

THE ROCKHOUNDER



DECEMBER 2011

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Gem, Lapidary, and Mineral Society of Montgomery County MD., Inc. is “To increase knowledge and popular interest in earth sciences, geology, mineralogy, paleontology, lapidary arts, and related subjects”.

REGULAR MEETING: Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month from September to June. The Society will meet on Monday December 12th 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 chat with old friends and help us set up for the PARTY!. **NO SHOW TABLE THIS MONTH.** There will be no speaker for this meeting because this will be the SWAP/SELL and social evening. You may bring hobby related items to swap or sell. Space is limited and we need some tables for refreshments, so bring no more than an amount that will fit on one table. It is possible that tables will have to be shared.

REFRESHMENTS This is the only meeting of the year when we have refreshments. PLEASE BRING COOKIES, CAKE, CRACKERS, or CANDY (Or VEGGIES for those who insist on healthy eating) to share. Goodies should be “finger food”. Napkins, cups, plates, punch, coffee, tea, and hot chocolate will be provided. Come and have a good time. As usual, visitors are welcome. Remember that WE MUST VACATE THE BUILDING by 10:00pm and the tables and chairs must be cleaned and put back where we find them. If EVERYONE helps, it is not a big chore.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS will **NOT** meet in December.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to **Gary and Shirley Letcher** who were voted into membership in November.

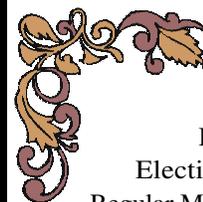
In keeping with a Board of Director’s decision, we will henceforth list only names of new members. No address, phone number, or e-mail address will be noted since this publication is posted to our website and could compromise personal security

WEATHER ALERT SNOW CONTINGENCY

Reminder: If schools in Montgomery County MD are to be cancelled, or let out early, because of weather on the day of a scheduled Society meeting, we will have no meeting. Call the Society President or a Board Member (Numbers on the back of the ROCKHOUNDER) if in doubt.



DEADLINE for Jan. 2012 Issue: Dec. 23rd



IN THIS ISSUE

Meetings, Membership Changes, Weather Alert, Rockhounder Deadline...	1
Election, Editors, Wildacres...	2
Regular Meeting Minutes.....	3
Board Meeting Minutes.....	4
FRA.....	5
Mini Miners, Field Trips.....	6
Swope’s Pit Field Trip.....	7
Meet Your New Officers.....	8
Shows & Events, Volunteer at the NMNH, Library.....	9
Birthdays, Birthstones, Staurolites.....	10
Web Sites, Postal Rates, Thanks Rosen...	11
Show Table.....	12
Door Prizes, Safety, Sunshine, Quarters.....	13



At the November meeting new Society officers were UNANIMOUSLY elected as follows:

New President: Andy Celmer New Vice President: Chris Luzier
Continuing Secretary: Jeff Cessna Continuing Treasurer: Andy Muir

OLD EDITOR

After over 6 years, I decided that it is time to retire from the position of Editor of the *Rockhounder*. My advancing age and ongoing health problems contributed to the decision. I have enjoyed my tenure serving the Society interacting with our membership and with editors of other club's newsletters. Doing the *Rockhounder* was really fun and I got a lot of enjoyment bringing a variety of news and educational articles to the Society. It was especially rewarding to receive Federation recognition not only for the newsletter itself, but also for many of the articles contributed by members of our group. A side benefit to me was being exposed to the many interesting articles and educational resources I reviewed to bring topics to you. I appreciated the many complimentary and supportive comments I received from members. I am working during the transition with a new editor who will bring a different, no less intriguing approach. Please cooperate with him, continuing to submit articles as well as meeting closing deadlines.

Wendell Mohr, retiring Editor

NEW EDITOR Gerald Elgert has graciously volunteered to become editor beginning with the January 2012 issue. With the Board's endorsement and the official appointment made by President, Eric Kindahl we welcome Gerald. He has varied interests and has led several joint field trips of our Society with the Maryland Geological Society. He is also Editor of that group's newsletter so comes with experience. Thanks, Gerald, for stepping forward to volunteer to fill the key position.



Photo by W. Mohr

EFMLS WILDACRES WORKSHOPS

Adapted from Steve Weinberger information



Our Eastern Federation sponsors two week-long workshops at the Wildacres Retreat in Little Switzerland, NC. Each session features a variety of classes to choose from and a guest speaker who gives six talks during the session. In addition, to recognize the 40th year, for those who have never attended an EFMLS Wildacres session, two **EFMLS Scholarships** are being awarded this year.

Dates for the 2012 sessions are April 10 - 15 (Shortened by one day to avoid an Easter travel conflict) and September 3-9. In April, renowned mineral photographer Jeff Scovil will be the "Speaker-in-Residence" and in the fall Julian Gray, Curator at the Tellus Museum in Georgia will join the fun. Both are excellent speakers and because they will be with the group for the entire week, you'll be able to talk minerals with them!

Tuition for the shorter Spring session is \$350/person and \$370/person for the Fall session. Cost includes lodging, 3 meals a day, and a gratuity to the Wildacres staff. Great value.

Details with class descriptions and applications for both sessions and the scholarships can be found at <www.amfed.org/efmls>. Just click on the Wildacres tab. Also on pages 3 & 4 of the December 2011 EFMLS Newsletter, also accessible from the EFMLS web site, is a list with descriptions of all classes for both sessions.

GLMSMC SCHOLARSHIP Our Board offers one scholarship annually to a Society member who has never been to Wildacres, has been a member for at least a year, and has been active in club affairs, especially at our annual show. Nominations are to be submitted to the Board. Any member may make a nomination, including for themselves. Reimbursement is made upon successful completion of the workshop. If interested in Spring session, apply to Andy Celmer by March 1st 2012. The board will consider the applications and act before the next Wildacres session.

The November 14, 2011 meeting was called to order by President Eric Kindahl at 7:46 pm, with approximately 55 people attending. It was M/S/P to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2011 regular meeting and the October 17, 2011 Board of Directors meeting.

President: Eric Kindahl noted that the club was seeking the bulletin award winners who have not yet picked up their awards. The Rockville Science Center is looking for teachers for a paid position. See Eric for information. Eric reminded us that the December meeting will be the holiday party. There will be no show table. Please bring food. There will be a door prize.

Field Trips: Jonathan Harris discussed several upcoming trips, see this newsletter. Gerald Elgert announced a fossil collecting trip for the upcoming weekend.

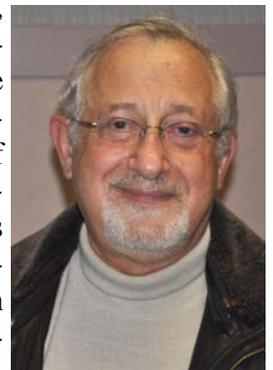
Treasurer: Andy Muir reported the expenses of show down payment and room rental for the auction. Income included member dues. The club continues in strong financial shape. He delivered a treasurer's report to the club president.

Guest Editor: Wendell Mohr had info available on Audubon courses. He noted the Smithsonian's Hope Diamond display in the special setting ending November 18th. He noted some upcoming local shows. The club is still in need of an editor following the December issue. Wendell briefly discussed the material for the upcoming auction.

Show: Pat Repik-Byrne reminded members to plan their display cases for next year's show. Sign-up will begin in January and end in February.

After a call for nominations from the floor and hearing none, the slate of club officers as listed in the October *Rockhounder* was voted in by the membership, with terms beginning January 2012.

Presentation: Vice president Owen Powers introduced the speaker for the evening, Morton Satin, Vice President, Science and Research at the Salt Institute in Alexandria, VA. After an introduction about his own life and how he came to the defense of salt, Mr. Satin gave the presentation *Our Understanding of Salt – Salacious or Salubrious*. The talk began with a brief introduction on the history, mining, and uses of salt. Mr. Satin then proceeded to discuss the reputation of salt, at length. He presented the case that much of what we know about the dangers to health from salt is based on few studies that, themselves, were flawed. While acknowledging a lowering of blood pressure for a subset of the population, he proposed that the emphasis on the over-reduction in salt intake may do more harm than good. This position has recently been put forward in the *Journal of Hypertension*. Thanks, Morton.



It was M/S/P to accept membership of visitors Gary and Shirley Letcher.

Joel Rosen administered the drawings for the junior door prize, door prize and show table prize.

Meeting adjourned at 9:58 pm.

Jeff Cessna, Secretary.



Before Mount Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain on Earth?

Mount Everest (it just hadn't been discovered!)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 21st, 2011

Board members present: Doug Baum, Jeff Cessna, Mark Dahlman, Jonathan Harris, Wendell Mohr, Andy Muir, Owen Powers, Pat Repik-Byrne and Joel Rosen. Board members not present: Eric Kindahl, Rod Towers. Guests present: Andy Celmer (incoming President), Chris Luzier (incoming Vice-President). Past-President Mark Dahlman called the November 21, 2011 meeting to order at 7:38 pm.



Past-President: Thanks were given to Andy Celmer and Chris Luzier for agreeing to stand for office. Mark Dahlman will send Andy Celmer the officer's duties write-up.

EFMLS Liaison and Guest Editor: The following volunteers were conscripted for the holiday party: Wendell Mohr – coffee maker; Pat Repik-Byrne – spoons, napkins, cups, plates, tablecloths; Andy Muir – coffee, tea, hot cocoa, sugar, sweetener, creamer; Mark Dahlman – punch; and Doug Baum – punch bowl. A volunteer for editor was discussed. Jonathan Harris stated that publication of field trips in newsletter was not required for insurance purposes, email notification was sufficient. Wendell will contact volunteer. The club will offer one scholarship to Wildacres in 2012. Duties for the upcoming auction were discussed. Mark Dahlman will print lot numbers. Wendell Mohr will supply bidder numbers and will distribute flyers.

Membership: It was M/S/P to change the new member listing in the newsletter to name only. It was M/S/P to remove birthdate information from the annually distributed roster.

Field Trips: Jonathan discussed upcoming trips. Jonathan discussed a student with a senior project involving Vulcan Havre de Grace Quarry. It was M/S/P to authorize \$150 for preparation of thin films, encouraging other clubs to contribute, with funds contingent on a solid proposal from the student, in the judgment of Jonathan Harris and Andy Muir. Discussions of ways to thank quarries resulted in the proposal of bringing food, such as brownies.

Show: Wendell Mohr noted the club has enough junior door prizes for the show. Mark Dahlman stated the announcement has gone to *Rock & Gem* and *Rocks and Minerals*. Pat Repik-Byrne discussed the agenda for the January meeting. Holly McNeil and FRA students will discuss the mini-miners table. Elmer Lantz will discuss the shop. Mark Dahlman and Joel Rosen will discuss set-up/take-down. Andy Muir will discuss front desk. Pat will discuss other positions and display sign-up. Wendell Mohr will discuss display planning and execution. Mark announced that contracts were sent to all dealers. Payment has been received from seven. Poster putty must be used instead of adhesive to secure signs.

Treasurer: Andy Muir reported on the clubs finances. The insurance has been paid. It was M/S/P to make the same donations as last year to AFMS scholarship and AFMS & EFMLS endowment funds, and ALAA. The profit and loss statement for the club and the budgets were discussed. It was M/S/P to accept the 2012 budget with amendments discussed at the meeting.

Property: Joel Rosen requested a back-up meeting junior door prize from the show stock, as his was used in November. Wendell will provide it. Owen Powers delivered the club presentation equipment and documents to Chris Luzier. Joel will investigate clip-on microphone for PA system.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:19 PM.

Jeff Cessna, Secretary.



The geology professor discovered that her theory of earthquakes was on shaky ground.

FUTURE ROCKHOUNDS OF AMERICA (The MOCKS) Ages 10-15

Meeting Date: December 12, 2011 **Meeting time:** 7:45 - 9:00 pm

Meeting Location: Sunroom Cafeteria at the Rockville Senior Center



November 14th meeting: Stone Age tools & Art badge. We discussed various rocks and minerals used as tools by ancient humans and looked at a few examples. We recreated an ancient method of making paint (red, green and black) by grinding up minerals and adding egg, and then made a group pictograph with each member painting "ancient" symbols using sticks. Next we talked about Petroglyphs and Geoglyphs, (highlighting the Nazca lines of Peru) and members made their own take-home Petroglyph using granite to carve the stone.



December 12th:

- **PARTY TIME!** Please bring in a finger food item to share with the rest of the group.
- We also will have a "Yankee Mineral Swap" for the MOCKS members (minerals are provided by the FRA, members do not need to bring in specimens).

Upcoming in 2012

We will start the year at our January 9th meeting with a three-month segment on Rocks. We will cover identification of Igneous, Sedimentary and Metamorphic rocks. This would be a great time for anyone interested in joining the Future Rockhounds of America to do so. Later in the year we will also do gemstone faceting and complete many other exciting and educational activities in the Earth Sciences.



THANK YOU to all who helped out the FRA program in 2011; the support the FRA receives from the club is invaluable. We especially thank those who donated specimens and books, as well as our guest speakers Pat Repik-Byrne, Dr. Michael Wise, Andy Muir, Maureen Campeau, Jim Kostka and Patrick Haynes.

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



A University of MD class took their annual school trip to the Yellowstone National Park with a chaperone who was also their science professor. The Professor wishing to show her intelligence said to their guide, "Look at all those big rocks. Wherever did they come from?" "The glaciers brought them down," said the guide. "But where are the glaciers?" "The glaciers," said the guide in a weary voice, "have gone back for more rocks."

FUTURE ROCKHOUNDS OF AMERICA (MINI MINERS) Ages 6-9

Meeting Date: December 12, 2011 **Meeting time:** 7:00 - 8:00 pm

Meeting Location: The Card room at the Rockville Senior Center

At the November meeting we delved into metamorphic rocks and experimented with marshmallows and chocolate chips to simulate metamorphism. Fun!

No agenda was submitted for December but come and be surprised!

For more information contact: Linda Smith, Home Phone: 301-530-5007, <Tunacat107@aol.com>.

Helper Conrad Smith



Photos by W. Mohr



FIELD TRIPS

Saturday January 7, 2012 Meet at 9:00 am. at James Madison University Department of Geology and Environmental Science and Mineral Museum, hosted by Professor Lance Kearns. Professor Kearns is a valued link between hobbyist and professional geologists. How have many of our seasoned collectors identified the rich variety of local minerals? Lance Kearns! For those who like machines more than experts, Professor Kearns has indicated that the X-ray diffraction machine and Ramen Spectrometer will be available. There is some chance that the EDS/SEM lab (Low energy electron diffraction and Scanning Electron Microscope) will be open. Professor Kearns indicated that he could help identify specimens. And of course another outstanding attraction; the JMU mineral museum.



Directions: Go West on I-66 to I-81 South. Get off I-81 at Exit 245. Turn RIGHT onto Port Republic Road and proceed to S. Main St. (US 11) and turn right at the light. Proceed northward on S. Main St. to the 3rd traffic light -turn left onto Cantrell Ave. Proceed over the bridge to traffic light on South High St. (VA 42). Memorial Hall (the old Harrisonburg High School) is directly in front of you. Go straight into the parking lot. The Mineral Museum is around the building to the left (south side) along Grace Street. Use entrance "E" to the building. After entering the building make an immediate right. The museum is at the end of the hall.

Juniors are welcome. Dr. Kearns does not have an age limit; however I would recommend that children be old enough to enjoy and appreciate the exhibits and equipment (Jonathan's estimate is age 10 and up). Standard club rules apply---parents must accompany and be responsible for children. For children 12 and up, Jonathan can permit a parent to send the child with another adult who is a Society member as long as that parent accepts full responsibility for anything that happens at or traveling to and from the venue.

Travel Time---about 2 hours and 30 minutes from Rockville, MD.

Please let Jonathan Harris know if you plan to attend and your agreement to our waiver and rules.

SWOPE'S PIT IN PENNSYLVANIA

November 19, 2011 Joint GLMSMC/MGS Field Trip.

It was 8:00 AM on Saturday morning. The air was crisp and clean and cool this November 19th 2011. Barb Burr and Gerald Elgert met Gary and Diane Leaman at their Gaithersburg, Maryland home. The four members of the GLMSMC club were dressed warmly for the journey. Gary and Diane were putting the finishing touches on the supplies in their pickup truck. Barb and Gerald added their equipment to the back of the truck and they all fit into the extended cab GMC. Gary drove. They went up Route 15 North, according to the route mapped out by Gerald. He had been to the location before and knew the way. A global positioning system, affectionately called "Maggie," also rode along with the quartet. There were two disagreements between the well-worn directions and Maggie's suggestions, but they ended amicable enough. The established route won.

The journey went past quaint little towns with well-kept townhouses and parks into Pennsylvania. The group traveled alongside the Susquehanna River, and northward toward Swope's Pit, which is near to the town of Turbotville. About 30 to 40 minutes prior to the destination, the group stopped at a Subway Restaurant and purchased some foot-long submarine sandwiches for lunch. Barb and Diane got hungry and devoured half of their sandwiches on the way. Gary and Gerald had more self-control. The foursome arrived at the dig site about noon. There were a couple of vehicles parked along the side of the road. In one of the cars sat Andy Celmer's wife, reading a book. Tom Sand and Lyle Petersen, from the Maryland Geological Society, had gone ahead with Andy and staked a claim for the day. They were already having success, finding some fine fossils, but no trilobites or ammonites, which we were interested in finding. Our group had to drive over a large and deep ditch, off the side of the road, to park. It was helpful to have a four-wheel drive vehicle. The truck was then parked and the party disembarked. The dig site was in an abandoned shale quarry. There was a short walk past some thick bushes and some climbing up the side of a hill. The party participants each found a site to occupy and started digging. They dug for about four hours. After the first hour Gary and Gerald polished off their sandwiches. The Rockhounds, Barb Burr, Gary and Diane Leaman dug out the shale from the hill and broke the wet pieces apart and found hidden treasures in the layers. We found pieces of crinoids, horn corals, ammonites, bryozoans, and lots of small shells in the shale. Gary found a particularly nice gastropod with the original shell material still intact. Lyle Petersen found the only trilobite. Tom Sand found a particularly huge and impressive ammonite, that after complete excavation, would prove to be more than a foot in length. The others found additional treasures in their digging areas.

The weather stayed comfortable the entire time. Other than someone asking an associate if they had found something and asking Gerald what it could be, sometimes the only sounds were digging, pounding or the neighboring cattle in an adjacent pasture mooing. Then the sun began to get low in the sky. When darkness threatened, and the buckets were sufficiently filled, they were loaded on the vehicles. The trio of vehicles began the trip back to their various homes. Initially, the plan was for everyone to enjoy sharing a meal afterward, but Lyle and Tom were a bit tired and declined the dining event. So Barb and Gerald and Gary and Diane went on to the Skeeter's Pit Barbeque Restaurant in Shamokin Dam, Pennsylvania and had a wonderful meal together, getting to know one another a bit more with their stories. The trip back was uneventful. The group disbanded at the final destination, Gary and Diane's home. Everyone was happy with their new finds and excited to tell their stories about the trip.



Lyle Peterson, Gary & Diane Leaman, Barbara Burr, Thomas Sand, & Gerald Elgert



Horn Coral in Matrix

Thomas Sand and Straight Shelled Ammonoid

Respectfully submitted, Diane Leaman



The "Trio"

All Photos by G. Elgert

MEET YOUR NEW OFFICERS**President Elect Andy B Celmer**

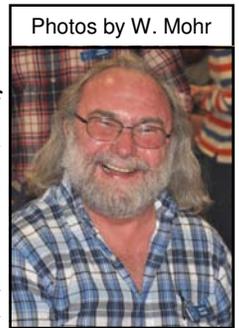
Andy grew up on the tidal wetlands of Baltimore County MD. The one thing that is conspicuously absent from the coastal plains is rocks, with the possible exception of bog iron ore. So his first real introduction to the world of rocks, minerals, crystals and fossils was a Geology 101 course. He took many physical science intro courses trying to find his true love. Andy took Geomorphology, Descriptive and Analytical Astronomy and 6 semesters of Physics.

As a person of Polish descent he says his "Favorite color is All of Them!" So the beauty of the color, crystal structure and symmetry of minerals, crystals and fossils took Andy by storm. He earned a Baccalaureate in Geology from U of MD, College Park and began a working career during the recession of the mid 70's, the Nixon Administration.

After working a couple of years he left town and hit the road on a multi month tour of the Great West. He collected rocks all along the way. When he reached the maximum weight limit that the postal service would handle, 50 or 60 pounds, he dove in a construction site dumpster, cut up plywood and 2x4s with a hand saw. Andy then built a box and shipped another box of rocks to friends and family back home. This formed the basics of his collection.

Of course once you have rocks you are required to torture them. He has a cabbing arbor for making cabochons, a 10 inch diamond saw, lost wax casting equipment, flat laps and his latest addition is a faceting machine. "One day I may grow up, but not today!," Andy says.

Andy lives in Monrovia MD along with wife, Patricia Cronin.

**Vice-President Elect Chris Luzier**

Chris Luzier grew up in Crofton, Maryland. He began hunting fossils at the world famous Calvert Cliffs locality and its adjacent 25 miles of beaches. He picked up anything and everything that was unusual - rock, fossil or anything else that was just "different." This became the basis of a lifelong fascination with things collectable, some trash and some treasure.

Many vacation trips with his family, all around the country, set a deep love for national and state parks. This love followed Chris to college. He studied at Shepherd College in Shepherdstown, West Virginia and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Park Administration - Natural Resources Management in 1994. He was married that same year to his wife, Stephanie, and they now reside in Millersville, Maryland, along with their daughter, Olivia, and their three beagles. Chris owns a landscape, stonework, and consulting business, now in its 11th year of business.

His passion for rocks, minerals, and fossils, has settled into primarily collecting fluorescent minerals from "The Fluorescent Mineral Capital of the World," Franklin, New Jersey and its sister location, Sterling Hill Mine, in nearby Ogdensburg.

He is also a member of the Franklin Ogdensburg Mineralogical Society (FOMS), the Fluorescent Mineral Society (FMS), the Sterling Hill Mine and Franklin Mineral Museum. Chris also assists occasionally in the Paleontology Department of the Natural History Society of Maryland as an Assistant Curator.

KUDOS to outgoing President, Eric Kindahl and Vice President Owen Powers. Both have served the Society admirably. Eric will remain on the Board of Directors as Immediate Past President. We are grateful for having as continuing Secretary and Treasurer, **Jeff Cessna and Andy Muir** respectively. Thanks guys.

December 10, 2011, Saturday, has been reserved at the Senior Center for our big auction of the season. Hold back some of any Holiday gift money for a present to another or even for yourself! The material is from two sources: Paul Vance and Gladys Fuller. Material includes slabs, cab and gem rough including Jade, many mineral specimens from a variety of localities, and books. Some are rare species, others showy and/or colorful specimens. The more valuable pieces will be auctioned individually. Others will be grouped into manageable lots. Schedule 9am viewing, 10am to 1:00pm, or later if needed. Save the date.



December 17th, 2011 from 9am - 3pm. Lapidary Items for Sale. Don Hartranft, who was the appraiser for the Ballards, contacted Mark Dahlman about the following:

Lapidary equipment and rough for sale: 20" slab saw (Star Diamond model ST-20 has very good notched-rim blade, needs motor and adjustments), 6-wheel grinding/polishing unit (Star Diamond super GP-8 belt driven unit would attach to motor you supply - same wheel/drum/pad configuration as current Barranca GP8), 10" vibratory lap, 16" vibratory lap, large 3-drum tumbler with motor, electric kiln (L&L Manufacturing model E-66), lots of rough for cutting and tumbling (agate, geodes and assorted others), slabs, petrified wood, grit, polish, and books.

The seller is having an open house on December 17th from 9am - 3pm at 2712 Bel Pre Road in Silver Spring, MD. Please RSVP to Don Hartranft at dhart1@verizon.net if you plan to attend. Your RSVP is important. Don doesn't want to run out of coffee and doughnuts!

February 18, 2012 Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club's 22nd Annual Mineral, Jewelry, & Fossil Show, one day, 10am - 5pm. The Show Place Arena, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Information <<http://www.smrmc.org/2012-rock-show.html>>.

March 3 - 4, 2012 Delaware Mineralogical Society 49th Annual Show. Delaware Technical & Community College, I-95, Exit 5B, Churchmans Road (DE 58), Newark (Stanton) DE. Saturday 10am - 6pm, Sunday 11am - 5pm. Information <www.delminsociety.net>.

March 17 - 18, 2012 **OUR SHOW!** Save the dates and stay tuned for more information and volunteer.

April 27 - 29 2012 Atlantic Micromounters Conference. MHA Conference Center, Elkridge MD.

VOLUNTEER in the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History Geology, Gems, and Minerals Hall. Visit <www.mnh.si.edu/educations/volunteering/> Explore the exhibition with visitors and stimulate their curiosity about the beauty and wonder of the Museum's collections.



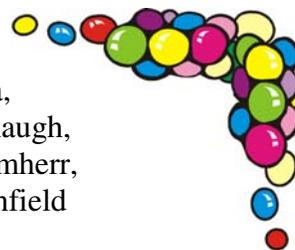
SOCIETY LIBRARY Go to the Society web site at <www.glmsmc.com/> and click on "Library" to see a complete listing of materials available for lending to members. Just about everything in the grand scheme of things in earth science is covered. You will find books on fossils, minerals, gems, geology and more. To utilize the library materials get in touch with Jonathan Harris at 301 545 0808 or <jjgharris7@gmail.com>. If you contact him before a meeting he can arrange to bring the requested material to the meeting and you may keep it out for one month until the next meeting, when it must be returned. Here is a great resource and most items are not available at the Montgomery County Public Library system.





DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Chase Batchelder, Blythe Batchelder, Beth Campanella,
 Mary Cummins, Mark Dahlman, Pat Jayne, Kristin Lolmaugh,
 Brent McCright, Jeffrey Nagy, Owen Powers, Helen Reimherr,
 Hugh Richards, Alf Shupe, Michael Tikinsky, Bob Winfield



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE – OCCUPATONAL BIRTHSTONES

via the Rockwood Rockhound News Jan 2004

Burglars - Keystone
 Politicians - Blarney Stone
 Bartenders - Whetstone
 Motorists - Milestones
 Architects - Cornerstone

Astronauts - Moonstone
 Hatters - Brimstone
 Shoemakers - Cobblestones
 Doctors - Gallstones
 Tourists - Yellowstone



STAUROLITES “Star-o-lites? Ed.”

Staurolite is a metamorphic mineral that is famous for its twinned crystals that form the shape of a cross. It is composed of iron aluminum silicate and its color ranges from yellowish brown to reddish brown to black. It can be transparent or opaque. It forms with garnet, tourmaline and kyanite in mica schists and gneisses and other aluminum-rich metamorphic rocks.

They can be found in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and New Mexico. Deposits are also located in Russia, France and Brazil. It is the official state mineral of Georgia. The cross most commonly forms at a 60 degree angle (St Andrew's Cross) but the 90 degree angle (Greek Cross) is most sought after. They sometimes form with both types of crystals creating a specimen that looks like a 6 rayed star.

Staurolite gets its name from stauros, the Greek word for cross but is also known as Fairy Stone and Fairy Cross. It has long been prized as a good luck charm and is thought to aid in healing and provide protection from evil spirits. A popular Christian legend states that tears shed by the angels at the time of Christ's crucifixion crystallized and fell to the earth as Staurolites. Other legends claim they were formed by the tears of fairies, shed in sorrow over the death of Christ. The Cherokee have their own legend which tells of the little people who brought to them a tale of greatness and sadness. The little people spoke of a special boy-child who had grown into a man of wisdom and taught his people the ways of the Creator and the straight white path of peace. He brought strong medicine (nuwati) to his people but had many enemies who would not hear his message of peace. On this day they would torture and kill the wise man. Because of their sorrow, the Cherokee began to cry. When their weeping had ended they looked down and saw that their tears had been changed into small stone crosses. (legend preserved by the Chiltoskey family of Cherokee North Carolina.) The Cherokee also tell of an annual ceremony centered around staurolites that was held at the Spring Solstice full moon. At sunset staurolite crosses would be put into the fire and heated until they were glowing hot, then carried to a special mound with green sticks. There they glowed for hours and were reheated as necessary to keep them hot until sunrise. The ceremony assured the people of safe passage, rain during the growing season and an abundance of food in the fall.

Sources: Smithsonian via Strata Gem June 2011 via Nov 2011 MOROKS Newsletter Monrovia CA

Pick a Good One



WEB SITES **Gems and Minerals: Earth Treasures from the Royal Ontario Museum** located at <<http://geology.about.com/od/bookreviews/fr/Royal-Ontario-Gems.htm?nl=1>> is about a book from the

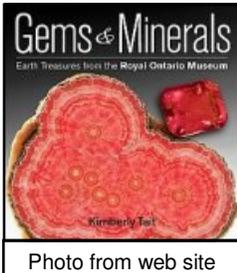


Photo from web site

Royal Ontario Museum, published October 20, 2011. As is customary this is not an endorsement. The book features 260 of the ROM's best minerals pictures, expertly photographed. The book lists at \$40, but as is frequently the case, it can be purchased for around \$30 from on-line U.S. book sellers. A few of the illustrations appear on the Amazon.com website. Andrew Alden, the reviewer heaps praise but cautions that it is not a reference book. The Field Museum, the Smithsonian, the Carnegie Museum and the Natural History Museum of London, among others, publish similar books about their gem and mineral collections. Perhaps you would enjoy this new book.

- Why is it that it always happens? The Peridot is always greener on the other side of the fence. •
- I acquired many gems and minerals equal or better than the ones in the museum. How do I make money on them? My friend said: First you get a sell phone.”

About Isotopic Dating: Yardsticks for Geologic Time is another article by Andrew Alden found at <http://geology.about.com/od/geotime_dating/a/timeyardstick.htm>. Describing the need for a geologic clock and moving into the continuing progress on accuracy, he tells about more and more precise dating using isotopes. Be sure to click on the links within the article for more information. • Andy was asked how old the fossil he had found might be. He said 3,000,003 years. How do you know so precisely? Easy, three years ago Professor Jones said it was 3,000,000 years old •

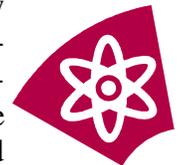


Photo by David K. Brezinski from MGS web site

Geology of the USA is yet another dissertation by Andrew Alden. See <http://geology.about.com/od/regional_geology/Regional_Geology.htm>.

It is a compendium for all states and way too extensive to describe in detail here. This site will be good for a cold winter evening by the computerside. Start with Maryland and expand from there. If you will be vacationing elsewhere when warmer weather prevails, this might be a good source of information for before you travel.

If not, just visit vicariously.

- Cliff went to many quarries in many states. Many had dangerous cliffs. He saw a great need for safety education so he wrote Cliff Notes. •
- Andrew Alden is so dedicated to geology that he can even sleep on rocks! •



POSTAL RATES are set to again rise on January 1, 2012. It is time once more to think about the cost of producing and mailing hard copies of the newsletter. Only about 10 members have no access to e-mail. But because many people request to receive the Rockhounder by both e-mail and “snail mail” over 50 copies are mailed each issue. If YOU can dispense with a mailed copy and receive the Rockhounder only by e-mail only it will represent a considerable saving. Let the new Editor know.

THANKS to Joel Rosen for his dedication to Society affairs. Joel is Property Manager and responsible for overseeing all the club possessions. He manages the trailer where we store the show cases and equipment and other things. He is electrician and problem solver at the Annual Show. Additionally he takes care of the monthly door prizes and oversees the show table. Say a big thanks to Joel for his work.

SHOW TABLE: Nov. 14th, 2011. Thanks to those who bring items for sharing at the meetings.

<u>Exhibitor</u>	<u>Specimen (s)</u>	<u>Locality</u>
Frances Becker	Almandine Garnets	Green's Garnet Farm, Roxbury CT
Boe Brosius	Star Ruby, Emerald, Aquamarine	Locality Unknown
	Emerald and Jasper	Canada?
	Pegmatite with Shorl	Brazil?
	Tanzanite (Zoisite)	Mererani Hills of Northern Tanzania
Barbara Burr	Prehnite	Loudoun Co, VA
	Pudding Rock	N. Chelmsford MA
Jeff Cessna	Talc (Fl.)	Balmat NY
	Fibrous Halite	Mulhouse, France
George Durland	Willemite, Calcite	Sterling Hill Mine, Ogdensburg NJ
	Willemite, Hardystonite, Clinohedrite	Franklin NJ
Gerald Elgert	Soft Coral*	OK
Ryan Gunnison	Assorted Meteorites	Various Localities
Jonathan Harris	Laumontite*	Churchville Quarry, MD
	Stilbite, Natrolite*	Vulcan Manassas Quarry, VA
	Talc*	Hunting Hill Quarry, Rockville MD
Eric Kindahl	Rhynie Chert w/ Plant & Fungal Fossils	Rhynie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland
Diane Leaman	Halite	CA
Gary Leaman	Fluorite	William Wise Mine, Westmoreland NH
Wendell Mohr	Halite	Grantsville UT
	Halite*	Death Valley CA
Andy Muir	Butterfly Calcite with Hyalite Opal	Mexico
	Aragonite and Sulphur	Sicily
	Aragonite	Mexico
Earl Smith	Amazonite	Amelia Courthouse VA



*Self collected or self made



All Photos by W. Mohr



Participate at the Show Table to increase your chances of winning a prize!

NOVEMBER 14th PRIZES

The General Prize, a Geode, Agate slice, and sawn Jade rough was won by **Kristin Lolmaugh**.

The Show Table Prize, a Grossularite from the Rockville Quarry, Rockville MD was taken home by **Frances Becker**.

A Pyrite Sun collected in Randolph County, IL, constituted **The Junior Prize** was won by **Jonathan Baum**.



SAFETY - HARD HAT SERVICE LIFE

By Al DeHart

As part of the Safety Brief for the recent Field Trip to the US Silica Quarry in Montpelier, VA, the Mine representative provided some information on hard hat service life. According to ANSI Z89.1, hard hats must be marked appropriately and should meet this standard. The manufacturer's date of manufacture for the hard hat is stamped on the underside of the hat, typically near the brim. The arrow points to the year that the hard hat was made. According to the Mine rep, if this year is more than five years old, you need a new hard hat to get into their mine. This is because OSHA incorporates the ANSI standard by reference and mine employers must follow its recommendations.



Since hard hats do break down over time, most manufacturers state that the hard hat's service life will expire in four to five years. Eight to ten field trip participants had to use Mine hard hats due to their own hard hats have exceeded the five year service life. We were lucky that they had the spare ones available to use. This was the first that I have ever heard of this and wanted to pass this on. So check out your hard hat for the date made. Damage such as cracks or damage to the interior suspension is grounds for needing to replace your hard hat. One other aspect is that hard hats constructed of plastic materials will degrade in sunlight due to the ultraviolet (UV) radiation. UV radiation will cause the hat to lose its glossy finish and eventually take on a chalky appearance. If you notice this happening to your hard hat, replace it immediately.

From The Collecting Bag of the Richmond G&M Society Nov.2011



SUNSHINE Continue to keep David Ballard in your thoughts. Dave has recently been hospitalized three times. Why not call him or send a card with your best wishes? He would surely appreciate the support.



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