



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MAY 2012

Since the New Year, the Academy and its Sections have reached out to its members and the public with informal science education activities. We participated at the Rochester Museum and Science Center's Science Saturdays and recently hosted the Annual Spring Lecture.

### **RAS Shines at Science Saturdays**

Our first invitation from RMSC to play a role at their popular Science Saturdays was accepted by the Mineral, Fossil, and Astronomy Sections. On these special Saturdays, museum visitors can experience science demonstrations and meet members of local organizations involved with science and technology. Our Sections displayed interesting materials for visitors to examine and RAS representatives had a great opportunity to speak with attending families. RAS trifolds and membership applications

were readily available to potential members.

The Mineral Section showed educational displays of local minerals, important industrial minerals, and demonstrated fluorescent and radioactive minerals. An ongoing slide show showed field collection activities. For inquisitive children (and adults), the collecting bug was encouraged by offering samples of minerals and rocks from local quarries that they could identify, label, and take away. Hundreds of people visited the tables laden with minerals and one family has already joined. Members who helped teach visitors and set up the displays are Nancy McCann, Jill Skeddle and daughter, Danielle Urich, Carol Wonder,



Participants in Science Saturdays

Jim Synyard, Kathy Henrie, Stephen Busschaert, and Paul Dudley.

Appropriately situated beneath a mastodon, the Fossil Section displayed a number of well-preserved critters from the past. John Handley and Dan Krisher enjoyed meeting the many people that stopped to talk. They provided handouts describing the geology of NYS and identifying common fossils, along with directions to a family-friendly collecting site near Batavia. Visitors could select a take-away a souvenir from a fossil bin.

Visitors to the Planetarium were greeted by Astronomy Section members Natalie Crittenden, Bob Crumrine, Lori Englund, Sue Lochner, Aimee Owens, and Valerie Rapson. Over a hundred people stopped to chat and view the popular astronomy applets. The young ones were engaged in constructing paper Star Wheels to learn the night sky and various coloring and craft activities.

### **Spring Lecture**

The Academy's annual Spring Lecture, on April 25<sup>th</sup>, was well attended by over 60 people. Many Astronomy Section members and their guests were present to hear Dr Michael Richmond describe "Who Measured the Solar System." We learned about a

number of measuring attempts spanning centuries from early naturalists to later scientists; the limitations they faced and the new advances in tools eventually spurred greater accuracy.

Thank you all for participating in these public events; the Academy year is off to a good start as a result! The next all-Academy event is the Fall Paper Session. The host of this event will be the Biology Department at St John Fisher College.

*Jutta Siefert Dudley*  
*President, RAS*

\* \* \*

### **39<sup>TH</sup> ROCHESTER MINERALOGICAL SYMPOSIUM**

The Rochester Mineralogical Symposium is an annual function of the Academy that has again brought mineral professionals, students, and collectors from far and wide to Rochester to attend this four-day event. For the third consecutive year, Ward's Natural Science Establishment opened its doors to Symposium attendees who were awed by the bins and cabinets full of rocks, minerals, and fossils. The Thursday evening lecture, that is always open to all current RAS members, was presented by a well-known mineral collector, on the Minerals of Japan. Friday's events consisted of lectures and a full afternoon of technical papers on mineral-related subjects. A silent auction, banquet, and a voice auction followed Saturday's talks. The auctions, that feature specimens and mineral related items, help to defray Symposium costs that are not covered by the registration fees. The 2012

Symposium concluded with two more lectures on Sunday morning.

*Paul Dudley*

\* \* \*

### **PUBLIC LECTURE**

#### **Digging with Mussolini Dr. Stephen L. Dyson**

Thursday May 17th 2012, 7:30pm  
at the Memorial Art Gallery

More archaeology was done in Rome under the Fascists than at any time before or since. Major sites were excavated in all parts of the City. The aim of the archaeology was to increase the regime's identification with ancient Rome. Mussolini liked to play the 'new Caesar' and 'new Augustus' against the background of ancient ruins. Since the fall of fascism, Mussolini's archaeology has remained a source of controversy and of corrective action. This talk will consider both the fascist archaeological program and the changing post-war reactions to it.

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### **BULLETIN EDITOR WANTED**

The Bulletin Editor has stepped down so we need a replacement. The Astronomy Section is under agreement with the Academy to do the job in return for funding. The Editor is responsible for gathering articles, layout, and the timely e-delivery of ten issues per year to the printer. Attendance at Board meetings is encouraged. It's a great opportunity to become acquainted with the entire Academy and contribute to the organization. Contact Lori Englund or Jutta Dudley for more information.

# *EVENTS...*

## **MAY EVENTS**

### **Fri 04 ASTRONOMY GENERAL MEETING**

7:30 p.m. Farash Center, Ionia, NY. General meetings move to the ASRAS observing site, Farash Center, for the spring/summer months. The main speaker for the evening will be ASRAS member Dave Bishop presenting his "Year in Review". Social time before the meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. After the meeting, stay for observing if conditions allow. For information, contact Lori Englund at 334-5744 or [lenglund@frontiernet.net](mailto:lenglund@frontiernet.net).

### **Thur 10 RAS BULLETIN DEADLINE**

Please send submissions to Nancy McCann at [mineralpres@rasny.org](mailto:mineralpres@rasny.org).

### **Thur 10 SCIENCE EXPLORATION DAY EVENING PROGRAM**

7 PM-9 PM, St John Fisher College, Student Life Center. Science and technology exhibits, including those of RAS Sections, are open to the public. Bring the family! (Note that you can also participate! Contact your Section President if you're interested.)

### **Fri 11 ASTRONOMY PUBLIC STAR PARTY**

9:30 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. Stay tuned for location, hopefully back at Mendon Ponds Park.. ASRAS members will be available for conversations about equipment and astronomy while the skies darken. If it's clear, why not stop out and have a peek? The main targets of the party will be dimmer, deep sky objects like star clusters, nebulae, and galaxies. We'll have views of Mars, a bit small for really good views, and Saturn rising in the east. Contact Jim Seidewand at 703-9876.

# ... for MAY, 2012

For updates to events, check the Academy website, <http://www.rasny.org>, and Section websites.

## **Fri 11 FOSSIL MEETING**

7:30 PM, Buckland Park Lodge  
1341 Westfall Rd. Brighton (Just ¾ of a mile west of Winton Rd.)  
Professor Gordon Baird, Geology Dept. SUNY Fredonia, leader of our April fossil collection trips will speak on "Features suggestive of increasing marine paleostress through the Middle and Upper Devonian interval." His lectures always draw a large crowd and are very popular. Contact Stan Spector (StanSpec@aol.com or 585 461 1272).

Reminder, there is NO meeting on the first Tuesday this month.

## **Tue 15 MINERAL MONTHLY MEETING**

7:30 - 9:30 PM in the Downstairs Meeting Room, Brighton Town Hall, 2300 Elmwood Ave., Rochester, NY 14618. Dan Robertson, Geosciences Chairman at MCC will lecture on; "Settling in With Some Platinum: Why the Stillwater Mine near Yellowstone has so Much of It".  
Door prizes & Refreshments.  
Visitors welcome! For information, contact Stephen Busschaert at 585-288-5683 or mineralvp@rasny.org, or check [www.rasny.org/mineral](http://www.rasny.org/mineral).

## **Wed 16 RAS BOARD MEETING**

7 PM Brighton Town Hall All members are welcome to join us.

## **Thur 17 ANTHROPOLOGY MEETING**

7:30 Memorial Art Gallery. We will join the AIA for their talk "Digging with Mussolini", by Dr. Stephen L. Dyson. See Bulletin body for more details. Contact Karen Wolf 670-9709.

## **Sat 19 HERBARIUM WORKSHOP**

10 AM - 2 PM, Basement of the Rochester Museum and Science Center (RMSC). Life Sciences Section invites you to help with the valuable herbarium collection – and see some interesting plants! No experience needed. Lunch is served in the RMSC Cafe until 2 pm. If you plan to attend, please send an RSVP to Elizabeth Pixley. Then, at RMSC, go to the front desk and ask staff person there to call ext. 368, the phone in the Herbarium. For more information, contact Elizabeth Pixley, herbarium curator (334-0977 or [epixley@rochester.rr.com](mailto:epixley@rochester.rr.com)).

## **Mon 21 MINERAL JUNIOR EVENT**

6:30 PM to 8:00 PM at Brighton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room. Program will be "Radioactivity and Minerals." The club Geiger Counter will be used to check specimens. All aspects of radioactive minerals will be covered, including industrial applications. Adults welcome. Door prizes for children. Refreshments. Please contact Nancy McCann if you plan to attend or have questions at 585-395-1713 or [mineralpres@rasny.org](mailto:mineralpres@rasny.org).

## **Sat 26 LIFE SCIENCE FIELD TRIP**

10:00 AM (rain date Sunday, May 27 at 1:30pm). Ellison Park Wetlands area now named Lucian Morin Park. Entrance on Empire Blvd between MacGregor's restaurant and All That Jazz Antique store. It might be wet so wear good hiking boots. We can expect wildflowers and migrating birds. Contact Karen wolf 670-9709.

## **ONGOING EVENTS**

### **Sat ASTRONOMY OBSERVING**

Join us for observing every Saturday night at the Strasenburgh Planetarium Observatory. See the ASRAS website for times as they change with the seasons. A small Mars and dimmer deep sky objects will be the main targets early in the night. A bright, half-lit Venus will be in the West. We'll have views of Saturn that improve later in the month. Unless at least mostly clear, we may not be open for observing. If in doubt, call the planetarium box office at 697-1945, or contact Jim Seidewand at 703-9876.

### **NON-RAS EVENTS OF INTEREST**

#### **Sat 05 PENFIELD QUARRY OPEN HOUSE**

6:30 AM to 12:00 PM Dolomite Products Co., Inc., 746 Whalen Rd., Penfield. Annual event where public may come in to collect minerals and fossils - dolomite, calcite, celestine, fluorite, pyrite, marcasite crystals, and gypsum, selenite, occasional crinoids, cephalopods. Well-supervised children age 4 and older may wear bicycle helmets, adults must wear hard hat. Safety glasses, long pants and sturdy footwear are required by all. For more info, please contact Nancy McCann at [mineralpres@rasny.org](mailto:mineralpres@rasny.org) or 585-395-1713.

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May, 2012 - Vol. 66, #5, Page 4

**ABOUT THE ACADEMY** - The Rochester Academy Of Science, Inc. is an organization that has been promoting interest in the natural sciences since 1881, with special focus on the western New York state region. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in science. Dues are minimal for the Academy and are listed in the membership application. Each Section also sets dues to cover Section-related publications and mailings.

For applications and/or more information contact Jutta Dudley, 140 Railroad Mills Road, Pittsford, NY 14534; by telephone 385-2368; or by e-mail <pres@rasny.org>.

The **Academy** Internet website is <http://www.rasny.org>

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The Editor position is open. Contact the Astronomy President or Academy President to volunteer for this important position.

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