

Science Safari

Presented by
Susan Campbell



Science is FUN! I've had a lifelong love of its many facets. Starting with toad-kissing as a toddler to being a kitchen microbiologist and chemist, to extensive studying of Dallas area creeks wearing my Dad's waders and carrying a net, I've always been a self-taught scientist.

I've always been a big reader of science books. At 10, I taught myself taxonomy to flesh out my field observations of plants, animals and insects, keeping notebooks as I went. For over 15 years, I've devoured my weekly copy of *Science News* to stay on top of science current events. Reading, researching and designing experiments and demonstrations for specially-requested topics is one part of *Science Safari* that I find especially satisfying.

Life and Earth Science, Chemistry, Mathematics and Latin were my favorite subjects at Richardson High School. Neuroanatomy, Psychology, Sociology, Psycholinguistics and Logic numbered among my favorites at Trinity University where I vacillated between pre-med, science and journalism.

I love to tinker. Starting with my mother's alarm clock (when I was three), I've always loved dismantling, repairing and building things. If you need a new motor in your dishwasher, just call.

And then I went into sales. For fifteen years, I sold products relating to printing and binding. A large part of my work involved client training. I enjoyed it, but it wasn't my passion.

As a parent, I was able to recapture some of my childhood love of the natural world and its properties by introducing it to my son and his friends. I was dismayed at how little his friends knew about science, and how disinterested they seemed. It was only natural for me to try to instill a little passion.

As a result, little by little, an idea began. How could I combine my enthusiasm for science, my talent for training, my love of entrepreneurship and tinkering, and my joy at seeing the "eureka" factor as children learned and had fun? As a lay educator, how could I sow the seeds of interest into them so that they might build from that little "spark"?

Science Safari is just that, my way of providing a "spark" to charge both educator and student. I truly hope to make a difference. From feedback I've received, I believe my program is doing that. Following a program at the Grand Prairie ISD Education Fair, a parent told me she wished I had been her science teacher, that my program was not only fun, but gave her the "spark" to try things at home with her kids. A 2nd-grader wrote me that he can successfully spin a clothes hanger on his finger with a quarter balanced on the hook and stop it without dropping it! It only took him 4 weeks of practice! And he understands clearly what centripetal force is. Other students have written to tell me about their Science Fair projects.

Science Safari is an unusual presentation. It has impact by virtue of the fact that it changes the routine of an otherwise regular day. It is participatory, which is necessary for reinforcing the experience, and I've been told that my enthusiasm is contagious.

Man loves to wonder and that is the seed of science.

Emerson

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Science Safari



Experience:

I have personally served over 41,000 participants in my programs. I have successfully conducted over 250 summer camp enrichment programs and over 200 after-school programs for Dallas Parks & Recreation and over 300 summer and after-school programs for students served by the Dallas Independent School District.

Organizational Structure:

Science Safari is owned and operated by Susan O. Campbell. There are currently no other staff members.

Qualifications:

I have served tens of thousands of children and many of their families in a variety of styles of science enrichment programs since I created the *Science Safari* program in 1994.

I have an excellent record as a vendor to the City of Dallas, Parks & Recreation Department (vendor #341100) and the DISD (vendor # 5411).

My programs and projects have been awarded more than \$25,000 in grants based on proposals I have written.

I have provided professional development workshops for elementary teachers in the DISD, Plano ISD and HEBISD.

I have provided my programs every year since 1994, excluding my two-year stint as Education and Outreach Coordinator and for the Dallas Museum of Natural History when I was unavailable, to area Departments of Park & Recreation, among others.

I volunteer to serve as a Science Fair judge in Metroplex school districts.

Texas Instruments, Home Depot, Minyard's and KSE - Texas have donated equipment and materials for my science enrichment programs.

I am a vendor member of the Metroplex Area Science Supervisors organization.

I am a Specialized Service Provider for DISD.

I am a founding contributing editor and member of the Society for Amateur Scientists.

I wrote a successful grant proposal resulting in \$18,000 in Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. funding, planned and coordinated the construction of the **Lakewood Outdoor Learning Area (LOLA)** at DISD's Lakewood Elementary School. For each of four years, I led over 700 students in outdoor learning sessions on the site. Each of those years, as a culminating experience, I designed and coordinated the *Lakewood Museum of Natural History*, an event for students and families in the Lakewood Area.

In April 2003, I coordinated the *Science Safari Research and Demonstration Fair* at City Hall as the culminating event after providing after-school programs for Dallas Parks & Recreation at 16 elementary schools. More than 300 visitors enjoyed exhibits created by the children involved in my program.