

Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club



Rock Talk



July, 2014

Message from the President

Rich Simcsak

We found out at the last meeting that the club will be unable to have the Showplace Arena the weekend we desired. This was due to the other group was to pay the full asking price vice the club with the reduced price we have been able to attain being part of the Prince George's County system and having the combination of education and having the Boy Scouts work toward their scouting goals.

The Center assures me that they are working with the Showplace Arena to resolve this in some way. I unfortunately believe to a high certainty we will not have the second weekend in March for our show at the Arena. I am hopeful we will have a full description of what our options are this month. Please be ready to make decisions on the way ahead for our 25th Silver anniversary show.

We had multiple rock hounding events this past month, thanks to Jim White and hopefully they will continue in the months ahead. All attend arrived and left safely with no injuries and many good samples! Thank you
Jim!

Next month (August) I am scheduled to be away in Taiwan due to my job. It was unfortunate I could not keep the meeting the week prior, so Polly will be running the meeting for us then. As a reminder - next month is the annual Club Auction! If anyone has items worthy of auctioning (i.e; willing to let go), please bring them in and help the club raise funds that helps us support others in need.

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Next Meeting:
July 22, 2014 @ 7:00 PM
Program
Geode Cracking by Christine Proctor
Refreshments
Christine Proctor and Mary Burns
**Clearwater Nature Center, 11000 Thrift
Road, Clinton, MD.**

JUNE MINUTES

Submitted by **Linda Holden**

DATE: June 24, 2014
Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by president Richard Simsack.

VISITORS/NEW MEMBERS:

Robin Pender is from Kent Island. Robin majored in geology. She found out about us at our show in March. Jim Smith and his daughter, Emily, are from Waldorf. He has been a rock hound for a long time. Interests: geodes, garnets, lapidary

* Richard will not be here for the August meeting. Polly Zimmerman will substitute.
* The November meeting will be changed to November 18th so as not to conflict with Thanksgiving.

MAY MINUTES: Approved as written.

MEMBERSHIP: Nothing new from Michael. There are at least ten emails that are incorrect. Please update your email. Contact Polly at polly.zimmerman@verizon.net.

NEWSLETTER: Our new newsletter is out with a new format thanks to Tim Foard.

Nice job! We will need new items submitted each month. Send your stories about field trips you have taken. They can be short and have a personal touch. Richard has been gathering newsletters from other clubs, as well as our past newsletters in a binder as a point of reference and to keep a record. Rich shared the "Virginia Minerals" newsletter. Check it out at [HTTPS://waw.DMME.VIRGINIA.GOV/COMMERCE](https://waw.dmme.virginia.gov/commerce)

FIELD TRIPS: Jim White reported that two trips are scheduled. On Saturday June 28th there is a field trip to Enterprise Manganese Mine. This will be a combined trip with the Lynchburg club. Time: 9:00-2:00pm. On Saturday July 12 we will be joining Ted Carver of the Northern Virginia club at Vulcan Manassas Quarry. Time: 7:00am
Carole Raucheisen went to Henson Creek in Prince George's Co. to collect fossils. Good collecting! The Larson's will be going to Young Harris, Georgia in July. They encouraged members to attend the William Holland School. For \$350.00 you get room and board for one week. There are 18 different courses to choose from. There is also a campground for RV's and

tents.

Jim Smith told us about Taylor's Ridge Agate near Rome, Georgia where beautiful agate can be found. We need ideas for other places we can go for future field trips.

PROGRAMS : Penny Masuoka presented the program, "How and Why to Record the Location of Your Collection Sites Using GPS and Other Methods." Tim Foard provided refreshments. Next month Christine Proctor will do a program on "Geode Cracking." Refreshments will be provided by Christine Proctor and Mary Burns. August will be our annual auction. October and November will feature a video, "Rhodochrosite: Red Treasure of the Rockies." The December meeting will be on Thursday December 11, at 6:00 pm for a potluck and gift exchange.

ELECTION: September - October for nominations.

WEBMASTER: No report.

OLD BUSINESS: Discussion centered on our 25th annual show. We have lost the second weekend in March since no contract was signed and no dates were requested or penciled in by Michael. Other dates will now conflict with

other clubs. What choice do we have now?

NEW BUSINESS: What do we do now? Will we have to have it at Clearwater Nature Center? Richard said he will make some calls to Michael and Parks and Recreation. Rich will also contact the Eastern Federation to notify them that we will be unable to hold the show on the date we had chosen. He also wants to request the financial records for the last five years to see how much revenue has been generated by our club's annual show.

ADJOURNED : Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Upcoming Field Trips

*Combined (with
Montgomery Co Club)
field trip to the
Gettysburg Quarry,
1575 Baltimore Pike,
Gettysburg PA.17325,
Saturday, July 26, from
7AM to 11AM. If
interested, contact Jim
White at
whitejs1@verizon.net.*

Upcoming Shows and Events

August 23-24: 47th annual Rock and Mineral Show sponsored by the St. Lawrence Co. Rock and Mineral Club. Madrid Community Center, 1835 St. Hwy 345, Madrid, NY

September 27-28: 50th Atlantic Coast Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show hosted by the Gem Cutters Guild of Baltimore. Howard Co. Fairgrounds, 2210 Fairgrounds Road; West Friendship, MD 21794 (MD 32 just off I-70).

October 18-19: 41st Annual Jewelry, Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show sponsored by the Kanawha Rock and Gem Club. So. Charleston Community Center, So. Charleston, WV

October 25-26: 45th Annual Rochester Gem, Mineral, Jewelry, and Fossil Show sponsored by the Rochester Lapidary Society. Main Street Armory, 900 E. Main St., Rochester, NY

EFMLS/AFMS NEWS by Timothy Foard



The EFMLS Newsletter for June/July has articles on eye safety, updates on the WildAcres workshop from September 1-7, the discovery of oxygen, regional VP elections, and school and youth outreach.

For more information, visit www.amfed.org.efmls



The May/June/July newsletter of the AFMS has an article on the 2009 Paleontological Resources Act and RS 2477 (Right of Way for highway construction across public lands) and what it means for collectors. Also in this issue is a tribute to Glenn M. Lee and his contributions to the rockhounding community.

For these and other information, visit www.amfed.org

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Vulcan Manassas Quarry July 2014 Field Trip Report

by Dave Lines

(Photos by Sheryl Simms (Northern Virginia Club) and Timothy Foard)

We (Jim W., Dave, Rich, John P. and Ron T from So Md Club and 7 from Northern Virginia) met at 7:00 a.m. in the Office parking lot ---- and were immediately impressed by the many dump trucks going back and forth getting rock --- crushed rock and fill dirt/rock. A continual stream of large noisy trucks went by us. Probably a 100 or more while we waited to begin the trip. Business was really hopping --- super busy --- especially since it was a Saturday morning! So it was with high expectations of much new material to be found that we waited because lots of trucks might mean lots of recent shots.

First, the Safety briefs --- two of them --- the first by our Trip Leader and sponsor Ted Carver of Northern Virginia Mineral Club. Ted ran through the list of do's and don'ts --- liberally embellished with several horror stories. The message was be safe, stay safe and keep the quarry open to

rockhounds. Second the quarry rep "TJ" gave us another rundown on safety rules relating to this particular operation and pointed out where we could and could not go, to drive on the left side, stay away from the high walls, be careful of all the truck traffic and to be out of the quarry by 11:45 a.m..

After a group picture, we entered the quarry a little past 8:00 a.m. and noticed a drill in operation preparing for a new shot. But then we realized that only a minimum amount of activity had occurred in the pit. We stopped at the first bench past the little picnic/memorial garden area down in the pit and quickly saw the road was blocked by boulders and a recent rain washed gully. After surveying the situation, we decided as a group to spend some time to move the boulders and level the bumps and gulleys enough for about 50 yards to get through to the rest of the quarry. Ted was particularly helpful with his unusual strength and ability to move heavy objects. After half an hour or so of effort, we had collectively cleared the road and caravanned past the obstructions to benches below.

But alas --- the pickings were slim as absolutely zero activity had taken place and the lower quarry was much the same as it had been for several years. None the less, we spread out and found bits and pieces in various locations on several benches all the way to the bottom. I saw decent specimens of prehnite, stilbite, calcite and chalcopyrite.



Small vug containing prehnite, apophyllite and calcite.

Although most of the specimens were found as float, we did find a couple of areas where there was a concentration of collectible material --- particularly one near the bench near the final turn toward the bottom where we found lots of colorful chalcopyrite.

At about 11:00 a.m., since I was riding with Rich, we decided to return to the area just above the 40 foot bench and try to find the boulder where Jim had found some interesting 1/8 inch round balls of what we assumed were calcite. Well, no calcite, but we did find some nice dodecahedral crystals of pyrite (or maybe very shiny chalcopyrite) embedded in a 1/2 inch seam of calcite. Nice.

All in all the weather was gorgeous --- in 70's and low 80's and partly cloudy. And we all stayed safe. Thanks Vulcan for another chance to find some great specimens and save them from the crusher.

Fossil Collecting Trip in the Austin Area

By Timothy Foard

Back in November, I was attending a conference in Austin, Texas with a co-worker and friend, Nick (also an avid fossil collector), and was hoping for a chance for a little fossil collecting after the conference. We visited a local rock and mineral shop and spoke with the owner about accessible fossil sites. I was aware that Austin is located within the seabed of the Western Interior Seaway, which dates to the Cretaceous Period and stretched from Canada to northern Mexico. He was kind enough to give us detail of a publically accessible site north of the city. We were faced with two limiting factors: time and the lack of collecting equipment. Nevertheless, on the same day we were to leave Austin, we set out early to the site, a limestone outcropping in Travis County, along the MoPac (Missouri-Pacific) Expressway.



Fossil site, Travis County, Texas.

It was a cold morning, so we bundled up before walking to the site. Fossils were abundant, but without proper tools, we would be limited as to what to bring back with us. Chunks of chert and flint were common throughout the area, and I collected a few specimens. Many contained inclusions which turned out to be remains of microscopic plankton, mostly foraminifera. Most of the fossils were bivalves (clams, scallops, oysters). The most abundant fossils were members of the genus *Texigryphea*, one of the “Devil’s Toenails” clams. To me the most unusual fossils were the so-called “Denture Clams”, *Raustellum carinatum* which were elongate clams with the margins of their shells create a zigzag border when both halves of the shells are completely closed. Gastropods (snails) were also present, but relatively rare.

Denture clam, *Raustellum carinatum*Fossilized seabed, with mostly *Texigryphea* sp.

A Cretaceous marine site isn’t complete without ammonites! This was also the fossil on Nick’s radar. After about an hour searching we both found a specimen.



Ammonite (Letherman tool for scale)

Not having chisels or sledge hammers, which would have made an easy extraction, we had to use what was available. I made no attempt to extract the ammonite I found (photos were fine with me), but Nick spent the better part of the next hour chipping away the matrix using a pocket knife and a short pipe he found. He succeeded, at the expense of bloodied fingers and knuckles. We ended up with a few bivalve specimens, an ammonite; each found a gastropod, and I collected some small pieces of limestone and flint/chert for thin sectioning before leaving for the airport.

Member's Finds

Host rock containing small vugs lined with white quartz crystals, and a larger crystal cluster, from a construction site in the Pikesville-Owings Mills area (mentioned in the June issue of Rock Talk), Baltimore County, Maryland. Collected by Timothy Foard.



Collected any interesting specimens recently? Send a photo or two to the editor at bmorebugman@yahoo.com for inclusion in the next issue of Rock Talk.



The Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club

Meetings take place on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm

Clearwater Nature Center, 11000 Thrift Road, Clinton, MD.

For More information, call:

(301) 297-4575

**We're on the web:
SMRMC.org**