



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 MEETINGS

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month from September to June. The Society will meet on **Monday, January 13, 2014**, 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.

Since our meeting was cancelled last month due to the weather, we will be having a belated holiday party. No show table this month and there will be no speaker for this meeting because this will be the SWAP/SELL and social evening. You may bring only hobby related items to swap or sell. Space is limited and we need some tables for refreshments, so bring no more than an amount that will fit on one table. It is possible that tables will have to be shared. There WILL be a prize drawing in December.

This is the only meeting of the year when we have refreshments. Please bring cookies, cakes, crackers, cheese, candy, and any other goodies that appeal to you. This year we are expanding our feast to include pot luck dinner items. Goodies should be “finger food.” Napkins, cups, plates, punch, coffee, tea, and hot chocolate will be provided. Come and have a good time. As usual, visitors are welcome. Remember we must vacate the building by 10:00 pm and the tables and chairs must be cleaned and put back where we find them. If everyone helps, it is not a big chore.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Meeting will be held **Monday, January 20, 2014**, at the home of Andy Muir. All Board members are expected to be there. Any member is welcome to attend but please let Andy know if you plan to attend at [amuir21@comcast.net](mailto:amuir21@comcast.net) or phone 301-990-1370.

## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

First and foremost, I want to heartily thank Andy for all of his service to the group as President. I also thank Kristin for the time put into *The Rockhounder* and Jeff for his duties as Secretary as they both move on. We are still looking for the editor's position to be filled and any candidate will have plenty of support. Please consider this, as it is a very important position in the group. Thanks again to all three of them, as they have been wonderful to work with. We were very happy to have all their time and talent, devoted to making a better group for all of us! Speaking of time and talent, there is an amazing abundance of talent in our group (unfortunately, the time aspect seems to be a little harder to come by). But your talents are what we need to make our group the best it can be! Thanks to all who have signed up already to serve at our upcoming 50th Anniversary show, and if you haven't yet, I am sure Andy will be vocal enough so none of us forget.

Deadline for the February issue of *The Rockhounder* is January 25, 2014.

I want to also say that I enjoyed my past time in office as Vice President,

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**REMINDER**  
If schools in Montgomery County, MD, are cancelled or let out early because of weather on the day of a scheduled Society meeting, the meeting will be cancelled. If in doubt, call the Society President or a Board Member (numbers on the back of *The Rockhounder*).

but surely won't miss the computer set-up that goes with it. I really miss the old days of Atari and Commodore 64's... Gracious thanks to Dave Tiktinsky for taking over for me in the Vice President's duties and also to Dave Fryauff for stepping up to fill Jeff's position as Secretary. The Board can't thank people enough for the volunteers that come forward to take these posts. Abundant thanks also go to all of our other current officers that keep volunteering to stay. Thanks so much again!!!

We are always looking for new ideas and localities for field trips and new speakers as well. If you are interested in giving a presentation or know someone who you think would be of interest to the group, please let our new Vice President know. As I said before, we have an incredible depth of talent within our group, you just need to come forward! As far as outings go, I know of no other mineral group that goes collecting as much as our group does. It constantly amazes me, how many trips Jonathan puts together, with the help of Sam Linton. Without these two members stepping forward, our digging might just consist of planting flowers in our backyard.

I look forward to seeing you all at our belated, snow-delayed, Christmas party at the January meeting. Bring dessert, snacks or a potluck dish to share and any swap and sell material. Let's bring just as much food as rock, since the outgoing President and I both seem to relish them equally!

☺ ~ ~ Chris, President

### **SOCIETY MEETING MINUTES: DECEMBER 9, 2013**

There was no meeting in December due to inclement weather.

*Jeff Cessna, Secretary*

### **BOARD MEETING MINUTES: DECEMBER 16, 2013**

**Board Members present:** Andy Celmer, Jeff Cessna, Jonathan Harris, Chris Luzier, Holly McNeil, Wendell Mohr, Andy Muir, Pat Repik-Byrne, and Joel Rosen. **Guests present:** Dave Tiktinsky. **Board Members not present:** Doug Baum, Eric Kindahl, Kristin Lolmaugh, Rod Towers. President Andy Celmer called the December 16, 2013, meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

**Show:** The possibility, logistics, and impact of a Cub Scout table at the annual show were discussed. More information will be requested from Jim Kostka and Conrad Smith. Directional signs were discussed, again. A responsible party is needed to take over sign placement. A responsible party is needed to supervise careful assembly of the new cases, working with Al DeMilo the first year. Pat Repik-Byrne will supply flower vases. Andy Muir will look into forcing forsythias. Pat will distribute exhibitor forms soon. Elmer Lantz inquired about purchasing colorful slabs for use in the shop in future shows. Jeff Cessna will transfer club owned rough alabaster to Elmer. Marble shops could be approached for donations. The eventual fate of any surplus old display cases was discussed. Joel Rosen asked if the large back room could be used for storage of cases boxes and triage of case conditions. The show listing is now online in several places. The Gaithersburg library is reopening and should be targeted for show publicity. The plaque for the Smithsonian case must be transferred to a new style case. Joel will "try to remember to do that before the show." The contract with the venue is complete. All dealers have confirmed.

**Treasurer:** Holly McNeil presented the treasurers report referring to the previously distributed draft budget. Holly prepared a calendar of payments and actions for the treasurer. Club incorporation is in place. After discussion, it was M/S/P to adopt the budget proposal. Holly presented Joel Rosen with an apron made from donated cloth that had been found to be inappropriate for use with juniors.

**Membership:** Doug Baum sent a report that he had received additional late renewals. Phone contact with non-renewing members was suggested to ascertain the reasons.

**EFMLS Liaison:** A new version of the By-Laws incorporating recent changes was produced by Holy McNeil, edited by Wendell Mohr, and mailed to all members. Additional changes could be used, such as specifically addressing email votes.

**Editor:** A replacement for the current editor is still needed.

**Other:** Several individuals have contacted the club for either donation or auction of mainly lapidary related materials and equipment. Some are being considered for auction during the show. Purchase of club logo mugs was tabled to a later meeting. It was proposed that the club could advertise their availability to work educating Cub Scouts in geology. Volunteers and a coordinator would be needed for this effort. The Each One Teach One submission was drafted by Holly.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 pm.

*Jeff Cessna, Secretary*

## **50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SHOW**

**BY PAT REPIK-BYRNE**

**HEAR YE- HEAR YE - OUR 50th ANNUAL GEM-LAPIDARY-MINERAL-FOSSIL SHOW** will be held on March 15 & 16, 2014 at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds. This is truly a feat to be celebrated!! All club members should be excited and take great pride in participating in this show. As most of you are aware, the GLMSMC Show is the major yearly activity of our club and is completely run by Club volunteers. Everyone needs to pitch in to make it a success. Show times will be the same as last year - the show will run on Saturday, March 15th from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm and on Sunday, March 16th from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm (later start time on Sunday). Andy Muir, the new Upstairs/Dealers Chair, is in the process of finalizing contracts with 22 dealers (our maximum number); some will be participating for the first time in our Show.

Plan NOW to exhibit. We need to have your commitment EARLY. For those not yet aware, we have acquired 25 "new" cases from the GLMSDC club that will be utilized for non-fluorescent exhibits. The new cases are in excellent condition, and look very similar to our older "classic" cases but are slightly smaller, and have a different, secure locking mechanism. Cases will be locked/unlocked only by the Show Chair/Downstairs Chair (Pat Repik-Byrne) or by other designated GLMSMC members. Dimensions of the new cases will be provided on the exhibit application form. Exhibit applications will contain a checkbox for preference of new vs classic cases and new cases will be assigned on a first come/first served basis. Exhibit applications will be sent to members in a separate e-mail message, and will also be available at the January meeting.

Attendees love viewing the showcases to learn about all sorts of things and revel in the amazing displays. Showcases can highlight specimens you've

collected on field trips, or minerals or items of particular interest to you (some examples may be: crystals, specimens having unusual shapes or properties, fluorescents, various forms of a particular mineral, various stones or minerals from a particular locality, lapidary or other items made from stones/minerals, geology, volcanoes, impact craters, etc., etc.). Folks attending the Show would love to see and share your interests. YOU can do it! If you haven't displayed previously, no problem – everyone is a beginner at some time. If you feel you don't have enough items for an exhibit, mention this at the meeting and perhaps we can pair up people for a shared exhibit. You have 2½ months to plan the exhibit, prepare neat labels, liners, risers, and other case features to highlight your exhibit! Exhibitor Application forms will be due to Pat Repik-Byrne by February 15. Use one form for each case.

As in previous years, we expect to have demonstrations of flint-knapping, gem faceting, beading and jewelry-making, micromounts, Calvert Marine Museum displays and fossil identification, gravity, vibrations and crystal growing activities, and much more. Have fun and gain a sense of accomplishment by fashioning and polishing a cabochon to keep! See the eye-popping fluorescent exhibits and fascinating demonstrations in the "UV-Fluorescent Tent." Demonstration applications will be sent to members in a separate e-mail message, and will also be available at the January meeting. Demonstrations are critical to our Show and, along with exhibit cases, are features that set our Show apart from others. Demonstrator Application Forms will be due back to Pat Repik-Byrne by February 15.

And VERY IMPORTANTLY, we have a GREAT NEED for VOLUNTEERS to work at the Show, starting with Set-Up on Friday (March 14), ending with Take-

Down on Sunday (March 16), and at all stations in between on Saturday and Sunday – Kids Activities (Welcome/Give-Away Area, Touch Table, Mini-Mine, Junior Quiz), Admissions Table, Hospitality, Raffle, and Lapidary Shop (teaching grinding/polishing, as well as doing sign-ups and un-dopping). Andy Celmer is in charge of volunteer sign-ups this year and is using VolunteerSpot (an online signup and reminder tool) to organize volunteer activities. All GLMSMC members should have received an e-mail from Andy in early December and have hopefully signed up for a preferred activity.

As a reminder, here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

1. Click this link - <http://vols.pt/XLZ6zj> - to go to the invitation page on VolunteerSpot
2. Enter your email address: (You will NOT need to register an account on VolunteerSpot)

3. Sign up! Choose your spots - VolunteerSpot will send you an automated confirmation and reminders.

**Note:** VolunteerSpot does not share your email address with anyone. If you prefer not to use your email address or if you don't have e-mail, please contact Andy at [abcpec@comcast.net](mailto:abcpec@comcast.net) or 301-305-0229 and he can sign you up manually.

Volunteer Sign-up sheets will also be passed around at the January meeting.

**Additional note:** Everyone who volunteers at the Show gets a bonus – FREE ADMISSION. Those NOT volunteering/exhibiting/demonstrating must pay the regular admission price. Another incentive to get onto the volunteers list!

Show fliers and posters are available to help publicize the show. If you haven't already done so, pick up your copies at the January meeting.

Let's make the 50th Anniversary Show a really special one! See you there!

## FIELD TRIPS

**SATURDAY February 1, 2014** – James Madison University Department of Geology and Environmental Science and Mineral Museum, hosted by Professor Lance Kearns; 9:00 am. For those who like machines more than experts, Professor Kearns has indicated that the x-ray diffraction machine and Raman Spectrometer will be available. There is some chance that the LEEDS/SEM lab (Low energy electron diffraction and Scanning Electron Microscope) will be open – and, of course, the JMU mineral museum. Please sign up by contacting [Jonathan Harris](mailto:jgharris7@gmail.com), [jgharris7@gmail.com](mailto:jgharris7@gmail.com), or 301-545- 0808.

## MINI MINERS Ages 6-9

**Next Meeting Date:** January 13, 2014

**Time:** 7:00 - 8:00 pm

**Location:** Card Room, Rockville Senior Center

There was no meeting in December due to inclement weather.

## FUTURE ROCKHOUNDS OF AMERICA (THE MOCKS) Ages 10-15

**Next Meeting Date:** January 13, 2014

**Time:** 7:45 - 9:00 pm

**Location:** Sunroom Cafeteria, Rockville Senior Center

There was no meeting in December due to inclement weather.

## January 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting:

The MOCKS will have a "Yankee Mineral Swap" at our January meeting. Specimens will be provided by the FRA - MOCKS do not need to bring anything for the swap. After the swap we will join the adults and enjoy the pot luck dinner provided by the membership.

**Reminder:** FRA members who would like to earn the Gold Panning and Prospecting badge need to either present information or submit a paper about uses of gold (badge requirement 12.2), gold throughout history (badge requirement 12.3), or gold resources in our state or region (badge requirement 12.4). Three activities are needed to earn the badge. Those members who went on the Lake Anna field trip or came to the November meeting have satisfied the gold panning activity, and those members who took the gold vs. pyrite quiz (part of our October meeting) satisfied the activity for learning differences between gold and pyrite. The gold vs. pyrite quiz is also available to anyone who hasn't taken it yet to satisfy badge requirement 12.1.

For more information on the Future Rockhounds of America program, please contact Mark Dahlman at [fra\\_advisor@glmsmc.com](mailto:fra_advisor@glmsmc.com) or 301-428-0455.

## **THE LILLIAN TURNER JUNIOR AWARDS**

**BY PAT REPIK-BYRNE**

These awards come from the generosity of Lillian Turner and her surviving son, Stephen. Mrs. Turner, a generous benefactor, was keen on promoting interest in rocks, minerals, and lapidary arts to youths in the community. With the ongoing and increasing generosity of Stephen Turner and the Turner family, in addition to ribbons, monetary awards of \$150, \$125, and \$100, will be presented for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place showcase winners respectively. At the judges' discretion, 4th place awards of \$50 may be presented for 1 or 2 other cases, if also deemed to be outstanding. Honorable Mention ribbons (without monetary award) may be presented to 1 or 2 additional cases at the judges' discretion. We are extremely grateful to the Turner Family for their contributions to our Society and for their continuing efforts to promote and support youth interest in rocks, minerals and lapidary arts.

To be competitive for these awards, you must be age 17 or younger and the display should be substantially your own work. If you have won previously, the case must be substantially different from the previous entry.

Criteria for judging are:

1. Educational component (What do you want people to learn from your display? How effective is your presentation in that regard?)
2. Overall presentation (neatness, creativity, clear labeling and arrangement of specimens; use of background that correlates with the theme or makes specimens stand out)
3. Short paragraph (3-4 sentences) on your reason for exhibiting your particular case or theme, why this is of interest to you. The write-up should be clearly displayed within the case and be easily readable. This is a critical component for all junior cases.
4. Any additional written or graphic information that reinforces knowledge of the specimens or theme of the presentation (for example, a display of igneous rocks might include a picture or drawing of a volcano to reinforce that they are formed by cooling of magma).

The above information will also be provided in a handout given to the MOCKS at the January and February meetings by Mark Dahlman (Advisor for the Future Rockhounds of America program), or can be obtained from the Show Chair (Pat Repik-Byrne) at [prb.rocks@verizon.net](mailto:prb.rocks@verizon.net).



# THE LURE AND LORE OF ROCKS: LABRADORITE

BY KRISTIN LOLMAUGH

Labradorite has been compared to moonlight reflecting off of water. It was first discovered on St. Paul Island, in Labrador, Canada, by Moravian missionaries in 1770 who named it for the area. It is, however, referenced in legends by older Inuit tribes, and was known to be in use by the Red Paint people of Maine for over a thousand years. It became a popular gem in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.



Photo by Kristin Lolmaugh



Photo from [http://www.jayfisher.com/\\_borders/GemLabradorite5.jpg](http://www.jayfisher.com/_borders/GemLabradorite5.jpg)

In ancient lore,

labradorite was considered to be a talismanic gem of winter, and in Asian cultures was known as a "phenomenal gem" to be worn on Saturdays. Phenomenal gems exhibited a moving line, star, or changes on the surface as the light varied, and was believed to bring good fortune to the wearer. Native Inuit tribes of North America believed labradorite fell from the frozen fire of the Aurora Borealis. Another legend describes a brave Inuit warrior who struck labradorite with his spear and created the Northern Lights.

Some believe labradorite is a tremendously spiritual stone that helps us regain our energy and aids our bodies and spirits in healing themselves. If you practice, focusing on labradorite can help you enter and maintain the meditative state.

Labradorite is said to be a power stone, allowing you to see through illusions and determine the actual form of your dreams and goals. It is excellent for strengthening intuitions.

## WEBSITES OF INTEREST

BY WENDELL C. MOHR

**William Pinch** has a work in progress at his web site, [www.williampinch.com/](http://www.williampinch.com/). I know Bill personally, having been in the Rochester Academy of Science, Mineral Section with him more than 40 years ago. You will find a Tsumeb gallery of specimens, a Chinese collection gallery, and a Rare Mineral gallery. Under favorite links see The RRUFF™ Project, <http://rruff.info/>. The RRUFF™ Project is creating a complete set of high quality spectral data from well characterized minerals. It is a data base for use with RAMAN instruments such as you can see and use on the James Madison University field trip on February 1st. Bill is among the very top mineral collectors and was responsible for the majority of mineral specimens making up the collection at the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Bill was the first winner of the Pinch Medal.



Photo from Website



Photos by Wendell Mohr

**The Smithsonian Gem and Mineral Collection**, is at [www.gia.edu/gia-news-research-smithsonian-gem-mineral-collection](http://www.gia.edu/gia-news-research-smithsonian-gem-mineral-collection). Red line closed again? Can't stand trying to find a parking place? Here is an up close, stay at home, look via a new program of the GIA (The Gemological Institute of America Inc.) Authored by Merilee Chapin, Duncan Pay, Jim Shigley, and Pedro Padua, it is well illustrated and features videos on interesting topics with Dr. Jeffrey Post narrating a couple of the features. You will enjoy the topics covered although the "Organizing



Minerals" seemed a little repetitious to me. The items about the historic emerald pendant and Yowah Nut opal are interesting.

**The Amazing Geologist**, <https://www.facebook.com/AmazingGeologist> is a Facebook posting on geology, minerals, fossils, and other miscellaneous stuff. You may find browsing here worthwhile owing to the Potpourri of phenomenal pictures and art.

### **SAFETY MATTERS: SAFETY SHOES**

BY BILL KLOSE, EFMLS

The wearing of safety shoes is not only required throughout U.S. industry, mines, quarries, and gravel pits, but is just plain common sense. This point was driven home for me many years ago when a young man on my production team had an eleven hundred pound steel roll from a toilet paper rewinder fall on his foot. The resulting blow caused his safety shoe protective cap to explode and thus expend the momentum from the roll, and produced a nasty looking and painful set of blood blisters and black and blue marks on the top of his foot, but no broken bones or loss of toes.

Today's safety shoes are available for many functions, in many styles, and are quite affordable. In selecting a pair of safety shoes, consider what you will be doing in pursuit of our wonderful hobby. If your passion is the art of the lapidary, slabbing rocks, or the sale or display of rocks, minerals, or fossils, a nice pair of low cut safety shoes with protective tips (steel or nonmetallic), such a sneakers, oxfords, penny loafers, even slip ons, may provide you with the protection you need from a dropped specimen or hand tool. If you attend field trips or walk over rugged terrain, you should consider safety shoes that support the ankles and provide protection from sharp sticks, thorns, stones, abrasion, temperature, moisture, and walking impact. A pair of waterproof boots that lace over the ankles would be ideal for this purpose. Higher lacing boots would be advised for areas where thorn bushes, cactus, or snakes are found. Full grain leather or waterproof safety shoes will provide moisture protection for normal weather encountered, however for extensive wear in water, such as creeks, beaches, snow, mud, etc., I strongly recommend that overboot or waders be used over the safety shoes. The soles of safety shoes should provide solid grip traction, but not clog or chew up the trail. A properly fitted set of safety shoes with a liner and footbed inside will provide ventilation, insulation from heat or cold, protection from rubbing, and absorption of walking impact, and all day comfort.

The wearing of wool socks (or other materials recommended by the manufacture) in the safety shoes will wick perspiration away and protect the feet from extreme temperatures and disease. Tucking the bottoms of your trousers and shoelaces into the top of the boots will keep insects, stones and other undesirable items from getting up your pantlegs and down into your safety shoes, and will reduce the chance of you tripping over your shoe laces. Please note that general issue army boots do not have protective tips and thus are not safety shoes. Only certain army personnel, like mechanics, are issued safety shoes.

Today safety shoes are available from most shoe stores. Tell your shoe store salesperson what your needs are, and find the style that you like. You may find that you are wearing them everyday for safety.

*From EFMLS Safety Chairman  
February 2000 EFMLS News*

## **BENCH TIPS**

BY BRAD SMITH

### **Mobile Stand**

A handy mobile stand for your flexshaft can be made easily and quickly from the base of an old swivel office chair. You can find these chairs being thrown out at office buildings and schools. I just ask the custodian in my building to set one aside for me.

To separate the chair from the wheeled base, simply remove the spring clip from the center bottom. I use a small screwdriver or a pair of pliers.

To make the stand, you'll need two pieces of threaded galvanized steel pipe and a pipe fitting from a hardware store. The first length of pipe is 3/4 inch diameter to fit the hole in most chair bases. The second piece is a length of less expensive 1/2 inch pipe. Total length of the two pipes should be five feet. I used a two foot length of 3/4 pipe and a three foot length of 1/2 pipe. They are joined together by a pipe fitting called a 3/4 to 1/2 reducing coupler.



### **Local Metals Source**

Local sheet metal shops typically have barrels of scrap copper, brass and aluminum sheet that they save for recycling. Shops will usually let you go through the barrels to select the shapes and thicknesses you want. Prices vary but will generally be just a little more than the wholesale per-pound scrap value.

I've found it's much cheaper to buy metal this way than ordering from a catalog. There are no shipping charges, and you'll be supporting a local small business in your community. Do remember to bring your thickness gauge and work gloves if you try this.

*More Bench Tips by Brad Smith are at [facebook.com/BenchTips/](https://www.facebook.com/BenchTips/)  
or see the book *Bench Tips for Jewelry Making* on Amazon*

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **March 29-30, 2014: Philadelphia Mineral Treasures & Fossil Fair and EFMLS Annual Convention** (Annual meeting Friday March 28th.) Sponsored by the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society; LuLu Temple, 5140 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting, PA .
- The Montgomery County Winter Recreation Guide has a number of classes that might be of interest to members. For more information, please visit:  
[http://www.montgomeryparks.org/viewer.shtm#http://www.montgomeryparks.org/activities/documents/Winter2013-2014\\_Complete\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.montgomeryparks.org/viewer.shtm#http://www.montgomeryparks.org/activities/documents/Winter2013-2014_Complete_WEB.pdf)



## THE MINERALS OF MAKEUP

BY DONNA BORECK AND LIANE KADNUCK

Have you ever read the list of ingredients in makeup, shampoo or toothpaste? It might surprise you. Many personal-care products contain a wealth of mineral materials taken from the earth.

Take, for example, eye shadow. One of the first ingredients listed in eye shadow is usually talc – a magnesium silicate mineral. Its platy crystal habit is in part the reason why talc has been an important ingredient in cosmetics since 3500 BC. The plates glide smoothly across each other, allowing makeup to be applied easily. They lie across the pores in the skin and lessen the chance of clogging pores, while providing texture to the skin. Yet they are translucent enough not to be seen. Talc is resistant to acids, bases and heat and tends to repel water. In addition to eye shadows, talc is used in loose and pressed powders and blushes, is a filler in some deodorants, and is added to lotions and creams. Talc can also be found in chewing gum and pharmaceuticals.

Mica, a mineral widely used in eye shadow, powder, lipstick and nail polish, is added to give luster or pearlescence to a product. Mica is resistant to ultraviolet light, heat, weather, chemical attack and adheres to the skin. Like talc, it has excellent slip characteristics and may be used to replace talc in makeup. When coated with iron oxide, mica flakes sparkle with a gold tint.

Kaolin, a clay, is added to makeup to absorb moisture. It covers the skin well, will stay on the skin and is resistant to oil. Kaolin and another clay, bentonite, are added to the earth-based face masks or packs predominately for their cleansing effects. Clays are also used as fillers in different products.

Powdered calcite, a calcium carbonate, absorbs moisture. Because of this, calcite and a magnesium carbonate, processed from dolomite, are added to powders to increase the ability of makeup to absorb moisture.

When it comes to makeup, color is the name of the game. Minerals provide coloring for the eyes, cheeks, lips and nails. Iron oxide, one of the most important color minerals, was used by Cleopatra in the form of red ochre as rouge. Today, iron oxides

give red, orange, yellow, brown and black tones to makeup.

Chrome oxides are used for green, manganese for violet or purple, ground lapis lazuli may be added to makeup for blue. Ultramarine blue and pink coloring is made from a mixture of kaolin, soda ash, sulfur and charcoal. Even gold has historically been used as a colorant. Ancient Egyptians used gold to color skin and hair. Gold can still be found in powders and makeup to add a rich, golden tone to the skin.

As an artist starts a painting with a bright white canvas to give the colors brightness and intensity, titanium dioxide is added to brighten and intensify the color of makeup, and to give whiteness and opacity. Titanium dioxide is also a natural sun-block and like talc, iron oxides and gold, it has been used for centuries. Titanium dioxide can be found in any makeup shadow, blush, nail polish, lotions, lipsticks and powders. Titanium dioxide also makes Oreo cookie frosting extra white, and is the “M” on M&M candy.

Minerals also find their way into health care products we use daily. Salt is effective in treating skin disease and is used in some soap. Fluorite, processed for fluoride, is added to toothpaste and drinking water to help prevent tooth decay. Calcium carbonate (calcite) and baking soda are abrasives in toothpaste. A borax and beeswax mixture is added to cleansing creams as an emulsifier to keep oil and water together. Boric acid is a mild antiseptic and is added to powder as a skin buffering agent. Zinc oxide is added to creams to allow the cream to cover more thoroughly. Zinc oxide ointment, which contains approximately 20% zinc oxide, is used to heal chapped skin. When an unlucky hiker runs into poison ivy, calamine base lotions are often used to soothe the itchy skin. Calamine is another name for hemimorphite, a zinc silicate mineral.

As you can see, minerals are found in many things we use. So the next time you are in the supermarket, take a moment and acquaint yourself with the multitude of minerals that are a part of our daily lives.

*From Beliflower Gem & Mineral Society via  
RockBuster News, September, 2013*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – Chris Luzier, 847 Springdale Drive, Millersville, MD 21108-1436, 443-995-5363  
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Life Members: Larry Harrison, Wendell Mohr, and Juan Proaño

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