

Art museum hosts Santa Claus for holiday open house

Children were invited to take part in a variety of fun activities at the annual holiday event

By Scott Pesznecker
Freelance Reporter

Yes, a young girl said, there is a Santa Claus. The girl, Sabine, said she believed in Santa Claus while visiting him at the University Museum of Art's annual Holiday Open House on Sunday.

Children had their pictures taken on Santa's lap and played with the Oregon Duck.

"The open house here is a tradition," said Heather Brown, the museum's public relations assistant. "Last year we had Santa here to give people a break from the malls, and this year we wanted the Duck here also."

Non-profit performances were given by the Oregon Children's Choir and the Motet Singers. The open house was coordinated by museum personnel.

"Lots of people gave lots of their time to the event," Brown said. "There were so many extras who were involved, giving their time and energy and performing for free."

Visitors also were able to view the museum's current exhibit, "Water: The Renewable Metaphor." Activities were held in the Water Discovery Room.

"It was a great opportunity to see the museum and gain a holiday sense of community," Brown said.

And learning did take place. "Just now he learned what seaweed is," said Carla Drath, mother of Jalen, who participated in the activities. "I really like the hands-on activities for the kids. It makes it more fun for the little ones to do and learn things and to play."

"I drew a ladybug," Jalen said. "I also like playing with the magnets." The magnets resembled various types of sea animals.

To illustrate the theme of the event, "A Winter's Celebration Around the World," the museum is promoting the event as cross-cultural, Brown said.

Cross-cultural activities at the event included Japanese postcard-making, origami ornament-making, and the telling of holiday folk tales from around the world.

Visitors were asked to bring a can of food to donate to FOOD for Lane County. They were also encouraged to make donations and enter the door-prize drawing.



CHAD PATTESON/Emerald

Charles Lachman (left) and his two sons Amos (middle) and Leo (right) enjoy a photo opportunity with Santa at the University of Oregon Museum of Art on Sunday afternoon.

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