

BULLETIN

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Summer is a great time of the year for Academy members. We get to play outside, observe what happens in the natural world, and learn new things! Star parties and fests beckon us to examine the sky and hear the latest news about action in places far, far away. Trips into gorges and quarries entice us to look for extinct critters and interesting minerals. Walks in swamps and woodlands awaken our senses to the wildlife that surrounds us. Many thanks to the leaders in the Academy Sections for a full calendar of events that keep us fascinated enough to keep looking up, down, and around!

Jutta Dudley, President RAS.

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PRI – THE PALEONTOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Over the years I have traveled on route 96 down to Ithaca on many occasions and have never found the time to check out the Paleontological Research Institute just north of town.

I recently had the opportunity to participate in a behind the scenes tour of this institution and was amazed at what I had been missing by not visiting sooner. The Museum of the Earth, which

is open to the public, is very impressive. In both size and wealth of specimens, it rivals and surpasses many other museums I have visited over the years.

Another facet which sets the institute apart from many others is the strength of its public outreach program. If you or your family are looking for an earth science or just science based activity to participate in over the summer, this is certainly one program you should investigate.

The institute has come to occupy a unique role in the field of paleontology and earth science and in no small measure this is due to its unusual history.

In 1932, Cornell geology professor Gilbert Harris was nearing the end of his 40 year career as a professor at the university. Over the years he had established a reputation as a petroleum geologist and mollusk researcher, amassed a significant paleontological collection and had even started and overseen the publication of a personally funded scientific journal.

As he approached the time of his retirement however he became increasingly concerned about the future of his research and collections. Professor Harris first approached the university about providing space and resources for the care of his life's work but was

not able to secure any backing from the university.

At this point Professor Harris made the decision to found an independent institution which would serve as a home for his life's work as well as a facility where researchers without any other institutional home could come and conduct research. On June 28, 1932 Professor Harris and a small group of friends and supporters founded what he called the Paleontological Research Institute.

Professor Harris served as Director of the institution he founded for many years and, while funding was always an issue, the institute continued to grow in both size and reputation. In 1968, under the leadership of its second Director, Katherine Palmer, the institute moved to its present location on the west side of the lake just north of Ithaca.

Today, the institute has continued to expand its roll in the areas of paleontological and earth science research and public outreach. It now houses a large and world renowned collection of Cenozoic mollusks and is becoming increasingly involved in research which will lead to insights into the climatic issues which face our society and planet.

Whether you are just passing through the area or have

specifically made the institute the destination of a trip, a visit to this facility is certainly worth your time.

If you wish to learn more about the institute and what it has to offer please visit their website at:

<http://www.museumoftheearth.org>

Dan Krisher

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ADK OUTDOOR EXPO

The Academy display at the Outdoor Expo June 11th at Mendon Ponds Park featured telescopes for viewing, plus fossil and mineral specimens. The ADK annual event is a good venue for making the Academy known to outdoor enthusiasts who are typically attracted to this event. A good number of visitors stopped by and hopefully we gained some new members. Many thanks to the volunteers who set up, manned the booth, or provided materials: Kathy Henrie, Jutta Dudley, Frank Bov, Chuck Hiler, Jeff Gutterman, John Handley, Bob Crumrine, Paul Dudley, and Steve Busshaert.

Jutta Dudley, President RAS.



Frank Bov extols the fine features of the sun.



Chuck Hiler eagerly describes mineral collecting in western NY

EVENTS for August/September, 2011

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

AUGUST EVENTS

Saturday 20 FIELD TRIP

Swamp Road and Pompey Road sites. Still in scheduling. Contact Dan Krisher at 585-293-9033 or at DLKFossil@gmail.com if you wish more information

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Tuesday 06 FOSSIL MEETING

7:30 PM Brighton Recreation Center off Winton Rd South, between I-590 and Westfall RD in Brighton, NY. Dr Richard Laub, Research Scientist at the Buffalo Museum of Science will speak on the "Byron, NY Dig Site," where museum staff and volunteers have been finding mastodon bones and more since 1983.

Friday 09 ASTRONOMY GENERAL MEETING

7:00 PM at IONIA (not RIT!). For more information, contact Lori Englund at 334-5744.

Saturday 10 FIELDTRIP Fall Brook, near Geneseo,

NY - Middle Devonian. Contact Dan Krisher at 585-293-9033 or at DLKFossil@gmail.com if you wish more information, or would like to attend.

Wednesday 14 LIFE SCIENCES HERBARIUM WORKSHOP

1:00 PM to 4:00 PM Life Sciences Section will hold a

workshop at the RAS Herbarium, located in the basement of the Rochester Museum and Science Center (RMSC). No experience needed! Plan to come and help with this valuable collection – and see some interesting plants! At RMSC, go to the front desk and ask staff person there to call ext. 368, the phone in the Herbarium. If you plan to attend, please send an RSVP to Elizabeth Pixley, Herbarium Curator (334-0977 or epixley@rochester.rr.com).

Tuesday 20 MINERAL MONTHLY MEETING

7:30 PM Brighton Town Hall, main floor auditorium, 2300 Elmwood Ave., Rochester, NY 14618. This evening will be the club's annual SHOW & TELL/SWAP/SALE! Come early to set up any items you wish to sell or swap. Chuck Hiler will talk about his trip to the Tucson Show, and members are encouraged to tell of their collecting experiences over the summer. For more information, contact Stephen Busschaert, at sbusschaert@msn.com or 585-288-5683. Please check website at www.rasny.org for updates

Thursday 29 MINERAL JUNIOR ROCKHOUND MEETING

6:30 PM - 7:30 PM Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting

Room, 2300 Elmwood Ave., Rochester, NY 14618. For children and grandchildren of family memberships, ages 5 - 17. Each Jr. Rockhound may bring a specimen from home for Show & Tell. Topic will be Aspects of Lapidary - from gemstone faceting to carving to rock tumbling. If we have time we'll do "cut and fold" Crystal Shapes. Door prizes & Refreshments. To sign up and for more info, email Nancy McCann at mineralpres@rasny.org or 585-395-1713.

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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 Jutta Dudley, 140 Railroad Mills Road, Pittsford, NY 14534; by telephone 385-2368; or by e-mail <JuttaSD@aol.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 Bob Crumrine, 3 Timway Court, Fairport, NY 14450 Phone (585) 265-5292 (days) and (585) 425-7448 (evenings), e-mail <editor@rasny.org>

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