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Dinosaur exhibit opens this weekend

The discovery of a new species of dinosaur by four Sioux Cityans is the highlight of a temporary exhibit on display January 17 through March 22 at the Sioux City Public Museum. ***DINO-mite Discoveries: Draco & Friends*** features the fossilized remains of dinosaurs, early mammals, and the newly discovered *Dracorex hogwartsia*, a 66-million-year-old, first-of-its-kind, dragon-like dinosaur unearthed in northwestern South Dakota.

An opening reception for *DINO-mite Discoveries: Draco & Friends* will be held on Sunday, January 18 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Sioux City Public Museum. The reception will honor Brian Buckmeier, Darren Maurer, Patrick Saulsbury and Steve Saulsbury whose personal collections are on loan to the Museum for the exhibit. The free reception will include refreshments and a Draco mask craft for children.

Educational programs will be held in conjunction with the exhibit in February and March. **Dino Days**, a class for children ages 3 to 5, will be held February 11 and March 11 from 10 to 11 a.m. The cost is \$3.00 and preregistration is required by calling 712-279-6174. Sessions for pre-school groups may be arranged by calling the Museum or e-mailing museumeducation@sioux-city.org. Additional exhibit-related programming will be announced.

After the discovery of the dinosaur skull in 2003, the new species was officially named and dedicated in May 2006. Celebrated Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling endorsed the scientific name *Dracorex hogwartsia*, which comes from the Latin words *draco* (meaning dragon), *rex* (meaning king), and *hogwartsia* (after the fictional Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry created by J.K. Rowling). The dinosaur was featured on the cover of the December 2007 issue of *National Geographic* magazine. The "Draco" skeleton was donated to the Children's Museum of Indianapolis where it is on permanent display as part of their Dinosphere exhibition. The skull on display at the Sioux City Public Museum is an exact copy of the specimen.

Despite their impressive discoveries, the four paleontologists are technically "amateurs" who lead professional lives in Sioux City. Buckmeier is an attorney, Maurer is an artist, Patrick Saulsbury is a veterinarian and Steve Saulsbury is a radiologist. Spring, summer and fall are spent in the field searching for more discoveries and the winter months are spent doing lectures as well as the time-consuming work of fossil preparation.

The Sioux City Public Museum is housed in the historic John Peirce Mansion at 2901 Jackson Street in Sioux City. Regular hours are Tuesday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, call 712-279-6174 or visit www.siouxcitymuseum.org.