Meeting: January 26, 2011    Time: 7:45 p.m. – 10 p.m.
Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd. Arlington, VA 22204

Program: Revisited
“Minerals of the Wannenkopfe Quarry,
Eifel Region, Ochtendung, Germany:
By Dave MacLean
Rutiles from Wannenkopfe

Dave MacLean will present slides of minerals in
the Wannenkopfe Quarry in the Eifel Region,
Ochtendung, Germany.
Mindat reports that 435 minerals are found in the
Eifel. The Eifel is well known for its many
microminerals.

“Photo of the Month”
By Patrick Haynes

President’s Message:
By Dave MacLean

Please plan to attend our 38th Atlantic
Micromounters’ Conference April 1-3, 2011 at the
MHA Conference Center in Elkridge, MD. We will
hear from a speaker, conduct the annual auction of
micromounts with photographs, dig into the "freebie
tables", and have a good time with our fellow micro
mineralogists..

I would like to work with you to present some
formal and informal programs from outside and
from our own talents and continue our workshops in
2011. Please let me know your ideas for programs
at our monthly meetings.

Demonstrating micro mineralogy at the NVMC
and GLMSMC shows and other places are an
opportunity to share the wonders of
micromineralogy with others. To demonstrate we
need volunteers.

Finally a big thank you to last year’s officers;
Tom, Bob, George, and George, newsletter editor
Kathy, Tour organizer Eric, and those who shared
raw material to share for making meetings fun and
interesting, an informative newsletter, and
productive field trips.

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"Photo of the Month is a 2mm Heulandite-Na
from Hwy 160, milepost 161.2, Wolf Creek
Pass, Mineral Co., Colorado
Previous Meeting Minutes 12/20/10
By: George Reimherr

Acting president Robert Clemenzi opened the meeting at 8:02 p.m. Twenty four persons were present. As this was a joint meeting/Christmas party with 2 other local mineral clubs, with people waiting to partake of the food and beverages on the tables, we dispensed with the usual meeting procedures and went directly to the election of officers for 2011. The slate of officers presented in the previous newsletter were all elected:

- President - Dave MacLean;
- Vice President - Robert Clemenzi;
- Treasurer - George Loud;
- Secretary - George Reimherr.

Logan Babcock was elected as at large board membe. He may take the position of Treasurer when George Loud moves out of our area.

There were two games played later in the evening. Attendees were asked to write down something about themselves on a slip of paper; the challenge was to guess who wrote that. It was a way for persons to learn about each other. The other game was a multiple choice at the correct answer to questions relating to the mineral hobby.

Field Trips: James Madison University
Dr. Lance Kearns  Saturday, Feb. 19, 2011  9-4
By Tom Tucker

The Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia would like to invite the Micromineralogists of the National Capitol Area, and the Northern Virginia Mineral Club to join us in a visit to the mineralogy labs of Dr. Lance Kearns at James Madison University, and their fabulous mineral museum. This visit is the usual setup with microscopes and access to powder x-ray diffraction, X-ray fluorescence, and electron microscope.

Previous Program Reviewed: 12/20/10
By Kathy Hrechka

MNCA & NVMC club members voted in officers for 2011, and enjoyed a joint holiday celebration.

NEW BOOK OUT: Roadside Geology of Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, D.C.

Published October 15, 2010 by Author John Mans, with Illustrators, Matthew Moran and Suzannah Moran. Paperback, 6 X 9 inches, 368 pages, list price $24.00. [You can buy it cheaper-- I saw it for as low as $16.32 by web surfing - Ed.]

From the sandstone ridges and shale valleys of western Maryland to the sand dunes and tidal estuaries on Delaware’s coast, the geologic features of the Mid-Atlantic region include a diverse array of rocks and landforms assembled during more than 1 billion years of geologic history.

The book’s introduction presents an overview of the geologic history of Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, D.C. It has 35 road guides which discuss the landforms and rocks visible from a car window, along bike paths, and at nearby waysides and parks, including Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historic Park, Assateague Island National Seashore, Rock Creek Park, and Cape Henlopen State Park. Learn why sea level is rising faster in the Chesapeake Bay than in other coastal areas of the world, find out how the sixth largest impact crater on Earth helped shape Chesapeake Bay, and discover what moved the rocks at Devils Racecourse in Catoctin Mountain Park.

Via "The Rockhounder" By Mohr, Jan. 2011

Dues are Due by January 2011:
Individual $12.50  Family $15., Sponsor $25, Patron $40., $55.00 Sponsor & Patron. (Due Jan. 1)

Checks should be made payable to MNCA and sent to:
George Loud, MNCA Treasurer
2409 Menokin Drive #101
Alexandria, VA. 22302
Editors’ Notes:
Kathy, Julia, & Michael Hrechka

Each month we will feature a club member’s original article. Also, if you enjoy a particular article in an electronic form, forward it to us to be included in the next Mineral Mite. Photos are great too.

“Where in the World are your Editors?”

Mayan City of Chichen Itza, Cancun, Mexico 12/10

Club Article Deadline is 10th of each month. The Mineral Mite will be emailed on 15th.

MNCA Conference April 1-3, 2011
By: Steve Weinberger, Conference Chair

Our spring conference is soon approaching; April 1—3 is not that far off. Our featured speaker will be Tom Loomis all the way from South Dakota. His topics will be listed in the flyer going out this month. Since this is our project we do need help from our members, but this does not mean that you have to be there all three days. Our tasks are divided among these days and I’ll list some of them here:

We need:
• 2-3 people on Friday afternoon from 3:30-5:30 to help set up tables, chairs and electrical lines
• 2-3 people on Saturday afternoon to help keep auction records
• people to bring desserts for Sat, & Sun. (bring enough to share with at least 10 people)
• 6 people to help on Sunday afternoon with tables, chairs, electrical lines and general clean up. Barbara Sky has already graciously offered to do registration on Saturday morning.

MNCA Conference continued

As you can see, there really is not tremendous commitment that we are asking of all of you, but without your help all of the work falls to Mike Seeds and me, and it is really too much for the two of us. So, decide where and when you would like to work and let me know. You can e-mail me at <cscrystals2@verizon.net>, call me 410-833-7926, or drop me a note at PO Box 302, Glyndon, MD 21071-0302.

If you’ll notice on the flyer, the cost for the Best Western Hotel has actually gone down from last year to $80 per night. If you share with a buddy you can split the cost and avoid the commute if you attend all sessions. The hotel has included a hot breakfast, heated indoor pool and sauna, etc. Why not make it a mini-vacation?

I have already received auction micros from some of you, but we still need some more. Remember, the better the specimens of the rare or aesthetic the better we do on the auction, thus keeping current and future costs down. Looking forward to hearing from you.
The 31st Annual New Mexico Mineral Symposium, the Petroglyph Mine and the Beryllium Virgin Claim

By: Patrick Haynes

A fun event that I attend every year is held in Socorro, NM in early November. On Friday night, the 12th, there were about 25 mineral and rock dealers congregated at the Comfort Inn. A wide variety of materials was offered, but a lot of it was "local" material, meaning specimens found in the southwestern states and Mexico. Several of the dealers have micro material, including Ron Gibbs, Ramon DeMark, Robert Walstrom and even me, strolling about with 2 flats under my arm. Mr. Walstrom was having a sale, having reduced his prices and then offering "keystone", half-price, on everything.

Jack and Marty Crawford go to the Boleo district in Mexico and purchase large lots of specimens from the fellow who collects mineral specimens for the company that owns the mines. They offered boleite, pseudoboleite and they even had a few cumengites. They also purchase chrysocolla and turquoise in large lots. It is great to obtain specimens from field collectors and such direct source dealers. In the motel one room is occupied by Blaine Reed from Durango, CO, a meteorite dealer, peddling his great assortment of interstellar debris. There is probably something there for everyone.

Saturday morning begin a day of presentations, preceded by some opening remarks from Virgil Lueth, mineralogist/curator for the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources. Three of the presentations were by members of the Mining Artifact Collectors association. The titles were "Blue Ice": Collecting halite and associated minerals from the Carlsbad potash mines", by Phillip Sims; "Collecting the Michigan copper country" by Tom Rosemeyer; "Blasting from the past" by Jack Purson; "The rare and uncommon minerals from the Hansonberg mining district, New Mexico" by Ray Demark; "Sierrita Mountain beryls" by Barbara Muntyan; "Collecting coal miners' carbide lamps" by David Thorpe; "Paper treasures" by Ross Arrington Beryllium Virgin Claim Pseudobrookites Gasparite and Larry Crofts; "Apache Hills minerals : the rest of the story, Hidalgo county, New Mexico", by Robert Walstrom; The greater Alma mining district:

Beryllium Virgin Claim: Pseudobrookites Gasparite a Colorado mining legend" by Steven Veatch. The premier and final presentation of the day is by a speaker who was invited to talk for an hour. It was "Geology and mineralogy of Mont Saint-Hilaire, Quebec, Canada" by R. Peter Richards. Dr. Richards only touched upon about twenty species or so, not the 400+ that occur there!

Throughout the days after every 2 or 3 talks, was a break, plus a 1-1/2 hour lunch break, allowing time to visit the NMBGMR's wonderful mineral museum. Throughout the day fresh refreshments are provided by the NMBGMR, including some AM breakfast burritos, complete with green chile and red salsa, should you desire it. The attendance this year was just under 300 people, making it one of the most popular mineral symposiums in the USA. Saturday evening is a banquet, which includes an auction to benefit the NM Mineral Symposium. Saturday night, both during and after the banquet, the mineral dealers at the Comfort Inn are back at it. Things are pretty spontaneous, rowdy and a lot of fun.

Sunday morning the talks resumed with "Hemimorphite and wulfenite of Montana" by Mike Gobla; "The Kearney Mine, 1942-1967" by jack Burgess; "Mt. Watson fluorite, Grant county, New Mexico" by Travis Cato; "The Mina Del Tiro, the lost pages" by Craig Pearson; and the final talk was "Minerals from the Thomas Range, Juab County, Utah" by the ancient Doktor Klaus Fuhrberger.

The symposium presentations had concluded for a lunch break followed by a silent auction where the Comfort Inn's dealers lose their dead weight and many other items are offered, mostly local minerals collected by local collectors.

I decided that my time would be better spent in the field collecting. I was accompanied by an
Albuquerque collector, Paulina Inigo, to the Petroglyph Mine, about 3 miles east of Hillsboro, Sierra County. This little mine is only a few hundred feet from the highway, easily accessible. The mine is little known, but one can find decent micro crystals of mostly lead/vanadium minerals, including wulfenite, vanadinite, willemite, descloiizite, cerussite, hemimorphite, quartz, calcite and chrysocolla. Collecting underground one pays little attention to the outside world and the passage of time. It was after 9 pm when we made to Truth or Consequences to obtain motel rooms.

The next morning we could see lots of threatening "weather" in the Black Range, where our next target was located. It snowed and rained while we drove over the continental divide and to the Beryllium Virgin Claim, located on the rim of Paramount Canyon in Sierra County. I had found red beryl at this location shortly after moving to Socorro in 1979 to attend college. Myself and my collecting partner filed a mining claim on the property just in case it had red beryl crystals of high value. Unfortunately the crystals are usually 1 to 4 mm in size, opaque and fractured.

The weather was dicey, and varied between sun-shiny-t-shirt and holy-moly-parka. Thirty years ago there existed a prominent outcrop of mineralized rhyolite with a cassiterite-hematite vein running behind it. The outcrop is now gone, removed by collectors, so most of the collecting activity takes place on the vein or mieralized rock adjacent to it. The vein has very interesting textures, with lots of coarse specular hematite associated with white layers/spheres of quartz or cristobalite and various types of cassiterite, including "wood tin", the massive dull orange variety. Bixbyites can occur in the vein, but are sparse. The adjacent rhyolite's crystals are microscopic and drusy quartz lines most of the lithophysae (= Latin for "rock bubbles"). Other species are bixbyite often with various modifications, pseudobrookite, ilmenite, hematite, cassiterite, sanidine, sparse rounded fluorite aggregates, sparse gasparite-(Ce), extremely rare chernovite (Y) and the cerium analog of chernovite, which has never been written up. This location has the world's best gasparite-(Ce) crystals. They are tiny and reach 0.3 mm in size. Due to their small size it is difficult to tell the difference morphologically between the monoclinic gasparite and the tetragonal chernovite, however the gasparite greatly exceeds the chernovite in abundance. And the chernovite-(Y) exceeds its cerium analog in abundance. Chances are if you identify a tiny yellow crystal then it is gasparite-(Ce).

Red beryl is found randomly in lithophysae in an area about 200' to the NNW, with very few associated minerals. A few shallow pits now exist where people try their luck, however it is not very productive, generally yielding one crystal for every 1-2 hours of breaking rock.

Photos: Beryllium Virgin Claim, with one of a shallow red beryl pit; and one w Paulina Inigo and Roy Griener, who joined us, working on the cassiterite/hematite vein, with adjacent mineralized rhyolite, overlooking Paramount C
A Diamond Celebration July 7-10, 2011
AFMS Convention and Show in Syracuse, NY

Year End Tax Reminder
Looking for that last minute tax donation? Make a contribution to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation. Monies received are invested, and the interest is used for $4,000 scholarships to graduate level earth science students – one per participating federation. Details may be found on website.

Snow Crystals: www.snowcrystals.com

MNCA Weather alert: snow contingency
If schools in Arlington County are to be cancelled, or let out early, because of weather on the day of our scheduled meeting, we will have no meeting. Call the NMCA President or a Board Member.

Micro Demonstrators Needed:
March 20 - 21 Sat= 11 am- 6pm  Sun= 10am-5pm
GLMSMC needs MNCA volunteers to demo micro mineralogy at the 47th Annual Gem & Mineral Show at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds, 16 Chestnut Street, Gaithersburg, MD

We may be able to borrow Joe Muerter's rock shop model and his turntable system.

The 37th Annual
Rochester Mineralogical Symposium
April 15-18, 2010
Radisson Inn Rochester Airport
175 Jefferson Road, Rochester, NY 1