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# EVERGREEN

WORLD FORESTRY  
CENTER MAGAZINE



WORLD  
FORESTRY  
CENTER

2022 SPRING ISSUE

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Spring, Indeed



Joseph A. Furia  
Executive Director,  
World Forestry Center

We at World Forestry Center are enjoying a special spring as we emerge from almost two years of limited operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are hosting and participating in more in-person events and experiences and continuing to improve our programming.

This summer, we will reopen our Discovery Museum to the public for the first time since March of 2020. (More about that on the next page). In addition, this September, we will welcome forestry professionals back to our campus for our first in-person Who Will Own the Forest? (WWOTF) since 2019.

While we are returning to normal operations, this organization has been changed by the events of the last two years – and much of that change has been a good thing. For example, in producing two virtual WWOTF events and the 2021 Wildfire Series, we built new virtual programming expertise that will allow us to continue to produce hybrid and virtual events and content that can reach audiences far outside the four corners of our campus.

In addition, we have improved how we can fulfill our mission of creating and inspiring champions of sustainable forestry and produce more public benefit for our forests and our communities. The best example is our 2021 six-week Wildfire Series, *Adapting to the Era of Megafires*, which was instrumental in galvanizing support for wildfire reform in Oregon. World Forestry Center has supported wildfire reform discussions in recent years, including hosting the OSU Fire Summit in 2018 and a number of meetings of the Oregon Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response in 2019 and its subcommittees.

Supporting these discussions has been a watershed experience for World Forestry Center, and we are committed to continuing to produce programming through events and experiences that more effectively educate and engage the public and professionals to create a more sustainable forestry future. Stay tuned for more developments throughout the coming year. ♦

Support World Forestry Center by donating at [worldforestry.org/donate](https://worldforestry.org/donate).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Discovery Museum to Reopen Summer 2022



World Forestry Center is thrilled to announce that our Discovery Museum will reopen to the public in the summer of 2022. Located in Portland’s forested Washington Park directly off the MAX Light Rail, our 20,000 square foot Discovery Museum has been the cornerstone of our public programming since it opened in 1971.

“The hands-on, high-touch nature of our Museum made it challenging to reopen since we closed in March 2020,” said Executive Director Joe Furia, “but we’ve used this time to improve the visitor experience, and we’re finally at a place where we feel ready to welcome back guests.”

Built in dramatic Northwest Regional style architecture by the famed architect John Storrs, the building itself has been a Portland landmark for decades. Inside, visitors will encounter familiar favorites as well as a selection of new exhibits and features.

“We wanted to reopen the Museum with some refreshed content,” said Experience Director Tim Hecox. “We’ll have an incredible art installation on wildfire (see Page 4) and a new temporary exhibit on the future of World Forestry Center (see right).”

For updates and timing on the Discovery Museum reopening, sign up for World Forestry Center’s email list at [worldforestry.org/emails](https://worldforestry.org/emails). ♦



### A Pop-Up Community Engagement Exhibit

The Discovery Museum reopening is an opportunity to engage our community and partners in future planning for the organization. To that end, World Forestry Center is working with Upswell, a Portland-based experience design firm, on a temporary community engagement exhibit.

This pop-up exhibit hopes to facilitate conversations around the urgent challenges facing forests and society, gather insights and information about our visitors, and increase the relevance of future experiences and programming.

## FEATURED EXHIBITION

### Rethinking Fire

Through the intersection of art and science, *Rethinking Fire* invites visitors to explore the idea that forests and fire are not opposed, but rather part of the same continuous cycle. The exhibit explores the ecological role of fire and the human impacts behind the rise of large and severe wildfires. Arizona-based artist Bryan David Griffith used fire itself to create paintings, sculptures, and large-scale art installations for this exhibition. Quotes from leading researchers in the fields of fire ecology, forestry, and climate science accompany each work.

After his home and studio were threatened by wildfire in 2014, Griffith received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Joint Fire Science Consortium to study fire in the field. His work from that project earned several accolades, inspiring Griffith to produce *Rethinking Fire* as a solo show.

“In Western culture we often view dualities—light and darkness, life and death, forest and fire—as opposing forces in an epic struggle of good vs. evil,” said Griffith. “We see ourselves as fighting to preserve life and subdue death by taming nature to prevent unpredictable disasters like wildfire.

“My work explores the idea that these forces aren’t opposed, but rather part of the same continuous cycle. One can’t exist without the other.... I juxtapose soft organic lines and natural edges with geometric forms that convey our desire to control capricious natural processes—often with unintended consequences.”

*Rethinking Fire* seeks to inspire dialogue to increase forest resiliency and create more sustainable, fire-resilient communities. ❖



Experience  
*Rethinking Fire*  
when the Discovery  
Museum reopens  
this summer.



## DONOR PROFILE

### A Community of Support: Torheim Family

World Forestry Center relies on a broad community of friends and partners who donate their time, energy, and funds to advance our mission. We spoke with siblings Jan Torheim Harrington and Robert E. Torheim about their family’s connection to the organization.

Their father, Robert “Bob” H. Torheim, was a founding, charter member of World Forestry Center and a forester with the U.S. Forest Service. In 2020, the Torheim family made a meaningful donation in honor of Bob to support the pivot of our programming, amid the pandemic, to virtual platforms which has allowed us to continue our work connecting our community to the value of forests.

#### How long have you been involved with World Forestry Center?

“Our parents relished the woods. As a young man in Seattle, our dad spent many hours camping, hiking, and fishing in the nearby National Forests. His 30+ year career in the Forest Service took our family from isolated ranger stations to Washington D.C. He was a founding member of the World Forestry Center, so our associations run deep!”

#### What about World Forestry Center’s mission speaks to you the most?

“World Forestry Center helps the public appreciate the importance of healthy forests for our present and our future. The organization brings stakeholders together to collaborate, promote research, and support forest health.”

#### How was your connection to forests developed?

“Our parents instilled in us an appreciation for the many ways forests are important — for wildlife, the Tribes, recreation, grazing, timber, fish, water... We grew up knowing and living the interconnectedness of the forest. It was, and still is, visceral.”

#### What is your fondest memory in a forest?

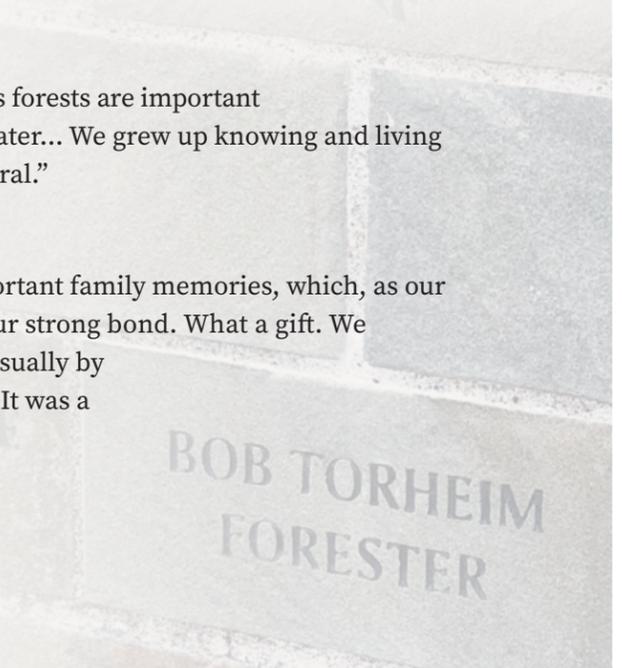
“There are so many. Spending time in the forest gave us important family memories, which, as our parents have now both passed away, have helped maintain our strong bond. What a gift. We remember it most as a time to be together in the open air, usually by a quiet stream, with sandwiches and mom’s great berry pies. It was a wonderful way to grow together as a family.”

#### What would you say to others looking to support World Forestry Center?

“World Forestry Center is about helping us keep our forests accessible, healthy, and sustainable in a cooperative, thoughtful, engaging manner.” ❖



Bob and his wife Marjean. This is a rare photo of Bob, as he was famous for being behind the camera, never its subject.



## CAMPUS UPDATES

### *Returning to an Improved Campus*

For many around the world, the past two years have been marked by an increase in remote and virtual work. However, for World Forestry Center's Facilities Department, the pandemic has facilitated an even deeper connection with our five-acre campus.

In addition to the regular upkeep of the site, the team has used the past two years to perform a range of campus improvements and deferred maintenance projects.

"We've taken advantage of this time to perform some small but needed upgrades in our administrative offices, rental halls, and public spaces," said Facilities & Safety Director Chuck Wiley. ❖



- » Upgraded lighting in Merlo Hall to energy-efficient LEDs
- » Repaired and refinished exterior wooden benches
- » Replaced carpet in Miller Hall
- » Updated audio visual equipment in Miller Hall
- » Refurbished event rental inventory
- » Upgrading outdoor campus lighting to energy-efficient LEDs (in progress)
- » Testing new remote meeting hardware in Merlo Hall library (in progress)
- » Installing outdoor security cameras on campus (in progress)
- » Upgrading theater projector in Discovery Museum (in progress)
- » Preparing exhibit spaces for Discovery Museum reopening (in progress)



### *Awarding Two Venue Rental Grants to Non-Profits*

There is power in place, and World Forestry Center is fortunate to steward a five-acre campus in Portland's Washington Park. Having the physical space to foster relationships, host critical conversations, and create emotionally resonant events and experiences sets us apart from many of the local and regional non-profits doing environmental, public education, and social justice work.

This year, we are sharing our campus with other non-profits through an inaugural Complimentary Venue Grant Program.

"We are looking for new ways to elevate diverse voices, promote inclusiveness, and improve equity in our community," said Event & Visitor Services Director Jennifer Kent. "By offering this grant, we hope to increase access and build new relationships."

The new program will award two grants in 2022, each for a complimentary event venue rental in either Miller Hall, Cheatham Hall, or our Cheatham Hall/Plaza combination (up to a \$3,950 value).

Preference will be given to non-profit organizations that have not held events before on our campus. Applications will not be accepted for events already booked at World Forestry Center.

"We're lucky to have these beautiful spaces," said Kent, "and we're looking forward to sharing them with organizations doing good work for our communities and our environment." ❖

To apply, visit [worldforestry.org/venue-grant](http://worldforestry.org/venue-grant). Applications are due April 15 and we will announce award recipients on April 22.

### *Host Your Event at World Forestry Center*

World Forestry Center's banquet and meeting halls are tucked away in the forest, only 10 minutes from downtown Portland. Our venues feature beautiful wooden interiors, polished stone floors, and modern amenities to make your event extraordinary. The best part is that renting World Forestry Center's event spaces helps support our mission-based work.



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

### *Merrit Thompson*

We sat down with World Forestry Center's Development Director Merrit Thompson and talked about art history, our community of donors, and the organization's transformation.



#### Tell us a little bit about yourself?

"I grew up in Arizona and found my way to the Pacific Northwest when I attended University of Oregon. Through college, I met my wonderful husband, Zach. Before World Forestry Center, I worked for NW Children's Theater and Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art. On weekends, you will most likely find me at one of the many wineries in the Willamette Valley or with family and friends enjoying breakfast, lunch, or dinner at one of Portland's numerous food destinations."

#### What do you do at World Forestry Center?

"As the Development Director, I spend my time fostering connections with our amazing community of donors and partners. I also work with our team to help connect and share the programs and experiences we develop with our community."

#### What connects you to World Forestry Center's mission?

"I've been with World Forestry Center for the past five years, and I've valued the opportunity to be a part of its evolution. I firmly believe in our mission and know we can impact the future of our forests, our climate, and our communities. It's inspiring to me that I can be a part of the solution and help others find their place in that work."

#### What's your favorite part of your job?

"I love talking with people and learning their stories. World Forestry Center has a long history and extensive relationship in this region. Many years later, I am still meeting new people. I'm inspired by the commitment that World Forestry Center's team, board, and donors show to the organization day in and day out. And I can't wait to spend time in-person with everyone this summer, starting at our museum reopening!"

#### What's something people may not know about you?

"I have never been to a museum that I didn't enjoy. I studied Art History and Architecture, which took me to Rome to finish my degree. The time spent in Italy only fueled my passion for art, architecture, history, and pasta." ✨

