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Newsletter #8 December 2019

Coldigioco/Le Montagne di San Francesco

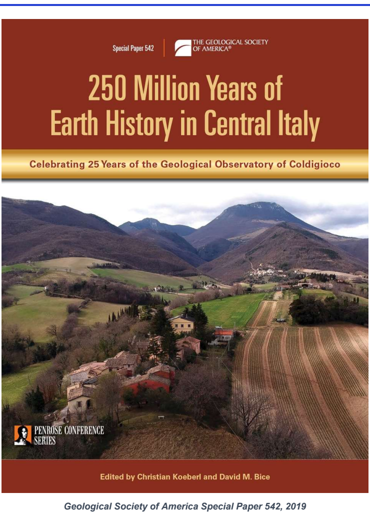
Coldigioco is a geological, artistic, and educational institute in the Marche Apennine Mountains of Italy, devoted to interdisciplinary research and teaching.

Dear Friends of Coldigioco,

This year we are proud to announce the publication of Geological Society of America Special Paper 542, ***250 Million Years of Earth History in Central Italy: Celebrating 25 Years of the Geological Observatory of Coldigioco***, edited by Christian Koeberl and David Bice. The book contains 28 papers dealing with geological research on the Umbria-Marche Apennines. Much of the research is a culmination of 25 years of geological fieldwork and studies, many using the facilities of the **Geological Observatory of Coldigioco** and supported by the **Associazione Le Montagne di San Francisco**, our Italian non-profit Association.

This year we sponsored geological field courses from American colleges and universities, the European Big History Network meeting, art classes and shows, theatrical productions, and cultural events. Our interdisciplinary scientific, educational, and artistic programs are made possible because of the support of our many friends of Coldigioco, and we thank you most warmly.

Coldigioco: A Center of Geological Research



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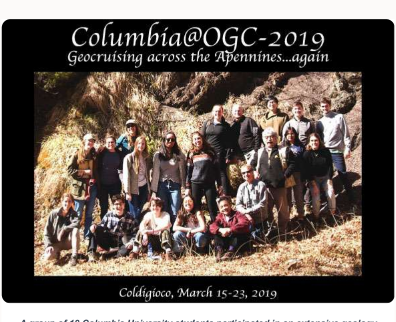
Here you can order Coldigioco GSA Special Paper 542

Columbia University's Apennine Explorers

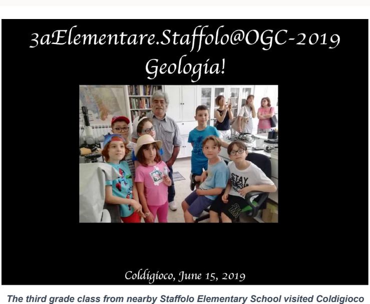


A group of 18 Columbia University students participated in an extensive geology field course led by Steven Goldstein and Sandro Montanari.

Appalachain State/North Carolina State Universities Joint Field Program

Appalachian State and North Carolina State Universities held a joint field geology program in Italy, with 16 students. Field instructors were Dr. Gabriele Casale (App State and former OGC student), Dr. Ethan Hyland (NCSU and former Carleton/OGC student in 2003), and Dr. Sandro Montanari. Joining the group was Hannah Riegel, Visiting Assistant Professor at App State, who got her PhD from the University of Camerino during the field program.

Future Geologists? Staffolo Elementary School



The third grade class from nearby Staffolo Elementary School visited Coldigioco for a lecture by Sandro Montanari on the extinction of the dinosaurs. They were accompanied by Maestra Laura Bocci and some parents.

New Mexico Tech Team Studies Frasassi Caves

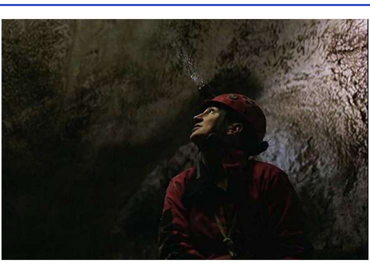
Dr. Dan Jones, assistant professor of Earth and Environmental Science at New Mexico Tech, who did most of his PhD thesis studies in the Frasassi Caves with Jenn Macalady as supervisor, came with two students and his wife Tess to start a new program of research on the gypsum deposits and sulfidic biochemical processes in the Frasassi Caves. With the group was science journalist Donna Lu, who wrote an article in the New Scientist magazine about Dan's and Jenn's research at Frasassi.

New Scientist Article

Associated Colleges of the Midwest Program

The Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) fall program included 10 students, Prof. Laura Peterson (Luther College, Iowa) as program director and geology teacher, and Sandro Montanari as co-director and geology teacher, Paula Metallo as art and Italian teacher, and Lucia Holte (Luther College) and Pietro Giacomini (University of Pisa) as TAs.

Penn State's Astrobiology Team Investigates Origins of Life



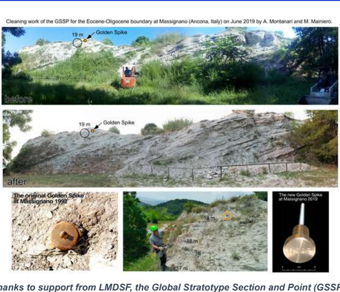
*Jenn Macalady, geomicrobiologist/astrobiologist at Pennsylvania State University, was featured in an award-winning documentary film **THE MOST UNKNOWN** that was screened this year at the Italian National Museum of Science and Technology in Milan, the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D.C., the National Geographic Science Festival in Rome, and over 50 theaters in the USA and Europe. The film features 9 scientists doing cutting-edge research ranging from astronomy to neuroscience who interview each other.*

Research Supported by l'Associazione Le Montagne di San Francesco

Jenn and her speleogeo research team have produced exciting information on the origins of life from micro-organisms found in the Frasassi Caves. Congratulations to Jenn's postdoc Brandi Cron (in photo) for her first research publication on sulphur formation.

Macalady Research Team Activities

Restoration of Massignano Type Section



Thanks to support from LMDSF, the Global Stratotype Section and Point (GSSP, or "Golden Spike") of the Eocene-Oligocene boundary (33.9 Ma) at Massignano have been cleaned off and restored, so that this essential document of Earth history is again scientifically useful. Click below to see a video of the work in progress!

Play EARTHSHAKING Video

European Big History Educators

We welcomed the European Big History Network who held their meeting/workshop at Coldigioco in September. Jesse Bos and Paula Metallo organized the meeting, and Sandro Montanari and Jan Smit led field trips to the K/T Boundary and Frasassi caves. Participants were university and high school Big History teachers from Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Russia, and Spain. The agenda included educational methodology for teaching Big History and plans for Big History teacher exchange between countries.

Celebrating Art from Coldigioco to the Moon

Our Moon. Longing, Art and Science.

Coldigioco artists Paula Metallo and Dona Jalufka at the opening of a special exhibit, "Our Moon. Longing, Art and Science" at the Natural History Museum of Vienna in October. From left, Museum Director Christian Koeberl, Paula, film director James Benning, Dona, and artist Florian Raditsch. The exhibit celebrates the 50th anniversary of the first manned lunar landing and shows the moon from scientific and artistic perspectives.

https://www.nhm-wien.ac.at/en/moon

Dona Jalufka

https://dona-jalufka.at

Paula Metallo

http://paulametallo.com

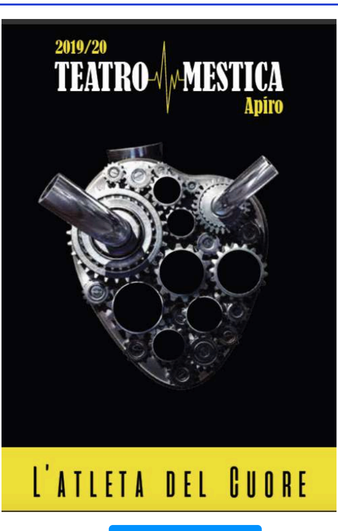
A Gift to Apiro from ACM Students

Art teacher Paula Metallo created the mural project which her Science and the Aesthetics students designed and painted in the nearby town of Apiro. The mural depicts geological strata, as well as folk designs and historical images important to Apiro. On the right are Paula and Roberto Morelli, Vice Mayor of Apiro, together with the ACM student mural artists.

Community Outreach

In an art therapy class at La Porta Aperta Day Center in Cingoli, Maxwell Montanari facilitates a project with students to create a paper wreath. Paula Metallo assists students with Simultaneous De-sign project at the Omero Tactile Museum of Ancona.

Celebrating Theater and Cultural Programs



Teatro Mestica 2019-20

The 2019-20 season "The Athlete of the Heart" features 13 performances at Teatro Mestica in Apiro, with two productions by the Teatro di Onisio, written and directed by Fiorenza Montanari. The season, supported also includes performances by other Italian acting companies, the secondary school Istituto Compresivo Coldigioco di Apiro, and classic films shown on the giant screen.

Teatro di Onisio

Onisio Theater Company

Fiorenza Montanari and Andrea Quatrini are founders and directors of the Onisio Theater Company and Acting School. Theatrical productions are supported by Le Montagne di San Francesco.

Drama teacher Fiorenza Montanari acknowledges the Onisio Acting School students after the end-of-the-year play that they helped write and produce.

Coldigioco Relady Annette Rose-Shapiro (front row, in black with yellow sash), visiting Bo Law Kung Fu student and teacher for 18 years in New York City's Chinatown, shares her expertise with Onisio Acting School students.

Become a Proud Supporter of LMDSF

L'Associazione Le Montagne di San Francesco (LMDSF) is the non-profit Association established in 2012 which makes it possible to support geological research, education, art, theatrical productions, and cultural events. Donations to the Association allow us to maintain the Geological Observatory of Coldigioco and to provide researchers and students the opportunity to study and experience this unique setting with 250 million years of Earth history in the Apennines.

How you can support Coldigioco and its mission of education and research.

Make a Donation

1. US Tax Deductible
Online donation through CAFAmerica (US $500 minimum). Alternatively, you can mail a check with this Gift Form (pdf).

2. Bank transfer
Bank Transfer Form (pdf). When you send a transfer, please notify Sandro of the amount you are sending, for his records.

We are most appreciative of the support from so many colleagues, students, family, and friends who have made Coldigioco possible for the past 27 years. Special thanks to Roland Saekow for his technical guidance in the production of this newsletter since its inception in 2013.

Tante grazie,
Milly and Walter Alvarez
Paula Metallo and Sandro Montanari

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