

Awards and Citations

Response by Ron Parsley for the presentation of the 2017 Paleontological Society Pojeta Award



Ron Parsley

I want to thank the Paleontological Society for giving me the John and Mary Lou Pojeta Award. It is unexpected, but I feel deeply honored. I would not be standing here if it was not for my committee, all of whom, Carrie Schweitzer, Colin Sumrall, and George Stanley, have been part of the picture, since or before 2004. Each of them brings their own talent to judging process and when all pick the same applicants, I feel confident that right decisions have been made. Their willingness and prompt attention to working on a challenging stack of applications every year have been key factors why the Sepkoski Grants program has been so successful.

The Pojeta award has special meaning to me. Some 57 years ago I was a fledgling grad student at the University of Cincinnati. Fellow grad student John Pojeta and his wife Mary Lou came by my cubicle in the back of the museum late one evening and wanted to know if I wanted to go with them to an all-night drive-in well known for its cheese burgers and strawberry pie. I went; it was the beginning of a long and enduring friendship. As the years went by and the Pojetas settled in with the USGS at the USNM, I always knew, as did many other young paleontologists, that the “casa Pojeta” was a welcome place to stay while working at the museum. John was always inclusive in his projects and in the late 1970s asked me to be part of a USGS project on the Ordovician paleontology of Kentucky and nearby states and to work on the echinoderms collected for the project. I probably produced the thinnest USGS Professional Paper (1066K) on record, but it was a foot in the door for a young paleontologist. John was always supportive and was instrumental in later years in my being awarded Fellow standing in both the GSA and Paleo Society.

John was always proud of his Czech heritage, and it is fitting that his last paper will be published in *Fossil Imprint* (published by the Czech National Museum) on fossil whitening, co-authored with Mary Lawson and myself. Again, many thanks for this award.

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