



Spring 2020

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From the President

Greetings!

Hillary Goodner, PAC NW Section President, Yakima Valley College

This spring term probably does not resemble much normalcy to any of us due to the coronavirus pandemic. We likely find ourselves in very different, and somewhat difficult, teaching and learning environments from that with which we are comfortable. During this time, we can think about a quote from Damian Bar, "We are not all in the same boat. We are all in the same storm."

I found myself scavenging for resources while preparing to organize my spring term courses when this quarter converted to 100 percent online. Some of these resources would be virtual, others much more physical.

I felt confident in getting most introduction to physical geology labs online, however, found myself hitting a roadblock for rocks and minerals. There is just a certain je ne sais quoi about holding a rock in your hand and being able to identify the properties of it. To counter this I had gathered some photographs of samples I use regularly in my face-to-face lab sessions but realized I did not necessarily have all I needed.

It was time to dig out my personal rock and mineral collection. Many of us I am sure have vast collections, some of which are likely gathering dust. I recently found myself going through my own collection, which reminded me of how many amazing samples I personally own as well as all the great memories that were associated with collecting or receiving them.

The majority of my collection was collected during a Rock and Mineral course I completed as part of my undergraduate program. We spent eight hours every Friday of the first 8 weeks of our semester on field trips exploring the local geology of the central and western Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The geologic history essentially in my backyard amazed me. Not only did I learn a lot about geology and where I grew up that term, but I collected samples of rocks and minerals I would likely not have even seen otherwise. It was this sense of wonder I did not want my students to miss.

These physical samples were part of what I needed for my online classes; the issue was developing a virtual lab using them. I then came across the a fantastic website for online mineral and rock identification lab resources that happened to reconnect me with an acquaintance I met at the Earth Educators' Rendezvous in Nashville 2019, Scott Brande (omg.georockme.com). Scott has produced a number of demonstration videos of various mineral and rock identification tests. With some of my own samples and the help of SERC, my online introduction to physical geology lab exercises began to take shape.

During these difficult times, it is amazing the community of support we have through NAGT. I hope you are all transitioning well and know that we are all here to support one another.

Due to the unfortunate circumstances we currently find ourselves in, we will not be meeting in Pendleton in June 2020. We are currently looking into new options for getting in touch with everyone and I hope you keep an eye out for what is to come.

Stay safe, stay healthy, cheers!

2020 NAGT Pacific Northwest Section Conference Cancelled

**Blue Mountain Community College, Pendleton
Oregon** (contact Philip Schmitz, pschmitz@bluecc.edu)
June 16-19

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 annual field conference has been cancelled. The section plans to resume the annual field conference in 2021 and Philip Schmitz & Blue Mountain Community College (Pendleton) have graciously volunteered to host. Sorry for the bad news but hope to see you all either in late July (see TRGS below), or in June 2021.

45th Annual TRGS Field Conference

The 2020 Tobacco Root Geological Society Field Conference is planned for July 23-26th and will be in beautiful Hamilton, Montana. This will be the 45th annual summer gathering (!) of Rocky Mountain geologists and it sounds like another great event. Core complex geology, Precambrian geology, mineral resource geology, and more! No hassles, show up, and see great geology and great people! For more info, contact Jeff Lonn (jlonn@mtech.edu) or visit the TRGS website at <https://www.trgs.org/field-conference>.

*as of 5/6/20, the field conference is still "a go!" but check the TRGS website for updates.

Book Reviews

Some Assembly Required: Decoding Four Billion Years of Life, from Ancient Fossils to DNA (2020), Neil Shubin. From the best-selling author of *Your Inner Fish* comes this relatively short, entertaining, and "easy" read (for non-biologists) about animal and human evolution. Shubin, a paleontologist and professor of Organismal Biology and Anatomy at the University of Chicago, provides fun stories along the way. Amazon reviews states an "accessible account of the great transformations in the history of life on Earth--a new view of the evolution of human and animal life that explains how the incredible diversity of life on our planet came to be." Recommended.

The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here (2020), Hope Jahren. Another best-selling author (*Lab Girl*), Hope Jahren address's climate change in the context of her life's work as a chemist/paleobiologist and from the perspective of a university professor. Well written, to the point, but not at all overbearing! Hope provides hope E.O. Wilson said of *The Story of More*: "A superb account of the deadly struggle between humanity and what may prove the only life-bearing planet within ten light years, written in a brilliantly sardonic and conversational style." Recommended.

Time to Renew! - IF YOU HAVEN'T renewed your dues, it's that time of year again, time to renew your **NAGT membership for 2020**. We need you! Plus, there are all the great benefits such as:

- In the Trenches
- JGE
- Professional development opportunities
- SERC access, and so much more!

Come on, do it now. It's easy. Go to:

https://nagt.org/members/?return_url=%2Fmembers%2Faccount%2F%3Fserc_source%3Dtrack_-20191008-g7rb1sbyxvd4reng

OEST – Outstanding Earth Science

Teacher Award is always seeking nominations for deserving K-12 teachers in your region! Please, take a little time and seek out a great K-12 ES teacher in your area and nominate them! The award is significant and they (and Earth Science) deserves your support. For more info on this important award, go to <https://nagt.org/nagt/awards/oest.html>, or contact our section **OEST coordinator Jodie Harnden** at jharnden@pendletonsd.org.

From the Field



Spectacular coastal outcrop of folded sediments and a Carboniferous-Triassic angular unconformity. Location: Telheiro Beach, SW Portugal. Photo and details contact Dr. Filipe M. Rosas (frosas@fc.ul.pt) at the Instituto Dom Luiz.