

DRIVEN BY CURIOSITY

FLAGSTAFF
FESTIVAL OF
SCIENCE

The Best 10 Days of the Year!



The 2026 W. L. Gore & Associates
Keynote Presentation

**Speed, Science,
& Human Ingenuity**

with Kirk Dunsavage | Sept 25 | 7pm

OVER 100 EVENTS - ALL FREE!

For a full list of events, reservations, and event updates
visit scifest.org or download the Festival app



FROM ROUTE 66 TO FORMULA ONE A CENTURY OF CURIOSITY

BY KATHERINE S. O'DONNELL

A century ago, the biggest technological breakthrough most Americans experienced was a paved highway that promised adventure beyond the next horizon.

Route 66 changed the way people traveled. It connected communities, fueled exploration and turned the automobile into a symbol of freedom and possibility. Few could have imagined that 100 years later, cars would communicate with computers, engineers would make split-second decisions using live data, and artificial intelligence would become part of everyday life.

At first glance, Route 66 and Formula One racing appear to have little in common. Together, they tell one of the most compelling stories of technological progress over the past century. Few people have witnessed that evolution as closely as Kirk Dunsavage.

As the W. L. Gore & Associates keynote speaker for the 2026 Flagstaff Festival of Science, Dunsavage will take audiences behind the scenes of some of the world's most advanced technologies while exploring a question that has consistently shaped every major breakthrough of the past century:

"What happens when people never stop asking, 'How can we make this better?'"

During a career spanning nearly three decades at Intel Corporation and later with Williams Racing, one of Formula One's most iconic teams, Dunsavage has worked at the intersection of automotive technology, healthcare, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. His experience has placed him on the front lines of industries where innovation moves quickly and continuous improvement is part of everyday life.

When we began talking, I expected Formula One to dominate the conversation. It didn't. As the discussion moved from racing to healthcare, artificial intelligence and even motorcycles, it became clear that Formula One was simply one chapter in a much larger story. Every example pointed back to the same idea: technology may accelerate progress, but people create it.

"I've always been curious about how things work," Dunsavage said. "I love technology, and I love what you can do with it." That curiosity has taken him places few people ever experience.

Imagine standing inside a Formula One garage just moments before a race begins. While thousands of fans



focus on the driver, dozens of engineers are focused on something just as important. They monitor hundreds of streams of live data flowing from the car. Tire temperatures, wind direction, aerodynamics, fuel loads and track conditions are constantly changing. Every decision carries consequences measured in fractions of a second.

The team that can take that data, analyze it, decide what to do with it, and make a change to the car is the team that's going to win," Dunsavage explained. The technology is extraordinary and the collaboration behind it is even more impressive. Software engineers, aerodynamic specialists, manufacturing experts, race strategists and data analysts work together toward one shared objective. Every race becomes another opportunity to learn, adapt and improve.

"Everybody knows what the goal is," Dunsavage said. "There's this continuous drive to get better and better, to learn from the last race, apply what you've learned and make changes for the next one." One observation stayed with me long after our conversation ended. Although Dunsavage has worked in dramatically different industries, he doesn't describe them as separate worlds. He sees the same principles at work in every one of them.

Before Formula One, he worked with software supporting CT scanners and other medical imaging technology. Better software helped physicians gather clearer diagnostic information while reducing radiation

exposure for patients. The environment looked nothing like a Formula One garage, yet the process sounded remarkably familiar. Gather better information. Understand the problem. Test new ideas. Improve the outcome.

Artificial intelligence represents the next chapter in that same story. Many conversations about AI begin with fear or uncertainty. Dunsavage approaches the technology from a different perspective.

"Technology is a tool," he said. "Somebody needs to tell it what to do, and somebody needs to know what to do with the results it gets back." That perspective feels especially relevant today, when conversations about artificial intelligence often focus on what machines can do instead of what people should do. His optimism isn't rooted in technology alone. It comes from believing people will continue doing what they have always done: adapt, innovate and discover better ways forward. Perhaps that's why Dunsavage is such a fitting choice to open this year's Flagstaff Festival of Science.

The Festival celebrates the centennial of Route 66, a highway that once represented the cutting edge of transportation and inspired people to explore what lay beyond the next horizon. One hundred years later, society stands at another crossroads. Artificial intelligence, advanced computing and emerging technologies are reshaping how people live, work and communicate.

Dunsavage won't tell audiences exactly where that road leads. Instead, he'll invite them to ask better questions about where it might take us next. His keynote promises more than stories from Formula One or a look inside one of the world's most respected technology companies. It offers an opportunity to connect a century of innovation—from Route 66 to artificial intelligence—and discover why the most important technology has never been the machine itself. It has always been the people behind it.

One hundred years ago, Route 66 invited America to discover what waited beyond the next horizon. The next horizon isn't somewhere in the distance. It's already here.

The question is whether we're curious enough to explore it.

Learn more at the 2026 W. L. Gore & Associates Keynote Presentation on Sept. 25, 7 p.m. at Ardrey Auditorium. Free tickets now available for reservation. Visit www.scifest.org for more information.



Message from the President

BY ADAM MARSH

Just as the Festival of Science does today, Route 66 connected places, people and ideas. The Mother Road provided a new opportunity to explore and inspired countless people as they travelled between Chicago and Los Angeles, and our mission as the Festival reflects that goal: to connect and inspire people of northern Arizona, particularly youth, with the wonders of science and the joy of scientific discovery. Our 2026 theme, “Driven by Curiosity,” nods to the centennial celebration of Route 66 and invites our audiences to this year’s 10 Best Days of the Year — all free!

Of course, you can’t get very far down the highway without a vehicle, so we kick off the Festival with the W. L. Gore & Associates keynote presentation from Kirk Dunsavage, an expert innovator and inventor in Formula 1 racing. The next day is my favorite annual Festival event: Snook’s Science in the Park! More than 50 of our STEAM community partners will provide the opportunity to experiment, engage and participate directly with the science happening here in northern Arizona, just one block away from Route 66 itself.

Over the course of this year’s 10-day Festival, you can have the chance to tag a monarch butterfly, explore the night sky, walk on Mars, learn about ancestral Puebloan culture, search for tarantulas and even meet a Zamboni! Experts will give presentations on the geology of our national parks, the history of the science fiction genre, and how technology and innovation come together to protect wildlife from our roadways. If you’ve never been to some of our local STEAM institutions, now is your chance to visit places like the U. S. Naval Observatory, Museum of Northern Arizona, Pioneer



Museum, Lowell Observatory and Meteor Crater. If you can’t join us in person, we will be streaming live or recording some of our programs on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@FlagstaffFestivalofScience>.

Please be sure to fill out a survey for a chance to win a pair of wireless earbuds. We use these invaluable data to adjust the Festival every year to better serve our diverse audiences. Paper copies of the program are available, but we encourage you to download the Festival’s mobile app, available to download by following this link: <https://tinyurl.com/SCIFEST26>. Thank you to our donors and sponsors, thank you to all the hosts and program providers, and most importantly, thanks to YOU, the curious observers, the passionate participants, the budding scientists and the explorers of the open road.

Dr. Adam Marsh
Board President

CULTIVATING curiosity

That's
NAU
NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

NAU is a proud sponsor of the Flagstaff Festival of Science

Northern Arizona Healthcare

Proud to sponsor

Science in the Park Sept. 26 @ Wheeler Park

in Downtown Flagstaff!

2026 Flagstaff Festival of Science events schedule

Organized by date and listed chronologically

Available Online All Festival

Science Bedtime Stories

Available at [SciFest.org](https://scifest.org) and youtube.com/FlagstaffFestivalofScience

This collection of children's stories introduces young readers to themes of nature, resilience, and connection. Featuring five local authors and their books, this filmed series engages children and can be enjoyed at home with your child before bed or any time.

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

Behind the Ballot: An Elections Center Experience

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Coconino County Elections Center

Get ready to dive headfirst into the heart of democracy on our exclusive tour of the Coconino County Elections Center! Reservation required: scifest.org.

Society of Automotive Engineers at Northern Arizona University (Formula and Baja teams)

6:00 PM – 6:45 PM

NAU Ardrey Auditorium

Explore NAU student-built Baja SAE and Formula SAE vehicles, meet the students behind them, and discover the engineering, design, and teamwork that bring these high-performance projects to life. (Will also be at the car show on Oct. 4.)

Pre-Keynote Ballet: Vroom, Vroom, Vroom!

6:30 PM – 7:00 PM

NAU Ardrey Auditorium

An artistic adaptation of the keynote address that explores cars and transportation through music and inventive choreography. Reservation required: scifest.org.

W. L. Gore & Associates Keynote Presentation: Speed, Science & Human Ingenuity

7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

NAU Ardrey Auditorium

Go behind the scenes of Formula 1 with technology leader Kirk Dunsavage as he explores how science, engineering, data, and human curiosity drive innovation. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Campus Sky Viewing at the Barry Lutz Telescope

7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

The Barry Lutz Telescope at NAU

Open house viewing at the 20-inch Barry Lutz Telescope: Explore the wonders of the night sky at NAU's Campus Observatory.

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

Hit the Trails with High Country Humane!

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

High Country Humane Butler Campus

Enjoy a guided High Country Humane hike with adoptable dogs while learning about canine behavior and outdoor health benefits.

Science Day at MNA

10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Museum of Northern Arizona

Join MNA for family-friendly Route 66 activities, including popsicle bridges, neon science, clay roads, and more.

Snook's Science in the Park

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Wheeler Park

More than 50 booths offering interactive learning for the whole family! Bring a curious mind and leave with a new appreciation for science in Flagstaff.

USNO Flagstaff Station Site Tour

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

US Naval Observatory

Reservation required: scifest.org.

Celebrating the Song Dogs

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Museum of Northern Arizona

This is a humorous lecture about the natural and cultural history of coyotes in the Americas, their place in lore, and the exciting things that make them nature's "tricksters."

Meet a Zamboni

1:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Jay Lively Activity Center

Get an up-close look at the Zamboni as rink staff show how this amazing machine transforms the ice between skating sessions.

Horses! The Evolution of the Horse

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Northern Arizona Riding Stables at Savi Ranch

Learn how horses evolved over time and about horse myths, watch a riding demonstration, and meet horses up close. Wear shoes suitable for mud or dirt. Parking: Follow the driveway to the arena at the back. Registration requested (scifest.org), but last-minute guests will be accepted up to capacity.

Safe and Connected: Roadways and Wildlife

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Museum of Northern Arizona

See how biologists and transportation experts use research to prevent wildlife collisions while keeping habitats connected.

Water for Wildlife — Wildlife Drinkers

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Fort Tuthill County Park — Home Ec Building

A talk on wildlife drinkers, providing drinking water for wildlife in northern Arizona, and a visit to the new wildlife drinker. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Inside Tynkertopia MakerSpace: A Community of Curiosity

3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Tynkertopia MakerSpace, 1515 E. Cedar Ave., Suite D2

Step inside and experience hands-on exploration, creativity, and discovery. You'll find a variety of engaging activities inviting you to tynker, build, experiment, and create using real tools and materials. Meet our team, explore our MakerSpace, and see how curiosity comes to life through self-directed learning.

Tynkertopia Open House

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Tynkertopia, 3330 E. Elder Drive

Learn how we invite curiosity, inspire wonder, and encourage playfulness at Flagstaff's award-winning STEAM Community Center.

NAU Science Art Show, presented by the Center for Ecosystem Science and Society

5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

International Pavilion at NAU

Explore NAU research through a special science art exhibit featuring the work of the Center for Ecosystem Science and Society. Meet our researchers to discuss the science of Arctic landscapes, wildfires, biocrusts, giant trees, the world of soil beneath our feet, and more.

Harvest Moon Concert, hosted by the Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM, with performance at 6:15 PM

Buffalo Park

Savor classical music and lunar reflections as the harvest moon rises, then view its surface through powerful telescopes.

Under the Full Moon: Picture Canyon and the AZT

5:45 PM – 7:30 PM

Picture Canyon Natural and Cultural Preserve

Hike 4 miles along the Arizona Trail as the harvest moon rises over Picture Canyon and the surrounding dark-sky landscape. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Campus Sky Viewing at the Barry Lutz Telescope

7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

The Barry Lutz Telescope at NAU

Open house viewing at the 20-inch Barry Lutz Telescope: Explore the wonders of the night sky at NAU's Campus Observatory.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

Historical Archaeology Tour of a 1930s Logging Camp

8:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Meeting location provided after reservation made. Walk through a 1930s logging camp near Tusayan and learn how archaeologists uncover stories of work and life in Arizona. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Tag a Monarch Butterfly!

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Rockin' River Ranch State Park

Become a citizen scientist by safely tagging a migrating monarch and helping researchers discover where its journey leads. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Curiosity Quest: A GPS Treasure Hunt

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Tynkertopia MakerSpace, 1515 E Cedar Ave., Suite D2

Use GPS coordinates and clues to locate five hidden geocaches while learning how real-world navigation technology works. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Meteor Crater Neighbor Appreciation Day

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Meteor Crater

Explore one of the world's best-preserved meteorite impact sites, take in the breathtaking views, and experience a day filled with adventure, discovery, activities, and fun for all ages. Make the most of your visit with a Full Rim Tour at 9 a.m. Reservations are required for the Full Rim Tour (scifest.org), but not the rest of the open house.

Elden Pueblo Public Day

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Elden Pueblo

Step back in time and explore the lives of people who lived here in the past at Elden Pueblo's Open House, with tours at 10 a.m., noon, and 2 p.m. Experience archaeology through artifacts, tools, hunting games, and interpretive excavations.

Ready for Research: Preparing a Stellar Science or Engineering Project

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Flagstaff Downtown Library Community Room

Students are filled with noticings and wonderings but often get stuck when translating passions into a testable question or engineering design problem. SARSEF will guide students and caregivers through planning an authentic research project during which they'll explore their passions, impact their community, and showcase their work at a regional science fair. Reservation required: scifest.org.

USNO Flagstaff Station Site Tour

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

US Naval Observatory

Reservation required: scifest.org.

Flagstaff Has its Faults

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Visit exposed faults around Flagstaff to read rock layers, measure movement, and connect local earthquakes to regional tectonics. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Rogers Lake Homesteading Guided Walk

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Rogers Lake County Natural Area, Rogers Lake Homestead Trail

Walk 2 miles in the forest to a historic Rogers Lake homestead while learning about the area's cultural and natural history. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Science + Improv

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Beaver Street Theatre

Three bona fide scientists, five (creative) improvisers. You'll learn from the scientists and laugh at how the improvisers interpret their work. A fun way to end your weekend. (Improvisation might include adult themes.)

The Merriam Expedition to San Francisco Mountain: Life Zones and the Founding of Ecology

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Riordan Mansion State Historic Park

Revisit the Merriam Expedition and learn how its study of San Francisco Peaks helped shape the science of ecology. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Campus Sky Viewing at the Barry Lutz Telescope

7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

The Barry Lutz Telescope at NAU

Open house viewing at the 20-inch Barry Lutz Telescope: Explore the wonders of the night sky at NAU's Campus Observatory.

SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Bouncing Babies

9:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Flagstaff Downtown Library Community Room

Come to the library for special science and car themed storytimes.

Behind the Ballot: An Elections Center Experience

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Coconino County Elections Center

Get ready to dive headfirst into the heart of democracy on our exclusive tour of the Coconino County Elections Center! Reservation required: scifest.org.

Lake Mary Water Treatment Plant Tour

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Lake Mary Water Treatment Plant

Follow Flagstaff's drinking water through treatment and learn how clean, safe water travels from source to household tap. Reservation required: scifest.org.

USNO Flagstaff Station Site Tour

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

US Naval Observatory

Join the staff of the Naval Observatory for a two-hour guided tour of the Flagstaff station. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Seed Poems & Wildflower Wishes

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

The Literacy Center

Join The Literacy Center for a fun hands-on activity combining science and poetry! Participants will plant their own wildflower seed, learn what plants need to grow, and create a short poem about their hopes and dreams. Each participant will take home their planted seed and poem to watch both grow over time. Reservation required: scifest.org.

For Birds, Just Add Water

4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Kachina Wetlands Entrance

Walk Kachina Wetlands at dusk, identify migratory birds, and see how restored water transformed a dry meadow into habitat. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Fun to Learn: From Bats to Butterflies — the Pollinators!

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Willow Bend Environmental Education Center

Bats, birds, beetles, bees, butterflies! Meet the big puppets that tell the story of pollination — how animals and insects move pollen between plants so that more plants can grow. There will be a performance from Momentum Aerial Studio puppeteers and a hands-on activity in the Willow Bend Center. Great for younger kids! Reservation required: scifest.org.

Geology of the National Parks

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Harrington's Tap House

Journey through North America's active geologic story and see how powerful processes created iconic western National Parks.

History of Science Fiction

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

CCC Fourth Street Campus and CCC Zoom

In many ways we live in the world of science fiction: smart phones, autonomous automobiles, people living in the ISS, plans to send humans back to the moon ... science fiction helps us find our way in this new world! Reservation required: scifest.org.

SEPTEMBER 29, 2026

Bird ID Walk at Rio de Flag

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Rio de Flag Wetlands

Spend a morning at Rio de Flag learning birding basics from wildlife experts, with binoculars and field guides provided. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Toddler Tales

9:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Flagstaff Downtown Library Community Room

Come to the library for special science- and car-themed storytimes.

Behind the Ballot: An Elections Center Experience

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Coconino County Elections Center

Get ready to dive headfirst into the heart of democracy on our exclusive tour of the Coconino County Elections Center! Reservation required: scifest.org.

Mountain Line Travel Training!

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM, 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Wheeler Park bus stop on Aspen Avenue

(Orange Route 5 — Stop 2)

Ride a free Mountain Line loop while practicing maps, routes, and transfers for easier, greener travel around Flagstaff. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Build a Catapult & Test It

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Tynkertopia, 3330 E. Elder St.

Design, launch, test, and improve a mini catapult while discovering how engineering choices affect distance and accuracy.

All-Ages Pinewood Derby

4:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Flagstaff Downtown Library Community Room

The Flagstaff City-Coconino County Public Library will host an all-ages pinewood derby! Adults and children are invited to make a car at home according to specific parameters and specifications. Bring it to the library to compete on gravity-run race tracks. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Lowell Observatory Open House

4:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Lowell Observatory Astronomy Discovery Center

Enjoy immersive shows in the giant-screen Lowell Universe Theater, soak up stunning views from the rooftop, and explore interactive exhibits for all ages that bring the universe to life!

How to Find Life, From Antarctica to Mars

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Lowell Observatory Astronomy Discovery Center

Learn how microbes in Antarctica's harsh Dry Valleys could guide the search for life on Mars.

Race Robots with the CocoNuts!

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

Lowell Observatory Astronomy Discovery Center

Join the CocoNuts to build a LEGO robot, then race it! Best for ages 8 and older with parents. Please arrive at the start.

Updates from the Mars Rovers

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Lowell Observatory Astronomy Discovery Center

Come hear our local martian, Ryan Anderson, share the latest science updates from the Mars rovers.

SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

Pilgrimage of Light Art Exhibit

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

NAU Beasley Gallery

Experience photographs that unite the cosmos and the Earth, aligning starlight with ancient landscapes to reveal the experience of deep time through projected celestial imagery.

Toddler Tales

9:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Flagstaff Downtown Library Community Room

Come to the Library for special science- and car-themed storytimes.

Preschool Express

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM

Flagstaff Downtown Library Community Room

Come to the Library for special science- and car-themed storytimes.

Meet Your New Neighbor: AI Is Already Living and Working in Flagstaff

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

NACET Accelerator Building — Conference Room

AI isn't coming to Flagstaff; it's already here, growing food, driving business, teaching kids, and reshaping jobs. Join four local innovators for a lively, audience-driven panel as they pull back the curtain on what's happening in our community, answer your questions, and look to the future.

6 **Rocks Rock Downtown Flagstaff Geology Tour**

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Meeting location provided after reservation made
Explore Downtown geology, architecture, and history with geologist Daniel Foley on this guided walking tour. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Robot Rally: VEX Obstacle Challenge

3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Tynkertopia MakerSpace, 1515 E. Cedar Ave., Suite D2
Control, adjust, and race VEX robots through an obstacle course while sharpening design skills and creative problem-solving.

Tag a Monarch Butterfly!

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery — Cornville
Become a citizen scientist by safely tagging a migrating monarch and helping researchers discover where its journey leads. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Walk on Mars

3:00 PM — 5:00 PM

Killip School Gymnasium
Explorers of all ages can walk across a giant, gym-sized map of Mars to learn about the Red Planet!

The Art and Science of Massage

4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Whole Hearted Healing Center
Discover how anatomy, creativity, movement, and hands-on bodywork come together in the art and science of massage. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Astronomy on Tap with Kristen Bennett

6:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Mother Road Brewery — Patio
Join Lowell Observatory and Mother Road Brewing Co. for Astronomy on Tap! Listen to fascinating science talks, play trivia to win out-of-this-world prizes, and of course, enjoy Mother Road brews on tap. Come early — seats fill up fast. Kristen Bennett will talk about her involvement with Artemis IV.

Buffalo Park Night Hike

8:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Buffalo Park Entrance
Join us for a 1-mile night hike through Buffalo Park! As we walk along a flat, well-maintained dirt trail, we will experiment with our senses, explore the constellations, and discuss the nighttime environment. Please bring water and red lights (no white lights, please!) to help preserve night vision.

OCTOBER 1, 2026

Pilgrimage of Light Art Exhibit

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

NAU Beasley Gallery
Experience photographs that unite the cosmos and the Earth, aligning starlight with ancient landscapes to reveal the experience of deep time through projected celestial imagery.

Explore, Build, Discover!

11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Market of Dreams
Explore, build, and play together! Try hands-on STEM activities with mobile exhibits, get creative, and sneak a peek at the future Children’s Museum of Flagstaff. Just bring your curiosity!

Brady Building Open House

1:30 PM – 4:30 PM

MNA Colton Research Center (opposite MNA exhibit building) Brady Building
Get a behind-the-scenes look at MNA’s dinosaur and reptile fossils and mineral collection in the Brady Building.

Northern Lights in the Sky

3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Market of Dreams
Look up! Explore the science behind auroras through storytelling, movement, immersive projections, and a live magnetic painting. Model solar wind and magnetic fields, and discover what solar activity means for skywatchers.

USNO Lecture

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

USGS Flagstaff Science Campus
Follow Flagstaff’s journey from Route 66 to the world’s first International Dark Sky City, and discover how a community came together to protect its spectacular night skies.

Outbreak! Solve a Disease Outbreak

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Market of Dreams
Become a disease detective. Analyze clues and data, investigate an outbreak, and work with an epidemiologist to uncover its cause.

Flagstaff Star Party, hosted by the Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition

6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Buffalo Park
Participants can take turns looking through powerful telescopes to get up-close views of planets, star clusters, and distant galaxies. Activities for kids provided by Tynkertopia.

Science through Storytelling

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

Kitt Recital Hall, NAU
An evening of personal science stories by NAU graduate students and faculty. Join us to hear life changing and emotional stories from the field.

OCTOBER 2, 2026

STEM Poster Session

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

NAU Ashurst Auditorium
Meet STEM students, researchers, and professionals. Explore their projects, exchange ideas, and connect with the Flagstaff community.

Rio de Flag Reclamation Plant Tour

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Rio de Flag Water Reclamation Plant
Ever wonder where water goes after it leaves your home? Follow its journey through the city’s treatment process and discover how wastewater is cleaned for safe, nonpo-table reuse. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Robot Rally: VEX Obstacle Challenge

3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Tynkertopia MakerSpace, 1515 E Cedar Ave., Suite D2
Build, control, and race VEX robots through an obstacle course. Tweak your design, test your skills, and solve challenges in this fast-paced, hands-on introduction to robotics.

Adobe Building: History, Science, and Craft

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

CCC Construction Lab, Fourth Street Campus
Join local experts to explore traditional adobe building techniques, the concept of thermal mass, and how to make your own bricks.

STEAM Confluence

5:00 PM — 8:00 PM

American Legion Hall, 204 W. Birch Ave.
Art show highlighting pairings of artists and STEM professionals representing STEM concepts.

CCC Science Night

5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

CCC Lone Tree Campus
Earn a Junior Science Badge and a prize through hands-on activities in open labs. Try chemistry experiments, explore rocks and fossils, use microscopes, and play STEM games. Fun for the whole family, with free parking.

Flagstaff Star Party, hosted by the Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition

6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Buffalo Park
Participants can take turns looking through powerful telescopes to get up-close views of planets, star clusters, and distant galaxies.

OCTOBER 3, 2026

Homolovi II Ancestral Hopi Pueblo Village Tour, including Ancient Petroglyphs

8:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Homolovi State Park Visitor Center
Guided tour of the Homolovi II Ancestral Hopi Pueblo Village, then hike to ancient petroglyphs. Moderate/difficult terrain; bring water and sturdy shoes. Reservation required: scifest.org.

National Weather Service Flagstaff Open House

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

National Weather Service
Go behind the scenes at the NWS Flagstaff. Tour the forecast office, meet local weather experts and partners, and watch a live weather balloon launch while discovering how we forecast northern Arizona’s weather.

Science Saturday: Building a Sustainable Future

9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Willow Bend Environmental Education Center
Discover how small everyday choices can make a big difference for our planet! Try hands-on games, experiments, and creative activities focused on building a more sustainable future. Drop in anytime.

Curious Spaces, Sustainable Places — The 2026 Coconino County Sustainable Building Tour

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Willow Bend Environmental Education Center
Explore sustainable homes on a self-guided driving tour featuring sustainable design. Choose your stops and create your own itinerary! Grab a tour guide at Willow Bend on tour day or download it at coconino.az.gov/sustainablebuildingtour.

Hands-on Robotics Workshop

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

NAU LRC Building (Building 61) Room 106A
Shake hands with a robot! Get up close with exoskeletons, autonomous vehicles, robotic arms, drones, and more while meeting NAU researchers and exploring the world of robotics. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Inside Tynkertopia MakerSpace: A Community of Curiosity

10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Tynkertopia MakerSpace, 1515 E. Cedar Ave., Suite D2
Tinker with real tools and materials, meet creative mentors, and explore how self-directed making turns curiosity into discovery. Open to all ages — drop in anytime.

Meet the Eagle, the Vulture, and the Owl

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Pioneer Museum

Come face-to-face with a bald eagle, turkey vulture, and barn owl while learning about these remarkable birds of prey with the International Raptor & Falconry Center.

Pioneer Museum Open House

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Pioneer Museum

Step into the 1908 former Coconino County Hospital, discover historic medical technology, and explore the Arizona Historical Society's Pioneer Museum grounds. Please note: an owl might be present on the grounds.

Seed Poems & Wildflower Wishes

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Pioneer Museum

Plant a wildflower seed, discover what plants need to thrive, and write a poem inspired by growth to take home with your seed. Reservation required: scifest.org. Please note: an owl might be present on the grounds.

Saturday Story Stop

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Flagstaff Downtown Library Community Room

Come to the library for special science- and car-themed storytimes.

Landscapes and Music: How Natural Formations and Creatures Have Impacted Arizona's Soundscapes

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Pioneer Museum

Discover how Arizona's landforms, birds, insects, and cultures inspire music through stories, fiddle, guitar, dance, and slides. Please note: an owl might be present on the grounds.

Lake Mary and Beyond: Where Flagstaff Gets Its Water

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Pioneer Museum

Follow Flagstaff's changing water story from its earliest sources through Route 66 growth to today's diverse supply system.

Constellation Creations: Hands on Workshop and Art Exhibit

12:30 PM – 4:00 PM

NAU Beasley Gallery

Create your own constellation and explore the connections between the night sky and Earth's ancient landscapes.

NAU Discovery Fair

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

NAU North Campus — Building 36 Courtyard

Explore the wonders of science through hands-on activ-

ities that spark curiosity and imagination across astronomy, biology, chemistry, ecology, engineering, physics, anthropology, and more.

The Global Roots of the Lute

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Pioneer Museum

Hear virtuosic music and follow the lute's changing construction, global journey, and evolution into Western guitars.

Growing Fruit Trees from Seed

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Pioneer Museum

Learn how to collect, store, sprout, and grow locally adapted fruit trees, and prepare seeds for cold treatment to take home.

Wind Power Cars

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

CCC Kaibab Campus, 1131 W. Kaibab Lane

Design and build a sail car, harness wind energy, and engineer the sail to control a vehicle's direction, speed, and distance. All materials provided.

Learning from Lobos

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Pioneer Museum

Investigate real Mexican gray wolf tracks, learn how biologists monitor wildlife, and create a wolf print to take home. All materials provided.

Paint a Star Map!

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Creative Spirits

All ages are welcome at Creative Spirits' studio, where we provide all needed supplies for a project to paint a star map! Reservation required: scifest.org.

Women in STEAM

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

Sosta

Hear inspiring speakers, connect through personal stories, and network while celebrating women in STEAM and inspiring the next generation. Light snacks provided.

Update on Global Volcanism

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

USGS Flagstaff Science Campus

There are more than 1,200 volcanoes on Earth that could erupt. At any given time there are around 30 to 40 volcanoes erupting. Come hear USGS scientists talk about some recent eruptions.

Flagstaff Star Party, hosted by the Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition

6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Buffalo Park

Participants can take turns looking through powerful telescopes to get up-close views of planets, star clusters, and distant galaxies.

OCTOBER 4, 2026

Curiosity Quest: A GPS Treasure Hunt

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Tynkertopia MakerSpace, 1515 E. Cedar Ave., Suite D2

Use GPS coordinates and clues to locate five hidden geocaches while learning how real-world navigation technology works. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Moon Walk Field Day and optional hike

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Moon Trail Trailhead off Landfill Road

Discover how Apollo astronauts prepared for their journey to the moon in Flagstaff. Optional self-guided Moon Walk: a 3-mile round trip hike to the astronaut training site at Cinder Lake Crater Field. Meet at the trailhead on Landfill Road, 1.5 miles east of Hwy 89. Sorry, no dogs.

A Journey Through Forest History Educator Workshop

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Pioneer Museum

This workshop balances historical exploration with practical curriculum training, offering educators a clear model for place-based learning. Through hands-on inquiry, local relevance, and evidence-based storytelling, participants will leave with ready-to-use strategies for connecting for-

est science, history, and stewardship across grade levels. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Tarantula Trek!

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Buffalo Park

Search for tarantulas on a family-friendly McMillan Mesa hike while learning about these remarkable desert arachnids. Reservation required: scifest.org.

USGS Open House

11:00 AM – 3:00 PM

USGS Flagstaff Science Campus

Explore interactive displays and activities related to geology, geography, biology, hydrology, planetary science, and mapping.

Plants, Food, Culture! A Harvest Celebration at McAllister Ranch

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

McAllister Ranch

Harvest heirloom vegetables, investigate traditional cooking chemistry, and celebrate food, music, dance, and living history. Reservation required: scifest.org.

Route 66: The Art, Science, & Soul of the Automobile

2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Americana Motor Hotel

Meet distinctive automobiles and discover the engineering, cultural impact, and innovations that put each one on the road.

an evening of
ART & SCIENCE

more info:

Free Event!
complimentary
food and drink

A special art show featuring world-renowned scientists and art produced by the Center for Ecosystem Science & Society at NAU

NAU International Pavilion
Sept 26th
5:30-7:30 pm

FLAGSTAFF FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE

NAU

ECOS Center for Ecosystem Science and Society at Northern Arizona University

McAllister Program in Community, Culture, and the Environment

Curiosity, Creativity and Collaboration

W. L. Gore & Associates Across Industries

"To some degree, each of us is a dreamer and a doer. I know that we will continue to dream and to achieve great and wonderful things."

– Vieve Gore, cofounder, W. L. Gore & Associates

From the beginning, W. L. Gore & Associates (Gore) has been shaped by a simple but powerful force: curiosity. Over the past nearly 70 years, that curiosity has led to more than 3,100 unique inventions worldwide in a wide range of fields including life sciences and healthcare, aerospace, automotive, industrial and chemical processing, semiconductor manufacturing, mobile electronics, public safety, apparel and textiles, consumer products and clean energy.

Across all these industries, the approach remains consistent. Associates connect with customers to understand their real-world challenges, whether it's a medical device addressing vascular disease, a cable that needs to survive the harsh conditions of space or a protective garment that keeps first responders safe in unpredictable environments.

Gore products are tested extensively in laboratories and under real-world conditions to ensure they perform consistently and as they were designed to, even in the most demanding environments. No matter the industry, the goal remains to deliver performance that stands the test of time.

Here are just some of the ways Gore products aim to create meaningful solutions for customers around the world:



Next-Gen GORE-TEX® Products

The vast majority of consumer products from Gore's fabrics business are now made with the Next-Gen ePE (expanded polyethylene) GORE-TEX® Membrane, which has a lower carbon footprint than the previous membrane and is combined with carefully selected lower impact textiles, including recycled, solution-dyed or undyed textiles.

Product lines for safety, workwear and defense professionals will also fully adopt this technology over the next few years.

Venting solutions for electric vehicles

High-voltage EV systems face continuous stress from heat, moisture and pressure that can quickly degrade components, compromising performance and safety. Rapid temperature fluctuations can cause significant pressure differentials inside sealed enclosures—leading to engine control units (ECU) overheating or unwanted condensation within powertrain systems.

From oversized housings to the smallest ECUs, GORE® Automotive Vents from Gore's performance solutions business address challenges including moisture ingress protection, pressure equalization, cleanliness compliance and long-term reliability.

Space exploration then and now

Gore has continuously innovated alongside the evolution of spaceflight. In 1962, Gore products enabled the first U.S. TV satellite to deliver a live transatlantic broadcast. When NASA's Apollo 11 landed on the moon in 1969, astronauts Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin Jr. and Neil Armstrong installed seismographic equipment connected to the lunar lander with a small, lightweight cable manufactured by Gore.



Associates work with government entities, commercial companies and leading space agencies like the European Space Agency (ESA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to ensure the success and safety of every mission. With a 100% success rate, Gore's products have been used in hundreds of global spaceflight programs, including the International Space Station, James Web Space Telescope and many space shuttles.

Gore's involvement in these diverse industries demonstrates how curiosity, collaboration and a commitment to solving real problems can open doors to unexpected places. We hope attendees at the many events offered during this year's Flagstaff Festival of Science take inspiration from what they learn and continue to ask questions to satisfy their own curiosity as Gore Associates continue to do the same.

Learn more at gore.com.





As a company rooted in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), W. L. Gore & Associates is a strong supporter of STEM programs in Flagstaff, where our Associates develop and make medical devices. Gore proudly invests in K-12 STEM educational experiences by awarding Gore STEM Grants to local organizations each year in collaboration with the Arizona Community Foundation of Flagstaff.

We are pleased to announce the following 2026 STEM Grant recipients:

After-School Academy of Arts • Arizona Science Center • Arizona Milkweeds for Monarchs • Azulita Project, Inc. • Boys and Girls Club of Flagstaff • Civitan Foundation • Elden Pueblo Project • Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce Foundation • Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition • Flagstaff Festival of Science • Flagstaff Trails Initiative • Friends of Camp Colton • Friends of the Rio de Flag • Grand Canyon Youth • International Raptor & Falconry Center • Lowell Observatory • Meteor Crater Education Alliance • Museum of Northern Arizona • Puente de Hozho • SARSEF • STEM City • The Arboretum at Flagstaff • Tynkertopia, Inc.

Together, improving life

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