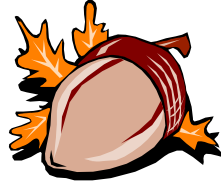
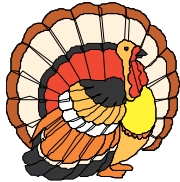


# THE ROCKHOUNDER



# NOVEMBER 2012

**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 November 12th** in the dining room of the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive, Rockville. A short business meeting will begin at 7:45 pm but the room is available to us at 7:30 pm so come early and chat with old friends. The speaker will be John Sampson White, of Stewartstown PA. His subject will be "Reminiscences Of A Very Old, Former Curator". Well known in the mineralogical community, John is the former Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History Curator-in-Charge. He is the Founder and Editor for the first few years of the Mineralogical Record Magazine and is a Consulting Editor of Rocks and Mineral Magazine. John has written numerous articles and has a wealth of publications to his name. He operates a museum/collector consulting business named *Kustos* and has a web site at <www.jwkustos.com>.

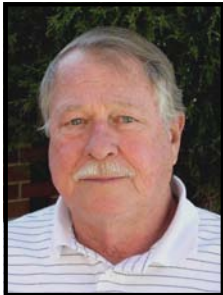


Photo from Speaker

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS** will meet Monday, November 19th, at the Home of Andy Muir. All Board members are expected to be there. Any member is welcome to attend but kindly let Andy know if you plan to attend at: <amuir21@comcast.net> or phone 301 990 1370.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

LYON, Bob & Sharon, 19512 Dubarry Drive, Brookeville MD 20833-2616, 301924 5625, E-mail: Bob: rlyonsea@comcast.net, Sharon: geosharon@comczst.net.  
YEE, Ming & Cynthia (Cindy), 18101 Parreco Farm Drive, Germantown MD 20874-4426, 301 717 5118, E-mail: Ming: mingyee@msn.com, Cynthia: cynthiacyee@msn.com.  
Jeremy.



## ROSTER CHANGES

HARRISON, Larry & Corky, 6370 High Ridge Rd., Lantana FL 33426-2620, 561 531 6402, corkyeila@comcast.net.  
BUSCH, Jack, 333 Russell Avenue, Kindley Building, Apt.115, Asbury Methodist Village, Gaithersburg MD 20877-2876, 301 216 4949, delete e-mail.  
SHINOWARA, Nancy, e-mail naras9@msn.com.

## REJOINED MEMBER

MARSTELLER, Julie, 9 Welland Court, North Potomac, MD 20878-4847, 240-388-3101, jmarsteller1@gmail.com.

**2013 DUES** Did you pay ‘em?

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**DEADLINE** for The December 2012 Rockhounder: November 26th

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

By Andy Celmer

Allow me to regale you with a cautionary tale of seeing what you want to see. I was deep in the mountains of West Virginia, near the town of Hillsboro. My quarry was fossil coral. In this case the limestone had been replaced by chert. If the chert were translucent, then thin slabs should reveal the internal structure of the coral.

I had a plan; I was focused, maybe too focused. I walked down to the stream through tall weeds; two snakes slithered into the water and eyed me suspiciously. I don't know my snakes but these were Pythons or Anacondas. Huge! And they obviously worked in Packs Like Wolves! I put some distance between me and the snakes. The snakes continue to increase in size even as I write this message!

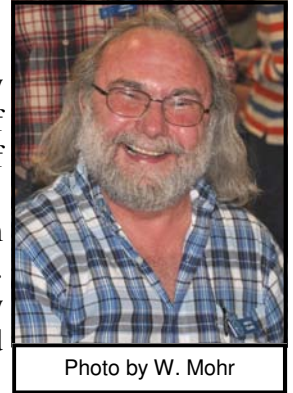
I settled into my task, find the coral. In a few minutes I found a piece and in two hours I had found 20 lbs. This was easy, I had lots of coral! I was crossing the stream taking the load to the truck when I looked down and saw a very different piece of coral.

I discovered, I had been collecting coral all right, but this coral was composed of limestone, not chert. So you could say it took me two hours to find my first piece. It took me the rest of the day to find a few more pieces.

The morals of the story are these:

1. If it's easy to find, you're probably collecting the wrong thing.
2. Look with a critical eye.
3. Don't believe everything you tell yourself.
4. Try harder to get someone to run interference with the Giant Snakes.

Andy B - The B stands for Big Baby.



**ELECTION OF OFFICERS** November is election month for the Society. Officers who have agreed to run for officer positions for 2013:

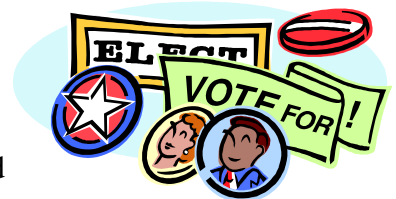
President: Andy Celmer

Vice President: Chris Luzier

Secretary: Jeff Cessna

Treasurer: Andy Muir

Nominations from the floor will be open, provided the person nominated agrees to serve.

**STEP UP!**

The Society still needs a volunteer to handle Demonstrations for the annual show. Questions may be addressed to Bob Irby at <irbyre@verizon.net> or 301 540 5033.

Wendell Mohr has announced that the December 2012 *Rockhounder* is the last that he will be able to edit. A volunteer is still needed to take over that position. The Editor holds a Board seat in addition to publishing *The Rockhounder*. Contact Andy Celmer <Abcpec@comcast.net> or 301 865 4442 to take over this vital responsibility.

**FOSSIL AUCTION** November 10th. Note: **Gaithersburg** Senior Center, 80A Bureau Drive, Gaithersburg, MD 20878-1430, **NOT Rockville** as previous auctions. 9:00 am viewing of material by all interested. 10:00 am Auction begins, ending by 1 pm. Rules: Bid increments of no less than \$1. Anyone may bid: Members, non-members, dealers, officers, auctioneers, and the Treasurer. Juniors are welcome to bid but a responsible adult should oversee activity. Material from the collection of Ray Kent includes fossils from Calvert Cliffs MD, Keyser WV, Central Avenue PG County MD, Rappahannock at Hopyard VA, various sand quarries toward Romney and Keyser WV, Gore VA, and others.

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:**

The October 8, 2012 meeting was called to order by President Andy Celmer at 7:45 pm, with approximately 76 people attending. It was M/S/P to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2011 regular meeting and the September 24, 2011 Board of Directors meeting.

**President:** President Andy Celmer announced two awards received by Trevor Babb for an article he wrote for the Rockhounder. Several awards were presented to other members. See October newsletter for the list. The club received a certificate of appreciation for its donations. The club picked up the fossil collection of Ray Kent for auction at a later date. The board of directors was asked to discuss auction options during the break.

**FRA:** Holy McNeil announced the results of summer homework assignments. Trevor Babb earned his Earth Resources badge.

**Treasurer:** Andy Muir reported the club was in excellent financial shape. The deposit has been paid to the fairground for the annual show. Please pay your membership renewal.

**Field Trips:** Jonathan Harris discussed upcoming trips to The US Silica quarry near Richmond, VA and the Texas Quarry. Further announcements would be made by email.

**Guest Editor and EFMLS Liaison:** Wendell Mohr gave an update on member Jack Busch. He discussed upcoming auctions, shows, and learning opportunities. We are still in dire need of a newsletter editor to relieve our long serving guest editor who retired as editor long ago.

**Membership:** It was M/S/P at two points during the meeting to approve membership of Bob and Sharon Lyon and Ming and Cynthia Yee and their son Jeremy



**Presentation:** Vice president Chris Luzier introduced the speaker for the evening, member Chris Luzier! Chris presented *Megalodon – The Monster of the Miocene and Other Fossils of the Atlantic Coastal Plain*. Chris started with a picture of a large colorful megalodon tooth and the impressive pictures continued through the talk. He discussed the various collecting localities from Calvert Cliffs in MD, through Lee Creek in Aurora, NC, to various localities in FL, noting unique specimens and unique collecting techniques, such as dangerous river diving in the south. Characteristics of teeth were discussed. Fossils other than shark's teeth were also shown, such as crocodile teeth, ray

dental plates, vertebra from several species, and mollusks. He also showed a rare Panopea pearl. Intact panopea shells are also rarely found. Chris noted that some of these would be available in the upcoming auction.

Thanks Chris.

Photos by W. Mohr



Rod Towers administered the junior's door prize. Joel Rosen administered the show table and the drawings for the door and show table prizes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Jeff Cessna, Secretary.

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES:**

Board members present: Andy Celmer, Jeff Cessna, Jonathan Harris, Wendell Mohr, Andy Muir, Pat Repik-Byrne and Joel Rosen. Board members not present: Doug Baum, Erik Kindahl, Chris Luzier, and Rod Towers. President Andy Celmer called the October 15, 2011 meeting to order at 7:35 pm.



**Treasurer:** Andy Muir reported on the club accounts. The profit and loss statement for the club was expected to be completed within a week and is expected to be distributed as a member-only supplement to the *Rockhounder*. Andy reported on recent expenses and reported on recent income from silent auctions and member dues.

**EFMLS Liaison:** Wendell Mohr discussed the recent request for speakers. No volunteers had come forward. An email from Spring River Rock Club, inquiring about rock swapping, was discussed. It will be announced at the next meeting.

**Guest Editor:** Wendell Mohr announced that the December 2012 issue would be his final *Rockhounder* issue as guest editor. The Board expressed their thanks to Wendell for serving as guest editor long after his retirement. Without many options it is essential that a member or team of members step forward to fill the void.

**Auction:** Ray Kent inquired about the current location of some fossils so he could add specific locality information in advance of the auction. The possible auction total was discussed. Based on that expectation a venue was selected from those investigated by Andy Muir. The venue must be rented the evening before for set-up and the day of the auction. Andy Muir would book the venue the following week. Wendell will advertise the auction. Andy Muir will make auction lot numbers and will print and photocopy locality labels. Wendell will bring some boxes and materials for customers to pack purchases. Andy Muir will investigate getting more flats.

**Show:** Publicity was discussed. The show is not yet in some calendars.

**Field Trips:** Jonathan Harris discussed upcoming trips to US Silica and Texas quarries.

**Property:** Joel Rosen discussed the inventory of door prizes and the upcoming need to purchase more.

The meeting was adjourned 9:25 pm.

Jeff Cessna, Secretary.

**CONDOLENCES**

On October 4, 2012 member Louis Van Rafelghem (b. Oct. 8th 1929) died. We mourn his passing and grieve with his wife Therese and children Johan, Rita Ann, Marc, Marie-paule, Dominique, Francis and Stefan. He also had 16 grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Born In Brugge, Belgium he was Brigadier General in the Belgian Air Force with 36 years of service. His assignments included Chanute AFB IL for nine months, posts in Kamina in what was then the Belgian Congo and other Belgium assignments. He then took an assignment at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton OH after which he became the Military Attaché to the US and Canada at the Belgian Embassy in DC. Upon retirement he remained in the US.



**November 11, Sunday. Texas Lafarge Quarry MD.** Meet at the scale house at the Padonia Rd entrance at **noon**. Space limited, but Jonathan doesn't expect to have to turn people away. You must have confirmation from him to attend.

Important change from prior trips: Our host will drive us to the collecting areas on a quarry owned bus rather than have people drive their cars. Thus it is important that you arrange your equipment and containers so you can easily transport them on the bus. You will also only be able to leave the quarry when the bus returns.



Minimum age for attending is 10. Minors under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent and both must be club members. If you are a "maybe" due to other commitments, please let Jonathan know of that status and when you can commit. Jonathan will manage space limited trips so as many club members as possible will get such opportunities over time. Notify Jonathan by November 3. Email is (preferred) <jgharris7@gmail.com> or phone 301-545-0808. Jonathan will randomly select people from a list of those who notify him by that date. Please include "Texas Quarry" in your email message.

The Texas quarry mines Cockeysville marble. It is known for calcite, pyrite, dravite, and mica specimens. The marble has also been used as a building stone in the Washington-Baltimore area. See <<http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/stones/stones4.html> for some historical information>.

Circumstances beyond control (weather or problems at the quarry) can cause last minute cancellations so it is advisable to check with Jonathan on Saturday Nov. 10th in the evening for any changes. Jonathan will try to avoid such situations and give notice as soon as he learns of them.

Directions: Take I-95 North towards Baltimore, take exit 49B--I-695/I-70/I-83 towards Towson,. At exit 24, go North in I-83 towards Timonium/York. At exit 17, go right on Padonia Rd. If you hit Beaver Dam Road, make a U-turn. We meet at the quarry entrance on Padonia Road, which is somewhere between I-83 and Beaver Dam Road.



You must sign an indemnification agreement (binding for all fieldtrips) from, Jonathan. The following equipment is required for everyone, including minors: hard hat (ANSI Z89.1), certified eye protection, steel toed boots, gloves, long pants, and fluorescent safety construction vest. Other safety equipment (we don't check for this, but you should use it!): sunscreen, drinking water snacks, raingear

### **OCTOBER DOOR PRIZES**

Junior Door Prizes: Conrad Smith won a Dinosaur Coprolite and a Tourmaline in Quartz from MD.

Ryan Gunnison claimed an Otodus Obliquus Shark tooth from Khouribga Morocco, and a Calcite/Strontianite specimen from the Winfield Quarry, Winfield PA.



For the Show Table Prize, Rod Towers won Hematite Crystals from Rio Marina, Elba, Italy.

The General Door Prize was won by Andy Celmer, (who drew his own number!) a Baculite Fossil from Montana.

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

**Next Meeting Date:** November 12, 2012. **Meeting time:** 7:45 - 9:00 pm.

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



**Congratulations** to Trevor Babb who was presented the Earth Resource badge as a result of extra work he did over the summer.



Earth Resources

Photographs by W. Mohr



Trevor and Jennifer Weiss also were honored by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies as well as the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies for articles they submitted in connection with FRA badge requirements. Well done!

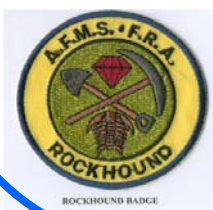


**October 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting:** Our guest speaker, Mark Dahlman, shared his knowledge of meteorites with the group. Mark discussed the events and analysis that finally convinced doubting humans that rocks do indeed fall from space. He reviewed the different classifications of meteorites, told stories of amazing meteorite impacts, covered impact craters and passed around some interesting specimens. Mark also started each of the FRA members on their own meteorite collection by giving each participant a specimen to take home. Thank you Mark!



**November 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting:**

We continue our work on the “special effects” badge by covering magnetism and magnetic rocks. What causes some things to be magnetic and not others? How does magnetism affect our lives, and indeed protect life on earth? What part has magnetism played in solving some of science’s most perplexing mysteries?



For more information on the Future Rockhounds of America program, please contact Holly McNeil at [fra\\_advisor@glmsmc.com](mailto:fra_advisor@glmsmc.com) or 301-605-7179.



### **MINI MINERS Ages 6 - 9**

**Next Meeting Date:** November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**Meeting time:** 7:00 - 8:00 pm

**Location:** The Card Room at the Rockville Senior Center

In Oct. the mini miners learned about different crystal shapes.

The topic for November is "What is a gem?".

For more information contact Linda Smith 301-530-5007 or  
<Tunacat107@aol.com>



Parents of children 6 - 9, Let's fill the empty seats



### **SWAP OFFER**

The Board felt that the Society itself would not participate in this request but would offer individuals the opportunity:

"I'm a member of Spring River Gem & Mineral Club in Cherokee Village, Arkansas. We are hoping your club, or a member of your club, will consider doing a rock swap with our club. We do this in USPS flat rate medium boxes (minimum of 10 #) Specifically for mineral and/or fossil specimens - No leaver-ites. Varying sizes so no one gets a box of pebble sized pieces. All specimens individually wrapped and identified.

In our swap, we will include pink dolomite, selenite stars, quartz crystals, calcite, etc., specimens we found on club field trips or individual field trips.

Happy rockhounding. Mary Kocz, e-mail: cty31470[at]yahoo.com. Phone: 870 856-4617."

If you are interested contact her directly.

### **DUES**

There was a club member named Hughes,

Who waited too long to pay dues,

She was struck off the roster,

Did not realize it cost'er

The programs, the field trips, and news.

Adapted from Peter Martin, from Calgary Lapidary Journal, Dec. 2006 Via Hound's Howl Dec. 2010

### **THE REAL WEATHER PICTURE**

Were sand collectors involved in naming the horrific end-of-October Hurricane Sandy? Meteorologists make weather conditions seem more complicated than they actually are. They fuss with weather maps and go on and on about low-pressure areas and slow-moving cold fronts. In truth, weather is very easy to understand once we grasp a few fundamental facts which are based solidly on the "Law of Cause and Effect."

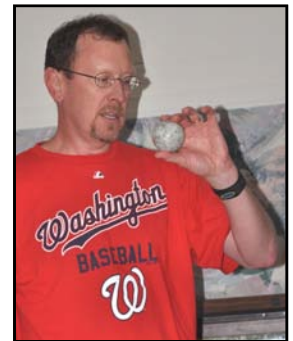
Dry Spells are caused by newly planted shrubs and lawns. Rain is caused by going on overnight camping expeditions, to tournaments, Sunday picnics, to weddings on the terrace, washing windows, and going mineral or fossil hunting!



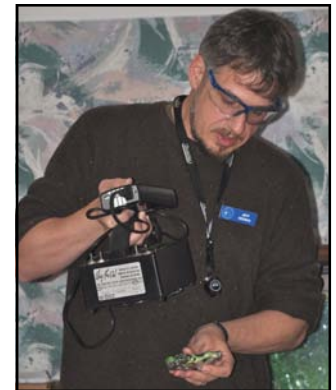
**SHOW TABLE:** October 8th, 2012. Thanks to those who bring items for sharing at the meetings.

<u>Exhibitor</u>	<u>Specimen (s)</u>	<u>Locality</u>
Frances Becker	Shark's Teeth	Calvert Cliffs MD (?)
Andy Celmer	Selenite	North of Las Vegas NV
Jeff Cessna	"Green eyed" Wollastonite	340 Ft. Level, Sterling Hill NJ
	Esperite, Calcite, Willemite	Parker Shaft, Franklin NJ
George Durland	Calcite and Willemite	Franklin NJ
	Trona	General Chemical, Green River WY
Gerald Elgert	Fossil Wood*	Paint Branch MD
Ryan Gunnison	Microminerals	Various Localities
Jonathan Harris	Wavellite*	Nat'l Limestone Q., Mt. Pleasant Mills PA
Diane Leaman	Coral	Locality Unknown
Gary Leaman	Archaen Butterstone	Greenstone Belt, S. Africa
Gary Letcher } Shirley Letcher }	Miscellaneous Fossils	Big Brook NJ
Wendell Mohr	PA Minerals Poster	EFMLS Convention Harrisburg PA
Andy Muir	Willemite, Calcite	Ogdensburg NJ
	Hardystoneite	Franklin NJ
	Scapolite var. Wernerite	Canada
Owen Powers	Giant Clam Cucullaea Gigantea	Friendly MD
Joel Rosen	Calcite/Microcline	Franklin NJ
Nancy Shinowara	Calcite Xls.	Kauai HI
Conrad Smith	Strontianite & Calcite	Mt. Pleasant Mills PA
Earl Smith	Franklinite	Franklin NJ
Linda Smith	Strontianite & Calcite	Mt. Pleasant Mills PA
Rod Towers	Native Silver	Cobalt, Ontario, Canada

\*Self-collected or self made



Photographs by W. Mohr



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



**The 21st Annual  
Richmond Gem & Mineral Society Rock Swap**

**Saturday, November 10th, 2012  
9:00 am - 3:00 pm**

*The Rock Swap is indoors, so come rain or shine.  
Open to all children and adults (from novice to expert) to swap or purchase the various mineral, gem,  
fossil, shell, and lapidary specimens.*

**Ridge Baptist Church Meeting Hall  
1515 East Ridge Road, Richmond, VA 23229**

Doors open at 7:00 am for setup. Tables are limited. Please bring your own table covering. We will have 6 foot & 8 foot tables set up for swappers/sellers. If interested in participating, please e-mail so we may reserve tables and make sure all have the space they need. (Heavy response for tables may reduce all requests to a single table). We suggest a 2 table limit. Weather permitting, an outdoor area may be available for additional tables (provided by swappers) or swapping out of your vehicle.

SWAPPERS PLEASE LABEL YOUR MATERIALS. Please have at least one flat of good material specifically labeled for children and novice collectors for swap or give away.

To defray Swap costs, RGMS asks that Swappers donate a specimen(s) for future RGMS raffles and auctions. Please, no junk!

Food and beverages are available at near-by restaurants. Restroom facilities are available in the building.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Andy Dietz (dietziv@yahoo.com) or Bob Simon (dino\_safaris@yahoo.com).

THE BEAD SOCIETY OF GREATER WASHINGTON  
PRESENTS ITS 56TH SEMI-ANNUAL  
**BEAD BAZAAR**

Saturday ◊ November 10, 2012 ◊ 10am-5pm  
Sunday ◊ November 11, 2012 ◊ 11am-5pm

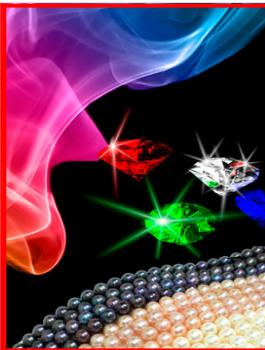
**BEADS ◊ JEWELRY ◊ FINDINGS**  
Contemporary ◊ Designer ◊ Ancient  
◊ Antique ◊ Ethnic ◊  
Demonstrations! Books!

Bead ID: Sat & Sun 12-2 pm

**ACTIVITY CENTER at BOHRER PARK**  
506 South Frederick Ave ◊ Gaithersburg MD  
-off Hwy 355/Frederick Ave at Education Blvd-

SAT ONLY Free Shuttle from Shady Grove Metro  
More info: <http://www.bsgw.org/bazaar.html>  
[BazaarBSGW@hotmail.com](mailto:BazaarBSGW@hotmail.com) ◊ 202.624.4500

Admission: \$7.00 or \$6.00 with this card  
- Children under 12 free -  
Future Bazaars:  
April 20-21, 2013 ◊ Nov 9-10, 2013



Nov. 20, 2012  
Rockville Science  
Center Science  
Café program:  
**THE SECRETS  
OF PEARLS &  
GEMS;**  
Enhancements  
and Treatments of  
Gems. Why

are gems so beautiful? How Science can improve what nature has made.

Speaker: Denise Nelson, GG, NAJA.  
At Branded '72 BBQ, 387 E. Gude Drive,  
Rockville. 7 - 8 pm. Dinner before, if you  
choose. Rockville Science Cafés are free  
and open to all.

Information contact:

Ruth Hennesian at 301-674-7884 or call  
the Rockville Science Center at  
240-FUN-8111.

**21st Annual  
GEM, MINERAL  
AND FOSSIL SHOW**

Presented by the Northern Virginia Club, Inc. [www.novamineralclub.org](http://www.novamineralclub.org)  
Sponsored by the Dept. of Atmospheric, Oceanic and Earth Sciences at GMU

Date: November 17 & 18, 2012

Place: Student Union II Building (The Hub)  
George Mason University Campus  
Braddock Rd. & Route 123, Fairfax, VA

Hours: Saturday 10am-6pm, Sunday 10am-4pm

Admission: Adults: \$5, Seniors & Teens (13-17): \$3  
Children 12 & under, Scouts in uniform,  
and GMU Students w/valid ID are FREE.

**\$1 OFF**  
1 Adult admission  
with this card

Demonstrations, Exhibits, and Door Prizes. Mini-mines for  
children to dig in and get free fossils and minerals.  
Over 20 Dealers with Fossils, Minerals, Crystals and Gems for sale.

Use Parking lot A, enter Lot A from Nottaway River Lane.  
Look for our Courtesy Shuttle to Mineral Show



**SUNSHINE** Jack Busch has moved to Asbury  
Methodist Village's Kindley Assisted Living Building,  
Wilson Health Care Center as you may have noted in the  
page 1 roster changes. We wish him well in his new  
living situation.



**AN ACCIDENTAL ROCKHOUND**

Article and all Photographs by Patricia Cronin

I'm not really into capturing rocks from the wild, but I've been known to go along on rock hunting trips with Andy every now and then. A road trip with my sister (and yes, her name really is Louise) was the occasion of inadvertently collecting a couple of nice specimens. My sister and I participated in a weeklong conservation project at Carlsbad Cavern, New Mexico. We drove from my home in Monrovia, Maryland. At Carlsbad, we worked on our project in the mornings and had afternoons free to explore the cavern and the area.



Each evening, thousands of Mexican Free-Tailed bats leave the cave in search of food. One of their favorite snacks is the mosquito. Each morning, just before dawn, they return to the cave to sleep all day. Watching the bats is a breath-taking experience, and the cave is magnificent. The speleothems are found here in greater numbers and more beautiful formations than in any other cave I've seen. On my first day in the cave, I had a strong desire to lie on the floor and stare at the ceiling for hours and hours. Knowing that most of the tourists would be looking up and would probably step on me was the only thing that restrained me.



One afternoon, our project leader took all interested persons to a nearby Selenite and Alabaster mine. The mine is a shallow pit enclosed by a high chain link fence. One can easily walk around the fence in 15 minutes. Inside were huge boulders of Selenite, some as large as a bed pillow and some several times that size. These gorgeous specimens were loaded onto wooden pallets. No one was at work, and I have no idea for what purpose the Selenite was mined. Our destination was the scrap pile. The owners dump Selenite chunks and rubble in a pile outside the fence. A sign invited collectors to take whatever they wanted from this pile. Most pieces ranged in size from a thumbnail to a basketball. I selected several of the larger pieces for Andy and some smaller samples for kids in my family. On this sunny day, the Selenite sparkled and twinkled on the desert floor. Too bad the space in our car was so limited.



After completion of our project assignment, my sister and I went to visit the Three Rivers Petroglyph site and hiked up the cliff twice to see the beautiful rock art created by Native Americans hundreds of years ago. Leaving there, we visited The Valley of Fire, an ancient lava flow. A wooden boardwalk provided an easy 1-mile stroll for visitors and protected the formations. One small area with a steep dirt path did allow for hands-on exploration by the



more adventurous. This lava flow was not a result of explosive volcanic activity. Instead, the lava flowed upward through cracks in the earth's surface. There were several collapsed lava tubes, and a ranger told us there were intact lava tubes in a more distant, off-limits part of the park. A lava tube is a tunnel with a curved ceiling created when molten lava flows quickly across the ground. The lava on the exterior of the flow cools, forming a hard shell. The hotter, still molten lava on the interior continues to move forward. Eventually, it settles and cools also, leaving behind a tube of lava. These tubes vary in size from big enough for a mouse to sleep in, to big enough for a tractor-trailer to drive several blocks.

Continued on Page 11

(Continued from Page 10)

We started home, making a side trip to Roswell, NM, the site of the alleged alien spacecraft crash in 1947. Our first stop on Sunday morning was to get maps & city information at the visitors & convention center. At the convention center, we found that the Chaparral Rockhounds rock club was holding its rock show. Naturally, we stopped in to admire the specimens. The club members displayed approximately 60 cases of exhibits. Many of these featured varieties of, or objects made from, a single type of stone, such as turquoise. Several others displayed jewelry made by club members. One of my favorites was a display of various sandstone pieces in picture rocks; that is, sandstone whose natural variations in color resembled landscapes or animals. Another exhibitor had a display of a variety of polished spheres he'd made. One especially interesting piece was originally a chunk of concrete from a repair at his church. The concrete and the many small rocks in the aggregate polished up beautifully.



Alien on Left is Patricia !

Another display was quite whimsical; a standard card table was set with china & silverware for a dinner party of four. Each of the four place settings held food, such as bacon & eggs or a pork chop & baked potato. Fruit, candy and breads also graced the table. But this food was inedible – each food item was made of rock!



The club members were very friendly. I talked briefly with the club president, Diane Weir. She gave me a Pecos Diamond to add to our (Andy's) collection. At the club's silent auction, I purchased a larger aggregate, which contained several Pecos Diamonds in matrix. I was told that this particular rock only occurs in the Pecos Valley of New Mexico.



Continuing home, we met many interesting people and visited numerous small museums & historic sites, including the birthplaces of Davey Crockett and Woodrow Wilson. Andy was happy with his new rocks, and the kids were amazed by a rock one can see through. It was a wonderful trip and we managed to get the car re-packed without discarding anything.

**NOVEMBER BIRTHSTONE-TOPAZ** Drop of Water Test for Topaz

Quartz and topaz are not easy to separate by eye, and are sometimes impossible when the quartz is a true topaz color. There is a big difference in price between the two and anyone describing quartz as "topaz", however innocently, may well be in trouble.

Topaz is quite a different mineral, which is harder than quartz. Because of this, a drop of water will not spread on topaz but will spread on quartz. Clean the stone as effectively as possible with a cloth or handkerchief to remove all trace of grease. It must be dry before the test. Then place a spot of clean water on it with a thin glass or metal rod.

On stones with a hardness of less than 7 on the Mohs scale, the water is dispersed. On harder stones it will remain a globule. The harder the stone the more rounded will be the globule.

from Rock Chipper via Rock Chip Reporter 11/97 via The Rollin Rock, 11/10, via RockCollector Oct. 2010. DO YOU BELIEVE IT? - Ed.



Photo R.Weller Cochise College

**SAFETY** A Thousand and One Times

by Ellery Borow, EFMLS Safety Chair

How many times you have heard the refrain, “Oh, no need to worry, I’ve done this a thousand times.”? I hear comments similar to that quite often, especially with regard to matters of safety. What the comment generally means is that the person making the statement thinks they can get away with some activity or another that needs more safety measures applied than they are willing to use. Having done something a thousand times is no guarantee that the thousand and first time will be just like all the others.



A short time ago a friend of mine fell while refilling a bird feeder. This feeder had been refilled often, certainly not a thousand times before, but still, many times. One would think that refilling a feeder would be a fairly routine thing. Generally it is, however, no two re-fillings are exactly alike, indeed, can never be exactly alike. This time, something went wrong with the refilling, a fall occurred and an injury incurred.

It is easy to become complacent with the activities one does frequently. It is easy to have one’s mind wander during often repeated motions. During times that one performs a task frequently it’s common that one’s actions become automatic... monitored only on some subconscious level and not receiving benefit from full attention by the awake brain. It is in those moments when accidents often happen. Oh, I have cracked open a thousand geodes, I have cut and polished a thousand cabochons, I have soldered a thousand joints, I have acid cleaned a thousand specimens. Can’t you just feel the potential for accidents with statements such as those?



The human brain is a rather complicated organ. It has, however, a remarkable capacity to find ways of simplifying the tasks we perform on a day to day basis. In that process of simplifying some task or other, things that are deemed non-essential are often omitted. Unfortunately sometimes the safety component of a task is deemed to be non-essential by the sub-conscious brain. What is a person to do? It really is quite difficult to focus one’s attention on repetitive tasks. While it may indeed be difficult to focus, focus one must. Or, if unable to focus continually, at least make safety a part of one’s

sub-conscious brain activity. In other words, make safety automatic. Make safety automatic by practicing it with every task prone to accidents. One cannot dwell on safety with each and every task in our busy lives, but one can at least be on the watch for un-safe conditions or situations. Please be and stay alert, especially with all potentially hazardous situations such as refilling bird feeders, or cabbing, or faceting, or cracking geodes, or- well, any and every potentially accident prone situation, no matter how many times it has been performed.



Oh, the bird feeder refilling incident resulted in a broken bone. The birds were no doubt happy with the refilled feeder, but a broken bone was a fairly high price to pay for happy birds. Anyone concerned about angry birds here?

Stay well and be safe – your safety matters.



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**ERRATA** (“ID ten T”) error\*. In the web site article in the October 2012 issue, an error crept in. The item about the Pachyrhinosaurus Perotum find contained an illustration belonging to Karen Carr, NOT by Nobu Tamura. <Here is the correct picture. Apologies to Mr. Tamura and readers of the Newsletter. \* IDIOT



Two more America The Beautiful Quarters with geological features have been issued by the U.S. Mint: Acadia N.P., Maine & Mt. Denali, Alaska

**ROCK ON!**

By Wendell Mohr

A family festival on Rocks and Geology took place on September 29th at the National Museum of Natural History. The free event featured presentations and activities with something for every age group. Smithsonian scientists and volunteers staffed venues included Flint Knapping, Volcano demonstrations, Geology in the National Parks, Secrets behind giant minerals (Mike Wise), Meteorites (Linda Welzbach, Tim McCoy and others), Fluorescent minerals, Art inspired by metamorphic rocks, Cement becomes rock (Sorena Sorensen), Sand, stone, and gravel (Mickey Stump from Vulcan Manassas Quarry), Rocks to build roads, and several others. Names are of people many of us know.

The Event was presented by the NMNH, National Parks Service, Dept. of Trans., VA, DE, MD, and PA State Geological Surveys, Mobile Mining Experience, and the Nat'l Sand, Stone and Gravel Assoc.

Tom Cummins and Holly McNeil provided outreach with Geode Cracking. It was cleverly arranged for visitors to get a "Passport" stamped at the various venues. A fully stamped card gave the guest the opportunity to crack open a geode themselves. Holly then would identify the minerals therein.



Photos by W. Mohr



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