

The official bulletin of the Dothan Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.

ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

920 Yorktown Road, Dothan, AL 36301-4372

www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

June 2014



Words from...

The President

Thanks to everyone who came out for the final meeting before summer break. We had a great program from the Merediths and an impressive array of items for Show & Tell and the two auctions.

I don't know about you, but I'm personally looking forward to our upcoming series of Summer Socials which start this month. As for next month, if you expect to find yourself traveling anywhere near Franklin, NC the week of July 21st make plans to stop and check out the two—yes, two—gem and mineral shows and the two private dealers offering retail and wholesale goods, one of them in a week-long outdoor show. Franklin is the place to be! Talk about killing two birds with one gemstone! (*Pun intended.*)

See you at noon on Saturday, the 28th. Jeff

Announcements

Summer Socials – our three summer socials have been planned for the fourth Saturday of June, July and August. All will be held at our regular monthly meeting place and all will be potluck, so cook up your favorite dish to bring along. As usual, we will meet at noon and eat at 1:00 PM. There is a different activity planned for each social. See below for details and mark your calendars!

June Social – The first social is set for **Saturday, June 28th**. Entertainment will be a Bingo Fest. If you have items to donate for prizes, please bring them with you.

July Social – The second social will be on **Saturday, July 26th**. We will be having a Members Sale. Members can bring any items they would like to sell, and 10% of the proceeds will go to the club treasury to help defray operating costs for meetings and the annual show.

August Social – The third social is scheduled for **Saturday, August 23rd** and will feature a full-blown fund raising auction for the club treasury, so donations of items for the auction would be greatly appreciated.

Upcoming Shows

June 27 – 29	Treasures of the Earth Gem & Jewelry Show	Fishersville, VA
July 21 – 27	T 7 D Outdoor Gem Show	Franklin, NC
July 23 – 27	Damian Belghali – Retailers and Wholesalers	Franklin, NC
July 24 – 26	USFG Franklin Faceters Frolic	Franklin, NC
July 24 – 27	Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin	Franklin, NC

Source: <http://www.the-vug.com/vug/vugshows.html>

Meeting Minutes – May 2014 – by Secretary

Our last meeting until fall was called to order by President Jeff DeRoche at 2:12 PM. There were 27 club members in attendance for the meeting. Jeff told the group that Loral Meints had been in a car accident. Her car was totaled, but she is OK. Well wishes for her were expressed by all the club members. Jeff also wished Happy Birthday to all the club members born in May.

CORRESPONDENCE: The club received the usual newsletters from our fellow clubs. We also received a flyer for the Tannehill show in McCalla on June 7 – 8 June, and a show in Tulsa, OK on July 11 – 13 where Bob Jones, editor of Rock & Gem Magazine, will be a featured speaker.

OLD BUSINESS: Jeff asked that members make sure all the show signs are returned. We have dates for next year's show and will need to get the signs changed. The April minutes were approved without changes. Diane Rodenhizer presented the treasury report and gave a membership report. We now have 71 members and 9 junior members.

NEW BUSINESS: Dates for the 2015 show will March 28 – 29. The show was moved up because of Easter and a conflict with the BBQ festival.

The group unanimously voted to make a donation to the church for their kind use of the hall. Since we will be holding our summer socials at the hall, everyone agreed that we should increase our donation to help offset any increased expenses.

Dates and activities have been set for the summer socials. We will have the socials at the church hall on the 4th Saturday of June, July & August. As usual, we will meet at 12:00 PM and eat at 1:00 PM. All socials will be potluck, so cook up your favorite dish to bring along. We will be having a bingo fest at the June 28th social. If you have stuff to donate for prizes, please bring it with you. We will be having a sale at the July 26th social. Members can bring items that they would like to sell, with 10% going to the club treasury. We will be having a fund raising auction at the August 23rd social, so donations of items for the auction would be appreciated.

PROGRAM: Today's program, "collecting while traveling," was presented by Barb & Gary Meredith. Gary described how the family tent-camped for years and that everyone became SCUBA qualified. The family would alternate vacation sites between Florida and Tennessee, and collect shells and other things while diving. Gary & Barb brought several boxes of things they had collected while diving, and also a bunch of other items they made.

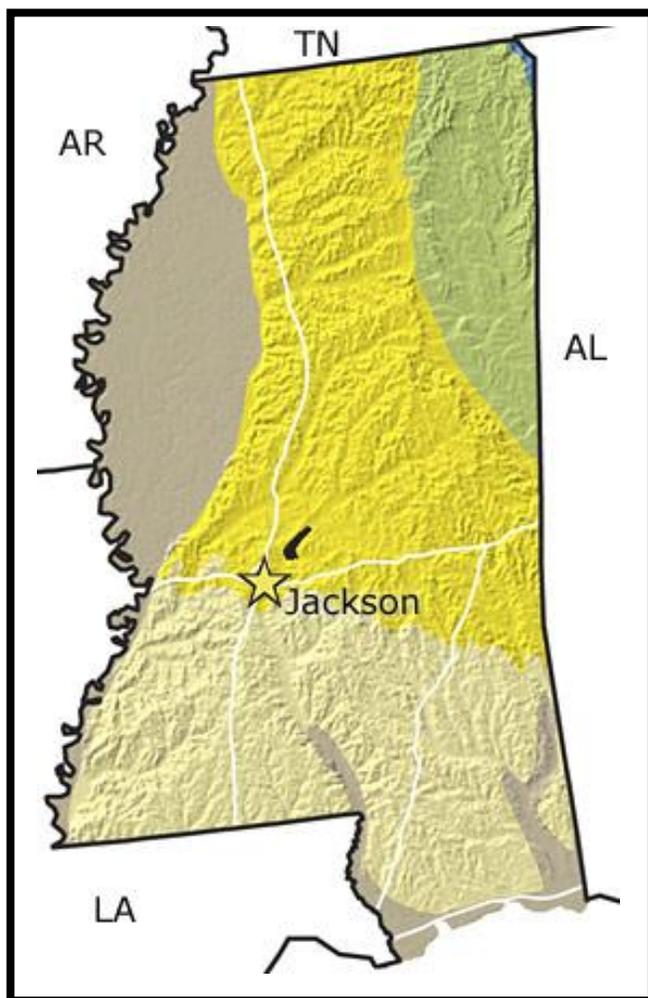
Barb showed some really nice things that she finger wove. Gary brought quite a few things he made as a wood carver and blacksmith. My favorites were the knives he made from railroad spikes. What a talented pair he and Barb are!

SHOW & TELL: Bill Tharpe bought some arrowheads and knives he made. They were beautiful. Neil Pollan showed a mineral display he started while in college. Ben Childress brought a bunch of micro-fossils, teeth fragments and pyritized coprolite from Hurricane Creek. He showed trace fossils from a tributary of Omusee Creek, and oysters and coral he found near River Falls. Ben also brought more petrified sea biscuits to give away. He is planning to go to Newton to hunt for sharks teeth after the meeting and invited anyone who wants to go, to tag along. L.J. Ward brought a specimen with blue costal chert, a really rare color. He also showed a really nice woven bumble bee his niece sent him from Guatemala. Ada went to visit family there and brought a 16-strand beaded necklace her niece gave her.

The club broke for refreshments and regrouped for the live and silent auctions. The live auction featured a flat of various mineral specimens donated by Joe & Tina Polakoski. I, of course, bought a purple fluorite to add to my collection. You can never have too much purple. Arnie Lambert donated a bunch of items for a silent auction and Chris Holderith donated a gem and mineral jigsaw puzzle. Door prizes went to Meredith Capshaw, Elliott Whitton, Bruce Fizzell, Anne Trice and Ken Johnson.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Leduc

Mississippi – Paleontology and Geology



Geologic Time Periods

0-1.8	Quaternary
1.8-65	Tertiary
65-145	Cretaceous
145-200	Jurassic
200-251	Triassic
251-299	Permian
299-359	Carboniferous
359-416	Devonian
416-444	Silurian
444-488	Ordovician
488-542	Cambrian
542-4650	Precambrian

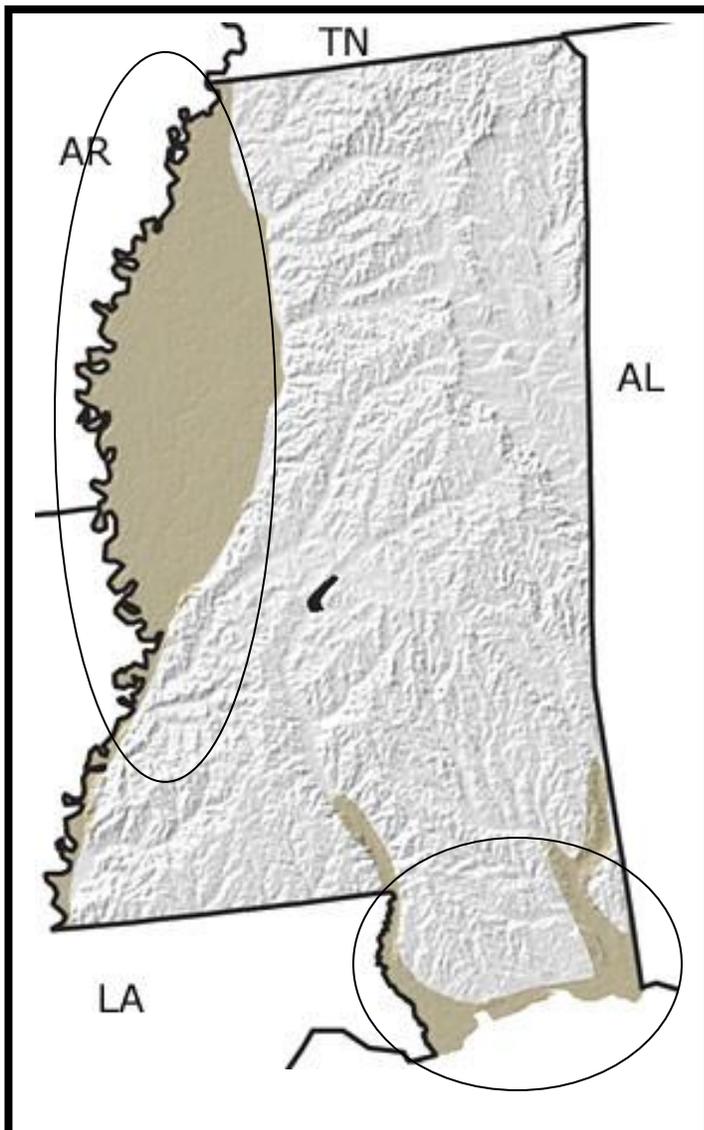
The Precambrian: There are no Precambrian rocks in Mississippi. The state, as such, did not exist during this time.

The Paleozoic: The youngest rocks found in Mississippi are marine in origin, formed during the Late Devonian. A sea with pockets of deep, oxygen-poor water covered the northeastern part of the state at this time. The fossils in these dark-colored rocks are primarily plant fragments and the remains of animals that could swim above the oxygen-starved depths. The sea continued to cover portions of the state into the later part of the Paleozoic and provided a home to molluscs, crinoids, brachiopods, and trilobites. During the Late Carboniferous, the water retreated as vast amounts of sediments were poured into the sea from the erosion of newly formed mountains. Forests of primitive trees and fern-like plants grew on the resulting broad coastal plains. By the end of the Paleozoic, the entire state was above sea level and exposed to erosion.

The Mesozoic: Mississippi remained above sea level for much of the Mesozoic. During the later part of this era, however, a shallow sea flooded the region as North and South America moved farther apart during the breakup of the supercontinent of Pangea. The rocks originally deposited as sediment on the floor of this sea contain abundant fossils of both invertebrates and vertebrates. Pieces of petrified wood are also common.

The Cenozoic: Warm, tropical seas periodically flooded southern Mississippi during the early part of the Cenozoic, while the northern part of the state remained above sea level. Marine fossils include whales, sharks, and bony fish, as well as numerous molluscs and other invertebrates. Fossilized wood found in northern Mississippi provides evidence of the forests and swamps that existed there at this time. In the Late Cenozoic, most of the state was covered by coastal plain and shallow sea. Glaciers far to the north of the state affected the climate and caused fluctuations in sea level. Blankets of wind-blown silt (loess) eroded from the Mississippi River floodplain cover large areas in the northwestern part of the state. Fossil shells of various terrestrial and freshwater molluscs, as well as the fossil bones of a number of terrestrial mammals, have been recovered from the loess deposits.

Mississippi – Cenozoic Eras

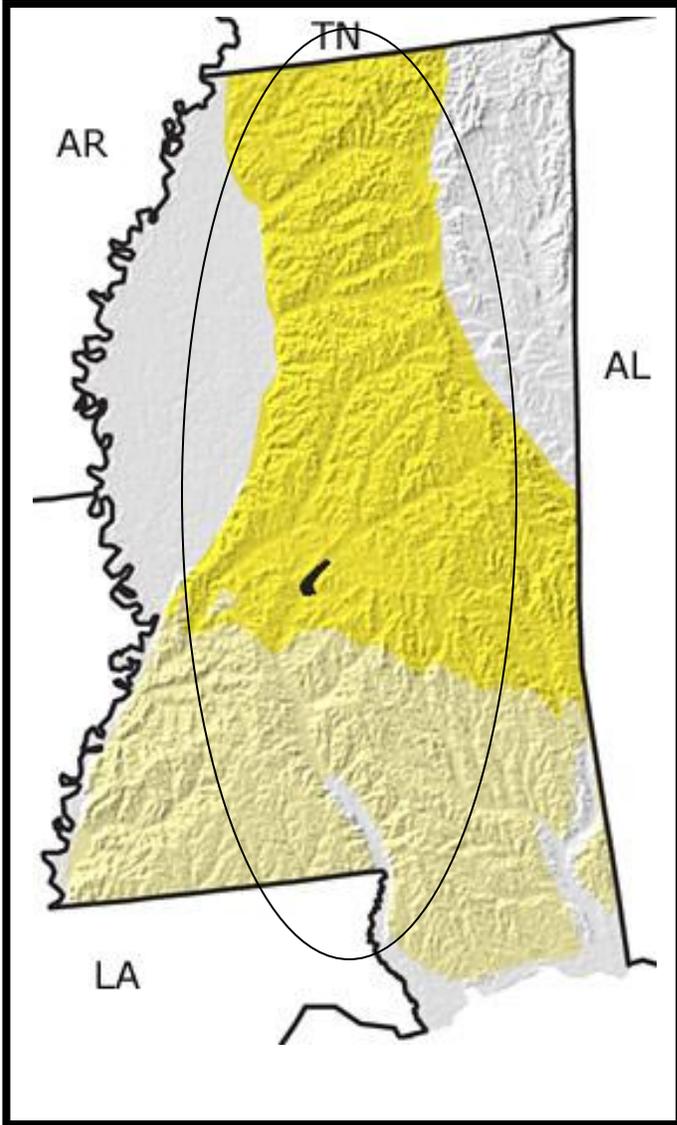


Quaternary Period

Most of the state was coastal plain and shallow sea during the Quaternary, but glaciers further north affected the climate and caused fluctuations in sea level.

Loess (wind-blown silt) blankets large areas in the northwestern part of the state. This silty sediment was eroded from the Mississippi River floodplain when strong winds scoured the landscape during the Pleistocene.

Fossils of shells of various terrestrial and freshwater snails and other molluscs, as well as fossil of manatees, hippos, and the short-faced bear have been recovered from the loess deposits.



Tertiary Period

A warm, tropical sea periodically flooded southern Mississippi during the Tertiary. Fossils of molluscs, whales, sharks, bony fish, and dugongs (relatives of manatees) can be found in these marine sediments.

The northern part of the state was above sea level. The landscape was dominated by large rivers, swamps, and forests.

The remains of one of these forests can be seen by visiting the Mississippi Petrified Forest, located about twenty miles northwest of Jackson.

MUSEUMS OF INTEREST TO ROCKHOUNDERS IN MISSISSIPPI

Dunn-Seiler Museum - *Mississippi State University – Department of Geosciences, Starkville, Mississippi*

The Dunn-Seiler Geology Museum houses mineral and rock collections, meteorites, and fossil displays including a Cretaceous crocodile skull, and many fossils from Mississippi and the Southeast.

Mississippi Museum of Natural Science - *Jackson, Mississippi*

The museum's 'Stories in Stone' exhibit displays local fossils.

PLACES TO VISIT - INTERESTING SITES TO SEE IN MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Petrified Forest - *Flora, Mississippi*

The Mississippi Petrified Forest is a privately operated commercial park and museum near Flora. The petrified wood is believed to have been formed about 36 million years ago when fir and maple logs washed down an ancient river channel to the current site where they later became petrified. The site was registered as a National Natural Landmark in 1965. There is a small museum with examples of petrified wood from other localities.

Plymouth Bluff - *South of Columbus, Mississippi*

Plymouth Bluff is a well-known Cretaceous fossil bed composed of marine sediments deposited when the area was part of a vast inland sea. The Mississippi University for Women's Plymouth Bluff Visitor Center has an excellent display of local fossils.

Tupelo Meteorite ... err Meteorwong - *Tupelo, Mississippi*

On East Main Street, Tupelo Mississippi (the birthplace of Elvis) displays – on a pedestal – the 1,100-pound 'Tupelo Meteorite.' The 'meteorite' is reported to have 'fell' near Tupelo in 1870 where it was 'discovered' by Tupelo Mayor H.C. Medford. The specimen has been publicly displayed outside the Leake & Goodlett building since about 1965, but has been 'borrowed' or stolen on occasion. In 1980, however, a NASA scientist determined that the specimen is not a meteorite; rather, it is just a sandstone concretion.

ROCKHOUNDING SITES IN MISSISSIPPI FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Petrified Wood - *Northern Mississippi*

Petrified wood is fairly common in Mississippi and occurs in streams.

Fossils - *Prentiss County, Mississippi*

In northeast Mississippi, fossils are fairly abundant. Twenty Mile Creek is a well-known location for fossilized shark teeth. Fossils in the area also include mollusks, brachiopods, and sponges.

Fossil Shark Teeth - *Northeast Mississippi*

The Tombigbee River Valley is full of chalk and sand outcroppings that contain a variety of fossils. In the Golden Triangle area, these deposits are mostly from the Cretaceous Period (about 82 to 70 million years ago). Throughout the area, there are fossilized teeth from sharks, giant fish, and sea going reptiles.

Club Meeting – May 2014

Photos by Pat



Big crowd,
a bigger
Show & Tell,
and two
auctions for
the May
meeting!



Club Meeting – May 2014

Photos by Pat

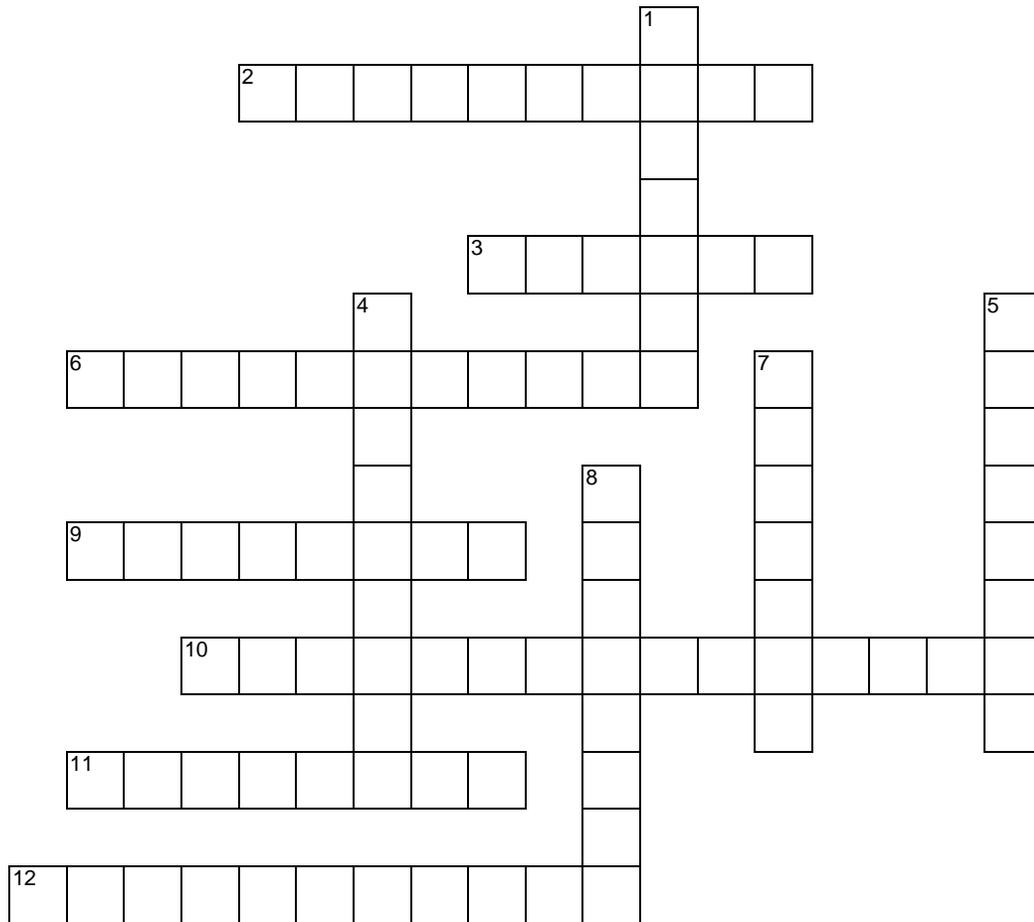


Members were rapt listeners as Gary and Barb Meredith told of their many travels and the resulting hobbies.





The Cenozoic Era



www.fossils-facts-and-finds.com

ACROSS

- 2 The current period of the Cenozoic Era
- 3 a time when glaciers advance and cover large areas
- 6 the scientific name for humans
- 9 the present era; name means new life
- 10 a predatory mammal with 2 very long teeth
- 11 The last epic of the Tertiary Period
- 12 The first epic of the Quaternary Period

DOWN

- 1 The Cenozoic Era is sometimes called the age of _____;
This class of animals is characterized by hair, live births,
and care of their young
- 4 the first epic of the Tertiary Period
- 5 the first period of the Cenozoic Era
- 7 a large elephant-like mammal with a hairy coat
- 8 the last epic of the Quaternary Period

The Cenozoic Era: Age of Mammals

The **Cenozoic Era** is the last and most recent of the geologic periods. Its name means “new life” coming from the Greek root kainos, meaning “new,” and zoic, “life.” While this new life came to refer to mammals-thus coined The Age of Mammals- this new life could have just as easily been the angiosperm or flowering plants, the insects, the newest fish (teleostei) or modern birds. All of these groups, including the mammals, continued to evolve during this present Era.

The Rise of the Mammals

During the Cenozoic, mammals evolved from their somewhat insignificant stature during the Mesozoic to include giant species that have gone extinct in modern times. While none of the mammals ever reached the size of the dinosaurs, there were some species that dwarfed their modern-day relatives. Everyone knows about mammoths, but during the Cenozoic Era some birds stood 7-feet tall. There were beavers 7 feet long! These creatures were typical of the growth achieved by the “new life” in the early Cenozoic.

Flowering Plants

Flowering plants or angiosperms were widespread in the Cenozoic Era. This was beneficial to insects, many of which evolved symbiotic relationships with flowering plants.

The Quaternary and Tertiary

The Cenozoic includes the period that began roughly 65 million years ago to the present. Historically, the Era has been divided into two periods: the [Tertiary](#) and the [Quaternary](#). These terms came from the 19th century when rock formation in Europe was classified as primary (being the oldest), secondary and tertiary, with quaternary being coined slightly later. As more sophisticated geologic understanding evolved, primary and secondary were dropped from use. Only Tertiary and Quaternary remained as the divisions of the era.

Changes in the Naming System

But these divisions don't seem appropriate in the light of current understanding about the geologic changes that occurred during the Cenozoic. New terms are being used that relate more closely and accurately to the stratigraphy of the planet: [Paleogene](#) for the early part of the Cenozoic including the early two-thirds of the Tertiary Period, and [Neogene](#) for the last part of the Tertiary and the Quaternary. Suffice it to say, regardless of what it is called, the geology that occurred remains the same! But let us not forget that the Cenozoic Era is a geologic classification and get back to the geology that distinguishes this period.

The Continents Move

During this time, the continents continued the separation that had begun at the end of the Mesozoic Era during the Cretaceous Period. The Atlantic Rift was widening and forcing more continental separation, in particular Greenland from Europe. Other ocean spreading rifts caused the separation of Australia from Antarctica and Africa from India. The supercontinents of Gondwanaland and Laurasia that had been the result of tectonic movement during the Mesozoic, were now transforming into the continents of modern day.

Volcanic Activity Builds Mountains

The rifts that occurred around the globe resulted in volcanic activity that formed mountain ranges. The Cascade Range that extends along the coast of North America from British Columbia to California is one example of this rifting/volcanic activity. Volcanic activity in Europe, Asia and Africa resulted in the formation of the Himalayan and Alpine mountain systems.

The Cenozoic Era: Time Marches On

And so the Cenozoic era continues. It is the era we live in, though we could hardly say this is the era of humans. We have been present as a species only about 1.5 million years of the 65 million of the current era. That represents about 7 seconds on the clock of eras!

Source: http://www.fossils-facts-and-finds.com/cenozoic_era.html

Across: 2 - quaternary; 3 - ice age; 6 - homosapiens; 9 - cenozoic; 10 - sabertoothtiger; 11 - pliocene; 12 - pleistocene
Down: 1 - mammals; 4 - paleocene; 5 - tertiary; 7 - mammoth; 8 - holocene

Who What Where When Why How

June Birthdays

JUN 19 Abbey Pollan
JUN 25 Ben Childress

Random Fossil Facts

The biggest dinosaur fossil is Sauroposeidon, which is believed to have stood 60 feet tall and may have weighed as much as 60 tons. That's as tall as a six-story building and as heavy as a nine elephants.

The smallest fossils of all are the one-celled organisms that are also the oldest: the blue-green algae.

The tiniest dinosaur fossil was found recently in China. Microraptor was the size of a crow (about 12 inches long).

Source: <http://classroom.synonym.com/10-fossils-2713.html>

Meeting Information

Time: 2:00 PM
Date: Fourth Sunday of each month (except June, July and August)
Place: Fellowship Hall – Tabernacle United Methodist Church
4205 S. Brannon Stand Road
Dothan, AL

Officers

President – Jeff DeRoche
334-673-3554

Vice President – Anne Trice
334-718-4838

Secretary – Pat LeDuc
334-806-5626

Treasurer – Diane Rodenhizer
334-447-3610

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Field Trips Chair – Bruce Fizzell
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Hospitality Chair – JoAn Lambert
334-792-7116

Club Hostess – Laural Meints
334-723-8019

Club Liaison – Garry Shirah
334-671-4192

Website: www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

Objectives

To stimulate interest in lapidary, earth science and, when necessary, other related fields.

To sponsor an educational program within the membership to increase the knowledge of its members in the properties, identifications and evaluations of rocks, minerals, fossils and other related subjects.

To cooperate and aid in the solution of its members' problems encountered in the Club's objectives.

To cooperate with other mineralogical and geological clubs and societies.

To arrange and conduct field trips to facilitate the collection of minerals.

To provide opportunity for exchange and exhibition of specimens and materials.

To conduct its affairs without profit and to refrain from using its assets for pecuniary benefit of any individual or group.

Classified Ads

Looking for an item to round out your rock collection?

Got a specimen, tool or handicraft for sale or trade?

Submit the pertinent details to me by the 10th of each month and your inclinations will be made known to the membership in the next bulletin.

N. J. Blackwell
28 Lakeview Trail, Apt. C
Daleville, AL 36322
Phone: 334-503-0308
Email: Tfavorite7@aol.com

Annual Dues

Single \$15
Family \$20

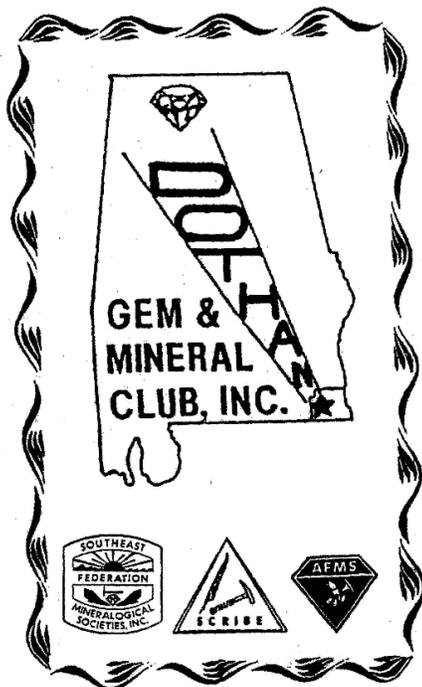
Refreshments

JUN 28 – Potluck Social

ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

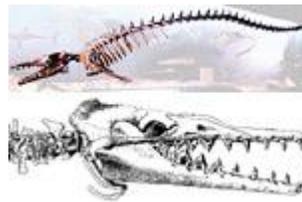
Editor – N. J. Blackwell
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Where you might hear...

The Mississippi State Fossil is:



Basilosaurus and Zygorhiza

Both of these early whales were hunting in the warm seas that extended over the Gulf Coast states during the Eocene (~ 50-40 million years ago). *Basilosaurus* (top) had a narrow, streamlined body, ~ 24 m long. *Zygorhiza* (bottom) was much smaller with a wider, more whale-like body.

Source: Photos and information courtesy of The Paleontology Portal (www.paleoportal.org).

Member of
Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies