

President's Message, Spring 2015

Fall 2014 was a great time to be a member of the Oklahoma Academy of Science!

Our fall field meeting was at Black Mesa State Park. In addition to interesting presentations on Friday and Saturday nights, we had a full lineup of field trips in the morning and afternoon on Saturday. Black Mesa is right next to New Mexico and Colorado, and it looked a lot more like New Mexico than Oklahoma—a shortgrass prairie with arid land shrubs. A lot of us went hiking up on the mesa itself, which offered spectacular views. Because Black Mesa is so far from any urban center, the nights were really dark, and the skies were spectacular, both for those who joined the astronomers for star-gazing and those who just looked at the skies from the camp. Some of us even had the privilege of seeing some dinosaur footprints. It is such a long ways to go - and I probably would not have ever gone there, had it not been for this meeting where I could enjoy it in the company of so many of my fellow professional and amateur scientists. Some faculty brought bus loads of students, which was a wonderful experience.

Our fall technical meeting was at NSU Broken Arrow. We had a full morning of talks and posters, many of them by undergraduates and graduate students. It is inspiring to see how much student research is going on in the sciences here in Oklahoma. After an intriguing noon presentation by Bruce Carnes about the evolution of aging, we had what I hope will be an ongoing tradition: an afternoon symposium. This year the symposium was an update about science-related issues in Oklahoma, with presenters from Oklahomans for Excellence in Science Education, the Oklahoma Meteorological Survey, one of Oklahoma's state seismologists, The Nature Conservancy, and Citizens for the Protection of the Arbuckle Simpson Aquifer. It was quite an exciting session. At previous technical meetings we have had symposia about the Wichita Mountains and about viruses. We anticipate another interesting symposium in Fall 2015.

You don't have to wait for a President's message months later to find out about all these things. We have a blog at <http://www.scienceoklahoma.blogspot.com>. There are also entries posted about general science topics and about important people in the history of the Academy. If you would like to post a blog entry, just email it to me (srice@se.edu). OAS now has a listserv so that we can be more immediately connected with one another. The Academy is not just something that happens three times a year, but is an ongoing community.

We look forward to our spring field meeting at Sequoyah State Park in April. Think about coming, and bringing as many students as you can! And it's not too early to think about blocking off November 13 for the 2015 technical meeting at Oklahoma City University.

Stanley Rice, President