

Fossil Club of Lee County

July 2006

Message from the president

Happy Fourth of July!!

Well guys, as I write this letter, the early fireworks are going off in the neighborhood, which makes for a different sort of background music than usual. I hope all of you had a good Fourth. I, of course, went fossil hunting. I was finally able to connect mutual times and took Jose fossil hunting. He won a trip with me at the club auction, and we were able to do it today. He is a pretty good fossil hunter, especially if I can get him to slow down!!! It seems that most people want to hunt too fast, but slowing down usually gets you more fossils in the end. He found some neat fossils, like a complete horse canon bone, a giant ground sloth carpal bone, a camel neck vertebra, a huge Encope sanddollar, a very large alligator ramus and some other things. Jose said he will bring them to this month's meeting, if he is able to come.

This month our club will have a social sort of meeting. It will be a **pot luck**. The club will provide soda and water, condiments and hooter's wings, a ham and the fixings. We ask that each member bring something, just like at the Christmas meeting, so everyone will get a nice buffet meal!!! We will also have **show and tell**, so please bring in your finds from anywhere that you have hunted (some folks hunted the Carolinas and some folks have fossils from back home) and share with everybody else. Show and tell is an integral part of our club. This is where other members get to see your finds and learn more about fossil hunting and identification. When you share with everyone, you get more out of the hobby yourself. Also, there will be a **large \$1 raffle**. So come, we will have some free time to mingle and tell lies. I often hear that we don't have enough time to talk fossils, etc. with each other at the meetings, so this month we will be able to do that and I'm sure it will be fun for all.

Last month we had a club sponsored canoe trip to the Peace river. The club paid the way and all you had to do was show up. We had a good turnout and I believe we all had fun. Other than Sandy falling out of her kayak at the start of the trip, everyone made it to the end without incident. Dave finally decided that he need to get his shoes wet!!! We had to literally carry the

canoe over some limerock outcroppings at the end, when we were the most tired, but that made getting to the Zolfo Springs boat ramp at the end all the sweeter!!! And the ride home, sitting in a comfortable car, heavenly!!! The day was great, the water was warm, and the company was terrific. A good time was had by all!!!

We are working on fossil trips to land sites, now that the rains have started and the rivers are coming up. Michael Orchin will keep us apprised of places to get into. In the meantime, look for construction along the roads. Southwest Florida is one big development right now and lots of digging is happening. If you see a potential place, pull over and take a look. Do not cross NO Trespassing signs to hunt. If you ask, sometimes they will give you the ok to hunt, legally, but don't cross signs. You can be pleasantly suprised sometimes at what you can find at these sites---but only if you take the time to stop and look.

The Calusa Nature Center has asked our club to help provide some volunteer help, as part of our obligation for being a corporate member and meeting there. This is a very legitimate request and something we now ask of the membership. If you can, or do, volunteer, please let any officer know, so we can communicate that to Sandy Schwartz, who will keep track. If each member will do 4 hours in a whole year it is all we need!!! You will learn something new and have fun doing it, so please make plans to give a little of your time to the Nature Center. This is a much simpler solution than finding somewhere else to meet!!! Keep in mind that this is YOUR club and you sometimes need to be a proactive member for it to survive. Also keep in mind that for \$20 for a whole year you get to attend 12 meetings, with refreshments and a speaker, except for the auction and Christmas (and this one social) meeting which we will do again if everyone likes it. You don't have to do anything other than sign up for trips and events and then show up. All of this is being done for you by your executive committee (unpaid!!), which is the officers and board of directors. You get a newsletter every month and at each meeting you attend you get an opportunity to get fossils to take home!!!!!!! This is not just a deal---it's a steal!!!!!! Now we ask that you contribute just a tiny bit of your time in a whole year to help keep YOUR club functioning. So I don't want to hear whining, or else you can join the board and really put some time in.

I want to thank Al Govin for chairing the meeting last month. I was forced(smile) to take a vacation, to the Baha-

mas, and was not able to make the meeting. Al did a great job, from all the feedback I got, from members that were at the meeting. He is our newly elected vice president and looks to be trying for my job!!! Maybe next year, Al ???

See you guys at the meeting!!!!

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

July Meeting

Our July meeting will be held on July 20th at 7:00 p.m. at the Calusa Nature Center located at Ortiz and Colonial Blvd. We will have a pot luck, show and tell and \$1. raffle.

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
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Chuck Ferber, Secretary 489-2891

Board Members

Leslie Stieffel 458-9818
Michael Orchin 574-6318
Sandy Schwartz 772-8015
Web site: Curtis Klug
Trip Director: Al Govin

Committees

Newsletter: Sandy Schwartz
Speakers: Louis Stieffel
\$1. Raffle: Louis Kimsey
Auction: Louis Stieffel
Publicity: Carl Fricke

Jose's Report On His Fossil Hunt With Louis

On the Fourth of July, my dad and I met Louis and Sandy, we were planning to go fossil hunting trip in one of the nearby pits. My dad brought his umbrella, a cell phone and a comfy chair. A few months earlier I had won a fossil hunting trip with Louis at the club auction, but it took some time before we could schedule the trip.

When we reached the site we discovered that a pit that just a few weeks earlier had been completely dry was now completely filled with water. This drawback, however, didn't keep us from collecting around the banks and surrounding mounds of dirt.



Jose at the pit.



Michael observing the hunt.

Our fossil hunting at first was not terribly fruitful, but as time went on and we moved around, Louis and I recovered some fairly nice specimens along with some more common fossils, such as turtle shell fragments. Some of the more important finds included:

- a completely intact sloth carpal bone
- a relatively intact camel vertebra
- a completely intact horse leg bone
- an unbroken four inch wide sand dollar
- a large chunk of fossil mangrove wood

- a few broken and unbroken whale vertebrae
- two complete cannon ball coral heads
- three medium size shark teeth fragments and
- four alligator teeth as well as other alligator material such as skull fragments

What is amazing about these finds is that most were found in and around the mounds that had previously been put through a dirt and gravel processor. Louis was very informative and taught me a great deal about fossil collecting and identification. He taught me basic things, such as not to go over a site too fast and to take the time to pick up as many seemingly small specks out of the surrounding sediment as possible, because you never really know what it is until you pick it up. We were in the pits all day and we were lucky enough not to have any rain. The site was very rugged and sharp and I tore up my tennis shoes, but other than that the day was great. In short; the trip was well worth the money just from what I learned, and the fossils that Louis and I found were an added bonus!



Louis shows off his find!



The hunt is over and everyone is tired.



A horse leg bone in beautiful condition.

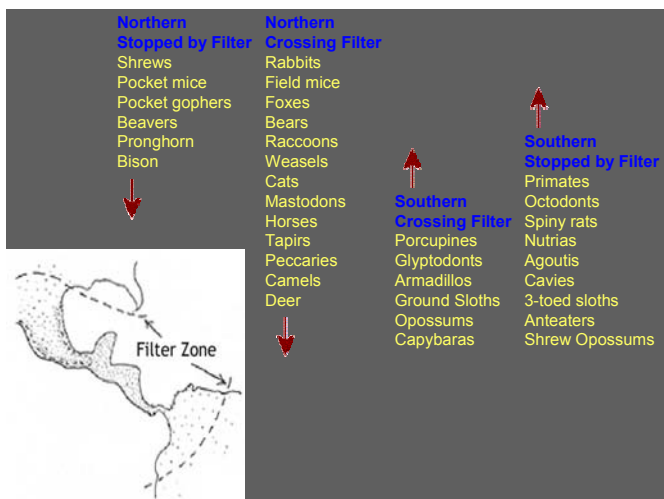
Did you miss our
June Speaker Alex Hastings?

Alex Hastings spoke at the June meeting. He is working on a two year master's program at the U. of F. and is a recipient of the Ken Ericson Award. He thanked the club for the funds which will enable him to travel to do more research. Alex explained how a land bridge between North America and South America opened allowing some animals to migrate north or south while some animals could not migrate. The land bridge started to open around 3.5 million years ago, with a few "waves" of mammals going across. The one which brought the porcupine over was 2.5 million years ago. The land bridge was more or less continuous from

there on as it is today. He showed a list of which animals did migrate north or south from each continent and also a list of those which could not due to the tropical environment.

He compared the fossil porcupine found in the Haile Quarry in Newberry to one from SA and another from NA using pictures side by side on the screen. The NA porcupine is Erethizon dorsatum, the Haile porcupine is Erethizon poyeri, and the SA porcupine is Coendou.

He found that there were similarities of both the SA and the NA porcupines to the Haile porcupine that demonstrated it had migrated.



Refreshments

July **Everyone bring a dish to pass!!**

August Ian

September volunteer needed!!

MINUTES OF MEETING OF FOSSIL CLUB OF LEE COUNTY

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

DATE OF MEETING: June 15, 2006

MEETING TIME: 7:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: Caloosa Nature Center

Number in attendance: approximately 35

Al Govin presiding.

Sanders Llewellyn from the Calusa Nature Center talked to us about our commitment to volunteer at the Nature Center in exchange for our use of the Calusa House for our meeting.

Thanks go to Alex Hastings of the University of Florida for his excellent talk on "The Missing Link in Porcupine Evolution." Alex is also the recipient of the Erickson scholarship.

Butvar, Books and T-shirts are for sale at the meetings.

Welcome to five new member who were in attendance: Eric, Carl, Mark, Sherri and Grace.

Next meeting will be a pot luck meetings, so everyone should bring a dish.

The possibility of having a meeting in the future at the Collier County Museum was suggested.

Secretary



Donna Johnson taking a break at Brownsville.



Sue Collier at Brownsville hunting that elusive meg tooth.