

Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia

MINERAL MINUTES



Vol. 70, No. 2

Mineral Minutes

February 2011

Club Meeting: Wednesday, February 2, 7:45 PM

The regular monthly meeting of the MSDC will take place as noted above. We meet at 7:45 PM in the lobby of the Smithsonian Natural History Museum.

Program and Speaker: . – The Minerals of Afghanistan

Our speaker this month will be our own Steve Johnson, who will present The Mineral of Afghanistan. Steve has recently returned from another tour in Kabul, a short one this time, and has brought back another interesting assortment of minerals which he has shared with us at several recent meetings. His program will include the story of people and places in Afghanistan, and the minerals which have become so well known in recent years. With so many events in the news about Afghanistan, it should be interesting to hear of Steve's personal experience with the minerals and the people who procure them for the collecting world.

Some of us will be having dinner with Steve prior to the meeting at Pier 7 restaurant, off of Maine Avenue, around 6:15 PM. Come join us if you are able, but please let Tom know if you're coming so he can make appropriate reservations. See you there, Tom, and Andy, too.

Place: The National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, 10th Street NW and Constitution Avenue, 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. If you park on the street, **THERE ARE PARKING FEES, PAYABLE AT THE KIOSKS, AND ENFORCEMENT UNTIL 10 PM.**

Dinner: Some of us will meet for dinner at the Pier 7 Restaurant at around 6:15 PM before the club meeting. Let Tom Tucker know so he can make reservations if you wish to attend.

2011 Dues are Due Now Last Chance to be in the 2011 Directory

Rick Reiber

If you have not already paid your 2011 dues, we hope you'll remember to pay Rick Reiber because the new membership list won't feel complete without your much appreciated presence on it. Bring your check and the enclosed form on page 5 (also online) to the February 2nd meeting, or mail it to Mineral Society of

DC, PO Box 9957, Alexandria, VA 22304. For new members who join/joined in the last months of the year, membership extends through the following year with no additional dues.

Prez Sez – A Word from Our President

Field Trip -- Mineralogy Laboratories and
Museum at James Madison University
February 19, 2011 9:00 AM

Tom Tucker

Dr. Lance Kearns has again invited MSDC, along with the MNCA Micromounters and the Northern Virginia Mineral Club to visit the mineralogy labs and the fabulous mineral museum at James Madison University, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Traditionally,

each of us has made a small donation to the mineralogy department for the furtherance of their activities and acquisitions. The Museum alone is worthy of a trip to Harrisonburg, being the finest collection of minerals in the State. There are a dozen or so large wall cabinets filled with minerals from around the world, but with an obvious emphasis on Virginia specimens, like the turquoise from Lynch Station, or apophyllite from Centreville or aragonite from Buchanan. After your visit I'm sure you will have selected your own favorites. There is also a small room with a stunning fluorescent mineral display.

During the morning Lance will be available to identify those unknown specimens you have accumulated over the years. I'm sure he will demonstrate the use of the x-ray diffractometer for crystal determinations. The lab has enough stereo microscopes for all those interested to examine their specimens, or perhaps those that others have brought to share.

If this visit is anything like those of previous years, there will be various mineral specimens and books available for purchase at unusually reasonable prices -- acquired from various donations to the labs. Arrive early for the best selections.

We will probably go out for pizza at lunch, and return in the afternoon to visit the scanning electron microscope laboratory, on the other side of the campus. We might use it to determine the chemical make-up of our unknowns, or to see close-up the crystals at hand.

The mineralogy labs are in the Geology Department which is in Memorial Hall (the former Harrisonburg High School building), on South High Street. For a map of the campus go to the University website, : www.jmu.edu, and at the upper right corner request "directions/map". On the index map, the Memorial Area is an inset at the upper right. Click the small map, and a detailed area map will appear.

Driving directions: It takes approximately two and a quarter hours to reach JMU from the DC Beltway. From the Beltway, go west on I-66 approximately 65 miles to its intersection with I-81. Take the left fork, and go south on I- 81 approximately 54 miles to Harrisonburg. Take Exit 245, Port Republic Road,

and go right about a mile to High Street. Turn right, and proceed north about a half mile to a light at Cantrell Avenue. Memorial Hall will be to the left, with abundant parking. Being a weekend, parking passes will not be needed, but if you do have a problem, Lance can probably take care of it.

If you plan to attend please let me know the number in your party, so that we can let Lance know how many to expect for coffee and buns. Email: threedogtom@earthlink.net, or phone: 540-347-9098. See you there, Tom

MSDC Minutes, January 5, 2011 **Denise Whitman, Secretary**

President Tom Tucker welcomed everyone to our first meeting of the new year. Past presidents Cynthia Payne, Ed Fisher, and Andy Thompson were recognized for their outstanding service. Tom thanked the members who put together the many pieces of our holiday party to make it one wonderful event.

The December minutes were approved as published upon a motion by Andy.

The Treasurer, Rick Rieber, is collecting membership dues.

"Geology in the News" had several entries. Both Jeff Guerber and Sheryl Sims mentioned the recent meteor shower and lunar eclipse in our area. Jack Busch reported on a 3.5 magnitude earthquake in Indiana. The latest issue of *National Geographic* has an excellent article on a large cavern in Viet Nam.

A field trip is planned for February 19 to James Madison University's mineralogy department and mineral museum in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Other mineral groups have been invited: it will be a great chance to meet collectors and have your specimens examined and/or identified. The labs containing the scanning electron microscope and x-ray diffractometer will be open. There is usually a mineral and book sale as well. Tom is the contact person.

Andy announced the line-up of speakers for the following months. Steve Johnson will tell us about the minerals of Afghanistan in February. March is still open. In April, we plan to meet on the campus of George Washington University to hear Dr. Tollo and his student, Allison Rubin, discuss their research on the rocks and minerals of Mount Rogers in southwestern Virginia. May is open. Rick Wunderman from the Smithsonian's Global Volcanism Program is slated for June.

Andy has the refreshment schedule--please sign up for one of the available months. Home-made as well as store-bought goods are welcome. Thanks go to those who brought the treats for this meeting.

Denise Whitman won one of the two door prizes. She picked out a "hematite" specimen that had been previously owned by the Dhyses.

Tom introduced tonight's speaker: Scott Southworth of the USGS. His Powerpoint presentation was entitled "Recent advances in understanding the geology of the Piedmont Province of Virginia, District of Columbia, and Maryland." The talk focused on the complexly metamorphosed rocks exposed in the vicinity of the Great Falls of the Potomac River. The National Park Service joined forces with the USGS to produce geologic maps of the parks in the 1990's. The region encompassing the C and O Canal had been mapped several times previously, but its geologic history was obscured by multiple faulting and metamorphic events. In the 1990's and up to the recent, Avery A. Drake, Jr., and other researchers have gained access to new techniques (e.g., isotopic dating of zircons) and interpretations. Using the model of plate tectonics, Scott offered a greater understanding of how these rocks underwent Paleozoic orogenies, Mesozoic rifting, and Cenozoic erosion to become the scenic wonder that reside in our backyard.

President – Tom Tucker
 Vice President – Andy Thompson
 Secretary – Denise Whitman
 Treasurer – Rick Reiber
 Director – Cynthia Payne
 (Don Greaves and Dave Nanney will also continue as directors.)

LET'S ROCK!

Sheryl E. Sims

A **diamond** has its sparkle
 Just as clear as **dolomite**
 Like **rubies** when fluorescing
 Beneath an ultraviolet light

An **apatite** for someone
 An **emerald** for the next
 While **malachite** takes shape
 Next to **prase** in this context

So, **sodalite** is like lapis
 With **azurite**, it's confused
 Blue **lolite** is as good as
Dumortierite, some say, too.

When what you seek is **pyrite**
 Fool's **gold** is not the goal
Chalcopyrite is even better
 Or, maybe **binghamite** has you sold

The Smithsonian has its **smithsonite**
 And, bon a mi, his **bonamite**
 But, so that you will not go wrong
 Be sure to add Derbyshire **fluorite**

WILDACRES

Steve Weinberger

Wildacres Workshop Committee Chair

WE HAVE THE DATES! WE HAVE THE SPEAKERS! WE HAVE THE CLASSES!

With the turning of the calendar pages, it's time to plan to attend our 2011 EFMLS Wildacres Workshops. Everything is set except for participants and that's where you and your fellow club members come in.

A week at Wildacres is a fabulous experience! Don't just take my word for it, go the EFMLS Website www.amfed.org/efmls/wildacres.htm and read what others have said about their experience.

Located off the Blue Ridge Parkway in Little Switzerland, NC, the Wildacres facility offers all the comforts of home except TV, radio, car horns, and street noises. What you do hear instead is laughter and pleasant conversation as you and your fellow participants immerse yourselves in a week of learning, sharing and fun.

On the private mountain, that's the Wildacres property, you'll find two lodges containing motel-style bedrooms with private baths, a lovely auditorium, dining hall and a variety of classroom buildings. Each day features a combination of class instruction, talks by our guest speaker or other activities such as a tailgate session and auction. And, oh yes, there's a "free day" halfway through the week for those who wish to go on a field trip or explore the lovely area – Asheville, for example, is but an hour away.

Tuition for each session is only \$350 per person. This includes your room and board for the entire week! There will be a fee for the materials you use in the class or classes you take during the week, but of course you'll get to take your finished projects home with you at the end of the session.

For 2011 we're honored to have two outstanding speakers. In spring, Gene LeBerge, award-winning Univ. of Wisconsin professor of geology & mineralogy, consummate teacher, and distinguished author. Gene will enthrall us all with his tales and photographs – from tourmaline and copper, to Namibia and Brazil.

In fall we're honored to have Dr. Steve Chamberlain, Chairman of the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium. Steve's a multi-talented fellow who has a passion for minerals – especially those of NY State, hostas, field trips, opera and more.

A complete list of classes for both the spring and fall sessions can be found on [the EFMLS website along with an application form.] We encourage you to register as early as possible (but not before January 1) to have a better chance at getting into your 1st or 2nd choice of classes since class size is limited.

Director Fran Sick, Registrar Pamm Bryant, and I look forward to spending time with you at Wildacres.

From: Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies *EFMLS News*, Vol. 48, No. 3, January 2011

Editor's Note: If you do not have access to the internet, please let the editor know (703.521.4614) and we will send you a copy of the classes and registration forms for both the spring and fall sessions.

Mineral Minutes Deadline
Mary Bateman, Editor

The **deadline for the March issue of the *Mineral Minutes*** will be **February 15**. If you have an article or pictures that you wish to share, please e-mail them to Mary Bateman at mbateman1@verizon.net or mail them to 2700 9th Street South, #203, Arlington, VA 22204-2328

Pictures

Editor

Thanks go to Cynthia Payne and Denise Whitman for sending pictures from the December Holiday Party. Unfortunately, my computer is not doing well and will not allow the transfer of pictures nor clip art to the newsletter.

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.

Please make check payable to MSDC.

ANNUAL DUES – PLEASE PAY BY JANUARY 10.

Pay at the January 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? Distributed to Club members only.

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

President: Tom Tucker	threeogtom@earthlink.net	Director: Cynthia Payne
Vice President: Andy Thompson	thompson01@starpower.net	Director: Dave Nanney
Program Chair: Andy Thompson	thompson01@starpower.net	Director: Don Greaves
Secretary: Denise Whitman		
Treasurer: Rick Reiber, c/o MSDC, P.O. Box 9957, Alexandria, VA 22304	rickhike14@yahoo.com	
Web page: www.mineralsocietyofDC.org		

Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:45 p.m., in the Kirby room, the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. (No meetings are held during July and August.)

The purpose of this Society is to promote interest in mineralogy, geology, and related earth sciences and to encourage mineral collecting. An annual scholarship is awarded to a deserving student in the related field.

Dues – **Due by 10 January.** \$20 for a single membership, \$25 for families.

The *Mineral Minutes* is the bulletin of The Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia, Inc.

The Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia is one of the founding Societies of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS!

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

Mary Bateman, Editor
2700 Ninth Street South, #203
Arlington, Virginia 22204-2328

Time Sensitive Dated Material
First Class Mail

**HAPPY VALENTINES DAY &
PRESIDENTS DAY**
