



**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".

# NO REGULAR OR BOARD MEETINGS IN JULY OR AUGUST

If any issues arise that require Board action they will be handled by E Mail and/or phone.

**DUES** Your GLMSMC membership expires August 31, 2010. Membership dues are due by Sept. 1st. Single membership is \$15 per year, Family membership (Which is defined as up to 2 adults and children under 18 years of age) is \$20 per year. **There is a \$5.00 surcharge for late renewals.** We pay dues for EFMLS/AFMS affiliations and over \$3.00 for insurance for each member over 10 years of age so when renewing, list only those interested in taking part in Society activities. Please send dues (check to GLMSMC) to new Membership Chairman Doug Baum, 11205 Golden Meadow Court, Germantown MD 20876-1740, (301 515 4641 or e-mail dbaum@gazette.net for questions.) He will mail your membership card(s) back to you if you send him a self addressed stamped envelope, otherwise you may pickup your card(s) at the September regular meeting. If your phone number, address, E Mail address, or other vital information has changed since the January 2010 Roster or subsequent *Rockhounters* please let us know. **Help by paying your dues on time.** DO IT NOW while you are thinking about it! Reconsider if you are willing to "go green": If you are willing to receive the newsletter by e-mail only, so note when sending in your dues.



CAMPANELLA, Paul, 20004 Apperson Place, Germantown MD 20876, 301 525 1251, paulywozg@hotmail.com.

LINTON, Sam, 914 Oakdale Circle, Millersville MD 21108-1442, 410 814 8847, cooldragonshirts@yahoo.com.

LUZIER, Christopher & Stephanie, 847 Springdale Drive, Millersville MD 21108-1436, 443 995 5363, csoluz2@aol.com.  
Olivia (02/96)

Ancient Egyptians slept on pillows made of stone. That's actually what caused many of their deaths.....pillow fights.

**DEADLINE** for the September 2010 Rockhounder: Aug. 30

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### **ROSTER CHANGES**

MASON, Chuck and Marybeth, reinstate e-mail addresses: Chuck: sugartree2@comcast.net,

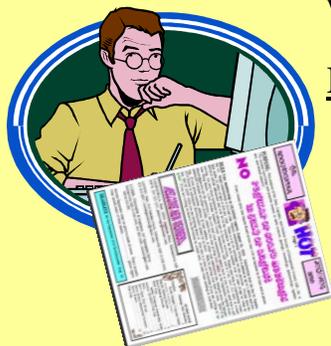
Mary Beth: m.b.mason@comcast.net.

PARNELL, Tom, new: e-mail Barjpar@gmail.com, phone 757 305 1957.

**ROCK AND GEM MAGAZINE ARTICLE** A freelance photographer named Andrea Stein from Columbia, Maryland asked permission to take photographs at our show in March. She had previously attended the show. She was granted permission by Mark Dahlman to photograph freely and obtain necessary releases. There was no charge to the GLMSMC for her work. She brought together her pictures along with a superbly written commentary which was submitted and accepted for publication by R&G Magazine. You may want to obtain a copy of the July 2010 publication if you do not subscribe and view the very attractive two full page spread. Thank you, Andrea, for the fine article which will go far to promote our Show in the future.

## **VOLUNTEER!**

**ADDITIONAL FRA LEADERSHIP** We are desperately searching for someone to lead the 6 – 9 year olds in the Future Rockhounds program. Will **YOU** help? Having more instructional assistance will allow our program for youths to more suitably meet the needs for the diverse ages and capabilities of our youngsters. You need not know everything about minerals, fossils and gems to be able to help. Plenty of support in terms of materials and program information will be provided. The society has the ability to rent additional space for the primary grade kids for 7 pm to 8 pm so you will still be able to attend the main meeting lecture. Please give Holly a helping hand. Contact her at 301 605 7179 or <fra\_advisor@glmsmc.com> if you want more information. The need is **NOW**. We need to reserve the space for the fall session, so please contact Holly prior to August 30th. The program, which has been so successful is in danger of failing if we don't support Holly in her request.



**ROCKHOUNDER EDITOR** A new editor is needed by the end of the year when Wendell Mohr will retire from that position. The new person should be versed in using computer word processing or publishing programs. A Job Description with most of the details of the job is available for anyone showing interest. The person automatically becomes a member of the Board of Directors. Contact Eric Kindahl if you think that you are the person for the job.

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES** The June 14, 2010 meeting was called to order by Past-President Mark Dahlman at 7:45 pm, with approximately 67 people attending. It was M/S/P to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2010 regular meeting and May 17, 2010 board meeting.

**FRA:** Holly McNeil presented the program's first Rockhound Badge to Jimmy Cummins, the 2<sup>nd</sup> in MD and 1 of only 4 in MD, DC and VA. Congratulations, Jimmie.

**Past-President:** Mark Dahlman announced a silent-auction of lapidary equipment donated by Mike Elwood. All items sold. Mark noted we still need FRA help, a membership chair, and a Rockhound Editor in training.



Wendell Mohr introduced Eric Keen, the winner of the GLMSMC Senior prize in the Montgomery County Science Fair. Eric presented his project, *Does Mountain Top Removal Affect Precipitation Patterns?* He described his chosen sites, the availability of data, his methods, and his results. With some results inconclusive and one site, Hazard, KY showing more variability after mining, Eric hopes his results will provide others with a basis to continue the investigation. Eric's mother, Christine Keen was a visitor and assisted with the digital projection. Thanks, Eric for a fine presentation.

**Editor:** Wendell Mohr noted that there will be more equipment for auction as time goes on. He announced that it was the last evening to apply for the Wildacres scholarship. He had applications and the schedule for the fall session. He listed many upcoming classes from Montgomery Co., the Southern MD Mineral Club, Patuxent Lapidary Guild, Glen Echo Park, and Audubon Society.

**Presentation:** Vice president Owen Powers introduced the speaker for the evening, Dr. Michael Wise. Dr. Wise enlightened us on *Zeolite Mineralogy and Pegmatites*. He started with a description of zeolites, a subject in which he had little interest until he realized they were not as uncommon in pegmatites as previously thought. Apparently most people don't look for them because they don't know they occur, they aren't gem quality, they're small and not common. They occur in miarolitic cavities or the core of the pegmatite, coating surfaces of minerals already formed, therefore in chemically evolved pegmatites. After giving many examples of what you can find, pollucite, bikitaite, laumontite, stilbite, chabazite-ca, scolecite, and chiavennite, he discussed the current theories for development, all of which have problems. There must be Ca left at the end of the process, but where does it come from? Remember not to scrub that material off of your pegmatite; it just might be a zeolite! Thanks Dr. Wise.



**Field Trips:** Jonathan Harris discussed some upcoming trips, see this newsletter. He requested help locating trip opportunities.

It was M/S/P to accept membership of visitors Paul Campanella; Sam Linton; and Christopher, Stephanie, and Olivia Luzier.

**Treasurer:** Andy Muir reported there was nothing to report.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM.

Jeff Cessna, Secretary.



Photographs by W. Mohr



## **FIELD TRIPS**

### **Maine Mineral Collecting Opportunity**

by Woody Thompson via June-July EFMLS News

The Maine Geological Survey in conjunction with the Maine Mineral Symposium Association is sponsoring a series of collecting trips to many of the famed Maine collecting areas.

Because of the popularity of these trips and the limited number of participants who can attend, those wishing to attend one or more of the trips will need to register. Following closure of the registration period, lottery drawings will be held to determine who the lucky trip participants will be.

2010 trips being planned are as follows:

Sat., July 17: Palermo Mine, No. Groton, NH, Saturday, September 4: Newry Mines, Newry, ME,

Sat., August 21: Ryerson Hill Quarry, Paris, ME, and Sat., October 23: Newry Mines, Newry, ME.

For information visit <[www.maine.gov/doc/nrimc/mgs/explore/minerals/fieldtrips/fieldtrips.htm](http://www.maine.gov/doc/nrimc/mgs/explore/minerals/fieldtrips/fieldtrips.htm)>.

**JUNE SILENT AUCTION** The 24" flat lap went to high bidder Andy Celmer. The 10" trim saw was claimed by Jonathan Harris. The tumbler, with only one bid went home with Elmer Lantz. We are grateful to Mike Ellwood for the donation which netted the Society \$111.00.

**PAUL D. VANCE** Born March 14, 1921. Died June 14 2010.

Paul had suffered a long decline in health. Wendell Mohr represented GLMSMC at the small service held. Burial was just North of Cumberland MD in Bedford County, Artemus PA.

He earned a Master of Commercial Sciences degree from Southeastern University in Washington, DC, was an accountant and an Officer of the Corporations of The Warner family plumbing businesses, retiring in 1996 after 37 years of service.

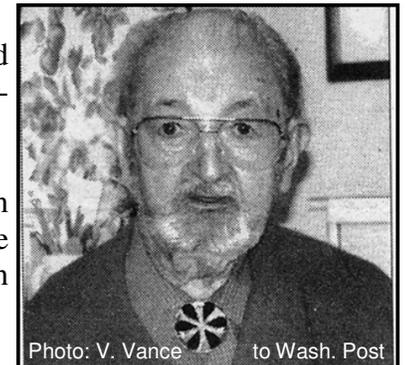


Photo: V. Vance to Wash. Post

Survivors include his wife of 42 years, Virginia, who is also a Society member, two sisters, Ruth V. Fields, and June V. Stull, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.



Paul was a long time member of the Society. His interest was in lapidary and his specialty was cutting and polishing Jade. He was a speaker about his passion for jade at our meetings. He exhibited his work at many of our annual shows. Helping to fashion the pre-forms for the workshop at the Show was a routine for him. Always willing to help others, he taught many people about cutting at the Show but also invited many members to his home for personalized instruction.

He served as Treasurer and was elected to Life Membership in the Society. Should you want to send a note to Virginia, her address is 8811 Patricia Court, College Park MD 20740-2024.

← Photo: W. Mohr



Summer is now officially with us and rock hounds hearts turn to field trips, rock shows, and other outdoor activities involving the family vehicle. In order to arrive safely, it must be prepared for the trip and “piloted” safely. Prior to leaving on a trip, make sure your vehicle is in good mechanical condition. Service the engine and make sure the brakes are in excellent condition. This may require a tune up, oil change, and brake adjustment or pad/puck replacement. Check the tires for wear and proper air pressure, including the spare tire or “donut”. If the tires show wear, rotate or replace them. A wheel alignment may be prudent if it appears that misalignment is the cause of uneven tire wear. If you are going to be traveling over long distances without services or on rural roads, especially rutted dirt roads, it may be advisable to replace the “donut” with a full sized spare tire. This will provide the ability to reach services that are further away than the recommended range and speed for the “donut” and will provide higher ground clearance for your vehicle on rutted roads, especially with the loads that rock hounds are known to carry. The tires should always be fully inflated. Soft tires provide a smoother ride, but will heat up and may fail in hot weather. Do not exceed your vehicles tire, spring, and towing load limits.

Make sure your windshield wipers are in good working condition and the inside and outside of the windshield and other windows are clean.

Adjust the seat headrests to the level of your ears, not to the lower area of your head or curvature of your neck. Ensure that the seat belts and children’s safety seats are in good working condition and properly installed in accordance with the manufacture’s instructions.

Make sure your headlights are properly adjusted and clean and wipers are working if installed.

Adjust your mirrors so as to reduce the “blind zones”. It may be advisable to replace the inside rear view mirror with a wider type to improve rearward visibility. Avoid buying vehicles with dark tinted windows which can impair visibility.

An oil change and lube will improve engine performance and mileage.

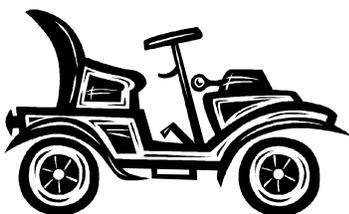
Check the supplies in the car for bottled water, a tire iron with lug nut key (if anti-theft lug nuts are installed on your vehicle), jack, flashlight with extra batteries, emergency flasher or triangle, and blanket. Extra brake fluid, engine oil, windshield wiper fluid, and transmission fluid are recommended, as well as an emergency tool kit, first aid kit and cell phone with spare cell phone battery or “cigarette lighter” cell phone charger.

Plan your trip before heading out, so you can concentrate on driving, not navigating. Have the maps and travel guides available in the vehicle and have someone else familiar with them to aid with navigation if the need should arise to reduce driver distraction. Make reservations in advance and plan the trip so that each days activities will not exhaust the driver. Provide for frequent stops to rest the driver and if possible share the driving responsibilities. AARP recommends that “if you are planning to take an unfamiliar route at night, try making a trial run during daylight”. Avoid driving in heavily traveled or high speed areas during rush hour and bad weather.

Make sure that your prescription glasses are current and that you have both clear and tinted glasses with you as well as any prescription medicines. Carry something to eat, like energy bars, and drink, in case you are marooned alongside an isolated highway for a period of time.

Once you are on the road, keep a safe distance (“three second rule”) behind the vehicle ahead of you. If you are going to change lanes, signal well in advance and look in the inside and outside rear view mirrors and over your shoulder before making your move, to avoid not seeing a vehicle in the “blind area” in the rear quarter area of your vehicle. When passing, provide adequate space and use your turn signals prior to pulling back over into the travel lane. Do not travel in the passing lane. Do not talk on the cell phone, eat, or engage in any other activity that will distract you or keep you from having both hands on the steering wheel.

Use your headlights at least one half hour before sunset until one half hour after sunrise and whenever there is poor visibility or rain. Keep the radio volume down and be alert for emergency vehicle’s flashing lights or audio warnings. Use your seat belts and keep at least 10 inches from the vehicle air bags.



If your vehicle should have a flat tire or other casualty, get as far off the pavement as possible and put out a flare, flasher, or emergency triangle, so others can see you. It is better to drive a short distance on a flat tire to get the vehicle out of traffic danger. If it is not safe to change the tire or repair the vehicle yourself, call for help.

## **JUNIORS FUTURE ROCKHOUNDS OF AMERICA “The MOCKS”**

By Holly McNeil

**\*\*NO MEETINGS IN JULY OR AUGUST\*\***



**CONGRATULATIONS TO:** Jimmy Cummins who earned and was awarded the A.F.M.S Future Rockhound program designation of Rockhound. Not only was Jimmy the first GLMSMC member to earn this, he is the second person in the state of Maryland to do so and now belongs to an elite group nationwide.

**ALSO CONGRATULATIONS TO:** Claire and Cassie DeSalvo and Ryan Gunnison who earned the Earth Process badge in connection with our program on the three rock types.

**June Meeting Recap:** Pearl was our “gemstone of the month.” Our main meeting program was the third and final installment in our three-part series on Rocks. We briefly reviewed what we learned over the last two months about igneous and sedimentary rocks and then focused on the metamorphic classification at this meeting. We then played a game of “Rock Trivial Pursuit” where we divided into three teams (igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic, of course) and tried to be the first to answer questions about the three rock types in five different categories.

**See You in September** for Gemstone Lore & Legend, where we will learn about some famous and infamous historical gemstones.

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

## **LARRY KRAUSE DEATH**

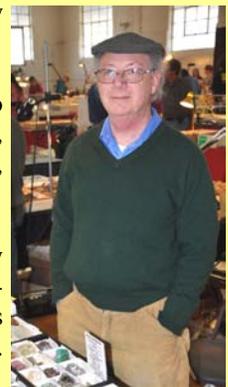
Excerpted from the Blog of Jake Slagel

Larry Krause, longtime dealer at our Show doing business as Octahedron Minerals, died on Wednesday, June 2nd at Gilchrist Hospice Center, after a long battle against cancer.

Just about every local collector in the Baltimore/Washington area was both a customer and a friend. Dealing minerals was only one of the many hats Larry wore. Most of them extended far beyond the interests that bind us mineral people together. Regardless of the hat he was wearing, what most lingers in the memory is of Larry himself and the spirit that drove him. He was gentle, kind, opinionated, motivated by challenges, driven by ethics, civic-minded, cultural minded, good-humored, and he had a great marriage.

Larry published at least five community newspapers, two magazines, and a book. He also founded two nonprofits, and had prominent roles with more than several other organizations, among them the Baltimore Mineral Society, which he served at various junctures as Secretary, Vice President and President.

During the final decade of his life, Larry gradually transitioned from publishing community newspapers to devoting more time to his mineral collection and Octahedron Minerals, the side-line business started years before. It wasn't long before the enormous two-room basement of his and Alice's house was filled with minerals from floor to ceiling. You will be missed, Larry.



**SHOW TABLE: June 14, 2010** Thanks to those who bring items for sharing at the meetings.

<u>Exhibitor</u>	<u>Specimen (s)</u>	<u>Locality</u>
Doug Baum	Calcite, Willemite* Hydrozincite* } Boe Brosius	Sterling Hill Mine, Ogdensburg NJ
Boe Brosius	Actinolite, Spessartine Garnet, Potch Opal, Orthoclase, Talc, Magnetite- Limonite-Malachite, Smoky Quartz } Jeff Cessna	Mineral Hill Mine, Finksburg, MD
Jeff Cessna	Topaz* Scheelite, (Fl.)	Topaz Mountain, Juab County UT Pingwu, Sichuan Prov., China
George Durland	2 Fluorites (Fl.) Fluorite (Fl.)	Heights Quarry, Weardale Co, Durham, England Franklin NJ
Jonathan Harris	Calcite* Calcite formation*	Hanover #2 Mine, Grant County NM Nat'l Limestone Q., Middleburg PA
Patrick Haynes	Azurite*	Nat'l Limestone Q., Mt. Pleasant Mills PA
Chuck Hyland	Autunite (Fl.) Eucriptite Franklinite	Mt. Spokane WA NH NJ
Avery Marsteller	Native Copper	Adams County PA
Wendell Mohr	Ruby/Zoisite sphere	Longito, Tanzania
Andy Muir	Calcite/Hyalite Opal*	Princess Pat Mine, Adalanto CA
George Reimherr	Stellerite	Luck Stone Q., Centreville VA
Joel Rosen	Rhodochrosite and Fluorite	Saquache County CO
Conrad Smith	Desert Rose	Mexico
Earl Smith	Fluorite	England
Linda Smith	Pyrite	Hunan Province, China
Eric Thompsen	Chalcopyrite	Garrisonville VA
Rod Towers	Diamonds in Conglomerate (Fl.)	Bahia, Brazil
Takashi Yabuki	Almandine/Spessartine Quartz with Dravite	Wadatoge, Nagano, Japan Takemori, Enzan Yamanashi, Japan
Jennifer Weiss	Slag	Thurmont MD



\* = Self-collected or self made

All Photos by W. Mohr



**MAY PRIZES**

**Junior:** Jonathan Baum smiled broadly after winning a Fluorite/Calcite from Rocky Hill NJ.

**Show Table:** Boe Brosius added a Prehnite from the Upper New Street Quarry in Paterson NJ to his collection.

**General Door Prize:** Owen Powers claimed a Marmatite/Quartz/ Pyrite specimen (graciously donated by Juan Proaño) from Huaron Mine in Peru. The mine has operated from the 1500's after Spanish conquest.

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



**EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH** At the invitation of teacher, Mrs. Tammy Monarch, Wendell Mohr gave a presentation on Rocks and Minerals to about 100 students at the Goshen Elementary School at 8701 Warfield Road in Gaithersburg on June 8th. The children were exceptionally enthusiastic about the subject and were very well behaved and receptive according to Wendell. He presented free mineral samples to each.

**SCIENCE OLYMPIAD EVENTS** Junior member Conrad Smith, along with a team of 26 hard working students from North Bethesda Middle School, placed first at regional science competition for middle and high school students. The competition held at Johns Hopkins University covered topics ranging from aeronautics to earth science and biology. Conrad was third at MD state level in the Fossils category. The student team from his school was selected to represent our State in the National Science Olympiad at the University of Illinois in May.



The national competition at the University of Illinois was really tough. Over 2,000 kids in 60 teams came from every state except Arkansas and West Virginia. They had an opening ceremony which reminded one of the real Olympics with a parade and music. Conrad was chosen to help carry the banner for the team. They had all kinds of events and tours for attendees.

He had a list of fossils he needed to know, and was allowed to take reference books for help in identifying unknown specimens. He was amazed at the fossil specimens. They had to identify about 80 fossils, give the phylum, genus and tell about the environment in which they lived. Many of the specimens were really obscure. Conrad said that they had an ammonite that was the size of a dinner plate, all kinds of brachiopods, and real dinosaur fossils for them to examine. What they will ask is a big unknown. Conrad didn't win a medal, but he wasn't dead last. His team ranked 32nd out of 60 teams.



The prizes were amazing. Any high school student who won a gold medal received, if they were accepted, a four year tuition scholarship to the University of Illinois. That's a prize!

Every 3rd year they substitute fossils with rocks and minerals. Conrad is really looking forward to that year.

A great deal of Conrad's success stems from his association with this Society which has been really helpful in his interest in fossils and mineralogy. He thanks the members who so kindly donated or loaned reference books and specimens. Special communication from Linda Smith

**WRISTS AT RISK**

David Maclean and Wendy De-Wolfe compare the artistry of their doctor's work in making each whole again. Heal fast!



While going to the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show a lady took a tour at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. A Washington D.C. woman, she mentioned that she was raising a type of cactus in a pot on her apartment balcony. Another tourist asked her how she kept from watering it too much, because the cactus would die if over-watered. "I subscribe to the Tucson newspaper," replied the Washingtonian. "Every time I read that it rained in the desert, I give my plant some water."





**SHOWS/EVENTS**

**July, Several Dates:** The Patuxent Lapidary Guild is having a series of wire wrap classes at their workshop, 169 Defense Highway (lower level), Annapolis MD. For information phone 410 294 0200 or 410 82 64005 or e-mail jackie@jackieO.net

**July 10: "Geology of the Fall Zone"**, Saturday, 9 am to noon, The Audubon Naturalist Society has a Geology Hike, led by Joe Marx through Dora Kelly Nature Park to Holmes Run Park, the boundary between the Piedmont upland and the Fall Zone. Moderately difficult 1 1/2 mile hike. Some uneven, muddy ground. The program is \$20 for members and \$28 for non-members. Info.: call 301 951 7179.

**July 12-16: Stone Carving Camp for Teens**, Glen Echo Park, 6-9 pm. Minimum age 12. Cost \$280 + tool rental \$45, and \$75 for stone. Info: 301 942 6975 or nizette@verizon.net

**July 25: Glowing Rocks** Sunday 2:00 to 2:30 pm. at Brookside Nature Center, 1400 Glenallan Ave., Wheaton MD. Free for all ages. Enjoy collection of crystals and fluorescent rocks. Info. 301 962 1480.

**July 27: Jewelry Basics.** Montgomery County Recreation Dept. class at Bauer Drive Community Center, 7-9 pm. Ages 12 & up. \$35 + \$6 material fee. Bring needle nosed pliers and wire cutters. Get Summer 2010 Guide for information.

**Aug. 9 to 13: "Can You Dig It?"** for 3rd and 4th graders at Woodend Sanctuary of the Audubon Naturalist Society in Chevy Chase. 5 full days. 9 am to 3 pm. Archeological and paleontological camp. Members \$285, Non members \$355. Info.: 301 652 9188 Ext. 16.

**August 13-15: East Coast Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show**, Better Living Center at Eastern States Exposition, 1305 Memorial Ave., West Springfield MA. Speakers, 200 dealers. 10 am to 7 pm Friday and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm Sunday. Featured exhibitor Bill Larson of Pala International. Adults and Seniors \$6.00, under 12 free. Parking fee \$5.00 daily. No pets other than service dogs.

THE GEM, LAPIDARY and MINERAL SOCIETY of WASHINGTON, D.C., INC  
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Directions on reverse side

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**STILBITE or STELLERITE?:**

By George Reimherr



This question came up regarding recent finds from Society field trips to the Vulcan Materials quarry, Manassas VA, in the spring of 2010. There were two general types of specimens found.

Type 1 consisted of brownish-yellow groups of individual crystals. Type 2 consisted of brownish-orange rounded clumps or hemispheres, often with smooth, shiny surfaces. The type 2 specimens rather looked like those found at the Luck Stone quarry, Centreville VA, collected as far back as 1981. The Centreville specimens were labeled "stilbite" and were sold as such.

After receiving permission from the Geology Dept. at James Madison University, Eric Thompsen and the author submitted samples of both types of specimens from the Manassas quarry for analysis. An EDS analysis was performed. The result: type 1 - the lighter color, brownish-yellow single crystals had sodium - analyzed as stilbite. The type 2 - the smooth, shiny rounded clumps and hemispheres had no sodium - came out to be stellerite. Some specimens may have had both stilbite and stellerite.

The specimens given away at the Society meeting on May 10, 2010 were mostly, if not all, type 2 specimens, hence stellerite.

Let's return to the story of the Centreville VA "stilbites." In 1999, Richmond VA collector Rudy Bland noticed that the Centreville hemisphere "stilbites" resembled specimens coming from Asia, but which were labeled "stellerite." (The author has a thumbnail size stellerite from Kazakhstan, purchased in 1994, which resembles the Manassas type 2 specimens.) So Rudy submitted 4 "stilbite" specimens from the Centreville quarry, to the Geology Dept. at JMU for analysis. All four specimens tested as "stellerite." The result was written up in a brief paper at JMU, but was not widely disseminated.

At the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History minerals exhibit, one may see, up on the wall opposite the little theater with its repeating motion picture about plate tectonics, a large specimen with beautiful orange hemispheres, from the Centreville VA quarry. The specimen - possibly found in the early 1980's - is labeled "stilbite"...but...might it really be stellerite?



Stilbite  
Manassas VA  
The large xl. ls 4mm.  
Photo by Patrick Haynes

**MINERALS FOR SALE** A popular PA collector, Penn Ambler, is selling much of his very large collection of minerals because of an upcoming move. He has heavily collected minerals for 45 years, including PA minerals extensively, but there is also much worldwide material. Also much material with micro and thumbnail potential. He will accept visits by appointment at 717 939 2586. He will also have an open house sale on Saturday July 17th at his home near Harrisburg, about an hour's drive north of Baltimore. Per communication from Fred Parker



A man collecting at a quarry is not watching the overhang when a large rock falls and he shears off all of his fingers. He rushes to the emergency room of a nearby hospital where the awaiting doctor takes a look and says, "Yuck! Well, give me the fingers and I'll see what I can do." "I haven't got the fingers." The doctor says, "What do you mean, you haven't got the fingers? This is the age of medical advances. We've got microsurgery and all sorts of incredible techniques! Why didn't you bring me the fingers?" "Well, doctor; I tried, but I couldn't pick 'em up!"

**LET'S WORK SOME SOAPSTONE**

By Pat Warner

California soapstone is 90 million years old and was formed from layers of sediment which were surrounded and fused by magma. The layers are still present like the layers in wood. **Characteristics:** Watch for the bedding or grain of your stone - too much hammering or chiseling will break the stone along this grain. Avoid these stress lines when designing your sculptures. Thin fish, hands, fingers, even noses on some sculptures require delicacy in hammering and chiseling.

Soapstone is temperamental about the directions you rasp it. On one of my pieces, I could file it in only one direction. I also found this true when I sanded it. Often the stone will almost explode, suddenly breaking off in small flakes, leaving small craters. Changing directions often solves this problem.

**First Steps:** Since most of the carvings done in our workshop have been small enough to carry back and forth with ease, very little chiseling has been done. The heavy cutting has been confined to blocking out small carvings. Very little sawing has been done; however, several of our carvers have found it feasible to use a carbide blade in their power saw to block out the basic design.

Most of the carving can be accomplished with rasps. The larger the rasp and the coarser the teeth, the faster it cuts, but it also leaves deep scratches. These can be removed with finer cuts of either a rasp or file. I find a very fine file very helpful in taking off the larger scratches. Some of the scratches can be scraped away with a curved knife blade.

Soapstone, because of its sculpture, may develop openings like cracks along the layers. These openings should be filled for a professional finish.

**Patching:** A good patch mixture is drywall spackle (hardware store), acrylic paints to color, and soapstone dust to thicken. Artists' paint colors of burnt sienna, burnt umber, yellow ochre, mars black, thalo blue, hookers green and titanium white will enable you to mix almost any color you will need to match your rock.

The patch material is a resin product called Akemi. It is manufactured for the repair of stone products and is available with its own compatible pigments. Both should be applied in the consistency of moist putty. Leave a little for refilling in case of shrinkage. Let it dry for 24 hours before sanding, going through 220, 320, and 600 grit. After you have done this and filled all the cracks, you are ready for finishing.

There is nothing that says you have to have a highly polished surface, except in competition under the Federation rules, which stress the polished surface. If you want to highlight things in white, you can polish the entire surface, then etch the area with a fine riffler.

**Polishing Soapstone:** Soapstone is absolutely gorgeous when polished, and the best way to polish it is under a stream or trickle of water. For abrasives, use wet or dry sandpaper, 220 grit and 500 grit, finishing with 600 grit. Use a pan of water and a sponge to remove the dust from your abrasive. Your carving needs to be checked, so let your piece dry and inspect your work. When all possible deep scratches have been removed, go on to the next grit.

**Final Touches:** Priming your piece with a deep penetrating wood sealer gives you the richest colors. A good sealer is a clear wood sealer and varathane. The trick here is to use a soft brush and coat the piece with a liberal amount of sealer, wait five minutes, and wipe off the excess. Next, spray with a thin varathane, let dry for 24 hours and sand with 600 grit again. Do this process 3 times.

The final step is giving the carving a clear coat of wax. Almost any wax will do. Apply with a soft cloth or finger, give a compete coat over the entire surface, and let set for 5 minutes. Finish by polishing with a soft cloth. Your carving will be protected because of these final steps.

Congratulations! You have completed a beautiful and long lasting piece of art. Claim it with your signature, plus the year.

**REFERENCE:** Carver's Success Book, published by M&M Soapstone, Angels Camp, CA  
Original source unknown, via The Gemrock, 10/98, via ROCKONTEUR 02/03.



## WEB SITES

By Wendell Mohr

**Fossils in the Architecture of Washington DC: A Guide to Washington's Accidental Museum of Paleontology**, at <http://www.dcfossils.org/>, is an interesting site by our own Society member, **Christopher Barr**. He, assisted by his wife Pat Jayne, daughter Judith Barr, and son Philip Barr, has obviously spent an enormous amount of time on this effort. With 15 galleries, paleontology, not of deposits in situ in DC, but rather in building stones makes a compelling read. There is a geological time scale, glossary, and an abundance of references and links. ●Chris went down to the C&O canal to check it out for fossils but found it was locked. They are said to have minerals there, November's birth stone - towpaz●



Photo from the web site

**Maryland Minerals** at <http://www.marylandminerals.com/> is maintained by Jake Slagle and is a good source for information about minerals from our "Free State" (That means no taxes, right?) See a slide show of over 100 specimens. Check out the many articles at the links given. Note the inclusion of references to Jonathan Ertman, Patrick Haynes, Jeff Nagy, and Fred Parker, all fellow Society members.

A link leads to Slagle's blog at <http://www.mineralbliss.blogspot.com/>. Some articles and tidbits, overlap the main site. The accomplishments of member Patrick Haynes in species discovery and collecting including Haynesite are documented here. Also here as well is a piece on Jessica Simonoff, the winner of the best junior exhibit at our March show.

The author offers minerals for sale on eBay, which is our standing practice not to endorse. You could fill lots of time checking out this site as you stay inside to escape the heat and humidity of summer.

**Pennsylvania Educational Publications.** The PA Geological Survey has publications posted online at [http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/topogeo/pub/educational/educational\\_online.aspx](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/topogeo/pub/educational/educational_online.aspx). From their Educational Series, ES-1: Rocks and minerals of Pennsylvania, ES-2: Common fossils of Pennsylvania, ES-4 : The Geological Story of Pennsylvania, ES-5: Geology and the Gettysburg Campaign, and ES-6: Pennsylvania and the Ice Age will of particular interest to you.

● Q. How hot is it in PA? A. So hot the sedimentary rocks have metamorphosed into igneous rocks. ●

## MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**JULY** Stephen Campanella, Patricia Carter, Bishwanath Chatterjee, Michael Ciletti, David Colvin, Antonia Dentes, Claire DeSalvo, Wendy DeWolfe, Gerald Elgert, Heather Felsen, Jonathan Harris, Dave Johnson, Eric Keen, Susan Luff, Andrew Mays, Tim Morgan, Savannah Muir, William Nagy, Bob Olshin, David Paraboschi, Jim Paraboschi, Michael Paraboschi, Barry Remer, Julianne Remer, Donna Rimar, Conrad Smith, Charlotte Tyler, Dee Williams, Takashi Yabuki.



**AUGUST** David Ballard, Larry Campbell, Lisa Carp, Carolyn Carter, Annie Dahlman, Michael Gallagher, John Gunnison, Jacob Harris, David Hennessey, Norma Irby, George Loud, Steven McNeil, Denise Muir, Gabi Muir, Nolan Pepper, Bill Porter, Joel Rosen, Nancy Shinowara, Louis Van Rafelghem, Kate Vargo, David Weiss, Barbara Wells.

## SOCIETY HISTORY

BY JACK BUSCH



**WILL 1995 EVER END?** As was reported last time, September had been a busy month for field trips. A number of fossil and mineral specimens acquired on those trips were displayed on October's Show Table, proving good productivity. Do you remember when I reported the temperature at July's fossil trip to Chesapeake Beach had been 115<sup>0</sup>? Well September's trip to nearby Willows was so chilly prolonged collecting could no be done. Sounds like what we had recently, only in reverse.

Word had been received that Dorothy ("Dottie") Porter, the Society's first president had died on September 16th. In her memory a donation was sent to the Eastern Federation.

Junior member Christian Michaelis brought to September's meeting his mineral collection for which he received 2nd prize of the summer's Montgomery County Fair.

Field Trip Chair Terry Cirrincione announced four trips for October. Vulcan Quarries VA (2 sites), St Leonard MD, State Line Quarry MD & PA, and Lime Crest Quarry, Sparta NJ. She also announced that George Mason Middle/Senior High School alumnus George Powell had donated a huge collection of fossils to the school for is students to have hands-on experience studying them. Included was a full set of adult Paratodus Benedini teeth (an extinct False Mako shark) he had collected at Lee Creek, and which, up to then, was the only such set known in the world. Quite a gift!

Society member (and long time friend) Fred Parker was the speaker at October's meeting. He told about collecting in Maryland and his experiences at some of them using slides to embellish his remarks. A very interesting presentation.

A list of nominees for 1996's officers was presented, to be voted on at the November meeting. The evening's Show Table almost collapsed as 13 members had brought over 30 specimens for display and many were not micros or thumbnails. In fact a calcite crystal from Medford Quarry was described as being very large (could that be a macromont?)

Back in the days of radio, comedian Ed Wynn would open each week's program with the statement, "The program's gonna be different tonight." Of course it never was. Well our November meeting really was different from any we'd had in the past. It was oriented toward the Society's junior members, and entitled "How to be a Rock Detective." It was presented by Ms. Ruth Dieke of the USGS who presented 24 "mysteries" each, when solved, would reveal a principle of natural history. By 7:00 pm our meeting room was crowded with children, their parents, and other adults who already had begun working on solutions. All the participants were happily involved, and together came up with the correct answers, in the process of learning a great deal about "rocks." Several of our adult members had set up displays to supplement the program. Dale Fisher's showed how to cut, paste, and mount a cab, and Rod Towers demonstrated his dichroscope.

Was anything accomplished at November's meeting? Wait and see. Meanwhile, enjoy the summer.



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Gem, Lapidary, and Mineral Society  
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