



Think & Believe

A Publication of Alpha Omega Institute

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Creation Vacations

(by Dave and Mary Jo Nutting, with Dorothy Hahn)

As summer approaches and the days grow warm, the thoughts of children and adults alike turn to VACATION! Even if we don't get a "real vacation," the long summer evenings often provide a break from routine and opportunities for "mini-vacations." How will we use this precious time? Will we be caught up in meaningless "entertainment" and "amusement," or will we invest it in building relationships and deepening our walk with God?

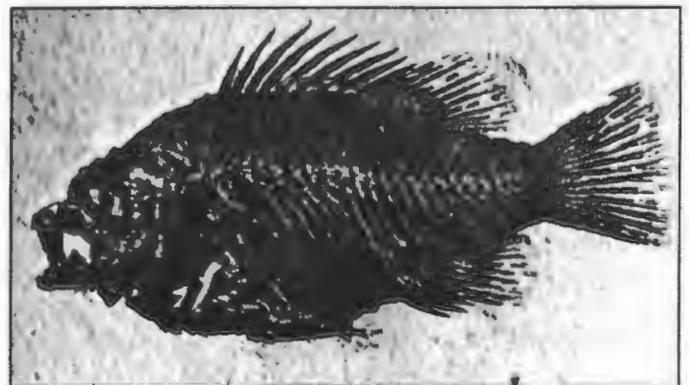
The Creation Vacations offered by Alpha Omega Institute provide one excellent opportunity for you and your family to take time for **relationships, recreation, refreshment, renewal, and reflection**. The cool, clean mountain air and beautiful camp settings help to refresh your body and soul as you turn your thoughts to your Creator. Depending upon your needs and interests, you can choose challenging physical activities or restful, relaxing moments of quiet reflection by a sparkling mountain stream. Teaching times are designed to stimulate your thinking and renew your mind through the truth of God's Word. Your spirit will be refreshed as you reflect on the character of God revealed in the beauty and order of His Creation. Relationships will be enhanced by relaxed mealtimes, shared experiences, and fellowship with family and new friends.

Even if you can't make it to one of our special "Creation Vacations" this summer, you can create your own. Instead of filling your "vacation" to the brim with sports, TV, movies, games, and man-made entertainment, try spending time enjoying God's handiwork. Instead of driving thousands of miles, trying to "take it all in," and "see" all you can, take time to get to selected portions of God's creation.

Consider using your vacation to specially seek Him: to see His handiwork in the stars and His loving care in the lilies of the field; to marvel at His power in a

thunderstorm and His love of beauty in a sunset; to thank Him for health and strength as we hike or play; to enjoy His imagination and creativity displayed in His creatures in the zoo, in the wilds or in your own backyard; to worship Him for His majesty exhibited in the soaring mountains, the crashing waves, or the towering redwoods.

Why not ask God to help you this summer to learn more of His character: "His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature [which are] clearly seen, being understood through what has been made? (Rom. 1:20) "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." (Rom 12:2) Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28) Does that speak to you where you are? Make your vacation this year a "Creation Vacation," a time to learn about and enjoy your great Creator. (See Notes and Quotes for "mini-Creation Vacation" ideas.)



The Fish of Fossil Butte National Monument
(See Spotlight on Science)

NOTES & QUOTES

■ **Field Trips and Mini-Vacations:** With even a day or so we can take a mini Creation Vacation. Here are just a few suggestions. How many more can you think of? Send us your ideas.

□ **Fossil Dig:** Spend some time digging fossils in a road-cut, quarry, creek-bank, etc. (Check local laws and get permission first!) Think about the evidence for rapid burial and Flood deposition. Meditate on the consequences of sin in your own life and the lives of others. Thank God for His mercy and grace in providing the way of escape by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

□ **Sheep Watch:** Spend some time with a shepherd, observing the sheep and the shepherd's care of them. Learning all you can about sheep. How are we like sheep? How is Jesus the Good Shepherd?

□ **Vineyard Adventure:** Meditate on John 15 as you spend time in the vineyard and with the vinedresser. Do you want to be a fruitful vine? Only as we abide in Him will we bear much fruit.

□ **Star Party:** Get away from the city lights on a clear, starry night. Bring some friends and a telescope if you like. Meditate on the majesty of God and the wonder of His care for you. (Psalm 8)

□ **Gold Panning:** Go ahead. Find a mountain stream and try your hand at gold panning. Think about the prospectors of old who dedicated their lives to striking it rich. Then meditate on Proverbs 2. Are you seeking for God's wisdom as for silver and hidden treasure?

□ **Harvest Adventure:** Spend some time in a field just before harvest. Observe and remember the words of Jesus: "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." Are you praying for workers for the harvest? Are you willing for God to answer your prayer through you?

■ **Creation Walks:** God wants us to learn about Him and fellowship with Him. He made the world for us to enjoy and to direct our attention to Him. Maybe some of the following walks and meditation suggestions will help you do this.

□ **Micro-walk:** Marvel at the intricacy in God's creation. Pay attention to His ingenuity and care for details in little bugs, tiny flowers, grains of sand, etc. God cares for every detail in our lives too!

□ **Texture Walk:** Feel the variety of textures God has made – smooth stones, slippery mud, sticky weeds, soft puppies. What "textures" has He brought into your life during the past year – joys, sorrows, busyness,

routine? Thank Him that He has a time and purpose for everything.

□ **Blind Walk:** Go in pairs, one blind-folded, one guide. Without using your sense of sight, explore what God has made. Think about the verse, "We walk by faith, not by sight." (II Cor. 5:7) Thank God for your eyes, and your faith.

□ **Look Up Walk:** We often spend a lot of time looking down. Find a relatively smooth place to walk so you won't stumble, and "Look up!" Meditate on the fact that some day Jesus will come again with the clouds (Rev. 1:7). Think of what it would have been like to be there when the voice came out of the heavens at Jesus' baptism saying, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased." (Mark 1:11)

□ **Flower Walk:** Take time to "smell the roses" and "consider the lilies." Are you anxious about anything? Jesus said our heavenly Father knows everything we need. "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you." (Matt. 6:33)

□ **Wet Walk:** Enjoy God's refreshing rain on a warm summer day. Take some time to let His Word refresh you and do its work in your life. "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth, and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it." (Is. 55:10,11)

■ **Longer Creation Vacations:** Design your own or come to one of ours! Learn more about your Creator, prepare yourself to "give an answer to every one who asks," enjoy a week in God's beautiful creation.

□ **Redcloud Family Mountain Adventure:** A perfect place to challenge yourself or relax and meditate in God's fantastic mountains. Confidence and trust-building activities like rappelling, ropes course and peak climbs are available. So are jeep trips to old mining towns, horseback trail rides, mountain bikes, canoes, fishing, hiking and relaxing. Something for everyone! (There's still room in the Aug. 20-25 session.)

□ **Id-Ra-Ha-Je Creation Family Camp:** Avoid the crowds and rowdy parties over Labor Day Weekend. Christian fun, fellowship and learning in a beautiful mountain setting. Creation teaching, exciting activities, singing, and more. A great way to wrap up the summer.

■ Hope to see you there! Call today for more information.

SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

The Fish of Fossil Butte National Monument

Fossil Butte National Monument located near Kemmerer, Wyoming, is a great place to include in your Creation Vacation. It is literally a monument to catastrophic geologic processes. The area is famous for the multitudes of perfectly-preserved fossilized fish, ranging from fingerling size to several feet in length. The assemblage of fossils includes at least 20 species of fish, turtles up to 6 feet long, crocodiles, insects, and many plants including large palm fronds. These are entombed in the layers known as the Green River Formation which is made up of laminated limestone, mudstone, and volcanic ash.

These fossils exhibit intricate detail. Not only are the skeletons most frequently preserved with every fin in place, but also the teeth and scales. The preservation is so perfect that most visitors are amazed and wonder how it happened. Usually, when fish die, they deteriorate rapidly and are hardly recognizable as fish in a very short time. The excellent preservation indicates that they were buried quite rapidly, otherwise there would have been much more widespread signs of decay. How fast was the burial? To give an idea, some larger fish were found with smaller fish in their mouths, evidently eating their lunch when trapped by sediment. Another fish was found squashed flat from top to bottom in swimming position as it tried to escape the weight of sediment on top of it. Large slabs of rock have also been uncovered which have hundreds of perfectly preserved fish on the same surface, indicating mass mortality.

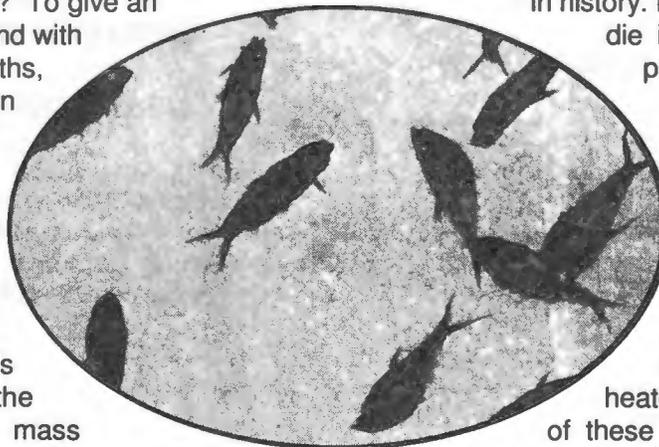
What is the explanation for this region? The literature distributed by Fossil Butte National Monument says that these fish and other creatures lived in a large lake "50 million years ago" when this part of Wyoming was subtropical. Seasonal fluctuations coupled with occasional episodes of volcanic activity supposedly produced many of the layers in the area. Exactly how the specific layers exhibiting evidence of mass mortality were formed is considered an "unsolved mystery" by the "experts."

Several possible models have been proposed, but there is no uniform explanation and many of the suggested mechanisms are seriously in question or have already been abandoned. Models involving

superblooms of poison-emitting blue-green algae and sudden changes in water temperature or salinity are still under consideration. One early model proposed that there was a toxic zone in the lake into which, over the course of time, great numbers of fish swam and died. Supposedly the toxic zone kept them from decaying until they were slowly buried. This model has several major problems, though, including the fact that the layers of mass burial are not confined to the deeper zones. Even the widely-accepted idea of seasonal fluctuations has come under attack recently and one of the National Monument's own publications admits that "geologists now question the classic 'varve' model (seasonally deposited laminae), thought to have occurred at Fossil Lake." Research continues, and undoubtedly more models will be suggested, but it is important to remember that no one was there to see what really happened.

Creationists who accept the Biblical account of the global Flood are attempting to understand the evidence in a manner consistent with that earth-changing event in history. Did the fish buried in Fossil Butte die in that great Flood or did they perish during the aftermath of the Flood, after the "mountains rose up and valleys sank down?" Great inland seas could have been formed as the land masses came up or as deep basins filled. Volcanic activity associated with the motion could have added toxic chemicals to the water or even heated the water in certain sections of these inland seas. This would have driven the oxygen out of the water and caused suffocation of the fish which would then be found in mass concentrations. Continued heating of the water may have caused massive precipitation of limestone which today encases the fossils. Perhaps further research will yield more clues to the puzzle.

If there really was a global Flood, one would expect to find "millions of dead things buried in these rock layers laid down by water all over the earth," as Ken Ham so frequently states. Fossil Butte clearly illustrates this prediction, but more research is needed to understand the specifics of how it fits in the overall time sequence of events during and following the Flood. Stay tuned for further developments.



EVENTS

(Call local contact for time and place.)

May: Nuttings speak in Mongolia!

Jun 5-9: Loma, CO: Loma Community Church VBS
Contact Fred Voltmer 970-858-7171.

Jun 15-17: Denver, CO: CHEC Homeschool Conference
Contact 303-388-1888.

June 19-23: Kremmling, CO: Kremmling Comm Chur VBS
Contact Tom Johnson, 970-724-9696.

June 26-30: Kremmling, CO: Mount Elam Bible Camp
Contact Tom Johnson, 970-724-9696.

July 2-7: Collbran, CO: Twin Peaks Science Adventure
Contact us, 970-245-5906.

July 17-21: Paonia, CO: VBS
Contact Penny Sutton, 970-527-3527.

July 26-29: Roggen, CO: Homestead Bible Camp
Contact Robert Korthuis 303-732-4501.

Aug 7-11: Westminster, CO: Highland Baptist VBS
Contact Rick Anderson 303-428-0622.

Aug 13-18: Lake City, CO: Redcloud Mountain Adventure
Contact us, 970-245-5906.

Aug 20-25: Lake City, CO: Redcloud Mountain Adventure
Contact us, 970-245-5906.

Aug 25-27: Somerset, CO: Id-Ra-Ha-Je West Family Camp
Contact Sam Kloberdanz 970-243-9247.

Sept 1-4: Bailey, CO: Id-Ra-Ha-Je Creation Family Camp
Contact Rod Adams, 303-674-8442.

Sept 17-19: Walla Walla, WA: Trinity Baptist
Contact Alan Walter 509-529-7447.

Sept 19-24: Kennewick, WA: Details in progress.
Contact us, 970-245-5906.

Sept 17 & 24: Basalt, CO: Basalt Bible Church
Contact church, 970-927-4342.

Please keep this schedule and pray for us!

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

In This Issue:

- Creation Vacation Ideas**
- Fish of Fossil Butte**
- NEW! Grand Canyon Video**
- FIRST ISSUE: KIDS THINK & BELIEVE!**

NEW! KIDS THINK AND BELIEVE TOO!

You asked for it and we're pleased to include the first issue of **Kids Think and Believe Too!** written by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson, Directors of Alpha Omega's children's ministry team, the **Creation Puppeteers**. We hope your children will enjoy and learn from this NEW publication designed especially for them. If you don't have children, please **find** some and pass it on. (Oh, alright, you can read it first. Bet you can't resist!) Feel free to copy and distribute to as many kids as you wish. (Freely, though ... Freely you have received, freely give.) Pray for Lanny and Marilyn as they take on this new project, and send your comments and feed-back. They're anxious to make it a real tool in helping children stand firm!

PRAYER NEEDS

- Nuttings:** Mongolia Trip: Safety, Health, Good Communication, Effective Ministry, Safe Return Home.
- Johnsons:** Full summer of VBS and camps: Safety, Health, Opportunities to reach many children & adults.
- Donna Henderson:** Wisdom in "holding down" the home front; Office equipment to work well.
- God's provision** of finances to continue on-going ministries and expand into new areas.

ATTENTION!

WESTERN COLORADO READERS!

"DINAMATION" TOURS NOW AVAILABLE

Take a **creationist tour** of the very evolutionary Dinamation Science and Learning Center. Learn how dinosaurs fit with Scripture. Terry Bridgman is heading up this project and would love to take your group for a tour. Call today to book your custom tour. 970-245-5906.

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