

DVESScapades

escapades: interesting, stimulating, exciting activities and adventures



Delaware Valley Earth Science Society Newsletter



(**Note our banquet is on Oct 18th**)

Meeting October 14, 2009

Program: Eugene F. Hartstein

gene@fossilnut.com

Subject: Fossil Fakes and Forgeries. I am inviting folks to bring in any fake fossils they may have for that meeting. In past presentations of this topic I have had a number of folks bring in fakes for display and we have had a great time. One fellow brought in a spectacular looking Moroccan trilobite that was sawed in half to reveal it was epoxy stuck to a rock. :) I also have a few slides on faked minerals so if you have a few of those, bring them along. From my perspective this is a great opportunity to educate the collectors on (slides or specimens) quality material. From my perspective this is a great opportunity to educate the collectors on quality material. Given by "Gene" Eugene Hartstein, DuPont CoTech Development Manager

President's Message - by AnnLynne Benson, DVESS President and EFMLS Director

My current term as President is gradually drawing to a close. Sadly, I will (again) be unable to attend the annual EFMLS convention (in Bristol, CT) due to scheduling conflicts – let me know if you would like to attend as the Delegate. Next year will be different - I hope – the convention will coincide with the Delaware Mineralogical Society's annual Spring show - right in our own back yard!!

I am honored that you chose me to serve as your President. Significant accomplishments were made during my term – our meeting finally found a permanent home and our cabinet has been installed therein; our new brochures were printed (come out to a meeting and get some!) I can't thank our wonderful Executive Board enough for their support and efforts; if the club was a car, they would be the wheels – we just don't get anywhere without them!!

Thanks also to those who graciously offered their homes for Executive Board meetings, and who brought snacks to the meetings – the food and fun make the work seem like play. All are welcome to join in the fun and games.

Special thanks to our new nominees for Board positions, and for those who have chosen to keep their appointed positions (e.g. Terry Wilson, our WebWoman; Gary Weinstein, our Program Chair; and the wise and wonderful Carol DeCuzzi, our patient newsletter Editor).

Please note the following proposed change to EFMLS By-Laws (to be voted on during the 2009 Annual Meeting in Bristol, CT on October 16th):

Article XIV. Dues and Fees. Section 2, Sentence 3

"If dues are not paid by ~~April~~ March 1, the member society will forfeit its right to all services provided by the Federation to member societies."

Rationale:

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April 1 is already into the sixth month of the EFMLS fiscal year and although many clubs begin their year on January 1, they would still have two months (January and February) to send in their dues without late penalty if we moved the date to March 1. By moving the penalty date up one month we could get important, and up-to-date information out to clubs via the website and Directory earlier. By advancing the penalty date we are not changing the basis of Section 2 which states that dues "shall be due and payable on or before January 1." The vast majority of clubs already send in dues in January and February and therefore will not be affected. As a reminder, EFMLS dues are calculated on club membership as of December 31.

So much for the past and future - on a more current note – let **DVESS ROCK** your world with our October events!

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
Oct. 14	Gene Hartstein (the FossilNut) "Fossil Fakes & Forgeries"	Ed Building behind Centenary United Methodist Church Rt. 30 (151 S. White Horse Pike), Berlin

FALL FEAST!!

Oct. 18 Banquet – Vitarelli’s Restaurant – 3D Shark movie, door prizes, auction Cherry Hill Our annual Banquet is just around the corner. Put Sunday, October 18th on your calender and bring the family out for a wonderful feast, once again at Vitarelli's on Rt 41, 1250 Kings Hwy N, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 -1915 (at W. Tampa Ave.) 1/4 mile north of rt 70 on the left. Time is 2 to 6. Included are door prizes for everyone, a silent auction and a wonderful program. This year Grant got a DVD from the National Geographic entitled "Sea Monsters, a prehistoric adventure in 3-D" - Terry Wilson is graciously providing 3D glasses for all. The all you can eat buffet will include Caesar Salad, Baked Meat Lasagne, Chicken Cacciatore, Eggplant Parmigiana, Fresh Green Beans in Oil and Garlic, Scalloped Potatoes, Rolls and Butter and Coffee, Tea or Soda. **WE** will be providing desert items, so whip up your favorite and bring it along. Yum!!!!!! As always the club will cover part of the expense so you can more easily afford to join us. Adults, members and guests, \$15.00, children under 10 \$7.50. Special dietary needs met (Call ahead for info. (856) 429-9088). You can't get a better meal with so many other benefits anywhere. Hope to see you then.

FIELD TRIP

Oct. 24 **FREE** tour of Sterling Mine Mineral Museum for all members Ogdensburg, New Jersey You must arrive at the mine or before 1 pm Traveling with our group? We will be leaving from Gary’s store at 10 am SHARP !!

Oct. 31 **ULTRAVIOLATION** – the only Fluorescent Mineral Show in the USA - sponsored by the Rock & Mineral Club of Lower Bucks Co. First United Methodist Church, Fairless Hills, PA.

Nov. 7 – 8 **GEMARAMA**, “Gems of Myth, Legend & Lore” sponsored by the Tuscarora Lapidary Society The School at Church Farm, near Frazier, PA

Selenitely yours, Ann Benson

Election of Officers for next year. We the DVESS would like to thank our past officers for running our group through thick and thin. For next year we have a beginning slate of officers picked. Please feel free to contact Gary or Terry or Lance (our election committee) for any other nominations or to offer your services for a post.

President, Grant Elliott and Gerald Feigin; 1st V.P., AnnLynn Benson; 2nd V.P., Lou Detofsky Secretary, Richard Murray; Treasurer, Gary Weinstein.

Minutes of August/September meeting: Our first ever August meeting program of going on a

treasure hunt through some 25 years of past club bulletins was well received. the door prize was taken home by one of our guests. Come out to the meetings and enjoy the comraderie, programs, door prizes and snacks. We welcomed new members at the September meeting and had a great time regaling each other with our summer exploits even though we did not have our usual summer break from meetings this year. Stuart Cleveland won the door prize.

FINDING TRILOBITES AT BELTZVILLE STATE PARK

By Al Zagofsky azagofsk@ptd.net

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Trove of Devonian period fossils found during dam construction.

Ever since 9/11, access to the spillway at the Beltzville Lake Dam has been restricted, limiting excursions to a fossil-rich dig uncovered in 1968 during construction of the dam. On Wednesday, July 16, for one of two opportunities this year, the area was open to a visit by a preregistered group from the Beltzville State Park Environmental Education Center.

The group of 35 participants in the program "Fossils: Portraits of the Past," led by environmental education specialist Carissa Longo, learned that in the dig are eight types of fossils of small marine creatures that were sealed in time approximately 365 million years ago. They lived during the Devonian period the age of fishes and died enmasse during a sudden flood, perhaps a tidal wave that covered a wide area with mud instantly crushing the creatures and sealing out the oxygen that would have caused the remains to decay instead of fossilize. "Most of Pennsylvania was covered by a warm shallow sea," Longo explained. "A large wave came, covered and killed all the animals at once. We have a death assemblage here."

Assisting Longo were two members of the Delaware Valley Paleontological Society: Jim Forster and Chris Storck. "I like exposing something that hasn't seen daylight in 300

million years," said Storck. "Especially if it's a trilobite. That's what I collect."

"Trilobites are my favorite," Forster concurred. "I love them. When you break open a rock, and see that they are in good condition, they look like they could get up and walk away."

The trilobite is Pennsylvania's state fossil. They are perhaps the second most well known of fossils following the dinosaurs, which didn't appear until the Jurassic period 160 million years later. The trilobites existed from the Cambrian period 570 million years ago until they disappeared at the end of the Permian period about 250 million years ago.

Trilobites, which ranged in size from ½ of an inch to 28 inches, had a three-sectioned body with a head, thorax and tail with an armored exterior skeleton on top. Many species of trilobites had compound eyes like insects and are believed to be the first creatures with a complex eye.



Image of a trilobite from Morocco courtesy Melbourne Museum.

John Snyder and Amanda Rossi examine a fossil record of a tidal wave that buried marine creatures 365 million year ago.



Below: Karina McKenna of South Whitehall Township uncovers a piece of shale bearing a fossil.



Besides the trilobites, the Beltzville Dam Spillway has: Cephalopods related to the chambered nautilus, Crinoids sea lilies related to the starfish, Brachiopods related to clams but have unequal shells, Gastropods related to snails, Coral, and Bryozoans a cup or twig-shaped animal that still exists.

"A fossil is evidence of prehistoric life," Longo explained. Fossils can be as young as 10,000 years. "The fossils at Beltzville were formed by the rapid covering of the animals by sediments. Over time, water dissolved the soft parts. The hard parts either remained or were replaced by minerals.

Below: A group of 35 participants in the Beltzville Lake State Park program "Fossils:

Portraits of the Past," led by environmental education specialist Carissa Longo, dug in the dam spillway to uncover eight types of fossils of small marine creatures that were sealed in time approximately 365 million years ago.

The marine animals unearthed at Beltzville lived during the Devonian period the age of fishes, and died en masse during a sudden flood, perhaps a tidal wave that covered a wide area with mud instantly crushing the creatures and sealing out oxygen that would have caused the remains to decay instead of fossilize.



To receive information about the programs, call (610) 377- 9150. Al Zagofsky/TIMES NEWS

Article borrowed with permission from the DVPS Newsletter V33 11 page 4 - 6

Chart available on line, search for the title.

Fossils and Geologic Time			
Time	Period	Life	Edwards frame
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	
444	Chambered nautilus	Trilobites	
	Tentacles	Crinoids	

WHAT'S IT WORTH???

I found this thought provoking article in the November 1996 DVESS newsletter and submitted same in the November 2004 newsletter - Grant Elliott

"Mineral Prices: Why So High?" By John Betts, (John Betts is one of the most highly respected mineral dealers in New York State) I get many questions about the prices of collectible mineral specimens. Novices are the most confused because they have yet to understand the confusing factors that affect mineral values. The following is a hypothetical chronology of prices and events of a typical mineral specimen.

THE BEGINNING All minerals start in the ground. A specimen is not worthless, but it does not yet have a price tag. It will lie there undisturbed, as it has for millions of years, until one of two things happen. Either it will erode from the solid rock, work its way into a sedimentary deposit and start another cycle of rock formation OR man will intervene and do something with it. It could go to a smelter to be refined into a commercial/industrial resource. Or it could become a collectible mineral specimen. I am going to focus solely on this latter path.

PRICE EVOLUTION

A collector digs it up and stores it wrapped in newspaper in his basement. It typically will remain in this state for two or three years, until his wife threatens to toss out all of the "junk" in the basement. Price=\$0.00. The collector washes it off for the first time and decides it is still worth keeping even though most of the other material he collected should have been left in the ground. He trades it at a swap along with ten other pieces to a collector that can see through the iron staining in acid to reveal the real beauty of the crystals. It is now clean and lustrous. Price=\$5.00.

The specimen is donated to the local mineral club for their fund raising auction. It sells for \$12.00. The new owner trades it away at a local swap to a savvy collector who knows the location has just been closed and no more specimens will ever be found. Owner values it at \$25.00. Years later, Mineralogical Record runs an article on the

lost location. The author identifies a rare left-handed twin crystal form as unique to the location. The owner doubles the price to \$50.00. The owner dies leaving most of his collection unlabeled. His heirs have no idea of what to do with the collection. A local mineral dealer calls the widow and offers \$1,800.00 for the entire collection and will not charge her extra for moving it. The price paid each specimen is approximately \$0.50. Now the mineral, unlabeled, is misidentified by the dealer as originating in Austria and a \$50.00 price is assigned along with the "classic" location notation. The specimen does not sell for two years. The small-time dealer discovers there is no money in selling mineral specimens and decides to sell wire wrapped amethyst pyramids instead. He sells his whole stock for 20% of the labeled prices. The specimen goes for \$10.00. The new owner is more knowledgeable and recognizes the true origin of the specimen. He researches the location and makes a copy of the article in Mineralogical Record as a sales prop and prices it at \$100.00. An "instant" collector, who has just started collecting minerals again, now that he makes enough money at age 35 after giving up collecting in high school, buys the specimen for \$90.00. He is happy He got 10% off. Meanwhile, there is so much demand for minerals from the old location that prices climb. Brian Wayne Lees-Thompson (All names used herein are fictitious) reopens the mine, attracting attention to the location again. Because of savvy marketing and the perceived shortage of specimens, prices are set at numbers that look like long distance telephone numbers. After two years the market is saturated. Mr. Lees-Thompson can't give them away. Prices drop to 10% of post- reopening prices. The minerals from the mine become a commodity worth about as much as Uruguayan amethyst! Meanwhile our specimen is sold to a new owner for \$150.00. He shows the specimen to an experienced collector who owns a microscope. They spot rare inclusions of baloneyium. They write an abstract that is accepted for presentation at the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium. They give a 15

minute presentation. It is offered for sale for \$500.00. It sells immediately to a locality collector that specializes in only that location. It is placed in a position of honor in his collection. The abstract is published in Rocks and Minerals magazine. The collector is offered \$1000.00 for it and he refuses. As the owner's age goes up, so does the mineral's value in the owner's mind. But he also knows that he can't take it with him when he passes on. He offers it to a local museum for \$5000.00. The museum has an annual acquisition budget of \$1000.00. They try to find a donor to purchase the specimen for the museum. In the meantime, the owner dies. The heirs know nothing about the collection- They just want to move into the house. So everything is taken away by the trash hauler. The mineral specimen ends up in the local landfill and starts the rock-forming cycle anew.

So What is a Mineral Really Worth? This silly chronology illustrates that the price is determined in varying parts by aesthetics, rarity, location, associations, uniqueness, marketing, and scholarly study. As with art, value increases with knowledge of the subject. There is no absolute value. There are no hard and fast rules. (Adler, 1981) If there were not mishaps along the way, the greater fool theory would prevail. Each owner would buy it and sell it to a greater fool that will pay more. Eventually it works its way up the price ladder until it reaches a practical limit. As a collector, all that matters is whether there is a bigger fool out there to pay more than we did. And - there is.

References:

Adler, Mortimer J., 1981, Six Great Ideas, MacMillan Publishing Co., NY

Gang, I love this specimen I found <http://www.sikhote-alin.org/Sikhote-Alin-Tree-Impact.html>

A meteorite imbedded in a broken section of a pine tree from the Sikhote-Alin forest that was penetrated and apparently cracked by an exploding fragment of the iron meteorite. The exterior of the meteorite has been lightly cleaned, however, the impacting side is quite oxidized. Areas of charred wood can be seen on the log. Approximate size of the meteorite is about 70 grams. Click here for more photos: [Sikhote-Alin Tree Impact](http://www.sikhote-alin.org/Sikhote-Alin-Tree-Impact.html) © Matt Morgan [Mile High Meteorites](http://www.milehighmeteorites.com) Images, text are Copyright 2007 by Michael Johnson SIKHOTE-ALIN.ORG



October 2009 Puzzle

by

Ed Loveland

Puzzle maker to the DVESScapades for many great years, and well appreciated.

THANKS ED, hope for many more!!!

E	T	I	N	O	T	S	A	L	L	O	W	O	P	I	Y
E	R	E	C	A	L	P	C	A	E	U	G	N	A	G	G
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N	F	O	N	C	Y	U	B	R	S	H	A	L	E	E	L
E	R	T	O	U	H	V	U	E	Y	B	O	E	P	O	O
C	A	L	C	L	A	P	C	H	I	T	E	K	C	U	R
S	C	A	R	A	C	S	R	T	N	T	L	I	I	S	T
E	T	D	I	R	K	B	T	O	I	N	M	D	T	D	E
R	I	I	Z	C	L	V	E	R	M	A	G	M	A	I	P
O	O	O	E	S	Y	L	A	D	E	A	B	K	M	C	E
H	N	Y	T	W	A	B	R	Y	Y	A	T	L	G	H	L
P	N	R	I	P	G	H	I	H	J	N	K	E	A	R	I
S	I	T	C	D	E	L	B	A	E	L	L	A	M	O	T
O	W	O	N	M	A	G	N	E	T	I	C	F	B	I	C
H	T	B	I	Y	R	A	T	N	E	M	I	D	E	S	U
P	I	E	Z	O	E	L	E	C	T	R	I	C	A	M	D

THE WORDS ARE:

ACICULAR	BARITE	BOTRYOIDAL	CUBIC
DICHROISM	DIKE	GANGUE	HABIT
HACKLY	HYDROTHERMAL	IGNEOUS	MAGMA
MAGMATIC	MAGNETIC	MALLEABLE	METAMORPHIC
ORE	PALENOTOLOGY	PETROLOGY	PHOSPHORESCENCE
PIEZOELECTRIC	PLACER	REFRACTION	SEDIMENTARY
SHALE	STREAK	TWIN	VUG
WOLLASTONITE	ZINCITE	ZIRCON	

Franklin Institute goes on:

Night Skys in the Observatory 2nd Thursday of every month

When: Thursday, October 8; 6PM - 9PM

Cost: FREE for members! Reservations not required.

October's Theme: *Space Robots with guest speaker, Andrew Johnston*

Smithsonian Museum scientist Andrew Johnston, Night Skies in the Observatory takes on a robotic theme this month as part of The Franklin Institute's celebration of World Space Week 2009. Author of "Earth from

Space," and numerous books about how we see the Earth from space, scientist Andrew Johnston visits The Franklin Institute to talk about how we see the earth from space and explain the robots that make these images possible.

About Night Skies in the Observatory:

Hosted by Chief Astronomer at The Franklin Institute, Derrick Pitts, the Joel N. Bloom Observatory is open late to the public and offers 5 different telescopes for you to view celestial objects in the sky, including stars, planets, nebulae, and if conditions are right, a galaxy or two. The evening also includes a Fels Planetarium show and a lecture or presentation (appropriate for all ages) on an astronomical or space science topic. For more info contact The Franklin.

This article courtesy of Diamond Dan's Mini-Miners Monthly

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This month we welcome young Mr. Kyle Zeller to the writing staff of Mini Miners Monthly. Kyle is an 8th grader and has been building a very fine mineral collection for a number of years now. His mom and dad take him to wonderful mineral collecting sites every summer. He will be sharing his adventures with you.

Rock Dig At Tripp Mine, Alstead, New Hampshire by Kyle Zeller



On Saturday, August 8th, 2009 twenty members of the Wayne County Gem & Mineral Club were invited to The Tripp Mine in Alstead, New Hampshire to collect specimens. The owner, Jim Tovey, is connected with our group through his

friendship with our members, David and Andrea Kords.

Our group first met at the General Store in Gilsum, NH, and then drove to the mine in Alstead. At the Tripp Mine site we were given a tour of areas to dig. There was an area of Rose

quartz, and a mine full of mica, smoky quartz, tourmaline, & hidden aquamarine.

The property had just been blasted (so) we needed water to rinse down the rocks. Many hoses were hooked up with generators to

pump water from the pit to rinse the rocks. The owner, Jim Tovey, worked the backhoe as Lee Champigny, Wayne Corwin & I were spraying and looking for any aquamarine hidden in the rocks. During this day, we struck aquamarine three times in the same area. This is quite uncommon because an aquamarine vein will absorb the beryllium in that area, usually creating one vein. Everyone had a great day and left this dig with their buckets full.

Editor's Note:
There was a contest for the "Best Specimen" found at the mine that day. Kyle won the contest - and \$100 - with an aquamarine and mica in matrix specimen (right).

All pictures by Scott & Julie Zeller. Used with permission.



DVESS MEETING LOCATION :

DIRECTIONS:

From Atco (west-bound), after the traffic light at Taunton Ave. (Rite Aid drugstore on the left), the church is about the 3rd building on the right; turn into the first driveway. If you miss it, pass by the church and turn Right onto Broad St. (at the Berlin Diner) then turn Right into the parking lot of the Baptist Church and go straight all the way - the parking lots of both churches connect.

From Rt. 73 in Marlton: head East (South) on Rt. 73. As you enter Berlin, you will pass Wal-Mart (on the left) and a shopping center (on the right) with Shop Rite and Staples. **Get into the Right "Exit Only" lane and follow the signs for Cross Keys Rd. At the intersection of Cross Keys Rd. and the White Horse Pike (Rt. 30) turn LEFT. At the next intersection (Broad St.) continue straight past the Berlin Diner and SPEEDY MART on your left; pass by 2 or 3 white storefronts on the left then see the big white church with red front doors on your left. Pass in front of the church and turn into the driveway on the far side. Education Building is behind the church.**

From Lindenwold or Clementon on the White Horse Pike (east-bound):

As you enter Berlin business district, you will pass through the traffic light at Cross Keys Rd. (CVS Pharmacy on right corner). Follow highlighted directions above.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Regular members are entitled to participate in all DVESS activities. Sponsoring members are entitled to the same plus a specially chosen mineral specimen. Dues are renewable each year in January. Membership rates for the Society:

Regular Membership:

\$15.00 for the 1st family member + \$5.00 for each additional family member

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

Sponsoring Memberships (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 a Native Gold Specimen

"Platinum" \$100 for 1st family member - receive a Premium Specimen

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 , knowledge 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>)

MEETINGS

The Society meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month throughout the year at Centenary United Methodist Church, 151 South White Horse Pike, (route 30) in Berlin. Junior Rockhounds meet at 7:30pm with the regular meeting beginning around 8 pm.

Anyone with info for the newsletter please share with me. You can be published!

Stuff you did in school, on a trip etc., see my info below (next page).

Editor's Notes: Editor is not responsible for authenticity of information in any articles submitted for publication. Nor are the opinions expressed in the "DVESScapades" necessarily those of the officers of the Delaware Valley Earth Science Society, Inc., and/or the editor.

To submit an article for publication in the DVESScapades contact the Newsletter Editor. decuzzic@comcast.net, or Delaware Valley Earth Science Society Inc., DVESS, P O Box 372 Maple Shade, New Jersey 08052 or DVESS Website: <http://www.dvess.org> garyskyrock@comcast.net

AFMS CODE OF ETHICS (American Federation of Mineralogical Societies)

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations of rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

- I will to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind - fences, signs, buildings.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material - matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule", will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public "image" of rockhounds everywhere.

<i>DVESS Directory 2008</i>	President Ann Lynne Benson 856-783-0969 SeleniteQueen@gmail.com
1 st Vice President Gerald Feigin gfeigin@co.gloucester.nj.us	2 nd Vice President Richard Murray bearich@snip.net
Jr. Rockhound Coordinator Mel LeCompte 856-783-0969 works-in-faith@comcast.net	Recording Secretary Grant Elliott 856-728-1731 gle@verizon.net
Website Coordinator Terry Wilson 609-714-1309 terry@dvess.org	Special Events Coordinator Ann Lynne Benson 856-783-0969 SeleniteQueen@gmail.com
Treasurer, Program Chair, Membership Chair Gary Weinstein 856-234-0708 - home 856-795-5077 - work garyskyrock@hotmail.com	DVESS Newsletter Editor Carol De Cuzzi 856-428-0621 - home decuzzic@comcast.net or DVESS@int-pro.com

Delaware Valley Earth Science Society, Inc. (DVESS)
P.O. Box 372
Maple Shade, N.J. 08052
DVESS Website : <http://www.dvess.org>

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Are you a member of the Mineral of the Month Club yet? www.mineralofthemonthclub.org
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New Finds From Germany's Messel Pit *ScienceDaily.com - 08/25/2009*



Today, anyone who looks into the Messel Pit, about 20 kilometers southeast of Frankfurt, Germany, will see scattered groups of trees, bushes and grasses. Underlying the vegetation, however, are richly fossiliferous shales. In the annual digs that the Senckenberg Research Institute carries out in the Messel Pit, an average of 3,000 fossil remains are recovered from the shale in this UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site. Some particularly well-preserved fossils discovered in 2007 and 2008 were recently exhibited.

The new find of a *Masillamys* has been recovered nearly whole and allows identification of the fossilized remains of its stomach contents. The extremely well-preserved outlines of the body reveal a shadow on the skin that leads us to the conclusion that this ancient rodent had a thick, short-haired coat of fur. "The key feature, the single pair of morphologically specialized chisel-shaped incisors, allow the 'real' rodent to be instantly recognized," explains scientist Dr. Thomas Lehmann, who is working on this animal. This individual, which was discovered just before the end of the digging season in September 2007, shows the short legs typical of the genus that lead one to assume that the rodent once lived on the floor of the primeval forest surrounding Messel.

Among the total of 6,773 finds that were recovered from the digs in the Messel Pit in 2007 and 2008, there were 1,929 fossilized remains of vertebrates, 1,403 insects and 3,441 plant remains. The information contained in the finds provide the scientists of the Senckenberg Research Institute data on the occurrence of individual species, their bodily structures and lifestyles, and the evolutionary history of animal groups. In addition, the research results help to reconstruct the Eocene environment and give clues to the relationship between climate and biodiversity. From the

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PROGRAMS: September meeting yielded only a small attendance, where people shared their summer adventures and discoveries.

October will see Gene Hartstein on fossil forgeries.

November will welcome Judith Goldberg presenting fossil finds in Cherry Hill.

December is the Christmas party and election of officers.

HARVEY CANTOR MICRO-MOUNTS: Ann will contact Carolyn Weinberger in regards to the purchase of the entire collection (Harve's specimens and DVESS micro-mount collection).

PLANETARIUM WEEKEND SCHEDULE

New Jersey State Planetarium

One World, One Sky Saturdays & Sundays; 1 & 3 pm; 40 minutes; Ages: 3-6 with adult; \$5/Adult, \$4/Child Big Bird's adventure begins on Sesame Street when Elmo's friend, Hu Hu Zhu, visits from China. Big Bird, Elmo and Hu Hu Zhu take viewers on an exciting discovery of the sun, moon and stars. They also learn about the Big Dipper (Ursa Major) and the North Star (Polaris). Elmo and Hu Hu Zhu then take an imaginary trip to the Moon where they learn that the Moon is a very different place from the Earth. When they imagine themselves back on Earth, they celebrate the idea that even though they live in two different countries, they still share the same sky. They even pick the North Star as their friendship star to always remind them of their shared joy of looking up at the sky together. Made possible by the Sesame Street Workshop and the National Science Foundation with special funding from the PNC Foundation through the Grow Up Great initiative.

Extreme Planets

Saturdays & Sundays; 2 & 4 pm; 40 minutes; General Audience; \$5/Adult, \$4/Child

For centuries, humans have wondered whether we are alone in the Universe. Now, we are one step closer to knowing the answer. With the discovery of the first planet orbiting another star, we now know that planets are not unique to our Solar System. In fact, these "extra solar" planets now appear to be quite common. The Planetarium's inaugural presentation explores what makes a planet "Earth-like" and takes an immersive full dome tour of several worlds that just might fit the conditions we're looking for. From water worlds to molten landscapes, inhabitable moons to planets with multiple suns, these exotic worlds are not just science fiction anymore!

Regularly scheduled Planetarium Sky Shows will be offered on Saturdays and Sundays at 1, 2, 3 & 4 pm. Ticket Prices - Adults: \$5; Children (age 12 and under): \$4; Groups of 15 or more: \$4 per person; Friends of the NJSM: \$1 off per ticket, up to 4 (Member card required). Planetarium Box Office is open 30 minutes prior to each scheduled Sky Show. Show tickets are sold on a first-come, first-served basis on the day of the show.