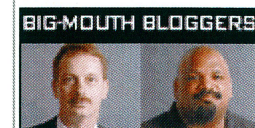


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Preteen T. rex debuts at Carnegie Museum

By Allison M. Heinrichs TRIBUNE-REVIEW Wednesday, November 22, 2006

See Jane run. Or, at least get an idea what Jane would have looked like stalking a young triceratops 66 million years ago.

The Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Oakland on Tuesday presented a cast of "Jane," the most complete juvenile Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton found.

"Pittsburgh has been clamoring for dinosaurs ever since we closed Dinosaur Hall in spring 2005," said museum director Billie R. DeWalt. "Jane is a glimpse of what's to come next November when 'Dinosaurs in Their World' opens."

Jane was discovered five years ago in Hell Creek, Mont., by an excavation team led by the Burpee Museum of Natural History. About half of the original skeleton was found and now is displayed at the Burpee Museum in Rockford, Ill.

Research Casting International -- the Canadian company that created "Dippy," the giant diplodocus outside the Carnegie's entrance -- made plastic resin casts of Jane's bones and filled in missing pieces with accurate representations.

"Everything that's missing, we did a laser scan,"

Photo Gallery

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Plain Jane James Knox/Tribune-Review

Plain Jane facts

The Carnegie Museum of Natural History's newest resident is a gangly preteen. On Tuesday, the museum unveiled "Jane," a cast of the most complete juvenile Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton found.

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said company owner Peter May. "Say you have a left side and need a right -- you do a mirror image in the computer and make a 3-D print. If we didn't have an opposite side, we'd sculpt it."

It took about six months to finish Jane's 300-pound recreated skeleton. The Cleveland Museum of Natural History has the only other cast of Jane.

In addition to being a museum draw, Jane is teaching paleontologists about the life of a preteen T. rex.

"It's a really exciting discovery, because people haven't found much in the way of juvenile skeletons of T. rex," said Matt Lamanna, assistant curator of vertebrate paleontology at the Carnegie. "There are some interesting differences with the adult specimens."

Jane -- who was named for a Burpee Museum benefactor, but whose sex is unknown -- was age 11 at death and probably weighed about 1,500 pounds, roughly an eighth the weight of a full-grown T. rex.

One of Jane's left toes has a bony growth that indicates an infection. Paleontologists suspect it inhibited the dinosaur's ability to hunt, possibly leading to starvation.

Jane's legs are longer in proportion to the body than those of an adult T. rex, giving the dinosaur a gangly, youthful appearance. This would have made it easier to run, meaning Jane's diet was different from that of a full-grown T. rex, Lamanna said.

"The young of this species were maybe faster and quicker than the adults," Lamanna said. "As the T. rex grew, it probably occupied different niches, eating smaller prey when it was young and larger prey as it grew."

Jane likely fed on young plant-eating dinosaurs, such as the three-horned triceratops, thick-skulled pachycephalosaur and duck-billed hadrosaurus.

"Dinosaurs in Their World" is expected to open in late November 2007, DeWalt said. That exhibit will display the museum's 16 major dinosaur skeletons in accurate poses surrounded by models of plants and animals contemporary to their time. The Carnegie has 270 fossils from the 163-million-year dinosaur era, among the most of any museum in the world.

A skeleton of a Quetzalcoatlus northropi -- a giant flying reptile with a 40-foot wingspan -- goes on

million years ago, during the Cretaceous period

Hometown: Hell Creek, Mont.

Age at death: 11

Sex: Unknown

Height: 7.5 feet

Length: 21 feet

Discovered by: Burpee Museum of Natural History amateur excavators Bill Harrison, a Spanish professor at Northern Illinois University, and Carol Tuck, a certified public accountant.

See Jane

Where: Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 4400 Forbes Ave., Oakland

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays; noon to 5 p.m. Sundays; closed Thanksgiving Day.

How much: \$10; \$7 for senior citizens; \$6 for ages 3 to 18 and full-time students with IDs; free for children under 3

Details: 412-622-3131, or www.carnegiemnh.org.

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display today at the museum. When the new exhibit is completed, a pair of T. rex skeletons will battle beneath it.

"We're really going to great lengths to make sure 'Dinosaurs in Their World' is accurate," Lamanna said. "People are going to be blown away by it."

Allison M. Heinrichs can be reached at [ahenrichs@tribweb.com](mailto:ahenrichs@tribweb.com) or (412) 380-5607.

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