The Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia

THE MINERAL MINUTES

Vol. 74, No. 2 ***Founded 1942*** ***February 2015***

NOTICE: ROOM CHANGE!!!! We will be meeting in the Cooper room in the Paleobiology Department for the February 4, 2015 meeting. Please be on time (7:45 PM) so we can all go there together.

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Reminder: Remember the field trip to James Madison University on Saturday, February 14. 2015, 9:00 AM…. Dr. Lance Kearns will answer mineralogical questions, and using various analytical techniques, he has offered to attempt to identify any unknowns you bring along. A tour of the JMU Mineral Museum will be included. Here's your chance to get that ugly black smudge from locality X identified. If we have specimens too small for conventional analysis, after lunch we will probably go across campus, and work with the Scanning Electron Microscope and x-ray spectrometer. Bring your little unknowns and they may get identified. A rice-grain sized fragment will be sufficient for an x-ray diffraction analysis. (Please see Tom's full announcement in the January *Mineral Minutes* for more information.) Please contact Tom Tucker at 1-540-280-7427 if you plan to attend.

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Program for February 4, 2015 Meeting - Mercer Parker speaking on the new technology and research at the Northern Virginia Community College

Mercer Parker is a, Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) student majoring in geology. He describes his experience there as follows: "I have been involved in undergraduate research at the community college for a little over a year. My studies have included the petrology and modal analysis of basement rock from the Chesapeake Bay Impact Structure (CBIS) and the petrology and pin-point chemical scanning-electron microscope (SEM) analysis of ultramafic rocks of the Central Piedmont. These studies have all been under the guidance and direction of Prof. Shelley Jaye. I plan to graduate NOVA in the summer of 2015 and attend

James Madison University in the fall of 2015, majoring in geology. I also plan to attend graduate school to get an M.S. in igneous/metamorphic petrology. I currently work as a Physical Science Technician for the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in Reston. I have recently been offered a career-term position for the survey, hopefully securing employment and support through graduate school."

"I plan to just speak about the latest and greatest events happening in the geo-lab at NOVA-Annandale. I will highlight our relationship with the survey, our work on CBIS, ultramafics in the Central Piedmont, new equipment, and maybe adding a few items that Shelley would like me to mention."

Dr. Shelley Jaye will also be present to comment on the new equipment at NOVA and exciting studies that are taking place.

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Dues are Due.

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MSDC January 2015 Minutes and Program Synopsis

- Secretary Andy Thompson

Business Meeting:
President Steve Johnson opened the meeting by welcoming attendees who braved the coldest night of the winter to date to initiate the New Year together and learn about the minerals and geology of Yellowstone Park. He welcomed Barry Sperling as a returning guest to MSDC and recent visitor to Yellowstone.

Old Business:
Membership --Steve noted that this is the time of the year when members need to renew their membership by giving Rebecca a check for $20 for individual members or $25 for family. Checks need to be made out to MSDC and mailed to: MSDC, P.O. Box 9957, Alexandria, Virginia 22304.

New Business
1. Health - Dave Nanney updated attendees on the health of long-time MSDC member and former President Cynthia Payne and her recent recovery from the flu.
2. Fund Raising - Sheryl Sims made a case that MSDC as a club needed to be a greater contributor to the Eastern Federation particularly by making monetary and mineral contributions to the EFMLS scholarship fund. Several members agreed to contribute minerals for the upcoming fund raising auction while noting that MSDC has long been making annual financial contributions to its own scholarship fund by way of supporting local undergraduates studying geology and mineral sciences in the greater DC area.
3. Upcoming Field Trip - Tom Tucker reminded members of the 14th of February annual "field trip" to James Madison University. See the January Mineral Minutes for specifics and

further information. Tom asks that interested members contact him at 1-540-280-7427 or via email at: threedogtom at earthlink.net. . He needs to know how many are coming so he can give professor Lance Kearns an accurate estimate.

4. Local Mineral Show – February 14, Southern Maryland club will have its annual mineral show.

5. New Technology Available - John Weidner noted that Northern VA Community College now has an electron scanning microscope that will open new possibilities for students.

Geology in the News

Attendees noted and discussed the recent 11 earthquakes (averaging 2 on Richter scale) all of which occurred within 9 hours in Texas, due, it seems, to the water pumped into the oil wells and in areas of fracking.

Steve called attention to "Meteorite Man" Steve Arnold who is selling off small chips of the Vesta meteorite to kick-start a fund raising campaign.

Treasurer's Report

Rebecca noted it is time for members to give her checks for renewing their club membership and they can do this at meetings or by sending her a check. Not counting those recently received funds, nor the payout for the insurance which all MSDC members have through the Eastern Federation, she noted MSDC continues to be solvent and currently holds one smaller CD that matured in July 2014 and was renewed at a low interest rate.

Program Report

The 2015 MSDC Program Chair Dave Nanney requested members' assistance for finding monthly speakers who will support the members' interests in learning subjects close to their own hearts. He said he urgently needs suggestions for both topics and persons who he can contact to line up programs for the upcoming months. so contact Dave at DNanney at cox.net

Synopsis: 7 January 2015 Meeting Presentation

"Yellowstone - With Rocks in Mind"

Geologist and former MSDC President Tom Tucker treated attendees to an up-close-and-personal overview of the geologic and animal habitat of Yellowstone. As someone who for decades lived just one mile outside of the nation's first National Park and as a geology instructor for Elderhostle and other groups during that time, Tom introduced visitors to the Park's 4 billion year geologic history, with a few modern wildlife pictures added for entertainment.

Yellowstone's Geologic Formation:

The appeal of Yellowstone is in large part its unusual geothermal geysers, hot springs, mud pots and fumarole, along with spectacular vista, and abundant accessible wildlife. The most common explanation of the geothermal phenomenon's origin is the theory of "hot spots" within the earth's crust. In this case, beneath the Yellowstone region is a gigantic lava chamber which is above the mantle and within the crust. Its heat fuels the geothermal activity on the surface. The theory is that, similar to the origin of the Hawaiian Islands, as the continental crustal plates slowly move to the west, over a "mantle plume", there are episodes of volcanic activity. In Hawaii, they resulted is the creation of a string of basaltic islands, with the most recent volcanic

activity at the east end. In Idaho and Wyoming, over a period of approximately 17 million years there has been a series of about seven volcanic episodes from within the crust, as the continental plate passes to the west, over another mantle plume. The earliest activity along this tract is the McDermitt, Nevada volcanic field. Not all geologists accept the theory of mantle plumes and hot spots, and there remains much research to be done. (World-wide, mantle plumes remain theoretical, with numerous competing theories, so much so that there is even a "Mantle Plume-Skeptics" website. (added by Tom))

Tom elaborated further that in the most recent volcanic activity, there have been three gigantic explosive eruptions roughly every 600,000 years with the most recent being 640,000 years ago. Small earthquakes, below the 3.0 level intensity are quite common and may indicate ongoing movement of lava within the "hot spot". In November of 2014 alone, for example, over a three day period, there were eleven quakes, all near the 2.0 Richter Scale level. In addition, Tom said since the 1920s, scientists have carefully tracked the rise and fall of the Yellowstone dome, a very large crustal bulge, and found that over time it rises and falls about 5 centimeters, perhaps in response to migrating magma.

Diverse Minerals:
Discussion brought out that the mineral composition of Yellowstone is somewhat unique given it is the only hot spot beneath continental crust. All the other mantle plumes are beneath oceanic crust and have resulted in the formation of islands such as Iceland and Seychelles. The islands tend to be composed largely of basaltic rock whereas the continental based Yellowstone volcanic province typically contain rhyolitic rocks, formed from more viscous magma rich in silica. Yellowstone rock formations contain both basalt and rhyolite. Most of the present thermal features are in areas of rhyolite, but there are several significant basaltic lava flows, some less than 100,000 years old. Much of the countryside outside of the Park to the north and east is underlain by extrusive andesitic rocks, of Eocene age, about 43 million years old. These rocks predate the Yellowstone phenomena, and just happen to be where they are, unrelated to the Yellowstone volcanic processes. Andesite is an extrusive volcanic rock, similar to basalt, but lighter in color, with more silica. That rock's name is derived from the Andes Mountains in South America where andesite was first described.

Andesite

Yellowstone's Topographic Features:
Yellowstone has everything from mountains in the East, North and South, a high Central Plateau and several river valleys and canyons . Tom explained that these land formations came about in the following manner. He said that much of Yellowstone's basement rock is up to 3.5 billion

years old metamorphic granite gneiss , which originated as sediments or igneous rocks which were changed by heat and pressure to the rocks we see today. An igneous granite rock is composed of quartz, feldspar and mica. and granite gneiss is a metamorphic rock with a similar composition. These basement rocks were covered by three thousand or more feet of Paleozoic and Mesozoic sediments prior to the origin of the "hot spot" or "mantel plume" which underlies the region today. Much of this sedimentary cover was eroded away before explosive volcanic activity began in the present Park area about two million years ago. Hundreds to thousands of feet of rhyolitic volcanic rock were deposited as a result of three major caldera events. Continuing hydrothermal activity has altered some of these rocks, changing feldspar minerals to soft easily eroded clay minerals, allowing the primary drainage in the area, the Yellowstone River, to carve a canyon over 1500 feet deep. The colorful, weathered rocks in this canyon led to the naming of the river, the Yellowstone.

The Mammoth Hot Springs area represents a different type of hydrothermal deposits. Hot water, about 180 degrees F., rises through hundreds of feet of Paleozoic limestone and dolomite, becoming super saturated with calcium carbonate. Upon reaching the surface, with lower temperatures and pressures, the water looses most of the dissolved carbon dioxide, depositing calcium carbonate in the form of large terraces of travertine. Geologically, the rate of deposition of this travertine is very rapid. In the early days of the Park, tourists could place items in the water of the terraces, and in a day or two the souvenir would be encrusted with calcite. The highest travertine terrace levels were deposited about 200, 000 years ago, but the large active area, including the large Liberty Cap formation now popular with tourists, was deposited after the last glaciers were in the area, less than 15,000 years ago.

Most other thermal areas in the Park are depositing silicious minerals, including quartz and opal. The water in these areas can be boiling, resulting in geysers, mud pots, boiling springs, and fumerols. Tom's favorite geyser? He said he most enjoyed the Echinus Geyser in the Norris Geyser Basin which used to be very regular in its eruptions, and was easily accessible. It used to erupt every hour or so, and spewed boiling water 40 to 60 feet in the air. But all of the thermal features are ephemeral, and Echinus has become much reduced and irregular. The very nature of thermal springs, rapidly precipitating their mineral content, results in frequent changes in their discharge patterns.

Conclusion:

Tom presented beautiful slides of everything from grizzly bears to big horn sheep, wolves and neighborhood bison, not to mention tales of a dinosaur fossil discovery. But perhaps the most intriguing aspect of his presentations were the puzzling anomalies which lie just east of the Park, the Heart Mountain "problem". These consisted of rock formations and discontinuities which baffled the viewer. Specifically giant rock formations up to "mountain" sized, moved from their original position up to 26 miles from their initial setting. The question is what forces made such changes happen. Clearly the earthquakes would be a contributing factor, but given the complexities of the terrain, even that theory strains the imagination and continues to challenge visitors and geological scholars as well.

Door Prizes

This month's prizes included two attractive minerals and several mineral books The fortunate recipients included John W. and both David H and David N.

Closing of the Business Meeting - A motion was made and seconded that the business meeting be closed. A "so moved" vote prevailed.

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Amazing Amethysts! - *Sheryl E. Sims*

Amethysts! Always a popular and beautiful mineral, I, too, find myself drawn to this beautiful type of quartz. The month of February brings them to mind. In fact, it reminds me of my trip to Farmville, Virginia, a few years ago.

Fortunately for us, amethysts can be found in many parts of the world, with better qualities coming from Brazil, Uruguay and southern Africa.[1] Amethysts can also be found in other countries such as Russia, Germany, Argentina, Bolivia, and the U.S. Found in beautiful shades of purple or violet, it has a hardness of 7, no cleavage, conchoidal fracture, and a glassy to vitreous lustre. Tiny traces of iron in the quartz give it a color which can actually vary from a pale mauve to a deeper violet. It's often found where granite is exposed on the surface.[2]

I dug for amethysts on the property of Mary Kay Simpson. She owns a farm and a large Great Dane named George. The day of the dig was a rainy, muddy one. With George-the-Great Dane planted firmly by my side, I held on to him to keep from slipping in the mud. I was able to maneuver to a spot along a vein where I hoped to strike amethyst. Dirt was everywhere and it was great! I found some small crystals lying on the ground around me which gave me the incentive to keep digging. I had never done so much digging in my life! It felt as though I was going to reach center of the earth.

Eventually tiring, I took a seat on a mound of rock and mud and tried to dig from that position. This would prove to be a painfully bad decision by the end of the day. My arms took over when my back called it quits. Heaving and hoeing until I thought I'd never be able to lift my arms ever again, I was happy to discover that I had filled my bucket up with what I hoped would be more amethyst than white crystal. With all of the mud and muck, I couldn't exactly see much purple. Still, I stretched out on the dirt and began scraping away at the line of crystals in front of me. I was hoping to find some *real keepers*. Oh yes, I must admit that I was quite the sight! I was dirty from head to toe, but I was happy! My position of choice was flat on my stomach with my right leg extended up in a 45-degree angle. In case you didn't know, that's how girly-girls do it. Minus a few broken finger nails, that position allowed me to grip and pull quite a number of crystals out using both hands. The extended leg acted like a rudder and kept me from falling head first into the hole. The next time you go digging for amethyst, you should try it!

[1] A Pocket guide to Rocks & Minerals. James Lagomarsino. p. 180.
[2] The Illustrated Guide to Minerals of the World, John Farndon. p. 111,

Tehuacan, Mexico - I have seen that outcrop before ! - Tom Tucker

At one of our meetings last year Tim Rose presented a nice program about the carved stone skulls found in archaeological sites in central Mexico. Toward the end of the presentation he was contemplating the origins of the raw stone that had been used in carving some of the artifacts. Tim showed a picture of an outcrop of travertine, and off hand said something like, "You've never been here". But I have been to that outcrop, or at least some outcrops in the immediate vicinity.

Twenty years ago this week (New Years), my daughter Shawn and I took a three week road trip through Mexico - a great adventure, back when it was reasonably safe to wander alone through the backroads of Mexico. (It was reassuring that we were stopped and "searched" at seven roadblocks in three weeks - as part of the Mexican drug interdiction program. Shawn was especially amused at a remote roadblock in the Sierra Madre Occidental, when an "Army" squad, armed with what appeared to be vintage "Mexican -American War" bolt action rifles, had me spread eagle over the hood of the car.) We had arrived in Tehuacan, where we visited the office of noted mineral collector Sr. Miguel Romero. Neither he nor his collection were there, but we had a nice long visit with one of his staff, in the office library - a large room lined with bookcase full of leather bound books and journals. The mid-shelf of each bookcase was a glass doored display cabinet, with a variety of small mineral specimens. Nice, but not the main Romero collection, which I believe was on display in Arizona at that time.

Since we had no plans on where we'd spend the evening, the fellow with whom we had been visiting most of the afternoon suggested a new hotel in Tehuacan, the Casa Cantarranas (that's the House of the Singing Frogs). Fabulous place. We were used to spending the night in accommodations for $ 5.00 to $ 10.00, but this new luxury hotel was about $ 23.00, and absolutely worth every penny. Even today the rate for our room is only $ 62 - we might have to go back !

Shawn REALLY liked these new accommodations, and we decided to spend a second night - so, what to do the next day ? She was attracted to the swimming pool and veranda. I was not. I left her for a day of solo exploring, driving south of Tehuacan about twenty miles and discovered the Zapotitian Salinas Botanical Gardens. Basically this is a rocky desert hillside covered in native cacti and other succulents, with a small headquarters building, and two staff members, neither of whom spoke a word of English. But I'm fully conversant in Spanish - I know maybe 20 words, and have never been bashful about trying any foreign tongue. I wandered through the Garden, and then spent nearly two hours visiting with the two staff members, discussing cacti! (See http://academiatlatoani.blogspot.com/2014/03/las-plantas-cactaceas-de-tehuacan.html for numerous pictures of the local cacti). I've really got you on the edge of your seats now, don't I ? I enjoy cacti, and had a side yard garden of numerous species when we lived in Texas. If you enjoy "wildflowers" or exotic plants, this small park in Mexico is well worth a visit.

Driving south from Tehuacan I had viewed the "salt pans" on the desert valley floor and near-by hillsides, and further up on the hills were numerous small diggings of some sort. Salt has been harvested in this area since shortly after European settlement of "Meso America", around 1550. The salt apparently originates in springs, and the Rio Zapotitian is salty. It's logical that where there are salt springs there may be other "evaportite" and related mineral deposits, like travertine. Along the way I had stopped at several nice roadcuts investigating the mineral possibilities. All were in compact grey limestone and although there were abundant seams of secondary calcite, I didn't find anything collectable. Higher on the hillsides I could see several "cuts" where something was obviously being dug. These were the "cuts" just like Tim had shown. Below one cut there was a small building on the west side of the road, and

immediately opposite it were numerous "dump truck sized" piles of rock. I stopped to investigate the piles of stone, and found that there were tons of pieces of semi-fabricated travertine, or "Mexican Onyx". These were the trimmings from the process of fabricating all those "onyx do-dads" we buy at the local tourist trap.

I would have liked to collect a few of the travertine fragments, but wanted to make sure it was OK. I crossed over to the small roadside building, and found it to be a "factory" for travertine products - book ends, natives sitting under sombreros, donkeys, chess sets, etc. We've all seen them in every tourist attraction gift shop. This is where some of them were being made. There was no indication that OSHA, or the Mexican equivalent, had any influence here. There were perhaps ten workers, busy at a variety of rock saws, sanders, laps, etc. I wandered around the crowded factory floor, saying hello and nodding recognition of their handicraft, but I didn't know how to ask, in Spanish, for a few waste rock pieces. Nobody paid any attention to me.

Just as I was leaving a car pulled up and parked - with Tennessee, USA license plates. This fellow must speak a little English. So I followed him back inside, and started a conversation. Yes, this fellow was the cousin of the factory owner. I asked him to ask his cousin if I may have some of the travertine scraps. The owner's reply was, "How many truck loads would you like?" No, No, No, I just wanted a few scrap examples. He was very accommodating, and said I could have all I wanted. As I was leaving I selected three or four pieces from the waste piles, representative of the nice, dense, well laminated caramel colored travertine.

So Tim, I have seen that outcrop, or at least one very near-by. The hillsides were littered with similar small rock faces, from travertine "quarries". Tim had noted that some of the small operators were being judicious in their rate of mining, so as to extend the life of their businesses. The place I visited must not have been so constrained, for I've looked at the latest Google Maps satellite view of the area, and there are no longer any waste rock piles on the road by the small factory.

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News About Our Members

- Long time member Cynthia Payne continues to recover from a hospital stay. She is back home at Brighton Gardens, 5550 Tuckerman Lane., Apt 321, North Bethesda, MD 20852.

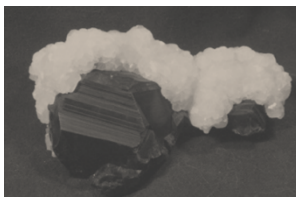
- George Loud is a grandfather again. He was presented with a new grandchild in November. Congratulations George!!!!

- Fredrick Olmstead, the husband of our member Georgia Olmsted passed away September 9, 2014, in Longmont Colorado. Our sincerest condolences go out to Georgia and her family.

(Editor's note: We are all interested in the news of our fellow members. Please let me know if you have news to share or an announcement to make. Thanks)

MIneral of the Month: Sphalerite - The Great Pretender
- Susan Fisher

(Editor's note: Since we are the Mineralogical Society, it seems appropriate that we highlight a mineral each month. Please consider writing a very short article about a favorite mineral like the one below. You can educate the rest of us on your "Mineral of the Month" and we will all gain a greater appreciation of the world of minerals.)



SPHALERITE with Calcite
Trepca, Mitrovica, Kosovo

SPHALERITE
Grace B. Mine, Picher, Oklahoma

Formula: Zinc Sulfide - ZnS
Crystal System: Isometric
Color: yellow, light to dark brown, black, red-brown, red, colorless, and very rarely, green
Luster: Adamantine, Resinous
Hardness: 3½ - 4

Since men have been mining metal ores, some ores have confused and frustrated them. Just when they thought they had found a great vein of a sought-after metal ore, something went wrong. The ore didn't act like it should in the smelting process. Although the ore appeared to be normal, it didn't melt easily and the desired metal wasn't produced. Sphalerite is notable for a long history of confusing early miners and metallurgists. The very name sphalerite indicates the miners' frustrations. It is derived from the Greek word *sphaleros* meaning "treacherous." The confusion is very understandable as sphalerite crystals are isometric and tend toward forming tetrahedrons and octahedrons. To complicate matters, twined crystals are very common and sphalerite can occur in a range of colors. The darker samples of this common mineral can resemble other metal ores, most notably galena.

The very things that were the bane of early miners help make sphalerite attractive to modern mineral collectors. Sphalerite is a common, widespread ore mineral so good samples are usually available to most collectors at reasonable prices. Although it is found in numerous geologic environments, sphalerite is usually found in hydrothermal veins and associated with other sulfide minerals The variety of colors and crystal forms allows the collector to have a number of very differently appearing examples of the same mineral. Sphalerite is normally stable under household conditions so it does not deteriorate in the collector's cabinet.

The variety of colors of sphalerite have always fascinated the collector. When it is very pure with little or no iron substituting into the crystal, it is pale yellow or orange or red. The clear red or yellow crystals have been cut into lovely gem stones. As the iron content increases, sphalerite becomes darker and more opaque. The rare green crystals contain a very small amount of cobalt. The intense red sphalerite crystals from Spain, China, and the Tri-state region (the area of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri around Joplin, MO) are much sought-after classics.

The gemmy green crystals from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Colorado are almost unobtainable and create excitement in the collecting community when some become available. Very lustrous, metallic appearing, twined gray-black examples from central Europe and Peru make striking display pieces when associated with quartz and/or calcite as well as other sulfide minerals. Sphalerite occurs in numerous locations and makes a wonderfully collectable mineral, especially for those who are interested in specializing in a single mineral or mineral group.

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Editor's "Two Cents" - Susan Fisher

We all wish for things we know will almost never happen. I think I could really have a great mineral collection if I could just win a two hundred million dollar lottery. I also wish for fully documented mineral specimens. By fully documented, I mean **REALLY** fully documented. Something like the following would be ideal:

> The aquamarine specimen was collected at 3:08 PM mountain standard time (MST), on July 17, 2002, 14.7 meters from the mine elevator #3, in the southwest trending tunnel, level 4 of the Oh-So-Famous mine. It was 1.8 meters from the tunnel floor in a 17 by 19 by 27 cm pocket that was filled with mud. The pocket formed at the intersection of two pegmatite veins crossing at a 37 degree angle. The matrix is white quartzite with biotite books to 1.8 cm across. Fourteen gemmy blue aquamarine crystals measuring from 1.7 cm to 9.6 cm long project from the 13. 2 by 10.1 cm matrix that was found lying in the bottom of the pocket. The piece was collected by mine owner Joe Lucky with the assistance of Tony Mineblaster. The piece was wrapped in a June 18 edition of the Mine Owners' Daily and placed in a wooden crate for transport to a waiting 1988 Ford F-250 for the trip to Minetown where it was sold at 8:23 PM MST to Ear-to-the-Ground dealer for $xx,xxx.xx. (The mine owner and his assistant then went to the I-Hit-IT-Big Bar and Grill and got gloriously drunk!) The piece was cleaned with room temperature soapy water and photos were sent to Mega Bucks Collector on July 20. The purchase was made by return e-mail for 31% over what the dealer paid and the dealer visited the bar. The piece remained in Mega-Bucks Collector's safe until he departed this earth on 29 September 2012. It was consigned to Get-IT-Sold Auction House….. You get the idea.

For the pieces I can afford, **THIS IS JUST NOT GOING TO HAPPEN** - at least not very often. (A few notable, larger finds do get written up in various journals and I have been able to purchase a piece - the joy of being able to refer to that publication in my notes on the piece!) For most pieces there is a dealer's label. What would be nice would be a general date/year a piece was found, the area of the mine or claim on which it was found, the CORRECT name and location of the mine or claim, by whom it was found and a history of ownership. Every detail adds to the scientific and/or historic value of the piece. It also makes the piece more interesting and it may even add to the monetary value. Every good piece has a story connected with it, but all too often that story is lost.

Once I acquire a piece (I can't afford anything like I described above, but I can dream!), it is now my responsibility to maintain the history that was passed to me in a form that can - and will - be passed along to the next owner. I believe it is important to preserve any labels or other records that came with a piece and record oral information that is passed along. A notebook with sheet protectors and pages for each specimen seems to work for me. Old labels fit well into small glassine envelopes like those used by stamp collectors. A typical page contains my description of the piece, purchase history, its storage location, a photo(s) of the piece, the label envelope taped to the sheet, and any bits of history I have on the piece. There are times when I feel the information passed to me is somewhat suspect. I should still record it, but label it as doubtful unless I am sure it is pure fantasy. (Then I have a good laugh and just appreciate the piece for itself.) I also record any restoration, repairs, and/or special cleaning used with the piece. I confess that I am behind on my records and sometimes am not as complete as I should be, but the ongoing collection curatorial project is just part of the enjoyment for me. My resolution for this new year is to save as much of the history of the minerals in my collection as I can. Will you give a try at doing the same? Have fun and good mineral hunting!

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After hearing Tom Tucker's great talk on Yellowstone, Barry Sperling sent these great pictures from a recent trip he took. THANK YOU for sharing!

Upcoming Events

February 14: Upper Marlboro, MD – 25th Annual Mineral, Jewelry, & Fossil Show sponsored by the Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club. The Show Place Arena, 14900 Pennsylvania Ave., Upper Marlboro, MD. Saturday Feb. 14, 10am-5pm. Admission $5 (senior citizens and students $4; children 12 and under and scouts in uniform get in for free). Door prizes, demonstrations, fluorescent minerals, free mini mine, fossil making, and scout activities for kids. Food for sale. Visit www.smrmc.org for directions, coupon, and for more information contact Michael Patterson at michael.patterson@pgparks.com. **(NOTE: Some of Cynthia Payne's minerals will be sold at this show.)**

March 7-8: Newark, DE - The Delaware Mineralogical Society, Inc. will hold its 52nd Annual Earth Science Gem and Mineral Show @ Delaware Technical and Community College 400 Stanton-Christiana Road; Newark, Delaware 19713 (@ I-95 Exit 4B).. Hours Saturday are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 11:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. The show features educational exhibits of mineral, lapidary and fossil specimens, displays from regional and university museums, a roster of fine dealers of minerals, fossils, gems, jewelry and lapidary supplies, door prizes, demonstrations of gem cutting and polishing and a children's table, where youngsters may purchase inexpensive mineral and fossil specimens. Admission is $6.00, $5.00 for seniors, $4.00 for youngsters between 12 and 16, and free for children under 12 accompanied by an adult. The Info and Coupons at www.delminsociety.org or contact gene@fossilnut.com. Or call Wayne Urion (302) 998-0686.

March 21-22: Gaithersburg, MD - Gem Lapidary, and Mineral Society of Montgomery County MD., Inc.m 51st Annual GLMSMC Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show At the Montgomery County Fairgrounds – Gaithersburg, Maryland. March 21 & 22, 2015. Montgomery County Fairgrounds - 16 Chestnut Street, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877. Saturday 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., Sunday 11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Admission is $6.00, ages 12 and older. Admission is Free for Children (11 and under), Free for Scouts in Uniform. To get a $1 off coupon please go to the club website: http://www.glmsmc.com/show.shtml Plenty of Free parking for the show. More than 20 dealers will have gems, minerals, fossils, meteorites and crystals for sale. Enjoy demonstrations, over 40 exhibits, raffle, door prizes, free workshop, free specimens for kids, and/or get more information about specimens from your own collection. Those under 18 can dig for free specimens in the kid's mini-mines!

March 21-22: Chambersburg, PA 17201, - Annual show; Franklin County Rock and Mineral Club, Inc., Hamilton Heights Elementary School; 1589 Johnson Road ; Sat. 10:00 am-5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am-4:00 pm; Admission $5.00, Children 12 and under free with paying adult; Jewelry- Gemstones-Minerals-Fossils-Displays-Demonstrations - Door Prizes ; contact Mike Mowen, 5979 Altenwald Rd., Waynesboro,, PA 17268, (717) 264-9024; e-mail: mlmo@innernet.net Click for show flyer

March 28-29: Sayre, PA - The 46th Annual Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club show will be held on March 28th (9-5) and March 29th (10-4). The location is the Athens Twp. Vol. Fire Hall, 211 Herrick Ave, Sayre, PA Contact Bob McGuire 570-928-9238 uvbob@epix.net Visit the club website www.chehannarocks.co.

March 28-29: Hickory, NC - 65th Annual EFMLS Convention and Show hosted by the Catawba Valley Gem & Mineral Club. Hickory Metro Convention Center, Hickory, NC. EFMLS Annual Meeting, Friday evening, March 27.

April 10-11: Alexandria, VA - Annual Atlantic Micromounters Conference sponsored by the Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area. Springhill Suites Alexandria Marriott, 6065 Richmond Hwy, Alexandria, VA. Registration at <www.dcmicrominerals.org/>

Visitors are always welcome at our monthly meetings and dinners!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL
THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (MSDC)

(___) Family ~ $25.00 per year. One address.
(___) Individual ~ $20.00 per year.
(___) New * (___) Renewal Dues are for Year _____*
For new members who join in the last months of the year, membership will extend through the following year with no additional dues.

ANNUAL DUES – PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES PROMPTLY.
Pay at next meeting or mail to:
Mineralogical Society of DC, P.O. Box 9957
Alexandria, VA 22304

Name(s) (First and Last)
_____
_____
Address_____
_____
City _____ **State** _____ Zip: _____
Phone(s): **Home/Work/Mobile**_____
Email(s) _____
OK TO INCLUDE YOU ON CLUB MEMBERSHIP LIST?
(__) Yes – Include name, address, phone, email.
If you want any information omitted from the membership list, please note:
Omit my: (__) Email, (__) Home phone, (__)Work phone, (__) Mobile phone, (__) Address, (__) Name
SPECIAL CLUB-RELATED INTERESTS?
_____

MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
(2015 Officers & Board Members)

President: Steve Johnson, stevikj@gmail.com
Vice President & Program Chair: Dave Nanney, dnanney@cox.net
Secretary: Andy Thompson, thompson01@starpower.net
Treasurer: Rebecca Siegal, dcmineralclub@gmail.com, (mail: c/o MSDC, P.O. Box 9957, Alexandria, VA 22304)
Directors: Dave Hennessey, John Weidner, and Sheryl Sims
Editor (Acting): Susan Fisher, novaya2@cox.net
Co-Web Masters: Betty Thompson & Casper Voogt, http://mineralogicalsocietyofdc.org/

Meeting Dates, Time, and Location: The first Wednesday of each month. (No meeting in July and August.) The National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, 10th Street and Constitution Ave, Washington D.C. We will gather at the Constitution Avenue entrance at 7:45 PM to meet our guard who will escort us to the Cathy Kirby Room. Street parking: **THERE ARE NOW PARKING FEES, PAYABLE AT THE KIOSKS, AND ENFORCEMENT UNTIL 10 PM.**

THE MINERAL MINUTES

Newsletter of the Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia

Mineralogical Society of DC
% Susan Fisher
14981 Gold Post Ct.
Centreville, VA 20121

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