

# SOCIETY OF VERTEBRATE PALEONTOLOGY NEWS BULLETIN

Number 191 • Fall 2006

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## — OFFICIAL BUSINESS —

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### **Strategic Planning**

The Executive Committee and Past Presidents Lou Jacobs and Bill Clemens participated in a strategic planning session at the midyear meeting with a goal of developing a five-year strategic plan for SVP. Focus groups were formed to discuss three major themes involving the impact of SVP on: 1) society, 2) science, and 3) membership. Highlights of these themes will be discussed at the annual meeting and reports from the focus groups posted on the Web site. We invite members to help us develop annual goals and objectives, steps in achieving our five-year goals. We intend to make strategic planning an on-going process and to review our objectives and accomplishments at annual meetings. (Annalisa Berta, President)

### **New Managing Editor of JVP**

SVP is pleased to welcome Laura Healy as the new Managing Editor for the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*. Laura started her role as the managing editor in January of this year. Her previous experience has been as a freelance copyeditor, writer, and project manager primarily in medicine and science. She regularly does editing/writing for WebMD, and serves as a copyeditor for MedReviews (New York) and a number of medical journals for Westminster Publications. She has managed production workflows for McGraw-Hill and served as the technical editor for Argonne National Laboratory's ELIST and software user employee manuals. Laura earned a BS in Zoology (minor in Chemistry) and an MS in applied physiology. She is based in Montgomery, Illinois, just west of Chicago.

## — NEW MEMBERS —

---

**Abbott, Sean T.**  
1482 Wellington Circle  
Rockledge FL 32955  
p/(321) 271-8003  
sean.abbott@ncf.edu

**Albury, Nancy**  
Sawmill Sink Fossil Site  
General Delivery  
Man-O-War Cay, Abaco  
Bahamas  
p/(242) 365-6329  
nancyalbury@batelnet.bs

**Anderson, Paul Anthony**  
1b Osterley Mansions  
Thornbury Road  
Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4LJ  
United Kingdom  
p/+44-20840-04963  
p.a.anderson@lse.ac.uk

**Baker, Caroline**  
2700 Q St NW, #203  
Washington DC 20007  
p/(202) 333-7333  
f/(202) 333-6661

**Bebej, Ryan**  
University of Michigan  
2060 Kraus Natural Science Building  
830 N University Avenue  
Ann Arbor MI 48109  
p/(616) 485-2135  
rmbebej@umich.edu

**Belmaker, Miriam**  
Harvard University  
Peabody Museum  
Department of Anthropology  
11 Divinity Avenue  
Cambridge MA 02138  
p/(617) 820-9210  
belmaker@fas.harvard.edu

**Bibi, Faysal**  
Yale University  
Kline Geology Labs  
P O Box 208109  
New Haven CT 06520-8109  
p/(203) 809-3227  
f.bibi@yale.edu

**Binder, Wendy**  
Loyola Marymount University  
1 LMU Drive, MS 8220  
Los Angeles CA 90045  
p/(310) 338-5211  
f/(310) 338-4479  
wbinder@lmu.edu

**Bourdon, Estelle**  
Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle  
Dept. Histoire de la Terre, UMR 5143  
578 rue Cuvier  
Paris F-75225  
France  
p/+33-1-4079-3458  
f/+33-1-4079-3580  
bourdon@mnhn.fr

**Boyd, Alec**  
1880 Cowell Boulevard, #237  
Davis CA 95616  
p/(541) 954-9039  
aaboyd@ucdavis.edu

**Burch, Sara H.**  
University of Chicago  
Department of Amphibians and Reptiles  
The Field Museum  
1400 S Lake Shore Drive  
Chicago IL 60605  
p/(312) 665-7234  
shburch@uchicago.edu

**Burky, Richard**  
1969 Sinaloa Avenue  
Altadena CA 91001  
p/(626) 794-5810  
rburky@earthlink.net

**Burns, Michael E.**  
Dickinson College  
2501 Winfield Avenue  
Scranton PA 18505  
p/(570) 947-9708  
mikeb999@aol.com

**Burton-Kelly, Matthew E.**  
University of North Dakota  
21-1/2 S 4th Street, #3  
Grand Forks ND 58201  
p/(802) 922-3696  
matthew.burton.kelly@und.nodak.edu

**Bykowski, Richard**  
3629 W 64th Street  
Chicago IL 60629  
p/(773) 484-0060  
rbykowsk@uoregon.edu

**Champoux, Noemie**  
888 #2 rue de Bourgnone  
Sainte-Foy QC G1X 3E3  
Canada  
p/(418) 951-3981

**Chapman, Jack**  
10119 Brandywine Drive  
Huntsville AL 35803  
p/(256) 880-3199  
jack.m.chapman@nasa.gov

**Cold, Christopher**  
1400 North Hills Avenue  
Marshfield WI 54449  
p/(715) 384-3945  
cold.christopher@marshfieldclinic.org

**Colgan, Patrick**  
10867 Pine Valley Court  
Allendale MI 49401  
p/(616) 331-3201  
colganp@gvsu.edu

**Cope, Dana**  
College of Charleston  
Department of Anthropology  
66 George Street  
Charleston SC 29424-0001  
p/(843) 953-1353  
f/(843) 953-5824  
coped@cofc.edu

**Drymala, Susan**  
205 Newberry Road  
Severna Park MD 21146  
p/(410) 608-0939  
sdrymala@umd.edu

**Esker, Donald**  
3177 Dowling Drive  
Fairlawn OH 44333  
p/(330) 666-0919  
eskerda@email.uc.edu

**Fahlke, Julia**  
Institut für Paläontologie  
Nussallee 8  
Bonn D-53115  
Germany  
p/+49-228-734-068  
f/+49-288-733-509  
jfahlke@aol.com

**Ferreira Castanhinha, Rui Alexandre**  
Rua Antonio Luis Lopes Torre 3OB  
Loures 2660-225  
Portugal  
p/+351-91-883-6929  
rcastanhinha@hotmail.com

**Frampton, Emily**  
University of Calgary  
531 42nd Avenue NW  
Calgary AB T2K 0H5  
Canada  
p/(403) 289-5722  
ekframpt@ucalgary.ca

**Francis, Kurt**  
Northern Illinois University  
30W254 Claymore Lane  
Naperville IL 60563  
p/(630) 305-0093  
kfrancis@yahoo.com

**Francke, John**  
2530 N 48th Avenue  
Omaha NE 68104  
p/(402) 933-0197  
johnfrancke@cox.net

**Gilbert, Christopher C.**  
Stony Brook University  
Department of Anthropology  
SBS Building #S-501  
Stony Brook NY 11794-4364  
p/(202) 277-1569  
f/(631) 632-9165  
cgilbert@ic.sunysb.edu

**Gomez-Perez, Marcela**  
University of Cambridge  
Department of Earth Sciences  
Downing Street  
Cambridge CB2 3EQ  
United Kingdom  
p/+44-1223-277-401  
f/+44-1223-333-450  
mg355@cam.ac.uk

**Graves, Milton**  
154 Victoria Road  
Dartmouth NS B3A 1V8  
Canada  
p/(902) 494-7018  
f/(902) 494-6889  
milton.graves@dal.ca

**Haile-Selassie, Yohannes**  
1 Wade Oval Drive  
Cleveland OH 44106  
p/(216) 231-4600  
yhailese@cmnh.org

**Harrison, Luke**  
150 Walseley Avenue N  
Montreal QC H4X 1U9  
Canada  
p/(514) 813-1283  
luke.harrison@mcgill.ca

**Hastings, Alexander**  
1225 SW 1st Avenue, #221  
Gainesville FL 32601  
p/(440) 225-3633  
akh@ufl.edu

**Henson, Douglas**  
3417 Teays Valley Road  
Hurricane WV 25526  
p/(304) 562-9039  
dwhmabmustang@aol.com

**Hutchinson, Bryan**  
710 4th Avenue S, Apt 339  
Grand Forks ND 58201  
p/(701) 746-5336  
bryan.hutchinson@und.edu

**Ibircu, Lucio Manuel**  
3310 Arch Street, Basement  
Philadelphia PA 19104  
p/(215) 760-5965  
lmi23@drexel.edu

**Kirera, Francis M.**  
330 Old Main  
Fayetteville AR 72701  
p/(479) 443-1934  
fkirera@uark.edu

**Knol, Randall**  
3123 King Street  
Alexandria VA 22302  
p/(202) 720-8396  
rsknol@aol.com

**Kotrc, Benjamin**  
Flat 802, Chantry Court  
Denmark Street  
Bristol BS1 5DH  
United Kingdom  
p/+44-117-0870-07587440

**Kullmer, Ottmar**  
Senckenberganlage 25  
Frankfurt am Main D-60325  
Germany  
p/+49-69-754-2364  
f/+49-69-754-2558  
ottmar.kullmer@senckenberg.de

**Lague, Michael**  
811 Berrywood Lane  
Galloway NJ 08205  
p/(609) 404-9018  
michael.lague@stockton.edu

**Lambert, Olivier**  
Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique  
rue Vautier 29  
Brussels B-1000  
Belgium  
p/+32-2-627-4497  
olivier.lambert@naturalsciences.be

**Latimer, Randy**  
206 Elm Street SW  
Vienna VA 22180  
p/(703) 938-1969

**Lopez-Arbarelo, Adriana**  
Bayerische Staatssammlung für Paläontologie und  
Geologie  
Richard Wagner Str 13  
Munich D-80333  
Germany  
p/+49-89-2180-6645  
f/+49-89-2180-6601  
alarbare@pmx.de

**Mazierski, Dave**  
University of Toronto  
20 First Avenue  
Toronto ON M4M 1W8  
Canada  
p/(416) 466-0309  
d.mazierski@utoronto.ca

**Mestriner, Maria Adelaide**  
Caixa Postal 1310  
Jacarei SP 12308-990  
Brazil  
p/+55-12-3958-5002  
pedidofax@yahoo.com

**Mille, Merril**  
11724 Owens Glen Way  
North Potomac MD 20878  
p/(301) 977-3967  
mjmyam@aol.com

**Minott**, Bonneville  
Dinosaur Discovery Inc  
2283 Argentia Road, Unit 1  
Mississauga ON L5N 5Z3  
Canada  
p/(905) 782-9710  
f/(905) 824-7877  
bon.minott@sympatico.ca

**Miyashita**, Tetsuto  
9712 87th Avenue NW  
Edmonton AB T6E 2N4  
Canada  
dinosaur238@gmail.com

**Moratalla Garcia**, Jose Joaquin  
Museo Geominero  
C/ Rios Rosas 23  
Madrid ES-28003  
Spain  
p/+34-91-349-5736  
f/+34-91-349-5830  
j.moratalla@igme.es

**Morgan**, Michele  
Harvard University, Peabody Museum  
11 Divinity Avenue  
Cambridge MA 02138  
p/(617) 495-4132  
memorgan@fas.harvard.edu

**Nargolwalla**, Mariam  
University of Toronto  
Department of Anthropology  
100 St George Street  
Toronto ON M5S 3G3  
Canada  
p/(416) 618-0013  
mariam.n@utoronto.ca

**Neighbour**, Gordon  
5 Warraton Road  
Saltash Cornwall PL12 4HZ  
United Kingdom  
p/+44-1752848214  
gordonneighbour@hotmail.com

**Ogino**, Shintaro  
Toso 2-1-6-305  
Kagosima 890-0071  
Japan  
p/+81-99-281-8150  
f/+81-99-259-4720  
gotolabo@hotmail.com

**Parent**, Sara  
299 East Street  
South Hadley MA 01075  
p/(413) 214-3523  
snparent@mtholyoke.edu

**Raper**, Diana  
110 Wheatland Court  
Longwood FL 32779  
p/(407) 682-5263  
draper@fit.edu

**Rodes**, Marc Alexander  
600 Glasgow Road  
Huntsville AL 35811  
p/(256) 859-2800  
morganucodon@wmconnect.com

**Sahney**, Sarda  
University of Bristol  
Department of Earth Sciences  
Queens Road  
Bristol BS8 1RJ  
United Kingdom  
p/+44-117-954-5248  
f/+44-117-925-3385  
s.sahney@bristol.ac.uk

**Sasoni**, Michael  
3375 N Country Club Drive, Apt #605  
Aventura FL 33180  
p/(954) 444-5172  
msasoni@aol.com

**Schnedler-Meyer**, Nicolas  
Tronninge Alle 3  
Regstrup 4420  
Denmark  
p/+45-6019-2329  
nicolassm87@gmail.com

**Sears**, Jeffry  
6925 Pilgrim Road  
Madison WI 53711  
p/(608) 271-0353  
f/(608) 271-3710  
bev\_jeff\_sears@sbcglobal.net

**Shirk**, Aubrey M.  
Kent State University  
135 N Depeyster Street  
Kent OH 44240  
p/(330) 414-8367  
ashirk@kent.edu

**Simons**, Verne  
5850 Fisher Road  
Athens OH 45701  
p/(740) 593-7294  
vs140204@ohio.edu

**Spakowski**, Shayda Dawn  
2746 Dawson Road  
Thunder Bay ON P7G2G3  
Canada  
p/(807) 768-0188  
sdspakow@lakeheadu.ca

**Stack**, Kevin  
3220 Sampson Street  
Wisconsin Rapids WI 54494  
p/(715) 421-0767  
stackk64@uwosh.edu

**Stermole**, David  
25 Hoseyhill Crescent  
Scarborough ON M1S 2X3  
Canada  
p/(416) 297-1927  
das\_reboot@hotmail.com

**Stewart, Mary G.**  
7386 Cardinal Lane  
Longmont CO 80503-8730  
p/(303) 530-3505  
mgsniwot@aol.com

**Strickland, Kaitlin Melissa**  
2402 Clark Avenue, Apt 10  
Raleigh NC 27607  
p/(910) 200-4214  
kmstrick@ncsu.edu

**Taylor, Michael P.**  
Oakleigh Farm House  
Crooked End Ruardean  
Gloucestershire GL17 9XF  
United Kingdom  
p/+44-1594-546-941  
dino@miketaylor.org.uk

**Visscher, Tjitske**  
Parkstraat 47  
Utrecht 3581 PE  
Netherlands  
p/+31-6-16364513  
tjitskevisscher@yahoo.com

**Wang, Shuo**  
Tianjin Normal University  
1-7-503 Longjingli Anshan Xi Road  
Nankai District, Tianjin 300193  
Peoples Republic of China  
p/+86-22-2749-8534  
uslarky@163.com

**Williams, Blythe A.**  
Duke University Medical Center  
Department of Biological Anthropology and Anatomy  
Box 3170  
Durham NC 27710  
p/(919) 660-7385  
blythe\_williams@baa.mc.duke.edu

**Williford, Danon**  
P O Box 615  
Sinton TX 78387  
p/(361) 364-4166  
daemon.fish@hotmail.com

**Witzmann, Florian**  
Humboldt University, Museum für Naturkunde  
Berlin 10115  
Germany  
p/+49-30-2093-8659  
florian.witzmann@museum.hu-berlin.de

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## — NEWS FROM MEMBERS —

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**CANADA** (Kevin Seymour, Canada Editor, [kevins@rom.on.ca](mailto:kevins@rom.on.ca))

### ***Royal Alberta Museum, Edmonton, Alberta***

We are into a multi-million-dollar “renewal” of our buildings and grounds over the next five years; so regular activities have been somewhat curtailed, with most efforts now directed towards planning. One on-going project, aimed at fossil gallery redevelopment, is the casting of a nearly complete, 11,300-year-old “*Equus conversidens*” skeleton recovered by University of Calgary faculty and students from the St. Mary Reservoir near Cardston in southwestern Alberta. We will use one or two of the casts in our proposed new galleries, but subsequent casts can be made for sale if interest be shown by the paleontological community. Drop us a line if you would like to know more: [jim.burns@gov.ab.ca](mailto:jim.burns@gov.ab.ca). (Jim Burns)

### ***Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Ontario***

Our job search for a Dinosaur Curator will be complete by the time you read this.

The gallery opening has been delayed again; the opening date is now June 2007. Both the Age of Dinosaurs and Age of Mammals galleries will open then (representing roughly the Mesozoic and Cenozoic eras, respectively) and be dominated by vertebrates. The Paleozoic gallery is ironically phased later, with no definite opening date yet. This gallery will have the old dinosaur gallery space, a much enlarged space compared to previous galleries focusing on invertebrates. The Paleozoic story will include some vertebrates of course, but also the Burgess Shale and Ontario fossils, both of interest to ROM visitors. (Kevin Seymour)

**CHINA** (Xiaobo Yu, International Editor, [xyu@cougar.kean.edu](mailto:xyu@cougar.kean.edu))  
No news submitted.

## **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**Northeast Region** (Margaret Lewis, Regional Editor, [lewism@stockton.edu](mailto:lewism@stockton.edu))  
No news submitted.

**Southeast Region** (Richard C. Hulbert, Regional Editor, [rhulbert@flmnh.ufl.edu](mailto:rhulbert@flmnh.ufl.edu))  
No news submitted.

**Midwest Region** (Joshua Smith, Regional Editor, [smithjb@levee.wustl.edu](mailto:smithjb@levee.wustl.edu))  
No news submitted.

**Southwest Region** (Chris Jass, Regional Editor, [jass@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:jass@mail.utexas.edu))

### **Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History, Corpus Christi, Texas**

It has been a long time since we reported on the museum's paleontological activities. There has been a change in the Curator of Natural History position. Jane Deisler retired in 2002 and Jeff Brown was hired as the new curator in June of 2003. Jeff's specialty is in zoology with a background in ornithology.

The tortoise and oreodont skull were completed in 2004. Work still continues on the Taylor



mammoth. Significant progress was made in completing an articulated section of sacral-lumbar vertebrae. The friability of the bone forces very careful, long conservation procedures (Photo 1: Gwen Hall with mammoth vertebrae; more information on the mammoth can be found in *SVP News Bulletin* No.181, Fall 2001).

We have an aspiring paleontology graduate student from Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, Marques Bowden. His energy and enthusiasm for the subject is refreshing, and his desire to do work on the tremendous variety of specimens here in the

museum is producing good results. He is currently working on an undergraduate research project that may yield a future publication on the paleontological collections of Nueces County.

The museum recently held a “Career Day” for high schools from the five area counties surrounding the museum. Various fields of science were exhibited. This effort was made possible by 67 area scientists and university students from all of the natural science disciplines. Paleontology was extremely popular and we were able to discuss the various occupations and careers available in paleontology including: museums, natural parks, teaching, research, conservation and preparation, and field work. Dr. Ronnie Thomas from Texas A&M University–Kingsville brought



specimens for display. Over 400 students and parents attended this event (Photo 2: Dr. Thomas at Career Day). (Gwen F. Hall)

### ***Museum of Nature & Science, Dallas, Texas***

We are pleased to announce that the former Dallas Museum of Natural History recently merged with its neighbor The Science Place to form a new scientific research and education institution—the Museum of Nature & Science in Dallas, Texas. This move complements plans that include construction of a new cutting-edge museum building near downtown Dallas.

The museum has lately made substantial gains on the scientific front. Tony Fiorillo has continued his exploration of high-latitude paleo-ecosystems over the past few years. Expeditions to Alaska's North Slope, with the assistance of personnel and students from the University of Alaska and Southern Methodist University, have uncovered a number of dinosaur-bearing localities. The Kikak-Tegoseak quarry on the banks of the Colville River is just one of the sites worked for multiple seasons, with thousands of pounds of fossil-bearing rock collected and shipped to Dallas for preparation and ongoing study. Tony also began working closely with the National Park Service in Denali National Park, investigating exposures of the lower Cantwell Formation (late Campanian–early Maastrichtian). The first dinosaur fossil found within the park, a natural cast of a theropod footprint, was discovered last summer by members of the geology department at the University of Alaska. Subsequent searching in the Park revealed additional vertebrate ichnofossil localities, including fossil bird footprints. Tony made silicone molds of some of the *in situ* tracks at that time, and the search continues for more sites this summer. In addition to his field work in Alaska, Tony attended the 2006 Goseong International Dinosaur Symposium in Sangjokam Country Park, Korea, this past spring.

Ron Tykoski joined the museum research staff as head fossil preparator after successfully completing his doctoral work at the University of Texas at Austin last June. The majority of his effort in the lab since his arrival centers around the preparation of specimens from the Kikak–Tegoseak quarry of Alaska. Ron has been directing the lab's cadre of volunteers on other specimens from this site. He's also tasked several volunteers with continued preparation of the *Alamosaurus* cervical series collected from Big Bend National Park in 2001. Progress is slow on the vertebrae, but the renewed effort should move things along a bit more rapidly. Ron continues his own work on basal theropod systematics (especially coelophysoid theropods), and archosaurs from the Kayenta Formation and Dockum Group. He is also working closely with Tony on descriptions of theropod remains from some of Tony's Alaskan localities. For a change of pace, Ron recently collected a large number of specimens from a new microvertebrate locality in the Antlers Formation (Lower Cretaceous) of Cooke County, Texas. Screenwashing of a small amount of sediment from the site is already producing a diverse vertebrate assemblage. Ron hopes to return to the locality soon to collect more material, including large bones exposed at the site.

We are pleased to announce that Karen Morton has been hired as the museum's collection manager. Karen comes to us from the museum's exhibits department, but her training in the museum science program at Texas Tech University prepared her well to take over as collection manager. Karen hit the ground running and immediately tackled the collection database, as well as the daunting process of organizing the backlog of specimens that greeted her upon her start. We happily and heartily welcome her as a member of the museum's research staff. (Ron Tykoski)

### ***Petrified Forest National Park, Arizona***

Much has happened with the park paleontology program since our last submission, most notably the hiring of a new preparator and the hosting of a paleontology symposium to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the park. Pete Reser decided to retire earlier in the year and has since been replaced with Matthew Brown, previously with the Chicago Field Museum.



Matt is a great fit into our program and we are keeping him extremely busy not only with our massive preparation backlog, but also with new specimens that we continuously bring in.

The symposium was a success with over 50 participants, 17 presentations, and a field trip. A volume of papers featuring all of the presentations was given out to participants at the meeting. This volume was published as *Museum of Northern Arizona Bulletin* 62 and features full papers on the Late Triassic geology, paleobotany, and vertebrate paleontology of the park, as well as numerous short papers dealing with Triassic paleontology world wide. Numerous new taxa (seven plants, two vertebrates) are presented in this volume. If you are interested in obtaining a copy please contact the Petrified Forest Museum Association at (928) 524-6228 ext. 239 or the Museum of Northern Arizona bookstore.

Besides the MNA volume, Bill Parker has several papers in press including a redescription of the aetosaur "*Desmotosuchus chamaensis*" and a revised phylogeny of the Aetosauria, as well as being a junior author on papers with Sterling Nesbitt and Randall Irmis reexamining the Late Triassic dinosaur record. Also in the works is a description of a new aetosaur (with Michelle Stocker of the University of Iowa), a redescription of the aetosaur *Desmotosuchus haplocerus*, and a full description (with Sterling Nesbitt and Randall Irmis) of the pseudosuchian *Revueltosaurus callenderi*. This full description is supplemented with additional information from two new skeletons collected over the last two summers.

Michelle Stocker was here this summer serving her fourth stint in the park and also working on her MS thesis on the phytosaur *Leptosuchus*.

New specimens collected this year include another excellent skeleton of *R. callenderi*, as well as more aetosaur, dinosaur, and the first *Silesaurus*-like fossil from the park. Overall it has been another exciting year for paleontology here at Petrified Forest. (Bill Parker).

### **University of Texas at Austin**

Tim Rowe and students from UT–Austin and the University of Maryland conducted field work in the Chinle Formation of eastern Arizona in May. Despite adventures in west Texas with one of the field vehicles, the trip was quite successful.

Chris Bell traveled to Brisbane, Australia, with Jim Mead, Sandy Swift, and Marci Hollenshead (Northern Arizona University) in May, and initiated new collaborative efforts on Pleistocene vertebrates with Scott Hocknull of the Queensland Museum. Chris and Jim then headed off for field work in Western Australia. When last heard from, they were still alive....

Wann Langston is supervising a new reconstruction of the skull and lower jaw of *Deinosuchus*. The specimen, based on material from Big Bend National Park, though similar in size to the famous Barnum Brown/R. T. Bird restoration, will differ substantially in proportions and contours. We hope to complete the restoration in time for the SVP meeting in Austin in 2007.

Ernie Lundelius continues to work with Bill Turnbull on the fauna from Madura Cave, Western Australia. He and Cinda Timperley (Texas Archeological Research Laboratory) are looking at the dentitions of terminal Pleistocene horses to see if there is any evidence of stress on the last populations of these animals prior to their extinction.

Ted Macrini graduated with his PhD in May; the title of his dissertation is "The Evolution of Endocranial Space in Mammals and Nonmammalian Cynodonts." Ted will begin a postdoc in the fall in the Department of Mammalogy at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. He will be working with curator Robert Voss on a project related to the cranial anatomy and systematics of marsupials.

Current graduate students are keeping busy. Jon Wagner continues to plod onward in his dissertation research on the phylogeny and nexogeny of extant and fossil caimans. His studies on the hadrosaurs of Big Bend continue at a decidedly more glacial pace. Chris Jass is working towards completing his dissertation research on the chronology and biogeography of mammalian fossils from Cathedral Cave, Nevada. (Chris Jass)

### **University of Texas at El Paso**

Angela Chavez successfully defended her MS thesis entitled "A Comparative Study of Vertebral Morphology in Medium-Sized North American Artiodactyla." She will be entering the PhD program in the Department of Biological Sciences this fall. (Art Harris)

### **ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION** (Brent Breithaupt, Regional Editor, [uwgeoms@uwyo.edu](mailto:uwgeoms@uwyo.edu))

No news submitted.

### **PACIFIC COAST REGION** (John M. Harris, Regional Editor, [jharris@nhm.org](mailto:jharris@nhm.org))

#### **California State University—San Bernardino**

It has been some time since that last contribution from CSUSB. As this is being written, Stuart Sumida is preparing to join Dave Berman and Amy Henrici (Carnegie Museum) and Thomas Martens at the Early Permian Bromacker quarry in central Germany. Their paper on the basal reptile *Thuringothyris* with Johannes Müller just came out in *Journal of Paleontology*. Stuart gets to leave behind the terrors of last academic year's move to temporary facilities while the Biology Building is refurbished and brought up to earthquake codes. Despite those roadblocks, activity in the laboratory continues.

Kim Scott has finished off a major chunk of her thesis on the Late Pennsylvanian/Early Permian (??) Halgaito Formation of southeastern Utah. Her assessment of the geology of that rock unit was recently published in the New Mexico Museum of Natural History Early Permian symposium volume published in honor of Dave Berman. Kim has also overseen the installation of a nearly complete mammoth skull in our temporary museum space on campus. She found the specimen in Irvine, California, while working with Cogstone Associates. Kim is now supervising a crew of undergraduate volunteers as they prepare the skull.

Ken Noriega has drug the lab (kicking and screaming) into the Mesozoic—the Cretaceous no less!—and is making steady progress on three-dimensional laser scans of centrosaurine limb elements that he will be rigging and animating for part of his thesis. He presented a preliminary set of results for the foot at the recent Dinosaur Provincial Park meeting last summer.

The lab has also welcomed some new members. Adam Huttenlocker has come to us from the University of Colorado, and he has already jumped enthusiastically into his thesis topic examining structure and histology of the elongate spines of sphenacodontid and edaphosaurid pelycosaurian-grade synapsids. He has been getting substantial help from Elizabeth Rega over at Western University in Pomona, California. Adam also published a paper on Early Permian tetrapods from Nebraska in the same NMMNH volume and has a paper in press on a new Early Permian amphibian in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*. Elsewhere, we've kept Adam busy helping with the mammoth and working as a T.A. in the Department. Valerie Pelletier is getting her feet wet in the lab re-illustrating some *Tseajaia* specimens for possible collaborative work with Stuart, Dave Berman, and James Walliser.

Stuart has been depending on the charity of co-authors to keep his head above water during the move to temporary facilities. His work with Dave and Amy at Carnegie continues as they got out papers on new specimens of *Dimetrodon teutonius*, *Thuringothyris*, and the diadectomorph *Orobates*. He has also lent a helping hand to the work that Elizabeth Rega has been doing on the

histology of the elongate neural spines in *Dimetrodon*. Most of the recent publication activity in the lab has been in the NMMNH volume in Dave's honor, and Stuart's activities have been no exception. He, Kim, and Natalia Wideman (now working on her PhD over at UCLA), reported on new materials of the extremely rare Early Permian crossopterygian *Lohsania* from southeastern Utah. Stuart and Natalia also published on the "limnoscelid" genera from the Early Permian of the southwest—essentially pointing out that *Limnoscelis* is the only valid Permian genus in the family. All in all, the lab was very happy to contribute to the volume that was published in Dave's honor and they also congratulate him on his honorary membership in SVP awarded this past year. Stuart also found time to get a couple of review articles out, one with Kathleen Devlin on major transitions in vertebrates in the Encyclopedia of Life Sciences, and another on the origin of amniotes for the McGraw Hill Yearbook of Science and Technology. He also continues to do anatomical consultation on animated films and special effects; recent work has included advising on *Madagascar*, *Over the Hedge*, *Chronicles of Narnia*, and the upcoming *Night at the Museum* (where a *T. rex* skeleton comes to life) with Rhythm and Hues, and *Ratatouille* with Pixar. (Stuart Sumida)

### **Colorado Desert District Stout Research Center**

The Anza-Borrego Desert State Park® (ABDSP) Paleontology Society volunteers finished the 2005–2006 field season with survey work in the Borrego and Vallecito Creek/Fish Creek badlands. The Borrego Badlands (not known for its articulated remains) recently produced a complete mid to lower vertebral column, sacrum, and innominate of *Equus* sp. from the Irvingtonian Ocotillo Conglomerate. Also an articulated camelid sacrum and innominate from a small species of *Camelops*, *Hemiauchenia* or possibly *Paleolama*, was recovered from the Irvingtonian part of the Vallecito Creek section. A second humerus of the walrus *Valenictus imperialensis*, the fourth specimen known from this taxon, was recently recovered from the Yuha member of the upper Deguynos Formation of late Hemphillian/early Blancan age in the Fish Creek Badlands.

Jeanne Johnstone, Senior Park Aide in paleontology, has been involved with field survey and locality documentation in the Borrego Badlands. She found and excavated the partial horse skeleton described above. Scott Musick, also a Senior Park Aide, monitored the excavation of a seismic study trench dug by Pat Williams along the San Andreas fault on the east side of the Salton Sea. There the seven-plus exposed Holocene Lake Cahuilla horizons yielded the remains of molluscs and fish. He also has been tracking down and geocoding locations throughout ABDSP previously plotted only on aerial photography. Scott is headed to the University of Nevada–Reno, to finish his studies at the Mackay School of Earth Sciences. We wish him the best in this new endeavor.

Now that "Fossil Treasures of the Anza-Borrego Desert" has hit the book shelves, George Jefferson and Kesler Randall, San Diego Natural History Museum, have started research for a technical paper on the camelids from ABDSP. Chris Shaw of the Page Museum also has been working up the large carnivores for publication. It is rumored that Eric Scott, San Bernardino County Museum, will follow suit with the horses.

After a visit of about seven months (and we will miss his most cheery morning greetings), Lyn Murray has returned to University of Texas–Austin. Hopefully he amassed enough collections data, specimen identifications, and field locality data to begin writing his dissertation under Chris Bell's watchful eye. Stephan Kirby, a student of Susan Janecke of the University of Utah, has completed his Master's work on the Quaternary tectonic and structural evolution of the San Felipe Hills. His mapping in the deltaic Arroyo Diablo and lacustrine Borrego formations has already provided a guide for our survey efforts.

The new paleontology collection hall is one step further to completion with the receipt of a \$32K grant from San Diego County. As work continues, the collection may be unavailable for research

periodically through the remainder of 2006. Please let us know in advance of any plans you may have to work in the collection. (G. T. Jefferson)

### **Occidental College, Los Angeles**

Don Prothero's new book, "After the Dinosaurs: The Age of Mammals," just appeared (Indiana University Press) and is available on amazon.com for about \$25. Don also completed the revisions on his new book on creationism and the fossil record, entitled "Evolution: What the Fossils Say and Why it Matters," which will be published by Columbia University Press later this year. He also spent much of June and August editing and laying out the SVP abstracts volume (for the eighth straight year).

The artiodactyl volume is about to go to press, and should be out in early 2007. Don and Scott Foss spent most of last year twisting the arms of authors and reviewers, but are very pleased with the results: contemporary views on nearly every family of artiodactyl (including a chapter on the whales as artiodactyls), along with the molecular and paleoecological perspectives as well, all between one set of covers. Johns Hopkins University Press should have it out early next year.

Don continues to do paleomagnetic field work in western Santa Barbara County, and during July, he collected samples at Bryce Canyon, Utah, and also in the famous Eocene–Oligocene floral localities at Antero and Pitch-Pinnacle in central Colorado. The samples from last season's work in the Gualala block are all done and ready to publish, and the results from the Massacre Lake and Thousand Creek sampling in Nevada are now in press.

In April, Don gave an invited talk at the South Dakota School of Mines in Rapid City. In June, Don gave a featured talk on the geological perspective to environmental problems at a big weekend-long Skeptics Society conference entitled "The Environmental Wars." After the Saturday session, Don ran a Sunday trip to the San Gabriel Mountains and Mount Wilson Observatory for the conference.

The following papers have appeared since the last notice: Prothero, D. R. 2005. Review of "Beasts of Eden" by David Rains Wallace. *American Paleontologist*, 13(1): 32–33; Prothero, D. R. 2005. The fossils say yes. *Natural History*, 114 (9): 52–56; Prothero, D. R. 2006. Paleomagnetism and tectonic rotation of the southern Coast Ranges, *California. Pacific Section SEPM*, 101: 215–236; Prothero, D. R., J. Hoffman, and S. Foss. 2006. Magnetostratigraphy of the upper Miocene Rattlesnake Formation, Oregon. *Paleobios*, 26(1): 31–35; Prothero, D. R., E. Draus, and S. Foss. 2006. Magnetic stratigraphy of the middle Miocene Mascall Formation, Oregon. *Paleobios*, 26(1): 37–42. These are all in pdf form and attached to my Web site. (Don Prothero)

### **William Stout**

On 1 July 2006, the San Diego Natural History Museum opened Fossil Mysteries to the public, the largest and most comprehensive exhibition the museum has ever undertaken. Blending traditional and contemporary exhibition techniques, Fossil Mysteries showcases the last 75 million years in the southern California and Baja California bioregion. Nearly 100% of the specimens have been found locally.

Seven of the 12 murals by William Stout that were commissioned for the exhibit have been completed and were displayed in their appropriate settings within the exhibition. At 14 feet high by 34 feet long, the Pliocene Bay mural is the largest painting Stout has ever done. The remaining five paintings are represented by enlargements of Stout's preliminary studies. As the remaining murals are completed they will replace their enlargement counterparts. The most recently completed mural depicts the Pleistocene world of two species of giant ground sloths and Bill is heavily indebted and deeply grateful to both Chris Shaw from the George C. Page Museum and Greg MacDonald of the National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado, for their tremendous insight

and the detailed input they provided regarding giant sloths and their very particular anatomy and appearance.

While nearly 100% of the specimens have been found locally, the science concepts in Fossil Mysteries are global. In creating the exhibition, the SDNHM research and exhibition staff consulted and collaborated with over 50 scientists and 20 artists and fabricators from around the world. The result is a presentation of cutting-edge scientific concepts presented in new, colorful, and imaginative ways. Climate change, plate tectonics, and evolution are the themes that string together the exhibition, which is laid out chronologically. These themes and major regional events in time connect San Diego's present to its past and future and demonstrate the relevance of natural history in our lives today. (Bill Stout)

### ***University of Bridgeport at Rio Vista***

After teaching 36 years at the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut, Peter Galton is now Professor Emeritus after taking early retirement in December 2005. Peter donated much of his library, other than archosaur and Mesozoic related items, to the Division of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Yale Peabody Museum; nonbiological books went to the University of Bridgeport. The aim was to cut down on the weight before moving cross country early this year to a house in a 55+ resort-style retirement community (he and Carol found it the week before the SVP meeting in Arizona; new address: 315 Southern Hills Drive, Rio Vista CA 94571-2153). Rio Vista is a small town (pop. 8000) on the western non-floodplain non-levee bank of the Sacramento River, the western edge of the Delta area with 1000+ miles of waterways, about midway between Sacramento and San Francisco.

Peter plans to continue research on dinosaurs. Most of his recent papers have been in Ken Carpenter's dinosaur books with the next two coming out in January in "Beaks and Horns." One is on the teeth of ornithischian dinosaurs from the Morrison Formation and the other, by J. Ruiz-Omenaca (Zaragoza, Spain), Xavier Pereda Suberbiola (Bilbao, Spain), and Peter, is on the femur of *Callovosaurus leedsi* (Middle Jurassic, England) as the earliest dryosaurid euornithopod. The first description of the shafts of large femora (bones originally ~850 mm long), originally reported between 1850 and 1870 from the Rhaetian bone bed at Aust Cliff near Bristol, England, appeared in *Revue de Paleobiologie* Geneva 24: 51-74, 2005. One shaft was probably from the basal sauropodomorph dinosaur *Camelotia* and the other two, which are slender, straight in front and side views, and a little widened transversely, are probably from a stegosaurid stegosaur rather than a sauropod dinosaur. Hopefully the detailed review of the unassociated archosaurian bones (mostly very basal sauropodomorph, long referred to *Thecodontosaurus antiquus*) from the nearby Rhaetian fissure fill at Clifton on Durdham Down will be submitted in July (three humeral morphs discussed in *JVP* 25, Suppl to 3: 61A). The best bones were destroyed in 1940 so copies of earlier figures of these will be used plus photos of the extant bones, many of which have not been figured previously. Peter junior authored a paper with Fabien Knoll (Paris, Stuttgart) on the improbability of a proboscis in the sauropod dinosaur *Diplodocus* (*Geobios* Lyon 39:215-221, 2006). He and Fabien also have a paper in press (*Geological Magazine* London, ?December) on the braincase described by Von Huene (1906) from the Middle Jurassic of Oxfordshire. It has been referred to the theropod *Megalosaurus* and to the sauropod *Cetiosaurus*, and even to both genera in the same paper, but it is clearly sauropod and probably referable to *Cetiosaurus*. (Peter M. Galton)

### ***University of Oregon, Eugene***

Interest in vertebrate paleontology has lingered here long after the sad departure of Ryosuke Motani, but now the good news is that his legacy will be renewed. We have just received official approval to hire a paleontologist for fall 2007. Details have not yet been decided. The job will have teaching duties in the Honors College but will be based in the Department of Geological Sciences with strong ties to the Condon Collection and the Oregon Museum of Natural and

Cultural History. Watch our Web site this coming summer in the Department of Geological Sciences for the advertisement.

Greg Retallack continues work on the end-Permian (251 Ma) mass extinction in Antarctica and South Africa, and, with Roger Smith, Hope Jahren, Nathan Sheldon, and Christine Metzger, has a paper submitted on the end-Guadalupian (260 Ma) mass extinction, which is in many ways a preplay of the big event. In South Africa our new carbon isotopic results show that the end-Guadalupian coincides with the extinction of tapinocephalians. Both end-Guadalupian and end-Permian events include marked negative carbon isotope anomalies, profound soil erosion episodes, advent of low-sinuosity braided streams, and transient increases in precipitation and temperature.

We welcome PhD student John Orcutt in the fall, with plans to study the respiratory physiology of *Lystrosaurus*, and its role in survival of the end-Permian atmospheric crisis. Two ongoing undergraduate theses also deal with vertebrate problems: David Levering on cursoriality of Oligocene oreodons and nimravid and Richard Bykowski on the functional morphology of *Triceratops*.

Bill and Liz Orr continue curation of the Condon Collection with an enthusiastic team of volunteers, and are pleased to report the collection returns to the administrative umbrella of the Oregon Museum of Natural and Cultural History. (Greg Retallack)

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