

Paleo Footnotes

Newsletter of the
Paleontological Society of Austin

Austin and Central Texas



Volume 4, Number 3
March 2009

President's Note

Rain, at last! It doesn't end the drought, but it might let loose a few fossils- at least in the creeks. The first step has been taken towards the Mineral Wells Dump Fossil Park. The committee that was looking into it has recommended passage; now the City Council has to vote on it. So far, so good. I contacted Ron DuCote of the Jasper area Pineland Gem and Mineral Society and he has agreed to allow us a little more collecting time in the creek. This will be our last time to hunt wood in this amazing creek. He did ask that we be at The Stump by 9:00, so please don't be late - it's a long trip to take and miss the caravan into the property. I believe that I mentioned at the meeting that there's a \$5 charge per person or \$10 per family-- payable at The Stump. Something we try to do is to bring some decent fossils to donate to Ron for the silent auction held during their show, if you can. Expect to get wet and muddy, you will be IN the creek. You can carry out whatever you are capable of - they can weigh ounces or hundreds of pounds. Many people like to dig in the banks for their wood, so bring digging tools if you want. And expect to see beautiful East Texas in the springtime. I look forward to seeing you there.

ED

PSoA Meeting Minutes February, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:11pm by President Ed Elliot.

The meeting minutes from January were approved.

Ed has cards to sign for Karen (Nature's Treasures) and the Brandt family (dealer dinner) for their extraordinary help with Fossil Fest.

OLD BUSINESS

Treasurer David Lindberg reported \$3791.95 in the checking account.

Joan Crane \$8229.74 She reported that we now have an EIN number.

There is \$10,043.07 in the money market account.

Mike Smith received a call from the IRS wanting evidence that the 2 previous organizations dissolved. Mike ended up creating 2 documents to be signed by two board members dissolving the prior organizations.

Jamie Young and Joan Crane will meet and try to roll the money over into another EIN. (For the new members, we have an application at the IRS to be a non-profit organization. We are two clubs that dissolved and gave our assets to the new club - PSoA.)

Ed Elliot requested Mike Smith to bring the paper for putting Quentin Martin's Brownwood Archaeocidaris slab (sea Urchins) on display at the AGMS building. AGMS approved the display as long as the PSA board will sign a letter absolving the club if it is damaged or stolen from the property. The display will be a memorial to Quentin.

Jamie Young reported that the AGMS does not want to house the PSA library as they do not have the room. Ideas were bounced around about possibly donating the library to UT.

NEWBIES

Many new faces were at February's meeting: Bill Dodd, Fred Blount (used to be member of APS), Christy Nunnally, Paul Rogers (mainly a rock hound just moved here from NM), Tom & Beverly Trunick (Beverly is a high school special ed teacher who worked at the Smithsonian in Mineralogy 30 yrs ago), Jinna MacLaurin, Dianna Fry, Gary Vliet (joined AGMS a few years ago), Gary Ormsby & guest and Bob Cooksey (found an ice age mammal - horse or camel - recently and called Linda McCall out to help him). Welcome everyone!!

NEW BUSINESS

David Lindberg noted that the Mineral Wells Town Council was supposed to vote the 4th of March on

what to do with the dump. They are currently looking at liability issues.

Linda McCall announced that Fossil Fest 2009 has two large dealers (that have paid money) and one that has verbally committed to a booth.

Fossil Fest t-shirts are on sale for \$10 (or \$6 only if you worked the 2008 show).

The 2009 Tucson Gem, Fossil and Mineral Show took place January 31 - February 15. This is "the show" where all the paleo dealers do their buying for the shows they go to. Several PSoA members were in attendance at this years show. Linda McCall was overwhelmed by all the paleo fossils available for purchase. The fossils are scattered around the show and Tucson. There are several shows going on at the same time. A great trip to plan ahead for next year if you weren't able to attend this year!

Jamie Young urgently requested help for the Georgetown Gem & Mineral Society show this weekend (Feb. 24 - 25). PSoA will have a booth and give away fossils for kids. Since the Brownwood field trip is this weekend also, there is a shortage of members to man the booth. The show will run from 10 am - 6 pm Sat and 10 am - 5 pm Sun. PSoA needs a lot of people to work the show. We've done this show for years and it would be a shame to let them down.

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP

The club will be travelling to Brownwood/Early this weekend (Feb. 24). Meet in Early at the Heartland mall at 8am on Saturday. Ed Elliot would allow approximately 3 hours driving time from Austin. There will be a 20 min drive to the location from the Heartland Mall. You can expect to find Pennsylvanian material: crinoids, brachiopods and bryzoans. One of the prize finds is the *Petalodus* shark tooth. Tools to bring include a rock hammer and chisel. Make sure you bring lunch and water as the area is rather isolated.

Ed Elliot is still trying to nail down the Midlothian trip. Midlothian is a quarry - Eagle Ford formation - full of shark teeth, vertebrae, bivalves and pyrite balls. The new quarry manager will only allow 2 weekends a year for fossil hunting. The quarry manager will let Ed know when he decides the dates.

SPEAKER

The last half of the meeting was spent learning how to clean fossils.

Many thanks to Joan Crane, Linda McCall and Ed Elliot for bringing their tools and demonstrating their favorite cleaning methods.

Next Meeting – Tuesday March 17, 2009

Biogeography and Diversity in Gulfian (Upper Cretaceous) Echinoids from the Western Gulf Region, Texas and Arkansas

By George Phillips

Tuesday 7 PM

Austin Gem & Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX

George Phillips is a Conservation Resources Biologist with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, and functions as the Curator of Paleontology at the Museum of Natural Science in Jackson, Mississippi. He is a graduate of Mississippi State University, with a BS in Biology & Geology, and has a Masters in Geology from North Carolina State University. His museum experience includes the Dunn-Seilier Museum in the Department of Geosciences at Mississippi State University, the North Carolina Museum of Natural Science in Raleigh, and has been a curator at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science since 2003. Although his graduate work was Late Pleistocene freshwater turtle communities, he has been working mostly on Upper Cretaceous echinoids since 2006. Currently, he is working on reviewing the diversity and biogeography of Upper Cretaceous "sand dollars" (Echinoidea: Cassiduloida: Family Faujasaiidae) in the Gulf Coastal Plain of North America.

Next Field Trip

Jasper, Texas for Fossil Wood Saturday 21st of March

Meet at The Stump, 9AM sharp

To the Stump Restaurant: Starting out from Lufkin - go southeast on US 69 toward Zavala. At Zavala turn left onto highway 63 East. About 15 miles further turn left onto Road 255. Start watching for Sam Rayburn Dam and the Stump Restaurant. If you come from Jasper look at a map and choose which way you want to go- it's easy. Arrive by 9:00 and wear clothing that can get wet and muddy. Wear something on your feet that will be comfortable walking in a creek in the water- usually ankle deep but can be thigh deep in places. And please bring cash (\$5 or \$10) for the fee so it'll be easy to collect - please.

Field Trip Report

Brownwood

It was a cold blustery morning at the mall in Early where twenty members had gathered. At least half of the people there were new members. While I'm certainly glad they came - several of them signed their names as opposed to printing and I couldn't read the names. I'm handicapped when it comes to remembering names anyway and I depend on the sign-in sheet to help me learn peoples' names. My fault for not saying something and I'll learn all of your names as we make more trips.

We pretty much spent the day at Wilson Quarry. We had talked of maybe going to the spillway but at 1:00 almost everyone elected to stay at Wilson. It certainly didn't hurt my feelings - I love those green and purple rocks. The outcrops in this quarry belong to the Harpersville Formation of the Cisco Group and are extremely fossiliferous. While I've never seen a coiled cephalopod from there, and gastropods are somewhat rare, most other marine fauna are

represented. Due to hunting pressure and the drought, I had expected Wilson to be "picked-over". We certainly proved that not to be the case. I know that I came back with more than a dozen different species of brachiopod; not only good specimens but some I had never found before. While I saw no beautiful specimens this day, Linda McCall, Gary Rylander, Melvin Noble and myself all found *petalodus* teeth. Several others found partial specimens. Gary was crinoid king that day with five cups and several partials. There were many nice bivalves found and lots of horn corals, bryozoans, partial trilobites and I picked up a couple of small gastropods that I had never found there before. Not "picked-over" at all.

Some new members had brought their dog with them. I hope they don't hate me for telling them that it was not a problem; it would be good to do so. I found out after the fact that they had left at mid-morning because their dog had a close encounter of

the worst kind, with a skunk. I have never seen or even smelled a skunk at Wilson and I'm sorry for what must have been a terrible trip home. The best laid plans of mice and men.

Previous persons excepted, I think we all had a fun, if somewhat cold, day and look forward to a return trip. See you in East Texas. – Ed

Editor's Note:

My apologies for the last two newsletters being rather short. Many of you have been starting to send me great material to include. These last two months I was swamped with work. Last month the mailing was handled by Suzanne and without her help the mailing would not have gone out at all.

I foresee a much saner schedule in the next few months and look forward to producing once again full (6-8 pages) and more interesting newsletters.

Thanks for your patience,

Erich Rose, Editor

The purpose of the **Paleontological Society of Austin** is the scientific education of the public, the study and preservation of fossils and the fossil record and assistance to individual, groups and institutions interested in various aspects of paleontology.

Meetings of the **Paleontological Society of Austin** are held the third Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building, 6719 Burnet lane, Austin, TX. The public is cordially invited to attend.

Annual Dues: \$15/individual, \$20/family and \$10/associate (non-voting, receiving newsletter)

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PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

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DATED MATERIAL – MEETING NOTICE

FIRST CLASS MAIL