

## **JOHNSRUD FAMILY RECOGNIZED FOR CONTRIBUTION**

BISMARCK - The North Dakota Industrial Commission has honored a Williston family for its donation of \$200,000 to enhance the North Dakota Geological Survey's fossil resource management program.

Clarence and Clarice Johnsrud and their children, Keith and Cheryl, were presented with a certificate of appreciation during the Commission's meeting Thursday, in Bismarck.

"We are very appreciative of this generous gift from the Johnsrud family," said Gov. Ed. Schafer. "By this significant contribution they are recognizing the importance of North Dakota's valuable fossil resources and providing a place where all North Dakotans will have an opportunity to look back in time."

"The funding provided by the Johnsrud family will enable the renovation and expansion of the Geological Survey paleontology laboratory at the Heritage Center," said Attorney General Heidi Heitkamp. "In recognition of this gift, the new laboratory will be called the Johnsrud Paleontology Laboratory."

"This gift will also be used for a new fossil exhibit in the main gallery of the Heritage Center that will display fossils of plants and animals that lived in North Dakota millions of years ago," said Commissioner of Agriculture Roger Johnson. "This will be a display that can be enjoyed by everyone touring the Heritage Center and can be a valuable learning experience for our children as they view a part of our rich geological history."

Dr. John Bluemle, State Geologist, noted that the North Dakota State Fossil Collection has grown substantially since its inception in 1989. The new laboratory will triple the space of the existing laboratory and will allow expansion of the fossil collection for many years.

Dr. John Hoganson, the Geological Survey paleontologist, also indicated that the fossil exhibit in the main gallery would feature many of the beautifully preserved fossil leaves that Clarence Johnsrud collected near Trenton, North Dakota. These leaves show that at one time North Dakota was a swampy lowland with a tropical climate. Rain forests containing redwood, bald cypress, sycamore, magnolia, palm and many other kinds of trees grew in North Dakota. Crocodiles were the main predators that inhabited these swamps.

The North Dakota Geological Survey is overseen by the Industrial Commission of North Dakota, consisting of Gov. Edward T. Schafer as Chairman, Attorney General Heidi Heitkamp, and Commissioner of Agriculture Roger Johnson.