

2019 SCSC Science & Nature Conference Presenters

The Bakken Museum inspires a passion for innovation by exploring the potential for science, technology and the humanities to make the world a better place. The Bakken Museum's outreach team sees more than 30,000 students a year with fun and unique STEM programming. The museum is Minnesota's only Smithsonian-Affiliate Museum and features a world-renowned collection of books and artifacts, multiple galleries focusing on the wonders of invention, plant medicine, bio-technology, science and The Florence Bakken Medicinal Garden. For more information, visit thebakken.org.

Al Batt is a writer, speaker, storyteller and humorist. He is a radio personality, book author and a columnist for newspapers and magazines. He is an avid birder, writes cartoons and speaks all over the world. His mother thinks he's a big deal.

Eileen Campbell is a watershed scientist at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

America's Fun Science Dr. Tyronne Carter, "Dr. Fun," is the director of marketing and curriculum design for America's Fun Science, which offers hands-on science enrichment activities and STEAM programs to schools, nonprofits, libraries, preschools, community education, scouting organizations and parents throughout the Twin Cities and surrounding areas. Tyronne is a licensed, experienced K-8 science teacher, licensed K-12 principal, certified STEM instructor, and a member of both the National Science Teachers Association and American Society for Engineering Education. America's Fun Science programs, which include utilization of the engineering design process, help promote team building, leadership, self-confidence, creativity and joy...and make science FUN!

Katie Chapman is the director of environmental education at Shetek Lutheran Ministries.

Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota educators work as catalysts for building a stronger, more vibrant community around play so that all children in our region share in a bright future of opportunity and well-being.

James Dontje is the director of the Johnson Center for Environmental Innovation at Gustavus Adolphus College.

Bob Ebsen is the education director at the Wildlife Science Center.

Elaine Evans is an assistant extension professor for the University of Minnesota.

James E. Gerholdt has been working with reptiles for more than 50 years and worked in zoos for more than 26 years. He is a founding member of the Minnesota Herpetological Society and has taught classes at the Science Museum of Minnesota for more than 20 years. He currently maintains, under permit, three of the protected threatened species of Minnesota reptiles.

Dr. Bruce Giebink, "Bruce the Bug Guy," is founder and manager of his own business, "The Bug Zone, LLC." Bruce specializes in delivering a variety of educational programs about insects and related arthropods. After obtaining his doctorate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he accepted entomology positions at Michigan State University (1988-1990) and University of Minnesota Extension Service (1990-1999). Prior to founding "The Bug Zone, LLC" in 2000, Bruce coordinated pest management and water quality programs as an assistant professor at the University of Minnesota.

High Touch High Tech of the Twin Cities is your local source for fun, hands-on science education. Their standards-based, compelling lessons ignite a student's natural curiosity about science, helping them to build problem-solving skills, increase self-esteem and create confidence to try something new. Their programs expose students to the amazing world of science and nature by creating in-class laboratories where students conduct experiments and analyze the results. By using discovery style learning and inquiry, science is brought to life for every student.

Sue Knott is an education specialist with Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom.

Lee Ann Landstrom is a naturalist and retired director of Eastman Nature Center in Maple Grove. She has also taught children's classes at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Lee Ann co-authored "Nature's Yucky," an award-winning non-fiction children's book series.

Michael Lynch is a radio meteorologist for WCCO and has presented and educated many on astronomy and starwatching for nearly 50 years.

Mad Science of Minnesota is the world's leading science enrichment provider for preschool and elementary students. They spark imaginative learning through interactive sessions on many STEM topics.

The Minnesota Zoomobile and its team of trained naturalists travel to schools and community events throughout Minnesota and beyond, providing an educational and entertaining environmental experience to a variety of audiences. Zoomobile naturalists use live animals, biological artifacts, theater techniques, storytelling and audience participation to create a dynamic, personal and fun program for all ages.

Dr. Rebecca Moen is an assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry and Geology at Minnesota State University, Mankato. She will be accompanied by biochemistry lab students and assistants.

Alicia Paplow is the executive director for the Prairie Ecology Bus Center and a past naturalist for them. She loves spending time outdoors and teaching about nature.

The Prairie Ecology Bus Center programs serve pre-school learners through adults using a variety of onsite and outreach programs to educate about the environment, helping people develop a sense of place and appreciation for the communities in which we live.

Erin Rupp is a beekeeper, informal science educator and the founder and executive director of Pollinate Minnesota. She started Pollinate Minnesota to safely connect students of all ages to live honey bees while teaching classes with everyone in beekeeping suits. Erin also works with cities, the state and other municipalities on pollinator friendly policies. She served on Governor Dayton's Committee for Pollinator Protection.

Melanie Schmidt is the youth development program coordinator for Mankato Area Public Schools' Community Education and Recreation Department.

Andrea Schneider is the owner and operator of I Know My Way, LLC, Orienteering USA (OUSA) and a Certified Coach Level I. By training, Andrea is a physicist and plastics engineer, but by passion she is an orienteering coach, who learned to read maps well before learning to read books. She started competitive orienteering at the age of eight, and has coached her sons, one on the Orienteering USA National Junior Team and one on the National Team. Having enjoyed this sport for many years in the form of competition, mapping, teaching and coaching, Andrea recently founded I Know My Way, LLC, to bring the life skill of navigation to school curricula and field trips.

Science from Scientists' mission is to teach and inspire the next generation to identify and solve real-world problems by improving STEM literacy. Their vision is to inspire students, ignite interest and improve STEM competency with the goal of filling the workforce pipeline with talented, competent individuals. They selectively choose and train real scientists with advanced STEM degrees to deliver state and national frameworks informed hands-on lab based lessons, in a collaborative program that is cost effective, scalable and measurably impactful. This year, SFS is serving 9,300 students and 295 teachers through their in-school programming.

Science Museum of Minnesota educators are highly qualified instructors with varied backgrounds and specialties. Collectively, they are experts in biology, sculpture, designing computer games, forensic science, carpentry and much more.

Art and Barb Straub are retired elementary school instructors who volunteer at the Henderson Feathers Mini Science Museum and the J. R. Brown Minnesota River Center in Henderson, Minnesota. They have been active in environmental education for 55 years and desire to share the fantastic natural phenology of the Minnesota River Valley with anyone who is interested.

Sheila Stevensen is an American Society for Clinical Pathology certified medical laboratory technician with the Mayo Clinic Health System at the Mankato hospital laboratory.

Tricia Swinyer is a naturalist with the Prairie Ecology Bus Center who enjoys the outdoors and teaching about it.

Jerry Wenzel retired in 2007 after teaching middle school life science for 35 years in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. He continues to inspire students with his science magic presentations in schools across Minnesota.

The Works Museum mission is to inspire the next generation of innovators, engineers and creative problem solvers. Dreams need doing and exploring engineering gives students the power to make stuff, break stuff and make it better! We need the imagination and skill of engineers to solve the problems and address the challenges of our modern world. Engineering fuels collaboration, persistence and problem solving; critical skills for every student from every walk of life. The Works Museum welcomes you to explore engineering and stretch your imagination. Their exhibits, programs and design challenges engage students in science, technology and engineering and make learning memorable and fun. Learn more at www.theworks.org.

Thank you to all our presenters and to the Mankato Area Foundation Community Fund for contributing to this event.