



THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA MINERAL CLUB INC



Crystals are the flowers of the Mineral Kingdom



THE MINERAL NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 51 No. 6

SEPTEMBER 2010

Minerals of Vulcan: Manassas

NVMC Schedule:

27 Sept. General meeting of the NVMC at 7:45pm

02 Oct. Field trip to National Limestone Quarry

25 Oct. General meeting of the NVMC at 7:45pm

22 Nov. General meeting of the NVMC and AUCTION at 7:45pm

The date for the December meeting will be forthcoming in a future issue of *The Mineral Newsletter*.

The September meeting of the Northern Virginia Mineral Club will feature a presentation by Marion Wiggins, Vulcan Materials geologist. Ms Wiggins will speak to us about the history and geology of the Vulcan Quarry in Manassas. This quarry is a significant local collecting site featuring a suite of minerals including prehnite, apophyllite, datolite, and many more (mindat.org has an extensive list). Vulcan has been very welcoming to mineral collectors, so we look forward to learning more about the company and the quarry. Members are encouraged to bring specimens from the Manassas Quarry for show and tell.

All club members are also invited to attend a dinner at 5:30pm with our speaker (you must pay for your own meal, though) at:
Dogfish Head Alehouse
7 Corners Shopping Center
6220 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22044
(703) 534-3342
<http://www.dogfishalehouse.com>

Please RSVP to Sue Marcus if you plan to attend the dinner prior to the meeting, at rlhaskins@verizon.net

Club Show in November

By Robert Winsor

Our club will hold it's mineral show in November, just as in prior years. However, details of the show this year will be forthcoming in next month's *The Mineral Newsletter*.

In the mean time, your help is needed to help Tom Taaffe organize this event. Please contact Tom at:

Rockclctr @ aol.com or give him a call at 703-281-3767.

There are many ways to help out by volunteering for tasks ranging from planning and promoting to providing manual labor for activities such as the setup of tables, etc. for the event. This is a very labor intensive event requiring help and coordination amongst many club members. This is also our club's largest

source of revenue each year. And, proceeds from this show help our club with the many public outreach activities that our club provides. So, not only is it a fun time for our club and the community, but it also serves as community service.

So please don't hesitate to contact Tom and let him know how and when you can help with the show.

Send in your Stories!

Other club members really do love to read about the adventures of other club members. Won't you submit an article about your field trips taken in the last several months? Send your article to the Editor (see last page for email and mailing address).

Inside this issue:

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June Meeting Minutes

By Kathy Hrechka, Secretary

May 24, 2010 Minutes NVMC

President, Barry Remer opened the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Treasurer, Rick Reiber gave a treasurers report, including answers to members budget concerns.

Past president, Dr. Peter Chin was welcomed, as he resides in Honolulu, Hawaii. Dr. Chin will be here for one year.

Jim Kostka had Mineral Club Show cards for our Nov. 20-21 annual show.

He encouraged members to take a few to distribute to friends.

George Reimher solicited the upcoming Springfield, MA show. He also had a mineral finding, proven by Dr. Lance Kearns, JMU of some collected stelerites

and stilbites from Manassas Quarry. The stelerites are dark yellow, containing no sodium. The stilbites are white, and contain sodium. He will submit information and photos to the newsletter editor.

President, Remer addressed questions concerning the summer club picnic. He said interest has dwindled; therefore there would be no picnic this summer. He spoke about the requests for membership list distribution. A club member may have the list, but may not circulate it for business purposes.

Door Prizes: Sheryl Sims handed out three door prizes. Dr. Chin won the first drawing, but declined. Jim Kostka won an Elbite from MA. The other two are mysteries.

President Remer reminded members about Wildacres retreat in NC to be held first week of September.

Robert Clemenzi reminded the members of the Folk Festival on the Mall, DC. He said that the Smithsonian will have an exhibit.

The meeting was adjourned.

The Prez Says

Here's hoping everyone had a great summer with lots of field trips or silver picking (purchasing for the newcomers). I saw lots of field trips cross my email. Here's a great big "THANK YOU" to all those members who organized and led field trips. Please bring something you collected to our meeting next Monday, September 27. There will be a table to put your specimen on in the auditorium at Long Branch. We'll start at 7:45 p.m.

Sue Marcus has another wonderful speaker for us on Monday. You are welcome to call her if you would like to meet the speaker before the meeting at dinner. The time and place are elsewhere in this bulletin.

Anyone who attended Wildacres a few weeks ago will tell you what a great place it is. Thanks to the Eastern Federation which subsidizes the week. The prices are very reasonable. The rooms are motel-like, the food is local and delicious, the instructors for the classes are excellent and the camaraderie flows the whole time. Also you have access to some of the best mineral,

rock, or fossil speakers who will sweeten your eyes and tempt your palate to collect even more. Please speak with someone who attended to find out about this North Carolina gem on a mountaintop next to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Remember our show at GMU on November 19 (setup), 20, 21 and volunteer to help. This is an opportunity to keep our dues low and share our hobby with the community. See Tom Taaffe, the Show Chairman, to volunteer.

Warm regards to all,
Barry Remer, NVMC President

Sept. Meeting Agenda

No meeting agenda was submitted in time for publication.

A GEM OF A FIND!

By Sheryl E. Sims

Emerald Lagassi, Pearl Bailey, and Ruby Dee are all big names. Few names, however, are bigger right now than **Carolina Emperor**, the nearly 65-carat emerald found recently in a North Carolina corn field. According to Associated Press and CBS News reports on August 30 and 31, respectively, Terry Ledford found the emerald, which was about 2 square inches in size, on his business partner's 200-acre farm in Hiddenite, NC. Hiddenite is 50 miles northwest of Charlotte, NC.

It's said that Ledford had the emerald cut to mimic the crown jewels of 18th century Russian empress Catherine the Great. It's now reportedly about the size of a quarter. After examining the emerald, gemologist, C.R. "Cap" Beesley, stated that it was

the largest cut emerald ever found in North America.

CBS News interviewed Michael Wise, of the Smithsonian's *National Museum of Natural History*, and he stated that he studied the area around Hiddenite for years, and that it's unknown as to why pockets or cavities of emeralds are formed in North Carolina. He said that conditions have to be "just right" to form emeralds. It's interesting to note that while this find is said to be comparable to an emerald once sold for \$1.65 million at Christie's auction house, it was found on land where the owners once charged only \$3 a day to dig for samples! While diamonds may be a girl's best friend, it's safe to say that there's nothing wrong with embracing an emerald in the rough!

Celebrate Science:

Don't miss the Expo on the National Mall

Festival Dates:

10/10/10 - 10/24/10

Expo Dates:

10/23 & 10/24

October 23 and 24, 2010, 10am-5:30pm

Over 1500 hands-on science and engineering activities

More than 50 stage shows on four stages

A free event for all ages

EFMLS/AFMS Bulletin Editor's Contest Winners

Original Articles: 9th Place Growing Crystals Part 2

By **Robert Winsor**

NVMC The Mineral Newsletter, 6/09

10th Place – Adventure to NASA's Johnson Space Center – Houston, Texas

By **Kathy Hrechka**

NVMC The Mineral Newsletter 9/09

New Editors: 2nd Place The Mineral Newsletter

Robert Winsor, Editor

Northern Virginia Mineral Club

Large Bulletins: 5th Place Gem Cutters News

Carolyn Weinberger, Editor

Request for Assistance

Through the NMVC website, Frank Ridge has asked if there's anyone in the NVMC or any other local club who does diamond drilling of small holes in polished stones and semiprecious gems? If you do contact Frank at: ridgell@verizon.net and copy Wayne Sukow: d8olite@fastmail.fm to keep him in the loop of replies to NVMC website inquiries. Thanks.

Marie Brown Yard Sale, 02 October

Marie Brown is having a Yard Sale, open to all who wish to come (not just for NVMC members)!

Mark your calendars.

Date of the sale is 02 October, with 03 October as a "rain date". 9:00am to 5:00pm

Selling:

- Collections of cutting material
- slabs
- minerals
- fossils
- petrified wood
- Raytech Saw
- Other miscellaneous

Please contact

Marie Brown: 703-256-8343

3722 Rodes Court

Annandale, VA 22003

Sorry, Marie does not have email. Please call her or send her regular mail with any questions.

Bishop Ireton High School

by Kathy Hrechka

Bishop Ireton High School in Alexandria celebrates Earth Science curriculum with a beautiful and new mineral collection. Thanks to Mr. Tom Taaffe and one other anonymous mineral donor from our club, students can now appreciate geology first hand. Earth Science is new curriculum for freshmen to be taught by Miss Parnell. Kathy Hrechka is looking forward to the challenge of co-teaching during the mineral and rock chapters. Once again, the students and staff of BI wish to thank the NVMC members.



Stilbite or Stellerite?

By George Reimherr

This question came up following recent (2010) finds on club field trips to the Vulcan Materials Quarry, Manassas, VA. Previous similar finds from elsewhere in the quarry (for example, back in September, 2007) had been analyzed as stellerite. This year's finds can be separated into two general types: Type 1 - lighter color, yellowish-brown groups of individual crystals; and Type 2 - darker color, orange-brown, rounded clumps or hemispheres, often with smooth, shiny surfaces. To settle this question, samples of both types were submitted to the Geology department at James Madison University for analysis. The results, received in June 2010 are as follows:

Type 1 specimens analyzed as stilbite.

Type 2 specimens analyzed as stellerite.

In the real world, some specimens may fall somewhere in between types one and two - they may have both stilbite and stellerite. Chemically, stilbite has sodium; stellerite does not have sodium. Specimens

from the 2010 Manassas Quarry find were given away at a recent NVMC club meeting. They were labeled "stellerite." As they were mostly type 1 specimens, the label should be changed to "stilbite".



Photo of stellerite from Vulcan Manassas quarry © Casper Voogt (April 2010)

New email address for the Newsletter Editor

Over the course of time, there had been some members no longer receiving the newsletter despite being on the distribution list. To fix this problem, the

official contact email for the newsletter was changed to news.nvmc@gmail.com. This email address should solve all the problems. So, please take notice of the new email address and update your records as such.

Metal in the Media and More

By Sheryl E. Sims

In an article by Tiffany O'Callaghan, entitled, "Heavy Metal," in the July 12, 2010 issue of "Time" magazine, Ms. O'Callaghan reported that concern was shown, by the Consumer Product Safety Commission ("CPSC"), over the (possibly high) level of cadmium found in the enamel of McDonald's Shrek-themed drinking glasses. The glasses were manufactured in the United States. Under the authority of the Federal Hazardous Substances Act, CPSC is charged with regulating the ever-growing prevalence of items/products that contain cadmium. The intent of the agency is to set forth standards for acceptable levels of cadmium in products because of the dangers that have already come to the forefront with lead. (Cadmium (48 Cd), a soft, bluish-white metal, is similar to zinc. It is named after the Greek mythological character Cadmus, was discovered by Friedrich Stromeyer and Karl Samuel Leberecht Hermann, from Germany.)



The article states that Bruce Fowler reported that cadmium might not be dangerous if low levels are found on the outside of the glasses. Since cadmium is not as widely used as lead, it is felt that it is not as great of a danger. However, the danger comes from cadmium

particles flaking off, spreading to other dishes, possibly through repeated dishwashing, and being ingested. She further stated that "many products" consist of "84% to 90% cadmium." In fact, in January 2010, an investigation was

done by the Associated Press. It was discovered that inexpensive jewelry, made in China, contained high levels of cadmium. As a result the CPSC issued several recalls on various types of jewelry primarily marketed for young children and priced from \$1 - \$12. McDonald's recalled 12 million Shrek-themed glasses. O'Callaghan stated that exposure to high levels of cadmium, over a prolonged period of time, could result in lung cancer, kidney disease, and even severe bone loss.

The Monroe Mineral Mining Museum

By Barry Remer

On Saturday, September 18 Long Branch Nature Center sponsored a field trip to the Museum. A hearty band of 4 children and 5 adults ventured South on I-95 to the Mineral Mining Museum. Gold fever was in the air. The museum is about 13 miles north of exit 133. We left Long Branch about 9:15 and arrived at the museum about 10:30. The museum has lots of information about Gold in Virginia. Limited mining started around the time of Thomas Jefferson and stopped during the Civil War due to the need for soldiers. After the war, mining resumed until 1940. Many miners went to work in defense plants and some became soldiers in WW II. The Park Ranger, Todd, is the resident expert about the history of Gold

mining in Virginia and surrounding states. He has a wealth of information. All of us went outside and used the bag of sand we bought and panned for over an hour. The minerals we found were: Gold, Amazonite, Pyrite, Mica and Garnet.

Some of the attractions we found at the location was climbing equipment for the kids. A covered pavillion with picnic tables to eat lunch, and a field for soccer or baseball. Saving the best for last... we found indoor plumbing at the site. The park is open year-round and can be googled at Monroe Mining Museum. The entrance fee is \$3.00 per person for the museum.



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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:

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Or via email: news.nvmc @ gmail.com

Visitors are Always Welcome at our Club Meetings.

**Please bring your
summer finds to one
of our upcoming
meetings!**

And, bring a friend.

**Submit articles for
the newsletter!**

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.