



To our members and friends:

August 2023 Newsletter

SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING: Wednesday September 20 7 PM Senior Hall
Human and Robotic Exploration of Antarctica – and Planets!

Not all of Antarctica is covered in ice. The ice-free areas are called dry valleys and the largest of these is the McMurdo Dry Valleys where Dr. Peter Doran has been researching hydrology and climatology for the past 30 years. At the Preserve's General Meeting on Wednesday September 20, 2023, Dr. Doran will present a program on his work.

The McMurdo Dry Valleys is considered one of the world's largest and driest deserts, where there are no birds, plants, or mammals. This dry desert biome supports microbes and microscopic soil invertebrates that can live in the harsh environment. The National Science Foundation (NSF) supports a project called the McMurdo Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) site, which is one of 30 sites around the world that monitors the ecological health of different biomes. Dr. Doran's research was part of this larger project.

Dr. Doran also worked with NASA, which funded research using the dry valleys as a reference, or analog, for the environments of other planets like Mars. September's program will cover this work as well as Dr. Doran's role as vice-chair of the international committee that oversees rules for the responsible exploration of the solar system.

Dr. Peter Doran

Dr. Doran is Professor of Geology and Geophysics, and the John Franks Endowed Chair at [Louisiana State University](https://www.lsu.edu/). Prior to 2015, he was faculty in Earth and Environmental Sciences at the [University of Illinois at Chicago](https://www.uic.edu/).

Dr. Doran specializes in polar regions, especially Antarctic climate and ecosystems. His broad research interests focus on field techniques in aquatic, climate, ecological and astrobiological sciences. Dr. Doran has conducted more than ten field seasons in the Canadian High Arctic and at last count over twenty-five in the Antarctic.

Dr. Doran also applies his expertise in extreme polar environments to planetary science and has been a member of several NASA-funded projects using polar regions as analogs for Mars and icy/ocean worlds. In 2008, former Apollo astronaut Harrison Schmidt nominated him to the Planetary Protection Subcommittee of the NASA Advisory Council where he served until 2017. In 2018, he was appointed to represent the U.S. as a member of the Committee on Space Research Panel on Planetary Protection and became Vice Chair of the Panel in 2022.

Both an Antarctic stream and glacier were named for Doran by the U.S. Geological Survey to commemorate his many significant research contributions conducted on the continent. Doran was elected as a Fellow of the Geological Society of America in 2018



ANNUAL TURKEY RAFFLE, BAKE SALE, AND AUCTION PARTY- Nov 11th, 7 PM

Once again this year our annual fundraiser is back live and in person on the evening of Saturday November 11th after the two year hiatus in '20 and '21 due to the pandemic ! This is our primary annual fund-raising event and accounts for a substantial amount of annual Preserve revenue. The event consists of an auction, bake sale and prize drawings:

AUCTION: We will auction off items donated by members, typically household items, small tools, etc. as well as gift cards from local merchants. Please bring auction items to Senior Hall prior to or in the morning of November 12th tagged with your name (if desired). This year we will make best efforts to upgrade the auction and refrain from auctioning off unwanted junk.

BAKE SALE: Please bring bake sale items to Senior Hall on the day of the event at any time after 9am. We then sell raffle tickets at the event for \$5 for a chance to win a bake sale item.

GRAND PRIZES: The three Grand prizes this year are in cash: \$500, \$250, and \$150. We will also raffle off 30 turkey coupons from Walt's foods (value \$25.00).

DOOR PRIZES: We are also planning to raffle off **Door Prizes** for those members who have bought at least one booklet of tickets and are in attendance that evening.

PIZZA: Early arrivers can purchase pizza and soft drinks for sale after 6:15p. Table snacks and water will be provided free of charge.

RAFFLE TICKET MAILING: In mid-September, you can expect your mail carrier to deliver your raffle ticket booklets for this event to be held **Saturday November 11th, at 7:00 PM**. Included with the ticket booklets is a letter describing this year's event. Individual raffle tickets will again cost \$5 or \$25 booklet of 6 tickets. Please consider purchasing or selling these tickets and return the ticket stubs and payment via mail or in person at Senior Hall (1100 Ridge Road). Tickets may be donated to the needy if you wish; simply note that when returning ticket stubs and payment. Any ticket drawn with this designation will result in the coupon being donated to organizations that serve those in need.

Additional ticket booklets are available at Senior Hall. Stop by during office hours on Saturday mornings 9-noon or call to request additional booklets. (708-798-1850). Again, this year we are able to accept payment for raffle tickets via credit or debit card in person at Senior Hall. **Also** members will receive one complimentary turkey coupon (\$25 value) for selling each block of 6 or more ticket booklets (36 tickets).

For many, many years the enthusiasm of our membership for this event has been gratifying and wonderful. Thanks to you all for your continuing support for this key fund-raising event.

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

This invasive plant (*lythrum salicaria*) has grown in the Preserve for as long as anyone can remember. Although it displays an attractive purple flower, it is nevertheless non-native and crowds out native plants in wetlands and moist areas of prairies. It's a perennial plant that grows 2'-6' high, can produce in excess of 2 million seeds per plant and has thick woody roots that crowd out native plants. You can find it in many areas of the Preserve, especially in the prairie areas around the prairie lakes. Years ago, long time Board member John Newgard, led volunteer efforts at getting them under control with partial short-term effectiveness. Herbicide was used

but care had to be used to spray only on the loosestrife and not on other nearby native plants. Broadcast spraying with herbicide is not advisable for this plant. Efforts were considerable but results were not long lasting.

But we learned of another solution from board member Dave Zaber about 3 years ago. Certain beetles like to eat this plant's leaves--a natural predator. But it is difficult to obtain the Golden Loosestrife Beetle (*Galerucella pusilla*) from commercial insect sources. Demand far outstrips supply. Lucky for us, this year this beetle has found its way into the Preserve on its own. So this season we have observed a dramatic decrease in the amount of purple loosestrife growing in the Preserve. Presumably these bugs will stick around for many years helping to keep the purple loosestrife under control !

BOARD AND OFFICER ELECTIONS

At our May General meeting, you, our members, voted into office the slate of Officers and Directors that were nominated by the Nominating Committee in accordance with our by-laws. Once again all current officers and those general directors with expiring terms volunteered to continue their service. The officers' term of service is one year (Sept 1 to Aug 31; general directors' terms are for three years Sept '23 to August '26). The following candidates were elected:


President	John Brinkman
Vice President	Gerry Tienstra
Treasurer	Dave Smith
Secretary	Greg Busler
Membership Secretary	Shawn Straney
Director Environmental Concerns	Kevin Jennings

General Directors: Carolyn Bury, Tony Talarico, John Newgard, Judy Johnson

General Directors with continuing terms: Mark Biolchin, Jay Eagle, Dave Zaber, John Sandala, Todd Wittenburg, John Sailor, Sam Casella, and Clayton Wassilak

REMINDER: OFFICE HOURS. HONEY AVAILABLE

The Preserve office is open every Saturday from 9am until noon. Wildflower honey from the Preserve is for sale at \$8 for a 12oz "bear" container as well as Preserve hats, mugs, T-shirts. Stop by with any questions or concerns that you might have about membership, Preserve rules, picnic pavilion reservations or other Preserve related issues



Your President, John Brinkman

GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 20TH

7 PM SENIOR HALL

Human and Robotic Exploration of Antarctica –
AND PLANETS !

Dr. Peter Doran, Professor of Geology and Physics at LSU, will present a program on his work of 30 years in the McMurdo Dry Valleys in Antarctica. This is sure to be a fascinating and informative program. See the article in this newsletter for additional details.