

# Nittany Mineralogical Society Bulletin

Nittany Mineralogical Society, Inc., meeting in State College, Pennsylvania  
Contact information on back page

Editor (see back page):

David C. Glick

August, 2021

Visit our web site: [www.nittanymineral.org](http://www.nittanymineral.org)

## IN PERSON MEETING!

At Boal Hall in Boalsburg

August 18th meeting:

## Show and Tell

by the members and guests

*Our August meeting is planned for Wednesday the 18th in Boal Hall (Boalsburg Fire Hall), 113 East Pine St., Boalsburg, PA 16827. Maps are available on our web site.*

*7:15 to 7:45 p.m.: Social "hour." Please bear with us as we figure out how to safely get back to in-person activities. For this first in-person meeting, we will not be serving refreshments. Feel free to bring your own non-alcoholic beverage. Current guidance in Centre County is to wear a mask indoors.*

*7:45 to 8:00 p.m.: announcements, questions, answers*

*about 8:00 p.m.: featured program*

*The event has free admission, free parking (Fire Hall parking lot north of East Pine St at Academy St), and is open to all; **parents/guardians must provide supervision of minors.** Bring your friends and share an interesting evening!*

The program topic for August will be **Show and Tell**, presented by anyone and everyone who would like to "show and tell" for 5 to 10 minutes or so. This is a great chance to bring in new specimens, lapidary work, books, photos, equipment, projects in progress, interesting contrasts and comparisons, **anything you like** which represents some area of interest in our hobby or science, and share it with others. You can speak about it as informally or formally as you'd like. Stories or questions on their own are fine, too. You can connect with other members who have similar interests, or



awaken an interest or spark an idea in someone else. We've had many fun and interesting presentations in the past, and look forward to more this time around.

We expect to use this meeting to get used to Boal Hall, where we'll meet for the rest of the year. Rather than trying to send out a Zoom program in real time this month, we will try to record the presentations and post video on the web site later. We hope that we may be able to Zoom to remote attendees with future meetings. -*Editor*

## Cave Day - Explore the World Below Us

The Arboretum at Penn State

August 28, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

NMS Seeks Volunteers

by David Glick

The Arboretum and Lincoln Caverns are organizing the first Cave Day during the International Year of Caves and Karst. The Lincoln Caverns web site says: "Join Lincoln Caverns and other cave, rock & bat groups at the Arboretum. Hands-on activities, engaging demonstrations, and presentations, courtesy of our community and university partners, will invite visitors to rappel into the science and wonder of caves, karsts, sinkholes, and groundwater. Join us to discover the interconnections between our sunlit world and the realms below."

NMS is planning to participate, and we are still looking for volunteers to help. Our activities are still being decided. We may have some maps showing distribution of carbonate, karst, and caves; cross-sections of our carbonate valleys; and a poster showing the collapse and remediation of a local sinkhole. Hands-on activities would be great - does anyone have any ideas? If you can volunteer to help, please contact David Glick (see p. 8).

### ATTENDING THE AUGUST MEETING?

Donations of **one or two high quality, labeled door prize specimens** are invited.

Larger quantities can go in a giveaway box.

Bring a friend!

## Your Opinion Requested: Parking for on-campus meetings

If we are able to return to having monthly meetings on campus in the future, there will be a noticeable change in the parking situation. We were pleased to meet in EES Building in part because of the parking in two large Red A lots, free during our evening meetings. Those lots are now gone, one for a new building and the other as a staging area for the building construction, and the new West Deck parking structure is open next to EESB. For those without PSU parking tags, parking there costs \$1/hour, 24/7. The smaller Red A lots near the bus station are also now restricted 24/7.

What are your thoughts on paying for parking during a meeting? Would that discourage you from attending? Should NMS investigate the possibility of paying to validate attendees' parking? Please provide your comments at a meeting or by email or phone to David Glick, NMS President (see p. 8).

## The Crystal Hunters of Chamonix

Former NMS member Bob Carnein, now in Colorado, provided this link to an article about the crystalliers in the Alps and what they go through to collect fine quartz and fluorite crystals in alpine cleft sites. Google: outside online crystal, or go to <https://www.outsideonline.com/2424416/crystal-hunters-chamonix-mont-blanc-france#close>

## Junior Rockhounds Meetings

Dr Andrew Sicree just finished presenting seven summer Junior Rockhounds weekly meetings for kids accompanied by their parents. We hope to schedule a fall session; watch for news at <http://www.nittanymineral.org/juniors.htm>



Junior Rockhounds meeting July 2021 at Boal Hall.

## Projects! Projects! Projects! NMS is Busy!

by David Glick

### Bilger's Rocks Education Center

NMS members are organizing assistance for the new Education Center at Bilger's Rocks, near Grampian in Clearfield County. After a delay during the pandemic, bookcases and a display case were delivered in July. Geological samples and educational materials for display are now being organized. If you'd like to be involved, contact Dave Glick (see p. 8).

Bilger's Rocks is an outcropping of the 100-plus-foot thick Homewood sandstone; broken blocks of the sandstone have shifted, creating passageways of varying widths. Walking through them is fascinating. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilger's\\_Rocks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilger's_Rocks)  
<https://www.thebilgersrocks.com/education-center>

### Penn State Fayette Rock Type Display

An outdoor display incorporating Pennsylvania rocks, illustrating rock types and rocks of economic importance, is being assembled at Penn State Fayette Campus. NMS members Mike Dunton, Bob Altamura, and Dave Glick are providing some of the specimens.



Above: samples for Fayette Campus. Row 1: sandstone, mica schist; row 2: diabase, slate; row 3: "flaxseed" iron ore.  
*D Glick photo.*

*D. Glick photo*

### Rocks to Altoona Public Library Kids' Class

NMS is pleased to prepare and provide 10 samples of each of 10 rock types (photo below) to Altoona Public Library for a kids' class. This follows a minerals class for which we also provided some samples. NMS member Mike Dunton provided the majority of the material, with Andrew Sicree and Dave Glick filling in the gaps.



### Gem scope, GIA course materials

NMS has purchased a gemological microscope, refractometer and polariscope, with extensive accompanying Gemological Institute of America course materials, from the estate of the late NMS member Dennis Zwigart. NMS plans to make these resources available to members. In addition, his library of books and magazines, and most of his mineral collection, were donated to NMS. Thanks go to Karen Zwigart for the donations and the arrangements.



Stibnite, Hunan, China. 4 inches. From the D. Zwigart collection.

*D. Glick photo.*

## EMS Museum Fluorite Display: On Again

Penn State's Earth and Mineral Sciences Museum and Art Gallery has been undergoing changes and renovation during the pandemic. It should reopen soon, and the NMS fluorite display that was to debut in 2020 is now set to do so this Fall.

## Fossils for Arboretum teaching:

Rebecca Horwitt, Childhood Education Assistant at The Arboretum at Penn State, asks for a few fossil donations for teaching purposes. She writes:

Hello Nittany Mineralogical Society,

I'm writing to inquire if Nittany Mineralogical Society, or perhaps one of its members, happens to have any extra fossils lying around that they would consider donating to the Arboretum for educational use in the children's garden. I am hoping for the sort of thing that's a bit too nice to discard but lacking real scientific value, fossils that don't have provenance information and/or are over-represented in collections.

Since the children's garden has a particular focus on Pennsylvania, I do have a Pennsylvania-centric wish list. I'm looking for anything that's Ordovician/Silurian marine, any Paleozoic fossil plant material, or any compression fossil plants (any age!). I'm especially hoping for any of the following: trilobites, nautiloids or ammonites, brachiopods, crinoids, Paleozoic corals, and a piece of *Lepidodendron* bark. (There is a real *Lepidodendron* fossil in the children's garden on one of the rocks next to the Time Spiral pavement. Visitors rarely notice it but are fascinated by it when they learn that it exists.) I'm especially interested in sturdy fossils that could potentially survive being grabbed by an overenthusiastic child; obviously we'll try not to let this happen but kids often grab before we can stop them!

Thank you in advance for considering this request.

Some fossils have been provided already, for which she has thanked us; if you can help, she can be contacted at 814-574-4169 or <ruh212@psu.edu>.

## In Memoriam: Ray Cromie



With deep sadness, we report that NMS member and long-time Penn State student-radio personality and late, late night DJ, Ray Cromie, died on June 29, 2021. Ray was interested in a wide variety of topics, and attended many of our meetings. We have not found a standard obituary, but some news and information has recently been posted (link, below). If you knew Ray, you will not be surprised that this is not typical.

<https://www.caringbridge.org/public/raycromie>

## Pennsylvania Geology Magazine

Pennsylvania Geology magazine's second issue of 2021, vol. 51 no. 2, is now available via the list at <[http://docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr\\_20033210.pdf](http://docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr_20033210.pdf)> (this link is available on the left sidebar of our web site's main page).

Two articles of interest to mineral collectors, Mining Pennsylvania Uranium and Tyuyamunite vs. Carnotite, appear in the issue.



Tyuyamunite (a yellow uranium-bearing mineral) coating a quartz-pebble conglomerate from the western adit along the south side of U.S. Route 209, Jim Thorpe (formerly Mauch Chunk), Carbon County, Pa. Collected by Robert C. Smith, II, with his grandparents, William C. and Lena K. Smith, circa 1955. The portion of the specimen having the yellow coating is 5 cm (2 in.) across (see article on page 3 of Pa Geology 51:2).

## Geo-Sudoku

by David Glick

This puzzle contains the letters ACENORSUV; one row or column is a word related to the August 28<sup>th</sup> event. Each block of 9 squares, each row, and each column must contain each of the nine letters exactly once. The solution is on page 8.

		S		U		R		O
O			N	V	R	S	A	U
			S		O			
	V	U		S			E	C
N		A	O					S
		O			U		N	
	U	V	R			N		
S			V	N				
	R		U					V

## FEDERATION NEWS

Nittany Mineralogical Society, Inc., is a member of EFMLS, the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies, and therefore an affiliate of AFMS, the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. **The Federations and our Society strongly encourage all members to read the monthly Federation Newsletters. The AFMS News is linked from our web site, [www.nittanymineral.org](http://www.nittanymineral.org).**

EFMLS elections were held July 9 and Eric Hoffman of Maryland is now EFMLS President.

The AFMS June issue is available on their web site; there are no issues published in July or August. Two articles from that issue are reprinted in this NMS Bulletin. The AFMS convention in Wyoming was held in June.

Please see the AFMS Newsletters at [http://www.amfed.org/afms\\_news.htm](http://www.amfed.org/afms_news.htm) . -Editor

## Friends of Mineralogy - PA Chapter SYMPOSIUM on Pennsylvania Mining and Mineralogy

<https://www.rasloto.com/FM/>

Mineral Collecting Enthusiasts Meet and Learn

Symposium Nov. 13, 2021; Field Trip Nov. 14  
Bright Side Opportunities Center, Lancaster, PA  
Please Register in Advance

The Friends of Mineralogy - Pennsylvania Chapter will hold their 2021 Symposium and field trip on the second weekend in November. Mineral collectors in attendance on Saturday will check in at the Bright Side Opportunities Center, 515 Hershey Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603. Activities, including several talks by experts on minerals, geology and mining in Pennsylvania and beyond, are planned. On Sunday, a field trip for those registered for the symposium will provide an opportunity for mineral collecting at a location to be announced. The field trip is open only to symposium registrants. Safety equipment will be required.

All interested mineral collectors are invited to register and attend. As usual, a few invited mineral dealers will be present, and there will be a silent auction, give-away table, refreshments, and plenty of opportunities for visiting with fellow enthusiasts. Lunch is available at restaurants within short driving distance, and there is adequate parking. Arrangements are still being made, so please see the web site <https://www.rasloto.com/FM/> for any updates, details, and the registration form.

Dates: Saturday & Sunday, November 13-14, 2021

Location:

Saturday, Nov. 13: Bright Side Opportunities Center,  
515 Hershey Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603.

Sunday, Nov. 14: collecting trip, to be announced

Registration: \$25/person for non-members, \$15/person for current FM-Pa members; \$5/ person for college students; free for younger students. Parents must provide supervision of minors.

Please register in advance; a form will be available on the web site.

Professional Geologists: lecture attendance qualifies for Professional Development Hours toward license renewal.

Information coming soon on web site:  
<https://www.rasloto.com/FM/>

## TO CAB OR NOT TO CAB

by Vicki Hathaway

from Alberta Geological Survey *Rock Chips*,  
October 2013, via the AFMS Newsletter, June 2021

It is usually true that, when lapidaries cut slabs, we do so with the intention of cutting them into even smaller pieces and making cabochons of various sizes. Sometimes, however, the slab must stand alone. When beauty is in the whole, cutting it up yields nothing. Take the slab of a Utah septarian nodule for example. It just doesn't lend itself to being cut up into smaller pieces. Sure, it would be possible to make some very nice cabs from the golden crystal parts, but destroying the slab for just a couple of cabs would be a shame. This is especially true when usable broken pieces of the crystal formations are usually lying all over the area in which the nodules are found.

Septarian slabs aren't the only ones that deserve to be saved. Slabs of crystal-lined geodes are also desirable as display pieces, and they are seen at shows and in shops all the time. Often, they have a bit of rind, a nice band of agate, and a center of clear crystal. The crystals often surround a void in the geodes center. The slab as a whole is more interesting than a cab cut from a small section of it.

Although many thunder egg slabs may yield very nice unusual cabs with interesting patterns and colors, many others will be better displayed whole. There are many other types of rocks that are beautifully displayed as slabs, but I think you get the idea. Now, if I have convinced you to throw yourselves on these beauties and save them from the horror of the trim saw, the next step is to decide what to do with

them. Just allowing them to lie on a table at a rock show or in a box at a shop is not the answer. A simple napkin holder would be a better use, as it allows the larger pattern to be displayed. All that is needed are a couple of slabs, a piece of wood or stone for a base, and a little epoxy or cyanoacrylate. Such items make a nice addition to the kitchen, and they work well as gifts.



If you don't happen to be a napkin holder person, how about some bookends? Using stone for bookends is a very old, very simple, lapidary exercise. Usually, this involves cutting a big heavy rock in half and placing one half on each end of a row of books. There is certainly nothing wrong with this, but it does not address our main purpose here: that of finding a lapidary use for slabs other than making cabochons. Slabs can be used very creatively for bookends by utilizing those inexpensive metal bookends found in office supply and stationary stores. Glue your slab to the vertical face of the bookend. If you wish, you can also glue a decorative piece of wood or stone to the outside tab to fancy it up a bit. These bookends come in different sized vertical faces, so you can get one to fit the size of the slab you are using. These make very pretty bookends, and they don't take up nearly as much shelf space as the large stone types. ❄

## VGMS WORKSHOP: Squeezing the Most Slabs Out of Your Rock

By John Cook & Ron Wise,  
Workshop Stewards, Ventura (CA) GMS  
From Ventura Gem & Mineral Society  
*Rockhound Rambling*, Nov.-Dec. 2020,  
via the AFMS Newsletter, June 2021

We often find great surprises inside a rock when we clamp it into the big workshop slab saw and slice away. But sometimes, we can get only a couple of slabs until the rock grows too small for the vice to grip, and we end up with a couple of fat “butt ends.” You could just flat-lap them and be



Weld’s 5-minute epoxy) and glue the flat side of your butt end to the face of the 2x4 segment, allowing for some clearance on the bottom.

Use just a small amount of glue, or you will have problems getting the rock off the wood after all is said and done.

It doesn’t take long for quick-setting epoxy to bond, so you could glue the same day as you cut, but letting the glue set for at least 24 hours is best. This helps ensure a firm bond as the saw blade begins to cut into the rock and as oil spills over both wood and rock.

You now have a rock that can be securely set and clamped into the saw via the piece of 2x4. Start cutting and see how many slabs you can produce from your butt end. To remove the last slab from the wood after cutting, place the wood and slab in a bucket of hot water with Dawn detergent and let the wood absorb water overnight. The slab and wood should come apart easily. If it doesn’t, try again with boiling water. Don’t try to chip the slab off with a hammer and chisel, or you may fracture and split your slab.



happy with two nice paperweights. Still ... they’ve got wonderful color and pattern, and you know for sure there are two, three, or more slabs that could be had in order to produce

To provide an example of how well this works, we had one fist-size Ventura Beach cobble of “catsup and mustard” jasper that produced just a single slab before the vice could no longer grip the cobble. After gluing the two butt ends to small pieces of 2x4, we ended up with no fewer than 10 slabs suitable for producing any number of cabochons!

All photos by Jim Brace-Thompson



fantastic cabochons. What to do? Go to a lumberyard and get yourself a 2x4. Cut off an end about as long as your rock. It’s best not to go any smaller than 4 inches in length so that it’s easy to handle and clamp into the saw. Use a quick-setting epoxy (like JB



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Confirm details of events before attending.

**Aug. 20-22, 2021:** Gem Miner's Jubilee, by Mid Atlantic Gem and Mineral Assoc. Lebanon Valley Expo Center & Fairgrounds, 80 Rocherty Rd., Lebanon PA 17042. Fri & Sat 10-6, Sun 10-4.  
<https://www.gem-show.com/>

**Sept. 25-26, 2021:** 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show, by Central Penna. R&M Club Inc. Harrisburg Consistory, 2701 North Third St., Harrisburg PA 17110 (beside the Zembo Shrine). Sat 10-6, Sun 10-4.  
[http://www.rockandmineral.org/?page\\_id=37](http://www.rockandmineral.org/?page_id=37)

**Oct. 2, 2021:** Fall Mineralfest, by PESA. Macungie Memorial Park, Macungie PA. Sat. Only, 8:30-3:00  
<http://www.mineralfest.com/>

**Oct. 9-10, 2021:** Annual Gem & Mineral Show, by Che-Hanna Rock and Mineral Club. Wysox Volunteer Fire Company Social Hall, 111 Lake Rd., Wysox PA 18854  
<http://www.chehannarocks.com/show.html>

**Oct. 30, 2021:** South Mountain Rock Swap & Sale, by Central PA and Franklin County Rock & Mineral Clubs. South Mtn Fairgrounds, W of Arendtsville PA on Rt 234. Sat. only, 8-3. Contact: [tsmith1012@comcast.net](mailto:tsmith1012@comcast.net)

**Oct. 30, 2021:** Ultraviolet fluorescent mineral show, by R&M Club of Lower Bucks Cty. First UM Church, 840 Trenton Rd, Fairless Hills PA Sat. only, 9-4.  
<https://sites.google.com/view/lowerbucksparocks/shows>

**Nov. 6-7, 2021:** Gemarama: 52<sup>nd</sup> annual show, by Tuscarora Lapidary Society. Theme: Pictures in Stone. Hall D at the Greater Philadelphia EXPO Center, 100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA 19456. Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5.  
<https://www.lapidary.org/gemarama/>

**Nov. 13-14, 2021:** Symposium on Pennsylvania Mineralogy and Geology, by Friends of Mineralogy - Pennsylvania Chapter. Saturday: Symposium at Bright Side Opportunities Center, 515 Hershey Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603. Talks by expert speakers; sales; silent auction; giveaway table. Sunday: field trip, location to be announced, open only to symposium registrants. Please register in advance. See <https://www.rasloto.com/FM/>

### Geo-Sudoku Solution

V	N	S	E	U	A	R	C	O
O	E	C	N	V	R	S	A	U
U	A	R	S	C	O	E	V	N
R	V	U	A	S	N	O	E	C
N	C	A	O	E	V	U	R	S
E	S	O	C	R	U	V	N	A
C	U	V	R	A	S	N	O	E
S	O	E	V	N	C	A	U	R
A	R	N	U	O	E	C	S	V

### INVITE A FRIEND TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

The Nittany Mineralogical Society prides itself on having among the finest line-up of speakers of any earth sciences club in the nation. Everyone is welcome at our meetings. If you'd like to be part of our Society, dues are \$20 (regular member), \$7 (student rate), \$15 (seniors), \$30 (family of two or more members, names listed). Those joining in March or later may request pro-rated dues. Your dues are used for programs and speakers, refreshments, educational activities, Bulletins, and mailing expenses. Please fill out a membership form (available at [www.nittanymineral.org](http://www.nittanymineral.org)), make checks payable to "Nittany Mineralogical Society, Inc." and send them in as directed, or bring your dues to the next meeting.

**We want to welcome you!**

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### mailing address:

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Penna. Furnace PA 16865

#### SOCIETY OFFICERS

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#### OTHER CONTACTS

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Junior Rockhounds: Dr. Andrew Sicree  
814-867-6263 (h) e-mail: [aas132@psu.edu](mailto:aas132@psu.edu)  
Membership Chair: David Glick (see above)  
Programs: Dr. Duff Gold 865-7261(o), 238-3377(h)  
e-mail: [gold@ems.psu.edu](mailto:gold@ems.psu.edu)  
Door Prizes: Dr. Bob Altamura (see above)  
Facebook & Publicity: John Dziak: [jjd264@psu.edu](mailto:jjd264@psu.edu)

The **Bulletin Editor** will welcome your submissions of articles, photos, drawings, cartoons, etc., on minerals, fossils, collecting, lapidary, and club activity topics of interest to the members. Please contact:

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425 Armagast Rd. phone: (814) 810-2116 (h)  
Bellefonte, PA 16823-9762

Newsletter submissions are appreciated by the first Wednesday of the month. Photographs or graphics are encouraged, but please do not embed them in word processor files; send them as separate graphics files (good to highest quality JPEG files, about 1050 pixels wide, are preferred). Please provide captions and name of photographer or artist.

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