

# SMP NEWSLETTER

Volume 10, #1

January 30, 2007

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## Board of Directors

### President

Virgil W. Lueth ('09)  
New Mexico Bureau of Mines  
801 Leroy Place  
Socorro, NM 87801, USA

### Past Pres. & Newsletter Ed.

Anthony R. Kampf ('07)  
Nat. Hist. Mus. of Los Angeles Co.  
900 Exposition Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90007, USA

### Vice President

Terry Huizing ('08)  
Cincinnati Museum Center  
1301 Western Avenue  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45203, USA

### Secretary

Jean F. DeMouthe ('07)  
California Academy of Science  
Golden Gate Park  
San Francisco, CA 94118, USA

### Treasurer

Anna M. Domitrovic ('09)

## TUCSON MEETINGS

**Date:** Thursday, Feb. 8, 2007

**Place:** Tucson Convention Center  
Crystal Ballroom

**Board Meeting:** 2:00 - 3:00 PM

**Membership Meeting:** 3:00 - 4:00 PM

**Program:** 4:00 - 5:00 PM

**"The Digital Specimen: Sample Curation in the 21st Century"**

(See description below)

**Tucson Exhibit: "Odd and Interesting Opals"**

Please notify [Jean DeMouthe](#) if you have specimens for our exhibit.

## TENTATIVE TUCSON AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. Approval of the Denver Meeting Minutes
4. Treasurers Report
5. Membership Report
6. Collections/Curators Committee Report
7. Education Comm. - Tucson '07 and Denver '07 Exhibits
8. "Best Practices" Project
9. SMMP Europe Report
10. New Business
11. Board Nominations and Elections
12. Board Meeting to Elect Officers
13. Program

## TUCSON PROGRAM

6118 W. Lazy Heart Street  
Tucson, AZ 85713, USA

Paul Bartos ('07)  
Colorado School of Mines  
1310 Maple St.  
Golden, CO 80401, USA

Penny Williamson ('08)  
School of Geosciences  
University of Wollongong  
NSW 2522 Australia

Jamie Newman ('09)  
Dept. of Earth &  
Planetary Sciences  
American Museum of  
Natural History  
Central Park West @ 79th St.  
New York, NY 10024

## **The Digital Specimen Sample Curation in the 21st Century Ms. Kerstin Lehnert**

Kerstin Lehnert is the lead principal investigator of the NSF-funded SESAR project (System for Earth Sample Registration, [www.geosamples.org](http://www.geosamples.org)). SESAR is part of the 'Geoinformatics for Geochemistry' Program at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University, of which she is the Director.

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### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Last year started with continued rumblings from the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences; like harmonic tremors prior to a volcanic eruption. Unfortunately (or fortunately –depending on your perspective) the eruption happened and a historic institution abdicated a part of its history. Some natural history museums around the country seem bent on competing with amusement parks for the public's entertainment dollar. Collections first acquired hundreds of years ago and built over long periods of time have become disposable. Such myopic views are alarming and do not serve the public or the institution's long-term viability. Liquidating museum assets to save other programs is a certain sign of institutional starvation or self-mutilation. Who is to say what will be popular or important in the future?

But it is not just the large museums that are struggling with viability. Museums housed in universities are constantly fighting to maintain space and funding. University administrations have successfully pitted museum against researcher such that campus faculty look to museum space for offices and labs. Unfortunately, a few million dollars of research grant over 2 to 4 years seems to take precedence over a collection built over a hundred years with a similar value. I guess what you have is taken for granted and what is coming is grandiose (I think overhead money has something to do with it too).

How do we get "decision-makers" to appreciate and protect museum collections? The first step is to dispel the myth that collections are static and boring. Whenever possible, establish communication with both the administration and public on new museum exhibits, programs, or museum sponsored/assisted research. Develop and nurture a constituency outside of the museum via programs or symposia. Getting the collections noticed and remembered by "decision-makers" is half the battle. Need some ideas on how do you do these things? Use the collective knowledge and experience of SMMP by contacting the membership. Where else can you get access to such experience and knowledge for only \$10 a year?

For those of you making the trip, I look forward to seeing you in Tucson. If you will not be there this year, email me prior to Feb. 8 if there is something you would like us to consider at the meeting.

*Virgil Lueth, President*

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## **2007 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION**

Three board member terms will be expiring this year. Please be prepared to nominate candidates and vote. Board members whose terms expire this year are:

Anthony Kampf    Jean DeMouthe    Paul Bartos    Peggy Ronning\*

\*Peggy Ronning has resigned upon moving to a new position; completion of her term would be for 1 year. Term expiration dates of the other board members are provided in parentheses in the sidebar.

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## **BEST PRACTICES PROJECT**

At the 2006 Denver SMMP meeting, there was a proposal to post one page information pages on our website summarizing our Society's recommendation for a "best practice." Virgil Lueth and Jean DeMouthe will present a draft best practice for research sampling of collections. Suggestions will be solicited for modifying the draft document.

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## **[MINUTES OF THE DENVER MEETING](#)** **[September 2006](#)**

**Click on the link above to view the minutes.**

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## **SMMP AFFILIATIONS**

## [American Geological Institute \(AGI\)](#)

Committee openings:

Government Affairs Program

International Geoscience Advisory Committee

## [Natural Science Collections Alliance NSCA\)](#)

Although the Society of Mineral Museum Professionals maintains no official ties with the [Commission on Museums \(CM\)](#) of the [International Mineralogical Association \(IMA\)](#), the Commission resolved at its December, 2000, meeting in Melbourne, Australia, to support SMMP's efforts in uniting mineral museum professionals worldwide.

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## **RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **Dorothy Ettensohn**

**Collections Manager, Mineral Sciences**

**Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County**

After more than 26 years in museum mineral collection management, Dorothy has announced her retirement from the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, effective January 31, 2007. During her 17+ year tenure at the museum, Dorothy has very ably managed a very active and rapidly growing collection and has been at the forefront of mineral conservation. She has also been an active member of SMMP. Before coming to the museum in 1989, Dorothy served as collections manager for 9 years in the Mineralogy/Petrology Department at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago.

**The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is currently accepting applications to fill the position of [Collections Manager, Mineral Sciences](#).**

**Click on the link above to view the job announcement.**

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## **OTHER MEETINGS OF INTEREST**

### **M&M6**

**6th International Conference on Mineralogy and Museums**

Denver, Colorado - September 7 to 9, 2008  
(For information contact [Paul Bartos](#))

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## SMMP LIST SERVER

You are encouraged to interact with your fellow SMMP members via our list server:

[smmp@listserv.nhm.org](mailto:smmp@listserv.nhm.org)

Please remember that when you reply to an email sent via our list server, you will be replying to the sender, although you have the option of copying the membership.

Tony Kampf processes additions to and deletions from the list server. That way we limit the list to our membership and if a member decides that they want to be dropped from the list, Tony will know whether to send them the SMMP Newsletter by snail mail. Note that you are only able to send via the list server from your email address that is on the list server. This should be the same one that is used in our on-line roster.

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## TRACKING DUES

SMMP dues are \$10.00 U.S., payable to Anna Domitrovic, treasurer, 6118 W. Lazy Heart Street, Tucson, AZ 85713. Any directory changes or additions should be sent to Tony Kampf. In Europe, dues can be remitted to [Peter Davidson](#), National Museums of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF, SCOTLAND.

Note that you can check your dues payment status on the [SMMP on-line roster](#). The year shown in the last column indicates the last year for which you have paid. If you are delinquent, please remit your dues payment as soon as possible.

**Remember to renew your membership. If you are planning to pay dues at the Tucson meeting, help Anna by filling out a membership application with your dues payment. Do it beforehand and save time at the meeting!**