

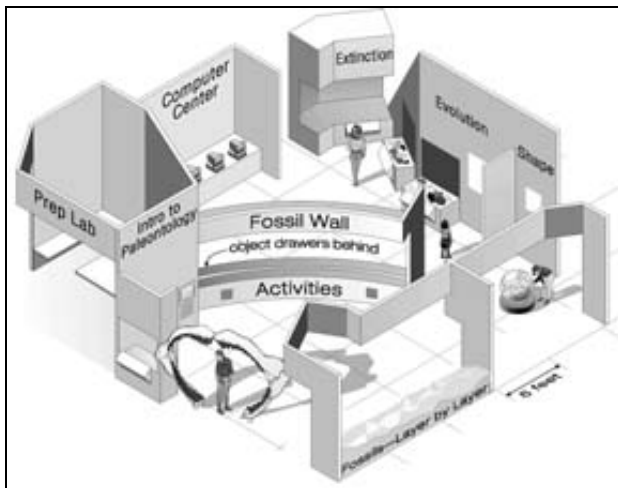
Florida Fossil horse Newsletter

Volume 7, Number 2, 2nd Half 1998

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News from Powell Hall



A Part of the New Fossil Hall: The Orientation Alcove, Pre-Lab, and Discovery Center

The new exhibits at Powell Hall are progressing well. The walls and infrastructure for the Fossil Hall are currently being designed and actual construction will begin next year. The Fossil Hall will be a 5,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art exhibit that teaches about general paleontology, gives the visitor an appreciation of museum fossil collections, allows a 50-million-year walk through ancient Florida, has a working prep-lab., and allows the visitor to experience more in-depth learning in a Fossil Discovery Center. We are pleased to announce that Dr. Gina Gould has been hired to direct the Fossil Hall project. Dr. Gould brings considerable exhibits experience from her work in the newly renovated paleontology exhibits at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

There are many exciting events and public

programs at Powell Hall this Fall that relate to Florida paleontology. In October we will open a travelling exhibit entitled "Elephants!" and along the same theme, receive our own Aucilla River mammoth skeleton to be installed in the Central Gallery. On the weekend of 20- 21st November we will host **Paleofest98**, a "Celebration of Florida Paleontology." In addition to field trips, workshops, and a benefit auction, a dinosaur lecture will be presented by world-renowned paleontologist Jack Horner.

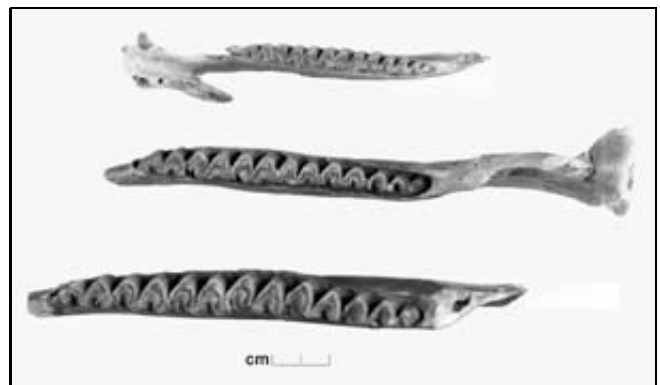
New Paleontological Research at the FLMNH: Florida *Anchitherium* and Nebraska Oligocene



Lower jaws showing side view of *Archaeohippus* (top), *Parahippus* (middle), and *Anchitherium* (bottom). Erika Simons photo.

In the more than a half-century of fossil collecting at Thomas Farm, only about 50 specimens total of *Anchitherium clarenci* have been recovered from this site (in contrast to the tens of thousands of the common *Parahippus leonensis* and thousands of the tiny horse *Archaeohippus*), including those collected during the *Pony Express* digs at Thomas Farm. *Anchitherium* is interesting because during the middle Miocene about 18 million years ago this horse dispersed from North America across the Bering Land Bridge during a time of lowered sea-level and then spread throughout the Old World. Interestingly, the Thomas Farm species *Anchitherium clarenci* from Florida is very similar to the Old World species. From the short-crowned teeth paleontologists infer

Over the past year Bruce J. MacFadden has been involved in a study of Florida *Anchitherium clarenci*, the very rare, donkey-sized horse from Thomas Farm. *Anchitherium* [*anchi*-, Greek, probably in reference to the 19th century notion that this was close to the modern horse; *-therium*, Greek, beast] originally was described in 1844 by the German paleontologist Von Meyer based on fossils from central Europe. This horse was then subsequently recognized from North American fossil deposits.



Lower jaws showing tooth wear surfaces of *Archaeohippus* (top), *Parahippus* (middle), and *Anchitherium* (bottom). Erika Simons photo.

that *Anchitherium* was a browser and fed upon leafy vegetation (in contrast to grazers that feed mostly on grass) and probably inhabited forested areas. Examination of the limb bones of *Anchitherium clarenci* indicate that this horse was fully tridactyl, i.e., with all three toes functioning in weight bearing and while walking or running. As grasslands spread



Metatarsal III (central toe bone) of Archaeohippus (top), Parahippus (middle), and Anchitherium (bottom). Erika Simons photo.

during the later Miocene while the forests declined, horses and other browsing mammals decreased in their diversity. *Anchitherium* and other browsing horses became extinct during the later Miocene.

In August Bruce MacFadden and Doug Jones (FLMNH Director) traveled to Nebraska where they collected Oligocene fossil mammals north of Crawford. They benefited from being in the field with Barbara and Reed Toomey and Steve and Suzan Hutchens. This rich fossil area of NW Nebraska has yielded many fossil mammals over the years and the collections that we are now making in this region will enhance and expand the research capabilities of the FLMNH vertebrate paleontology collection.

This is also the area in which the *Pony Express* Western Adventure field trip visited in June (see other story below).

Reflections on the 1st Annual Western Adventure

Our first ever Western Adventure trip to South Dakota and Nebraska went extremely well. After we arrived in Rapid City we all had time to unwind for a day. The only thing on the agenda for Sunday was a short visit to the Museum of Geology and the Journey Museum in Rapid City. The Museum of Geology, in its classic Victorian setup was packed with information and beautiful displays. The Journey is a new \$12,000,000 facility featuring a timeline from the earliest geological beginnings, prehistoric life, through Native American cultures to today. Both museums gave us a fine introduction for things to come. The rest of the day was spent unwinding or shopping downtown Rapid City.



Dr. Philip Bjork leads a tour through Badlands National Park and explains about regional geology. Erika H. Simons photo

On Monday, Dr. Philip Bjork, Director of the Museum of Geology, gave us an excellent guided tour through the Badlands of South Dakota, teaching us about the geology of the area. Seeing the Badlands interpreted in this way made us appreciate them as more than the fantastic scenery through which we drove. I could almost see the ancient landscape with strange fossil creatures roaming around.

On Tuesday morning we visited the Mammoth site in Hot Springs. Although the age of the site was different from the focus of this trip, Oligocene and Miocene fossil localities, it was nevertheless a worthwhile place to visit. The

sinkhole death trap site was discovered in 1974 and features both Columbian and woolly mammoths. The site has been enclosed in a building and is maintained as a very attractive interpretive museum. Museum employees and groups like Earth Watch still actively work the site.

After lunch we headed down to Nebraska and got settled at Ft. Robinson.

A little rain got in the way of our first day digging for fossils, as the mud made the dirt roads to the fossil sites impassable. We shifted our agenda and went to Agate Fossil Beds National Monument. Dr. Robert Hunt and preparator Ellen Stepleton of the University of Nebraska State Museum greeted us at the brand new visitor center. Bob was the scientific curator responsible for the wonderful content of the new exhibits. These kind people had taken a day out of their busy schedules to show us around. The tour began with a short informative video followed by an interpretation of the displays and finally a trip to the famous daemohelix (fossil beaver *Paleocastor* burrows) site. The displays in the visitor center were wonderfully arranged and focused, and self-explanatory. They gave the visitor a picture of what life was like here 19 million years ago.

One of Dr. Hunt's graduate students, Glen Hayes, joined us at the visitor center and together we went to one of his study sites to learn about collecting paleomagnetic samples. We returned to Fort Robinson to freshen up and were invited to a delicious lasagna dinner at the summer residence of Helen and Al Cozzini (otherwise from Temple Terrace).

When the rains continued the next day, some of us stayed at Ft. Robinson to read from the many books we had purchased thus far. Others split into two groups and one went on an interpretive road trip to learn more about the local geology and fossil localities. The other, Ann Bowen and Erika Simons went back for a second look at Agate Fossil Beds to walk up to the two famous hills named "Carnegie" and "University" where the beds were first discovered. "Walk up the hills in the rain?" you ask? No. Wouldn't you know the rains lifted and the afternoon was bright and very windy. We were aided by a strong wind helping us up the hills.

The same winds, which carried on all through the night, helped dry the muddy roads and the next morning we were off to Sand Creek Ranch for a scrumptious chuckwagon breakfast at Barbara and Reed Toomey's (from Sanibel Island) summer home and our first day of fossiling. The weather was perfect. This was a big change from the previous 2 days when it was raining most of the day. The Toomeys were most gracious hosts and brought out a delicious spread of lunch to the hungry diggers. In the evening we were treated to a fabulous dinner with Steve Hutchens (of Old Town) grilling the steaks. Aside from providing delicious nourishment, the Toomeys and the Hutchens also accompanied us on all our excursions to the local fossil deposits. We are most grateful to Barbara, Reed, Sue and Steve.

Hunting for fossils in Nebraska was a new experience for most of us and required that we develop an eye for the fossils in that area. The bones were almost the same color as the surrounding matrix and very well camouflaged. I was always amazed when a fossil was pointed out to me. My response was always the same... "I would have walked right past that". A protruding femur head or the joint of a jaw sometimes disclosed near complete skeletons that were lying just inches beneath our feet the proverbial "tip of the iceberg". Sue and Steve Hutchens, veteran fossil collectors, assisted graciously and patiently as we stumbled across something we might have passed up as some isolated fragments. With their help, our little group was able to make some significant contributions to the museum's new Nebraska collection. We finished



Father and son participants, Joe Brooks of Gainesville (left) and Charles Brooks of Iowa (right) excavate an oreodont skeleton. Erika H. Simons photo.

exposing a *Mesohippus* skeleton, an oreodont, and a small *Stylemys* turtle found by the Hutchens earlier this summer. One of our participants, Jonathan Bowen, found a second oreodont partial skeleton. Many partial jaws of the little deer *Leptomeryx*, and isolated turtle limbs, oreodont limbs, titanotheres' toes, horse jaws, and vertebrae were collected.



Participants Marcia Wright of Winter Park (left), and Jeante MacFadden of Gainesville (center) excavate a *Stylemys* turtle while Sue Hutchens of Old Town (top left) and Bruce MacFadden (right) look on. Erika H. Simons photo.

A basic tool for the western fossil collector is a bottle of Butvar, an Acetone soluble hardener/glue. Butvar is brushed on the bone as it gets exposed. The hardener penetrates the fossil and protects it. Once it is brought to a lab for preparation, the hardener can be dissolved and peeled off for better cleaning and preparation. When preparation is finished a final coat of hardener is applied. This wonderful technique cannot be applied to Florida fossils because the surrounding soil and fossils are always moist, which only causes the hardener to form a milky rubbery layer on the outside of the bone and does nothing to hold it together. Using Butvar allowed us to wrap a complete *Stylemys* turtle in aluminum foil (an unheard of practice in Florida) and transport it thusly to the

Hutchens place where it could be prepared. This first western trip was instrumental in teaching us the basics of fossil collecting in the dry lands of Nebraska. Next year we will spend more time in the field and make our western collection grow! This trip will also add important fossil specimens to our growing Oligocene collection at the FLMNH.

Our return trip to Rapid City through back-roads was quite an adventure. Although this scenic tour of South Dakota grasslands and ranches was beautiful, this "shortcut" took us an hour longer than taking the main roads. Erika H. Simons

Pitboss Reflections on the 1998 Thomas Farm Digs

We had another great spring season at Thomas Farm. This year we must have hit a collective jackpot of jaws. Not only did we find our usual complement of horse jaws (*Parahippus* and *Archaeohippus*), our collection was also enriched by "dog jaws" and "camel jaws", "slingshot beasts" and bear dogs. I wonder if it had anything to do with that voodoo doll that Bill Lee found in his square during Session I? Someone mischievously buried a small voodoo doll in Bill's square, as part of an inside joke. Bill, being a conscientious digger, in trying to bring his square down systematically, almost didn't find the doll. Dennis Ruez and I had to take drastic measures to get Bill to dig in the right place so he could discover his prize.

It comes as no surprise that our famous Jeff Yaun found 4 horse jaws (1 *Archaeohippus*, 3 *Parahippus*) all by himself in the infamous boulder bar. One of our



Participants Teri Lear of Kentucky (left) and Barry Albright of Gainesville (right) dig fossils at Thomas Farm. Erika H. Simons photo.

newcomers, Marge Fantozi, made graduate student Jay O'Sullivan very happy when she found a complete *Archaeohippus* jaw, complete with canines! She also found a *Parahippus* jaw. Brian Ahern, working next to Marge, found another *Parahippus* jaw and a "dog" jaw, possibly *Tomarctos canavus*. Working in the boulder bar, near Jeff Yaun was Jewel Pozefsky lamenting that she wasn't finding anything worthwhile. She found a beautiful *Tomarctos* jaw and 3 associated maxillary teeth of *Amphycion longiramus* (the bear dog)! Joel Carr

found a partial *Blastomeryx floridanus* jaw. Bill Lee found a complete *Prosynthetoceras texanus* jaw, right where he'd waved his voodoo doll and chanted incantations! That was only Session I! We had equal success in Session II! The Thomas Farm fossil site was dubbed Jaw City for the 1998 season. Sitting in the square Jeff Yaun had "blessed" the week before, Will Edmunds continued to make great finds. Will found 2 *Parahippus* jaws and Kristin, his wife, working in the adjacent square, found another *Parahippus* jaw! She is also the proud discoverer of a *Nothokemas floridanus* (camel) upper jaw with all its teeth! The infamous boulder bar yielded its treasures under a major paleontologist onslaught. Doris and Paul Hargrave both found jaws there. Doris's was a *Parahippus*. Paul's jaw is still sleeping in its jacket and has yet to be determined. Pam Sufi also found a complete jaw that is still sleeping. Other parts of the site were no less productive. Ken and Linda McGurn each found *Parahippus* jaws. Ken found an upper and Linda, a lower (not necessarily from the same individual.) Ken also found a partial *Alligator olseni* jaw. Sheila Brodbeck found an *Archaeohippus* jaw. Teri Lear and Brian Beatty worked on a conglomerate of bone that yielded a *Tomarctos* maxilla and an atlas of a very small Artiodactyl, probably one of the diminutive musk deer.

Barry Albright, a postdoctoral fellow, at the museum, joined us in Session II this year and greatly assisted us in field identifications and new excavation techniques. Barry completed his masters and Ph.D. record on western US early Miocene faunas and has worked in the hard matrices of western fossil deposits. His digging techniques were, therefore a bit more aggressive than what we were used to at Thomas Farm. He did find a lot of good fossils.

Aside from the jaws, there were many other equally important finds made by everyone. We've enriched our longbone collection to several species. Rhino teeth and toes, musk deer limb and foot bones, artiodactyl vertebrae, and several carnivore foot elements were collected. A single bird bone, the humerus (one of the major wing bones) of a hawk was found this year by Doris Hargrave. See the attached list, which due to space restrictions must only reflect the best finds. All I can say is "congratulations, to each digger and keep up the good work"! Erika H. Simons

Session I -- April 16-19:

| Person Name | Sci Name | Material |
|-------------|----------------------|----------|
| | cf. <i>Tomarctos</i> | |

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Ahern, Brian (Temple Terrace) | <i>canavus</i> | maxilla, mandible |
| | <i>Achaeohippus blackbergi</i> | mandible, teeth, tibia |
| Ahern, Tom (Temple Terrance) | <i>Parahippus leonensis</i> | femur, innominate, carpal |
| | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | teeth |
| | Canidae | radius |
| Carr, Catherine (Deland) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | teeth, humerus, radius, ulna, carpals |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | teeth, tibia, metapodials |
| Carr, Joel (Deland) | <i>Blastomeryx floridanus</i> | mandible w/teeth |
| | Carnivora | tooth, phalanx |
| | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | vertebra, carpals |
| Cole, Melissa (Alt.Sprgs.) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | vertebra, carpals, tarsals |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | teeth, tibia |
| | <i>Alligator olseni</i> | teeth, osteoderms |
| Dykes Jr., Wiley (Orlando) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | tooth, vertebra, metapodials |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | teeth, atlas |
| | Artiodactyla | tarsal, tibia |
| Fantozzi, Marge (Orlando) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | mandibles, radius |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | tibia |
| | <i>Machaeromeryx gilchristensis</i> | humerus |
| First, Valerie (Casselberry) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | teeth, tarsal, metapodials |
| | <i>Amphicyon longiramus</i> | tooth |
| | Artiodactyla | ulna |
| Hardin, Beth (Tallahassee) | <i>A. longiramus</i> | tibia, vertebra, carpals, metapodials, phalanx |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | teeth, tarsal, phalanx |
| Karlen, David (Brandon) | <i>P. leonensis</i> | teeth, ulna, carpals tarsals, metapodials |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | humerus, tarsal |
| Lear, Teri (Lexington, KY) & Brian Beatty (Gainesville) | <i>T. canavus</i> | maxilla |
| | Ardiodactyla | atlas |
| | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | teeth, ulna |
| Lee, Bill (Baton Rouge, LA) | Carnivore | tarsal |
| | <i>Prosynthetoceras texanus</i> | dentary w/teeth |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | tibia, humerus |
| Lenard, Nicole (San Antonio, TX) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | tarsals, vertebrae |
| | Artiodactyla | radius |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| | Carnivora | tarsal |
| O'Connor, Wanda (Alt. Sprgs.) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | teeth, tarsals, ulna |
| | Artiodactyla | carpal |
| | Carnivora | teeth, vertebra |
| Pozefsky, Jewel (Orlando) | <i>T. canavus</i> | mandible w/teeth |
| | <i>A. longiramus</i> | assoc. maxillary teeth |
| Ward, Larry (Orlando) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | teeth, metapodials, carpals |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | phalanx |
| | Carnivora | metapodial |
| Williams, Duane (Maitland) | <i>P. leonensis</i> | patella, femur, metapodials, carpals, tarsals |
| | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | teeth |
| Wright, Marcia (Winter Park) | Camelidae | tooth, carpal, tarsal |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | tarsal |
| | <i>A. olseni</i> | vertebra, humerus |
| Yaun, Jeff (Mayport) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | mandible, etc. |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | mandibles, etc |
| | <i>Anchitherium clarencei</i> | phalanx |

Session 2 - April 23-26

| Person Name | Sci Name | Material |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Brodbeck, Sheila (Wellington) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | mandible, metapodial |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | carpals, tarsals |
| | <i>M. gilchristensis</i> | phalanx |
| Burton, Janet (Havana) | <i>B. floridanus</i> | tooth |
| | <i>M. gilchristensis</i> | tarsal |
| | Camelidae | tooth |
| | Carnivora | metapodial |
| Carter, Audrey (Winter Garden) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | metapodial |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | humerus, femur, tarsal, phalanx, mandibular condyle |
| Edmunds, Will (Berlin, MD) | <i>P. leonensis</i> | tibia, ulna, calcaneum, metatarsal |
| | Artiodactyla | astragalus |
| | <i>A. longiramus</i> | ulna |
| Edmunds, Kristin (Berlin, MD) | <i>Nothokemas floridanus</i> | maxilla w/teeth |
| | Artiodactyla | humerus, tarsal |
| | Carnivora | vertebra |

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Hargrave, Doris (Gainesville) | <i>A. longiramus</i> | tooth |
| | Canidae | vertebra, radius |
| | Accipitridae | humerus |
| | <i>Pseudemys</i> sp. | neural |
| Hargrave, Paul (Gainesville) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | carpal |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | teeth, carpal, phalanges |
| | Carnivora | tarsal |
| Hudson, Glyniss (Alt. Sprgs.) | <i>A. longiramus</i> | vertebra |
| | <i>Floridatragulus dolichanthereus</i> | tooth |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | tibia, phalanx |
| Killingsworth, Bill (Birmingham, AL) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | mandible, tooth, etc. |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | mandible, radius, vertebra, tarsals |
| McGurn, Linda (Gainesville) | <i>P. leonensis</i> | mandible, humerus, tibia |
| | Carnivore | mandible, tooth |
| | <i>M. gilchristensis</i> | tarsal |
| McGurn, Ken (Gainesville) | <i>P. leonensis</i> | maxilla, radius, tooth |
| | Serpentes | vertebra |
| | <i>A. olseni</i> | dentary, osteoderms |
| Rawlings, Beverly (Apopka) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | vertebra, metapodial |
| | Artiodactyla | tarsal |
| | Chiroptera | radius |
| Rawlings, Jim (Apopka) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | tooth, phalanx |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | petrosal, metapodial |
| | Camelidae | tooth |
| Stauffer, Jeff (Fayetteville, NC) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | tooth, vertebra |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | tarsal |
| | Carnivora | metatarsal |
| Stone, Paulette (Clermont) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | teeth, carpal, tarsals |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | teeth, radius |
| | <i>B. floridanus</i> | teeth, phalanx |
| Stuart, Scott (Orlando) | <i>A. olseni</i> | vertebra |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | tibia |
| | Carnivora | phalanges |
| | Ardiodactyla | phalanges |
| | | |

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Sufi, Pamela (Oakland, CA) | <i>A. blackbergi</i> | tarsal, sesamoid |
| | <i>P. leonensis</i> | mandible, teeth, vertebrae |
| | Camelidae | radius, carpal |

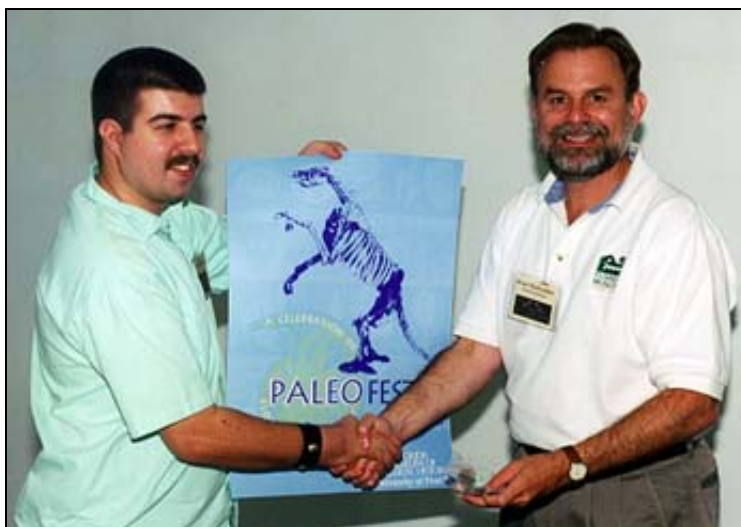
New FHC Winners!

Congratulations to our three new winners! On June 1 1998, three names were randomly selected from those who filled out the Gallop Poll, our feedback survey for the FHC site. First prize, a fossil horse jaw replica valued at \$200, went to a contestant from Connecticut. Second prize, a *Pony Express* T-shirt, went to Lucky of Florida. third prize, a **Paleofest96** poster, was awarded to Nathan of Florida. Fossil Horses in Cyberspace can be accessed at: <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/fhc/>



8 Year old Lucky with FHC's Dr. Bruce MacFadden. Stan Blomely photo.

Three Events are Better Than One



We are very pleased to announce three exciting *Pony Express* events for 1999. These events are very popular and spaces are likely to fill fast. to save your space in any of these events please fill out the form in another section of the Pony Express web page, and return to the listed address. Don't wait! Some sessions are already filled.

8 Annual Thomas Farm Dig.

Session 1 April 15-18 1999 **FILLED!**

Session 2 April 22-25 1999 **FILLED!**

2nd Annual Western Fossil Adventure in Nebraska

June 19-26 1999 (HURRY!)

Nathan shakes hands with Dr. Bruce Macfadden. Stan Blomely photo.

Come hunt Oligocene fossils with us in Nebraska. Tour the Museum of Geology in Rapid City. Stay at Ft. Robinson, NE and from there visit Toadstool State Park, the Hudson-Meng (bison kill site), and collect Oligocene fossils at a nearby ranch.

2nd Annual Summer Lab Session
August 12-14 1999 (HURRY!)

Learn from professionals how to prepare and identify fossils from Thomas Farm.

New for 1999! Family Day at Thomas Farm
May 1 1999 (HURRY!)

Meet at Powell Hall for a tour of exhibits and behind the scenes, then drive out to Thomas Farm and go fossil hunting. Sort through screen-washed dirt for tiny fossils. bring your lunch, we'll have a picnic.

Pony Express

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Editorial Staff:

- Bruce J. MacFadden Program Director
- Erika H. Simons, Editor and Program Coordinator

Direct all Correspondence to:

Pony Express
Exhibits & Public Programs
Florida Museum of Natural History
Powell Hall -- P.O. Box 112710
Gainesville, FL 32611-2710
Phone: (352) 846-2000 extention 255

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Editor's email address: esimons@flmnh.ufl.edu

Pony Express--Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of this newsletter is to communicate news and information and disseminate knowledge about fossil horses, particularly in Florida, and to develop a state-wide constituency that will support and enhance the research, exhibition, and educational programs offered at the FLMNH that pertain to fossil horses. Contributions to the Fossil Horse Fund are deposited into an account at the University of Florida Foundation, Inc., a tax-exempt entity, and will be used for the purposes stated here.

Do you travel along the information superhighway?
 The *Pony Express* is now on the World Wide Web via the
 Internet URL location:
<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/vertpaleo/ponyexpr.htm>

Donations to the Fossil Horse Fund -- 1998

All contributions received between April 16 1998 and September 21 1998

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- The Zinns (Alachua)

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