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MISSISSIPPI GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY *eBulletin*



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Joe Johnson

Fellow Members,

I understand that the Fall BBQ went well despite some weather issues. I wish I could have made it, but was out of town on some family matters. Karl is working diligently to set up some interesting speakers for the rest of this year. Stanley and David are doing a great job of keeping us on track, and of course Bob has continued doing a good job as editor.

We have lined up our October speaker, it will be Dan Buller from Halliburton to discuss some of the current activity in North Louisiana on the Haynesville Shale. I hope you can make it to learn about this unique discovery that has changed a lot of minds about natural gas potential in the lower 48.

The GCAGS convention will be held in Shreveport on Sept. 28th-29th. I will be there and I hope some of you will attend as well.

Our own Lisa Ivshin et al. has worked diligently to bring IOGCC to Biloxi in October for their annual meeting. You can register online at www.iogcc.org/biloxi. This organization represents every hydrocarbon producing state in the union and should have a large turnout to discuss the current legislation regarding the oil & gas industry in our great state and the nation.

See you at the October 8th luncheon.

Sincerely,
Joe



In This Issue:

Meetings Schedule

Fall Barbeque

MGS Fall BBQ Sponsors

Petrophysical Evaluation of the Haynesville Shale in Northeast Texas and Northwest Louisiana.

**IOGCC ANNUAL MEETING
ENGINEERING GEOLOGY,
THE YAZOO CLAY, AND THE
SAINTS**

**Who are these MGS
members?**

GCAGS

MGS Membership

Application

Members in good standing.

MGS Advertising Notice

MGS Boland Scholarship

Fund

MGS Honorary Members

MGS MEETING SCHEDULE

When	What	Where
September 10, 2009	Fall BBQ	Jackson Yacht Club
October 8, 2009	Dan Buller—Petrophysical Evaluation of the Haynesville Shale in NE Texas and NW Louisiana	River Hills
November 12, 2009	TBA	River Hills
December, 2009	TBA	Colonial Country Club
January 14, 2010	TBA	River Hills
February 11, 2010	TBA	River Hills
March 11, 2010	TBA	River Hills
April 8, 2010	TBA	River Hills
May 13, 2009	Spring Fling	Jackson Yacht Club



OFFICERS MEETINGS

August 11, 2009
September 1, 2009
October 6, 2009
November 3, 2009
December 1, 2009
January 5, 2010
February 2, 2010
March 2, 2010
April 6, 2010
May 4, 2010



IOGCC Annual Meeting
Biloxi, Mississippi at IP Hotel
www.iogcc.org/biloxi

2009 Annual Meeting "Unconventional Potential: Setting Sensible State Policy"

Oil and natural gas supply more than 60 percent of the nation's energy. Fortunately technology has unlocked techniques to recover oil and natural gas from unconventional sources, which has greatly increased our domestic reserves.

Join the IOGCC at its 2009 Annual Meeting, **Oct. 4-6, 2009**, in **Biloxi, Miss.**, as we focus on the sound development and regulation of these important resources, which are so vital to our nation's energy security. Highlights include a follow up to a Governors' Roundtable held last year in Santa Fe focusing on unconventional resource potential, economic development, and barriers to production.

IOGCC meetings, typically attended by member governors and their representatives, federal and state regulators, legislators, and a cross-section of industry representatives, provide an effective forum for government, industry and others to share information and viewpoints, allowing members to take a proactive approach to emerging technologies and environmental issues.

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2009 Fall Barbecue

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ENGINEERING GEOLOGY, THE YAZOO CLAY, AND THE SAINTS

David T. Dockery III, Mississippi Office of Geology

The selection of Millsaps College as a training camp for the New Orleans Saints has been a thrill for many sports fans and a boost to the college. To accommodate the Saints' summer practice needs, the college contracted to expand their lower playing field adjacent to Woodrow Wilson Avenue. Dirt-moving work began in the spring and summer of 2007, and the field was expanded by cutting the toe of the hillside that separated the upper and lower playing fields. This work was done at a time of significant drought, which masked the problem of subsurface drainage from the upper field. A two-meter-high retaining wall, consisting of 2,000 pound concrete blocks fitted together like LEGO toys, was placed at the base of the cut hillside above a foundation of crushed limestone. Figure 1 shows a disturbing sight in the freshly cut hillside; the three cut benches in the picture consist of a red terrace sand in the upper bench and weathered Yazoo Clay in the lower two benches. The terrace sand underlying the upper football field could not drain through the clay below but only out the hillside. The underlying Yazoo Clay is the infamous, swelling, foundation destroying, road buckling, wall splitting, bane of the Jackson area. The Mississippi Office of Geology has published an environmental atlas of the Jackson area, containing geologic maps showing the surface outcrop of the Yazoo Clay. These maps are a must for prospective home buyers or builders. Once the retaining wall at Millsaps was built, it was backfilled with the excavated expansive Yazoo Clay and terrace sand.

Figure 2 shows the spectacular failure of the retaining wall after the return of winter rains. While the wall held together, it did not stay put. At the top of the picture is the slump scarp, which threatened the filming tower and the upper field, and below is the slump's toe, which rose some five feet high from the edge of the lower playing field. With the manicured grass surface, the toe looks like a roll of carpet. Before the Saints arrived for training camp, the displaced retaining wall needed to be rebuilt and the practice field repaired. The geotechnical firm of Burns Cooley Dennis, Inc., was employed to design a new retaining wall. Figure 3 shows the drilling of a hole through the slump to determine the base of the failure surface or shear plane. Once the depth of the failure surface was known, the wall had to be removed block by block, as shown in the fourth picture. Figure 5 shows a construction-schedule conference with concerned representatives from the college, the construction firm, the engineering firm, and the Saints.

The design of the new wall required: (1) a significant crushed limestone keyway, extending below the failure surface, to lock the surface in place, (2) lower and upper retaining walls, (3) a sand chimney to drain the upper playing field, (4) foundation-quality fill material, and (5) geogrid plastic to bind the fill as a unit. Figure 6 shows the emplacement of fill and geogrid behind the upper wall. Figure 7 shows the new retaining walls upon completion. The moral of this event can be summed up in a comment overheard from one of the workers reinstalling the irrigation system; the first system was taken out when the main line was ruptured by the slump. The worker (see Figure 8) said, "I'm doing the same thing I did last year." Put in terms of a carpenter's adage: Neglect geologic (soil) testing and build twice; do geologic testing and build once.



Figure 1. Excavation for a new football field at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi. The lower two tiers in the foreground consist of weathered Yazoo Clay. The upper tier is terrace sand, which drapes over the Yazoo Clay of the bottom tiers in the distant hillside. The crushed limestone floor is the foundation for a retaining wall. Extra stone is placed at the base of a small slump in the foreground. Picture (digital CD #41) taken on May 23, 2007.



Figure 2. Slump in Yazoo Clay pushed the retaining wall up and out as seen from the new football field at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi. The slump scarp cuts near the observation tower of the upper field, and the toe is elevated in front of the retaining wall like a roll of carpet. Picture (digital CD #42) taken on January 31, 2008.



Figure 3. Millsaps geology students watch as an auger rig drills a hole to determine the base of the slump block adjacent to the new football field at Millsaps College. Picture (digital CD #42) taken on February 20, 2008.



Figure 4. Excavation of slump block and removal of the tilted retaining wall. Each concrete block in the wall weighs 2,000 pounds and is fastened by dome and socket joints. Removed blocks are stacked in the foreground for reassembly later. Picture (digital CD #42) taken June 4, 2008.



Figure 5. Onsite conference concerning construction schedule for the retaining wall between the Saints' football training fields at Millsaps College. From left to right are Danny Neely (Millsaps College), Mike Early (Clear River Construction [CRC]), Jeb Boney (CRC), Terry Ashburn (New Orleans Saints), Mike Bolton (Burns Cooley Dennis), Kendrick Schetter (Millsaps), Dr. Todd Rose (Millsaps), and Nick Travis (President, CRC). Picture (digital CD #46) taken on June 17, 2008.



Figure 6. Layers of geogrid fabric and soil are placed behind the upper retaining wall at Millsaps College. The geogrid fabric ties the layers into a coherent block that resists the fractures and shearing responsible for slope failures. Picture (digital CD #47) taken on July 2, 2008.



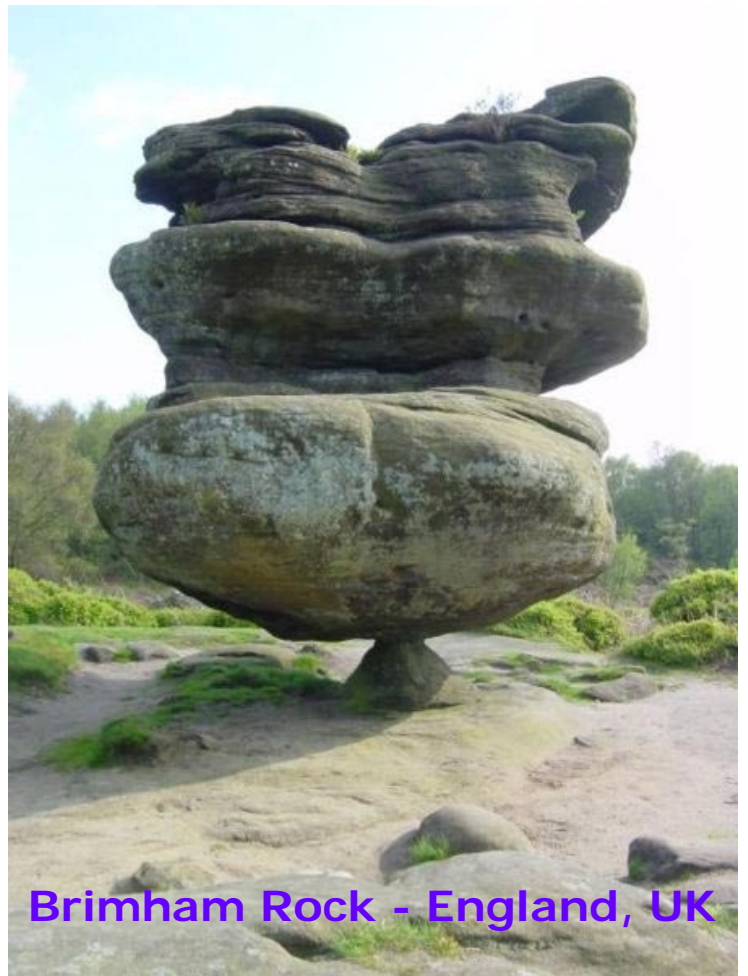
Figure 7. New retaining wall at Millsaps College completed in time for the Saints' summer football camp. The upper wall was extended from 205 to 300 feet to the east (left) of the stairs. Picture (digital, CD #55) taken on July 22, 2008.



Figure 8. James Bridgforth, holding fossil oyster excavated from irrigation trench, Jared Meyers (right), and Rob Anders on trenching tractor, all with Lakeland Irrigation. James reported, "I'm doing the same thing I did last year." The main line of the first system was taken out by the slump. Picture (digital CD #47) taken on July 1, 2008.



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Brimham Rock - England, UK



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CALL FOR PAPERS

60th Annual Convention
October 10-12, 2010
San Antonio, Texas

Hosted by the South Texas Geological Society



Welcome back to San Antonio! Our theme this year is "Weathering the Cycles" – a challenge that resource geologists certainly have faced and overcome in the past! How do we weather the economic cycles? We...

- ✓ Network with our community
- ✓ Experience the latest technology in the technical exhibition
- ✓ Take a course or a trip and grow new and diverse skills
- ✓ Listen to special presentations on strategies to endure and prosper during an economic downtime and prepare for the inevitable rebound.

By celebrating our successes, facing our challenges, and learning from the research results of our peers, we are paid back many fold by sharing ideas and experiences among our professional community. So come and share your experiences! Suggest a session topic, present an oral paper or a poster, learn about the latest ideas and technologies in our field. Come to San Antonio and enjoy the Gulf's own geoscience convention!

PROPOSED TECHNICAL SESSIONS INCLUDE...

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HOW TO SUBMIT:

Abstracts (not more than 250 words) should be submitted for review online or via email to the technical program chair. Papers should have application to Gulf Coast and Gulf of Mexico geology. Include your full mailing address, telephone and FAX numbers, email address, and whether you are submitting for **oral** or **poster** or **either** (preferred).

Submit abstracts by **February 1, 2010** as instructed on the website www.gcags2010.com

Notification of acceptance by March 1, 2010. All presenters, both oral or poster, must submit either a paper (10-12 pages) or an extended abstract with key figures for review by **April 16, 2010**, for inclusion in the *Transactions*. Full instructions for authors will be posted at www.gcags2010.com.

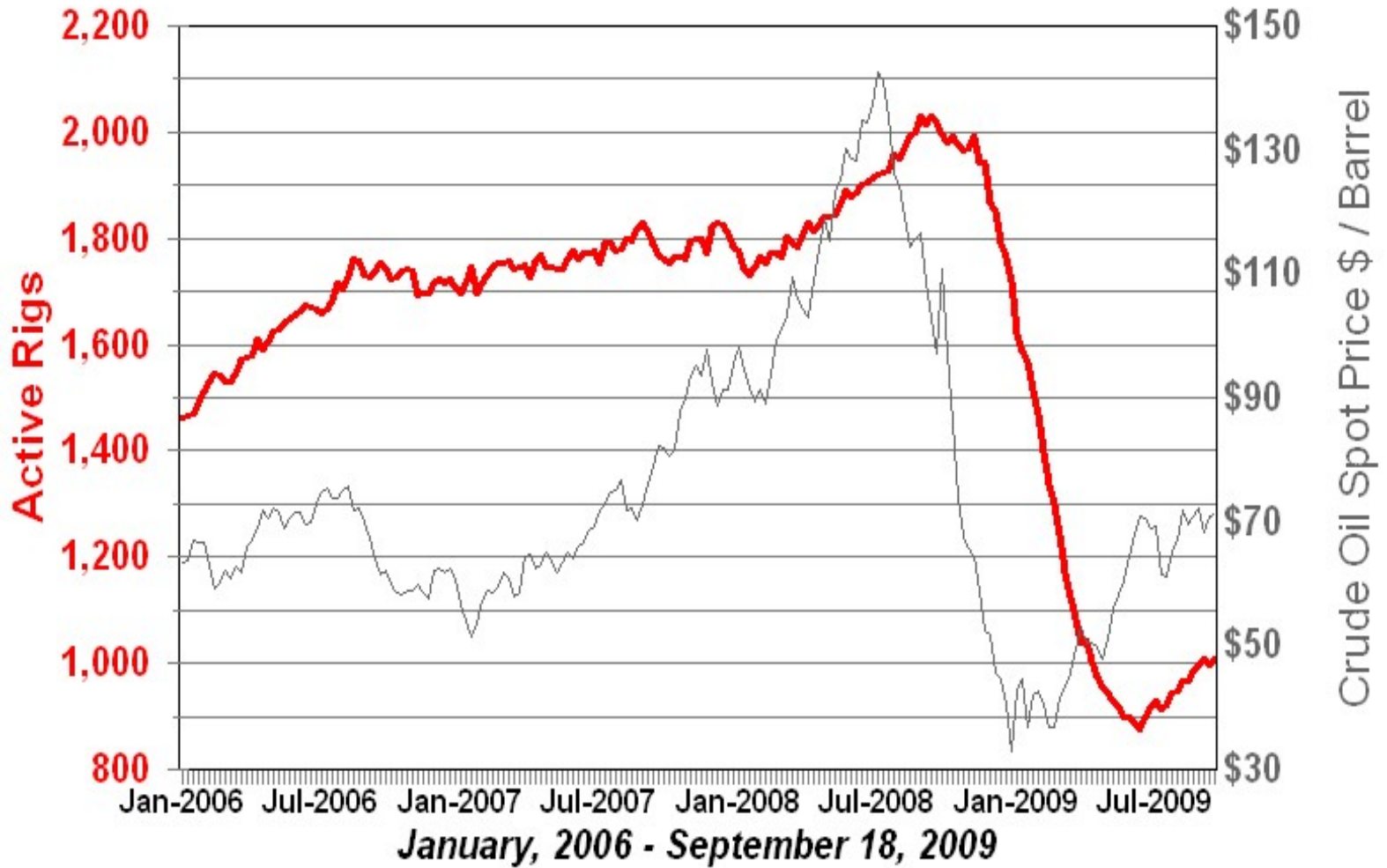
ABSTRACT DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 1, 2010!

Questions or ideas for the technical program should be directed to:
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U. S. Rotary Rig Count Total Active Rigs



WTRG Economics ©2009

Who are these MGS members?

Hint: 1962



Answers on last page

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2009-2010

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Since inception in 1980, the Society has honored 112 students with the Boland Award. If you would like to contribute, please contact Dave Cate at 601-718-9397 or mail your check (L. F. Boland Scholarship Fund) to him at 217 W. Capitol St., Jackson, MS 39201.

The MGS gratefully acknowledges this years contributors to the L. F. Boland Scholarship Fund for the 2009-2010 year.

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1965-1966	Sankey L. Blanton	2001-2002	Andrew T. Sylte
1966-1967	Alan Jackson	2002-2003	Aaron Lasker
1967-1968	Julius M. Ridgway	2003-2004	John G. Cox
1968-1969	Edward D. Minihan	2004-2005	James E. Starnes
1969-1970	Kevin E. Cahill	2005-2006	Todd Hines
1970-1971	John Lancaster	2006-2007	Bob Schneeflock
1971-1972	Larry Boland	2007-2008	Tony Stewart
1972-1973	Charles Barton	2008-2009	Lisa Ivshin



Armando T. Ricci



Julius Ridgway



George Vockroth



Stewart Welch

