

THE PTERANODON

DECEMBER 2023

LATEST NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS



FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY'S
STERNBERG MUSEUM
OF NATURAL HISTORY



Chief curator Dr. Laura Wilson welcomes Kansas Museum Association members to Sternberg Museum on Nov. 6. Approximately 90 people attended the informal dinner and tour as part of their annual conference held at the Hilton Garden Inn.

WELCOME KMA: Sternberg hosts dinner event for museum professionals

The Kansas Museum Association conducted its 2023 conference in Hays on Nov. 6-8, and Sternberg Museum played host to one of the evening events.

Approximately 130 museum professionals from throughout the state attended the conference, which was comprised of a series of workshops, area tours and a variety of speakers covering numerous topics.

The event kicked-off on Monday, Nov. 6, with workshops throughout the day as well as a morning tour of three historic

Volga German Ellis County churches in Catherine, Pfeifer and Victoria and an afternoon tour of old Fort Hays. Overall, 48 people went on the tours, although not all went on both excursions.

That evening, approximately 90 people boarded buses for a traveling reception that included the Moss Thorns Gallery at Fort Hays State University, Sternberg Museum, and Ellis County Historical Society. Participants ate traditional German





fare in their stop at the Sternberg at around 6 p.m. that night. In addition to bierocks and green bean dumpling soup, attendees got the opportunity to tour the museum.

Over the next two days, conference-goers primarily spent their time at the Hilton Garden Inn listening to numerous presentations on the issues currently facing museums.

The keynote speech on Tuesday morning was given by Angela Bates, organizer and founder of the Nicodemus Historical Society. In her presentation, "The Road To Nicodemus," Bates discussed formerly enslaved pioneer settlers from Kentucky who made their new home in northwest Kansas in 1877. T

The presentation included information about how the town was established, promoted, settlers solicited, and how they made the trek by train, and then by foot for the last 35 miles. Bates also discussed how Nicodemus became a National Historic Site.

Other workshop discussions during the day focused on museum closures, fundraising, communication and technology techniques, artifact exhibits, succession planning, cooperation between institutions, critical issues in museums.

On the next day, speakers addressed costume management, planning, developing traveling exhibits for small museums, multimedia, broadband, and interactive exhibits.

The conference closed with a presentation from the Kansas Creative Arts and Industries Commission about KCIAC happenings and grant opportunities.



TOP: Kansas Museum Association conference participants enjoyed an informal meal of bierocks and green bean dumpling soup.

MIDDLE: The exhibits in the front lobby caught the attention of KMA members.

ABOVE: Visitors stop to view the iconic fish-within-a fish.

GLOBAL PRESENCE

Virtual meeting enables FHSU, Sternberg Museum to enhance their...

Fort Hays State University and Sternberg Museum went global in late October thanks to the efforts of David Levering, Sternberg camp director.

Levering organized and delivered the 2023 Society of Vertebrate Paleontology's (SVP) Virtual Meeting on Oct. 26-29. The virtual meeting was conducted in addition to the in-person meeting in mid-October in Cincinnati.

According to Dr. Kenshu Shimada, former FHSU student, professional vertebrate paleontologist at DePaul University in Chicago, and SVP government affairs committee chair, SVP is a non-profit international scientific organization consisting of researchers, educators, students and enthusiasts to advance the science of vertebrate paleontology. It is the largest paleontological professional society in the world with nearly 2,000 members.

Shimada said SVP typically organizes annual meetings in person, primarily in North America, but occasionally on different continents. When the COVID pandemic hit in early 2020, the SVP pivoted and hosted the 2020 and 2021 annual meetings remotely. In conjunction with the 2021 remote meeting, Levering developed a "Virtual Sternberg Museum" and hosted an SVP-approved social event at the conclusion of the formal SVP meeting.

Levering took the "Virtual Sternberg Museum" one step further and hosted the 2023 SVP Virtual Meeting.

The meeting was packed with well over 100 poster presentations from around the globe as well as a series of talks, discussions and networking events.

The virtual meeting was deemed a success as there were more than 1,100 eligible participants, including more than 100 people who only signed up for the Virtual SVP.

"I cannot stress enough how impactful the meeting was to the field of vertebrate paleontology as well as to FHSU

and Sternberg Museum," said Dr. Kenshu Shimada, former FHSU student and professional vertebrate paleontologist at DePaul University in Chicago. "Besides offering a venue to SVP members who could not attend the in-person meeting, it was exceptionally beneficial even to those who attended the in-person meeting."

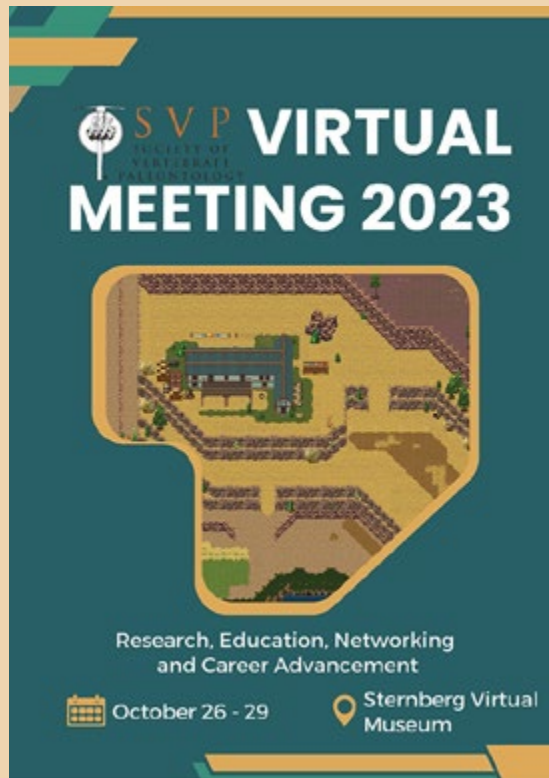
Shimada added that while the virtual poster session delivered cutting-edge, academic research, Levering put together many engaging talks and discussions that were not necessarily academically oriented.

These included SVP members' behind the scenes experience working with the production of high profile movies such as Jurassic World Dominion, academic journeys, tips on how to look and apply for research funding, graduate schools, internships, and advice on how to deliver effective science teaching and outreach programs.

"These topics are too rarely featured during in-person meetings even though they are vital for the SVP community," Shimada said. "They were particularly helpful in guiding student attendees on how to navigate and develop their careers in paleontology in both academic and non-academic sectors."

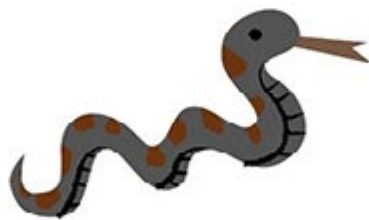
In addition to Levering, Shimada acknowledged the work of Dr. Laura Wilson, who delivered a seminar on how FHSU and Sternberg conduct research and student engagement. She also moderated a discussion session on the future of vertebrate paleontology.

"FHSU and Sternberg have a global presence in the field of vertebrate paleontology, and it was further promoted thanks to Mr. Levering and small group of Fort Hays paleontology team members," said Shimada, who earned his BS and MS in geology from FHSU in 1993 and 1994, respectively. "Sternberg is very fortunate to have such a talented educator, communicator and organizer."



Photos with
Santa
&
the Grinch!

THE ELVES WILL BE THERE TO HELP!



23 DECEMBER, 2023
10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

- This event is included with regular admissions
- Must provide your own camera
- Please consider donating for animal enrichment



Holiday Cookie Decorating

COME FILL UP YOUR COOKIE JAR!

December 26th, 11am - 12pm

\$4 for members - \$5 for general public





HOLIDAY

Bird feeders

JOIN US TO MAKE
SOME BIRD FEEDERS!

DECEMBER 27TH, 11AM - 12PM

\$4 FOR MEMBERS - \$5 FOR GENERAL PUBLIC





Holiday Slime

JOIN US TO MAKE SOME
HOLIDAY SLIME!

DECEMBER 28TH 11AM -12PM

\$4 FOR MEMBERS - \$5 FOR GENERAL PUBLIC



HOLIDAY ANIMAL ENRICHMENT

JOIN US TO MAKE PRESENTS
FOR OUR ANIMALS!

*SNAKES, RATS, AND LIZARDS
WILL BE WATCHING YOU!*

DECEMBER 29TH, 11AM - 12PM

\$4 FOR MEMBERS - \$5 FOR GENERAL PUBLIC





Snowflake Art

**JOIN US TO LEARN ABOUT
SNOWFLAKES**

JANUARY 2ND, 11AM - 12PM

\$4 FOR MEMBERS - \$5 FOR GENERAL PUBLIC



HOLIDAY GAMES

**JOIN US TO PLAY SOME
HOLIDAY THEMED GAMES!**



JANUARY 3RD, 11AM - 12PM

\$4 FOR MEMBERS - \$5 FOR GENERAL PUBLIC



TOP: William Brantley compares his wingspan to that of the Pteranodon on display.

BELOW: Visitors check out a few of the displays that are part of the "Expedition Dinosaur: Rise of the Mammals" exhibit current at the museum.

AT THE MUSEUM



ABOVE: Joe Thomason, former curator of the herbarium, shows fossil plant seeds to Fort Hays State University students during a visit to the museum.



LEFT: During free day at the museum, visitors view the gila monster located on the top floor of the museum.



DEPARTMENT UPDATE

EDUCATION

by Ian Trevethan
Education & Outreach Director

The Sternberg Museum Education Department has been busy this fall with outreach and in-house programming. Outreach programs were presented at Southeast of Saline School in Gypsum, Minneola Grade School in Minneola, and two programs at Lincoln Elementary in Hays.

Several public schools visited the museum for guided tours, along with the Ellis County Home School Association and three FHSU classes and labs.

In early October, Education Director, Ian Trevethan, attended the Association of Science and Technology Centers annual conference in Charlotte, NC as part of the ASTC New Leaders Fellowship. The fellowship is a nine-month program that focuses on museum leadership in today's ever-changing museum landscape. During the five-day conference, Ian attended several leadership workshops and learned from today's top museum directors and CEOs from around the nation.

The museum education department was well represented at the Kansas Museum Association annual meeting which was hosted in Hays this year from November 6-8th. Ian collaborated with the staff at Fort Hays State Historical Site to present two programs about the early naturalists of the great plains. Additionally, Ian gave a talk at the meeting, Along with Adam Conkey of the Kansas State Historical Society titled "Performative Interpretation and Collaboration Between Institutions."



FHSU sophomore Brett Isaac Fox works on species identification and storage optimization of the museum's butterfly collection.

ZOOLOGY

by Jackson Roberts
Zoology Collections Manager

The Zoology Collections have been making steady progress under new management due to the fantastic team of curatorial assistants and our new volunteer. Brett Isaac Fox (Sophomore, FHSU) has been working through the Coleoptera (beetles) of the Entomology Collection.

To give his eyes a break, he will be moving next to the Lepidoptera (butterflies) to continue species identifications and storage optimization.

Brett Koehn (Graduate Student, FHSU) has continued to reorganize the Sternberg's mussel collection to ensure the safety of the biggest freshwater mussel collection in the Great Plains. Lastly, our team has grown!

We recently welcomed Gavin Wasinger (Sophomore, FHSU) as a volunteer to help with curation of mammal skins and osteological specimens.



Reorganizing Sternberg's mussel collection to ensure the safety of the biggest freshwater mussel collection in the Great Plains is graduate student Brett Koehn.