



# The Rockhounder

March 2021

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."

**NOTE:** Please send any submissions for the April issue of The Rockhounder to Editor Olivia Luzier at [editor@glmsmc.com](mailto:editor@glmsmc.com) by Thursday, March 25th, 2021.

## Regular Meeting Announcements

Ken Reynolds, Vice President

## March Speaker Information:

**Speaker:** Dr. Jeffrey Post

**Title of Talk:** Jeff's Journal Unearthed from C to Mn02

Dr. Post has graciously agreed to share with us what he has been doing over the past year, including some new research and a literary project.

Dr. Jeffrey Post is the Curator of the U.S. National Gem and Mineral Collection. His areas of research interest include mineralogy, gemology, geochemistry, crystallography, and electron microscopy. He has published more than 75 scientific articles in these fields.



*Photo courtesy of Holly Heighes*

### Next Regular Meeting:

**Date:** March 8th, 2021

**Time:** 7:30 PM

**Place:** Virtual (online Zoom meeting)

### Next Board of Directors Meeting:

**Date:** March 15th, 2021

**Time:** 8 PM

**Place:** Virtual (online Zoom meeting)

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### President's Message

Holly Heighes

We are once again honored to have Dr. Post as our guest speaker on March 8th. I wish it were in-person, but we are doing the best we can to keep our club as normal as possible. And like that old movie: 'If it is Tuesday, it must be Belgium,' 'If it is March, it must be Dr. Post.'

Dr. Post has been a great friend to our club for many years and very generous with his time. His annual visits to our meetings to share the latest happenings at the Smithsonian are a highlight of our club year. He has supported our show, our youth program and gave of himself in many ways, not the least of which was visiting Wendell and JoAnn at Asbury when their health prevented them from attending our meetings.

I hope you will join us on March 8th in welcoming Jeff and showing our appreciation for all he has done.

**Pictures (in order from top to bottom):** Jeff handing one of our FRA (youth group) members the badge she earned, at the Smithsonian, and setting up the Smithsonian case for our show.



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## GLMSMC Regular Meeting Minutes from February 8th, 2021

Jeff Cessna

The February 8, 2021 meeting was called to order by President Holly Heighes at 7:45 PM. There were approximately 49 people in attendance. The meeting was conducted online. A motion passed to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2021 regular meeting. A motion passed to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2021 Board of Directors meeting.

**President:** President Holly Heighes welcomed members and guests. Guests introduced themselves from Virginia, Kentucky, Maine, and several other locations. Holly thanked Kathy for offering her presentation. She thanked Jonathan Harris and Andy Celmer for serving as co-hosts for the meeting. She provided meeting instructions to turn off video and microphone during the presentation to avoid bandwidth limitations.

**Treasurer:** Jonathan Harris delivered a Treasurer's report. Income since the last report included membership payments. The club is financially solvent.

**Show:** Downstairs Chair Chris Luzier reported that the club now has received a contract with the fairgrounds for the 2022 show dates.

**Membership:** Doug Baum introduced himself as Membership Chair. He thanked those who had already sent in their membership payments. The memberships expired on Dec 31st. He provided contact information for those guests interested in joining the club and noted that more information can be found on the website and in the Rockhounder.

**EFMLS Liaison:** Andy Celmer announced upcoming shows in Florida and the Che-Hanna show in Wysox, Pennsylvania on March 27th-28th. Holly thanked Andy for his efforts to assist the EFMLS. She noted the Board would be discussing the club relationship with the EFMLS at the next BOD meeting and invited any members to attend.

**Program:** Vice President Ken Reynolds introduced to our speaker for the evening, Kathy Hrechka, from the Micromineralogists of the National Capitol Area. Kathy gave a presentation entitled "Snow Crystal Photomicrography 101." She opened her presentation by sharing her first interaction with our club when she attended the club show in 1985 upon moving to the area. While departing the show, she was announced a door prize winner and that started her personal interaction with club members and demonstrators of micromineralogy. Kathy discussed the different crystal shapes snowflakes can take and factors in their formation. Her technique involves collecting on colored felt

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## GLMSMC Regular Meeting Minutes from February 8th, 2021

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and working fast under a cold light source to capture the images. She uses a microscope and captures the image by camera or cell phone through the objective.

She showed examples of her results from different storms and conditions. Weather conditions of our area make work difficult, but we were still rewarded with spectacular images of unique crystal shapes. Kathy also credited Kenneth Libbrecht, author of a field guide to snowflakes and other titles, and Wilson Bentley, a pioneering photographer of snowflakes in 1925. Kathy fielded many questions from an engaged audience. Thanks, Kathy.

**Show Table:** A suggestion for the show table was to include specimens from your collection kept for their crystal forms. Those with items to present were asked to provide the information in the chat to facilitate inclusion in the minutes.

- Ken Reynolds showed an amazonite and mica, the collection of which was facilitated by an encounter with our speaker and Laura Dwyer at the Morefield Mine, Amelia Courthouse, Virginia. Kathy had just secured access to the underground workings and Ken got to go along.
- Ed Clopton showed a twinned cerussite from the Coeur d'Alene District, Idaho.
- Diane Leaman showed a quartz crystal from Montana that had belonged to her mother. Gary Leaman showed a calcite crystal from Pugh Quarry, Custar, Ohio.
- Pat Repik showed a limonite "star" pseudomorph after marcasite from the White Desert, Egypt, that she had successfully fought for at our member auction.
- Dave MacLean showed a beach collected clinker leftover after burning off oil in ships. The material was deposited overboard in the past. The material was collected at Tower Road Beach in Illinois.
- Nancy Shinowara showed a large green garnet with one face showing it had been intergrown with another crystal. She inquired about the correct identification and possible localities.
- Jonathan Harris showed a siderite on heulandite, self-collected from Havre De Grace Quarry, Harford County, Maryland. The siderite showed twinned tabular crystals and the heulandite showed coffin-shaped crystals.
- Jeff Cessna presented 2 witherites, one with fluorite, from Cave-in-Rock, Illinois, with barrel-shaped crystals and a reticulated "snowflake" cerussite from Tsumeb, Namibia.
- Steve Stuart showed a recently acquired 275 nm led UV flashlight. It garnered much interest from

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## GLMSMC Regular Meeting Minutes from February 8th, 2021

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- attendees. Sphalerite from the Franklin, New Jersey mining area was suggested as a good species to investigate with the light.
- Jeff Grueber was inspired by the ice crystal on an airplane window to share information on the Cloud Appreciation Society: <https://cloudappreciationsociety.org>.
- Laura Dwyer suggested our beachcombing include searching for fulgurites and showed examples. She noted they are common and can also be found with shells fused within them.
- Willy Wiley showed a kyanite collected in a road cut near Roxbury, Connecticut. The specimen was found on a student field trip to the locality immediately upon exiting the vehicle.
- Germaine Broussard showed specimens from an unlabeled collection of white material contained in pockets of a dark matrix, some pockets including crystals. It reminded Dave MacLean of rhyolite from the Pacific Northwest. Another suggestion was vesicular amygdaloidal basalt, which can be found in Connecticut, Upper Michigan, out west, and locally at Sugar Grove, West Virginia, with the pockets likely containing zeolites.

**Adjournment:** It was M/S/P to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM.

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## GLMSMC Board Meeting Minutes from February 15th, 2021

Holly Heighes, Secretary pro tem

**Board Members present:** Doug Baum, Andy Celmer, Jonathan Harris, Holly Heighes, Chris Luzier, Ken Reynolds, Joel Rose, and Dave Tiktinsky. **Guests present:** Dan Kohn, Karen Lottes, Gary Leaman, and Diane Leaman.

President Holly Heighes called the February 15th meeting to order at 8:02 PM.

**EFMLS:** Andy Celmer, EFMLS Liaison, and Holly Heighes gave an update on issues surrounding the EFMLS, the insurance that GLMSMC obtains through EFMLS, and the private insurance quote

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## GLMSMC Board Meeting Minutes from February 15th, 2021

Holly Heighes, Secretary pro tem

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received. This was discussed at great length. Holly will inquire if we are able to obtain insurance with higher limits that may allow us to collect at locations that have been closed to us due, in part, to the lower limits and coverage of the EFMLS insurance. If we can obtain satisfactory insurance, the Board will then conduct a formal vote by email to determine if we wish to purchase it and separate from the EFMLS.

**Programs:** Upcoming programs were discussed, with multiple suggestions made. VP Ken Reynolds will be following up. Karen also volunteered to contact a source who also might be available to discuss meteorites. It was noted that the March meeting will be with Dr. Post.

**Membership:** Doug Baum reported that, thus far, 76 members have renewed, on par with our typical experience. Maintenance of the membership list and email distribution list were discussed. Dan suggested maintaining both on Excel would streamline and improve this function; it was heartily agreed. Doug will update the list and forward to Dan.

**Treasurer:** Jonathan Harris provided the monthly income statement and balance sheet for review and indicated the activity consisted of depositing membership payments.

**Website:** Dan Kohn and Jonathan Harris will see to various updates re: speakers, show & newsletter.

**Other Business:** Dan Kohn provided various possibilities for inclusion in the Rockhounder and will forward to Olivia. Chris Luzier mentioned that the Friends of Mineralogy, Virginia chapter (FMVA) directory has been published and that we will be included in the 2022 version. Gary Leaman mentioned that the FMVA is planning some auctions, and as we have run many successful auctions, Gary offered our assistance. Likewise, when FMVA has perfected online auctions, they said they will be happy to lend us a hand if we would like to pursue this.

It was M/S/P to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 PM.





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## **GLMSMC Board Meeting Minutes from February 21st, 2021**

Jeff Cessna

**Board Members present:** Doug Baum, Andy Celmer, Jeffrey Cessna, Jonathan Harris, Holly Heighes, Chris Luzier, and Dave Tiktinsky. **Guests present:** Gary Leaman and Diane Leaman.

President Holly Heighes called the February 21st meeting to order at approximately 7:04 PM.

On February 18th, 2021, a motion was made by email to purchase private insurance as outlined in the proposal (of February 18th, 2021) and to exit the EFMLS. The motion was seconded. An additional online Board of Directors meeting was called for discussion.

Discussion included the increased insurance available compared to our prior insurance and the effects of separating from the EFMLS.

The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 PM.

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## **How to Pay Your 2021 Dues**

Doug Baum

**How to pay your 2021 GLMSMC dues, if you have not already:**

- 1) \$20 for Family and \$15 for individual membership.
- 2) Send check made out to GLMSMC to Doug Baum, 11205 Golden Meadow Court, Germantown MD 20876.
- 3) If you send a self-addressed stamped envelope, I will mail your Membership Cards.
- 4) Any questions? Email Doug Baum at DBaum18@aol.com.

Thanks,  
Doug Baum



### Barite

Don Peck

**Editor's Note:** This piece comes from the "Mineral Of The Month" column by Don Peck, life member of the New Jersey Mineralogical Society.

Barite is a rather common mineral. Its name comes from the Greek for "heavy," as barite is sensibly heavier than most rocks and minerals. It crystallizes with several habits, although it is often bladed, as in the photo to the right. Barite may be but is rarely prismatic. Fernlike growths from Cumberland, England, are particularly attractive, as are Desert Roses from Oklahoma. In Addition, it may be massive, compact, or earthy.



Barite crystallizes in the Orthorhombic system. It is in the Barite Group of minerals, as are celestine, and anglesite, along with avogadrite, itolite, olsacherite, and hashemite. The last four are rather rare. Barite and celestine form crystals that are virtually impossible to distinguish visually. The forms are the same and the angles differ by less than one degree.

Barite is barium sulfate,  $\text{BaSO}_4$ . It is insoluble in water and in acids. The powdered mineral can be fused with  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$ . The fused mass can be treated with water and the solid remainder dissolved in  $\text{HCl}$ . The resulting solution will give an apple green flame test when viewed through cobalt blue glass (to eliminate the sodium yellow from the flame).

Barite may be colorless, white, yellow, brown, gray, blue, or reddish in color. Its streak is white. It has three directions of cleavage with one perfect and a second less so. Hardness is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{1}{2}$ . And Specific Gravity is 4.50, nearly twice that of common rock or quartz. Barite is often fluorescent under long wave UV. Colors may be yellow, orange, or pink.

Barite is a component in drilling muds in the petroleum industry used to stabilize pressure in the bore hole. It is also used in making medical X-rays (but you really don't want to know!)

Barite occurs in limestones and hot spring deposits. It is often associated with celestine, anglesite, strontianite, and hematite. Many of the world's finest specimens come from England, but the major producers in tonnage are China, India, United States, Morocco, Iran, Turkey, and Kazakhstan.

#### References:

- *Dana's New Mineralogy*, Gaines et. al, John Wiley & Sons
- Wikipedia





## Future Rockhounds of America (The MOCKS) Ages 10-15

Mark Dahlman

**Next Meeting Date:** Time will tell

**Meeting Time:** 7:45-9:00 PM, when we're back in action

**Meeting Location:** Sunroom Cafeteria at the Rockville Senior Center

Continuing our Fossil badge, one of the badge activities is to learn about fossil names. The FRA handbook includes the following activity If you do three activities, you earn the Fossils badge.

“Fossils, including dinosaurs, often have long names that seem impossible to pronounce. Sometimes, they were built around the name of a person (for instance, a famous paleontologist or the person who first discovered the fossil). Other times, they are named for the place where they were found or for some characteristic. The names are then put into Latin or Greek form. Pick your favorite fossils or dinosaurs and learn how its name came about and what it means. Or develop a new dinosaur name built around the name of your society or town. Or create a whole new fossil animal and give it a name!”

Email me how your favorite fossil name came about and what it means, or send me a new dinosaur name built around the name of our society (Gem, Lapidary, and Mineral Society of Montgomery County, MD) or your hometown, and you will have completed one of three activities needed to earn the Fossils badge.

I'd love to see pictures of your rock ornament (see December's article), or your collection showing off your fossils, which is another badge activity (see the October article), as well as any interesting fossil-related web links to share with the group. My email address is shown below.

For more information on the Future Rockhounds of America program, please contact Mark Dahlman at <fra\_advisor@glmsmc.com> or 301-428-0455.



## **Rockhounding Finds**

Sam Linton

Finds from last fall from Virginia. Stack of complete, large placopectens, double macrocallista, 3" thick pecten (fattest one yet... in the background of limpet pic), and 17 cavity limpet.



Limpet



Macrocallista



Pecten (super fat)



Placopecten

*Photos courtesy of Sam Linton*



## Articles of Interest

Dan Kohn, Gary Leaman

The following “Illustrious Opals” articles can be found at the website listed below:

<https://www.rockngem.com/illustrious-opals-library/>

- Issue 1: “Exploring the Allure of Opal”
- Issue 2: “Fossil Bee in Opal”
- Issue 3: “Ammolite”
- Issue 4: “Opal Grandeur”

*Rock and Gem Magazine* is letting people who provide an email address pull down the current and past Opal articles, as well as sign up for the future Gemstone articles being published later this year.

<https://www.rockngem.com/>

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## Upcoming Events

### 2021 Mineral Treasures Show

**Date:** Saturday, May 8, 10 am—6 pm

**Location:** Picnic Grove at St. Michael Byzantine Church, 203 Jacob St., Mont Clare, PA 19453

**Admission:** \$5 adult; under 13 and all scouts in uniform free

Minerals, gems, and fossils for sale, with vendors under the Pavilion and on the grounds

Free parking

Kids' activities & free mineral specimens

Snack bar

Picnic tables available -- bring your own picnic

Indoor bathroom facilities

**Information:** [www.phillyrocks.org](http://www.phillyrocks.org).

**Contact:** Karenne Snow, [mineral.fossils.rock@gmail.com](mailto:mineral.fossils.rock@gmail.com)



## Upcoming Events (Cont'd)

### **1<sup>st</sup> Annual \*SUMMER\* South Jersey Gem, Jewelry, Mineral & Fossil Show**

**Date:** June 12, 2021

**Location:** 1721 Springdale Road Cherry Hill, NJ 08054

**Show Times:** Saturday (6/12/21) 10:00 am - 5:00 pm (Saturday Only) (Outdoor Only)

**\*Rain Date:** Sunday (6/13/21) 10:00 am - 5:00 pm (Outdoor Only)

**Website:** [www.sjmineralshow.com](http://www.sjmineralshow.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/sjmineralshow](https://www.facebook.com/sjmineralshow)

If you are planning a trip and want to know what clubs you might be able to visit, it would be worthwhile to visit the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies website. Check out their newsletter archives at <http://www.amfed.org/news/default.htm>.





### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President** – Holly Heighes

**Vice President** – Ken Reynolds

**Secretary** – Jeff Cessna

**Treasurer** – Jonathan Harris

**Field Trip Chairman** – Germaine Broussard

**Membership Chairman** – Doug Baum

**Downstairs Showchair** – Chris Luzier

**Upstairs Showchair** – Dave Tiktinsky

**Property Manager** – Joel Rosen

**Immediate Past President** – Jonathan Harris

**EFMLS Liaison** – Andy Celmer

**Bulletin Editor**– Olivia Luzier

**Life Members:** Larry Harrison, Wendell Mohr, Juan Proaño, and George Durland

**Society Address:** Gem, Lapidary, and Mineral Society of Montgomery County MD., Inc.

P. O. Box 444, Gaithersburg MD 20884-0444

**Website:** <http://www.glmsmc.com/>

All Society correspondence is to be sent to this address except that which is intended for The Rockhounder and its editor. Such items are to be sent to the editor's email address at [editor@glmsmc.com](mailto:editor@glmsmc.com).

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Award Winning Bulletin  
EFMLS, AFMS



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FIRST CLASS MAIL**

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