

Trip to James Madison University – Oct. 29:
By Dave Lines



"These are some of the pics from the JMU Grand Re-Opening of the new Mineral Museum. The first is a pic of our members who attended (Rich ---his wife Deb also came but is not pictured --- Ann and Dave, Sandy and Sam Lyon). It was quite an affair with delicious catered goodies to eat and wine to sip as we listened to several speakers extol the fabulous new specimens donated by the Peter Via estate. The superb level of perfection and quality of the specimens on display was truly spectacular. I could detect no dings, bruises, nicks, chips or damage of any kind on these beauties. Many of the crystals of the gem minerals were particularly stunning --- see-through clarity with sharp, complete terminations that rival the best specimens in museums around the world. The new museum was about twice as large as the previous JMU Mineral Museum and included an additional small room dedicated to fluorescent minerals.

The attendees were divided alphabetically into 12 separate groups that were each limited to a museum tour lasting only 5 --- yes, FIVE --- minutes. I snapped pictures as fast as I could, but it was a blur. Fortunately, after the last group left, they allowed those interested to return. Sandy, Sam, Ann and I returned and stayed about 30 minutes more until they kicked us out.

I spoke with Dr. Lance Kearns, who was in charge of putting together all this huge undertaking, and he said that we were the very first people to have viewed the museum. He was rightfully very proud of the final product. The times when it will be open to the public are posted on the museum website at <https://www.jmu.edu/mineralmuseum/index.shtml>. As an aside, Dr. Kearns (actually both Lance and his wife Cindy are PhD doctoral professors there) is pictured in a wheelchair --- a temporary condition --- because he slipped while exiting a hot tub. Hope he is back on his feet soon.

If you are in the Harrisonburg, Virginia area in the Shenandoah Valley, I

hope you will take the time to visit this very special collection. I think you will be glad you did."





