

July 2012  
Number 72

*Creating innovators of the future  
through inventions of the past*

# The Meri and Joe Ehrlich Gallery

## Our Newest Cabinet of Curiosities

In December 2011, MOAH opened its newest exhibit space, the *Meri and Joe Ehrlich Gallery*. Located in the former gift shop, this new gallery space allows us to use the beautiful redwood cases in the manner for which they were originally built --- as display spaces for artifacts and collections.

When the Williams house was built in 1907, this room was designed as a waiting room for guests; it contained the family's collections of minerals as well as other curiosities from their travels. When MOAH moved into the Williams House, the Ehrlichs underwrote the restoration of the room, which served as our gift shop, under the skilled direction of Ernie Faxon and later with support from Ed Hoffacker and the Palo Alto Sport Shop and Toy World. Recently however,



we faced the dual challenges of declining gift shop revenue and the need for more exhibit space for our increasing collections. We also wanted to pay tribute to the Ehrlichs for their tremendous support of MOAH. After getting approval from their son Jeff, we moved forward with a plan to reclaim the space for exhibits. Joe Ehrlich had always wanted us to display the Cody Family Collection once more at MOAH. We were delighted when the Cody family agreed to loan us Tad's personal tools and creations for our first exhibit in the new gallery. With the help of Annie Holdren, Tad's daughter, we recreated portions of his workplace to show visitors a glimpse of the creative process. We hope this is a fitting tribute to the creativity of both these wonderful men. Many of the pieces from the Cody Family Collection will remain on display in the Ehrlich Gallery until Spring 2013. After that, the gallery will be used to display smaller artifacts from MOAH's own collections, as well as treasures on loan from our supporters. We hope you will enjoy MOAH's own Cabinet of Curiosities.

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## From Our President

Jim Wall



### A win for MOAH and Palo Alto

By the time this article has been incorporated into the newsletter, sent out to print, and distributed to our members, a significant step for our museum will have come and gone. As I write this, the event is still in the planning stage. But as you read it, the event will be history. I hope some of you will have had first-hand impressions as it all unfolded, but it means more to the museum than just another event. Specifically, I am talking about the Vintage Vehicles & Family Festival and its integration into the Palo Alto May Fete parade.

From our side of things, we have been hosting annual VVFF events for many years, both as a fundraiser and to increase the public's awareness of the museum. And, while they have been very popular in terms of attendance and a significant source of revenue, they have never been very successful in raising the awareness of the museum, its collections, and its activities. Polls of VVFF attendees revealed that many did not know about the museum, where it was, or what it did. And, despite the information distributed, the announcements made, and the posters displayed, many did not realize that the festival was a fundraiser, or for whom.

A few months ago, with the closing of the park across from the Stanford Shopping Center, the VVFF committee was searching exhaustively for an appropriate new venue for the 2012 event. Working closely with the City of Palo Alto, the committee discovered that no suitable location was available to us. But then the answer became clear, and the solution could not have been much better for the museum. The 2012 Palo Alto May Fete parade was planned by the city to end at Heritage Park, directly across from MOAH. And they were planning to close Homer Avenue directly outside the museum property. This became a perfect opportunity for us to have a VVFF event that would bring people directly to the museum.

MOAH staff and volunteers worked with May Fete organizers to make sure this would be a win for both parties. Using its contacts within the antique car community, our museum would provide cars to spearhead the parade. And when participants arrived at the parade's final destination, they would find 30 more incredible cars and motorcycles on display along the street and down the museum driveway, drawing parade attendees into the museum property. Hosting an open house with a variety of things to see and do, the museum was able to

See *From Our President*, Page 5.

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## From The Executive Director

*Gwenyth Claughton*



### Spooky, Scary Fun For The Family

For two nights only, Saturday October 27<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday October 28<sup>th</sup>, from 5:00 to 8:00 PM, MOAH will host a very special Halloween event for families with children aged 7 and up. If you are looking for a way to “spark up” your Halloween festivities, you may

wish to join us for some scientific tricks and some yummy treats at our Halloween Science Night.

Since MOAH first launched Science Night last year, this family-friendly activity has been one of our most popular special events. Science Night at MOAH is the brainchild of long-time volunteer Bob Boschert, fondly known to all as “Mr. Science.” A retired engineer and inventor, Bob has engaged thousands of young minds throughout the Bay Area with his hands-on approach to teaching science and technology. A typical Science Night with Bob begins with a brief background lecture explaining scientific principles, followed by a demonstration of some of his weird and wonderful devices, and then a whole lot of fun as visitors get a chance to try things out for themselves. Bob believes that children learn best when they are encouraged to experiment for themselves. The program is geared to children ages 7 years and up, but adults are some of our most enthusiastic participants. With all that learning, participants work up an appetite and, thanks to generous support from Pizza My Heart Palo Alto, we provide them with all-you-can-eat pizza and refreshments. Parental supervision is not required at these events, so many parents drop off their children and enjoy a dinner date on their own.

Our Halloween Science Night will include even more fun as MOAH’s own mad scientists show off their tricks. Several rooms in the Williams House will be turned into a not-too-scary haunted house for participants to tour. In addition to the usual pizza party, there will be holiday-themed treats and activities. Participants are encouraged to come in costume, as prizes will be awarded in various categories.

We hope you will join us on one of the two dates offered. The all-inclusive price is \$25 per person for participants of all ages. We ask that participating children be 7 years of age and up. As our capacity is limited, we encourage you to pre-register by October 15 to ensure your spot for some spooky, scary fun. Please see MOAH’s web site for more detail.

## What Kind Of Plant Is That?

Anyone watching the restoration of MOAH’s historic gardens over the past several years has seen a significant transformation of our beautiful grounds. The planting of demonstration vegetable and fruit beds, the restoration of Dora Williams’ cutting garden, the beautification of the front lawn area, and the establishment of the Lane Family California Mediterranean garden are all projects undertaken by our dedicated garden team. Visitors to the garden have been able to enjoy their beauty, and now, thanks to the generosity of the Garden Club of Palo Alto, they will also learn more about the plants and their horticultural history as we develop an educational program for the gardens.

We will use a recently announced grant from the Garden Club of Palo Alto to install professional plant markers and interpretive signage and to produce a multi-lingual visitor’s brochure for self-guided garden tours. These materials will be based on the extensive research and documentation MOAH garden staff has gathered over the years. This will result in better use of the Ruth Bell Lane Memorial Gardens at the Williams House as an outdoor exhibit space and teaching tool for MOAH visitors.

Since it was founded in 1921, the Garden Club of Palo Alto has existed to encourage an interest in gardening, horticulture, artistic use of flowers and plants, conservation of natural resources, and allied subjects; to educate the community in these subjects; and to assist in the beautification of public areas in the City of Palo Alto and elsewhere. We are delighted that this venerable organization will be supporting our museum once again in this exciting new initiative. We are particularly delighted that history has come full circle, as Ruth Bell Lane herself served as President of the Garden Club from 1938 to 1939.

Work on the project will begin in Summer 2012 and will extend through Summer 2013. Be sure to come back and explore the culinary, medicinal, industrial, and aesthetic history of the MOAH gardens.

# MOAH sincerely thanks the following individuals and organizations for their support in the past six months

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# Just Where Do We Store All That Stuff?

## Open House at the MOAH Warehouse

We are often asked just where does the museum store our collection of over 5,000 artifacts. And, thanks to continued support from the Frank Livermore Trust, the answer is ... in a warehouse in Redwood City.

On a weekend day in September, MOAH members, 2011 Annual Appeal supporters, and those who have donated artifacts will be invited to a special "Open House at the MOAH Warehouse." Visitors will enjoy light refreshments and behind-the-scenes tours led by members of our Collections Committee.

More information will be sent in the near future.

## MOAH At SFO

If you are flying through Terminal 3 at SFO in the near future, be sure to take a little time to see their wonderful new exhibit, *Threading the Needle: Sewing in the Machine Age*. This exhibit traces the development of the domestic sewing machine from the 1850s to the 1970s and celebrates over one hundred years of sewing. Also included are dress-making patterns, notions, and other sewing paraphernalia. The exhibit draws heavily from MOAH's own sewing machine collection and was put together with the assistance of the MOAH Collections Committee, intern Lindsey Munzel, and our own resident sewing expert, Beryl Self. We are thrilled that MOAH's artifacts are being enjoyed by so many travelers! The exhibit is open until August 2012.



### From Our President, *continued from Page 2*

complement the events the city had planned for Heritage Park. The result was there would be even more activities for the parade participants and attendees.

This is significant to us on several levels. First is the continuing cooperation between MOAH and the city. Starting with hosting some city classes in our Learning Center, and then continuing with the integration of VVFF into the May Fete parade, the closer relationship with the city is an important step in the continued success of the museum in Palo Alto.

Another key benefit is to have a permanent location suitable for hosting the Vintage Vehicle & Family Festival. This has long been a significant part of the yearly fund raising that the museum needs to do to operate. And, with the added exposure the city provides in advertising the May Fete parade and fair, there is an even greater benefit to the underwriters and sponsors that support VVFF.

Last, but even more significant to MOAH, is the added exposure that the May Fete parade will bring to the museum itself. The City of Palo Alto, local businesses, schools, and media all promote the parade and fair, resulting in a large number of parade and fair attendees each year. By combining the VVFF car show with activities inside the museum itself, we will attract a large number of visitors to the museum each year on the May Fete parade day. The benefits of this local exposure to the museum are very significant.

For the first time, our yearly fundraiser will have brought visitors, possible volunteers, and potential financial donors directly to the museum itself. And we hope that it will not be the last.

# Current Main Gallery Exhibit

## *Inventing the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: 1901 - 1941*

Now through January 13, 2013

*Beryl Self and Gwenyth Claughton*



*Inventing the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* continues the theme of the impact of technological innovation on American lives from the turn of the century to the outbreak of World War II.

While 19<sup>th</sup> century America is regarded as one of the most prolific periods of invention the world has ever known, it was not until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that many of the new ideas were commercially produced and marketed. Electricity became the servant of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Innovations, ranging from the development of commercial radio broadcasting to the mass production of automobiles, profoundly changed the way we lived our lives.

*Inventing the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* draws extensively from MOAH's own collection of early 20<sup>th</sup> century artifacts.

## At The Lectern

Eclectic as ever, MOAH's popular lecture series got off to a great start in 2012.

In early March, Donnis Stoner delivered MOAH's second Heritage Arts lecture, entitled *Button History*. A passionate collector of these tiny masterpieces, Donnis admits that her buttons are "like children" to her.

Dating back to the Bronze Age, the first buttons had no purpose (as far as we know) and served simply as decorative objects. The Greeks and Romans used them as decorations as well but, in time, someone figured out that, when combined with a loop, they could be used as fasteners. The loop eventually gave way to the buttonhole, and the combination of button and buttonhole arrived in Europe, courtesy of the Crusaders, around the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. By 1250, France boasted a button makers' guild and by 1350, "button mania was running wild." The popularity of buttons declined when the Puritans condemned them as sinful, but that trend reversed over time.

Donnis asserts that no person had a more significant impact on the world of buttons than Queen Victoria, who, during her 40 years of mourning for King Albert, triggered a virtual explosion of black buttons, manufactured first of jet and then of black glass.

Following her presentation, Donnis invited the audience to examine examples of her extensive collection, including hand-painted Satsuma buttons from Japan, carved pearl and shell buttons, old glass buttons, Alemite advertising buttons, "perfume buttons," and Masonic buttons.



*continued on next page*

## At The Lectern continued



Steve Yvaska is known by over 300,000 readers of the Mercury News as The Seasoned Collector. In early April, he came to MOAH to talk about *The Treasures in Your Attic*. Casually moving from one story to another, highlighting lessons learned over a long career, Steve offered varied tidbits of advice:

- > To be considered a true antique, an item must be at least 100 years old; everything else is a “collectible.” Buy “as old as you can,” and buy “one good thing” rather than a few mediocre objects.
- > If you’re buying for resale, be aware of what’s popular today and in what geographic region. For example, current hot items include Pyrex, early costume (“junk”) jewelry, and fishing lures. Also, while “carnival glass” may be popular in the mid-west, don’t expect it to sell well in California.
- > When downsizing, talk to your children and other family members before selling or donating items, and never divide sets.
- > Don’t throw out ephemera without first researching its value. Paper items of potential market interest include baseball cards, postcards, and the program from that play you saw in the ‘60s.

Concerned that young people would rather fill their homes with IKEA furniture than with treasures of the past, Steve has a goal to create a new, young generation of collectors, and he encouraged us to join him in this mission.

Steve is well known for his efforts to raise money for good causes through antiques. In that vein, Gwenth Claughton, MOAH’s Executive Director, reminded the audience that MOAH always welcomes donations of vintage items appropriate to its mission.

According to Professor Fabio López-Lázaro of Santa Clara University, the adage “Innovation is nine tenths perspiration” aptly describes the process that resulted in his latest book, *The Misfortunes of Alonso Ramirez: The True Adventures of a Spanish American with 17<sup>th</sup> Century Pirates*. On May 9, Fabio treated MOAH members and guests to an in-depth look at the pirate mystery he sought to solve and the detailed research that led to his success. He began by challenging his audience to imagine themselves trying to prove that a person really existed many hundreds of years ago, especially a pirate who endeavored to leave no paper trail.



On a trip to Puerto Rico, Fabio read the first “novel” written in the Americas. Commissioned by the Count of Galve (Spanish Viceroy in Mexico) and published in Mexico City in 1690, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora’s book, *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, tells the tale of Alonso Ramírez, who is captured by English pirates near the Philippines, is forced to work for them for two years, and, when freed, manages to return to Mexico. Fabio noticed remarkable similarities between this story and *Memoirs of a Buccaneer*, written by the famous English pirate William Dampier. To prove that the two stories were really one and the same (and, therefore, that the tale of Alonso Ramírez was truth, not fiction), Fabio spent the next several years laboring (often in the wee hours of the morning) to resolve annoying discrepancies between them. To do so, Fabio traveled throughout the world examining thousands of pages of archives (“legajos” in Spanish), reconciling one date at a time and uncovering evidence of events and characters. A major success Fabio shared was his discovery in Toledo, Spain, in 2006 of a letter from Galve to his brother, the Duke of Infantado, confirming the existence of a real person upon whom the book was based. While historians have speculated this possibility over the centuries, Fabio’s discovery confirmed that the book was not a novel but a first-hand account of a remarkable time.

When not engaged in scholarly pursuits, Fabio may often be found toiling in MOAH’s gardens.

# Science Education News

Wendy Breu



What a busy time! It feels as though we have been working non-stop since the New Year. Here is a quick summary of some of the education activities that took place during the first quarter of 2012:

- o 5 Weekend Enrichment Workshops, all full, with multiple students on waitlists
- o 3 Science Nights
- o 2 Electromagnetism Science Samplers
- o 2 Mechanical Puzzler Samplers
- o 4 Off-site visits to schools in the local community



## Are You Game For Puzzles?

As soon as the holiday exhibit was over in January, we hosted two separate Puzzle Sampler programs as part of school field trip visits from International School of the Peninsula. Stan Isaacs, who gave a captivating lecture during MOAH's 2004 exhibit, *Vintage Board Games and Puzzles*, adapted the same lecture and gave the students a presentation on the history and variety of mechanical puzzles. After his talk, Stan showed the students how to build and solve a puzzle made with strings and rings.

## Science Summer Camp On Hiatus

Since its initial launch in June 2011, MOAH has hosted a total of six Science Nights. This two-hour “edutainment” event (dinner included) has continued to gain popularity, with attendance ranging from 35 to 55 per event. Both the format and frequency of Science Night have proved to be very effective in reaching out to a wider audience. Therefore, MOAH has put its summer camp program on hiatus for now in order to channel more energy into staging additional Science Night events throughout the year.

## Call For Help

The numerous ad-hoc requests we are receiving for both on-site and off-site science sampler presentations are putting huge time demands on our small but dedicated group of volunteer presenters. At present, our small out-reach group consists of four members: Jim Wall (MOAH President and instructor), Bob Boschert (Science Night presenter), Wes Anderson (Science Night facilitator and class assistant), and myself. If you are interested in helping out in one of our science events, please contact MOAH.

For information on upcoming classes and events, please check our education page at [www.moah.org/education](http://www.moah.org/education).

# In Memoriam

## Betty Britton

Our community lost one of its most passionate historical advocates with the passing of Betty Britton. Betty was actively involved with Palo Alto Stanford Heritage where she researched historical properties. She assisted MOAH in several exhibits, most recently as curator of an exhibit celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Williams House. In addition to organizing the exhibit and docents, Betty used her design talents to reupholster Dr. Williams' favorite chair, which now looks as good as it did 100 years ago. Our sincere condolences to her husband Ralph and family.

## Donald de Lemos

For many years, visitors to MOAH were first greeted by the smiling face of Don de Lemos at the museum's front desk. He often worked as a weekend docent along with his wife Virginia. Both shared their considerable knowledge of local history, delighting MOAH visitors with his good humor and charm. He is missed by all of us who had the pleasure to work with him, and we send our best wishes to Virginia and family.

## Duane Dunwoodie

MOAH was deeply saddened with the passing of long-time volunteer and supporter, Duane Dunwoodie, this past December. We were fortunate to attract Duane to our museum following his retirement as a designer and builder of high-tech measurement equipment used in radar, telephony and computers. Duane served for many years as an active MOAH Board and Community Advisory Board member. Duane's passion for automobiles --- collecting Ferraris and restoring and racing vintage Elva sports cars --- was instrumental in launching Vintage Vehicles & Family Festival as MOAH's signature community event. With Duane's enthusiasm and extensive car connections, we were able to secure strong participation and support for VVFF right from the very beginning. Duane and his wife Marlene remained active and enthusiastic supporters of MOAH over the years, attending and volunteering at events, bringing their grandchildren to MOAH classes, and sponsoring MOAH events. We will all miss Duane and send our sincere condolences to Marlene and family. Vintage Vehicles & Family Festival 2012 was dedicated to Duane's memory.

## William "Bill" Kiely

Former Board member and Community Advisory Board member Bill Kiely passed away this past spring. Bill first became involved with MOAH following his retirement from Raychem, bringing his considerable management and planning skills to help MOAH establish our educational focus and strategic planning. Our best wishes are extended to his wife Laura and family.

## Monroe Postman

MOAH lost one of its great friends and most dedicated volunteers with the passing of Monroe Postman this past February. Monroe was a true pioneer of Silicon Valley. Monroe served as San Jose's "Technology Transfer Agent," helping to integrate emerging technologies into public services. When President Jimmy Carter visited San Jose, Mayor Janet Gray Hayes introduced Mr. Postman to the President as "our resident genius." Monroe's unwaivering curiosity and passion for technology remained with him throughout his life. Following his retirement, he worked first as a volunteer and then full-time for the Menlo Park VA Hospital, developing technological solutions to assist physically disabled veterans. MOAH benefited considerably from Monroe's eclectic interests and skills over the years. From developing hands-on devices to teach history and science, to curating exhibits and loaning artifacts, Monroe and his wife Frederica were always ready to help out. Together, they played a major role in creating our recent Cabinet of Curiosities exhibit that featured many of the treasures they gathered over their lives together. Just prior to his passing, Monroe was actively working on our current exhibit and finding ways to teach the history of motors. His dry humor, passion for learning, and commitment to preserving technological history will be missed by all of us who were fortunate to work with him. We send our sincerest warm wishes to Freddie and family.

## Volunteer Opportunities For 2012

MOAH is on the lookout for curious and active adult volunteers. We have a variety of jobs that can provide you with some fun and rewarding volunteer experiences while you meet and work with interesting people. For more information about volunteering at MOAH, please contact Gwenyth Cloughton at 650-473-9070.

### Gallery Docents

Are you looking for a weekend volunteer project that requires only an occasional 2.5 to 4 hour commitment? Would you like to be part of MOAH's exciting exhibits and share your knowledge? We are looking for Gallery Docents to take occasional shifts on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays either from 11:00AM until 1:30PM or from 1:30PM until 4:00PM. This is one area in which MOAH can really use your help!

### Garden Volunteers

How about being part of the restoration of an historic garden while getting some fresh air and exercise and meeting some interesting people? MOAH's Garden Team is looking for some additional personnel to help with both heavy and light garden duties.

### Education Instructors and Assistants

Have you ever thought about sharing your knowledge and talents with young people? MOAH offers weekend classes and summer camps to youth aged 9+ in science and technology. We are on the lookout for both instructors and assistants.

### Exhibits Team Members

Do you love to work with others on creating educational and entertaining displays and exhibits? Do you have a passion for history? How about being a part of MOAH's Exhibits Team? We mount several exhibits each year and are looking for team members to assist with all aspects of research, development, and installation.

### Publicity and Public Relations Team Members

Are you interested in communications and public relations? Do you wish more people knew about all of MOAH's great services? How about working with our Publicity Team to get the word out to our community?

### Special Events Volunteers

Do you love to get involved with special events, fundraisers, and parties? Do you like the excitement of working with a team to plan and execute themed functions? How about being a Special Events Volunteer for MOAH?

## Welcome, New Members!

### Individual

William P. Hoffman, Jr.  
Heidi Morshead  
Julia Powers  
Terry Robinson  
Joanna Self

### Family

Alan Cooper  
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## And thank you to Upgrading Members

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Derek Attwaters  
Nancy Steege  
Preeva Tramiel

### Sustaining

Nancy Kiely  
Carolyn & Harry Love

**We are so very grateful for your support!**

## The Inventions Of A Lifetime: Your Choice!

Our next exhibit, opening Spring 2013, highlights the inventions of the post-WWII period. We would like to know: What were the 3 inventions of that period (1945 - 1970) that had the most impact on your life? Email (or mail) your answers to Laurie ([admin@moah.org](mailto:admin@moah.org)) by October 15 — your reply might become a display in the next MOAH exhibit.

# Heritage Arts Committee News

Bev Nelson

The Heritage Arts Committee has been working hard to expand MOAH's programs to include greater focus on what some might call "domestic technologies."

Piggybacking on MOAH's successful, 21-year lecture program, we have now presented two Heritage Arts lectures. The first, presented in 2011 by Rich Douglas, former owner of Douglas Fabrics in Palo Alto, described the history of sewing machines to a sell-out crowd. More recently, Donnis Stoner, a well-known button collector, told the story of buttons through a series of beautiful slides (see At The Lectern on Page 6). Our committee is now exploring potential future lectures on such topics as quilting, hats, and embroidery. We would welcome your suggestions on possible Heritage Arts lectures that would be of interest to you.



We have also expanded our series of Heritage Arts classes. Having previously delivered *I Can Sew!*, *I Can Knit!*, and *I Can Quilt!*, we recently delivered *I Can Crochet!* to several mother-daughter teams from the Santa Clara Lyceum group. As with previous classes in this series, instruction in the craft was preceded by an overview of its history. The three multi-talented instructors of this class were Wendy Breu (MOAH's Education Director), Judith Lautmann (MOAH Board member and newsletter editor), and Eileen Wall (MOAH's bookkeeper). We thank these women for the time and support they have devoted to MOAH and its students. As with lectures, we welcome your thought and suggestions on Heritage Arts classes we might offer in the future.



## How to Join and Get MOAH for your Money!

Museum members receive this newsletter; attend lectures free of charge; receive a discount on workshops and special events; and are invited to special members-only receptions for each exhibit.

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## MOAH EXHIBITS, CLASSES, EVENTS

**Exhibits: Friday - Sunday, 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM (Group tours available at minimal fee)**

***Inventing the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 1901 - 1941***

Now through January 13, 2013

Main Gallery

***Inventing the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Post-WWII***

Opening Spring 2013

Main Gallery

***Antique Toys from the Cody Family Collection***

Now through Spring 2013

Ehrlich Gallery

### Events

***Open House at the MOAH Warehouse***

Redwood City Warehouse

Weekend day in September

Date and time to be announced soon

***Halloween Science Night***

Saturday, October 27, and Sunday, October 28

5:00 - 8:00 PM

**Classes (See MOAH web site for latest schedule)**

### Permanent Exhibits

**General Store**

**Kitchen**

**Print Shop**

**Gardens**

**Marshall Mathews Garage**

**Collections Corner**

**Dr. Williams' Office**

**Ely Family Children's Room**

### Mini-MOAHs (Offsite Exhibits)

**Stanford Federal Credit Union**

694 Pampas Lane, Stanford

**Bell's Books**

536 Emerson St., Palo Alto

**Terminal 3**

San Francisco Airport