



THE  
NORTHERN  
VIRGINIA

MINERAL CLUB  
INC

*Crystals are the flowers of the Mineral Kingdom*



# The Mineral Newsletter

**Meeting: March 25 Time: 7:30–9:00 p.m.**

**Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd. Arlington, VA 22204**

## Club Member Auction Coming Up! March 25 Meeting

*by Kathy Hrechka, Vice President*

Join club members for an evening of excitement during our Club Member Auction! Everyone wins when you upgrade your collection by selling some pieces—and someone else upgrades theirs by buying them!

Our Winter Auction gets our new year off to an exciting start. The meeting will start promptly at **7:30 p.m.** (*note: this is 15 minutes earlier than usual*). We will quickly move through the business part of the meeting so we can get to the fun!

Sellers, come early to help set up the room and your items. Bid slips, which you may copy if more are needed, are contained in this newsletter below.

Don't hesitate to bring a guest or invite nonmembers! Although only members are allowed to sell, the meeting and auction are open to all.

Auctioneers, accountants, and runners are volunteers—help us out here, folks!

*Bring small bills, bid early and often, and help us move on to the next item.* We need to be out of our meeting room by about 10 p.m.

### **\*\* Note Current Club Auction Rules\*\***

- Any member may offer up to 20 specimens or up to 4 flats for auction.
- Each flat is one auctionable item.




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**March 2013**

You can explore our club website:

**<http://www.novamineralclub.org/>**

- The club gets **15%** of the purchase price; the remainder goes to the seller.
- Anyone may donate items to the auction to fully benefit the club (no money goes back to the donor).
- The minimum bid is **\$2** on any item.
- Bids from **\$2 to \$20** increase by **\$2**; bids above **\$20** increase by **\$5**.
- We start with a silent auction, so look carefully and start bidding. Items with multiple bids during the silent auction will be brought sooner to the vocal auction.
- Winning bidders must pay for the item promptly, with cash or check. 




Goethite from Restormel Royal Iron Mine in Cornwall, England. Goethite was named for Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749–1832), German poet and amateur geologist.

## President's Thoughts

by Rick Reiber

This month's meeting will be an old favorite, the club auction. Several happy sellers will be able to park a car in the garage again, and many happy bargain hunters will have to buy more display space. It's NVMC's own economic stimulus package!

Join in the fun and cheer on a bidding war or quietly try to get a deal on that specimen that only you seem to notice. A good time is guaranteed, or your no-cost admission will be cheerfully refunded! 

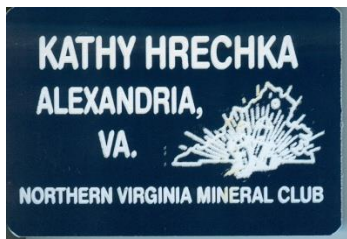
## Name Tags for Club Members

by Kathy Hrechka, Vice-President

We encourage club members to wear their name tags to each meeting to help us get to know each other and establish community.

The cost is \$9, but you pay only \$5—the club picks up the rest. But if you have misplaced your name tag, the total cost of replacing it is yours.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the next meeting. If you are unable to attend and wish to sign up, contact me at kshrechka@msn.com with your name and city. You can pick up your name tag at the next meeting.



## Previous Meeting Minutes: February 25, 2013

by Dave MacLean, Secretary

President Rick Reiber called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. The minutes of the January 2013 meeting

were approved as published in *The Mineral Newsletter* for February 2013.

The president recognized past Presidents Sue Marcus and Wayne Sukow. He also recognized Karen Pabst, wife of our speaker Michael Pabst; Lisa Diernisso; and Pankat Mittal.

There was no old business, and there were no committee reports.

Under new business, the treasurer's report and the 2013 budget were discussed. The officers presented the proposed 2013 budget as follows:

Total income, 2013 ..... \$11,078

### Expenses:

5100 Newsletter.....	\$320
5300 Club Event .....	\$1,696
5320 Meeting Room Rent.....	\$500
5350 Gem & Mineral Show.....	\$3,002
5410 Storage .....	\$1,174
5500 Membership .....	\$2,336
5700 Bank Fees.....	\$94
5710 Misc Taxes and Registration.....	\$36
5900 Donations .....	\$900
Total .....	\$10,059

Net income over expenses .....\$1,019

The club's income remained the same as in 2012, but expenses increased by 3 percent. Proceeds from the club auctions were donated to the Fred Schaefermeyer scholarship fund.

The 5300 budget line item (Club Events) included dinner expenses for program speakers, their spouses, and the president or a designee. It also includes educational outreach to northern Virginia schools, a new program; and door prizes for club meetings.

The 5350 budget line item (Gem & Mineral Show) includes credit vouchers in the amount of \$200 for persons 17 or younger working at a show (redeemable only for geology items bought at show). It also includes a donation of \$1,000 to the George Mason University Geology Department for hosting the Gem and Mineral Show.

The 5500 budget line item (Membership) includes travel expense support, shared among persons attending Wildacres or an EFMLS or AFMLS meeting who write an article for *The Mineral Newsletter* and present a talk at an NVMC meeting.

The 5900 budget line item (Donations) includes a \$400 donation to the James Madison University Geology Department for the annual field trip hosted by Lance Kearns. It also includes a \$500 donation to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC.

Several people said that NVMC needs a printer for printing 17-by-22-inch posters. It would cost about \$300.

By motion made and seconded, the members approved the 2013 budget as presented.

### Announcements

**March 20** (Wednesday): The Micromineralogists of the National Capitol Area will meet at 7:45 p.m. at the Long Branch Nature Center in Arlington, VA.

**May 3–4** (Friday evening to Saturday): The Midatlantic Micromounters Conference will be held at the Congressional School in Falls Church, VA.

**March 16–17** (Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.): The Gem Lapidary and Mineral Society of Montgomery County show will take place at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds in Rockville, MD.

By motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned. ➤

## Michael Pabst: Photography of Microminerals

by David MacLean, Secretary

*Editor's note: The following summarizes a presentation by Michael Pabst at the NVMC meeting on February 25.*

A microscope distorts the image in a way that the human brain corrects. A microphoto does not make the same correction.

Michael showed a photo system consisting of a digital camera (easier to use than a film camera) and a long tube with a 25-mm-focal-length Zeisse Luminar lens on the lower end. The adapter for the lens is available on e-Bay; the Luminar lens is no longer made and costs \$900.

The longer the tube, the larger the magnification. This arrangement is not as convenient to use as a camera



Realgar  
from  
Langban,  
Sweden

fitted to a microscope, but photos using the tube show less distortion.

The availability of computer programs such as Photoshop and stacking software (combining ZP, Helicon Focus, and Full Photoshop) allow one to create three-dimensional photos, overcoming the problem at high magnifications of a shallow depth of field. Without stacking, only part of the mineral is in focus.

In order to photograph the mineral like the human eye sees it using a binocular microscope, one can take a photo on one eyepiece, rotate the mineral 11 degrees, and photograph it through the other eyepiece, then combine the photos.

Light sources can distort colors. Sunlight is best but not always available. A halogen lamp gives the least color distortion.

To get the best photos, one can focus on a small number of isolated crystals rather than a large group of crystals close together. Some minerals are so ugly that they are not worth photographing.

Looking at the mineral with one eye only makes it appear as it will in a photo.

A digital camera permits a person to take many photos and to delete the photos not wanted.

Michael showed microphotographs from his collection and some made by top recognized experts, including the president of BMW using the best equipment available at any price.

Minerals shown came from Germany; Langban, Sweden (realgar); Colorado (pyarargyrite); Christmas Mountain, AZ (diopside); Arizona (linarite); Sugar Grove, WV (pyrite); and the Dixie Mine, Rockbridge County, VA (dufrenite). ➤



## Field Trip: William and Mary Mineral Collection

by Sheryl Sims

The Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia invites members of the NVMC and the Micro-mineralogists of the National Capitol Area to join it on a field trip to see the William and Mary College mineral collection.

**Date:** 23 March 2013

**Time:** 10 a.m.

**Location:** McGlothlin-Street Hall, College of William and Mary

Recommended parking is in the vicinity of the Muscarelle Art Museum on Jamestown Road. Club members will rendezvous in front of Muscarelle a little before 10 a.m. and then walk over to McGlothlin-Street Hall (not far). Parking in the area can be at a bit of a premium and there is no parking near McGlothlin-Street.

If interested in attending, please e-mail Steve Johnson (MSDC President) me at [stevikj@gmail.com](mailto:stevikj@gmail.com). Steve will provide more detailed driving instructions if needed. He would appreciate receiving your RSVP at your earliest convenience so that he will have an idea how many are planning to attend. ➤

## Ask the Expert

In June 2012, Sue Marcus discovered a Webpage in the "Arts and Culture" section of *Smithsonian.com* (at <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/Ask-Smithsonian-201206.html>). You can submit a question, and Smithsonian experts will respond.

### What is the oldest artifact in the Smithsonian's collections?

Maria K. Sicree, Boalsburg, PA

The Smithsonian's collections transport us back millions of years to humanity's beginnings and far beyond. The Allende meteorite, formed 4.56 billion years ago, is the world's oldest known natural specimen—and the oldest object at the Smithsonian. It contains diamonds from dozens of supernovas and



The Allende meteorite, 4.56 billion years old, is the oldest artifact at the Smithsonian (and in the world).

amino acids that could have provided the raw materials for early life forms.

G. Wayne Clough, Secretary  
Smithsonian Institution

### How do scientists come up with names for dinosaurs?

Charlotte Dixon, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, England

It varies. Some scientific names refer to physical attributes; *Tyrannosaurus rex* ("king of the tyrant lizards") is named for its size and role as a top predator. Other names refer to the species' discoverer or the place where they were found. Still others are whimsical: *Irritator challengeri* refers to the frustration of the scientists who first tried to identify the predator and to Professor Challenger from *The Lost World* (and later works) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Hans Sues, Paleontologist  
Natural History Museum



*Irritator challengeri*, whimsical name for a dinosaur predator.

## Field Trip Followup

*by Jonathan Harris (adapted from the March 2013 edition of The Rockhounder)*

About 30 rockhounds from the Gem, Lapidary, and Mineral Society of Montgomery County and the Northern Virginia Mineral Club ventured to Lance Kearns' laboratory and the mineral museum at James Madison University for an indoor fieldtrip on Saturday, February 2. Professor Kearns greeted us with pastries, tools for identifying mineral specimens, surplus specimens to trade for donations, and a visit to the museum.

Participants used microscopes, drops of acid, a Raman spectrometer, a modern X-ray diffractometer, and Lance's expertise to help identify specimens. Some added to their collection from a variety of surplus specimens and micromounts that Lance offered. We also toured the mineral museum—a room of specimens from Virginia and around the world, guarded by a state-of-the-art security system. ↗



Virginia taprock display at the James Madison University mineral museum. *Photo: Jonathan Harris*



Dr. Lance Kearns demonstrating radioactivity from a uraninite specimen. *Photo: Jonathan Harris*



Young club member studying a specimen. *Photo: Woody Machalek*



## Rock-Polishing Tools for Sale

A rock collector has left behind rock-polishing tools as part of his estate. His widow is looking for one or more buyers. Some of the items for sale are shown here. If interested, please contact Michael Green at [mwgamai@aol.com](mailto:mwgamai@aol.com) or 571-228-8851.

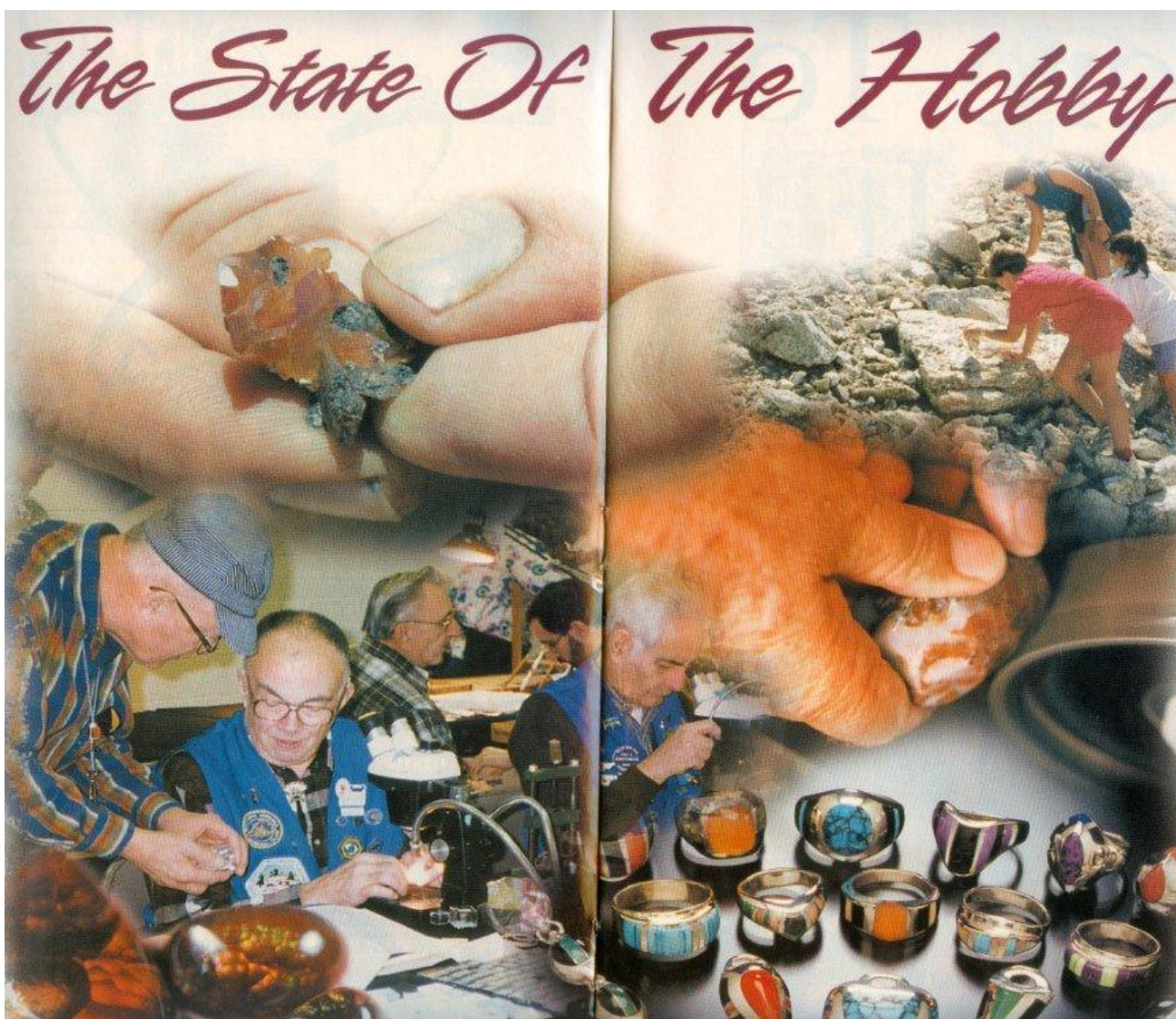
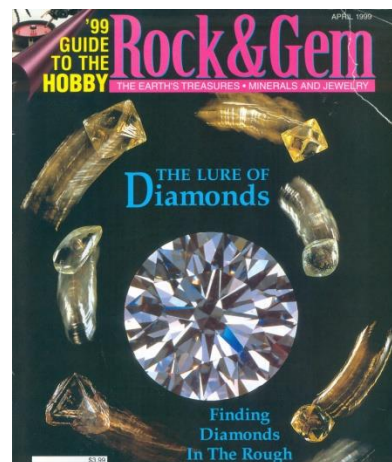




## Locating the Real Diamonds in the Rough

Kathy Hrechka discovered two well-known mineral hobbyists in the April 1999 edition of Rock & Gem magazine (donated by Tom Taaffe).

Captured in a collage of geology happenings, NVMC members Fred Schaefermeyer (center) and Paul Smith (left) are wearing federation blue vests while examining micros. Fred (age 94) now lives in Denver, CO, and Paul is deceased. His wife Jennie lives in Dallas, TX. Fred and Jenny are honorary club members and enjoy receiving *The Mineral Newsletter* each month. ↗.



**Auction 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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## 2013 Club Officers

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Refreshments: Karen Lewis

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PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:  
<http://www.novamineralclub>

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## The Northern Virginia Mineral Club

You can send your newsletter articles to:

news.nvmc@gmail.com

**Visitors are always welcome at our club  
meetings!**

### RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

#### SEND YOUR DUES TO:

Kenny Loveless, Treasurer, NVMC  
PO Box 10085, Manassas, VA 20108

**OR**

Bring your dues to the next meeting.

**Purpose:** To promote and encourage interest in and learning about geology, mineralogy, lapidary arts, and related sciences. The club is a member of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS, <http://www.amfed.org/efmls>) and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS—at <http://www.amfed.org>).

**Dues:** Due by January 1 of each year; \$15 individual, \$20 family, \$6 junior (under 16, sponsored by an adult member).

**Meetings:** 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. (No meeting in July or August.)

*\*Changes are announced in the newsletter; we follow the snow schedule of Arlington County schools.*