

Eastern Section EMD Report March 14, 2006

EMD Sessions in 2006 Eastern Section Meeting

The 2006 Eastern Section AAPG Meeting will be held at the Buffalo-Niagara Adam's Mark hotel in Buffalo, NY from Sunday, October 8 through Wednesday, October 11. The technical program will include at least one EMD session, with an emphasis on drilling activity and historical gas production from Devonian black shales. Field trips for the meeting will be provided by the local host, the New York State Geological Association, and will include at least one trip along the shoreline of Lake Erie to examine outcrops of Middle and Upper Devonian black and gray shales.

The first commercial gas well in the United States was drilled in 1821 along the bank of Canadaway Creek in the town of Fredonia, an hour's drive southwest of Buffalo. Total depth of this well was only 27 feet, into the black Dunkirk Shale Member of the Perrysburg Formation. The initial flow of gas was sufficient enough to light 30 burners and an inn, but after the well was deepened to a depth of 70 feet, enough gas was produced to light the streets and public buildings of Fredonia. A small plaque in the town of Fredonia marks the location of this gas well, the first of more than 300 to be drilled to the Dunkirk Shale in the shoreline region of New York in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

I have contacted the Technical Program Chairman, Taury Smith, to inquire if he plans to add any sessions on coal or coal bed methane. His original plan was to offer attractive sessions on the Trenton-Black River play, Devonian sandstone plays, Devonian shale plays, and a reservoir characterization session based on core studies.

Other EMD Events at the Eastern Section Meeting

Traditionally, the Eastern Section hosts an All-Division Luncheon for members of EMD, DPA and DEG. Usually, a speaker is selected who will address a common theme for all of the division members, but no announcement has been made as yet regarding this year's speaker.

The Eastern Section meeting always begins with an Opening Session and Awards Ceremony, which is similar in many respects to the Opening Session at the national meeting. During the ES Opening Session, all three Division Presidents are invited to make brief comments about their respective division.

The Eastern Section recognizes the person who gives the best coal paper in an EMD session with the Ralph L. Miller Memorial Award, and also recognizes the best poster presentation with the EMD Best Poster Award. Both were established in 1990, and since its inception, the Ralph L. Miller Award has been expanded, such that it now is given in recognition of the best paper on any topic in an EMD session.

During the 2005 Eastern Section Meeting in Morgantown, I worked with the Technical Program Committee to develop a special session during which AAPG leaders could give 30-minute, technical talks. This new initiative was well received by the national officers, seven of whom participated, and by Eastern Section members, and opened new lines of communication among the officers and members. I have requested that the Technical Program Chair for the 2006 meeting at least consider a similar session, and if he does agree to do so, I have offered to assist him with it.

Recent Meetings/Events of Interest

Coalbed Methane Reservoir Engineering; October 18, Morgantown, WV. One-day short course to provide the necessary background for making informed decisions about developing coal bed methane prospects and optimizing the recovery and economics of existing coal bed methane operations.

North American Coal Bed Methane Forum; October 25-26, Morgantown, WV. Included a short course on coal bed methane reservoir engineering.

Coal in your tank: the ultra-clean transportation fuel of the future? October 28, Morgantown, WV. The first talk in a new energy seminar series at West Virginia University. If you are interested in this presentation, power point slides can be seen by going to <http://www.nrcce.wvu.edu/news.cfm> where a link is provided.

The Barnett Shale: A Useful Analog for the Appalachian Basin Devonian Shale Play? Presentation during the IOGA-WV winter meeting, January 31, Charleston, WV.

New Microhole Coiled Tubing Trend in Drilling Shale Wells: Presentation during the IOGA-WV winter meeting, January 31, Charleston, WV.

Evaluating the Barnett Shale Production Performance Using an Integrated Approach; March 14, 2006, Pittsburgh, PA. Presentation at the monthly meeting of the local AAPG affiliated society, the Pittsburgh Association of Petroleum Geologists, and the local SPE chapter.

Upcoming Events of Interest

North American Coalbed Methane Forum; April 18-19, Canonsburg, PA

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas G. Patchen
ES Councilor