Summer hits at the RMAC; new exhibits, fun

By Michael Hall
Executive Director

This summer is proving to be a very productive one at the Roswell Museum and Art Center.

As the executive director, I am particularly proud of the numerous programs, events and lectures we are offering, as well as many new exhibits. An entire article will be devoted to the new exhibits soon. I am going to just give a sample of the fun activities we have.

Top among our notable summer programs is “Arts for Autism” that reconvened the last Saturday of June for a second season of activities. This free program was created by RMAC Education Curator Claudia Gonzalez last January for families with autistic youths and the initial sessions enjoyed a very successful first quarter.

It is now back by popular demand with a new series of adventures in partnership with the New Mexico Autism Society. These activities remain not just an art class in multiple mediums, but a forum to introduce youths with special needs to new levels of self-confidence and socialization.

During last Saturday’s class, families worked with their children and enjoyed the art of creating “Jellyfish” light designs, which incorporated art and science in an innovative exercise.

As they made these jellyfish lights, the class discussed those sea creatures and how they pulse in the water and the way in which this life form must rely on their tentacles to catch food.

This sensory lesson challenged new experiences for our wonderful students.

Also in June, the RMAC’s first in a series of three Friday night sci-fi adventure movies launched. We featured the alien adventure Independence Day as a warm-up for our Fourth of July RMAC Costume Contest.

(Speaking of the Costume Contest, it was a smashing success with Events Coordinator Olga McGuire.)

Our movies are of note here because they remain our proudest feature.

Film features allow us to host parents participating in an enjoyable family activity of movie going with their children.

Free popcorn and snacks make it an even more enjoyable evening. The next two family movie nights are on Friday, July 10 with Titan and Battle for Terra on Friday, July 24. All features start at 7 p.m. at the Roswell
Museum and Art Center.

Our clay classes are already full this summer and all of our offerings in art are a big success. They provide a wide variety of art all the way from drawing to yoga to a new experiment in crocheting.

Summer guitar classes with Johnathan Gomez are a major hit too and are all in harmony to bring music into our world of the arts.

This summer we have also featured some enjoyable free lectures for the public. We want to thank senior curator from the Hubbard Museum, Brittany Porter, for providing a fantastic lecture this last Wednesday.

Her presentation, “My Land is the Southwest,” focused on the National Register of Historic Places area nomination process and the designation of the Peter and Henriette Wyeth Hurd House and Studios in San Patricio.

Dr. L. Hernandez Gomez provided another very well received lecture recently. She spoke as a representative of the League of Imaginary Scientists, a Los Angeles-based art group specializing in Pataphysics, Interactive Art and Art/Science Collaborations.

Dr. Hernandez discussed “Life on Earth vs. Life on Mars” which was a climate-focused art lecture.

Her hands-on approach seeks interplanetary solutions to local environmental concerns.

Following the lecture Dr. Hernandez engaged in a workshop with several participants including a very interested youth who developed an even greater appreciation for our delicate natural environment.

Our Xcel Energy grant-funded mentoring program completed two more successful sessions in June. We welcomed Evan Feldman, the Director of Contemporary Art at the Gerald Peters Gallery in Santa Fe. She presented a program on New Mexico Galleries.

Galleries are the business end of the art scene, and this was an important lesson in dollars and common sense. That is exactly what our program is about, providing a wide variety of skills that are not taught in most academic settings.

This is an amazing opportunity and a totally free one for any high school age youth who has an interest in a career in art.

Our eight sessions are providing insights and experiences that no art class or college preparatory course will provide.

Most recently we welcomed Marisa Sage for the fifth program in our series of eight. Ms. Sage is the new director of the New Mexico State University Gallery, who featured a lesson on creating “Effective Portfolios.”

Putting together an effective portfolio is a key skill for any aspiring artist. Art-bound students can still join remaining sessions, and there will continue to be new offerings for everyone at the RMAC!

So stay tuned and for more information contact us at education@roswellmuseum.org.