NOGS LOG

March 2006

Volume 46, Number 5

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MARCH ACTIVITIES

NOGS Events

March 6

NOGS Luncheon

Joseph Carl Fiduk, of CGG Americas, Inc., will present "Extensional rafting: A new idea for structural control of shelf margin and slope facies deposition in Upper Wilcox strata of South Texas, northwestern onshore Gulf of Mexico"

(See Page 3 for Abstract and Biography)

Contact the NOGS Office for reservations.

Please note the new e-mail address for the NOGS Office is info@nogs.org.

THIS MONTH'S LUNCHEON LOCATION

LE PAVILLON HOTEL

Check with concierge or desk for location

Lunch served at 11:30am

Admission:

wi	th reservation	\$25.00
wi	thout reservation	\$30.00
St	udent Member with reservation	n Free



from the President

If someone would have told me at this time last year that in February 2006 I would be stepping in as NOGS President and trying to help NOGS get back on its feet after a five month hiatus due to New Orleans being devastated by a hurricane... well, you can probably guess what I would have said. If ever there was reinforcement of the old adage, "live every day to the fullest, because you never know what tomorrow will bring", these last five months have done it for me.

First, I'd like to once again thank Bret Hampton for the outstanding job he did while serving as NOGS President, and to wish he and his family nothing but the best in the future. I doubt that any previous NOGS President faced the obstacles Bret did during his eight months as President. His first luncheon in July was cancelled, due to a hurricane which turned out to be a false alarm, only to be followed two months later by Hurricane Katrina. Bret had put together an outline for a very productive year for NOGS, trying very hard to get some new initiatives started. He very quickly found himself scurrying around just trying to find out what cities his Board of Directors were living in, and wondering whether there would be any membership remaining when the city reopened. Bret organized board meetings by conference calls and did a super job of rallying the troops to get NOGS back up



Dear NOGS members and advertisers,

This issue is yet another abbreviated version of the *NOGS LOG*. Please remember our advertisers who are listed in this issue and have advertisements with links on the NOGS website, www.nogs.org.

As we continue to re-constructing NOGS and our services to you, we invite you to visit our new website at www.nogs.org. Like the *LOG*, our new website is a "work in progress." Send comments and suggestions to me at the e-mail address listed below.

Paul Post Editor *NOGS Log* E-mail: log@nogs.org

---continued on page 6---

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NOGS Office

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The office is located at Suite 300, 810 Union Street, New Orleans, LA 70112. Correspondence and all luncheon reservations should be sent to the above address.

Sent to press on February 12, 2006.



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Extensional rafting: A new idea for structural control of shelf margin and slope facies deposition in Upper Wilcox strata of South Texas, northwestern onshore Gulf of Mexico

Joseph Carl Fiduk

to present at the Luncheon on March 6, 2006

ABSTRACT

The prevailing paradigm for Upper Wilcox deposition in South Texas is that margin sedimentation was accommodated by growth faulting and slope failure. This same general mechanism is invoked around the Gulf of Mexico, but fails to explain why Upper Wilcox deltaic sediments are greatly expanded but also relatively confined compared to other Paleogene deltaic centers.

Examination of 2D seismic data in South Texas has identified what is now interpreted to be a large, rafted block of Eocene, Paleocene, and Cretaceous strata, analogous to rafts identified in the Kwanza Basin of Angola. Preliminarily named the "Wilcox raft" because of its association with the Wilcox depotrough, it has been identified in the subsurface extending from Starr County on the Texas - Mexican border, northward over 200 kilometers into Live Oak County, Texas. The actual extent of rafted material may extend farther to the north and/or south. The raft's detachment surface is interpreted to be at the base of the Jurassic Louann salt

The Wilcox raft contains one primary block more than 150 kilometers long and 15 to greater than 30 kilometers wide. The primary raft block may be segmented, and the entire rafted unit may include a number of smaller branching arms, ramps, and offset fault blocks. Various portions of the raft have downdip displacements from 5 to greater than 30 kilometers. The raft is bound on the west by expanded Upper Wilcox (early Eocene) strata and on the east by expanded Queen City (middle Eocene) strata. Other incompletely detached blocks lie to the west of the raft across the Wilcox depotrough. Raft geometries suggest that at least one additional rafted block lies farther basinward of the Wilcox raft, possibly beneath expanded Vicksburg (early Oligocene) strata. The raft system may be segmented along strike by switching vergence of the master fault cutting the Cretaceous, thereby providing

possible local escape points for Wilcox sediments to more distal locations.

A proposal for rafting in this area of South Texas is not entirely new. Earlier modeling and restorations across the Wilcox depotrough have incorporated rafts. However, these models were predicated on large-scale salt withdrawal and incorporated more than three kilometers (>10,000 feet) of autochthonous salt occupying the area of the Wilcox depotrough. We believe that a much thinner autochthonous salt layer existed beneath South Texas. In other areas of the northern Gulf of Mexico where thick autochthonous salt existed, salt stocks are abundant. Although a few salt structures do exist in South Texas, there are very few compared with other interior salt basins. Forward modeling suggests that large sedimentary structures in the Wilcox depotrough, which can be misinterpreted as turtle structures, are related strictly to deposition during raft extension and not salt withdrawal. The geometries can be produced purely by extension on multiple detachments (Louann and lower Paleocene Midway shales) linked by ramps that dip both basinward and landward.

Extensional rafting is known and incorporated into exploration strategies along the South Atlantic margins of West Africa and Brazil, but not in South Texas. Back-filled incisions across raft structures, turbidites draped over or between rafts, and basin floor fans downdip of rafts are known exploration targets elsewhere but not recognized in South Texas. Additionally, because updip extension requires downdip contraction, contractional structures of this age could exist basinward of the raft. Employing a raft model explains why Upper Wilcox shelf margin deposition was confined and opens new exploration possibilities in this mature producing trend.

--- continued at the bottom of page 4 ---

BIOGRAPHY

Carl Fiduk graduated with a B.S. (1979) and an M.S. (1982) in Geology, both from the University of Florida. He later received his M.B.A (1985) degree from the University of Texas of the Permian Basin and his Ph. D. in Geology from the University of Texas in Austin (1994). He has worked for the USGS, Gulf Oil, Discovery Logging, the Texas Bureau of Economic Geology, British Petroleum, the University of Colorado, and as a private consultant. He is a member of the AAPG, SEG, GCSSEPM, HGS, and GHS and is an AAPG Certified Petroleum Geologist. His research

interests cover sequence stratigraphy, sedimentology, salt structural deformation and evolution, basin analysis, shallow and deep marine depositional processes, petroleum systems analysis, and the use of three-dimensional time and depth data in petroleum exploration. On these subjects, Carl has authored 50+ papers and abstracts and has given several hundred presentations. Carl is presently Chief Geologist for CGG Americas, Inc. working with their depth imaging group in Houston.

THE LUNCHEON RESERVATION DEADLINE IS MARCH 1, SO CALL THE NOGS OFFICE - TODAY!

"And Looking Ahead..."

The next luncheon will be April 3. Larry Zarra of Chevron will present "Wilcox Depositional Systems: Shelf to Deep Basin." Contact the NOGS office at 561-8980 or e-mail annette@nogs.org to make your reservation.





In Remembrance of Charlie Ritchey

Charles Harry ('Charlie') Ritchey passed from this life on Sunday August 14, 2005 at the age of 71. Charlie was born in Lafayette and lived in Point Clear, Alabama for 30 years. He was selected All State in high school football. He attended Texas A&M University on a football scholarship, where he played quarterback under 'Bear' Bryant. Charlie received the Mitchell Award in geology and honors for best student at Texas A&M where he received a degree in geology. He earned a juris doctorate from Loyola University in New Orleans in 1968. In addition to being a NOGS member, Charlie was also a charter member of the Plimsol Club and Lamplighter Club.

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New NOGS President Scott Wainwright (center) with February Luncheon guest speaker Dale Bird (left) and former NOGS President Bret Hampton



AAPG Communications Director Larry Nation attended the February 6 NOGS Luncheon to show AAPG's support for NOGS, to acknowledge the historic nature of NOGS and its quick comeback from Hurricane Katrina, and to gain insight for an article involving NOGS and Katrina that will be published in the AAPG Explorer

INFOSTIDBITS

Geology of New Orleans: We do not need to look far for a relevant tidbits subject this month. At the forefront of importance to many NOGS members and New Orleans citizens is to understand how to cope with the aftermath of Katrina. With a brief respite before the 2006 hurricane season, I think we all wonder how the city will fare if another powerful storm hits this year or in the future, and will the protective measures being taken to upgrade the levee system, or to alter the drainage pattern of the city be sufficient to protect citizens and property? I look back to early September this past year when I had my first glimpse of the flood from aerial photos and satellite imagery. The geologic overprint reflected in the flooding pattern was striking. Equally striking was the man-made alteration of the landscape. After making note of these observations to other NOGS members, it was brought to my attention that a relevant paper was published by NOGS in 1980.

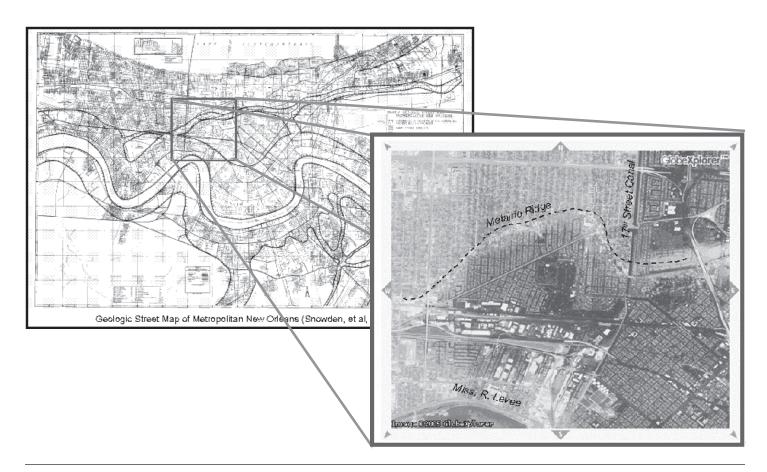
GEOLOGY OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS: Its Relationship to Land Subsidence and Flooding, by J.O. Snowden, W.C. Ward, and J.R.J. Studlick, With a Geologic Walking Tour of Downtown New Orleans, by L.E. Rieg, 1980.

This is an excellent document that draws extensively from the work of J.N. Fisk and others to present the geology of our city in non-technical fashion - written for the residents of New Orleans. To read the paper in light of Katrina validates the prophetic relevance of this work and shows the importance of understanding history - both geologic and cultural. Given our history, we should ask ourselves what we as a Society can do to educate New Orleans area residents, and at the same time enhance the relevance of NOGS during the rebuilding of the City. Perhaps a good start would be to read this paper.

The paper can be purchased through the AAPG bookstore as part of a 3-CD set that includes all of the technical articles published by NOGS. Price is \$95, and can be ordered on-line at www.aapg.org/eSeries/source/orders

For links to interesting Katrina/Rita related websites, visit the DNR website at www.dnr.louisiana.gov and follow the link "DNR provides weblinks of interest" specifically at: www.dnr.louisiana.gov/sec/execdiv/pubinfo/newsr/2005/0904sec-katrinalinks.ssi

Robert Rooney



President's Message (continued from page 1)

and running. Bret did have some help after getting things started though, and I don't want to neglect the tremendous job Annette Hudson did in getting the NOGS office back up and running and the entire NOGS Board of Directors, a very dedicated group of individuals which I intend to rely on heavily in the fours months of my term as President.

Second, I'd like to thank all of the NOGS members who worked so hard on the 2005 GCAGS Convention that had been scheduled for the end of September. I have no doubt that Jim Zotkiewicz and his committee were about to put on one of the best GCAGS conventions that had been held in years. The planned symposium on Coastal Processes and Restoration could not have been a more timely idea, and the importance of the topic to our city, state, and country has been magnified many fold by recent events.

In the next several months NOGS will face many challenges as we struggle to find our equilibrium in post-Katrina New Orleans. My guess is that it will be September before we get a good handle on what our membership will look like going forward. Good news for NOGS and the city is that it appears most of the companies displaced by the hurricane intend to return over the next six months. As our usual meeting place for our luncheons is closed and will not be reopening for at least a year, the location for our monthly luncheon will probably change

Brenda E. Reilly

somewhat frequently in the near future as we try to find the best location for everyone. Costs have gone up for most everything and we will do our best to keep our costs as low as possible while continuing to offer a strong technical program. Please keep a close eye on the luncheon announcements every month, so that you can make sure that you show up at the right location. Even if you suffered little personal damage to your home or business from the storm, I think that it's important that we get together as often as possible with friends and colleagues to exchange ideas about our business and our city, foster new relationships, or to just vent a few of the frustrations we all feel daily as a result of the changes that have been forced upon us over the last several months.

More good news for NOGS as we move forward is that our industry is stronger than it has been in years. Record commodity prices have increased profits for exploration and service companies. Whereas not all of the general public sees this as a good thing, those of us who have suffered through the ups and downs of our industry over the last few years can appreciate the opportunities that are presented when the industry is healthy. Our industry provides the fuel on which our country runs, and I have always been proud make my living in an industry as important to this country as ours; a healthy and strong oil and gas industry can only help us, our city, and our state rebuild better than before.

Scott Wainwright

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South Louisiana and Offshore Exploration and Production Activity

While We Were Gone ...

- Chevron on December 20 announced the Knotty Head discovery in Green Canyon Block 512, ~170 miles southeast of New Orleans. The well was drilled in ~3,500 feet of water to a total depth of 34,189 feet, making the discovery currently the deepest well drilled in the Gulf of Mexico. The well encountered more than 600 feet of net pay in multiple zones. Analysis indicates high quality crude oil in good quality reservoir sands. Further drilling is planned to determine the extent of the discovery. "The Knotty Head discovery is part of an extensive middle-to-lower Miocene play we are aggressively pursuing within the Mississippi Fan Foldbelt," said Bob Daniels, Anadarko Senior Vice President, Exploration and Production. Chevron owns a 25 percent interest in Green Canyon block 512. Other owners include Nexen Petroleum Offshore U.S.A. Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Nexen Inc., (25 percent), Anadarko Petroleum Corporation (25 percent), and BHP Billiton (25 percent). Nexen Petroleum Offshore U.S.A. Inc. is the operator.
- Chevron continued its string of successes with an announcement on January 4, 2006 of a discovery well at the Big Foot Prospect in Walker Ridge Block 29, ~225 miles south of New Orleans. The Big Foot #2 discovery was drilled in ~5,000 feet of water to a total depth of 25,127 feet and encountered as much as 300 feet or more of net oil pay. "... the Big Foot discovery further validates the extensive middle-to-lower Miocene play we are aggressively pursuing within the foldbelt area," said Bob Daniels, Anadarko Senior Vice President, Exploration and Production. Chevron owns a 60 percent working interest in Big Foot. Other owners are Anadarko Petroleum Corporation with 15 percent, Plains Exploration & Production Company with 12.5 percent, and Shell with 12.5 percent.
- **McMoRan** continued its successful onshore South Louisiana and GoM Shelf deep drilling. For their most recent update, go to http://www.mcmoran.com/pdf/2006/011906.pdf
- Production has been reestablished in the North Thibodaux Field located in Lafourche Parish.
 Quest Exploration LLC directionally drilled the #1 Albert Caldwell to a total depth of 10,928 ft.
 M.D. The surface location of this well is located in Sec. 72-14S-16E and the BHL is in Sec. 74.
 Seventeen (17) feet of gas was logged in the "Barnhart Sand", and eight feet in the "10,800' Sand".
 Completion was in the Barnhart from perforations at 10085-90 ft. On test, the well flowed at a rate of 1,395 MCFGPD and 10 BCPD on a 1/8" ck. with 3445 psi FTP and 3571 psi SITP. The take point in the Barnhart Sand is located 400 ft. southeast of the Roeser Pendleton #1 Southdown Sugars well. This well was competed as a 12,379' dry hole when it was drilled in 1951. However, eighteen (18) feet of gas pay in the Barnhart was logged, which was considered non-commercial at that time. Geological evaluation is underway to determine the feasibility of additional drilling.
- In the eastern part of the Central GoM, Enterprise Products Partners LP, Houston, signed agreements with the Atwater Valley Producers Group (Anadarko Petroleum Corp., Dominion Exploration & Production Inc., Kerr-McGee Oil & Gas Corp., Hydro Gulf of Mexico LLC (formerly Spinnaker Exploration Co.), Devon Energy Corp., and Energy Resources Technology Inc. [a wholly owned subsidiary of Cal Dive International Inc.]) to increase the processing capacity of the Independence Hub platform by 150 MMCFGPD to a total capacity of 1 BCFGPD. The deep-draft semisubmersible platform will be located on Mississippi Canyon Block 920 in 8,000 ft of water, where it will now process gas from 10 fields. The \$28 million expansion project includes increasing, by the same amount, the transportation capacity of the Independence Trail natural gas pipeline, which will transport the gas to the Tennessee Gas Pipeline system in West Delta Block 68. The expansions are required to accommodate expected natural gas production from three discoveries made in the area since the project was initially announced. The facilities, currently under construction, are expected to be installed in 2006 and receive first production in 2007. Both the platform and the pipeline are fully subscribed by the Atwater Valley Producers Group for the first 5 years of service.





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