



Fossil Club of Lee County

May 2007

Message from the president

Hello!! Yes, it's time for another fossil club meeting!! The time sure does fly by. This month we will have an old friend of the club-- Lenny Canterbury, speak to us. He is an experienced fossil dealer as well as an accomplished fossil hunter. Lenny has "been there--done that"! Last month's speaker, Dana Ehret gave a great talk on fossil turtles. I bet hardly anyone in the crowd knew we had so many different turtles!! No wonder they are confusing! Dana also spoke about the upcoming Shark Exhibit at the museum in Gainesville. We are participating in this event and I will speak separately on this subject in another article.

Alice Thorne--"the trips lady"- has been doing a heck of a job. She got us two separate trips to the Rinker mine near Miami. We found lots of beautiful calcified shells and corals as well as some nice, beautifully colored fossil shells. A couple of the giant Lind olives were also found, and both by the same person, Janice Patton, who made Charley stay by the van so she could gather all the goodies!! (or something like that!!) Alice has a trip or two also scheduled to Handi Phil pit coming up soon. We held elections last month at the April meeting and you all are stuck with the same guys again!! Next year, though, some new faces will have to jump in there and do it, OK? The Venice Shark Tooth Festival was held since last meeting and I sure hope lots of you went!! It is a great fossil show, at least for shark teeth, (which are getting pricier!) and also a nice way to spend the day. Leslie and I went to the beach, by the pier, before coming home and I don't ever remembering seeing the gulf as beautiful. Clear, green

May Meeting

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

water and lots of porpoises playing around. It was a nice day!!

I brought up the subject of the fossil ID project last month that we are helping get started with the museum. We voted to spend the money for the first two animals, alligator and dugong/manatee. I will be meeting with Bruce McFadden and some of the other clubs, at the Shark Exhibit show, when we go there next month. I will elaborate more on this topic when we finalize the plan. If successful, this will be a tool we can all use to help ID our fossils. This month's meeting will be chaired by the vice-president, Al Govin. I will be on a vacation trip that my wife is making me take, needed or not!! She is having to force me to spend some time playing, snorkeling, dining out and relaxing, etc. (smile) Anyway, I won't be there for you to kick around, so do it to Al!! Don't forget your Show-N-Tell. This is an integral part of the club, as that is why we exist!! Show your finds, whether from the Venice show, or the river or Rinker pit or wherever!! We want to see them!

Louis Stieffel, president, Fossil Club of Lee County

Searching for Olive Shells

By Janice Patton

Now listen everybody
For I have a tale to tell
About our trip to the Rinker Mine
To find an olive shell

You have to get up early
And drive an hour or two
Six people went on Saturday
Some went on Sunday too

We arrived at about nine thirty
We were quite a hearty bunch
We'd gotten up so early
It seemed like it was time for lunch

We all put on our hunting gear
And started searching around
We knew the olive shells were there
Just waiting to be found

Unfortunately at Rinker
There are no signs to show
Exactly where the shells will be
So you don't know where to go

There were two exciting incidents
Which fortunately drew no blood
Rita slid down a rock pile
And Alice fell in the mud

We found a bunch of shells that day
Some big and some quite small
Lesley found the cutest shell
Whose name I can't recall

Our hopes of finding olives
Were looking rather bleak
I went back to the shell pile
One last time to take a peak

When all at once I saw it
My heart began to pound
A big and shiny olive shell
Was laying on the ground

And then I found another
Although it was rather small
It certainly was much better
Than finding nothing at all

Those were the only olives
That were found upon that day
Somehow I just got lucky
That's all that I can say

Now if you go to Rinker
And you find an olive shell
Stick it in your pocket
And never ever tell

If Louis hears about it
You'll be volunteered to be
The one to write about the trip
That's exactly what happened to me

Our thanks go out to Alice
For the wonderful job she's done
When it comes to planning fossil trips
Alice is second to none.

The Olive Lady

Officers

Louis Stieffel, President (239) 458-9818
or e-mail: Cape 187@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: Alice Thorne

Committees

Newsletter: Sandy Schwartz

Speakers: Louis Stieffel

\$1. raffle: Mike Siciliano

Auction: Louis Stieffel

Web Master: Curtis Klug

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: April 19, 2007

MEETING TIME: 7:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Calusa Nature Center

Number in attendance: approximately 47

Louis Stieffel presiding.

Thank you to Alice and John Thorne who provided refreshments for our April meeting.

Alice Thorne talked about possible trips and a trip to Handy Phil for May 12, 2007.

T-shirts for sale. Thanks to Sandy Schwartz for her efforts in designing and producing an excellent club t-shirt.

The speaker at the April meeting was Dana

Ehret for an excellent talk on "Fossil Turtles of Florida". Mr. Ehret is a PhD. Candidate at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

Had show and tell. Had a small auction after meeting. Thank go to the fossil dealers and Mark Cantos for asking the dealers to donate items for our auction.

Elections were held. All last years officers agreed to serve another term. Motion was made to re-elect all last years officer, motion was seconded, and vote was unanimous.

May refreshment will be Bill Sullivan and June refreshments will be Chuck Ferber.

Club also voted to fund up to \$4,000 to the Florida Natural History Museum in Gainesville to fund the identification of two species. The two species the club would like fossil identification photos of are alligator and Dugong or manatee.

Hunting the river

By Louis Stieffel

I've been telling you to get to the rivers and creeks before they flood with the upcoming rainy season. After the rains start it will be too late and you will wish you had gone. Al Govin and I went (again) to the river last Thursday, enjoying a rare day off mid-week. We decided to hunt the river as the creeks flowing into the river have been teeming with fire ants, rafting along until they find you!! (These guys will actually crawl down your body and bite you under the water!!) We parked by a bridge and walked the banks, finding that we could go about as far as we wanted to go!! The limerock ledge along the water's edge makes for a great path, with the exception of an occasional downed tree which we had to go around. The water is warm, clear and very low. You can put on a backpack, carry your screen and shovel and park near a bridge or boat ramp and just take off!! Dig along the way until you get to a gravel bar you feel will produce a few fossils for you. Stay and enjoy the day!!

The day Al and I went the river was low and clear and beautiful. We saw no one else, which is a switch from the weekends!! The last

stop for us was a nice long stretch of a gravel gravel bar with a little current running across it. Like all spots on the Peace, anymore, it has been dug into by other fossil hunters. They can't get it all, folks, so just keep trying till you find a spot that hasn't been dug. We did that, and snorkeled as well and managed to find some fossils. The most remarkable and memorable event of this trip was not fossil related. When we walked up to this pretty, rocky, flowing, cypress tree lined bit of paradise, a bright pink Rosette Spoonbill bird was standing on the rocks near the bank. This bird stayed there the whole 2-3 hours that we were there. When I picked a log to sit on and take a break, this beautiful bird came up to within 10 feet of me. Of course, I did not have a camera!! These encounters are what make the Peace River fossil hunting trips as special as they are.

I remember a time, north of Brownsville, motoring slowly back to the ramp, late afternoon, near dusk, when rounding a bend we came across at least 50 wild turkeys, all gathering, preparing for their roost in the big trees lining the river!! Rick Piper and I have paddled a canoe within yards of four deer drinking at the river's edge, up ramp from Zolfo springs, as well as have an otter lead the way in front of us until he scampered to the side and went up the bank. What I'm trying to say here is that you should go to the river while you can. You just may have an unforgettable time!!

Refreshments

May Bill Sullivan

June Chuck Ferber

July.....

Coming Events

Alice Thorne has scheduled 2 trips to Handi Phil, **May 12 and May 26th**. These are both Saturdays. The pit is only open to be hunted on Saturdays. You may arrive whenever, but you **must leave by 3:00 p.m.** There is no limit to the number of people hunting and you may enter and start hunting, you do not need to wait for anyone else. You must, however, sign a release form from the mailbox and leave it in the mailbox. Several people may sign on the same form. If the gate is closed when you get there, open it, enter and leave it the way it was. The rules are simple, **STAY AWAY FROM RUNNING MACHINERY, DON'T TAKE RISKS.**

DIRECTIONS: Go north on I-75, get off at King's Highway. At the first light, approximately 50 feet, turn right on Veterans. This road parallels Rt. 41, then curves over and crosses it. It becomes 776 after it crosses Rt. 41. Follow this road for another 16-18 miles to Englewood. You will see a Wal-Mart on the left, the street after Wal-Mart is San Casa. Turn left on San Casa. (You cannot go right.) ENGLEWOOD. Go to Avenue of Americas, about 4 streets and turn left. Go to the stop sign. Look right, you will see Handi Phil.

May 26—27th. Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Intergalactic Bead and Jewelry Show** at the Harborside Convention Center, Room C 1375 Monroe St., Ft. Myers, Fl

Volunteer Hours

Our club goal is to provide volunteer hours to the **Calusa Nature Center** in exchange for our free meeting room each month. This is voluntary but we hope all those who are able will participate. Please call **Kim Pierce at 275-3435** to volunteer. Kim is there Sunday to Thursday from 8:30—5:00. There are opportunities to work in the gift store, office work, and grounds work. There are no events scheduled at this time. Please report the number of hours and date worked to me at; Cameraqueen @earthlink.net or (239)772-8015
Sandy



Eric Jacobs Goes to Australia

Our fellow fossil club member Eric Jacobs spent 2 months traveling through South America and has now left for Western Australia. He said that he would like to stay forever but he is over 45 and cannot get permanent status. He compares Australia to the wild, wild west of years ago and enjoys the vast area to explore for minerals. He is purchasing a van or truck to live out of. Eric has done this

before, spending almost the entire time camping out, staying 7 – 10 days at a time, going from mine to mine, hunting opal and sapphire. When he was about to leave a location, the mine owners would call ahead to the next mine where they had mates and thought all would have a good time. They all have radio towers hooked up to satellite phones and high speed internet and get marvelous TV connections.

This time he is going to the goldfields of Kalgoorlie and Murchison and then perhaps through the center of an area somewhere around Alice Springs where there is new gold activity, spending up to three weeks in the bush or until the food and fuel threaten to run out. He is taking Mexican fire agate, sharks teeth and some American opal to trade, exploring for nuggets and anything else that comes under foot.

I am hoping that Eric will keep in touch when he can so that we can keep up on his activities. Good luck on your hunting!

Sandy