SOCIETY OF VERTEBRATE PALEONTOLOGY
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2006 INCOMING PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

It is an honor to become President of this fine scientific society. I am fortunate to do so at a time of strength for SVP, owing to the sustained work of Annalisa Berta, the rest of the Executive Committee, our staff at the Sherwood Group, and many dedicated members. In SVP, we have a growing membership, financial health, and enduring enthusiasm for the many aspects of vertebrate paleontology. In my remarks here, I wish to outline some of the challenges and opportunities facing paleontology, especially vertebrate paleontology. We cannot afford to be complacent.

I see four challenges as especially important. First, research universities are eliminating faculty positions for organismal biology in both biology and geology departments. Museum collections are being de-accessioned; curators of vertebrate groups are being replaced with molecular biologists. Fewer and fewer academic positions are available for the growing number of excellent students in our profession. Second, many scientists in other fields still view paleontology as quaint and nonessential. Our field is undervalued in academia. Third, the public at large—at least from a U.S. perspective—has a mixed reception of paleontology. On the one hand, they find fossils almost as fascinating as we do; on the other hand, they disbelieve their significance. The controversy about teaching evolution in public schools continues to flare up across the United States from the public schools to the courts to the President. Finally, the global environment, including all of the current generations of the history of life, faces a **crisis of crises**. SVP needs to face these challenges with collective energy and creativity.

Seeing the challenges also reveals the opportunities. We need to remind ourselves, other scientists, and the public why our science is important. Many aspects of paleontology and the history of life provide fundamental insights into the pace and mode of global change, about the evolution and extinction of organisms, about whether *our* time is a typical moment in earth history or a bit quirky, and about the human impacts on the earth's ecosystems. We need to emphasize the broader significance of vertebrate paleontology to other scientists and the public. In our courses, research programs, museum exhibits, and discussions with colleagues, we must demonstrate our relevance to other natural sciences, the liberal arts, and society. Also, we need to increase our engagement in the public debates about evolution and creationism. Much of the public thinks that there is a loss of human dignity in being the evolutionary descendants of other mammals. We can offer a different view by explaining the extraordinary heritage of humanity as a branch on the tree of life.

Overall, we must use our knowledge and enthusiasm for educational activism and emphasize the relevance of paleontology to the understanding of fundamental natural processes, to education, and to society. Various SVP committees are working on these challenges, our strategic plans focus on these goals, and we welcome your participation.

With best wishes for 2007, Catherine Badgley.

MINUTES OF THE 66TH ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, 19 OCTOBER 2006, ONTARIO, CANADA

At 5:30 PM, Annalisa Berta introduced herself as the SVP President and welcomed all present. She thanked the Executive Board, committee chairs, editors, and the SVP business office for their contributions to SVP over the last year.

Berta also highlighted some achievements during the past year as follows:
• The development of strategic plans for SVP.
• This is the first year that SVP awarded Student Member Travel Grants.
• This is the first year that the Student Liaison Committee will hold a raffle at the meeting to raise money for the Student Member Travel Grants.
• SVP is offering a one to one match for all monies donated to the Student Member Travel Fund; and a two to one match for all monies donated by student members to the fund.
• A silent campaign to raise money for the SVP Sponsored Field and Topical Conferences Fund has brought in $35,000 to this fund to date.

Berta then turned the meeting over to the new SVP President, Catherine Badgley.

Badgley reminded attendees that Rich Lane would be a guest speaker on Friday, 20 October, and that he was also available for private conferences during the week. Badgley acknowledged outgoing board members Annalisa Berta, David Archibald, and Chris Beard for their contributions to the Society and they were given plaques.

Reports were given by:
The Secretary, Treasurer, and the chairs from the following committees: Development, Membership, Publications, Program, Host and Future Host, Information Management, Education and Outreach, Ethics Education. A special presentation was also given on the Paleo Portal by John Flynn.

The President also reminded attendees to look forward to the:
67th SVP Annual Meeting to be held in Austin, Texas;
68th SVP Annual Meeting, to be held in Cleveland, Ohio, in 2008; and
69th SVP Annual Meeting, to be held in Bristol, England, in 2009.

Badgley then introduced Annalisa Berta who gave a brief outline of the strategic planning initiatives that have been developed for SVP. Berta encouraged attendees to attend the Open Executive Board Meeting on Saturday, 21 October, to get more detailed information on the initiative.

Greg McDonald was introduced to give a Motion of Thanks as follows:

Whereas
(The Thanking By SVP, with apologies to Robert Service, by Greg McDonald)

Whereas strange things are done in the midnight sun, by the folks who toil for bone;
The Arctic trails have their secret tales, that would make your blood turn to stone;
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights, but the queerest they ever did see
Was on the River Rideau, where we all did go, to attend the meetings SVP.

Whereas we sallied forth, to the Great White North, Ottawa our destination
The reason you see, was SVP, a very important occasion.
So we all have descended, as it was intended, upon the Canadian Museum of Nature
To discuss vertebrata, and remove all errata, and do it without any censure.

Whereas, our host it was said, had a great many dead, of vertebrates of many taxa
Whether fish of the sea, or dinos (at least three) and mammals up to the maxa.
Since time in the field, these fossils did yield, all needing study and explanation
We've all come together, despite the cold weather, to the capitol of the Canadian nation.

Whereas phylogenies were presented and none more resented, then those completely cladistic
With branches and node, that quickly forbode, a classification wholly sadistic
With cladograms unfurled and phylogenies hurled back and forth with total conviction,

Was it truth they had found? For outgroups abound or is it merely PAUP fiction?

Whereas with talks of faunas extinct, they're not always succinct in describing more dinosaur species,
Or even on dung, whose glories were sung, and billed as the "Origin of Feces,"
And with isotopes stable, we are now able, to determine an animal's diet
What food it consumed, before being entombed, but will the creationist's buy it?

Whereas with symposia diverse, and none too perverse but all with a global perspective,
On reptiles marine, and for now it would seem evo-devo is more then elective.

Whereas to remove fossils from stone, all preparators must hone
Their skills with air scribe and glue,
Fossils both terrestrial and marine and so it would seem, that this is what preparator's do,
So with each preparator's session they all shared the lesson,
Of the chosen, the proud and the few.

Whereas the meeting has ended, and we did as intended, to explain anatomy functional
With characters scored and paleoecology explored, and to discuss if evolution is punctual.
Our meetings now done, both serious and fun, we have arrived at a single conclusion,
That fossils do tell, that story so well, there is what we call evolution.

Whereas they heard the call, to host us one and all, at this meeting so very intellectual.
We now thank our hosts of whom we can boast were all so very effectual.
I now call on the ranks to rise and give thanks, in the form of a standing ovation.
Please put together your hands, to be heard 'cross this land
And thus ends my Service and narration.

The Business Meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Committee Chair and Strategic Plan reports are published in this *News Bulletin*.

SVP STRATEGIC PLAN

Endorsement from President Catherine Badgley

The SVP is a strong and vibrant society, in part because of its ongoing plans and initiatives. The strategic-planning session in June 2006, initiated during Annalisa Berta's presidency, resulted in a number of creative ideas for advancing the prominence of vertebrate paleontologists and the SVP. In order to make progress toward achieving these goals, we will need to prioritize them and focus our energies strategically. Some of the new initiatives are close to the mission of specific SVP committees already, whereas other initiatives represent new directions.

We welcome your comments about which of the identified goals you consider most important and how to achieve those particular goals. In addition, we welcome your involvement. Much of the work to accomplish these goals will occur in SVP's standing committees. If you would like to become involved with one of the committees and are not yet a member, please contact the respective chair of that committee and inform him or her of your interests.

Introduction from Past President Annalisa Berta

The Executive Committee and past presidents Lou Jacobs and Bill Clemens participated in a Strategic Planning Session at the SVP Midyear Executive Board Meeting with the goal of developing a five-year strategic plan for SVP. Since our last strategic plan was developed in 2001, we felt that this was an excellent time to evaluate our current condition, anticipate the future, and identify actions to achieve that future.

Based on input from various SVP committees we defined three major themes involving the impact of SVP on: 1) Society, 2) Science, and 3) Membership.

We formed focus groups for each of these three themes, from which summary reports were prepared. The summary reports of these themes appear below. Highlights of these themes were discussed in Ottawa at the Annual Business Meeting and we received many valuable comments. These reports will be discussed among our various committees.

We invite your additional comments and suggestions, at svp@vertpaleo.org, as we continue to further refine our strategic objectives and develop annual goals. We look forward to your ideas and participation as we define the future of SVP.

Impact of SVP on Society
Goal:
To become the voice of paleontology for the media and society. The central idea here is that people in the media, in politics, in other scientific societies, and in society at large call upon SVP members for insight and perspective about a wide range of topics in paleontology, earth history, and global change. These topics could include new paleontological discoveries and their significance, potential misrepresentations about evolution or earth history (by creationists and others), and a deep-time perspective on global warming or extinction. An example is to contact Al Gore and inform him that SVP has support for his message about global warming (in "An Inconvenient Truth").

Key Steps to Achieve the Goal:
1. *Press Releases*
Send many press releases each year from SVP, coordinated by the Media Liaison Committee. These releases will publicize new paleontological discoveries, the Romer-Simpson medalist at each annual meeting, and topics in each issue of the *JVP*, among other subjects.

2. *"Rapid-Response Team"*
Establish and train a "rapid-response team" to be on call for the media to comment upon breaking news about paleontology, evolution, intelligent design, global environmental change, and other relevant topics.

3. *SVP Network*
Develop a network of SVP members to attend state or national science-teachers meetings, including the National Association of Geology Teachers. It would be useful to have one or more SVP members who could attend the meeting in all 50 states over the next five years.

4. *Volunteer SVP Member Speakers*
Provide a pool of SVP members to speak at amateur meetings in each region of the U.S. and Canada.

5. *Distinguished-Speaker Series*
Develop a distinguished-speaker series to give paleontological talks to academic or public audiences.

6. *High-Visibility Speakers*
Invite a famous speaker to give a keynote address at the annual SVP meeting. Suggestions within SVP's group were Al Gore and Steven Spielberg. The purposes would be to bring more public visibility to the annual meeting and to make the speaker aware of our relevance to his or her causes.

7. *Cultivate Relationships with the Media*
Cultivate prominent journalists (with global, national, and regional bases) to increase the coverage of paleontological subjects in the media. An example mentioned was Alex Chadwick

(National Public Radio) who might be interested in developing radio expeditions to fossil sites with SVP members.

Implementation:
1. *Hire Media Specialist*
Hire a media specialist to train members of the rapid-response team and others who will be in contact with the media regularly (would require funding).

2. *Media Training*
Offer a media-training workshop at a forthcoming annual meeting for anyone interested (would require funding).

3. *Coordinate Implementation of Goals with SVP Committees*
Meet with members of the Media Liaison Committee, Education and Outreach Committee, and Information Management Committee to discuss how to implement these goals. Our general goal overlaps the missions of each of these committees. Some reconfiguration of committees might be warranted. Talk to the committee chairs before the Ottawa meeting.

4. *Develop Contacts in the Media*
Talk to current contacts in the press and ask for further contacts in order to identify journalists who have special interests in paleontology and related disciplines.

Impact of SVP on Science
Goal:
To adopt and implement a three-tiered approach to proactively link our science with related disciplines, funding sources, and government regulators.

Key Steps to Achieve the Goal:
1. *Commissioning Interdisciplinary Papers for* JVP
Promote a continuing series of interdisciplinary articles coauthored by a vertebrate paleontologist and a scientist from a related discipline. These would aim to lay out controversies and possible solutions to scientific problems that intersect with vertebrate paleontology (e.g., climatic change, evolution, environment, earth history, etc.). These papers would offer a model for further synthetic research. Having coauthors from other disciplines would draw readers from those disciplines to *JVP* and into the VP literature.

2. *Penrose-Style Conferences and Field Excursions*
As identified by the Development Committee, one of our fund-raising initiatives is to seek endowment funds to support organization of publicized conferences or field excursions that revolve around an interdisciplinary problem that intersects with VP. The conferences would be composed of invited speakers from VP and the other relevant discipline(s), perhaps on the model of the Helsinki series of environmental conferences (e.g., http://www.helsinki.fi/bioscience/spatialecology/workshop8.html). The field excursions would be discussion visits to sites that provide critical evidence for the theme problem. Proceedings of these events would be published first as individual papers in *JVP* then collected together and republished as a topical book.

3. *Foundation of a Nonprofit Institute*
Provide funding, conference management, and advocacy through a nonprofit "Exploration Institute." This would start out small, perhaps to manage the conferences and field excursions mentioned above. The long-term aim would be to create an endowment and recognizable name such that the Institute would be a source of competitive funding for VP and a media and advocacy point for the discipline, serving as a counterweight to the conservative Christian Discovery Institute (http://www.discovery.org/).

Implementation:

1. *Interdisciplinary Papers for* JVP

Work with the Publications Committee to solicit interdisciplinary papers for *JVP*.

2. *SVP-sponsored Conferences and Field Excursions*

Work with the Development Committee to raise funds and plan SVP-sponsored conferences and field excursions.

3. *Nonprofit Institute*

Work with the Development Committee for long-term planning of a nonprofit institute to support advocacy of vertebrate paleontology and related issues.

Impact of SVP through Membership

Goal:

Reach out, retain, AND ENGAGE our members and encourage diversity in our membership for professional and societal growth. In order to support several groups that comprise our Society, we propose the following four steps.

***Key Steps to Achieve the Goal*:**

1. Avocational group

Increase the opportunities for avocational groups to participate in programs at the Annual Meeting and other Society programs.

2. Students

Allow student members to retain student-member status for three years after graduation.

3. International Institution Sponsorship for Developing Nations

Focus on one region of developing nations (e.g., Africa) by sponsoring approximately three to six museums at the individual rate. Additionally, bring one representative from each sponsored institution to the Annual Meeting and have one representative from each sponsored international institution sit on an SVP committee.

4. Sister Institutions

Develop relationships and collaborations with sister organizations through various means, such as co-hosting international meetings (e.g., SVP meeting with the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology and Comparative Anatomy in Bristol) and symposia or events at national meetings of other professional organizations (e.g., SVP and the Paleontological Society may collaborate on topical symposia at the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting).

Implementation:

1. Support Avocational Groups

Encourage avocational groups to hold workshops and programs associated with the Annual Meeting (organization, logistics, and costs of such events would be the responsibility of each avocational group).

2. Continuing Student Membership Category

Work with the Membership Committee to develop a continuing student category of membership.

3. International Institution Sponsorship

Work with the Membership Committee to identify an international institution to sponsor and fund raise to enable a representative to attend SVP Annual meeting.

4. Sister Organizations

Work with the Program Committee to develop collaborative meetings and symposia.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MOTIONS

Motions Passed via E-mail:

- 2006 Auction proceeds to support Student Member Travel Grants.
- Approve motion to approve the statement from the Executive Committee regarding the conduct of John Rensberger in obtaining appropriate permits to conduct paleontological field work.
- Approve that the announcement for the 2007 SVP Bryan Patterson Award be approved, with the following change: The word –below-- in the second line of the second paragraph is removed.

Motions Passed at the Executive Committee Midyear Meeting on 2 and 3 June 2006:

- Approve the 2006 Midyear Meeting Executive Committee agenda with the additions.
- Approve the Program Committee develop criteria for workshop proposals and forward to the Ex Comm for approval.
- Approve the October 2005 Executive Committee minutes with corrections.
- Approve to cover the costs for the Romer-Simpson Medal winner to attend the SVP Annual Meeting at which they receive their award.
- Approve the updated copyright transfer form, as presented by the Publications Committee, with the addition of two changes made by the Executive Committee.
- Approve the nomination of Charles S. “Rufus” Churcher and David S. Webb as new Honorary Members of SVP.
- Approve the limiting of number of Romer presentations at the Annual Meeting to a maximum of 12.

Motions Passed at the Executive Committee Annual Meeting on 17 and 18 October 2006:

- Approve the 2006 Annual Executive Committee meeting agenda.
- Approve Bristol, England, as the site for the 69th SVP Annual Meeting.
- Approve the 2006 Midyear Executive Committee meeting minutes.
- Approve that authors be allowed to post a pdf of their article on their Web site after paying a fee to SVP. Fee is to be determined by the Publications Committee. If the author doesn’t pay the fee, then the author may still distribute the pdf of the article, by e-mail or by link, to the SVP Web site, upon request.
- Approve the new SVP copyright agreement that brings it in line with SVP pdf agreement and includes a reference to the fee structure for authors who wish to post the pdf on their Web site.

2006 ELECTION RESULTS

The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology election was held, for the second year in a row, by electronic ballot. The positions of Vice-President, Secretary, and Member-at-Large were open, due to term expiration. Two candidates were slated for each of these positions.

The election period was held from 5 June 2006 (12:01 AM CT) through 1 September 2006 (11:59 PM CT). Paper ballots were sent out to all members without e-mail addresses and to members who had indicated to us that they would be without Internet access during the election. Ten completed paper ballots were cast and returned to the SVP office.

In total, voter participation was 29% of all eligible SVP members.

New Executive Committee Member:	Blaire VanValkenburgh, Vice-President
Moving into position as President:	Catherine Badgley, Vice-President
New Executive Committee Member:	Christopher Brochu, Secretary
Retiring Executive Committee Member:	J. David Archibald, Secretary
New Executive Committee Member:	Michael Gottfried, Member-at-Large
Retiring Executive Committee Member:	Chris Beard, Member-at-Large

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary David Archibald requested that the June 2006 meeting minutes be revised with corrections noted by the Executive Committee and sent to him for approval prior to final distribution to the Executive Committee. Meeting minutes are to be sent to the Secretary for proofing before they are circulated to the Executive Committee. Motions passed by e-mail were reviewed. Results of the election were announced: Blaire VanValkenburgh was added as the new Vice-President, Christopher A. Brochu was added as the new Secretary, and Michael Gottfried was added as the new Member-at-Large. Outgoing President Annalisa Berta, outgoing Secretary David Archibald, and outgoing Member-at-Large Chris Beard were all thanked for their service to SVP. It was re-established that the Secretary should communicate the results of the elections to the Nominating Committee just after the outcome of the elections is known.

TREASURER'S REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2005-2006

This budget summary was presented at the annual meeting in Ottawa, Toronto, Canada, and represents preliminary results of the closing figures for Fiscal Year 2005-2006.

Review of Endowment and Investment Funds as of 30 September 2006

The SVP general investment fund, managed by Merrill Lynch, increased in value from $2,104,936 to $2,263,927, for a gain of 7.55% for the year ending 30 September 2006. The separately held Estes Fund increased from $40,975 to $45,840.69, for a gain of 11.88%. The conservative SVP investments fared better than the S&P 500's gain of 8.71% for the same time period.

No changes were made in investment allocations during FY 2005–2006. At the end of the fiscal year, our endowment asset allocation was 24% fixed-income securities, 75% equities, and 1% cash pending reinvestment. The Estes Fund asset allocation was 32% fixed income securities, 46% equities, and 22% cash.

Review of Fiscal Year 2005–2006

Membership/Administration. Administration income derives mainly from member dues, the income from which increased more than 19.2% over last year. This additional income offset the increased management fees and bank fees budgeted for this year.

Investment and Endowment Fund. Endowment funds increased significantly more than budgeted. The overall increase in the U.S. economy benefited our Society. For the fourth consecutive year it was not necessary to use the entire 4% of the endowment funds budgeted to support the Society's programs.

Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology. Journal publication by Sheridan Press included significant electronic editing and formatting. Again this year, the diligent *JVP* editors kept publishing costs in line, so that we were able to produce the journal this year within budget. Also, income from the sale of the journal through BioOne subscriptions was higher than budgeted.

Annual Meeting. The Mesa meeting was operated under budget. The increased cost of holding the annual meeting was offset by the efforts of the host committee and the business office to keep costs at a minimum.

Summary. The largest single program expense continues to be the *JVP*. Greater use of electronic publishing possibilities should result in decreased publishing expenses. Increased membership, conservative investing of endowment funds, and diligence on the part of all committees insured that SVP remains financially sound.

Summary of Proposed Fiscal Year 2006–2007 Budget
The proposed budget assumes conservative projections for administrative income and earnings from investment funds.

Administration. Management fees will increase 5% over last year. Income from dues and increased journal sales should meet increased administrative expenses.

Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology. The proposed budget is based upon maintaining current page production and a 2% increase in budget.

Investment and Endowment Fund. The SVP endowment was modified by the origination of the SVP Student Travel Grant Fund. An initial $50,000 was moved into this account from the general endowment, and an additional $50,000 was offered as a matching fund. Income from this fund will be used to award grants to SVP student members for travel to the annual meeting.

Annual Meeting. Final figures for the 2006 annual meeting remain incomplete at this time, but are expected to show a profit this year due to high attendance and continued host committee efforts to keep costs at a minimum. Registration revenue is expected to offset hosting costs.

Summary. We anticipate significant revenue from the annual meeting, *Memoir* sales, and continued increased royalties from BioOne subscriptions will offset increased expenses for 2006–2007. Also, constant review of expenditures and attempts to increase revenue will be utilized to maintain a favorable financial position for the Society.

Summary of the Fiscal Year 2005–2006 Budget

	2005–2006 Budget	2005–2006 Year Actual	Budget–Actual Variance
MEMBERSHIP/ADMINISTRATION			
Income	$ 294,220.00	$ 275,474.00	$ (18,746.00)
Expense	$ 149,422.00	$ 155,573.00	$ (6,150.00)
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ 144,798.00	$ 119,902.00	$ (24,896.00)
LEADERSHIP & AWARDS			
Income	$ 12,278.00	$ 8,800.00	$ (3,478.00)
Expense	$ 51,129.00	$ 46,662.00	$ (4,468.00)
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (38,851.00)	$ (37,862.00)	$ (990.00)
JOURNAL			
Income	$ 100,880.00	$ 134,249.00	$ 33,368.00
Expense	$ 150,522.00	$ 168,020.00	$ (17,498.00)
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (49,642.00)	$ (33,772.00)	$ 15,871.00
COMMUNICATIONS			
Income	$ 1,550.00	$ 1,295.00	$ (255.00)
Expense	$ 30,571.00	$ 20,317.00	$ (10,255.00)
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (29,021.00)	$ (19,022.00)	$ (10,000.00)

MERCHANDISE SALES			
Income	$ 7,650.00	$ 10,794.00	$ 3,144.00
Expense	$ 2,487.00	$ 15,406.00	$ (12,919.00)
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ 5,163.00	$ (4,612.00)	$ (9,775.00)
ANNUAL MEETING			
Income	$ 247,283.00	$ 273,466.00	$ 26,183.00
Expense	$ 282,580.00	$ 285,850.00	$ (3,270.00)
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (35,298.00)	$ (12,384.00)	$ 22,913.00
GENERAL ENDOWMENT			
Income	$ 66,000.00	$ 187,659.00	$ 121,659.00
Expense	$ 80,471.00	$ 39,209.00	$ 41,262.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (14,471.00)	$ 148,450.00	$ 162,921.00
PERMANENTLY RESTRICED FUNDS			
Income	$ 4,535.00	$ 2,491.00	$ (2,044.00)
Expense			
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ 4,535.00	$ 2,491.00	$ (2,044.00)
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED FUNDS			
Income	$ 18,545.00	$ 61,839.00	$ 43,135.00
Expense	$ 12,278.00	$ 8,800.00	$ (3,478.00)
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ 6,267.00	$ 53,039.00	$ 46,773.00
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS LESS ENDOWMENT	$ (2,852.00)	$ 12,250.00	$ 15,102.00
ENDOWMENT INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	$ (3,669.00)	$ 203,980.00	$ 209,694.00
ENDOWMENT INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	$ (6,521.00)	$216,231.00	$ 224,796.00

Summary of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2006–2007 Budget

	2006–2007 Budget
MEMBERSHIP/ADMINISTRATION	
Income	$319,265.00
Expense	$148,758.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$170,508.00

GOVERNANCE & AWARDS	
Income	$ 15,878.00
Expense	$ 50,509.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (34,630.00)
JOURNAL	
Income	$ 126,324.00
Expense	$ 185,857.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (59,533.00)
COMMUNICATIONS	
Income	$ 1,350.00
Expense	$ 37,269.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (35,919.00)
MERCHANDISE SALES	
Income	$ 14,960.00
Expense	$ 5,514.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ 9,446.00
ANNUAL MEETING	
Income	$223,956.00
Expense	$276,825.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (49,869.00)
GENERAL ENDOWMENT	
Income	$ 74,000.00
Expense	$ 103,822.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ (29,822.00)
PERMANENTLY RESTRICED FUNDS	
Income	$ 1,890.00
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED FUNDS	
Income	$ 14,371.00
Expense	$ 11,878.00
Net Increase (Decrease)	$ 2,493.00
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS LESS ENDOWMENT	$ 25,440.00

ENDOWMENT INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	$ (25,437.00)

SOCIETY OF VERTEBRATE PALEONTOLOGY
REVIEW OF NET ASSETS

NET ASSETS	9/30/2006 VALUE	9/30/2005 VALUE	9/30/2004 VALUE	9/30/2003 VALUE
Permanently Restricted				
Axelrod	$156,022	$156,022	156,022	156,022
Chance Award	$1,326	$1,466	1,466	1,220
Estes Award	$47,151	$46,266	42,503	41,083
Lazendorf Award	$9,000	$7,500	6,000	6,000
Patterson Award	$56,957	$56,957	56,957	56,957
Temporarily Restricted				
Estes Award	$9,204	$8,951	5,187	3,234
Axelrod	$78,897	$60,158	41,512	0
Chance Award	$192	$63,573	63,548	69,801
Patterson Award	$18,371	$13,910	8,266	3,087
Romer Prize	$21,563	$18,874	16,672	13,966
Skinner Award	$53,079	$48,716	44,176	40,738
Lazendorf Award	$3,252	$2,311	1,479	1,850
Wood Fund	$16,767	$16,810	0	0
Unrestricted	1,936,214	1,780,143	1,449,072	$1,474,719
Total Net Assets	2,664,245	2,154,572	1,892,860	$1,869,167

SOCIETY OF VERTEBRATE PALEONTOLOGY
REVIEW OF INVESTMENTS

MAJOR TYPE OF INVESTMENT	9/30/2006 VALUE	9/30/2005 VALUE	9/30/2004 VALUE	9/30/2003 VALUE
MoneyMarket/Cash Management Account	12,052	20,948	38,515	34,154
Mutual Funds	1,708,015	1,533,346	1,029,327	1,016,744
Corporate Bonds	0	0	167,177	156,713
Certificates of Deposit	538,908	544,996	660,301	647,102
Estimated Accrued Interest	4,952	5,645	10,564	-
Total Investments	2,263,927	2,104,935	1,905,884	1,854,713

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

At the annual meeting Annalisa Berta announced two decisions of the Executive Committee that recognize the importance of our program to facilitate student attendance at annual meetings through grants from a Student Member Travel Grant Endowment. The Executive Committee has both designated $50,000 of our general endowment toward support of this endowment and designated another $50,000 as a challenge grant to match new gifts to the travel grant endowment. The "match" for gifts from the general membership is 1:1; gifts from student members will be matched on a 2:1. It is a pleasure to note that the student raffle at the annual meeting, including matching funds, brought in over $600. Thanks to the great work of Brent Breithaupt and his committee and generous gifts of casts (particularly the great ceratopsian skull), books, and "memorabilia" from you, the annual auction was a roaring success bringing in over $20,000, which will be matched by the challenge grant. Over $10,000 was given by major donors to the SVP. The current balance in the endowment includes some $35,000 that is being matched by the challenge grant. To make a long story short, currently the balance in the Student Travel Grant Endowment is approximately $130,000 toward our initial goal of $150,000. Thank you all for your support and help in meeting this goal!

The interest of members in supporting other programs of the SVP was expressed through numerous gifts. The endowment to fund SVP field and topical conferences has grown to about $25,000. Particularly through gifts made with the annual renewal of dues, the funds for the Estes, Patterson, Skinner, and other awards continue to be augmented.

Many years ago members of the SVP recognized that, in order to significantly support programs that aid student members in their education and promote other projects that add to the support of our field, the income from annual dues had to be augmented. The next time you visit the SVP's Web site, take a moment to look at the list of awards that we give. In large part funding for these awards is derived from members' gifts. Thank you for your continuing generosity that makes it possible for the SVP to play a significant role in the development of our field. (William Clemens)

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Government Affairs Committee has continued to work to protect fossils on federal lands through passage of the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act. The PRPA was reintroduced in the 110th Congress by Senator Akaka and Congressman McGovern. We urge all US SVP members to write to their senators and representatives in support of this legislation. (Ted J. Vlamis)

MEDIA LIAISON COMMITTEE

Information Item

The Media Liaison Committee is excited about its changing role within the SVP, and looks forward to the role that it will play in engaging the media in our science. With the expanding role of the MLC in mind, Catherine Badgeley appointed Lars Werdelin a Committee co-chair. Darin Croft, also on the Information Management Committee, joined the MLC this year in an effort to cross-appoint members and create a flow of information between those committees that have a natural public interface. To this end, the MLC now includes members who are also appointed on the Program Committee, the Education and Outreach Committee, and the Publication Committee. The Media Liaison Committee chairs are currently working to identify international members to join the Committee.

The Media Liaison Committee held the press conference at the Annual Meeting in Ottawa, Ontario, over the lunch hour. Members of the media in attendence commented favorably on the

new format, and requested a more-formalized media “social hour” which we orchestrated for Thursday evening. Speakers at this year’s press conference included: Matthew Carrano—“A new perspective on non-avian dinosaur diversity”; Leon Claessens, Patrick O’Connor, and David Unwin—“Evolution of the respiratory apparatus and breathing mechanisms in Pterosauria”; Nicholas Pyenson and Megan McKenna—“How did early toothed whales echolocate? An analysis of fossil and living species elucidates key transitions in the evolution of sound production”; Daniel Fisher—“Mastodon tusk ‘scars’ record a history of combat”; and Elizabeth Hadly—“Are rare species doomed? A paleontological perspective on extinction.”

The MLC also proposed a workshop in media training at the 2007 Annual Meeting in Austin. This item does have budget implications, but at present, pending approval of the workshop and a particular format and audience (we gave several options), we are unsure of the cost that SVP might incur with this type of workshop. We do feel that it is important for the “rapid response” team that the Executive Committee has recommended go through a full session of media training, perhaps in conjunction with an annual meeting or an ex com meeting, depending on who is on the rapid response team.

We continue to have discussions with the business office about maintaining a list of press contacts, and are working with the Program Committee to streamline the selection of press conference presentations. For future SVP meetings, we plan to offer an abbreviated plan for press conference presenters to allow them to best connect their research to the public.

Does this item have budget implications? Currently, no; but if a media trainer is hired for the rapid response team to conduct a half-day session on media training, it may cost as much as $3,000.

Does this item require headquarters support? Yes, in terms of housing a database of press contacts, and helping plan a media workshop for the rapid response team. (Kristi Curry Rogers and Lars Werdelin)

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Committee convened on 19 October 2006, during the Annual Meeting in Ottawa, Canada. Present at the Crowne Plaza Hotel were Chair Pat Holroyd, Julia Sanke, David Fox, and Thomas Adams. Absent were Jaelyn Eberle and Margaret Lewis. Incoming chair Larry Flynn and SVP member Allison Beck were also present.

Discussions centered on three areas: current issues that arose during the Annual Meeting, consideration of honorary member candidates, and a round table on issues related to the strategic plan initiative of the Society.

Current Issues

A perennial concern is to maximize engagement of avocational paleontologists. We noted that a better representation of local amateur paleontological societies might be achieved by active intervention of the institution that hosts the Annual Meeting.

Some members were not satisfied with name tags—not so much how their names appeared, but how their institutions vs. addresses appeared. Perhaps we can build in flexibility of choice on how the name and affiliation will appear on future meeting name tags.

Candidate Listing

We discussed the need to build a working list of candidates for honorary membership. All candidates will be vetted and promoted according to normal guidelines.

Strategic Plan

Pat and Larry began a discussion of how the Membership Committee can contribute to the strategic plan of the Society. A draft of the plan had been presented to committee chairs by Annalisa Berta and

Catherine Badgley. That plan was revised somewhat in 2007, but at the time of the SVP meeting, we focused on two areas: developing countries and revised membership fees, particularly for students.

We embraced the idea of representation at annual meetings broadened on the global scale, and Society membership of scientists from developing countries. We began the process of developing a plan to promote access to Society journals and perhaps subsidized annual meeting attendance.

The strategic plan had suggested a structured membership category and lowered rate for recent graduates. Extended discussion with student members allowed us to focus on alternative ways to retain members at that critical time just after graduation. (Larry Flynn)

PREDOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD COMMITTEE

The Predoctoral Fellowship Grant committee met for about an hour during the SVP in Ottawa.

The PreDoc committee consists of: Christian Sidor (Chair), Rick Blob (final year), Mark Uhen, Natalia Rybczynski, Julia Clarke (final year).

We discussed, and plan to submit to the Executive Committee, a list of suggested modifications to the predoc guidelines. These include:

1) move to an all-electronic submission process (either online submission, or minimally an interactive PDF). Too much time is wasted photocopying and mailing applications.

2) update the criteria by which the applications are reviewed. We would like to be able to factor into our decision the impact the funding would have (i.e., we'd like to fund needy applicants, not ones with lots of funding already).

3) update the guidelines listed on the SVP Web site. For example, the written proposal is not mentioned as a criterion by which we will make our selection.

Other proposals we have for the Executive Committee include:

1) revise guidelines to state that applications will be considered only once (to insure that the applicants are within about one year of completion).

2) ask the applicants to include in their applications a discussion of how the funds would contribute to finishing their dissertations.

3) clarify if non-US students can be awarded the grant. (Christian Sidor)

PREPARATORS COMMITTEE

The Committee met in Ottawa in October at the SVP Annual Meeting, selected new co-chairs, and focused its discussions on: the FAQ Web page; initiating a Web link to previous abstracts and presentations of preparation talks and posters from prior meetings; encouragment of the membership to publish results of materials experiments and technical methods, for wider dissemination to the greater paleontological community; linking up with European preparation and conservation groups for a shared preparation session during the Bristol meetings in 2009; finding ways of increasing recognition of the professional status of preparators, collections managers, and conservators, and trying to protect positions within institutions; making a greater outreach to include conservators and collections managers in the Preparators Committee (and some adjunct discussion of changing the name of the committee to be more inviting to these professionals); arranging a site visit to Bob Rainey's Prep Lab at the J. J. Pickle Research Facilities during the 2007 SVP meetings in Austin; and reserving some talk slots during the prep sessions at the

meetings for invited specialist talks on particular subjects (e.g., use of airscribes; microprep techniques; appropriateness of consolidants and glues).

The Preparators Committee encourages all those who have participated in Prep Symposia at past SVP meetings to please submit electronic versions of your posters and talks to Akiko Shinya (ashinya@fieldmuseum.org)—these will be grouped with their abstracts and placed in the Materials and Methods sections of the SVP Web site.

The new co-chairs of the Preparators Committee are Kyle Davies and William Sanders. Ron Tykoski is the Committee's liaison to the Local Organizing Committee for the 2007 SVP meetings. The Preparators Symposium is now the Preparators Session, and we are pleased to be accorded more predictable status for future meetings; we are also appreciative that posters associated with the Preparators Symposium/Session have been placed in the afternoon poster session(s) following the talks.

Various Committee activities include: Akiko Shinya (Web site development) reports that she is working on a new format for the Materials and Methods section of the SVP Web site, and on a format to accommodate electronic versions of talks and posters from previous meetings in the M&M page. William Sanders (co-chair) is working with Jason Head to formalize arrangements for the Preparation Session, afternoon posters, and off-site visit to Bob Rainey's prep lab in Austin (2007 SVP meetings). Ron Tykoski is working with Bob Rainey to make arrangements for this visit, and with the Local Organizing Committee to arrange logistics associated with that visit. Mary Carpenter has compiled a lengthy and comprehensive updated version of the FAQ page, which will be put on the M&M page once new Web formats are in place. Bill Amaral continues to manage the preparator's listserver, which has functioned well to disseminate information to those interested in fossil preparation and conservation. Carrie Herbel has taken the reins as the new chair of the Preparator's Grant Committee.

We will need some backing from the Local Organizing Committee for SVP 2007, and SVP, to arrange transportation and box lunches for purchase for those who wish to visit Bob Rainey's off-site lab on Thursday during the SVP meetings in Austin; we anticipate no more than 40 attendees, in rotating lots of ten people, for about 30 minutes for each visit session. (William J. Sanders)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Committee Membership

The 2007 Program Committee was expanded to 13 members with the addition of five new members and the retirement of Donald Prothero. New members are: Jonathon Bloch (University of Florida), Matthew Carrano (Smithsonian Institution), Michael Gottfried (Michigan State University), Emily Rayfield (University of Bristol), Rebecca Terry (University of Chicago). Mike is the Executive Committee representative to the Committee. Rebecca is the student member, replacing Eric Dewar.

I will be asking members who have served on the Committee for four or more years to retire at the meeting and to provide recommendations for replacements.

67th SVP Meeting Symposia Selection

The Committee received 11 proposals. Four were selected by majority vote. A fifth may be accommodated as well. Selected symposia are: 1) "Faunal dynamics and extinction in the Quaternary: A symposium honoring Ernest L. Lundelius Jr."; 2) "Carnivora: A model clade for studies of phylogeny, form, and function"; 3) "Fossils, molecules, and morphology—The evolutionary history of bats"; and 4) "Dissorophoidea—Focus on an early amphibian radiation."

67th SVP Meeting Field Trip and Workshop Selection

There are four field trips planned for the 2007 meeting: 1) Lower Permian of North Texas; 2) Late

Quaternary cave sites of central Texas; 3) Big Bend National Park; 4) Spousal/family Austin field trip. Additionally, a series of 30-minute trips will be scheduled Thursday, 18 October, to visit the University of Texas fossil preparation labs.

There are three workshops planned for the 2007 meeting: 1) Teachers' workshop; 2) Communicating with the media (two separate workshops).

Meeting format
Changes to the meeting format include adding a fourth poster session and changing the annual preparator's symposium to a regular platform session. Breakdown of total presentation slots is as follows:

	2007 Meeting (maximum projected)	**2006 Meeting**
Regular	216	206
Poster	400	300
Symposium	64	66
Romer Prize	16	17
Preparators' Session	16	15
Total	**712**	**604**

Depending on rejection rates, it may be possible to run one or two afternoons as two opposing sessions instead of three.

Abstract Review Modifications
The online review process is being modified from the 2006 version to include all relevant abstract information provided to reviewers on a single Web page, and transparency of abstract reviews to all members assigned to a particular abstract. (Jason Head)

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Initial Submission in Calendar Year 2004

354 drafts / 205 distinct manuscripts
- 38 Rapid Communication drafts
- 96 Note drafts
- 293 regular article drafts
- 5 book review drafts

Decisions:
- 95 format inappropriate (returned for corrections without review)
- 66 rejected
  - 2 immediate reject
  - 34 reject (after review)
  - 30 major revision ("reject with hope")
- 104 minor revision (some multiple times)
- 118 eventually accepted

32% rejection rate (66 of the 205 distinct manuscripts)

Initial Submission in Calendar Year 2005

358 drafts / 187 distinct manuscripts
- 24 Rapid Communication drafts
- 90 Note drafts
- 230 regular article drafts
- 9 book reviews

Decisions
- 74 format Inappropriate (returned for corrections without review)

89 rejected
9 immediate reject
30 reject (after review)
50 major revision (“reject with hope”)
81 minor revision (some multiple times)
81 eventually accepted
48% rejection rate (89 of the 187 distinct manuscripts)

During 2004, 80 manuscripts were accepted and 994 pages were published.
During 2005, 100 manuscripts were accepted and 1,006 pages were published.
During 2006, 75 manuscripts had been given final acceptance up to 6 September 2006.

Submissions to *JVP* by Country since 2004

Country	2004	2005	2006 (to 6 Sept.)	Totals
Argentina	5	14	7	26
Australia	6	5	4	15
Austria			1	1
Belgium	2			2
Brazil	3	3	1	7
Canada	12	7	16	35
Chile	1	1		2
China	7		1	8
Czech Republic	2			2
Denmark	3	3		6
Estonia		2		2
Finland		1	1	2
France	12	9	7	28
Georgia		1		1
Germany	13	9	13	35
Greece	2	2		4
Hungary	2		2	4
India		3	0	3
Ireland	2	0	0	2
Italy	5	2	1	8
Japan	1	4	2	7
Mexico	2	1	2	5
New Zealand		1		1
Peru	1	1	0	2
Poland	3	1		4
Portugal	2	1	1	4
Russian Federation			2	2
South Africa	7	1	0	8
Spain	1	3	9	13
Sweden	2	3		5
Switzerland		1	3	4
Turkey		4		4
United Kingdom	9	7	10	26
USA	87	81	50	218
Venezuela			2	2

None or Unknown	13	16	9	38
Total per year	**205**	**187**	**144**	**536**

JVP *Backlog and Time to Publication*
A couple of years ago the *JVP* backlog between acceptance and publication had risen to more than one year. To reduce the backlog, *JVP* has been publishing more pages per year for the past few years. Most recent issues had about 30 articles in them for a total of about 120 per year. Since we are currently accepting about 100 manuscripts per year, we have been catching up on our backlog and have arrived at the stage where we have almost completely eliminated the post-acceptance backlog. As a result, we may have slightly thinner issues for the next little while, about 25 papers per issue, until authors realize that time to publication in *JVP* has decreased, leading to more submissions.

There are still delays in getting manuscripts through the review and editorial assessment processes. These delays are caused mainly by slowness on the part of reviewers, slow turn-around on the part of our overworked editors, and, of course, by author delays. Reduction of publication delays is an important strategy for increasing the citations and impact factor of *JVP* and for attracting important, high-profile submissions.

Another possible strategy for increasing the profile of *JVP*, now that the backlog has been reduced, is to solicit a small number of review articles. Review articles tend to be widely read and cited. We do not plan at this time to decrease our rejection rate.

PDF Distribution Policy
The new PDF Distribution Policy was implemented by including it in the *JVP* Style Guide (manuscript_preparation.pdf) and by posting it on each author's pdf file in the form of an electronic sticky note. SVP's copyright policy continues to be in need of revision and is under discussion.

JVP *Style Guide*
The Style Guide (a.k.a. manuscript_preparation.pdf) was revised once again as of April 2006 and is posted on the Web site. Another minor revision is in progress.

Annual Meeting Abstracts
After discussions involving the Publications Committee, the business office, the Program Committee, the Executive Committee, and the Information Technology Committee, it has been decided to post the Annual Meeting abstracts (*JVP* Supplement to No. 3) on the SVP Web site as a pdf file. This will increase the visibility of the Society's activities, raise the profile of its meeting presenters, and provide an electronic archive of meeting abstracts for future years. The current abstracts have now been posted thanks to the joint efforts of the above, and it may be possible to post some past meeting abstracts as well. (Mark Wilson)

ROMER PRIZE COMMITTEE

The Romer Prize Committee met during the 2006 Annual Meeting of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology in Ottawa, Ontario, to decide on a recipient of the Romer Prize from among the students who presented and to discuss the number of submissions that would be accepted in the future. At the conclusion of the meeting, chairmanship of the Romer Prize Committee passed from Ryosuke Motani to David Fox, who is the current chair of the Romer Prize Committee.

Committee members in attendance were: Ryosuke Motani (Chair), Paul Barrett, Matthew Carrano, Jaelyn Eberle, Larry Flynn, David Fox (incoming chair, substitute for Katrina Gobetz), Stephen Gatesy, Peter Mackovicky, Judy Massare, Ray Rogers, and Christian Sidor.

Seventeen abstracts were submitted for the Romer Prize session at the 2006 Annual Meeting, although in the end only 15 presentations were made from the podium. The Committee awarded the 2006 Romer Prize to Nadia Fröbisch for her paper titled “The evolution of preaxial dominance in the tetrapod limb development.”

The Committee decided that the limit on the number of abstracts for future Romer Prize competitions would be set to correspond to a half-day session of 15 minute presentations during the meeting with one 15-minute break. For sessions that begin at 8 AM and end at 12:30 PM, this would correspond to 17 presentations.

The only other business addressed by the Romer Prize Committee was a discussion of possible new Committee members for the next year. The new chair will act on some of the names discussed in time to establish a new Committee list prior to reporting the complete Committee membership for the coming year to the President by 9 February. (David Fox)

MORRIS SKINNER AWARD COMMITTEE

The Committee consisted of Xiaoming Wang (Chair), Rodolfo Coria, Kristi Curry-Rogers, Daniel Goujet, Patricia Monaco, and John Harris. Submissions are primarily accepted through e-mail correspondence with the Chair. The Committee continues the existing policy of seeking wide representations and recognizing individuals from all lines of pursuit. We are constantly on the lookout for potential new members to serve on the Committee, and invite interested individuals to contact me personally.

The 2006 Skinner Prize competition accepted three qualified nominees. The Executive Committee approved the decision to award the 2006 Skinner Prize to Dr. Varavudh Suteethorn from the Research and Museum Division Bureau of the Geological Survey (Department of Mineral Resources) in Thailand. (Xiaoming Wang)

STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Four diverse students sat on the Student Committee at the SVP Annual Meeting at Ottawa: Kerin Claeson, Student Chair—PhD student; Andrew Farke, former Student Chair—PhD candidate; Stephen Brusatte, Master’s student; Eugenia Leone, undergraduate—first-year attendant.

The Student Round Table at Ottawa was successful and informative for students in most cases. The list of round-table topics and panel members was as follows:

- Finding Non-Academic Jobs in Paleontology—ReBecca Hunt, Augustana College
- Finding Academic Jobs in Paleontology—Pat O’Connor, Ohio University
- NSF Grants and Fellowships—John Damuth, National Science Foundation
- Graduate School—Blaine Schubert, East Tennessee State University
- Organizing a Field Project—Karen Samonds, Redpath Museum, and Doug Boyer, Stony Brook University
- Creating an SVP Talk—Ryosuke Motani, University of California, Davis
- Applying for Collection Permits—Dale Hanson, Bureau of Land Management
- Research Opportunities in Wyoming—Scott Hartman, Wyoming Dinosaur Center
- Preparing a Successful Poster Presentation—David Eberth, Royal Tyrrell Museum of Natural History
- Preparing an SVP Abstract—Jason Head, University of Toronto at Mississauga
- Fieldwork Opportunities in Paleontology—Richard Stucky, Denver Museum of Nature and Science
- Publishing in *JVP*—Robert Reisz, University of Toronto at Mississauga
- Field Work Opportunities in Utah—Mike Getty and Mark Loewen, University of Utah
- Preparing a Curriculum Vitae—Chris Brochu, University of Iowa

- Applying for Grants—Johannes Mueller, Humboldt Museum
- Using the Paleobiology Database—Matt Carrano, Smithsonian Institution

Several students expressed concern about applying to graduate programs. At the Austin meeting, I will solicit recently admitted graduate students to sit as panel members in addition to faculty members involved with the admissions process.

Editors from *JVP* expressed interest in creating a workshop to involve graduate students in peer review and editing at the journal. This will likely take place in the form of a round table at the Austin meeting although a more-formal workshop could happen.

We saw a large crowd eager to collect reprints at the Student Reprint Exchange. Our stock of reprints was low at the end. We need to solicit more papers from a wider group of researchers. I would like to see more student authors contribute to the exchange.

The first raffle to raise money for student travel grants was held during the reprint exchange. The Student Committee raised approximately $200 matched by the Executive Committee at a 2:1 rate. The prize from the raffle was a free student membership and was awarded to Christopher Noto from Stony Brook University.

For the student evaluation program, six students were evaluated by 15 different people.

The Student Committee intends to follow-up on efforts started two years ago to quantify the number of women vs. men signing up for platform talks at the meetings.

Eugenia Leone is generating a report on her experience as an undergraduate attending SVP for the first time. I hope to have her letter published in a newsletter. (Karin Claeson)

STUDENT POSTER PRIZE COMMITTEE

The Student Poster Prize Committee unanimously selected Laura Porro (University of Cambridge) as the first-place winner of the 2006 SVP Student Poster Prize for her outstanding poster presentation: “Cranial biomechanics of basal ornithischians using finite element analysis.” A photograph of Laura with her poster can be viewed under that award posting.

The Student Poster Prize Committee also unanimously chose to recognize Tatsuya Hirasawa (University of Tokyo) as runner up in the 2006 SVP Student Poster Prize competition for his excellent poster presentation: “Kinematics of theropod rib cages and their implications for the respiratory systems.”

Thirty-six posters were submitted to the competition and 32 were presented at the Annual Meeting in Ottawa. These numbers represent a significant increase in presentations over each of the past three years (24 in 2003, 21 in 2004, 21 in 2005). The increase appears to correlate with the higher awareness about the competition that was generated by the business office due to their reorganized procedures and their Web site announcements in the spring of 2006. In particular, the Committee thanks Kate VanZanten (Sherwood Group) for her efforts and energy. Given this improved response, the Committee encourages the business office to continue raising the profile of all student award competitions during the winter and spring convention-organizing period that precedes each meeting.

With this year’s increase in presentations and reduced attendance by Committee members, it was more difficult to ensure that each poster was reviewed by at least three judges (our standing policy). Thus, we recommend that the Committee maintain a group of at least 12 judges to draw on as needs require. Not every judge need participate each year, and it is understood that not all judges will attend every Annual Meeting.

The scientific quality of posters was good this year, with three finalists presenting on a broad group of topics that engaged the Committee's range of expertise. The overall quality of presentation style and adherence to stylistic rules and guidelines was consistent, indicating that students are paying close attention to the rules and regulations supplied on the SVP Web pages. Although spoken English was a challenge for one of the finalists, all three finalists were able to explain and defend their work to the satisfaction of the Committee.

The Committee applauds the executive and awards banquet organizers for recognizing the achievements of two students (Laura Porro and Tatsuya Hirasawa) during the 2006 Awards Banquet. We encourage the Executive Committee to continue to allow the Student Poster Prize Committee to formally recognize a runner-up in the future should the Committee see the need for such recognition. While costing nothing, the positive impact of such recognition is great.

In 2005 and 2006, Judd Case and David Eberth (respectively) participated in the Student Round Table forums, answering a steady stream of questions on poster presentations in general, and how to compete for the Student Poster Prize, specifically. We thank Andy Farke for this wonderful opportunity to get the word out about posters, and we encourage future organizers of the event to include a representative from the Student Poster Prize Committee.

The Committee recognizes the contributions and collegial spirit of Greg Erickson, who now steps down to devote this time to other activities, and welcomes Don Henderson (Royal Tyrrell Museum, expertise in functional morphology and computer modeling) as his replacement. We also recognize the replacement of Committee Chair David Eberth with Laura MacLatchy for the 2007 business year.

Heading into 2007, the Student Poster Prize Committee will consist of: Laura MacLatchy, incoming chair; David A. Eberth, outgoing chair; Alison Murray; Judd Case; Jaap Hillenius; Gerald Grellet-Tinner; Joanna Wright; Tamaki Sato; François Therrien; Don Henderson, incoming member.

It has been a greatly rewarding experience for me to serve as a member of the Committee and, more recently, as its chair. It has also been deeply satisfying to observe the improvement in presentation quality of posters at SVP during these many years. (David Eberth)

– COMMITTEE LISTINGS –

Click here to search for committee information:
http://www.vertpaleo.org/committees/committeeSearch.htm

– AWARD WINNERS –

Richard Estes Memorial Grant—Juliana Sterli

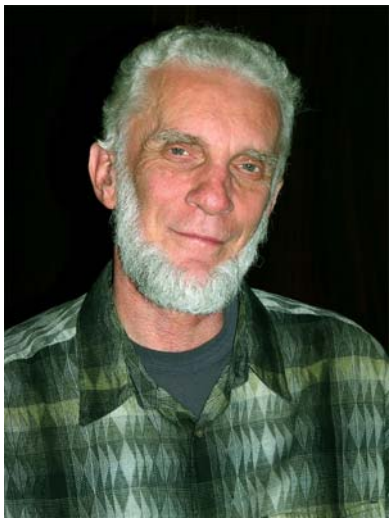
First of all, I would like to thank to the Committee of the Richard Estes Memorial Grant to give me this opportunity that will allow me to improve my knowledge in the field of fossil turtle research. I am very honored to receive this award.

I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1980. Since a little girl I have enjoyed reading all about natural sciences in general and paleontology in particular. When I finished high school I started to study biology at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata in 1998. As an undergraduate student I collaborated for three years in the Department of Paleontology at the Museo de La Plata.

In 2004 I finished my degree studies and started with my doctoral studies on the systematics and paleobiogeography of continental fossil turtles based on material from Jurassic deposits of Patagonia. Since 2004 I have held a doctoral fellowship from CONICET (National Council of Scientific and Technical Research) and work at the Museo de Historia Natural de San Rafael under the direction of Dr. Marcelo de la Fuente.

Because of the lack of fossil and extant turtle collections in Argentina, this award will allow me to visit the most important collections in the United States and collect data to perform a phylogenetic analysis including fossil and extant species. Although my doctoral thesis is on fossil turtles, I am interested in the integration of morphological and molecular information on extant species as well.

Joseph T. Gregory Award—John R. Bolt



John R. Bolt is currently Curator of Fossil Amphibians and Reptiles in the Department of Geology, Field Museum, and formerly Department Chair. He served for five years as Treasurer of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology; during that time and continuing to the present he has also been either Chair or Member of the Financial Oversight Committee. His election as Treasurer departed from the previous practice of electing a single Secretary/Treasurer. This change represented a recognition that the Society's growing membership and increasing complexity required separation of the Secretary/Treasurer's functions. These factors also led, during John's tenure as Treasurer, to a number of changes in the Society's business operations including the decision to employ an association-management firm.

As an undergraduate in geology at Michigan State University, John decided on a career in vertebrate paleontology. In his senior year he was accepted into several VP programs including those at the University of Chicago and the University of Michigan. The latter explains how he came to spend a summer in the Pleistocene of (mostly) Meade County, Kansas, with Claude Hibbard's field crew, which that summer included Margaret Stevens and Rick Zakrzewski.

Following this summer in Meade County, John began graduate work with E. C. Olson at Chicago. Field work with Ole in the Lower Permian of northern Texas was a revelation to a Midwestern boy: this had to be the hottest place on earth, at least in July. John had no sooner decided to do a thesis on some Lower Permian tetrapod(s), than a project found him. A commercial collector had sent Ole some tiny tetrapod specimens for identification. These came from the famous Lower Permian Fort Sill fissure fills in southwestern Oklahoma, and their state of preservation was amazing despite the fact that they had been prepared with an Air-Dent. John determined that they looked like dissorophid temnospondyls, but the dentition was unique: all specimens were missing crowns, yet the tooth bases looked as though they had all been planed off at the same height, not broken. By coincidence Parsons and Williams had recently published their work on modern amphibian relationships, emphasizing the unique bicuspid and pedicellate teeth of lissamphibians. Collecting trips to Fort Sill soon resulted in much more material, and definitive association of lissamphibian-type teeth with this little dissorophoid temnospondyl. John named the new taxon *Doleserpeton annectens*, and argued that it supported earlier suggestions of a

relationship between dissorophoids and the origin of lissamphibians. This work was the beginning of John's long-standing interest in dissorophoids, the origin of lissamphibians, and the fauna of the Fort Sill deposits.

After graduation from the University of Chicago, John spent several years at the University of Illinois Medical Center, which he left for a position at the Field Museum. Together with Bob DeMar he began work on patterns of tooth replacement in polyphyodont vertebrates, especially Paleozoic tetrapods. The multiple-tooth-rowed captorhinomorphs presented a particularly interesting problem: it was obvious that these animals had replacement, but the mechanism was not clear. A histological study with Armand de Ricqlès, of *Captorhinus aguti* (another Fort Sill species) suggested an answer. *Captorhinus aguti* apparently used a system involving growth of the dentary medially, with addition of new teeth, and loss of teeth laterally due to bone remodelling.

Continuing his interest in lissamphibian origins, John began discussing the subject with Eric Lombard, of the Department of Organismal Biology and Anatomy at the University of Chicago. Their intent to study the evolution of the anuran ear was expanded into a general study of the evolution of the tetrapod ear. The anuran-ear paper they had initially contemplated appeared several years later, and proposed that anurans are most closely related to dissorophoids. This was followed by a paper on the evolution of the stapes, and John and Eric have continued to collaborate on other studies.

Although most of John's field work has been in the Lower Permian of the southwestern U.S., with excursions into the Triassic, he always wanted to collect Mississippian or Devonian tetrapods. He is still waiting for the Devonian opportunity; but he got a chance at the Upper Mississippian, thanks to the generosity of the Iowa Geological Survey. This was a locality near the town of Delta in southeastern Iowa, an abandoned quarry that has produced hundreds of specimens of tetrapods and "fish." The latter led to John's first nontetrapod paper, a study of the lungfish *Tranodis castrensis* with Hans-Peter Schultze. The most abundant species at Delta is a stem tetrapod christened *Whatcheeria deltae* by John and Eric Lombard. They have since published other studies on the Delta fauna, and their work on this fascinating fauna continues. John feels very fortunate to have the chance to collect and study one of the few Mississippian tetrapod localities in the world, and is excited about continuing this and other projects.

Honorary Membership—Rufus Churcher and David Webb

C. S. (Rufus) Churcher

I was born on 21 March 1928. My first memories of fossils were of finding sharks' teeth and sea urchin spines and tests in the Cretaceous chalks of the North Downs in Kent, England, when I must have been five or six years old in about 1934. I kept wanting to find a complete skeleton! My next fossil meeting was in 1938–39 with cave faunas in Malta where my father commanded part of the coastal defense during Mussolini's invasion of Albania and Greece. The dwarf elephants and red deer from the cavern of Mnaidra and the underground conduits fascinated me. When World War II broke out in 1939, I was in Long Island visiting my grandparents, but had the good fortune of going to the World's Fair in Flushing Meadows and the American Museum of Natural History. My mother and I rejoined my father in England in September with its wartime restrictions. I remember the silver barrage balloons over Southampton as the S.S. *United States* docked. Thus I was schooled in the United Kingdom, and spent the war there, growing up British rather than American! Fossils were hard to find as gasoline was rationed and all coastal areas were mined or covered in barbed wire, and so unavailable to curious boys.

At the war's end, I went AWOL from the RAF and returned to New York with my mother. I then renewed my acquaintance with the AMNH's wondrous exhibits of dinosaurs and extinct mammals. My parents decided to meet up in South Africa and in 1947 I enrolled for a three-year science degree at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg (Pmb). While there I became familiar with the basic rock units of the green hills of Natal and Zululand by spending weekends rock climbing, and learned some simple Karroo stratigraphy. In vacations I joined my parents on their farm in Kenya and camped in the bush and tracked game. In 1950, I briefly studied forestry at Oxford University, but "Hoppice Feet" and "Petersburg Standards" did not keep my attention, so I switched to geology. However, family matters forced me to return to Kenya. In 1951, my professors at Pmb offered to let me take an honors fourth year in zoology, which I accepted. I was persuaded to apply, successfully, for a Council for Scientific and Industrial Research scholarship to do an MSc in vertebrate paleontology at the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, under John T. Robinson. I inherited Robert Broom's desk, with sketches of Karroo reptiles on the backs of bills and laundry lists, and the drawers filled with pill boxes from which single tablets had been removed—tried by Broom for effectiveness! My topic was the fossil Hyracoidea or dassies in the Transvaal Caves, with the quid pro quo that I was to be Robinson's preparator. Thus I prepared many fossils, both Pleistocene from the caves and Karroo mammal-like reptiles, with the advantage of a once-in-a-lifetime chance to become familiar with the famous "Mrs. Ples" and the crested *Paranthropus*, and the cave breccias, as well as learning considerable anatomy of many vertebrates.

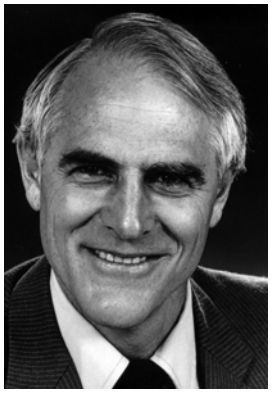
In 1953, with a Master's in my bag, I went via Kenya to the United States. Now, infected by the paleobug, I approached G. G. Simpson who, surprisingly, accepted me as his student but, because the AMNH was then giving degrees through Columbia University and Columbia would not accept my South African advanced degrees without much repetition, insisting that I repeat my final undergraduate year's courses, I declined their arrangement. Harvard had the same academic reaction. In 1954, while visiting Canadian cousins in Ontario, I tried to study in Toronto with Loris S. Russell, but he had moved to the National Museum of Canada in Ottawa and could not accept students. However, the University of Toronto (U/T) accepted me into a PhD program in mammalogy with my degrees taken at face value. I studied the taxonomy of the red fox in North America under Randolph L. Peterson in the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), from whom I acquired the then up-to-date understanding of mammalian subspecies. I instructed in mammalogy and vertebrate dissection during those years and so learned the North American fauna both inside and out! Upon graduation, and looking for a position in Australia in dingo control, I was offered a lectureship in Zoology at U/T with conditions that outweighed the Aussie offer. T. H. Huxley could turn down U/T, but I did not think I could!

I soon reverted from modern mammals to fossil ones, first being interested in the Toronto region's Pleistocene Don Valley Beds or the Hamilton Bay deposits. Subsequently the ROM (Vertebrate Palaeontology) acquired a fine collection of tar-seep vertebrates from Talara, Peru, and I worked on its dire-wolves, camels, sabre-tooth cats, and horses. Loris S. Russell had noted Pleistocene mammal remains in sands and gravels in the Canadian prairies, and in 1965 suggested to Archibald MacS. Stalker of the Geological Survey of Canada that I could serve as vertebrate paleontologist to his stratigraphic geologist in a survey of the Quaternary deposits of the western prairies. This resulted in the discovery of the Medicine Hat Buried Valley's multiple tills with sands between, in which were numerous faunas from various interstadial or interglacial beds. Funds became scarcer and so possibilities of field work in that area diminished, but Stalker and I had established that there was a plentiful Pleistocene fossil record in Canada, from the Peace River area through Alberta south of Edmonton and Saskatchewan south of Saskatoon to Fort Qu'Appelle. At this time, 1980, I was asked by Anthony J. Mills of the ROM (Egyptology) to join the Dakhleh Oasis Project (DOP) as its faunal anatomist and paleontologist, with some geological responsibilities. This has resulted in the stratigraphic description of a vanished 50 by 20 km paleolake in the Dakhleh Oasis basin, and the description of the Middle Pleistocene Iron Balls paleofauna of African facies from its deposits. The opportunities to roam over wide areas of sedimentary deposits without hindrance were incredible. I even slipped from the high horse of

Quaternary mammals to the Late Cretaceous littoral and marine reptiles and fish of the Tethyan Seaway, and collected many specimens. I am still involved in DOP operations in the field for some four to six weeks and working up my finds at home: both provide me with a wonderful scientific outlet now that I am no longer at the university.

I consider I have been most fortunate in being able to make a career in a calling that still fascinates me, to have had the facilities and libraries of a first-class museum and a renowned university, to have had the joy of invigorating graduate students, and even the pleasures of lecturing to so many inquiring minds and administration for a worthwhile cause, and the resources of many inspiring colleagues. I lectured courses in comparative vertebrate and dental anatomy, mammalogy, and vertebrate paleontology among many. I have been able to travel widely and pursue my interests in *Smilodon*, African and Canadian Quaternary faunas, and, against my better judgement perhaps, an entanglement in equine taxonomy and dental morphology. Add to this the satisfaction of elucidating obscure aspects of vertebrate paleontology and function, and I admit that vertebrate paleontology has given me a most satisfying career.

S. David Webb



Dave was imprinted early by motorcycle forays into the Mojave Desert with his rockhound dad. In high school his love of desert geology was reinforced by the late Ray Alf's fossil trips. Ray inspired many students at Webb School, a preparatory institution founded by Dave's great uncle. One October morning when Ray's troops were combing Red Rock Canyon, Dave's encounter with a *Merychippus* maxillary produced in him a profound epiphany. Burning questions arose: "What did these teeth masticate?"; "How long did this animal live?"; "Why did it die?"; Where is the rest of it?"; "Why did it have three toes?"; "Are we sure it really had three toes?". That desert day witnessed the birth of a paleobiologist.

For another decade, however, that destiny lay latent. The heady intellectual air of Cornell University led our young scientist to believe that the highest calling was nuclear physics. Even when courses in geology and evolution seemed more enthralling than math and physics, the myth persisted. Then, as fate would have it, R. A. Stirton dropped into Ithaca and gave an exhilarating account of the Berkeley team's work in the Tertiary of Australia, replete with an Oligocene koala from the "Red Center." What really got Dave was Stirt's blood-curdling imitation of a dingo call. The moral here is that one's career choices ought to follow one's heart not one's head. And so off to Berkeley with a major in zoology and a minor in geology.

Living in Berkeley, newly married, with an NSF fellowship, our California pilgrim was very comfortable, despite minor guilt pangs over Congress's and his draft board's apparent belief that his scientific endeavors would help the U.S. beat the Russians to the moon. The faculty were fabulous. The most cosmopolitan course was surely Charles Camp's "History of Paleontology." Equally stimulating was the extraordinarily productive group of fellow grad students.

The next summer Dave hired on at the Yale Peabody Museum as curatorial assistant to Joe Gregory. A year later Joe came to Berkeley where he became the first of three successive graduate supervisors. The next two were Don Savage and R. A. Stirton. It was Stirt who sensed that Dave's primary interests were paleobiological and wisely steered Dave to the rich late Miocene faunas of Cherry County, Nebraska. While that dissertation was gestating, Dave's son, Alex, was born in the Cherry County Hospital, just in time to scurry west for the fall semester.

In 1964 academic jobs were relatively plentiful. After considering Fairbanks, Seattle, and Boston, Dave signed on in Gainesville, Florida. That turned out to be an excellent growth opportunity. Clayton Ray, who had just moved on to the Smithsonian, helped immensely, pointing out the major field opportunities. It was exciting to begin filling regional gaps in the early Hemphillian, late

Blancan, and early Irvingtonian, including underwater excavations. It was astonishing to a westerner to realize that subtle and even nonexistent outcrops could yield magnificent mammalian morphology. While developing several rich Florida faunas the curious prevalence of edentates intensified Dave's interest in what he called "the Great American Interchange." Meanwhile the success of Florida field work showed him the need to balance input from field work with output from publications. One solution was a book titled *Pleistocene Mammals of Florida* into which Dave and his students funneled much of their primary research.

That was also the year that Dave received a Guggenheim Fellowship which, combined with an NSF grant and a sabbatical year, provided a broadening year of museum-hopping in western Europe. And two years later Yale beckoned with a visiting professorship. That second affiliation with "Mother Yale" was just as rewarding as the first. Among many highlights Dave recalls serving with John Ostrom as a vintner in one of Yale's colleges. Other long visitations in those middle years included the Field Museum and the Quaternary Research Center in Seattle. Another assignment combining science and geopolitics was to lead the U.S. delegation to the International Quaternary Association's meeting in Beijing. The year was 1991, two years after the Tianamen Square incident. Thanks to behind-the-scenes labors of many scientists in many national academies, the freedom of scientific inquiry and exchange triumphed over politics.

The greatest honor in Dave's professional career came as a most improbable byproduct of his work on the Great American Interchange. George Gaylord Simpson, his lifelong hero, inquired if the Florida Museum would be interested in his scientific library. The University of Florida, it seemed, was not so well-endowed with library resources as many universities, yet it gave signs of maintaining a long-term commitment to research in areas conformable with the corpus of Simpson's work. Dave then joined the board of the SIMROE Foundation and met with them every year until Simpson's death. He was then called by Anne Roe to attend the memorial service and to transport the library east. The Simpson Library continues to grow and occupies a place of pride in the research program of the Florida Museum.

Other joys of Dave's work have included collaborations with students and colleagues on a wide array of paleobiological projects. Increasingly, the best studies required multiple years and multiple collaborators. At Leisey Shell Pit, the richest Irvingtonian site in the world, hundreds of people from Tampa Bay carefully dug their squares under the supervision of the Florida Museum crew. The Love Bone Bed, from its humble beginning as an okra patch, took seven years to yield a major Clarendonian fauna. Most recently Dave's 20-year underwater project is finally being published as a multi-author book entitled *First Floridians and Last Mastodons*" (see Publications). Another project that has to be mentioned is Dave Whistler's "goat camel." Some camels are said to be constructed by committees, but *Capricamelus* required two Daves. This camel collaboration took place at the Los Angeles County Museum where Dave Webb had published *The Osteology of Camelops* four decades earlier.

And then came retirement. Barbara and Dave both love western vistas, and Anaconda, Montana, lies in the heart of some spectacular country halfway between Yellowstone and Glacier. Previous service to the SVP as Member-at-Large, as President, and, with Bruce MacFadden, as the keeper of the central office when it resided in Gainesville, was no trouble. This award of Honorary Membership is deeply appreciated.

John J. Lanzendorf Paleoart Prize: Two Dimensional Art—Mark Fordham

After years of showing in galleries and museums as a realist artist in the fine-art world (chronicled in an in-depth interview in *American Artist Magazine* 1991), Mark Fordham entered the visual effects world when the movie *Jurassic Park* created a computer revolution in Hollywood.

In the last ten years, he has garnered an Emmy nomination, three Gemini nominations, one Gemini win, and a nomination from the Visual Effects Society for matte painting.

Two years ago, Mark and his wife Dianne created Matte FX Inc., a company that has been specializing in documentaries and films with an emphasis on the prehistoric. Last year, Matte FX completed visual-effects art direction on National Geographic's *Sky Monsters*, as well as creating images of prehistoric sea creatures for the magazine's 2005 article entitled "Sea Monsters." Matte FX is currently involved with a documentary on the ages of Earth in conjunction with the renowned Meteor Studios.

Mark also accepts many private commissions to create paintings and sculptures of animals in the more-traditional mediums of bronze and oil painting. His works can be found in private and public collections throughout Canada and the United States.

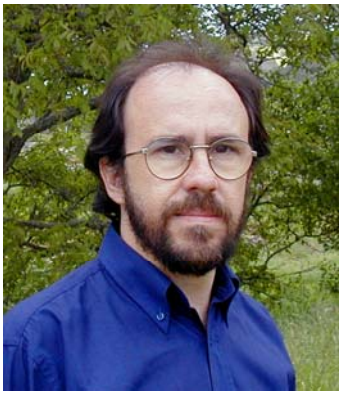
He is currently in the stages of a museum show in Canada where he hopes to merge fine art, visual effects, and paleoart in a show creating landscapes of the prehistoric worlds in digital matte painting.

John J. Lanzendorf Paleoart Prize: Three-Dimensional Art—Michael Anderson

Right out of art school, Michael Anderson took a job in the Vertebrate Paleontology Department at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Not even sure what vertebrate paleontology meant, he was put to work reconstructing the skeleton of *Meiolania*, a horned turtle from the Cretaceous. This, and other work at the museum, kindled an interest in anatomy. After completing a medical illustration program in Chicago, where he learned medical modelmaking, maxillofacial prosthetics, and facial reconstruction, Michael became a preparator at the Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale. At the Peabody Museum, he has produced an oversized luna moth, the prehistoric giant dragonfly *Meganueropsis*, and facial reconstructions of a Neanderthal and *Australopithecus*.

The *Torosaurus* statue was a collaborative project with many other talented artists and paleontologists. The artist would like to thank all those who helped in its making.

John J. Lanzendorf Paleoart Prize: Scientific Illustration—Mauricio Antón



Mauricio Antón has been a full-time paleo-artist since 1987. His career was launched when he painted a series of murals depicting life in the Tertiary for the Sabadell Museum in Spain. Since then, he has created artwork for museum exhibits worldwide, including the Museo de Ciencias Naturales de Madrid, the Florida Museum of Natural History, and the American Museum of Natural History. He has co-authored and illustrated numerous books, including *The Big Cats and Their Fossils Relatives*, *Mammoths, Sabertooths, and Hominids*, and *Evolving Eden*. He has illustrated and authored many popular articles, and collaborated with the BBC and the Discovery Channel in developing documentary films including *Wild New*

World, *Sabretooth*, and *Walking with Beasts*. Mauricio's artwork is inseparable from his research on the anatomy of fossil vertebrates, which has been published in academic journals including the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology,* the *Journal of Human Evolution*, and the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. Most recently, Mauricio is exploring the applications of computer-graphic imaging and animation to paleoart. He collaborates regularly with leading paleontologists, studies collections all over the world, participates in excavations, and travels to pristine habitats in search of information and inspiration.

Bryan Patterson Memorial Grant—Randall B. Irmis and Barbara Sanchez-Hernandez

Randall B. Irmis

I grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, Illinois; my early interest in geology and natural history was equally influenced by visits to the Field Museum and trips to the rolling hills of southwestern Wisconsin. I moved west to Northern Arizona University for my undergraduate degree where I received a B.S. in geology (with an emphasis in paleontology) in 2004. While there, the fantastic outdoor geological laboratory that is the southern Colorado Plateau initiated my interest in Triassic vertebrate paleontology, particularly the assemblages found within the Upper Triassic Chinle Formation. This resulted in three summers of field work at Petrified Forest National Park under the direction of park paleontologist Bill Parker. After completing my undergraduate degree, I began my PhD at the University of California–Berkeley, and have continued field work in the early Mesozoic of the Colorado Plateau.

My PhD project focuses on understanding the origins, interrelationships, and initial diversification of early dinosaurs. As part of this research, I am co-leading a field project with colleagues from the American Museum of Natural History and Field Museum of Natural History in the Upper Triassic Chinle Formation of northern New Mexico to excavate a new quarry containing some of the earliest North American dinosaurs. Funding from the Bryan Patterson Award will allow me to conduct field work that places this quarry and other localities in the area into a better stratigraphic and paleoenvironmental context. This work will hopefully lead to a better understanding of the vertebrate faunal changes occurring through time in the Late Triassic of northern New Mexico.

Barbara Sanchez-Hernandez

I was born and brought up in Spain. Although I've moved to many different cities, it is in Soria and Teruel provinces where I conducted my most important paleontological projects.

In the summer of 1994, I participated in my first major excavation campaign. During November and December of 1994, I volunteered to sieve sediments from the Atapuerca outcrop, close to Soria province. In the summer of 1998 I collaborated in the paleontological campaign of the Torralba-Ambrona outcrop in Soria province, assisting my great friend and adviser, Dr. Carmen Sesé (Natural History Museum of Madrid, Spain). Also in Soria I led two paleontological prospecting campaigns: one in Carazuelo (2003–2004) where we obtained more than 54 fossil remains of *Tempskya riojana*, conifers, and *Cycadeoidea* indet.; and the other in 2005–2006 studying the pterosaur tracks.

Simultaneously in July 2004, I started my PhD project under the supervision of Prof. Michael J. Benton at the University of Bristol, U.K. At the end of my first year I described a basal sauropod, *Galveosaurus herreroi*, which shares some features with the British *Cetiosaurus oxoniensis*.

Getting this award has been very motivating and encourages me to pursue futher research in this field; it will contribute to improve the knowledge of the Mesozoic paleontology of northern Spain.

Predoctoral Fellowship Grant—John A. Finarelli

My current research centers on the mammalian clade Carnivora, with emphasis on the suborder Caniformia. The Caniformia are ideally suited for investigating the role fossil data play in testing evolutionary hypotheses, because they possess a well-sampled fossil record and a large extant diversity to compare past evolutionary patterns with the living species. My primary research interest focuses on two main areas: 1) phylogenetic reconstruction of groups using evidence from both morphologic and molecular data sets, and 2) the quantification of character-state evolution and the mechanisms behind evolutionary trends in character evolution with respect to phylogenetic hypotheses.The combination of morphological and molecular data into phylogenetic analyses represents a powerful tool for understanding not only the evolutionary relationships of extant taxa, but also for successfully integrating extinct lineages into the phylogenetic framework of extant lineages. I am compiling a matrix of morphological and molecular characters, in an effort to resolve the phylogenetic relationships among fossil and extant lineages.

Phylogenies represent primary hypotheses against which one can test hypotheses of character evolution through time. This leads to the second facet of my current research program: developing quantitative approaches for the analysis of the evolution of body size and relative brain size with respect to a phylogenetic framework. I have been able to demonstrate that incorporating both character data and temporal information from the fossil record increases the accuracy and precision of character reconstruction, even in the presence of evolutionary trends. These results have improved our understanding of body-size evolution among caniform carnivorans, documenting that small body size was the ancestral condition for several lineages that later attained large body size in parallel.

Relative brain size has been hypothesized to increase through evolutionary time among the Carnivora, although sample size and lack of a phylogenetic framework have made hypothesis testing difficult. I have developed a method for estimating brain size for fossil taxa and applied it to the fossil record of the Caniformia. From this expanded data set, I have recovered evidence of relative brain-size increase across the Caniformia. Furthermore, within the well-sampled caniform clade, Canidae (dogs), there is evidence that this shift can be isolated to a single branch of the canid phylogeny.

I am very honored to accept the SVP Predoctoral Award for 2006, and I would like to thank the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology and the Award committee.

The Preparator's Grant—Guntupalli V. R. Prasad

I was borne on 22 November 1958 in a farmer's family in Sekuru village of Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh state in southern India. In my formative years, I was inspired by late Dr. S. Subba Rao, Reader in Geology at Vikram University, Ujjain (Central India) and a native of my village to elect geology as a subject at graduation level. The interactions with him during his visits to our village

and his briefings on how rocks are formed in nature and how the history of life can be gleaned from the rocks had generated considerable interest in me for Earth Sciences.

Later in 1982, the University Grants Commission (New Delhi) Junior Research Fellowship took me to the Centre of Advanced Study in Geology, Panjab University, Chandigarh in northern India where I pursued my doctoral research on the Late Cretaceous vertebrate fauna of Deccan intertrappean biota of Andhra Pradesh. At Panjab university, I received the basic training in vertebrate paleontological research methodology under the tutelage of Prof. Ashok Sahni, a well-known vertebrate paleontologist of India.

After completing my PhD in 1986, I joined the faculty of the Geology Department at Jammu University, Jammu and Kashmir state, northern India. This was also the time during which a debate linking Deccan Volcanism to K/T boundary extinctions began. With the objective of understanding the effects of Deccan volcanism on contemporaneous biota at the actual site of eruption, I had worked on the biota from the sedimentary beds intercalated with Deccan volcanic flows in many parts of peninsular India. This led to the discovery of the first Cretaceous mammals from India. Subsequently, I got interested in the evolution of vertebrate fauna on the Indian subcontinent during its northward journey and its implications for the paleobiogeography of the Indian plate. In pursuance of these objectives, I have been working for several years on the Mesozoic vertebrate fauna of India, particularly Mesozoic mammals from the Upper Triassic Maleri Formation and Jurassic Kota Formation of Pranhita-Godavari valley, and several Lower and Upper Cretaceous formations of peninsular India. For the last two years, I have been trying to convince the authorities of Jammu University about the need to establish a natural history museum in Jammu and finally succeeded in getting a formal approval from the university. Hopefully the museum building will be completed by next year. The SVP Preparator's Grant will greatly help me in developing a preparation lab at the proposed museum and also in disseminating the knowledge gained during my training at the AMNH to researchers and students from other Indian universities and research institutes. I express my deep sense of gratitude to the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology and the Preparator's Grant Committee for considering me worthy of this grant.

Alfred Sherwood Romer Prize—Nadia Fröbisch

I have my first memory of vertebrate paleontology when I was five years old and my parents took my two sisters and me to the Senckenberg Museum in Frankfurt, Germany. I can still remember how fascinated I was by this visit. I grew up surrounded by Devonian rocks in the small town of Gummersbach in western Germany and spent a lot of time during my childhood collecting trilobites and crinoids. But my heart was always with vertebrate paleontology and I had made my choice to study geology/paleontology at the University of Bonn a few years before I graduated from high school. After my undergraduate diploma at the University of Bonn, I spent a year as a visiting student at the University of Calgary and during that time also spent some time as a volunteer at the Royal Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller. I returned to Bonn to finish my diploma (MSc equivalent). For my thesis I worked on a Middle Triassic ichthyosaur from Nevada under the supervision of Martin Sander. This was a great project involving visits to the Museum of Paleontology of the UC Berkeley and the Field Museum in Chicago, which sparked my continuous interest in marine reptiles. The Institute of Paleontology of the University of Bonn provided a stimulating environment and I had a great time there. I wanted to broaden my experience and pursue my

PhD studies in North America and was excited when Bob Carroll accepted me in fall 2003 as his student at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. I have a year left until I finish my PhD, for which I study different aspects of the ontogeny and life history of Paleozoic amphibians in comparison with modern amphibian taxa—a project that taught me a great deal of new approaches and methods.

I have many people to thank, first of all my parents who always supported me and fueled my interest with books and museum visits (even when I grew up and still wanted to be a paleontologist) and my husband Jörg Fröbisch, who shares my passion for vertebrate paleontology. Also, I want to thank Bob Carroll for introducing me to the project that showed me what great study objects amphibians are and for sharing his enthusiasm and encyclopedic knowledge. Hans Larsson offered his support and a constant stream of ideas and helpful suggestions. And last but not least, I thank my fellow students and friends of the McGill deep time specialist lab and the Reisz Paleontology laboratory in Toronto for great discussions, moral support, and many fun hours.

As an “academic grandchild” of Alfred S. Romer, I am particularly honored that I was chosen to receive the A. S. Romer prize of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Thank you very much!

A. S. Romer—G. G. Simpson Medal—William A. Clemens

My introduction to vertebrate paleontology came when, as a boy, I visited my grandfather’s homestead in Goshen Hole, eastern Wyoming. Around the homestead dark blue fragments of titanothere enamel and cream-colored fragments of bone weathering out of richly fossiliferous exposures of the Chadron Formation piqued my curiosity. Many years later at the University of California a course taught by R. A. Stirton (Stirt) revitalized and expanded my interest in fossil vertebrates.

During my first year in graduate school at Berkeley I had the common dilemma of searching for a dissertation research project. Although it would be news to me, events of the preceding summer offered a remarkable opportunity. While working on the Four Mile fauna of Colorado—this project involved Malcolm’s pioneering application of the underwater-screening technique to early Cenozoic deposits—Malcolm McKenna, Don Savage, and Les Kent wanted a change in scene. They told me that they chose to go to eastern Wyoming and prospect in the Lance Formation in hopes of finding a few—but not too many—interesting fossil mammals. Their hopes were unexpectedly shattered by Les’s discovery of the richly fossiliferous site that became known as Lull 2 quarry. Richard Estes and I had the opportunity to apply underwater screening to this and subsequently discovered localities and study the resulting large collections of microvertebrates. This opportunity set me on the trail of Mesozoic mammals, an area of research that continues to occupy my interest.

At Berkeley I was able to gain from studying with Don Savage—who tolerantly was my major professor—Stirt, Charles Camp, Sam Welles, Ralph Chaney, and Howell Williams, to mention just a few members of the faculty. By chance I became a member of a remarkable group of graduate students. In addition to Richard and Malcolm, Dick Tedford, Les Marcus, Dave Webb, Jack Wolfe, Jane Gray, and many others contributed to a stimulating program at Berkeley. My experiences in graduate school highlighted the values of a strong academic program covering the diverse fields of paleontology that integrated relevant areas of the earth and biological sciences and was bolstered by the support of field and laboratory research provided by a paleontological museum. As a member of the faculty and a museum curator—first at the University of Kansas and then back at Berkeley—I have worked toward continued development of diverse research and teaching programs.

Through the years I have been lucky to have had the opportunity to work with a large number of very talented students who have certainly expanded my academic horizons. It is a pleasure to be able to sit back and benefit from their continuing contributions to our field. For over 30 years many of my students and I have worked in eastern Montana gaining from the experience and talents of an avocational paleontologist, Harley Garbani. Bob Makela and Jack Horner introduced us to the microvertebrate faunas of the Judith River Formation. More recently we have benefited from being part of Jack's Hell Creek Project. Also I have had the opportunity to gain from time spent working with colleagues at University College London, Royal Holloway College, and the Natural History Museum in London, as well as paleontological institutes in Munich and Bonn. In sum, yes, I am a great believer in the many values of collaborative research projects.

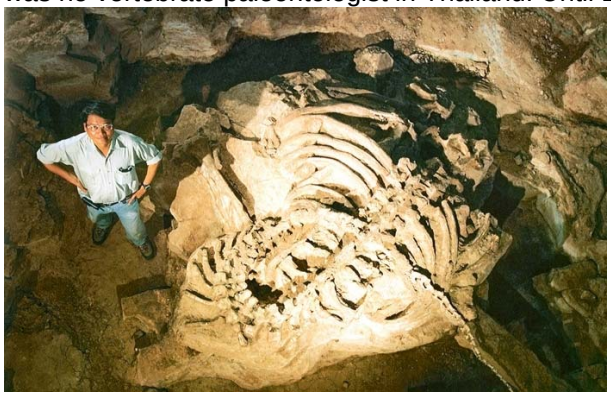
The SVP has played a major role in my career. The first annual meeting I attended was in Ann Arbor in 1958. About 30 to 40 of us gathered in a classroom. The sequence of talks was determined by calling on the participants in sequence according to where they sat in the room. The chair's admonition that contributions should be brief—10 to 15 minutes—fell on deaf ears. How different a meeting from the one we have enjoyed in Ottawa! Some have argued that we should go back to the old style. I am not one of them. Our Society has changed, and I think for the better. We are now an international group of over 2,000 members including dynamic groups of student members, avocational paleontologists, and paleoartists. The SVP now advances our research through expanded annual meetings and publication of the premier journal in our field. It has an increasingly active program of supporting student members. Many members are actively and effectively dealing with the challenges of teaching science—particularly evolution—in our public schools. Others are working toward the development of new laws concerning the collection of vertebrate fossils on state and federal lands. I am honored to be a member of this active, evolving Society.

Finally it is a pleasure to acknowledge the support I have received from my wife, Dorothy, and our children. Through the years they have tolerated my absences on field projects and those long-night stands when I retreated to my study to finish a lecture or put the final polish on a manuscript. Above all we share pleasant memories of gatherings at our home of paleontologists from many corners of the world.

Thank you all for the award of the Romer-Simpson Medal.

Morris F. Skinner Award—Varavudh Suteethorn

Varavudh Suteethorn was born on 10 October 1948, in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand. He received a bachelor's degree in geology from Chiang Mai University in 1967. He began a career in geology in Geological Survey Division, Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) in 1974. He worked around the western and northeastern areas for geological mapping. This work was effective in the discovery of fossils because he found many localities containing fossils. At the beginning, there was no vertebrate paleontologist in Thailand. Until 1980, the dinosaur expedition team was established through the cooperation of the Thai (DMR) and French governments. Varavudh has been part of the team since it started. His work taught him the geology of the northeast very well and led to the dinosaur discovery. He spent much time working in fossil preparation and conservation in France and Canada and received the certificate of vertebrate paleontology from the University of Paris VI, France, in 1986.

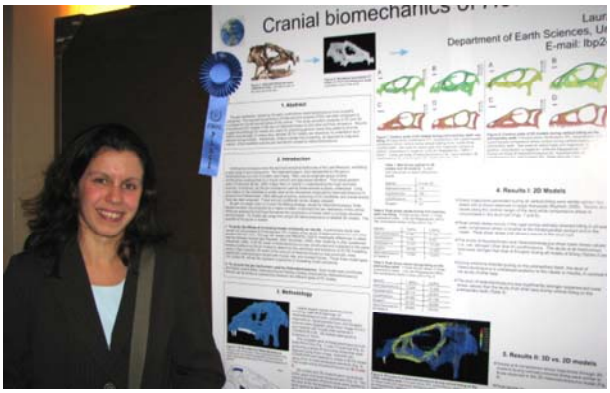


In 1992, Varavudh became a leader of the Thai dinosaur team. He spent most of his time on his work. For 25 years the results have shown the worth of hard work. He discovered many important sites, ranging in age from the Triassic to the Cretaceous of nonmarine Mesozoic rock, mainly in northeastern Thailand (or the “Khorat plateau,” for example “Phu Kum Khao” which is the richest find of dinosaur specimens and “Phu Nam Jun” where more than 300 *Lepidotes* specimens have been found). The team discovered many specimens and published numerous papers both at national and international levels. Among the main results of this cooperation are the discoveries of plants, invertebrate, and vertebrates. For instance, the deposits of the Khorat plateau have yielded 16 species of dinosaurs, including the ancestor of tyrannosaur (*Siamotyrannus isanensis*, described in *Nature* in 1996), and the earliest known sauropod dinosaur (*Isanosaurus attavipachi*, described in *Nature* in 2000). Vertebrates other than dinosaurs also occur, which comprise freshwater sharks, bony fishes, temnospondyl amphibians, turtles, phytosaurs, crocodiles, and pterosaurs.

As part of the team achievement, he is one of the outstanding people who pushed for the establishment of the dinosaur museum, which has been subsequently developed and recently become one of the best dinosaur museums in Southeast Asia. He is not only a dedicated researcher but also an attentive lecturer. He has taught students from kindergartens to the local students, medical students, and teachers. His outstanding research inspired the students to develop interests in paleontology and geology. Moreover, his teaching and training programs gave the teachers more confidence in their careers and helped them to develop teaching techniques in the scientific method for their students. Paleontology, especially dinosaur studies, in Thailand would not have succeeded without him, the first dinosaur hunter of Thailand, and a member of the Thai–French dinosaur expedition team.

Student Poster Prize—Laura B. Porro

I was born in Chicago, Illinois, and grew up in the suburb of Schiller Park. As a child, science was my favorite subject and I was always fascinated by the natural world. After graduating from East Leyden High School, I went on to study biological sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The first class I walked into, however, was an introductory geology course taught by Roy Plotnick. I understood for the first time how the physical earth, its climate, landscapes, and living creatures have all changed through time and influenced each other. Most importantly, it rekindled a passion for dinosaurs and other extinct animals.



I started a second major in earth and environmental sciences and undertook research projects in both degrees, funded in part by a Goldwater Scholarship in 2003. Much of my undegraduate work focused on invertebrates. I looked at the effects of collembolan arthropods on forest communities and using algal mats (modern stromatolites) to track nutrient flow in the McMurdo Dry Valleys of Antarctica. The City of Chicago also presented me with opportunities outside UIC, such as a summer internship and further volunteer work at the Field Museum.

During my fourth year, I read a paper in *Nature* by Emily Rayfield using finite-element analysis (FEA) to study skull function in *Allosaurus*. I was intrigued by the innovative use of this engineering technique to objectively study the biomechanics of extinct animals with no living analogues. I was fortunate to receive a Gates Cambridge Scholarship in 2004, allowing me to work at the University of Cambridge with my supervisors, David Norman (Cambridge) and Emily Rayfield (Bristol). My PhD project involves using FEA as well as skull and muscle reconstructions,

suture analysis, and tooth wear to understand feeding in the enigmatic herbivorous dinosaur *Heterodontosaurus* as well as other primitive ornithischians. By understanding the jaw mechanism and feeding strategies of these early herbivores, I hope to shed light on the origin and early evolution of herbivory in Ornithischia and the later success of this diverse group of dinosaurs.

I would like to thank my supervisors, Emily Rayfield and David Norman, and my colleagues at Cambridge for helpful editorial advice on the poster as well Sunrise Printing Inc. for a superb printing job.

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– NEWS FROM MEMBERS –

CANADA (Kevin Seymour, Canada Editor, kevins@rom.on.ca)

Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Ontario

We are pleased to welcome David Evans as our new curator of dinosaurs. He will start in the spring of 2007. is PhD thesis focused on crested hadrosaurid evolution and ontogeny, with an emphasis on the outstanding record of this group from western Canada. David will set up a research program that will focus on the evolution and biology of Cretaceous ornithischian dinosaurs. He recently submitted a paper on a juvenile *Parasaurolophus* braincase from Dinosaur Provincial Park in Alberta.

Jason Head is now a Research Associate of the department, and has been taking advantage of our extensive comparative collection of skeletonized Recent snakes (as well as vertebrate fossils, of course).

Nicolas Campione, Robert Reisz's graduate student from the University of Toronto, is currently working on a side project with David on the evolution of the atlas-axis complex in ornithischian dinosaurs, with particular reference to hadrosauroids. Andrew Spence, a volunteer from the Museum Studies program, has finished scanning all of W.A. Parks's historic vertebrate fossil publications, which we hope will soon be available for free download.

Our gallery work is finally coming to an end! The Age of Dinosaurs and the Age of Mammals galleries should open some time during the summer of 2007, and then we can get back to whatever we were doing before the galleries intruded into our lives. (Kevin Seymour)

FRANCE (Xiaobo Yu, International Editor, xyu@cougar.kean.edu)

Département Histoire de la Terre, UMR 5143 du CNRS, Paléobiodiversité (Lab. Paléontologie), Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris

Philippe Janvier revisited the Miguasha Museum (Québec) in June 2004, in order to finish some work on exceptionally well-preserved specimens of *Euphanerops* and *Endeiolepis*. In October and November 2004, he returned to field work on the Devonian of Bolivia, and found additional early-middle Devonian chondrichthyan material, which he is currently studying in collaboration with J. Maisey (AMNH). An interesting discovery was that of probable chondrichthyan endoskeletal elements in well-dated Pridolian concretion-bearing beds of the Subandean zone.

Alan Pradel is now beginning his PhD with P. Janvier on early gnathostome braincase anatomy, trying to define the group's morphotypic features. Vicent Pernegre is still working on the inexhaustible collections of pteraspidiform heterostracans, notably from Spitsbergen. Vincent Dupret defended his PhD at the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle of Paris (France), and is presently a postdoc at the Institute of Vertebrate Palaeontology and Palaeoanthropology in Beijing. Taking advantage of his work on the basal arthrodiran (Placodermi) phylogenetic relationships in Early Devonian paleogeogrpahic and paleoecological contexts, he is studying the southern Chinese (Yunnan) arthrodiran faunas. Marie-Hélène Hamel is finishing her PhD on Carboniferous paleoniscoid braincases, supervised by P. Janvier and Cécile Poplin. Didier Dutheil is finishing up his detailed description of *Serenoichthys*, the articulated Cretaceous bichir.

J. Sébastien Steyer (early tetrapods) is preparing his HDR-Level (Research Direction Habilitation). He is now focusing his work on the Permian "amphibians" of Africa and Asia: in a co-authored paper (C. A. Sidor et al. in *JVP*), he gave detailed descriptions of the Permian temnospondyls they discovered in the Sahara (Niger) (see also *Nature* 434). Following his field work in Niger (2003) and Laos (2005), J. Sébastien plans to prospect in the Permian of Tanzania with C. A. Sidor et al. Both submitted, with R. Damiani, the description of a capitosaur in the Triassic of Antarctica for *JVP*. J. Sébastien also co-authored with the latter the description of a giant brachyopoid from Lesotho (*Bull. SGF* 176). He came back from the Permian of Morocco where, with Nour-Eddine Jalil (University of Marrakech), he found interesting remains, including a temnospondyl fragment (under prep.). J. Sébastien also organized with G. Gand (Université de Bourgogne) student field work in the Permian of southern France with German colleagues (Schneider et al.). They discovered the earliest tupilakosaurid temnospondyl accepted for publication in *JVP*. Finally, J. Sébastien went in the Triassic of Turkey with a Turkish-French team: they discovered the first fossil trackways (cf. *Hyloidichnus*—Permian) of the country and an interesting Triassic flora.

Sophie Sanchez is working on her PhD on the bone histology and skeletochronology of early stegocephalians, under the co-supervision of J. Sébastien Steyer (CNRS/MNHN) and Anick Abourachid (biomechanics, MNHN). She is preparing an article on the contribution of the skeletochronological data to better understand the ontogeny of *Discosauriscus austriacus*, a seymouriamorph from the Lower Permian of the Czech Republic. Sophie has obtained long bones of the temnospondyls *Mastodonsaurus*, *Sclerocephalus*, *Apateon*, and *Gerrothorax* at the Museum of Stuttgart, thanks to Rainer Schoch, to expand her ontogenetical comparisons. This is the first time that these methods have been applied to such old fossil material. Next, she will use microtomography to analyze and reconstruct the bone structures of early tetrapods. This nondestructive method will allow her to make detailed observations on rare specimens. She is also planning to collaborate with Gaël Clément to analyze Devonian material and then to better understand the modification of the bone structures around the "fish"/tetrapod transition.

Nathalie Bardet has been focusing most of her work on the marine reptile fauna from the Maastrichtian phosphates of the Oulad Abdoun and Ganntour basins of Morocco. A paper on durophagous mosasaurids, including a new species of *Globidens*, has been recently published (*Netherlands Journal of Geosciences* 84:167–175, 2005) and a paper with V. de Buffrénil is under review on the histology of the varanoid *Pachyvaranus*. Several extensive papers are also in progress on the "remaining" mosasaurid fauna, as well as on the biostratigraphy and biodiversity of marine vertebrates along the Maastrichtian series of the Ganntour Basin (with H. Cappetta and X. Pereda Suberbiola) and on the marine reptile diversity across the K/T boundary (with S. Jouve and N. E. Jalil). A global overview of the Maastrichtian marine reptile fauna from the phosphates of Morocco was presented at the SVP Annual Meeting in Ottawa in Betsy's symposium. With her PhD student Peggy Vincent, Nathalie has several projects in progress on plesiosaurs, especially concerning a new elasmosaurid taxon from the Maastrichtian phosphates of Morocco, an elasmosaurid specimen from the Aalenian of France (*Neue Jahrbuch Geologie Paläontologie Abhandlung*, in press), and a juvenile plesiosauroid from the Pliensbachian of Spain (with J. C. Garcia Ramos, L. Piñuela, and J. I. Ruiz Omeñaca, all from the Jurassic Museum of Asturias where the specimen is kept, and M. Fernandez and X. Pereda Suberbiola). With her colleagues from the Universidad del País Vasco/E.H.U. of Bilbao (H. Astibia, X. Pereda Suberbiola and company), Nathalie published a paper on sirenian remains from the Eocene of Navarre (*Revista Española de Paleontología* 21:79–91, 2006) and presented a poster at the Climate and Biota of the Early Paleogene Congress (Bilbao, June 2006). Finally, Nathalie has been involved this year, with her colleagues J. C. Rage and V. de Buffrénil (both MNHN), in a Master II project dealing with the histology of the Cenomanian squamate *Carentonosaurus*, a subject that will be amplified and carried on in a PhD thesis.

In July 2005, Philippe Taquet went to Prague for the Congress of the International Commission for the History of Geology and visited the Czech Republic on the tracks of the famous paleontologist Joachim Barrande. In autumn, he published with Emilie Lang and Algerian colleagues the description of a new middle Jurassic sauropod, *Chebsaurus algeriensis*. In February 2006, Philippe revisited Algeria, exploring the Albian and Aptian outcrops of the Reggane region, and of the Aoulef oasis in the Sahara desert, where the first skull fragment of the giant crocodile *Sarcosuchus imperator*, the "super croc," was found many years ago by Albert de Lapparent. In May 2006, Philippe published, after many years of research in old libraries, the first volume of a huge biography of the founder of vertebrate paleontology, the famous naturalist Georges Cuvier, this first volume being devoted to the youth of Cuvier.

Amid requests dealing with various faunas (from the Eocene of India to the Pliocene of Tanzania), Jean-Claude Rage is trying to work on his own projects. The third and last part of his study of the Paleocene snakes from Itaboraí (Brazil) progresses slowly, but its completion is approaching. Two papers (amphibians and squamates) from the Lower Miocene of Namibia have been submitted. In the article on amphibians, the poorly known anuran "*Xenopus*" *stromeri* is redescribed on the basis of new material collected by the Namibia Paleontology Expedition, especially by M. Pickford and B. Senut. In October, Jean-Claude attended the Journées Bernard Gèze, a meeting devoted to the Phosphorites du Quercy held in the Quercy. This resulted in a review of the faunas of lower vertebrates from the Phosphorites; a paper on the subject was submitted to *Strata* for a volume which will include several articles on the Phosphorites.

Estelle Bourdon has completed her PhD (supervised by E. Gheerbrant) on the Paleogene avifauna from the Ouled Abdoun Basin (Morocco) in February 2006. New avian remains have been discovered in this locality during field work in May 2006. A detailed description of the Moroccan material will be published in the following months. Estelle recently obtained a two-year position as a research assistant (Collège de France, Paris) to work on the phylogeny of the ratites (Aves, Paleognathae) together with Armand de Ricqlès (Collège de France) and Jorge Cubo (Pierre and Marie Curie University).

Christian de Muizon published his monograph (co-authored with V. Bouetel) on *Piscobalaena nana* from the early Pliocene of the Pisco Formation from Peru. The paper thoroughly describes

the skeleton of this very small mysticete and presents a parsimony analysis of the major groups of mysticetes. The Cetotheriidae are clearly defined as a monophyletic taxon, which includes some of the genera traditionally included in the family (*Cetotherium*, *Nannocetus*, *Piscobalaena*, *Herpetocetus*, *Metopocetus*, and *Mixocetus*). Some specimens (tympanics) referred by Kellogg to *Mesocetus* are referred to *Piscobalaena* and represent the first North American record for the genus. Christian is now working with Virginie Bouetel on the description of another small cetothere from the Pisco Formation from the middle Miocene, and on a small mysticete from the early Miocene of the Chilcatay Formation from the Peruvian coast. With Sandrine Ladevèze and Christine Argot, Christian started a collaboration with Marcelo Sanchez (BMNH) on two skulls of marsupials from the Oligocene of Wyoming. This work will present a phylogeny of the major groups of marsupials, including the oldest skeletons of American metatherians that Christian discovered in Bolivia (*Pucadelphys*, *Andinodelphys*, and *Mayulestes*). In the future, Christian plans to work on the skull of *Andinodelphys* with Sandrine Ladevèze and on the postcranial skeleton of this genus with Christine Argot. Work on the endocast of *Pucadelphys* has been completed (co-authored with T. Macrini, R. Cifelli, and T. Rowe). The endocast of *Pucadelphys andinus* is the oldest metatherian endocast known so far. Finally, after four years with virtually no field work (because of bureaucracy), Christian spent one full month (July) in Bolivia this year and work at Tiupampa.

Sandrine Ladevèze defended her PhD dissertation last September and is now a junior lecturer and researcher at the MNHN. She still studies the evolutionary history of metatherian mammals and their fossil relatives, particularly the South American radiations. She is involved in the study of the auditory area of Paleocene metatherians from Tiupampa (Bolivia) and Itaboraí (Brazil). Complete descriptions of these new petrosal bones have been completed (Ladevèze, *JVP* 2004, *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Socociety*, in press; Ladevèze & Muizon, *Palaeontology*, in press) or will be submitted soon. Moreover, Sandrine plans to participate in a field trip organized in July by Christian de Muizon in the late Cretaceous and early Tertiary of Bolivia.

Emmanuel Gheerbrant published this year (*Geological Magazine*) a new creodont from the early Eocene of the Ouled Abdoun basin, Morocco. The study of this species supports the hyaenodontid status of *Tinerhodon* from the late Paleocene of the Ouarzazate Basin, Morocco. Both species provide the first piece of direct evidence for an African origin of the Hyaenodontidae and its order (“Creodonta”). The last field-work campaign in the Ouled Abdoun Basin (see photograph) was focused on a stratigraphic study of the local phosphate series in several localities. This work, in collaboration with H. Cappetta, M. Mouflih, S. Sen, J. Yans, and geologists from OCP (see photograph), includes paleomagnetostratigraphy, delta 13C chemostratigraphy (PE boundary), sedimentology, and biostratigraphy. In addition to the selachian biostratigraphy, new significant data are expected for the dating and correlation of the vertebrate levels, especially the mammal levels. As a development of his habilitation thesis, Emmanuel, in collaboration with Jean-Claude Rage, made a review of the paleobiogeographical history of the vertebrate fauna from the Cretaceous and Paleogene of Africa (*Palaeogeology, Palaeoclimatology, and Palaeoecology*, in press). The work shows that Africa had a more-complex paleobiogeographical history than that presented by the classical view in the context of the dual world of Laurasia versus Gondwana. It is shown that Africa took very early its present basic biogeographical pattern (i.e., isolation from Gondwana + interchanges with Laurasia via the Mediterranean Sill), probably since the mid Cretaceous. (Emmanuel Gheerbrant)

The research team working in Ouled Abdoun quarries during the last field work party ; photograph taken at Geological Survey of OCP, Khouribga, Morocco, May 2006 (by E. Bourdon)

UNITED KINGDOM

University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge

Currently we have three graduate students working on paleontology projects in the museum. Esther Sharp and Roz Wade are finishing writing up their PhD projects on the systematics, anatomy, and phylogeny of British Carboniferous lungfishes and Scottish osteolepidids respectively. They hope to finish early this year. Viviane Callier joined us this year on a Churchill Fellowship-funded Master's project, and she has chosen to work on reconstructing some CT scans of *Ichthyostega* material that Jenny Clack and colleagues collected from Greenland in 1998. The material consists of a partial skull and postcranial skeleton of a subadult specimen, and Viv hopes to elucidate braincase, axial skeleton, and humerus anatomy in comparison with what is known of more mature specimens.

Jenny Clack discovered a suite of specimens showing skeletal remains of basal Namurian chondrichthyans from Derbyshire (UK) in May of 2005, which includes material from several taxa. It should help to resolve some anatomical and phylogenetic questions in basal chondrichthyans, as well as provide some faunal and ecological comparisons with other Namurian shark faunas. She hopes to find a student to work on this for a PhD.

Jenny herself continues work on *Ichthyostega* with Per Ahlberg and Henning Blom, both from Uppsala. Henning Blom published a clarification of the systematics of *Ichthyostega* in 2005 from work he did as a post doc in Cambridge, and the team has also published a big paper reviewing and detailing the localities and specimens of tetrapods discovered in eastern Greenland. A paper for the Meemann Chang festshrift (currently in review) describes a new tetrapod taxon from eastern Greenland. They are currently working with Latvian colleagues on new and exquisite material of *Ventastega*, which they consider places it as certainly the most primitive tetrapod known.

Jenny is also working with Jozef Klembara (Bratislava) on a Russian chroniosuchid. This is the only known fully articulated specimen and has been identified as *Chroniosaurus dongusensis* from the Upper Permian. Jenny and Jo are describing it in detail, hoping to show its relationships to embolomeres. Jenny also completed a paper with Marcello Ruta on new material of the anthracosaur *Silvanerpeton* from the Visean East Kirkton locality in Scotland.

In the recent past, our group has included two MPhil students from the USA. Matt Friedman worked on the Devonian lungfish *Soederberghia*, and Brian Swartz worked on the Devonian actinopterygian *Stegotrachelus*. They are now studying for PhDs in Chicago and Berkeley respectively. (Jenny Clack)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Northeast Region (Margaret Lewis, Regional Editor, lewism@stockton.edu)

College Misericordia

Grant Hurlburt is beginning his second year as a Visiting Assistant Professor at College Misericordia in Dallas, Pennsylvania, teaching human anatomy and physiology to physical and occupational therapy and nursing students. He has recently submitted a paper entitled "Relative size of brain and cerebrum in tyrannosaurid and other theropod dinosaurs: An analysis using brain-endocast quantitative relationships in extant alligators" to be included in a volume of papers based on talks given at the symposium on The Origin, Systematics, and Paleobiology of the Tyrannosauridae at the Burpee Museum of Natural History and Northern Illinois University in September 2005. This paper includes CT data from theropod dinosaurs and is supported by NSF Grant Award 0517257 for $171,262 awarded in July 2005; PI Lawrence Witmer, co-PIs Grant Hurlburt and Ryan Ridgely. His recently completed Excel program estimating body mass and length from skull dimensions, based on alligator data, has been supplied to numerous fellow paleontologists. (G. Hurlburt)

Howard University, Washington DC
Despite another long hiatus in our reports, we are still extant, and keeping very busy indeed. Since our last report in 2002, Brian Beatty, after completing his Master's degree with us on desmostylians, headed off to Kansas to do a PhD on dental microwear in marine vertebrates (including desmostylians and sirenians) with Larry Martin. This project is already bearing fruit in a manuscript completed this spring by Daryl Domning and Brian on the functional design of dugong tusks.

Brian also accompanied Daryl to Tokyo in March 2006 to attend a very useful two-day workshop on paleoparadoxiid desmostylids, organized and hosted by Naoki Kohno at the National Science Museum. It was a unique opportunity to study, laid out on one table, the originals or replicas of most of the significant specimens of this group known in the world. The workshop attracted some three dozen Japanese participants and us three Americans (including Howell Thomas from the LACM)—reflecting once again how far we in the U.S. are lagging in the study of this fascinating tethythere group. (This is despite our having a more diverse desmostylian fauna to study—although many of our spectacular new critters remain unprepared for lack of funds, especially in Orange County, California, where they help fill a warehouse of treasures rescued from earthmovers.) Following the workshop, we were able to look at yet more desmostylian fossils at several other museums, including the spectacular Gunma Museum of Natural History where Dr. Yoshikazu Hasegawa was our hospitable host.

Going and coming from Tokyo, Daryl saw specimens and worked with colleagues on tethythere projects in Los Angeles and Berkeley. He has wrapped up his National Geographic-supported excavations in the Jamaican Eocene (which yielded the four-legged sea cow *Pezosiren*), and hopes to find time someday to finish a monographic treatment of that animal as part of a multi-authored volume on the site. Meanwhile, he has completed three other sirenian studies with Italian colleagues: 1) corroborating the pattern of peri-Messinian ecophenotypic dwarfing of Mediterranean sea cows, related to the late Miocene salinity crises (with G. Bianucci et al.; presented at a conference in Libya in November 2004); 2) formally documenting the pre-Messinian evidence for this: *Metaxytherium serresii* from the late Tortonian of Calabria (with G. Carone); and 3) a catalog of the numerous remains of the recently extinct Steller's sea cow in the museums of the world (with S. Mattioli). Daryl is now at work on a chapter with Phil Gingerich and Iyad Zalmout for the new *Cenozoic Mammals of Africa* volume, and the description of a new genus and species of small dugongid that he and Venezuelan colleagues collected at Urumaco in August 2002.

Ray Bernor's student Shundong Bi finished his doctoral dissertation on Chinese fossil rodents and landed a job last year at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Ray and Miranda Armour-Chelu are now off to a summer's work in Europe and will bring us up to date on their wide-ranging activities in our next report.

Irina Koretsky has joined our tenure-track faculty and is kept busy teaching gross anatomy, but still finds some time for fossil seals and for co-editing the fourth and final volume on the Pliocene fauna of the Lee Creek Mine in North Carolina. Since the *Smithsonian Contributions to Paleobiology* series has been allowed to go extinct (your tax cuts at work!), this volume will instead be brought out by the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

Taseer Hussain, Hans Thewissen, Sirpa Nummela, and their Indian colleagues have been studying the Eocene evolution of whale hearing. This work was published in *Nature* in 2004. They studied the outer and middle ear structures in early whales and established that sound transmission mechanisms change early in whale evolution. In pakicetids, hearing in both air and water were unsophisticated. This intermediate stage was soon replaced by a sound-transmission mechanism similar to that in modern toothed whales. Sirpa, Taseer, and Hans have also been working on a paper entitled "Cranial anatomy of Pakicetidae." Here they have described the skulls

and isolated tympanics of the earliest whales. Hans, Sunil Bajpai, and Taseer have also published a short paper on “New insectivorous placentals from the Eocene of Pakistan” in the *Journal of the Paleontological Society of India* (2005).

In addition to his paleontological activities, Taseer has also been studying the health effects of global climate and environmental change. He has been particularly looking at effects of extreme temperature exposure and associated climatic features on chronic pulmonary and cardiovascular diseases. (D. Domning)

New Jersey State Museum, Trenton

We are pleased to welcome our new colleague, Rodrigo Pellegrini, just arrived from the University of Kansas, who is now our Registrar of Natural History. With substantial training and experience in collections management, as well as some excellent research on mosasaurs, Rod will certainly serve our museum’s needs very well.

Bill Gallagher reports that the Cretaceous/Tertiary Symposium (or is it Cretaceous/Paleogene now?) at GSA was well received and very well attended. Organized by Bill, along with Ken Lacovara of Drexel, it served as a benchmark forum for the status of our knowledge of this important event, as seen in Atlantic and Gulf Coast geology and paleontology.

Dave Parris is planning his spring trip to China, to work with Wang Xuri of the Dalian Museum of Natural History. Mr. Wang’s work in New Jersey last summer was a welcome beginning of a joint effort for a major exhibition plan. We are pleased to credit the International Partnerships among Museums (IPAM) of the American Association of Museums for the grant that supports this project. (D. Parris)

Pennsylvania State University

Russ Graham moved to Penn State two years ago from the Denver Museum of Nature and Science to become Director of the Earth and Mineral Sciences Museum. He has started a new program in vertebrate paleontology and, as best he can tell, it is the first of its kind at PSU. Russ taught a class in vertebrate paleontology last fall and will be teaching the class again this fall. He plans to add to the curriculum by offering other courses in Quaternary vertebrate paleoecology, faunal analysis, and evolution of mammals in subsequent years. Russ is busy building the VP and modern osteological collections. If anyone has extra material or casts that they would like to donate, PSU would be happy to receive them.

Russ is continuing his Quaternary research with excavations in two caves in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Sediments and fossils from these caves may provide a very long record of the Quaternary history of this unique biota. This research has important implications for the conservation of this biota in the face of global warming. In addition, Russ is using an Industrial CT scanner at PSU’s Center of Quantitative Imaging to study the in situ three-dimensional taphonomy of microfossils.

Russ continues his work with FAUNMAP. He is now collaborating with Tony Barnosky and Mark Carrasco (UC Berkeley) in merging FAUNMAP with MIOMAP to examine long-term trends in biodiversity. Russ and Eric Grimm (Illinois State Museum) have a proposal in to NSF to merge the FAUNMAP and North American Pollen Database (NAPD) with other databases, including beetles and plant macrofossils, in order to do ecosystem analyses throughout the Plio–Pleistocene. Finally, Russ is completing papers on his research in the White River of Colorado.

Julianne Snider has joined the EMS Museum staff as Assistant Director of Exhibits and Collections. Russ and Juli hope to move the EMS collections to a new research, education and collections facility this fall. They have also completed the conceptual planning for new exhibits. Melissa Pardi did a senior thesis with Russ on the taphonomy of two levels in one of the Black Hills caves last year. She focused her study on biases created by trap effectiveness as the pit

became deeper. She and Russ plan to submit a paper on this research to *The Holocene* later this summer. (R. Graham)

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
We are pleased to welcome our "new" colleague, Michael Lague, to the Biology Program Faculty. Previously a Visiting Assistant Professor, Mike is now an Assistant Professor of Biology and is teaching anatomy and physiology in our newly expanded nursing program. Mike is engaged in ongoing research into patterns of skeletal dimorphism among living and fossil primates, including early hominins. He has recently submitted a grant to the National Science Foundation (as co-PI) with Michael Plavcan of the University of Arkansas and Adam Gordon of The George Washington University. Using state-of-the-art technology for quantifying bone shape, this project will address problems specific to assessing dimorphism (and, by extension, social behavior) from fossil remains. Mike is also finalizing revisions for a co-authored paper on fossil hominin mandibles that has been accepted by the *Journal of Human Evolution*. In addition, Mike continues to work with John Polk and a consortium of individuals centered at the University of Illinois on the long-term effects of lower-limb joint injury on human gait patterns.

After returning from maternity leave, Margaret Lewis continues to work on her book on the Koobi Fora carnivores with Lars Werdelin from the Swedish Museum of Natural History. She has also completed several chapters for various edited volumes. Roger Wood continues his research on extant diamond-back terrapins and their distant fossil relatives. (M. Lewis)

Southeast Region (Richard C. Hulbert, Regional Editor, rhulbert@flmnh.ufl.edu)
No news submitted.

Midwest Region (Joshua Smith, Regional Editor, smithjb@levee.wustl.edu)
No news submitted.

Southwest Region (Chris Jass, Regional Editor, jass@mail.utexas.edu)
Southern Methodist University
We are staying busy with multiple projects and students. Louis Jacobs and Mike Polcyn have started working in the Cretaceous of Angola. Louis Jacobs, Dale Winkler, Kent Newman, Lou Taylor, and Jim Diffily are working in the Cloverly Formation of northwestern Wyoming. Dale Winkler, Louis Jacobs, Tony Fiorillo, and Kent Newman are working in Mongolia with former SMU students Dr. Yoshi Kobayashi, Dr. Young Nam Lee, and Dr. Ly Junchang. Tony Fiorillo and Kent Newman are continuing the work on the Upper Cretaceous of the North Slope, Colville River, Alaska. Alisa Winkler has been working with Yuki Tomida on rabbits. Bonnie Jacobs is continuing her work in northwestern Ethiopia at Chilga.

Thomas Adams is finishing up his MS on the Triassic of Hound Island, Alaska. Chris Strganac is finishing up his MS on the Oligocene of the Yakima Valley, Washington. Chris is currently in Ethiopia with Louis Jacobs. Yosuke Nishida is finishing up his MS on desmostylians. Diana Vineyard will defend her MS on sea turtle evolution in January. Carolina Aguillon is finishing up her MS on the Mexican Cretaceous, and Yuri Kimura has just started her MS work on Inner Mongolian mammals. Scott Meyers is continuing his PhD work on the isotopic geochemistry of the Jurassic. Aaron Pan (who is a new father), is finishing up his dissertation in May and Juan Messini is also working on his thesis. (Kent Newman)

University of Texas at Austin
Chris Bell was back in Australia with Jim Mead, Sandy Swift, and Marci Hollenshead (Northern Arizona University) in summer 2006. Their efforts were once again centered on evolutionary morphology and paleontology of Australian lizards. They spent several days in Brisbane sharing thoughts, ideas, data, and enthusiasm with Scott Hocknull and Alex Cook, then separated for new adventures. Hollenshead and Swift drove from Brisbane to Adelaide to work with Mark Hutchinson in the collections of the South Australian Museum. Bell and Mead caught a flight from Brisbane to Darwin, visited the Northern Territory Museum, and then drove south-southwest through the Kimberley, the Pilbara, and down the Gascoyne Coast, ending up in Perth for a productive week of work with the Western Australian Museum folks. They recently completed their description of the skull of *Moloch horridus*, and are now plugging away on detailed investigations of the skull morphology of other western Australian agamids and geckos.

Summer 2007 will see Bell joining up again with Nick Czaplewski (Oklahoma Museum of Natural History), Mead, and others in the Black Rock Desert of northwestern Nevada, hoping to continue work on Miocene terrestrial vertebrates.

Jon Wagner has spent much of 2006 culturing bacteria in vivo, but he has managed to progress in his work on morphological and molecular phylogenetics of caimans. He plans to present a preliminary revision of the fossil caimans of La Venta, Colombia, at the next SVP meeting. His work on the hadrosaurs of Big Bend continues, with one manuscript due to be published in 2007, and another on the way.

Gabe Bever defended his dissertation in November. He has moved on to the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology at the AMNH as the Lerner-Gray Research Fellow. (Chris Jass)

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION (Brent Breithaupt, Regional Editor, uwgeoms@uwyo.edu)

No news submitted.

PACIFIC COAST REGION (John M. Harris, Regional Editor, jharris@nhm.org)

Colorado Desert District Stout Research Center
The Anza-Borrego Desert State Park® Paleontology Society volunteers started the 2006–2007 field season with survey work in the Borrego Badlands, and the recovery of a partial *Equus* forelimb. Jeanne Johnstone, Senior Park Aide in paleontology, has been involved with field survey and locality documentation also in the Borrego Badlands. She is currently excavating a bone bed in the Irvingtonian Age Ocotillo Conglomerate that has yielded to date an *Equus* sp. mandible, 22 *Equus* ribs and vertebrae scattered over more than 2 m^2, and a large camelid metapodial. The bed, which appears to represent an over-bank flood deposit, also contains "worm burrow" ichnites and a significant amount of plant debris, some of which hopefully will be identifiable. Scott Musick, also a Senior Park Aide, has been geocoding Harley Garbani sites in the Blancan Age Hueso Formation of lower Arroyo Tapiado in the Vallecito Creek Badlands. Scott is in the process of recovering an articulated partial limb of what is tentatively identified as a large camelid.

While the summer temperatures were topping 120°F, time was spent curating both the invertebrate and vertebrate remains from the Yuha member of the Deguynos Formation, an early Pliocene marine deltaic deposit in the Fish Creek Badlands. The Yuha, which yields marine and terrestrial vertebrates, recently produced an upper molar that can be confidently assigned to *Dinohippus*, according to Eric Scott. Also, two separate *Smilodon gracilis* astragali were identified during preparation and curation of materials collected during the 2004–2005 season from the upper Hueso Formation in the Vallecito Creek Badlands.

This fall James Landers, computer guru and owner of Shannon River Systems, spent two months overhauling the vertebrate collection data store. James restructured and linked several Access data bases, constructed data table entry forms, and installed primary keys, table link referential integrity, and required fields that will help reduce digital cataloguing errors. Now all we have to do is correct all of the taxon identification and bone element name errors.

It seems that everything always tries to happen at the same time, and paleontology in the outback of southeastern California is no exception. This season saw the submission of numerous regional project EIRs, including proposals by San Diego Gas and Electric to put a 500 kV power line through Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, US Gypsum wants to expand their mining operations in the Fish Creek Mountains, there is a proposal to drill a geothermal well at Ocotillo Wells State Park, the Army Corps of Engineers wants to perform an on-the-ground survey and remove all WWII ordinance from several square miles of the Borrego Badlands, and there is an inter-agency project to restore the Salton Sea. At this point, the projects require our review and comment, and some of them failed to account for impacts to paleontological resources altogether. Also, State Parks recently acquired 6 square miles of desert along the east side of the Santa Rosa Mountains with over 3,000 acres of potentially fossiliferous badlands. We will be busy. (G. T. Jefferson)

Harry Jerison

I have been appointed a Research Associate at the Field Museum of Natural History. I have five recent publications available as pdf preprints of final draft copies (to be edited before publication) to which VP people are welcome; request by e-mail to hjerison@ucla.edu:

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(Harry Jerison)

Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Working in the basins of the northern Tibetan Plateau shortly before he learned that he had terminal cancer, Will Downs expressed a keen interest in going to the Zhada Basin in the remote corner of southwestern Tibet. Lack of funding prevented us from granting his last wishes while he was still alive, but his persistent interests in that part of Tibet provided an early impetus that culminated in a fully fledged expedition in the summer of 2006. It is thus gratifying that we were able to carry some of Will's ashes to the Zhada Basin, where we spread them in our first field season there. We chose a very

Back: Jack Tseng, Li Qiang. Front: Xiaoming Wang, Feng Wenqing, Gary Takeuchi.

fossiliferous site on top of a scenic hill just west of the Xiangzi Farm, overlooking the Langqinzangbu River at the northern foothills of the Himalayas. We know Will would have loved this spot with its spectacular exposures and tranquility. A brief ceremony was performed on 6 September 2006 under Tibetan prayer flags and silk scarves ("Hada"), along with Will's favorite Chinese liquor (Erguotou baijiu) and cigarettes. In brilliant sunshine under a deep blue Tibetan sky, Xiaoming Wang led the ceremony attended by Feng Wenqing (a long-time friend and admirer of Will's and a fellow awardee of the Morris Skinner Prize), Gary Takeuchi, Jack Tseng, and Li Qiang (see photo). We are sure Will is at peace now that he has reached the beautiful Zhada Basin. The Langqinzangbu River ultimately flows in the Indus River and we hope the mighty river will carry remembrances of Will to his colleagues and friends downstream in Pakiston. (Xiaoming Wang)

Occidental College, Los Angeles

Don's new book, *Evolution: What the Fossils Say and Why It Matters*, has gone into final production with Columbia University Press and should be out this spring. Intended as a book for general audiences, it should help all sorts of people (particularly nonpaleontologists) handle the creationist lies about the fossil record and provide many new examples of evolution in the fossil record that haven't been featured enough. Meanwhile, the edited volume *The Evolution of Artiodactyls* (co-edited with Scott Foss) has also gone into production with Johns Hopkins University Press. It should be out in time for SVP next fall in Austin.

Over the summer, Don produced the SVP abstracts volume for the last time; this fall, he rotated off the Program Committee after 14 years of service (five as chair). He also completed lab analysis on the paleomagnetism of the Cretaceous Jalama Formation of western Santa Barbara County, and the Cretaceous–Miocene rocks of the Gualala block, on the California coast south of Cape Mendocino, as well as samples from the (?)early Pleistocene Moorpark mammoth site. Results from paleomag samples from the Eocene–Oligocene Antero and Pitch-Pinnacle floras of central Colorado are now in press. He is currently analyzing Ken Campbell's Miocene–Pleistocene samples from the riverbanks of the Peruvian Amazon.

In August, Don gave a talk to the Inland Geological Society in Riverside, and in October, he co-lead a field trip by the South Coast Geological Society. In February, he spoke to the LACM seminar series (the third time in 20 years) and WAVP, and in March, he was a keynote speaker for the Western Interior Paleontological Society in Denver. From March to June, Don taught paleo at Caltech again. Then in mid June, he ran a four-day trip with the Skeptics Society to see the geology of Las Vegas, Zion, and the Grand Canyon. After that, he will be on sabbatical until February 2008 and can really focus on research again.

In January, Don was at the AMNH, beginning a new project on the Oligocene peccaries *Perchoerus* and *Thinohyus*. Meanwhile, his big paleo class last fall netted several new research students. One of them, Kristina Raymond, has already begun a research project on Rancholabrean sloths.

Finally, Don feels honored that after so many years of working on rhinos, Spencer Lucas officially named the Clarno amynodont *Zaisanamynodon protheroi* (*Paleobios* 26(2):7–20, 2006). It's his first! (Don Prothero)

University of Bridgeport at Rio Vista

Peter Galton has two chapters in the book *Horns and Beaks. Ceratopsian and Ornithopod Dinosaurs*, the last in the series edited by Ken Carpenter for Indiana University Press. The first as junior author (with Jose Ruiz-Omenaca and Xabier Pereda Suberbiola, both of Spain) redescribes the holotype femur of *Callovosaurus leedsi* (Middle Jurassic, England) as the earliest dryosaurid euornithopod. The second is a well-illustrated review of ornithischian teeth from the Morrison Formation that includes several collected in the1880s from W. H. Reed's YPM Quarry 9 at Como

Bluff, long famous for its numerous remains of small vertebrates and teeth. Two small teeth are tentatively referred to *Nanosaurus agilis* and one to Ankylosauria indet. The latter was collected over 90 years before the group was recognized from the Jurassic of Europe and over 100 before it was recognized from the Morrison. As noted, the holotypic teeth of the "fabrosaurid" *Gongbusaurus shiyii* Dong et al., 1983 (early late Jurassic, China) may also be Ankylosauria indet. Despite timely correspondence, the stereo photos are reduced from their original size to separation distances of 35 and 45 mm and Peter's current mailing address (315 Southern Hills Drive, Rio Vista CA 94571) is not given.

A new genus, *Othnielosaurus*, is erected for the "hypsilophodontid" euornithopod *Laosaurus consors* Marsh, 1894 (*L. celer* Marsh, 1878 being a nomen dubium) because the characters of the holotypic skeleton (YPM 1882) were the basis for the diagnosis of the precladistic pre-*Drinker* genus *Othnielia* Galton, 1977 (type species *Nanosaurus rex* Marsh, 1877). However, the holotype of *N. rex* is a femur (YPM 1875) that lacks autapomorphies or a unique combination of characters. The book was published late October 2006 (not indicated as such; Peter received it early November) but the copyright date is 2007. Apparently publishers often do this in the last quarter of the year to make the book appear to be more current so, in effect, the "year" for many publishers runs from 1 October to 30 September. This will definitely lead to confusion for citations of the date of publication of the book and, more importantly, for the date of erection of the new ornithopod taxa in it, viz., *Othnielosaurus*, *Theiophytalia kerri* Brill & Carpenter, *Mantellisaurus atherfieldensis* Paul, and *Cedrorestes crichtoni* Gilpin et al. It would appear that, following ICZN 1999 Article 22A.2, the correct citations is *Othnielosaurus* Galton, 2006 ("2007"), etc. A related problem is if *JVP* issue number 4 appears in January and, even though this is indicated on the cover, papers in this number are commonly miscited (e.g., especially those by Sereno and/or Novas on *Herrerasaurus* as 1993 instead of 1994). Unfortunately it is not practical for *JVP* to indicate this on each article but authors could do it for their reprint copies (paper or pdf). (Peter M. Galton)

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Deep Blue is the University of Michigan's permanent, accessible, online repository for its scholarly and artistic work. This excellent resource archives nearly 80 years of paleontological publications from the University of Michigan Museum of Paleontology *Contributions* and *Papers on Paleontology*. Articles have been scanned at high resolution and are fully searchable. You can visit Deep Blue at http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/41251. (J. Wilson)

– PUBLICATIONS –

Thompson Webb: The Years at Webb School, 1922–1975
Lovingly pieced together by Thompson';s son, Thompson, Jr., and grandson, Thompson III, this volume will reveal to you a Thompson Webb you've never known. Through Thompson's own writing, his letters, his speeches, and his notes, you'll view his school as well as his values and mores. The files contained many stories that he had begun writing in the late 1950s. In addition to the infamous Shoestringing speech, you'll learn about the fire during the dedication of the Vivian Webb Chapel, you'll share Thompson's emotion as he relates stories about problem students and parents, and get the inside story of how he sold his school and incorporated. This book is a complement to anyone's library. It is available from The Webb Schools, 1175 West Baseline Road, Claremont CA 91711; tel. (909) 626-3587. The url is http://www.webb.org/. (R. Graham)

First Floridians and Last Mastodons

Now available from Springer-Verlag is *First Floridians and Last Mastodons: The Page-Ladson Site in the Aucilla River*, edited by S. David Webb (ISBN 10-1-4020-4325-2). This hardcover book is Volume 26 in the Topics in Geobiology series and contains 588 pages with 37 color illustrations. Ordering information is available at http://www.springer.com/west/home/geosciences?SGWID=4-10006-22-173673306-0

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