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THE  
NEWSLETTER  
OF THE  
NORTH CAROLINA  
FOSSIL  
CLUB

NUMBER 23

APRIL 1986

## RESERVATIONS REQUIRED FOR TEXASGULF TRIPS!

Texasgulf has imposed a limit of 50 people per trip, and since 73 NCFC members showed up for the last trip on March 29th, we will have to require reservations for future trips. (This will affect only Texasgulf trips.)

If you want to go on a Texasgulf trip, you must call the designated officer to sign up. The first 50 NCFC members signed up will be expected to show up. Unfortunately, anyone showing up without a reservation will be turned away. Anyone making a reservation and not showing up without cancelling at least 2 days before the trip will forfeit an opportunity to reserve a spot on the next trip.

Reservations will be accepted for two weeks prior to each upcoming trip only (i.e., registration starting April 12 for April 26th trip; wait until after May 3 to register for May 17th trip).

To make reservations call:

for April 26 - Judy Schneider  
(919)851-6726

for May 17 - Carolynne Hertenstein  
(919)469-3299

Calls will be accepted only between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

In addition to limiting our numbers, Texasgulf will also require that everyone wear hard-hats in the mine (they will provide hard-hats if you don't have your own), and everyone will have to sign a waiver for accident liability.

## GIFTS TO THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

by Robert W. Purdy

Specimens donated to the Smithsonian Institution, a federal trust, are protected by federal law; they do not become the property of the Curators in charge, but rather, they become the property of the people of the United States. The Smithsonian Institution, therefore, is a federal trust owned by the people of the United States.

To establish the legal claims of the Smithsonian to the gifts it receives, collection personnel are required to document, inventory, and accession all gifts to the national collections. Since specimens that are accessioned cannot be easily disposed of (written permission from the Museum's Director is required), Smithsonian policy requires that we accept only those which are properly documented and which enhance the scientific value of the national collections.

We wish that we could catalogue every specimen as it comes into the collections; however, we do not have the personnel to do so; currently we can only catalogue those that are needed for immediate study or that are being placed in a collection (such as the fossil fish) that is undergoing a specimen by specimen inventory. These latter specimens are catalogued by inventory personnel not at the time they are received but as they fit into their inventory schedule. In time, however, most specimens are examined, measured, fondled, catalogued, and cited in a publication; often this happens many years after they are donated to the Smithsonian.

About exchanges, because of the uniqueness of each identifiable fossil vertebrate, we rarely exchange actual specimens, but when we do exchange them, only material that is more than adequately represented in the collections is exchanged for other material of equal scientific importance. This criterion of adequate representation in the collections severely limits what is available for exchange. The Smithsonian exchanges specimens only with other museums so that the continued preservation of the specimens and their collection data are assured.

If, therefore, you received a letter of acknowledgement from me with only an accession number, this does not mean your specimens will not be catalogued or studied, but it does mean that they are entrusted to the Smithsonian as the property of the people of the United States under the protection of federal law for generations to come.

The North Carolina Museum of Natural History is appealing to the State Legislature for a new museum building, for which anyone who has visited the museum will recognize the need.

To strongly emphasize your support, you may send a letter (sample below) to Senator Staton and to your own district legislator so they can inform their colleagues of the statewide support for the expansion of the facilities and services of the Museum of Natural History.

(Sample Letter)

The Honorable William W. Staton  
636 Palmer Drive  
Sanford, NC 27330

Dear Senator Staton:

I support the plans for building a new North Carolina State Museum of Natural History and for the growth of the museum's programs for the people of North Carolina.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Membership(s): Individual (new) \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
                                  Individual (renewal) 5.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
                                  Spouse 2.50 \_\_\_\_\_  
                                  Junior (under 18) 1.50 \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please! Memberships cannot be accepted at the site on the day of the trip.

Mail to: N. C. Fossil Club, P. O. Box 92, Cary, NC 27511.