From The Director
by Dr. Kenneth Carpenter

The Members’ Appreciation dinner was held at the Tuscan Restaurant in December. It was the largest gathering yet. I presented an overview of the museum’s accomplishments for 2012. To those of you who attended, thank you for your continued support.

Work progresses nicely on the Allosaurus skeleton in its new pose. The tail is nearly completed and has a nice, graceful sweep. The legs are attached, but not the feet. The new pose gives the Allosaurus a distinctly new look. We will start on the Stegosaurus as soon as the Allosaurus is done. The skeleton of the giant ankylosaur Peloroplites is being mounted in Fruita, Colorado, and should be on display by the next newsletter.

The giant clams from near Green River reported in the last newsletter continue to make the news. I admit being surprised how much interest the clams have generated. If you haven’t seen the one on display, come on in so you can see for yourself what the fuss is about.

We continue with the “What is Archaeology” exhibit. I was overly optimistic when I thought we would be finished by the end of January. However, I can now report that the exhibit is almost ready to be installed and will include some hands-on activities. The exhibit will show that there is much more to archaeology than simply collecting artifacts. One important change is the decision to increase our outreach by having some trilingual signages (English, Spanish and braille). Ours will be the first museum in the state to use braille labels extensively with touch specimens. We have also been making plans with the Castle Valley Archaeological Society for this year’s Prehistoric Week (May 4-11). There will be a special lecture, Dining with the Fremont, for museum members only. This special lecture will also feature some Fremont foods for you to sample. Please watch for announcements.

In my role as Curator of Paleontology, I completed the revision of my 30 year project on the bone deposits at Dinosaur National Monument. That 200+ page manuscript was submitted to the Carnegie Museum of Natural History for publication later this year. Unlike other studies, I made extensive use of archival data, including notes, letters and continued on page 3

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As warm winds drive the snow to higher elevations in Castle Country, the museum’s Hall of Archaeology is looking forward to the longer days and warmer nights suggesting that field season is right around the corner! I am applying for permits to conduct two excavations this summer, which I will detail in the summer newsletter. This report will highlight some interesting recent research on our archaeological collections.

Dr. Jim Allison, BYU anthropologist, has an ongoing research project dating the earliest maize from sites in Utah. One site housed here at the museum may have the earliest maize recovered in the Salt Lake Valley. Three samples were selected and sent to Beta Analytic in Florida for direct radiocarbon dating. Look for a press release this summer detailing the results of the study.

One incredible artifact on display at the museum is a bighorn headdress recovered in the San Rafael Desert. There are depictions of humans wearing bighorn headdresses in rock art panels across the Western United States, but this specimen is the only headdress reported in the archaeological literature.

The headdress was manufactured by modifying a bighorn skull, with the horns cut in half and attached with cordage. The artifact also has Olivella shell beads, traded from the California coast, attached with cordage.

Dr. Alan Gold, of AECOM, Inc. researches the Coso Rock Art District in California. He contacted me with a research request to radiocarbon date a small piece of the cordage and to examine the shell beads, which can be dated based on manufacturing methods. Based on both the radiocarbon date and the shell bead date, the headdress was manufactured sometime around AD 1100. This date and the general location of discovery suggest that this artifact would have been made and used by the Fremont. Stop by the museum and see the headdress for yourself!

The site was an oft-utilized campsite next to a spring. This intensive research trip included the documentation of microscopic use-wear and obsidian sourcing with x-ray fluorescence. We look forward to having Nate and his team back to document some of the other Paleoindian collections here at the Prehistoric Museum.

I continue to host Wednesday evening volunteer sessions. I will also be using volunteers in my fieldwork this summer. Please contact me if you are interested in helping out!

Don’t forget that State Prehistory Week is May 4th through 11th! The museum will have events all week, starting with Family day on the 4th, with activities for the whole family, and ending with field trips on the 11th. There will also be a members-only lecture “Dining with the Fremont” on the 8th, featuring food samples reminiscent of the meals the Fremont would have eaten.
Members were treated with gallery openings to two separate exhibits: the “Guild of Natural Science Illustrators’ Traveling Exhibit” and “The Other Side of Utah”. The former displayed detailed, hand-drawn or computer animated scientific illustrations, while the latter exhibit is a collection of amateur and professional artwork and photography from people in the area.

The Guild show ran from mid-January through mid-February. However, “The Other Side of Utah” is still on display in the temporary gallery through May 10th, so come and support local artists from eastern Utah. Both openings were popular with members, some of whom even contributed to the community art show.

The museum is always thankful for its members and their support. Please remember to show your museum membership card to the clerks. They see so many people that they have a really hard time remembering your face. New membership cards now have this reminder on them. Thank you all for your understanding in this matter!

If you would like to renew your membership, or for any other issues concerning memberships, contact Claire Bennett, 435-613-5755 or claire.bennett@usu.edu or find membership in formation online at our website usueastern.edu/museum and click on “get involved”.

Watch for email and other correspondence concerning upcoming membership events, outings, and other membership perks.

From The Director
continued from front page

photographs of Earl Douglass, who found the site in 1909. I also completed an edited book manuscript with Hector Rivera-Sylva (Museo del Desierto, Mexico) and “Dino” Frey (Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde, Germany) called Dinosaurs and Other Mesozoic Reptiles of Mexico. The book has 12 chapters written by 12 authors and it will be published by Indiana University Press. I was also the invited speaker at the Museum of the Red River in Idabel, Oklahoma. This is my second time there to talk about the Oklahoma State Dinosaur Acrocanthosaurus, the most complete skeleton of which I described in 2000 with Philip Currie. The bones and teeth of this T-rex sized carnivore have been found south of Price.

As you can see, your museum is off to a good start this year thanks to your member support and donations.

GIFT SHOP

The gift shop is still reveling in the make-over, which has inspired some new items to make their appearance. We have new canvas bags, water bottles, T-shirts, pottery, shooters and more.

Shopping feels even better when you purchase from the museum gift shop. There is satisfaction in knowing that your dollars are helping to support the museum.

Members receive a 10% discount on gift shop purchases, so be sure and take advantage of membership and all of the wonderful perks museum membership offers!
Spring Has Sprung
By John Bird

What a cold winter! I was very glad to get back into the field and enjoy some sunshine for a day. Ralph Escamilla, Charlie Johnston, TyRee Olsen and I traveled into the Swell to check out a couple of new sites. The sun was shining and it was a beautiful day. We located the sites we wanted to investigate, and surveyed the surrounding area looking for more possibilities, but unfortunately we came back empty handed. Not the greatest way to start out our field season, but it is important to realize that a lot of effort goes into each find and every excursion cannot result in a grand discovery. Locating and digging up dinosaurs and other treasures from our past takes dedication, time and patience.

The remount of “Al” is coming along well. His tail is up and the cast portions are painted. The real fossil bone will be left for all to see.

Charlie a retired artist and museum professional has been volunteering his time painting the replica portions of “Al”.

Working on “Al” brings back memories of my boyhood. I have fond memories visiting the museum with my friends. I remember we were very excited when we heard the museum was going to have an allosaur on display. When the museum started in 1961 it was located upstairs in Price City Hall, in the South West room. “Al” was too big to fit in the room, so he was mounted outside of the museum in the hallway. My friends and I visited often.

Fifty years ago, in 1963, Don Burge, the founding director of the museum and “Dinosaur Jim Jensen” from BYU constructed the first Allosaurus mount for the museum. It was constructed at BYU and was comprised of real bone that was collected from the Cleveland-Lloyd dinosaur Quarry, as well as plaster casts of the incomplete portions. There is a favorite story that Don loves to tell about the transport of “Al” from BYU to the museum. He recalled that the only truck they could find that was big enough for the transport was a beer truck. Beer trucks are not usually seen on the BYU campus, therefore, as you can imagine, the campus police were very interested in knowing what they were doing.

The real bone and the replica bone were both painted on the original mount to give the skeleton a more uniform, “perfect” look. That was the accepted way things were done at that time. We have been careful to preserve the original casts and real bones on the remount. However, today we want the public to be able to see the original bone in the mount, so the casts are being painted dark gray. Come in and check out the progress we are making and tell us what you think.

Up on campus in collections we have been busy making labels for each of the fossils in our collections. These labels contain all the important information researchers need to identify the fossils when they study them. This is a project Duane Taylor, my friend and the former collections manager for the museum wanted to do, but never had the time. Our director Dr. Carpenter decided this project had waited long enough. We have about fifteen hundred labelled, but we have several thousand more labels to go. We will be working at this for a while.

I thank all the volunteers who are so dedicated and are so willing to help. Don often said that our museum was a monument to volunteerism and I echo that sentiment.

John
The sudden increase in tour bookings by area schools and pre-schools is a sure sign that Spring is just around the corner, but that doesn’t mean that we have been hibernating here at your museum. Work continues on several projects and other projects have been completed.

The giant clam from near Green River (Emery County) has been fully prepared and restored by John Bird and an exhibit case constructed to display this beautiful fossil on the wall of the museum, next to the other Cretaceous invertebrate fossils from this area. This spectacular fossil is worth a trip to the museum by itself, but don’t forget to check out our temporary gallery while you are here.

Ken, Tim, and I (with Administrative Assistant Claire Bennett keeping us organized) are nearing completion of a major new exhibit titled What is Archaeology, that will be one of the first exhibits visitors will see upon entering the Archaeology Hall. This exhibit, which was funded by a generous donation from the Castle Valley Archaeological Society (CVAS), will explain to the visitor what takes place in an archaeological investigation. I have added drawers to an existing exhibit case, which will allow us to show more materials without cluttering up the main case, as well as allow us to add interactive and touchable components to the exhibit.

Interactive components currently being fabricated include a dichotomous (two-choice) key to identify six projectile points on display, and another interactive comparing tools and household items of the Fremont with counterpart items we use today.

Planned touchable components include several varieties of bone and stone tools, as well as a variety of pottery types.

In order to make this exhibit more visitor friendly for all members of our community, we have decided to make all our labels in this new exhibit bi-lingual (Spanish and English). In addition, touchable components will have a Braille label to enhance the experience for the visually impaired.

January 10, 2013 saw the opening of the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators Traveling Exhibit that ran through February 15, 2013. This show consisted of 20 high-quality framed illustrations and over fifty additional unframed illustrations in an accompanying portfolio. This show was augmented by 14 additional scientific illustrations by six of my former scientific illustrations students at the University of Georgia and me. I hope you got the chance to see these quality illustrations for yourself. Noel Carmack brought his art class over from the USU Eastern campus to see the show and hear a brief lecture on scientific illustration. The students were amazed at the detail of the illustrations and fascinated by the scratchboard and carbon dust illustrations.

Hot on the heels of this exhibit was our annual community art and photography exhibit which we titled “The Other Side of Utah – 2013”. This title reflects the fact that we have opened up this show to all photographers and artists east of the Wasatch Front. Residents of the Wasatch Front have numerous opportunities to showcase their work, whereas opportunities for artists from “the other side of Utah” are much fewer. Response this year was good, with twenty-eight artists (including photographers) submitting 47 pieces of art, resulting in a really nice show. Media in the show include miniature sculptures, carved gourds, photographs, graphic arts, conte’, as well as oil, acrylic, and watercolor paintings. It is always exciting to see the work of the many talented artists in our area. This show will run through May 10, 2013. You owe it to yourself to stop by your museum and see these works of art.

Our next show scheduled for the temporary gallery is a one-woman show by a local artist, Terry Willis. Terry’s oil paintings of local scenery will make you appreciate the beauty we sometimes take for granted in our busy lives. We hope you can find time to see this exhibition.
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