

Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club



Rock Talk



May, 2017

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Next Meeting:

May 23, 2017@7:00 PM

Program

Classification and Structure of Silicates
John Weidner, Mineralogical Society of
Washington, DC

Refreshments

Tim Foard

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

APRIL MINUTES

Submitted by David Lines

DATE: Meeting was called to order on April 25 2017 at 7:05 pm by Jim White, Acting President.

VISITORS: Two guests: a young girl named Aliya Busch and her mother.

TREASURER: Dave, Treasurer --- same balance as last month. Bob read a "Thank You letter" from Betty Jewett thanking our club for our donation to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation in memory of Bob Jewett. Dave said he had received letters from both the EFMLS and AFMS thanking us for the same donation. Our club has reached the 1200% giving level --- meaning that we have donated 1200 percent of our membership total donations (# of members times \$1 per member) over the years.

MEMBERSHIP: --- Polly, Membership Vice President. 41 members paid to date. 14 members plus 2 guests present tonight. The "not so good" news is that Monty is on Hospice. Please keep him and Cheryl in your prayers and thoughts.

FIELD TRIPS: --- April was another busy month.

(1) 4-15-17 --- Phoenixville, PA ---- pyromorphite (joint trip with Delaware Mineral Society). 4 of our club members went – all found some pyromorphite as well as some galena and quartz crystals. Tom of the Delaware Mineral Society also generously mailed a box of pyromorphite specimens to Rich to give to the trip attendees.

(2) 4-18-17 --- Gettysburg Quarry, Gettysburg, PA with Montgomery County club --- Tim Foard attended and found a variety of microminerals such as calcite, stilbite, quartz, actinolite, feldspar and epidote.

(3) 4-21-17 --- Medford Quarry, in central MD, with Montgomery County Club. Tim Foard attended and found lots of calcite crystals up to 2-1/2 inches long. Calcite was plentiful and he definitely would go again. Some of the calcite fluoresced "red". This trip is held once per year only.

Upcoming trips_---- 2 more in April and 2 (so far) in May: (1) 4-29-17 --- Avondale Quarry in Avondale, PA (Joint Trip with Delaware Mineral Society for pegmatite materials – large almandine garnets/schorl tourmaline. (This is a Friday trip --- please note.)

(2) 4-29/30-17 ---- Franklin NJ ---"Super Dig" – fluorescent minerals – (on you own trip) and Sterling Hill at Ogdenburg, NJ *** (Attendees need to take copy of April Newsletter showing that this is an "Official Trip" --- must sign up online --- 225 person limit.) Need SMRMC Club ID card showing dues paid this year. Cards passed out tonight. Thanks for Nature Center staff filling them out and for Bob signing them this past week. Gary mentioned that it was easier and less expensive to sign-up for this trip online.

(3) 5-6/7-17 – Primitive Technology Weekend at Willow Grove Nature Center at Willow Grove entrance to Cromwell Valley Park (Baltimore County) – call 410-887-2503 for further info. (This is a "go on your own" trip.)

(4) May – Herkimer NY --- Herkimer diamonds --- approx. start TBD on 5-15-17 (Monday) – Please contact Trip Leader = Joe Davis if interested. Several people interested.

PROGRAMS: Carole, Programs Vice President --- Tonight: "2016 California Trip" by Dave. May's Program will be by John Weidmer of the Washington DC club about "The Classification and Structure of Silicates". June's program will tentatively be done by Gary on a subject TBD. Snacks tonight were provided by Tim Smith. May snacks will be provided by Tim Foard.

WEBMASTER: Bob, Webmaster --- website looks great – it has received 908 hits in past 8 days.

NEWSLETTER: Tim Foard, Editor --- Everyone reported receiving their April issue on time. Tim said May issue will contain several field trip reports from April.

MINUTES: Dave, Secretary -- Minutes for February and March meetings both approved.

OLD BUSINESS: A. Rock Swap --- Dave, Swap Chairman --- June 17th from 9 – 5 at Gilbert Run Park, Charles County, MD.

(1) Largest pavilion reserved --- No word whether Region IV will pay the \$300 pavilion rental fee to reimburse Dave. Dave also paid \$50.00 check (his own) for the deposit fee. Since the Club voted at March meeting to reimburse Dave from Club Treasury for his expenses if not covered by proceeds from auction after lunch, Dave felt that this should also apply to all club members who spent money to buy ice, sodas and other supplies for swap. A motion was made, seconded and passed to approve same.

(2) Plenty of room in parking lot for 100 swappers – each can have 10' x 10' behind their vehicle to set up 3 tables and 10 x 10 tent.

(3) Large covered pavilion with 37 large aluminum picnic tables --- 2 electric outlets for microphone for auction.

(4) Extras include horse shoe pits, cornhole blocks, volley ball court on sand with net, playground with swings for kids.

(5) Swap Fliers --- Dave needs 200 more to mail to the clubs holding shows in May.

(6) Swap Announcements sent to *Rock and Gem* magazine, *Rocks and Minerals* magazine and to the EFMLS Calendar --- swap shows up on 1st page on Google with 200,000 hits. (Type in “rock swap southern Maryland 2017”). (late info --- Our swap is in the June 2017 Issue of *Rock & Gem* magazine on page 76.)

(7) Volunteer list to help at swap -- sign-up sheet passed around at Meeting.

Sign up list Currently is as follows:

A. Paul and Linda - collect specimens from each swapper for auction;

B. Ralph G. – Auctioneer;

C. Rich – auction helper

D. Joe (2), Bill C.(1), Rich (1) Tim F. (2), Harry (2) and Dave (2) to bring 10 coolers for drinks/ice.

E. Joe – buy and bring 10 bags of ice;

F. Tim S. -- Buy sodas/water for 100 people;

G. Carole and Al – plastic ware/cups/plates for 100;

H. Rich and Harry --- 2 people to answer questions/direct swappers where to park

** WE STILL Need a few (3) more volunteers to:

(i). Make/install 3 “EFMLS” signs; (ii) Auctioneer recorder; (iii) Set up and remove “Treasure Box” and make a “sign” for.

Dave will be absent at May meeting (attending Wildacres).

B. Nametags – Tim S. said he was ready to send in an order but unable to reach Michael Patterson. Tim needs logo, etc. to complete order.

C. Update: “Rock Sale/Show” in parking lot at Gary’s store location to be planned for month of October. No specific news. Possible outside show there on May 6th --- set up by 9 am --- fee \$10. Address is 3 West Friendship Road, just east of MD Route 2 traffic circle. See Gary if interested.

NEW BUSINESS: Per Gary, Matoaka Cabins in St. Leonard, Calvert County, MD has new person in charge (Bonnie – who is the daughter of deceased owner Connie Smith). The Maryland Geological Society has held their summer picnic there in some past years. Are we interested? Door Prize Drawings ---Bob received a generous donation of tools from Tom and Cobb Allison for tonight’s doorprizes. Thank you Tom and Cobb!! Anyone wishing to donate door prizes to give away, please bring them to a meeting of your choice.

ADJOURNED: Meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.
(Note – Dave will be absent at both May and June meetings due to previous commitments.)

Upcoming Shows and Events: 2017

June 3 - Macungie, PA - 68th Semi-annual Spring Mineralfest presented by the Pennsylvania Earth Sciences Association (PESA), Macungie Memorial Park, 70 Popular Street.

JUNE 3-4 - Canandaigua, NY - GemFest 2017, 24th annual Mineral, Gem, Fossil and Jewelry show sponsored by the Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club. Location-Greater Canandaigua Civic Center, 250 N. Bloomfield Rd., Canandaigua

June 17, - Langhorne, PA - The Rock & Mineral Club of Lower Bucks County 50th Anniversary Picnic, located at Playwicki park (the back pavillion), West Maple Avenue right next to the Neshaminy Creek.

June 17, - La Plata, MD – Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club (SMRMC.org) will host the 2017 EFMLS Region IV POTLUCK PICNIC AND ROCK SWAP/SALE on Saturday June 17th at Gilbert Run Recreational Park located at 13140 Charles Street, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622 which is 8.8 miles east of La Plata.

JUNE 17: Chelmsford, MA - Gene Bearss Annual Micromounters Symposium sponsored by the Micromounters of New England. Trinity Lutheran Church, 170 Old Westford Rd; Chelmsford.

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(position open)

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Rocks, Minerals, and Fossils in the News

A New Dinosaur Fossil Found in Alberta Is So Well-Preserved It Looks Like a Statue

"As rare as winning the lottery."

TRAVIS M. ANDREWS, WASHINGTON POST

12 MAY 2017

<https://www.sciencealert.com/a-new-dinosaur-fossil-has-been-so-well-preserved-it-looks-like-a-statue>

Before being assembled into something recognisable at a museum, most dinosaur fossils look to the casual observer like nothing more than common rocks. No one, however, would confuse the over 110 million-year-old nodosaur fossil for a stone. The fossil, being unveiled today in Canada's Royal Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology, is so well preserved it looks like a statue. Even more surprising might be its accidental discovery, as unveiled in the June issue of *National Geographic* magazine.

On 21 March 2011, Shawn Funk was digging in Alberta's Millennium Mine with a mechanical backhoe, when he hit "something much harder than the surrounding rock." A closer look revealed something that looked like no rock Funk had ever

seen, just "row after row of sandy brown disks, each ringed in gunmetal gray stone".

What he had found was a 2,500-pound (1,130 kg) dinosaur fossil, which was soon shipped to the museum in Alberta, where technicians scraped extraneous rock from the fossilised bone and experts examined the specimen.



Robert Clark/National Geographic

"I couldn't believe my eyes - it was a dinosaur," Donald Henderson, the curator of dinosaurs at the museum, told Alberta Oil. "When we first saw the pictures we were convinced we were going to see another plesiosaur (a more commonly discovered marine reptile)." More specifically, it was the snout-to-hips portion of a nodosaur, a "member of the heavily-armored ankylosaur subgroup," that roamed during the Cretaceous Period, according to *Smithsonian*. This group of heavy herbivores, which walked on four legs, likely resembled a cross between a lizard and a lion - but covered in scales.

Unlike its cousins in the ankylosaur subgroup, the nodosaur lacked a bony club at the end of its tail, instead using armor plates, thick knobs and two 20-inch (50 centimetre) spikes along its armored side for protection, according to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History.



Robert Clark/ National Geographic

"These guys were like four-footed tanks," dinosaur tracker Ray Stanford told *The Washington Post* in 2012. This particular one, according to a news release, was 18 feet (5.4 metre) long and weighed around 3,000 pounds (1,360 kilograms). As Michael Greshko wrote for *National Geographic*, such level of preservation "is a rare as winning the lottery." He continued: "The more I look at it, the more mind-boggling it becomes. Fossilised remnants of skin still cover the bumpy armor plates dotting the animal's skull. Its right forefoot lies by its side, its five digits splayed upward. I can count the scales on its sole.

Caleb Brown, a postdoctoral researcher at the museum, grins at my astonishment. "We don't just have a skeleton," he tells me later. "We have a dinosaur as it would have been." The reason this particular dinosaur was so well preserved is likely due to a stroke of good luck. (Well, perhaps a stroke of bad luck for the poor nodosaur.) Eventually, the land creature floated out to the sea - which the mine where it was found once was - and sank to the bottom. Researchers believe it was on a river's edge, perhaps having a drink of water, when a flood swept it downriver. There, minerals quickly "infiltrated the skin and armor and cradled its back, ensuring that the

dead nodosaur would keep its true-to-life form as eons' worth of rock piled atop it. That is a boon to researchers, particularly given that teeth and bone fragments are much more common finds. "Even partially complete skeletons remain elusive," *Smithsonian* reported

2.65-carat diamond at Arkansas state park found in less than 10 minutes

Published May 12, 2017

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/05/12/2-65-carat-diamond-at-arkansas-state-park-found-in-less-than-10-minutes.html>



Victoria Brodski found a 2.65-carat diamond at Arkansas' Crater of Diamonds State Park on Saturday. (Arkansas State Parks)

An Oklahoma woman struck gold when she found a 2.65-carat diamond at an Arkansas state park in less than 10 minutes.

Victoria Brodski and her family visited Crater of Diamonds State Park on Saturday after she heard someone found a 7.44-carat diamond there in March, according to the Arkansas State Parks website. Brodski, 25, picked up a shiny object she thought was a pretty piece glass minutes after she arrived that morning. She dropped it in her pocket and kept searching for diamonds for the rest of the day.

Brodski realized hours later that she picked up more than a piece of glass when she was at the park's Diamond Discovery Center.



(Brodski named the diamond "Michelangelo" after the Teenage Mutant Turtle, not the sculptor. (Arkansas State Parks))

"I was looking at pictures of diamonds on display and noticed their similarity to what I had found," Brodski told the park.

A park staff confirmed she found a brown diamond, which she later named Michelangelo — after the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle. It was one of the three diamonds found that day and the second largest uncovered at the park so far this year. "It's about the size of a bead, with a dark brown color, like raw honey. It has a smooth, rounded surface and appears free of blemishes, inside and out," Park interpreter Waymon Cox said. Brodski said she will be selling the diamond and splitting the money with her family. "We made a contract before we came, that we would split anything we found among the four of us," she said.

Brodski found the diamond where water flows through and deposits gravel. Since diamonds are heavier than most small rocks, they're often found near heavy minerals.

Miners have excavated a huge jade stone that is worth \$170 million

<http://www.thevintagenews.com/2017/05/04/miners-have-excavated-a-huge-jade-stone-that-is-worth-170-million>



A massive chunk of jade stone has been excavated in Burma, the Southeast Asian country also known as Myanmar.

This finding was made in a remote mine located in Kachin State in the northern part of the country. The stone measures 19 feet long and weighs 192 tons, as reported by the BBC. It's believed to be worth \$170 million. It's not clear if a single stone of this magnitude has ever been discovered before, but it's in the same league as other geological wonders. An example would be the world's second largest diamond, which was actually discovered last year. Also, there is a rare violet diamond that miners recently excavated in Australia.

U Tint Soe, a local politician, stated that it's a present for the fate of their citizens, the government, and their party as it was found in the time of their government. It's a very good sign for them.



Field Trip Report: Phoenixville Lead Mine

Timothy Foard

On the morning of April 15, 2017, around 50 members from several local and regional clubs began trickling into the Pickering Valley Golf Course, the site of the lead mine dumps. Some of us, including Rich Simcsak and myself, arrived before most of the golfers hit the field. We were given a map and were pointed in the direction of the mine dumps. We were also advised to keep a low profile because of the activity, which would certainly increase later in the morning and the fact we had to traverse the course to reach the site.

The stone has been reported to be heading to China, where it will be carved into sculptures and jewelry.

The name jade can be applied to two different types of metamorphic rock; nephrite and jadeite. This discovery is thought to be a jadeite rock. The two types are alike in appearance and are used for ornamental purposes. They have different chemical and physical compositions, but jadeite is the most valuable of the two. It's extremely challenging to tell the difference just by a visual inspection. Miners in Burma have found one of the world's most valuable pieces of jade.

In an uncut, untreated form, the vibrant green of the stone is hard to see, and it looks like a pretty ordinary, dull rock with a darker green tinge. But after it has been polished and chiseled, it will look glassy and green, IFLScience reported.

Around 70 percent of the world's high-quality jadeite is believed to have come from Myanmar and this makes up around half of their domestic product. Unfortunately, the multi-billion dollar trade is filled with crime, government corruption, and environmental destruction.

It seemed easy enough to find the more distant dump site, but an hour later Rich and myself were still unable to find it. It turned out that we were in fact heading in the right direction, but at least I was expecting a massive pile of rocks to indicate the presence of past digging, which did not materialize. This particular dump site was quite small and very close to private property in a wooded area. Now that we eventually found it, we proceed to start digging, and were beginning to find small pieces of pyromorphite, which is the main reason we were here. They were often associated with quartz crystals. We did not find large pieces, and it was hit and miss as to where to dig. After digging in one spot did not produce anything, we moved a few feet in another direction and hoped for success. Soon more rockhounds began to show up, some of which were just as confused about the site location as we were initially. Prior to arriving to the site, we crossed a small stream with some large rocks. About an hour at the site and the stream began to tug at me, and I pulled away to take a look at the rocks in the stream bed. A large chunk of massive quartz with small vugs when split with a chisel revealed delicate crystals of quartz and botryoidal masses of goethite. A rather dark fine-grained rock when cracked with the hammer contained imbedded crystals of galena and some other unidentified mineral. There were some rocks which look like slag material. All of them had cavities inside and a very few contained small





colorless crystals of very likely another lead mineral, either cerussite or anglesite. It was definitely worth investigating the stream. Our packs were getting heavy, and we want to check out the second mine dump, which was closer to where we were parked. There were more collectors at this second site, and it didn't take long before we found additional pieces of pyromorphite. Quartz crystals were much more common at this dump, and sometimes plates several inches across were recovered after a little digging.

It was really hard to pull away, as it was very close to departing time. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of collecting here. I certainly hope I get another opportunity to collect there again!

Field Trip Report: Gettysburg Quarry

Timothy Foard

About nine of us showed up on that cool April 18th morning at 7:00 AM in the parking area of Valley Quarry in Gettysburg. After a brief safety talk, we immediately were led down to the bottom of the quarry. Specimens of stilbite and epidote are the most common minerals, but over 40 minerals are known from this quarry. The majority of these minerals occur as micros. At the bottom there were large areas of standing water from heavy rains a couple of days earlier, which limited access to those not willing to get wet. Some waterfowl took advantage of the temporary pool. One collector, who never visited this quarry, asked me where to look,

and I suggested searching any natural openings—and most will be very small—in otherwise solid rock, as they will be one of the places for minerals to have room to form crystals.

I searched among the boulders, most of which consisted of diabase and hornfels, for any cavities and chiseled away at others which looked like they may be hiding potential crystals. About a half-hour into searching turned up an exposed crystal-lined vug about a centimeter wide. As is often the case, these cavities are rarely positioned on a boulder where they can be extracted without contorting the body into awkward positions, and this time was no exception. After considerable effort, I was able to remove the vug in pieces. Most of the minerals were various shades of green, but some colorless minerals were also present. They were also coated with iron oxide, so the identity of the minerals was not always apparent. I found several more cavities, most being smaller than the first one. The crystals present in the cavities were epidote, actinolite, quartz, calcite, stilbite, and feldspar. Each vug contained 3 to 4 mineral types, but it wasn't apparent until I had time to examine them under the microscope much later.



I decided to explore the islands of boulders, so I donned my knee waders (also steel-toed) and waded out to the rocks. Some of the geese objected in the form of barking-like honks to my intrusion into their comfort zone. The ducks simply flew off and landed at the distant end of the quarry where more standing water was present. I was too focused looking for vugs and nearly overlooked a crack barely a millimeter wide lined with tiny needlelike radiating crystals of

actinolite. There was also a white mineral I had not yet identified encrusting the exposed surface of one of the boulders.



Soon it was time to leave the site. Other collectors were finding stilbite, and one boulder contains several cavities lined with the mineral. All of us went away with at least this mineral and most found epidote as well and a few collected rocks for their garden. We thanked the quarry rep and headed off to our destinations.

All in all, it was a very good trip—what better way to spend a Tuesday?

Field Trip Report: Medford Quarry

Timothy Foard

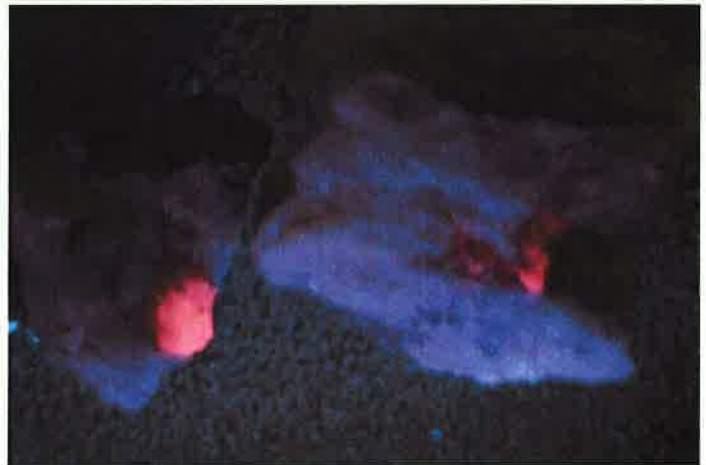
On Friday, April 21, 2017 around 50 people from several local area clubs arrived at the Medford Quarry office for a safety briefing and to hand in signed liability waivers to the quarry representative. This particular quarry in the past had been a longtime favorite for collectors, but became off limits for several years until only recently. Now it is open once a year, and turnout is generally high, so much so that we have to carpool to limit the number of cars driving into the pit.

Calcite is the mineral to be found here, and today was no disappointment. Calcite crystals were present on the boulders lining the road leading down to the

bottom, some of them an inch across. They were also abundant throughout the site, but the largest crystals required some digging. Several collectors were rewarded with dogtooth crystals 2-3 inches long, others were finding plates covered with crystals.



The other mineral present was the soft, manganese mineral, todorokite, which looks like a black glob of grease on some of the calcite. I looked for the presence of crystals, but they all appeared to be the massive form. A couple of collectors found some dark green epidote crystals splayed out like a fan on the surface of massive calcite. I selected a couple of massive calcite I suspect may be florescent under shortwave, which later turned out to be the case.



It was time to leave the quarry. Most thanked the quarry representative and left, but a small group stayed at the office to show off their finds and to talk about upcoming shows.

Field Trip Report: Avondale Quarry

Timothy Foard



The Avondale Quarry Trip drew a large number of interested collectors from various regional clubs on the warm spring morning of April 29, 2017. After the usual safety briefing and signing waivers, we were free to explore most of the quarry, which is quite large, the major exception being the high wall marking the boundary of the quarry. Most of the host rock is metamorphic in nature, but some rare pegmatite was also present. We were shown what to expect when searching for garnets, which were quite large—2-3 inches across, but encrusted with minerals so it was not possible to see the crystal faces. Tourmaline in the form of schorl was also quite common, and some of the crystals were an inch in diameter. Both the garnets and tourmaline were embedded in the schist and because of the nature of the host rock, it was sometimes possible to chisel



them out without too much damage to the mineral.



Most of the people spent a lot of time looking for garnets and the tourmaline. I found one garnet and several schorl crystals. I also found a large feldspar crystal embedded in schist, which I left in place and decided to photograph it instead. I shifted focus on looking for micros, while at the same time keeping an eye on anything unusual. Some quartz boulders looked promising for vugs, but were not productive.

I noticed on one of the boulders lining the road a rust-colored stain along a crack near the top. I suspected a sulfide zone, and a couple of whacks with the sledge hammer produced slabs that I inspected for any sulfide minerals. On the rust stain were groups of pyrite crystals which grew in the octahedral habit.

It was getting to be a really hot day near the end of our stay. I spoke with other collectors about their finds as we were heading back to the cars to leave for the day.

Trip Report (Gerry McLoughlin Collection)

Dave Lines

We (7 folks --- Leo, Jim, Dave, Paul, Linda, Wendy and Rick) went up on Tuesday May 16. The morning rush hour traffic was pretty bad on I-476 that was supposed to bypass Philly --- 30 minutes to go 5 miles. Other than that, the trip was long (4-1/2 hours each way) but uneventful --- thankfully. Between MD, DE and PA, we paid \$32 of tolls per vehicle. That was a shock.

Letty (the widow) is a very nice person and was a wonderful hostess to all of us. Overall, the rocks were decent – especially considering that she has been selling stuff for 1-1/2 years already. The best stuff must have been really terrific. She was selling individual specimens for ½ the price her husband PAID for them – each rock had a small sticky note with tiny perfect print with the name of the rock, the amount he paid and the date of purchase. Incredibly organized. And the UV rocks were plentiful and cheap --- 50 cents per lb. Jim bought 700 lbs of UV, Dave bought 53 lbs, Leo bought another 50 lbs. The back of Dave's truck was full going home.

The attached pic (Wendy took pic) of a chunk of Butterfly Wing Jasper is one of the nicer rough specimens that Wendy got. Letty also sold us some cabs that had nice plumes, etc.

Overall, we probably purchased \$1,000 of her rocks. She was happy. And we had a good field trip.



Member's Finds

Some of the quartz specimens collected during the Phoenixville field trip by Debbie Curtin



Collected any interesting specimens? Send a photo or two to the editor at bmorebugman@yahoo.com for inclusion in the next issue of Rock Talk.

*The Southern Maryland Rock & Mineral Club
is proud to host the 2017*

**Eastern Federation of Mineralogy and
Lapidary Societies (EFMLS)**

Region IV Annual Swap and Sale

Picnic & Auction

**Open to all Rock Club members in the
Eastern Federation**

**Gilbert Run Recreational Park
(Brookside Pavilion)**

Charlotte Hall, MD

Saturday, June 17, 2017

9 am - 5 pm

**Admission to the Park is \$5 per
carload**



**The Southern Maryland Rock and
Mineral Club**

**Meetings take place on the 4th
Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm**

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

For More information, call:

(301) 297-4575

We're on the web:

SMRMC.org