

EXHIBIT NEWS

Mammals, Meteorites & Skulls

MAMMALS

Despite rapidly running out of room, the foyer has a 'new' (to us) giraffe head-neck-shoulders taxidermy mount on a reciprocal long-term loan from the International Wildlife Museum in Tucson, Arizona. Mr. Ken Behring of the Bay Area donated four small Asian deer to the museum, and one of the duplicates was the exchange for the giraffe. It was placed at 18+ feet high, full height position of the largest male giraffes. The placement still allows room for another animal that will be coming this year

Also the largest member of the mongoose family, a 50 pound, tree climbing, fruit eating Binturong, was added as a full body mount. When alive the Binturong smells like fresh, hot buttered popcorn. More specimens will be coming. Watch for the Fall newsletter for details or visit the Museum and find out for yourself.



METEORITES

On the second floor of the Museum is a new display, "Meteorite Impact Craters on the Earth." A poster of meteorite impacts throughout the world is surrounded by an assortment of meteorite specimens. Funds for the display came from the Astronomy Department chair, Harry Houppis. The majority of the specimens are a gift of Charles Dailey, Zoology professor.

Dick Marasso, retired chair of the Astronomy Department, designed and built the display case. George Bromm, geology and astronomy technician, catalogued the specimens with help from students Tina Campbell and Heather Mehl. Thank you to all involved!

SKULLS

The skull display case will soon have two additional entries; a replica of the giant (wolf size) South American armadillo and the extinct, (grizzly bear size) armadillo from ice age Florida. The skulls were provided by Charles Dailey, Zoology instructor. They temporarily are in a large armadillo display in the LRC. Richard Hilton also arranged for the Museum to purchase one of the last fossil European cave bear skulls available. It will join a cave bear jaw already in the History of Life display. Two more rare additions are anticipated this year. ■



WELCOME

A New Sign

Paul Ruhkala of Ruhkala Granite and Marble Co. in Rocklin has donated a piece of light gray Sierran granite for a new Museum entry sign. The sign features the Museum logo designed by Joe Medeiros. The granite came from near Yosemite National Park. It will help direct Museum visitors to our west entrance.

Pictured are Charles Dailey, Zoology; Joe Medeiros, Botany; Paul Rubkala and Dick Hilton, Geology.

A New Clam

Recently donated by Hildreth Brown Hunter of Pasadena, CA, is a giant clam from the southwest Pacific reefs. It is a specimen from a group of the heaviest bivalves known today. Some specimens can weigh 500 pounds. ■



DONORS

Donor Recognition

A new major donor recognition plaque has been mounted in the Museum foyer. Come see the names of many of the people who have made possible the exhibits in the museum. Recent additions are Stanley Davis of Vacaville for the fossil storage cabinets, Paul Snider of Suburban Ford



and the Roseville Auto Mall for the museum expansion fund, Kelvin Moss of the Humboldt Bancorp for the giant shark exhibit, Charles Dailey for the armadillo skulls, Binturong and shark exhibits, and Rebecca Gregg of the Sierra College Photography Department for support for the Native American artifacts case.

Other donors include Kenneth Behring, Peter Bollinger, April and Steve Foster, Dave and Margi Fulton, Granite Bay Safari Club, John and Vivian Kiss, Vivian Ledebauer, Robert Weber, Dick Marasso, Ruhkula Granite and Marble, Rod Shelton, Robert Sowell and Kevin Woody. There is room for your name, so please help. ■

EXHIBITS

Native American Artifacts

With the long standing encouragement and recent financial assistance of Rebecca Gregg of the Sierra Photography Department, Jennifer Molina-Stidger, Anthropology chair and Museum committee member, is helping develop a native American artifacts display. It is currently in Sewell Hall's central Museum room, S-110, but we would like to acquire a display case in the lower foyer of Weaver Hall near where the anthropology classes are taught. Care is being taken to include only items that will be culturally acceptable to Native Americans. Many of the specimens are on loan from April Moore, a local Native American from the Nisenan tribe.



New Mineral Case

Don Juergenson, Emeritus Metals Technology instructor, recently received a donated mineral collection for the Museum. George Bromm, Geology instructional assistant, built and mounted another new mineral display case in the north foyer of the Museum. George and Don recently filled the 4' x 6' case with about 100 additional small but impressive mineral samples. ■



EXHIBITS

Sidewalk Art

On the access road around Sewell Hall outline drawings are showing up that somewhat resemble police drawings of body outlines at the scene of a crime. This is not a crime scene, but rather representations of various giant animals. Last summer's campus interior roadway resurfacing obliterated the prior versions. Charles Dailey's zoology classes are restoring the illustrations and adding more. By going outdoors we can accurately show the real size of these huge animals. Most are extinct, but some are still alive. When the series is completed a free guide sheet will provide brief descriptions of the animals' histories and life styles.

Hawver Cave Display

Sierra College student Mary Olswang, with help from the Museum staff, prepared an exhibit of the prehistoric, ice age animals which were found by Dr. Hawver in Hawver Cave on the Cool divide. The originals are in the Museum of Paleontology at U.C., Berkeley. Casts are on loan for the exhibit. The exhibit is in the historic court house in Auburn. Have you been there to see it? ■

EXHIBITS

California Academy Loans

The California Academy of Sciences, which includes Steinhart Aquarium, Morrison Planetarium and the Natural History Museum, in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park closed its doors at the end of December, 2003. They are emptying their buildings and will then dismantle them and eventually rebuild. Years of wear and tear, earthquake damage and aged displays are the reason for rebuilding. On May 1, 2004, they will open temporary facilities at 875 Howard Street in downtown San Francisco. The Academy will reopen in Golden Gate Park in 2008.

We have arranged for numerous specimen loans from the Academy for the next few years. Watch for future

exhibits, some of which are in preparation now.

Our Museum display limitations have led to our own loan program for local high schools. A moose taxidermy mount recently donated to us has been loaned to Mark Fowler for the Lincoln High School natural history program. Other taxidermy specimens have previously been placed with Lincoln and Placer high schools. ■

You know about the giant tortoises of the Galapagos Islands—but imagine ones that size roaming California in the recent geological past... Wait 'til you see this new exhibit!

BEHIND THE SCENES

New Fossil Storage Cabinets

With the generous help of Stanley Davis of Vacaville, the museum has acquired 14 fireproof fossil storage cabinets. This was necessary to ensure qualifying for a permit for the summer field paleontology class of 15 students to search for and collect early Triassic dinosaurs near Petrified Forest National Monument in Arizona this summer, June 19 to 27. The class will be taught by Richard Hilton and Charles Dailey and will also visit Zion, the Grand Canyon and Meteor Crater. Want to sign up for Biology/Geology 16G?

Some Donations Declined

Local residents who have tried to donate specimens to the museum have in a few cases been almost as frustrated as the museum staff. With severe space limitations in the building, the museum staff have had to decline some generous offers including a nice shell collection. If someone would be willing to donate the funds to expand the

building with storage and display space along with their collection, the Museum would happily be able to accept more educationally valuable specimens. ■

What is 7 feet long, 3 feet wide and has over a thousand bones? You'll find out when our new exhibit goes on display!

Newsletter contributors: Charles Dailey, Joe Medeiros, Harry Houpis, Kim Stevens, Mike Price, Kerrie Cassidy.

SEE THE WORLD THROUGH SIERRA COLLEGE'S FIELD STUDY PROGRAM

- **BIO. SCI. 16E**
Ecology of the Sierran Conifer Forest.
 Seminar at Truckee Center Jun 22, field trip Jun 26.
- **BIO. SCI. 16G**
Field Paleontology and Ancient Environments. Fossil dinosaur hunt in Arizona. Seminar Jun 14, field trip Jun 19-27. Transportation fee \$150.
- **BIO.SCI.16O**
High Sierra and White Mountain Ecology.
 Seminar Jul 21, field trip Jul 24-31. Entrance fee \$105.
- **BIO. SCI. 16U**
Coastal Habitats of Central California.
 Seminar Jul 28, field trip Aug 1-7.
- **BIO. SCI. 16Y**
Ecology of Selected Wilderness Ecosystems. Travel to Costa Rica to study Central American tropical ecology topics. Seminar Jun 8, field trip Jun 12-26. Estimated land costs \$1500 plus airfare. Contact Joe Medeiros, 916-789-2725.
- **GEOL. 16G**
 (Same as Bio. Sci. 16G)
- **GEOL. 52F**
Weekend Field Geology. Monterey Peninsula. Seminar Jul 6, field trip Jul 9-11. \$90 lodging fee.
- **GEOL 53F**
Field Geology of Western North America. Seminar Jul 19, field trip Jul 25-31 to the Canadian Rockies. \$200 transportation fee and \$35 insurance fee. *See the Summer/Fall Schedule of Classes for more information.* ■

PLANETARIUM NEWS

Cosmic Corner

Sky Watch

If you want the latest information on what to look for in the sky with all the details and future predictions, consult the following web site by Sky and Telescope magazine: <http://skyandtelescope.com/observing/>. This site also includes an interactive sky chart to help you locate constellations, planets, and other sky objects.

Here are the two major highlights for the next several months for observers in the greater Sacramento area: For the first two weeks of April, all five “naked-eye” planets will be visible in the sky just after sunset. Venus is that very bright “star” in the west and Jupiter is almost as bright in the east. Saturn is almost straight overhead in the constellation of Gemini and Mars is that orange-tinted object between Saturn and Venus. A good pair of binoculars or a small telescope will allow you to see the rings of Saturn, the moons of Jupiter, the disc of Mars,

and the phase of Venus. After April 15, Mercury leaves the night sky, but the other four planets remain visible in the night sky until early June when Venus moves to the morning sky.

In May, Comet NEAT is expected to be visible to the unaided eye. As the month progresses, the comet will move from the south to the north along a line that runs to the east of the constellation of Orion (which sits right on the western horizon just after sunset). A second, naked-eye comet, Comet LINEAR, will be in the western night sky during the last week of May and just after sunset. ■

Stellar Vocabulary

Opposition: The configuration of a planet when it is opposite the Sun in the sky. This is an excellent time to view a planet since it is closest to Earth at this time in its orbit around the Sun.

OBSERVATORY PROGRAM

Planetarium Presentations

The Astronomy Department offers “Wonders of Astronomy”—a presentation given in the Sierra College Sewell Hall Planetarium located on the second floor. This lecture/demonstration showcases our present understanding of the universe with a multimedia arrangement that includes a slide show, a hands-on activity, and the projection of star images on the planetarium dome. Fun for all ages.

Call Dr. Harry L. F. Houpis, the Planetarium Director, at (916) 789-2715 to schedule a presentation time. ■

Stellar Vocabulary

Transit: The passage of a planet directly between the observer and the Sun. At a transit, we see the planet as a dark spot against the Sun’s bright disk. Venus will transit the Sun for the first time since 1882 on June 8th this year; unfortunately, this transit will not be visible for observers in California.



SUMMER CLASS

Museum Methods

This two unit course will explore the myriad activities performed and techniques employed in museum operation. Discussions will range from museum goals and themes, to exhibit design, implementation and interpretation. For class projects, students may take part in exhibits currently being designed or under construction by the Sierra College Natural History Museum. Activities may include: specimen preparation and preservation, production of museum quality reproductions, design and wording of signs, specimen documentation and museum announcements and publicity. Techniques and products for material stabilization, consolidation and conservation will be examined and used. Students will learn methods of specimen preparation and preservation for research, exhibition and storage. Various molding and casting techniques will be applied. Students will develop and conduct a museum tour.

This is definitely a “hands-on” course. It may be repeated for up to 8 units and is transferable to CSU. Meets Tues. and Thurs. 5:30-9:40 p.m., June 22 through August 12. ■

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 23, 7:30 P.M.

Conversation with a Tramp: An Evening with John Muir

A play by Lee Stetson

This stirring production has been presented every summer in Yosemite National Park—and throughout the country and around the world as well—since 1983. It depicts Muir's last dramatic battle to preserve the beautiful Hetch Hetchy Valley, part of our National Park, but threatened by San Francisco's desire to construct a dam there, drowning it hundreds of feet deep. Audience members are his guests as they await final word of the Hetch Hetchy's fate from Washington decision makers. While waiting, Muir's righteous anger at the 'temple destroyers' is tempered by his hearty good humor, and his relating of a number of his most extraordinary wilderness adventures, including his remarkable 'tree ride' in a Sierra windstorm. A fine introduction to both Muir the man and his profound love of wildness, this show is often sponsored by organizations defending their own environment.



Tickets: \$10 at the door, \$8 pre-performance sales, \$5 all students.

Call, e-mail or write for tickets or information: Joe Medeiros (916) 789-2725, jmedeiros@sierracollege.edu, Reserve tickets by sending a check made out to Sierra College Museum and a self-addressed stamped return envelope to: Muir Tickets, c/o Joe Medeiros, Sewell Hall, Sierra College, 5000 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA 95677. ■

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 21, 7:30 P.M.

What a Great Planet!

by Dick Hilton and Joe Medeiros

Dick and Joe have always thought that they were lucky to be born on this planet (and at a time when exploration was relatively easy). With a combined 80 years of traipsing around its rocky and wooded surfaces, they have combed it from its far north to near its south pole, always in search of the same things: neat stuff—volcanoes, glaciers, plants, forests, deserts, critters, rocks, fossils—all things that make life exciting. Forever in search of the answers to life's questions, their travels have spanned Earth's continents and enabled them to see and experience nature to its fullest. Join two of Sierra's science faculty in an evening of "dueling photographs", taken over the decades during their travels (together and separately). Neither will know which photo will emerge next as they alternate showing their favorite images to the museum audience—describing how fascinating that creature, or that geologic formation, or that "whatever" was. Join them as they wander from Alaska to Africa and from the Galapagos to Australia. Convinced that the study of natural history keeps life full of interest and surprises, they're also convinced that by sharing their enthusiasm, others will want to protect this outstanding planet we call home.



Sewell Hall (Science) 111 at 7:30 p.m. General public \$2, Students \$1, Museum members free. ■

SIERRA COLLEGE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER 2004



Museum Membership

Please join us in supporting your Museum. Membership benefits include free admission to natural history seminars and special events, and a 10% discount on field trips and other fee activities. You will also be first to be notified for Museum events, field trips and workshops so you will have the earliest opportunity to register for limited enrollment activities. Your membership card will identify you as a supporter of the Museum.

Membership categories:

- Supporter: \$50 per year
- Individual: \$20 per year
- Family: \$35 per year
- Student: \$10 per year

Send a check payable to the "Sierra College Natural History Museum." Please include the membership category you desire and your name and address. A membership card and information will be sent to you. Memberships may also be purchased at the door during Museum seminars and special events. Contributions are tax deductible.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 21-23: Earth Day activities. Main event April 22, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. On the quad.
- April 23, 2004: "Conversation with a Tramp: an evening with John Muir." A one-man play by Lee Stetson. Dietrich.
- April 29, 30, May 1: Horticulture Dept. Plant Sale, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Greenhouse.
- May 21, 2004: "What a Great Planet!" Dick Hilton & Joe Medeiros. Sewell.
- June 14, 2004: Summer Field Study Program begins.
- New Nature Trail Guide published.



SIERRA COLLEGE
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

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Rocklin, CA 95677

check out our web site
www.sierracollege.edu/museum

