ROCK TALK APRIL 2024

APRIL PROGRAM
"It’s a Mystery"
A "volunteer and program" should be named shortly so be ready for that in April. If you are desirous of doing a program, PLEASE contact Jill soonest!

IN THIS EDITION
Chestnut Ridge VA
Delaware Petrified Wood and Fossils
West Virginia Mineral Word Search

SMRMC 2023 MINUTES
Old Waldorf School, Waldorf, MD
March 25, 2024

October Minutes submitted by Teresa Jones. Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Tim.

VISITORS/NEW MEMBERS: Approximately 31 Members in attendance. New Member Holly Smirnoff was introduced.

SECRETARY: Was moved to accept the minutes and seconded; Minutes were approved.

MEMBERSHIP: Vycki reminded the group that this will be her last membership report, as she has stepped by from the position and we need a new VP/Membership Chairman. Currently 118 paid members. 100 adults and 18 junior members. Another 30 members are pending renewal, which breaks down as follows:
Expiration Month; Expiring Members;
Families; Individuals
  July 2023; - 3, 2, 1
  Sept. 2023; - 5, 1, 3
  Oct. 2023; - 1, 0, 1
  Nov 2023; - 10, 2, 2
  Jan 2024; - 2, 0, 2
  Feb 2024; - 7, 2, 1

Renewal notices have been going out via email, with sporadic response. We are experimenting with mailing hard copy notices.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Financials were reviewed. All dues to AFMS and EFMLS are paid in full. No Issues.

FACEBOOK posts/members: 536. Kurt mentioned the site has been bombarded by people who want to sell and he is monitoring messages to members concerning this.
Continue to post pictures/items that might be of interest.

**WEBSITE:** Nothing new to report.

**NEWSLETTER:** Please continue to send him articles of interest and ideas of what they would like to see in the newsletter.

**PROGRAMS:** Sue Knower reported that tonight’s programs will be a Safety Review of procedures, equipment, etc., especially concerning quarries. Vycki and Bernie are providing tonight’s refreshments. Refreshments for April will be Trisha.

Programs are needed for 2024. She encouraged anyone who has a topic of interest to consider presenting to the group in 2024 or to let her know of any topics you are interested in.

**FIELD TRIP REPORT:** Dave shared specimens he found at Purse State Park (now Nanjemoy Wildlife Management Area) during his ‘go on your own’ trips to collect fossils when there were blow-out tides. Other sites to collect during those times are Clifton Beach, Liverpool Pt. and Chesapeake Bay. He will notify members about the tides in a short-notice email.

Dave reiterated that dues must be paid up-to-date to attend field trips (insurance rules).

**Recent Past Field Trips**

In December, January and February, short-notice fossil collecting notices were sent for fossil hunting. The actual time of trips depended on strong north winds and time of lowest tides.

Feb. 29 and March 3-4, Dave went on Field Trips in AZ and CA and found 6 medium flat-boxes of “good stuff”, which he shared.

March 24 at Chestnut Ridge, VA, 7 people collected quartz crystals. (Note: this was a Sunday trip due to last minute changes because of heavy rain on Saturday) Everyone made the hike way to the top and a good time was had by all. He displayed some specimens from the trip.

**Upcoming Field Trips**

(No scheduled yet, but several are in the works.)

TBD in April: Chesapeake & Delaware (C&D) Canal in Delaware to collect fossil belemnites (Delaware state fossil). Possible side trip to collect petrified wood at another secret location.

TBD – Petrified wood in Odessa, DE. Trip announcement will be emailed to all members as soon as word is received from Calvert Marine Museum Fossil Club.

TBD in May or June: National Limestone quarries in Middleburg, PA to collect Calcite, Celestite, Strontianite, Purple Fluorite, fossil snails, wavelite.

TBD – near Vesuvius, VA. Unakite, rockbridgeite, pink/white/gray quartzite with black skilithos tracks (lapidary material). Scheduling around Virginia Spring Turkey Gobbler season is a factor.

TBD- Point of Rocks, MD/VA for Potomac Marble (lapidary), blue quartz, jasper, and native American artifacts.

TBD - Contrary Creek, VA for garnets, crystals and gold
TBD – HK Penn Quarry (MD/PA border) (for green colored minerals- Williamsite, McGuinnestite, Serpentine.

Dave polled the members for interest in various out of state field trips.

Asked if anyone interested in going to a longer trip to the following places: SC Diamond Hill in Andersonville for quartz crystal – skeletal, smoky, amethyst.

GA – Graves Mountain near Lincolnton for rutile crystals and colorful iridescent and hematite.

KY – Danville for geodes of quartz crystals.

MO (Missouri) geodes with various crystals- quartz and calcite.

Old Business

Members’ Auction - Possibilities for outdoor venue... Gilbert Run ($150.00/day), Cedarville (Cost ?); $1.000 to have it here at the Waldorf School. May be held on a Saturday in August to not rush the event along with a picnic lunch.

New Business

At the beginning of the meeting, Dave proposed a memorial donation of $1 per member. Dave presented the motion and Vycki seconded. Motion passed.

Upcoming Rock Show in October: Kenny wants to have a meeting in the next few weeks of people who want to have an active part in the how. Points of discussion: Table set up. He also posed the possibility to look into the club buying our own tables. Currently each table to rent is $10.00. Issues include: storage for the tables.

A proposal was made that all club dues to due Dec. 1. Currently, the dues cycle for a member depends on the month they joined. This would streamline the membership dues process. Motion and vote for approval was made.

New VP/Membership Chairman - Carole and Paul volunteered. (thanks!)

Adjournment

There being no more business, a motion to adjourn was made by Paul and Vycki seconded. Adjournment at approximately 8:15 pm.

After refreshments and Door Prize drawing (thanks, Dave). Rich presented a very practical and interesting review of Quarry Safety.

FACEBOOK Page Is Growing!!
Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club

Kurt is maintaining our ever growing FACEBOOK Page and is looking for pictures of the club members collections and description of where those items were collected. This social media effort is helping share what this club is doing and can help it expand even further.

If you are not "FACEBOOK Friendly" or "Computer Savy", Kurt is happy to assist you in navigating these "internet waters" safely to share your stories.
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### 2024 PROGRAMS/REFRESHMENTS SCHEDULE

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**Program Volunteers, Dates TBD:**

2. Kenny Sams – Opals
3. Jill Lee – Summer Astronomy

Dates are tentative. Changes are possible due to a multitude of reasons that are always beyond our control.
**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**JUNE 8-9 2024 - WEST FRIENDSHIP, MD**
Retail & Wholesale Vendors with Wholesale Only Trade area. Hourly Door Prizes and Grand Prize Drawing. $6 Admission Children under 12 Free. Howard County Fairgrounds, 2210 Fairgrounds Road, West Friendship, MD 21794. The Gem Miner's Spring Show is an exhibition of beads, fine jewelry, gems, minerals, fossils, gift and craft items. New Wholesale section. Hourly and grand door prizes. In its 3rd year. Free and handicapped parking; contact Teresa Schwab, (301) 807-9745; Email: eventcoordinator@gem-show.com www.gem-show.com.. Website will have updates. 301-807-9745

**MAY 4-5 2024 - The North Shore Rock and Mineral Club will be hosting the 59th annual 2024 New England Gem & Mineral Show: Saturday May 4th (9 am-5 pm) and Sunday May 5th (10 am-4 pm) at the Topsfield Fairgrounds, Coolidge Hall, on Route 1 in Topsfield, MA (GPS: 207 Boston St., Topsfield, MA). Retail and wholesale dealers, minerals, fossils, beads, gemstones, jewelry, lapidary, exhibits and mineral and fossil identification. Families will enjoy gold panning, "Spin-a-Gem," mineral sifting and geode cracking. General admission is $7.00 ($6.00 with ad/coupon). Children under 12 free and FREE PARKING. Contact person is Joe Weisberg. Email is northshorerockandmineral@gmail.com Website: www.northshorerock.org

**MAY 24-26 2024—SALEM, VIRGINIA:**
Annual show; Salem Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show; Salem Civic Center, 1001 Roanoke Blvd; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-4; 18 and older: $8, 11-17: $2, 10 and under: Free; Featuring the finest Gems, Minerals, Jewelry, Fossils, Meteorites and Beads from Around The World; contact Alan Koch; Email: agmjs3@gmail.com; Website: www.americangemshow.com

**JUNE 1 2024—MACUNGIE, PENNSYLVANIA:**
Annual show; Pennsylvania Earth Sciences Association (PESA); Macungie Memorial Park, 50 Poplar St; Sat. 8:30-3; Free; Fossils, gems, and minerals from six continents and outer space on over 100 tables indoors and out featuring a fluorescent mineral room and other goodies; contact Mandy Apgar; Email: pesanewsletter@yahoo.com

**JULY 12-14 2024—RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA:**
Retail show; Treasures of the Earth, Inc; North Carolina State Fairgrounds, 4285 Trinity Rd; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Adults $8, sixteen and under free; There will be jewelry of all types, custom faceted-gemstones, beads, crystals, minerals, and fossils. A wire-wrapper will be present to design jewelry and wrap stones on site; contact Ellen White, (804) 642-2011; Email: Ellen.White@TreasuresOfTheEarth.com;
AUGUST 24-25 2024 - St. Lawrence Rock & Mineral Club’s 57th Annual Show August 24th & 25th, Canton, NY @ the Pavilion, 90 Lincoln St., Canton, NY 13617 ADMISSION: $4.00 Adults, 12 and under free Sat. 9-4:30 PM; Sunday 9-3:00 PM Friday the 23rd at dusk, there’s a free fluorescent mineral hunt for kids, lights provided. Contact William deLorraine, President: wdellie@gmail.com, 315-287-2560 visit us @ www.stlawrencecountymineralclub.org

SEPTEMBER 28 - 29 2024  The Central Pennsylvania Rock and Mineral Club’s 58th Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show! Saturday, September 28, 2024 10 AM – 6 PM Sunday, September 29, 2024 10 AM – 4 PM. NEW Location at The Zembo Shrine Auditorium  2801 N. 3rd Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110 Admission $6 PER PERSON ($5 with postcard or ad) CHILDREN 12 & UNDER FREE  Free off-street parking!

OCTOBER 26-27, 2024 – Rochester Gem, Mineral, Jewelry and Fossil Show. 10am-5pm Saturday, 10am to 5pm Sunday. Total Sports Experience. 435 West Commercial Street, East Rochester, NY. Children’s activities, hourly drawings, about 28 dealers.

ODDS AND ENDS

EDITORS NOTE: I may forward an email from ROCKCHASING.COM if the article(s) are worthy for sharing with the club members. IF anyone gets to their "FULL POINT" with too much information - PLEASE tell me and I will stop it's dissemination to those members not wanting the email.

New titanium mine just 3 miles miles from Georgia wildlife refugee center sparks outrage among locals who fear project will wreak havoc on iconic blackwater swamp

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-13215753/titanium-Georgia-wildlife-refugee-sparks-outrage.html

Father-daughter 202 million-year-old fossil find could be largest prehistoric marine reptile


An active volcano in Antarctica is spewing $6,000 in gold dust every day

https://www.foxweather.com/extreme-weather/mount-erebus-antarctica-gold-dust
“No pain, no gain” is the short version of Chestnut Ridge. The long version? Well, for starters, it is a 200 mile drive from Southern Maryland, then (if you are in shape) a 1-1/2 hour strenuous hike over rocks and logs straight up a steep mountain, then 3 or 4 hours of digging including deciding what to take and what to leave, then a 1+ hour hike back down carrying too much weight, and finally another 200 mile drive back home. It’s not for sissies.

The seven (7) Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club members (Rich, John M., Tom Z., John S., Irma U., Maria N., and myself) who went this time were the fittest group I have ever guided up there in the past 26 years. We met at the Burger King in Staunton and caravanned for an hour to the yard of a friend’s property at the foot of Chestnut Ridge. Upon arrival, the outside temperature was 28 degrees F. When we dressed for the hike, I recommended wearing light clothing and carrying the rest until we reached the top because we would all soon be sweating despite the current chilly temperature. I wore a tee shirt --- and put my coveralls in my backpack. We reviewed the safety precautions --- be careful hiking, the dry leaves on the ground were slippery, choose your footing carefully, rest frequently, use common sense, don’t roll rocks downhill --- and warn others if a rock starts rolling. Then I requested all holes be refilled and covered with old leaves and forest litter --- the goal was to leave the area looking untouched. Likewise pick up any trash. I reminded everyone that this was National Forest property and we had written permission to collect quartz crystals here and we wanted to keep it looking good. Then we took a group picture and chipped in for a gift card for the property owner.
There were no illusions --- the first five minutes was the easy part --- only a 20-degree slope uphill. Then for the next 100 yards, it increased to a 40-degree slope. My old legs began to feel it. The group following me began to string out. I tied bright survey tape around small trees every 20 – 30 yards so people could follow at their own pace. Slowly we made progress upward. Two areas were nearly flat, most areas were steep, others were steeper. We passed the halfway point. Then the 3/4-way point. The folks began to get excited. In the brushy areas, John M. helped me move downed tree limbs and dead laurel bushes out of our way. Then we could see the top. Whew! What a climb! When we began to see almost hidden quartz crystals sparkling in the sunshine, people started chattering and spread out. They soon forgot their aches. Wow -- crystals seemed to be everywhere. We moved to the very top around a sheer outcrop of sandstone laced with visible veins of quartz crystals.

The path I took was very steep (at least a 60-degree slope). I noticed a 12-inch diameter tree on the side of that steep area which had fallen and wedged in the top of another tree. I could see crystals winking beneath the upturned root ball and suggested to John M. that he should start digging there. He did and was rewarded with some beautiful clusters of clear, undamaged crystals --- probably the best ones found by any of us. We let those who had never been here go ahead of us and see the untouched surface with crystals sparkling all over. It was rewarding to see the excitement on everyone’s faces. I tried to point out areas where I thought good specimens would be --- but the best ones seemed to be randomly found.
We all settled down into his or her spot and carefully pulled away the old brown (mostly oak) leaves on top and began to remove the dirt. I sifted each scoop of soil with my small screen with ½” wire mesh. I found crystals in every shovel full. The smallest were 1/4” diameter and ¾” long and the largest were 1” diameter and 1-1/2” long. I carefully examined all sides of every rock I dug because some contained clusters of crystals on one or more sides. Another precaution we took was to let the crystals gradually acclimate to the warmer air temperature because the crystals were cold underground. We kept them out of the direct sun. If one held a freshly dug cold crystal in a warm hand, the crystals would instantly cloud up with tiny cracks inside --- a clear crystal would become permanently cloudy. The best crystals were very clear with sharp perfect points. I later found that most of the clusters I found had one or more damaged crystals. I should have moved to another spot, but it was easier to keep digging and finding stuff without losing precious time moving. Everyone seemed happy and were finding specimens where they were digging. We all took breaks to eat lunch and drink some water to recharge. We chatted and looked at each other’s finds and compared notes. This time together is always one of the best rewards of the trip because we get to know each other better, which in turn strengthens our club. We all continued to collect specimens until around 2:00 pm and then began to wrap our finds with old newspaper for protection and pack them up. Then came the filling of our holes and covering any bare soil with old leaves and pieces of limbs and logs. When we finished, the area where we had been collecting looked like we had never been there. Well done!
In small groups, we then started descending the mountain following the trail we had marked with bright survey tape. The trip downhill is different than the climb up. Uphill is a cardio workout. Downhill is all strength and endurance --- everyone is
tired, and they are carrying more weight. [Confession --- I took a big fall when my feet went out from under me and had to put stuff back in my bucket which had spilled out.] I was literally the last person to leave the top. John M. helped me by removing every other piece of the survey tape. I removed the rest as I descended. We left the mountain looking pristine. Back in the parking area, we packed up our vehicles and counted our blessings for a safe and successful trip. After a little help turning the vehicles around, we all headed back to our home. A fun trip.

The following are some comments written by others in our group:
From Irma and Maria: “This was our first time going to Chestnut Ridge, and an enjoyable experience. The hike up was difficult but rewarding and we found some really nice crystals. The mountain was somewhat difficult to hike because of how steep it was, but it can be manageable and worth it for the crystals you can find. Everyone was very kind and helpful. Dave recommended places to dig and he marked the trail up the mountain. It was a very satisfying experience, and we left the trip tired but happy with our finds.”

From Tom: “The trip to Chestnut Ridge was phenomenal! I get out with a few different clubs and must say all of the people I meet from the SMRMC are wonderful. I always feel welcomed and enjoy everyone’s company. I strongly believe it’s the people you’re with that make the trip. Again, thank you for setting up this wonderful adventure. It is very much appreciated.”

**Delaware Petrified Wood and Fossils**

*by Dave Lines*

We were few of us (only 5 --- Dustin, Rich, Renee, Bernie, and Dave). We met at 7:45 am at the Middletown “Park and Ride”, took a quick group picture, showed our group some sample flats of what to look for, and reviewed our plan for the day --- caravan to the petrified wood location and look in a mowed grassy field, then shift to a wooded area with a stream, and then caravan to the C&D Canal and look in old dredge spoil piles for fossils (belemnites and various fossil shells). At the start, the weather was a chilly 47 degrees with strong westerly winds, so we dressed warmly for searching in that open field. For one of us, this was the first field trip with our club,
while two others had looked previously for petrified wood in a farm field in another location and found very little (only 3 pieces for one person and nothing for the other person). I promised that we would do better.

Everyone was enthusiastic and eager to get started as we changed into sturdy footwear, and then spread out looking for any bare patches of ground in the grass. In a few minutes, I found a spot where I could see several small pieces of petrified wood. I called everyone together and told them I could see 3 pieces within 3 feet from where I was standing. They immediately found them all and pocketed each piece. Success -- their eyes were getting calibrated. Soon everyone was finding wood on their own. After about 30 minutes of searching the field in the strong winds, I was getting cold, and my eyes were watering. I suggested that we head into the woods where it would be less windy and warmer.

Inside the woods, the conditions were much more pleasant with almost no wind. By that time, everyone knew what to look for. The best places were the deer trails which had bare ground. Each small gully was productive as well because there had been numerous heavy rain events in the two years since we were last here. I showed our group a particular wash about 30 feet long where there were numerous pieces of excellent wood showing. I looked in only a small portion of that wash and found several nice pieces --- then I went back and looked again and used my handheld small 3 prong garden scratcher to scrape away the leaves and sticks where they had piled up and I found a dozen more pieces of petrified wood.

Persistence and attention to detail as well as getting down on our hands and knees paid the highest dividends in terms of the most petrified wood being found. Our eyes were our best tools. The tiniest pieces of wood showing often led to much larger pieces when pulled from the ground. The difficult to access places were great --- like those under bushes and thorny brush. I searched one gulley where another person in our group had already looked --- I could see their tracks. Yet, I found about ten nice pieces of wood that they had missed, including my largest find of the day which had been protruding about an inch out of the gulley bank under a bit of honey suckle --- perfectly hidden. I was having a lot of fun finding stuff, when I received a call from Rich at about 11:00 am suggesting that we go to the next place. I was on the far side of the field when he called. Then he said, “take your time”. Perfect. I did just that and moseyed back through the woods following deer trails and picking up at least 15 more specimens. 😊 When I reached our parked vehicles, I emptied my very full fanny back into a cardboard flat and we all started the drive to the C&D Canal area.
Arriving at the C&D Canal spoil area on the north side of the canal just east of the Reidy Point Bridge, we parked out of the way along the road beside the canal and we hiked into the spoils area and spread out to look for fossils. There was a fresh pile of sand about 100 feet long and 20 feet high to the right and four of us went there to look.

I had remembered that Tom Z. had previously mentioned that he went to the left and did quite well. So, I went left and walked about ¼ mile along the perimeter road/berm until I came to a large area of sand that had been bulldozed into a long pile. I walked over to the sandy area and immediately saw several fossil oyster shells and belemnite sections laying on the surface. I picked some up and looked further, finding several more belemnites. I called Rich and told him what I had found and suggested that he bring the group over.

Within a few minutes, everyone arrived and started looking for stuff. Some sifted the sand with screens and some just searched the surface. Rich found the largest belemnite on the surface --- it was ½ inch in diameter and 2-plus inches long with a nice point. Everyone found belemnites and fossil oyster shells. I found 2 exogyra shells that had both the top and the bottom shells intact.

Justin left around 1:00 pm, while the rest of us stayed until around 2 pm. It had been a good day, but everyone was tired from the long drive up and 6 hours of collecting, so we all headed home to clean up our finds and label our new specimens. Another great trip.
**Summer Intern Possibility**

Note – This is an offer from Kyanite Corporation in western central VA to hire a student as an intern for this coming summer. If you (or someone you know) are interested, call Mike Morris at the number below.

From: Mike Morris  
<mmorris@kyanite.com>  
Date: April 5, 2024 at 1:56:06 PM EDT  
Subject: Summer Intern

As we discussed would are looking for a qualified intern to assist a drilling program roughly May-June-July at KMC.  
Have to be 18  
Go through 3 days of paid training  
Computer capable  
Makes notes and entries  
Organize and store core  
Reliably present  
Camera use with training  
Able to lift 75# - more typically 50#  
Run a forklift – with training  
Drive a vehicle onsite – UTV – ATV possibly  
Photo-graph core  
Keep core logs  
Receive and interpret instruction from professional Geologists  
For consideration $15 an hour is the idea

If anyone is interested let me know – we can discuss further details – would have to interview and be accepted.

MMorris  434 547 6629
MINERALS THAT CAN BE FOUND IN WEST VIRGINIA

These and a few others (that I could not fit in) can be found in West Virginia. Many collecting websites list locations where these minerals can be found. Happy Hunting!!

ANHYDRITE  GALENA  PSIOMELANE
BARITE  GYPSUM  PYRITE
CALCITE  HEMATITE  QUARTZ
CHERT  MARCASITE  SEPTARIAN NODULE
COAL  MELANTERITE  SPHALERITE
DIAMOND  MUSCOVITE  SULFUR
DOLOMITE  OOLITE  TOURMALINE
EPIDOTE  OPAL  TRAVERTINE
FLUORITE  PETRIFIED WOOD  ZIRCON
The Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club
Meetings take place on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm
Held at the OLD WALDORF SCHOOL
Next to the Waldorf JayCees Hall
3074 Crain Highway, Waldorf, MD 20601
North of the RT 301 / RT 5 intersection
We’re on the web: SMRMC.ORG

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Bob Davidson

Field Trip Chairman
David Lines

Treasurer
Greta G

Rock Talk Editor
Rich Simcsak

FACEBOOK Coordinator
Kurt Knower

ITEMS WANTED/FOR SALE

For Sale – Virginia Unakite slabs (approx ¼ inch thick) – $0.50 per square inch (this is half off regular price). Call Dave (240) 427-7062