



The Discovery Mourns Loss of Dawn Wells

“Gilligan’s Island” star and chair of the foundation that has provided longtime support for The Discovery dies of COVID at 82

RENO, Nev. (December 30, 2020) – Dawn Wells, who starred as Mary Ann in the popular 1960s sitcom “Gilligan’s Island,” died from complications of COVID-19 Wednesday. She was 82.

Wells was a huge supporter of the Terry Lee Wells Nevada Discovery Museum (The Discovery) and was instrumental in the museum’s founding in her role as a trustee of the Terry Lee Wells Foundation. Dawn, a native of Reno, was the cousin of Terry Lee Wells who started the Terry Lee Wells Foundation in 1999. The foundation’s mission was to support organizations in Northern Nevada that help to improve the quality of life for the underprivileged, with a special emphasis on women and children.

The Discovery’s President/CEO Mat Sinclair said:

“We are saddened by the loss of Dawn Wells. Dawn has a longstanding connection to Reno and to The Discovery. Dawn was born to Joe Wesley and Evelyn Wells in Reno, Nevada, where she attended Reno High School.

“Dawn was a huge supporter of The Discovery and instrumental in its founding. Dawn’s passion for the museum and the community it serves will be missed tremendously.

“She remained a lifelong enthusiast of science education and she was always so very proud of our museum. Even in her death she continues to give to The Discovery as one of three charities she has asked people to support in her honor. We all are mourning her loss.”

In May of 2018, the Terry Lee Wells Foundation was dissolved. However, the Foundation’s legacy is represented by the incredible, longtime partnership with the museum that bears Terry’s name, the Terry Lee Wells Nevada Discovery Museum (The Discovery).

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About The Discovery

The Discovery creates interest and engagement in science for all. Through unique, hands-on programs and exhibits, The Discovery creates learning experiences that range from simple curiosity to deep understanding, empowering a community of critical thinkers. The Discovery is a locally founded nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. To learn more about The Discovery and how you can help support the museum’s mission, visit www.nvdm.org.