

Pick Of The Literature

by Dr. Donna Phillips

Who wouldn't love to meet a dinosaur hunter? Who doesn't enjoy a good dinosaur book? Who wouldn't love to meet a dinosaur hunter who writes dinosaur books? And what could possibly make it better than for the dinosaur hunter to be someone from Western New York? If these ideas excite you then you are in for a treat!! Joseph Kchodl (otherwise known as "Paleo-Joe") is a real life paleontologist and he will be here to tell his stories of discovery and adventure!

Kchodl is a graduate of Lewiston-Porter High school and received a bachelors degree in Education from Niagara University in 1979. He began his career searching for fossils in the Niagara gorge and went on to discover a 60-foot-long Camarasaurus in Utah in 2008!

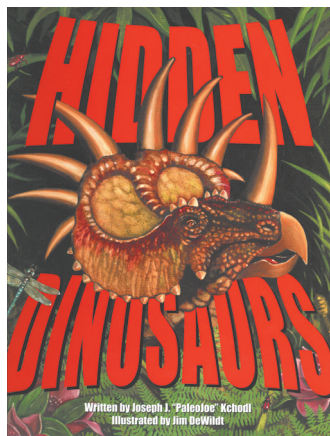
He has written a number of books that incorporate some of his adventures that have been likened, according to *Buffalo Spree*, to "Dinosaur CSI and a cross between Indiana Jones and Jurassic Park for the junior detective set."

In 2001, he won the prestigious Katherine Palmer Award for Paleontology, from the Paleontological Research Institute in Ithaca, NY, in part for his educational efforts.

Known as a wonderful storyteller and accomplished scientist, he has had quite a number of adventures to share

and written numerous books based on his experiences. You can find his collection of local fossils in the Schoelkopf Geological Museum in Niagara Falls.

For the youngest paleontologist, PaleoJoe has written **Hidden Dinosaurs**



(Mackinac Island Press, Traverse City, 2006, \$18.95). This picture book is packed full of information and can be used in many ways. It can be read as a story with simple, poetic, and informative text. It can be used to

discover many interesting facts about dinosaurs in the Dino Data boxes on every other page. Or it can be used to practice looking carefully (just like a paleontologist) to search the illustrations for hidden icons.

In it we learn about kinds of dinosaurs, where they lived, what they ate, how they lived, how and where the fossils were discovered, and the science of paleontology. This book is fun and informative on so many levels.

PaleoJoe is also known for his Dinosaur Detective Club series. In his first book **The Disappearance of Dinosaur Sue** (Charlesbridge Publishing/Mackinac Press, Watertown, 2006, \$7.95), written with Wendy Caszatt-Allenis, there is a



Meet PaleoJoe, Dino Hunter & Author May 14th at Penn Dixie Center Event

Jurassic in the San Rafael Desert of Utah.

The **Penn Dixie Paleontological and Outdoor Education Center** is pleased to have Joseph "PaleoJoe" Kchodl, of Midland, Michigan, speaking on "Camarasaurus Dinosaur Discovery in the Deserts of Utah" on Friday, **May 14, 2010**, at 7pm in the auditorium of the

Gateway Executive Office, 3556 Lake Shore Road, Blasdell.

This previously un-researched site yielded nearly 250 dinosaur bones in the first dig season, encompassing 7 different dinosaur species on location.

PaleoJoe will illustrate how the dinosaurs were found, carefully removed and the preparation required to get them from the field to the laboratory. PaleoJoe will have his books for

sale and autograph before and after the presentation.

Children, scouts, students from all levels, families, and groups are welcome to attend this special program. Plan for an evening of adventure, entertainment, and learning. Who knows? The next world famous paleontologist from Western New York may be sitting in the audience!

Penn Dixie members are **FREE**, non-members \$3 each. Call **716-627-4560** for information and directions.

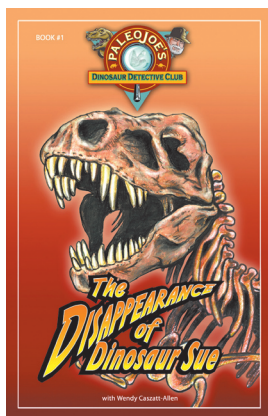
The Penn Dixie Paleontological and Outdoor Education Center, in Hamburg, also provides a variety of events and programs in fossil collecting, geology, astronomy, birding, wetland investigations and studies, summer day camps, group visits, birthday parties, exhibits at science nights and shows, and off-site programs year-round. Visit www.penn Dixie.org to learn more.

Everyone interested in dinosaurs — children, grandchildren, and any kids, age 2 to 102, will have a great opportunity to meet and talk to a dinosaur hunter and author of several children's dinosaur books.

PaleoJoe will bring dinosaurs to life with the story of his 2008 discovery of a 60-foot long Camarasaurus dinosaur and description of the ancient

mystery. What happened to Sue, the most complete skeleton of a tyrannosaurus rex ever found? How could she be missing from Chicago's Field Museum? It takes PaleoJoe, with the help of young Shelly Brooks and Dakota Jackson, to find out.

This book is an interesting look into the world of fossil collecting and smuggling, that involves detective work and an exercise in problem solving. In it we also learn a bit about PaleoJoe himself; his world travels,



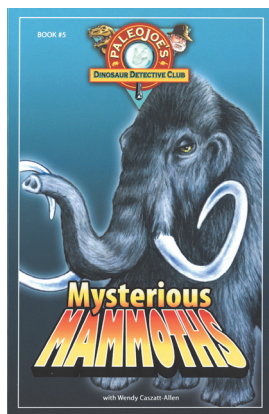
his time in the US Army, and his knowledge of the German language and his CSI skills. Readers will find this story hard to put down. It is written so that most children can read it in upper elementary school and it will teach them without their even knowing it. To make it even more fun, it acts as a flip book. Fan the pages and bring a tyrannosaurus to life as it runs across the page!

PaleoJoe has written four others

books

like this in his series. In **Stolen Stegosaurus** (Charlesbridge Publishing/Mackinac Press, Watertown, 2006, \$6.95) Shelly goes on a dig and discovers Stegosaurus eggs but soon after, they disappear. It is up to PaleoJoe, Shelly, Dakota, and Detective Frank to find out what happened to them. And just like in **The Disappearance of Dinosaur Sue**, there is a cartoon of a Stegosaurus that runs across the pages as you fan it!

Secret Sabertooth (Charlesbridge Publishing/Mackinac Press, Watertown, 2007, \$7.95) is a mystery that involves a missing brother, a sabertooth skull and the La Brea tar pits. There seem to be some unusual happenings in the raptor room in **Raptor's Revenge** (Charlesbridge Publishing/Mackinac Press), and the crew goes to Siberia to look for mammoth tusks and runs into trouble in **Mysterious Mammoth** (Charlesbridge Publishing/Mackinac Press, Watertown, 2008, \$6.95). Each of these chapter books will be a great way to engage your readers in mysteries, paleontology and reading!!



Dr. Donna Phillips is an associate professor in the Education Department of Niagara University where her specialty is children's literature and literacy.

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