



SAPROLITE

NEWSLETTER of the SOUTHEAST SECTION
GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Winter 2015-2016

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings and happy 2016 to all in the GSA Southeast Section. Many thanks to Blair Tormey (Past Chair) for raising the Sapolite phoenix from the ashes last year! It is truly a challenge to reach everyone in such an expansive section, which includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in the U.S, and the states of Campeche, Quintana Roo, and Yucatán in Mexico. We hope this second installment in the new series of electronic issues will get the news of the section out to everyone, and motivate our members to participate in some capacity, however large or small.

It's a good time to be involved. By all counts, interest and enthusiasm for the Southeast Section has been steadily increasing the past few years, particularly as highlighted by attendance at section meetings. In recent years, most meetings have broken the attendance record set by the previous one. Student attendance is responsible for much of the increase, rising continuously in the past five years from around 40% in 2011 to greater than 50% the last two years. At the same time, the number of professionals attending has changed very little. Of course the meetings provide an important venue for students to present their own research, but I suspect increasing numbers are participating because of the opportunities for mentoring, for networking and making professional, industry, and graduate school contacts, and for the exposure to the awesome research their peers and professionals are doing. At the same time we hope that professionals will continue to find ample opportunities to share their research and ideas with their own colleagues, as well as with students. A truly successful meeting requires participation from all sectors. So bring students! Bring your colleagues and co-workers! Bring yourselves!

Speaking of successful meetings, last spring's section meeting at the Chattanooga Hotel truly set a record for attendance (860 attendees!). In addition, the Chattanooga meeting field trip guide has been praised as "fantastic," and was the only guide published from the 2015 section meetings. Give a big shout-out to the local committee, Jonathan Mies (General Chair); Amy Brock-Hon and Mark Steltenpohl (Technical Program); Ann Holmes, Michael Gibson, and Chuck Trupe (Field Trips); Kevin Hon (Exhibits); and Claire Landis (Student Volunteers), for a superb operation.

Come to Columbia! Winter is still in the air, but spring is just around the corner and soon our thoughts will turn to the Southeast Section meeting in Columbia, South Carolina (March 31-April 1). Some folks have been thinking about it for quite a while now, in particular Venkat Lakshmi and Michael Bizimis (General Chair and Co-Chair, respectively), Jim Knapp (Technical Program), Will Doar (Field Trips), Camilia Knapp (Exhibits), and other volunteers. This promises to be an outstanding meeting, with sessions ranging from crustal structure to biochemistry, Appalachian terranes to barrier islands, and beyond. Early registration ends February 29. You can register at the meeting website: <http://www.geosociety.org/Sections/se/2016mtg/registration.htm>.

SEGSA is much more than just a once-a-year meeting. Your participation, volunteer activities, and donations help keep the organization moving all year long with such activities as planning future meetings, assisting graduate and undergraduate students through the SE student research and travel grants, and generally promoting geoscience education. The section also serves as a link to the global community that is GSA.

GSA News of Interest:

- **Field Trips:** We are reminded that all section meeting field trips must comply with the GSA safety policy, including requirements for first aid training for trip leaders, first aid kits, a responsible second-in-command, a Code of Conduct in place and enforced, and a revised waiver form that must be signed by attendees. Further information can be found at:
 - The GSA safety policy: http://www.geosociety.org/Sectionmanual/FieldTrips/documents/Field_Safety_Policy.pdf
 - Online Section Manual, complete information on planning and implementing field trips: http://www.geosociety.org/Sectionmanual/FieldTrips/documents/Field_Safety_Policy.pdf
- **Open Access:** GSA is moving forward with the plan to have all its journals freely available online by 2019. Open access to journals will be phased in, with *Geology* beginning in 2017, *Geosphere* and *Lithosphere* in 2018, and *GSA Bulletin* in 2019. You can find more information at <http://www.geosociety.org/news/pr/2015/15-38.htm>.
- **GSA Connected Community:** Network, discuss, and collaborate through the Connected Community: <http://community.geosociety.org/home>.

Special acknowledgements: Don Neal (Secretary/Treasurer), Blair Tormey (Past Chair), Bob Tracy (Chair Elect), Venkat Lakshmi (Vice-Chair), and Jon Mies (Past Vice-Chair) all deserve recognition and thanks for their dedication to the Southeast Section and their tireless work on its behalf. I would like to express special gratitude to Don Neal who, after serving as the Southeast Section Secretary/Treasurer for 15 years (!), has decided it's time to step down and make way for a capable successor. Don has been the 'heart and soul' of SEGSA management for so many years, and his breadth of knowledge of the organization is without equal. Another deserving of special thanks is Robert (Kelly) Vance, who is stepping down after ably serving as the SE Section Representative to the Geology and Public Policy Committee since 2010. Kelly was particularly instrumental in developing the GPPC Managing Coastal Hazards Position Paper, which addresses response of coastal communities to storms and rising sea level. Best wishes to Don and Kelly as they make time for other professional endeavors.

Looking ahead. Planning is already in the works for the 2017 section meeting, to be held March 30-31 in Richmond, VA. David Spears and Karen Layou are the Co-Chairs. The call will soon go out for theme sessions and symposia, field trips, etc. Submit ideas! Chair a session! Volunteer your time!

On behalf of the Southeast Section Officers, I wish you all a fruitful and rewarding year ahead. See you in Columbia!

Best wishes,

Elizabeth (Beth) McClellan
Chair, Southeast Section
emcclellan@radford.edu

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Management Board, 2015-2016

Chair:	Elizabeth McClellan	Radford University
Past Chair:	Blair Tormey	Western Carolina University
Vice Chair:	Venkat Lakshmi	University of South Carolina
Past Vice-Chair:	Jonathan Mies	University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
Chair-Elect:	Robert Tracy	Virginia Tech
Secretary-Treasurer:	Donald Neal	East Carolina University
Student Representative:	Sarah Morgentaler	University of Tennessee, Chattanooga

GSA Councilors: Harry (Hap) McSween, Chuck Bailey

Financial Status of the Section

At the end of fiscal year, 30 June 2015, the section had \$145,106 in its accounts. The total interest realized during the fiscal year was \$1199. This interest, together with a reported surplus of \$35,241 from the section meeting in Chattanooga, TN, and section members' dues, is used to fund the Section's student Grant Program, Student Travel Program, and general operations of the section.

Future Section Meetings

2016 – Columbia, SC (Mar 31-Apr 1)
2017 – Richmond, VA (Mar 30-31)

2018 – Knoxville, TN
2019 – Auburn, AL
2020 – Joint with NE section

Local Chair(s)

Venkat Lakshmi vlakshmi@geol.sc.edu
David Spears, david.spears@dmme.virginia.gov
Karen Layou, KLayou@reynolds.edu
Colin Sumrall csumrall@utk.edu
Willis Hames, hameswe@auburn.edu
TBA

Student Research Grants

The Section has two research grant programs, one for undergraduates and another for graduate students. In the spring of 2015, there were 7 undergraduate grants totaling \$4960. The grant competition in the spring of 2015 resulted in the expenditure of \$5040 to support the research of 8 graduate students.

Student Travel Grants

The Student Travel Grant program continues to be very popular. In the fall of 2014, the Section expended \$5750 to support the travel of 94 students presenting papers at the annual meeting. In the spring of 2015, the section expended \$4550 in support of 23 students presenting papers at section meeting. The Section appreciates the matching funds provided by the GSA Foundation and the contributions from members. Several students did not pick up their checks at the meeting and therefore forfeited them. Total student expenditures for 2014-15 was \$10300.

64th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Section

The 64th annual meeting of the section was held in March, 2015, in Chattanooga, TN. Jonathan Mies chaired the meeting. Three symposia and 12 theme sessions were held as well as 13 disciplinary sessions. Nine field trips were offered. The meeting was well planned and well attended.

65th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Section

The 65th annual meeting of the section will be held in the spring of 2016 in Columbia, SC. Venkat Lakshmi of the University of South Carolina will be the General Chair. The meeting should be successful both scientifically and financially.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Neal
Secretary-Treasurer, Southeast Section

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SECTION

Important Dates in 2016:

1 February, 2016: Session Submission Deadline, GSA Annual Meeting

1 February, 2016: Graduate Student Research Grant Deadline

29 February, 2016: Columbia Early Registration Deadline

31 March – 1 April, 2016: Southeast Section Meeting, Columbia, SC

1 April, 2016: Undergraduate Student Research Grant Deadline

12 July 2016: Abstract Submission Deadline, GSA Annual Meeting

25-28 September, 2016: GSA Annual Meeting, Denver, CO

****note earlier dates than usual for the 2016 Annual Meeting**

Section Bylaws changes

A copy of the ballot for officer elections is included at the end of this newsletter. The ballot will also be made available electronically through GSA this spring. On this year's ballot, you will notice an amendment to our Bylaws that requires a vote by our membership. Please take some time to review the changes and vote. Additional changes to the Bylaws may be proposed and acted on this spring at the annual section meeting in Columbia. If you have any questions concerning the Bylaws, please consult the SE Section website at <http://www.geosociety.org/sections/se/> or contact one of the current SE Section officers.

Environmental Education Professional Learning Funding Opportunity

Earth or environmental science teachers who would like to improve their teaching about evolution can apply now online for funding to attend conference sessions dedicated to “Issues in Environmental and Climate Education” in Columbia on Friday, April 1, and/or to join fellow teachers and geologists on a related theme field trip to Congaree National Park, the following day. These events are part of the 64th Annual Southeastern Section Meeting of the Geological Society of America. A wide range of topics will be presented in the session on Friday morning, including:

- An overview of issues for which environmental literacy is a critical need
- How citizen science groundwater monitoring improved environmental literacy
- A new SERC-funded module on carbon, climate, and energy resources
- Strategies for using paleoclimate and modern storms data in the classroom
- Climate education in the context of new K-12 science standards
- A classroom simulation to assess an approach to putting a price on carbon
- An app for studying the effects of sea-level rise

On the Saturday all-day field trip, observe the carbon cycle over many time scales ranging from tens of millions of years to annual, at Congaree Bluffs National Heritage Preserve and Muck Swamp of Congaree National Park, and tied into the practical requirements of K-12 education. A limited number of grants, provided by the National Association of Geoscience Teachers, are available to partially reimburse expenses, including K-12 conference and field trip registration costs. **Apply by February 22**, at <http://georgiarocks.us/nagt/grants>
Questions? E-mail Bill Witherspoon, bill@georgiarocks.us

Do you have news to share with the Southeastern Section?

Email the Section Chair, (Elizabeth McClellan, emcclellan@radford.edu), Section Secretary-Treasurer (Don Neal, neald@ecu.edu) or the Sapolite Editor (Blair Tormey, btormey@wcu.edu) and we'll be sure to include it in the next issue of Sapolite!

TO MEMBERS OF GSA SOUTHEASTERN SECTION
Ballot for 2016 - 2017 Officers GSA Southeastern Section

Please vote by completing the section at the bottom and mailing it to GSA postmarked **no later than 1 March 2016**. Biographical information on the candidates is on the following page.

You may also vote online by 1 March at: <http://rock.geosociety.org/ballot/vote.asp?Name=SE>

Access the online e-ballot by using either your GSA member number or the e-mail address associated with your GSA membership. For membership assistance, please contact GSA at: gsaservice@geosociety.org or call (888) 443-4472. You may also submit your completed ballot by Fax: (303) 357-1074.

Section Chair (one year term):

- Robert J. Tracy
 Write-in _____

Chair-Elect (one year term):

- Jonathan Mies
 Write-in _____

Vice Chair (one year term):

- David Spears
 Write-in _____

Secretary-Treasurer (one year term):

- Blair R. Tormey
 Write-in _____

Bylaw Amendment – Removal of a Nonperforming Management Board Member.

Removal of a Management Board Officer. Any officer who fails to perform the duties prescribed in the bylaws, or brings discredit to GSA or the Section in any way, may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the other officers of the management board. Any management board officer may make a motion for removal of another officer. The Section officer who is subject to a motion for removal must be provided an opportunity to respond and present an argument against removal prior to any vote on the motion.

Shall the Southeastern Section By-Laws be amended as shown above?

- _____ **Yes**
_____ **No**
_____ **Abstain**

Mail Ballot To: Section Office, Geological Society of America
PO Box 9140, Boulder, CO, 80301-9140

Mailed ballots should be postmarked no later than **1 March**. You must complete the following section to validate your ballot:

Your Name (printed) _____

Your Signature (required) _____

Your GSA Member Number * (required) _____

* Your 7 digit GSA member number is on the top right corner on the external mailing label. If you need assistance with your member number, call: (888) 443-4472

Biographies of Candidates for 2016 - 2017 Section Officers

Section Chair (one year term)

ROBERT J. TRACY: Petrology. Educ: Amherst College, B.S., 1967; Brown University, M.S.1970; and Univ. of Massachusetts, Ph.D,1975; Prof. Exp: Research Fellow, Harvard Univ. 1975-78; Asst to Assoc Prof., Yale Univ. 1978-1986; Prof, VIRGINIA TECH, 1986-present; Member: GSA; Research: Petrology.

Chair-Elect (one year term)

JONATHAN W. MIES: Structural Geology/Tectonics. Educ: Univ. of New Hampshire, AB 1981; Univ of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, MS 1987, Ph.D. 1990. Prof Exp: UC Foundation Associate Professor of Geology, UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, CHATTANOOGA. Mem: GSA. Res: structural geology, geological education.

Vice Chair (one year term)

DAVID SPEARS: Structural Geology, Public Policy. Educ: Lafayette College, BS 1981; Virginia Tech, MS 1983. Prof Exp: Petroleum Geologist, Chevron USA 1983-1991; Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy 1991-present; STATE GEOLOGIST OF VIRGINIA 2009-present; Mem: GSA. Res: Structural geology, public policy.

Secretary-Treasurer (one year term)

BLAIR R. TORMEY: Stratigraphy. Educ: Pennsylvania State University, B.S., 1996; Univ of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, M.S., 1999; Prof. Exp: Research Scientist, Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines, WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY, 2005-present; Member: GSA; Research: Stratigraphy, paleoclimate, coal and petroleum resources.