

# Hastings Museum

## Volunteer Handbook

January 2016



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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## WELCOME

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the volunteer program here at the Hastings Museum. I hope you find your experience here a rewarding one!

Volunteers are crucial and important to the operation of the museum. Last year Museum volunteers provided over 1700 hours of service, supporting projects such as special events, education programs and maintenance. I can honestly say that our special events would not happen without the volunteers. This museum has provided programming to the Hastings community for over 85 years, because of dedicated people like you.

As Museum Director, and on behalf of our Board of Trustees and staff, we so appreciate the help you, as volunteers, give the Museum. We thank you for your expertise, and the pleasure of your company. You help to maintain the excellent reputation the Museum has earned. The Hastings Museum is a better place with your help!

**Rebecca Matticks, Museum Director**

## The Volunteer Program

### Volunteer Mission Statement

The mission of the Hastings Museum Volunteer Program is to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities which enhance and serve the mission, services, programs and activities of the museum.

### Requirements

-  Volunteers must be at least 12 years of age.
-  All volunteers must pass a background check.
-  All volunteers must be able to attend orientation.

As policy the Hastings Museum does not accept volunteers who are fulfilling court ordered community service for the following reasons:

1. The court requires individuals fulfilling court ordered community to be supervised and Hastings Museum volunteers often work unsupervised.
2. The Museum often works with minors who are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian.
3. The Museum houses numerous artifacts, exhibits, and equipment of great value.

### Benefits of being a Hastings Museum Volunteer include:

-  Free Museum Membership for Volunteer & Museum Store Discounts (after 50 hours worked in a calendar year)
-  Free Volunteer Shirt (after 50 hours worked in a calendar year)
-  Free Admission to Theatre Previews
-  Free Admission to the Museum during National Volunteer Week
-  The opportunity to meet others that share like interests

To receive these benefits, you must be considered an active volunteer. This means that you have volunteered within the past year for the museum.

## Volunteer Procedures and Conduct

The Hastings Museum Volunteer Program utilizes qualified individuals without regard to race, gender, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, marital status, veteran or military status.

### **Orientation**

All volunteers are required to attend a brief orientation prior to their first day of service. The orientation provides an overview of the museum's history, practices, policies and procedures and discussions regarding providing quality customer service and interaction with museum visitors.

### **Training**

Hastings Museum staff members will readily provide the necessary tools and information to fulfill assigned tasks. Prior experience is not required. Successful completion of training may be required for certain duties. Training may include attending classes and/or brief training sessions.

### **Identification & Recording Volunteer Time**

All volunteers are required to **record their start time in the Volunteer Log Book**, located on the Visitor Services counter, and wear the appropriate volunteer identification while on duty. Upon completion of their duty, volunteers will **record the time they finished in the Volunteer Log Book** and return their identification. It is important for us to have an accurate record of the time you donate to the Museum. We use this information for accountability in cases of emergency and for grant writing.

Please note that for large events there will be a Volunteer Sign-in table for check in and out and to pick up and return your museum identification.

### **Recognition**

Each year during National Volunteer Week, the museum is delighted to recognize our volunteers with a **day of free admission** to the museum for a guest and themselves.

Those outstanding volunteers who have provided 50 or more hours of service within the calendar year will be recognized with a **museum membership**, which is reviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator twice a year.

The Hastings Museum participates in the **President's Volunteer Service** award program. Awards are presented during National Volunteer Month each April for service provided the previous calendar year.

### **Punctuality**

Please arrive on time for when you were scheduled. **If you are unable to arrive as scheduled, please inform the Volunteer Coordinator by calling as soon as possible, ideally a 24 hour notice can be given.**

If you are unable to report for an assignment as scheduled or if you are ill, contact the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible and **no later than 2 hours prior to the beginning of your scheduled shift.**

### **General Appearance & Attire**

- Volunteers should practice good personal hygiene.
- Clothing and shoes should be clean, well fitted (neither tight nor sagging), and appropriate for the work environment.
- Visible tattoos are permitted as long as they don't contain offensive language or graphics.
- Hair, beards and mustaches should be clean and well kept.

### **Conduct**

Our goal at Hastings Museum is to provide our visitors with an enjoyable learning experience and one in which they will want to revisit again. Please remember the impression volunteers give to our visitors reflects upon the entire museum. It is important to the museum that our volunteer's reflect the professionalism the museum upholds. Volunteers should always smile, be courteous and give our visitors their full attention. Volunteers should be familiar with the different services and exhibit areas in order to answer questions and provide directions for visitors.

**To achieve our goal of being the best professional museum possible, the following policies have been made:**

- No smoking or tobacco use while on duty.
- Be respectful of museum property
- Avoid using profanity, crude jokes or gestures while working.
- Sexual harassment by or directed toward any volunteer is prohibited as stated in the City of Hastings Ordinance No. 3235 and will not be tolerated.
- Do not leave your position unless properly relieved or told to do so by your supervisor.
- Use of media devices including **cell phones are not permitted while on duty**. If you need to use your cell phone for an **emergency, seek approval from Katie (volunteer coordinator) or Russanne Hoff (Curator of Education)**.

#### **Handling Visitor Complaints**

- Remain friendly, helpful and courteous.
- Take immediate action by contacting the Volunteer Coordinator or Visitor Services so that they may address the complaint directly.

#### **Volunteer Complaints**

- Volunteers may submit a formal complaint (in writing/e-mail, in person or by phone) to the Volunteer Coordinator. Forms for complaints may be found in the back of the Volunteer Book.
- The Volunteer Coordinator will meet with the complainant to gather necessary information, discuss the complaint with appropriate staff if necessary, and respond to complainant in e-mail, by phone or in person.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the actions taken, he/she may lodge the complaint with the Curator of Education for further review and possible action.

#### **Lost Children/Parent**

Escort the child or parent immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator, unless they cannot be immediately located, then escort the child to Visitor Services. Notify Visitor Services so she/he can make an announcement over the museum public address system to aid in locating the lost child or parent.

#### **Lost Articles**

Lost articles are immediately turned into Visitor Services.

#### **Museum Property**

Museum property such as books, tools, equipment, etc. will not be removed from the museum nor borrowed for personal use. We strongly recommend leaving personal items at home.

#### **Parking, Entering and Exiting Building**

To accommodate museum visitors, volunteers are required to park in the southern end of the parking lot. Volunteers use the main lobby entrance when entering and exiting the building. Emergency doors are NOT to be used for regular entry or exiting.

#### **Resignation**

The Volunteer Coordinator needs to be notified when a volunteer wishes to resign his/her position.

#### **Dismissal/Termination**

- A volunteer, who has not worked during a 2-year period, or cannot be reached by the Volunteer Coordinator, will be considered inactive.

- A volunteer, whose performance or attitude is disruptive or interferes with an activity, may be dismissed from that event or activity by the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator will follow up with the volunteer and staff involved to try to correct the situation.
- Serious violations are cause for immediate discharge/termination. Violations will be brought by the Volunteer Coordinator to the attention of the Curator of Education, who will determine whether to terminate the services of the volunteer.

### **Three Strike Rule**

- If a volunteer earns three strikes, they will be discharged/terminated from the volunteer program.
- A volunteer can receive a strike by:
  - Failing to show up to a volunteer job without notice
  - Regularly canceling your volunteer shift
  - Breaking conduct as outline in the manual.
- Volunteers will be informed if they have earned a strike in writing.

\*Please note- if a volunteer misses an event due to family emergency, illness, or the like- it will not count as a strike.

## **Guidelines for Volunteers Interacting with Children in the Museum's Education Programs**

If you are volunteering to aide a teacher in an educational class and are working with children the following guidelines must be adhered to.

### **Expectations in Classroom Setting**

- A Volunteer is Representative of the museum and in a classroom setting functions as a "Teacher's Assistant".
  - Prior to the start of a class the teacher will provide direction and go over with the volunteer what the expectations and needs of the class will be. This includes, but not limited to; setting up activities, crafts, interacting, encouraging and helping with children, preparing snacks & drinks, getting children in a line to enter/leave the classroom, accompanying child to restroom, monitoring children at play outside the museum, clean up, etc.
  - Volunteers should not: be on their mobile phones, have inappropriate conversations with others, leave classroom without teacher knowledge and approval.
  - Communicating with the teacher, assisting with their needs and taking their direction during a class is essential.
- When a volunteer is asked to accompany a child from the classroom to the restroom they should wait for the child outside the restroom and then accompany the child back to classroom. We are open to the public and therefore our classrooms are accessible so it is imperative that we supervise the children according.
- A volunteer may be asked to accompany children across the parking lot to the park. If so it is also the volunteer's responsibility to help the teacher in making sure the children are safe during this process by keeping children in order and in a line while crossing the parking lot. It is also expected for the volunteer to aid the teacher in monitoring all the children during the time outside. Volunteers will be provided direction by the teacher in terms of spreading out over the play area to supervise the children as needed.

### **Modeling**

A Volunteer should:

- Always model and encourage cooperation and responsible behaviors among children.
- Encourage positive behaviors among children, including cooperating, helping, taking turns and talking to solve problems.
- Assist children with disabilities to interact according to individual needs.
- Talk with children and encourage them to be involved, and to share experiences, ideas and feelings.
- Speak to children in a friendly, courteous manner.
- Treat children and adults with equal respect, regardless of gender, race, age, language, religion, culture or family composition.
- Use appropriate language at all times

### **Behavior**

- All behaviors should be managed in a positive manner.
  - Example: Student A steals the glue from Student B. The volunteer should tell Student A to return the glue to Student B and either ask politely to borrow the glue or find another glue bottle.
  - Example: Student A hits Student B. The volunteer should tell Student A that hitting is not allowed and that they need to apologize to Student B.
- If there is negative behavior beyond either example, notify a staff member and they will address the issue.

### **Language & Content of Classroom Discussions**

- Again, volunteers are representatives of the museum and therefore need to present themselves at all times in a professional manner including the language and content of conversations with both children and other adults in the classroom.
- If you overhear a child having an inappropriate conversations you should notify the teacher immediately.

### **Helping People with Special Needs**

It is the policy of the museum to treat all visitors with respect and courtesy. Please adhere to these guidelines when helping those with disabilities:

- Look the person in the eye and speak directly to them, not to their companion.
- If the person is struggling, ask if you may help, just as you would with anyone else, and respect their answer, whether yes or no.
- Be patient, if the person has trouble speaking; give them time to express what their mind is saying.
- If the person has trouble seeing, hearing or moving, again be patient and understanding.

If you have ANY questions regarding any of these (but not limited to) guidelines listed above, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator; Katie Karr ([kkarr@hastingsmuseum.org](mailto:kkarr@hastingsmuseum.org)), or Russanne Hoff; Curator of Education ([education@hastingsmuseum.org](mailto:education@hastingsmuseum.org)) to discuss.

### **Emergency and Safety**

#### **Fire Safety Policy & Procedures**

**Fire Awareness:** Hand-held dry chemical fire extinguishers are located throughout the museum, please become familiar with the location of fire extinguishers in your area.

## **Memorize all exits!**

If you smell **smoke**, remain calm and immediately contact a staff member. They will investigate and if necessary, order an evacuation. If you see **fire**, remain calm and follow these instructions in proper order:

- Pull fire alarm
- Direct visitors to the nearest exit (**DO NOT USE ELEVATORS!**)

If you hear the **Fire Alarm**, volunteers should encourage visitors to follow the evacuation procedures by immediately exiting the building via the closest fire exit. If a visitor refuses to follow these instructions, a staff member must be notified once you have reached safety.

Everyone, staff, volunteers and visitors, will meet on the sidewalk front of the museum by Burlington Avenue after evacuating the building.

## **Tornado Safety Policy & Procedures**

April, May and June are the most likely time of the year for a tornado to occur, however, tornadoes may occur any time. The tornado safe area is located on the lower level of the museum in the hallway across from the Kool-Aid exhibit. Volunteers should familiarize themselves with the following procedures:

- The Visitor Services Supervisor is the Emergency Manager on duty.  
When a tornado warning for Adams County is issued, the Emergency Manager or Director will initiate safety procedures.
- The Emergency Manager on duty will inform staff, volunteers, and visitors to proceed to **the hall by the Kool-Aid exhibit** in the basement.
- Volunteers, should encourage visitors to follow the evacuation procedures. If a visitor refuses to follow these instructions, a staff member must be notified once you have reached safety.

**Do not use elevators** during a tornado warning, unless a visitor is handicapped or unable to negotiate stairs.

## **Accidents & Injuries**

A variety of accidents may occur in the Museum. All accidents require the completion of an Accident Report, regardless of whether the individual is a staff member, volunteer or visitor.

**Visitors:** Ask if the visitor wants you to call for assistance. Immediately report the accident to a staff member. Never discuss the Museum's role in the accident, nor blame the visitor. A Visitor Accident Report must be completed by a staff member as soon as possible.

**Volunteers/Staff:** Injuries to you, other volunteers or staff, should be immediately reported to a staff member and an Accident Report Form is to be completed by a staff member as soon as possible.

## **Hazard Reporting**

Any and all types of safety hazards should be reported to a staff member.

## **Power Outage**

In the event of a power outage the Visitor Services Supervisor on duty will coordinate all safety activities.

**Volunteers** will secure their area and report with any visitors to the Visitor Services Supervisor on duty. Volunteers will follow instructions given by the Emergency Manager.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

In the event of a blizzard or heavy snowfall, the following will occur:

- A staff member will personally notify you by telephone not to report for work.

**Security**

Security is everyone's responsibility. Report any unusual or suspicious things to a staff member.

## THE HASTINGS MUSEUM

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Hastings Museum brings to life the natural and cultural history of Hastings, Adams County and the Great Plains of Nebraska. The museum connects Nebraska to the world and universe through educational programs, exhibits and films, inspiring greater public respect for and understanding of our past and future.

### MUSEUM HISTORY

**Albert Brooking** spent most of his life gathering artifacts and specimens from all over the United States. As much as he enjoyed amassing this assortment of objects, he was not satisfied with just collecting. He dreamed that one day he would be able to house his collection in a Museum and share it with everyone.

Like today, in the early 1900s Hastings hosted many cultural and social events. The idea of building a Museum to add another cultural experience was strongly supported by the Hastings Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber formed a Museum Committee on June 8, 1926. The committee soon petitioned to acquire space in Highland Park for the Museum.

Hastings City Council donated the site in Highland Park for the construction of a Museum. They also agreed to provide salaries for two Museum employees and to heat the building – but the city could not afford to construct a building. Instead, a temporary location was secured in the Hawthorne school building, and Brooking was placed in charge of the Museum. Work began in November 1926.

Hastings Museum opened at this location on January 9, 1927. Visitors were amazed by more than 2,000 mounted birds completed by Brooking, A.T. Hill's nationally known American Indian collection, hallways filled with firearms and more.

The Museum's collections grew rapidly and five years later was bursting at the seams. In January 1932, the Board of Education passed a motion to lend the Morton school building to the city for use as a Museum. The Museum opened at that site on April 17, 1932.

The Great Depression brought public relief programs funded by federal grants. The grants were designed to employ people and aid in projects that would benefit the public. In 1935, the city began applying for federal grants to help construct a Museum building. Funding through the Work Projects Administration (WPA) came in the fall of 1937.

At long last, the collection that Brooking worked hard to gather would be housed in a new and permanent building – and the City of Hastings would have the largest municipal museum between Chicago and Denver.

Long before the building was complete, work began on the detailed animal dioramas. For example, the time consuming task of creating foliage yielded more than 500,000 hand-made leaves! This portion of the dioramas was supervised by Don Karr.

After countless hours of work, the Hastings Museum building was dedicated during Jubilleum Days on June 15, 1939. A highlight was the dedication speech delivered by Dr. Charles Abbott, secretary at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Abbott's speech was delivered after a grand introduction orchestrated from Washington. Vice President John Garner began the festivities by pushing a button in Washington that set off a charge of dynamite across the street from the new Museum building!

Some may remember Hastings Museum as the House of Yesterday, a name established in 1941 as a publicity promotion but later led to confusion – with visitors expecting to see a house. In 1978, the House of Yesterday promotion was officially abandoned and the Museum's public name reverted to Hastings Museum.

### Notable Dates in the History of the Hastings Museum

- **June 8, 1926:** A Museum Committee is formed and soon petitions the city for space to build in Highland Park – but the city could not afford to construct a building.
- **January 9, 1927:** The first Museum opens in the Hawthorne school building.
- **April 17, 1932:** Needing more space, the Museum moves to the Morton school building.
- **June 15, 1939:** Hastings Museum opens in a new building at its current location. The original space was built with the assistance of WPA grants received in 1937.
- **September 11, 1958:** Hastings Museum’s planetarium opens, the construction of which was made possible by the J.M. McDonald Foundation.
- **January 14, 1972:** A \$342,000 contract was signed to build the Museum’s second addition. Fundraising for the addition began in 1968 and was headed by Stanley Abbott.
- **May 21, 1985:** A third addition along the north side of the building opened. It included two storage rooms for the collection and a children’s interactive center.
- **January 11, 1991:** The Museum announced plans for the addition of a large screen theatre to present films. The original system was IMAX but it was switched to MegaSystems in 2001, which also allowed the showing of Hollywood-type movies.
- **March 20, 2009:** The Planetarium opens after undergoing a dome upgrade and the addition of a full dome projector. The project was supported by the J.M. McDonald Foundation and the Hastings Museum Foundation.
- **August 8, 2011:** Hastings Museum announced it had achieved accreditation from the American Association of Museums (AAM), the highest national recognition for a museum.
- **October 25, 2011:** An upgraded Theatre opens, complete with a new screen and the latest in digital projection technology, including the ability to show films and movies in 3D. The project was supported by the Hastings Museum Foundation.

**GENERAL MUSEUM INFORMATION**

The Hastings Museum is located 12 miles south of Interstate 80 via Hwy 281 at the intersection of Burlington and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets.

**Hastings Museum**  
**P O Box 1286, 1330 N Burlington Ave**  
**Hastings, NE 68902-1286**  
**402-461-4629, 1-800-508-4629**  
**www.hastingsmuseum.org**

**Admission Prices**

|                         | <b>Adult (12-59)</b> | <b>Senior (60+)</b> | <b>Child (3-12)</b> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Museum</b>           | \$8.00               | \$7.00              | \$6.00              |
| <b>3D Film</b>          | 10.00                | 9.00                | 8.00                |
| <b>2D Film</b>          | 8.00                 | 7.00                | 6.00                |
| <b>Museum + 3D Film</b> | 16.00                | 14.00               | 12.00               |
| <b>Museum + 2D Film</b> | 14.00                | 12.00               | 10.00               |

(Members take \$1.50 off ticket prices for films)

**Planetarium Shows** (FREE with museum admission)

- **Memorial Day weekend – Labor Day**
  - Full Dome Presentation - Daily @ 1 & 2 pm
  - Sky Tonight Monday –Saturdays @ 3 pm
- **September - April**
  - Full Dome
  - Presentation - Daily @ 2 pm
  - Sky Tonight
  - Monday - Saturdays @ 3 pm

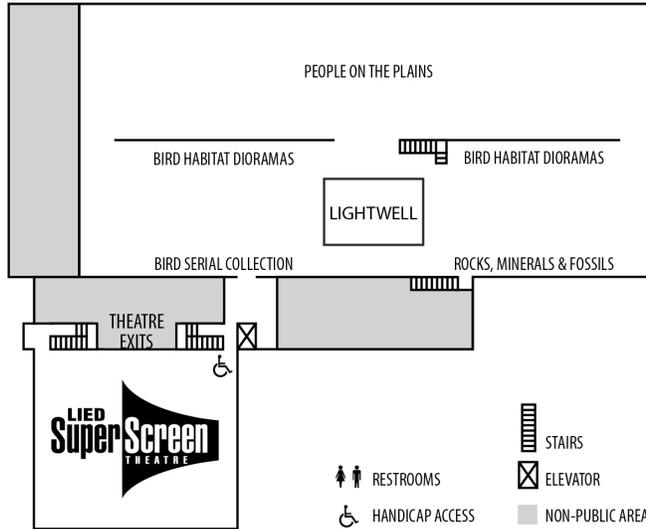
**Memberships**

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Individual              | \$45  |
| Companion               | \$50  |
| Family                  | \$55  |
| Grandparent             | \$55  |
| Silver Premiere         | \$175 |
| Gold Premiere           | \$325 |
| Platinum Premiere       | \$600 |
| Membership Plus Program | \$20  |

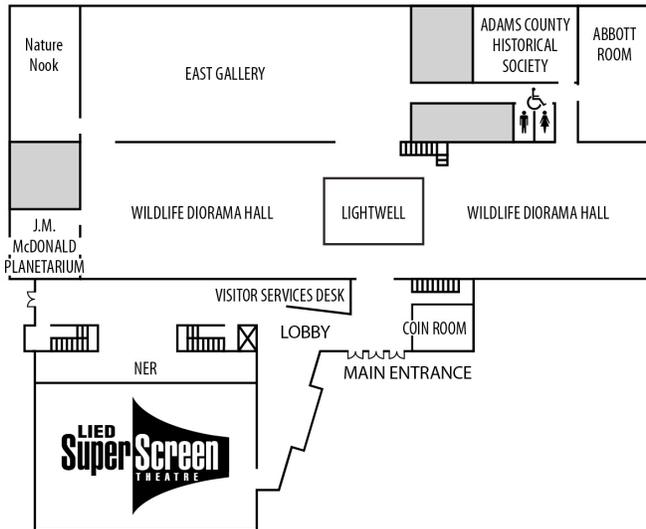
Show times and pricing is subject to change. For more information, please visit our website, [www.hastingsmuseum.org](http://www.hastingsmuseum.org) or contact Visitor Services at [visitorservices@hastingsmuseum.org](mailto:visitorservices@hastingsmuseum.org) and 402-461-4629.

Floor Plan

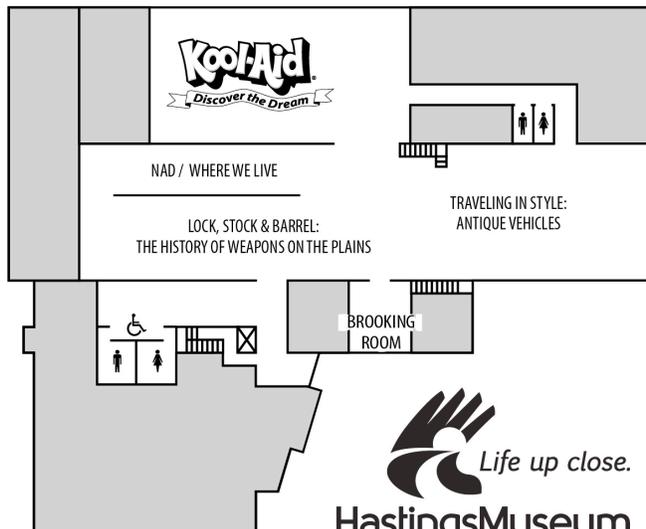
# UPPER LEVEL



# MAIN LEVEL



# LOWER LEVEL



 **Smoking** is not permitted anywhere inside this facility.

14th & Burlington • Hastings, NE  
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**Concessions** are available in the main floor lobby. Food and drink may be consumed in the theatre or main lobby. We ask that you help us preserve our collections and not take concessions into the museum.