



Stephanie Zollshan / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Honoree Thom Smith, the former Berkshire Museum natural science curator, greets guests.

Berkshire Awards honors those who inspire

AWARDS from B1

dresses and suits.

During a cocktail reception that kicked off the evening, the 250 attendees packed the museum lobby, sipping wine and munching on hors d'oeuvres.

"There are so many people here, and I'm surprised that I know so many," said Smith, one of the award winners.

Newman, another of the honorees, called the award "quite an honor" while hugging and shaking hands with people congratulating her. Newman brought her 100-year-old mother, Helen Sierles, who on Monday moved to the Berkshires from New Jersey.

"I'm very proud of my

daughter," Sierles said. "She's made a difference in so many people's lives."

The crowd then filed into the museum theatre, where short videos about each of the candidates played on the screen before they accepted their awards. The videos were produced by the museum and filmed by 10th Street Entertainment out of New York City.

"I had to stop fidgeting long enough for them to shoot it," Smith said.

The Crane family's award was unique in that it honored the whole family's service, which stretches back to the 1800s. In 1903, Zenas Crane founded the Berkshire Museum.

David Crane received the

award on behalf of the entire family.

"It's very nice to be recognized as a family," he said. "It really goes back many years, and it's been carried down through generations."

After the videos and presentation of awards, dinner was served in the Ellen Crane Memorial Room with a musical backdrop.

"For the first year, we're very gratified with the turnout," said Lesley Ann Beck, the museum's director of communications. "We definitely plan to keep it going on an annual basis."

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