

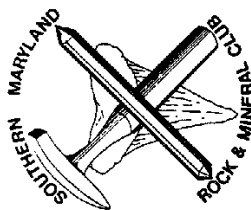
September 2010



SOUTHERN MARYLAND ROCK AND MINERAL CLUB



RockTalk



Message from the President

I wanted to say "Thank You" to everyone who participated in the potluck/auction August meeting. It was a great success and I think everyone had a good time eating all of the delicious food and bidding on the huge variety of rocks and related items.

August's meeting brought back some fond memories for me. It was just two years ago that Harry and I just happened to stumble into the Nature Center for our first "Rock Club" meeting. We had no idea what to expect. There was a room full of people and food and lots of rock stuff....you guessed it, our first meeting was the August potluck/auction. Wow, I thought, what a fun group! I never even

knew there was a title for people like me who liked rocks (I just thought I was a little strange). I used to spend my lunch break at work walking through a stream and collecting river "button" rocks. My coworkers used to accuse me of having "rocks in my head", and I guess they were right! It's nice to know that there are a lot of people out there with the same "addiction".

It's been quite an adventure being a member of SMRMC. I have made many new friends and have traveled to many new places (and have acquired MANY new rocks). It's wonderful how friendly, helpful and caring rockhounds are. Perfect strangers become "old friends" in no time

when they come together in the field or at meetings or shows. I'm impressed with how knowledgeable our club members and other rockhounds I've met are about geology and jewelry making. The generosity of the quarry, mine and land owners who let us prospect on their land is amazing. Our planet has some truly fascinating gems and minerals to explore and I hope we get a chance to discover as many as possible.

Rockhounds Rock!!

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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 Dixon



The 2011 Convention will be held in Syracuse, NY. An article this month lays out some of the extra activities you can enjoy in Central NY if you plan on attending.

Loren Patterson shares a final message about field trips and the importance of following the Code of Ethics. He also mentions joining the American Lands

Access Association in order to be involved in keeping lands open to rockhounds.



The annual meeting in California in June was a big success.

Forming a Junior Club within clubs is an important goal. There is a list of resources that can be used in order to help in this endeavor.

A full listing of all 2010 Bulletin Contest Winners is included this month. Check out all the winners!

For more information, go to www.amfed.org

Upcoming Shows and Events

Submitted by Ralph Gamba

September 25 – 26 2010 - 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 2, 2010 – Rock and mineral yard sale, Annandale, VA. 9AM-5PM, Rain date Sunday, October 3. 3722 Rodes Ct, Annandale.

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, 2010—RICHMOND, VA: 19th annual fall rock swap; Richmond Gem & Mineral Society; Ridge Baptist Church Meeting Hall, 1515 East Ridge Rd.; Sat. 9-3; free admission; swap and sale ; contact Carl Miller, (804) 310-8762; e-mail: kobold1@erols.com

November 20-21, 2010--FAIRFAX, VA: 19th annual show; Northern Virginia Mineral Club; George Mason University, Student Union Bldg. II, Rte. 123 and Braddock Rd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; adults \$5, seniors \$3, teens (13-17) \$3, children (12 and under) and Scouts in uniform free
Web site: www.novamineralclub.org/

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.

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

August Minutes

By Polly Zimmerman

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm, after a wonderful “pot-luck” dinner.

WOW what a spread !!!!!

Guests were introduced. Welcome to all.

Treasurer: No Change.

Membership: No Change

Programs: Sept. “Minerals”

Field Trips:

August: 17 people went to point of rocks and Potomac Marble.

Paul and Linda went to Oregon.

Tina and Larry went to Arizona

Field trips to come:

Bob is going to Herkimer

Sept 24-25 Florite Dig

Oct. 2 Limestone Quarry

Oct. 9-10 Florida trip

Oct. 23 Willis Mt.

Oct. 30 VA Tech. Show and Sale 10/5

Morefield Mine Date ????

Newsletter - No report – Editor on “Honeymoon”!!!!!!!

Web-Master: Check out all the new additions.

New-Business: Think about ways to keep all member interested in staying with the club.
Please share your ideas and wants from the club at the next meeting.

Adjourned at 7:55 for a GREAT rock sale/auction. Great fun for all.

Ligon Mine Field Trip

By Dave Lines



On Saturday July 17, 2010, seven members --- Joe and Paula, Harry and Tina, Robert and Stephanie and myself --- of the Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club met at the MacDonald's in Amelia, Virginia. The Ligon Mine, located on a farm about 15 minutes north, is actually the dumps of a mica mine which has long since been shut down. We hoped to find some of the star quartz, mica, schorl (black tourmaline) in matrix and beryl --- especially.

Actually, we were very excited as I recently had received word that one of the Richmond Club members had found a large chunk of beryl weighing 25 pounds from a new pit that the landowner had dug the previous year. Seems he was trying to locate the opening of the original mine. In the process of using a backhoe, he created a pit about 25 feet long, 15 feet wide and about 10 feet deep in the horse pasture area (for those of you familiar with the Ligon). The ample dumps all around this hole had not been looked at very much, so the hopes were high that we could find some real nice specimens.

We arrived at the farm about 9:00 a.m. and met the owner, Ken Hooley. He informed us that he had just bulldozed the dumps to clean off the vegetation for us, since I had called earlier in the week and told them we were planning to come. This was a very good thing as the weeds and huge poke berry plants could be daunting in July. He also had installed two new gates and left both open for us and encouraged us to drive as close as we wanted to. So we parked within a few yards of the mine. Nice.

Despite very warm temperatures that day (well into the 90's), we searched the dumps very thoroughly with garden scratchers, shovels and screens until lunchtime. Lots of chatter between club members the whole time. After lunch, we kept at it until about 2 p.m. when Harry and Tina decided to depart. The rest of us kept searching until just before 3 p.m. when we could hear rumbles of thunder, at which time we all left.

Our finds were interesting and plentiful (so much so that we paid the owner for an two extra 5-gallon buckets of material when we left). We found copious quantities of schorl in mica schist matrix, lots of star quartz, some beautiful hunks of clear and smoky quartz, lots of mica (some books were an inch thick), some very nice pieces of pegmatite showing mica crystals - quartz - feldspar together, --- but alas, no beryl. Stephanie clearly found the best specimen of schorl --- which had several well formed $\frac{3}{4}$ inch diameter, terminated crystals perched nicely atop a fist sized chunk of mica schist matrix.

As the last person to leave and give our goodbyes to the owner, I drove only a mile or so when the sky opened with heavy rain. We had left just in time.

Fossil Field Trip

By Harry League

On July 3, 2010 Tina and I joined Ted Carver from the Northern VA club for a fossil field trip in Virginia and West Virginia. Our meeting place was in Gainesville, VA.

There were 8 adults and 3 juniors from the combined clubs, SMD, NVA, and Rockville. Several of the “hunters” were first timers and very enthusiastic about the trip.



We managed to hit 5 sites that day. The first was a road cut on US 50, in Gore. There we collected shell fossils and small crystals. The next site was a road cut near a store where Kat found a trilobite. There we met Brad, who owned land nearby and wanted to show us the fossils he collected on his property. He had built stone walls on the outside of his house that contained fossils- pretty interesting. The next site was in the woods behind a road cut where Ted found a large plate of shell fossils.

My favorite site was the Mexican restaurant we ate at in West Virginia- the food was great!, and after all ...I'm in it for the food...

With full stomachs we headed for the last (and best) site. We all found many pieces of trilobites at this parcel in West Virginia. Some of the trilobites were “frog headed” with faceted eyes. Tina and Palace found some nice Elrathia King type trilobites. Everyone on the trip had a good time and found some nice specimens to take home.

Garnets, Schorl, Sheetz, Blue Quartz, Arrowheads and Calico Rock --- All in One Day

By Dave Lines



“It was a dark and stormy night....” begin the words of this story. During one night in the week preceding our August trip, our initial destination in Silver Spring, MD had experienced massive and destructive thunderstorms. The first evidence to us were downed trees and a “missing footbridge” --- which had been 40 feet long and built of strong steel and heavy planks. It was GONE! Pushed aside and smashed like toy. Whoa. Mother Nature can be a powerful force.

Eighteen club members (Dave K and his wife Jennifer, son Mike and daughter _____; James, Joe, Mike and son Pat; LaRonda; Cheryl; Ralph; Robert and Stephanie; Arnold; Linda, Laurel and Kai; and myself) showed up at the appointed time of 9 a.m.. After a safety brief by the Trip Leader, we posed for a group photo and started down the trail into the woods.

Our goal that morning was to search a tiny feeder stream which had previously been a tranquil brook, trickling over interesting rocks. Alas --- it had been transformed into a scoured ditch of mud and sand. It took us a while to figure out that we needed to shift our prospecting further upstream. When we did take, we quickly found garnets just about everywhere we looked. Granted, they were not pretty --- in fact, they were almandine dodecahedron garnet crystals that had weathered to iron pseudomorphs of garnets. Sizes ranged from tiny to nickel and even quarter sized. Plentiful and fun to find --- especially for the 2 kids and our three new rockhounds. We also found lots of small schorl (black tourmaline) crystals in mica schist, which was also the source of the garnets. The hills around the creek contain almost unlimited quantities of this material --- and it all eventually washes into the creek.

By 11 a.m., we were ready to caravan for an hour to Frederick where we ate lunch at a Sheetz station. After a relaxing lunch and sharing rockhound stories, we again caravanned to our next location --- Point of Rocks, MD.

Here is where my “small world” story begins. The evening before, my wife and I attended an outdoor concert at the La Plata Town Hall in Charles County where we were entertained by the U.S Navy Band group --- “The Country Currents”. During introductions of the various band members, one of them was from --- Point of Rocks!!! Wow! I figured this had to be *divine providence*. So after the show, I introduced myself to that band member --- Chief Petty Officer White --- and explained that our rock and mineral club was going to his hometown the very next morning to look for rocks. He asked “Where?” and I explained that we were going to start on a gravel bar under the Potomac River bridge and then look for a place to collect the famous “Potomac Marble”. Then he suggested we go see a farmer friend of his. Which is exactly what we did after I lead the group to the parking area at the boat access ramp on the Virginia side of the river. After I got everyone else looking for blue quartz, metabasalt and jasper under the bridge, Joe and I went to see Chief White’s farmer friend. And as it turned out, this farmer was *someone who I had previously met*



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All in One Day

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through the Maryland Farm Bureau --- in fact, he had been our guest speaker at our Charles County Farm Bureau Banquet just last Fall. He was not only a genuinely nice fellow, he hated the stuff which he said the locals called "Calico Rock" because it damaged his farm equipment. His farm had *tons* of Potomac marble in the fields and woods and he invited us to take away as much as we could haul! Now is that divine providence or what!?! Thank you Lord!

Beaming with our good fortune, Joe and I headed back to do some collecting of our own at the River. Joe was really anxious to get there because he had found a beautiful triangular flint Indian arrowhead in the brief five minutes before we went to get permission from the farmer. Back under the bridge, everyone had found plenty of blue quartz as well as other interesting rocks. Our group headed to the farm about 3 p.m., and within 15 minutes, everyone had picked so much Potomac marble, that we spend the next 30 minutes hauling it back to the vehicles. By 4 p.m., we completed our field trip and, after everyone left, I re-located our generous farmer friend and thanked him profusely. Another great field trip!



The Kentucky Three Day Event

By Mike Saniga

Four members of the SMRMC traveled to Kentucky for a three day field trip, August 13-15, 2010. The first day was agate day. Tina, Harry Mike, and Pat from the SMRMC met up with three members of the Blue Grass Gem and Mineral Club in the small town of Irvine. Tom, the group leader from the Blue Grass Club, received permission for our group to collect agate from a heavily wooded hillside just outside of town. The last portion of road (the collecting area) was only passable by a four-wheel drive vehicle with plenty of ground clearance. The small stream which the agate was located had to be driven across many times, and at times it was the road. Even the rain storm didn't dampen the spirits of the group, but it did make the road very slippery. The stream bed and the gravel banks produced a small amount of agate and copious amounts of banded chert. Other specimen "flower bed" rocks were also collected.

One of the other neat things about the day's journey was the butterflies. Every opening in the forest was inhabited by hundreds of butterflies.

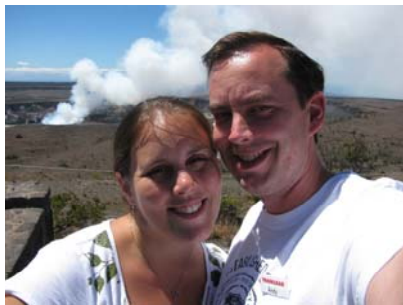
The second day was spent looking for fluorite in the hot humid country side. The members of the Southern Maryland Club met up with Tom and his wife Jane from the Blue Grass Club in Lexington. After about a half hour drive we got the opportunity dig for fluorite with about 30 other club members. Two trenches several feet deep and about 40ft long had been bull dozed on the edge of a farm field. Fluorite was scattered everywhere. Some people found good specimens by just walking around and looking at the over turned dirt. Most spent much of the time digging on the edge of the cuts. By early afternoon the 100 degree temperature and high humidity forced all but the hardiest to call it a day. The days dig was very successful with many nice specimens being found.

On the final day we met Tom and Jane in Lexington who then lead us to the outskirts of Danville. The parking area was in a dried up stream bed that was coated with geodes! So many geodes that everyone ran out of buckets to put them in. In fact I had several rolling around the car on the way home. Some of the other items that were found in the stream included pieces of chert, fossils, and pyrite balls. By early afternoon the car was heavily weighted down with rocks and I called it a day.

A very special thanks need to go to Tom and his wife Jane from the BGGAMC who made our three day event a very successful and memorial experience.

Message from the Editor

By Jessica Dixon



Aloha Everyone!

I hope everyone had a great summer and is excited about fall! I know my summer ended spectacularly. I had a wonderful time exploring three of the Hawaiian Islands on my honeymoon at the end of August. Learning about Hawaii's explosive volcanic past made the rockhound in me very excited. The "Big Island" was very exciting. Our hotel was built right on top of an old lava flow and we were thrilled to view Kilauea, perhaps the most active volcano in the world. The black sand beaches of the southern coast were also an amazing sight to behold (it almost didn't seem natural).

Alas, we had to come home. I did enjoy going through all the emails and trip reports to see what club members have been up to. It seems like everyone has been finding some great pieces. Hopefully they are planning on bringing them to the meeting so we can all see them in person.

Keep the articles coming and if you need any ideas or help with one, please let me know. I'd be glad to help.



Upcoming Field Trips

Dave Lines

Oct is a super busy month this year for club field trips as follows:

2nd: National Limestone Quarry (calcite, strontianite and wavellite), Middleburg, PA

9th: Searles Lake (evaporative minerals), Trona, CA
: Havre de Grace Quarry, MD, field trip on Oct 9th

16th: Morefield Mine, Amelia, VA (We will share this mine trip with college students and Boy Scouts. Sharon says Sam hit a great pocket of topaz xls just before they shut down last Spring and he is mining more stuff now. Lots of other exciting minerals have been found including well crystalized blue cleavelandite. FYI, this is our only opportunity to go as a Club this Fall.

Also, *individuals* may call Sharon at the Mine (804)-561-0344 to *reserve a different date on their own* --- depending on the mine schedule

23rd: Willis Mtn (kyanite), Dillwyn, VA --- and more are possible.

Contact Dave Lines for details



ROCKTALK

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

Next Meeting
Sept. 28, 2010
7:00 PM

We're on the web:

SMRMC.org

September
Refreshments/
Programs

September Refreshments:

Polly Zimmerman and Jessica Dixon

September Program:

Minerals of the Alum Cave Bluff presented by Dennis Coskren