



Paleo Footnotes

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December 2016

President's Note

Erich Rose
PSoA President

Here we are again at the close of another year. And to close the year, we will be celebrating with a potluck dinner and the infamous White Mammoth gift exchange. So, wrap up a cool fossil, a great paleo book, a pair of trilobite earrings, or whatever you see fit and join us. Pretty much everyone is guaranteed to have a good time. The club will provide the meat and some soft drinks, and you bring a side dish or desert. If you like, you can bring your own adult beverages as well.

I also want to report that Fossil Fest was a success despite being so close to Thanksgiving. We didn't break any records, but, with all things considered, we did just fine. This was the last show for our out-going vice president and show chair, Suzanne Galligher. After four years, she is turning the reigns over to Emelia Rose. Emelia and Gary Vliet are our two new officers, VP/show chair and secretary, respectively.

The officers and board will be working out next year's budget in the coming weeks and presenting it for approval at the January meeting. If you have any ideas, concerns, or other feedback for us regarding the budget, the show, or anything else, please let me know. We also look forward to setting a tentative new field trip schedule and dates for the 2017 auction and Fossil Fest.

Take care and see you Tuesday.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, December 20 – 7 p.m.
Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building
6719 Burnet Lane
Austin, Texas

Annual Holiday Party

Erich Rose
PSoA President

Please join us for the Paleontological Society of Austin **WHITE MAMMOTH HOLIDAY POTLUCK!**

The main dish and soft drinks will be provided. Bring your favorite side dish or dessert (please let us know what you will bring when you RSVP to avoid duplicates). You can contact Erich Rose at president@austinpaleo.org.

If you would like to participate in the "White Mammoth" gift exchange, please bring a gift-wrapped, fossil-related item. We suggest around \$10-15 value or just something you think would be fun to have. Obviously, fossils, books, toys, games, etc. will all work nicely. Rules for the exchange will be explained after the dinner.

Fossil Fest Recap

Mike Smith
PSoA Treasurer

Financially speaking, Fossil Fest was a success. Our annual show saw 1,250 visitors over the weekend of Nov. 19-20, with an uncanny split of 630 attendees on Saturday and 620 attendees on Sunday. Of those guests, the 1,078 paying visitors (remember, kids under 6 years old are free) contributed to the overall net revenue of about \$2,100 for the Club to support our educational outreach activities, meeting programming, and scholarships throughout the year.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered or otherwise helped make this year's Fossil Fest a great time for everyone!

5-year-old Paleontologist Takes Home Grand Prize

Dax Gonzalez
PSoA Editor

Of the almost 900 raffle tickets sold during Fossil Fest, at least one of them was purchased by a parent of Henry – a 5-year-old kindergartner from Austin. That ticket ended up making Henry the proud owner of a megalodon tooth from the early Pliocene (5 MYA) measuring more than four inches long. As it turns out, Henry has had a keen interest in fossils from his days as a preschooler – searching for oyster fossils in playground gravel. “During his pre-k graduation last year, the head of his school was giving a little talk about each child and made the mistake of saying Henry wanted to be a paleontologist when he grew up,” his father, Chris, recalls. “He stopped her and said, ‘I’m not going to be a paleontologist later, I AM a paleontologist already.’”



Henry with his new megalodon tooth.

Meeting Minutes

Dale Vargo
PSoA Secretary

November 15, 2016 – Austin Gem and Mineral Society Building

Mike Smith opened the meeting, stating that Erich is on the way. Then Paul Hammerschmidt announced our speaker for tonight, Matthew Brown, who began by noting that The University of Texas’ vertebrate paleontology department is now within the Jackson School of Geosciences and its Museum of Earth History. During his talk, Brown described his experiences as a fossil preparator, having worked at Petrified Forest National Park, at Disney World’s fossil prep lab – having worked on Sue, the T-Rex – and his work for UT’s Vertebrate Paleontology Lab. He gave an overview of Texas’ vertebrate paleontology history and science, the UT vertebrate lab’s history, its growth as a working lab facility, and its present scope and growing technological capabilities. Brown explained many of the details involved in vertebrate fossil preparation and touched on some of the recent work being done near Big Spring and Bee County. He concluded his talk by taking questions about the recovery and recent litigation concerning Sue, the famous well-preserved fossil T-Rex. Paul then re-stated his intent to continue bringing qualified speakers to our meetings. Erich urged us to return after the break for upcoming important business to take place.

Erich welcomed us back from the break. He noted that our previous month’s meeting minutes had been revised. He announced that next year’s slate of Officers were being elected tonight. Paul asked that we now vote on this election. Paul announced and nominated the slate of candidates for 2017 as, President, Erich Rose; Vice-President/Show Chair, Emelia Rose; Treasurer, Mike Smith; Secretary, candidacy still open; and then Gary Vliet stated he would be the candidate for the Secretary position; Board Member (Editor), Dax Gonzalez; Board Member (Field Trip Chair), Ed Elliott; and Board Member (Program Chair), Paul Hammerschmidt. Mike suggested that we vote for the entire, now-complete slate of candidates. Kathleen moved that we vote to accept this slate. Her motion was seconded and this entire slate of candidates was approved by vote of acclamation. Erich stated that he would text Emelia to notify her of the election results. Then Suzanne announced some upcoming work to be done for Fossil Fest: Friday afternoon volunteers needed, and a few work slots to still be filled. Paul requested someone to help him to bring the display cases to the show Thursday afternoon and Dale volunteered. Erich announced our annual Christmas dinner party could be held on our 3rd Tuesday evening slot, December 20, and Kathleen confirmed that there are no conflicts on that date with AGMS. The date was accepted, and Kathleen stated that the dinner will be a pot-luck. Erich stated that the club will provide the meat entrees. He reminded us that there will be a “White Mammoth” gift exchange following after and to bring a wrapped fossil-related gift to participate. Mike reported that our Society has just donated \$2,000 to each of the UT paleontology labs. Suzanne confirmed that UT vertebrate paleo students will be manning a booth at Fossil Fest. Mike said he has access to a shark costume and Mary volunteered to wear it during the show. The Dallas club’s offer to have a booth at Fossil Fest was no longer being considered. Bill said that he has brought copies of his new echinoid book and that they are available for purchase tonight, and to please promote the book. The door prizes were won by Mary, Cathy, Andrea, and Dale. The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 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.

PSOA Web Site: www.austinpaleo.org
Webmaster: Gordon Galligher, webmaster@austinpaleo.org

2015 Officers:

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president@austinpaleo.org
vicepresident@austinpaleo.org
treasurer@austinpaleo.org
secretary@austinpaleo.org
fieldtripchair@austinpaleo.org
programchair@austinpaleo.org
editor@austinpaleo.org
webmaster@austinpaleo.org
showchair@austinpaleo.org

Science Advisors:

Ann M. Molineux, PhD.
Pamela R. Owen, PhD.
James T. Sprinkle, PhD.

annm@mail.utexas.edu
powen@mail.utexas.edu
echino@mail.utexas.edu

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PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

Dax Gonzalez, Editor
7802 Mullen Dr.
Austin, TX 78757