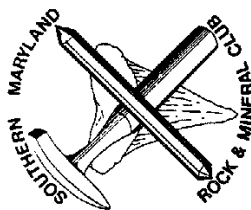




RockTalk



Message from the President

Rockhounds BEWARE! This message is to warn you of the very contagious and rapidly spreading HKNY virus, and unlike the H1N1 there is no vaccine. Its symptoms are similar to “gold fever” but with a decidedly “sparkly” twist.

I recently contracted this virus on a trip to Herkimer, New York. It strikes without warning as you enter the Herkimer Diamond Mine gift shop. Diamonds in a variety of shapes, sizes and colors abound from wall to wall, making it nearly impossible for your brain to function. You start to feel that little “tingle” in the back of your neck as your feet steadily propel you to the “pay to play” desk. You pay your mine entry fee and “head to the

hole”. As you swing your sledgehammer and crack open your first diamond laden rock you become “infected”. You pocket your glittering treasure and begin feverently pounding on every rock around you with hammers and chisels. The fever rises with every diamond you find. There’s no stopping you even when your chisels get dull and your arms can no longer lift the sledge. Every gold hunter knows the feeling... just one more...one more....

When the mine closes at 5:00 pm, you reluctantly pack up your tools and treasures and head out of the gate wishing you could stay for “just one more hour....” Sleeplessness is another symptom of the

virus. You lay awake thinking of all of the rocks you could have cracked open if you just had the time. When you finally fall asleep you dream of diamonds to be found. You return to the mine the next day at the crack of dawn and the cycle continues. There is no cure for HKNY and the only treatment is frequent visits to the Herkimer Diamond Mine to quench your insatiable thirst for the glittering gems.

For more information check out their website at: www.herkimerdiamond.com.

If you decide to go and contract the virus, take two aspirin and don’t call me in the morning; unless you find the “big one”.....

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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.

EFMLS/AFMS News

Submitted by Jessica Thomson



EFMLS released a June/July edition of their newsletter and will not have an August edition as they are on their summer break. Reminders for Wil-dacres as well as the Code of Ethics were included.

The Safety Chair wrote about collecting alone and the importance of bringing a cell phone with you if you feel you really have to go by yourself, which is not recommended. For more information go to www.amfed.org/efmls



AMFS also released a June/July edition of their newsletter and contains the Code of Ethics.

There is an article included describing a six-step program for forming a youth group in your club.

There is also information pertaining to the American Lands Access Association. They are looking for members to help them protect public lands for the public. After all, how can we collect if we can't do it on public lands?

For more information go to www.amfed.org

Upcoming Shows and Events

Submitted by Ralph Gamba

August 7 – 8: The Gem, Lapidary and Mineral Society of Washington D. C. Inc. 60th Annual Gem and Mineral Show and Sale. Stone Ridge School, 9101 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD Saturday 10 AM - 6 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM. Admission Adults \$6.00, Senior Citizens \$5.00, children under 16 free with paid admission. Web Site: www.GLMSDC.COM.

August 14-15: Native American, Fossils, Rocks, Gems and Minerals Themed flea market Shupp's Grove, Adamstown, PA www.shuppsgrove.com 607 Willow St. Reinholds, PA

September 25 – 26: 46th Annual Atlantic Coast Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show. Howard County Fairgrounds, I 70 at MD Route 32 Saturday 10 AM – 6 PM. Sunday 10 AM - 5 PM. Admission \$2.00

October 8 2010: Rock and mineral auction Chesapeake Gem and Mineral Society, Women's Club of Catonsville, St. Timothy's Lane & Frederick Rd in Catonsville, MD 7:30 PM

November 13: Richmond Rock Swap (9-3) Richmond, VA

If anyone has information on any other local shows or rock events, contact Ralph Gamba at rgamba@verizon.net, so they can be included in this list.

SMRMC OFFICERS

PRESIDENT:
Tina League

VICE PRESIDENT (membership):
Tina League

VICE PRESIDENT (Programs):
Larry O'Callaghan

VICE PRESIDENT (Field Trips):
Dave Lines
(301) 934-9396

SECRETARY:
Polly Zimmerman

LIAISON/Youth Coordinator:
Michael Patterson
(301) 297-4575
michael.patterson@pgparks.com

TREASURER
Dave Lines

EDITOR
Jessica Thomson
rocktalkeditor@yahoo.com

WEBMASTER
Bob Davidson

EFMLS Representative
Dee Tinsley
flydeetin@gmail.com

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

June Minutes

By Polly Zimmerman

Meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm.

Guests were introduced

Minutes for May meeting were approved as read.

Treasury has had no changes.

Membership 74 active member reflects 5 new members. “welcome”

Programs tonight will be a video.

Field Trips

*Contrary Creek was a great trip. Monty struck it rich.

*Short notice Vulcan Quarry Saturday

*Sat. July 3, Fossil trip / Rd. cuts.

*Sat. July 10 Perce State Park

*Sat. July 17 Lingon Mine

Newsletter will be combined July/August.

Old Business

Carole showed the new display board.

Dave presented his ideas for rules for the Lapidary Room. Discussion followed and was chaired until Michael could be present for the input of the center. This topic will be discussed again in July.

New Business

List of students who have attended classes on lapidary procedures.

Web Master announced a large increase in traffic on the web. About 65 hits a day.

Meeting adjourned 7:55 for snacks and video.

Dixie Iron Mine Trip

By Dave Lines

Have you ever seen a "bear tree"? A bear tree is where a male bear marks his territory. The bear stands on his hind legs and reaches as high as he can and bites a big hunk or two out of a tree and rips off some bark. The higher up the tree trunk that the bite is, the bigger the bear. The bear bite on the white pine tree that I saw on this trip was well above my head and I am 6 feet 2 inches tall. And this bear tree was *FRESH*. The pine sap was still sticky on the bark and the tree. And when I looked closer, there were little strands of *black fur* clinging to it. Kinda sent a little shiver up the back of my neck.

This encounter just added to the day's interest. Overall, the trip to the Dixie Iron Mine near Vesuvius, Virginia, was fabulous. The weather was perfect --- cool, but not raining. The sky cleared once, but remained cloudy for the most part --- certainly, no where near the dire predictions of an "all day rain" which had scared away our other potential field trippers. We parked on private property (with permission) near Vesuvius at the very end of a road and hiked up for 1-1/2 miles to top along a pretty good, but at times steep, trail. Someone(s) with chainsaw(s) had cleared brush and cut through over 100 fallen trees along the way. The Dixie Iron Mine is near the top of the mountain and was mined for high quality iron ore from 1840's to 1901, according to my fellow rockhound and guide, Tom Tucker, President of the Micro-Mineralogists of the National Capitol Area. He was after micros with names like dufrenite, kidwellite, strengite and cacoxenite, but the main thing (for me) was "rockbridgeite" in lapidary quality and sizes. Rockbridgeite is an iron phosphate and was discarded by the miners as it made the iron brittle (ref. a). More recently (ref. a), it was discovered that rockbridgeite would take a high polish that has the deep, rich look of black jade.



Only by accident, did we find the lapidary quality rockbridgeite, and that was when we took a wrong trail that was choked with fallen trees and dead/live brush. Since the whole vicinity is recovering from a forest fire, dead trees are fallen like giant pickup sticks everywhere with dead brush and new mountain laurel growing up in between. Rough travel. At the upper end of this grown up trail, there are a lot of mine dumps and to the right side is a large slanted mine adit where the original iron ore vein looked as though it had been 4 to 6 feet thick. On the hillside more or less opposite this hole (David Lipscomb has a picture of it on his website ref b.), I spotted a few chips of rockbridgeite. Rockbridgeite is black, but may be brown outside from weathering. The key to identification is a *pea green color* when chipped with a rock hammer. This area is about a quarter mile down hill from the upper workings, but since Tom was primarily interested in micros, we worked our way up higher through the woods to the main mining area.

The original overall mining operation had been very extensive judging from the large dumps and long line of collapsed tunnels. The miners basically had followed that same seam of iron ore along the ridge as far and as deep as they could go. At the extreme left side of the mine as you face it looking uphill, there is a huge gaping hole (east shaft) in the mountain that goes wa-a-ay down. Tom said it was 180 feet deep. He is a spelunker, and though he said he had never been in it, he said would make it a state park if it had been a cave. We tossed a rock into the abyss and we could hear it roll and bounce for a long while. Actually, we never heard it hit bottom --- the sounds just became fainter and fainter. A truly dangerous spot, it is definitely a hole to stay well away from.

Tom showed me the area he planned to get micros from, but it only contained rockbridgeite in very thin seams. So after spending some time with Tom, I left and went straight (west) in the general direction of the collapsed tunnels and down through the laurel thickets to re-locate the first area we found. En-route, in the middle of a jungle of laurel, is where I saw that "bear tree".

At the lower location, I spent about 3 hours digging through dumps with a potato fork in search of rockbridgeite. At first, I picked up everything, including chips (for possi-

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Dixie Iron Mine Trip

CONTINUED

ble tumbling), but eventually kept only the larger pieces. Also, I collected a few pieces of brecciated jasper, which looks like a conglomerate of rounded and broken light tan and gray colored rock surrounded by dark mustard colored jasper. Very interesting pattern. Dave Lipscomb noted that some of it is lapidary quality and has specimens and polished pieces on his website for sale. After spending about 15 minutes refilling and covering the area where I had dug, I was ready to start heading back --- Tom said he was going to stay until dark. Altogether, I picked up more material than I could carry back --- and also saw some on the way back, but I just couldn't carry anymore. Found a couple of chunks of rockbridgeite that may be large enough for a small sphere. I spent two (2) hours hiking back down the mountain to reach the vehicles. Could only carry my bucket a few yards at a time before I had to set it down. Iron ore is HEAVY!!!

After I unloaded my rocks back at the car, I returned to the mountain to search for some of the other material that can be found there. Trace fossils of "scolithos" worm tubes in very fine grained quartzite --- some very nice for lapidary --- predominately pink, white or tan with contrasting black worm tubes. This material is abundant about one mile from the vehicles. Unlimited quantity --- a mountain worth --- and sizes from small to huge. The "catch" was hauling it back to the vehicle. Another item there worth collecting is cryptomelane (manganese nodules) at the Kelly Bank Mine on lower part of trail. The mine was fully reclaimed several years ago and is now covered in heavy brush, but with persistence, I found several decent specimens. One was 6 inches across, but it was a totally hit or miss affair.

As for recommending this trip to others, I am not sure how many folks in our club would *enjoy* this trip. The mountain is steep and it is a long hike each way. It definitely takes someone who is in good physical condition. But on the other hand, good quality lapidary material --- rockbridgeite, brecciated jasper and scolithos in quartzite --- can be found. As for me, I want to go back.

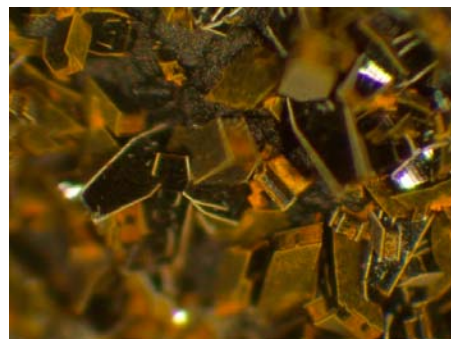
"Micro" PostScript by Tom Tucker: All of the mineral species noted here are various complex iron phosphates. Originally, the dark green radiating masses found here and in near-by mines was thought to be DUFRENITE. In 1949, with the advancement of better analytical techniques, much of the material was determined to be a new species, and was named ROCKBRIDGEITE, for the locality on South Mountain, near Midvale, Rockbridge County, Virginia, just a few miles south of the Dixie Mine. The original species, DUFRENITE, is found in excellent crystals at the Dixie Mine, but I have found ROCKBRIDGEITE only in massive seams and micro-sized spheres. But as Dave Lipscomb has demonstrated, the massive ROCKBRIDGEITE material does take a beautiful polish and is thus an unusual lapidary material.

It might also be noted that the Dixie Mine actually crosses the county line and is partly located in Augusta County. The mine is rapidly being reclaimed by nature, with large portions of the fractured hanging wall falling into the open surface cut and the underground workings. A comparison of the photo of the "west shaft" included here, with the picture posted on Dave Lipscomb's website (Ref. b) shows some of these recent changes.

References:

"Mineral Collecting Sites in Virginia", D. Allen Penick, Jr. and Palmer C. Sweet, Virginia Minerals, Vol. 38,
No.2, May 1992

www.varockhound.com/va/rockbridge/dixieironmine.shtml



Dufrenite, field of view 5mm

Roll Out the Beryl

By Dave Lines, John Sorg, Ralph Gamba, Mary Cramer, Mike Saniga and Patrick Saniga



On the morning of April 17th, six members (*) of the Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club met at a site in Amelia County, Virginia, which is historically known for its beryl crystals. As soon as we arrived, we parked and conducted an orientation and safety brief. Then we spread out to surface check bare spots throughout the area. Almost immediately, Dave Lines found a small segment of an opaque greenish beryl crystal. After everyone calibrated their eyes to this piece, we each picked a spot, cleared the leaves away and started digging and screening what we dug up, while looking for that telltale greenish color and hexagonal crystal shape.

The original mined area is an open trench about 100 feet long with dump areas immediately adjacent to the trench. The trench, which is still visible, is about 10 feet deep and about 20 feet across. The sides have caved in considerably and small trees have grown up in the trench and on the sides. In fact, the entire location, which covers more than one acre, is wooded with pine and hardwood trees to 6 inches in diameter. Large boulders of massive white and smoky quartz, some with large beryl crystal impressions, are scattered about the dump. Mica is common. A private gravel residential road now goes directly through part of the dump area. Nevertheless, beryl crystals can be found just about anywhere by digging and careful screening with a 1/2 inch mesh screens. Water and a brush can also be used to rinse off the red clay to further identify any suspected finds.

For this trip report, each participant submitted a brief summation of his/her impressions. Our comments follow:

John --- Another great outing with the SMRMC. Our trip leader Dave did a good job of putting the team on the trail of the gems. This location has to rank as one of the easiest access sites to gather specimens. You could dig right beside your vehicle since the road base and parking area were made from the mine tailings. The challenge of working tailing piles is the randomness of the material. There is an element of luck involved as some piles are richer than others. My strategy was to focus on one shady spot near the original trench. I found beautiful beryl crystals in quartz matrix. As the day went on the beryl's found were increasing in size. I definitely would recommend this location for a return trip.

Ralph --- Mary and I found a few beryl crystals. Mary found one in matrix, I found a number of matrix pieces and one nice solitary crystal (which I will give to Mary). I still enjoyed the trip and hope to go again.

Mary --- I really did not find much. One little thing may have had a beryl in it, but now I cannot find that. However, it was a fun day and it was encouraging that other folks came up with some beauties.

Mike --- First, a thanks need to go out to Dave for his efforts, not only to get this property open to our club, but to keep it open for us. Dave and crew did such a good job at mine restoration that the land owner couldn't tell that anyone had been there. It took Pat and me a little while to figure out that we should have been digging in the hard packed tailings and not the loose (probably already sifted) dirt. I managed to find several good crystals and Pat found one very special specimen. This is a very easy access trip, but to get to the good crystals, it could be some hard digging. I can't wait to go back!

Pat (age 10) --- I thought we were going to go into a big trench and dig around, but it turned out to be a hill where we just started digging. My dad and I dug in the spoil pile because we thought we would find something big. I found a big stone with beryl on it. It is yellowish. There are 3 crystals that were clearly visible from the surface but there were more on the bottom. When I found it, I felt really happy and it was very cool that there was more than one crystal in the stone. I thought we could try to chisel it out, but we didn't. Then we found this huge piece of beryl that was cut in half. We found one stone with a hole where there used to be a beryl that was as big as my leg. Then we

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Roll Out the Beryl

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washed it off and found out that it had a piece of beryl and then everyone started to come over where we were and started digging there. Eventually we connected the holes and then everyone was digging in one hole. There were about 3 good spots and we quit about 4:00 pm because it took 3 hours to get home. It was a lot of fun and was worth our while. We had a good time and found some good specimens.

Dave --- As a group we dug until early afternoon. The weather was nice ---sunny and in the 70's. It was just right for gold panning, and since John has gold fever, he left about 2 p.m. to travel to Contrary Creek and check out what his friends had found there. Before John left, he refilled his hole and sprinkled pine straw back over the area --- it looked beautiful. One would have never guessed that someone had just been digging.

Well, John had been doing pretty good in that spot, so, soon after he left, all the rest of us moved in and began digging there again. Almost immediately, we began finding beryl crystals. They seemed to be just below the level of solid red clay --- only a thin layer of a few inches, but we found at least ten crystals --- loose and in white/smoky quartz matrix. All of these in a small area about 6 feet long by 2 feet wide and 1 to 2 feet deep.

We dug and screened the tailings until 3:45 p.m. and decided to call it a day. Then we spent about 30 minutes refilling our holes and covering the areas with old leaves and pine straw. The whole place looked pristine when we left. For the day, our group spent about 6 hours there and found perhaps a total of 30 pieces of beryl. So overall, it was productive and safe fun.



Guaranteed Gold in Your Pans

By Dave Lines

Wow! Contrary Creek gold panning doesn't get any better than this! Everyone --- from first timers to seasoned panners --- found visible gold in their gold pans late Sunday afternoon on June 13, 2010 during our Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club field trip.

But the real key to our success was our new member, John Sorg. John is an experienced and well equipped gold panner. He almost guaranteed our good luck by his hard work and super effort well ahead of our trip by starting *six hours earlier* and running his power dredging equipment in the creek all day. By the time that our 15 club members (Cheryl, Monty, Robert, Stephanie, Ed, Arnold, Mike, Patrick, Josh, Shelly, Harry, Tina, Joe, Paula and Dave) arrived at 3 p.m., John had 6 buckets of "concentrate" ready for us to pan. It was great! We all owe John a HUGE thank you!

To put his effort in perspective, each pan of the "concentrate" probably equaled *50 pans* of the straight material from the creek bottom. So, when 15 of us panned out an average of 2 pans of "concentrate" each, that was equivalent to 1,500 pans (15 x 2 x 50). Incredible.

We also found almandine garnets, magnetite and pyrite. In fact, John showed us a spot where we dug for garnets in a layer of gray clay in the stream. The garnet crystals we found were well formed, do-decahedral and had sharp edges.

Oh --- another thing. John brought about 20 of his gold pans and generously loaned them to us. And he gave us small glass vials to hold our gold. We were also joined by 3 other rock hounds who followed us from the Lake Anna Swap held earlier that day --- Pam from the Richmond club and Rosemary and ___?___ from the Tidewater club. Again, John welcomed them and they found gold, too.

Thanks, John, for a great field trip!

Make My Day

By Ralph Gamba

Ten members of the Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club ignored the forecast of rain and journeyed to Amelia Virginia to collect at the Morefield Mine. We stared the forecast in the face and said "Make my day." Sporadic showers dampened the road to Morefield, but the rain did not dampen our spirits.

The group of ten, Fortini, Lorna, Christine, Serena, Stephanie, Mary, Mike, John, Robert, and Ralph, paid the entrance fees and headed to the field to collect.

At 10 AM, the mine workers let us in and we scavenged the ground (see Figure 1) before the 11 AM dump.



Figure 1 Serena and Christine searching at Morefield

During this scavenging, Ralph spotted a piece of cleavelandite with a small brown crystal. After breaking off some of the cleavelandite blades with his fingernail, he exposed a 3/16 x 1/8 inch crystal which Sam Dunaway identified as monazite. Monazite is a phosphate of rare earth elements such as Lanthanum, Cerium, and Neodymium. It is often radioactive.

After the dump, Mike made the discovery of the day. He picked up a white rock with bluish areas. The blue mineral in the rock is prosopite, a Calcium Aluminum Fluorohydroxide. Figure 2 is a picture of Mike holding the sample.

Meanwhile, John gathered some nice mica books. Lorna and Fotini gathered amazonite. Fotini admired the display of amazonite samples on display.

Along with the fun of collecting, we enjoyed showing our finds to members of other clubs, along with telling stories of other finds and learning more about the minerals and geology.



Figure 2. Mike holding prosopite.

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Make My Day

CONTINUED

Collecting continued through the day with many of us spending time at the sluice (see Figures 3, 4, and 5). We found amazonite, spessartine garnets, amethyst among other minerals.



Figure 3. Stephanie and Robert looking for micros at the Sluice

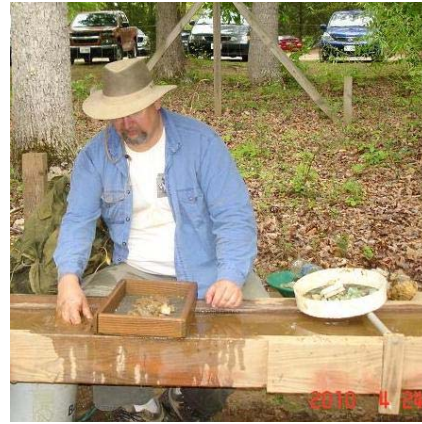


Figure 4. John at the Sluice.



Figure 5. Serena at the Sluice

As we awaited the second dump (see Figure 6), a mine worker mentioned that Youtube[®] has a video of a Morefield dump called “Feeding the Pigeons”.

Figure 6. Sam Dunaway and Mine Worker “Feeding the Pigeons”

Those who stayed until 3 PM were treated to a third dump, in which we gathered amazonite. Ralph found a nice terminated amazonite in matrix. Mary gathered amazonite and quartz.



We became so engrossed in collecting that some of us did not notice if it rained or didn't rain. Others mentioned that the predicted rain did not come. We stared down the forecast of rain and our finds “Made our day.”

Ref: Descriptions of monazite and prosopite from Mindat.

Photos 1 through 4 and 6 by Ralph Gamba;

Photo 5 by Christine Proctor.

Glendon Times Hard Work Plus Heavy Tools Equals Pyrite

By Dave Lines



If you like large pyrite crystals, and don't mind hard work, then Glendon, North Carolina is *the place* for you.

As a member of the "Gem and Mineral Society of Lynchburg, VA", I was eligible to participate in a great trip set up and smoothly run by the Southeast Federation on May 15, 2010. The overall Trip Leader was Mike Streeter --- noted author and rockhound of McRocks.com website fame. This pyrophyllite mine, about 50 miles southwest of Raleigh, was re-opened (following 2 years of closure) last spring for access by rock hounds after negotiations with Standard Mineral Company.

The mine is basically an open-pit operation which is several hundred yards long and about two hundred yards wide. The purest part of the pyrophyllite deposit has been mined out and the remaining portion of the mine containing pyrite crystals (considered an undesirable impurity by the miners) runs down the center of the open pit in the form of a low hill. Just about anywhere you dig in this hill, you will find pyrite crystals --- of all sizes --- from tiny, perfect cubes to whoppers as large as 4" by 4" by 6". Small blue-green flourite crystals can also occasionally be found throughout the mine associated with white quartz. But the main thing is pyrite.

There is a "catch", of course. Some of the pyrophyllite matrix is relatively soft and easier to dig in using chisels and 3 pound hammers --- BUT some the matrix (usually containing the largest crystals) is really HARD. Last April, I broke a steel chisel, and my Estwing pointed bullnose just bounced off. This year, I brought along a couple of sharpened jack hammer bits that were pointed. These bits are made of an extremely hard steel. I also brought along a couple of sledge hammers --- a 10 pounder and a 20 pounder. Plus an assortment of other steel wedges and chisels. And a stiff bristled brush to clean off the area I was working on. This brush often revealed pyrite crystals that I had not previously even noticed.

Another "catch" is that the pyrophyllite deposit is tilted at about 45 degrees. This means that you have to dig deeper and deeper to follow a "vein" of pyrite crystals. For me, I had chosen a location where the "vein" went under a deep pile of overburden. So in addition to hardrock mining, I had to do a considerable amount of shoveling.

Weather conditions at Glendon over the years have varied greatly --- sometimes it is wet and muddy --- this time, it was dry, dusty and HOT as blazes. I ran out of drinking water before the trip was half over. A shade umbrella would have been great.

The trip was limited to 120 people, but I heard that 6 slots were never taken. Too bad. The trip started at 9 a.m., after a safety brief by Mike --- stay inside the marked area, drink plenty of water, be careful and be out of the mine by 3 p.m.. By noon, I would estimate that over half of the people had left due to the brutal heat --- it was 95 degrees and no breeze. By 1 p.m., only 25 diehards remained. By 2 p.m. when I gave up, only ten people were still hammering.

Overall, I did fairly well digging and brought back several flats of pyrite crystals in matrix. My largest weighed about 3 pounds. I also made a new friend --- Gerald from Atlanta --- he had driven 7 hours. Near the end of the dig, Gerald saved my bacon with a couple of cold sodas. Wow --- they sure hit the spot. And thanks, Gerald, for helping me carry my tools back to the van --- especially the 2 sledge hammers.



Message from the Editor

By Jessica Thomson

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer and trying to stay cool with the heat we've been having lately.

So, we have our July/August edition of the RockTalk. I will not be in town (for those who aren't aware, I am getting married and will be on my honeymoon in Hawaii) for most of the month of August, so will not be able to produce an August edition. You'll notice that this one is a bit longer. I had a lot of articles to put into this edition, which was exciting. You'll find a bit of something for everyone!

September's edition will be the same. Please continue to email me your pictures and articles and I will be sure to find a place for all of them. Remember, even if it is just a half page and a picture, we would all love to hear about your adventures!

A side note to the topic of articles. In order to make it easier for me to place the article into the useable space, please send your pictures separately. It is easier for me to insert the pictures myself than to edit the formatting you may have in place. If you have specific places you'd like the pictures you can make note of that when you send them. I read the articles and will be able to place the picture where you may have it marked. A simple (**Place picture 1 here**) will suffice, and I would delete the note before publishing. If you have questions, please ask. I'm just looking for ways to make editing go a little faster.

Enjoy the rest of your summer. I'll see you at the July meeting, though I won't be at the August Potluck/Auction. Don't forget!!! That is a fun time for all!

Mineral Hill Copper Mine

By Chris Proctor



On May 16th three of our Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club members joined the Northern Virginia Mineral Club on a trip to Mineral Hill Copper Mine Tailings. Members from our group included Christine Proctor, Serena Lee, and Stacey Harris-Styles. This was Serena's second field trip and it was Stacey's first. We arrived around 9:00am and after a brief safety talk we started a long walk through the woods. Along the way we walked past a big beautiful lake and then up ahead we saw the large gray pile of rocks. When we climbed up towards the top of the pile we were able to spot the greenish blue pieces of Malachite. I was hoping to make some cabochons out of the Malachite, however, some pieces were soft and flaky while others had trace amounts on the surface of rocks or running through them. Regardless the colors were very pretty. We also found some dark green Actinolite, Magnetite, Chalcopyrite, and Quartz.

Ted Carver was the Northern Virginia trip leader and was helpful in identifying rocks as well as one of their members named Casper, since he had visited this area several times before. The most knowledgeable rock hound seemed to be Alec, who was only about thirteen. He was recognized nationally for fossil identification and at the state level for rock and mineral identification. The weather was great and we hunted for about four hours. After we gathered up our rocks we started walking back to our vehicles. Of course it took a little longer going back since we were weighed down with all of our treasures. It was a fun trip that was easy to get to and wasn't very far away.



ROCKTALK

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

**Next Meeting
July 27, 2010
7:00 PM**

We're on the web:

SMRMC.org

July/August
Refreshments/
Programs

July Refreshments:

Ralph Gamba

July Program:

Gary Lohman will present a program on fluorescents.

August Refreshments/Program:

August is the annual Potluck/Auction. Everyone is to bring a dish to share and any materials or specimens you'd like to sell. A percentage of your sale goes into the treasury. Even if you don't have anything to sell, bring your money because there is always something great to buy!