



Conglomerate

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• **Field Trip Nov. 14!**

On Sat., Nov. 14, there's a field trip to the LaFarge Texas quarry. Only 5 BMS spaces are available, so reserve now with Brad Grant. Full safety equipment is required. For directions and information consult Brad. Note: other clubs are sharing this trip and attendance is limited. Be sure you have a reservation if you expect to collect.

• **Upcoming Shows**

For the latest information, check out the web site of the Eastern Federation of Mineral and Lapidary Societies: <http://www.amfed.org/efmls>.

NOVEMBER

21-22: Fairfax, VA - 18th Annual Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show sponsored by the Northern Virginia Mineral Club Show site—George Mason University, Student Union Bldg II, Rte 123 & Braddock Rd, Fairfax, VA. Hrs: Sat. 10:00 AM-6:00 PM, Sun. 10:00 AM-4:00 PM. Adults \$4, Seniors & Teens \$3, Children 12 & under and Scouts in uniform free. rockclctr@aol.com, <http://www.mineralclub.org/>

DECEMBER

12: Timonium, MD - Private show (Fred Parker Minerals, Mike's Minerals, Highland Rocks & Fossils and Octahedron Minerals). Holiday Inn at I-83 & Padonia Rds.

Next BMS Meeting: Wed., Nov. 25

There was no meeting of the BMS in October because we presented the Desautels Symposium October 2-4 (see story in this issue). The next meeting of BMS will be held Wednesday, November 25th, 2009 at 7:15 p.m. at the Cockeysville Fire Hall social room, 11210 York Road in Cockeysville. **The fire hall is off of York Road, but it is not visible from York Road.** From I-83 take the Shawan Rd. exit 20A east toward Cockeysville, and after 0.8 miles turn right on York Road. Look for the Finch/John Deere dealer on your right and turn right into the driveway

between John Deere and the Hunt Valley Animal Hospital. This turn is about 100 feet north of the traffic light at Ashland Rd. in front of the Hampton Inn. There are signs for the fire company at the turn. Drive down the hill to the parking lot and park to your left at the side of the lot directly away from the entrance doors. Do not block the big doors housing emergency vehicles and do not park in the middle of the parking lot where firefighters park when they arrive to answer an alarm. Enter through the green doors and take the stairs up to the Social Room. (See map above.)

BMS's meeting location had to be changed because the Cockeysville Library is undergoing renovations. Except for our social gatherings, BMS will continue to meet at the Fire Hall on the fourth Wednesday of each month, which was the best available date we could reserve.



Report: The Desautels Memorial Symposium

The BMS presented its fall symposium October 2-4, 2009 at the MHA Pierson Conference Center, 6820 Deerpath Road, Elkridge, MD 21075. By all indications it was a great success.

Things began Friday afternoon when BMS members Carolyn and Steve Weinberger, Jake Slagle, Bernie Emery, and Mike Seeds joined Quintin Wight in setting up tables and chairs and running drop cords. Soon the room was ready and the first guests began arriving. John Ebner brought his display of historical micromounts, and people began unloading their rocks and equipment.

After a buffet supper, it was time for slide shows, and Quintin Wight spoke first showing slides of the huge impact crater at Charlevoix in Quebec. Then Pat Haynes took the audience deep into an abandoned mine at Goodsprings, Nevada to collect specimens.

Saturday morning the room began to fill up. Actual attendance figures are not yet available,

see next page

Do You Know....

...about the organizations that bring together mineral enthusiasts across the nation—and throughout the world?

One major resources for rockhounds is the **Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies, Inc.** (EFMLS; <http://www.amfed.org/efmls/>), established in 1950 to bring together the various clubs in the eastern U.S. From an initial membership of 10 clubs, the EFMLS has grown to about 150 affiliates representing over 10,000 club members. The EFMLS is a member of the **American Federation of Mineralogical Societies** (<http://www.amfed.org/>), an umbrella association for seven regional federations, including the EFMLS. Other regional organizations are the California, Midwest, Northwest, Rocky Mountain, South Central, and Southeast federations.

Tucson Show

The Big Enchilada of mineral shows and sales takes place in Tucson, AZ from Jan. 30-Feb. 14, 2010.

Baltimore Mineral Society

Mike Seeds, *president*, 717-285-3745; Al Pribula, *vice president*; Bob Hudgins, *treasurer*; Carolyn Weinberger, *secretary*; Larry Krause, *newsletter*, 410/828-0024.

E-mail news or questions to: mseeds@fandm.edu or managingeditor@verizon.net
Write c/o 1106 Gypsy Lane West
Baltimore, MD 21286.

FIELD TRIP INFO:

E-mail Edmund.A.Goldberg@usdoj.gov to learn about upcoming mineral field trips.

but the room seemed fuller and busier than last year. There were a few new faces too. A couple extra tables had to be set up in the back. The crowd seemed lively, and when Al Pribula started the silent auction at 10 a.m, there were lots of people scanning the minerals and flats on the back table, and when the buzzer finally went off, only a few items were unsold. Bidding for some items was intense.

When people weren't bidding, they were grazing the giveaway tables, and those tables were filled with lots of rock this year. Not only did BMS members contribute giveaways, but many guests brought flats, boxes, and egg cartons filled with goodies. Also, thanks to Steve and Carolyn, some of the material saved from Harvey Cantor's garage was on the giveaway table. People commented on the abundance of giveaways this year.

The voice auction began at 2 p.m., and Al Pribula generated a lot of excitement. The bidding as lively and in some cases intense. Everyone seemed to enjoy the auction. The highlights were gifts from guest of honor Marco Ciriotti. Two autographed copies of his book, *Italian Type Minerals*, were auctioned, and the first sold for \$74. When Al joked that he would start bidding on the second copy at \$73, everyone laughed, but after intense competition for the book, it sold for \$76. The highlight of the auction was a mineral specimen collected by Marco and identified as a new mineral about to be named. It sold for \$250.

At every opportunity, attendees rushed to the dealer tables in the hallway. Keith Williams filled two tables with specimens, and Pat Haynes had many boxes of specimens he had collected from abandoned mines, mostly in Nevada. Bonnie Grim showed specimens from Roy Grim's collection, and Jon Ertman had many flats of larger minerals. As always, George and Doug Rambo filled two tables with tools and supplies ranging from tiny tweezers to sledge hammers.

During the Hall of Fame ceremonies, Quintin Wight inducted the late Vi Anderson and guest of honor from Italy, Marco Ciriotti. Marco then gave a talk "Minerals of the Luserna Stone," and Quintin followed with a talk on the life and accomplishments of Vi Anderson. A CD of Marco's talk was distributed to everyone at the symposium.

After supper at local restaurants, everyone returned to hear Quintin and Willow Wight give their presentation "Gems and Minerals of Russia," which covered their attendance at the International Gemological Conference in Russia a few years ago. We learned about Russian diamond mines and lots more. Keith Williams gave the second talk of the evening, "Mining and Minerals of Bulgaria," which was not only about minerals, but also about the life in southern Bulgaria.

Sunday morning saw lots of activity at the giveaway tables, dealer tables, and trading among attendees. At 10:30, Mike Skebo gave his talk, "From Russia: With Memories and Minerals," in which he described his adventures collecting in the Kola Peninsula.

After lunch, people packed up their rocks and slipped away while BMS members Carolyn and Steve Weinberger, Bob Hudgins, Brad and Pattie Grant, Bernie Emery, Lynne Lugar, and Mike Seeds put away tables and chairs, ran the sweeper and took out the trash.

BMS can be proud of the 2009 Symposium.

—Mike Seeds

—BMS MEETING SCHEDULE—

7:15 P.M. 4th Wednesdays at Cockeysville Volunteer Fire Hall, York Road just south of Shawan Road. No meetings in Oct. (Micromount Symposium); December (BMS holiday party), May (BMS Picnic).

—It's time to renew your BMS Membership!—

Individual memberships \$10; family memberships \$15. Send payment along with your name, list of family members, address, phone and e-mail to: Bob Hudgins, 6713 Balmoral Overlook, New Market, MD 21774. Or: renew at the next BMS meeting!

Other Local Clubs

Chesapeake Gem And Mineral Society, Inc.

(<http://chesapeake.rockclub.us/>)
meets the 2nd Friday of each month except August at 7:30 P.M. Women's Club of Catonsville, St. Timothy's Lane & Old Frederick Rd; Catonsville, MD.

Gem Cutters Guild of Baltimore, Inc.

(<http://www.gemcuttersguild.com>)
meets the 1st Tuesday of each month except January, July and August at 7:30 P.M. at Meadow Mill at Woodberry, 3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Suite 116; Baltimore, MD

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Or: renew at the next BMS meeting!

Write for "The Conglomerate"!

Send your observations to octahedron1@mac.com or mseeds@fandm.edu for inclusion in *The Conglomerate*. Don't have email? Hand in your submissions at a meeting or by snail mail.

Shoebox Adventures: Ghost Fluorite

The baggie that came out of the big shoebox at the end of my microscope table, contained 12 micromounts and 12 photographs. They're specimens from the voice auction at the Atlantic Micromounters Conference in March of 2009. If you buy the specimen, you also get the color photograph taken by Steve Weinberger. Specimen No. 2 turned out to be ghost fluorite and it is spooky stuff.

The fluorite is a single cube about 4 mm on an edge on a granular matrix possibly dolomite. Unlike a lot of colorful fluorite, it is pale amber – roughly the color of dry Champaign. One face has a mysterious seam running down the center and you can see some kind of structure inside the cube that seems to repeat that seam along with some radiating features. It's not a beautiful sight until you put a UV light on it. Then the deep inside of the cube lights up with a pale yellowish glow that seems to be incased in the clear outer portions of the crystal – like a ghost trapped in a crystal coffin. It's ghost fluorite.

But it's even better. Watch closely as you click the light off and you can see the glowing core of the crystal fade away over a few seconds. Not only does the crystal's core fluoresce, it phosphoresces—retaining its glow for a short time after the UV light is removed. Spooky.

There are two possible explanations. Perhaps the cube began to grow from a solution depositing fluorite with an impurity that makes it fluoresce under UV. The composition of the solution could have changed later and deposited the outer, clear portion of the cube. The other possibility is that the cube contains fractures or faults leading into its interior, and, at some point after it formed, a solution seeped inside and deposited the ghostly glow.

The mineral comes from the Flamboro Quarry (sometimes misspelled "Flamborough") in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, and those crystals are known to fluoresce and phosphoresce because they contain petroleum inclusions. Evidently, a solution left organic compounds deep inside that react to the UV light. The ghost is trapped in fluorite, but it isn't a fluorite ghost.

My records show that the specimen sold in the auction for \$3, which is the starting bid. I bid on it because no one else in the room would risk \$3, and they missed a neat bit of fluorite. If there had been a basket of little paper bags at the front of the room with a sign saying "Micromount Grab Bags—Selected for Your Pleasure by Expert Micromounters—only \$3," the crowd would have gobbled them up. But no one would raise their hand for a \$3 fluorite. I didn't know it was ghostly, but it went home with me and into the shoebox of adventures at the end of my bench. Happy Halloween.

—Mike Seeds

September 16th BMS Minutes

President Mike Seeds called the September 16th meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. at the home of Larry and Alice Krause. Minutes of the July meeting were approved as printed in the *Conglomerate*.

Treasurer Bob Hudgins reported that the club remains solvent.

Unfinished Business:

There was no unfinished business.

New Business:

Mike was appointed as head of the Nominating Committee and will actively seek candidates to serve as officers beginning in January 2010.

Announcements:

- The Gem Cutters' Guild show is the weekend of September 26-27 and BMS will again have an information table. Members were encouraged to come and talk to the public about the club for an hour or two. Al Pribula indicated that he would be there on Saturday. Bernie, Lynne, Steve and Carolyn indicated that they will not be able to help out because of their involvement in Gem Cutters.

see next page

The Rock Dump

• Recall that **we elect our officers at the December Holiday Party**. If you would like to serve as President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer, you can nominate yourself or ask someone else to nominate you. You can also nominate someone you think will do a good job, but get their permission first. BMS is even more fun if you are involved.

• **Brad Grant** and **Ed Goldberg** are working on further field trips which will be announced in the next newsletter.

• Some mineral collectors take pride in owning a mineral from the collection of an earlier collector. There are even collectors who specialize in historic mineral labels. But **micro-mounters** seem especially sensitive to the history of their specimens, and that may be because trimming, mounting and labeling require thoughtful decisions and create an object that records the taste of the collector. When you make a micro-mount, you put something of yourself into the little box.

• The latest **membership list** shows that BMS has 62 members. We have grown quite a bit in the last few years.

• At the recent **Symposium**, Quintin Wight talked about the 350 million year old impact crater at Charlevoix in Quebec. You can see it easily if you use Google maps to go to Charlevoix and then select the "Terrain" setting. You will have to zoom out to see it; it is over 30 miles in diameter and only about two-thirds of it remains visible on land. The sea has claimed the rest.

—Mike Seeds

• There will be no meeting in October because of the Desautels Symposium. The next meeting will be held the 4th Wednesday at our new location, Cockeysville Library (York Rd., just south of Shawan). Directions will be in the November newsletter.

• Members were encouraged to attend the Desautels Symposium, October 2–4 at MHA. Help is especially needed on Friday afternoon for set-up and Sunday around noon for take-down and clean-up. Since the focus of the weekend is on minerals, even those not micro-mounters are encouraged to attend.

Following adjournment of the business meeting at 7:30, Phil Greenberg presented a talk on linarite and cinnabar, passing around numerous specimens from his collection. Mike Seeds then gave a short presentation and "show and tell" on how he takes stereo photographs simply by standing in one place, taking a photo and then moving his camera ever so slightly before taking a second. He then mounts the two images side-by-side and views them through a stereo viewer. The results are amazing.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. After thanking Alice & Larry for their hospitality, the group then paid a visit to view Larry's mineral collection.

—Submitted by Carolyn Weinberger, Secretary

Preview: The Tucson Mineral Show

From Jan. 30 to Feb. 14, Tucson, AZ comes alive with mineral enthusiasts from around the world. Dealers set up in motels for the duration, often "sleeping where they sell" by folding down the mattresses and box springs they stack against the wall during the day in order to have selling space. Just visiting these dealers at the private shows is an adventure, but the centerpiece of the experience is the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, held annually in the city's convention center on the second full weekend of February. This year's dates are Feb. 11 to 14; hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Thurs., Fri. and Sat., and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Sun.

Sponsored by the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society, Inc., the event is the largest of its kind in the U.S. One of the highlights for show attendees is the beautiful exhibits of minerals, fossils, jewelry and lapidary. Lectures and seminars round out the experience.

This year's show theme is "Gems & Gem Minerals." For more details about the club show at the Tucson Convention Center, visit: <http://www.tgms.org/2010show.htm>.

For information about the entire Tucson experience, including the many private shows, visit: <http://www.xpopress.com/AZ-show-schedule.html>

Brush Up on the Scientific Side of Minerals...

The Internet is awash with information—especially for those who like to drill down to the bedrock, so to speak. For those who want to learn ever more about rocks and minerals, check out the Mineral and Locality Database at <http://mindat.org>. The site, hosted by Jolyon Ralph and Ida Chau, claims to be the largest mineral database and mineralogy reference site on the Internet, and if you browse through it, you'll find it hard to argue about that. In addition to a wealth of detail (Want to brush up on the properties of particular minerals? Go to <http://www.mindat.org/cim.php> and have a blast!), this site also offers a message board and an online chat feature.

Jolyon Ralph has posted one of his own mineral adventures here: his account of mineral hunting on the Isle of Eigg, one of Scotland's Inner Hebrides islands. Great photos! Visit: <http://www.mindat.org/article.php/799/Jolyon%27s+Travels++Part+2++The+Isle+of+Eigg>.