DMNS curator Stucky topic: Snowmastodon

A new Pleistocene site at high elevation in the Colorado Rockies will be the focus of a presentation by Richard Stucky, curator of paleoecology and evolution at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science, during the annual CU Retired Faculty Association Fall Meeting Wednesday, Oct. 24.

His talk will follow the luncheon. The business meeting begins at 10 a.m., followed by a social with refreshments at 11:30 and the luncheon at 12:15, all in Room 235 of the University Memorial Center on the CU-Boulder campus. CURFA members may park in the underground parking structure next to the UMC. Members using the parking structure can request a parking coupon when they register. The registration table will be outside of Room 235.

Stucky, who last year became adjunct associate professor and research associate at CU Boulder, will present “The Incredible Fossil Find at Snowmass” in which he will detail discoveries made two years ago near a Western Slope winter resort. The dig is now known as the Snowmastodon Project.

He said his discussion will include details of how the Snowmastodon site was found and the nature of the excavations.

“I’ll also do an update on the research: where we are and the different animals and plants we’ve found. We’ve got lots of invertebrates and vertebrates, and we’ve found wood material and seed material at the site. We’re getting a pretty good environmental picture as to what it was like.

“This was an active mountain reservoir construction site near the Snowmass ski area,” he said. “Heavy equipment operators ran across fossil bones, and their company contacted the museum.

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We could, we can & we should

“What Don’t We Got”
This plaintive refrain is sung by representatives of the United States Armed Forces who are assigned to protect a lovely Pacific island in the musical “South Pacific.” I have chosen it for the title of my message since it expresses the thoughts contained it.

For about four years I have been one of the leading cheerleaders for the Colorado University Retired Faculty Association (CURFA). I have drawn attention to every program, every Tea Time, every luncheon, every presentation, every retired faculty grant, every graduate student award. It was easy to point out the good and enjoyable in CURFA and tell the members that they are receiving a great reward for their $20 membership dues.

In my last message, however, I am going to write about what CURFA lacks as well as the outstanding person who is the nominee for the position vice president/president-elect. What does CURFA lack, which in my judgment it should have? There are two items, which often strike me as noticeably absent in any review of CURFA’s activities:

- Returning luncheon reservations within the time set for their return.
- One or more charitable or community-based activities.

Let’s turn to luncheon reservations since it requires less in the way of description. Twice a year members are asked to return a luncheon reservation by a date prior to the semiannual luncheon so we have a reasonably firm number of meals to tell the UMC caterers. I have been the person whose job it was to give the meal number to the UMC for about two years. Do you think I know you cannot attend by Oct. 17. We have adopted a return policy for luncheon reservation payments if you let us know you cannot attend by Oct. 17.

Community activities don’t seem to be mentioned when a census is taken of the activities of CURFA. A few members of CURFA are assisting the president with some of the activities of his office, but it is only a few members. An organization the size of CURFA should be able to deliver at least one or two charitable or community activities, beyond marching at commencement, each year. If the Rotary Club can do it, we ought to be able do it. One activity, which ought to be a good fit for us, is tutoring and /or mentoring. Most retired faculty associations at universities around the country number tutoring and mentoring as a primary activity. It would appear that tutoring and mentoring should be a significant part of the activities of CURFA.

Why aren’t they? You are not being asked to teach a class. Some hours of tutoring and mentoring can be arranged with first- and second-year students or upperclass-persons, as the case may be.

We have been hesitant to arrange some tutoring or mentoring before we knew that tutoring and mentoring should be a significant part of the activities of CURFA. We have been hesitant to arrange some tutoring or mentoring before we knew that CURFA will be in capable hands in the years to come. He was a student, teacher and administrator at some well-regarded institutions.

David received his Ph.D. degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Michigan, 1965; was a Postdoctoral Fellow in Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering at UC San Diego, 1965-1969; and was a UCB faculty member in mechanical engineering, 1969-2008. Since 2008 he has been emeritus professor of mechanical engineering. As a
“It’s a really good representation of the paleo environment. The location has provided an excellent site. It’s like a giant pickle jar with everything persevered way up at the top of the mountain.

“The biggest surprise was the number of mastodon; it is the most important mastodon site in the country.”

The Snowmastodon Project is one of three exciting Pleistocene sites unearthed in Colorado.

“In 2011 we had two other sites, one in the San Luis Valley and one near Holyoke, which were discovered by heavy-equipment operators. These excavations haven’t really been covered by the Denver media yet. We’re still excavating the Holyoke site.

“We try to get in and work collaboratively with the construction companies. We respect the work they need to do and try to make sure that they meet their deadlines. The three digs were real good collaborative relationships.

“We hear a lot about the big animals discovered with such excavations, and there are some at all three sites. There was some kind of elephant-like animal found in the San Luis Valley site and a stegomastodon at the Holyoke site.

“But a lot of small animal remains have been found, too: chipmunks, mice, gophers and those kinds of animals. These sites reveal episodes in Colorado history that are not too well known.”

Stucky said the Holyoke site is at least 1.2 million years old. The San Luis Valley site has been dated at 25,000 years and the Snowmass site is 40,000 to 110,000 years old.

At this time, only 10 percent of the Snowmass site has been explored. Stucky said that the reservoir could be drained at some point so that scientific excavations can resume.

DMNS has extensive connections with CU and other university communities. At least two DMNS researchers have CU adjunct appointments, Stucky said.

“We often have collaborative relationships with different universities around the country, and CU is of course a natural. I’ve sat on committees of CU doctoral students; the campus is a nice quiet place to get away to and work,” he said.

“We’re targeting the middle of next year to present papers for a coordinated treatment of the Snowmastodon site itself. There is a team of 45 scientists from around the country involved in the project. Probably half a dozen are from CU, and at least one CU graduate student, from the anthropology department, is heading up a one of the component projects.”

Stucky earned a B.A. (1974) and M.A. (1977) in anthropology from CU-Denver and a Ph.D. (1982) in anthropology (physical anthropology specializing in vertebrate paleontology). After completing a Rea Postdoctoral Fellowship of the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1985 he became an assistant curator of vertebrate fossils at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Prior to his present appointment in 2005 he held several positions at DMNS since 1989 including vice president of research and collections, vice president of museum programs, chief curator of the Collections and Research Division, curator of vertebrate paleontology and department head of earth sciences. He is a former president of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology and served on the Council of Scientific Society Presidents, the Colorado Natural Areas Council and the Board of Directors of the National Science Collection Alliance.

Stucky’s research involves understanding the evolution of species and natural communities among mammals through the past 65 million years with a specific interest in the impact of climatic change on biotic systems. He also has a keen interest in getting youth involved in science to lead them into a scientific career.

University administrator he has served as assistant vice chancellor for research in the UCB Graduate School 1988-1991; associate vice chancellor for budget and planning for the Division of Academic Affairs, UCB, 1991-1997; and as associate vice president for technology for the President’s Office, 1997-2000.

The honors and awards he has claimed and his activities since receiving his Ph.D. are impressive and include the following: receiving approximately $1 million in research contracts and grants; the author of 110 peer-reviewed publications in the technical literature (subjects include fluid mechanics, gas dynamics, acoustics, heat transfer, combustion and explosions, geothermal energy and rocket motor science); a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, 1972-1973; a College of Engineering and Applied Science Research Award, 1980; a Faculty Fellowship, 1982-1983; a Fulbright Research Grant for The Netherlands, 1983; a Senior Visiting Fellowship from the Science and Engineering Research Council, United Kingdom, 1982-1983; a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Fellowship, June 1985; a Fellow, American Physical Society, elected November 1986; an Outstanding Ph.D. Recipient, The H.H. Rackham Graduate School, University of Michigan, 1988; and an Associate Fellow, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, elected.

He is also a small-business owner. Kassoy Innovative Science Solutions (KISS) has research contracts on liquid rocket engine combustion stability.
**CURFA creates CU deceased-faculty database**

By Richard Blade  
CURFA Vice President & Program Chair

When I became VP/president-elect of the CURFA, it was a natural thing to look at the organization and try to decide what segment of the retired CU faculty were being served and what could be done to improve the organization. While the organization claims to serve all the retired faculty, whether formally members of the CURFA or not, it became clear that aside from the CURFA directory of all retired CU faculty, the segment of the CU faculty that did not pay dues and attend meetings was being underserved. The obvious question was what to do about it. After giving the matter a lot of thought, I came to the conclusion that there were two things that could be done.

The first was to set up ride sharing so that people who cannot get to the CURFA activities by driving or by public transportation can still join the organization and attend the activities by getting rides. As you may know, that has gone into effect, though at present a disappointing number of people have taken advantage of it.

The second is the deceased-faculty database, accessible on the CURFA website by all CU-retired faculty, whether or not members of CURFA. True, those who retired before email took the place of paper memos at the University frequently don’t have Internet access, but retirement establishments and younger relatives are increasingly available to help out.

The establishment of the database involved three other people beside myself. Marc Swadener, whose official job with CURFA is to make the annual directory, started long ago passing on current obituaries to me and others in the CURFA. Neil Ashby, who is the CURFA webmaster, started putting obituaries on the website even before my database was finished. And Sue Middleton, the administrative assistant for CURFA, who went through all the historical paper files and copied those that listed deceased faculty for me to OCR (i.e. scan and convert into computer readable text). President Nort Steuben approved the expenditure of $40 per year to do the research on a national database of obituaries called www.legacy.com. The Boulder Daily Camera just converted to that system for its own obituary database.

Currently the database contains about 358 names of faculty who have passed away in the last 10 years, and we are in the process of collecting obituaries for those names.

When you go to the database on the CURFA website, www.colorado.edu/RetiredFaculty, what you see first is a table that gives pertinent information about each deceased faculty member. The “links” column then has one or more links, the first of which is labeled “obit” if we have an obituary, and clicking on it takes you to the obituary.

Additional links are for such things as the obituaries of spouses, and additional materials, including stories of interest and photos, that might be contributed by colleagues, friends and relatives. Typical names for additional links will be “more,” “spouse” and “photos.”

**If you have stories, photos, or whatever that you think are appropriate to include in the database, please contact me, Richard Blade, at 303-283-9670 or email to rich1600@gmail.com.**

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**Vice president reports on nominees, programs, guide**

By Richard Blade  
CURFA Vice President & Program Chair

One of the duties of the VP is to head a three-person nominations committee to prepare a slate of candidates for various CURFA positions in 2013 and later. The candidate for VP/president-elect is then formally elected at the fall business meeting after a call for possible additional nominations. The other nominees are approved by the CURFA board (see nominees on page 8).

This year the other two members of the nominations committee were Jim Wolf and Sandra Moriarty. Our complete list of nominations appears elsewhere in this newsletter, but most are carry-overs, a number of which are due to an extension in terms of office by the CU and UCB faculty governments. President Nort Steuben will introduce David Kassoy, our nominee for VP/president-elect, in this newsletter. The one other new officer of note is the nominee to replace James Jankowski as general secretary: Uriel Nauenberg. Uriel has a long and distinguished career in the UCB physics department beginning in 1969, and was elected chair of the CU Faculty Council in 1969 and 1973. He received the Hazel Barnes Prize in 2004 and the Robert Stearns Award in 2007. He didn’t wait for his term of office with CURFA to begin Jan. 1, but immediately began his job by arranging to transfer the CURFA listserv from UCD to UCB.

Probably the most important role of the VP is program chair. I feel my own record has been somewhat mixed in success, and last spring I had to postpone the May Tea Time until this Sept. 12 because the singer’s piano accompanist could not make it to the performance. For that reason Nort asked me to schedule an extra Tea Time this fall. I am happy to report that the presenter at that the Nov. 14 Tea Time presenter will be Teresa Chaplin of the UCB Geography Department. She will talk about the Colorado wildfires, a topic of great current interest. More details are on page 8.

Finally, I need to say a few words about the “CURFA Faculty Retirement Guide” that I agreed to update a year ago. Originally it was in print form, but the board decided last spring to make the new edition online. That makes it far more comprehensive, with web links to a great deal of important information that was not in the original editions.

Unfortunately, it also requires a great deal of help from the CU Payroll and Benefits Department (PBS), and because of problems with open enrollment of benefits last spring, they could not help me with it then. I hope to get their help this spring to get it completed.
SHARON K. ARAJI (Sociology, UCD) retired in August 2011 as professor emerita of sociology. Her specialty areas in teaching and research were family and social psychology. “Topics related to these areas have characterized my teaching and research, with the exception of interests, research and travel to the Middle East,” she wrote. Before coming to CU-Denver in the fall of 2007 on a one-year contract as department chair and professor of sociology – which was later converted to a permanent tenure track position – she held similar positions at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She took advantage of the RIP program and remains active in her profession, especially the Pacific Sociological Association and Alpha Kappa Delta, sociology’s international honor society. She held many positions in both organizations, including president. Her most recent research, published work and documentaries relate to domestic violence and contested child custody, and also honor crimes. Sharon.Araji@ucdenver.edu

REX BURNS (English, UCD) has been volunteering with the Boulder County Wildland Restoration group. He published a short story in the October 2012 issue of Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine. rexburns@comcast.net

DAVID KASSOY (Mechanical Engineering, UCB) is continuing a long tradition of volunteer activity in his former department as well as in the CU Sigma Xi Chapter where he facilitates its lunchtime scientific presentation series. He has also been organizing CURFA member visits to outstanding facilities on the Boulder campus. He has a small research business, Kassoy Innovative Science Solutions (KISS), which holds contracts from the U.S. Air Force to study rocket engine stability. This has given him an opportunity to continue his research on combustion-generated gas dynamics and to publish scientific articles on the subject. “From time to time I’m called upon to do grandfather duty for my grandsons in New York City and my granddaughters in Mountain View, Calif. A great pleasure!” he wrote. David.Kassoy@colorado.edu

FRANK KREITH (Chemical and Biological Engineering, UCB) on April 30 presented a lecture entitled “Transition to a Sustainable Energy Future” at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. On May 14, the American Society of Solar Energy awarded him the 2012 Hoyt Clark Hottel Award “for his innovative thinking that spurred many technology advancements ... and inspiring generations of young engineers.” In June he assisted the U.S. Department of Energy’s Oak Ridge Operations in reviewing proposals for innovative technologies that
promote sustainable and renewable energy. On July 23, an article entitled “Geographic Limitations on Integral-Collector-Storage,” co-authored with his graduate student Frederick S. Schollenberger and his National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) colleague Jay Burch, was presented at the International Conference on Energy Sustainability in San Diego and published in the proceedings. On July 25, he attended the 35th reunion of NREL, previously the Solar Energy Research Institute (SERI), for which he was one of the Founding Members. On Aug. 20 and 21, he participated in the Peak to Peak Workshop entitled “Teaching Sustainability at CU-Boulder” sponsored by the CU provost. He is currently teaching in the Senior Design Program of the Department of Mechanical Engineering as a supervisor of one the projects. “When I am not writing on sustainable energy, I do regular Pilates,” he wrote.

fkreith@comcast.net

PETER ROBINSON (Museum, UCB) has been working, whenever possible, as a paleontological monitor on construction sites. Most are related to the oil and gas industry but some are coal mines, power lines and highways. “While the work is often boring it has its interesting aspects and actually gets some scientific material saved from destruction,” he wrote. “As a result of this work, the University Museum probably has the best collection ever made from the Uinta Formation of Rio Blanco County, Colo. The cover in that area is such that one would probably not get much material without artificial exposures. My wife, Paola Villa, is actually accomplishing something in real research. She has had a paper published in the Proceeding of the National Academy in which she was the lead author and along with it a second paper in which she was a junior author. She has been working on the transition from Middle Stone Age to Later Stone Age in South Africa. The gist of their papers is that the transition took place earlier than thought and was accompanied by certain types of technological advances.” His plans for this fall were to be working in the field from the middle of September into October and possibly later.

Robinsp222@gmail.com

FRANZ ROEHMANN (Music, UCD) and his wife, Cari, had plans for early October to join the
Staying in Touch

small tour group Road Scholars in a visit to Havana, Cuba, to learn about that nation’s art, music and theater. “I’ll take along a saxophone just in case there is an opportunity to sit in with some locals,” he wrote. A third CD of his music, “Sonances,” is now available. It is mostly chamber music for woodwinds with piano and saxophone quartet. Two earlier CDs, “Gettin’ Together” and “Together Again” – a collection of big band jazz standards and originals – are also for sale. All are available by contacting him or online at CDBaby.com. froehmann@aol.com

FAHRIYE SANCAR (Environmental Design and Planning, UCB) wrote that she remains a “typical academic.” Sancar@colorado.edu

JACK WEIHaupt (Geography & Environmental Sciences) is the lead author of “Impossible Journey: The Story of the Victoria Land Traverse 1959-1960, Antarctica” published by The Geological Society of America (www.geosociety.org/bookstore). According to a GSA promotional flyer, “This volume, written by Victoria Land Traverse team members, is a scientific, historical and adventurous account of a four-month, 2,400-km journey into the unexplored hinterland of East Antarctica. A critical link in the International Geophysical Year/U.S. Antarctic Research Program, the traverse team conducted seismic, gravity, magnetic, geological, glaciological and atmospheric surveys over the continental ice sheet, discovering the Wilkes Subglacial Basin, the Wilkes Land Gravity Anomaly, the Outback Nunataks, the USARP Mountain Range and the upper reaches of the Rennick Glacier. In so doing, the traverse encountered heavy crevassing on the Skelton Glacier, where SnoCats frequently broke through snow bridges, threatening the end of the traverse. On the high plateau, fuel shortages and frequent equipment failures also threatened to terminate the journey. The latter portions of the traverse were marked by near catastrophes in the vicinity of the Mertz and Ninnis glaciers, and on the glaciers of the Transantarctic Mountains, where unknown and initially undetected substantial crevasse fields were encountered. This account has been constructed a half-century later from the traverse team’s scientific field notes and personal journals.” John.Weihaupt@ucdenver.edu

‘I’ll take along a saxophone just in case there is an opportunity to sit in with some locals.’
Colo. wildfires focus of November’s Tea Time

Teresa Chapman will present a lecture titled “Wildfires in Colorado” for a CU Retired Faculty Association Tea Time presentation on Wednesday, Nov. 14. A social “hour” will be held at The Academy Chapel, 970 Aurora in Boulder, at 3 p.m. followed by the presentation at 3:30.

“Please, come to meet new friends, see your old colleagues, sample excellent refreshments and enjoy a great program,” CURFA Vice President and Program Chair Richard Blade said.

Chapman is an outdoor enthusiast and Ph.D. student in the UCB Geography Department’s Biogeography Lab under the mentorship of Tom Yeblen. Chapman is being funded by various grants and fellowships, including the National Science Foundation and the Colorado Mountain Club. Besides doing her research, she has taught Forest Geography and Introduction to Climate and Vegetation for the last three years.

The Biogeography Lab’s research focuses on forest disturbances and dynamics, such as wildfires, insect outbreaks and the effects of climate change on forests. Chapman’s talk will deal with the study of wildfires in Colorado, including the determination of dates and severities of past fires, the conditions of modern fires and the regeneration of new forests following fires. The talk will also present new research investigating the association of the mountain pine beetle outbreak with the Colorado fires of 2012.

The Academy encourages using public transportation or carpooling. Due to limited parking space, visitors who drive are asked to park on the west (Academy) side of 10th Street.

If you plan to attend, please respond to Richard Blade by Tuesday, Nov. 13, at 303-283-9670, or email rich1600@gmail.com, so we can set up appropriately.

Carl Kisslinger Graduate Student Awards Fund

CURFA has established an endowment through the CU Foundation that provides research awards for outstanding graduate students at all CU campuses. The awards are announced in the spring for the following academic year. Award winners are also invited to attend the general meeting and report on their research.

We continue to need contributions to meet our goal of $50,000 in the CURFA fund. Please help support this effort by making a contribution using this form.

You might also consider mentioning the CURFA Graduate Student Award Fund in your will and asking family and friends to make contributions to the fund in your memory.

Name: __________________________________________________________________________________________________
Campus: Boulder ___ HSC ___ Denver ___ UCCS ___
Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________________________________________
Contribution: $25 ___ $50 ___ $100 ___ $500 ___ $1,000 ___ OTHER $___________
Mail your check and this form to the Carl Kisslinger Graduate Student Awards Program at the CU Foundation, 4740 Walnut, Boulder, CO 80301. Or charge a contribution to:

VISA ___   MASTERCARD ___   AMEX ___   Discover ___

Card Number: __________________________________________________________   Exp. Date: _____________________
Cardholder Signature: ___________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your support of the CURFA and its Carl Kisslinger Graduate Student Awards Program.