

DVESScapades

escapades: interesting, stimulating, exciting activities and adventures



DELAWARE VALLEY EARTH SCIENCE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



March 2015

Next Meeting: March 11th

Program: John Sanfacon on agates.

Upcoming Programs:

May: Gene Hartstein on Mazon Creek fossils

Winter Weather Advisory

in case of bad weather, the meeting will be CANCELLED
if the Berlin Schools are CLOSED. Listen for School
Closing Number **579**



Meeting location: Education Bldg. behind Centenary United Methodist Church,
149 South White Horse Pike, Berlin NJ 08009

President's Message by Ann Lynne Benson

There is a staid similitude to our club born of a formula that works for us (*this is not a bad thing* but I realize some may disagree with my observation). We have been meeting monthly for nearly 60 years. We usually have a video in the winter months and a speaker program the rest of the year with many really sensational speakers. We have field trips. Members often bring interesting finds to display at our meetings and sometimes give away appealing specimens. We have minerals for sale at each meeting. We have a remarkable camaraderie among our members. We have a banquet in the Fall and a picnic in the Summer (each featuring an auction). We have a fantastic Junior Rockhounds program led by a caring teacher whose intense preparation provides exciting classes which are greatly enjoyed by the kids (as well as by the teacher himself and the parents/adult members who attend); we often make use of the Merit Badge Program provided by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies; we provide a prodigious service to the Home School families who attend. We open Sterling Hill Mine annually for a day and night dig - some of our members travel over 600 miles one way to volunteer at this event which attracts rockhounds from even farther away (one group is coming from Wisconsin this year).

Every member is encouraged to participate at whatever level is comfortable to them, although we live in hope that each person will become more active: we don't know what holds people back from doing little things that need to be done, or bigger things that could be done, or coming out to an Executive Board meeting just to see the "behind the scenes" running of DVESS.

Club members, particularly Executive Board members, throughout the Eastern Federation* are an aging population. Last year 57 club members within the Federation passed away - that's the most of any single year in memory. If more members do not increase their involvement, our clubs will not grow. As individuals we need to do more, so we can be more, so we can offer adults and children in the Delaware Valley activities that will pique their curiosity, open their minds, and enlarge their lives (and in the words of one of our Federation Execs, "give them more to do than finger games and watching videos").

So what could you do? Send a notice of monthly meetings to local newspapers (including online editions); write a letter to science teachers at local schools inviting them to attend a meeting and asking if they would be willing to speak with a member of our club. Carry a club pamphlet with you and give it to the parent of a child who likes to collect rocks (yes, it's ok to start a conversation with a complete stranger). Volunteer to coordinate refreshments at meetings. Come up with an idea. Participate.

Here's a biggie: become part of the Federation's administrative body; participation of more people from clubs increases communication within the Federation, thereby strengthening the feeling of unity and belonging. Also the more people that are involved, the stronger the Federation can become. EFMLS is our link to the American Federation*, but it's more than that. It's the source of the insurance that makes it possible to collect at Sterling Hill Mine and other quarries. It offers scholarships to persons deeply involved with our hobby to further their education in the Earth Sciences. We all know the importance of education in this economy. Up here in the Northeast the earth sciences have been taking a hit as schools from elementary level to the Universities cut programs; the University of New Hampshire gave their geology department away several years ago and I'm told that even the Harvard Mineral Museum is

cutting back. These are not good signs; we need people in the earth sciences who have an affinity for our hobby. What better way than to support these individuals by providing funds for their education!

The Federation has a great newsletter with interesting articles. EFMLS keeps our clubs in contact with each other by having the Annual Meeting associate with club shows across the region (last year it was here in Plymouth Meeting, PA and this year it's in Hickory, NC); it keeps tabs on collecting sites that close, such as the Rossville malachite/azurite location in northern York County, PA. EFMLS honors one member of each club per year as the Club Rockhound of the Year, provides free access to the extensive EFMLS program library, supplies information about our club on the EFMLS website, and (my favorite) extends to us the privilege of attending workshops at Wildacres twice each year (this year I'm taking photography of minerals and making gem trees). Each session at Wildacres is a week long; room and board along with gratuities, class instruction, six talks by our Speaker-in-Residence, and much much more is only \$390 per person!

We get a lot from our involvement with our club and our Federation, but our level of involvement is up to us. We don't need to take giant leaps forward but our choices seem to be get moving or stagnate.

So keep on Rocking!

Respectfully,

Ann Benson

* The **Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS)** is a regional federation of the **American Federation of Mineralogical Societies** whose purpose (in part) is to promote popular interest and education in the various Earth Sciences, and in particular the subjects of Geology, Mineralogy, Paleontology, Lapidary and other related subjects, and to sponsor and provide means of coordinating the work and efforts of all persons and groups interested therein, and to sponsor and encourage the formation of Regional Federations to strive toward greater good will and fellowship. The **American Federation of Mineralogical Societies** is composed of [seven similar regional organizations](#) of gem, mineral, and lapidary societies.

Field Trip Report

Mark Leipert, Field Trip Chair

February 28th - Museum Trips: Ann, Mil, Sue and myself braved the frigid temperatures to go to the Delaware Museum of Natural History and the University of Delaware Mineralogical Museum. The mineral exhibit at the Natural History were nonexistent and those at the Mineralogical Museum were spectacular. The two museum trips were short enough that it was easy to fit them both in for a short weekend excursion.

March 21st - Next museum trip: I'm open to suggestions. Please email me at mark.leipert@yahoo.com with your suggestions. More details will follow at the March 11th meeting. A sign up sheet and details at the meeting.

March 28th and 29th - Fossil Fair and Mineral Show: Both Delaware Valley Paleontological Society and the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society will be putting on the show both days at the LuLu Temple in Plymouth Meeting. More details at the Fossil Fair website.

Mark your calendar for the **Super Digg** that will be taking place on Saturday, April 25th. We will need as much help to run this event as we can get. There will be a sign up sheet for various positions at the meeting. Positions vary from greeter, parking director, safety officer, registration, weigh-out, security, etc. This is your chance to help your club out and do some great collecting.

Field Trips Photos by Susan Moore

Delaware Museum of Natural History, February 28, 2015









Websites of the Month

The **Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies, Inc.** was organized in 1950 to bring about a closer association of clubs and societies devoted to the study of the earth sciences and the practice of the lapidary arts and related crafts in the eastern portion of the United States.

<http://www.amfed.org/efmls/>

EFMLS Wildacres Workshops

<http://efmls-wildacres.org/>

Delaware Museum of Natural History

Encounter life-sized dinosaurs, look beneath the seas, experience an African Watering Hole, come face-to-face with a jaguar, marvel at the diversity of birds and shells from around the world...

<http://www.delmnh.org/>

University of Delaware Mineralogical Museum

"Although the Mineralogical Museum was founded with the gift of the collection of Irene du Pont, Sr., it has grown to encompass specimens gifted or made possible by many generous donors, including Mrs. David Craven, Alvin B. Stiles and Frederick Keidel. Because of our intimate space, we have chosen to focus on individual displays that illustrate particular mineralogical concepts or themes. "

<http://www.udel.edu/museums/minerlogical.html>



News

Nearly complete fossil of Cretaceous marine reptile found in Colombia

<http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2015/02/18/nearly-complete-fossil-cretaceous-marine-reptile-found-in-colombia/>

Forgotten fossil found to be new species of ichthyosaur

<http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-31521719>



Quote of the Month

“When the climbers in 1953 planted their flags on the highest mountain, they set them in snow over the skeletons of creatures that had lived in the warm clear ocean that India, moving north, blanked out. Possibly as much as twenty thousand feet below the seafloor, the skeletal remains had turned into rock. This one fact is a treatise in itself on the movements of the surface of the earth. If by some fiat I had to restrict all this writing to one sentence, this is the one I would choose: The summit of Mt. Everest is marine limestone.”

— *John McPhee, Annals of the Former World*

Shows and Events

March 14–15: Clifton, NJ - 26th Annual North Jersey Gem & Mineral Show. Over 25 dealers featuring rocks, minerals, fossils, gemstones, crystals, lapidary rough, rockhounding supplies, and much more. Organized by: [North Jersey Mineralogical Society](#) - Pope John Paul II Center (775 Valley Road), Clifton, NJ.

March 28–29: Plymouth Meeting, PA - Delaware Valley Paleontological Society Fossil Fair - Sponsored by the Delaware Valley Paleontological Society and the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society. Fossils, minerals, gems, and jewelry for sale; fossil and mineral exhibits and demonstrations; learning activities for kids. Food, beverages, and door prizes. LuLu Temple, 5140 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462. <http://dvps.essentrix.net/fossilfair.htm>

April 25, 2015 - Sterling Hill Super Dig - mark your calendar!
<http://sterlinghillminingmuseum.org/superdig/index.php>

April 25–26: Franklin, NJ - 43rd Annual NJ Earth Science Association Gem & Mineral Show with Outdoor Swap. Donation: \$6.00 per person, children under 14 free with paying adult. Franklin School, 50 Washington Ave., Franklin, NJ 07416. <http://www.njesa.org/>



Membership Information

Regular memberships are entitled to participate in all DVESS activities.

Sponsoring memberships are entitled to the same plus a specially chosen mineral specimen. Dues are renewable each year in January.

Regular Membership:

\$20.00 for the 1st family member + \$5.00 for each family member

\$10.00 for the 1st Senior (65+) member + \$5.00 for each family member

Sponsoring Membership: (each additional family member - \$5.00)

“Silver” \$50.00 for 1st family member – receive a Geode Specimen

“Gold” \$75.00 for 1st family member – receive Mineral Specimen

“Platinum” \$100.00 for 1st family member – receive Premium Specimen

Delaware Valley Earth Science Society Information

The Delaware Valley Earth Science Society, Inc. (DVESS), a non-profit organization, was founded in 1956 and incorporated in the state of New Jersey in 1957. The Society:

- promotes interest in, knowledge of, and the development of skills in the “earth sciences.” These interests include mineralogy, paleontology, lapidary arts, archeology, and local preservation.
- supports the conservation of natural resources, advocates the availability of collecting sites, and maintains close contact with those in the academic field.
- is a member club of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (<http://www.AmFed.org/EFMLS>)

Delaware Valley Earth Science Society Inc. (DVESS)

P.O. Box 372

Maple Shade, New Jersey 08052

DVESS Website: <http://www.DVESS.org>

To submit an article or photos for publication in the DVESScapades, contact the Newsletter Editor at aquamarinepaisleyorchid@yahoo.com.

