

REGULAR MEETING: Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month from September to June. The Society will meet on **Monday September 14th** in the dining room of the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive, Rockville. The short business meeting will begin at 7:45 pm but the room is available to us at 7:30 pm so come early and see what you and others have on the Show Table and chat with old friends. The Program speaker will be member **Jeff Nagy**, speaking about "**The Fountain Copper Mine - A Forgotten Mining Operation in Montgomery County, Maryland.**" He will speak about, not only to the mining operation, but also about the original investors in the company. Jeff, a member of GLMSMC, is also a member of the Baltimore Mineral Society and the Montgomery County Historical Society. He is currently working with Larry Bernstein and Fred Parker on an update of Maryland Geological Survey Publication ES-5, *Minerals of the Washington DC Area*. Come hear what promises to be an interesting and informative talk.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS will meet **Monday September 21st** at 7:30 pm at the home of David and Nancy Ballard. All Board members are expected to be there. Any member is welcome to attend but please let Nancy know if you plan to attend (301 926 7374).

ROSTER CHANGES

FULLER, Gladys, 419 Russell Avenue, Wallace #202, Gaithersburg MD 20877-2871, Phone 301 987 6428.
MUIR, John & Nancy, E Mail: njmuir@gwi.net.
OLMSTEAD , Georgia 733 Arrowood Street, Longmont CO 80503-7531, Phone 703 639 7168.

NEW MEMBER HILKEMEYER, BETH, 12116 Cliftondale Drive, Silver Spring MD 20904-1941, 301 680 7963.

DUES & DON'TS If your last name begins with the letter A through Z your dues are due! Unless you have already paid, your **membership in GLMSMC expired August 31, 2009**. Single membership is \$15 per year, Family membership (Which is defined as up to 2 adults and children under 18 years of age) is \$20 per year. There is a \$5.00 surcharge for renewals after a grace period to November 1st. We pay dues for EFMLS/AFMS affiliations, newly increased postage rates, and over \$3.00 for insurance for each member over 10 years of age so when renewing, list only those interested in taking part in Society activities.

Please send to Membership Chairperson Nancy Ballard, 16812 Baederwood Lane, Derwood MD 20855-2011, (301 926-7374 for questions.) She will mail your membership card(s) back to you if you send her a self addressed stamped envelope (SASE), otherwise you may pickup your card(s) at the September regular meeting. If your phone number, address, E Mail address, or other vital information has changed please let us know. Please help by paying your dues on time.

DON'T be late. **DO IT NOW** while you are thinking about it!

DEADLINE for the October 2009 Rockhounder: **Sep. 28.**

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE: Greetings to everyone on the start of our Society's 47th year! I hope you all have had a great summer - perhaps our monthly show and tell will have many interesting stories to prove it. This promises to be another year of great presentations, field trips, timely information, and camaraderie. The Future Rockhounds program, led by Holly McNeill, will no doubt have another outstanding year of fun and learning for our Junior members too.



Since we are at the start of our year, don't forget that dues are due for the coming year (September 2009 to August 2010). Dues, \$15 individually or \$20 for a family, should be paid to our Membership Chair, Nancy Ballard. As approved by the Society last Fall, we will impose a late fee of \$5 per household if membership renewal is made late (after November 1). This is to encourage everyone to renew promptly.

Also, I'd like to encourage anyone who doesn't have a name badge to order one. Nancy Ballard has order forms and the cost is \$5.25 per badge. Wearing your name badge helps all of us whose memory needs a little help, and it helps identify who is a Society member at our annual show.

We are looking for members interested in serving the Society as board members for 2010. Elections are in November so we would like to have our slate filled next month. If you are curious about serving as a board member (and wanting to find out more before committing to anything is perfectly understandable), please contact me or any of the current board members.

Finally, if you are interested in attending the EFMLS convention and show October 16th-18th in Bristol, CT, which is not far from Hartford, please let me know by our September meeting. We would appreciate having a Society member attend as our representative to the Annual Meeting on Friday October 16th. One person as Director's alternate and one person as Delegate are eligible to receive \$200 toward expenses. If no one takes us up on this offer, Wendell and Jo Ann Mohr are willing to represent us. See you at the meeting, Mark

CORRECTION TO MINUTES OF THE JUNE 2009 REGULAR MEETING

As recorded in the July-August *Rockhounder* "2009 Treasurer: Andy reported we were doing great financially, with not many changes. The bank we utilize has been bought by **M&T Bank**. (NOT Provident)"

CONDOLENCES Ruth King, wife of Alfred "Bucky" King, both members in the late '80's, died on July 19, 2009. Our thoughts are with their 2 sons, seven grand children, 20 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild.



WANTED A volunteer is urgently needed to run for the position of Vice President of the Society for the 2010 year. Primary function of the position is to procure 9 programs for our meetings for the year. Board meeting attendance is expected. Assistance will be provided. See Mark Dahlman if you are willing to take on this task.

THIS AND THAT Holly McNeal returned from GIA in Carlsbad CA, having taken another course toward her Graduate Gemologist program. She tells that she has only 1.5 courses left to go! You go girl!

Juan Proaño is settling in at their new New Jersey home and he sends his best regards to all the GLMSMC members.

Lisa Carp is recovering from hip replacement surgery followed by influenza in the hospital. Have a swift recovery, Lisa.

Sara and Bob LaVilla have put their home up for sale in anticipation of a permanent relocation to Seattle WA.

Georgia Olmstead has moved to Longmont CO, near her daughter. Fred is doing much better. Georgia is past the crises of moving first to another house in Arlington and then to CO in mid-June. Good collecting out there in the Rockies. Go get 'em Georgia.

FAMOUS PETRIFIED FORESTS

by Dick Young



Our petrified forests are generally of three types. The first type has been showered and completely covered by volcanic ash leaving the trees standing in an upright position. The Petrified Forest of Yellowstone National Park is an example of this type. The trees are standing in their original state where they grew many millions of years ago. The forest of Yellowstone covers more than 40 square miles which is the largest area known. Another unusual feature of the Yellowstone Petrified Forest is that many thousands of fossilized leaves, needles, cones, and seeds of over one hundred different kinds of trees and shrubs have been found there. It is the only place in the world where twenty seven successive layers of petrified forms can be seen.

The story behind Yellowstone Petrified Forest is that an old volcano began to erupt and continued for some twenty years. Mineral-bearing waters had begun to petrify the once living forest. In the span of a couple of years, a new forest began to appear and grew for the next five hundred years. Then the old volcano erupted again. The process reoccurred twenty-seven times as twenty seven distinct layers of buried forest have been exposed in the fossil forest on the south side of Lamar River Valley. An example of a well preserved stump can be seen a few feet from the highway along "The Petrified Road." Along two thirds of the way up on the eastern edge is a group of upright standing trunks of unusual beauty and size just as they grew to many millions of years ago. The largest of these petrified stumps is a redwood over five feet in diameter and believed to be approximately one thousand years old when buried by volcanic debris.



A second type of petrified forest is believed to be the result of logs jamming at the mouth of a river, sinking into the mud, and becoming petrified. The Petrified Forest of Arizona is an example of this type. Driftwood may be deposited on the shore by the winds. Generally fossil wood which at one time was driftwood does not have bark. The fact may account for the lack of bark on the wood in Arizona.



The Arizona forests are between one hundred and two hundred million years old. One stone log, twenty feet wide and forty feet thick, flung across a ravine forms a natural bridge - the famed Agate Bridge.

The Arizona forests are composed of different forests varying in coloring. The Rainbow Forest is a multiplicity of colors, the Blue Forest is mostly carbonized sections, and the Black Forest is brilliantly black. Many logs are white, some almost transparent, and make up the Second Forest,

while the Third Forest displays large specimens as long as one hundred sixty feet.

The fossil wood is of three general types:

1. Jasperized wood predominantly bright red, some translucent, and variegated with a riot of colorless.
2. Small amounts of bright red wood are found, often with areas of nearly colorless quartz.
3. Section of dark or nearly black wood.

The opalized wood forests of central Washington run a close second to the famed forests of Arizona. An outstanding feature in Washington is that the only fossilized ginkgo trees known in the world are found there. The well known Ginkgo Petrified Forest is of the driftwood type. Of the ten thousand fossilized trees in this forest only six have been identified as Ginkgo trees. The Ginkgo is one of our oldest and most primitive types of trees, a direct ancestor of our modern tree, and is remarkable in that it has survived through millions of years while other species have died out.

Nevada boasts of the largest petrified tree known in the world. It is fourteen feet in diameter and nearly three hundred feet long. Another distinction in Nevada is that the woods of Virgin Valley are fully opalized with the "fire" of the fire opal.

A third type is that of scattered woods which may be covered in some manner, to become solidified later. For instance, rising water in a lake may completely cover a forest and protect it from decay. Later on petrification may preserve the trees permanently. Some of the woods in California, Nevada, Oregon, and central Washington have this origin.



From Music City Rockette, Feb. 2002, via Breccia October, 2008

Photos (not a part of the original article) are credited to Roger Weller/Cochise College.

FIELD TRIP REPORT, Sideling Hill, Hancock, MD Combined Trip with The Maryland Geological Society Saturday, July 18, 2009 By Gerald Elgert.

Although the day dawned with predictions of afternoon thunderstorms and other minor inconveniences, five members of the Gem, Lapidary and Mineral Society of Montgomery County joined with twelve members of the Maryland Geological Society on a combined field trip to Western Maryland for Mississippian and Devonian fossils. Our day began with a lecture at the Sideling Hill Visitor Center, located on the National Road, just west of Hancock. Dr. Stan Dickenson, a docent, told that in Mississippian times the area was covered by a large lake extending into what is now eastern Ohio. The lower Sideling Hill sediments were probably deposited in an alluvial plain environment that was near to sea level some 330 to 345 millions of years ago. Dr. Dickenson related as to how a collision between the North American and African continents, 230 to 240 millions of years ago, resulted in this bit of mountain building that we see in Western Maryland. The resulting stress compressed the earth's crust to form erosion resistant sandstone capped ridges. The road cut now exposes a cross section of this geology, now compressed into a tightly folded syncline. The intervening valleys are underlain by soluble limestones and easily eroded shales. It is in these two geological zones we would collect in an area that was possibly once part of the African continent.



The Group at Sideling Hill



Andy Muir, Fumiko Shirakura and Kiyoshi Sasaki

Our first collecting site was on Sandy Mile Creek Road which is just a few miles to the east of the Sideling Hill. An abandoned glass stone quarry now provides easy access to the Oriskany Sandstone. The formerly flat formation has been tilted ninety degrees and is highly resistant to weathering in places. In others the sand grains, cemented together by calcium carbonate, have weathered to loose sand that is highly prized for sand boxes and play grounds. In searching through rubble accumulated at the base of the hillside, I began finding abundant casts of Lower Devonian era marine fossils such as brachiopods and a platycerid gastropod snail with a curled tail. Andy Muir was rewarded for chiseling into the quarry wall, discovering the mold of a nice echinoid. Jeff Weiss was happy with finding a finely detailed solitary coral.



Echinoid (Sea Urchin)

Afterwards we followed the old National Road to the point of where it makes a hairpin turn around and over the lower portion of the Sideling Hill ridge. Dr. Dickenson had related as to how tractor trailers, in the days before the new road was completed, on icy winter or foggy days, would line up for miles in navigating this route. The hill side below a communications tower provided easy access to a continuation of the Rockwell Formation, so prominent at the Sideling Hill road cut. Deposited some 340 millions of years ago, this Mississippian Era deposit produced a variety of interesting finds. Tom Piscitelli found a slab of diamictite, an unusual combination of unsorted pebbles, sand, clay - you name it - that is inconsistent with the usual lithology found in this strata. He also found some plates demonstrating slippage and fracturing during the compression stages that formed the ridge and syncline. Kiyoshi Sasaki found the print of a horsetail and the impression of a scale tree. Everyone returned home with something and a big smile. There's nothing to compare with collecting at a beach on a mountain, especially on a piece of real estate that was once connected to the African continent and almost in our backyards.



Diamictite

GLMSMC members attending: Leila Campbell, Jeff Cessna, Tom Cummins, Gerald Elgert, Andy Muir and also friend of Leila, Linda Perry. Last Three Photographs by Gerald Elgert



FIELD TRIPS

September 26 8:00 am to Noon, LaFarge Marriottsville Quarry. This quarry is a marble quarry. Calcite, pyrite, and other sulfides have been found.

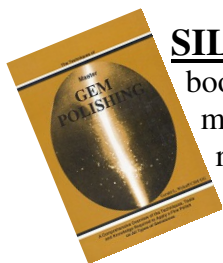
Please let Jonathan Harris know if you plan to attend by September 12 so he can provide the quarry with an accurate head-count and set up an additional visit if we are over the trip limit. No one under the age of 16 is permitted in this quarry.

The management has requested that we have no more than 15 people in the quarry. If more than 15 sign up we can look to opening another date. If you are a "maybe" and have potential conflicts, please let Jonathan know, <jgharris7@comcast.net> preferred, or call 301 545 0808 when you signup and please inform him when your plans are final. Note: If we have to limit people, Jonathan will first see if we can have an additional trip and ask for volunteers. If that does not work, he will then select people at random who sign up by September 12. He will not give preference to early signups. Because we want to respect the quarry employee's time please don't be a no-show. No-shows will be noted and end up in the back of the line for future fieldtrips.

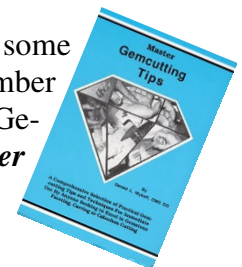
Note **required safety equipment** for all trips: steel toed boots, hard hat, long pants, safety glasses, gloves.

Directions: Address 11411 Marriottsville Rd. Take US 29 (Colesville Rd/Columbia Pike) North to I-70. Proceed 4.1 Miles West on I-70 to exit 83. From the exit ramp turn RIGHT and go NORTH on Marriottsville Rd. about 6 miles. The quarry entrance will be the 2nd entrance on the left after Wards Chapel Rd. Please note there are several quarries on Marriottsville Rd. We are going to the **LaFarge** one. We meet in the parking lot at the office for the safety briefing first.

Aurora NC. I have been informed that there will be no Aurora collecting this fall. Note from The Phosphate Corporation of Saskatchewan, (PCS): "The 2009 fall fossil hunting season has been canceled. We are preparing to start running a fleet of haul trucks throughout and in the area of the fossil hunting ramp. Plans are to move over 5 million cubic yards of material with these trucks. With the increased amount of truck traffic all the area including the area setup for fossil hunting will be closed until further notice." Per note from Jennifer Wingard, our coordinator for Aurora.



SILENT AUCTION Thanks to Paul Vance for the donation of some books on gem cutting which will be up for silent auction at the September meeting. There are three copies of *Master Gem Cutting Tips* by Gerald Wykoff which lists new for \$17.95, and three copies of *Master Gem Polishing* by the same author which lists new for \$24.50. These are two out of a whole series of 20 by the author.



ETIQUETTE REMINDER From time to time it is worthwhile to remind folks that when Looking at another person's specimen that you ask FIRST before handling anything and honor "Do Not Handle" labels. With polished stones it is important not to rub the stone since each rub diminishes the polish. This has application whether at the show table or other places. (Thanks to Paul Vance .)



Questions asked of the ranger by visitors to at Carlsbad Caverns National Park this summer: How much of this unimaginably huge cave is underground? So, what's in the unexplored part of the cave? Do you get snow in the winter in the lower levels? Does Bat Man live in the cave?

SAFETY by Chuck McKie, from the 10/08 CFMS Newsletter via
the 01/09 AFMS Newsletter



It has been quite a while since we had any shop safety. The following is from chapter two of the AFMS Safety Manual. The following safety rules, if followed, will lessen the risk of possible harm or injury. Protect your eyes when chipping or grinding rocks. **WEAR PROTECTIVE GLASSES.** Run your grinding wheels no faster than the speed recommended by the manufacturer. Do not let your {Ceramic/stone} wheel become water logged. Keep it running until all water has been thrown out; otherwise, it will cause a heavy spot and make your wheel out of balance. Keep your wheel true. It will wear longer and there will be less chance of its parting while in use. Keep all belt pulleys and belts covered. It may save a finger. Use dop sticks whenever possible. It may save a badly cut finger.



A word of warning to those individuals who use dry sanding of their cabochons: Silicosis is a serious disease which is caused by the inhalation of fine silica dust. Use a dust mask or suction blower, or change to wet sanding. Silicosis cannot be cured! Be careful with your alcohol lamp. It can cause a fire. Keep all containers properly labeled. Putting polishing powders in empty baking powder cans, for instance, without a proper label, can be dangerous. (If you put the polishing powder in an empty baking powder can, your wife could use it with disastrous results). The use of Oxalic Acid, when properly used, greatly facilitates the polishing of agates. Oxalic Acid is caustic to the skin, as well as a frank poison, if accidentally ingested or inhaled. Also, getting some in the eyes from the spray from the polishing wheels, may cause a burn of the cornea, resulting in impaired eyesight. When using this acid, proper precautions must be taken.



It is advisable to apply the polish to the wheel with a brush. Wear protective glasses. It may be advisable, under certain circumstances, to wear protective gloves. Immediately wash any contact areas of the skin with soap and water. Medical attention may be advisable. Sulfuric Acid and Nitric Acid are sometimes mixed with polishing compounds when faceting sapphire. They are also used in the polishing of sapphire cabochons on lead laps. These acids are severe caustics and will cause severe burns if they come in contact with the skin or eyes. In using the techniques above, one must use the utmost precautions. Any contaminated areas must immediately be washed with soap and water. If any gets in the eyes, thoroughly irrigate with water and seek medical attention. The application of a baking-soda pack is often advisable or the sponging with a solution of baking soda in water to the burned area. The polishing compounds we use today are, as a rule, relatively non-toxic, except to some individuals. The use of detergents added to the polishing powders could cause dermatitis of the hands. This can be eliminated if the offending substance is eliminated. The use of Epoxy Resins is very irritating to the skin, and severe cases of dermatitis have resulted. This can easily be prevented by not getting the hands in actual contact with the resins. Acetone will remove this, if you should get some resin on the skin. The various cutting oils used in the diamond saws are primary irritants to the skin, and will, in many individuals, produce dermatitis. Also, the fire hazard, in the use of certain cutting oils, must be realized and proper precautions taken.

To be continued in the October *Rockhounder*

SHOWS ETC.

September 12-13 44th Annual Gem, Mineral, and Jewelry Show, Central Pennsylvania R&M Club, returns to Zembo Shrine, 2801 N. 3rd St., 3rd & Division Streets, Harrisburg PA. Saturday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm., Sunday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Admission \$5, 12 and under and scouts in uniform free.

Information: <www.rockandmineral.org> which has a \$1 discount coupon.

September 26-27 45th Annual Atlantic Coast Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show, Gem Cutter's Guild. Howard County Fairgrounds, MD 144 near MD 32 and I70, West Friendship MD. Saturday 10:00 to 6:00, Sunday 10:00 to 5:00. Adults \$5.00, children 12 and under with an adult free. Information: <www.gemcuttersguild.com>

Anniversary Special

\$1.00

Admission

with this coupon

Regular admission - \$5.00
Children 12 and under
FREE with paying adult

45th Annual

Atlantic Coast

Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show


Howard County Fairgrounds
I-70 at MD Rt. 32

Award-winning displays of jewelry, gems, minerals, fossils, and lapidary art.
Choice rough, slabs, tools, finished gems, minerals, fossils, beads and jewelry for sale.
Demonstrations show how to make your own beautiful jewelry and finished stones.
Visit our website <www.gemcuttersguild.com> for news about our classes and show.

September 26- 27, 2009

Visit our website....
<www.gemcuttersguild.com>
for news about the show and our jewelry and gem cutting classes.

Sponsored by



Hours:
Saturday: 10 A.M. - 6 P.M.
Sunday: 10 A.M - 5 P.M.

October 2-4: Elkridge, MD - 53rd Annual Desautels Micromount Conference hosted by the Baltimore Mineral Society. MHA Conference Center, 682 Deerpath Road, Elkridge, MD. Friday 7:00-9:30 pm. Saturday 8:00 am-9:30 pm, Sunday 8:00 am-1:00 pm. Adults \$25. Information and registration <calpeirson@hotmail.com>.



October 17-18 37th Annual Gem & Mineral Show and 59th Annual EFMLS Convention sponsored by the Bristol Gem & Mineral Club. Beals Community Center, Bristol, CT. EFMLS business meeting is on Friday, October 16th.

October 31 "ULTRAVIOLATION" Fluorescent Mineral Show by The Rock and Mineral Club of Lower Bucks County, PA Fairless Hills, PA 20th . First United Methodist Church, 840 Trenton Road, Fairless Hills, PA., 9:00 am – 5:00 pm. \$2.00 Donation, Children age 12 and younger free. Information contact Chuck O'Loughlin, 130 Maple Terrace, Merchantville, NJ 08109, Phone: 856-663-1383, Email: ultraviolation@yahoo.com.

OTHER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES **September 13** Patuxent Lapidary Guild Open House, 50th Anniversary Celebration, 12 noon to 4:00 pm. 169 Defense Hwy, Annapolis, MD. Lower level, rear entrance of Annapolis Precious Metals Showroom. Watch demonstrations of lapidary skills by their instructors. Tour the facility and talk with artists and members. Sign up for classes or membership. Light refreshments will be served. Information <www.patuxentlapidary.org>. The Patuxent Lapidary Guild is once again listing classes on their website. Various courses will include faceting, cabbing, casting, smithing, precious metal clay, and beading. Check for scheduled times and topics.

Montgomery County Recreation Dept. and Montgomery Parks of the M-NCPPC. Obtain their Fall 2009 Montgomery County Guide at the library.

Two of our members are leaders for classes at the Potomac Community Center under the sponsorship of the Montgomery County Department of Recreation. Both classes have a fee of \$126:

September 16, 10:00 am to 12:15 pm for 13 Wednesdays, Lisa Carp will teach Advanced Gemology. She tells the editor that the class will include antique jewelry, metals, and glass.

September 17, 10:00 am to 12:15 pm for 13 Thursdays, Tim Morgan will teach Gemology I (for beginners). He will cover gemstone formation, identification, hardness, and care of gemstones.

Other Recreation Department classes including stone sculpture and several classes for jewelry.

Brookside Nature Center lists "Geology on Display" and "Spotlight on Rocks and Minerals" classes. The Black Hill Visitor center lists:

"Fossil Collecting by Kayak", one day Sep. 26th 8 am to 8 pm to Calvert cliffs.

"Medford Quarry Tour" Saturday Nov 11th 9:30 am to 3 pm. For ages 12 & up, it will be led by geologist Page Herbert and Naturalist Glenn Cumings. Children must be accompanied by an adult. \$25, or \$20 if you are a member of the Friends of Black Hill.

Sep. 26 through Dec 12, Saturdays 9:00 am to noon, Geology Course NATH1125E of the Graduate School with field trips Oct. 18 & Nov. 15. Class location Capital Gallery. Information: 888 744 4723.

Glen Echo Park. Various classes covering polymer clay, metal clay jewelry, earring design, beading basics, jewelry for teenagers, and stone sculpture are being offered during the fall. Obtain the "Fall-Winter Classes and Events" booklet at the library or see <www.glenechopark.org> for scheduled dates, locations, synopsis, fees, age limitations etc.

November 7—8 Friends of Mineralogy Pennsylvania Chapter 2009 Fall Symposium "Pennsylvania Mineralogy", Hackman Physical Science Laboratory Building & Kauffman Lecture Hall, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA.

Saturday Nov. 7: 8 am – 4 pm Speakers, General Meeting, Silent Auctions, and give away table.

Sunday Nov. 8: Field trip to the Penn Maryland Materials Quarry, Peach Bottom, PA.

Members free. Non-Members \$20, \$15 Seniors and Students,

Info.:<www.geocities.com/sajas.geo/FM/index.html> pre-register for this event by Oct. 31. If you plan to attend just the field trip, you must also pre-register, since the head count for the field trip is limited.



EFMLS DRAWING At least 10 great prizes will be awarded in a drawing at the EFMLS Convention and Show, Oct. 17 & 18 at Bristol CT to benefit the Eastern Federation Fund. Tickets are available and Jo Ann Mohr will be pleased to sell them to you at the Sept. meeting for \$1.00 each, or 5 for \$4.00. You need not be present to win.



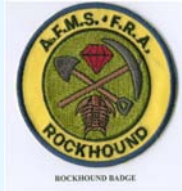
JUNIORS FUTURE ROCKHOUNDS OF AMERICA

By Holly McNeil



September 14th program – Assignment: We will start with a mineral collection “show and tell” session, so participants should bring in at least 10 **mineral** samples. To receive credit for the Rocks & Minerals badge, the collection must be properly labeled and organized (stored in a box, tray, etc.).

Following the “show and tell” we will have time for any optional reports (see below) and, time permitting, we’ll have a lively game of “Rockin’ USA!” with prizes for all participants.

**Optional:**

If any member wishes to give a complete oral report to the group (3 – 5 minutes in length) on something they did over the summer relating to rocks and minerals or fossils – such as a trip to a natural history museum, a rock collecting field trip, etc., this will satisfy a badge requirement. Keep in mind the “Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?” rules of good reporting!

If any member has done additional work (such as suggested on the “summer activities handout” given out at the June meeting) please bring it in for me to review and sign off on your badge checklist.

For more information on the Future Rockhounds of America program, please contact Holly McNeil at 301-605-7179 or <fra_advisor@glmsmc.com> .



SAPPHIRE, The birthstone for September, is one of the two gem varieties of the species corundum, an aluminum oxide (Al_2O_3). Although blue is the best known hue, the gem occurs in virtually every spectral hue excepting red. Red corundum is ruby. Sapphire may also be colorless and occurs in the non-spectral hues, gray and black. Sapphire can be found naturally or manufactured in large crystal boules.

Because of its remarkable hardness sapphire is used in many applications, including infrared optical components, watch crystals, high durability windows, and wafers for the deposition of semiconductors.

The mineral corundum consists of pure aluminum oxide. Trace amounts of other elements such as iron, titanium and chromium give corundum their blue, yellow, pink, purple, orange or greenish color. Sapphire includes any gemstone quality varieties of the mineral corundum except the fully saturated red variety, and the pinkish-orange variety known as padparadscha.

Based on Wikipedia, <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sapphire>>
From Middle Tennessee Rockhounds Sep 2008



**Star of Bombay
(182ct.)**



**Rough
Sapphire**



WEB SITES

World's Largest Cave, Song Doong, in the Vietnamese jungle, concerns the discovery of what is purported to be the world's largest cave. It is no less than 262 X 262 feet and is at least 2.8 miles long. See <<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/07/090724-biggest-cave-vietnam.html>>. The cave was known to locals but was thoroughly explored by scientist from Britain and Viet Nam in April 2009. View the images shown on this National Geographic web site.



- The musician George Frederic Handel at first had a go at being a Speleologist. But soon he gave it up. The cave baroque and it was too hot to Handel. •



ITMCA (International Thumbnail Mineral Collectors Association), is a new site this year at <<http://thumbnails.crocoite.com/>>, and somewhat of a work in progress. You may wish to join the Google group for discussions and member contacts or the Thumbnail "Ning" Network to add your own content. See What's New, Articles, and Images. Thanks to Jeff Cessna for the lead for this one.

- In a murder trial, the defense attorney was cross-examining the coroner. Attorney: Before you signed the death certificate, had you taken the pulse? Coroner: No. Attorney: Did you listen to the heart? Coroner: No. Attorney: Did you check for breathing? Coroner: No. Attorney: So, when you signed the death certificate, you weren't sure the man was dead, were you? Coroner: Well, let me put it this way. The man's brain was sitting in a jar on my desk. But I guess it's possible he could be out there collecting thumbnail minerals somewhere. •

A Geologist's Lifetime Field List, <<http://www.uc.edu/geology/geologylist/>>, is a modification of an original work by Lisa A. Rossbacher in the April, 1990 issue of *Geotimes*. The University of Cincinnati in Ohio modified and extended it and it offers a fun site showing places for geologists or travelers to visit or experience. Unfortunately many of the links are broken but you could "Google" the topic. It covers far-ranging localities listed under general geology topics as well as specific places to visit worldwide. How many have you experienced?

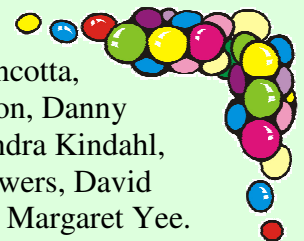
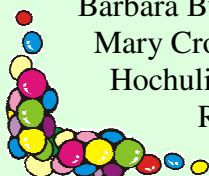
- A geological research team proceeded towards the apex of a natural geologic protuberance, the purpose of their expedition being the procurement of a sample of fluid hydride of oxygen in a large vessel, the exact size of which was unspecified. One member of the team precipitously descended, sustaining severe damage to the upper cranial structure; subsequently the second member of the team performed a self-rotational translation oriented in the same direction taken by the first team member. What were their names? It will be a while before Jack and Jill head up that hill for a pail of water again. •



Can you see Snoopy, the rockhound? ►

HAPPY SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY TO MEMBERS:

Barbara Burr, Joyce Becker, Michael Buynak, Jeffrey Cessna, Cindy Cincotta,
Mary Crosswhite, Erich Grundel, Maureen Gunnison, Nicholas Gunnison, Danny
Hochuli, Susanna Hochuli, Aung (Oscar) Htut, Emily Johnson, Alexandra Kindahl,
Rory McElravy, Jo Ann Mohr, Georgia Olmstead, Meredith Powers, David
Smith, Michelle Snyder, Jane Warford, Jennifer Wingard, Margaret Yee.



SOCIETY HISTORY

BY JACK BUSCH



MORE OF '94 Welcome back from what I hope was an enjoyable summer, and to another season of meetings. And our first one marks the start of our 16th year at Rockville Senior Center. To reprise an old chestnut, time certainly flies when one's having fun.

The highlight of the September 1994 *Rockhounder* was a page-and-a half article by Jack Nelson telling about Montgomery County's Rock Run. This is a 9.1 km. stream which runs from just north of Potomac Village to the Potomac River into which it empties at the Naval Surface Warfare Center. Those of you who knew Jack are aware that he was an avid gold panner and, like the true accountant he was, Jack kept records of his work, stating that from the beginning of September 1991 until June 1994 he had gone panning 209 times, and that his results had earned him 10¢ per hour, excluding cash for gas, oil, and supplies. In his article Jack describes the many minerals, mostly micros, he found in addition to gold while swishing many pans of "black sand." I may have said this before but it bears repeating, he found enough gold in his swishing to have wedding rings made for himself and his wife. Now, before you take off for Rock Run be advised that more than half of the stream flows through private property, and only the part flowing through Rock Run Park is open to the public.



The speakers at our September meeting were husband and wife Christopher and Stephanie Stepien who gave a program on Amber. The couple recently had visited the shores of the Baltic Sea noted for this gemstone, but could not prove having done so as picture-taking was verboten. However, they had brought with them many pieces of amber rough and finished jewelry. They explained that the area now covered by the Baltic Sea originally was a huge forest 10 to 60 million years ago, and the amber came after the trees were covered by the sea. Amber comes in about 270 shades of color ranging from solid white to solid black. Oddly, the solid white variety is favored by Europeans, even though the honey colored is most popular in the U.S. Although large amounts of amber are found in the Dominican Republic, it is not as valuable as the Baltic variety. On the other hand, it is more likely to have insect inclusions. The speakers cautioned everyone that amber dust/dirt is highly dangerous, thus vacuum devices should be used when working with this material. They also warned amber should not be stored in plastic bags; doing so will cause it to become cloudy.



Photo: R. Weller/Cochise College

One other event took place at the September meeting - Rod Towers was accepted as a member, so happy 15th of a sort to you, Rod.

There were three field trips in September, the first of which was to old favorite Medford Quarry. According to reports, 11 persons participated, all of whom left the quarry with beautiful crystals of many shapes. Also Helen Reimherr found enough malachite around calcite to share with everyone.'



The next trip was to another favorite place, The Willows, where more than 50 persons showed up to hunt fossils. All were recorded with mostly medium size shark teeth but one lucky person uncovered a 3 3/4" Carcharodon Megalodon tooth.

Rounding out the month's trips was one to the "secret" williamsite site. The trip was limited to those who verbally took an oath not to disclose the location nor the route to get there. All attending found serpentine, and some found "quality" williamsite. Also found was a quantity of a mineral (?) no one could identify, but there was enough of whatever it was for everyone to take some home.

I will go into October's doings and perhaps more next time.

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