

THE EXHIBIT

The Newsletter of UL Lafayette Science Museum



Letter from the Director

DR. JENNIFER E. HARGRAVE, UL LAFAYETTE SCHOOL OF GEOSCIENCES



Greetings and Happy New Year from UL Lafayette Science Museum. What a fantastic year 2023 was for our museum! I am so grateful to see the support that our community and beyond showed us this year. We welcomed more than 20,000 museum visitors in 2023, and 122 school field trips that brought in 4,902 students! Part of the museum's mission is to provide informative and interactive experiences in STEM fields to the community and our K-12 and University students. Thank you so much for supporting our efforts.

As we reflect on our successes of 2023, I am eager to move forward into 2024 with even more to offer our community. We have several new exhibits in the works for the spring and we are already planning for a STEM-filled summer. We hope that you continue to support our efforts by participating. Be sure to get your membership (or renew your last one!) so you don't miss any of the excitement.

I agree with Marie Curie when she said: "I am among those who think that science has great beauty". My hopes for the new year are that you continue to feed your curiosity by visiting us at UL Lafayette Science Museum. Together, we can add the beauty of science to our community, state, and beyond.

Best wishes,

Dr. Jennifer Hargrave, Museum Director



Documentary Date Night

SCIENCE FILMS IN THE MUSEUM GALLERY

Through a generous sponsorship by Aqueos, we have revived Documentary Date Night! At this fun event, we'll show a documentary film in the museum gallery. Bring a date, bring a friend or just yourself for an evening at the museum. Attendance for the educational film screening is free and will be followed by a discussion led by UL faculty.

On Thursday, Jan. 25, at 7pm, we will screen the documentary “The Space Race,” the untold story of the first black astronauts. The film weaves together the stories of Black astronauts seeking to break the bonds of social injustice to reach for the stars, including Guion Bluford, Ed Dwight and Charles Bolden, among many others. By weaving together archival footage of U.S. space expeditions and stories told by Black astronauts, the filmmakers open an enlightening dialogue about the expectations placed on trailblazers. It’s a profile of the pioneering Black pilots, scientists and engineers who joined NASA to serve their country in space set against a backdrop of defining moments in American history.

The film screening is free, donations are accepted and concessions and museum memberships will be for sale at the event. Doors open at 6:30pm and the film starts at 7pm.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**STEM SATURDAY:
GEOLOGY ROCKS - JAN
20**

**DOCUMENTARY DATE
NIGHT - JAN 25**

**EARLY CLOSURE AT 4PM
FOR MARDI GRAS
PARADES - FEB 3, 9, 10 &
11**

**STEM SATURDAY:
PHENOMENAL PHYSICS -
FEB 17**

STEM SATURDAY - MAR 9

A white calendar icon with a grid of dates, set against a blue circular background with a drop shadow.

Museum Spotlight: More than Exhibits

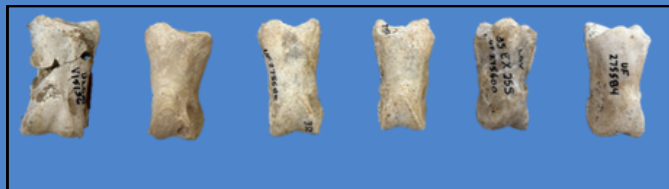
RESEARCH COLLECTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL SCIENTIST AND STUDENTS

Last month, our own Dr. Jennifer Hargrave and Dr. James E. Martin took a research trip to the collections at the Vertebrate Paleontology collections at the University of Florida (UF). They brought several fossils with them to compare with those at the UF museum for identification. This helps to decipher which fossil animals we have in our LSM collections, and provides valuable insights into the evolution and geographic range of our fossils. The researchers primarily focused on the newly discovered fossils from Acadia and Iberia parishes for use in an upcoming fossil exhibit, as well as scientific papers. They also brought some geologically older fossils from Oregon and Washington that are part of other ongoing research.

The vertebrate paleontology collection housed within LSM has nearly 200,000 fossil specimens, many of which have never been on display. Instead, they are used for research for professional scientists and students. The Lafayette Science Museum will be sure to let you know when our research papers come out. You will also see some of these amazing finds in the display opening in late spring.



Dr. James Martin measuring teeth from the lower jaw of a tapir from Iberia Parish. Today, tapirs are only found in Central and South America, as well as Southeast Asia. However, they were quite common in the Gulf Coast during the Pleistocene.



Fossil toes from an extinct group of deer-like creatures. Our specimen is on the left. You can see similarities to the ones from the UF collection. Paleontologists use similarities and differences when identifying fossils.



This is a comparison of a carnassial, or the slicing tooth of carnivores, of a new discovery from Acadia Parish. Ours is on the left, as compared to the UF specimen on the right. Can you see the similarities?



New Museum Membership Levels

MORE BENEFITS & WAYS TO SUPPORT SCIENCE IN LAFAYETTE

With new membership options at general and premium levels, you can support our educational mission, outreach efforts and the creation of new exhibits. Visit anytime with your membership and never miss an exhibit, planetarium show or event. Memberships are valid for 12 months from the purchase date and count as charitable gifts for tax purposes.

CORE BENEFITS FOR ALL GENERAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Unlimited free visits to museum & planetarium;
- Receive our e-newsletter *The Exhibit*;
- Invitations to member-only previews & events;
- Free admission to over 360 museums and science centers worldwide through the ASTC Travel Passport Program
- Museum Store Discount (varies by level); &
- Discounts on camps, classes, & some events.

INDIVIDUAL \$65 - 1 adult, core benefits + 10% store discount.

DUAL \$100 - 2 adults, core benefits + 10% store discount.

FAMILY \$125 - 2 named adults + your children or grandchildren (age 17 & younger), core benefits + 10% store discount.

SUPPORTING \$275 - Family benefits + a VIP Gallery Tour of special exhibitions upon request.

*Additional Adult \$45 - Add to any membership level.

*Current UL Student, Faculty, Staff - 10% off any level.

PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

These membership levels provide crucial support for all Museum activities. Members in this distinguished group enjoy exclusive privileges and opportunities in addition to the Core Member Benefits.

CURIOSITY LEVEL \$500

Family Membership with Core Benefits plus:

- Four one-day passes to share;
- 15% Museum Store discount;
- Sponsors membership for one local family.

INQUIRY LEVEL \$1,000

Family Membership with Core Benefits plus:

- Six one-day passes to share;
- 15% Museum Store discount;
- Invitations for a behind-the-scenes experience;
- Sponsors membership for 3 local families.

EXPLORATORY LEVEL \$2,500

Family Membership with Core Benefits plus:

- 10 one-day passes to share;
- 20% Museum Store discount;
- Invitations for a behind-the-scenes experience;
- Sponsors membership for 5 local families.

DISCOVERY LEVEL \$5,000

Family Membership with Core Benefits plus:

- 12 one-day passes to share;
- 20% Museum Store discount;
- Invitations for a behind-the-scenes experience;
- Sponsors membership for 7 local families.



A Very Merry Museum Holiday Event

HOLIDAY STEM ACTIVITIES AND A VISIT FROM MRS. CLAUS!

We decked the halls for a Very Merry Museum Holiday Event on Saturday, December 9. In conjunction with STEM Saturday: Puzzled presented by UL Lafayette's Department of Mathematics, we had holiday STEM activities and a visit from Mrs. Claus.

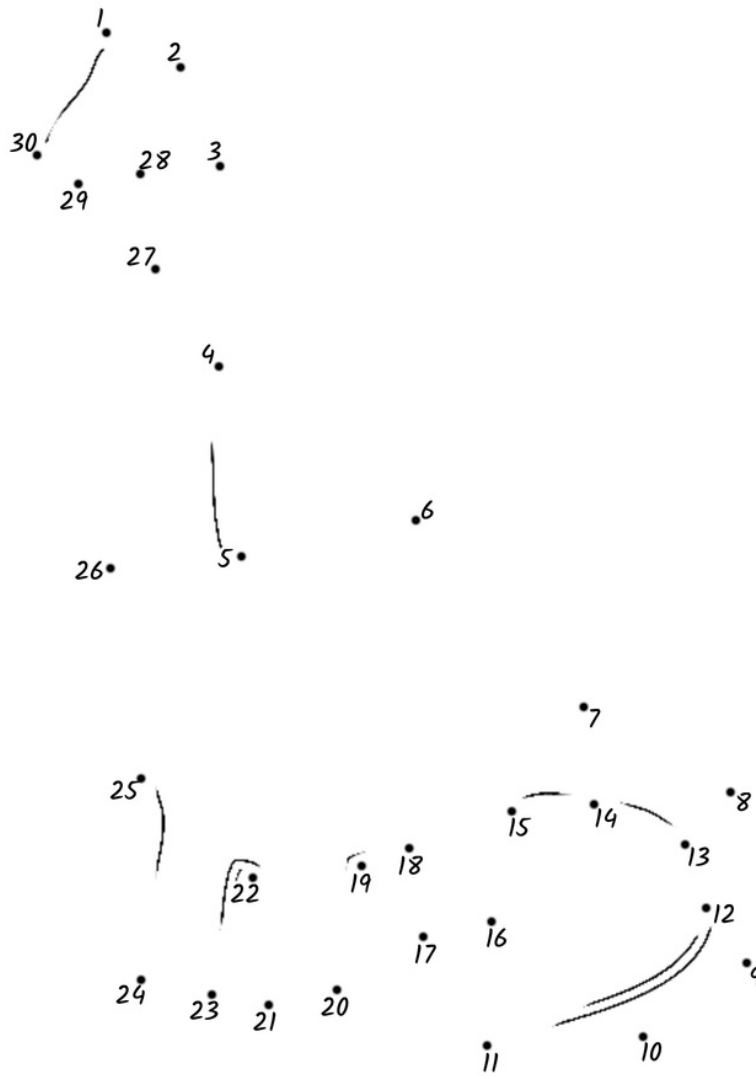
Museum visitors were welcomed to festive holiday decor. STEM activities included mathematics puzzles and brainteasers including Euler and Pythagorean puzzles, creating 3D folded gingerbread houses, and an engineering challenge using holiday themed materials like tinsel, tissue and ribbons to quiet a jingle bell.

In addition to photos and story time, Mrs. Claus also lead visitors in singing holiday songs and carols. A very merry time was had by all!



Curiosity Corner

Dinosaur Dot-to-Dot



What do you call a group of singing dinosaurs?

A tyranno-chorus!

