

**Citation by Jonathan Hendricks:**

Each year, the Paleontological Research Institution recognizes an individual who is not a professional paleontologist for the excellence of their contributions to the field. This award is named for PRI’s second Director, Katherine Palmer, who was an avid supporter of avocational paleontology. On behalf of PRI, I am pleased to announce that Mrs. Barbara K. Toomey of Gainesville, Florida has been selected as the 2018 recipient of the Katherine Palmer Award in recognition of her significant contributions to the science of paleontology.

Mrs. Toomey was nominated for this award by Mr. Roger Portell, Director of Invertebrate Paleontology at the Florida Museum of Natural History. I would like to share portions of Mr. Portell’s nomination letter with you.

The Invertebrate Paleontology Division at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville is very fortunate to be associated with many exceptional avocational paleontologists, but in a class all by herself is Barbara K. Toomey. Barbara has been a “fixture” in our program for decades. She along with her late husband Reed made substantial investments of their time, collections, money, and support to not only the Florida Museum, but other museums as well. Barbara’s contributions to Invertebrate Paleontology at the Florida Museum are very many:

She conducted numerous collecting trips with me to Jamaica (enduring a bull sharpening its horns on her rental car while collecting fossils at Seven Rivers, riots in Montego Bay, detention by customs for transporting sealed plaster jackets containing vertebrate fossils, and high tides and Manchineel trees while collecting along the sea cliffs at Falmouth).

Barbara and son Jim donated to the Florida Museum their exceptional Cenozoic collections of Florida and North Carolina fossils, including many rare taxa and several new species.

Barbara helped organize and pack several hundred thousand fossils (two semi-truck loads) donated by Dr. Emily Vokes of Tulane University. Barbara’s work ethic was instrumental in helping to motivate some of my staff and students who spent too much time in the “Quarter” during the evenings. She has helped pack and ship several other major fossil collections as well.

Barbara has worked in cramped, filthy, moldy, and stinky sheds, basements, and building all for the benefit of Invertebrate Paleontology at the Florida Museum and she has NEVER once complained.

Barbara has worked tirelessly to feed hordes of people during professional research and avocational collecting field trips to numerous fossil sites.

Barbara helped completely reorganize the Invertebrate Paleontology reprints in the G. G. Simpson Library at the Florida Museum.

Now no longer able to go in the field, Barbara currently works (4-5 days a week) at our newest offsite office complex unpacking, sorting, and organizing large donated research collections, which I believe was instrumental in helping obtain a National Science Foundation curation grant.

Because of Barbara’s long-term dedication helping Invertebrate Paleontology thrive at the Florida Museum, her desire to contribute to science and education, and her financial support for funding fieldwork, collection needs, and exhibits, I most enthusiastically nominate her for the PRI Katherine Palmer Award.

In the view of the Paleontological Research Institution, all of these—and other—efforts make Mrs. Toomey an ideal nominee for the Palmer Award.

The efforts of Mrs. Toomey—especially in association with the Division of Invertebrate Paleontology at the Florida Museum—have broadly served to advance the science of paleontology, in particular by helping to make specimens available for scientific study.

In this age of databases and digitization, the “nuts-and-bolts” work of sorting and organizing fossil specimens is often underappreciated, but is fundamentally critical to providing the data that will fuel the next generation of paleontological research.

We hereby recognize the paleontological contributions of Barbara K. Toomey by presenting her with the 2018 Katherine Palmer Award.