019 The Festival Committee has organized a fantastic variety of free events showcasing the wonders and value of science with a special focus on Colorado Plateau science. The goal of the festival is to connect and inspire citizens and visitors of southeastern Utah with the joy of science, the importance of our regional research, and the thrill of scientific discovery.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

6 PM – The Festival kicks off at Star Hall with the film *Skyglow* – a collaborative project by Harun Mehmedinovic and Gavin Heffernan that explores North America's remaining magnificent night skies and the grave threat of artificial light at night to our fragile environment. This theme can be appreciated by southeast Utah citizens whose night skies are bursting with glorious stars and four of their local national parks boast the honorable International Dark Sky Park designation. A question and answer session with Harun will follow the film



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

7 PM – Biologist, author, and birdwatcher, Eli Knapp will discuss his book *The Delightful Horror of Family Birding: Sharing Nature with the Next Generation* at the Grand County Public Library. In this collection of essays, he takes readers from a leaky dugout canoe in Tanzania and the mating grounds of Ecuador's cock-of-the-rock to a juniper titmouse's perch at the Grand Canyon and the migration of hooded mergansers in a New York swamp, exploring life's deepest questions all along the way. Knapp is professor of intercultural studies and biology at Houghton College and a regular contributor to Birdwatcher's Digest, New York State Conservationist, and other publications. The event is presented in partnership with Utah Humanities Book Festival and Grand County Public Library.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

9 AM – Unique to the Festival of Science will be a guided tour of the Intrepid Potash Mine. The tour will include a presentation on the science behind potash production followed by a tour of the evaporation ponds, flotation mill, and other parts of the production process. Space is limited, so **free tickets are required** (see below). Participants must be 18 or older and must wear closed-toe shoes. Meet at the Lions Park to ride in vans to the site and expect to return to around 12:30 pm

6 PM -- Friday evening, join regional educators, geologists, archaeologists, paleontologists, biologists, astronomers, other scientists, and science aficionados on the Museum of Moab Lawn (Center Street) for the Science Mingle. Light refreshments will be provided.

7 PM – Immediately following the Science Mingle is the Keynote Presentation at Star Hall, hosted in conjunction with the USU Center for Colorado River Studies and American Rivers. This year we will be welcoming Mike and Jenny Fiebig as our keynote speakers. During the summer and fall of 2018, the Fiebigs completed a human-powered, 5-month, 1800-mile source to sea trip on the Green and Colorado rivers in a custom built dory named the "Green River." Along the way, they interviewed a diverse group of people about their connections to the river and to one another, from ranchers in the Wind River Mountains of Wyoming, to people restoring sections of the Colorado River Delta in Mexico. Whether you're curious about the current state of the river system, planning your own through-paddle, or reestablishing connection in a disconnecting world, this talk is sure to be inspiring.



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

9 AM – National Park Service interpretive ranger Will Leggett will lead a geology walk and talk. Leggett and a group of up to 20 participants (**FREE ticket required**) will hike along Moab's Old Mail Trail above Mill Creek (parking at Powerhouse Lane is limited – please carpool) to discuss how geologic forces forged Moab's unique landscape.



Serving to connect and inspire the citizens of southeastern Utah



with the wonders of science and thrill of scientific discovery



11 AM – STEMonstrations at the Sun Court and City Gym on Center Street! This kid-focused event will include, among other things, an opportunity to learn about what is living in those rare desert potholes, hands-on sediment (that's science-speak for dirt) tables, and elephant toothpaste with a side of bubbles!

3-7 PM – Festival fans should visit the Youth Garden Project (next to Grand County High School off of 400 East) for their first annual Harvest Festival – a celebration of fun, food, and the fall harvest. Join them for games and activities for all ages, farm-fresh food, produce contest exhibition, storytelling, live music, and more! Admission is free. For more information see article and ad on page XX.

5 PM – Gay Wyn Quance of Solid Carbon Products LLC discusses how carbon dioxide emissions (greenhouse gases) can be converted in to valuable consumer and industrial solid carbon products and produce potable water as a byproduct. Location to be determined.

6 PM – Star Party at Arches National Park to celebrate its certification as an International Dark Sky Park. Rangers from around the Colorado Plateau will join forces to share the wonders of the night sky. Shuttles from the visitor center begin at 6 pm and ranger programs begin at 7 pm, followed by a constellation tour and telescope viewing. Be prepared to be away from your car for several hours. Toilets are available at the program location, but no water is available. More information will be available on the Arches National Park home page as the date approaches.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

9 AM – On the final day of the Festival, start your morning with US Geological Survey biologists to learn about dryland restoration techniques used to reclaim degraded areas in the arid southwest like the field at the top of the Hidden Valley trail. Learn to identify native and non-native plants as well as biological soil crusts along the way. Please note, this is a very strenuous hike with about 600 feet of elevation gained in a half mile. Expect lots of switchbacks and uneven surfaces and likely hot conditions as the trail is on an east-facing slope.

11 AM – Do you wonder Why are Moab's rocks so red? and What makes Moab so special geologically? Find out why on a short 3-mile hike (difficulty level: intermediate) to Corona Arch through the specular arch forming rock layers of the Triassic/Jurassic Wingate, Kayenta and Navajo Formations. Dr. Benjamin Burger, geology professor at Utah State University and the host of *The Rocks of Utah* on YouTube, will lead the hike and discuss the wonderland of Moab's extraordinary geology. Hike limited to 25 people, **free ticket required** (see below).

FREE tickets will be available at the Moab Information Center and the Grand County Library starting September 3 for the following events: Intrepid Potash Mine Tour, Geology walks at Mill Creek and Corona Arch. People interested in carpooling can post on the Facebook page to organize meeting up with other attendees.

Please check the website for any changes or additions to the schedule of events: www.moab-scifest.org, facebook.com/moab.scifest/ or contact the organizers at moab.scifest@gmail.com.

Be sure to mention you read about it in *Moab Happenings*.

