

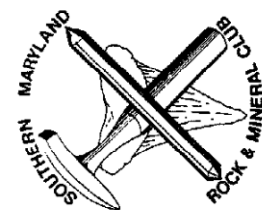
June/July 2008



SOUTHERN MARYLAND ROCK AND MINERAL CLUB



Rock Talk



Message from the President

This month, the message will be short as Mel and I have spent 5 weeks at the William Holland School of Lapidary Arts in Georgia. Mel and I each took a Silver I class, Mel took a chain class and taught faceting for two weeks. The classes I was to have taught were cancelled, one for lack of students and the other for a class that had a larger enrollment and needed the beading class room. So I was able to take an extra class. I took seed beading after resisting it for 30+ years, glass fusing, and intarsia. We will be sharing our experiences at the School for the June program. Come on out, and you may learn a little as there are changes occurring in these fields.

Hopefully, we will be voting on the final set of Bylaws to send forward, and we need to discuss and put in place a protocol for reimbursing mileage for our quest speakers. Sadly, I was told that their had been no inquires or participants for our Jr. Rockhound Program so if we have time, we need to revisit this.

Summer has arrived and rock hunting will be activities that some of us include. A word of caution, IT IS HOT OUT THERE SO CARRY PLENTY OF WATER. Try to drink at least 4 oz every hour; and if you are perspiring heavily, make it a glass. Heat exhaustion or heat stroke can sneak up on you without you realizing it

until too late. That could cost you your life. This is a bigger problem than most realize because as we get older our thirst mechanism decreases and we do not always know when we need fluids.

See you at the meeting.
Lorna

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Meetings

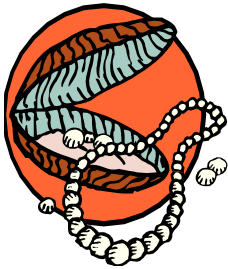
...are held the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm.

Clearwater Nature Center 11000 Thrift Road
Clinton, MD.

For more information, call Michael at (301) 297-4575.

June's Birthstone: The Pearl

By Lorna Larson



Some people believe that pearls should not be a birthstone as it is not a mineral but an organic material composed of calcium carbonate/aragonite. This substance is used to surround small foreign bodies which get inside an oyster/muscle shell and causes irritation. It is the same substance that coats the inside surface of the shell. The value of a pearl is determined by its smoothness, color, thickness of its nacre, and its pearlescence. Most wild/natural pearls will be less perfect than cultured

pearls and are considerably more expensive. China figured out a way to take wild pearls and culture them for all natural pearls which created problems in the pearl market for awhile. They now outproduce any other country for fresh water pearls making these pearls very reasonable to own. They have also created a wide range of shapes to keep the market up. But they are now facing some of the same disease/pollution problems that created havoc for Japan's Biwa pearls. The South Sea salt water pearl industry found that too many of the pearls being sold were of an inferior quality so have established a program to grade the pearls to keep the quality and price elevated. So they have a number of pearls to be destroyed, but I think they may have come up with a way to use those so they do not go on the market as whole pearls. Don't know for certain as I have not seen it addressed in the literature I read.

Many people have heard the tale of Cleopatra dissolving two pearls in vinegar to win a bet with Mark Anthony. Although vinegar will not dissolve pearls, they can be crushed and put in liquid to drink. Did this actually occur, who knows for certain. But I've tried it and was able to down the crushed pearls.

Many myths have surrounded pearls through the ages. For instance the goddess Aphrodite Marina was thought to symbolize the pearly gates of paradise with her body, and her priestesses dispensed "pearls of wisdom." Hindu brides wore pearls to symbolize their feminine magic (sexual). In China, blood or semen drops of celestial cloud dragons fell from the sky and were swallowed by oysters to form pearls. Other pagan beliefs stated that pearls were formed by seawater and moonlight. And in Christianity, The Virgin Mary has a strand of pearls.

Queen Elizabeth the First wore numerous pearls. I don't know if she started the tradition or not, but they began to symbolize purity and chastity. I remember getting my first strand of imitation pearls for my sixteenth birthday. It symbolized the movement into adult behaviors as pearls were appropriate to wear on any "dress-up" occasion as an adult.

In addition to the mystical beliefs pertaining to pearls, they have had a medicinal history throughout many countries. China still grinds up pearls for medicine. In the 1700's, European Doctors prescribed crushed pearls for a long list of ailments. Although we do not use crushed pearls for medicine, you will find cosmetics with crushed pearls. I wonder if they get their "pearl dust" from the pearls that were not good enough to sell.

Most pearls today are cultured, both in fresh and salt water. There are many techniques for enhancing the look of pearls to increase the number that can be sold. If they are not white enough, they are bleached. Some are dyed by various means including the addition of chemicals in the water for the oyster/muscle to incorpo-

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***If corrections or additions are needed, please contact Rocktalk Editor

Minutes...

Polly Zimmerman

May 27, 2008 Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7 PM on the back porch of the center.

Treasurer: Discussion tabled on the \$50.00 request due to the fact that Michael was not present.

Membership: Ralph introduced Pat Ford

Programs: Try to get speakers at no cost. Lorna will present June's program and Bob in July.

Trips: Vulcan Quarry was a good trip. Dave talked about the Kentucky trip, 1200 miles round-trip. Found lots of geodes. Swap meet at Lake Anna, Sat. June 21, May do some gold panning after, can also go for garnets / magnetite. May 31 is the last day for Morefield mine. "too bad" Their website is toteshows.com for more information. Meet at the welcome center at 7 AM. July field trips, nothing firm.

Tom told about their Herkimer trip. They had lots of rain but were able to get lots of big crystals.

Editor: Will combine June and July's news letter.

Webmaster: Suggested we might add a "for sale" page. Bob will look into the idea.

Old Business: Vote in June on the By-Laws, for your calendar March 21,2009, our rock and mineral show.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20. We moved indoors for snacks and program.

...Pearls

Continued...

rate in the pearl itself. Some may be irradiated or micro-waved or dyed. Most pearls have been treated one way or another. So much for purity.

The care of pearls is simple. Keep them clean with soft cloth and water and rub lightly with clean hands. Keep in mind that they will absorb body oils, lotions, perfumes, hair spray and other oils, etc. that are used on the body as they are porous. Store them away from other jewelry as they are soft and if placed on fabric make certain it is dye fast. I saw a lovely strand of salt water pearls that had been stored on red velvet. That portion touching the pearls had become a lovely pink. There was nothing that could be done to erase the pink from the pearls. Another necklace ruined. The actual life of a pearl is about 150 years before it goes "dead" and could even turn dark grey or black. This is why there are no great pearls coming down from antiquity.

Enjoy those pearls and know that they are an appropriate accessory for almost any occasion.

Scott...Part 2 (In case you missed last month's article, "Scott" is Dave's young cousin and a new rockhound.)

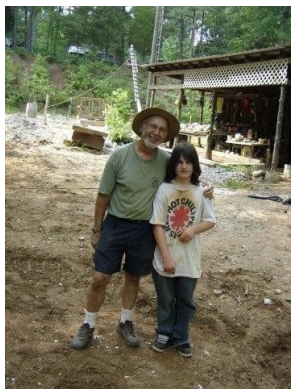
By Dave Lines

Scott's Dad drove him to meet me at 9 a.m. at the Farmer's Market in Alexander on that last Saturday in May --- the very last day for the Morefield Mine. I had sold out of flowers, so we left a couple of minutes later. The trip to Amelia was smooth and we arrived about 11:15 a.m. to see cars parked nearly out to the paved road. I asked a family on the way out if he left a parking spot closer to the office --- "Yes, right in front of the picnic table!" was his reply. We pulled in and went to pay our admission --- there were 10 people in line!! Sharon mentioned that had 1,024 paid customers the previous Saturday --- a record.

Anyway we got down to the dump area about 15 minutes before the first "spreading of the goodies". While Scott was taking it all in, I showed him what to look for. He began to fill his bucket with small pieces of amazonite and mica. Then they told everyone to move back so Sam could safely bring in the dozer to dump the material. It was a huge crowd. Scott and I were near the front edge of the crowd and I told him to concentrate on just one piece of blue-green amazonite with his eyes and when I gave him the word, he was to hurry to that one piece as fast as he could and pick it up. Scott was a good learner, because when the dust settled he emerged with a nice fist-sized piece of gem-quality amazonite. It was much better than anything I found that day. The transformation in Scott as the day progressed was great, too. At the beginning of the afternoon, he was wearing a favorite white t-shirt that was nice and clean, but about 4 hours later it looked like a candidate for a Tide detergent commercial!!

The best part of the day for Scott came late in the afternoon during the second portion of the second "dump". I got hung up in the big crowd in the first portion of the dump area and when I finally made my way to the second dump area, Scott was just beaming --- he was **STANDING** on top of a **HUGE** specimen of pegmatite. It was so large that he could not lift it, so he wisely stood on his claim until I arrived. It was a wonderful specimen --- it had everything that the Morefield is famous for --- a large sized portion of amazonite, 3 or 4 big crystals of mica embedded in albite and smoky quartz, massive cleavelandite and a large spessartine garnet. It was spectacular and a real treasure. Scott had done a superb job of spotting it and getting to it quickly --- all by himself.

I picked it up --- very heavy (later, it weighed 75 pounds on the bathroom scales!!) --- and took it straight back to the van --- a slow trip with several stops --- then went to the office and paid Sharon another \$10 for it since it was equal to another full bucket --- and then some. Sam said not to pay for it, but we did anyway. Then we had Sharon give us a receipt for it on a Morefield Mine business card (a wallet calendar) and both Sam and Sharon signed and dated it for Scott.



Great provenance for Scott when someday he can prove he was there on the "last day for the Morefield". It will be quite a story in ... let's say 50 years. Scott beamed all the way back home and his Mom said later in an email that Scott insists on keeping that 75 pound rock in his bedroom.

Meet the Member

By Carole Raucheisen

Name: Jan Simmons

Area live in: Huntington

Place of birth: Selma, Virginia

Occupation: Retired

Marital status/spouse's name: Bob

Number and ages of children: 7 children, 22 grandchildren, 2 great grandchildren

How became interested in rocks/minerals/fossils: While learning about alternative medicine, Jan read about how crystals are formed, and became curious about other minerals. When she attended her first club meeting, she felt so welcomed.

How long a collector: All her life, but more seriously in the past 20 years, particularly when visiting their creek-side cabin in the Virginia mountains.

What you like to collect: Anything she can collect herself.

Favorite find and how found: Crystals from Chestnut Ridge.

Favorite Rock Club experience: On her first trip with the club, collectors had to walk down 6 feet from the road into a creek to collect Potomac marble. But, there was this man she hadn't gotten to know yet named Jack Worthington. Well, Jan said she couldn't believe that he just jumped right down into the stream and it scared her to death. It just amazed her that he could do that.

Most memorable field trip: Chestnut Ridge. She can't believe that she got up that whole mountain at all, but then coming down without the whole group, they got lost and had to crawl through bushes on their hands and knees to get to the road.

What you have gained from the Rock Club: Lots of knowledge both from members and outside speakers. She appreciates the patience of members who are willing time after time, despite her automobile-accident-caused short-term memory loss, to help her identify minerals and other rocks.

What you would still like to find/collect: Crystals from Arkansas.

Other interests: Collecting fossils with Flo, alternative medicine, making jewelry and learning new ways to work with glass, and visiting with their family that keeps growing.

Have a Successful Rock Trip

By Bob Davidson

After several years of collecting and making mistakes I have noticed that there are a few things rockhounds need to know for a successful trip. Although they are common sense sometimes they are overlooked.

Know what you are looking for.

A lot of people, including myself, go into the field in search of minerals only to come to the conclusion that they really don't know what they are looking for. I have come home empty handed when the mineral I was looking for was right in front of me. As a result I try to find pictures of what I will be looking for before I go. The web is a great resource for this as are rock and mineral identification books. The flip side of this is to keep an open mind in the field. I do best when I collect anything that looks interesting. I keep just about all crystals, any unusual colors or shapes and anything that seems to be scarce in the area. There is plenty of time later to examine the material more closely. I guess that's why I have such a large rock pile in the back yard.

Give yourself plenty of time.

I can kick myself when I have tried to cram too many sites in a short period of time. It's hard to relax and concentrate on where you are because you always have the next site on your mind. Usually there is not enough time to thoroughly scout out an area. I now plan trips allowing plenty of time for each site I want to visit.

Be prepared for the kind of work you'll be doing.

As an Eagle Scout I learned early in life to follow the Boy Scout motto, "Be Prepared". There is nothing more frustrating than finding a cluster of fine crystals that can only be extracted using the two-foot pry bar you left in the garage. It doesn't hurt to take more tools and supplies than you think may be necessary, unless of course, your going to Chestnut Ridge or some other place where you have to carry everything. A few days before you leave on a trip start making a list of the tools, clothes, and miscellaneous items, such as insect repellent, you will need. Every time you think of something, add it to the list. Then put your list on the computer so you can reference it next time. Before long you will have a comprehensive check-off list that can be used as a reference for almost any trip you will take.

Obey the rules.

When collecting in a quarry, know what the rules are and follow them. Wear your hard hat and steel-toed shoes at all times. Keep away from the walls or any area where rocks may fall on you. I often see people completely ignoring this and even going inside roped off areas where any number of dangers may exist including unexploded blasting caps. Every year when I go to the open house at the Meckley Quarry I see someone breaking the rules. Now I hear that this year there may not be an open house. That's what happens. A few people can ruin it for everyone.

Go further than most people.

Many of us go to sites that are mentioned in rockhound books or magazine articles. Directions are very specific, some even have GPS coordinates. When you go to one of these sites remember that hundreds, or perhaps thousands of people have already been there. In many cases what you are looking for is long gone. What remains however, is that you are in a area where minerals have been found. The key is to expand your search area and go a little further than most people are will go. Last year the group of us that went out west heard about a place where you could park your car, walk across the road, and find carnelian agate. We did just that and didn't find anything. But the further we walked from the road the more we began to find. And those who walked the farthest found the most.

...Successful Rock Trip

CONTINUED

Visit, ask questions, and listen.

A large number rockhounds underestimate the vast amounts of information available from local residents near a particular collecting locality. A few years ago I stopped for gas in Interior South Dakota. I asked the lady running the place if she knew where I may find some interesting rocks local to the area. She told me to drive exactly eight miles, park the car, jump the fence, and walk 100 yards. I did just what she said and found all of the most beautiful prairie agate I wanted. Whenever you are on a trip with Dave Lines watch closely when he talks the locals. He always makes conversation and tells them what he's doing. He asks them about the area in general and sites they may know about. Many times it pays off.

Collect with a positive attitude.

I am a strong believer in the power of positive thinking. When you go into the field, go with the right frame of mind. Really believe that it will be a most successful trip. Collect with others who are good-natured and who also have a positive outlook. Nothing can spoil a trip like a pessimistic, negative rockhound that is always complaining.

Morefield's Last Day...

Pictures by Dave Lines



May 31, 2008



For all the Trips we had to this wonderful mine, we are sad to see it close.

Thanks to Sam and Sharon Dunaway for all the wonderful days!



We will miss you!



Constitution and By-Laws

A couple of months ago, the President of the Club, Lorna Larson, established a committee to review the Constitution and By-Laws of the Club and make recommendations for any changes needed to bring it up to date. The committee consisting of Polly Zimmerman, Carole Rauchiesen, and Bob Davidson made recommendations that were used to draft a new version of the Constitution. It is included in this months Rock Talk for all members to review prior to the vote for approval

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE SOUTHERN MARYLAND ROCK AND MINERAL CLUB

Article 1. Name and Affiliation

Section 1. Name

The Name of this organization is The Southern Maryland Rock And Mineral Club, hereinafter referred to as the Club.

Section 2. Affiliation

This Club is affiliated with the Clearwater Nature Center, an entity of the Louise F. Cosca Regional Park of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Center, and with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc., through the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies, Inc., hereinafter referred to as the Eastern Federation.

Article 2. Purpose

The purpose of the Club is:

1. To stimulate interest in the earth sciences and hobbies associated with rocks and minerals, fossils and lapidary arts.
 2. To encourage and work for improvement in the art of gem cutting and making jewelry.
 3. To provide members with opportunities to collect and identify rocks, minerals, and fossils.
- To provide opportunities for fellowship among members and with other clubs and societies having similar aims and interests.

Article 3. Membership

Section 1. Eligibility

Membership in the Club is open to anyone interested in one or more of the purposes listed under Article 2.

Section 2. Classes of Membership

A. **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP** is available to one person. If two people in a family join the Club, they must join as Individual Members.

B. **FAMILY MEMBERSHIP** is available to three or more people in a family.

C. **CLEARWATER NATURE CENTER ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP** is an additional membership that allows special privileges that are not afforded by Individual or Family membership alone, including the use of the Center's Lapidary Facility, and participation in other M-NCPPC sponsored activities.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP may be granted by the Center to individuals who perform over 50 hours of volunteer service to the Center in a calendar year or at the discretion of the Director of the Center. Honorary Members are not required to pay dues.

Section 3. Admission to Membership

A. Applicants shall complete and sign the formal application form provided by the Center.

B. Members shall be in Good Standing when their dues are current, they have attended at least four scheduled Club meetings in a 12-month period, and they adhere to the Club's accepted Code of Ethics (attached as an addendum to these By-Laws).

C. Special privileges shall be granted to Members in Good Standing, including one free table at the Annual Jewelry, Mineral, and Fossil Show. Members not in Good Standing may be removed from membership by a majority vote of the members present at a regular meeting.

Section 4. Dues

A. The dues amount shall be set by the Center. The Center will collect dues from each member, record and maintain a membership roster, and notify the Club of new members.

B. The year for dues shall begin January 1.

C. All dues are payable to the Clearwater Nature Center. Individuals may elect to join the Club only, or to participate as a Clearwater Nature Associate. A portion of the Club dues also provides membership in the Eastern Federation.

Article 4. Officers

Section 1. Titles

The Officers of the Club shall consist of:

- A. President,
- B. Membership Chairman,
- C. Field Trip Chairman,
- D. Program Chairman,
- E. Secretary,
- F. Treasurer,
Editor,
Webmaster and
Liaison Officer (appointed by the Center).

Alternates may be elected to co-chair these positions.

Section 2. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of current Club Officers, the past President, and the Director of the Center. The Executive Committee shall meet if the President or the Center's Liaison Officer declares a need to do so. Such reasons may be to appoint a new officer to replace one that is unable to fulfill his or her duties, or if a major policy change is made by the Center that affects the Club. The meeting will take place at the Center on a day and time set by the Liaison Officer.

Section 3. Elections

If more than one person has been nominated for an Office and has agreed to serve, election of that position shall be by secret ballot at the November meeting. Otherwise, the slate of Officers will be elected by a show of hands representing the majority of members present. Officer's terms shall be for a calendar year, starting January 1.

Article 5. Duties of Officers

Section 1. President

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Club and Executive Committee, shall appoint all committee chairmen, shall be the official spokesman for the club, and shall exert every effort to carry out the provisions of these By-Laws and perform other duties customary to the office.

Section 2. Membership Chairman

The Membership Chairman shall work closely with the Center to keep apprised of new members, shall contact new members and answer any questions they may have, shall introduce new members at Club meetings. He or she shall also maintain a current membership roster containing the member's name, address, phone number(s), and email address.

Section 3. Field Trip Chairman

The Field Trip Chairman shall plan field trips that are of interest to Club members, shall discuss upcoming field trips at Club meetings including locations, dates, times, traveling arrangements, a description of specimens that may be found, equipment needed, and other pertinent information. He or she shall designate a Leader for each trip who will coordinate all activities during the trip and ensure that a report is made to the membership at the next meeting.

The Programs Chairman shall seek volunteers to make special presentations at Club meetings that are of interest to the membership, shall coordinate with the Center to ensure that any equipment needed for the presentation is made available.

Section 5. The Secretary

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Club and Executive Committee, and conduct the Club's routine correspondence.

Section 6. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall receive all non-membership money and hold it in a cash fund. It may consist of donations, the sale of donated items, or other fund raising activities that are not in conflict with the Center. The fund will be used to cover costs not normally provided by the Center, such as Memorial Contributions to the Eastern Federation. Funds in excess of \$500 will be donated to the Center.

Section 7. Editor

The Club Editor shall create a monthly newsletter for distribution to Club members.

Section 8. Webmaster

The Webmaster shall develop and maintain a Club website with information of interest to Club members and the public in general.

Section 9. Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer is an employee of the Center who provides logistic and oversight support to the Club.

Article 6. Standing Committees

Section 1.

Except as otherwise provided herein, the President shall appoint the chairmen of all standing committees, the Nominating Committee, and special committees he or she deems advisable to fill club needs.

Section 2.

Each committee shall consist of the chairman and such members as he or she shall select.

Section 3.

The Nominating Committee for the selection of new officers shall consist of the committee chairman and two other members appointed by the President. At the October Club meeting, the Committee will announce the names of the nominees. Voting by Club members will take place at the November meeting as stated in Article 7, Section 3.

Section 4.

Except as otherwise stated herein, the President shall outline the duties of the Committees.

Article 7. Club Meetings

Section 1.

Regular monthly meetings shall be held at the Center at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month, unless changed by the membership.

Section 2.

Special meetings for specifically announced purposes may be called by the Executive Committee on 5 day's notice to the membership.

Section 3.

The Annual meeting of the Club shall be the regular meeting for November. Election of Officers shall be held at that time. Newly elected officers shall assume their duties on January 1st following the November elections.

Article 8. Order of Business

The normal order of business at regular meetings of the club is:

Call to Order, followed by:

Introduction of guests and new members

Approval of the Minutes of the previous meetings

Treasurer's Report

Membership Report

Program Report

Field Trip Report

Editor Report

Webmaster Report

Old Business

New Business

Special Announcements

Refreshment Break

Program Presentation

Adjournment

The presiding officer may vary the order of business.

Article 9. Amendments

Section 1.

All proposed amendments to these By-Laws shall be presented by the President, on behalf of the Executive Committee, at a regular meeting of the Club. The proposal shall be presented in the following month's issue of Rock Talk. The vote for adoption shall take place at the next regular meeting.

Section 2.

Five members, by written demand, may require the Executive Committee to present proposals for amendment at any meeting; the Executive Committee shall have at least 31 days to study and prepare the proposed changes before they must be presented to the membership at a regular meeting.

Article 10. Termination of the Club

Section 1.

The Club shall be considered terminated when $\frac{3}{4}$ of the voting membership votes at a regular scheduled meeting of the Club that the Club no longer complies with the purposes set forth in Article 2. Notice of Intent to Present such a Motion shall be approved by the Executive Committee and provided in writing to all members at their last known address, at least 20 days before the date of its presentation. Absentee ballots, signed by the member(s) shall be accepted.

Section 2.

The Club shall be considered terminated when there remains 6 or fewer members, as defined in Article 3, Section 2.

Section 3.

Immediately upon termination of the Club, as defined herein, all assets remaining after payment of just debts, shall be transferred to the Clearwater Nature Center, its successors, or the M-NCPPC.

END OF THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS



ROCKTALK

Clearwater Nature Center
Maryland-National Capital Park &
Planning Commission
11000 Thrift Road



We're on the web:
www.freewebs.com/smrmc/

Message from the Editor

Hello All!

Summer is here and I know I am so glad for it! I will battle the heat because I am actually off from work for two whole months! I needed this break.

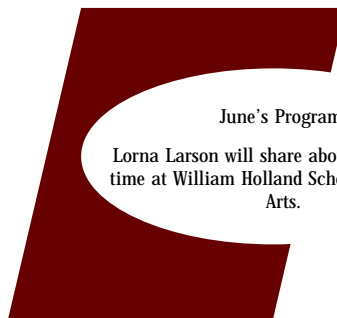
I wanted to remind everyone that this newsletter is for both June and July. I won't have access to the programs I need in order to put out a good newsletter, so this will just be a combined one. I will have an August newsletter out before our auction day. Any articles you would like to see in that month's newsletter, please send to the editor's email and I'll get them in there!

I would like to draw everyone's attention to our programs on this page! We are in need of some good programs for our meetings. Refreshments are taken care of, but programs seem to be our problem. Please contact Polly with any ideas you might have so that we can have fun and interesting meetings!

I will not be at June's meeting. I am going to North Carolina to visit family. What I am excited about is we might be going to one of the emerald mines while I'm there, so I'm looking forward to that!

Everyone have a great June and July and send me anything you would like to see in the newsletter!

Thanks, Jessica



PROGRAMS/ REFRESHMENTS

June	Program- Lorna Larson Refreshments-Larry O'Callaghan
July	Program - _____ Refreshments-Tom and Cobb Allison
August	Annual Auction and Potluck
September	Program- _____ Refreshments-Ralph Gamba
October	Program- _____ Refreshments- Polly Z and Jessica T
November	Program- _____ Refreshments- The Holden's
December	Annual Potluck and Chinese Auction