

# The Conglomerate

Newsletter of the Baltimore Mineral Society  
<[www.baltimoremineralsociety.org](http://www.baltimoremineralsociety.org)>

Volume 7, Number 5  
May, 2011



## • May Program Notes

from Jake Slagle

The May BMS meeting will occur on Wednesday May 25th beginning at 7:30 pm at the Cockeysville Volunteer Fire Company social room. The program will be a video of a talk given at the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium by Dr. Steve Chamberlain entitled "Disposing of Your Collection: Where, When and How".

Steve is the chairman of the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium, a task he's enjoyed having for the past 20 or so years. He's an avid field collector who specializes in New York State specimens. Steve's collection initially covered world-wide localities, but the reality of maintaining, cataloging and storing such a vast collection forced him to make some major decisions about the direction in which he wanted to go. This talk is an outgrowth of his studies about the future of his collection in 2004 - a dilemma that many of us will face at some time.



And, as an added bonus, viewing this talk will give you a peek at the excitement of the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium.

The meeting will be hosted by Bob Zopfi.

## • Congratulations



BMS member Lawrence Davis was married Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> to Katherine Ebeling. Congratulations and best wishes to the new couple.

## • Rubble from the President

by Brad Grant

I'm delighted to tell you that we were finally able to get our trips in to Havre De Grace and Churchville. While it rained during the Havre De Grace trip, the weather for Churchville was nice. Regardless, good collecting was had at both places. I have some pictures that I will be putting up on our website as soon as I figure out my new smartphone.



We have a trip for Valley Quarry in Gettysburg on June 4<sup>th</sup>. There is paperwork that needs to be filled out by those planning to attend and I will be bringing that it to the May meeting. If you are interested in going to this quarry, you will need to be at our May meeting.

I will be rescheduling our Allegany Aggregates trip which was cancelled due to low response. Many of you told me that you would like to go, but that the date just conflicted with too many other activities. I would like to arrange a carpool for this trip and I will talk more about that our meeting in May.

Jim Hooper and I did a presentation for a Girl Scout troop on April 29<sup>th</sup> and it went really well. The scouts asked lots of questions and had a very good time. They also enjoyed the giveaways that we bought from Havre De Grace and Medford. I will be cleaning up my presentation so that if other club members want to use it they can.

Finally, kudo needs to be given to Ed Goldberg. The Maryland mineral display is up at the Maryland Science Center. I am looking forward to going to see the display before tourist season!!! Again Ed, thanks for all your hard work on this.

Brad

## Baltimore Mineral Society

The BMS was established in order to allow its members the opportunity to promote the study of mineralogy and to act as a source of information and inspiration for the mineral collector. We are members of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies and affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday of each month (except October, December and June) at the Cockeysville Volunteer Fire Hall beginning at 7:15 p.m. Visit the club website <[www.baltimoremineralsociety.com](http://www.baltimoremineralsociety.com)> for directions.

Yearly dues are \$10 for individual members and \$15 for family memberships. Send payment along with your name, list of family members, if applicable, address, phone and e-mail to: Bob Hudgins, 6713 Balmoral Overlook, New Market, MD 21774.

### Officers:

President..... Bradley Grant  
410-515-4293  
<[bgrant@aberdeen-md.org](mailto:bgrant@aberdeen-md.org)>

Vice President..... Jim Hooper  
410-747-4321  
<[jhooper@jhu.edu](mailto:jhooper@jhu.edu)>

Secretary .....Carolyn Weinberger  
410-833-7926  
<[cscrystals2@verizon.net](mailto:cscrystals2@verizon.net)>

Treasurer .....Bob Hudgins  
301-865-3212  
<[hudginswr@msn.com](mailto:hudginswr@msn.com)>

### Directors:

Bernie Emery  
Ed Goldberg  
Steve Weinberger

Editor .....Mike Seeds  
717-201-8750  
<[mseeds@fandm.edu](mailto:mseeds@fandm.edu)>

### Write for "The Conglomerate"!

Send news, announcements, comments, observations, or articles to <[mseeds@fandm.edu](mailto:mseeds@fandm.edu)>. No e-mail? Hand in your submission at a meeting.

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## • April Meeting Minutes

by Carolyn Weinberger, Secretary

President Brad Grant called the April 27, 2011 meeting of the Baltimore Mineral Society to order at 7:30 pm.

Minutes of the March meeting were approved as printed in the Conglomerate. There was no treasurer's report due to the absence of Bob Hudgins.

### Old Business:

Brad reported that the presentation being planned for the Girl Scout's will occur on Friday, April 29 at 6:30 pm. Members were encouraged to join Brad and Jim Hooper at St. Ursula's School and to bring give away specimens for the girls.

### New Business:

Jim Hooper asked about the *Mineralogical Record* magazines that the BMS subscribes to and whether the club should continue. After a brief discussion the issue was referred to the Board for further discussion and resolution.

### Announcements:

Jake Slagle mentioned that the latest issue of "The Vug" was available for download online and that it featured Maryland Minerals. (With a little prodding, Jake acknowledged that he was the author of several of the short articles and that several of the photographs used were those he took of minerals in his own collection. Jessica Simonoff based another article on an interview of Mike Wise. Bob Simonoff took other photographs featured in the volume and others are minerals from the collections of BMS members Fred Parker and Bob Eberle).

Upcoming field trips are scheduled for  
April 30 – Churchville Quarry  
May 7 – Alleghany Aggregates Quarry

Submitted by  
Carolyn Weinberger  
Secretary

### Upcoming Field Trip

from Brad Grant

Valley Quarry in Gettysburg – June 4th. Equipment needed: hard hats, steel toed shoes, gloves, reflector vest, picks, rock hammers, bucket and "rock wrap" for specimens. You must sign up with me no later than the May meeting (May 25).

Minerals to be found at Valley include actinolite, apatite, bornite, diopside, diopside, epidote, goethite, hematite, magnetite, malachite, montmorillonite, natrolite, pyrite, schorl, titanite, tremolite, quartz, and others.

• Other Local Clubs

♦ **American Fossil Federation.** Meetings are held the 2nd Sunday of alternate months (Jan., March etc.) at 10:30 am at the Bowie Community Center, Bowie, MD. <americanfossilfederation.com>

♦ **Chesapeake Gem & Mineral Society.** Meetings are held the 2nd Friday of each month (except August) beginning at 7:30 pm at the Woman's Club of Catonsville, 10 St. Timothy's Lane. Catonsville, MD.

♦ **Gem Cutters Guild of Baltimore.** Meetings are held the 1st Tuesday of each month except January, July and August beginning at 7:30 pm at Meadow Mill at Woodberry, 3600 Clipper Mill Rd, Suite 116; Baltimore, MD 21211. <gemcuttersguild.com>

♦ **Maryland Geological Society.** Meetings are held the 3rd Sunday of alternate months (January, March etc.) beginning at 11 am at the South Bowie Community Center. <www.ecphora.net/mgs>

♦ **Patuxent Lapidary Guild.** Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of each month at 7 pm. at 169 Defense Highway, Annapolis, MD. <www.patuxentlapidary.org>

• *New Display at the Maryland Science Center*

*by Steve Weinberger. Photos by Steve Weinberger*

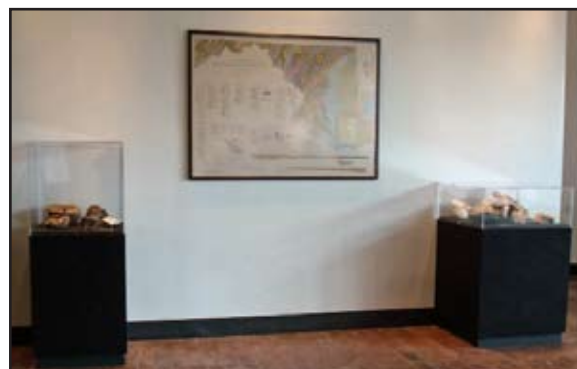
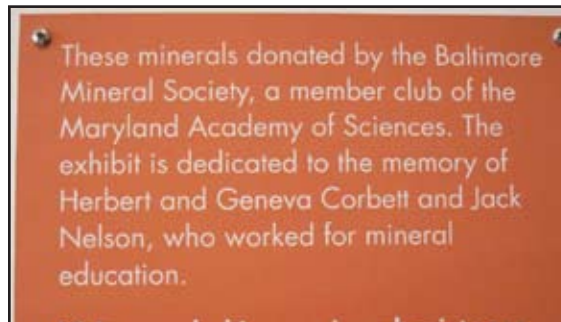
After what seems like an eternity, the new display of Maryland minerals is on view at the Maryland Science Center at the Inner Harbor.

The brainchild of Ed Goldberg who worked tirelessly with personnel at the Center and also donated the minerals on view, the display consists of five large cubes, each highlighting major collecting areas here in Maryland. A large map of the state links the collecting sites with the minerals on display. In addition, two large signs tell about the collection and BMS. Ed dedicated the display to the memory of Herb and Geneva Corbett and Jack Nelson.



Located in the back lobby of the Science Center and in plain view of all the kids who come and visit. (I can tell you that the display has generated lots of excitement among the kids and adults and they spend lots of time crowding around the cases and pointing out their favorite specimens!), you too can see them as you move from area to area on the first floor of the center.

Congratulations to Ed for all his hard work!

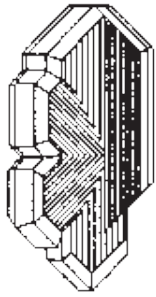


*more photos on page 7*

## • Rochester Mineralogical Symposium

by Mike Seeds

The 38<sup>th</sup> annual Rochester symposium took place April 14-17, 2011 just south of Rochester, New York. The crowd seemed bigger this year with many seats taken in the ballroom for lectures and plenty of people shopping with dealers.



Dr. Renato Pagano from Italy gave the opening talk Thursday evening: The Gualteroni Collection: A Time Capsule from a Century Ago.

Among a number of interesting speakers, William deLorraine discussed "The Balmat Zinc Deposits of New York State: One of the Most Fantastic Ore Deposit Stories Ever Told." He explained how he mapped the underground folded layers of rock and ore and deduced that the ore had migrated into its present position like squeezed taffy.

Friday afternoon contributed papers were so numerous they were continued on Saturday morning. The most interesting for BMS members might be Jessica Simonoff's talk "Hollow Galena from Madan, Bulgaria."

The highlight of Saturday morning was Jeff Scovil's annual slide show, What's New in Minerals. The minerals were beautiful and the photography was outstanding.

The micromounter's work room, sometimes called the "Playroom", was busy with trading, a giveaway table, and lots of micro talk.

Up on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor 29 mineral dealers filled their rooms with minerals from micromounts to cabinet specimens. One dealer featured finished gems, and another diamonds cut, raw, and in peculiar spherical habits. Some dealers had books and equipment for sale. Rooms were busy with shoppers every spare minute.

Saturday afternoon the silent auction attracted crowds of collectors leaning over the tables to study specimens, books, artifacts, and tools. At least one collector was stunned to win a very unusual crystal structure for only \$5.00. He said, "No one understood what it was, so I got it." The evening dinner followed the lively voice auction selling everything from specimens to cheese to a photo taken by photographer Jeff Scovil.

The final talk of the symposium was given by Dr. Sarah Hanson. She spoke on "Northern Arizona Volcanoes: Recent Volcanic Eruptions that Changed the Landscape Forever." She described her efforts out in the desert sun to trace lava flows in the Flagstaff volcanic field back to their source cinder cones.

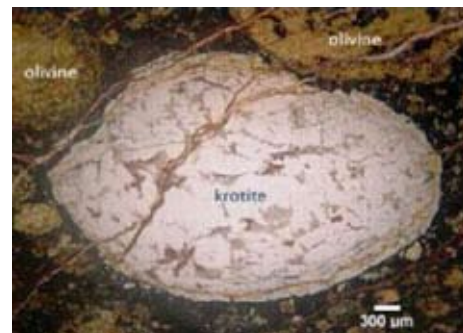
Next year the symposium will take place April 19-22, 2012. It's a simple drive from Baltimore up US 15 to Rochester, so check the web site <[www.rasny.org/MinSymposium/MineralSymp.htm](http://www.rasny.org/MinSymposium/MineralSymp.htm)> and mark your calendar.

## • One of the Earliest Minerals Formed in Solar System

by Mike Seeds

In the May-June issue of the journal *American Mineralogist*, a team of scientists announced the discovery of the new mineral krotite, one of the earliest minerals formed in our solar system. It is the main component of an unusual inclusion embedded in a meteorite (NWA 1934), found in northwest Africa. These objects, known as refractory inclusions, are thought to be the first planetary materials formed in our solar system, dating back to before the formation of the Earth and the other planets.

This particular grain is known affectionately as "Cracked Egg" for its distinctive appearance. Dr. Harold C. Connolly, Jr. and student Stuart A. Sweeney Smith at the City University of New York (CUNY) and the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) first recognized the grain to be of a very special type, known as a calcium-aluminum-rich refractory inclusion. ("Refractory" refers to the fact that these grains contain minerals that are stable at very high temperature, which attests to their likely formation as very primitive, high-temperature condensates from the solar nebula.)



continued on next page



crystals inside small vugs. It is a micromounters treasure, but you won't find big specimens. Spheres of cowlesite five inches across don't exist. Cowlesite is a micro, and micromounts are almost never faked. Why bother? They sell for a few bucks. The cowlesite from Big Tree Creek came from Andy Dietz at the Atlantic Micromounters Conference last spring. It cost \$6.

Of course you should always buy from dealers you know and respect, but even an expert dealer can be taken in by someone faking minerals. Beautiful crystals of sulfur were on the market a few years ago, but they were grown in vats and sold to dealers as the real thing. They were real sulfur, and they were big and gorgeous and expensive, but they were faked and the dealers didn't know.

Micromounts are so small it would be hard to fake something even if there were a financial incentive. Creating a perfect specimen less than a centimeter across would be really difficult. Add to that, micromounters look at their minerals under microscopes, so any sign of fakery would probably be visible. In a talk at Rochester this spring, Jessica Simonoff pointed out that even using a UV light to look for glue isn't fool proof; there are now plastic glues that don't fluoresce. But sticking a pea-size specimen under a microscope is probably the best way to look for blobs of glue or other signs of fakery.



*Cowlesite in a vug lined with chlorite  
Big Tree Creek, Washington. Field of view 5 mm.*

Most micromounts sell for a few dollars, but at least one was sold for \$1500. It was a single crystal of sampsonite. That would certainly be worth the effort if you could get your knuckles into a tiny vug and glue in a crystal. Even if you did a perfect job, you might still get caught because many micromounters are expert at identifying minerals and mineral forms. Somewhere someone



The Conglomerate is distributed by e-mail to most of our members and on paper by the US post office to those without e-mail. The club newsletter is published in full color, but printing costs prevent it being printed in color. Members who receive their newsletters by e-mail, see full color photos and graphics. Also, although the newsletters are mailed promptly, there is some unavoidable delay at the post office. Members who receive their newsletters by e-mail, see meeting and field trip announcements a few days early.

If you're currently not on the e-mail distribution list, and want to receive The Conglomerate promptly and in color, send your e-mail address to the editor, Mike Seeds, at < mseeds@fandm.edu >.

• *Bob Hudgins*

*from Carolyn Weinberger*

I learned two weeks ago that Treasurer Bob Hudgins is back in the hospital with a serious infection. He was at Hopkins, but has now been transferred to Kernan's where he'll stay for a couple of weeks while they continue to get rid of the infection. Once that happens, he'll be home for several months while things heal.



We certainly hope that Bob makes a speedy recovery and can rejoin us at meetings soon.

at a microscope would notice something wrong. For all those reasons, fakers won't bother with micromounts.

Micromounters talk about incorrect locations on labels and misidentified minerals all the time. That's part of the fun. But they never mention fakes. It's not an issue. You can buy sampsonite if you save your lunch money, or you can buy a vug filled with beautiful cowlesite for a few dollars, but if you collect the little stuff, you really don't have to worry about fakes.

• More Science Center Display Photos



Greenspring Quarry, Pikesville, MD



Mineral Hill, Sykesville, MD



Medford Quarry, Westminster, MD



Hunting Hill Quarry



Frostburg,  
Allegany Co.

## *The Conglomerate*

Mike Seeds, Editor  
516 Bald Eagle Ct;  
Lancaster, PA 17601



### *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>.

#### June:

4 - Spring Mineralfest sponsored by the Pennsylvania Earth Science Association. Macungie Memorial Park, Macungie, PA.

#### July:

7 - 10: EFMLS / AFMS Convention and Show hosted by the Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse. NY State Fairgrounds, Syracuse. Info at <[www.amfed.org/show2011.htm](http://www.amfed.org/show2011.htm)>.

July 7 - AFMS Meeting

July 8 - EFMLS Meeting, 7 pm

July 9 - 10 - Show

July 9 - Awards Banquet

July 10 - Editors & Webmasters Breakfast

30-31: 32nd Annual Champlain Valley Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show sponsored by the Burlington Gem & Mineral Club. Tuttle Middle School, So. Burlington, VT.

#### August:

6-7: 41st Annual Mid-State Gem & Mineral Show sponsored by the Water-Oak Gem & Mineral Society. Mt. Merici School, 152 Western Ave; Waterville, ME.

12-14: East Coast Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show. West Springfield, MA. "Little" Tucson on the east coast!

27-28: 45th Annual Rock & Mineral Show sponsored by the St. Lawrence County Rock & Mineral Club. Madrid Community Park, Madrid, NY

27-28: 48th Annual Gem & Mineral Festival sponsored by the Capital Mineral Club. Everett Arena, Concord, NH

#### September:

24-25: Atlantic Coast Gem & Mineral Show; Howard Co. Fairgrounds, W. Friendship, MD.