On this cool, rainy autumn evening I’m graced with the honor of writing to our members for our newsletter. At the completion of my third year as executive director, there’s a lot to consider. The summer tourism season is over, our annual fundraiser is just around the bend, and Penn Dixie is winding down the year with our 21st Earth Science Day -- this year renamed to ‘Erie County Earth Science Day’ in honor of our major contributor. Did you know that Penn Dixie is the tenth-highest funded cultural group in Erie County? We’re grateful and also hopeful that the county executive and legislature will continue their support of the cultural community.

Our mission of hands-on science education is pretty cut and dry, but every once in a while I’m tempted to romanticize fossil marine life. In Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea, Jules Vern described witnessing the underwater world for the first time. He wrote:

“The sea is everything. It covers seven tenths of the terrestrial globe. Its breath is pure and healthy. It is an immense desert, where man is never lonely, for he feels life stirring on all sides. The sea is only the embodiment of a supernatural and wonderful existence. It is nothing but love and emotion; it is the Living Infinite.”

Strangely, I have the same feelings about Penn Dixie. Though our creatures are extremely dead, the constant and enlivening presence of science enthusiasts prevents one from being lonely at Penn Dixie. Our fossils are exciting. And, there is energy around our organization that seems to grow each week. Thanks to many efforts, 908 visitors -- plus about 50 volunteers and 18 staff -- descended to Penn Dixie on Saturday, August 25 to help set an inaugural Guinness World Record™ for the World’s Largest Fossil Dig. Check your email for updates while we await official word on the record.

In this short space it is not possible to thank everyone who has helped Penn Dixie during my tenure. So, we’re rebooting our annual report and will aim to distribute this document during the first quarter of 2019. We’re really proud of what we’ve accomplished and I want to be sure to

continued on next page
Educator’s Note

Happy Fall! As it turns cooler, we look forward to great fossil hunting weather. This summer we had many visitors to the site, many taking part in our special programs like Fossil Prep 101 or World’s Largest Fossil Dig. Thank you to the many groups that visited Penn Dixie this summer. I also want to extend a very special thank you to our many volunteers that helped during our World’s Largest Dig. It was our most complex program ever and it would not have been possible without the help from our dedicated volunteers.

This summer our Traveling Fossils brought earth science fun to many people around Western New York. We took part in several programs at different branches of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library for their Libraries Rock! summer program. We were also happy to be back at the Erie County Fair to celebrate Fair Bear's birthday.

**Director’s Note - continued**

Thank those who gave time or other resources in support of our mission.

Before we get to 2019, however, I’m thrilled to reveal the new name for our annual fundraiser: Hops ’N Rocks! Join us on Thursday, November 8 from 6 to 9 pm at Buffalo Riverworks on 359 Ganson Street for a festive evening featuring dinner, drinks, live music, auctions, and all sorts of fun prizes. Robin Evenhouse from Evenhouse Printing in Hamburg will be our special guest auctioneer, too.

Hops ’N Rocks also serves as our annual membership meeting and we’ll take this opportunity to unveil plans for our permanent educational center. You can meet the architect and provide important feedback to us at this early stage in the build process. All ages welcome. For full info and tickets, visit: penndixie.org/hopsnrocks

If you haven’t visited Penn Dixie recently, please consider a trip this fall. We’ve rehabbed the check-in shelter -- featuring solar panels donated and installed by the Burkett Family, repainted the education pavilion, and made many small but hopefully noticeable upgrades to our park. As a nonprofit we seek to reinvest our revenues into creating a stellar visitor experience. Since our guests consistently provide great reviews, I think we’re on the right track. If you don’t believe me, check out our Facebook live video featuring a visitor who dressed like a dinosaur to collect fossils on September 22. How about that enthusiasm? If I can’t finish without calling back to Jules Verne’s analogy. Penn Dixie -- a 54-acre sea of fossils -- feels life stirring on all sides. We have an excellent staff, a cohesive board of directors, and a dedicated crew of volunteers. Our members (you) are incredible boosters and have helped us grow immensely over the past three years. As your executive director, I’m grateful for this supernatural and wonderful existence.

**Phil**

Penn Dixie educators also spent two weeks working with elementary and middle school students in the Medina Central School District for their summer enrichment program.

Soon our 21st Annual Earth Science Day will take place at Penn Dixie. We are expecting a large number of visitors once again this year. As an educator, I love seeing people of all ages having fun learning about earth science from all our talented exhibitors and educators. Earth Science Day is fun for the entire family! And did we mention that it’s completely FREE?! If you are interested in volunteering for the event please email me at holly@penndixie.org.

We still have availability for fall field trips and traveling fossil programs. Fall is a beautiful time to come to Penn Dixie and embark on a fossil hunting adventure! For more information on site visits, to book your group visits, or anything else please call me at (716) 627-4560 or email at holly@penndixie.org.

**Holly**

Director of Education

Membership Categories:

1. **STUDENT** (K-12 or College):
   - 1-year $25 • 2-year $35

2. **SENIOR** (65 & up):
   - 1-year $25 • 2-year $35

3. **INDIVIDUAL**
   - 1-year $30 • 2-year $45

4. **FAMILY** (2 adults and all household children):
   - 1-year $45 • 2-year $70

5. **GRANDPARENTS** (2 grandparents and 5 grandchildren):
   - 1-year $50 • 2-year $85

6. **ASSOCIATE** (includes fossil set):
   - $80/year

7. **CORPORATE** (includes fossil set and guided tour for 10):
   - $100/year

8. **PATRON** (includes fossil set and guided tour for 10):
   - $100/year

**JOIN ONLINE AT penndixie.org**

Complete an application at the site, or call 716-627-4560 to request a paper application via mail.

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**DIG INTO MEMBERSHIP!**

**BENEFITS INCLUDE:**

1. Support conservation of the Penn Dixie Site, a 54-acre preserve in Blasdell, NY
2. Unlimited free admission to the #1 fossil park in the U.S., science lectures, and for most special programs and astronomy nights
3. Discount admission for summer camps, Dig with the Experts, and other special programs
4. Receive The Penn Dixie Chronicle newsletter
5. Receive Penn Dixie eNews updates
6. Merchandise and partner discounts – see our website for the latest info
7. Support the science education efforts of the Hamburg Natural History Society, a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit
Penn Dixie Summer 2018 Calendar

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6 • 9 AM TO 4 PM
21ST ANNUAL ERIE COUNTY
EARTH SCIENCE DAY

Earth Science Day turns 21 on Saturday, October 6! Join us from 9 am to 4 pm, rain or shine, to learn about Western New York’s natural history, ecology, and resources through interactive exhibits and demonstrations in a family-friendly setting. Experience hands-on learning under the big tent from The Buffalo Zoo, Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens, Hamburg Library, Reinstein Woods, SUNY Buffalo Geology Department, Past & Present Rock Shop, and many more. For those interested in learning more about natural resources, our friends at Earth Dimensions will demonstrate the operation of a drill rig during the event.

Thanks to a generous donation, the first 210 children to arrive will receive complimentary fossil collecting trowels. For adults: To celebrate Earth Science Day’s 21st birthday, we will offer complimentary wine tasting from Ten Thousand Vines in Hamburg.

New This Year: The Cass Project brings two art programs to Penn Dixie on Earth Science Day! “Eco-Printing” with Emma Percy will be added to our exhibitor tent. This drop-in workshop will explore a variety of simple techniques for making prints and drawings with plants. Using inks and the pigments within the plants themselves, each visitor can create a unique piece of artwork to take home with them. Separately, our inaugural Artist-in-Residence, Bonnie Rush, will offer guided tours of her Trilobite Labyrinth project at 10 am, 12 pm and 2 pm. Tours — which require a 1/4 mile round trip hike — will originate at the Cass Project table under the big tent.

Thanks to the generous support of Erie County and our sponsors, Earth Science Day is FREE to ALL. No registration needed. All ages welcome. Penn Dixie members may present their membership cards to receive a special thank you gift at the event.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6 • 6:30 TO 9:30 PM
EARTH SCIENCE DAY STARGAZING

Our final astronomy program of the season brings us the two planets and the arrival of the autumn constellations. Without a moon, we’ll have a clear view of Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn, as well as deep space objects including NGC457 ET Cluster and M31 The Andromeda Galaxy. Without a moon, we’ll have a clear view of Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn, as well as deep space objects including NGC457 ET Cluster and M31 The Andromeda Galaxy.

Plus, Paleo Joe Kchodl will give a special science talk the evening before the dig. On Friday, May 17 at 6:30 pm he will present “The Fossil Adventures of PaleoJoe” in the Gateway Building Auditorium, 3556 Lakeshore Road in Blasdell, NY. This family-friendly presentation is FREE for Penn Dixie members AND registered dig guests, or $5 for the public. No registration needed.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9 • 10 AM TO 1 PM
FALL HOMESCHOOL DAY

Learn about the geological history of Western New York with a hands-on science program at Penn Dixie! This special program for homeschoolers includes a complete educational tour of Penn Dixie led by our trained educators. All participants are welcome to take home all the fossils they find.

Registration is $6 per student. There is no charge for children aged two and under. Program is for grades 1-12; please specify your child’s grade when registering.

Rain date: Thursday, October 11, 10 am to 1 pm. Registration is required by 5 pm on Sunday, October 7. Register online at penndixie.org/fall-homeschool-day/

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28
FINAL DAY OF THE SEASON.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8 • 6 TO 9 PM
HOPS ’N ROCKS FUNDRAISER
AT BUFFALO RIVERWORKS

Join us for a festive evening organized by the Hamburg Natural History Society’s Board of Directors in support of Penn Dixie Fossil Park & Nature Reserve. We’ll have dinner, drinks, live music, auctions, and all sorts of fun prizes. Robin Evenhouse from Evenhouse Printing in Hamburg will be our special guest auctioneer. Hops ’N Rocks also serves as our annual membership meeting and we’ll take this opportunity to share some really exciting news. All ages welcome.

Tickets are $35 during pre-sale or $45 after November 1. Tables of 10 are available for $300. Purchase single tickets on our website, at Penn Dixie during normal business hours, or by mailing a check or money order to Hamburg Natural History Society, 3556 Lakeshore Rd. Ste. 230, Blasdell, NY 14219. Purchase a full table by contacting Dr. Phil Stokes at phil@penndixie.org. Ticket includes admission, Buffalo Buffet dinner, one drink, auction entry, door prizes, live music and more. We accept cash, credit, and personal checks at the event.

Tickets & info: penndixie.org/hopsnrocks

SATURDAY, MAY 18 & SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2019
DIG WITH THE EXPERTS

Join us for our signature event — Dig with the Experts! This is our very popular, once yearly opportunity to unearth the best, most complete, and most unexpected fossils at Penn Dixie. We’ll have equipment do the heavy lifting and scientific experts on site to help with locating and identifying the best fossils. You’ll have to do the digging and digging, of course, but you’re guaranteed to find something cool and interesting.

Ticket sales will begin in January 2019. Preregister at penndixie.org/dig-with-the-experts

Plus, Paleo Joe Kchodl will give a special science talk the evening before the dig. On Friday, May 17 at 6:30 pm he will present “The Fossil Adventures of PaleoJoe” in the Gateway Building Auditorium, 3556 Lakeshore Road in Blasdell, NY. This family-friendly presentation is FREE for Penn Dixie members AND registered dig guests, or $5 for the public. No registration needed.
MYTH: Perseus killed Medusa, and on his way back came to Ethiopia. There he found a lovely maiden to be sacrificed to a horrible sea monster: Cetus, a whale. Her name was Andromeda, the daughter of Queen Cassiopeia, who boasted that she was more beautiful than Nereus, the Sea God. Perseus, seeing Andromeda chained to a rocky ledge by the sea, fell in love with her and stayed by her side until the sea monster Cetus arrived. Perseus then cut off the head of Cetus and took Andromeda back to her parents and asked for her hand in marriage, which they gladly gave to him.

WHAT TO VIEW: When viewing this constellation it’s kind of interesting to see that Perseus is just off to the left of Cetus as a constant reminder of the monster’s ill fate. The star Mira varies in magnitude from 2.0 at maximum to 10.0 at minimum, in a period of 331.65 days. At its brightest, Mira is one of the reddest stars that can be seen with an unaided eye and lies around 130 light years away. The brightest star of this constellation is Deneb (sometimes called Diphda) about 68 light years away. Over two dozen galaxies brighter than 12th magnitude are visible here with a very dark sky.