



**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 8th 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 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 10:00 pm 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 meet NOT meet in December. Next meeting January 12, 2009

**ROSTER CHANGES**

ERTMAN, Jonathan, grossular9@live.com  
FISHER, Dale, rdfisher2@gmail.com  
IRBY, Robert and Norma, irbyre@verizon.net  
RIMAR, Donna, d.rimar@comcast.net

**WILDACRES** If you’ve not had a chance to visit an EFMLS Wildacres session, details and an application for the April 17 to 23 session will be in the January EFMLS News. Featured speaker will be Dr. Michael Wise of the Smithsonian, our January speaker.



**ROSTER UPDATE** An updated roster will be sent out with the January *ROCKHOUNDER*. It is for the convenience of members and will be mailed or E mailed to members only. It is not to be used to solicit business, nor will it be distributed outside of the Society. If you do NOT want your name, address, phone number, or E Mail address listed, please let Wendell Mohr (301 926 7190) know by December 15th. If any data in your listing has changed, (Address, phone number, E Mail, children added or deleted) and you have not told Wendell about it, please do it NOW.

**DEADLINE** for the January 2009 Rockhounder: **Dec. 26th**

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**NOVEMBER VISITORS** Gary and Diane Leaman, & Frances Becker. Won't you come again please?



CUMMINS, Tom & Mary, 10448 Carlyn Ridge Rd., Damascus MD  
20872-2157, mydeckguy@comcast.net, 301 253 5458

Jimmy (1/97)

DeWOLFE, Wendy, 8701 Cathedral Way, Gaithersburg MD  
20879-1791, Wendy@dwde Wolfe.com, 301 869 8587

MILLER, Michael, 241 E. 4th St., Frederick MD 21701-3601,  
Michael@flintknappers.com, 330 224 0016

PARABOSCHI, Jennifer & Jim, 5108 Russett Rd, Rockville MD  
20853-2549, Jennifer.paraboschi@gmail.com, 240 242 4955

David (8/97), Michael (8/99), and Luke (2/02)

SPENCER, Chuck, 1239 Derbyshire Road, Potomac MD 20854-6145, vcs Spencer@aol.com, 240 370 2799

**PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:** As the holiday season comes closer, I hope you are looking forward to our holiday party. As in past years, the party is in place of our December meeting. The festivities will be in our regular meeting place at the Rockville Senior Center, at our normal meeting time on December 8th. Please feel free to bring any items you care to swap or sell, and don't forget to bring your favorite finger food to share. It's a nice way to catch up with old friends and to get to know new ones.

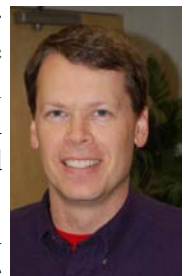
Speaking of friends, our November board meeting, the last of the year, was the last board meeting for Juan Proaño, who is stepping down as Treasurer after many years of service to the Society. Juan surprised all of us by presenting the society with a flat of outstanding mineral specimens from his collection to be given as door prizes at our meetings. In addition, Juan has offered to stay on until the audit of the Society finances has been completed. It sure is great to have a friend like that - thanks Juan!

And speaking of the Society's financial audit, our audit will be performed this year by Steve McNeil, who has a professional background in such matters. Thanks Steve!

And finally - get ready Juniors! Starting in January we will have a special new program for you! Holly McNeil, to whom we give our appreciation for devoted service as she retires from the job of Secretary, has volunteered to lead the Future Rockhounters of America (FRA), giving Juniors (up to age 18) the opportunity to learn about many subjects of interest to Rockhounters. Based on a program set up by the American Federation of Mineral Societies (AFMS), the FRA program provides instruction and activities for Juniors who can earn badges in subjects such as fossils, rocks and minerals, lapidary arts, collecting, earth processes, field trips, gemstone lore and legends, and more. The material is provided to us at no cost by the AFMS. Holly has been busy planning for this exciting new venture, and will be looking for adults to assist in teaching particular subjects as the year progresses. More information will be available at our holiday party. Holly will be holding the charter meeting of the FRA during the first half of our Society's January meeting in the sun room attached to our normal meeting room. Look for FRA announcements in future Rockhounters.

I look forward to seeing you all on the 8th!

Mark



## **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.

**BAGS FOR KIDS FOR SHOW** Jo Ann Mohr, still needs material for making the bags for kids specimens. If you have some excess cloth material you never used please donate it for the cause. She will also accept worn out old shirts etc. which could yield usable material. Help the little ol' bag lady!

Did you hear about the newsletter editor who misplaced his dictionary? Now he's at a loss for words.



**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:** The November 10 2008 meeting was called to order by President Mark Dahlman at 7:45 pm with approximately 61 people attending. Minutes of the October 13, 2008 regular meeting were approved.

**Junior Advisor,** Rod Towers conducted the Junior raffle and presented each Junior Rockhouser with a quartz crystal specimen generously donated by Nancy DeMulder, our speaker for the evening.

**President:** Mark shared a letter from the AFMS thanking us for our \$400 contribution to the scholarship foundation. He also made a general announcement to inform the group of the availability of name badges and encouraged members to purchase and wear them. Name badge applications are available from Nancy Ballard.

**Elections:** The following individuals were nominated, seconded and unanimously elected as officers for 2009: Mark Dahlman, President, serving a second term, Elmer Lantz, Vice President, serving a second term, Andy Muir, Treasurer, new to office, and Jeff Cessna, Secretary, new to office.

**Editor,** Wendell Mohr announced the availability of magazines gifted by the estate of Susanne Patch for members to take, and updated the group on upcoming events.

**Membership Reinstatement Fee:** Wendell moved that a reinstatement fee of \$5.00 per household be imposed on those who renew their membership after the announced deadline. This fee would apply to those not renewing by December 1<sup>st</sup> this year and by November 1<sup>st</sup> in subsequent years. The motion was seconded and passed.

**Field Trip Chairman,** Jonathan Harris announced the upcoming field trips.

**Vice President,** Elmer Lantz introduced the speaker for the evening: Nancy Kahn DeMulder. Nancy addressed the question of what to do with those cherished specimens, when putting them on the shelf isn't enough. Her solution – jewelry. She gave us many practical suggestions on designing and making our own jewelry as a way to “protect, display and enhance” that special stone. She encouraged us to not only understand the characteristics of the stone, but also the properties of the metal to be used in the setting, and provided examples of the importance of doing so. She discussed various methods of jewelry crafting, tools and supplies and graciously shared some of her creations with us. Thank you Nancy! (We're happy you also won the door prize!)



**Treasurer,** Juan Proano announced that the club finances are in “good shape.”

**December meeting agenda:** Mark announced there would be no speaker or show table at the December meeting, but plenty of food, drinks and camaraderie. Members are welcome to bring specimens to swap or sell.

**Awards:** Mark announced the following awards by the American Federation of Mineralogical Society: Wendell Mohr, honorable mention in the small bulletin category, and Heather Felsen, 3<sup>rd</sup> place for her “Wildacres Spring 2007” article. Congratulations to Wendell and Heather for these National level awards!

**Property Manager,** Joel Rosen announced that member Fred Parker is selling part of his collection at the upcoming Northern Virginia show being held at George Mason University.

**Library:** Mark reminded everyone of the club's extensive library. A complete list of books and publications is now on the club's website. If anyone would like to borrow these materials, contact the librarian, J. Harris.

Meeting Adjourned 9:57pm.

Holly McNeil, Secretary



**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Board members present: Nancy Ballard, Mark Dahlman, George Durland, Heather Felsen, Jonathan Harris, Elmer Lantz, Holly McNeil, Wendell Mohr, Juan Proano, Joel Rosen. Future Board members present: Jeff Cessna and Andy Muir. Non Board member present: Dave Ballard. President Mark Dahlman called the November 17th meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

**Miscellaneous Business:** There was follow up discussion regarding the possibility of purchasing Joe Murter's Rock Show exhibit for permanent display. A motion was made but not seconded. Heather will inform Joe and offer some alternatives for him.

**Membership Chair:** Nancy Ballard commented on the high percentage of membership renewals.

**Show Chairperson:** Heather Felsen announced that the dealer contracts for the show have been sent out and provided a sample of the accompanying cover letter for review. Heather has drafted a preliminary floor layout, subject to change pending final dealer numbers. There was discussion of renting a third room at the fairgrounds to accommodate additional dealers, many of whom have been on our wait list for years. Heather will make additional inquiries of the fairgrounds and inform the board.

**Field trips:** Jonathan updated the board on upcoming planned trips and received suggestions for some indoor trip possibilities during the winter season. Jonathan will follow up.

**Treasurer's Report:** Juan Proano reported on the status of the finances and presented the final 2008 budget and year-to-date Profit & Loss. Juan reminded the board that he, Andy, and Mark will make arrangements to go to the bank to remove him and add Andy as an authorized check signer on the account. Juan noted we received a letter from the IRS with updated information on our reporting requirements. We are in full compliance with these rules. A person was suggested to audit the Society books and will be contacted.



Juan thanked the current and past boards he has worked with during his tenure as Treasurer, thanked Nancy Ballard for her hospitality in hosting the board meetings, and presented the board with a donation of 9 beautiful specimens from his private collection to be used by the club as door prizes.



**Property Manager:** Joel Rosen presented a complaint about the meeting room layout and recommended a center aisle to improve traffic flow. Joel made a motion that was seconded and approved to increase the annual gratuity to the senior center custodian to \$100.

**Upcoming Speaker:** Elmer reported the Jan. 2009 speaker will be Dr. Michael Wise of NMNH on Hiddenite.

**Editor:** Wendell updated the Board on the status of the Lillian Turner award, and commended Jonathan for the number and quality of field trips he has arranged.

**President:** Mark informed the group of the American Federation's junior program "Future Rockhounds of America" that he would like the club to implement. He explained the program and will be looking for someone to spearhead its implementation. Mark also asked board members to review the summary comments from the member survey and consider any action items. He reminded those who have not turned in their "job description" to do so.

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 pm.



A horse may be coaxed to drink, but galena must be lead.

Holly McNeil, Secretary



**DECEMBER MEMBER BIRTHDAYS:** John Bennett, Mary Cummins, Mark Dahlman, Cheryl Hyland, Pat Jayne, Jeffrey Nagy, Owen Powers, Helen Reimherr, Hugh Richards, Lois Ritchie, Alf Shupe, Bob Winfield.



**DECEMBER'S BIRTHSTONE** is turquoise. Did you know that turquoise actually is found as crystals? And from where? The Bishop copper prospect in Campbell County, Lynch Station VA no less! Originally the only known crystal locality, crystals are now known from at least 26 other locations worldwide.

(Effective January 1, 2009.)

**MEET YOUR NEW TREASURER** Andy Muir, is a relative newcomer to the hobby. Just three years ago his parents mentioned that their town, Auburn, Maine, owns wooded parkland containing the dumps of feldspar mines where tourmaline has been found. Andy's searches there didn't lead to any tourmaline, but he read that some of the pegmatite rocks he collected should fluoresce -- so he made a small investment in a 4-watt shortwave/longwave lamp. Andy said, "Seeing that magical transformation of some boring gray and white rocks into brilliant greens, oranges, and pale blues really ignited a passion for collecting fluorescent rocks." He said he has thoroughly enjoyed the hobby since then, especially the wonderful people he has met in the GLMSMC.



Andy most enjoys spending time with his family, even if they aren't avid rock collectors. They do enjoy attending the rock shows, where his wife Denise purchases beads for jewelry projects, daughter Savannah (13) works on her low-budget collection of thumbnails from A to Z, and daughter Gabi (11) seeks out attractive crystals and carved animals. Andy has a degree in Chemistry from Dartmouth College that has seldom been used during the last 16 years, as he analyzes airplane safety issues at the Federal Aviation Administration. In addition to rocks, Andy enjoys gardening and various crafts such as rubber stamping and pumpkin carving.

**MEET YOUR NEW SECRETARY** Jeff Cessna, as the son of two Frederick County science teachers, spent his youth learning outside of the classroom as well as in. Hikes or canoeing trips with his parents and older brother were a regular weekend activity. They often consisted of moving from rock, to flower, to tree and learning the names and information about each one. If only he had kept it up, he wouldn't be busy re-learning all of it today. Collecting in those days consisted of whatever was interesting and nothing of any monetary value. There were occasional trips to Calvert Cliffs for shark's teeth and Sandy Mile Road in western MD for marine fossils from the Oriskany Sandstone exposure.

He went to school on the eastern shore of MD at Washington College, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics. Since that time he has worked at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, MD making measurements of radioactivity that serve as the standard to which all such measurements in the US should be related. He now lives in White Oak, MD.

Intentionally setting out to collect rocks as an adult started with a free airplane ticket, for getting bumped off of a flight, and the book, *The Rockhounds Guide to Colorado*. The collecting didn't yield any specimens of interest, but the Estwing rock pick and canvas collecting bag bought in Boulder, CO are still in use today. After years of roadside and beach collecting he decided to join the GLMSMC to be able to get into some local quarries. Those opportunities came with the bonus of interesting speakers, knowledgeable and friendly members, and a thriving community. His interests include minerals, fossils, a little lapidary, and especially fluorescents.



**SAFETY BRRRR!!!! BRRRR!!!!**

Adapted from article by Mel Albright AFMS Safety Chair Oct 1997  
 There are two bad effects that you can get from being too cold too long. One is hypothermia and the other is frostbite.

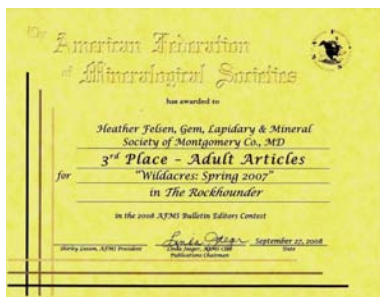


HYPOTHERMIA is low body temperature. Warning signs are slurred speech, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, uncontrollable shivering, and a sensation of extreme exhaustion. If you suspect hypothermia, take the person's temperature. If it below 95°F. or 35°C., seek emergency medical help immediately! If that isn't available, or will take a long time, start by warming the person SLOWLY. Warm their body first - if needed, cuddle with them. Get them into dry clothing and cover them well with a warm blanket - including their head. No alcohol drugs, coffee, or hot beverage or food should be allowed. A warm broth is great. Do NOT warm their arms and legs first because this drives cold blood towards the heart and may cause heart failure! Prevention of hypothermia is mainly common sense. Avoid hard work - pushing a car, shoveling snow, walking in drifts, and the like. The strain of cold with hard labor can cause a heart attack. Avoid working up a sweat. Remove outside clothes layers to avoid perspiration and overheating and then put the layers back on when you finish. Don't eat snow. If you want a snow cone, take the snow indoors.

FROSTBITE is simply frozen body tissue. The warning signs are a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in the extremities - fingers, toes, ears, nose, or cheeks. Treatment of frostbite requires immediate medical help. If you must wait, slowly re-warm the affected areas. BUT, remember that if they also have hypothermia, the body must be warmed first. Prevention of frostbite means two things. One is proper clothes - mittens, layered waterproof clothes, double socks, and so on. The other is ordinary common sense - DON'T go out in extremely cold weather if you can avoid it at all. If you must go out, don't stay long at one spell. Come in and warm up frequently.

Reference for these articles: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service.  
 <<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/oax/?n=frostbite>>

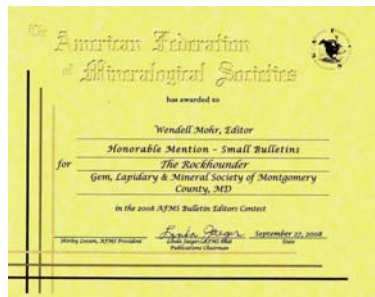
**AFMS BULLETIN EDITOR'S AWARDS**



Hearty congratulations to Heather Felsen for placing 3rd in the category of Adult articles for her fine piece about "Wildacres Spring 2007."



Photo AFMS News June-July 2008



And Wendell Mohr was awarded an honorable mention for the Rockhounder in the small bulletin category.

**AFMS ENDOWMENT FUND RAFFLE** John Kuehn won prize #5 in the AFMS Endowment raffle. It was a faceted London Blue cubic zirconia stone set in 14k gold. Est. value \$200. (donated by Steve Weinberger.)



**FIELD TRIPS:** Jonathan Harris will email announcements of any trips scheduled after press time. Get on his list if you are not already included and are interested. No E Mail? Call Jonathan at 301-545-0808. December field trip: Take your silver pick and beg, steal, trade, or buy specimens at the December meeting!



**JEWELER'S LOUPE** I recently purchased a clip-on loupe at the Harbor Freight Tools store in Gaithersburg. It has two swing-down one inch lenses for 3.3X or 5.0X viewing which can be used in combination to get a 16.5X magnification. Of course you need to wear glasses to use it conveniently for hands-free viewing. It goes by the item number of 94364-OVGA and lists for \$4.99. It is on sale for \$2.88 until Dec. 26th. That's cheap! I am not endorsing this commercial store but found the device to be extremely useful for examining small crystals and it would be good for the nominal intended use for jewelry. You can see tiny stuff really clearly.



"I see," said the blind carpenter as he took his hammer and saw!

Editor

## LAPIDARY CLASSES

**Patuxent Lapidary Guild** Cabbing, Silver Smithing, Casting, Faceting, and Faceted Stone Setting are offered at various times. The Guild has a shop which is open on Thursday to members, after training, at a nominal fee of \$5.00. It is a requirement that you join the Guild to take the classes. Contact the President Don Zwach at 301-725-4475 or <dpz1@aol.com> for information.

**Clearwater Nature Center** (Southern MD Rock and Mineral Club) offers a class in cabochon making for a fee of \$30 for Montgomery and Prince Georges County residents, \$36 for others. Ages 18 & up. Bring your own safety goggles and apron. Dec. 6th, Jan. 10th, and Feb. 7th from 9 am to 3 pm. Info. 301 297 4575.

**Glen Echo Park** offers classes in precious metal clay. All are for age 16 and up, taught by Marjorie Barnes.

- "Metal Clay Charm Bracelet", One session for a fee of \$80 + \$65 for materials, is on February 7, 2009, 10 am to 4 pm in Arcade 304.
- "Intro to Metal Clay Jewelry", by same instructor, is being offered in a 2 session course, one on Jan. 24 & 25, 2009 and the other Feb. 21 & 22, 2009. Fee is \$160 + \$85 supply fee. Both are 10 am to 4 pm in Arcade 202. Information for both classes: <marjoriebarnes@yahoo.com>.

**OTHER CLASSES AND TRIPS** Get the Montgomery Co. Recreation And Park Program Guide.

**Montgomery County Recreation Department.** A class of 10 sessions on Stone Sculpture, by Ann Rupert, for ages 12 & up, is being offered at the Ross Boddy Community Center. One set, 7 to 9 pm, begins on Wednesdays Feb. 25th. Another set on Thursdays begins Feb. 26th. You must furnish your own tools, supplies, gloves, safety glasses, and stone. Get the Winter 2008 Montgomery County Recreation and Park Programs Guide for details and registration information.

### **Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission.**

Black Hill Visitor Center, 301 916 0220, <BlackHillNature.org>.

- "Bog Iron field trip", Little Bennett Regional Park, Dec. 5, 11 am to 1 pm, ages 18 & up, Free.
- "Medford Quarry tour" with geologist, Dec. 6, 10 am to 2:30 pm, ages 12 & Up, \$25 (Friends of Black Hill \$20), educational and a little collecting.
- "Crystal Magic", Learn about crystals and make your own pendant, Jan. 15, 7 pm to 8:15 pm, ages 5 & up, \$4 (\$3 FOBH).

Locust Grove Nature Center, 301 299 1990, <LocustGroveNature.org>.

- "A Crystal Ball", Learn about and make take-home crystals, Jan. 9, 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm., 6-12 yrs, \$6



Actual License Plate given to Andy Muir by his wife!

**SHOW TABLE: November 10, 2008** Thanks to those who bring items for sharing at the meeting

<u>Exhibitor</u>	<u>Specimen (s) * = Self-collected or self made</u>	<u>Locality</u>
Boe Brosius	Native Silver	Elura Mine, New S. Wales Australia
	Gold lapel pin	Not given
	Green Grossular	Eden Mills VT
	Pink Topaz	Not given
	Sherry Topaz	Thomas Range, Delta UT
	Diamond	South Africa
	Prehnite,	Luck Quarry, Loudoun Co. VA
	Grossular Garnet	Hunting Hill Quarry, Rockville MD
	Gold flake	Valdez Creek AK
	Jasper	Bethany Beach DE
George Durland	Opals (Fl.)	Oasis NV & Napa CA
	Microcline (Fl.)	Diamer District, Pakistan
	Orthoclase (Fl.)	Turmig, Skardu, Pakistan
Gerald Elgert	Araucaria Petr. Wood broken & healed	Holbrook AZ
Jonathan Harris	Grossular Garnet*	Hunting Hill Quarry, Rockville MD
Chuck Hyland	Assorted agates etc. (Fl.)	CA to east coast
Alexandra Kindahl	Quartz (Milky, Druzy, with Mica)	Locality unknown
Eric Kindahl	Kyanite*	Willis Mtn. Mine, Dillwyn VA
David Maclean	Earrings	Not given
	Staurolite in Schist*	Presque Isle MI
Gabriella McDonald	Serpentine etc (Fl.)	Hunting Hill Quarry, Rockville MD
Wendell Mohr	Calcite Iceland Spar	Locality unknown
	Quartz and Epidote	Sichuan, China
Andy Muir	Hackmanite (Fl.)	Hochka Valley, Afghanistan
	Powellite & Stilbite (Fl.)	Maharashtra State, India
	Calcite & Sulfur (Fl.)	Maybee MI
Jeff Nagy	Apatite & Pegmatite*	Baltimore MD
Bill Porter	“Big Rock”*	Locality not listed
Keith Regatts	Calcite (Fl.)*	Medford Quarry, Westminster MD
George Reimherr	Rhodonite, Willemite, Franklinite (Fl.)	Franklin NJ
Joel Rosen	Calcite	Ouray CO
Rod Towers	Dinosaur bone slices	CO
Barbara Wells	Wire wrapped Cabochons*	Locality not given
John Wells	Beach stones	Lake Superior



**NOVEMBER DOOR PRIZES**

Winner of the junior prize was Michael Paraboschi, and was a hematite bear with a fish in its mouth. David MacLean took home the show table prize which was a specimen of quartz var. amethyst, “Cactus” or “spirit quartz”, from KwaNdebile Mphumplanga Boekenhouthoek, South Africa. (Now there is one where the label required may be bigger than the specimen!) We were happy that Nancy DeMulder, our speaker, won the general door prize, a sandstone sculpture from the western USA.



**UPCOMING SHOWS AND EVENTS**

**December 13th, 10 am to 4:30 pm** – Fall Festival of Fine Minerals, Fossils, and Jewelry. Days Hotel, 9615 Deereco Road, Timonium MD. Take I-83 to exit 17, right on Padonia Road to Deereco Rd. Commercial show featuring Henry's Gems (& Jewelry), Highland Rock & Fossils, Mike's Minerals, Octahedron Minerals/Jewelry, and Parker Minerals. Information: 410 828 0024

**Ongoing** until January 11, 2009 "Desert Jewels: North African Jewelry and Photography from the Xavier Guerrand-Hermès Collection," Smithsonian Institution, Museum for African Art, 950 Independence Avenue SW. 10 am to 5:30 pm. See <<http://africa.si.edu/exhibits/hermes/index.html>> for more information.

**THE ROCKHOUND, THE FROG, AND THE PLUM****By Member, Mary Crosswhite**

Once upon a time [Saturday Nov.8th] in a land far, far away [Georgia] a lovely middle-aged woman [Hey--Fairy Tale--remember?!?] went rock collecting at a place called "Jackson's Crossroads" with a friendly group of people called M.A.G.M.A. (Mountain Area Gem and Mineral Association, 99% Digging, 1% Talk! Ed.)

Digging in the dirt and rock piles like children with all the other 50 and 60 year olds on a gorgeous Fall day was a treat in itself. If we found some pretty amethyst crystals along the way, that was just icing on the cake [that's what the people who don't find anything ALWAYS tell everybody]. (Actually we did come home with some nice sparklies, but nothing anyone would want to hit us over the head for and steal).

Well, after a lunch break, I returned to the pile I had been digging on and asked "Anybody find anything amazing?" And a lady said to me "We found a frog. Want to see it?" Indeed, someone digging in the just excavated dirt had unearthed a live frog--a tree frog from the look of him [BOY WAS HE LOST]. Of course, nobody was inclined to stop digging to deal with a frog, so there he sat, a bit stupefied, on top of the dirt. I said "Shouldn't we put him in the woods?" And the lady said "Would you do that?" And I said "Of course". So I scooped up the frog in my gloved hands [I remember wondering if he gave me warts would they be purple like little amethysts], and lovingly took him over to the woods, scraped aside some leaves, and put him at the base of a tree, covering him back up. The truest part of this story is probably that that neat little frog was every bit as beautiful a creation as any crystals could be, AND he was alive, AND he let me hold him, but what has this tale to do with Truth?

Now I didn't expect my small kindness to earn me any monetary reward, but it did occur to me that if this were a Fairy Tale, that frog might give me a reward by letting me go back and find a HUGE amethyst crystal on my next dirt pile. Ha! Ha!--Silly romantic! Well, a little while later I heard a young lady on an adjacent dirt hill yell, "Oh my gosh--Look at THAT!" She had found a beautiful, perfect amethyst crystal, the size and color of a plum. Just reached into the dirt and pulled it out like Little Jack Horner sitting in his corner. And I thought "JACK HORNER????!! WAIT a minute----that was supposed to be MY amethyst!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" [Rotten double-crossing frog!]

So what's the MORAL of the story???? Was the frog just spatially challenged? (The lady who found the beautiful stone WAS about the same distance from me as the first dirt pile was from where I had placed the frog). Or was the frog just contrary ["I ain't rewarding no warm-blooded critter for picking me up. THAT sets a terrible precedent..."] Or should I have filled my canteen with water that morning before going out digging instead of margaritas?

Anyway life is unfair, or frogs are unfair. I don't know..."



Mary Crosswhite  
◀ Photo by W. Mohr

Photo from Hound's Howl, Aiken Gem, Mineral, & Fossil Society, October 2008 ▶



## Monitor These

WEB SITES

By Wendell Mohr



**Where to Buy Minerals** Not an avid reader as a teenager, I used to love *Life Magazine*, with its myriad of pictures. Here is the mineral equivalent. <http://www.where to buy minerals.com/> is an off-shoot of the commercial site, the-vug.com, as customary not endorsed here. You will find gorgeous photographs and links to various different suppliers of top-notch mineral specimens. A few links are to e-rocks and e-bay and have expired. Give a look at this site by Justin Zzyzx. As a voyeur, you will not pay attention to the high prices.

• Speaking of prices, in the current economy noble metals are doing well but talc mines are showing softness in the market. Mining equipment hit rock bottom. •

**The Academy of Natural Sciences**, a well known Philadelphia Museum, is featuring a special exhibit through April 19, 2009 about the *Hadrosaurus Foulkii*, a notable dinosaur fossil find from Haddonfield NJ. The fossil was described 150 years ago and marked several firsts: 1st nearly complete dinosaur, 1st shown to stand kangaroo-like on two feet, and 1st mounted specimen on display. Visit <http://www.anps.org> and, if you can't get to Philadelphia yourself, you can vicariously learn about it all. Don't miss the links to Joseph Leidy and Hoag Levins's web pages for details. • Who would have believed that dinosaurs came from eggs? All of them came from broken homes! •



**Finger Lakes Geology** is by Dewitt Middle School teacher Laura Vanvleet of Ithaca NY and reached at <http://www.icsd.k12.ny.us/dewitt/library/>. You will find the subject at the pull-down menu labeled "Classroom Resources by Subject." Read "Tips on using this site" first, followed by clicking on the subject at the upper right. Learn about the finger lakes, falls, glens, fossils, state parks, and mining and quarries. See "Teacher Resources" for more interesting information. See "Various Flickr Links to the Finger Lakes Geology Image Collection Database" for some 2400 images. • In the big el niño of the Devonian, most of New York was underwater. Know what flavor geologists in NY have at the ice cream parlor? Rocky road or chocolate marbled vanilla. •

MINERAL PROFILE - WULFENITE

Wulfenite is a lead molybdate mineral with the formula  $PbMoO_4$ . It can be most often found as thin tabular crystals with a bright orange-red to yellow-orange color, sometimes brown, although the color can be highly variable. In its yellow form it is sometimes called "yellow lead ore".

Wulfenite is named for Franz Xavier von Wulfen (1728-1805), an Austrian mineralogist.

Wulfenite is found in many localities, associated with lead ores. A secondary mineral associated with the oxidized zone of lead deposits. Wulfenite is a heavy mineral with a specific gravity of 6.5-7.0.

Wulfenite is in the tetragonal system, often stubby, pyramidal, tabular, massive, granular, and earthy. It shows a white streak, and has a hardness of 2.75 - 3.0 on Mohs hardness scale.

It is a secondary ore of molybdenum, sought after by collectors.

The most famous locality for Wulfenite is the Red Cloud Mine in AZ. Crystals are deep red in color and usually very well formed. The Los Lamentos locality in Mexico produced very thick tabular orange crystals. Samples from Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, while usually not bigger than micro-crystals, are desirable because of the unusual location. [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)  
The Society Messenger Middle Tennessee Gem & Mineral Society July 2008



**1993 Continued** - For May 1, Field Trip Chair Terry Cirrincione scheduled a jaunt to Sideling Hill (near Hancock MD). For various reasons only five members participated, and from Terry's report those who did not missed a great experience. For those of you not familiar with this site, it's about 6 miles west of Hancock on route I-68, close to the PA and WV state lines, and is such a geological wonder that an Exhibit Center had been established there. The 340 foot cut through mountains of the Allegheny Ridge provides a cross section view of a 350 million year old geological formation. A guide from the Center (a retired USGS geologist) took the group on a tour of the site, showing his knowledge along the way. (See <<http://www.mgs.md.gov/esic/fs/fs17.html>> Ed.)



**MINING OUR HISTORY**

I mentioned May's gold panning trip in last month's ramblings, but there were other successful field trips also, to Lee Creek NC for fossils, to The Willows on the Bay's western shore for different types of fossils, and to Medford Quarry, a repeat visit to an old favorite mineral hunting ground. The final trip of the month was to Meckley Quarry. From Terry's report the results could only be called fabulous. So many good finds were made that to list them all would take up about five column inches so I'll limit myself to two discoveries. Georgia Olmstead found malachite crystals over phyllite (a metamorphic shale), and George Reimherr found calcite crystals. (George was working in a particularly sunny spot, so his wife Helen held an umbrella over him while he chipped away. No one held one over her, though.) There even were some things for lapidaries as cutting material of black and white marble, and pink and white striped dolomite was found. May had been a very productive month.

The speaker at June's meeting was Dr. Robert Hazen of the Carnegie Institute in Washington. He told of the differences between graphite and diamond and how nature makes the change. Dr. Hazen stated there are tons of diamonds the size of footballs 100 miles deep in the earth. Most of these are pulverized during volcanic activity but, in a volcanic pipe from that depth in an eruption going 100 MPH, some diamonds as we know them are preserved, but not the football sized ones. (If there were, I'm sure De Beers officials would jump for joy.) Dr. Hazen then led the audience through the history of attempts to create diamonds. Most were failures until scientists in Sweden and at General Electric succeeded. A book he had written, "*The New Alchemists*" was to be published by Random House in November. He exhibited a man-made diamond (by GE) on the evening's Show Table. Secretary pro tem Nancy Ballard noted in the minutes that based on the number of questions asked after the talk, Dr. Hazen had sparked the interest of the listeners.

Also included in June's Show Table was an item brought by Jennie Smith which she had labeled "Tully Monster" from Pit 11 Braidville PA. Can anyone enlighten me as to what it is?

June's first field trip was Chair Terry's first time to Meckley Quarry. She got lost along the way, but the group finally arrived at the place. Once in the quarry they had fantastic results. Terry reported the place was loaded with all manner of minerals including some deep purple fluorite. Charles Zellers found exceptional specimens of that mineral. Apparently no one left Meckley empty handed.

There was another successful gold panning trip to Rock Run. Bob Irby found a nugget with 5 microscopic quartz minerals in one of its crevices. This trip it was Jack Nelson who stepped into a waist-high hole! That didn't deter him from teaching panning techniques and from visiting several other sites. All in a day's work or fun. Two other incidents occurred during the trip. The participants encountered a young hawk which had fallen from its nest. They fed it (what, was not specified), and the bird promptly followed them to the stream. Then on the way back to their cars, they came across many ant hills 2 ½ to 3 feet high, some of whose residents showed their resentment at having their territory intruded upon by biting Georgia Olmstead and Marshall Stapko. As Terry commented in her report, when we go on a trip we can end up getting involved in much more than rocks. As many of you know, *Rockhounder* Editor Emeritus Nancy Ballard also is an expert gardener. She added that the beasties undoubtedly were Allegheny Mound Ants which, in addition to not liking their homes disturbed, also want them not to be shaded, thus they inject overhanging trees with poison to kill them. So take a warning, if in your travels through the woods you see strange mounds, stay clear of them.

Greetings to all, and have enjoyable holidays. See you next year.





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Gem, Lapidary, and Mineral Society  
Of Montgomery County, Md., Inc.  
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