

Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club



Rock Talk



February, 2015

Message from the President

Rich Simcsak

Thanks to all that participated in the 25th Annual Rock, Mineral, and Jewelry Show! Mother Nature was truly kind to us by holding off the snow and other nasty weather she could have let loose upon us in the middle of February. From the opening of the doors until closing we had a steady flow of people visiting and enjoying the various vendors and demonstrations on the arena floor. From rough estimates, we had over 1000 people attending!! Our best ever! Many dealers commented on the success they had especially with the "risky date". Probably with the little bit of cabin fever and nice weather helped the attendance numbers.

Special thanks to Dave Lines for the "full court press" on advertising the event. Also to our demonstrators: Cheryl Reese with Fossil making; Lauren with beading; Greta with Cabachon design & making; Marco with his flint knapping, and Dave Lines with Gold Panning. Each demonstration had many interested people with many questions for the experts! Also many thanks to the members of the Nature Center that assisted! Their running of the front door and the door prizes gave the club members more chances to be with the attendees and tell them about the club and other events we do!

For NEXT year's show - we will begin this month by talking about the good, bad, and ugly of this year's and plan out for the future 26th show to make it even better!! Any ideas or complaints or even things we need to repeat - please bring the

thoughts up next week!

We are still in need of a volunteer to be our Programs/Events Director. Penny has relinquished this position since she now have a very busy work schedule and will probably be unable to attend meetings for a distant future. Anyone that is willing to take on this position - PLEASE see Polly or myself!

Remember - Please pay the yearly dues!! This is the way we see the true numbers of the club's membership.

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JANUARY MINUTES

Submitted by Cheryl Reese

DATE: January 27, 2015; Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Polly in Richard's absence.

VISITORS/NEW MEMBERS: --- No visitors or new members.

MEMBERSHIP: Membership due are due. Currently do not have an updated membership list. Pay at the Nature Center's front desk.

NEWSLETTER: No Report.

FIELD TRIPS: Mushroom Festival and 3 days of rockhounding for agates, geodes, fluorite and fossils in Kentucky during the last week in April.. If you need information see Harry or Tina League. Harry and Tina are also planning a trip to Utah again in September.

TREASURER: \$50.00 was reimbursed to Dave Lines for advertising in the Rock and Gem magazine.

PROGRAMS: We still need a program chairman. Tonight's program is "Getting Ready for the Rock and Gem Show". February's program will be given by Gary Lohman and he and Cindy will provide refreshments

WEBMASTER: Digital coupons on phones will be allowed for entrance to the Rock show. Website is up-to-date.

OLD BUSINESS: Gary and Cindy Lohman will be our clubs' representatives at the EFMLS convention in Hickory North Carolina in March.

NEW BUSINESS: EFMLS will be offering a free trip to WildAcres, in North Carolina to one of their sessions which this year are May 18-24 and August 24-30. Points will be given to the clubs who submit items to the newsletter mentioning the WildAcres programs. Cindy Lohman volunteered to do this.

ADJOURNED: Meeting was adjourned at 7:25 with refreshments provided by Paula Davis followed by a discussion on the upcoming show.

Next Meeting:
February 24, 2015 @ 7:00 PM
Program
 Presentation (TBD) by Gary Lohman

Refreshments
 Gary and Cindy Lohman

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

Upcoming Field Trips

None scheduled at this time.

Upcoming Shows and Events: 2015

March 7-8 - Newark, DE - The Delaware Mineralogical Society, Inc. will hold its 52nd Annual Earth Science Gem and Mineral Show @ Delaware Technical and Community College 400 Stanton-Christiana Road; Newark, DE

March 21-22 - Gaithersburg, MD - Gem Lapidary, and Mineral Society of Montgomery County MD., Inc. 51st Annual GLMSMC Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show At the Montgomery County Fairgrounds , 16 Chestnut Street, Gaithersburg, MD

March 28-29 - Sayre, PA - The 46th Annual Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club show, Athens Twp. Vol. Fire Hall, 211 Herrick Ave, Sayre, PA

March 21-22 - Chambersburg, PA - Annual Jewelry, Gemstones, Minerals & Fossils Show sponsored by the Franklin County Rock & Mineral Club. Hamilton Heights Elementary School, 1589 Johnson Rd; Chambersburg, PA.

March 28-29- Plymouth Meeting, PA 15th Annual Mineral Treasures & Fossil Fair sponsored by the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society and the Delaware Valley Paleontological Society. LuLu Temple, 5140 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting, PA

EFMLS/AFMS NEWS by Timothy Foard



The EFMLS Newsletter for February has a registration application to the Wildacres workshop and to the EFMLS board of directors meeting in Hickory, NC. There is a syllabus of classes to be taught at the summer session of Wildacres. Also included in the newsletter are dues and web site contest deadlines reminders, AFMS scholarship news, and one on the history of mineral collecting up to the 16th century.

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



The February newsletter of the AFMS has information on the 2015 AFMS program competition, the announcement of 3 new House Committee Chairs of committees which can have an influence on activities on public lands. Also included is the recognition of AFMS rockhounds of the year and a continuation of membership building/retention through the club bulletin.

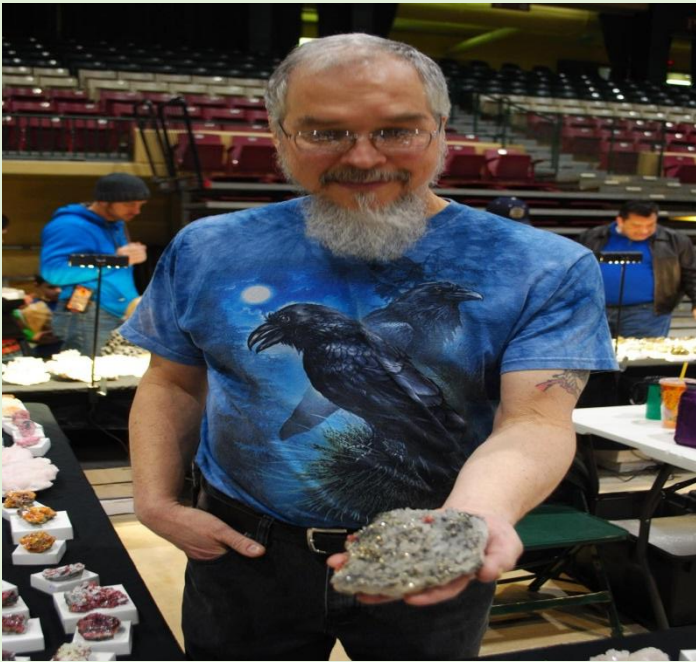
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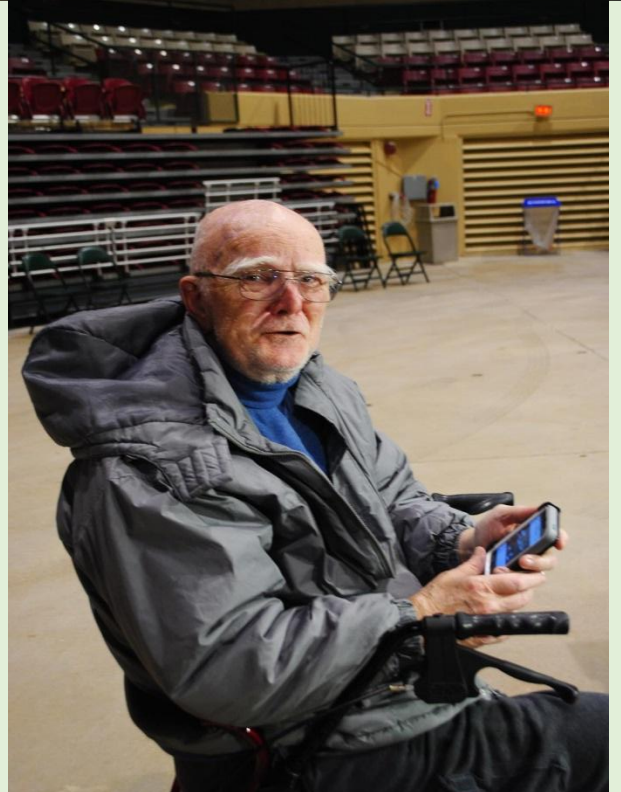
The 25th Annual SMRMC Mineral, Jewelry, and Fossil Show

Photographs by Sheryl Sims, Richard Simcsak, and Timothy Foard



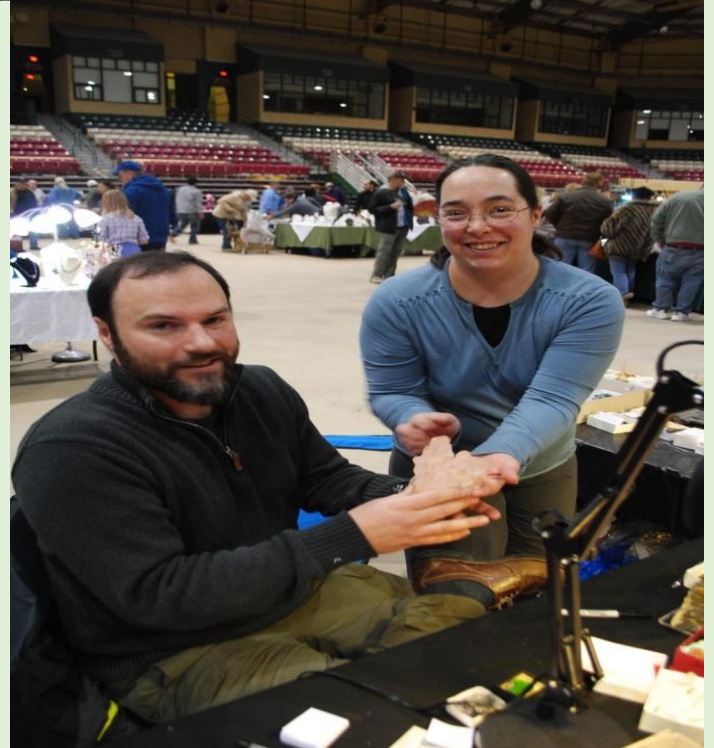




















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Rocks, Minerals, and Fossils in the News

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/02/19/in-an-underwater-graveyard-scientists-discover-bones-of-giants-from-madagascars-past/>

In an underwater graveyard, scientists discover bones of giants from Madagascar's past

By Sarah Kaplan February 19

Not too long ago, huge animals dominated the island of Madagascar: elephant birds the height of professional basketball players, giant, lumbering tortoises, massive lemurs that weighed up to 15 times as much as their smaller, living relatives.

Those creatures have all but died out within the past thousand years in one of the swiftest extinction events known to scientists. Researchers still puzzle over what exactly led to their demise. But a newly-discovered “underwater graveyard” filled with thousands of fossils may offer a key to understanding what happened to Madagascar’s megafauna.

A team led by National Geographic fellow and Brooklyn College professor Alfred Rosenberger found three flooded caves in Tsimanampesotse National Park, each containing an unprecedented number of large, perfectly preserved specimens. One in particular, Aven Cave, is so packed with bones that divers felt them every time they put their hands down.

“It’s just phenomenal,” researcher Laurie Godfrey, a paleontologist at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, said in a phone interview with The Washington Post. “A huge cache of fossils like this has never been explored before. Now that we know that it’s there, it’s opening up a new era in paleontological exploration.”

The researchers’ most prized findings are the bones of several extinct species of giant lemurs, ranging from several hundred to several thousands of years old. Among them are specimens of *Megaladapis*, a big-nosed, beady-eyed creature whose heavy, squat body more closely resembled a koala’s than those of the diminutive lemurs we know today, and *Archaeoindris*, the largest known lemur species that was the same size and weight as a gorilla.

The discovery, which National Geographic announced Tuesday, is just the first step in what Godfrey hopes will be a more thorough investigation of the caves. The initial sweep brought up so many fossils that researchers haven’t even begun to dig into the sediments on the cave floors. Once they do, Godfrey estimates they’ll find thousands of specimens from dozens of extinct species.

The caves remained unexplored for so long because of the difficulty of probing their flooded interiors. In Aven Cave, where the fossils were most abundant, the water is 130 feet deep and often murky.

But that same water is also what makes the caves such perfect places to find fossils.

“In a flooded cave the preservation can be just marvelous,” Godfrey said. “Nothing’s bothering them, nothing’s disturbing them.”

The quality of the fossils will be key for scientists’ research into the causes of the animals’ disappearance. Godfrey said that researchers will likely be able to obtain DNA samples from the specimens, carbon date them to see when they died, and examine them for cut marks or other signs of human butchering.

“All of this information can help us flesh out the story that we’re telling about what happened to the giant lemurs and the associated fauna,” she said.

It’s long been understood that human arrival on Madagascar about 2,000 years ago coincided with the sudden die-off of much of the island’s wildlife. Two-thirds of the species that lived on the island a millennium ago are now extinct, in part because of changes caused by humans, Godfrey said. What’s not clear is exactly how those changes led to the animals’ demise.

“You’re dealing with a situation where not only are humans coming but they’re bringing a lot of other animals and plants that transform the habitat. They’re hunting,” for example, she said, and “it could be that certain species didn’t want to come near water or food sources because humans were around. There’s competition with new introduced species. There’s a number of long, complicated stories people have put forth as to why these animals are extinct.”

Untangling those stories isn’t just a matter of understanding history — it can help with conservation efforts today. Lemurs are the most threatened mammal species on Earth, according to a policy paper published last year in the journal

Science, and Madagascar is the only place where they are found in the wild.

“It’s a very sad situation in Madagascar. The threat to species is tremendous, there’s a high rate of extinction,” Rosenberger said in a [video](#) for National Geographic. “We’d like to know what the interaction was between people, climate change, habitat change ... that contributed to the demise of the giant lemurs. Because knowing that might give us some perspective on what we have to prepare for the future.”

<http://www.wildcat.arizona.edu/article/2015/02/gem-science-explored>

Gem science explored

By John McMullen | Published 02/19/15 8:00am

At the Tucson Convention Center this past weekend, the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society held its 61st annual show as part of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. It brought vendors and educators alike to showcase their gems, minerals and fossils and allowed visitors to explore the science behind the gem with educators from the UA, the TGMS, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and many more organizations and dealers.

“The Gem Show highlights some of the most spectacular, rare minerals that come out of the Earth, [which makes it] a great place for people to get interested in natural resources,” said Simone Runyon, a geosciences graduate student interested in economic geology. “[It] is a great opportunity for education [about] ... the mines that supply the natural

resources that we rely on in our day-to-day lives, not just the glittering specimens.”

The Gemological Institute of America booth, for example, taught visitors about inclusions, which is another mineral, gas bubble or organic material inside a gem. Individuals could look at amber under a microscope to see a dipteran insect — the order containing flies and mosquitoes — as well as other minerals to view more examples. Amber is fossilized tree resin that is at least 1 million years old, explained Larne Antrim, guest services manager of the GIA.

The Gemological Association of Great Britain, similar to the GIA, showcased the various tools a gemologist would use to inspect their findings.



By Angeline Carbajal / The Daily Wildcat

Luke Larson packs away ammonites to take back home to South Dakota on Sunday at the Mineral & Fossil Cooperative. Larson said this year marked his 10th year at the show and is the largest source of revenue for his family business.

“We have had demonstrations [teaching about] different gemological equipment, [such as] microscopes, dichroscopes and polariscopes,” said Gary Roskin, a fellow and practical tutor of the GAGB.

The show not only displayed beautiful gems and their tools, but educators also emphasized some of the more common rocks and minerals people see everyday: quartz, feldspar and mica. People at Dianich’s booth were given the opportunity to identify different specimens.

“We are here to help people understand and appreciate rocks and minerals,” she said. “People have a thirst for knowledge; they want to know what they have, and they are curious about the specimens we have.”

The big beautiful crystal specimens that are worth, at least, hundreds of dollars are fun to look at, but there is more information to be learned about other common rocks and minerals, as well as earth processes, Dianich said.

“People are often shocked that many of the beautiful crystals they see at the [shows] came out of the ground looking the way they do,” said Shaunna Morrison, a geosciences graduate student studying mineralogy and crystallography. “They associate nice crystal faces and angles with cut gemstones used in jewelry, but there is a multitude of raw minerals that look more dazzling than any man-cut stone.”

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Show provided a venue for people to experience the science behind gems — whether they wanted beautiful minerals or fossils, to purchase jewelry or to become more educated on minerals. There is something for everyone, Morrison said.

Member's Finds

A vug containing at least 3 minerals-calcite, prehnite, and actinolite-from a boulder at the Vulcan Manassas Quarry, Manassas, Virginia. I was only able to photograph the cavity with some effort, as the boulder's location within the quarry made it too dangerous to extract the minerals.



Collected any interesting specimens? 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**