2004 EFMLS/AFMS CONVENTION & SHOW

by Bob Livingston
Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse (club Host)

This is our second installment of getting the word out to you. Last month we told you when and where the show is and when and where the meetings are. We tried to give enough info for the early birds to lock in a hotel reservation at the Headquarters Ramada Inn. (Remember for complete package details, you can go to <www.amfed.org/EFMLS> click 2004 Convention and get full particulars, plus all the forms may be easily downloaded.) This time we will tell you what's going to be shaking at the show and why you should not miss coming to the fabulous Finger Lakes area of upstate New York.

This show is several acres of goodies all in air conditioned comfort in the largest building at the New York State fairgrounds. With all this going for you it can easily be your one-stop shopping site for this summer: you will walk several miles to taking it all in - a wholesale section of 12 wholesalers (valid tax number will be required for entry) and 52 hand-picked retailers from the US and Canada.

You will get to meet dino SUE in all her glory from out West plus see great educational exhibits (with everyone’s cooperation we are planning for at least a hundred-strong showing). Here’s a sampling of some we already know: the Smithsonian, Carnegie Museum, AE Seaman Museum, New York State Museum, PRI, Penn State and Syracuse U. have all promised fantastic displays. In addition we know there will be world class minerals by pros like Bill Pinch, a phenomenal case of treasures brought up by Dr. Steven Chamberlain from his descent 2-1/2 miles under the Atlantic in the sub, Alvin, fantastic carvings, wow opals, New York State garnets, Art Grant’s museum cut stones, coprolites, calcites, quartzes in many forms including Herkimer diamonds like no other, and huge specimens from a Canadian quarry.

Then there are humongous several-thousand carat-faceted stones from the Northwest Faceters guys, the 5800 carat “Dare Devil” CZ won just 2 years back, aquamarine to die for, a large and complete fossilized shark from George Powell, plus the jewelry/metal work exhibits, cabs, faceted stones, minerals, fossils, spheres, carvings, mining memorabilia and whatever that will be brought in to share by you all. Plan on placing yours in competition and stand a chance for a nice bragging ribbon, or better yet a trophy.

Add fossil prep demos, glass beadmaking, faceting, beading, cabbing, daily “Glowing Fluorescent” shows with UV Bob, tools, machinery, supplies, onsite jeweler, wirewrapping, and we have the nucleus of enough to keep you busy for a while.

Lest we forget your kids, we’ll have mineral sluicing for them, Strawdraw game, geode splitting, operating gondola car trains (for kids of all ages) and most likely soapstone carving. Top it off with lectures, some hand-made quilts for the ladies, hobby art, gem trees, hourly door prizes, great show prizes, and EFMLS auction of “Good Stuff” on Saturday, food, free parking, a building that is wheel chair accessible, camping on the fairgrounds (reserve early), and several collecting trips and this whole Syracuse adventure takes on a life of its own.

You just can’t lose unless you fail to come and be part of the 2004 great gathering of super people - Rockhounds.

Plan to take some extra time and enjoy the sights and pleasures of the Finger Lakes Vacationland for extra bonuses:

- Syracuse China factory and outlet is 10 minutes from the hotel
- Erie canal museum in Syracuse has full size packet boat
- Boxing Hall of Fame (Canastota) is 25 minutes east from your hotel
- St. Lawrence Seaway and 1000 Islands are 2 hours North
- Tour and “taste” in the beautiful Finger Lakes wine country (25 wineries)
- Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown...Corvette Museum are 2-1/2 hours East
- Learn all about garnet production and collection, 3 hours north at North Creek, NY
- Historic aviation and glider trips, 2 hours South and West
- Museum of Glass, Corning (see world renown Steubenware crystal made), 2-1/2 hours South
- Sail on one of the eleven Finger lakes or enjoy an evening dinner cruise there
- Take in the Museum of Automotive History in downtown Syracuse
- Don’t miss Niagara Falls, 2-1/2 hours West
- IMAX Theater and Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse
- Eastman (Kodak) Museum is in Rochester, 1-1/2 hours West
- Huge 3-story Carousel Mall for shopping, 1-1/2 miles south of Ramada Inn
- Salt Museum (Syracuse got its start pumping and evaporating salt), 2 miles from the hotel
- Stickley, collector-grade furniture factory and showroom, 20 minutes East

Lots to enjoy, lots to see, photo opportunities galore to snap and share back home. Remember, “Memories” are made from all of this. The welcome mat will be out for YOU.

Next month, we will tie-up some loose ends and take it up “another notch” with Field Trip opportunities.

from EFMLS News (3/04)
As I write this in mid-January, H.T. 2416 is “stalled” in several House committees, including the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreations and Public Lands, the Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health, and the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans, all subcommittees of the House Resources Committee. The companion bill in the Senate (S546) passed on voice vote and some predicted smooth sailing through the House. However, by letter, email and telephone, opponents of the bill were able to get sufficient information to House members on the key committees to at least delay the legislation. In my early teens (several years ago) I collected a rock only recently confirmed by a professional paleontologist to be petrified bone. Take the problem of identification, add the problem of ignorance of boundaries of public lands, and mix in the draconian criminal and civil penalties of H.R. 2416, and we have a mix likely to cast a chill on the legislation. In my opinion, the 14 co-sponsors of H.R. 2416 are likely to push to clear the bill from committee in the near future. Accordingly, it is not too late, indeed it is an opportune time, for you to write your congressperson to express your opinion of the bill.

H.R. 2416 - Paleontological Resources Preservation Act

For example, H.R. 2416 provides for forfeiture of “all vehicles and equipment of any person that were used in connection with the violation” (Section 11(b)). We have such a forfeiture provision in statutes dealing with drug trafficking, but fossil collecting?

The following is representative of letters I have sent to over 50 House members:

Congressman (or Congresswoman) __________
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: “Paleontological Resources Preservation Act”

Dear Congressman (or Congresswoman) __________.

I am writing in opposition to the captioned bill. I serve as Chair of the Conservation and Legislation Committee of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS), a national organization of “rockhound” clubs, representing about 50,000 rockhounds throughout the United States. I offer a wager to any of your colleagues inclined to support H.R. 2974. I will bring a group of ten (10) rocks, including one vertebrate fossil, to any location in the National Capital area at a time of their choosing. My bet is that they cannot identify the vertebrate fossil within a reasonable period of time. Yet H.R. 2416 would require such skill of ordinary citizens and impose draconian penalties in the event of failure. The Senate companion bill (S546) has already passed the Senate. Here’s what Washington Watch had to say about S546: “Bad Bills S546 Anti-rockhounding bill titled the “Paleontological Resources Preservation Act” places severe penalties on recreational rockhounding, would permit only “experts” to disturb public land surfaces. Allows for seizure of private vehicles, camping equipment and anything else the government wants to grab for even minor violations. This bill assume that big brother government has all the answers, even though some of the greatest discoveries of dinosaurs in pre-recorded history has been done by private individuals.” Frankly, I was surprised that the forfeiture provision for seizure of vehicles and other property of the malfeasor (without right to trial?) is also provided for in the House bill, even if the violation is characterized as a “civil penalty”, i.e. does not rise to the level of a crime (misdemeanor or felony). The forfeiture provision would put erring fossil collectors in the same peril as drug dealers. What else is wrong with H.R. 2416? Answer: a lot. For example, Section 9 “Prohibited Acts: “Penalties - False Labeling Offenses” provides “a person may not make or submit any false record, account, or label for, or any false identification of any paleontological resource excavated or removed from Federal lands.” Pity the poor collector or curator, amateur or professional, who mistakes a Psittacosaurus bone for a Chasmosaurus bone. Such misidentification can make a criminal. Thankfully, I only collect minerals which I all to often misidentify. I also object to Section 15 of the bill entitled “Saving Provisions”, Provision 3 which specifies that the bill does not apply to “amateur collecting of a rock, mineral or invertebrate or plant fossil that is not protected under this act.” I wish to specifically address the situation here in Northern Virginia where I have lived for over 30 years. During this time I have received numerous inquiries from Scout leaders at a loss as to where to take scouts to collect geological materials and fulfill the requirements for a merit badge in geology. I have personally directed them to Westmoreland State Park (a Commonwealth of Virginia Park) where fossils can be collected along the Potomac shoreline. I personally have led “Indian Princess” (YMCA/YWCA) groups on such collecting trips along the shores of the Potomac.

Other materials collected included fossil whale bone. The kids were thrilled and took their treasures into their schools for show and tell sessions. Please understand that this activity would not have been possible if the Potomac shoreline was in a National Forest subject to the provisions of the legislation as proposed in the form of H.R. 2416 because all of the fossils collected by the kids on the trips I have described were vertebrate fossils. I would not wish to belabor the point. I recognize that current BLM and Forest Service regulations prohibit the collecting of any vertebrate fossil without a permit, however, I believe that this policy is wrong-headed and certainly should not be made statutory law. The bill assume that the Potomac shoreline is in a National Park. Young kids and old kids should be free to collect common vertebrate fossils as well as common invertebrate fossils on public lands. Fossil collecting is and has been gateway to the sciences, i.e. it is often one’s first hands-on experience with anything science related.

For the foregoing reasons I urge you to oppose H.R. 2416.

Yours truly,

George Loud, Chair, Conservation and Legislation Committee

Addendum

This afternoon (January 15th) I received a telephone call from a congressional aide who cautioned me that, in his opinion, the 14 co-sponsors of H.R. 2416 are likely to push to clear the bill from committee in the near future. Accordingly, it is not too late, indeed it is an opportune time, for you to write your congressperson to express your opinion of the bill.

from EFMLS News (3/04)
Tips and Trips
The Georgia Mineral Society
April 2004

Safety from Outside Critters
by Bill Buckner, SFMS Safety Chair

There are many kinds of critters that may hurt us and a few that might cause us to hurt ourselves. I will list a few, along with the danger they threaten and where they might be found.

- **Mosquitoes**
  
  Where: Anywhere outside of a closely screened house.
  
  Danger: Some people are allergic to their bites. There are still a few dangerous illnesses caused by their bite.
  
  Control: Keep stagnant water emptied and spread with a larvae killer. Wear long sleeves and long pants, use insect repellent on all uncovered parts of the body. Stay inside in early morning and at twilight.

- **Ticks**
  
  Where: Anywhere there are animals: yard, woods, parks, etc.
  
  Danger: There are at least two diseases carried by ticks.
  
  Some are hard to recognize. On one field trip I returned home with dozens of little red and black spots on my feet. I took a shower and washed as best I could. I washed them with alcohol. They still itched. The next morning I asked my wife to take a look at the spots. They had spread upward on my body. She saw some of them move. She picked off a hundred of these little critters with tweezers.
  
  Control: Use good repellent. If you get ticks, pick them off slowly so they will turn loose and let you heal. If you have swelling or discoloration, see a doctor as soon as you can.

- **Wasp, bees, hornets, yellow jackets, and other stinging insects**
  
  Where: Anywhere near nests or source of food.
  
  Danger: Most are usually not harmful unless you are near their nest or threaten them in some way. Another cause of concern for any of the above critters is that if they smell fear they prepare to fight. Some people are dangerously allergic to some of these. Be careful. If you are stung, check to see if they left a stinger. Bees usually do. Wasps usually do not. If there is a stinger, grasp it with tweezers as close to the skin as possible and gently pull it out.
  
  Control: Be aware of your surroundings and avoid moving too close to their nests. There are some effective flying insect sprays, but they are not to be applied to your body.

- **Spiders**
  
  Where: Anywhere, indoors or out.
  
  Danger: Most spiders are not a threat. In fact, most are beneficial in controlling other insects. Some are dangerous, like black widows and brown recluse. If you are bitten by a spider, try to get a good look at the spider. If the site begins to swell or discolor, please see a doctor as soon as possible. It is better to be safe than sorry.
  
  Control: Just look for their webs and avoid when possible. Be aware of your surroundings.

McRocks Cookout and Rock Swap
(3rd Semi-Annual Event)

You are hereby invited to join the friends of McRocks.com at the Bear Den Campground near Spruce Pine for our 3rd semi-annual cookout and rock swap. Bring your rocks and minerals to trade with fellow rockhounds from States near and far, including; Oklahoma, Texas, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Connecticut, North Carolina, Florida, South Carolina, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. All food and drink will be provided at a reasonable price. The fellowship and fun will be priceless.

Place: Bear Den Campground, Bear Den Mt. Road, Spruce Pine, NC

Date: June 26, 2004 (Saturday)

Time: 3:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.

(Organized field trips will be held throughout the preceding week and weekend.)

Directions: From the Junction of Hwy-226 near Spruce Pine and the Blue Ridge Parkway, drive 6 miles north on the Blue Ridge Parkway to milestone 324.8 at Bear Den Mountain Road. Turn right into Bear Den Campground.

From the Junction of Hwy-221 and the Blue Ridge Parkway near Linville Falls, drive 7.1 miles south on the Blue Ridge Parkway to milestone 324.8 at Bear Den Mountain Road. Turn right into Bear Den Campground.

Pictures of the last McRocks Cookout and Rock Swap held in October 2003 may be seen online by going at www.mcrocks.com. (proceed to the “Field Trips” page and scroll down to McRocks Cookout and Rockswap).

For more information, email Patty Brantley to: waynebrantley@hotmail.com or go online to: www.dreamtool.com/tools/messages.mv?index+mcrocksnet.

We hope to see you there!

Mike Streeter, GMS member, mcrocks.com

Internet Website Update:

There were many significant additions made to the SFMS Internet presence this past federation quarter.

We have updated the SFMS William Holland Workshop and SFMS Wildacres Workshop on-line information and added the new 2004 Registration forms and 2004 workshop information in PDF format for download.

We have added a “Special Field Trips” page to highlight open field trips and rock swap information. There have been numerous updates to the SFMS 2004 club show listings and updates to the contact information for many of our SFMS clubs.

The most important addition to the SFMS website this quarter was the electronic “LODESTAR” page where all SFMS members can now read and download the current copy of our federation newsletter. We also will provide an historical database of past “LODESTAR” newsletters in PDF format starting with the January 2004 issue.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Flora, SFMS Webmaster
from Lodestar, SFMS Newsletter (3/04)
A Gem of a Star?

by Doug Daniels, GMS Member

I’m willing to bet that every rockhound desires a large diamond crystal for their collection. The largest documented rough diamond crystal found to date weighed about 3100 carats, and yielded the 530-carat Star-of-Africa gem, which is in the Crown Jewels of England. Want to top that? Astronomers believe they have found a much larger gem out amongst the stars.

A group at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics has recently found evidence that a white dwarf star in the constellation Centaurus may have a core of crystallized carbon, or “diamond”. A white dwarf is what is left after a star (similar in mass to our Sun) “burns out”. The star of interest (technically known as BPM 37093) is about 2500 miles in diameter, and weighs about 5 million trillion trillion pounds. This star, nick-named “Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds” (after the Beatles song), has been observed by several groups since the late 1990’s, because of theories of how white dwarf stars evolve. The conclusion that this particular star has a crystallized carbon core was based on long-term observations of pulsations in the outer layers of the star. This process is similar to observing seismic measurements of the earth to determine the internal structure of our planet (albeit a bit more difficult). The analyses estimate that the core of the star contains a diamond of about 10 billion trillion trillion carats!!!!

Now, that’s big. And, before you load up the SUV for a field trip, note that the star is located 50 light-years (or about 300 trillion miles) away (guess you’d better get up early….). And, there are a few other tidbits that should be posited before you book your trip.

First, the scientists only reported that the data suggest a stellar body with a crystallized core. Models of the evolution of a star leading to such a white dwarf suggest the core is composed largely of carbon. Most people assume that crystallized carbon means diamond. Well, graphite is also crystallized carbon. Second, the chemical composition of the core of such a star is not definitely known; it likely contains other elements, and may contain up to 50 percent oxygen (OK, maybe it’s a colored diamond?). Third and foremost, the physical conditions within a white dwarf star are much more intense than those found in the interior of the earth. We cannot generate, in our labs, the temperatures and pressures present in the interior of a star. Thus, it may be that the crystalline carbon does not have the diamond structure. And, as one scientist suggested, even if you could go there and get a sample, it would likely explode because of pressure differences. (I forgot to mention there would be an atmosphere of hydrogen and helium surrounding that devilish gem.) Lastly, if meteorites give us any indication, the core would likely be a conglomeration of “diamond” crystals, not a single crystal.

Oh well. As rockhounds, we can always dream….

References:
www.iowastatedaily.com/vnews/display.v/ART/1998/05/26/3bf43e3e0d51a?in_archive=1

SFMS YOUTH RESOURCES REPORT

Junior of the Year

Jennifer Baldwin

CONGRATULATIONS, JENNIFER!! You submitted a very impressive report of your activities!

Jennifer participated in the JOY award contest last year and received runner up recognition, but now she has won the title that she has worked so hard to obtain. Jennifer is 16 years old and in the 11th grade in Collierville, TN. She has been very active in both the youth and adult Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society and has attended several meetings as well as Club field trips. She has written several articles for her Club newsletter including two research papers and seven reports and has worked 22 hours at her three day Club Show. Jennifer is the Secretary of the Micromount Group and co-editor of the MAGS Explorer Youth Newsletter. She has also won 1st prize for her “Venice Beach Fossils” display. Jennifer and her family have been shark teeth collecting in Florida as well as participating in many other field trips during this past year.

Jennifer, we were so pleased to receive your application and read about all the things you do with and for your Club and then that you took the time to tell us about it. You well deserve the title “JUNIOR OF THE YEAR”.

Jennifer was given a handsome plaque and a mineral specimen (a large selenite) at the SFMS quarterly board meeting in Jackson, MS on February 28, 2003 to recognize her accomplishment.

The criteria for JOY involves a lot of time, interest and effort, and we think a recognition of participation is appropriate. We can only have one “Junior of the Year” but other contestants are given a memento for their participation.

KELLY BALDWIN has received a mineral specimen and a framed certificate as the one who had the second most points. Kelly, a 13 year old member of the Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society, was the “Junior of the Year 2002”.

MICHAEL BURCH also received a small mineral specimen and a framed certificate. Michael is 11 years old and a member of the Huntsville Gem and Mineral Society, Huntsville, AL. In addition to all his other activities, Michael introduced four new junior members to his Club.

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies is happy and proud to present these well-earned recognitions to our youth. We encourage all interested youth to participate in the 2004 contest by obtaining the criteria from your Club President (they have also been published in the January 2004 Lodestar) and following the guidelines. The contest ends October 21, 2004 and entries must be submitted by November 30, 2004. Announcement of the winner will be at the SFMS Annual Meeting in December 2004.
### April 2004

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**Good Bye GMS** by Freida Duffey

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Freida has decided that she has to resign from the club since she no longer is able to participate in the activities. I for one have appreciated Freida’s contributions to Tips and Trips during the years I have edited it. She could always be counted on for a word search puzzle to fill in space. Thank you Freida. - editor.)
WE ARE A NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION THAT THRIVES WITH YOUR VOLUNTEER HELP!

NAME: ________________________________
SPOUSE’S NAME: ________________________________
CHILDREN’S NAMES & Ages (residing at home):

ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________

HOME PHONE(s): ________________________________ OFFICE PHONE(s): ________________________________ E-Mail: ________________________________

OCCUPATIONS, HOBBIES, INTERESTS: ________________________________

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS AT GMS: (Check all that apply)

_____ Mineral Section  _____ Micromount Section  _____ Fossil Section

_____ Junior Section  _____ Gem Section  _____ Electronic Newsletter

Dues for New Members (Single, Couple, Family) are $25.00 per Society year. ($20.00 + $5.00 Initial Processing Fee)
Renewal Dues are $20.00 per Society year. (due 12 months from the date of joining and every 12 months thereafter)
Reinstatement Dues (For Expired Membership) are $25.00 ($20.00 + $5.00 Reinstatement Fee).

FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS ARE FOR THE IMMEDIATE FAMILY INCLUDING CHILDREN RESIDING WITH PARENTS. CHILDREN 16 YEARS OF AGE AND YOUNGER ARE CONSIDERED JUNIOR MEMBERS.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE GEORGIA MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.

For Official Use Only:

Date Paid: _______________ Amount Paid: _______________ Check # _______________ Cash _______________

THE GEORGIA MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.
P.O. BOX 15011
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30333 - 5011

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
PLEASE FORWARD

FIRST CLASS

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

Happy Easter!