



The production of gas in landfill is a natural part of the decomposition process. "Landfill gas" is not the same thing as "natural gas" or "methane". Natural gas is approximately 80-percent methane. Landfill gas is roughly 50 percent methane. The methane from landfill gas is a product produced from the anaerobic decomposition of garbage. The methane recovered from a landfill is approximately half of the total gas recovered. Carbon dioxide, mixed with methane, is the second largest

# SCIENCE DISCOVER EXPLORE IMAGINE 2010 FUN ANNUAL REPORT

EXPERIMENT  
NATURE  
WONDER  
ENGINEERING



SCIENCE  
EXPERIMENT  
NATURE  
WONDER  
ENGINEERING

10.1.2009 to 9.30.2010





## Children's letters to AAHOM



## A Year of Learning

from the Executive Director, Mel J. Drumm

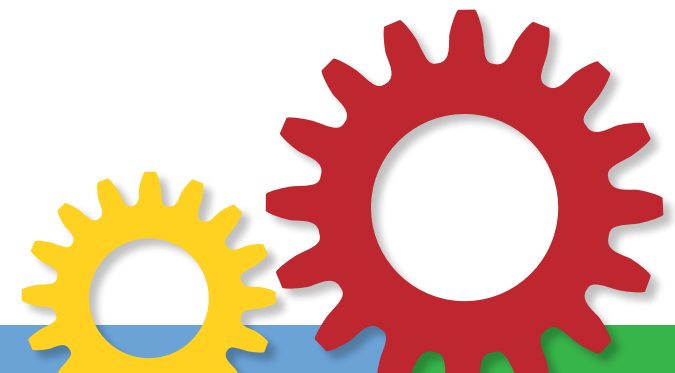
Every once in a while, something happens that reinforces everything you thought to be true. This year, the *Bob the Builder* exhibit reinforced our perceived answer to a very important question.

The “Year of Bob,” as we refer to it, was the result of one of those fortuitous decisions to bring in a traveling exhibit that targeted a very young audience. Through the generosity of several donors, we were able to bring the exhibit to the Museum for six months. The first floor was transformed into a pint-sized workshop that engaged children of all ages. Through Bob, we learned that there is absolutely no question about the need or importance of reaching the youngest scientists, too!

Bob reinforced the Museum’s mission to provide informal learning opportunities for children of all ages. We established new attendance and membership levels, welcomed repeat and far away visitors and saw more and more younger visitors at the Museum. As a result, we are now welcoming a burgeoning audience of preschoolers along with our traditional audience. We will continue to develop programming for our younger guests and have joined the Association of Children’s Museums so that our Family Plus members may access more than 165 additional museums.

While *Bob the Builder* was the centerpiece of Museum activities, our programming traveled across Michigan and throughout the country via Distance Learning activities and Outreach programs. New exhibits were added, including the *Dig Box* in the Michigan Nature Room, *Amateur Radio Station* upgrades and the *Inverted Pendulum*. The exhibits *Ones & Zeros*, *Measure Up*, *Waste to Watts* and the *Plasma Ball* were all renovated. In addition, the Museum worked throughout the year with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on the development of *Great Lakes Discovery*, an exhibit that explores shipwrecks and the Great Lakes.

2010 was the Museum’s 28th year of offering unique hands-on science, math and technology experiences through educational programs, weekend public programs, special events and exhibits. Each year we learn more, adapt our programs and facilities and expend every effort possible to listen to our visitors – this year, it was about Bob... and those that enjoyed Bob!





## A Year of Reflection

from the Board Chair, JPaul Dixon

The past year has been exceptional for the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum. We owe this to tremendous support and enthusiasm of the community, the Trustees (past and present), the organization's close constituents, members, patrons and in particular, the extraordinary staff that live the mission each and every day. The Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum is not only key to our community, our community is key to the organization.

It is marvelous to report that despite the continued economic struggles, records were broken in attendance and membership this year. Our guests (young and old) were provided incredible opportunities to experience science, technology, engineering and math. Divers explored a shipwreck at the bottom of Lake Huron while visitors at the Museum experienced live demonstrations. Our preschoolers thronged to experience the very popular traveling exhibit *Bob the Builder*. Several exhibits were added and content in existing exhibits was enhanced.

A very successful event for the Museum is *Creature Feature*, where Museum members are treated to a night of all kinds of exotic animals throughout the Museum. Our local technology community collaborated last year for the *Hands-On Local Tech Event* where attendees could experience first hand the innovations and innovators that are part of the area's business community. Look for these events to return bigger and better in 2011.

The outlook for the organization remains strong and we are very optimistic about the future. Due to a generous grant from Toyota, the Preschool Gallery will be getting enhancements with the intent to stimulate interest in science and engineering for our youngest visitors. We have received support from PNC Foundation and several individual donors looking to help us address an area of increased need: school groups that want to visit the Museum but are not able to do so because of the cost of transportation and the decline in school funding. To meet the demand, the Museum implemented the *Discover Science Assistance Fund*. The fund balance has increased significantly as a result of this outpouring of support. These funds will allow many young people to have access to unique learning experiences which they otherwise would not be able to do.

There are so many wonderful organizations that make up this vibrant community, but there is something special about the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum. It is absolutely moving to witness a young person find inspiration within the Museum, through outreach programming or as part of the many events that take place throughout the year. Thank you for being a part of our continued success.

### AAHOM Fun Facts!

1. Visitors come from around the world. From which foreign country, other than Canada do most visitors come?

- a. Germany
- b. Israel
- c. Japan
- d. UK/England

Answer:

d. UK/England exceeded Germany by 6 people! We have recorded visitors from 57 different countries.

2. Did you know we are open every day except for 6 holidays. (We're even open New Year's Day!) Our 2010 attendance in the building was:

- a. 160,476
- b. 153,533
- c. 164,264
- d. 176,811

Answer:

d. Although these are the annual numbers for the last four years – we just keep growing! Total attendance last year was 241,195 including all offsite programs.



### AAHOM Fun Facts!

3. The Michigan Nature exhibit is one of our most popular galleries. How many monarchs are hatched annually?

- a. 22
- b. 88
- c. 93
- d. 102

Answer:

c. 93 monarchs were hatched last year with the last one released on October 3rd.

## Award-winning Distance Learning, Outreach Programs Bring Hands-On Programs to the Classroom

Our hands-on programs for the classroom continue to grow and generate interest in the Museum. We're proud to be catalysts for imagination and learning in science and math classes around the country.

Most notably, our Title One programs, designed to inspire and encourage underperforming students, were delivered to 67 schools including for the first time, Ypsilanti Schools. We also delivered hands-on science and writing workshops to Estabrook, Erickson and Adams STEM schools.

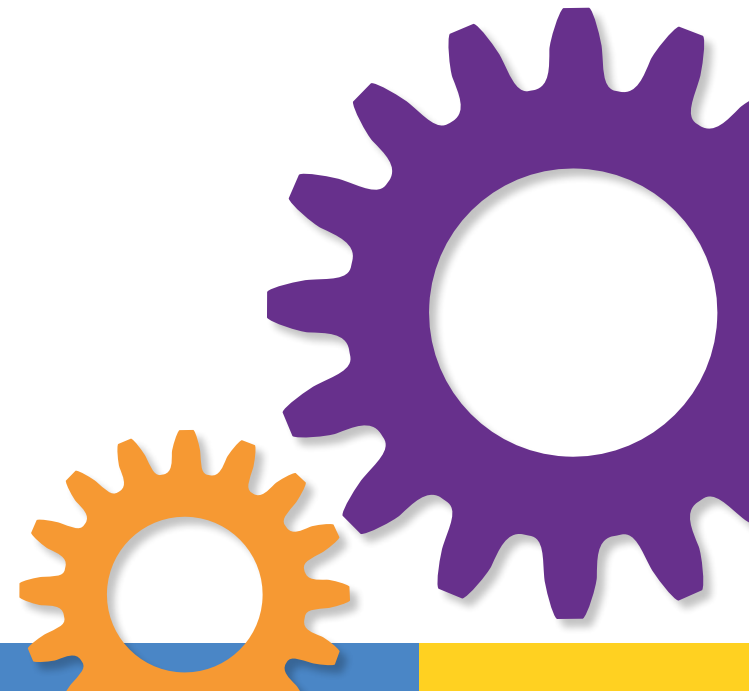
A grant from New York City's Thirteen!, in cooperation with Detroit Public Television, helped the Museum bring music and science programs to special-needs students at one Ypsilanti Elementary school. The students learned about the physics of sound, made their own music, and participated in a sound and music science fair. This was tremendously successful, and we hope to deliver this unique program to other special-needs children in the coming year.

Our second annual northern Michigan tour exported our Outreach activities to five communities in the northern Lower Peninsula and in the Upper Peninsula. We are building interest in a 2011 northern Michigan tour, thanks in part to our role as an Outreach provider that travels to deliver to these populations.

Distance Learning Programs, where our hands-on learning is conducted via interactive videoconferencing in real time, grew nearly 30% this past year. Our widely respected programs brought home a Pinnacle Award from the Center for Interactive Learning Collaborative for exceptional evaluations from teachers who have booked our programs. We ranked 18th out of over 230 providers in national rankings by teachers!

Outside of the classroom, funding from the Erb Family Foundation helped the Museum work with five regional libraries to develop a project designed to have a positive impact on their community's environment. We also collaborated with Project SNAP to commemorate the events through extraordinary community-wide murals installed in their cities.

Our staff delivered special hands-on activities to help library patrons think about their community's ecological challenges, too. This exceptional grant experience touched hundreds of citizens in these communities, and we worked with dozens of teachers, librarians, town officials, ecologists and businesspeople. In addition, this grant was the catalyst for the Museum to win a coveted Institute of Museum and Library Services Planning Grant to explore the concept of delivering teen science programming to rural libraries and communities throughout Michigan.



## New exhibits Keep Interest in Museum Membership, Visits High

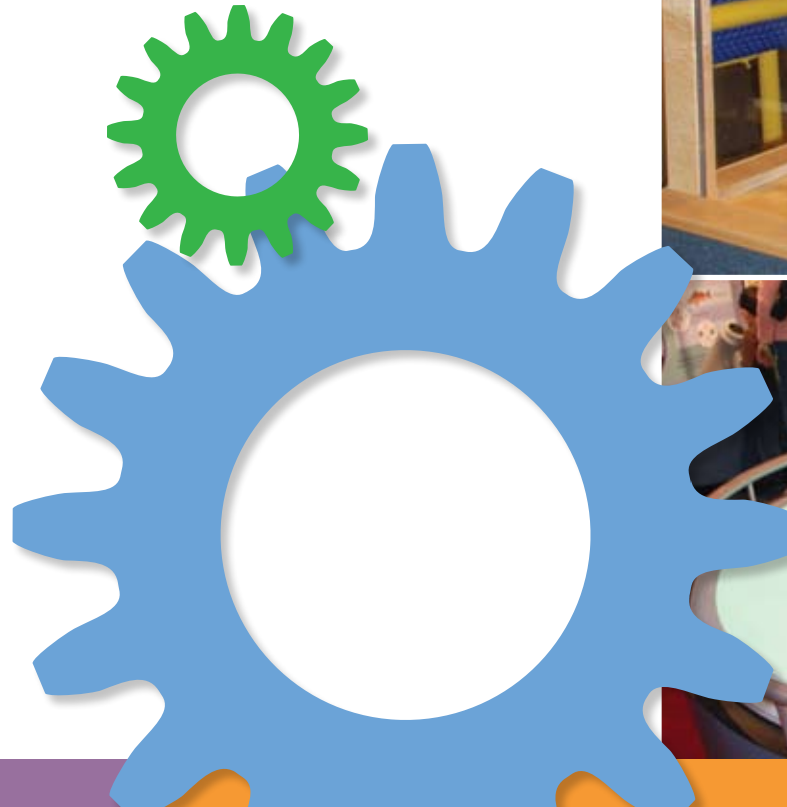
We're proud to be able to answer, "A lot", when someone asks, "What's new at the Museum?" In 2010, several new exhibits helped keep our offerings fresh, attracted new visitors to the Museum and provided repeat visitors with interesting and engaging experiences.

*Bob the Builder*, without doubt, stole the spotlight in 2010. Our *Block Party* kept the energy and enthusiasm alive as children and families built anything they could imagine out of hundreds of foam blocks. Several other new, permanent exhibits continue to inspire imagination everyday:

- *Measure Up*, sponsored by NuStep, offers the chance to learn more about the body and how it works. In a fully updated exhibit, concepts such as balance, flexibility and nutrition are made fun through a series of interactive displays.
- Michigan Nature was expanded to include a new *Dig Box*, an interactive nature sound computer and a Petoskey stone polishing station.
- Under the direction of Professor Shorya Awtar, the *Inverted Pendulum* was designed by University of Michigan engineering students to demonstrate feedback control. It shows how feedback control circuits are used in many things, including thermostats and high-tech marvels like the Segway® scooter.
- Our *Great Lakes Discovery* exhibit, sponsored by NOAA, kicked off with the installation of the *Pewabic "shipwreck,"* on loan from the Thunder Bay Marine Sanctuary. Visitors can walk through the mock hull and experience Michigan's maritime history through a series of exhibits.

Existing exhibits were renovated in 2010, creating a fresh, new experience for visitors. They include:

- Light & Optics *Plasma Ball*
- A rewired Doll House, complete with new graphics
- Upgrades and reinstallation of *Waste to Watts*
- Refinished, recarpeted *Giant Magnet*
- New mechanics for the *Walk-on Piano*
- New strobe light for our *Shadow Wall*
- *Ones & Zeros* has returned from long-term loan and has been placed in a new location





## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Creature Feature

This family fundraising event is a favorite for both visitors and staff. Each year we transform the galleries into a menagerie of animals with experts to answer questions and facilitate interaction for our visitors. Snakes, skunks, kangaroos and birds of prey are always interesting. *Creature Feature* has become a marquee event because it aligns with the Museum's mission and provides an opportunity for a unique family night of learning.

### Local Hands-On Tech Event

A geek event for the entire family! Each spring this event connects entrepreneurs, innovations and visitors of all ages with science and learning. In just two years, the event has grown in sponsorships and attendance. The evening is unique with galleries showcasing companies demonstrating their technology to visitors, live music for the adults, workshops and scavenger hunts for the children and refreshments for everyone. Interactive displays of software, video games, navigation and technology are intriguing and entertaining for all.

### Live Dive

On July 14, 2010 a series of webcasts from NOAA's Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary in Alpena fascinated the Museum's visitors with live underwater exploration. Through support from NOAA's Preserve America Initiative Grant, Sanctuary archeologists explored the shipwreck of the *Montana*, a wooden freighter from the 1800s that burned and sank in Thunder Bay. The *Montana* is one of over 200 well-preserved submerged historic sites in northern Lake Huron. The webcast provided the opportunity for Museum visitors to explore far from home.

### Sciencepalooza Weekends

One weekend a month, special science-themed activities are offered to visitors. Highlights include:

- *Car Carnival* (May) was a partnership with Washtenaw Community College School of Automotive and Motorcycle Technology. WCC brought many fun activities including changing spark plugs, denting and repairing fenders and using a pneumatic sprayer to "paint" a car shape with colored water. A favorite was the motorcycle challenge, where visitors could race their friends to see who has the fastest reaction time.
- *All About Ancient Cultures* (September) celebrated people who lived long ago. Visitors made Roman mosaics, Egyptian hieroglyphics and learned to use a Chinese abacus. The Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments brought instruments from around the world for visitors to try, and the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology set up a simulated archaeological dig, where visitors unearthed artifacts from long ago.

### Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

In celebration of Dr. King, the Museum offered a special day of educational and cultural activities for the regional community. In 2010, our celebration included science and cultural activities, including hands-on demonstrations and musical performances led by Drummunity.

### Special Exhibit Opening

The *Block Party* offers children of ages the chance to build and create with hundreds upon hundreds of foam bricks, and inspires design, architecture and construction creativity. Located on the first floor of the Museum, its unique, playful backgrounds provide building, stacking and organizing inspiration for new designs and structures. The exhibit has been extended through summer 2011.

## **VOLUNTEERS: To name a few!**

### **Amateur Radio Volunteers**

For the past several years, more than 24 amateur radio operators from the area shared their time to demonstrate the world of ham radio and its importance in our community. They also offered classes to receive a technician-level radio operator license and helped secure new equipment. We appreciate the time and expertise our ham radio team – Dan Romanchik, Jack Walker and Jim Eller – have volunteered, including installing the roof antenna this year.

### **Walter Wimer**

Several mornings a week, our neighbor (literally) Walter greets school groups and families at the Museum. Walter has been helping at the Museum for over 10 years. He has led a very interesting life, having lived in Germany and Paris and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. After the war, he worked for a French company and traveled the world. He remains fluent in French and German which he loves to practice with our youngest visitors. The next time you visit, look for Walter as he has many stories to share.



### **George Blessing**

One of our most valuable volunteers is almost invisible, yet his work has helped make the Museum the success it is today. George helps to build exhibits; his most important work involves intricate wiring and controls. His completed projects are as neat and accurate as any found in commercial applications, creating reliable, easy to repair and safe exhibits.



George, who has been a volunteer since 1999, is a perfect example of what makes this Museum so special: dedication and commitment to the highest possible quality work. Next time you visit the Museum, take a look at some of our major exhibits and notice how well they function, then thank George!

## **SPECIAL GIFTS**

### **PNC Foundation**

The PNC Foundation is helping to make field trips to the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum a reality for area students. Many school districts in southeastern Michigan wish to supplement their curriculum with a field trip, but often can't because of limited resources. PNC's grant of \$35,000 will help the Museum extend our reach in the community by focusing on school districts with low to moderate income. Scholarships are awarded through the *Discover Science Assistance Fund*.

### **Jan & Bob Lyons Family Foundation**

The legacy of Bob Lyons and his importance to the Museum continues with support from his family foundation. This year, the Foundation helped to bring a traveling exhibit to the Museum and enhancements to the popular *Lyons Country Store* exhibit.

### **Community Organizations**

The Kiwanis Club of Downtown Ann Arbor helped to provide free admission for visitors on special days with a grant of \$1,500. The Rotary Club of Ann Arbor sponsored two *Night in the Museum* programs for area schools with a grant of \$3,000.

### **Benard L. Maas Foundation**

The Benard L. Maas Family Foundation continues to support the Legacy Gallery stage area with sound and lighting equipment, seating and programming. Most weekends special science-themed demonstrations on a range of science topics are offered to families.



### **Amateur Radio Volunteers**

From left to right: Dan Romanchik, KB6NU; Jack Walker, WT8N; Jim Eller, K8ELR





## Museum's endowment held at AAACF

More than 10 years ago, an estate gift to the Museum established an endowment fund through the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation (AAACF). Every year, gifts from Trustees, staff and community friends have helped grow the endowment.

The Museum plans to be around for a long time and a well-funded endowment helps to provide needed stability. Although we are not in the position to use the earnings from the current fund, it does provide us with assurance that our Museum will be sustainable for future generations.

Several tax incentives make contributing to our endowment beneficial to a donor. Please discuss with your tax advisor or the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation as you consider a gift for the Museum's future through an annual or estate gift.

## AAHOM Endowment Donors FY 2010 (10-1-2009 to 9-30-2010)

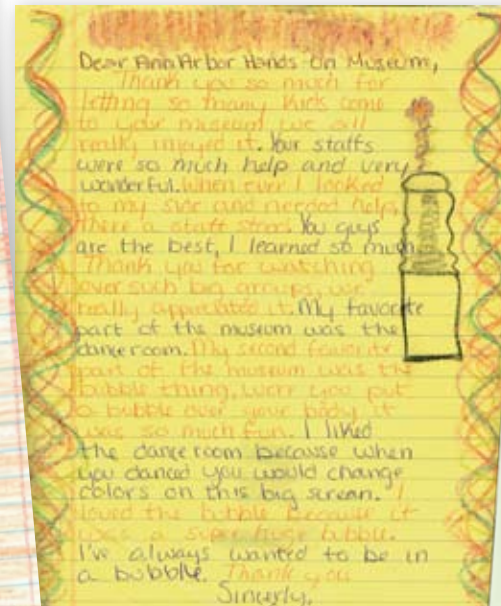
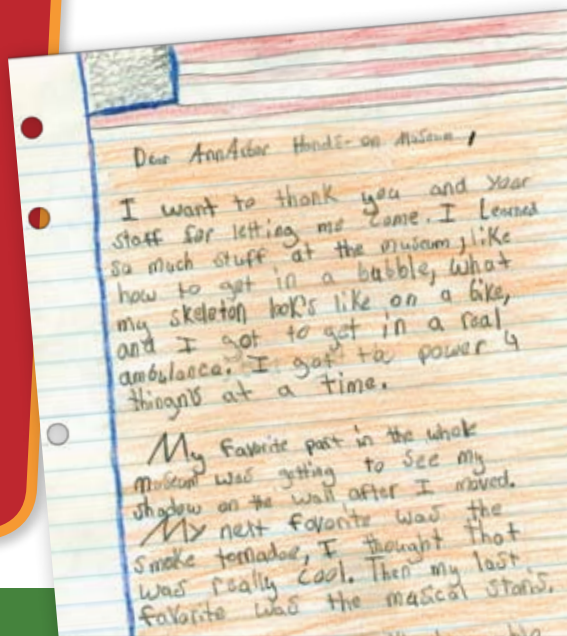
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### AAHOM Fun Facts!

4. Let's talk gift shop. What is the most popular selling item?

- a. Polished rocks
- b. Mood rings
- c. Marbles
- d. Magnetic rocks

Answer:  
 4. c – Marbles. 10 cents each (tax included) and have sold 114,000 since May 2006. The greatest revenue generator is the polished rocks.



## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

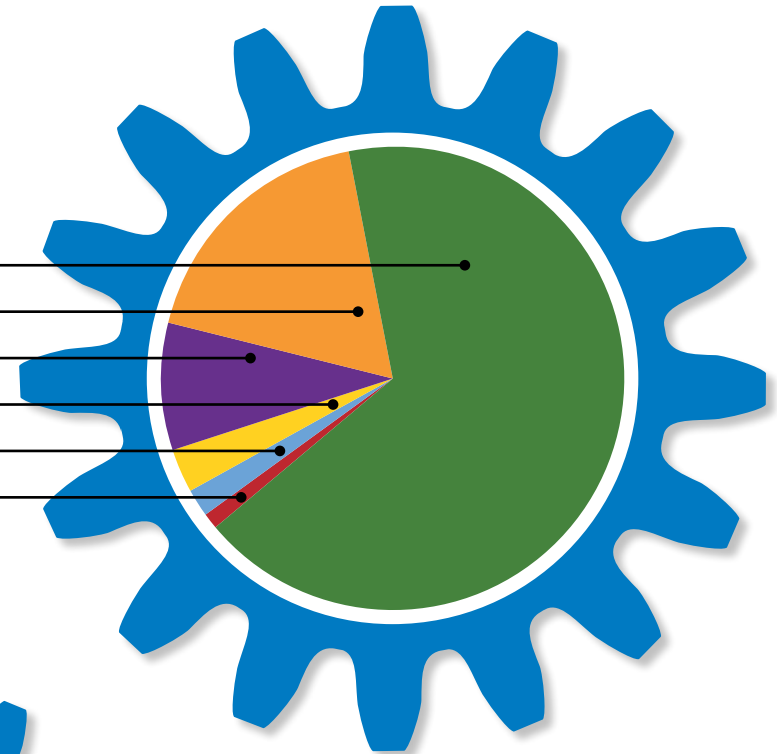
2010 Annual Budget of \$2.1 million helps support:

- 240,000 annual visitors
- 18 full-time staff members
- 50 part-time staff members
- 250 birthday parties
- 4,602 memberships
- 4 Member Night Events
- 12 Sciencepalooza programs
- 300 Distance Learning programs
- 475 Outreach programs
- 7 Night in the Museum programs

## Where the \$2.1 million comes from

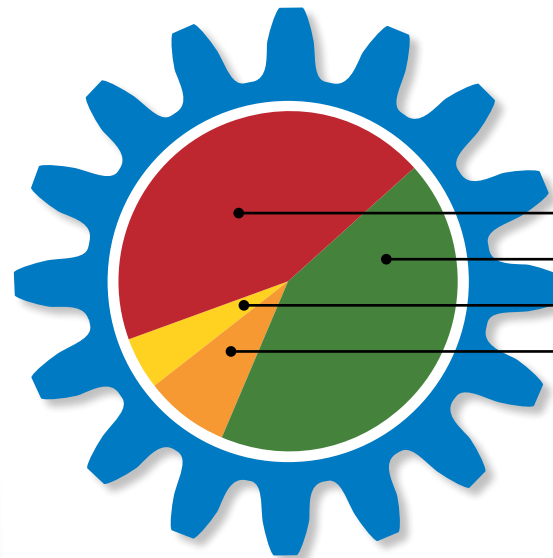
### 75% Earned Revenue:

Memberships & Admissions: 67%
Education programs: 18%
Gift shop net: 9%
Exhibit rentals & sales: 3%
Birthday parties: 2%
Other revenue: 1%



### 25% Community Support

Restricted Donations: 44%
General Operating Donations: 43%
Government Grants: 8%
Special Events: 5%



Thank You!



## AAHOM LEADERSHIP TEAM

Mel J. Drumm, Executive Director

John Bowditch, Director of Exhibits

Nancy Bryk, Director of Education & Public Programs

Carol Knauss, Director of Operations

Ann Neuenschwander, Director of Development

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## COLLABORATORS

Many different community groups, organizations and businesses offer their time and resources to help the Museum. Our collaborators offer us help on interactive programs, provide resources in an area of expertise, or volunteer their time to prepare or deliver a program or exhibit. Whatever their level of involvement, their help is appreciated by the staff and the visitors.

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