John Wesley Powell River History Museum

Green River, UT

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Executive Director
A LITTLE CONTEXT
OK, really, a little context.

- We are owned and funded by the city of Green River (pop. 952).
- The town’s primary economic driver is tourism.
- The museum opened its doors in 1991.
- Was expected to pay for itself, and bring in a million dollars annually to the Green River economy.
- A “Friends of” nonprofit was founded in 2008, but did very little fundraising.
Putting the Fun back in Funding

- More than half of our funding comes from revenue generated through the museum gift shop.
- The city sets the budget, and supplements whatever is not funded through the gift shop from their general fund.
- The nonprofit organization collects some money, but does not contribute significantly to funding.
- Some county funding for information center staff.
In early 2014, the city hired the first full time administrative staff member in the history of the museum.

Creating and implementing a long term strategic plan.

Developing professionalism in staffing.

Building a shared vision and goals for the future across multiple organizations.

Seeking mentorship and training for staff and board members.
WHAT DO WE WANT TO DO?

- Create a well-oiled machine.
- Professional staff with clear roles and understanding of mission.
- Programming!
- Build museum community and regional interest in museum involvement.
- Contribute to a collective narrative and shared memory in Green River and for the river running community.
How to do it
What We’re Doing: part one
Local partnerships and the search for a better life

● City of Green River:
  ○ funding, governing body, property owners

● Pyramid Youth Programs: shared programming
  ○ Goblin Gang, Jr. River Runners and Naturalist camps

● Epicenter: partners in promoting arts & culture in Green River
  ○ exhibitions, events, shared resources/back scratching
What We’re Doing: Part Two
Regional Partnerships and a Return to Middle Earth

- Utah Conservation Corps: Americorps
- Utah Humanities Council: mentorship, training, grant funding
- Outdoor Industry: Financial Support
- River Running Companies/Industry: Financial and moral support
- Wasatch Front Companies: Financial support and involvement
- Southeastern Utah Museums: Strength in numbers!
What We’re Doing: Part Three

Memberships and Sponsorships

- Museum Membership and Corporate Sponsorship Program
  - Find a healthy balance between a program that is not overly time consuming, but also provides some benefits to member or sponsor.
  - Examples: free admission, gift shop discounts, newsletter, private events or free access to public events.
  - Generated $2,875 in gross revenue
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THE THIRD CREW
CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

Benefits

$150 - Partner
- Free membership for two staff members
- 10 admission passes for one time use
- Link to your business as a partner on the museum’s website
- Invitation to Hall of Fame Ceremony
- 5% discount on rental space

$350 - Benefactor
- Free membership for 5 staff members
- 15 admission passes for one time use
- Large link to your business as a partner on the museum’s website
- Half page advertisement in our annual journal
- Invitation to Hall of Fame Ceremony
- 5% discount on rental space

$500 - Corporate Sponsor
- Free Membership for 5 staff members
- 20 admission passes for one time use
- Full page advertisement in our annual journal
- VIP invitation to Hall of Fame Ceremony
- Advertising for your company in new member packets
- 5% discount on rental space

$1000 or more - Customizable
- We’ll work with you to accomplish the goals that best fit your business
- Membership for employees
- Work with the Director of the museum to apply funding from your partnership to specific programming or events

What We Do

Education
- Youth education through programs like the Goblin Gang, an outdoor education program in partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Green River.
- Junior River Runner program
- Plans to bring environmental education, history, and geology curriculum to 4th grade classrooms throughout Southern Utah.

Preserving History
- An expanding collection of historic artifacts significant to the history of the Colorado Plateau
- The Green River Archives
- The River Runner’s Hall of Fame
- Collecting oral histories

Arts & Culture
- Green River Open Mic Night
- Canyon River Runner’s Art Show
- Rotating gallery of original work

Community Engagement
- Adult workshops, classes, and lectures
- Community events that develop interest in the arts, literature, and outdoor activities.
- Partnering with local non-profits, businesses, and other organizations.
What We’re Doing: part four

Network, just put yourself out there

- Find conferences and conventions that are a natural fit.
  - Outdoor Retailer show in SLC.
- Get involved in the museum community.
  - You’ll see opportunities for development present themselves, but you have to take advantage of them.
- Take a baseball player approach.
What We’re Doing: Part Five
Grants, Grants, and More Grants

- Utah Division of Arts and Museums: If you don’t already apply annually, start doing it now!
- Foundation Center: scroll through 990s, find foundations that support museums and nonprofits in Utah. (foundationcenter.org)
- Training: Don’t know how to write a grant? Ask for help, or find a grantwriting workshop. (Grant Writing USA, local colleges, classes)
What We’re Doing: Part Six

These are the events of our lives

- Annual Hall of Fame Banquet Fundraiser
  - We induct a member to River Runners Hall of Fame annually.
  - Hold a silent auction and request donations (goods and money).
- Build a community through programming
  - People grow to value the space and want to support it (i.e. quilt guild, quilt shows, community art shows, etc...)

SO WHAT NOW?
JUST KIDDING, NO MATH

LOOKING AHEAD, WHERE ARE WE GOING?

- Less dependency on the gift shop for operational funding.
- Stronger nonprofit organization for both governance and funding.
- Transition from a glorified gift shop into a collecting museum with active community support and involvement.
RESOURCES

- Utah Museums Association
- Utah Emerging Museum Professionals
- AAM, AASLH, WMA
- Utah Humanities Council and Utah Division of Arts & Museums
- Foundation Center
- Change Leaders
- Other local/regional museums and nonprofit organizations.