



PRESS RELEASE

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Celebration of Life to Honor Max the Great Horned Owl

- **What:** Celebration of Life honoring Max, the beloved Great Horned Owl and longtime Eyes in the Sky avian ambassador
- **When:** Saturday, February 7, 3:00–5:00 PM
- **Where:** Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, in Fleischmann Auditorium
- **Why:** To honor Max’s legacy in environmental education and the generations of community members he inspired through classroom visits and public programs

Santa Barbara, CA — The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, in partnership with Eyes in the Sky (EITS) of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, will host a **celebration of life for Max**, the beloved Great Horned Owl, on **Saturday, February 7, from 3:00–5:00 PM** in Fleischmann Auditorium.

Max, who recently passed away at the wise age of 27, was a cherished avian ambassador and a familiar presence to generations of Santa Barbara families. Through classroom visits, public programs, and Museum appearances, Max helped inspire a lifelong love of birds and nature across the community.

Santa Barbara Audubon Society Board President Janice Levasheff shares her admiration for her late friend. “Max was one of the original EITS raptors and a local celebrity. As a long-time feathered ambassador, he sparked the love of birds and nature in countless members of our community. Even to this day, many adults still remember Max from his visits to their classrooms while they were in elementary school.”

The celebration of life will offer community members, longtime fans, and families an opportunity to honor Max’s extraordinary legacy, reflect on the impact he had on environmental education in the region, and celebrate the deep human-animal connections that defined his life. Guests can expect a warm, reflective gathering not too far from the Museum Backyard; a place Max called home for many years.

Max’s story is unique among raptor ambassadors. Though physically capable, he could not be released into the wild due to early imprinting on humans after falling from his nest as an owlet. Instead, he went on to live an extraordinary wildlife in education and outreach and even foster-



parented dozens of orphaned great horned owl chicks, helping them successfully return to the wild.

"This special event underscores the shared goals of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and the Santa Barbara Audubon Society: to inspire stewardship, curiosity, and compassion for the natural world." Says Janice Levasheff, Director of Santa Barbara Audubon Society.

The event is free to attend but exploring the Museum before the event requires paid admission. Additional details are available through the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History [website](#).

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About the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Powered by Science. Inspired by Nature. Founded in 1916, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History inspires a thirst for discovery and a passion for the natural world. The Museum seeks to connect people to nature for the betterment of both, and prides itself on being *naturally different*. For more information, visit sbnature.org.

About Santa Barbara Audubon Society & Eyes in the Sky (EITS)

Santa Barbara Audubon Society protects area birdlife and habitat and connects people with birds through education, conservation, and science. Since 2000, EITS has been Santa Barbara Audubon Society's key wildlife education program. It features live birds of prey trained to interact with the public as ambassador animals. Each of their birds was adopted from a licensed wildlife rescue center; they are considered non-releasable and would be unlikely to survive outside of human care. For more information, visit santabarbaraaudubon.org.



Max the Great Horned Owl, up close and personal. Photo by Jim Walker.



Max the Great Horned Owl, at home at the Museum. Photo by Brent Flaaten

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Eyes in the Sky founder and original director Gabriele Drozdowski and Max during a full day of educating humans about owls.