



REGULAR MEETING Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month from September to June. The Society will next meet on Monday April 13th 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 to chat and see the Show Table materials. The program will be by **Steve Weinberger** whose talk is entitled "**Micromounting - Not Just for the Small Minded**". It explains the many reasons why micro-minerals are such a fascinating endeavor and shows various techniques for making good mounts. The last part gives a through-the-microscope look at a number of interesting minerals. Steve has been in the lapidary and mineral hobby for over 40 years. His interest began with making cabochons, then progressed to faceting, mineral collecting, micromounting and photomicrography. He has served as president of the Gem Cutters' Guild of Baltimore and is currently serving as treasurer. He's also served as president of the Eastern Federation and the American Federation and is currently Central Office Administrator and By-laws chair for AFMS. Steve is also chairman of the EFMLS Wildacres Functioning Committee and Bylaws Chair for EFMLS.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS will meet on April 20th at 7:30 pm at the home of David and Nancy Ballard. All Board members are expected to be there. Any member is welcome to attend but please let Nancy know if you plan to attend.

NEW MEMBERS CURRY, John, 9503 Burgee Place, Frederick MD 21704-7842, 240 405 9670, jjcurry9@yahoo.com. Son Kellyn (2/03)
HENNESSY, Michael, 11998 San Ysidro Court, Woodbridge VA 22192-6248, 703 855 8535 (cell) (Second adult in David Hennessy household.)



FORMER MEMBERS-REJOINED

MUIR, John and Nancy, 113 Taft Avenue, Auburn ME 04210-4244
WARREN, Dorothy, 3511 Farragut Avenue, Kensington MD 20895-2125, 301 933 2082 (H), 301 219 3031(Cell)
WINGARD, Jennifer, and KING, Joshua, 406 E. King St., Gordonsville VA 22942-9126, 540 832-5195, xtlrsearch@yahoo.com

VISITOR Robert Clemenzi

POSTAL INCREASE One ounce 1st class postal rate goes to \$0.44 on May 11th. If you get the *Rockhounder* by mail as well as E Mail consider dropping the snail mail version to save the costs of printing and postage. Please let your editor know if E Mail only will suffice.

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:

Well, wasn't that a great show and sale! We had a tremendous turnout, our vendors reported very good sales, the club cases were full of good looking and interesting exhibits, and the shop and demonstrators did a great job engaging our visitors. Of course there were plenty of exclamations of "Ooh!" and "Wow!" and "Cool!", and the kids' table was as popular as ever. In fact as far as I could see, all of our members working at the show provided our visitors an enjoyable experience.

We also had one of our most successful raffles - we went through all 500 tickets and had to make more! If you missed the end of the silent auction on Saturday, you missed an exciting event. The silent auction became an open auction with a crowd of bidders vying for the 16 lots. The material was from the estate of Jim Durborow, who was a Society member and Society president in the 1970s. The club will receive a portion of the auction proceeds.

I can't thank you all enough for giving your time and effort to prepare and conduct such an excellent show. So as not to miss anyone, I won't list names, but I can't pass up thanking our co-chairs Heather Felsen and Pat Repik-Byrne. Heather and Pat did an incredible job of organizing this year's show. They deserve a tremendous amount of credit for a tremendous event. And of course they had a lot of help from many Society members. Pat remarked several times that she was very pleased our members are so quick to pitch in.

So many of you put in a lot of work getting ready for the show, such as making the 400 (!) preforms for the shop, assembling all of the equipment needed to put on the show, and collecting material to set up the raffle, drawings, and auction. The show was well publicized (we couldn't ask for better timing on the Post articles!), postcards and fliers were distributed, and signs, brochures, and giveaway magazines were set out. Of course there was the touch-table, mini-mine, junior rockhound quiz, and FRA exhibit that were set up for our younger visitors. And let's not forget all the free samples, labels, and beautiful handmade bags for the kids too. There were tickets, certificates, contracts, and money to be taken care of, plus all the hard work of setting up and then taking down the tables, chairs, cloths, cases, shop equipment, electrical cables, and fluorescent tent. The preparation that you all put into your exhibits and demonstrations really showed. And wasn't it great to have snacks and drinks (for set-up day, and early mornings before show opening only), and even flowers at the hospitality table again. You all did an outstanding job that we can all be proud of.

As we watched the last of the dealers push their things out the door at the end of the day Sunday, I felt a bit sad it was over. It was great to spend the weekend with friends in our Society doing things we enjoy (as well as getting some great new specimens!).

See you on the 13th, Mark

MINERALOGICAL RECORD One of the two lots sold at the March meeting for \$87. The unsold lot will be sold to a book dealer with proceeds to the Society. In April we will hold another silent auction for another two years of these collectible magazines. One lot consists of Vol. V, 5 issues, 1975, (No. 3 is missing), minimum bid \$70. The other lot, Vol. VI, 6 issues, 1976, minimum bid \$75. The Minimum bid for each is half of the going retail price. As we get to more recent issues these magazines become better and better.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:

The March 9, 2009 meeting was called to order by President Mark Dahlman at 7:46 pm, with approximately 54 people attending. Minutes of the February 9, 2009 regular meeting were approved.

President: Mark announced the two lots of Durburow material and the two volumes of Mineralogical Record Magazine for the evening's silent auction. One volume of *Mineralogical Record* sold and both other lots sold. With postage rates going up Mark reminded us to please receive the newsletter by email only, if possible. Wildacres applications were due by March 17th and the Society scholarship was still available.

Show Downstairs: Pat Repik-Byrne had the volunteer sign up sheets. People were doing a great job signing up. Exhibit cases were pretty well filled, thanks to all contributors. Space was only available if you brought your own case.

Show Chairman: Heather Felsen reported that all dealers had submitted full payments; tables and chairs were ordered; security was arranged, the final fairground payment was in; and she would soon be hanging the banner.

Show Demonstrators: Bob Irby reported the demonstrators would include two faceters, the bead society, the flint knappers, micro-mounter Tom Tucker and others, Joe Murter growing silver crystals, and Mike Ellwood from the Calvert Marine Museum. The MD Geological Society would supply brochures.

Field Trips: Jonathan Harris announced the upcoming Hunting Hill trips, Age 16 years and above only. A trip to Pinesburg to find dolomite, barite, fluorite, and smoky quartz is also planned. Juniors over 10 yrs are allowed with a parent. See field trips for details.

Publicity: George Durland distributed flyers to all that needed them.

FRA: Holly outlined the FRA evening program about collecting. It included how to strategically add to a collection, curate the collection, and avoid some possible missteps. An introduction to the Moh's hardness scale would also be given, to prepare for the mineral identification program next month. The FRA program will have a display at the show. Everyone was invited to see the program scrapbook.

Junior Advisor: Rod administered the junior door prize give away.



Speaker: Vice President, Elmer Lantz, introduced the evening speaker, recently joined club member, Michael Miller. Michael gave a presentation entitled "Geofact or Artifact? How Stone Artifacts are Identified."

We learned about archeological lithics, the study of chipped or ground stone artifacts. The terminology of and processes for creating various shaped stones were presented. Clues were given for how to tell geofacts, naturally shaped stones, from artifacts, those modified or shaped by man. We learned that arrowheads are a "recent" development, about 1,000 years BP (Before Present), present being 1950. A wealth of information and examples were packed into the presentation. Many questions from the audience showed their keen interest in the program. Michael was happy to identify items brought in by various club members. We were invited to take a look at selection of examples he brought, including a wide variety of different materials. Thanks, Michael.



(Continued on Page 4)

Regular meeting minutes (continued from Page 3)

Editor: Wendell Mohr cautioned us about the fake Rock & Gem Magazine renewals, having received one himself. The National Association of Geosciences Teachers Eastern Section will be holding their spring conference May 14-17th at the Loudoun campus, N. VA Community College in Sterling. For a fee there are programs and local field trips available. Wendell reported on the Delaware Gem and Mineral Show, noting that all 24 display cases had nice liners and risers for professional look. He had hint sheets for our members for exhibiting. The upcoming shows and events calendar was reviewed.

New Members: It was M/S/P to approve the membership of John Curry and son, Kellyn.

Treasurer: Andy Muir delivered the straightforward treasurer's report "We're solvent."

Chuck Mason skillfully filled in for an absent Joel, by calling the show table. The door prize and show table prize were also absent.

There was a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday" in honor of Jack Busch's upcoming 90th birthday. Happy 90th Jack.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Jeff Cessna, Secretary

SHOW

DURBOROW MATERIAL At the March meeting two small lots of mostly lapidary material were sold and at the Show the remainder of the material was put up for silent auction. The Society keeps 25% of the sales so we netted \$282.25 and Versie Durborow got 75% = \$846.75.

ATTENDANCE Nancy Ballard reports that we had 1588 paid attendees (and about 500 children). That compares very favorably with last year's 1324 paid. The wonderful Washington Post articles by Ann Cameron Siegal, one in the Kids Post and the other in the Weekend section, certainly had a high impact. Thanks, Ann.

LOST & FOUND On Monday after our show it was discovered that there was a jacket left at the Fairgrounds by a child. It is a black velour jacket with leopard trim on the collar and sleeves. If you claim this, or know of someone who will, call Lynn Strachan at the Fairgrounds: 301 926-3100, Mon. - Fri., 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, or <LStrachan@mcagfair.com>.

RAFFLE Lot # 2 was won by Emma Bowers, while both lots #1 & #3 were taken home by Owen Powers.

LAPIDARY REQUEST A man at the show is looking to have some cutting done. Steven Figman is looking for someone to do some trimming, cabs, and sawing. He will pay for the occasional work. Contact him at 202-326-1300 if you are willing to help him.

EFMLS DRAWING At least 8 great prizes will be offered at the EFMLS Convention and Show in October at Bristol CT, and more keep coming in. You can see these prizes in color by going to <www.amfed.org/efmls> and downloading the March and April EFMLS Newsletters. Tickets will be available soon and we will keep you posted.



AFMS DRAWING, likewise, will take place at the AFMS Convention Aug. 1st at Billings MT. Tickets for \$5 each, or 5 for \$20 may be bought by check addressed to "AFMS Endowment Fund" along with SASE to Carolyn Weinberger, P.O. Box 302 Glyndon MD 21071-0302. Color photographs are at <www.anfed.org/endow2009.htm>.

Saturday April 18, Martin-Marietta Pinesburg Quarry 8 am to 1 pm, 14932 Bottom Road, Williamsport, MD 21795. This is a limestone quarry where there are vugs with quartz, calcite, dolomite, barite, pyrite, and fluorite. Some fossils and concretions also appear in the quarry. Meet at the Manager's Office no later than 8:00 am. We will collect from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm. Minimum age is 10, minors must be with a parent. Please let Jonathan know if you plan to attend by April 11 so he can provide the quarry with an accurate headcount. Directions to Pinesburg: Take 1-270 North to I-70 West to I-81 South (near Hagerstown). Take the Williamsport exit (2) right which is US 11 South. Turn right at the third traffic light on MD 68 and continue for about a mile until you see a sign for Bottom Road. (There is a cannery on the left and a brickyard on the right.) Take Bottom Rd. to the left before the railroad tracks. After 2.3 miles you will see a sign that says DO NOT ENTER. Turn right across the railroad tracks. Go to the second entrance and turn into the visitor's parking lot. It is about 1 hour and 15 minutes from The Montgomery Village/ I-270 intersection. No cost is involved.

April 19th, and May 17th, Hunting Hill Quarry in Rockville, 8:15 am. Minimum age is 16 (with proper parental supervision.) Only paid members are permitted. You must reserve no later than one week before the trip. Email <jgharris7@comcast.net> (best) or call Jonathan at 301-545-0808. Include with any messages your name and contact information. The quarry needs a headcount a week ahead, and contact information is needed in case of a last minute cancellation. If you show up without prior signup, you will be asked to leave. All collectors must attend the safety briefing at the beginning of the trip and follow all quarry rules. It is customary to pay \$5.00 each for the quarry person.

Find your best way to the intersection of Shady Grove Road with Darnestown Road. (From I-270 you may take I-370 west to Great Seneca Highway, where you turn left, to Darnestown Road, where you turn right.) Go North (West at this point) on Darnestown Road. Turn Left at the stop light at Travilah Road. Go 0.9 miles and turn left on Piney Meetinghouse Road. Go 0.1 miles to the quarry entrance on the right. Enter the property and stay right and meet at the office building.

Saturday May 2, Gettysburg Quarry, 7:45 am to Noon. Known for zeolite crystals, copper minerals, epidote crystals, and micromounts. Go North on I-270. In Frederick, continue North on US 15 towards Gettysburg. Soon after entering Pennsylvania, exit onto PA-97, Baltimore Pike. Turn left on Baltimore Pike/PA-97 and the quarry is 0.8 miles (toward downtown Gettysburg) on the left. The address is 1575 Baltimore Pike, Gettysburg, PA. Travel time about 1 hour 15 minutes from Rockville. The age limit for this trip is 10 years old; all minors must be carefully supervised by a parent. The quarry manager emphasized the importance of staying away from forbidden areas-high walls and drop-offs; adults or children venturing there will get our Society blacklisted from this site. You must reserve a spot no later than April 25th. Email <jgharris7@comcast.net> (best) or call Jonathan at 301-545-0808.

Saturday May 9, PCS Lee Creek Mine, Aurora, NC, 07:00 am. Drive time about 6 hours from Rockville. A classic site for fossil shark's teeth and whale bones. We have only 8 slots. You are only allowed into the mine once a season; please don't go with our Society and then with another. They check driver's licenses. If you get caught you may get barred. Please sign-up with Jennifer Wingard at <xtlresearch@yahoo.com> no later than April 29th. In an email please include both email and phone contact information and how many times and when you have been to the site. If you don't have access to email, please call Jonathan at 301-545-0808. Jennifer or Jonathan will notify you soon after if we have a slot for you. We would like to have at least one experienced person on the trip. Note that "no-shows" for this trip are absolutely forbidden. The mine management reduces slots when the requested ones are not fulfilled. Management is extremely strict and has no tolerance for even the slightest infraction of rules.



(Cont'd on Page 9)

BE SAFE – BE WELL

by Don Monroe, AFMS Newsletter
September 2008

Oh Say Can You See?

Many, many of us do not see as well as we would like or as well as we once could. All of these vision problems are not the result of aging. In some cases, other factors play a part in creating the problem.

Pre-teens and older teenagers may have sustained eye injuries while at play due to flying objects or missiles such as a shot from an air rifle. I well remember being hit in the eye with the “ball” from a sweet-gum tree. My cousin could really throw well for a girl. Yes, it was very painful and it took several days to heal. A small amount of permanent damage resulted in what the doctor called a “floater” which is in my eye to this day.

Excessive exposure to bright sunlight has a long-term effect on our eyes. This exposure can result in cataracts and other eye damage. Sun glasses that reduce UV exposure can help.

Are we properly concerned with the lighting that we rely on when we read, write or do close work?

The latest information I received from my ophthalmologist indicates that all of us will have cataracts as we age. These will show up as yellowing in the eye and, for the most part, surgery will not be required. Good lighting will assist us minimizing this effect.

Regular eye examinations and corrective lenses must become a way of life for us if we are going to safeguard our sight. I personally do not see any pleasure in standing on a street corner with a white cane and a tin cup or having our grandchildren read for us because we can't see.

**APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

Tom Cummins, Elsie Durland, Karen Durland, Quinn Hunter, Sierra Hunter, Anna Marcus, Alexander McDonald, Melissa McDonald, Michele McMurtry, Jason Millington, Earl “Eric” Smith, Chuck Spencer, Michael Tihomirov, Virginia Vance, Charles Zellers.

**April's Birthstone is Diamond.**

The 478 carat **Light of Letšeng** diamond, produced from the Letšeng mine in Sept. 2008, was sold in Antwerp for \$18.4 million, reflecting the remarkable white color and clarity of the stone. It is anticipated that a polished diamond of at least 200 carats will be produced. This diamond was the third significant diamond to be recovered at Letšeng following the **Lesotho Promise** in 2006, & the **Letšeng Legacy** in 2007.

The **Light of Letšeng** ranks as the twentieth largest rough diamond ever recovered. The Letšeng mine has now produced four of the world's largest rough diamonds and the three largest diamonds recovered in this century.

London-listed **Gem Diamonds** owns 70% of the Letšeng mine in a joint venture with the government of Lesotho. The mine is located in the Maluti Mountains, is the highest diamond mine in the world at an altitude of 1,250 meters above sea level and one of the coldest places in Africa.

Credit Judith Kinnaird, SEG News- letter, January 2009 (Society of Economic Geologists.) via Juan Proaño

People say the darndest things! To a tour bus driver at Mount Rushmore in South Dakota:
“How did they know where to dig to find those faces?”

Rockbuster News May 2006



SHOW TABLE: March 9, 2009. Thanks to those who bring items for sharing at the meetings.



Exhibitor

Specimen (s)

Locality

Jeff Cessna	Calcite (color change fluorescent)	Manassas VA
George Durland	Willemite, Sphalerite, Calcite	Sweden
Jonathan Harris	Benitoite	San Benito Co., CA
Chuck Hyland	Chondrodite/Norbergite	Farber Quarry, Franklin NJ
Gary Leaman	Grossular Garnet*	Rockville Quarry
Chuck Mason	Manganocalcite (fluorescent)	Huanzala, Peru
Wendell Mohr	Calcite (fluorescent)	South Africa
Tom Parnell	Meta-Rhyolite, Meta-Andesite,	Catoctin and Sam's Creek area Frederick
Pat Repik-Byrne	Ash, Basalt*	Co., MD
Conrad Smith	24 artifacts (5 self collected*)	CO, MD, MT, VT, & WY
Earl Smith	Malachite	Democratic Republic of Congo
Linda Smith	Arrow Points/ Knives	TX & OK
Chuck Spencer	Labradorite	Madagascar
Rod Towers	Calcite Crystals	Locality unknown
No Name Listed	Strontianite on Calcite	Winfield PA
	Fossils	Near Sideling Hill MD
	Siderite*	Frostburg MD
	Pecten Fossils*	Greenbrier NC
	Shark Teeth*	Calvert Co., MD
	Green Rock*	Cabin John Creek, Montgomery Co., MD
	Microscope and specimens	
	Fluorite Carving	China



DOOR PRIZES Joel Rosen sends his regrets about his absence at the March meeting due to illness. He will double-up on giveaways at April's Society meeting.

PATUXENT LAPIDARY GUILD CLASSES
 Enameling on PMC, Apr 19th and Apr 26th, 10 am-4 pm. Sign up by April 4th.
 PMC Bezel Making, Apr 25th and 26th, 10 am-6 pm. Sign up by April 11th.
 Mold Making Techniques, May 2nd and May 3rd, 10 am-6 pm. Sign up by April 18th
 Keum-Boo on PMC, May 5th-May 26th, 6-9 pm. Sign up by April 20th
 PMC Bezel Making, May 23rd and 24th, 10 am-6 pm. Sign up by May 9th
 Information: Don Zwach, 301 725 4475 or <dpz1@aol.com>



UPCOMING SHOWS AND EVENTS

April 4-5, Philadelphia Mineral Treasures and Fossil Fair. 10 am to 5 pm Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm Sunday. Joint annual show, of the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society and the Delaware Valley Paleontological Society at the LuLu Temple, 5140 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting PA, 2 miles off the PA Tpk., Norristown exit. Admission \$5.00, under 12 \$1.00. Free parking. Four Speakers.

April 4-5, 31st Annual Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show sponsored by the Franklin County Rock and Mineral Club. NEW LOCATION ! Shalom Christian Academy, 126 Social Island Road, Chambersburg, PA. Saturday 10 am- 5pm, Sunday 10am- 4 pm. Admission \$4.00. Children under 12 free with adult. Information: Brian Cole 717 677 4125, <bdcole@localnet.com>.


April 23-26, 36th Rochester Mineralogical Symposium, Radisson Hotel Rochester Airport, 175 Jefferson Rd. Rochester NY 14623. Dealers, presentations, auction, micromounts. Registration form <www.rasny.org>. Information <sccham2@yahoo.com>

April 25-26, 37th Annual NJ Earth Science Association Gem and Mineral Show with outdoor swap. Show Saturday 9 am to 5:30 pm, Sunday 10 am to 5 pm; Swap both days 9 am to 5 pm. At Franklin School, 50 Washington Avenue, Franklin NJ. Donation \$5, under 14 free with paying adult. Information: Sterling Hill Mining museum 973 209 7212. Concurrent with:

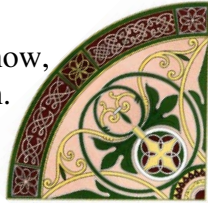
April 25th ONLY: The World famous Sterling Hill Mine Super Dig, 30 Plant Street, Ogdensburg NJ, 07439, rain or shine, sponsored by the Delaware Valley Earth Science Society and Northeast Field Trip Alliance, in cooperation with the Sterling Hill Mining Museum. Guaranteed all fresh material excavated. 9 am to 11 pm. \$20 registration by check, \$21 by PayPal, plus Pound rate: \$1.50/pound. 5 to 12 year olds can dig in "Mine Run Dump" with an adult. 12 years and older can dig in the pits (preferably with an adult). Registration now at <www.uvworld.org>. For payment by check, mail early. If for some reason you cannot complete the registration on-line by April 20th, noon, deadline, mail check for DVESS to PO Box 372, Maple Shade, NJ 08052 and mention that you have not registered on-line. Minimum 100 people required with a maximum OF 200. (Mention that GLMSMC is covered by EFMLS liability insurance.)

April 25, Saturday only, 10 am to 4 pm, University of MD, Maryland Day. Open house with 84 different events going on. Several relate to the Geology Department and the Mineral exhibit will be open. See <<http://www.marylandday.umd.edu>>, click on "Science and Tech Way." Because this event draws about 80,000 people, and it conflicts with the NJ events, Jonathan Harris is trying to schedule another time for just our Society to visit their museum and labs.

April 25-26. 49th Semi-Annual Bead Bazaar of the Bead Society of Greater Washington at the Activity Center at Bohrer Park, 506 S. Frederick Avenue (MD 355) at Education Blvd. Saturday 10 am to 5 pm, Sunday 11 am to 5 pm., \$7.00 admission, children under 12 free. Saturday only: Free Shuttle from Shady Grove Metro. More information web site <<http://www.bsgw.org/bazaar.html>>, Phone 301 868 1026, E Mail <BazaarBSGW@hotmail.com>



May 23 Saturday only, 20th Annual Chesapeake Gem and Mineral Society Show, 10 am to 4 pm, Ruhl Armory, Towson MD. I-695 exit 26, York Road South. Armory is on the east side (across from car dealer and funeral home) at 1035 York Rd. just inside I-695. Free admission.



JUNIORS Future Rockhounds of America

At the March FRA meeting of the MOCKS we talked about ways to strategically add to our collections and things to look for when making specimen purchases. We learned about the Mohs hardness scale, practiced testing some specimens to determine their hardness number and played a game of Tic-Tac-Rock (our version of "Hollywood Squares") with all questions relating to mineral hardness.



April 13 Meeting: **MINERAL IDENTIFICATION**

This will be an entry level class on mineral identification and will cover: Color, Hardness, Streak, Cleavage, Luster and Fracture. Attendees will build their own basic mineral identification kits (materials provided) and will be guided through the practical application of their tools and knowledge to aid them in identifying unknown specimens.

This session would be a great opportunity for youths interested in joining the MOCKS as well as those relatively new to rock and mineral collecting. More experienced collectors could consider it a refresher.

FIELD TRIPS (Continued from Page 5) End up on the wrong side of a collecting zone marker cone and our club will get zero slots next time. To see what to expect see the web sites <<http://www.elasmo.com/>> and <<http://www.fossilguy.com>>. This is a reminder that quarry management does us great favors by inviting us in and we must be extra sensitive to their rules and requirements.

Saturday May 9, National Limestone Quarry, Mt. Pleasant Mills PA, 9:00 am at quarry office. A great site for wavellite, strontianite, variscite and turquoise. Bring a specimen from some other location for Eric Stahl, manager of the Quarry. Jonathan is unable to attend. A group leader to keep things organized is needed. People may leave when the group leader leaves! Volunteer leader you? Let Jonathan know. Mt. Pleasant Mills is about 3 to 3.5 hours away. Go N. on I-270, continue N. on US 15. Roughly 9 miles N. of Liverpool take PA 104 to intersection with PA 35 at Mount Pleasant Mills. From this junction, go N. on Route 104 about one-third of a mile and make the first left turn (Heister Valley Rd). Proceed a little way to the first left turn on this road and your are at the Quarry entrance. (If anyone has ever been to Middleburg Quarry, ten miles from the Mount Pleasant Mills Quarry, and is planning to go, let Jonathan know if you would be willing to lead an afternoon side trip. Eric indicated we could collect there if we have someone familiar with the quarry present. This quarry has yielded nice fluorites.)

Field trip rules: Field trips are restricted to club members in good standing. Children must be accompanied by a parent and use the required safety gear. Participants must attend the safety briefing given at the beginning of the trip, sign applicable waivers and paperwork, and follow all quarry instructions. Required safety gear: hard hats, safety goggles, long pants, steel toed boots, and gloves. Participants must wear eye protection and hard hats at all times on quarry property. Seriously consider bringing: sunscreen, water, snacks, and clothing appropriate for the weather conditions. Participants must sign up with the field trip chair in advance. With the exception of the Aurora trip, E mail Jonathan if you have to cancel or if you plan to make a decision the morning of the trip (e.g. "fair weather collectors"). Jonathan Harris will email announcements of any trips scheduled after press time and will have specific driving instructions. Get on his list. Questions? Contact <jgharris7@comcast.net>. No E Mail? Call Jonathan at 301-545-0808



Eyeball These

**WEB SITES**

By Wendell Mohr

All About Gemstones, <<http://www.allaboutgemstones.com/>>, parent company KHI, Inc., is an intriguing site with over 700 images and 2500 photos, diagrams, and illustrations. Any commercial links are given no endorsement here. A virtual encyclopedia, it covers a lot of ground and touches on gemstones, gemology, grading, cleaning, mining, history, cutting, equipment, precious metals, reference books, and several aspects about jewelry. They didn't miss much. • Aesop said he found a 563 carat blue garnet. That was Aesop's Fable. •



Aurora Fossil Museum site at <<http://www.aurorafossilmuseum.com/>> gives an overview of fossils of the PCS Phosphate mine and other sources. There is information about their location, hours of operation, cost (Free!), collections, and gift shop. "Shark tooth mound" is a dig site open to all ages, and events like the upcoming Aurora Fossil Festival on May 22-23 are featured. Very useful fossil identification photographs and an article about the geology of Aurora help to educate. Here's fun for all ages. • One of our members found a 6" Carcharodon extinct great white shark tooth. Only problem was that it was broken into two pieces. It's OK—Fixodent and forget it. •



A Guide to Common Mineral Fakes is a featured quarterly "The-Vug magazine" issue interspersed with many commercial ads. You know the routine by now: We do not endorse any of the dealers whose advertisements are, themselves, very colorfully filled with exciting specimens. The web site is at <<http://www.the-vug.com/TheVugQuarterly/Munich2008web.pdf>>. The editor is Justin Zzyzx of Los Angeles CA who brings you tales of seemingly unending "Caveat Emptor." Count the ways I love thee: Minerals heated, irradiated, dyed, bleached, painted, chemically treated. Glued, repaired, substituted, matrix added! Wrongly identified species or locality. Manufactured, cast crystals, and more! Similar fakes of fossils are described. Be aware. • Often faked, native copper, native silver, and native gold may be cast. How do you tell? According to Sherlock Holmes, it's elemental my dear Watson •

UPDATE ON S.22,

The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, containing the "Paleontological Resources Preservation Act", failed in the House of Representatives on Mar. 11, 2009. Votes were largely along party lines; all MD Democrat representatives were "for", the only MD Republican, Roscoe Bartlett, District 6, "against." In the Senate both MD Democrat Senators had voted "for." They said, "This bill is now dead."

However, Democrat leadership did not give up. The bill was added as an amendment to H.R. 146, "The Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Battlefield Acquisition Grant Program". Some amendments were made. On motion that the House agree to the Senate amendments, the bill was approved by the Senate and House Mar. 25th. The Omnibus Public Land Management Act, containing some 170 bills, went to the President for signature and was signed Mar. 27th. So The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act is now Public Law. Stay tuned for future developments.

SOCIETY HISTORY

By Jack Busch



HELLO 1994! The weather gods looked favorably upon us the second day of this year, thereby permitting us to hold our January meeting as scheduled. Thirty three members and a guest came to listen to Dr. James O'Connor, State Geologist for Washington DC (Yes, I know the District wasn't, and still isn't a state but never-the-less that was his job title. His topic, of course, was the Geology of the Area and of the finds of small dinosaurs in the "Tobacco" clay east of the District and also in the region where Metro's Green Line was being built. West of the District consisted mostly of hard rock, and seventeen quarries at one time had been operating in the Rock Creek Park area. In fact, the Uptown Theater (remember it?) had been built in an old quarry. (No, I don't think they used its benches for seats.) He mentioned that sometimes tiny crystals of minerals could be found in the wall of the old water mains.

Gold always is an attention-getting subject, and on January's Show Tables Jack Nelson had some of the shiny stuff he'd found "somewhere on the Rockville College Campus." To complement this, Editor Nancy Ballard, in the *Rockhounder*, had a squib stating the first gold found in the US was in Maine in 1820.

There were no field trips of the usual sort in January, but the Smithsonian held a mineral Ident-i-day at its nature Center which at the time still was in the Museum of Natural History downtown.

There are things other than gold that are precious and among them are diamonds (also known as a girl's best friend). And it was about this pressed form of carbon that the speaker at our February meeting, Fred Ward, gave a program. He told that diamonds first were discovered in an alluvial deposit in India about 800 BCE, but that no remnants of that deposit could now be found. The next finds were in Brazil, many centuries later, then in South Africa. Now they are found in USA, Russia, Australia, Canada, and also West African countries. Fred supplemented his talk with beautiful slides of gems or should that be slides of beautiful gems, take your choice.

Most of February's field trips had to be cancelled because of bad weather. One successful trip was to Richmond VA to see Lillian Thomas Pratt's collection of Imperial Russian Jewelry and Easter Eggs featuring the work of Carl Fabergé. The other trip was to Winchester quarry where seven hardy souls found nice specimens of calcite, chalcopryite, quartz, and fluorite. Some of the cancelled trips were rescheduled for April with hopes the weather would be more clement then.

At February's Board meeting Paul Vance was recognized for having prepared 200 preforms for the upcoming show. That's a lot of sawing!

A neighbor was our speaker at the March meeting, Helen Serras, President of the GLMSDC. Helen is a specialist in Glyptography, the art of carving portraits on gemstones, and did her apprenticeship at the Glyptography Center in Athens, Greece. She explained how she used hand tools to do the work, in that way "taking the tools to the work" thereby lessening the chances for breaking the stones. She preferred to carve hard stones (7 or higher on the MOHS scale), and her favorites were beryls. Using slides to illustrate her talk, Helen explained that Glyptography began 15 to 20 thousand years ago. Most early work was in the form of seals, used to mark and identify items for their owners. She brought some of her work for the audience to see.



And yes, there was a show in March, with over 300 more paid attendance than the previous year's show. George Konig's mineral case was deemed both the best exhibit in mineral class and best exhibit in show; Paul Vance's lapidary case, best in class, Mike Ellwood's best in Fossils; and Mary Ann Hinning's best in Educational. When another member was unexpectedly called out of town and could not enter her exhibit, Anna Marcus stepped in and filled the space with a case of her Chinese Fossils. It's nice to have a pinch hitter available, isn't it.

Happy Holidays, Jack

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