

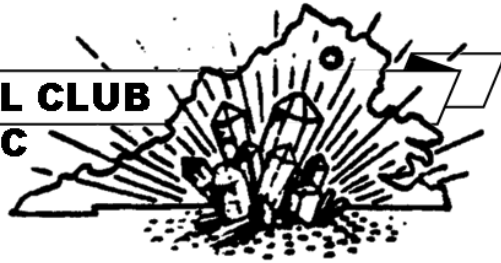


THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA

**MINERAL CLUB
INC**



Crystals are the flowers of the Mineral Kingdom



THE MINERAL NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 52 No. 7

SEPTEMBER 2011

Autumn Auction

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

Every year we have two auctions. In previous years our second auction was held in November *but no longer!* Our Autumn Auction is now moved to the September meeting which will be on the 26th this month. The meeting will start promptly at 7:45 and typically we move through the business fast so that there is time for the auction. Please come early if you wish to sell items and setup early enough to have your items laid out on the table with bid slips

prepared (see page 5).

If you just want to buy stuff, please bring cash as this makes the transactions easier - and please bring a variety of bills. Items of higher cost can be paid with check.

We look forward to seeing you at Long Branch Nature Center on the 26th! Don't hesitate to bring a guest or invite non-members. The meeting and auction is open to all (but only members can sell).

NVMC Schedule:

**September 26 AUCTION
and general meeting**

**September 24 - 47th annual
Gem, Mineral & Jewelry
show at Howard County
Fairgrounds**

**October 24 Gen. Mtg.
November 28 Gen. mtg.**

**December 19*
Holiday Meeting
* This is a joint meeting
with MNCA**



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20th Annual GEM, MINERAL AND FOSSIL SHOW

Presented by the Northern Virginia Mineral Club, Inc. www.novamineralclub.org

Sponsored by the Dept. of Atmospheric, Oceanic and Earth Sciences at GMU

Date: November 12 & 13, 2011

Place: Student Union II Building
George Mason University Campus
Braddock Rd. & Route 123, Fairfax, VA

Hours: Saturday 10-6, Sunday 10-4

Admission: Adults: \$5, Seniors & Teens (13-17): \$3.
Children 12 & under, Scouts in uniform,
and GMU Students w/ valid ID are FREE.

Demonstrations, Exhibits, and Door Prizes. Mini-mines for children to dig in and get free fossils & minerals. Over 20 dealers with Fossils, Minerals, Crystals, and Gems for sale.

Use Parking Lot A, enter Lot A from Nottaway River Lane.

\$1 OFF
Adult Admission
with this card.

June Minutes

June 27, 2011 - Kathy Hrechka, Secretary

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

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the previous month were approved and seconded as published in the June newsletter.

Show Report: Tom Taaffe gave a brief report concerning our club show in November.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer, Rick Reiber gave a treasurer's report, and noted that he is operating Quick Books for our club.

Announcements: Matt Charsky, member of the AFMS/EFMLS Advisory committee promoted the upcoming Federation Show in Syracuse, NY. The Fred Schaefermeyer Scholarship Fund was explained, and will seek recipients from Dr. Lance Kearns, JMU.

The Prez Says

Well our hot and humid weather appears to be displaced by overcast days and cool weather. Here's hoping you all had a great summer. Maybe you're looking forward to some quarry or fossil trips now. The auction we voted to have earlier this year is less than a week away. Be sure to get your specimens ready for a night of interesting fun and please bring cash or lots of checks. It's not possible for our Treasurer, Rick, to run tabs for members during the auction. Also, try to keep the conversations at a whispering level so as not to confuse the auctioneers or those of us at the treasurer's table. It's difficult keeping track of whose specimen belongs to whom. Speaking of auctioneers we need some volunteers to come forward and sell. You do not have to have the rapid voice like those who sell horses or tobacco. Remember also current club members can bring up to 20 pieces to auction.

We'll spend a few minutes before the auction honoring those who won EFMLS and AFMS awards. Spent the month of July teaching elementary children about the Civil War. Arlington County has a fort that



President Barry Remer presents Junior member Alec Brenner with a Leadership Award. (Photo by Sheryl Sims)

John Carver, Field Trip Chair promoted future mineral collecting trips. Contact him - jtcarver@msn.com.

Jim Kostka provided freebies from the Vulcan Quarry. He also solicited a letter writing campaign to the Smithsonian in support of maintaining mineral collections in reference of closing the Leesburg Naturalist Center.

was the site of Fort C. F. Smith. It was one of the 68 forts built around Washington to protect the Capitol. Many of them knew about it. Some about family members who soldiered on both sides. The kids learned to load muskets made of wood in nine times and how to march in single file or in columns of two. They also designed forts and built them on the sidewalk on the property.

I spent a week in Hartford, Connecticut visiting friends. When I came back Julianne and I went to Minneapolis for her high school reunion. We visited her mother in Wisconsin and her sister and brother in Minnesota. I did a little exploring driving into North and South Dakota. The Prairie lands are beautiful. Green flatlands, azure blue skies, and Cumulonimbus clouds in all shapes and sizes. Now it's back to classes, rocks and minerals.

Let's have an interesting and enjoyable year. We'll learn a lot. Have a great show at GMU. Also, talk with and learn from each other.

Barry Remer



PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH.
April 30, 2011 NVMC field trip
Manassas Vulcan Materials
Melissa Thompson's find



Photos from June meeting courtesy Sheryl Sims



FIELD TRIP TO U.S. SILICA QUARRY

Story and Photo By Sheryl Sims

At the invitation of Dean Hostetter, from the Shenandoah Valley Gem and Mineral Society, my daughter, Amber, and I, plugged in our GPS and headed to Montpelier, VA on Saturday, July 16 to visit the U.S. Silica Quarry. We were the only members from NVMC, but we were soon joined by members from the Lynchburg, Williamsburg, and Southern Maryland clubs.

Our day started at 4:00 a.m. in order to arrive in time for the mandatory safety briefing given by U.S. Silica Office Supervisor, Kevin, Randesi. There were

about 25 rock hounds in attendance. After the briefing, where we learned that U.S. Silica was given the highest award for their safety program. We caravanned through the quarry, reaching our destination and beginning our labor of love.



I'm not entirely sure what I found, but I think I stumbled across some biotite, garnets, hornblende, moonstone, pyrite, blue quartz, rutile, muscovite, and apatite. I'm looking forward to bringing my finds to our upcoming meeting so that my fellow-club members can help me with the identification process.

Helpful Club Officers

Do you have a question about the club? Contacting one of the following can help:

Club President: Barry Remer

bsbremer @ comcast.net

Vice President - Sue Marcus

rlhaskins @ verizon.net

Secretary: Kathy Hrechka

kshrechka @ msn.com (703) 765-3187

Treasurer: Rick Reiber

mathfun34 @ yahoo.com

Show chairman - Tom Taaffe

rockcllctr @ aol.com

American Federation Bulletin Editors' Contest Results 2011

Junior Articles – 12 to 17, Top 10 (7 entries)

Trophy - Diggin' Dinos in North Dakota – Becoming a Real Paleontologist

by Alec Brenner (15)
The Northern Virginia Mineral Club (EFMLS)
The Mineral Newsletter, 11/10

Educational Articles

8th Place - Erich Grundel

A Mineralogist, Almost
The Mineral Minutes

Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia

Drawn Features

Trophy - Sheryl Sims

Rock, Mineral & Gemstone Word Find
The Mineral Newsletter
No. Virginia Mineral Club

Mini Bulletins, Top 10 (2 entries)

Trophy - The Mineral Mite, 10/10

Kathy, Julia, & Michael Hrechka, Editors
Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area
(EFMLS)

Eastern Federation Bulletin Editors' Contest Results 2011

EFMLS Web Site Competition

6th Place - Casper Voogt & Betty Thompson

Mineralogical Soc. of the District of Columbia
mineralogicalsocietyofdc.org

Drawn Features

Trophy - Sheryl Sims

Rock, Mineral & Gemstone Word Find
The Mineral Newsletter
No. Virginia Mineral Club

2nd Place - Wendell Mohr

MD License Plate
(A continuing feature)
The Rockhounder
Gem, Lapidary & Mineral Society of
Montgomery County, MD

Junior Articles

Trophy - Alec Brenner

Diggin' Dinos in North Dakota

The Mineral Newsletter No. Virginia Mineral Club Educational Articles

2nd Place - Erich Grundel

A Mineralogist, Almost
The Mineral Minutes

Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia

5th Place - George Reimherr

Stilbite or Stellerite?

The Rockhounder

Gem, Lapidary & Mineral Society of
Montgomery Co. MD

9th Place - Sheryl Sims

An Eye for Diamonds
The Mineral Newsletter No.
Virginia Mineral Club

Written Features

6th Place - Cynthia Payne

Hope Diamond Adorns Cynthia Payne at the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History

The Mineral Mite

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area

Honorable Mention

Kathy, Julia & Michael Hrechka

Editor's Notes "Where in the World Are Your Editors?"

The Mineral Mite

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area

Non-Technical Articles

10th Place - Tom Tucker

Phosphate Mineral World of Virginia
Mineral Mite

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area

Honorable Mention

Sheryl Sims

Just a Little Piece of the Rock, Please!

The Mineral Newsletter No. Virginia Mineral Club

Wayne Sukow

Treasure at the End of the Rainbow

The Mineral Newsletter

No. Virginia Mineral Club

Mini Bulletins, Top 10 (2 entries)

Trophy - The Mineral Mite, 10/10

Kathy, Julia, & Michael Hrechka, Editors
Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area

EFMLS Each One Teach One Award

Honorable Mention was awarded to Kathy Hrechka, nominated by the Northern Virginia Mineral Club.

**Bid Slips - Please print
and bring one for each
item you wish to auction**

AUCTION BID SLIP

ITEM # _____

DESCRIPTION _____

FROM _____

DATE of FIND _____

Starting Bid
amount: _____

*Bidders: You need to bid on this item if you
want it to be auctioned! Place bid below.*

NAME	BID
------	-----

_____	_____
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_____	_____

----- Cut along line and bring one for each item -----

AUCTION BID SLIP

ITEM # _____

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FROM _____

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NAME	BID
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_____	_____

----- Cut along line and bring one for each item -----

The Call of the Cabochon

By Sheryl E. Sims

Photos by Jim Kostka

Recently, I attended a cabochon making class at the Clearwater Nature Center in Clinton, MD. It was the first time that I had ever done so. Having admired those made by various members of the mineral club, I longed to be able to try my hand at creating my own.

For those who don't know, making a cabochon is the process whereby one uses machines to cut, shape, and polish rocks. The task seems a bit daunting at first, but before long, you find yourself literally in the groove. Unless you sign up for a class, when using the lapidary room some items that you will need which are not supplied by the center are:

- Rocks, slabs, and other cutting material.
- Protective eye wear
- Aprons (optional) to protect from oil and water spray.
- Sharpie Markers (Ultra Fine) for marking stones.
- An alcohol lamp, candle or other device to improve the dop fit.
- A lighter or matches.
- A knife to remove excess dop wax from your stone



Once you take a cabochon class and have the instructor's signature on the completion form, you will be able to reserve the lapidary room for \$4.00 a day. About four people can work comfortably in the room at one time. There are a lot of important details that one needs to learn in order to use the equipment safely and to leave

the lapidary room clean and ready for the next person. However, generally speaking, the process goes something like this:

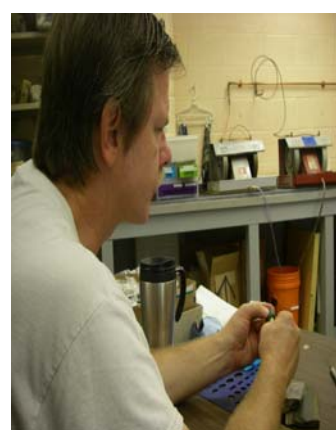
The first step in creating a cabochon is to cut a slab of stone. A template is used to mark the size and shape of the stone. Then, you will need to mark cutting lines around the shape with a pen. Those will be your trim lines. The edges must be clearly marked. You will then cut along the lines with a diamond blade saw – cutting as close to the line as you can without running into or across the lines. The next step is to trace a line around the side of the stone. This is called a girdle line and it separates the top from the bottom of the stone. A bezel is a sloping edge or face of a stone. It's between the girdle and the dome or crown of the stone. The advantage of having a bezel is that it



Using an alcohol lamp to melt wax.



Dopping



The Call of the Cabochon (continued)

makes it easier to mount a well-shaped stone.

Using an alcohol lamp, the stone is then secured to a stick with hot wax. This is called dopping. You will need to make sure that the wax doesn't obscure the line around the stone. It may require that you push the wax down with your finger. Or, you may cut away some of the wax with a knife. The wax needs to be just below that line. The piece can then be placed in the freezer to harden and dry. Taking care not to have the stone drop off the stick when removing it from the freezer, it must be taken to the silicone carbide or dia-

mond coated wheel to be ground down to the template line. It will take some time to do this evenly and smoothly. Next, sand the top and sides until the stone is smooth. When you are satisfied, it's time to set and polish the stone. Lacquer may be applied to give it a nice shine. If you opt for lacquer, be sure to let it set to ensure that the coating isn't tacky or you will leave a finger print when you touch the stone. When you are all done, you will have a beautiful stone, polished and honed with your own two hands with the help of some might fine lapidary equipment!



Polishing and Grinding

Please visit Clearwater Nature Center's website to learn more about the lapidary room:
<http://www.smrnc.org/lapidary-room.html>

\$1.00 OFF
Admission
with this coupon

Children 12 and under
 FREE with paying adult

Regular Admission - \$5.00

Sponsored by



Hours:
 Saturday: 10 A.M. - 6 P.M.
 Sunday: 10 A.M. - 5 P.M.

47th Annual Atlantic Coast Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show

Howard County Fairgrounds
 I-70 at MD Rt. 32

Award-winning displays of jewelry, gems, minerals, fossils, and lapidary art. Choice rough, slabs, tools, finished gems, minerals, fossils, beads and jewelry for sale. Demonstrations show how to make your own beautiful jewelry and finished stones. Visit our website <www.gemcuttersguild.com> for news about our classes and show.

September 24 – 25, 2011

Visit our website....
 <www.gemcuttersguild.com>
 for news about the show and our jewelry and
 gem cutting classes.

Combing Calvert Cliffs

By Sheryl E. Sims

Pat Rehill and I made a spontaneous decision to visit Calvert Cliffs on July 3. It extends 30 miles or so from Chesapeake Beach to Drum Point. It was my first time fossil hunting. Having heard about other club members' field trips to the cliffs, I was anxious to find shark teeth and other various fossils.

Our search began with an enjoyable albeit cloud-covered morning. We searched leisurely for triangular-shaped, shiny objects. I found a teeny, tiny one and Pat found a couple as well. It was interesting to learn from Pat that Southern Maryland was once covered by the sea 20-25 million years ago. Having marked the end of the Miocene period, upon visiting, one now finds exposed cliffs. Erosion has made visible, layers of sand, shell, rocks, and fossils, if you're lucky. It's said that over 600 species of fossils have been found and identified. Shark teeth can be found from varying species: great whites, white sharks, sand sharks as well as mako, silky, and snaggletooth sharks. It's said that shark teeth found during the Miocene period were as large as five inches! Whether you find them on the beach or embedded in the cliffs, the hunt is fun.

Major finds have produced whale vertebrae, large shark teeth, and skeletons, some complete, of birds and other animals such as porpoises and seals. Crocodile teeth are also found as well as pieces of shell from sea tur-

tles. Visible in the cliffs are mollusk shells. Some of the clam and oyster shells are very old and quite pretty. You may even find sand dollars, crab claws, barnacles and sea urchins, although they are pretty rare. I found a few pieces of coral.

By noon, it was too hot to continue our search, so we headed to the Calvert Marine Museum. There, we toured the Ft. Drum Lighthouse and then headed to the museum. I was very impressed with the exhibit there. The museum appears to be small, but it is a lot larger than it looks. It has quite a few interesting fossil, fish, and boat displays. I especially enjoyed seeing the fossils and getting a chance to peak into the room where they are cleaned, sorted, and reassembled for mounting.

On the way home, we pulled over to the side of the road to chat with Jim Earman, a local fossil man. He had a fossil stand and some pretty amazing fossils with which to tempt an eager fossil hunter. I invited him to speak to our club, and am hoping that he'll do so in the future. In the meantime, I look forward to my next fossil-finding adventure so that the next fossils I hold up for a photo-op will be mine!



The Amazing Geode Cave

By Robert Winsor

Question: What's the most amazing crystal cave you've never heard of? Answer: The Giant Geode Crystal Cave in Put-In-Bay, Ohio. Unfortunately, this place is locally known as simply the Heineman Winery, or "The Crystal Cave". Nowhere in the brochures or local lore will you hear about just how amazing this place really is. It's truly a hidden gem!

How I learned about this place is pure dumb luck. My family and I were in Sandusky for a day of fun at the legendary Cedar Point amusement park (where fun was had by all!). We had an extra day to kill and we were pondering what to do. We decided to take HWY 2 north and then take the ferry to Put-In-Bay Island, a small recreational retreat on Lake Erie. When we arrived at the island, we heard about a "crystal cave".

We took the ferry by foot - you can take your car on the ferry, but this is a bad idea. Rent a golf cart when you get there to navigate this 0.5 sq. mile size island. The cave/winery is only a 5 minute cart ride away, and easy to find by following the brochure available at the cart rental.

What makes this cave so unique? Apparently this is supposed to be a huge GEODE that the winery owner cracked into while trying to expand his cellar way back in 1897! He knew it was special and preserved it. But what makes this SO ULTRA COOL is that this thing is studded with huge ice-blue celestite crystals everywhere. Not calcite, not quartz, but *celestite*. The pictures herein do not do it justice, but crystals there are all many inches...and one tops out at 18"! You simply must see this to believe it. It's stunning.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be a tiny person and walk around inside a geode? This place lets you do that!

Photos show my kids, Isaac (middle) and Brooke (bottom) next to the crystals. Brooke is next to the largest crystal in the cave - showing the scale.

How to get there: Take HWY 2 north from Sandusky to Catawba Island. Take the HWY 53 exit north to the ferry (there are signs, and parking is free if you don't mind walking a couple blocks). Take the Miller ferry to Put-In-Bay Island - by foot. Rent a golf cart and drive it to the Crystal Cave/Heineman Winery (brochures and maps at all golf cart rental locations). It doesn't hurt to take in a helicopter tour while there!





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

The Northern Virginia Mineral Club

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Round Hill, VA 20141

Or via email: [news.nvmc @ gmail.com](mailto:news.nvmc@gmail.com)

Visitors are Always Welcome at our Club Meetings.

**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.