



SAPROLITE

NEWSLETTER of the SOUTHEASTERN SECTION
GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Winter 2020-2021

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As I write this letter, I think we all can agree that last year presented us with monumental challenges: personally, professionally, and as a scientific community. The triple whammy of a global pandemic, protests for social justice, and political unrest are unprecedented since the Section's founding in 1947. I hope that the coming year we can come together and move forward with a renewed sense of optimism as we work to end these crises, and recover a sense of normality and greater inclusivity that has been lacking these last 12 months.

The global COVID -19 pandemic has had a huge impact on all of our lives and has been a big adjustment for the section. Most notably, it resulted in the last-minute cancellation of the joint Southeastern-Northeastern section meeting that was to be held in Reston, VA on March 20-22, 2020. This resulted in a loss of income from our major revenue stream – the meeting – but the section remains financially sound. While the decision was both necessary and correct, I can only imagine the heartbreak felt by the organizing committee who worked tirelessly for over a year to bring this meeting together. I would like to thank the meeting General Co-Chairs Arthur Merschat and Patrick Burkhar, Technical Program Co-Chairs Chuck Bailey and Wendell Barner, Exhibits Chair Daniel Harris, Field Trips Co-Chairs Mark W. Carter and Chris Swezey, Short Course Co-Chairs Daniel H. Doctor and Katie Tamulonis, Student Volunteer Chair Wilma Aleman Gonzalez, Treasurer Patrick Burkhart, as well as the meeting sponsors and volunteers. It is hoped that this meeting will be rescheduled for 2023 or shortly thereafter so that their hard work can be realized in a spectacular meeting.

The cancellation of the section meeting, however, freed up funds that had been earmarked for student travel to Reston. Consequently, these funds were transferred to the GSA Foundation's GSA CARES program, providing emergency financial assistance to student members impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We very much appreciate the generous contributions of the membership that helped us stretch these funds so they could reach as many students as possible.

For the time being, the pandemic will continue to affect how we run our meetings. The 70th annual meeting of the Southeastern Section—originally scheduled for Auburn, AL—will be held in an online format during April 2021. A fully virtual format ensures the safety of all involved while providing the content of an in person meeting. We are grateful for the hard work of the organizing committee: General Chair Willis E. (Bill) Hames, Technical Program Co-Chairs

Karen McNeal and Kathryn Brown, Field Trip Chair David T. King, Jr., Sponsorships Chair Charles E. (Chuck) Savrda, Exhibits Co-Chairs Laura Bilenker and Ann Ojeda, Treasurer Haibo Zou, Student Volunteer Chair Ashraf Uddin, Education Programs Co-Chairs Marilyn Vogel and Stephanie Rogers, and Guest Activities Program Co-Chairs Brennan Vanalderwerelt and Ann Ojeda. I appreciate the dedicated work of Bill and the entire Auburn planning committee to pull this off while managing the plethora of issues that now are the norm of daily life. Not only did they put together a great meeting package, but they had to reinvent what a sectional meeting looks like in a pandemic setting. In coming years it will be interesting to see how lessons learned from these trying times influence meeting formats moving forward.

The 2022 meeting in Cincinnati, OH will be a joint meeting between the Southeastern and North-Central sections co-chaired by Rebecca Freeman, University of Kentucky and Craig Dietsch, University of Cincinnati. I wish them well, and I look forward to attending.

On behalf of the Southeastern Section Officers, I wish you a happy, productive and, above all, a safe and healthy 2021.

Sincerely,
Colin D. Sumrall
Chair, Southeastern Section

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Management Board, 2020-2021

Chair:	Colin Sumrall	University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Past Chair:	David Spears	VA Dept. of Mines, Minerals and Energy
Vice Chair:	Bill Hames	Auburn University
Past Vice-Chair:	Arthur Merschat	United States Geological Survey
Chair-Elect:	Scott Harris	College of Charleston
Secretary-Treasurer:	Blair Tormey	Western Carolina University
Student Rep:	Allie Nagurney	Virginia Tech University
Councilor:	Madeline Schreiber	Virginia Tech University

Membership

At the end of December 2020, Southeastern Section membership stood at 2,396 total members, including 766 Professionals, 462 Seniors, 2 Honorary Fellows, 295 Early Careers, 765 Students, 66 K-12 Teachers, and 40 Affiliates.

Financial Status of the Section

At the end of the fiscal year, 30 June 2020, the Southeastern Section Endowment had a balance of \$245,484, and the Southeastern Section Operating Account had a balance of \$92,229, down from \$115,829 at the beginning of FY20. This decrease is largely due to a loss of income from the 2020 Joint SE-NE meeting in Reston, VA, which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. In addition, \$6,184 in expenses were incurred as part of the meeting pre-planning process. The total interest realized was \$2,509 during FY20, and income from members' dues

was \$2,745. Despite the loss of 2020 meeting income, the section funded the Student Research Grants, Student Travel Grants, and general operations of the Section within budget for FY20.

Future Section Meetings

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Local Chair(s)</u>
Auburn, AL (virtual meeting)	April 1-2, 2021	Bill Hames
Cincinnati, OH	April 6-8, 2022	Rebecca Freeman (SE); Craig Dietsch (NC)
Reston, VA	2023 (tentative)	Arthur Merschat (SE) Patrick Burkhart (NE)
Harrisonburg, VA	2024 (tentative)	Steve Leslie and Steve Whitmeyer

Student Research Grants

The Section has two research grant programs, one for undergraduates and another for graduate students. The graduate grant competition in February 2020 resulted in the expenditure of \$7,950 from remaining FY20 funds to support the research of 7 graduate students from a pool of 12 applicants. There were no applicants for undergraduate research grants in April 2020, due to the abrupt shift to remote instruction by many colleges and universities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds for 2020 undergraduate research grants would have drawn from the \$15,000 allocated for FY21, leaving the balance for graduate research grants in the spring of 2021.

Student Travel Grants

The Student Travel Grant program continues to be very popular. In the fall of 2019, the Section expended \$5580 to support the travel of 62 students presenting papers at the annual meeting in Phoenix, AZ.

In the spring of 2019, the SE-NE joint section meeting in Reston, VA was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As there was no student travel to fund, the Southeastern Section Management Board voted to transfer the \$4500 allocated for those student travel grants to the GSA Foundation's GSA CARES program, a program that provided emergency financial assistance to student members impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Section appreciates the matching funds provided by the GSA Foundation and the generous contributions from members. Total student expenditures for 2019-2020 was \$10,080.

69th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Section

The 69th annual meeting of the section was planned for March 2020 in Reston, VA. Unfortunately, the meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Arthur Merschat, at the United States Geological Survey, was the General Co-Chair for the Southeastern Section. A great deal of planning had gone into the meeting, with 6 symposia, 26 theme sessions, 4 field trips, 3 short courses, and 1 special event. A total of 762 abstracts had been accepted, and roughly 1400 attendees were expected. The Section is deeply grateful for the dedicated service of Arthur and the entire Reston committee. The Northeastern and Southeastern sections have committed to return to Reston, potentially as soon as 2023.

70th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Section

The 70th annual meeting of the section will be held *online* in April 2021, graciously hosted by faculty and students at Auburn University in Alabama. Bill Hames will be the Meeting Chair.

Due to the ongoing global pandemic, this meeting has shifted to a fully virtual format to ensure the safety of our membership and GSA staff, as well as the scientific and financial integrity of the meeting. The virtual format will offer new opportunities, not the least of which is an all-access format. A single registration fee will provide access to ALL sessions, workshops, and field trips over the entire meeting window. Field trips are also scheduled over six days to minimize conflict and maximize participation. See the meeting [website](#) for the latest details. The Section is deeply grateful for the dedicated service of Bill and the entire Auburn planning committee, especially considering the shift to virtual format.

Respectfully submitted,
Blair Tormey
Secretary-Treasurer

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION ENDOWMENT DONATIONS

The following people are donors who made a gift to the Southeastern Section Endowment in fiscal year 2020. At the end of the fiscal year, 30 June 2020, the Endowment had a balance of \$245,484. We thank each of you for your generous support!

Katharine L. Avary	Edward M. Dullaghan	Robert J. Moye
Joseph A. Ayers-Irusota	G. Robert Ganis	Andrew K. Rindsberg
Nina L. Baghai-Riding	Felicia Harris	Maegen Rochner
Thomas H. Biggs	Robert D. Hatcher	Sally E. Walker
Edward S. Custer	James A. Heller	Leonard S. Wiener
Gwen M. Daley	Nikita P. Kepezhinskas	Ralph H. Willoughby
Michael E. Davias	Ernest Klatt	Samuel F. Womack
James Deemy	Norman S. Levine	Minghao Wu
Tim Diedesch	Elizabeth A. McClellan	

NEWS FROM AROUND THE SECTION

Important Dates in 2021:

February 1, 2021: Session Submission Deadline, GSA Annual Meeting
February 2, 2021: Graduate Student Research Grant Deadline
February 22, 2021: Auburn (Virtual Meeting) Early Registration Deadline
April 1-2, 2021: Southeastern Section Virtual Meeting hosted by Auburn University
April 1, 2021: Undergraduate Student Research Grant Deadline
October 10-13, 2021: GSA Annual Meeting, Portland, Oregon

THANKS!

Allie Nagurney, a PhD Student at Virginia Tech, has served 3 years as the Student Representative for the Southeastern Section, but will be graduating in May 2021. The Section is grateful for Allie's enthusiasm and dedicated service, both on the Section Management Board and on GSA Council as the President of the GSA Student Advisory Council.

Help Wanted: Southeastern Section Student Representative

The Southeastern Section is currently accepting nominations for a Student Representative to serve on the Section Management Board. The student (undergraduate or graduate) will be appointed by Section Chair, Colin Sumrall, and their term will begin at the April 2021 Section meeting. The Student Representative is a voting member of the Section Management Board and a member of GSA's Student Advisory Council (SAC). GSA's SAC is comprised of student representatives from Divisions, Sections, and Committees, and serves to promote and develop student events for GSA, connect student representatives, and provide a critical link between the GSA student membership and GSA Council.

While serving on the Southeastern Section Management Board, the Student Representative will:

- provide a student perspective to the Management Board
- help promote student engagement in GSA and in the SE Section
- help plan events at the Southeastern Section meeting
- be provided a \$500 travel allowance to attend both the Section and Annual GSA meetings

While serving on the SAC, the Student Representative will:

- represent the concerns of the Southeastern Section on the Student Advisory Council
- attend four 1 hour SAC meetings a year (time commitment is flexible)
- learn more about how GSA works as a professional society
- network with geology students and professionals across the country

If you have specific questions, please feel free to contact the outgoing Student Representative Allie Nagurney, (nagurney@vt.edu).

If you are interested in becoming the next Student Representative, please email Section Chair, Colin Sumrall (csumrall@utk.edu) or Section Secretary, Blair Tormey (btormey@wcu.edu).

Congressional Visits Day Report

Geosciences Congressional Visits Day (Geo-CVD) was held in September 2020 as a virtual event, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The event re-engaged past participants, and thus no student was sponsored by the Section this year. Each year, the Southeastern Section provides funding for a graduate student to participate in the Geo-CVD program. If you would like information on how to participate, please visit the [Geo-CVD webpage](#). GSA remains hopeful that Geo-CVD will return to an in-person format in September 2021.

Do you have news to share with the Southeastern Section?

Email the Section Secretary-Treasurer (Blair Tormey, btormey@wcu.edu) to include it in the next issue of Sapolite!

Vote for Section Officers

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.

IN MEMORIAM

The following are members of the Southeastern Section that we lost between March 2019 and March 2020. If you know of any members that we have lost this year, please notify GSA Membership. Also, if you wish to share any remembrances in the next issue of SaproLite (2022), please contact the Section Secretary-Treasurer, Blair Tormey (btormey@wcu.edu).

Warren A. Evenson	Cross Lanes, WV	10 July 2019
Richard C. Fountain	Deland, FL	01 January 2020
T. Randolph Gray, Sr.	Birmingham, AL	Notified: 03 May 2019
Dennis Lee Hipple	Miami, FL	22 November 2019
Marvin L. Ivey	Largo, FL	05 April 2019
Thomas C. Klekamp	Mandeville, LA	04 October 2018
Andrew McIntyre	Washington, VA	02 March 2019
Andrew H. Merritt	Gainesville, FL	02 November 2019
Neil D. Opdyke	Gainesville, FL	07 April 2019
Dale R. Simpson	Winchester, VA	18 October 2019

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN SECTION
Ballot for 2021 - 2022 Officers Southeastern Section

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

You may 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 your e-mail address that is in your GSA member records. 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):

- () Scott Harris
() Write-in _____

Chair Elect (one-year term):

- () Katie Luciano
() Write-in _____

Vice Chair (one-year term):

- () Rebecca Freeman
() Write-in _____

Secretary-Treasurer (one-year term):

- () Blair Tormey
() Write-in _____

The Southeastern Section Bylaws were amended to be more consistent with those of other GSA Sections. Do you approve the amendments highlighted in the attached pages?

- _____ 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 2021 - 2022 Section Officers

Section Chair (one year term)

M. SCOTT HARRIS, Coastal & Marine Sedimentology and Stratigraphy, and Geoarchaeology. Education: College of William and Mary, B.S. 1988; University of Virginia, M.A. 1992; University of Delaware, Ph.D., 2000. Professional Experience: Associate Professor, COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON, 2008-present; Member: GSA.

Chair Elect (one year term)

KATHERINE E. LUCIANO, Coastal Geomorphology, Seafloor Mapping. Education: College of William and Mary, B.S. 2007; College of Charleston, M.S., 2010; Professional Experience: Coastal Geologist, SOUTH CAROLINA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, 2012-present. Member: GSA.

Vice Chair (one year term)

REBECCA L. FREEMAN, Paleozoic Stratigraphy and Paleontology. Education: Murray State University, B.S. 1988, University of Missouri-Columbia, M.S. 1994; Tulane University, Ph.D. 2011. Professional Experience: Assistant Professor, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY, 2011-present; Member: GSA; NAGT.

Secretary-Treasurer (one year term)

BLAIR TORMEY, Sedimentology and Stratigraphy. Education: Pennsylvania State University, B.S., 1996; University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, M.S., 1999; University of Wisconsin, 1999-2002. Professional Experience: Coastal Research Scientist, WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY, 2005-present; Member: GSA; AAPG; NAGT.