

Discovery Museum

Brian Groose

By REBECCA MORRISON

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WINCHESTER — Brian Groose is proof that volunteers come in all shapes and sizes.

The 13-year-old is a new volunteer at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum in Winchester.

Brian's job changes daily, but it constantly keeps him on the move. He does as much as he can for the museum, from helping out with summer camps, to running errands with museum staffers, to enjoying time with his volunteer friends, to taking out the trash.

His love for staying active translates into his free time as well.

"I like to hang out with friends, roller-skate, and go on bike rides," he said.

While he admits the "fun factor" is a core motivator for his volunteer work, the savvy eighth-grader adds that college is already on his radar.

"I figure if I volunteer now, it could help me get into a good college," he said.

Although this is Brian's first volunteer job, he keeps a serious schedule, working six-hour days. He hopes to volunteer for other organizations in the future, but at this point, the museum is his main project.

It wasn't too long ago that Brian, himself, was a Discovery Museum patron.

"I probably went about 10 times when I was younger," he said.

So, how does it feel to be on the other end? Brian says he's learned a lot about manners and housekeeping.

"I've learned that some people like to 'trash' the museum, and that I shouldn't do that [in other envi-



ronments], because someone has to clean up. And here, that's me," he added.

It is fitting that Brian works at a science museum,

since his favorite subject at Admiral Richard E. Byrd Middle School is science. He says that he learns along with the museum visitors.

"I've learned about different species of animals from the nature displays, and I've learned a lot about computers, like what you're supposed to do and what you're not supposed to do," he said. "I learn new things here all the time."

Brian hopes that the beginning of the school year will not mark the end of his volunteer work. Come September, he hopes to volunteer at the museum whenever he can.

Brian works purely for personal satisfaction. He notes that his lack of a regular paycheck does not affect his performance on the job.

"Even if I made money, I'd still work just as hard," he said.

And upon witnessing him in his work environment, his words are not difficult to believe. It's hard to miss the steadfast know-how and steely determination in his eyes.

The museum's senior staff members are impressed thus far by Brian's work ethic.

"We're certainly glad to have Brian around as a volunteer — that's for sure," noted Jan Kirby, the museum's program director.

And, if they're lucky, Brian's work won't come to an end anytime soon.