December 13th:

Annual Holiday Dinner at Quaker Steak & Lube Restaurant

Happy Holidays!

We hope that you will join us! On Wednesday, December 13, 6:00 p.m., rather than our usual meeting and program, we will have our Holiday Dinner at Quaker Steak & Lube Restaurant, 501 Benner Pike (across Benner Pike from the Nittany Mall), State College, PA 16801 in their “Corvette Room” at the back of the restaurant. The entire restaurant is decorated in automotive memorabilia making the place and our event a lot of fun. There actually is a real red Corvette suspended from the ceiling above part of the Corvette Room.

NMS will pay for appetizer plates to be shared by all those present, then attendees can order and pay for their own dinners. We'll have door prizes also, and both N M S and members who have signed up will have items for sale.

Minerals Junior Education Day Set for March 23, 2024

Minerals Junior Education Day is set to return on Saturday, March 23, 2024! We'll need about eight stations where students in grades 1-8 learn about some aspect of minerals, earth sciences or lapidary, and get specimens to take home. It's time to plan for what station you might present, or to volunteer to help at an existing station (we’ll have more information about that coming soon). Donations of minerals, books, etc., for the sales table are also welcomed - make arrangements in advance, so that we can get them organized and priced. Contact coordinator Frank Kowalczyk: frank.j.kowalczyk@gmail.com or 814-404-9854.

Cleavable Calcite Sought

Junior Rockhounds Chair Dr. Andrew Sicree uses calcite to demonstrate mineral cleavage at his many educational projects. His stock is getting low! If you’re out collecting, and see chunks of calcite over one inch that exhibit good cleavage - material you might not normally bother collecting - please pick them up for use in these educational endeavors. Or maybe you have some in that box in the corner of the basement - please bring them in.

Mineralogist Peter Heaney receives Teaching Award

from https://www.psu.edu/news/office-undergraduate-education/

We’re pleased to report that long-time friend and supporter of NMS, Penn State Professor of Geosciences Dr. Peter Heaney, was one of six Penn State faculty earning the George W. Atherton Award for Excellence in Teaching. “His incorporation of hands-on exercises and visualizations, class debates and encouragement of questions in a variety of courses” earned him the award. Congratulations, Peter!

Symposium on Pegmatites: Crystals Big & Beautiful

Bill Stephens, president of EFMLS and FM-PA, is enthusiastic about having collectors and Professional Geologists connect to watch an outstanding symposium on February 10, 2024. The finest and most noteworthy and influential experts in pegmatites will give their presentations at the Tucson Gem & Mineral Society / Friends of Mineralogy National symposium online. Watch for details in the January Bulletin.

-Editor
Friends of Mineralogy - Pennsylvania Chapter
Symposium Report

The University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown provided a very nice venue for FM-PA’s annual symposium for mineral collectors on November 11, 2023. Among those presenting were NMS’s Dr. Andrew Sicree speaking on Minerals of Centre County: From the bottom of the quarry to the top of the Sky, and Dr. Robert Altamura speaking on A Model for the Cause of Iridescence in Plagioclase Feldspar and the Effect of Superimposed Polysynthetic Twinning.

For the first time, there was a small but full-fledged mineral, fossil and gem show associated with the symposium; ten vendors had a wide variety of Pennsylvania and world-wide items. A silent auction and a giveaway table provided other opportunities for acquisition. There was also a showcase of some impressive Pennsylvania specimens from a private collection.

Multiple presentations concerned the New Paris quarry, the site of the symposium field trip on Sunday, Nov. 12.

For more on FM-PA, see the symposium program and past newsletters on their web site, rasloto.com/FM/
WILDACRES WORKSHOPS
May 13-19, 2024
From EFMLS News
December 2023, Volume 70, Number 12

Wildacres is located in a beautiful and peaceful setting on top of a mountain. Its location makes it the perfect place to unwind while learning a new, refreshing an old, or updating a skill. New participants are welcomed with open arms as well as those returning. Lifetime friendships and even marriages have been forged due to participation in Wildacres. You may arrive as a stranger, but you go home with new friends. While at Wildacres, you are exposed to the beauty of the setting, with new ideas, expert teachers, and talks by a well-known speaker-in-residence.

Mark your calendar for the 2024 session at Wildacres May 13-19 for your first or another great experience on top of the mountain. Final plans are in the works and will be printed in the EFMLS News and updated on the website when finalized. In the meantime, you may want to plan ahead and reserve the dates on your calendar. To date, classes in Intarsia, Beading, and Wire Working have been confirmed. Other class offerings are in the process of being finalized.

The Speaker-in-Residence will be Mike Colella, who will be accompanied by his wife, Sue. Mike is a man of many talents and has been a professional photographer for decades, speaking on his photography and many hobbies:
• Sands of the World, discussing his collecting from around the world and will show some of the more exotic samples of his collection.
• Suiseki, the ancient art of viewing stones, its history, collecting, and how he takes stones from collection to final display. Slides and live examples will be presented.
• Wood Art, how he creates it.
• Being a Professional Photographer, from photographing gems and minerals to wines of Europe and travels to Alaska.
Safety with Sole

Ellery Borow
AFMS Safety Chair
from EFMLS News
Dec. 2023

Ballet slippers, moon boots, fishing waders, tennis shoes, rain galoshes, baseball cleats... golfing, basketball, and so many more activities have their own associated footwear. In other words, special footwear for special purposes. There is footwear for the stage, for walking on the moon with its dust and low gravity, footwear for wading in deep water and playing on a tennis court. There is no unique style of rock collecting shoe.

Think, if you will, of the rock, mineral, and fossil hobby specimen collecting activity. One might walk root-encumbered trails, cross the occasional stream, navigate a talus slope, climb some rocks, traverse far-reaching sand dunes, shuffle through snow-covered ground, ford muddy areas, or walk steaming hot sand.

Participating in our collecting activity requires being prepared for walking in a great many different conditions. The collector needs to be prepared for just about anything—with footwear to match those conditions.

While some mines and quarries have specific footwear requirements necessitating ANSI Code steel toed shoes, most collecting localities leave footwear decisions up the individual collector. In situations where the individual collectors choose their own footwear, there are a few recommended criteria for consideration such as:

- Use comfortable shoes
- Use shoes with suitable ankle support
- Select shoe soles with suitable traction
- Use shoes with the necessary arch support
- Make sure the footwear is durable

Consider the conditions to be encountered when collecting:

- Will there be steep slopes necessitating superior ankle support?
- Will water-proof or water-repellent footwear be needed?

- Will ground level collecting conditions be very hot, or cold?
- Will the collecting site embankments be very loose or firm material?
- Will rain be expected?
- Might a spare pair of boots be advisable to bring with one?

If a general, one-boot-for-all-conditions footwear is needed, a generic work boot may be suitable. Generally speaking, one should consider avoiding “flip-flops”, sandals, open-toed shoes, and shoes with decorations (such as rhinestones) as the decorations are likely to be scuffed off the shoe. Shoes that do not protect the foot are inadvisable. Feet do us a great service -- they deserve to be protected from harm.

Sometimes it can be difficult to find suitable footwear for small children. Their small feet can be injured rather easily. Specialty shoe stores sometimes carry durable boots for small children. When in doubt, small children should not be brought to sites where conditions can be problematic in assuring their safety.

The best advice is to use forethought and wisdom when selecting suitable footwear for collecting. Well-protected feet, and boots with sole, can serve one for a lifetime of enjoyable collecting.

Geo-Sudoku
by David Glick

When I say North Carolina retreat, you say ACDEILRSW - or something with those letters - in one row or column of the puzzle. If you’ve read this issue, you’ve seen it. 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.

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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. We encourage our readers to read their monthly newsletters, which are linked from our web site, <http://www.nittanymineral.org>.

In the AFMS December Newsletter, President Roger Burford writes about mineral, fossils and rocks from his state of Louisiana. Public Relations Chair Jim Brace-Thompson reports on social media use and his Zoom seminar on that topic. Ellery Borow writes on “Safety with Sole” - shoes and boots to keep us safe (reprinted on page 4 of this Bulletin). Regarding competitive display cases, updates and clarifications have been made to the Uniform Rules, and updates to Guidelines for Exhibitors and Guidelines for Judges are coming next. Several Rockhound of the Year recipients are introduced. Cheryl Neary presents part 3 of a series on Ventura, California, where the 2024 AFMS Convention will be held, May 24-26; this one is all about the Channel Islands (and mermaids).

What’s the deal with mermaids, Ventura, and the AFMS Convention? In each issue of the AFMS Newsletter leading up to Show Time, we’ll present a different mermaid photo taken in Ventura. The person attending the convention who can correctly identify the specific location of each mermaid will receive a rocky reward at the show banquet.

The Eastern Federation’s December Newsletter includes President Bill Stephens’ message (reprinted at right). Rock & Gem, the officially endorsed hobby magazine of AFMS and the regional federations, is offering a deal which includes a 61% discount for subscribers and a 15% commission to the AFMS Endowment Fund on each subscription; see page 7 of this Bulletin. EFMLS’s week-long retreat featuring classes, fellowship, and relaxation in the beautiful North Carolina mountains is set for May 13-19, 2024; see page 3 of this Bulletin.

EFMLS President’s Message
December 2023

Hello Everyone. I trust everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday. We are all looking forward to the end of year holiday season and as President and on behalf of the Executive Board of the EFMLS, I wish you all safe and happy holiday season.

I don’t believe I had a message last month due mainly to the FM-PA Chapter Symposium crunch and of course my regular job work load. I’m in Radford, Virginia, doing a job at the Radford Army Ammunition Plant as I write this in the last week of November, and have been to St Louis, Missouri, and Fort Gordon in Georgia in just the last month. No complaints, just happy to be busy. A lot of good news to provide as many things have transpired since my last message. Here are some highlights:

- We voted to approve, unanimously I might add, to have the EFMLS pay for the Diamond Dan Mini-Miners publications for all of our clubs. The publications some of you already receive, and many may like to receive will now be available for download directly from our website with a password to be provided for designated club officers to access, and readable online as well, at no cost to our clubs! Look for additional information coming soon. If you have been paying you will no longer need to pay. Darryl Powell will likely contact existing customers directly to explain how it will work and to avoid interruption of service or any unnecessary payments or confusion. How about that?!

- The Annual Directory the Federation issued once every year is now a living document, downloadable by club officers with a password provided by the webmaster on request. It’s Done! It’s live and it’s as up-to-date as the latest info we have from our member organizations. Gone are the days of licking envelopes and stamps, calling people up and manually preparing a document that was typically out of date the day it was issued. The new digital directory will now be accessible essentially on demand with credentials, and can be downloaded and printed or viewed online. Contact the webmaster for access.

- The FM-PA annual symposium and field trip was a success and brought together a whole new group of people. Our host, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown Geology department, provided excellent support and a stellar venue. At that venue, I am pleased to report that we had an
opportunity to try out an Owl meeting camera and sound recording device, which worked so well that I will be getting a demo December 5th and probably purchasing a newer version of the device for upcoming meetings and conventions. I anticipate that the device will make it possible to operate fully autonomous hybrid and live streaming meetings in the future. No more paying for and relying on obsolete and/or incompatible sound and projection systems at convention venues, running hybrid meetings where the attendees are logged in remotely cannot see, or, when appropriate, interact with the meeting hosts, etc. Stay tuned.

• As some of you may know, the Friends of Mineralogy National organization runs a symposium at and in conjunction with the annual Tucson Gem & Mineral Show (TGMS) at the convention center in Tucson every year. As some of you have heard me lament, and many of you running hybrid meetings know, you need two computers to run a hybrid meeting properly, one to share the screen for presenter’s presentations, and one to monitor the attendees, assist with problems including making sure the screen is shared correctly, and assisting remote attendees with their issues. They have never had a volunteer to run a second computer and this year, the meeting was going to be in person only. Well, with this new Owl technology proof of performance at the PA Chapter symposium, I offered to run the live streaming meeting so this year’s symposium could be opened up to anyone who would register and they accepted. Long Story short, register to attend remotely and I’ll send you the link and you can see the finest and most noteworthy and influential experts in pegmatites give their presentations at the TGMS/FM-National symposium Saturday, February 10, 2024. Stay tuned for specific instructions.

• The Executive Board, having completed edits to the electronic version of the Directory, will begin the daunting task of updating the operations manual starting in January. Our former Treasurer Barb Ringhiser will be leading the effort to update and streamline the traditional/existing operations manual to be more helpful for new officers and committee chairs alike, our new Social Media Director will draft the operations policies and procedures for the new Executive Board position of social media director and its associated committee members, our social media policies and procedures and the like, and will work with our outside webmaster, myself and others to develop the policies and procedures pertaining to electronic communications, the website, zoom and other electronic forms of communication. With the increasing reliance on technology, major modifications that have been made to the bylaws in recent years it is now time to bring the Operations Manual in compliance with those bylaws and our needs for safe and effective use of electronic communications, social media and the like. Our goal is to have this completed and approved before the end of my 2023-2024 term.

• The Executive Board has discussed, and we will soon implement, generic website emails for the officers on the executive board and certain others. Several officers have had their emails hacked over the last few years and they get changed without general notification to those who need to know. And, of course, every time we have a change, few get the 411 and there is always some confusion about which email is current. On top of that, keeping track of EFMLS business emails, and keeping them separate from other business is a nightmare, at least for me. So, look for generic emails to be published most likely in the January or February newsletters for all of our executive board offices. Added benefits include the outside website host/management team will have all our communications archived for future reference without each of us being tasked with datamining our own emails, and we will have the added security afforded by the antivirus software and vigilance of our outside website folks.

That’s a lot to digest I know, and guess what? Dues renewal and insurance time is approaching. Forms will be up on the website available for download soon, but we will prefer you log into your club profile and fill out the information there as well as that will save you and us time, effort and the potential for human error and/or delays. If you are concerned about how to do it, contact webmaster@efmls.org. Especially if you are the club officer/treasurer primarily responsible for dues and insurance payments. We can help. Note we have a new Treasurer, Sylvia Eppig, and a new address to send checks for this coming 2024 renewal.

All for now. Remember you can always reach me at President@efmls.org for support or concerns that do not involve the website and you can reach me and Steve Hart of Madhouse Graphics, our outside website manager/design firm by emailing webmaster@efmls.org, and if you have interest in posting something to our Facebook pages (there are two now), you can reach Andrew at efmls.social@efmls.org.

Cheers and have a happy Holiday Season! See you next year!
Sincerely,
Bill Stephens, PG, President
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UPCOMING EVENTS
Confirm details of events before attending.
https://efmls.org/events/
See other show calendar links on our web site.


Mar. 8-9, 2024: Micromount Symposium by Leidy Microscopical Society. Advent Lutheran Church, 45 Worthington Mill Rd, Richboro PA 18954. Fri. 12-6, Sat. 9-6; https://leidymicroscopical.com


Geo-Sudoku Solution

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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 $25 (regular member), $10 (student rate), $18 (seniors), $35 (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), 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!

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