

# M.A.P.S. *Digest*

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A LOVE OF FOSSILS BRINGS US TOGETHER

**February MAPS Meeting – Feb. 11, 2006**

Room 125 of Trowbridge Hall, University of Iowa, 1:00 pm. Program TBD.

**April 7,8 & 9 2006 – MAPS EXPO**

The National Fossil Exposition  
Western Hall, Western Illinois University,  
Macomb, IL. Theme: Plants  
Keynote speaker: Dr. Conrad Labandiera

**April 6 – MAPS EXPO**

**There is a casting workshop tentatively scheduled for Thursday, April 6. If interested, please contact Gil Norris at either 12 noon or 5:00 PM daily for further information. Gil may be reached at 309-786-6505.**

**2006/01 DUES ARE DUE**

Are your dues due? You can tell by checking your mailing label. It reflects dues received by January 15, 2006. The top line gives the expiration date in the form of “year” followed by “month” – 2006/01 means 2006/January. Dues cover the issue of the Digest for the month in which they expire. We do not send notices but will let you know if you are overdue by including “OVERDUE” next to your due date on your Digest. We carry overdues for two issues before dropping them from our mailing list.

Please include on your check your due date and name exactly as it appears on your mailing label - or include a label.

Dues are \$20 per U.S./Canadian household per year. Overseas members may choose the \$20 fee to receive the Digest by surface mail or a \$30 fee to receive it by airmail. (Please send a check drawn on a United States bank in US funds; US currency; a money order; or a check drawn on an International bank in your currency.) Library/Institution fee is \$25.

**Make check payable to MAPS and mail to:**

**Sharon Sonnleitner, Treas.  
4800 Sunset Dr. SW  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404**

**ABOUT THE COVER**

**Photo by C. Cozart**

This month's cover photo is a large crinoid holdfast found in life position in the Middle Mississippian Fort Payne Fm. of Kentucky.

**DIGEST CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED**

Articles and other materials of paleontological interest are needed for future issues of the Digest. Soft copy in Microsoft Word is preferred. Please email materials if possible to either:  
[fossilnautiloid@aol.com](mailto:fossilnautiloid@aol.com) or [cdcozart@aol.com](mailto:cdcozart@aol.com)

Hard copy may be mailed to:  
John Catalani  
3405 High Trail  
Woodridge, IL 60517

**MAPS Board and General Meeting Minutes  
Room 125 Trowbridge Hall, University of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa  
November 5, 2005**

The meeting was called to order by President Karl Stuekerjuergen. An abbreviated Secretary's report was read. Dale moved the minutes be accepted. Tiffany seconded - motion carried.

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$5718.44 in checking and \$13,139.48 in savings for a total of \$18,857.92. Gil moved the Treasurer's report be accepted. Dale seconded - motion carried.

A report from Mark Shurilla, EXPO Digest Editor, suggested that the EXPO Digest was progressing well and might contain approximately 200 pages. It is anticipated that the EXPO Digest may have color photos.

The ever-popular Fossil Dig, orchestrated by Tiffany Adrain, will once again be a cornerstone of the EXPO exhibition.

A new Directory will also be published this coming year. Any changes to the Directory should be sent to Sharon Sonnleitner by the first of February.

The following slate of new officers was presented and unanimously approved:

President	Marv Houg
1st Vice President	Dale Stout
2nd Vice President	Steve Holley
Secretary	Doug DeRosear
Treasurer	Sharon Sonnleitner
Director	Blane Phillips
Director	Allyn Adams
Director	Charles Newsom

It was noted by Marv Houg that Pete Larson from the Black Hills Institute is scheduled to give a talk on the sex determination of dinosaurs on April 3, 2006 in Cedar Rapids. More information will be forthcoming.

At 2:00, the board meeting was adjourned.

After the meeting, a fascinating talk on the fauna of the Price Creek Amana Beds was presented by MAPS member Jim Preslica with some assistance from Charles Newsom. These beds are equivalent to the Cerro Gordo Member of the Lime Creek Formation which is exposed at the famous clay pit near Rockford, Iowa, where many fossil enthusiasts have collected over the years. Although some species from the Amana Beds are identical to the Rockford specimens, there are many more cephalopods and rare Devonian echinoids present in the Amana Beds. Also, the individual specimens of like species tend to be larger from the Amana Beds. It is sincerely hoped by many that Jim and Charles will continue to share their new discoveries with the rest of the MAPS members.



**MAPS Board and General Meeting Minutes  
Room 125 Trowbridge Hall, University of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa**

**January 14, 2006**

The meeting was called to order by President Marv Houg. The minutes of the November meeting were read. Gil Norris moved the minutes be accepted as read, Allyn Adams seconded, motion carried. The Treasurer's report was presented by Marv Houg and showed a year-end balance of \$2187.89 in checking and \$11,642.87 in savings for a total of \$13,830.76. Gil Norris moved the Treasurer's report be accepted. Dale Stout seconded, motion carried. A brief discussion was held concerning a decrease in the declining membership which was reflected in the amount of dues received. It was decided that the books should be audited. This task was directed toward Dale Stout and his committee.

**EXPO NEWS:**

Gil Norris will make sure that coffee and donuts are once again available at the show.

Karl Stuekerjuergen will follow up with Mark Shurilla, MAPS Expo Digest Editor, to make sure that everything is progressing in a satisfactory manner.

Sharon Sonnleitner will order 6000 cards advertising the 2007 EXPO.

Marc Behrendt, Table Chairman for the EXPO, would appreciate any help he could get to assist in getting the tables ready for the throngs of exhibitors.

Tiffany Adrain would welcome any small fossils that they could use for the ever-popular Fossil Dig.

In other news, Tiffany Adrain reported that the University of Iowa has received a National Science Foundation grant to digitize the collection in the Repository.

Gil Norris moved that the meeting be adjourned. Dale Stout seconded, motion carried.

After the meeting, the always-cordial Tiffany Adrain, Curator of the Repository at the University of Iowa led the group through the Repository. She gave a brief history of the collections and explained how the collections were used by professional paleontologists and fossil enthusiasts. Many interesting specimens were observed by the MAPS group.

**MEET YOUR 2006 OFFICERS**

The following members were elected to the MAPS Board for 2006:

President: Marvin Houg

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Dale Stout

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Steve Holley

Secretary: Doug DeRosear

Treasurer: Sharon Sonnleitner

Editor: John Catalani & Chris Cozart

Director through 2008: Charles Newsom

The following complete the 2006 Board:

Immediate Past Pres.: Karl Stuekerjuergen

Director through 2006: Allyn Adams

Director through 2007: Blane Phillips

## FIELD TRIP – OCTOBER 9

By Sharon Sonnleitner

If you like trilobites and crinoids, Klein Quarry in Coralville, Iowa, was the place to be on October 9 for a MAPS-sponsored field trip. Thirty people collected in the Devonian quarry on a cool day perfect for working



*The trilobite that started the frenzy at 4:00*

hard limestone. Although the quarry is quite large and people spread throughout it, one could often see groups clustered on small piles, breaking rock in search of *Phacops* and *Proetus* trilobites. Most were rewarded for their labor. A few people were lucky enough to find nice crinoids. Brachiopods, corals, and a few cephalopods, tentaculites, and *Platyceras* were also found, according to what I heard.



*Searching for trilobites*

While some people left at noon, the rest of the group intended to stay until 4:00. But just before 4:00, someone split and lifted a chunk of rock from the floor of one level of the quarry to reveal one of the nicest trilobites found that day. Although people were gathering to leave, they were soon breaking rock practically elbow to elbow and finding more trilobites, extending the outing for another hour.



*When a trilobite is found, a crowd gathers*

As an aside: common knowledge is that all the trilobites are dead, but I'm not so sure. Soon after I arrived at the quarry, I found a pretty big trilobite on the top of a rock pile where several other people were hunting. I was able to break it off a larger rock and fit it into my jeans pocket. It looked hard as a rock and seemed trapped in the limestone, but after I searched around for some of its friends without success and climbed down off the pile, I found it had escaped from my pocket without my noticing. And it was not seen again in spite of the fact that I looked all over for it, and several others re-hunted the same area.



## Penn Dixie Paleontological and Outdoor Education Center

Living in the US is both a curse and a blessing. Virtually anywhere you live you are within driving distance of a fossil locality of some kind or another. The problem is it is either private property or public property. If it is public property, more than likely either you can't collect fossils or are extremely limited to how you can collect and what you can do with the fossils once you have collected them. If it is private property, you are at the mercy of the owner and his feeling about a stranger collecting on his property (there are a lot of understandable property owners though). That brings me to the famous Penn Dixie site near Buffalo, New York. In the late 1970's I would drive up from Cincinnati and sneak into the site to collect the beautiful Devonian trilobites found there. It was always a crap shoot because there was so much trouble at the abandoned site (drugs, parties, target practice, etc). If things had been quite for a while you might get to collect the entire weekend without being disturbed. There were several times though that I drove the 430 miles one way just to be run off by the local police before I even got a chance to collect. I tried to lease the property from the current owner but he was not interested.

That all changed in 1998 when the Hamburg Historical Society purchased the property and made it a fossil collecting site open to the public. By spending \$20 and becoming a member you can collect any weekend in the summer (a \$100 corporate sponsor has even more privileges). All hand tools are allowed and you can do anything you want with the material you find (keep, trade or sell). There has even been trilobite layers exposed with construction equipment to make it easier to collect the trilobites.



Penn Dixie fossil site in Hamburg, New York

To be successful collecting, you will need to know where to look for the layer and when you are in the layer. First of all the trilobite layer is at the lower end of the quarry about 2 feet above the Tichnor limestone. The shale above the trilobite layer breaks down quickly with weathering and can be easily pried up with a spade. Secondly, it is virtually impossible to start from the top and dig down through the layer. You have to start from the side of a previously dug hole.



Trilobite layer being collected by Jeff Aubry. Notice facing being worked

The trilobite layer is much harder than any other shale in the quarry and does not split into thin sheets. In the upper part of the layer, there are numerous horn corals. The trilobite layer is directly below a horn coral layer and has to be pried up with heavy pry bars. If you are not finding trilobite molts, you are not in the right layer. Although you can find trilobites by collecting the shale piles, realistically a successful dig is a weekend project. I pick out a spot near an existing hole and remove overburden in an area about 5 feet by 15 feet. This has to be done with a pointed spade. Next I clean up around the front of the layer to the floor. The layer is then pried up by driving wedges or pry bars under the layer with a small hand sledge (crack hammers are too small). Once the layer has been loosened, I pry it up with LARGE pry bars. The layer splits much easier after it has dried for 3-4 hours so I normally pry up layer for several hours and break it down with spitting hammers after it has dried. A good weekend will fill 5-6 beer flats with nice fossils. Some of the fossils found include beautiful *Phacops rana*, *Greenops boothi*, *Hyperblastus* (blastoid) (brachiopods) and (horn coral).





Perfect 1 ½ prone Phacops rana rana from Penn Dixie



22 perfect enrolled Phacops rana rana from Penn Dixie



The **M**id-**A**merica **P**aleontology **S**ociety (MAPS) was formed to promote popular interest in the subject of paleontology; to encourage the proper collecting, study, preparation, and display of fossil material; and to assist other individuals, groups, and institutions interested in the various aspects of paleontology. It is a non-profit society incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa.

Membership in MAPS is open to anyone, anywhere who is sincerely interested in fossils and the aims of the Society.

Membership fee: \$20.00 per household covers one year's issues of DIGESTS. All Canadian and Overseas members receive the DIGEST by air letter post. For new members and those who renew more than 3 issues past their due date, the year begins with the first available issue. Institution or Library fee is \$25.00. (Payments other than those stated will be pro-rated over the 6 yearly issues.)

MAPS meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of October, November, January, and February and at EXPO in March or April. A picnic is held during the summer. October through February meetings are scheduled for 1 p.m. in Trowbridge Hall, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. One annual International Fossil Exposition is held in April or late March.

The MAPS official publication, MAPS DIGEST, is published 6 times per year – January, Feb/March, April, May/June/July, August/Sept, Oct/Nov/Dec. View MAPS web page at <http://www.midamericapaleo.org>



## CYATHOCHRINITES