



National Association of Geoscience Teachers
Southeastern Section Newsletter
Winter-Spring 2019

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www.nagt.org

SE-NAGT
geogiarocks.us/nagt

Geological Society of America
www.geosociety.org

US Geological Survey
www.usgs.gov

Earth Science Week
www.agiweb.org
www.earthscienceworld.org
www.earthsciweek.org

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President's message

by Frank Forcino, SENAGT President

SENAGT needs your service!

If you or someone you know is interested in serving SENAGT, we are currently seeking a new president and vice president. My two-year term as president will end during SEGSA in Charleston in March. I will continue to serve the section as section secretary or NC state representative. Unfortunately, we do not have anyone to take over as president, and we have not had a vice-president for two years. ***We need people to take over the leadership of SENAGT, immediately.*** If you are interested in making a difference in the education community throughout the southeast, there is opportunity to provide K- 12 and post-secondary Earth science teachers with recognition and resources. Please contact me or come to the SENAGT business meeting (see below for details) to gain further information or to volunteer your services.

[ed. update: **We now have nominees for all offices except president.** If you are considering stepping forward, please know that the current officers have approved a travel budget to help the next president attend SEGSA 2020 in Reston, VA.]

Business Meeting March 28 in Charleston, SC

I invite you to attend the NAGT Southeastern Section business meeting on Thursday, March 28, 2019 in Charleston, SC during the SEGSA meeting. The lunch meeting will take place at Mellow Mushroom from 12:00pm to 1:30pm, two blocks from the meeting location (309 King St.). At this meeting, we will discuss some overall goals for NAGT as well as ideas for education sessions for SEGSA 2020 and fields trips geared toward K-12 educators. This is a great chance to make your voice heard and get involved with NAGT. If you're interested in providing input for NAGT or just having lunch with fellow educators, please come to this meeting. If you are able to RSVP, please email me. You are also welcome to just show up!

Outstanding Earth Science Teaching Award

Do you know an Earth science educator who deserves recognition for his or her standout teaching practices? Or is there an Earth science teacher who has had a large impact on your career? This is your chance to nominate that teacher for the NAGT Outstanding Earth Science Teaching Award. Awards are given out to a teacher in each state and one for the southeast section as a whole. Deadlines vary based on state, starting as soon as March 29. See the following website for specifics:

<https://nagt.org/nagt/awards/oest.html>

This is a great way for teachers to find out about NAGT. It is a way for NAGT to get out into the community and look for exemplary teachers who don't know who we are. Teachers are encouraged to nominate themselves. Even if you do not intend to nominate anyone, please spread the word that this award exists. Teachers deserve recognition for the amazing work they do, and this is a small way that can be accomplished.

I look forward to seeing many of you at SEGSA in March!

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Future of this newsletter

by Bill Witherspoon, Newsletter Editor

After 12 years, I am ready to step aside as editor of this newsletter. I am grateful to the state representatives, SENAGT presidents, and others who have written and contributed pictures for it, some for longer than that 12 years. What happens next? As I had hoped, there are younger professionals interested in applying their vision to how this Section stays in touch through the year. It is not determined as yet whether a semiannual newsletter in PDF format will be part of that, and how the [Facebook site](#) and other social media might come into play. Come to the Charleston meeting and be part of the discussion. I plan to call in to the meeting, as I will not be at SEGSA this year.

Meeting Calendar

Most recently reported dates of past or future meetings

National Science Teachers Association and Affiliates		
Area	Latest date on web site	City
National	April 11-14, 2019	St. Louis
Eastern	Nov. 14-16, 2019	Cincinnati
Southern	Nov. 29 – Dec. 1, 2018	Charlotte
Alabama	Nov. 5-6, 2018	Tuscaloosa
Florida	Oct. 24-26, 2019	St. Augustine
Georgia	Feb. 12-14, 2020	Columbus
Louisiana	Oct. 22-24, 2018	Shreveport
Mississippi	Oct. 28-30, 2018	Biloxi
North Carolina	Nov. 14-15, 2019	Winston-Salem
South Carolina	Nov. 8-10, 2017	Columbia
Tennessee	Nov. 1-3, 2018	Murfreesboro

Geological Societies		
Organization (Area)	Latest date on web site	City
GSA (National)	Sep. 22-25, 2019	Phoenix
GSA (Southeastern)	Mar. 28-29, 2019	Charleston, SC
GSA (South Central; incl. LA)	Mar. 25-27, 2019	Manhattan, KS
Alabama Geological Society	Nov. 15-17, 2018	Birmingham
Carolina Geological Society	Oct. 5-7, 2018	Boone, NC
Georgia Geological Society	Oct. 5-7, 2018	Augusta

State News in Geoscience Education

Alabama (submitted by David Kopaska-Merkel, Alabama Geological Survey)

People

This year, it seems, all of my usual contacts were very, very busy. I was busy myself, and neglected to remind them to send in contributions for the newsletter, after my initial call for news. Be that as it may, I have some good news to report. Last week I talked to a high school science teacher who is extremely interested in becoming a co-state representative to our group. I am not mentioning her name, because I am only 90% sure this is going to happen, but I will know soon.

Fossils of the Black Belt teacher workshop

The Geological Survey of Alabama, Discovering Alabama, the Birmingham Paleontological Society, the Alabama Geological Society, the University of West Alabama, and the Museum of the Black Belt,

collaborate on a series of annual one-day paleontology field workshops for teachers. Last year, we focused on biostratigraphy and lithostratigraphy. This year (October 16, 2018), we returned to the same large Cretaceous outcrop to study taphonomy and fossil preservation. Andrew K. Rindsberg, James Lamb, and I led the workshop, with the invaluable assistance of members of the [Birmingham Paleontological Society](#). We had a couple of dozen attendees, mostly K-12 teachers. The weather cooperated and everybody had a good time. In previous years we have found a turtle carapace, a brittle star, and a pterosaur. Last year we found another pterosaur and a juvenile mosasaur jaw. Everyone had a good time and learned a lot. Anyone interested can email me, or visit the workshop's [Facebook page](#).



Last instructions before setting out



Hamulus worm tubes

Legacy workshops

Legacy is an Alabama state agency responsible for environmental education. This includes earth science. For 2019, Legacy will be co-leading with the McDowell Environmental Center a workshop entitled "A Sense of Scale! Using your Earth to Teach Earth Systems Science." Legacy will also be teaching "Mountains to the Gulf," which is an eight-day field workshop covering a variety of topics, including earth science. You can learn more about both workshops here:

<https://legacyenvd.org/educator-workshops/>

ALLELE lectures

The University of Alabama's long-running series of lectures on evolution continues this year with presentations on many subjects that have evolutionary components. Past lectures can be listened to on iTunes-u. You can find information about recent and upcoming lectures here: <http://evolution.ua.edu/> There are generally six per academic year, and there are three planned for this spring. These lectures are all free and open to the public.

Geological Survey of Alabama

The Geological Survey, Alabama's oldest state agency (founded in 1848), has entered the 21st century: we have a Facebook page. We have posts about: Fossil Friday (photos and information about fossils from the GSA paleontology collection); seismographs (examples of earthquakes that were detected by seismic stations in Alabama); geo-events (a variety of earth-science related events such as meetings, presentations, workshops, and teacher offers [such as the fossil workshop]); GSA publications; and photos, figures, and links from ongoing projects and field work.

Thanks to Sandy Ebersole, GSA.

Florida (no news submitted)

Georgia (submitted by Christy Visaggi, Co-state Representative)

Happy new year Georgia! First, I'd like to express my gratitude on behalf of geoscience educators in the state to Bill Witherspoon, our long-dedicated newsletter editor for SENAGT. As you may know, SENAGT has benefitted from his involvement and leadership in many capacities over the years. We are indeed lucky to have such a passionate educator and knowledgeable geologist here in Georgia! Now if you have been living under a rock because your love for geology goes that deep, you might not know that Bill co-authored the [Roadside Geology of Georgia](#) guidebook – an essential book for any geo-enthusiast in our state! It is a phenomenal resource, and if you don't yet have a copy, pick one up! You might be interested to know also that Bill leads [geology walks](#) around Georgia, and having experienced one myself, I can say without a doubt that I learned far more than I could have from any book in just a few short hours; I'd highly recommend you find a way to get in the field with him to soak up that knowledge. Most recently, he and Bill Waggener led walks in historic downtown Columbus, GA, as part of the [Georgia Science Teachers Association](#) annual meeting, and they will be back doing their 3rd annual geology building stone (and a great outcrop) [walk in Midtown](#) as part of Atlanta Science Festival. Bill Waggener is a past OEST and is Education Chair of the [Georgia Mineral Society](#) as well as a committee chair for [Atlanta Geological Society](#).

Speaking of the [Atlanta Science Festival](#), you have a few opportunities to embrace your inner geo-nerd. Students at the Department of Geosciences at Georgia State University are once more offering geology hikes and activities at Stone Mountain through the [Rock n' Walk](#) event on Sunday, March 10. Also, new this year, GSU GEOS students will be at [Arabia Mountain](#) and [Cascade Springs Nature Preserve](#) as well. If you're into water sampling, geocaching, scavenger hunts, and more, be sure to give us a look. Another opportunity you have to dig deep into the rock record is by attending the [Walking with the Mesozoic Giants](#) event at [Fernbank Museum of Natural History](#) where professor Anthony Martin of Emory University will be speaking. Don't forget to glide on through the new [pterosaurs exhibit](#) while at the museum! Finally, if you're eager to put on that paleontology hat, remember that the [Paleontology Association of Georgia](#) is up and running with meetings and events around the state! They recently held their 2nd annual fossil symposium at the [Tellus Museum](#), and the next meeting is planned for May in southern Georgia (specific location to be confirmed). Other events on the horizon later this year include the annual [Georgia Geological Society](#) fieldtrip, where we'll hop across the border for a joint effort studying the famous Brevard Zone with the [Alabama Geological Society](#). Stay tuned for more details!

Lastly, a few fun facts for y'all if you aren't yet aware of these opportunities. Teachers – a quick reminder to plan ahead for the [Earth Science Education](#) mini-grants provided by the Georgia Mineral Society. Applications are due by September 1. Also, come July, join us in Nashville for the 5th [Earth Educators' Rendezvous!](#) Abstracts are due March 13. To conclude my news for Georgia, I encourage you all to give the Rockd app a go. Do you want a free app where you can learn about the geology beneath your feet, what fossils are nearby, where your house was in the Jurassic, and whether anyone has stopped by outcrops near your school? Read this article on [Medium](#) to learn more... and happy exploring to you all this spring!

Louisiana (no news submitted)

Mississippi (Submitted by Renee Clary, Mississippi State University, State Representative)

Mississippi Museum of Natural Science

Fossil Road Show: See the museum's fossil collection and collector displays and meet institutional exhibitors. Enjoy hands-on activities and bring a fossil for staff and guest paleontologists to identify. The event will be held **March 2, 2019** at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science in Jackson, MS. For more information, check the MMNS [website](#).

Mississippi State University

Earth Day entries due April 17: The Dunn-Seiler Museum is sponsoring a competition to promote awareness of endangered species in the state. Protect Our Species invites Mississippi's K-12 students to use discarded items to create a model of a plant or animal from Mississippi that is endangered – or to create an organism in Mississippi's geologic past that is extinct. More information can be found [here](#).
Entries are due April 17, 2019.



Science Night at the Museums

Mississippi State University Museums & Galleries Committee hosted Science Night at the Museums on February 13, 2019. The Mississippi Cretaceous Panorama mural was unveiled in the Dunn-Seiler Museum, as well as extraordinary mosasaur fossils donated by the E. Montgomery family. Multiple disciplines participated in Science Night, providing science outreach and fun activities for the community. Learn more about the Cretaceous mural [here](#).

Left: Graduate Student Joshua Broussard as everyone's favorite Mesozoic flying reptile at Mississippi State University's Science Night at the Museums, held February 13, 2019.



Above: The new Mississippi Cretaceous Panorama mural features a mosasaur, *Triceratops*, and an asteroid impact. It was painted by undergraduate students Todd Rowan and Moesha Wright under the director of Emeritus Art Professor Brent Funderburk.

National Fossil Day: The Dunn-Seiler Museum celebrated National Fossil Day on October 17, 2018 by hosting Fossil Extravaganza and unveiling a new display, Cabinet of Curiosities. Winning entries of the Fossil Art and Story contest are currently on display.

Right: Dunn-Seiler Museum Collections Manager Amy Moe-Hoffman explains to young visitors the fossils and minerals on display in the new Cabinet of Curiosities Display, unveiled at National Fossil Day's Fossil Extravaganza.



2019 Gem, Mineral, Fossil, and Jewelry Show

The Southeast's largest gem and mineral show was held February 23-24, 2019 at the Mississippi Trade Mart at the State Fairgrounds in Jackson, Mississippi. For more information, check out the Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society [webpage](#).

North Carolina (State Representative position open; see below)

Randy Bechtel writes: "I have some exciting news, I have taken an education position with NC State Parks. My last day at the NC Geological Survey was Jan. 30. In my new position I continue to focus on geoscience education but will expand into other natural sciences. I will be working with an awesome education unit, park rangers, exhibits developers, as well as with formal and informal educators."

"I plan to continue my membership with SENAGT, but I will not be able to continue my role as NC State Representative. Once I get established in my new position, I may be able to become more involved. For now, though, I have to step back."

[Ed. note: Randy Bechtel wrote his first of many thorough and informative contributions to this newsletter in Fall 2004. Thanks, Randy, for your 15 years of service to our section as NC State Representative. Randy's new contact information follows.]

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Puerto Rico (State Representative position open)

South Carolina (submitted by Gwen Daley, State Representative)

The South Carolina Envirothon competition (<http://www.dnr.sc.gov/education/Envirothon/competition.html>) will be held April 12th at Clemson's Sandhill Research and Education Center. Registration deadline for teams is March 15th.

The South Carolina State Museum observatory is offering teacher professional development workshops in June (Chester County) and July (Lee County). For more information, please see: <http://scmuseum.org/education/professional-development/offsite-boeing-observatory-teacher-workshop/>

"Take Action SC Environmental Education Partnership" (a partnership of state, university, and other stakeholders) offers a wide variety of educational resources, including K-12 environmental curriculum material: <http://www.takeactionsc.org/>

New South Carolina Earth Studies Publications

Brewer, R.J. 2019. Regional geology, oil and shale shows of eastern Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and middle Florida. In Hydrocarbon Potential in Southeastern United States. Springer Briefs in Earth Sciences. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-00218-3_12.

Mallin, M.A., J.M. Burkholder, L.B. Cahoon, A.E. Grogan, D. M. Sanger, and E. Smith. 2019. An environmental assessment of the North and South Carolina coasts. Chpt 16 (p. 405-426) in World Seas: An Environmental Evaluation, 2nd Edition. Academic Press. DOI: 10.1016/B978-0-12-805068-2.00044-9.

Hudson, J. 2019. Santee Cooper's coal ash impoundment closure challenge: Risk reduction through recycling. In J. Fox and M. Scott (eds) Sustainable Electricity II. Springer. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-95696-1_10

Tennessee (submitted by Michael A. Gibson, University of Tennessee at Martin, and Ann E. Holmes, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Co-State Representatives)

Fifth Annual Earth Educators' Rendezvous – July 15-19, 2019

Vanderbilt University's Dept. of Earth and Environmental Sciences (EER) brings together researchers and practitioners working in all aspects of undergraduate Earth education, including a mix of college faculty, graduate students, and K-12 teachers from all disciplines who are interested in improving their teaching about Earth. The program is designed to appeal to everyone from the instructor attending their first Earth education-themed meeting, to experienced STEM education researchers, to administrators who want to better support students in their programs. Among many options, participants can learn about new teaching approaches, discover opportunities to get involved in research programs, prepare for an academic career, or discuss how to approach teaching and learning challenges in their classroom. Abstract submissions are due March 3, 2019. Early Bird Registration deadline is May 1. Fees are reduced for all NAGT Members. There are multiple opportunities for travel support for EER, including participating in the activity review camp (\$500 stipend), NGSS tagging camp (\$500 stipend), Marine Geology Using GEODE workshop (\$1,000 travel award) and general travel stipends (\$500). For more information and registration, visit:

https://serc.carleton.edu/earth_rendezvous/2019/program/index.html

News from UT Chattanooga

Faces are changing in UT Chattanooga's geology program. Longtime chairperson, Dr. Habte Churnet, retired in December 2018 having served the region, the university and the geology program for more than 30 years. Coupled with the upcoming retirement of Dr. Ann Holmes (August 2019), two new faculty hires for the program are in the works. One of these positions is a computational hydrologist/aqueous geochemist position, which is a new direction of expertise within the faculty. The other, a computational paleontologist/stratigrapher will be hired to maintain the core curriculum. Both will provide additional research experiences for our undergraduate majors. As with much of the state of Tennessee, orange cones abound on our campus, with the greening of several pedestrian walkways that used to be streets. The program's two-week geology field-experience trip to Scotland in July 2018 was a rousing success. Among many fabulous stops, we visited several of Hutton's localities, viewed Pleistocene lacustrine shorelines, aka the Parallel Roads, hiked across the Highland Boundary fault on the east shore of Loch Lomond, and walked NW Highlands paths once tread by Peach and Horne in their quest to understand thrust faulting. The anomalous weather didn't hurt; it was remarkably sunny and warm due to regional drought, which also contributed to a temporary suppression of the midge population.

Coon Creek Science Center 2019 Season Begins

The Coon Creek Science Center, located in McNairy County, begins its 2019 season beginning March 1. The site is the home of the Late Cretaceous Coon Creek Formation, which contains hundreds of fossil species, including the State Fossil of Tennessee (*Pterotrigonia thoracica*), mosasaurs, sharks, bivalves, gastropods, turtles, and much more (<http://www.memphismuseums.org/coon-creek-science-center/>). The University of Tennessee at Martin has been working with Memphis Museums Inc.

(which also runs the Pink Palace Museum in Memphis), the owners of the site, to take over running the site. The two are working on details that should result in a 40-year renewable lease to UT Martin giving it total autonomy on the site. UT Martin has been involved with the site since the early 2000's by running Standards-based K-16 education and research programs on the site and maintaining a permanent research cabin. UT Martin has already begun to make some minor renovations and repairs to the site. For more information on day programs, or to schedule a visit, contact:

<http://www.memphismuseums.org/>. University groups, educators, and amateur societies should schedule trips and programming to the site by contacting the Alan Youngerman at the UT Martin Selmer Center (ayoung3@utm.edu) or Michael Gibson at UT Martin (mgibson@utm.edu). K-12 and church groups in the Memphis Shelby County area should contact the Pink Palace Museum in Memphis directly through the Coon Creek website.

UT Martin Travel Study to Meteor Crater and Other Southwest Sites.

Drs. Lionel Crews, astronomer at UT Martin, and Michael Gibson, geologist at UT Martin, will be offering a travel study opportunity for December 16-22, 2019 open to anyone. The trip is being run in conjunction with a 2-hour Fall course entitled Planetary Geology by the same two professors. The course itself includes trips to the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, AL, the Wells Creek impact crater in Tennessee, and the UT Space Institute in Tullahoma, TN. The travel-study trip to Meteor Crater is a 2-hour add-on to the Planetary Geology course, but participants can take this trip without having taken the Planetary Geology course. The tentative itinerary for the trip includes: Monday 16th travel to Flagstaff, AZ and a late afternoon visit to Lowell University Observatory. On Tuesday 17th the group will visit Meteor Crater and be allowed to hike to the bottom of the crater. Later that day there will be instruction about desert processes and a visit to the University of Arizona Astrogeology Center. On Wednesday, the group drives to Albuquerque with stops at the Petrified Forest for paleobotany studies along the way. The next day, will be a drive to Carlsbad Caverns and tour of the caverns for a discussion of karst processes. Friday includes a trip to Roswell, NM for "alien" adventure fun, then a visit the White Sands testing area, Rocket Museum at Alamogordo, arriving in Los Cruces to overnight. On Saturday the group will head towards Albuquerque visiting the Socorro Telescope Array on the way. After overnighting once again in Albuquerque, the group returns to Memphis on Sunday, December 22. Costs are still be determined but are estimated to be around \$800-\$1000 depending upon travel arrangements. For more information contact Michael Gibson (mgibson@utm.edu, 731.881.7435) or Lionel Crews (lcrews@utm.edu; 731.881.7440).

36th Annual GeoConclave

Plans are underway for the 36th annual GeoConclave Sept. 27-29, 2019 and all schools in the southeast are invited to participate! GeoConclave is an annual competition among the schools primarily participating in the Association of Tennessee Geology Clubs, established in 1980, but is open to any university undergraduate geology program that wants to send a team. The purpose of the competitions is the to benefit the geology clubs of institutions of higher learning in Tennessee and other southern states by an interchange of ideas and stimulation of good fellowship among the club members through competitive competition. The GeoConclave concept was conceived in 1980 by UT Martin faculty as a way for students and faculty of that rural institution to meet and interact with other geologists in the region. GeoConclave serves as an inexpensive and important form of professional development for the faculty and a networking venue for the students. Charter Members of GeoConclave share responsibility of serving as the host institution (five-year rotation basis), which includes running a field trip for all participants. These host institutions are UT Martin, UT Knoxville, Tennessee Technological University, Middle Tennessee State University, and Austin Peay State University. The Tennessee Division of Parks, through UT Martin graduate Stuart Carrol, serves as the official sponsor for GeoConclave and provides GeoConclave with access to Group Camp facilities at Fall Creek Falls State Park prior to the opening to the public each spring. In a rare turn of events, this year the competitions will be held at a different venue, Harrison Bay State Park, near Chattanooga, TN.

GeoConclave events typically include a field trip learning experience usually run by the host institution. Schools meet for a day-long field trip to explore the geology of some portion of Tennessee, determined by the hosting institution. Then on Friday evening, the schools will meet at Harrison Bay State Park to organize for Saturday competition. GeoConclave competition events consist of:

Technical Contests (Each event ~60 minutes in duration and is based upon techniques, skills, and knowledge attained from "core" courses in a typical geology major):

- Geologic Maps Interpretation
- Structural Data Measurements/Interpretation
- Orienteering/Navigational Skills
- Mineral Identification
- Paleontology & Fossil ID
- Rock Petrography/Lithology

Non-Technical Contests include the following traditional events:

- Men's Geo-Hammer Throw (distance)
- Women's Geo-Hammer Throw (distance)
- Geo-Hammer Toss (accuracy)
- Men's Geode Roll
- Women's Geode Roll
- Host institution surprise event

The Rock Bowl: Academic Prowess Competition is patterned after the 1960's TV College Bowl. This event is scored separately from the other events with a separate award. The Rock Bowl is considered the most prestigious of the competitions in GeoConclave. School teams (4 players per team) compete in school pairs through rounds of elimination by answering undergraduate level questions related to the earth sciences. Final team remaining wins the Rock Bowl, which carries as separate plaque. Rock Bowl scores then figure into the overall GeoConclave scoring.

To enter a team in this year's competition, contact Audrey Pattat, 256 Brehm Hall, Dept. of Agriculture, Geosciences, and Natural Resources, University of Tennessee at Martin, TN 38238; 731.881.7441, apattat@utm.edu.

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