

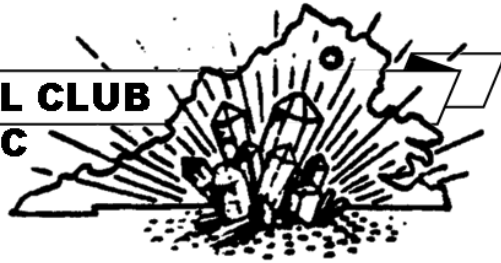


THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA

MINERAL CLUB
INC



Crystals are the flowers of the Mineral Kingdom



THE MINERAL NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 51 No. 1

JANUARY 2010



Snowed OUT!

Also find information
on our Club Website:
<http://www.novamineralclub.org>

Our December meeting was blocked by the falling of massive amounts of crystalline dihydrogen monoxide, a mineral common to this region at this time of year. Fairfax county schools were closed, and as such, the meeting was cancelled. The January meeting will therefore be essentially the same as planned for the December meeting. We will start the meeting at **6:45pm on Wednesday the 27th** at Long Branch Nature Center in coordination with the Micromineralogists Of The National Capital Area. Similar to the plans for the December meeting, this meeting is a Potluck style party, so please bring your favorite dish. There

will also be a gift/sharing/exchange so don't forget to bring a specimen or other hobby related item if you would like to participate.

Sometimes parking can get tight at the Nature Center. Your best option for getting a good parking space is to come early. Arriving early also affords a chance to meet with others prior to the normal meeting, although this meeting should afford plenty of time for interactive discussion amongst friends.

Deli sandwiches & beverages will be provided by the MNCA club.

NVMC Schedule:

NOTE: Different meeting time this month!!

27 Jan. General meeting of the NVMC at 6:45pm

20 Feb Field Trip to JMU Geology Dept.

22 Feb. General meeting of the NVMC at 7:45pm

22 Mar. Meeting and NVMC AUCTION at 7:30pm

Field Trip 20 Feb

The Northern Virginia Mineral Club has been invited to join the Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area on a Field Trip to the James Madison University Geology department on 20 February. More information will be forthcoming, but please contact Tom Tucker if you would like to attend. Send him email at threedogtom@earthlink.net.

Reminder!

Renew Your Membership

It is time to renew your membership in the Northern Virginia Mineral Club if you have not already done so. Please send your membership dues to the following address:

**RICK REIBER, TREASURER
NORTHERN VIRGINIA MINERAL CLUB
PO BOX 9851
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22304**

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More photos from the 2009 show - see article on page 4

Dec. Meeting Minutes

By Robert Winsor

There was snow. Lots of it. On the roads, sidewalks and under which our cars were buried.

The meeting was cancelled.

Hope you all had Happy Holidays!

Jan. Meeting Agenda

27 January 2010

CHRISTMAS PARTY...NVMC & MNCA

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA is shortened due to party.

Call to order

Approval of minutes of November '09 NVMC meeting.

Presentation of 2009 NVMC President's Award

Election of officers for 2010. The term of office begins with the January, 2010 meeting on January 27, 2010

Report of Nominating Committee for '10 NVMC

Officers

President.....Barry Remer

Vice President...Open

Secretary.....Kathy Hrechka

Treasurer.....Rick Reiber

Editor.....Robert Winsor

Call for nominations from the floor.

Call for motion to close nominations and proceed to election motion.

Adjourn meeting.

The Prez Says

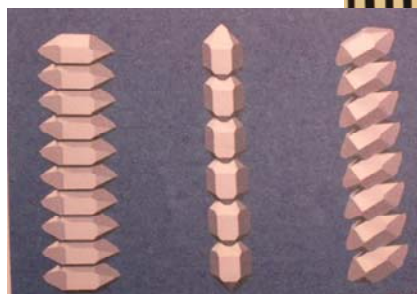
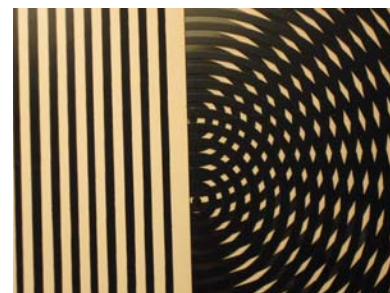
TIME FLIES, MEETINGS MORPH, and WINTER WINS.

The December 2009 record snowfall that caused the NVMC & MNCA Christmas Party to be canceled gave me an opportunity to write a "baker's dozen" Prez Says articles in my final year as NVMC Prez. So, what do you write about when you've said your Goodbyes and Thank You in December?

How about looking ahead to the upcoming year of well attended meeting, welcoming new and returning officers, welcoming new members, participating in stimulating programs, sharing with other mineral clubs, each of us finding a new way to contribute to the club's activities (volunteer to do a program for the club, accept an invitation by the president to chair a NVMC or Eastern Federation committee that's been in dire need of one for several years, be an early volunteer for helping with our annual show (perhaps giving a prize to #s 1, 2, and 3 to sign up to work???), help with set up before meetings and clean-up after meetings, be a welcoming and helpful ambassador for the club, give an Earth Science lesson for a local school, write an article for the NVMC newsletter, or.....you name it.....)

Finally, I give my best wishes to new and returning NVMC officers and all NVMC members for an enjoyable, healthy, rewarding and productive New Year.

**Wayne Sukow,
Prez.**



Explaining Iris in Agate (above) and Explaining Chalcedony in Iris Agate (left)

Hooray for Luray

By Sheryl E. Sims

Luray Caverns, in its magnificence, is a registered natural landmark. Like many, I've visited it several times over the years and have found it to be one of the most incredible natural wonders that I've ever seen. Discovered by Andrew Campbell in 1878, Luray Cavern possesses an array of decorative stalactite and stalagmite like few caverns/caves on earth.

Upon descent, appears one beautiful formation after another. Drip-by-drip, day-by-day, towers of minerals reflect time's unique artistic touch. Breath-taking pools of water and formations exist in inviting colors. Have you seen "Saracen's Tent"? The smooth formation gives the illusion of panels of silky draperies. Its translucent folds look to be hand-folded.

If you are wishing for more, there is always the Luray Caverns "wishing well" or "fried egg"! The wishing well is really a large subterranean pool of water. It is said to be six feet deep. Visitors from all over the world have tossed over \$400,000 worth of coins into the wishing well. The coins are removed annually and donated to various charities.

For music lovers, Luray Caverns has a great stalacpipe or-

gan! This unique instrument takes up over 3-1/2 acres of the cavern. It produces beautiful symphonic quality tones when played and is automatically activated for amazed audiences. Incredibly, it can also be played manually.



Not until joining the NVMC did I truly consider or appreciate how amazing Luray Caverns is in terms of its age, composition of crystalline dolomite and layers of calcite and limestone. To some, it may simply be a big hole in the ground, but to me, the lure to Luray is a strong one. The cavern is majestic and the experience one you won't soon forget.



The Board of Directors

Do you have a question for one of our Board members? To the right you can find email addresses and phone numbers for club officers (Note imminent changes for Prez and Vice Prez!).

Also, if you would like to attend a meeting of the Board of Directors, please contact Wayne Sukow and let him know ahead of time. All club members are welcome at Board meetings!

Board Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:30pm at Wayne's home in Fairfax. Please contact Wayne for directions.

President (Interim): Wayne Sukow

d8olite @ fastmail.fm (703) 280-8108

Vice President: Barry Remer

bsbremer @ comcast.net

Secretary: Kathy Hrechka

kshrechka @ msn.com (703) 765-3187

Treasurer: Rick Reiber

rickgr3 @ comcast.net (703) 578-4224

2009 NVMC Mineral Show

By Tom Taaffe

Photos courtesy Sheryl Sims

Our 18th Annual Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show was held this past Nov 21 & 22 at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. It was co-sponsored by the Dept. of Atmospheric, Oceanic and Earth Sciences at GMU and held in the ballroom at GMU's Student Union II.

We want to start by thanking **Dr. Julia Nord Cooper** for contributing not only her own time but also thank her for recruiting so many helpful, friendly and enthusiastic Mineralogy students to help out with the show. These students brought a lot of energy to our event such as placing all the campus directional signs, helping dealers unload/unpack and also helping with Sunday night breakdown. During the show, the GMU Mineralogy club operated a booth selling coffee and snacks while other students like the ever reliable **9 O'clock Nick** drove the GMU courtesy shuttles to and fro.

We had 26 dealers, ranging from large to very small and mostly familiar long time participants. New this year were **Zahir Bouday**, Pakistan Minerals & **Marge Noel** with her Fossil Jewelry. Marge squeezed into the show at the last by sharing a table with longtime member, **Barbara Sky** and her Gem Trees. Our exhibitors included **Lois Dowell & Karen Lewis** (Handmade Jewelry), **Jeff Guerber** (Meteorites), **Diane Nesmeyer** (Garnets) and the **Micromounters**. In addition, our Field Trip coordinator, **Ted Carver**, brought in a homemade exhibit (coffee table style) that he and other field trippers filled with interesting specimens from recent field trips. All in all, there was a wide abundance of minerals, fossils and unique lapidary and jewelry creations for all in attendance to admire and enjoy. As far as activities, **Dick Davies** demonstrated faceting and **Tom Tucker**, **Kathy Hrechka**, and **Patrick Haynes** garnered the attention of many with their microscopes and thumbnails at the Micromounters table.

The Kid's Activity Tables and the Mini-mines were overrun time and again by kids of all ages including a slew of Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts & Brownies. It fell to **Alec Brenner** to "hold the fort" against these unre-



dictable onslaughts, since it was he who worked the Kid's Tables almost fulltime! (Thanks!!) Alec got some much needed help from **Julia Hrechka**, **Ned Slagle**, **Dave MacLean**, **Diane Nesmeyer**, **Marie Brown** and a small handful of others who stepped in to help here and there. It wasn't enough. Seriously, we need more people to be ready to step up to help when there is a rush at the Kid's Tables.

BTW **Jim Kostka** is significantly to "blame" for all those scouts and he "promises" (i.e. threatens) even more scouts at our next show.

If you were there, you know that our 2009 show was an extremely lively affair from start to finish, with many enthusiastic show goers arriving bright and early Saturday. The ballroom filled up quickly and dealers and demonstrators alike were kept happy and hopping all day. So busy in fact that a lot of dealers didn't even have time for lunch til after 3PM!

Show goers had no trouble discovering wonderful mineral and fossil specimens that they could not live without, dealers and collectors hobnobbed and old friends in the hobby enjoyed the opportunity to visit



2009 NVMC Mineral Show (cont.)

with each other. It was a great day to be at a Mineral Show.

Sunday morning was calm enough for dealers to stray from their booths, walk around and chat a bit. This is a pleasure for those of us too busy Saturday to get away from our booths. But, as noontime arrived so did the crowd. Families with kids and Scout groups seemed to predominate but collectors of all stripes were present. Unplanned, two girls somehow appropriated the microphone on the stage and happily assumed the duties of calling out our hourly door prizes. They did such a fine and entertaining job of it that all previous door prize announcers were more than happy to relinquish the task to them for the rest of the day.

Next in line was our trademark Silent Auction, administered by **Rob Robinson** and **Jeff Guerber**. This is how it works: Approx 60-80 Mineral, Fossil and Lapidary items are laid out on tables on the stage with bid slips for each. People place their bids, often keeping a close eye on the bid slips of the specimens that they desire the most. More often than not, there are many items in the auction (all donated by dealers and club members) that potentially will ignite a bidding war between 2 or 3 bidders. Pencils are ordered down at 3 PM sharp so the final bidding is often high drama. This year's Silent Auction was so popular that bidders nearly overwhelmed the stage at its end.

I would encourage anyone, especially those who enjoyed this year's Mineral Show to PLEASE VOLUNTEER EARLY next year so as to better help out with the numerous show tasks.



So, who were some of the key contributors to this year's show?

Thanks to **Alec**, **Autumn** and **Sara Brenner** for coming to my house in late October to stick labels and stamps on the 1350 show invitations we sent to previous show attendees. Once again, they were among the first to volunteer to help for this year's show.

On Friday, the day before the show, **Jim Kostka**, **Dave MacLean**, **Pat Rehill**, **Richard Palaschak** and **son** met at the club's storage unit at 3:30 PM and ferried back to GMU the exhibit cases and a host of other necessary club materials. **Wayne Sukow** arrived and single handedly tackled the task of building our 4 white exhibit cases.



We were glad to find that the staff at SUB II had provided enough tables for our needs. That was good news. They even set up the tables according to our floor plan (or so they thought). Oops! They left out the crucial 5 tables in front of the stage. Every table had to be moved! With **Mike Shoemaker's** assistance, we set upon the task of moving all the 70+ tables in the ballroom about 5 ft in one direction measuring aisle widths as we went. Once again, everything fit, but just barely.

Later on Friday, **Jeff Nesmeyer** arrived to help with



2009 NVMC Mineral Show (cont.)

securing electrical cords etc. **Diane Nesmeyer** brought her wonderful Garnet collection. **Kathy Hrechka** arrived to tweak the exhibit area and to help further prepare the room. **Jim Kostka**, **Mike Shoemaker** & I set up the Kid's Activity Tables. **Jeff Guerber** arrived to set up his Meteorite Exhibit; I think it was **Robert Clemenzi**

who brought us **Joe Murter's** *World Famous* Miniature Rock Shop and he also put out some of the "Touch Minerals" for display.

Rick Reiber anchored himself at the admissions table. He got help from **George Reimherr**, **Ned Slagle** and a couple of others. **Sheryl Sims** helped early on and took lots of pics! **Jim Kostka** figured to do "a little troubleshooting" on Saturday but

did realize a crisis loomed. Inconveniently, two ballroom circuit breakers blew at 10 AM, knocking out several dealers' lights. Jim was forced to scramble to realign the extension cords for as many as 6 booths all over the ballroom to balance the electricity being used by some dealers. Not fun!

For Sunday night breakdown, I was so wiped out that I can't now recall everyone who helped but those that I do know of include: **Jim Kostka**, **Holt Apgar**, **Wayne Sukow**, **Jeff Guerber** along with a number GMU students volunteers.

The club is grateful for all the volunteers who generously donated their time and enthusiastic energy. They are the primary reason for the 2009 show's success. I sincerely apologize if we inadvertently omitted the name of any of volunteers.



What's in a Newsletter?

By Robert Winsor

Some people are curious what goes into one of our newsletters. So here it is:

Each newsletter takes a few days to prepare using Microsoft Publisher software. Each article in the newsletter takes anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes to copy from the source and sort out where it can be placed on what page. The goal is to make each page filled with content without having large blank spaces on any of the pages. Sorting this out is like a puzzle.

Then there is the printing. There are approximately 55 club members that receive their newsletter in printed form. Each of these printed newsletters is folded in half by hand, and two mailing seals are placed opposite the fold to keep the newsletter from flopping open during mail carrier delivery. The mailing seals are printed with the NVMC circular seal emblem (found on the back page). Then mailing labels are printed and affixed to each newsletter. A stamp is placed and they are taken to the post office for deliver. The whole effort of printing, sealing, labeling, stamping, and mailing takes about 3 hours of work (including the maintenance of the mailing list - members that receive the mailed copy change every couple months!). The cost of these mailed copies is about 7.3 cents per printed page (2 printed pages per sheet) and 2 cents per staple, so an 8-page newsletter like this one costs \$0.64. Then the stamp to mail it costs \$0.44, for a total cost of \$1.08. A ten-page newsletter totals \$1.24, and a 12 pager costs \$1.39 each. I will not produce a newsletter exceeding 12 pages because it would exceed 1oz and require an extra stamp!

For those of you members taking newsletters by email only, you are saving the club annually about \$11 (ten newsletters per year). Thank-You! Currently there are 87 email addresses getting the newsletter this way, with about 80 of them being club members. I am glad to send the newsletter to any email address. If you know someone that would like to receive this newsletter by email, just have them send me a request by email.

The Rosetta Stone in the British Museum, London

By Kathy Hrechka

The Rosetta Stone was unearthed in 1799 by workmen constructing Fort St. Julien, el- Rashid (Rosetta) Egypt. The French officer, Bouchard realized the importance of the stone after noticing that it was inscribed in three different scripts, one of which was ancient Greek. In time, the stone would become famous as the final clue to solving the mystery of ancient Egyptian writing.

The stone's inscription, a commemoration of the first anniversary of Ptolemy V's coronation in 196 B.C. was written in two different types of Egyptian script, hieroglyphics and demotic (a native, cursive script). Jean-Francois Champollion deciphered the coded languages in 1822.

The stone was taken to Britain in 1802 as a prize of war, and it has since been part of the collection of the British Museum. The dark grey granite with a rose-colored vein was freshly cleaned and set in an upright display in 1999 for easier viewing of the inscriptions.



The author, Kathy, examining a replica Rosetta Stone (above) and views of the front and back of the stone (below) December 2009





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PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
[HTTP://www.novamineralclub.org](http://www.novamineralclub.org)

The Northern Virginia Mineral Club

You can send your Newsletter articles to:

Robert Winsor
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Round Hill, VA 20141

Or via email: phototech @ comcast.net

Visitors are Always Welcome at our Club Meetings.

**TIME TO RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP!**

SEND YOUR DUES TO:

**Rick Reiber
Treasurer, NVMC
PO Box 9851
Alexandria, VA 22304**

**OR
Bring your dues to the
meeting**

Purpose: To promote, educate and encourage interest in geology, mineralogy, lapidary arts and related sciences. The society is a member of Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS)

<http://www.amfed.org/efmls> and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS)
<http://www.amfed.org>

Dues: Due by 1 January of each year; \$15.00 Individual, \$20.00 Family, and \$6.00 Junior (under 16, sponsored by an adult member).

Meetings are held at 7:45 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month (except

May and December*) at [Long Branch Nature Center](#), 625 Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204. Phone (703) 228-6535. (No meeting in July & August.)

(*Changes announced in the newsletter.) Snow schedule - Arlington county schools.