



Fossil Club of Lee County

March 2007

Message from the president

Happy March guys!!

Yes, it's hard to believe that March is already upon us. Just last week it was Christmas, wasn't it?? Anyway, you know what March means---our annual Fossil Club of Lee County fossil auction!!! This year we hope to make it even bigger and better than last year, which was a record auction for the club. Thanks to the generosity of several club members and some things I've been able to squirrel away throughout the year, we will have some really nice items. At this time we have approximately 120 lot numbers, some with multiple items. What this means is that we plan on starting the auction promptly at 7 o'clock. The viewing should be ready at 6:30, so get there early and see what you want to bid on. Due to the large amount of fossil items I hope to move along at a good clip, so viewing ahead will help a lot. We will take a break approximately at the halfway point, so please be patient and get your soda, etc, before or at break. Also this year we have a new, and hopefully improved, system. We have purchased a system that professional auctioneers use, (for not a lot of money!!) and hope this works out well. Please be patient with us--we are trying hard to do it right!! Some of the items to be auctioned off are; several riker cases, of various sizes, filled with fossils, shark teeth, arrowheads, and sanddollars. Also we have loose fossils, from Florida as well as more northern areas. Trilobites, ammonites, cephalopods, crinoids, mammoth tooth partial, mammoth skull partial, jar of shark teeth, framed pictures, painted feathers, minerals, jewelry books, bones and teeth and all kinds of great stuff!!!! We have a display coffee table, fossil

March Meeting

Our March meeting will be held on Thursday, March 15th starting promptly at 7:00 p.m. at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Blvd. We will be holding our annual auction and will not have a speaker.

hunting screens, fossil fish, casts of claws, skull, etc, fossil shells, Indian artifacts and points, Samauri swords, amazon creek nodules, etc, etc.... This is going to be a great auction, and you guys should be able to add some neat items to your collection. Come early and stay until the end. (One suggestion, though, as it gets mighty dark back there by the Iona house at night---bring a small flashlight for when you leave.) See you at the auction!! Since we will need all of the meeting time, and more, for the auction, we will not have a regular meeting and no club business will be discussed. If you have something for the club, email Sandy and she can disperse the info to the members using email. Thanks.

The club trip, arranged by Alice Thorn, (THANKS!!) on Saturday, March 3, to Solomon's castle, was a huge success!! Thirty-three members showed up and after touring the castle, (which you got to go see, if you have'nt been there!!) some members ate at the "boat in the moat" while others went to horse creek for some fossil hunting. Shark teeth of all species were found as well as horse teeth, deer fossils, sting ray dermal scutes and spines, a partial mammoth tooth and turtle and other animals. Overall, a very interesting creek and lots of fun for everybody digging together. Sandy is viscious in her chase for the fossil!!

!! Several of us caught her looking pretty hard at our screens, which because of everybody digging

close together our screens were also close together!! Donna would distract us with her infectuous laugh while her cohort Sandy would suddenly "find" a fossil!! ???

Of course, I'm just joking, but it was a fun time and I think all who

showed up was glad they did. I know I did. Our speaker for April will be Dana Ehret, from Gainseville. She will be another of a long line of great speakers we have been able to get from Gainseville. I want to thank Bruce McFadden for helping fossil clubs in the

state of Florida share in the knowledge of these highly talented individuals. And, of course, I want to thank the speakers themselves. We are a good four hours drive for these folks, one way, so I really hope the members of this club appreciate the efforts of these world class speakers. Last month's speaker Jonathan Bloch was great. He showed lots of excitement and you could just see how much he is dedicated to his work. Thanks, Jon. We learned a lot!! Richard Hulbert, the collections manager, came with him and was kind enough to help any member who wanted with id of their fossils. (I probably brought too many for id, but Richard knows and I wanted to!!) Thanks Richard, for all your help.

Since last month's meeting we have participated in the CCFOW owl fest, and had a trip to Solomons castle. And it's just christmas--- isn't it???

Louis Stieffel, president, F.C.O.L.C.

Fossil Club of Lee County

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Committees

Newsletter: Sandy Schwartz

Speakers: Louis Stieffel

\$1. raffle: Sandy Schwartz

Auction: Louis Stieffel

Web Master: Curtis Klug

Volunteer Hours

Please call **Kim Pierce at 275-3435** to volunteer at the nature center. Kim is there Sunday to Thursday from 8:30—5:00. There are opportunities to work in the gift store, for office work, and grounds work. When Easter arrives, we will have the opportunity to help with an Easter Egg Hunt. Please help with volunteer hours if you are so inclined, as it helps us to secure a nice meeting place. This is not required, it is **voluntary** but it does help the club. Please report the number of hours and date worked to me at; Cameraqueen@earthlink.net or (239)772-8015 Sandy

MINUTES OF MEETING OF FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

A meeting of the membership of the Fossil Club of Lee County was held at the time, date, and place set forth below.

DATE OF MEETING: February 15, 2007

MEETING TIME: 7:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Caloosa Nature Center

Number in attendance: approximately 51

Louis Stieffel presiding.

Thank you to Ted, Pat, and Sally for refreshments. We especially thank them for besides providing excellent food, they did not charge the club for the refreshments.

Books, Riker Cases, and Butvar on sale at meeting.

Louis again emphasized that volunteering at the Caloosa Nature Center is not mandatory for club membership, but it is highly encouraged due to the club getting use of the Ion House meeting place in exchange for volunteering hours to the Caloosa Nature Center.

The Club will have a booth at the Owl Fest sponsored by the Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife. The Club needs volunteers for that booth, call Ray.

The March Meeting is our annual auction, which starts at 7 P.M.

Alice Thorn is our new trips coordinator. We thank her for volunteering for the position and the hard work she has already put in. She has arrange a trip on March 3rd for the club to Solomon's Castle. The cost is \$8.50 per person. There will be fossil collecting in Horse

Creek afterwards. She is also busy trying to arrange other fossil trips.

As stated in the last newsletter, Ian asks for donations of large welk shells to be sent to the Oklahoma Creek Indians for use in making bowls for their museum.

March 10th & 11th are the Fossil Fest in Tampa.

There was a good show and tell.

The meeting had a break, before the speakers talked.

The meeting ended with an excellent talk on "First Ten Million Years of Primate Evolution: New Fossils from the Paleocene of Wyoming," by Dr. Jonathan Block of the Natural History Museum in Gainesville. He also spoke on a fossil whale skull recovered from a pit in Sarasota. Dr. Richard Hulbert from the Museum of Natural History in Gainesville identified fossils for members. Thanks to both Dr. Block and Dr. Hulbert for speaking to our club and for coming all the way from Gainesville to speak to us. They also made an invitation to club members to volunteer at the Halle Quarry near Gainesville on an exciting scientific dig. They said that the Museum only has a limited time to collect from a sinkhole deposit in the quarry. The deposit is extremely productive and they can use all the help they can get to help with the excavation. Please contact the museum at their website if you are interested.

The raffle was held after the meeting by Sandy Schwartz.

Secretary



James, Gunther's son hunting at Horse Creek

**Solomon's Castle Tour and Horse Creek
Fossil Hunt
by Donna Johnson**

Thirty-three club members ventured into the wilderness of Hardee County to discover a unique castle on Saturday, March 3rd. Solomon's Castle is the home of an artist and punster extraordinaire. The house itself is made of recycled materials as is all the art inside.

After the tour of the castle and the artwork, several people ate in the "Boat in the Moat" restaurant while about 10 others delayed eating and started to fossil hunt in Horse Creek.

I was with the "eat later" crowd and as the sun came out from behind the clouds, the water seemed to get a little warmer. We all found a lot of smaller shark's teeth and a few 1" plus ones. A dolphin tooth was found by new member Suzette who truly immersed herself in her new found interest. Another new member, Pam Plummer, found some alligator teeth. Louis and Donna both found very large ray dermal backbone plates and Sandy found some garfish scales and sting ray barbs and pavement tooth plates. Another member found a shark vertebrae. It really was a wonderful field trip.....thanks Alice for coordinating it!



Pam and Louis checking the screen



Suzette found a porpoise tooth as well as many shark's teeth

Mexico Scientist: Frog could be 25 million years old

Mexico City— A miner in the state of Chiapas found a tiny tree frog that has been preserved in amber for 25 million years, a researcher said.

If authenticated, the preserved frog would be the first of its kind found in Mexico, according to David Grimaldi, a biologist and curator at the American Museum of Natural History, who was not involved in the find.

The chunk of amber containing the frog, less than half an inch long, was uncovered by a miner in Mexico's southern Chiapas state in 2005 and was bought by a private collector, who lent it to scientists for study.

A few other preserved frogs have been found in chunks of amber, a stone formed by ancient tree sap—mostly in the Dominican Republic. Like those, the frog found in Chiapas appears to be of the genus *Craugastor*, whose descendants still inhabit the region, said biologist Gerardo Carbot of the Chiapas Natural History and Ecology Institute. Carbot announced the discovery this week.

Carbot would like to extract a sample from the frog's remains in hopes of finding DNA that could identify the particular species, but doubts the owner would let him drill into the stone. "I don't think he will allow it, because it's a very rare, unique piece," Carbot said.

Refreshments

March Sandy Schwartz

April Alice Thorne

May volunteer needed

New Trip Planned

Alice is planning a new trip, possibly for April. There will be limited spaces. Look for an announcement at the March Meeting.