Volume 56 No. 8 March 2008

MISSISSIPPI GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

eBulletin

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~ PRESIDENT'S LETTER ~

Tony Stuart

Greetings,

We had a lot of stuff happening in February. NAPE was the largest yet and the MGS was well represented. A large group of us attended and thoroughly enjoyed the annual Tellus luncheon at the Hilton. Many thanks to the Tellus group for the invite.

At our monthly meeting, Larry Hall with Baker Hughes presented an informative talk about conventional coring. Like many aspects of our industry, coring technology has changed significantly in the past several years. It's always good to try to keep up.

This was the first meeting in the new building at the River Hills Club. It's a very nice facility. The credit for our moving our meetings to the RHC goes to Todd Hines and Bob Schneeflock. I told ya'll when I took this job that these guys had done a number of things to significantly improve our society. As a result of their work, my job has been pretty easy and my presence has been mostly for ornamental purposes.

The first meeting at the Oil & Gas Board computer system (RBDMS – Risk Based Data Management System), was held on the 19th. I missed it, but I'm reliably informed that everyone was duly impressed. This system will be a very significant improvement to the way that we do business. There will be two more meetings, I think. Everyone in the Mississippi petroleum industry should attend.

At our March meeting, we will recognize Harry Spooner as our newest honorary member. We normally do this at our April meeting when we give out the Boland scholarships, but Harry's demanding work schedule will have him involved in a study of marine biology in a carbonate platform environment in April, so we have moved his presentation up to the March meeting. I hope that all of you who have known and worked with Harry over the years will try to come.

We will also have a talk by Larry Baria describing some of his recent work on the Smackover in Arkansas.

Until next month,
Tony

In This Issue:

MGS MEETING SCHEDULE

When	What	Where
September 20, 2007	Fall BBQ	Jackson Yacht Club
October 11, 2007	Jim Mulligan & Bob Schellhorn Denbury Resources – Introduction to Lower Tuscaloosa Geology, Why Seismic Matters, "Or does it"?	River Hills
November 8, 2007	Rick Taylor – Inconvenient Evidence, Global Warming Goes On Ice	River Hills
December 8, 2007	MAPL / MGS Christmas Party	Colonial Country Club
January 10, 2008	Michael Geffert, Greystone Oil & Gas The Revitalization of Sligo Field	River Hills
February 14, 2008	Larry Hall, Baker Hughes Optimization of Core Quality	River Hills
March 13, 2008	Larry Baria and Ezat Heydari – A Regional Erosion Surface and its Effect on the Smackover Reservoir-Seal	River Hills
April 10, 2008	Honors Meeting: Boland Scholarships	River Hills
May 12, 2008	Spring Fling	Jackson Yacht Club

OFFICERS MEETINGS

September 4, 2007

October 3, 2007

November 7, 2007

December 4, 2007

January 8, 2008

February 6, 2008

March 4, 2008

April 1, 2008

May 6, 2008

Our speakers for March

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF LAWRENCE R. BARIA

After receiving a BS in Geology in 1967, Baria pursued a Masters Degree in stratigraphy and sandstone petrology at Northeast Louisiana University and PhD studies in carbonate facies, stratigraphy and sulfate diagenesis at Louisiana State University. In his early years he worked as a field geologist in Louisiana, Arkansas, Colorado and Alaska while employed by the U.S. Forest Service, the Arkansas Geological Commission, and the USGS. After leaving LSU, he went to work for Getty Oil Company in their E & P Research lab where he specialized in Cretaceous and Jurassic stratigraphy. In 1976 Baria moved to Jackson, Mississippi to work with Enserch Exploration in Jurassic and Cretaceous exploration of the eastern Gulf Coast. Since 1980 he has been a consulting geologist active in the generation of prospects within the Haynesville, Smackover and Norphlet Formations. In addition to generating prospects, Baria often consults with various companies active in Jurassic exploration both inside and outside the Gulf Coast Region.

Biosketch of Ezat Heydari

Dr. Ezat Heydari's education includes and B.S. degree from the University of Tehran in Iran, a M.S. degree from the Pennsylvania State University, and a Ph.D. degree from Louisiana State University. He has worked as a research scientist for Louisiana State University and for the Mississippi Office of Geology. He is currently an Associate Professor of Earth Science at Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi.

His specializes in sedimentology – stratigraphy, depositional environments, petrography – diagenesis, low temperature geochemistry, subsurface geology, and petroleum geology. He conducts field and laboratory investigations in order to investigate the causes of the events which shaped Earth's history. One of his active research projects include detailed studies of Jurassic oil and gas reservoirs of U.S. Gulf Coast. He has also investigates Permian and Triassic strata of Iran in order to decipher the cause of the mass extinction that left the Earth nearly lifeless about 251 million years ago. He is the author of 35 published research papers and 50 conference presentations.

A Regional Erosion Surface and its Effect on the Smackover Reservoir-Seal System Along the South Arkansas – North Louisiana Jurassic Shelf

Ezat Heydari[1] and Lawrence R. Baria[2]

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[2]Jura-Search, Inc., P. O. Box 320426, Flowood, MS 39232; bearlear@bellsouth.net

The Upper Jurassic Smackover Formation displays three shoaling upward cycles in the north-central U.S. Gulf coast (Louisiana-Arkansas-Mississippi). From the base, they include the Smackover "C", Smackover "B", and Smackover "A" cyles. The basal "C" cycle consists of an upward succession of lithofacies indicating a progradation of beach-to-basin environments. The overlying "B" cycle encompasses massive grainstones formed as Bahamian-type marine sand bars. The "A" cycle includes isolated shelf-margin ooid shoals. Although each cycle has its own characteristics, the overall reservoir potential of the Smackover carbonates in this area depend on a complex interplay of depositional environments, pre- and post-burial diagenetic processes, hydrocarbon source and seal capacity.

In our recent investigation, the reprocessing of 3D-seismic data with enhanced high frequency attributes and a high signal to noise ratio clearly depicts linear, 1 to 2 mile-long buildups of porous marine bars of the Smackover "B" cycle. These bars appear to trend WNW-ESE and were formed along depositional strike of the South Arkansas Jurassic shelf edge. One particular bar which was drilled and conventionally cored, is at least 80 feet thick, provides structural drape and local thinning of overlying sediments, and exhibits an obvious velocity sag on the underlying seismic reflectors.

In the two wells which tested this feature, the contact between the Smackover marine bar and the overlying Jones Sand member of the Haynesville Formation is abrupt and appears locally scoured. A detailed investigation of conventional cores shows evidence of a major erosional surface at the top of the Smackover Formation. In fact, cemented oolitic grainstone clasts are incorporated into the siliciclastic shallow marine sediments of the overlying Jones Sand. It is obvious that the potential seal to this otherwise very attractive Smackover reservoir has been breached by an erosional event at the top of the "B" cycle.

New Orleans Geological Society

Technical Field Seminar

Modern Transgressive Depositional Environments of the Abandoned Mississippi River Lafourche Delta Complex

April 5-6, 2008

Leaders: Dr. Michael Miner and Dr. Mark Kulp, University of New Orleans

Limit: 18 persons (minimum 13)

Cost per attendee: $295 (includes field guide, transportation, lodging, meals, and drinks)

Departure: From UNO Saturday April 5 at 7:00 am sharp

Return: To UNO Sunday April 6 at 3:00 pm

Description: Rapid relative sea level rise (~1 cm/yr) in the abandoned Bayou Lafourche delta complex of the Mississippi River Delta Plain (MRDP) drives transgressive processes on human timescales. Thus, the geomorphic evolution is captured on historical nautical charts, enabling a detailed stratigraphic framework to be directly linked to processes and the resulting geomorphology. A large database of historical and recent bathymetric surveys, shallow sediment cores, and high resolution shallow seismic reflection data collected over the past three decades have been applied to develop transgressive stratigraphic models for the region. Sediment cores and shallow seismic profiles will be presented on location in order to provide participants with a firsthand experience of transgressive depositional environments, facies associations, stratigraphic architecture, and bounding surfaces. We will travel from New Orleans to Port Fourchon, Louisiana in vans, then by boats to the Timbalier Islands transgressive barrier system and Terrebonne relict barrier chain. At the end of day 1 we will return to the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium field camp in Port Fourchon for a seafood boil and a good night's sleep. Day 2 will consist of a trip by van to the Cheniere Caminada beach ridges, Grand Isle, and Barataria Pass tidal inlet. Stops along the way will focus on the modern coastal zone geomorphology, shallow and deep stratigraphy, and shallow and deep processes of the Louisiana Coastal Zone.

What to Wear: The weather for this time of year is quite unpredictable so participants should be prepared for heat and sun as well as the possibility of a cold boat ride. Participants should wear hats, sunglasses, and closedtoe, rubber sole shoes. Rain gear is a necessity.

What to bring: Plenty of drinks will be provided. A field notebook, camera (with protective case), photo scale, and hand lens will be useful.

Contact: NOGS office at (504)561-8980 or info@nogs.org

The Sliding Rocks of Racetrack Playa

One of the most interesting mysteries of Death Valley National Park is the sliding rocks at Racetrack Playa (a playa is a dry lake bed). These rocks can be found on the floor of the playa with long trails behind them. Somehow these rocks slide across the playa, cutting a furrow in the sediment as they move.

Some of these rocks weigh several hundred pounds. That makes the question: "How do they move?" a very challenging one.

The truth: No one knows for sure exactly how these rocks move - although a few people have come up with some pretty good explanations. The reason why their movement remains a mystery: No one has ever seen them in motion!

Let's learn how they are thought to move....

About Racetrack Playa

Racetrack playa is lake bed that is almost perfectly flat and almost always dry. It is about 4 kilometers long (2.5 miles - north to south) and about 2 kilometers wide (1.25 miles - east to west). The surface is covered with mudcracks and the sediment is made up mainly of silt and clay.

The climate in this area is arid. It rains just a couple of inches per year. However, when it rains, the steep mountains which surround Racetrack Playa produce a large amount of run-off that converts the playa floor into a broad shallow lake. When wet, the surface of the playa is transformed into a very soft and very slippery mud.

Are They Moved by People or Animals?

The shape of trails behind the rocks suggest that they move during times when the floor of Racetrack Playa is covered with a very soft mud. A lack of disturbed mud around the rock trails eliminates the possibility of a human or animal pushing or assisting the motion of the rocks.

Are They Moved by Wind?

This is the favorite explanation. The prevailing winds that blow across Racetrack Playa travel from southwest to northeast. Most of the rock trails are parallel to this direction. This is strong evidence that wind is the prime mover or at least involved with the motion of the rocks.

Strong wind gusts are thought to nudge the rocks into motion. Once the rock begins to move a wind of much lower velocity can keep the rock in motion as it slides across the soft and very slippery mud. Curves in the rock trails are explained by shifts in wind direction or in how the wind interacts with an irregularly shaped rock.

Are They Moved by Ice?

A few people have reported seeing Racetrack Playa covered by a thin layer of ice. One idea is that water freezes around the rocks and then wind, blowing across the top of the ice, drags the ice sheet with its embedded rocks across the surface of the playa.

Some researchers have found highly congruent trails on multiple rocks that strongly support this movement theory. However, the transport of a large ice sheet might be expected to mark the playa surface in other ways - these marks have not been found.

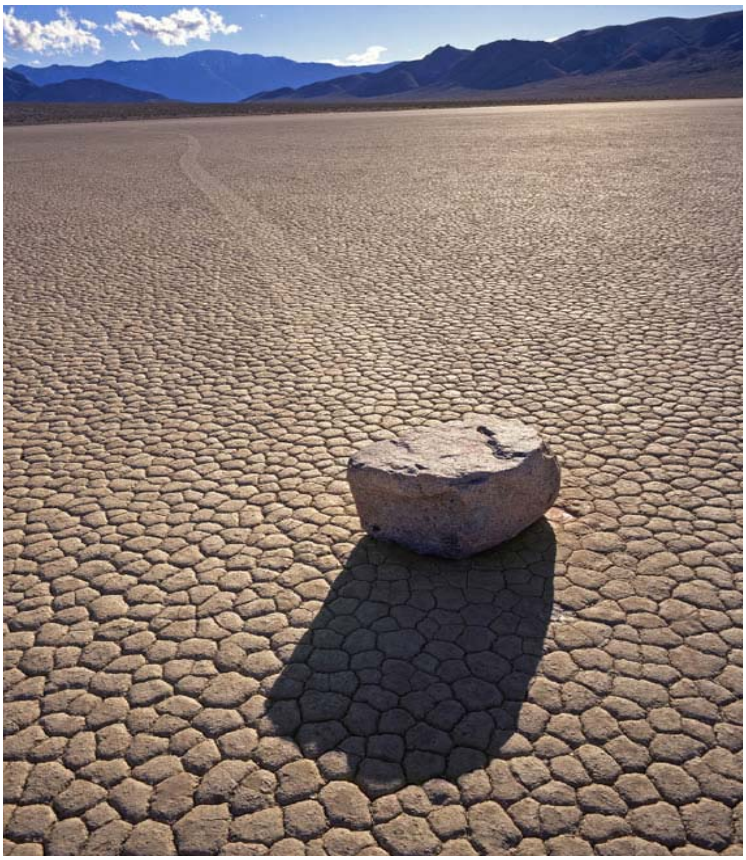
Other researchers experimented with stakes that would be disturbed by ice sheets. The rocks moved without disturbing the stakes. The evidence for ice-sheet transport is not consistent.

Wind is the Favored Mover!

All of the best explanations involve wind as the energy source behind the movement of the rocks. The question remains is do they slide while encased in an ice sheet or do they simply side over the surface of the mud? Perhaps each of these methods is responsible for some rock movement?

Perhaps this story will remain more interesting if the real answer is never discovered!

Photos of Sliding Rocks Below!



MGS BOLAND SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Society's L. F. Boland Scholarship Fund is open to donations (tax deductible) year round. Your contribution will help the Society recognize and reward outstanding earth science students at its annual Honors Day meeting in April, 2008. Since inception in 1980, the Society has honored 108 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 the following contributors to the L. F. Boland Scholarship Fund for the 2007-2008 year:

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Geologist Survivor

While the media rarely represents geologists to the general population, (excluding sound bytes on Discovery Channel volcano specials), there was one recent attempt to integrate geologists into a television program. According to various blog sources, CBS was looking to produce a new reality tv show for 2008, after correctly predicting that the writers' strike would cut down on their ability to create blue-toned dramatic shows centering around corpses. One of their production managers happened to see a documentary on a volcanologist researching lava in Hawaii, and seeing the danger and excitement inherent in people smashing molten hot 'magma' with rock hammers, pitched the idea of a 'geologist survivor-type' show.

In December of 2007, CBS hired a production crew to pull the show together; the scenario was that nine geologists would be placed in the field, where they would vote each other off based on their willingness to do dangerous geologist type feats common to the field; like researching active volcanoes, earthquakes, landslides, and landing in bush planes on glaciers. Geologists that weren't up to the task would be voted off, and the last remaining "Hard-core geologist" would win a prize. The production was plagued from the beginning. They were successful in finding nine geologists, 6 males and three females, between 25 and 50 years of age, and they quickly set up the first challenge; researching an active volcano in the Philippines . The geologists and camera crew set up camp near the bottom of the volcano. The camera crew filmed the nine geologists bonding. The geologists were supplied with alcohol (a common strategy to loosen up the cast in reality TV), but the camera crew was surprised to notice that even after drinking gallons of the liquid, the geologists did not change their behavior, and continued talking in an obscure jargonized language about 'bombs', 'breccia,' and 'lahars,' none of which made for good reality tv.

This trend continued through the entire first challenge; the geologists were seemingly oblivious to the camera, and the only interpersonal drama occurred when the seismologist and structural geologist got into a yelling match over the best recipe for chili. When the camera-crew and geologists went up to do research on the volcano, instead of sticking together, the geologists scattered into the landscape, and the camera-crew found themselves unable to find more than two at a time. Also, after listening to the volcanologist eagerly predict just how soon the volcano would blow, the camera-crew became extremely nervous and returned to the camp. The final result was almost no footage, and the editors were unable to make sense of what footage their was because they had no idea what the hell the geologists were talking about. Finally, a few of the scientists seemed to understand the concept of 'voting off' another member. After consulting a nearby university, the crew finally explained that they 'competing for a GSA research grant.' This didn't go well either, as the geologists pointed out that they didn't have the time to write a paper...finally, they were simply told to get rid of someone on some sort of criteria. After a council, the geologists decided that whoever had the worst aim with a rockhammer would be told to leave.

The second event, landing in a bush plane in upper Alaska, was a complete failure. None of the geologists were nervous at the idea, which destroyed the drama the crew was hoping for, and worse yet, no-one in the production crew was willing to accompany the geologists to the site, out of sheer terror. The result was that small cameras were given to two of the geologists to film themselves. When the footage and geologists returned, the editors found tapes filled with footage and commentary about mountains and 'glacial erratics'. Only ten percent of the footage featured humans, and most of that footage was simply the petrologist standing by outcrops for scale.

By the time the production reached Hawaii, most of the camera-crew had quit (because of the steady diet of chili and the dangerous situations), and only five of the geologists were left; not because they had been voted off, but because they had been over-excited by rock formations at various locations and had refused to leave. More-ever, paying for an almost-constant supply of beer and transportation of the geologists' luggage (piles of rocks), had almost exhausted the budget. CBS finally pulled the plug on the project in January, 2008, despite their fear that they might be sued for withdrawing the promise of a prize; however, none of the geologists sued, as they were still under the impression that they needed to publish a research paper to receive the money.

Haven't seen this on SNOPES yet. True?

Submitted by Phil Cook

No matter what happens, somebody will find a way to take it too seriously.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

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1/2 Page Ad (6” x 4”)	$300	$_____
1/4 Page Ad (3” x 4”)	$200	$_____
Business Card Ad (1 1/2” x 3”)	$100	$_____
Professional Listing (1/2” x 3”)	$ 50	$_____

II. Web Page Advertisements (www.missgeo.com):

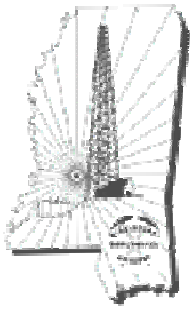
Type of Web Page Ad	Rate/Year	Amt. Remitted
Front Page Sponsor (Banner Ad – limit of 5)	$500	$_____
Second Page Banner Ad	$250	$_____
Professional Listing/Link	$100	$_____

(Note: Please contact Steve Walkinshaw at (601) 607-3227 or mail@visionexploration.com for details concerning placing your ad on the MGS web site.)

Total Remitted $_____

Please make checks payable to the Mississippi Geological Society. If you have any questions, contact Maurice Birdwell at (601) 936-6939 or mnbirdwell@comcast.net

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospitals dying of nothing.



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