



President's Message

I mentioned in the January issue that the Publications Committee is working on the next *Proceedings* to be published this spring. As promised, the articles are now online and may be accessed from the home page (www.rasny.org).

The "Hiscock Site" by Richard Laub, curator of geology at the Buffalo Museum of Science, tells the story of the last 13,000 years of paleontological history as revealed in a small swamp in Byron. Dr. Laub has presented talks at RAS meetings over the years, so some of you already know the Hiscock Site is extraordinary. I invite you to read the article and see what makes it so special. Volunteers, scientists, and students of the earth sciences systematically excavated the site several weeks each summer from 1983 until 2011. I feel privileged to have been an integral part of the dedicated band of "Byron diggers."

Not far to the east of Byron lies the valley of the Genesee River. Ongoing research of valley sediments deposited in glacial and postglacial times has revealed a complex history that can now be better understood in relation to global changes. Dr. Richard Young of SUNY College at Geneseo gives us some ideas of this complexity in his paper "Genesee Valley Glacial and Postglacial Geology from 50,000



View into the Hiscock Site Basin

Years Ago to the Present: A Selective Annotated Review." The updated information and the many references provided will keep the serious student of glacial geology busy reading for a long time!

~ Jutta Siefert Dudley



HELP WANTED

The Rochester Academy of Science Bulletin is looking for a new editor. Volunteers should be familiar with Microsoft Word and be able to attend the Rochester Academy of Science Board Meetings. This is a great opportunity to help out the RAS while becoming more involved in the community and being in the know of all RAS events, lectures, and meetups. If interested, contact editor@rasny.org

**More stars. Less light.
Participate in GLOBE at
Night!**

Calling all Earthlings! Take a few minutes to get involved in the GLOBE at Night campaign to preserve dark skies! GLOBE at Night is a citizen-science campaign open to people all over the world to raise awareness of the impact of light pollution by inviting citizen-scientists to measure their night sky brightness and report their observations to a website from a computer or smart phone. Light pollution threatens not only our "right to starlight", but can affect energy consumption, wildlife and health. Through 2011, people in 115 countries contributed 66,000 measurements, making GLOBE at Night one of the most successful light pollution awareness campaigns to date. Please join us to **participate in the 2012 campaign an hour after sunset till about 10pm January 14 through 23, February 12 through 21, March 13 through 22, and April 11 through 20.** For information and resources, visit us at www.globeatnight.org.

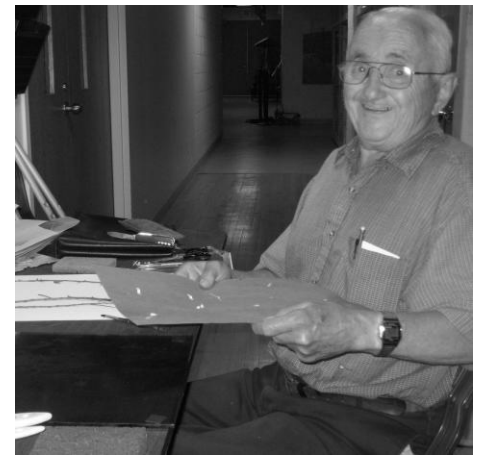
From Constance E. Walker, Ph.D., Director, GLOBE at Night campaign. Chair, International Dark-Sky Association Education Committee. Associate scientist & senior science education specialist, NOAO.

**Black Bear Trails & Sign: A
Preliminary Study**

Alyssa Johnson and Dr. John Van Niel

*Finger Lakes Community College,
3325 Marvin Sands Drive,
Canandaigua, NY 14424*

The Black Bear Management class at Finger Lakes Community College studied a particular type of black bear (*Ursus americanus*) behavior during the 2010-11 school year. We were interested in better understanding the characteristics and potential purposes of trails left by black bears in which the bears step directly into the same footfalls each time. These trails, called ritual, hot foot or retread trails, consist of readily visible circular depressions. We found mention in popular and scientific literature of both grizzly (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) and black bears creating such trails, however we were unable to find any quantitative work regarding the characteristics and creation of the trails. In July, the class travelled to Massachusetts under a National Science Foundation grant to view an active trail. We noted the proliferation of associated sign along the trail including bites, scratches, rubs and straddle trees. Camera traps were deployed in order to record frequency and timing of use. We measured the stride and straddle of the trails and found that these trails did not conform to the measurements one would expect from a bear walking "normally", implying that these trails are formed while bears are employing a deliberately altered gait.



Mr. Robert G. McKinney. FRAS
1925- 2011

Bob McKinney was a long time member of RAS and became a Fellow in 1965. Before he retired, he worked as a chemical engineer at Kodak. He will be remembered by many of us for his fascination with birds. He was active in the GOS (Ornithology Section), the Eastern and Ontario Bird Banding Associations, Braddock Bay Bird Observatory, as well as Burroughs Audubon Nature Club. He greatly enjoyed bird banding and became a master of that skill. To honor Bob, the banding lab at Braddock Observatory has been named after him. Bob's skilled hands also worked with plants. He regularly volunteered in Life Section's Herbarium, enthusiastically repairing plant specimens. His helpful and kind disposition will be missed.

EVENTS for February, 2012

(For updates to events, check the Academy web site, <http://www.rasny.org>, or appropriate Section web site.)

FEBRUARY RAS EVENTS

Saturday 4 ROCHESTER MUSEUM & SCIENCE CENTER "SCIENCE SATURDAYS"

12:00 - 4:00 PM Mineral Section will have a display of fluorescent and industrial minerals. We'll have a slideshow of members collecting in the field, and we'll be talking to the public and giving away locally collected mineral specimens. To volunteer to work at this outreach event, please contact Nancy McCann at mineralpres@rasny.org or 585-395-1713.

Tuesday 7 CONODONTS PRESENTATION

7:30 PM. Jeff Over, Professor of Earth History- Paleontology and Stratigraphy at SUNY Geneseo will present on Conodonts are Wonderful. Jeff has extensive knowledge and experience in Conodonts, Frasnian-Famennian extinction, and Mongolian fossils. Bring any conodont fossils you might have and any questions on any of his areas of expertise.

Wednesday 15 HERBARIUM WORKSHOP

1 PM - 4 PM. Located in the basement of the Rochester Museum and Science Center (RMSC). No experience needed! Plan to come and help with this valuable collection – and see some interesting plants! 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).

Wednesday 15 BOD MEETING

7:00 PM at the Brighton Town Hall, Upstairs Conference Room.

Friday 17 WINTER EDUCATION LECTURE SERIES

7:30 PM in the Gosnell Science Building of the Rochester Institute of Technology, room A300. Valerie Rapson will be presenting "Worlds Beyond Our World: An Introduction to Exoplanets." Join us as we travel beyond our world and venture into newly discovered and wildly unpredictable exoplanetary systems! This lesson will cover exoplanet detection methods and properties, telescopes dedicated to the search, recent discoveries and more. Come learn about exoplanets and how you can join the hunt with or without your own telescope.

NON-ACADEMY EVENTS

RANDOLPH MAMMOTH

Exhibit of Mammoth remains originally found in western NY and stored in NYS Museum
Roger Tory Petersen Institute, Jamestown. Runs until December.

Wednesday 1 SCIENCE ON THE EDGE SERIES LECTURE

7:30 PM. about the Maya Mystery of 2012. Held at the Rochester Museum and Science Center.

Saturday 7 HERE COMES THE SUN

Exhibit of solar photographs and meteorites. Roger Tory Petersen Institute, Jamestown. Runs until April 7th.

Wednesday 29 SCIENCE ON THE EDGE SERIES LECTURE

7:30 PM. On extreme storm chasing. Held at the Rochester Museum and Science Center.

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

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

The *Astronomy Section* Information phone number is (585) 987-5330. The *Astronomy Section* Internet web page is <http://rochesterastronomy.org>

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