



Fossil Club of Lee County

April 2008

Letter from the Prez Thanks for the memories!!!!

Well, fellow members of the Fossil Club of Lee County, it's time to let someone else have all the fun!! Over three years of being president of this great organization has left me with enough good feelings and great memories to last a long time. Thank you for giving me the opportunity. I hope I haven't let you down!!



Over three years ago, the club, then named the Paleontological Society of Lee County, was floundering. The good folks in charge at the time had been at the helm for a long time, and juggling work and home responsibilities along with the duties required of keeping the club vibrant and active had taken it's toll, and the club was in danger of disbanding. Several of us decided that it was too fine an organization to let fall apart, so we decided to be the new officers and get the club on track again. Myself, as president, John Riley as VP, Charles "Chuck" Ferber as secretary and Ray Seguin as treasurer, formed the nucleus of the board along with a few members, such as Sandy Schwartz and

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 17th at 7:00 p.m. at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Blvd.

Officers

Louis Stieffel, President (239) 458-9818

Or e-mail: Cape187@earthlink.net

Al Govin, Vice President 541-2845

And cell 910-2339

Ray Seguin, Treasurer, 989-1921 or 936-5019

Chuck Ferber, Secretary 489-2891

Board Members

Leslie Stieffel, 458-9818

Michael Orchin, 574-6318

Sandy Schwartz, 772-8015

Trip Director, Bill Shaver

Committees

Newsletter: Sandy Schwartz

Speakers: Louis Stieffel

\$1. Raffel: Mike Siciliano

Auction: Louis Stieffel

Web Master: Curtis Klug

Michael Orchin and Leslie Stieffel serving as directors. We rewrote the by-laws, and got the membership to pass them, so as to put the club into a more modern era. We also changed the name to a more user friendly one.

We decided to try writing and sending out the club newsletters on the internet, using personal e-mail, for those that had it. Sandra "Sandy" Schwartz stepped up and volunteered for this major task. She has put in countless hours designing the newsletter and producing it. One of the conditions for her acceptance of the newsletter was that I had to write an article every month, which I have. I have actually enjoyed doing this, even though it does take time to do it. This e-newsletter has turned out to be a major reason the club treasury has been strong, as printed and mailed newsletters are expensive. We wanted a web site and Curtis Klug stepped up and took on the task. He has done an incredible job with it! All of our past newsletters are archived and we have information and links to help people interested in this hobby. We get inquiries from around the globe as a result!! Most are questions about fossils which we are glad to help with.

Our treasurer, **Ray Seguin**, has also done a fantastic job. He is the last of the club's original founding members, going back to the very first organizational meeting!! Ray has kept the books up to date, dealt with the IRS on our non-profit status, pays the bills and collects the money, monthly gives an oral treasury report and a yearly written one. Besides those duties, Ray has built the fossil display cases that we use for public display at events, and he has recently built the storage closet for the Iona house for our supplies and



items to be sold. Ray has added value to many items sold at the annual fossil auction by professionally framing and mounting items donated. Ray has always donated items for the door prize at each meeting as well as items for the \$1. raffle table. Among other tasks that Ray has done, he has never charged the club for his time, and only occasionally recouped his expense for materials.

Our Vice president, John Reilly, held office for the first year and after that Al Govin, another old time member, took over the VP duties. Both of these members have helped the club whenever needed. Al has run a couple of meetings when I took vacation. Chuck Ferber, our secretary, helped immensely when we rewrote the bylaws. Chuck, Being a lawyer, kept us on track, and researched pertinent phrases so as to insure we were doing it right. Every meeting Chuck takes the minutes and gets them to Sandy, the newsletter publisher, in time for the newsletter.

Michael Orchin took over as trips director for awhile, before handing it over to Alice Thorne, and finally to Bill Shaver, and all three did a great job. This is a tough job for anyone and requires a lot of effort. It is very hard to get a trip together for 25-30 people to fossil hunt!! It can be difficult to do that for just yourself, so anytime we have a trip,

it was because of lots of trying! We had a fossil show, the end of that first year and everyone had a good time. We have not had another because I was not able to find a member volunteer willing to be in charge and put on another show. We have had t-shirts designed for us, with the assistance of Sandy Schwartz, and now most members wear their club shirt to outings.

We have supplied butvar, bone hardener, to members, to help preserve their finds. We sell several different fossil books. We have recently been providing riker display boxes to members. All of these items are sold to club members at our cost plus freight, as a service. Several club members, like Donna Johnson and Pam Plummer have done a great job with this. We have a \$1 raffle fundraiser at almost every meeting and the current raff eleer is Mike Siciliano, who has done a great job. Mike is also going to be a director. Each month, we have a volunteer member provide refreshments, at club cost, if that member desires. Frequently they are donated, but this is never a requirement. This is a great way for members to get involved with their club, and it is appreciated by all. I bring up all of this to point out the fact that even though we have had 3 great years and the club is strong and vibrant and financially sound, it is because of a group effort. This is your club, and I just helped keep it going.

We have had some great world class speakers in the last three plus years. These have included museum directors, college professors, authors, fossil dealers, archeologists, paleontologists, and geologists. We have had Robin Brown, a founding member, speak and give us some history of the club's beginnings and early Florida fossil hunting. We have had

Bruce McFadden, the curator of the Museum of Natural History, in Gainesville, speak of fossil hunting in other parts of the Americas, as well as in Florida. We have had John Worth from the Randall Research Center in Pineland, Fl, speak to us about the Calusa Indians and why we find their artifacts sometimes while hunting fossils. We have had Andreas Kerner speak about his involvement with fossil discoveries in some of the rivers of Florida, and the ongoing research to learn more from these discoveries. We have had Frank Garcia speak to us about his world famous discovery of Pleistocene fossils at Leisey. We have had many other equally talented and interesting speakers, and I want to thank them all!! We learn so much from their sharing of their knowledge. We have had record breaking annual fossil auctions, each better than the last. These auctions are the major portion of our funds and it is a fun night for all. We have taken trips to Solomon's castle, river trips to Brownsville, Wachulla, Scout camp in Arcadia, Orange River trips, Horse Creek, & Possum Creek. We have been to Gainesville twice, as a club function, and were able to have a tour of Gordon Hubble's world class fossil shark museum, a behind the scenes outing in the actual fossil collections of the FMNH, and a guided tour of the displays, by Bruce McFadden. . Richard Hulbert and Roger Portell welcomed us with open arms in the collections rooms and gladly showed us whatever we asked to see. We have participated in the Cape Coral burrowing owl festival for the last three years, showing fossils and telling the public about our club. We participated in the last major exhibit at the Florida Museum of Natural History, MEGALODON, THE GREATEST SHARK THAT EVER LIVED. As a club, we have been active, and members that participated have had, I believe, a good time.

Since I have been president, our club has donated over \$8000 to organizations, universities and scholarships for aspiring paleontology

students. I am extremely proud of this, as we all should be!!

This April meeting is elections and you will be electing a new president. I have enjoyed this time immensely, but I never signed on for a permanent position. I still must work for a living, and with these current economic times, I find I need more time at work. Bill Shaver will be running for the office and I'm confident he will do a great job. I will continue to be the auction committee and the auctioneer, as well as try to help Bill with retaining speakers for the monthly meetings. I will also stay on as a director.

Again, THANKS for being such great friends these last few years and for many more years ahead!!

Louis Stieffel, President
Fossil Club of Lee County

**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: [March 20, 2008](#)

MEETING TIME: 7:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Calusa Nature Center

Number in attendance: a lot

Louis Stieffel presiding.

March was the annual fossil auction, which was well attended. A brief business meeting was held. Elections for officers and directors will be held at the April meeting. This year officers and directors to be voted on are: Bill

Shaver for President, Al Govin for Vice

President, Ray Seguin for Treasurer, Leslie Steiffel for Secretary, Louis Steiffel for director, Sandy Schwartz for director, and Michael Orchin for director and Michael Siciliano for director.

Secretary **Chuck Ferber**



AUCTION TIME OF THE YEAR!

The Fossil Club of Lee County had their annual fossil auction last month at the March meeting. It was a great success and we broke a record, again!! Also, everyone had a great time!!! This month we will have a short, mini-auction as some items that came in too late to add to the main auction, so we do it again this month. It will be about 20 items and will not take as much time, of course, as the regular auction.

The April meeting is also the annual election for officers for the upcoming year, which starts in May, for new officers. This election time was changed in our by-laws several years ago. Two changes in the current slate of officers will take place, president and secretary. I am stepping down as president and Chuck Ferber is relinquishing his secretarial position. Bill Shaver is running for president and Leslie Stieffel is running for Secretary. I will remain on the board as a director. Anyone else wanting to run for an office, must speak up at this meeting or we will consider nomin-

ations closed.

The speaker this month is Greg Herbert. Greg is a professor of Paleontology at the University of Florida at Tampa. He has spoken to us before and is a very interesting speaker. Greg will speak in the beginning of the meeting, **so please don't be late and walk in while he's speaking.** Thanks.

After the speaker, we will have the elections, then the break. After the break we will have the mini-auction, and follow up with the \$1 raffle drawing. Sandy has ordered and already received a new batch of riker cases, for your fossil display. There will be some available at the meeting. Last month, at the auction meeting, our volunteers for refreshments were Pat and Don Legree. Well, it just so happens that Pat took ill and had to go to the emergency room the morning of the auction. She was then admitted. Her husband Don, gathered snacks, hot wings, soda, water, chips, napkins, utensils, etc. and brought them to the meeting, for everyone to enjoy. He then left to go back to the hospital. I want to personally thank both Don, and Pat for this effort!! It went above and beyond the call, and we must realize that we have two very special members in these two folks. Louie says Thanks!!!! If you are a snowbird, it may be time to fly back up North, but if not, along with all the rest of you, I hope to see you at the meeting!!

Louie



Al Govin, our current vice president, is running for the same office again this year. He was washing glyptodont scutes out of a wall. (above) Alas, the secret spot is now lake front property.



This is **Charles O'Conner**, showing a tooth he got diving in South Carolina with friends.

Charles- take us with you next time!!



Charles and his 2 friends got these teeth diving in one afternoon diving.



Jacob Rosenkranz hunting on the Peace River

His goal is to find something new.



Donna Johnson and I went hunting in the Peace River 2 weeks ago. Notice Donna's wet suit. It was cold! Did we find any teeth like Charles found? Oh, no, but we did find a few things.



Refreshments

April Michael Siciliano and Sandy

May Leslie and Louis Stieffel

June volunteer needed!

From the newspaper– Michigan

Teen finds giant shark’s fossilized 3 inch tooth

Port Huron– David Wentz was snorkeling in the St. Clair River last August when what he thought was an off-looking rock caught his eye.

“I didn’t know what to think,” said the 16-year-old Port Huron resident.

Michigan State University paleontologist Michael Gottfried said the 3-inch long tooth comes from an extinct species called *Carcharodon megalodon* or the “megatooth” shark. The megalodon, which went extinct 2 million years ago, reached lengths of more than 60 feet.

By comparison, Great White sharks generally are about 20 feet long.