



Paleo Footnotes

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December 2015

President's Note

Erich Rose
PSoA President

Well here we are again. Almost full circle, another lap around ol' Sol is just about complete. It is time to celebrate the holidays and the coming of a new year. Please join your fellow Paleo Society members for an evening of good food and lots of laughs. As always we will be doing a potluck dinner party. The club will provide the meat dishes and beverages, and you bring a side dish, salad or desert. You are also welcome to bring a cold beverage of your own choosing as well.

But, the main event will be the White Mammoth Gift Exchange. This is where most of the laughs, and maybe some groans, come in. Wrap up something paleo-related: a fossil, a book, jewelry, or whatever you think a fellow member would enjoy. If you are coming as a couple or family, bring a gift for everyone who will want to take part. You could go home with an awesome fossil or someone's white mammoth. Who knows?

This event will be on the same night as our regular meeting. While we will not have a full formal meeting, we do have some business to consider. It is time for election of officers. Some of us are happy to stay in our current positions while others may want to take a break. President, vice president/show chair, secretary and treasurer are the main positions, but we also need a new program chair and a few other positions, as well. If you would like to help the club and take part in a more meaningful way, then let me know so I can include you on this year's ballot. Remember, we are a nonprofit, volunteer-run organization and rely on our members to keep things running. If becoming an officer or chair seems like too much, we always need help with the various outreach events throughout the year.

So if I don't see you at the party then I wish you a wonderful new year in this season of hope and light.

Fossil Fest Recap

Suzanne Galligher
PSoA Vice President and Show Chair

This year's 25th Annual Fossil Fest, Monster Marine Reptiles, was a great success! Our attendance was just a handful shy of last year's two-day record of 1,600 attendees. We'll have a full Fossil Fest report in January.

This month, I'd like to give thanks to the many volunteers who gave of their time and talents to support Fossil Fest. Without these volunteers, there would be no annual show.

In honor of all volunteers, here is a little poem of appreciation:

Dedicated hearts like yours
Are not so easy to find.
It takes a special person to be
So generous and kind.
To care so much for the next generation of fossil enthusiasts
Is a quality all too rare.
Yet you give of your time and talents
And depth of knowledge to share.
So thank you for being a volunteer,
We're privileged to work with you.
We want you to know how appreciated you are
Not just today, but the whole year through.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, Dec. 15 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane
Austin, Texas

Field Trip Report

Ed Elliott
PSoA Field Trip Chair

It was a brisk, cool, beautiful day for collecting, and we were 25 eager people excited about our trip to the Clifton Quarry. Our guide talked to us briefly, and we watched a short video. Then, it was on to the spoils piles. This quarry has available (from oldest to more recent) the Edwards Formation and the Kiamichi Formation of the Fredericksburg Group, and the Duck Creek and Ft. Worth Formations of the Washita Group. I made a bee line for the gray Kiamichi, of which I seldom see much. There were quite a few ammonites found. I believe that I heard Melinda Falk say she had picked one up. I watched Rose and Mike Farmer bringing down the hill a nice twenty-incher – the best one I saw that day. Our guests from the Smithsonian, Marge and Steve Noel, also found one. Out of the Edwards, Mike Smith and John Hinte both picked up rudists called *Sellaea*, and I found a rather nice *Toucasia*. Out of the Kiamichi I found a rather nice regular echinoid *Orthopsis sp cf charltoni* that made me extremely happy and a rather sad little *Goniopygus zitteli* from the Edwards. As the collecting moved from the spoils piles to the quarry, Paul Hammerschmidt and Mike picked up some really beautiful ones. Gary Rylander said that he had found 17 of them! We had planned to go to another site later in the day, but we decided to stay since our guide/host was amenable and we kept finding nice fossils. Why waste daylight driving when we were already in a good place? Just before we left, Gary showed me a lovely bivalve in matrix. I didn't know its name, but the crystalline "original" shell was fun to see. Lots of great things were found this day and I think it was the best trip our club has had at this quarry. I look forward to going back. See you at the Christmas party.

Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2015

Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building

Dale Vargo
PSoA Secretary

Erich welcomed the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and noted that Fossil Fest had just taken place this past weekend. The meeting minutes were approved by vote. Mike stated that this year's attendance for Fossil Fest was only 10 people fewer than last year's good attendance, and that there were more adults attending this year. Mike also mentioned that it has been easier for Fossil Fest to be held during two days instead of three days, as we used to have a few years ago. He said that one of the dealers noted the great amount of people attending the show. Ron complemented the UT Paleontology crew's presence throughout the show. Scott noted that we could have had several more admissions if Fossil Fest would have accepted payment by debit/credit. And, Erich said that we are considering that capability for the next show by possibly renting an ATM or purchasing credit card swiping technology. Erich called for more comments about Fossil Fest. Suzanne said we do have some t-shirts left. Mike said that we definitely made money on Fossil Fest. Erich noted that the FFest weekend will likely change for next year and that we are working on that change. Paul confirmed that many dealers said that their sales went well. For next year's show, Suzanne requested more of us sign up online to volunteer.

Erich asked for any upcoming details on community outreach and Suzanne and Mike outlined some opportunities. David and Mike are scheduled for an event in January. Erich encouraged others to volunteer for outreach since it is fun and an important function of our club. Scott asked about Dino November and Suzanne told of that upcoming event in Round Rock that has 100 young students attending. Erich then welcomed tonight's visitors: Wesley a paleontology fan, Margaret and her husband Steven from the Smithsonian, Andrew from Florida, Cathy who heard about the Club while attending FFest, Abigail soon earning her degree, and Dee from AGMS. Ed then gave important details of the upcoming field trip; a great opportunity to collect in a large quarry near Clifton. He emphasized there are release forms required to be notarized and presented for each person attending the field trip. (*continued on next page*)

Rowan then announced that the UT Vertebrate Lab is conducting a 'HornRaiser' crowd-funding campaign and that it will be ending in 2 days. Erich then called for us to applaud Suzanne for her great work that she had just completed as Show Chair for Fossil Fest 2015, presenting roses to Suzanne in appreciation. The door prizes were won by Wesley, Scott, Will, Ron, Steven and Dave. Then we took our customary refreshment break.

After the break, Ron introduced our presenter for tonight, Ms. Rowan Martindale, Ph.D., from The University of Texas at Austin Paleontology Department. Rowan gave an overview of invertebrate and carbonate reef sedimentation, focusing on ancient reef deposits and the details of studying exceptionally well-preserved fossil deposits, nicknamed Lagerstätten. She described the work that she and colleagues have done discovering and plotting possible photo-symbiosis evidence between algae and coral in ancient reef deposits. She referred to some excellent fossil reef evidence in Austria and Alberta, Canada that have amazingly detailed preservation, and how these fossil reefs have yielded much information about the various factors affecting the interdependent biosystems living on these reefs. With the well-preserved fossil evidence these ancient reefs have yielded, Martindale and her colleagues have been able to create detailed scenarios that describe how ancient climate, volcanic events, changes to the ocean's acidity, large-scale environmental perturbation events and resulting mass extinction events affected these reefs over deep time. Martindale's research work is linking this evidence to similarities in modern ecology, climate and environment to help our modern scientific community respond with appropriate, helpful information. She then took questions from Paul and Steven. She concluded by saying her upcoming areas of study will be in Morocco and the Caribbean. The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

The purpose of the **Paleontological Society of Austin**, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, 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 on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Austin Gem and Mineral Society building located at 6719 Burnet Ln. in Austin, Texas. The public is welcome to attend. Visit austinpaleo.org for more information.

Annual Dues: \$18/individual, \$24/family and \$12/associate (non-voting, receiving newsletter) Send to: Treasurer, Paleontological Society of Austin, P.O. Box 90791, Austin, TX 78749-0791.

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