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Rochester Academy of Science
BULLETIN
"An organization of people in the Natural Sciences"



April, 2007 - Vol. 61, #4, Page 4

ABOUT THE **ACADEMY** - The Rochester Academy Of Science, Inc. is an organization which has been promoting interest in the natural sciences since 1881, with special focus on the western New York state region. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in science. Dues are minimal for the Academy, and are listed in the membership application. Each Section also sets dues to cover Section-related publications and mailings.



For applications and/or more information contact membership chairman Stephen Busschaert, 54 Keswick Rd., Rochester, NY 14609; by telephone 288-5683; or by e-mail <sbusschaert@msn.com>.

The *Academy* Internet web page is <http://www.rasny.org>

The *Astronomy Section* Information phone number is (585) 987-5330. The *Astronomy Section* Internet web page is <http://rochesterastronomy.org>

This "BULLETIN" is produced monthly, *except July and September*, by the *Astronomy Section, Rochester Academy of Science*. The editor is Frank Bov, 16 Gladbrook Rd., Pittsford, NY 14534 Phone (585) 422-9910 (days) and (585) 385-1518 (evenings), e-mail <frank.bov@xerox.com>

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The Academy Postal address is P.O. Box 92642, Rochester, NY 14692

RAS 2007 SPRING
LECTURE SERIES

A Fossil Guide to Mark Twain's Essay "Was the World Made for Man?"

J. Michael Pratt

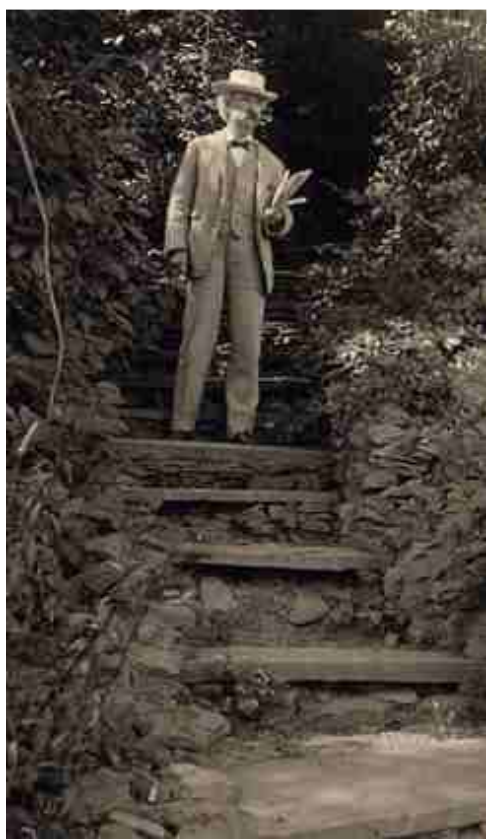
Assistant Professor of
Management Information
Systems, Elmira College

Monday, April 16
6:00 PM Dinner (\$18 *)
7:30 PM Lecture (FREE)

Main Auditorium
Brighton Town Hall
2300 Elmwood Avenue

For six months beginning in September 1870, a spate of family tragedies and crises left Mark Twain struggling to repeat the success of his first book, *Innocents Abroad* (1868). To get back on track, Clemens invited his lifelong friend, Joe Goodman, to spend the summer with him at Quarry Farm. With Goodman's encouragement, Mark Twain finished his second book, *Roughing It* (1872) and regained his self-confidence.

Perhaps to recall their Comstock adventures, he and Goodman mined the abandoned quarry at the farm but not for precious minerals but for more an intellectual treasure – ancient fossils.



Samuel Clemens, *aka* Mark Twain

Join Dr. Pratt as he explores Mark Twain's fascination with paleontology in several of his writings — in particular, his satirical essay, "Was the World Made for Man?" (1903). Dr. Pratt will also identify parts of the essay that seem to echo Clemens' fossil collecting experiences 32 years earlier at Quarry Farm.

* Please RSVP by April 9th to Stan Spector at 585-461-1272 or <stanspec@aol.com>

ROCHESTER
MINERALOGICAL
SYMPOSIUM

Thursday, April 12th through
Sunday April 15th

Radisson Hotel,
175 Jefferson Rd., Henrietta, NY

The Rochester Mineralogical Symposium attracts people from all over the world who are interested in all facets of mineralogy. Anyone interested in knowing more about rocks and minerals is welcome.

The emphasis is on education and lectures – a symposium. Lecture topics vary, from the collection of old mineral labels to mineral collectors from the early days of science; from *Minerals and the Internet* to *What's New in Minerals*. Displays of many fine minerals will be available.

The Thursday evening program is FREE to all RAS members. The lecture begins at 8:00 PM. The speaker will be Dr. Wendell Wilson, and his topic is: *Mineralogical Record Label Archive*.

Tickets are \$65 for the weekend, or \$30 per day. \$5/day for students with ID. Under 16 free. Call (315)682-0387 for more information.

ROCHESTER ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
BALLOT FOR JULY 2007 – JUNE 2008 OFFICERS

Please vote for each office. Note there are (as always) TWO Directors' slots to fill.

OFFICE	NAME	√	WRITE-IN CANDIDATE
President:	Stanley M. Spector		
Vice President:	(Open)		
Membership:	Stephen Busschaert		
Treasurer:	William Hallahan		
Secretary:	Helen D. Haller		
Member, Board of Directors, 3-year term:	Jeff Gutterman		
Member, Board of Directors, 3-year term:	Kym Pocius		

Completed ballots can be returned to the RAS post office box, or delivered in person at any RAS or Section meeting.

**AIA ROCHESTER
LECTURE**

***The Origins of Sanxingdui:
An Early Complex Society
in Sichuan Province, China***

Dr. Rowan Flad

Dept. of Anthropology
The Peabody Museum

Thursday, April 12th, 7:30PM
Memorial Art Gallery

In 1986, two pits filled with fabulous bronze, jade, gold and ivory objects were found in Guangan City near Chengdu, Sichuan. These discoveries forced a complete revision of our understanding of the “big picture” of the Early Chinese Bronze Age.

Recent research has begun to focus on understanding the origins of this “Sanxingdui civilization” with focus on the earlier communities associated with the “Baodun Culture.” Dr. Flad will tell us about his current field work.

**RMSC DISTINGUISHED
SCHOLAR LECTURE**

Saving the Giant Panda

David Powell

Assistant Curator of Mammals
at the Bronx Zoo

Wednesday, April 18th, 7:30PM
Eisenhart Auditorium

Although the zoo birth of a panda cub is cause for celebration, the ultimate survival of the giant panda depends on sustaining wild populations. Seeking to improve captive breeding and reintroduction to the wild, David Powell studies panda behavior in China and in animals loaned to the U.S. The short-term loans of these popular animals represent a significant investment in improving the status of wild giant pandas and supporting the Chinese government in conservation of the pandas' habitat.

David Powell is Assistant Curator of Mammals at the Bronx Zoo and a Smithsonian Research Associate with the National Zoological Park.

Tickets are \$15 for non-RMSC members, \$8 for students through grade 12 or college students with ID. Call (585)697-1942 for more information and reservations.

* * *



Bonus question: Who is this man?

Find out at the Spring Lecture!

EVENTS for APRIL 2007

(For updates to events, check the Academy web site, <http://www.rasny.org>, or appropriate Section web site.)

**Tue 03 FOSSIL
MEETING**

7:30 PM, Community Room,
Brighton Town Hall. Dr. Jorg
Maletz from SUNY Buffalo's
Department of Geology will talk
on *Graptolites; Enigmatic
Fossils from the Paleozoic*. For
more information contact John
Handley at 802-85676 or at
<jhandley@rochester.rr.com>.

**Fri 06 ASTRONOMY
GENERAL MEETING**

7:30 PM Rochester Institute of
Technology, Gosnell Hall, room
A300. This month's speaker is Dr.
Dan Watson, presenting *Planet
Formation*, based on work in
infrared astronomy from the
Spitzer Space Telescope. Also,
Steve Fentress will tell us about
*The Renovated Griffith
Observatory*. Visitors are always
welcome. For information,
contact Carol Latta at 230-9548,
or <cosmos@rochester.rr.com>.

**Thu-Sun 12-15 ROCHESTER
MINERALOGICAL
SYMPOSIUM**

Radisson Hotel, 175 Jefferson Rd.
See the RAS web site for
schedule details. The Thursday
evening program is free to all
RAS members. Dr. Wendell
Wilson will speak at 8: 00 PM on:
*Mineralogical Record Label
Archive*. See notice elsewhere in
this issue for more information.

**Thur 12 ANTHROPOLOGY
LECTURE**

7:30 PM, Memorial Art Gallery,
sponsored by the AIA. Dr. Rowan

Flad, Dept. of Anthropology at
the Peabody Museum, will speak
on: *The Origins of Sanxingdui:
An Early Complex Society in
Sichuan Province, China* See
notice elsewhere in this issue for
more information.

**Fri 13 ASTRONOMY
STAR PARTY**

9:00 - 10:30 PM, Northampton
Park ski lodge parking lot. Join us
for views of Saturn and deep sky
objects in members' telescopes.
Members will be on hand to
answer questions and show how
to navigate in the sky. Dress
warm as evenings may be chilly!
For more information, contact Jim
Seidewand at 723-6225 or cell
703-9876

Sun 15 RAS BULLETIN

Articles and event notices due for
the May, 2007 newsletter.

**Mon 16 RAS
SPRING LECTURE**

7:30 PM Main Auditorium,
Brighton Town Hall. J. Michael
Pratt will give a talk titled: *A
Fossil Guide to Mark Twain's
Essay "Was the World Made for
Man?"* Dr. Pratt is an Assistant
Professor of Management
Information Systems at Elmira
College. See notice elsewhere in
this issue for more information.

**Wed 18 DISTINGUISHED
SCHOLAR LECTURE**

7:30 PM Eisenhart Auditorium at
the RMSC. David Powell,
Assistant Curator of Mammals at
the Bronx Zoo will speak on:
Saving the Giant Panda. (See

lecture notice elsewhere in this
issue.) Tickets are \$15 for non-
RMSC members, \$8 for students.
Call (585)697-1942 for more
information and reservations.

**Wed 18 RAS BOARD
MEETING**

7:00 PM Brighton Town Hall,
Stage Conference Room.
Everyone welcomed.

**Sat 21 LIFE SCIENCES
FIELD TRIP**

10:00 AM to Bauman's
Greenhouses, 1397 Five Mile
Line Rd. and Karen Wolf's home
for lunch. Bauman Farm Markets
are now growing much of their
own flowers and vegetable
seedlings in their several
greenhouses. Please join us to
explore and test your skills
identifying young plants by their
leaves only. Bring your lunch to
eat at Karen's. Please call Karen,
670-9709 to confirm the event.

**UPCOMING
MAY EVENTS**

**Wed-Thur 09-10 SCIENCE
EXPLORATION DAYS**

St. John Fisher College Student
Life Center/Gymnasium. There
are three sessions: Wednesday
and Thursday mornings starting at
9:00 AM, attended by middle
school and high school students,
and Wednesday evening 7:00-
9:00 PM, open to the public.
Volunteers are needed to staff
displays from all Academy
sections. Complementary donuts
and coffee in the morning, and a
buffet lunch afterward.