

JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2024

2024 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

These magnificent specimens come from one of the largest and oldest regions of Argentina. The fossils are 25 million years old and were found in the region of Patagonia. They are the remains of animals that lived in the region of Patagonia. The fossils are 25 million years old and were found in the region of Patagonia. They are the remains of animals that lived in the region of Patagonia.

bell
museum

MISSION

The Bell ignites and sustains curiosity for nature and the universe.

VISION

The Bell envisions a hopeful future where all are inspired by nature and empowered by science.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

We believe it is essential to create an environment that welcomes and empowers people from historically underrepresented and marginalized communities to have equitable access to the museum's resources as well as opportunities to transform our work.



DEAR BELL FRIENDS –

As you will note in the pages that follow, a year in the life of the vibrant, dynamic institution that is the Bell Museum is marked by newsworthy milestones and moments: the opening of new exhibitions and planetarium shows, the kick-off of youth camps and school programs, celebrations of astronomical and natural phenomena, the launch of research and education initiatives, the arrival of new staff, and so much more! We have much to celebrate and proudly share in this year's Report to the Community.

With close inspection, I hope you'll also note that the Bell Museum's success emerges from a strong foundation and commitment to partnership and collaboration. We don't do any of this alone.

Partnership has connected us to new audiences, broadened our perspectives, enhanced our creativity, opened access to new knowledge and resources, and, most importantly, expanded our impact.

Successful partnership emerges from carefully tended relationships, a shared vision, and a commitment to community. It's hard work. I'm so grateful to our Bell team who collectively invest time, energy, and ideas to cultivate fruitful partnerships in service to the Bell's mission.

And I'm filled with gratitude for you, our donors and committed community members. Thank you for the continued support that makes partnership possible. Together, we can work towards a hopeful future where all are inspired by nature and empowered by science.

With gratitude,

HOLLY MENNINGER, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Bell Museum
University of Minnesota



2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

- Deepen Our Community Commitment
- Strengthen Our Science Mission
- Elevate Climate Solutions
- Steward Capital Investments
- Forge a Strong Future



The Bell Museum is located on the traditional and treaty land of the Dakota people, in the area known as Mnisóta Makhóche (the land where the water reflects the skies).

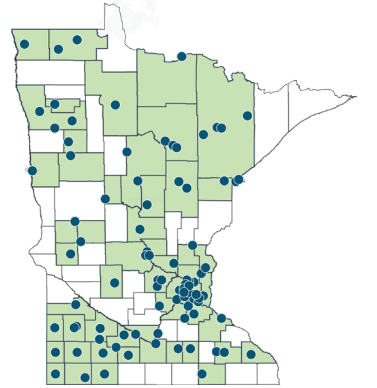
GOAL Remove geographic, situational and financial barriers to engaging with the Bell Museum as a resource for learning.



The Bell distributed over 15,000 Science & Nature Kits statewide in 2024.

REFLECTIONS ON 2024

MUSEUM WITHOUT BOUNDARIES



WORKING ACROSS MINNESOTA IN 2024

Our Statewide Engagement team has been busy partnering in communities, meeting people where they live, learn, work, and play through STEM programming. The Bell partnered with elementary schools, 4-H groups, Boys and Girls Clubs, scout groups, libraries, and tribal organizations across the state to facilitate hands-on learning about natural history, astronomy, engineering, and more. Activities ranged from the science of taxonomy to learning about gravity in space.

The ExploraDome traveling planetarium team worked closely with Soul of the Southside Festival to produce a new planetarium experience featuring the poetry of Brother Asè during the Juneteenth celebration in south Minneapolis. This team also partnered with the Somali Museum of Minnesota to develop a Somali astronomy program.

The Statewide Summer Camps program wrapped up its third year with its largest expansion yet. Camps were expanded into two new locations, at the Southwest Research and Outreach Center (ROC) in Lamberton, and the Northwest ROC in Crookston, bringing the high-quality Bell Museum camp experience to new communities, including middle and high school youth. Back at our original site at the North Central ROC in Grand Rapids, we built on the existing summer camp, adding in new opportunities, including single day camps and additional weeks of programming.

SNEAK PEEK

STEAMquest activity packs are expanding to more schools, libraries, and scout groups across the state. Activity packs contain STEM activities and supportive resources, giving confidence to educators hosting a STEAMquest event.

MUSEUM WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

Thanks to a new partnership with the Minnesota Historical Society, we will be hosting all-ages STEM events at Jeffers Petroglyphs, Forest History Center, and Split Rock Lighthouse throughout 2025.



REFLECTIONS ON 2024

RESEARCH & COLLECTIONS

Curators Sushma Reddy, Sharon Jansa, and Keith Barker kicked off a new initiative called "Salvage Wildlife." The project invites members of the public to turn roadkill or accidental collisions into specimens for the scientific collections of the museum. Supported by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, the project creates opportunities to study environmental quality, emerging animal diseases and more.



Next Generation Science

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the Bell supports promising graduate students with Natural History Awards and Fellowships to help them study the natural world at home and abroad. Projects supported this year included studies aiming to mitigate conflict between East African wildlife and humans, managing an invasion of the deadly avian vampire fly in the Galápagos Islands, and how best to teach new residents about Minnesota natural history.

The financial assistance provided by my Bell Museum Fellowship enabled me to focus wholeheartedly on my study of fish genetics, now in the process of publication in a prominent science journal.

EMMA ROBACK | '24 PhD, Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior

SNEAK PEEK

In 2025, we're using new technologies like 3D and CT scanners and eDNA to investigate cutting edge research questions.

RESEARCH & COLLECTIONS



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BELL'S SCIENTIFIC COLLECTIONS!



GOAL Preserve, protect, and interpret Minnesota's natural resources and tell the story of our global biodiversity.

When an injured trumpeter swan needed new feathers, scientific collections came to the rescue! Special flight feathers were taken from a frozen swan specimen, and it took six hours to complete the transplant giving the injured swan a new lease on life.



The Bell hosted an eclipse extravaganza for the April 8th total solar eclipse! More than 1,200 Minnesotans came together that day to learn about eclipses, watch a stream from the zone of totality, and enjoy the community.



GOAL Engage communities across the state in exploration and understanding of the universe through immersive environments or in your own backyard.

We celebrated our fifth Statewide Star Party in September! Thousands of star gazers at 26 different sites across Minnesota joined together to celebrate the Moon, our closest celestial neighbor!

REFLECTIONS ON 2024

MINNESOTA'S ASTRONOMY CLASSROOM



The Bell launched distribution of its original planetarium productions with the NASA-funded *Mars: the Ultimate Voyage*. Over one hundred planetariums have licensed the show, using it to ignite curiosity and inspire wonder in the next generation. Twenty partner planetariums also received the *Hazards of Spaceflight* activity kit, which lets participants dig deeper into the challenges of sending humans to Mars and back safely and includes an original, collaborative board game.

We've shown this show to many schools and I've had many students tell me that they want to be astronauts when they grow up. - PLANETARIUM PARTNER

We also continued our collaborative programming in the ExploraDome traveling planetarium with Indigenous astronomy knowledge keepers and further developed our *Ojibwe Moons* ExploraDome presentation. Led by Gaagige Anakwadikwe, our Native American Education Initiatives specialist, and featuring

new artwork by Niizhoodewii Denomie, we were able to showcase the show in the Whitney & Elizabeth Mac-Millan Planetarium at the Bell for the first time at the Statewide Star Party.



SNEAK PEEK

Thanks to a new partnership with the Minnesota Historical Society, and with special cooperation from Jeffers Petroglyphs, we were able to add four user-friendly, high quality digital telescopes to our toolkit. These will enhance Bell statewide astronomy offerings at Minnesota Historical Society sites.

REFLECTIONS ON 2024

CREATIVE BY NATURE



Over this last year we strengthened our relationship and collaboration with Indigenous artists. Alicia De La Cruz, a beadworker and a proudly two-spirit member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and descendant of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, spent time with us as an artist in residence. De La Cruz learned about plant evolution and endangered plant species, focusing on plants native to Minnesota and useful to Ojibwe peoples. She drew on Ojibwe beading traditions to create beautiful, true-to-life representations in the display *Beading the Wildflowers of Minnesota*.

Bringing Artists Together

The exhibition *Moments of Memory: Minnesota Landscapes Painted from Life*, was a partnership between the Bell Museum and Minnesota Plein Air Collective (MPAC). MPAC is dedicated to helping all artists, from beginner to expert, capture the beauty and diversity of the state's natural landscapes through painting—and gave visitors a chance to try it themselves during Bell programs.

Thanks to this partnership we reached a far wider audience, and increased appreciation for the intersection of arts and science. – ALLISON EKLUND | Minnesota Plein Air Collective (MPAC)

The Bell Museum original planetarium production, *Secrets from a Forest*, received the 2024 JANUS Award for Best Feature at the Fulldome Festival, in Jena, Germany. The selection jury remarked: "Exceptional live action footage and resonant audio blend the voices of nature and human artistry together, reminding us of our inextricable reliance on the living beings of the forest and how our hearts and souls can sing together."

SNEAK PEEK

In early 2025 we will launch a new augmented reality (AR) art installation by Marlena Myles (Spirit Lake Dakota) to enhance student understanding of Dakota perspectives on nature and storytelling.

CREATIVE BY NATURE



GOAL Explore the connections between art, science, and the natural world, creating new ways to expand access to science.



Students learn about how to interpret an Ojibwe turtle calendar representing the thirteen moon lunar cycle during the Gidinendamowinaan field trips, featuring Ojibwe knowledge and cultural perspectives.



GOAL Ignite curiosity and wonder in the natural world for lifelong learners.

REFLECTIONS ON 2024 CURIOSITY CATALYST



This summer the Bell hosted two teacher workshops for middle school teachers. In the first workshop, organized in collaboration with researchers from the U of M's Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, teachers delved into environments of the past and learned what that can teach us about our current and future environment.

The second workshop was co-developed with the Smithsonian Science Education Center. Teachers improved their understanding of topics related to Earth's history and their comfort teaching them. Participating teachers will bring the lessons and tools from workshops to their classroom, reaching over 5,000 students.

I received many ideas of applicable activities and experiences I can easily recreate in my classroom. I also learned many new science concepts!

- TEACHER WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

On Native Land

We expanded our K-12 visit experiences with two new *On Native Land* field trips. These programs explore Minnesota's natural history—earth, water and sky—through Dakhóta and Ojibwe traditional ecological knowledge and cultural perspectives. The new field trips were made possible thanks to funding from the Shakopee

Mdewakanton Sioux Community and in partnership with Native led organizations and individuals across Minnesota, South Dakota, and Canada including Dakhóta and Ojibwe knowledge keepers, educators, first language speakers and scholars, and artists.



SNEAK PEEK

We are redesigning our Imagine the Future gallery to center community perspectives, provide hands-on activities, and support visitors in taking climate action. The gallery will reopen in April 2025, kicking off a special Year of Earth.

CURIOSITY CATALYST

DONOR APPRECIATION

Annual Donors | July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

\$1,000,000 +

WEM Foundation

\$100,000 - \$249,999

Corrie W. Ooms Beck
Cargill
Ruth & John Huss
David J. & Esther G. McLaughlin
Shakopee Mdewakanton
Sioux Community+

\$50,000 - \$99,999

3M
General Mills Foundation

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Mary Anne Anderson
Ford W. & Amy L. Bell
Mark & Mary Ellen Catron
David B. Donsker
Edward A. Everett*
Burr Oak Group Inc.
James Ford Bell Foundation
MGK
Richard M Schulze
Family Foundation

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Boston Scientific Corporation
Donaldson Co. Inc
Anna Gerenday
Valerian B. & Carolyn H. Kuechle
Marlys L. & Gary F. Kupferschmidt
Linda A. & David E. Maschwitz
Minnesota Corn Growers
Association
Geri M. Nelson
Lynn Vernon
Xcel Energy Foundation

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Paul B. & La Vonne M. Batalden
John R. & Nan E. Beard
Blaze Credit Union
Robert H. Bruininks &
Susan A. Hagstrum
Ronald L. & Janet A. Christenson
Kathleen O. & Gerald A. Erickson*
Barbara B. Franklin
Michael E. & Stacie F. Hafner
Edwin J. & Susan B. McCarthy
Constance A. Sullivan
George D. Weiblen &
Rebecca Montgomery
Patrick J. Whitcomb &
Patty A. Napier

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Anonymous Donor
Martha and Bruce Atwater
Barr Engineering Co
Samuel H. Bell
Johanna Bell
Stephen F. & Beth A. Birke
Thomas R. &
Marilyn S. Breckenridge
Fredrikson & Byron Foundation+
Andrew Busch &
Christine Conelea
Eleanor R. Crosby
The Crosswols Foundation
Carolyn C. Cushing
Sheldon W. Damberg
Gretchen D. Davidson
Davidson Family Fund–Saint Paul
and Minnesota Foundation
Edward N. & Sherry Ann Dayton
Wendy W. Dayton
Dayton King Foundation
Dellwood Foundation Inc
Brian Ellis+
Benjamin R. & Rebecca S. Field
Lynden & Lawson Gerdes
Florence K. Gleason
Julie A. & Robert V. Guelich
Steven M. & Jennifer Gullickson
Harlene O. Hagen
Alice J. Hausman+
Hausman Volunteer Committee
Hawn Family Fund–
Minneapolis Foundation
Cherie A. & Jerald C. Holm
Donald L. Lipsey &
Ann M. Hoven+
Art & Martha Kaemmer Fund–
HRK Foundation
Jean C Wirsig Fund–Saint Paul
and Minnesota Foundation
Bruce C. & Jean Johnson
James P. & Linda J. Johnson
Arthur W. Kaemmer*
Mary T. & Gary P. Kasper
Paul T. & Virginia L. Kubic
Parke W. Kunkle
Quoc Le+
Sally J. Humphries Leider &
Richard J. Leider
Kathleen & Allen U. Lenzmeier
Margaret W. & Ilo E. Leppik
Diane P. & David M. Lilly

Patricia J. & William J. Litchy
Lucy C Mitchell–
The Longview Foundation
Richard C. & Juanita V. Luis
Harold & Dorothy J. Markowitz
Mary C Dolan–
The Longview Foundation
Clara M. Ueland &
Walter R. McCarthy
Carolyn J. McKay
Margot Monson
Anthony Manfredi & Lisa Nelson
Mary L. Nichols
Michael & Kathleen O'Keefe
Thomas M. O'Keefe+
Manley E. & Ann M. Olson
Pamela J. Pietz
Judith M. & Nickolas Priadka
Sam Rosen–ROV GEAR+
Patrick J. & Sarah A. Schott
Lee A. Pfannmuller &
Gary T. Seim
Merrily A. Smith
Mary A. Ebert & Paul R. Stembler
Nathan Stohlmann
Renee E. Tierney & Lori Tauring
Kristina Teeter+
US Bank Foundation
Robert D. & Karen H. Wasson
Fred & Eleanor C. Winston Fund
Denise L. Young

+ first-time donor
* deceased donor

The Bell Museum is proud to recognize support from state and government agencies:



\$999 and Below

Julie Anderson+
Ann Aurelius
Jones Barton
Paul Baumtrog
Jeff P. Baysinger
James L. Beardsley
Daniela L. Bell & Eric H. Foster
Mary T. Benson
Charlotte A. Brooker &
Eugene G. Mammenga
Richard W. Brown &
Dori Henderson
Charles F. Bye
Stuart R. & Jean L. Chastain
Susan B. Cobin
Janet Colliton
Stephen Contag+
Steven R. Corneillier
Gwen W. & Kenneth W. Crabb
Heather Crawford
David P. Crosby
James Hughes &
Stephanie J. Daily
Belle C. Davenport+
Ronald E. Drude
Thomas W. Foels
Sara Fortin+
Jennifer P. & Ryan K. French
Iris J. Fryzel+
Daniel D. & Cynthia M. Gallaher
Vivek Goel
Julie A. & Amy Gudmestad
Wayne E. &
Kathleen A. Halverson
James H. & Mary B. Hammill
Lawrence R. Heaney
Randall A. & Teresa Hillson
Walter A. & Judith K. Hinck
Karen M. Hodgson
Kenneth B. Hoj & Linda K. Warner



Kenneth G. Holmbeck
Jessica Intermill &
Tyler D. Candee
Darrick W. Jensen &
JeriLynn K. Young
Sharon A. & Fredrik A. Johnson
Stephen W. & Anne M. Johnson
Steven A. Kaatz
Adele Kaufman
Janet P. & Markus A. Keel
Esther M. Kellogg



Mary C. Kemen & Brian C. Randall
Michael K. Kennon &
Peggy Korsmo-Kennon
Carlton B. Kittleson
Tamara & Mark S. Kjolhaug
Samuel Knuth
Heather C. Kosec
Jason D. Kral & Justine Lee Kral
Robert L. Kriel & Linda E. Krach
David A. & Susan M. Kroska
Leslie J. & Joseph D. Krueger
Scott M. & Vicki S. Lanyon
Jed D. & Elizabeth R. Larkin
Diane L. Larson &
Thomas Converse
Sandra J. Larson
Barbara A. Leary
Beverly & Leland Gehrke
Peter U. Leppik & Carla Hennes
Grace Li
Susan J. & Gordon E. Lipsy
Donald T. & Ann E. Luce
Mark N. Lystig
Brent & Mitzi Magid+
James P. McCarthy &
Gloria J. Peterson
Mark S. McCarthy

Susan P. & Thomas E. McCarthy
Holly Menninger
Dale C. & Kristi P. Mensch
Mary C. Miller
Joanne Wetherell-Moriarty &
John J. Moriarty
Gordon R. & Barbara S. Murdock
Bruce D. & Barbara Nelson
Gerda E. Nordquist
David R. & Billie P. Novy
Eugene W. & Julie M. Ollila
Angie H. Oster
D. L. & Linda K. Petersen+
Richard E. & Elaine E. Phillips
Susan B. & David B. Plimpton
Kenneth & Rachael A. Crabb
James & Joan E. Rataczak
Sigrid Rea
Peter Rood+
Russell & Nina M. Rothman
Nina & Russell Rothman
Lawrence & Barbara A. Rudnick
Paul R. & Patricia H. Sackett
Clara Sallmann+
Todd Sandell
Nancy P. Sather
Amber L. Sausen &
Daniel J. Green
M P. Schaffer
Lynne A. & Martin J. Schoen
Bruce Schroeder
Jean E. & Mark T. Schroepfer
Amy Schult
Julie A. Setnosky
Ommund D. Skaar
Mark A. Snyder
William F. & Candace Thomas
Kirk S. & Susan C. Vadnais
Mary K. Volk
Gilbert P. & Debra Waibel+
David L. & Ann Wasson
Wong Morren Thriving
Earth Fund
Vera M. Wong &
William E. Morren
Robert P. Wozniak &
Olga V. Kavun-Wozniak
James E. Young &
Carol A. Marchel

+ first-time donor
* deceased donor

Your gift nourishes a lifelong love for nature and the sciences—and a deeper understanding of Minnesota, our world, and our universe.

At the Bell Museum we see a hopeful future where all are inspired by nature and empowered by science. Thank you for working with us to understand the past and shape the future.

Find the spark that ignites your curiosity at the Bell Museum and take the next step:

BECOME A BELL MUSEUM MEMBER!

The Bell Museum is powered by our members. From enabling staff to create dynamic and fresh programs to ensuring our facilities are accessible to all, your membership supports everything we do. Become a member to help make adventure and discovery possible for everyone!

You have the opportunity to shape the future of the Bell Museum through your donation today! Your gift makes the Bell's mission, vision, and values a reality. The investment you make today supports the museum's key initiatives:

Museum without Boundaries FUND 23605

Support access to museum programs such as STEM Science & Nature Activity Kits, Statewide summer camps, *On Native Land* program initiatives, Statewide Star Party, and more!

Creative by Nature FUND 3958

Preserve the Bell's Wildlife Art Collection and support programs and exhibits that focus on the intersection of arts and science.

Minnesota's Astronomy Classroom FUND 24683

Support the development of new planetarium shows, and the creation and distribution of star maps for all visitors and students.

Curiosity Catalyst FUND 3421

Support K-12 visits to the museum, virtual field trips, scholarships for youth programs, new hands-on experiences in the Touch & See Lab and Learning Landscape, gallery programs and more!

Research & Collections FUND 25242

Preserve the Bell's collection, expand and maintain the digital collection through the Biodiversity Atlas, support collections-based research and more!



2088 Larpenteur Ave West
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55113

bellmuseum.umn.edu



Advisory Board

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Daniela Bell, Ph.D., Chair | Wilmer Fernandez | Jed Larkin, J.D. | Jonathan Palmer | Amber Sausen |
| Peter Leppik | Susan Galatowitsch, Ph.D. | Josh Leonard | Laura Pilarski | Sara Schultz, M.S., Ph.D. |
| Dudley Edmondson | Jill Jensen | Mary Nichols, Ph.D. | Melissa Rahn | Kimberly Steward, Ph.D. |
| | Mike Jensen | Angela Osuji, Ph.D. | | |



Printed on paper containing 100% post-consumer waste using soy-based inks.