

*The Mineralogical Society  
of the  
District of Columbia*

**THE MINERAL MINUTES**



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**WELCOME BACK!!!**

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**Pre-Meeting Dinner: Join us at 6:00 p.m. for dinner before the club meeting. Location: Elephant & Castle, 1201 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. Please contact Dave Nanney, or Steve Johnson, StevikJ@gmail.com, to make a reservation if you wish to attend.**

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**Program for the September 2, 2015 Meeting: Corridor H - A Look into Time presented by Shelley Jaye**

**Wednesday, September 2, 2015 7:45 pm**

**Smithsonian Natural History Museum**

**10<sup>th</sup> Street and Constitution Avenue, NW**

Professor Shelly Jaye's presentation on West Virginia's Corridor H will illustrate the anticlines and synclines evident in the road cuts and explain the stratigraphy which has been exposed by the highway's construction. The road cuts in Corridor H graphically show the results of the stresses to which the area has been subjected over time and hold evidence of the changing environments in the area.

Professor Jaye is a geologist/petrologist currently teaching Northern Virginia Community College. She is from Detroit, Michigan and earned her B. Sc. and M. S. in geology from Wayne State University. Before she began her teaching career, she worked for 15 years for the Department of Defense managing the development of geologic information systems. Professor Jaye was an adjunct professor at Tidewater Community College, Thomas Nelson Community College, Saint Leo University and Franklin University prior to relocating to Northern Virginia. Her background is in igneous and metamorphic petrology.

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### **Andy Muir Remembered**

- Mark Dahlman and Holly McNeil -



Andy, we miss you.  
We will always think  
of you when we see a  
fluorescent mineral.



### **Andy Muir February 8, 1965 - August 9, 2015**

Many of us knew Andy as a collector of fluorescent minerals. As well as being an active member of the MSDC club and regularly seen at dinner prior to the meetings, he also served the Gem, Lapidary, and Mineral Society of Montgomery County, MD for years as treasurer, and most recently as show co-chair. As a fluorescent enthusiast (whose license plate said GLOROX) Andy of course enjoyed attending the Franklin, NJ shows and the digs at Sterling Hill. He didn't confine his interest to NJ specimens though, developing a wide knowledge of minerals from around the world and was on an ongoing quest for perfect "sphere" material. Having a supportive family, his more decorative acquisitions were on display throughout their home, including a very attractive black light display of minerals in the living room.

Andy and his wife Denise were very active in their daughters' activities, providing a strong sense of family. Andy was an avid softball player for many years and he also enjoyed gardening. His yard was filled with a nice mixture of plants and rocks to give year-round interest, and he could often be observed waving his arms in the air and yelling to chase the deer away from his plants. Andy loved the holidays and especially Christmas. Perhaps some of you noticed a green and red haze in the night sky over the Germantown area during the month of December? You might be surprised to learn that it was the glow from Andy's extensive outdoor decorations that he painstakingly put out with great joy every year. Andy's life was further enriched this last year by the addition of two feline companions (Hermione and Luna) to the Muir household and Andy personally made cat trees and scratching posts for them. Andy was smart, gregarious and had a sharp sense of humor and a big laugh. He good-naturedly tolerated much teasing by his many friends and gave it back in his turn.

He is survived by his beloved Denise, his two daughters Savannah and Gabrielle, his parents and brother. He spent his career working on aircraft safety for the FAA and his free time surrounded by his family, those fortunate enough to call him their friend, and of course, his rocks.

He will be greatly missed.

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## Synopsis of the June 2015 MSDC Meeting

- Andy Thompson, Secretary -

President Steve Johnson called the meeting to order and began by welcoming three visitors, Ken, Stephannie and Taylor, the latter two each having attended an earlier MSDC meeting. They shared their diverse interests in minerals, geology and science. Steve then recognized past club presidents who were in attendance: Ed Fisher, Erich Grundel and Andy Thompson. He then called for Old and New Business items of which the attendees offered none for discussion.

Treasurer Rebecca Siegel then reported the club continued to be financially solvent including a recent expenditure of funds for the six-month renewal of the club's postal box.

Recent "Geology in The News" included the recent eruption and spectacular lava flow on Galapagos Island (Ecuador) after 30 years of sleep. On a more local level, club members Cathy and Dave discussed the Moorefield mine in VA which, as expected, has closed for the summer. Both members sang the praises of the owners during a recent expedition there which allowed for up-close and personal mining experiences. Cathy brought back amazonite, quartz, topaz and beautiful books of mica. Dave said it was a "real mine" definitely worth experiencing. Both recommended visiting the mine when it reopens in the fall and recommended the value of taking a tour and tailoring the visit to allow for personal underground exploration. Individuals can collect from the above-ground tailings but no underground collecting is allowed.

Dave gave members a "heads up" with regard to the club's September 2 meeting which will feature Professor Shelly Jaye's presentation on West Virginia's Corridor H. She will illustrate the anticlines and synclines evident in the road cuts and explain the stratigraphy which has been exposed by the highway's construction. MSDC members will subsequently be invited to accompany Shelly as she leads geology students on a tour of the areas, all of which are readily accessible along the highway.

Concerning the governance of MSDC, Steve picked up on a thread he introduced at the May meeting and asked Andy to find a date for an upcoming MSDC board meeting to be held in VA at the Tech Shop in Crystal City. Steve recommended the meeting be on a weekend date which allows free on-site parking.

Susan Fisher then gave an update on long-time member and past president Cynthia Payne whose health continues to improve and whose mobility and taken a positive step forward.

To facilitate the flow of the meeting, V.P. for Programs Dave Nanney then called for a drawing for the door prizes which included polished U.S. South West agate slabs donated by Joe Noonan, mineral specimens donated by Cynthia Payne and a 2015 mineral calendar Erich brought back from the Rochester NY mineral symposium. Against all odds, the three winning tickets drawn from Steve's hat were those of the evening's guests who had their choice of the specimens. Future meetings will continue to make the minerals and agate slabs available to lucky attendees.

Steve then called for a motion to close the business meeting and asked Dave Nanney to introduce the evening's presenter, Dr. Mike Wise, a club favorite who over the years has generously shared his expertise on various aspects of pegmatite. But this evening was unique in that Mike's topic shared his unique classification of pegmatite rocks with the title: Patterns of Distribution of Granitic Pegmatites: A Global Perspective."

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## Synopsis of the Minutes of the MSDC Board of Directors' Meeting, August 16, 2015

- Andy Thompson, Secretary -

### Attendees

Board Members: Steve Johnson, Dave Nanney, Sheryl Sims, Dave Hennessey, Rebecca Siegal, Andy Thompson, John Weidner, Susan Fisher,

Guests: Betty Thompson, Ed Fisher

President Steve Johnson thanked all for attending the board meeting which was held at the Tech Shop in Virginia. He invited anyone who so desired to give a brief "check in" of their summer activities, whether mineral related or otherwise.

1. The board members approved the Secretary's Minutes of prior Board meeting of 12 Oct 22.
2. Rebecca then reported that the treasury currently had adequate funds in the checking account to meet our expenses for the current year. Discussion among members suggested our yearly expenses were in the \$2,200 range.

ACTION – Rebecca: At the board members' request, Rebecca said she would bring to the September meeting a list of our club members. To respect members' privacy, traditionally the list is not publicly shared on the web.

3. Dave Nanney, as V.P. for Programs noted that our Sept 2 program will be given by Shelly Jaye who will discuss the geology of Corridor H. That in turn may lead to a MSDC October field trip along that highway with its extraordinary road-cuts. No speaker is identified yet for October. Our own Erich Grundel is scheduled to present at our November meeting. Dave then led a brainstorming discussion about possible speakers and topics which identified a very interesting roster of possibilities. Stay tuned.

4. Susan Fisher, as temporary editor, led a discussion about the current level of interest and support for our monthly newsletter, *Mineral Minutes*. **Susan shared that she appreciates getting all submissions sent to her 10 to 12 days before publication, which happens about 7 days before each monthly meeting.** The board members affirmed the importance of and value of the *Mineral Minutes*, and also discussed the challenges most print and electronic publications face in today's digital world. All board members said they do read its contents and some said they did so selectively. To facilitate this, in the future, Susan will highlight the salient contents in an "In this issue" type format in order to give a snap shot on the first page and increase readers' instant access to the contents and facilitate their selection of what they want to read.

The biggest challenge seems to be the club newsletter is not getting sufficient support from the membership. When feedback is requested by the editor, she has received very little. Nor are many members submitting articles or notices for publication. Steve suggested including the MSA monthly summary email in our electronic newsletter; it gives brief synopses of MSA newsletter contents and would likely be of interest to members.

Another consideration is gradually moving to an entirely digital distribution. Currently the editor mails 9 hard copies to recipients and about 95 electronic copies to a wide audience. Other mineral clubs will continue to get copies; they sometimes reprint our published articles with the club's permission.

There was also considerable discussion of the extent the *Mineral Minutes* needed to include information about the Eastern and American Federation newsletters and activities. The general sense of the board members' was to continue to include Eastern Federation events in the calendar, and to occasionally publish other EFMLS and AFMS information at the editor's discretion. We also need a new editor for 2016, since Susan stepped in for 2015 only. See #5 below.

5. Steve then began a discussion of possible Officers for 2016, which opportunities will be discussed at the club's October monthly meeting and a slate will be proposed at November's monthly meeting. Steve and Rebecca each announced that they are stepping down as President and Treasurer, respectively. Also Dave Hennessey's 3-year term as Director will be completed in December. Steve and Rebecca both said they would be interested in being newsletter editor. John Weidner said he would consider taking the Treasurer's position. Andy Thompson said he was willing to continue as Secretary. Not every board member volunteered for a new position, and, given individuals will likely be shifting of offices, it is highly likely there will be further vacancies for which MSDC members may consider volunteering. There was no discussion of a nominating committee.

6. Board members expressed their shock and sorrow at the very sudden passing of Andy Muir. (See the memorial article written by Mark Dahlman and Holly McNeil in this issue). Eight MSDC members attended either the viewing and/or the liturgy, burial and subsequent gathering at the St. Francis of Assisi Church hall. The board then addressed the important question of how MSDC wants to memorialize Andy Muir. Given that Andy's primary club was Montgomery County, MSDC board members decided it would be best if we first learned what they were doing. With that in mind, Steve asked that Andy Thompson be the liaison and work with Holly McNeil and report back to the board. One possibility is that they will do something special at their holiday party in Rockville on the second Monday evening in December, to which Mark and GLMS-Montgomery County's President Chris invited MSDC members to join with them.

ACTION: Andy will talk with Holly and/or Mark Dahlman about a fitting remembrance of Andy Muir, and also to find further details about the GLMS-MC holiday gathering and share it with MSDC members.

7. Board members then held a brief discussion of how MSDC does not have positions either elected to the board or appointed by the president, including having a Membership Chair, Hospitality (welcoming guests, nametags, guest contact info and introductions), By-Laws, etc. And members also noted we need greater numbers of younger members to continually enrich our club's enthusiasm and activities.

8. We set a tentative date for the next board meeting as 30 October 7 pm. If the 2016 candidates for office are identified by then, it would be valuable to invite them to the meeting, so they get an orientation and a sense of what's needed in the various offices even though elections will not yet have been held. People who have assumed office in recent years haven't appropriately mentored in their learning about the expectations for their elected roles.

Having completed discussion of the agenda items as proposed, the board members moved to close the meeting which was seconded and approved unanimously.

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## Mineral of the Month: Wulfenite - A Fragile Lead Mineral

- Susan Fisher

Formula:  $\text{Pb}(\text{MoO}_4)$ , lead molybdate

System: Tetragonal

Color: Orange-yellow, yellow, red, brown

Luster: Adamantine, Sub-Adamantine, Resinous

Hardness:  $2\frac{1}{2}$  - 3

Density:  $6\frac{1}{2}$ -  $7\frac{1}{2}$  g/cm<sup>3</sup>



### WULFENITE

Villa Ahumada, Sierra de Los Lamentos, Chihuahua, Mexico

Piece: 9 x 5.5 x 4 cm  
Fisher specimen and photo

Wulfenite is one of the more colorful minerals containing lead. It may be vivid yellow, orange, bright red, greenish gray, or even black. It usually occurs in oxidized hydrothermal lead deposits and has been known to cover the walls of very large pockets. (The Arizona- Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson has a reconstructed pocket of bright orange wulfenite covering an impressively large surface area.) The crystals are usually tabular squares with flat or rounded faces but may also be pyramidal or rarely pseudo-octahedral. When the crystals are very thin, they tend to be fragile because of the high density of the mineral. The weight of the crystal is almost more than its physical structure can support. It is usually associated with other minerals common to oxidized hydrothermal lead deposits such as smithsonite, hemimorphite, cerussite, anglesite, mimetite, vanadinite, and pyromorphite. It has been used as a minor ore mineral, but it is prized by many mineral collectors for its crystal perfection and its vivid colors. .

When described in 1772 by Ignaz von Born, wulfenite from Annaberg, Austria was called "plumbum spatiosum flavo-rubrum" (try getting that on your labels!!!). Other equally difficult names were proposed over the next few years but none were universally accepted. Finally the mineral was renamed wulfenite in 1845 by Wilhelm Karl von Haidinger in honor of Franz Xavier von Wulfen who had written a monograph on the lead ores of Bad Bleiberg Austria.

There are numerous wulfenite locations around the world. The American Southwest is famous for the number of mines producing fine examples. The Red Cloud mine in the Silver District, La Paz County, Arizona is a noted locality for bright orange-red, well formed wulfenite. The Glove mine in Santa Cruz County, Arizona produces lovely butterscotch-yellow crystals. The Los Lamentos locality in Chihuahua, Mexico produces very thick tabular orange crystals. In recent years several locations in China and Morocco have produced notable examples. Old European pieces are also sought by many collectors.

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## Editor's "Two Cents" - What If???

- Susan Fisher -

Life is full of what-ifs. What if Washington wins the Super Bowl this year? What if I am hit by a Metro bus? What if we win the lottery? What if we have to move next week? What if I can find a two thousand carat diamond at Crater of Diamonds? What if ...?

While most of these what-ifs are unlikely, there are some we just can't avoid. Most of us will have to eventually arrange for passing our rock-, mineral- or fossil- related collections on to a new home. We have collected carefully and built a nice collection and we want it to be appreciated after we are no longer its chief curator. Some of us have family members who want to carry on the collection, but even

that isn't an absolute surety. Younger families may not have room for three thousand pieces. Most educational institutions can use some study pieces but don't have the room for large collections of display pieces without substantial endowments. The same is true for many museums. If we plan to sell the collection, how do we accomplish this? The dealers we have dealt with for years may be close to our age and ready to retire also. With all these powerful what-ifs, what can we do?

In order to manage these huge what-ifs, we have to have a plan. It isn't fun to think about our ageing, but it is an inescapable fact. Approach it from a rational perspective and try to imagine the joy the collection may give others in the future. What does a plan entail? It may be slightly different for each collector, but I think most would follow these general steps:

(1) First, decide what you would really like to see happen to your collection. Talk this over with your family or anyone who might be affected. These discussions may result in moving on to alternative one, two or even three. Be patient and imaginative.

(2) Approach any potential recipients to see if they are willing and capable of accepting the collection. Discuss any conditions that might be involved. If your plan includes a sale of the collection, research fees and taxes that might be involved. Again, have alternatives.

(3) Start now to prepare the collection. Be sure you have a good catalogue of the collection. Cull the collection. Remember all those boxes stashed in the furthest back corner of the basement. (Do you really want to keep 147 pounds of rock filled with small quartz crystals? Some schools, nature centers or Scout troops might be able to use them now. Consider having a "rock trading" party with your friends. Perhaps a sale of culled items is a good idea.) Update your labels and records if necessary. This step can't be accomplished over night so make it a project and enjoy working with the collection.

(4) Formalize your wishes. Depending on what you want and the value of your collection, this step may be as simple as a letter or may require legal documents. Seek legal help if you need it. If the steps are to be carried out after your passing, be sure this document is in an appropriate place and its location is known to those who will need to carry out your wishes. If you are the one to take care of the disposition, set a time table and try to stick with it.

(5) Enjoy your collection and feel better that you have provided for the (distant) future. Your loved ones will appreciate your preparedness. Plus, since you have culled the collection, there is **ROOM TO ADD MORE PIECES!**

I hope this gives you some ideas about planning for your collection's future. The most important thing is to enjoy your collection and take positive action now to preserve that joy for others by taking a few of the what-ifs out of the future. Please excuse me now as I go back to my work on step 1.

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## Upcoming Events

**Sept 18 - 20 - Fishersville, VA** - Shenandoah Valley Gem & Mineral Society show at the [Augusta Expo](#) - 277 Expo Road - Fishersville, Virginia, Friday, 9/18/2015 - 2 pm - 6 pm; Saturday, 9/19/2015 - 10 am - 6 pm; Sunday, 9/20/2015 - 11 am - 5 pm; Admission is \$3.00 for Adults, \$2.00 for students & seniors Children age twelve & under & Scouts in uniform admitted FREE; Additional info at [http://www.shenandoahvalleyrockclub.org/annual\\_svgms\\_show.html](http://www.shenandoahvalleyrockclub.org/annual_svgms_show.html) (**Cynthia Payne's minerals will be for sale at this show.**)

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**Oct. 25 - 2015 Bethesda, MD** - Auction by the Gem, Lapidary, and Mineralogical Society of DC. At Bethesda Woman's Club, 5500 Sonoma Road, Bethesda, MD 20817. Free parking at rear of building and on side streets. Preview noon-1 pm. Live and silent auctions 1-5 pm. Cash and personal checks only. No third-party checks.

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**Sept 26-27: West Friendship, MD** - 51st Annual Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show hosted by the **Gem Cutters Guild of Baltimore**. Howard Co. Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. (See the coupon on the this page. This is a great show sponsored by our friends in Baltimore.)

**Sept 26-27: Franklin, NJ** - Franklin Mineral Museum sponsors this show as their only large fundraising event that helps pay for the operations of the Mineral Museum. 59th Annual Franklin-Sterling Gem & Mineral Indoor Show and Outdoor Show, Sponsored by the Franklin Mineral Museum. When: Saturday, September 26th & Sunday, September, 27th 2015. Times: Indoor show: Saturday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. and Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Outdoor Swap: Saturday 7:30 am to 6:00 pm. Sunday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Daily Admission: Adults \$7.00/ Children \$4.00. Where: Franklin School, 50 Washington Ave., Franklin, NJ 07416. Admission: \$7.00 Adult, \$4.00 child (6-16) Our Links: <http://spmom3.wix.com/franklin-gem-mineral> <http://www.franklinmineralmuseum.com/aboutus.htm>

**Oct 24: Fairless Hills, PA** - The Rock and Mineral Club of Lower Bucks County, PA presents our Annual "ULTRAVIOLATION" an all Fluorescent Mineral Show, at the First United Methodist Church, 840 Trenton Road, Fairless Hills, PA., 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Cost \$2.00 Donation, Children 12 years old and younger FREE, Information contact Chuck O'Loughlin, 130 Maple Terrace, Merchantville, NJ 08109, Phone: 856-663-1383, Email: [ultraviolation@yahoo.com](mailto:ultraviolation@yahoo.com)

Check out [www.amfed.org/EFMLS](http://www.amfed.org/EFMLS) for more show dates and news from the American Federation and the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies

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Atlantic Coast  
**Gem, Mineral  
& Jewelry Show**

@ Howard County Fairgrounds

**September 26-27, 2015**

Saturday 10 AM-6 PM ■ Sunday 10 AM-5 PM

[www.gemcuttersguild.com](http://www.gemcuttersguild.com)





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, 10<sup>th</sup> 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***

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**Newsletter of the Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia**

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% Susan Fisher  
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