

Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club



Rock Talk



July-August, 2019

**Next Meeting:
August 27, 2019 @ 6:00 PM**

**Program
Annual Auction**

**Refreshments
Pot Luck**

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

Everyone --- please bring a potluck dish to share.

Our annual auction begins immediately after supper. You may bring anything (must be "rock related") that you want to sell --- 10% of sales amount will be deducted for the club treasury. Cash only --- stop by your ATM and get some extra \$\$\$\$. Many lots of rocks, fossils, mineral specimens, lapidary rough, cabs, jewelry, machinery, etc. will be auctioned to the highest bidder. Judging from past auctions, there will be **bargains galore!!!** Members from other clubs are welcome to both the picnic and the auction."

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JUNE MINUTES

Submitted by Cheryl Reese

DATE: Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, June 25, 2019 at 7:05 PM by Sondra.

VISITORS/NEW MEMBERS:

There were no visitors present. One new member has joined since the last meeting.

MEMBERSHIP: No report.

NEWSLETTER: No report.

TREASURER: No changes.

FIELD TRIPS:

June 29th 2019: 16 people have signed up for national limestone in Mt. Pleasant, PA. This is combine trip with Montgomery club, from 9-1. Waiver must be signed and given to pit master.

July 20th 2019: Contrary Creek in Mineral Spotsylvania County, VA. from 9-1. Gold, garnets and magnetite can be found. Water is very acidic so wear old clothes and water shoes. Dave has invited the Montgomery club also.

PROGRAMS: Sondra will talk about her experience at Wildacres and Theresa will talk about her time at William Holland. Refreshments for July??

August: Annual meeting and auction.

September: Bob Farrar may come back and do another program on mineral collecting in Morocco.

Still need people to provide refreshments for September and November.

WEBMASTER: No report

OLD BUSINESS: Dave made a new plaque for National Limestone trip.

NEW BUSINESS: Membership cards are being mailed to each member. Please take these cards with you on field trips as they will confirm our club is covered by insurance.

Samples of business cards were passed around to see design. Rich made a motion to add our club activities and it was seconded by Polly. Dave made a motion for going ahead and order 200 cards on the better card stock from Avery. This motion was also seconded

ADJOURNED: Meeting adjourned at 7:30 followed by door prizes and the "Beer flat social". Refreshments provided by Bill and Deb Curtin.

JULY MINUTES

Submitted by Rick Simcsak

DATE: Sondra opened meeting at 7:10 pm on Tuesday, July 23, 2019.

VISITORS/NEW MEMBERS:

None.

MEMBERSHIP: No report (Joe not in attendance).

NEWSLETTER: Newsletter will be published as a combined July/August edition.

TREASURER: Dave Lines stated that the Treasury was in sound standing.

FIELD TRIPS:

Trips since last meeting:

a.6-29-19 National Limestone Quarry,
- Middleburg, PA

Minerals found: Calcite crystals,
Fluorite, Pink Dolomite

Mt Pleasant Mills quarry had no recent work and few specimens were found. Wavellite pit behind quarry yielded no specimens.

b.Contrary Creek, Mineral VA -

Minerals found: Gold, Garnets,
Pyrite, Tantalite, and Magnetite (Fe_3O_4)

99 degree weather was not a problem while collecting in the creek. Gold flakes were found late (and lost), while garnets and magnetite were the primary finds.

Upcoming trips -

a. 8-10-19 ---The Richmond Club will be visiting the US Silica Quarry in Montpelier, VA.

Minerals to be found: Moonstone (Black, Gray, and White), Bronzeite, Ilmenite and Rutile

This is a Richmond club only trip. Dave Lines and Rich Simcsak (new

Richmond member) will be attending. Dave described how to become a member of the Richmond Club and who to contact before the Aug 2nd sign-up deadline to attend the trip.

b.9-28-19 Willis Mountain Kyanite Mine, Dillwyn, VA

Minerals: Iridescent Hematite, kyanite, fushite, pyrite, quartz, 30 other minerals.

Official notice from the host Lynchburg VA Club is expected in August.

c.10-10-19 + 11th, 12th and 13th --- trips open to all rockhounds: Graves Mountain, GA for rutile xls, iridescent hematite, quartz, lapis xls; Mt Ida, Arkansas for quartz xls (32nd World Championship Quartz Crystal Dig); Trona, CA for evaporative minerals (xls) – pink halite, hanksite, sulfohalite, borax

PROGRAMS: Tonight: Sondra will talk of her week at Wildacres Retreat, NC. Snacks were provided by Teresa.

August meeting: The Annual Club Auction and Pot Luck. Members are encouraged to bring items they desire to be auctioned. A 10% auction fee will be given to the Club Treasury. Everyone please bring a dish to share.

WEBMASTER: No report (Bob not in attendance).

OLD BUSINESS: Sarah presented Club Business Cards that she designed and printed. She was thanked for her efforts and

talents. Cards were shared among the attending club members with the goal of giving them to other people who might be interested in joining our Rock Club. This is Sarah's last night with our club since she is moving to PA.

NEW BUSINESS: Rich discussed the concept of "Mineral Sampler Boxes" like Dave has made through the years for the purpose as a start for young rockhounds to spark a higher interest in the hobby.

ADJOURNED: Meeting was Adjourned at 7:35 pm. Door Prize drawings were held.

UPCOMING SHOWS AND EVENTS 2019

October 19-20, 2019 - So. Charleston, WV - 47th annual Kanawha Rock & Gem Club show and sale. So. Charleston Community Center; 601 Jefferson Road, So. Charleston, WV; Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5

October 26, 2019 - Fairless Hills, PA - The Rock and Mineral Club of Lower Bucks County, PA and the North East Region Fluoresophiles (NERFs) of the Fluorescent Mineral Society and its collecting wing the UV Nomads present "ULTRAVIOLATION 2019" at the First United Methodist Church, 840 Trenton Road, Fairless Hills, PA. (See flyer, page 23).

Letter from Dr. Lance Kearns (JMU):

Hello Mineral Enthusiasts;

I am writing to let your mineral club members know that the James Madison University Mineral Museum (the one located in Memorial Hall) will be closed permanently beginning July 1, 2019. We are presently in the process of constructing a new and bigger Mineral Museum which will be located in the Festival Center on the JMU campus. We expect this new facility will open in the Spring of 2020. Your club will receive notification when the new museum is to open, and an invitation to join us for the Grand Opening.

For now, I am asking you to spread the word (by mouth and newsletter) that the JMU Mineral Museum will be closed permanently beginning July 1, 2019.

Best wishes,

Dr. Lance E. Kearns
Professor Emeritus
Mineral Curator

ITEMS WANTED/FOR SALE

For Sale – Virginia unakite slabs (approx ¼ inch thick) – \$0.50 per square inch (this is half off regular price). Call Dave (240) 427-7062.

For Sale – SMRMC Only 4 remaining t-shirts for sale: size small (1) at \$9.00; and large (3), also at \$9.00 each Contact Tina @ htleague@comcast.net

Rocks, Minerals, and Fossils in the News

PHOTOS: Moon rock samples sealed since Apollo missions

Yahoo News Photo Staff

<https://news.yahoo.com/photos-moon-rock-samples-sealed-since-apollo-missions-181145452.html>

Collected during Apollo 17, a 3.5 billion year old basalt rock known as "The Children of the World" or "The Goodwill Sample" is displayed in the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. It was used for to make samples that were gifted to every country on earth. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)More

Inside a locked vault at Johnson Space Center is treasure few have seen and fewer have touched.

The restricted lab is home to hundreds of pounds of moon rocks collected by Apollo astronauts close to a half-century ago. And for the first time in decades, NASA is about to open some of the pristine samples and let geologists take a crack at them with 21st-century technology.

What better way to mark this summer's 50th anniversary of humanity's first footsteps on the moon than by sharing a bit of the lunar loot.

With the golden anniversary of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin's feat fast approaching — their lunar module Eagle landed July 20, 1969, on the Sea of Tranquility — the moon is red-hot again.

After decades of flip-flopping between the moon and Mars as the next big astronaut

destination, NASA aims to put astronauts on the lunar surface again by 2024 at the White House's direction. President Donald Trump prefers talking up Mars. But the consensus is that the moon is a crucial proving ground given its relative proximity to home — 240,000 miles (386,000 kilometers) or two to three days away. (AP)



A stainless steel bin is opened to show individually tagged and sealed lunar samples collected during Apollo 16 inside a pressurized nitrogen-filled case holding the samples from that mission in the lunar lab of the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)



Ryan Zeigler, Apollo sample curator, left, stands next to a nitrogen-filled case displaying various lunar samples collected during Apollo missions 15, 16 and 17, inside the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)



A regolith breccia rock of sintered lunar soil, dating 3.2 billion years old and collected by Apollo 15, is displayed in a pressurized nitrogen-filled case inside the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)

Collected during Apollo 15, a 3.5 billion years old basalt rock similar to rocks formed around Hawaii, is displayed in a pressurized nitrogen-filled examination case inside the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. For the first time in decades, NASA is about to open some of the pristine samples and let geologists take a crack at them with 21st-century technology. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)More



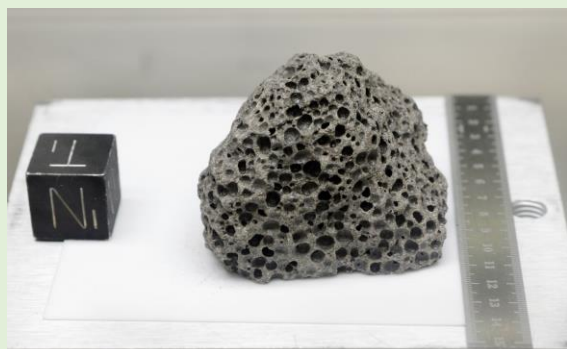
Jeremy Kent, Apollo curation processor, works with lunar samples within a sealed, nitrogen-pressurized examination case inside the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. The samples are always kept inside a nitrogen environment to prevent decay and degradation, even as they are moved between the lab and the storage vault. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)More



Lacey Costello, Apollo sample curation processor, talks about her job examining lunar samples inside the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)



Two separate 2 inch foil pans hold lunar dirt, from the last shovel full collected by Neil Armstrong on the Apollo 11, in the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)





Jeremy Kent, Apollo sample curation processor, tugs to open the 1978 U.S. federal bank vault that protects the entrance to the lunar sample vault inside the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. The door requires two separate combinations, held by two separate people, to open. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)More



The Genesis Rock, foreground, a 4.4 billion year old anorthosite rock, approximately 2 inches in length, brought back by Apollo 15 and used to determine the moon was formed by a giant impact, sits under glass inside a pressurized nitrogen-filled examination case as Lacey Costello, an Apollo sample curation processor, works with other samples on the outside of the case inside the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)More



Collected during Apollo 16, an anorthosite sample believed to be the oldest rock collected during the moon missions is displayed in the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. Scientists also believe it to be from the original crust of the moon just after it cooled. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)More



The "Genesis Rock," a 4.4 billion-year-old anorthosite sample approximately 2 inches in length, brought back by Apollo 15 and used to determine the moon was formed by a giant impact, is lit inside a pressurized nitrogen-filled examination case in the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)More



Pressurized nitrogen-filled cases hold lunar samples collected from Apollo 11, left, and Apollo 12, right, with NASA's Apollo sample curator Ryan Zeigler in the background, inside the lunar sample vault in the lunar lab at the NASA Johnson Space Center Monday, June 17, 2019, in Houston. The restricted lab is home to hundreds of pounds of moon rocks collected by Apollo astronauts close to a half-century ago. (Photo: Michael Wyke/AP)More

The following specimens have been stolen from the University of California, Santa Barbara:



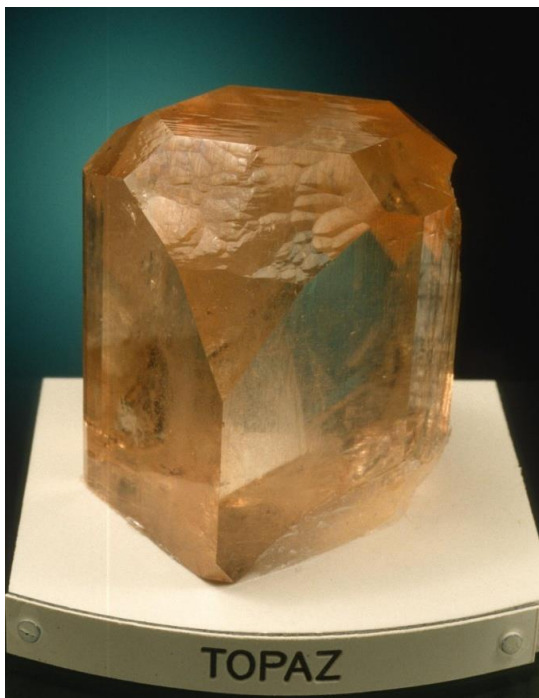
01-Aquamarine 6.4cm

The Mineralogical Record



SPECIAL ALERT!

STOLEN SPECIMENS!



40- Topaz 3.7 cm



65-Legrandite 2.8 cm



66- Gold 3.0 cm



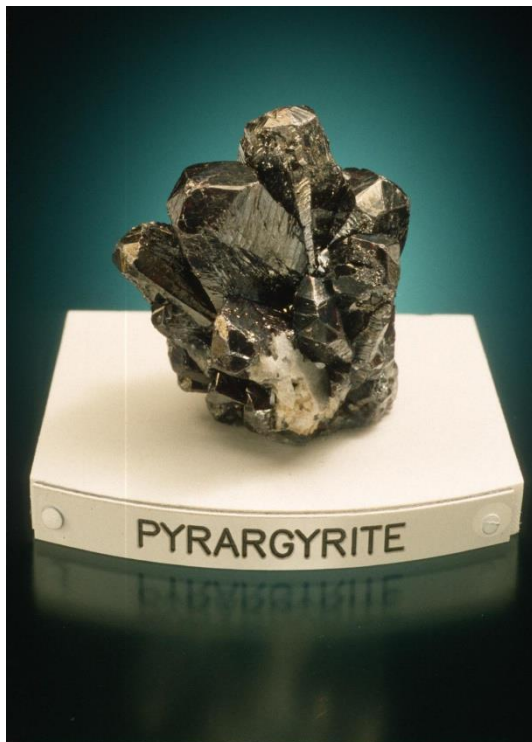
67- Serandite 4.9 cm



26- Tanzanite 2.2 cm



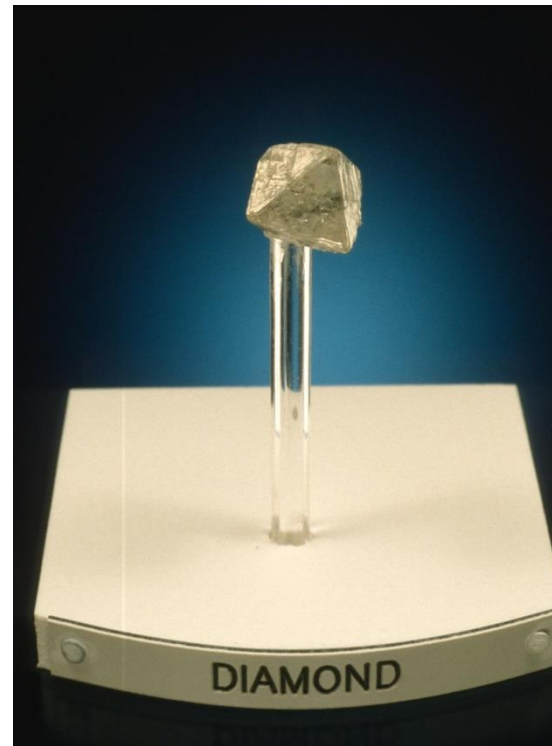
50- Mimetite size unavailable



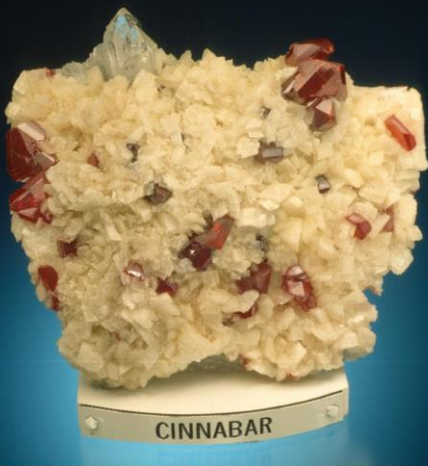
56- Pyrrargyrite 3.5 cm



14- Beryl size unavailable



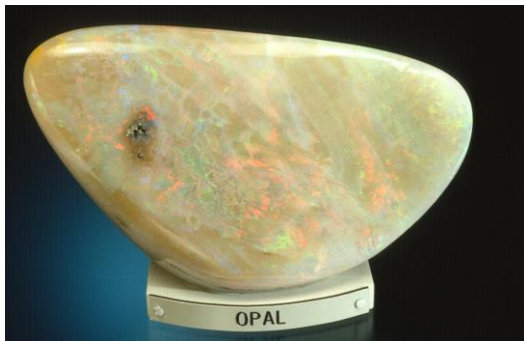
45- Diamond 0.9 cm



20- Cinnabar 2.7 cm



41-Gold 5.3 cm



24- Opal 9.7 cm



60- Rhodochrosite size unavailable

If you come across any of these specimens, please contact Detective Alexis C. Dougherty, of the USCB Police Department at (805) 893-3446 or at alexis.dougherty@police.uscb.edu

University of California Santa Barbara Police Department

UCPD CASE #: 19-1254

If seen please contact the UCSB Police Department immediately.
805-893-3446
Actual images

Left to Right:

1. Diamond
2. Lepidolite
3. Magnetite
4. Beryl
5. Aquamarine
6. Tourmaline
7. Topaz
8. Citrine
9. Pyrope
10. Opal
11. Rhodochrosite
12. Gold
13. Gold
14. Serendite

UCSB POLICE DEPARTMENT
Public Safety Building,
UCSB
Santa Barbara, CA
93106
Phone: (805) 893-3446
Fax: (805) 893-8569
www.psa.uscb.edu

Best regards to all,

Wendell Wilson

and The Mineralogical Record Staff:

Tom Gressman

Chris Stefano

Tom

Moore

Christi Cramer

California Rockhound Adventures June 21-23, 2019

by Dave Lines

We flew to California for a wedding in San Francisco and a birthday celebration 200 miles south in San Luis Obispo. In between the two main events, Ann visited with her sister Kit and I went rock hunting for three days.

Previously, I had emailed my rock hound buddy Wes Lingerfelt, so the day after our arrival in San Luis, I drove to his house in Nipomo. His wife Jeannie greeted me with a hug and directed me around back where I found Wes polishing an inch thick round of Arizona petrified wood. Wes warmly greeted me and showed me his work. From my perspective, it looked great, but Wes spotted a scratch and said he needed to start over. But first he led me out to the front porch where he presented me with a beautiful 5 inch sphere of black and white striped granite with ½ inch splashes of pink feldspar. The material for the sphere came from a dry creek wash in the desert about 80 miles to the east where Wes planned to take me rockhounding the next day.

Wes also gave some large cut-offs of “Gary green” (also called larsonite) scenic rhyolite from eastern Oregon. Then it was my turn --- I presented Wes with two large pieces of primo quality Rose River unakite that totalled 24 pounds. Then Jeannie surprised me with an offer of a gift of one of her gorgeous creations for Ann. Jeannie cabs and wirewraps (with gold fill) likely scraps left from Wes’ sphere making. From a tray of a dozen or more beauties, I selected a simple, but elegant, carved leaf of green jade. Wow! Ann would love it. While I was admiring my choice,

Jeannie insisted that I pick another piece for Ann’s sister Kit for her upcoming 80th birthday. Very generous. I chose a handsome blue, green, white and black cab made of gem silica from the Planet Mine in Arizona --- north of Quartzsite where I had rock hounded with Wes in 2011. (The piece was a big hit with Kit when she opened Jeannie’s present a few days later.)

After catching up with Wes since my previous visit in late January, we worked out the plans for our rock trip the next day. I had called Ralph Bishop earlier and I would pick him up at 8 am the next morning. But first, I wanted to look for some Nipomo agate. Wes suggested I start my search along the edges of the road right-of-way (r.o.w.) on the nearby Diana Foothills Road that ran through the ranches in the foothills just above Nipomo. I bid Wes and Jeannie goodbye and headed to Foothills Road. For the most part, the right-of-way was almost completely covered with grass and weeds, but I managed to find a few small pieces of translucent white agate in about one mile of road. Both edges of the road r.o.w. were fenced with 5 strands of tight barbed wire and posted with numerous “No Trespassing” signs. The ranches meant business and there was no way that I was going to cross that barrier.

Near the end of the Foothills Road, there was another “dead end” public road that turned off at right angles and headed downhill. Here the ground on both sides was completely bare and the looking improved greatly. In about 400 yards I found enough agate to fill a zip lock sandwich bag. Nearly all of the agate was the plain white translucent variety, although a few showed fortification stripes.

Later that afternoon when I had just arrived back in San Luis Obispo, I had a serendipity moment when Kit flagged down a passing neighbor who was driving by Kit's house. He was a retired dentist and, in the ensuing conversation, I showed him Wes' sphere and the agates I had found earlier. That started his remembrance of another friend who lived nearby --- and collected rocks. "Ah ha" thought Kit. "Another potential rock hound buddy for Dave." So -- unbeknownst to me -- she tracked down this rock guy, drove there, introduced herself and told him about me. So-o-o when she came back and told me, I decided to go see him after supper. Armed with a map that Kit drew on the back of an envelope, I took my sphere and my agates finds and drove over to this fellow's house and knocked on his front door. An energetic white haired man enthusiastically greeted me as I introduced myself. Ray Brooks was a finder, collector and lapidariast of local rocks --- who specialized in --- of all things --- Nipomo agate. Perhaps it was "meant to be". What are the odds of the chance meeting of such a person? Anyway, I showed him the little bag of agates I had found and, to my surprise, he was impressed and said I had done well. After 5 minutes chatting on his front porch, Ray invited me in to see some of his collection. Nipomo agates were indeed his passion. He had boxes (ornate wooden and brass cigar sized boxes) full of carefully polished slabs of agates and many other types of rocks --- he "rescued collections". He was currently enthralled with "peacock obsidian" -- a variation of rainbow obsidian, except when cut at the proper angle and polished, it shimmered like that of a wild turkey gobbler's breast feathers. It was dazzling. Another neat

thing was his "agate spinners" --- tumble polished pieces of Nipomo agate in various random shapes that had a natural centered high point on which they rested and around which they would spin like a top when twirled. Different. And fun.

Another coincidence --- Ray's former (now deceased) rock hound buddy had been a high school friend of one of the ranch owners who owned land along that same road (Foothills Road) where I had found my agates that very afternoon. So, at one time (but no longer), Ray and his buddy had been able to access that entire huge ranch and had been given permission to look wherever they wanted. High up in the hills above Nipomo, they found the source of these wonderful agate treasures. Wow!! He had some real beauties. We talked rocks until dark and then I went to get some sleep before my upcoming adventure with Wes and Ralph the next day.

At 8 am the next morning, I pulled up in Ralph's driveway and Ralph came out ready to go with his miner's pick and collecting bag. After a short catchup, we piled into my rental car and headed to Wes' place. Once there, we transferred our stuff to Wes' SUV and pulled out shortly after 9 am. As we traveled east, the clouds disappeared and the outside temperature rose from the low 60's to the high 90's.

About 2 hours later, we arrived at Reyes Creek (pronounced "ray-ess") --- a now dry, sandy, rocky stream bed with scrubby bushes about 200 yards across that ran from the mountains into flat open desert. It was a hot 97 degrees when we opened the car doors. But the humidity was very low. We lathered up with sun lotion and headed out to find some rocks suitable for Wes to make spheres.

The sun was brutal. We probably should have started 5 hours (or months) earlier. I found several likely pieces and returned to the SUV to unload and then went back out again. In another hour, the 3 of us gathered with our finds --- we had about 10 nice pieces up to 20 pounds each. Ralph had the find-of-the-day -- a native American stone mortar (or bowl) with a great concave basin that had been ground out (from use) in a 25 pound rock. A super find. Then we drove to a nearby, truly off the beaten path little bar/grill for lunch --- but it (sadly) was closed.

Still hungry for some lunch, we traveled back west about 20 miles to the only other restaurant in the area ---- “The Buck Horn”. Service was terrible, the food only marginally better and way too expensive (\$17 for a burger with fries). Continuing our drive home, we reached Nipomo about 4 pm and then (after we checked Wes’ shop --- a combination store/showroom), I took Ralph back to his house. True to form, Ralph generously gave me a cigar box of neat fossils, most of which he had found in CA. Fossil sea cow molars, fossil agatized brachiopods, fossil murex shells similar to our own ephora, whole fossil sand dollars and some fossil insect cocoons from Australia. Plus, best of all, he gave me several really cool pieces of cut and polished Nipomo sagenite (internal sage-like crystals embedded inside clear agate). These are highly prized specimens – not even counting the time to properly orient, then cut and then polish each one. Real treasures for sure. Thanks Ralph!

The third day, I coordinated my ventures with the time of low tide which I needed on the coast to maximize my access to beach rocks. On this trip, taking the advice of “Ray”, I

went to Pico Creek just north of the town of San Simeon near Hearst Castle. [Pico is about 5 miles north of the San Simeon Creek that I wrote about this past January 2019 and previously in July 2017.] Reaching the designated parking area about 7 am, I grabbed my collecting bag and a walking stick and headed north along the beach to where the creek entered the ocean. The weather was perfect --- heavy overcast (think “even lighting with no shadows”) with a cool on-shore breeze. I found thousands of rocks piled in long drifts left from winter storms. I decided to collect some green chert and jasper for tumble polishing because we don’t have anything like that on the East coast. I also gathered a few pieces of brecciated yellow jasper, but the pickings were slim. At least until I jumped across the stream draining across the beach from Pico Creek. It was a different world on the north side with very large outcrops of bedrock and vertical formations with very little sand. And the best part was relatively narrow bands of beach rocks at the upper edge of the beach next to the cliffs. In those small patches of rocks, I found some specimens with real potential. Especially brecciated jaspers with red, yellow, green and white all in the same specimen. I also found some very solid maroon colored jasper that I tested for flint knapping. I think the flint knappers in our club will like it. I also found many small colorful and patterned rocks that Ann really likes. I also found a very smooth, hand-sized black rock – which I first thought was jade, but is not. It just feels good to hold. Anyway, I quit collecting about 11 am and headed back south to San Luis Obispo with a full bag. It had been a great 3 days of rock hounding in California.

Trip Report --- National Limestone Middleburg and Mt. Pleasant Mills Quarries June 29, 2019

Article and Photos By Dave Lines

This trip report is due to the generosity and selflessness of one man ---- Mr. Eric Stahl --- owner of National Limestone in Pennsylvania. He basically gives up every Saturday morning from late Spring time to well into the Fall every year to host dozens and dozens of Rock Clubs from as far west as Wisconsin. He does this in order to give his Christian testimony to each and every person who rock hounds in his quarries. This is his only requirement --- his price of admission. He says that God put beautiful rock, mineral and fossil specimens there so people would come to him. But this opportunity may not continue much longer because Eric's body is wearing out --- his hips are painful and inoperable. Currently, he is able walk only short distances using 2 canes. He says his son (and successor) has stated that he will not come in on Saturdays to host rockhounds. So this may well have been our last chance to collect there. With that in mind, our Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club presented Mr. Stahl a handsome "Thank You" plaque which featured four specimens which were actually found there --- a calcite crystal cluster, a group of green wavellite balls, a purple fluorite specimen and some cave onyx (travertine).



He accepted the plaque with a big smile and said he would display it on the mantle of the stone fireplace in his office. We then all signed in individually and turned in signed waivers. Then he gave us a safety brief and his testimony to the 30 people present. At about 9:15 am, we started our convoy of vehicles into Middleburg Quarry. We had 13 folks from our club ---- Joe and Paul, Harry and Tina, Jim W., Joyce and Pam, Wendy, Adrienne, Tim and Lorna S., Rich and Dave.

Everyone headed to the area where Eric said there was a fresh shot. Rich and I drove past it to get an overview of the quarry from above. Looking back across the new shot, it was easy to see that the shot covered at least an acre. If it exposed some calcite crystal veins, it would be a good day. We returned and parked on the edge of the new shot. Calcite crystals were sparkling everywhere. It would be a very good day. For the next 1-1/2 hours, we collected calcite crystals by the 5 gallon bucket full as fast as we could fill them. If the pieces were too large for the buckets, we hand carried them to our vehicles. If they were larger than we could carry, we hammered them into smaller pieces. It was a collecting frenzy. We also found clear calcite crystals covering pink dolomite. The

combination was beautiful. At 11 am, I found an 18" by 12" chunk with delicate strontianite crystal sprays over calcite crystals in a large cavity in the rock.



It was spectacular --- but despite my special handling, the crystal sprays were too delicate and they crumbled during our trip home. About that time, people started leaving Middleburg quarry and headed to Mt. Pleasant Mills quarry. I screwed up and joined the move to the other quarry. It was a mistake because we found nothing worth keeping in the second quarry. Despite Eric's report of celestite there, we found none. Rich and I then drove to the backside of the quarry to search for wavellite, but had similar poor luck there. Several of the Montgomery County Club (our host club on this trip) found a few fossil gastropod moon snail casts by digging down near the back wall of the second wavellite pit. Most people just found small pieces of wavellite on the surface of the sandstone chunks. We should have stayed in the Middleburg Quarry. Oh well. The grass is not always greener on the other side. Live and learn. Rich and I ---- as well as everyone else --- did really well at Middleburg. I will

be trimming calcite crystals for a long time. If you missed this trip, I hope we will have another chance next year. Time will tell.

100 Degrees Outside and No Trouble Staying Cool

Article and Photos by Dave Lines

Contrary Creek, reportedly so named because it flows northward, in an area where most streams flow south and east, is located near Mineral, Virginia. A month before we had planned this Field Trip for July 20, 2019. Little did we know that the week preceding this outing had day after day of record shattering high heat and that the day of the trip was predicted to be 100 degrees with a "heat index" of 118. The weather service warnings --- Beware of heatstroke! Stay inside an air conditioned building! Do not go outside in this oppressive heat! Avoid all vigorous activity outside! -- scared several people who had signed up away from even attempting the trip. So be it. Everyone has to decide for themselves. Eleven (11) hardy souls --- 8 from Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club (Rich, Tim S., Lorna S., Francesca, Pam Jim, John B. and Dave) and 3 from Shenandoah Valley Gem and Mineral Society (Wayne Lee and his sister and her husband) met at the prescribed time of 9:00 am at the small parking area near the U.S. Route 522 bridge crossing the creek. The temperature was a balmy 85 degrees when we gathered for our safety brief. I reminded everyone of some likely hazards --- bees, snakes, sunburn, acidic water (4.5 pH), a very steep and sometimes slippery entry trail, and lastly dehydration and overheating. I also pointed out that the bridge itself provided a huge area of shade and that the creek water would keep us cool --- especially since we were going to be "in" water all morning. I restated the rules as I understood them regarding where we could search for specimens and where we could not. I told everyone to remain within the area from 100 feet

downstream of the bridge to 50 feet upstream of the old concrete bridge abutments. This was a sufficient sized area for everyone to look. I reminded everyone to stay below the normal high water mark and to refill any holes they made. Then I showed everyone a flat of Contrary Creek specimens that I had either found or purchased. The flat contained magnetite both in octahedral crystals and in massive chunks, actinolite, almandine garnet dodecahedral crystals, pyrite crystals in schist, massive pyrite, black slag glass, and antique purple glass. After a final reminder to drink plenty of water, we all went down to the creek and spread out to find some great specimens. I noticed 3 men already gold dredging in the creek about 200 yards downstream. But first, I picked up several pieces of massive magnetite and gave them to several folks to get them started. Then I walked downstream and introduced myself to the gold dredgers. It was a Dad (Jim) and his son and a nephew from Pennsylvania. They had been here numerous times and Jim was a current, card carrying member of the Central Virginia Gold Prospectors. They were cool. I explained that our group was from local rock clubs and would be looking up near the bridge. I returned to find everyone happily digging for specimens.



Several were gold panning. I started digging a hole on the gravel bar just upstream of the bridge (and beneath its shadow) and dug down about 2 feet looking for a layer containing garnets. I found lots of finely ground

pyrite. So much that it clogged up my gold pan half an inch deep. I found lots of slag glass, massive and crystal magnetite and some actinolite. But no garnets and no gold. I tried several other locations in the shade but found little to be excited about. Everyone else was having about the same amount of (poor) luck. I moved to the center of the stream and things began to improve with some garnets in schist as well as some magnetite crystals. Finally I moved out into the sunshine. The temperature by then was in the mid-nineties, but I was very comfortable. Actually it honestly felt more like it was 80 degrees because I was constantly in and out of the water. I started a new hole in the gravel bar closer to its upper edge and dug down about 12 inches when I hit 2 large rocks. I eventually dug around to locate their edges and removed them from my hole. They both showed excellent mineralization with mica schist and quartz. I kept digging and soon began finding mud. I panned some of it and immediately found several garnet crystals. Then I classified (removed larger rocks) each layer of the hole as I dug deeper with a 1/4 inch mesh classifier screen, and checked first the screen – which contained several pea sized garnets – and then panned the rest. I found about 10 garnets in each pan for at least the next 3 pans. Eureka! I also found 2 pieces of gold – tiny, but still visible. I was happy. Unfortunately I lost both pieces somewhere between the stream and home. Oh well. Maybe I will find more next time. Several others in our group saw what I was doing and I told them to dig out some of the mud and gravel from my hole and pan it. They too found garnets. Additionally, Wayne and his group dug another hole nearby and also found some decent garnets. I also found several nice specimens of garnets in schist with quartz. At about 1 pm, the fellows from PA decided to leave because they had a 4 hour drive home. Unfortunately, we did not see what they found because they saved their consolidated dredge material for a cleanup back

home. Overall, everyone found something worth keeping. And, most importantly, we all stayed cool.

U.S. Silica Mine, Montpelier, Virginia August 10, 2019 Trip Report

Article by Dave Lines; Photos by Mark Davis and Thomas Hale

It is a rare day in August when it is cool and cloudy, yet that was exactly the weather we enjoyed during the Field Trip set up by the Richmond Gem and Mineral Society (RGMS) to the US Silica Mine near Montpelier in Hanover County, Virginia. About 22 members participated including at least four (4) — Rich, Tim S., Lorna S. and Dave — who were members of both RGMS and the Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club.



We met at 8:00 a.m. at the Office where we all signed waivers and were shown a safety presentation on a wall mounted large HD screen. Although without a sound track, the pictures quickly reviewed the safety requirements for the mine and familiarized everyone with the layout of the facilities. Full personal safety gear (hardhat, steel toed footwear and safety glasses) was required at all times with vehicle wheel chocks (as well as engaging the vehicle emergency parking brakes) placed around one wheel at each stop. The Mine Safety Manager, who was our Host for the trip, asked that we carpool in higher clearance vehicles to allow us to proceed across rougher areas and to reduce the total number of vehicles. Forming a caravan, we

followed the Safety Manager as he led us into the open pit mine.

Since it had been just over five (5) years since we had been in this mine, I was very interested in any changes that had taken place. The area on the left side (as we entered the mine) had been deepened and widened considerably while the area on the right side had been “cleaned up” significantly by removing the various piles of waste rock and widening the lower level. Our first stop was on the right side of the mine at the traditional location (beyond the rock crusher at the foot of the long conveyer) to find gray and/or silver flash moonstone (andesine) as well as bronzite (enstatite). Gray and silver flash moonstone is an exceptional lapidary material that, when polished, has a very strong schiller of silver or gray or even black. Bronzite when polished has a more subtle internal copper colored flash that looks like bits of “copper colored foil” down inside.

We were not disappointed. All the rock in this area was well washed off from years of rain and easy to identify. Excellent gray flash moonstone was everywhere on and in the surface of the mine floor. We just had to use a rock hammer to pull it out and put it in a bucket. It was great. Abundant and of excellent quality. And along the edges of the berm, the pieces were even larger. Eventually Tom Leary, who has a knack for prospecting, found an area where there was a great deal of bronzite. He also found a significant amount of massive rutile (titanium dioxide TiO_2) that was reddish colored and very heavy. Additionally, he found some massive ilmenite ($FeTiO_3$) that was black, heavy and had a metallic luster.

At about 9:30 am, we (led by Pete McCrery) moved to a new location near the road above where we had just been. It turned out that Pete was searching for bronzite but could find none. When I mentioned that we had found a good deal of it where we just had been, Pete wanted to return there. After about 30 minutes here, we headed to another area of the quarry

where our Host (the Safety Manager) said there were garnets.



He led us to the far left side of the quarry on the second level down from the top. Sure enough, we found almandine garnets embedded in what I think is black, crumbly, biotite mica. The garnet crystals were not very pretty, but they ranged from marble sized to as large as tennis balls. Pam Bryant said they could be polished. Everyone picked up a few. A few folks found some white flash moonstone in this general area, although the pieces were very small. Then it was decided to return to the gray flash moonstone/bronzite area since there was plenty of material left and some people had not collected any bronzite yet.

We arrived back at the gray flash moonstone area at about 10:30 am and stayed about an hour. Pete was able to find some very nice pieces of bronzite. Several people found another area that contained both excellent quality bronzite and gray flash moonstone. Some of the collected specimens that I saw had half inch wide bands of reddish colored rutile through the gray flash moonstone — it was very striking material. Rich and I collected a large amount of gray flash moonstone as well as a good bit of bronzite. In fact, we found some of the largest sized bronzite that I

have ever seen here — large enough to make some bronzite spheres.

[An interesting side note: I met a young man, Thomas Hale, who was working on something he named the “Virginia Mineral Project”. Basically, as I understand, he was going to re-do and update the Virginia DMME (Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy) list of minerals. Additionally, he wants to record the stories of where and how the minerals were found as well as how they were used. He plans to work with all the local Virginia rock and mineral clubs. He intends to photograph Virginia mineral specimens from both private and public collections with the goal of publishing a book which will include the stories of how they were collected. By so doing, he is working toward his Masters and PhD degrees. This is an immense project. He is currently working out in Blacksburg and expressed interest in going on some of our field trips for his research. You may contact Mr. Thomas Hale at “viriniamineralproject@gmail.com” for volunteer opportunities.]

At about 11:30 a.m., we took a field trip group photo (of those still remaining) and then headed back to the Office. People were very happy with their finds. Everyone expressed that they had had a productive morning and thanked the Quarry Rep for taking his time to host us. This was an excellent field trip and a great reason to consider joining one or more other rock clubs in our region. You will be glad you did.

OFFICIAL COMBINED MINERAL COLLECTING FIELDTRIP**THE GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY OF LYNCHBURG, VA INC. (HOST)****An official Fieldtrip of the Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club****KYANITE MINING CORP., DILLWYN, VA. – ANNUAL FIELDTRIP****WILLIS MOUNTAIN KYANITE MINE****Saturday, September 28, 2019****9:00 AM to 1:00 PM**

Sign-up is required, Please email me or sign-up at the meeting. If you cancel, notify me to be taken off the list as space may be limited due to the expanded list of clubs now participating in this annual event.

Note: Please sign up early because I must forward a list of attendees to the Lynchburg VA club by 9-19-19. There is a limit of 150 collectors from all clubs.

SAFETY: Everyone must arrive at the office parking lot *no later than 8:30AM* to sign the release form and hear the required safety briefing. *Each Club field trip leader, and/or their appointed representatives, will act as safety observers while in the mine and will be expected to be on the lookout for and correct all safety infractions from any collector from any club.* Keep in mind that this site is one of the very few that are still open for collecting. Not obeying all the safety rules will cause this site to be closed to all future collecting. *If you have any medical condition that would put you in any danger, do not attempt this trip. For your own safety, let your field trip leader or collecting buddy know if you have any medical condition that could be a problem for you.* Be prepared for windy, hot or wet weather. Also bring drinking water and stay hydrated.

DRIVING FROM Southern Maryland: Mine office physical address: 10830 James Madison Hwy., Dillwyn, VA. Or Follow I-95 south to I-295 west toward Charlottesville to I-64 to VA Rt 288 south to US Rt 60 west. Continue on US 60 (West) to Sprouses Corner. Turn left on US 15 South and drive 4 miles to Willis Mt. Plant Road. Turn left and stop at the stone mine office building on the right. Park out of the way as not to block traffic. Please do not park along Rt. 15. Allow 4 hours driving time from Southern Maryland to the mine office.

ASSEMBLY TIME: Meet at the mine office for signing the waiver and for safety instruction --- plan to be there by 8:00 a.m. --- *no later than 8:30am.* (Note – last year we had a family who almost missed this trip because they arrived too late for the safety briefing. --- Don't be late.) Please wait in the parking lot and do not block traffic. Commercial trucks may be using the road. While you're waiting, be sure to enjoy the beautiful blue kyanite boulder in the front yard from the old closed Baker Mountain. Barricades will block us from driving in restricted areas. Access to all plant operation areas is prohibited.

COLLECTING: Willis Mountain is a “monadnock”. The kyanite exposure resisted weathering and, as the surrounding area was eroded and weathered away, the mountain outcrop was left standing. This is very much like the famous Graves Mountain kyanite mine in Georgia. The center of the mountain has been mostly mined away. We should be able to find plenty of white kyanite blades in the massive kyanite quartzite; pyrite; quartz; hematite; iridescent hematite; red mica, green mica, apatite and possibly some

blue kyanite and pale green trolleite. Some of the white kyanite and quartz here have a beautiful light blue fluorescence and the apatite is yellow so bring your short wave lamp and blackout cloth.

SAFETY Clothing Required: Each person must WEAR a Hard Hat with a mfg. date of 5 years or less [no bicycle helmets], safety glasses, steel toed boots [ONLY STEEL OR MSHA (Federal Mine Safety and Health Act) APPROVED REINFORCED FIBERGLASS TOED BOOTS WILL BE ALLOWED; No low quarters or sneakers even if they have steel or composite toes], gloves, long pants. If you do not have all the required safety equipment, you will not be allowed to enter the quarry.

Additional Safety Requirement: Wheel Chocks --- each time you park your vehicle in the mine, please set your parking brake and chock your wheels using wheel chocks (purchased, homemade or use a rock).

Recommended Collecting tools: Geologist pick, small chisels, 3 or 4 pound crack hammer, old newspaper to wrap specimens, buckets. Optional: sledge hammer, 6 foot pry bar, larger chisels. We can drive into the designated collecting area, so hand trucks are not needed. Please bring a camera and take some pictures of the mine and our collecting for our newsletter and website. The view from the mine (on a mountain top) is awesome.

AFTER THE DIG SOCIAL: The pavilion beside the mine office will be available immediately after the dig ends at 1PM to relax, cool off eat your lunch. This will also be a social get together so that we can have a chance to become better acquainted with the members of our rock club neighbors and to provide some time to relax before their long ride home. You might want to bring your own lawn chair. There may also be other groups there as invited guests of Kyanite Mining. There might be a brief program on the mine and a lab tour.

AGE LIMIT: Minimum age limit is 8 years old. All children must be signed for, closely supervised by an adult and never left un-attended. They must also wear all the required safety equipment. No Exceptions.

PETS: No pets allowed, this is an active working quarry.

WEATHER: The trip may be canceled for safety concerns in case of hard rain or a thunderstorm or hurricane. Call to confirm if there is any question.

Sign up --- at our August meeting or by email to dave.lines@earthlink.net. Please include your cell phone number in case I have to reach you.

CONTACT: Dave Lines , cell 240-427-7062, Field Trip Chairman for the Southern Maryland Club, email: dave.lines@earthlink.net

ULTRAVIOLATION Show

Where: First United Methodist Church, 840 Trenton Rd, Fairless Hills, PA

When: October 26, 2019, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

What: ULTRAVIOLATION is the ULTIMATE annual show for the fluorescent mineral enthusiast, whether a novice or serious collector. The show features many of the world's premier fluorescent mineral COLLECTORS AND DEALERS who strive each year to bring the biggest, brightest and best fluorescent minerals to satisfy the insatiable cravings of the fluorescent collector. ULTRAVIOLATION highlights fluorescent minerals exclusively and is the next best thing to night collecting. Free admission and a fluorescent mineral specimen for each junior mineralogist 12 years and younger when accompanied by an adult.

Admission: \$2.00 Donation, Children 12 & Under Free

Dealers: 8' TABLE \$30 – ½ TABLE \$15 ADVANCED REGISTRATION FOR DEALERS IS ADVISED

SEND YOUR CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO:

Lee McIlvaine, 8510 Elliston Dr. Wyndmoor, PA 19038 Or Paypal electronic payment to leemcilvaine@yahoo.com

For information call Lee McIlvaine at 215-713-8020 or email uvgeologist@yahoo.com

2019 ANNUAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTZ CRYSTAL DIG OCTOBER 11 - 12,
2019 OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

One Contestant Per Form, Please Print Clearly

Contestants may not dig or visit participating mines on or after Wednesday 10/9/19 prior to the event.

Name: _____ Age _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address : _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

____ I am a member of a rock, gem, and mineral club and wish to enter the club division of behalf of:

Club Name & Address: _____

____ I would prefer a vegetarian meal at the awards banquet.

This is an AMATEUR quartz crystal digging competition. Profession and commercial quartz crystal diggers and dealers are not permitted to compete in the World Championship Quartz Crystal Dig. The Montgomery County Area Chamber of Commerce asks for your understanding and honesty in maintaining this as an amateur event. Any entrant in violation of this rule will be disqualified, their entrance fee forfeited, and barred from future events.

____ I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I AM AN AMATEUR QUARTZ CRYSTAL DIGGER.

____ I fully understand participating in the World Championship Crystal Dig (the dig) is physically strenuous. I am in good health and do not have a history of health problem that may be aggravated by my participation in the dig. I hereby waive and release all contestants, sponsors, official, and volunteers from any and all claims incurred in connection with or aggravated by my participation in the dig.

THE MOUNT IDA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO
DECLINE ANY APPLICATION FOR ANY REASON

____ I AGREE TO COMPLY WITH ALL RULES OF THE DIG

_____ (SIGNATURE)

_____ I am the parent/legal guardian of a participating Young Miner.

Parent /Legal Guardian Name (Please Print) Signature

Make checks for entry fee and additional t-shirt(s) payable to:

Mount Ida Area Chamber of Commerce PO Box 6 Mount Ida, AR 71957

Questions? Call 870-867-2723

PLEASE MAKE A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS OF ALL PAGES AND RETURN ORIGINALS

2019 ANNUAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTZ CRYSTAL DIG OCTOBER 11 - 12,
2019 OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

Welcome to the 2019 Annual World Championship Quartz Crystal Dg in Mount Ida, AR, the Quartz Crystal Capital of the World. This year's two-day dig is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, October 11 - 12th. All amateur quartz crystal diggers are invited to enter.

ENTRY FEE

The dig entry fee is \$115. Register early and save! Early bird discount is 25% off when registered by August 31, 2019. No refunds will be issued after October 1, 2018. Same day registration is \$125 if space is available. Please note: Only 100 diggers may register for this year's event.

DIVISIONS

ADULT: Open to diggers 18 years of age or older. Awards presented in two categories, points and clusters. **YOUNG MINERS:** Open to diggers 17 and younger. Awards presented in one category, points and clusters combined. **CLUB:** Diggers may also team up with fellow rock, gem, and mineral club members to compete for bragging rights and a chance to win a free entry to next year's dig. Be sure to list your club name on the entry form!

AWARDS AND PRIZES

A total of \$2250 in prize money is awarded in three categories: Points, clusters, and young miners. 1st - 3rd place winners in each category receive a quartz crystal adorned award plaque. 1st - 5th place winners are awarded cash prizes as follows: 1st \$250, 2nd \$200, 3rd \$150, 4th \$100, 5th \$50 Awards and prizes are presented during the Awards Celebration on Saturday evening. Each digger receives on complimentary meal ticket to the banquet. Additional meal tickets may be purchased for \$15 each at the start of the banquet. If you prefer a vegetarian meal please so indicate on your entry form.

PARTICIPATING MINES

Twin Creek Crystal Mine(Upper and Lower Mines) <http://dixiecrystalcompany.com>

SCHEDULE

On Friday, October 11th, 7am, meet at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds (248 Fairgrounds Rd., Mount Ida, AR 71957) for orientation mine passes, and number assignment. Coffee and donuts provided. All diggers must check in at the fairgrounds before proceeding to the mines!

Digging begins at 8am and ends at 3pm. Diggers must check in, present their mine pass, and sign a liability waiver at their chosen mine each day. Diggers may not switch mines midday but may choose a different mine each day. Diggers may not leave the mine and return again after the same day. **ONCE YOU LEAVE THE MINE YOU ARE DONE DIGGING FOR THE DAY.** Plan ahead and bring plenty of water and snacks. Do not leave behind trash at the mines! If you see trash please pick up.

Diggers may enter the best point and best cluster they dug on each day for judging by a panel of experienced quartz crystal industry professionals. Diggers must submit their entries, in the numbered bags provided, to the Dig Master at the mine. Crystals for judging must be entered on the same day they were dug.

Judging takes place at the fairgrounds when the Dig Masters deliver the crystals to the Crystal Handlers. Digger may observe judging. Individual scores are posted after tabulation of the judges' scores by the Scoring Committee. Awards are based on two-day cumulative points. Be sure to enter one point and one cluster each day.

Saturday, October 12th, 7:30am, meet at the fairgrounds for mine passes, dig announcements, and door prize drawings before proceeding to the mines. Digging begins at 8am and ends at 3pm. Individual scores are posted upon tabulation of the judges' scores. Awards celebration begins at 6pm, awards presentation at 7pm. Crystals submissions may be recovered from the stage afterward, around 8m.

CAMPING

A limited number of RV spaces and Tent camping spaces are available at the Montgomery County fairgrounds provided by the MC fair board: \$20 per night with electricity, \$10 per night without electricity. Spaces are assigned on first come, first served basis with prepayment required for reservations. If you wish to camp at the fairgrounds please indicate the number of days. ____ I wish to reserve a camping space for ____ days for an RV or Tent (circle choice) with or without electricity (circle choice). Please contact the Chamber to check availability, 870-867-2723 or director@mtidachamber.com.

ADDITIONAL EVENT T-SHIRTS

Each Digger will receive one Event T-Shirt with application. Preorder and save! Additional event Tshirts may be preordered for \$15 each. Please include payment for your t-shirts with your registration. A limited number of event shirts will be available for purchase at the event for \$20 each. Please pre-order to assure you get a shirt in your size.

I wish to pre-order event t-shirt(s) in the following sizes

Size S M L XL 2XL 3XL

**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:

