Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club

ROCK TALK OCTOBER 2021

26 October 2021 at 1900 (7 PM)
Meeting at OLD WALDORF SCHOOL
(next to the Waldorf JayCees Hall)
North of the RT 301 / RT 5 Intersection
FACE MASK REQUIRED - Charles County Requirement

CELEBRATING THE OPENING OF THE JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY (JMU) MINERAL MUSEUM

Dr Kearns (JMU Mineral Museum Curator) has invited eight (8) clubs to be at the Grand Opening of the Mineral Museum after multiple years of transition from the old high school to the new building it is now housed in (yes - COVID-19 has had a part in the delay).

Eight clubs have been invited to the opening on 29 October. This promises to be an outstanding evening of viewing many prior unseen Minerals found in Virginia. Details in this newsletter. Recommend if you bring a camera, ensure there is **GIGABYTES** of empty space for all the photos you may want to take. It will be that good!!

Check Details on Page 7

October Program - Al and Carole: Hands-On Fossil Fish Workshop

Uncover 60 million-year-old Wyoming fossil fish from their shale matrix. Since specimens vary in size and quality, they will be selected by members using a number system.

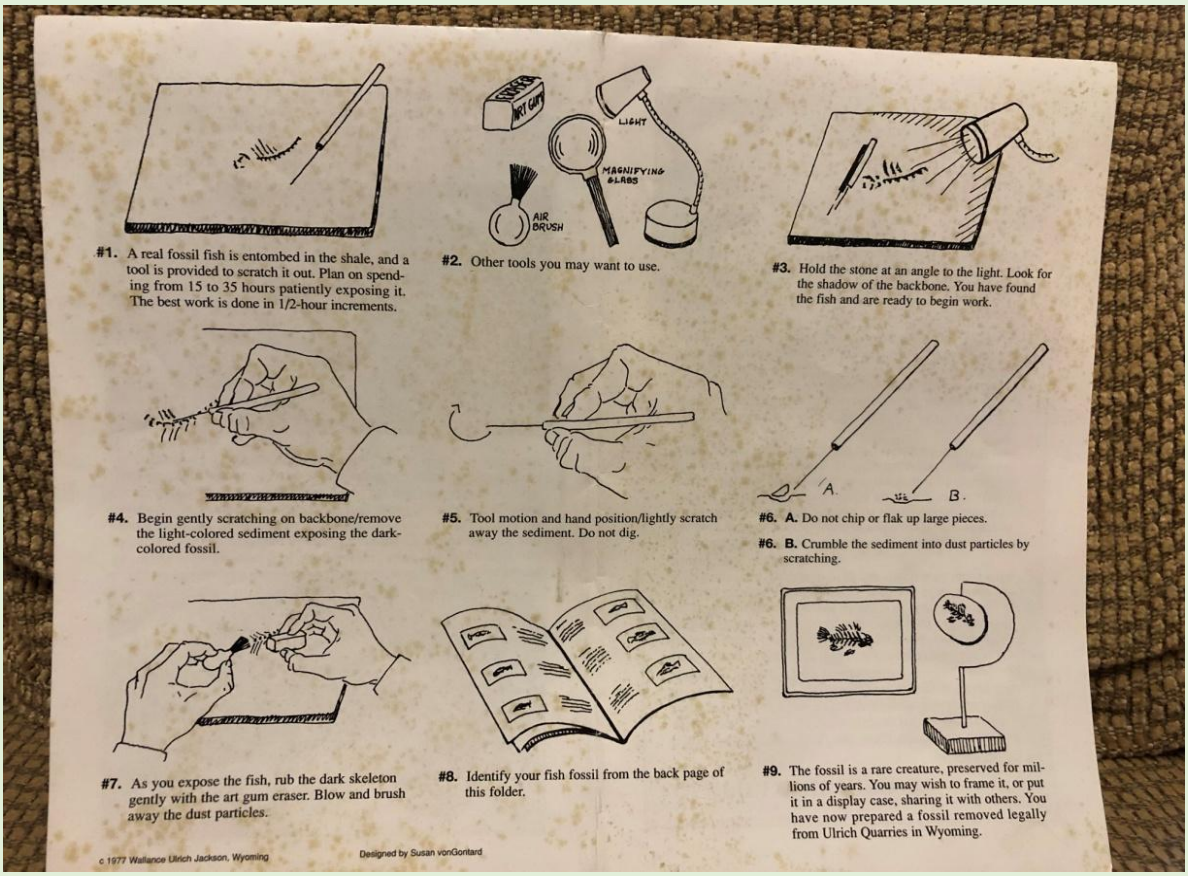
A few simple supplies will be needed and a lot of patience.

Supplies to bring: (See pictures below for supplies and directions) (i.e.; **HOMEWORK**)

1. A **beer flat** or similar-sized **sturdy box** - tape any holes to keep matrix pieces off of tables
2. A **small metal scribe**, or similar needle-pointed tool, maybe a retractable ball-point pen
3. **Gum eraser**
4. **Small brush**
5. **Magnifying glass**

We will bring several lamps to share, newspapers, clear acrylic spray to preserve the specimens, and a vacuum cleaner

Dave will bring crab paper and duct tape for the tables and trash bags.



#1. A real fossil fish is entombed in the shale, and a tool is provided to scratch it out. Plan on spending from 15 to 35 hours patiently exposing it. The best work is done in 1/2-hour increments.

#2. Other tools you may want to use.

#3. Hold the stone at an angle to the light. Look for the shadow of the backbone. You have found the fish and are ready to begin work.

#4. Begin gently scratching on backbone/remove the light-colored sediment exposing the dark-colored fossil.

#5. Tool motion and hand position/lightly scratch away the sediment. Do not dig.

#6. A. Do not chip or flak up large pieces.

#6. B. Crumble the sediment into dust particles by scratching.

#7. As you expose the fish, rub the dark skeleton gently with the art gum eraser. Blow and brush away the dust particles.

#8. Identify your fish fossil from the back page of this folder.

#9. The fossil is a rare creature, preserved for millions of years. You may wish to frame it, or put it in a display case, sharing it with others. You have now prepared a fossil removed legally from Ulrich Quarries in Wyoming.

c 1977 Wallance Ulrich Jackson, Wyoming

Designed by Susan vonGoritard

SEPTEMBER 2021 MINUTES

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 7:03 by Joe filling in for Sondra

VISITORS/NEW MEMBERS: There were four (4) visitors in attendance with all finding our club through the internet. Apologies for not getting all their names. Two visitors, Jill L. and Ray S. joined the club later during the meeting.

Correction: August minutes stated a new visitor/member's name was Curt Miller. His name is Kurt Knower. Blame the masks! My apologies.

MEMBERSHIP: There are 42 members in good standing

EDITOR: Rich is always looking for new articles ,trip reports or any ideas you may have that can be incorporated into the newsletter.

TREASURER: Dave read the treasurers report. Reports will not be published. He reviewed the club membership fees for the visitors.

PROGRAMS: Need a program for October, Ralph is providing refreshments. We do not have access to projector in October. Discussion about timing of November meeting occurred with decision for it to remain the Tuesday before Thanksgiving.

WEBMASTER: No report

FIELD TRIPS:

10/2/21 H.K. PENN Quarry, there are 5 slots available. Contact Dave if interested in going. There are 31 minerals that can be found at this site.

10/29/21 JMU Museum Open House in Virginia that was cancelled last year due to pandemic. Fliers were available for those interested in going.

11/13/21 Richmond Swap, fliers were available also and in newsletter

11/27/21 Odessa Delaware for fossilized wood. Native American artifacts have also been found there. We have been invited there by the Calvert Marine museum fossil club. This trip will not occur if the soybeans have not been harvested by then.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business

NEW BUSINESS: Dave talked about forming a small committee to look into having a Rock show in the future. He's trying to find dates that don't interfere with other shows. March is out due to no heat in the building. Ralph and Theresa B. are on the committee with Dave.

ADJOURNED: meeting adjourned at 7:30 followed by door prizes , refreshments and a DVD video called ,The Gemstone Journey

YOU TUBE VIDEO

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZoPhaD-6eI

The Impact Crater Near Washington DC; Chesapeake Bay Crater

In the AUGUST 2021 ROCK TALK:	
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2021 PROGRAMS/REFRESHMENTS SCHEDULE		
MONTH	**PROGRAM**	**REFRESHMENTS**
OCTOBER	**Wyoming Fossil FIsh - Al and Carole**	Ralph
NOVEMBER	**Elections / TBA**	TBA
DECEMBER	**Holiday Party**	Pot Luck

Calendar of Events

Many events have been postponed/cancelled and/or rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please check with the sponsoring club to make sure the event has not been cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic before attending any event.

October 30, 2021 ULTRAVIOLATION SHOW

Where: First United Methodist Church, 840 Trenton Rd, Fairless Hills, PA
When: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
What: ULTRAVIOLATION is the ULTIMATE annual show for the fluorescent mineral enthusiast, whether a novice or serious collector. The show features many of the world's premier fluorescent mineral COLLECTORS AND DEALERS who strive each year to bring the biggest, brightest and best fluorescent minerals to satisfy the insatiable cravings of the fluorescent collector. ULTRAVIOLATION highlights fluorescent minerals exclusively and is the next best thing to night collecting. Free admission and a fluorescent mineral specimen for each junior mineralogist 12 years and younger when accompanied by an adult.
Admission: $2.00 Donation, Children 12 & Under Free
Dealers: 8' TABLE $30 – ½ TABLE $15 ADVANCED REGISTRATION FOR DEALERS IS ADVISED

SEND YOUR CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO:
Lee McIlvaine, 8510 Elliston Dr. Wyndmoor, PA 19038 Or PAYPAL electronic payment to leemcilvaine@yahoo.com

For information call Lee McIlvaine at 215-713-8020 or email uvgeologist@yahoo.com

Extremely worthwhile for anyone interested in Fluorescent Minerals!!

November 13-14 – Fall 2021 New York Gem & Mineral Show sponsored by the New York Mineralogical Club at the School of Fashion Industries Gym, 3rd floor, 225 West 24th Street, N, New York,City, NY. Sat. 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM, Sunday 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM

November 20-21 - 54th Annual Gem, Mineral, Jewelry, Bead and Fossil Show, South Florida Fairgrounds Expo Center East, 9067 Southern Blvd., West Palm Beach, Florida, sponsored by the Gem & Mineral Society of the Palm Beaches. Saturday 9 am-6pm; Sunday 10 am-5 pm. Admission $9, children under 12 free. 2-day admission $14. Visit website for $1 off coupon, www.gmspb.org. For more information contact Barbara Ringhiser, bar2678@aol.com (561-585-2080).

Saturday, November 27, 2021
Petrified Wood
Odessa, Delaware

Invite from the Calvert Marine Museum Fossil Club **JOHN WOLF MEMORIAL TRIP TO ODESSA, DE** You can collect petrified wood (cypress), probably deposited in the Cretaceous or Paleocene Rancocas Group and then re-deposited in a Pleistocene bed. No special equipment is required and members with children, even young ones, can find them. This is a great field trip for new members. Other clubs have been also asked to participate. Some lucky people have also found arrowheads at this site, whose age ranges over thousands of years. Here is a great link to a write-up about a previous field trip there.

http://viewsofthemahantango.blogspot.com/2011/08/petrified-wood-from-delaware.html

Dave will have further information for those interested in this trip. Multiple trip reports can be found at the club's website.

You Had Better Get Your Lapis Before It Becomes Extinct.....

By John Martin, Conservation and Legislation chair, AFMS

A very brief excerpt of the bill follows. To see the entire bill which contains eight (8) more sections detailing implementation, consult **https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr5088 or the Congressional Review. 117TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION H. R. 5088**

To prohibit the importation into, or transit through, the United States of any mineral, or product produced with minerals, from Afghanistan, and for other purposes. IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AUGUST 24, 2021 Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. STAUBER, and Mr. WESTERMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned. A BILL To prohibit the importation into, or transit through, the United States of any mineral, or product produced with minerals, from Afghanistan, and for other purposes. 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act may be cited as the **''Stopping Terrorist Minerals Trade Act''**.

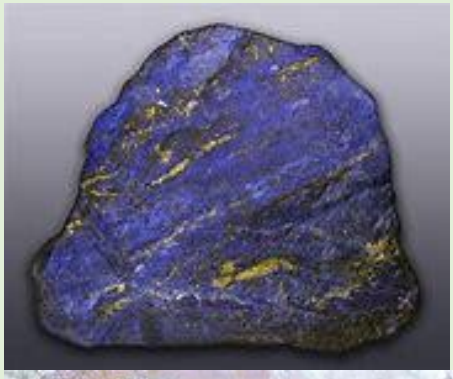
SEC. 2. FINDINGS. Congress finds the following 1) Funds derived from the sale of minerals in Afghanistan will be used by the Taliban and its allies to finance terrorist and military activities, overthrow legitimate governments, subvert international efforts to promote peace and stability, and commit horrifying atrocities against unarmed civilians.

2) The United States spent 20 years and two trillion dollars to attempt to bring peace and international comity to Afghanistan, only to see the Taliban supported by other international actors overthrow the legal government in a matter of hours.

3) The United States spent tens of millions of dollars funding critical mineral surveys and mineral exploration to help build an alternative economy for the legitimate peaceful Government of Afghanistan and that data has now fallen into the hands of the Taliban and its allies.

4) Prohibiting the Taliban and its allies from profiting from the use of these mineral resources will ensure that threats to international peace and security posed by the Taliban will not be funded with these minerals.

These are the first two (2) of eleven (11) sections, but the most important. For those sections refer to the URL listed in the first paragraph.



Drs. Lance & Cindy Kearns invite you to the Grand opening of the new James Madison University Mineral Museum.

It is on **Friday, October 29th at 4:30**, located in the **Festival Conference and Student Center** (lower level). Please spread the word and the invitation to all members of your mineral club. We are inviting all members from 8 different clubs, but we do not have individual addresses for everyone. If you are reading this, you are one of the few people in your club to receive this letter.

Please, be certain that everyone who intends to come will send an RSVP, before October 22, 2021 : You can respond either by email, by phone call, or by USPS. Please be sure to indicate which club you belong to.

Ann Marie Coe
COEAM@JMU.EDU

or Mail to:
Ann Marie Coe
540-568-7274 James Madison University
Office of Donor Relations
MSC 3604
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Directions to the James Madison University Mineral Museum

South Bound on I-81: Get off at **Exit # 245**

Turn **right** onto **Port Republic Road** at end of ramp

Go about 100 feet; **turn Right** in to campus through **Newman Lake Gate**

Proceed through campus to **first traffic light** and **Turn right.**

North Bound on I-81: Get off at **Exit # 245**

Turn **left** onto **Port Republic Road** at end of ramp

Follow road over I-81 then **turn Right** in to campus through **Newman Lake Gate.** Proceed through campus to **first traffic light** and **Turn right.**

Both

Follow road past the **Rose Library** to the next **traffic light.**

The **Festival Conference Center** is just ahead on your right. However, **turn left** at the light and find a parking place. Walk across road to **Festival Center Entrance**.

The Mineral Museum is downstairs: Enter building and turn left. Follow to stairway (or elevator just beyond). Go down the stairway and turn left. Follow hallway around to **Mineral Museum (Room 1021), 1301 Carrier Drive, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807.**

No Parking Pass needed if you park in lots **D3, C12, R4**. These lots are across the street from the Festival Center entrance. Also, the East Campus parking deck is available without parking pass.

When on campus watch out for speed bumps, stop signs and students that walk out in front of you without looking.

Websites describing the New Museum:

https://www.jmu.edu/mineralmuseum
https://www.jmu.edu/news/2020/11/06-via-gift-to-mineral-museum.shtml

MEGA MINERAL GIFT

Via Collection revealed for the first time at JMU Mineral Museum

https://www.jmu.edu/news/2020/11/06-via-gift-to-mineral-museum.shtml

https://youtu.be/aHGG6DkQhRc

James Madison University has received a mineral collection valued at more than $16.8 million from the late Peter L. Via of Roanoke, Virginia. The gift is the largest in JMU history and brings to $196,226,148 the total raised so far since the 2014 start of *Unleashed: The Campaign for James Madison University*. The campaign, JMU's second ever, is focused on priorities that enrich the student and community experience and is on track to surpass its goal of $200 million by mid-2022.

"We are so pleased to be able to make this remarkable collection available to the public," says President Jonathan R. Alger, who announced the estate gift at the Nov. 6 JMU Board of Visitors meeting. "This gift from Peter Via enhances the stature of science education at JMU just as last month's Hartman Hall naming benefits our business programs. Truly, we are honored to receive this level of support from our donors during the *Unleashed* campaign."

Photo by Jeff Scovil
Barite. A simple barium sulfate by composition with an orthorhombic crystal structure, barite is a relatively common mineral. These crystals from the Pohla Mine in Saxony, Germany, are exceptionally bright and colorful.

"Mineral enthusiasts who come in, they're going to look at the big gem crystals, the aquamarines, the emeralds, the tanzanites, the beautiful things," says Lance Kearns, JMU emeritus professor of geology and curator of the JMU Mineral Museum. "A professional mineralogist might come in looking for the rare and unusual things. We have a specimen of hydroxylherderite, one of the largest crystals in the world. We also have a ferro-axinite crystal, one of the biggest in the world. So it depends on your point of view as to what is going to be special."

The collection, adds Geology and Environmental Science Department Head Steve Leslie, "is most valuable because it's accessible to a lot of people to experience. ... The real value is to society and the more we're able to share it, I think the more we get out of the collection itself."

The Via gift affirms JMU's status in higher education, given that it is among only 25% of U.S. colleges and universities in the nation that have geology departments. And in this rarified world, JMU has attracted and developed top scholars — in part because of the geography of the Shenandoah Valley.

"This part of the world is rich with all kinds of really interesting geologic features," says Cynthia Bauerle, who was dean of the College of Science and Mathematics when the bequest was realized. "So it's no wonder that we have attracted the caliber of geoscientists that we have in JMU's geology department. … We have geologists in our Geology and Environmental Science Department who publish in the best journals in the world, who have national and international reputations, who are at the forefront of their fields doing research. We have geologists who are involved in global research collaborations at polar expeditions. Our students benefit from that as a daily experience."

The acquisition promises to solve a longtime mystery for mineral collectors who have only heard about Via's collection and brings international attention to the JMU

Mineral Museum, which for almost five decades has been a popular mid-Atlantic draw for mineral enthusiasts, tourists, and K-12 educators and schoolchildren.

A DESTINATION COLLECTION

"With the acquisition of the Peter Via mineral collection, James Madison University has suddenly become an important destination for serious mineral collectors, very few of whom have ever been granted an opportunity to see it," Wendell Wilson of the *Mineralogical Record* reported in its September/October 2020 issue. The publication is considered the journal of record among mineral professionals and enthusiasts and worked in conjunction with world-renowned mineral photographer Jeff Scovil to be the first to visit JMU to photograph and report on the collection last year.

Photos by Jeff Scovil
(Left to right): **Red beryl**. Less than 3 inches high, this crystal is one of the largest specimens known. Red beryl is extremely rare and specimens come almost exclusively from the Wah Wah Mountains of Utah.

Rhodochrosite on tetrahedrite. The color of this manganese carbonate is always some shade of pink. The two most common major crystal forms are the rhombohedron and the scalenohedron. This specimen comes from the Sweet Home Mine in Colorado. They are also most commonly found in the Kalahari Manganese fields of South Africa.

Emerald. A variety of the mineral beryl, crystals are hexagonal and prismatic in their geometry. Chemically they are beryllium aluminum silicates. The beautiful green color is a result of minor trace elements of chromium and vanadium. This specimen comes from Colombia, the world's most renowned location for gem quality emeralds. Usually cut into faceted stones, the crystals are hard to come by.

"We have now become a destination collection," Kearns says. "I already got a call from one of the New York State museum curators who wants to come and see the collection. We now have a situation where people are going to ... come here just to see the collection. They'll come to JMU for that."

Recognition is also coming in the form of invitations for the museum to display nationally and internationally, including from the Rochester Mineral Symposium in New York and the Munich Show (Mineralientage), the largest mineral trade show of its kind in Europe.

Driving this attention in part is the appeal of finally being able to lay eyes on a collection people had previously only heard about.

"Each specimen is a work of art by Mother Nature."
— Lance Kearns, Curator and Founder, JMU Mineral Museum

"What we're looking at here with the Via Collection are some of the finest examples of these species in the world," Kearns says. "Peter was known internationally. He was kind of reclusive. He ... never went out to shows. Basically, he would have people bring him material and he ... wanted the finest in the world. He would basically pay anything to get the No. 1 example of the species."

According to the *Mineralogical Record*, "The Peter Via collection consists of 314 specimens chosen for their high quality and aesthetic appeal. ... The collection is particularly rich in suites of pegmatite minerals (tourmaline,

topaz, beryl), azurite, calcite, barite, fluorite, quartz, gold and rhodochrosite. Rare species were not a focus of the collection, which instead relies on 76 relatively common species that are widely available in display quality." Wilson reports they are " … common, colorful, well-crystallized species."

Peter L. Via

"The Via collection previously fell into the category of private (or even 'secret') high-end collections formed by wealthy individuals with no interest in sharing access to their treasures," according to the journal. "Peter Via was one of those elusive, behind-the-scenes major mineral collectors."

Via, who died Nov. 27, 2018, was born in California in 1941 and became a well-known Roanoke businessman and philanthropist. His parents' family is known for its philanthropy, especially to Virginia Tech.

He was an avid hunter and fisherman and contributed to causes associated with the natural world. According to his obituary in the April issue of Rocks and Minerals, Via was known primarily in the world of American Saddlebred horse breeding. His Fox Grape Farm produced Callaways Copyright, a trotter who was the only six-time winner in the 100-plus-year history of the Harness World Grand Champion. Via and his wife, Lynn, were major financial donors to the American Saddlebred Museum.

Stepdaughter Claire Sullivan ('90) and husband, Tom ('90), are both JMU alumni and serve on the JMU Parents Council. Their son, Patrick ('21), is a College of Business senior due to graduate in May 2021.

In the mid-1990s, Via began a serious interest in collecting minerals, but the source of his fascination started much earlier and is not widely known. "He told me that when he was 5 or 6 and living in California he was kicking a rock and noticed it was full of little crystals and from then on, he said, he was transfixed," says Kathy Sarver ('03M), the JMU development officer who worked with Via to arrange the estate gift.

A RARE RELATIONSHIP

Lance and Cindy Kearns were among the rare few Via invited into his home to see and talk about his collection. No doubt word had reached Roanoke of their reputations as scholars, researchers and teachers. But spurring that attention was also their intense involvement with mineral enthusiasts and clubs around Virginia and the central Appalachian and mid-Atlantic regions.

"Lance always had a high appreciation for mineral collectors outside of the academic community," his department head explains. "His passion for that was such that he would meet with clubs, and he was the true professional who was accessible to mineral clubs and societies. He would bring them to campus and run events for them, identify minerals with them. He treated them with a tremendous amount of respect and enjoyment and did a huge amount of outreach and education."

Via relied on the Kearnses' expertise and, now and again, he would donate a

specimen to the museum. Yet their long relationship got off to a rocky start.

"He called me one day before we ever met and asked me whether the museum had security," Kearns says. "I said, 'huh?' and he hung up. I didn't know who he was."

That phone call occurred in the early days of the JMU Mineral Museum, when it was located in glass cases and drawers in Miller Hall. Later, in the 2000s, Bauerle's predecessor as dean, David Brakke, recognized the museum's value and made the investment to move it into secure display cases in Memorial Hall, the former Harrisonburg High School. There it served geology majors and other JMU students who took geology courses. It also became a regular stop for science field trips from area schools and a focal point for regional mineralogical societies, whose financial support helped purchase the cases and underwrite JMU student geology trips into the field.

Luckily, by that time, Via had called back, and the two never spoke of the earlier exchange. The relationship between Via and the Kearnses ultimately led to Via's bequest of his collection to JMU.

JMU MINERAL MUSEUM

Several years ago, JMU invested in a brand new headquarters with specialized lighting, display cases, security and storage in the Festival Conference and Student Center, making way for the museum to become one of the final science assets to make the move to JMU's East Campus hub for the science disciplines. The Mathematics and Statistics Department and Wells Planetarium remain in Miller Hall.

The museum has been on hiatus for the move and a complete rethinking of the presentation to allow for integrating the Via collection.

"The original collection in Memorial Hall was arranged in a systematic display, meaning that minerals were displayed and classified based on their chemical composition and atomic structures," explains Cindy Kearns, who serves as the museum's interim collections manager. "With the addition of the Via collection, we ... still have a systematic classification, but with the large amounts of single species, we want to be able to highlight those individual species as well. So you'll see that there is still some systematic appearance to it. But then there are specialty cases — the beryl case or the tourmaline case or the fluorite case — rather than just the individual classes of minerals."

The Via collection's 314 specimens increase the museum's mineralogical holdings and constitute its third major collection. The museum also features the JMU Collection, which the Kearnses have developed over four decades of research and acquisition, including their own contributions of specimens. The other major collection is the Virginia Mineral Collection, funded by Richard S. Mitchell in 1989 and endowed by his father, Clarence Mitchell, in 1993. "It is probably one of — if not the — finest collection of Virginia minerals," Kearns says.

The museum currently displays 378 exhibits in 18 cases, including the Fluorescent Collection in a room with ultraviolet light. Overall, the museum holds more than 1,770 catalogued specimens. Most are in storage for possible later rotation into exhibition, including 5,000 micromounts from the collections of Phil Cosminsky and Fred Keidel. Specimens come from 39 countries and 24 U.S. states with emphasis on Elmwood, Tennessee, and Franklin and Sterling Hill, New Jersey.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

The infusion of the Via Collection will intensify the mineral museum's ongoing role in

JMU's STEM outreach and "serve as a vehicle or a portal for a young person," Bauerle says. "All of a sudden, they start thinking, 'Gee, how does something so beautiful form naturally? What does it mean that it takes thousands of years or millions of years for a structure like this to form? Why does this structure look like this? And this one looks so very different? What are the conditions that lead to that? How would I learn more about that?' Those are the questions that a scientist might ask. And I think that's always what we're trying to do when we showcase the collections that we have. We showcase the kinds of things that we're doing here at JMU. It's always about how we can make the science ... accessible and ... excite their imagination.

Purple and gold provide a JMU dazzle to many of the specimens in the Via Collection. The JMU Mineral Museum staff has chosen this piece, from the Elmwood-Gordonsville zinc mines in Smith County, Tennessee, to serve as its publicity or "icon" specimen. The yellow points (gold) are calcite crystals that sit on purple fluorite crystals. These in turn sit on a dark reddish brown mineral called sphalerite, which is the main ore mineral of zinc.

"We're a public institution, and so it is our mission to provide opportunities for learning to our community, to the Commonwealth [of Virginia]," Bauerle emphasizes. "I think this is a beautiful example of how we do that, stewarding a relationship that led to the opportunity that we have to showcase this really spectacular collection. It resonates very directly with our mission. I think that's something to celebrate."

Visitors will come to see the collection for different reasons, Kearns explains. "The professional mineralogist has seen a lot of fluorite, but … he or she is going to be there to look for the rare, the unusual. They're concerned about the atomic structure, the chemical processes and the geologic environment that gave rise to the specimens. The person who is just interested in minerals is going to come in, they're going to look at aquamarines the size of your hand, emeralds, tanzanite, crystal. ... They're going to look at the things that they know and be wowed by them."

PUBLIC PREMIERE PENDING

The Via Collection's public premiere had been scheduled for spring 2020 as part of the grand reopening of the museum in its new secure location in the Festival Conference and Student Center, but has been postponed until further notice because of COVID-19 restrictions. When the museum is able to open, the mystery surrounding the Via collection will finally be resolved as collectors and others from around the world are able visit and see Via's specimens for themselves. Until then, visits for the curious are possible by appointment only, dependent on the discretion of museum staff.

Willis Mountain Kyanite Trip Report 9-25-2021 by Dave Lines

A huge turnout of rock hounds --- 10 clubs, 104 people --- and all their various vehicles --- were packed into the office parking lot and adjacent entry road by 8:30 am.

The waivers and safety training sheets were required to be read and signed by everyone there --- took a while. Then a verbal safety brief by both Dave Callahan (long time and now semi-retired Lynchburg trip coordinator) and Mike Morris --- Kyanite Corporation man in charge of this giant field trip. Both spoke for a few minutes giving wise advice for all. Mike also described current mining activities on the mountain --- a rock crusher on top --- so much of the mountain was off limits to us. He introduced several other Kyanite employees who would be on the mountain with us – Dan --- in charge of the operations. Also a new employee since our last trip (September 2019) --- Tom Huddleston – a young Mining Engineer from Virginia Tech. The weather was great --- sunny and a cool start --- 48 degrees on the truck thermometer upon arrival, but it quickly warmed up to the lower 70's in the sunshine. We (Rich, Orion, Kim, Cheryl and Dave) took a group picture, then joined the caravan of vehicles that went up the mountain about 9:15 am.

There had been a great deal of mining since our last visit in 2019, but since the rock crusher was actively breaking up large boulders on top, we all had to park and remain a full level below that activity in a relatively small area on the north side of the mine. There had been very little mining where we were allowed to look. Eventually people had scoured every noon and cranny there. There was not much iridescent hematite. There was a great deal of very sparkly pyrite in white quartz/kyanite laying all over the area. Also lots of biotite mica --- some white in color and some red (rutilated). I walked around for nearly an hour looking for specimens, and only picked up a few that I would bring home --- and those had small crystals (1/2" to 1" long x 1/8" wide) embedded in a very solid quartz-kyanite matrix. I gave a lot of specimens to other folks that I met – especially to first timers. One was a fellow (John Campbell who drove from Boston). He had never been to Willis, so everything was a specimen for him. I spoke with several friends and acquaintances on the mountain.

I walked up the road leading to the active rock crushing. Saw at least 20 people collecting --- including a group lead by Mike Morris. I asked if I could lead a group to the other side of Willis Mountain to find some

blue kyanite. He said yes (I had asked him permission to do the same thing several other times in past years, so he was not concerned).

At 11:30 am, I lead a group of 4 vehicles to the area near the cell phone tower on the south side of Willis Mountain where a vein of blue kyanite crosses an old dirt access road. The kyanite crystals were very thin and about one inch long, but they were definitely blue. Trouble was, they were in a highly weathered crumbly matrix. Not very exciting, but different if you had never collected any. We collected there about an hour and decided to head back to the Kyanite Corp office parking area since it was about 12:45 pm and time to be off the mountain. Just before we left, John Campbell, the fellow from Boston, generously shared with our group some specimens he had brought down with him --- some blue calcite with white wollastonite (both massive without crystals) from the Valentine mine, in Harriston, in upstate New York. He also gave out a few specimens of uncleaned tremolite crystals on matrix he had collected at West Pierrepont, New York. The crystals, after washing off with a hose, were light green colored and solid (not the asbestos form of the mineral).

After the trip ended at 1:00 pm, back in the office parking lot area, people began comparing what they had found. Tom Leary of the Richmond club had collected about 200 pounds of iridescent hematite just past and above the rock crusher area. Most had very small vugs with iridescent colors of red, blue, orange, green and yellow. His best specimen was solid and about 1-1/2 inches across with a nice iridescent hematite coating over small crystals of kyanite which were randomly stacked together.

The best specimen collected by someone from our club was found by Rich --- a four (4) inch piece of white quartz which had almost clear crystals of kyanite (?) (½ inch by 1 inch by ¼ inch thick) embedded in it. Rare to see clear, solid kyanite, if that is what it is.

There was also a gathering of folks under the large picnic pavilion behind the office building where we talked to several of the other rock hounds while we (Rich and I) ate our lunch. A few folks had brought specimens to show and/or sell.

Rich and I headed home about 2:00 pm. Another good trip.

4.38-carat diamond discovered by vacationing couple at state park

https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/4-38-carat-diamond-discovered-vacationing-couple-state-park

Noreen and Michael Wredberg found the diamond at Crater of Diamonds State Park.

This sounds like a pretty good way to spend a vacation.

A California couple visited a state park in Arkansas and made an amazing discovery. While they may have shown up hoping to spend some time with nature, they left with a massive diamond.

Noreen and Michael Wredberg live in Granite Bay, Calif., and have spent the last decade visiting the country's various national parks. During a trip to Arkansas, they visited the Crater of Diamonds State Park, according to a news release from the Arkansas State Parks.

According to the release, Arkansas is the only state in the country to have a diamond mine open to the public.

Noreen says she had heard about the park on TV years ago and wanted to visit. She and her husband arrived on September 23 of this year. While there, they participated in a diamond hunt. While Noreen wanted to stay near the entrance, her husband suggested moving to a nearby field where it was a bit warmer.

While searching there, Noreen found a 4.38-carat diamond.

The Arkansas State Parks website says that it is the largest diamond found at the state park so far this year.

Park Superintendent Caleb Howell inspected the diamond and said, "When I first saw this diamond under the microscope, I thought, 'Wow, what a beautiful shape and color!' Mrs. Wredberg's diamond weighs more than four carats and is about the size of a jellybean, with a pear shape and a lemonade yellow color."

According to Park Interpreter Waymon Cox, the area is routinely prepared to help visitors find diamonds.

"We plow the search area periodically to loosen the soil and promote natural erosion," he explained. "Diamonds are somewhat heavy for their size and lack static electricity, so dirt doesn't stick to them. When rain uncovers a larger diamond and the sun comes out, its reflective surface is often easy to see."

Richmond Gem & Mineral Society

Saturday
November 13, 2021
9am to 3pm

29th Annual Fall Swap

FREE ADMISSON

Open to all children and adults (from novice to expert) to swap or purchase various mineral, gem, jewelry, fossil, shell, and lapidary items.

Free items for kids and a raffle.

Food and beverages are available at nearby restaurants. Restroom facilities are available in the building.

Ridge Baptist Church Meeting Hall, 1515 East Ridge Road, Richmond, VA 23229

NORTH OR SOUTH OF RICHMOND
Use I-95 to Exit 79 to I-64 West (North of Richmond City). Leave I-64 at Exit 181A (South) on Parham Road.
Proceed south on Parham Road for about 1.5 miles and turn left onto East Ridge Road.
The Ridge Baptist Church and Meeting Hall are 400 feet on the right, across from Kroger's Grocery.
Meeting hall is the white building at the rear of the parking lot.
There is ample parking in front of the Meeting Hall.

EAST OR WEST OF RICHMOND
Use I-64 to Exit 181A (South) and follow the directions at left.

Stroke has a new indicator.

They say if you email this to ten people, you stand a chance of saving one life. Will you send this along? Blood Clots/Stroke - They Now Have a Fourth Indicator, the Tongue

STROKE: Remember the 1st Three Letters....

S. T. R.

STROKE IDENTIFICATION:

During a BBQ, a woman stumbled and took a little fall - she assured everyone that she was fine (they offered to call paramedics) ...she said she had just tripped over a brick because of her new shoes.

They got her cleaned up and got her a new plate of food. While she appeared a bit shaken up, Jane went about enjoying herself the rest of the evening.

Jane's husband called later telling everyone that his wife had been taken to the hospital - (at 6:00 PM Jane passed away) She had suffered a stroke at the BBQ Had they known how to identify the signs of a stroke, perhaps Jane would be with us today. Some don't die. They end up in a helpless, hopeless condition instead.

It only takes a minute to read this.

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke...totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

RECOGNIZING A STROKE

Thank God for the sense to remember the '3' steps, STR. Read and Learn!

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

S * Ask the individual to SMILE.

T * Ask the person to TALK and SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently)

(i.e. Chicken Soup)

R * Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.

If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call emergency number immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

New Sign of a Stroke

Stick out Your Tongue!

NOTE: Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue. If the tongue is crooked', if it goes to one side or the other

that is also an indication of a stroke.

A cardiologist says if everyone who gets this e-mail sends it to 10 people; you can bet that at least one life will be saved.

I have done my part. Will you?

32 DIFFERENT MATERIALS FOUND IN VIRGINIA

O	L	I	G	O	C	L	A	S	E	T	I	B	L	A
P	R	B	R	O	N	Z	I	T	E	C	N	I	Z	E
A	B	T	A	L	C	G	H	G	A	R	N	E	T	Q
L	Y	C	H	T	O	P	A	Z	F	F	T	I	U	D
A	M	A	Z	O	N	I	T	E	L	I	E	A	R	V
L	H	L	M	I	C	A	F	O	D	G	R	J	Q	E
L	E	C	O	A	L	L	U	N	D	T	G	A	U	N
O	T	I	N	C	Y	R	A	I	Z	O	R	S	O	I
C	I	T	D	R	I	L	R	S	L	E	W	P	I	L
O	K	E	E	T	E	B	W	D	E	J	U	E	S	A
S	A	B	E	V	K	Y	A	N	I	T	E	R	E	M
Y	N	P	A	C	E	N	O	T	S	N	O	O	M	R
R	U	E	O	F	D	E	T	I	N	H	E	R	P	U
H	L	R	P	Y	R	I	T	E	E	T	A	L	S	O
CX	A	S	S	I	T	E	R	I	T	E	S	A	L	T

This month we have 32 of the many materials in Virginia to find. What have you found in Virginia??

ALBITE
AMAZONITE
BERYL
BRONZITE
CALCITE
CASSITERITE
CHRYSOCOLLA
CLEAVELANDITE
COAL
FLOURITE
GARNET
GOLD
JASPER
KYANITE
MICA
MOONSTONE
OLIGOCLASE
OPAL
ORTHOCLASE
PREHNITE
PYRITE
QUARTZ
ROCKBRIDGEITE
SALT
SLATE
TALC
TIN
TOPAZ
TOURMALINE
TURQUOISE
UNAKITE
ZINC

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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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