



THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA MINERAL CLUB INC



Crystals are the flowers of the Mineral Kingdom



THE MINERAL NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 51 No. 2

FEBRUARY 2010

Meeting Feb 16th

Also find information on our Club Website: <http://www.novamineralclub.org>

Our February meeting is ***NOT being held on the 22nd*** as would be the normal customary 4th Monday of the month. This month we need to hold the meeting on ***Tuesday the 16th***. The meeting will start at the normal time of 7:45 pm at Long Branch Nature Center in Arlington.

During the January meeting a new Board of Directors was due to be elected. However, the Editor of The Mineral Newsletter was unable to attend the meeting and the official new members of the Board have not yet been conveyed to the Editor.

Also, the program for the February meeting has not yet been finalized due to changing plans of possible presenters.

Apologies go out to club members for the very anemic newsletter this month, but materials normally published each month have not been received in time for this month's early meeting.

The heavy snow fall that hit the DC area in the last week has played no small part in the sparse content of this newsletter.

NVMC Schedule:

NOTE: Different meeting time this month!!

16 Feb. General meeting of the NVMC at 7:45pm

20 Feb Field Trip to JMU Geology Dept.

22 Mar. Meeting and NVMC AUCTION at 7:30pm

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Pictures from the January "Holiday" Potluck

Courtesy Sheryl Sims



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Reminder! Renew Your Membership

It is time to renew your membership in the Northern Virginia Mineral Club if you have not already done so. Please send your membership dues to the following address:

**RICK REIBER, TREASURER
NORTHERN VIRGINIA MINERAL CLUB
PO Box 9851
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22304**

Just A Little Piece of the Rock, *Please!*

By Sheryl E. Sims



By now you have heard the story. Last week, something fell from the sky. That something was a 4.5 billion year old meteorite! Holy constellations! Turns out that on January 19th, at 6:45 p.m. in the evening, the meteor fell right through the roof of Dr. Marc Gallini's Lorton, Virginia office. In fact, it crashed through the ceiling of one of his examination rooms at the terminal velocity rate of 200 feet per second. His office is only 10 or so minutes from where I live. Like any member of the Northern Virginia Mineral Club, my curiosity was more than a little piqued when I heard about his smashing experience. I had an idea! Wondering aloud, I asked myself if Dr. Gallini might consider letting me pay a visit to his office to see his little "rock".

"Where's the harm in asking?" I thought. I called his office, introduced myself over the phone, and explained to the receptionist what I had in mind. Perhaps, Dr. Gallini would not only let me see the meteor, but maybe he'd even let me keep a small piece! I was hopeful. Naturally, I wanted it for purely unselfish motives. I wanted to bring it to our January meeting for "Show & Share!" I had it all worked out in my mind. Totally understanding that he would only want me to have the smallest of pieces, I thought that no piece would be too small. After all, we all know about the microscopic bits and pieces of minerals the Micromineralogists collect! At a minimum, maybe he'd let me take a few pictures with him and the meteor.

Excited, I scheduled a couple of hours of leave from my job on Thursday, January 21, and headed to his office. The receptionist told me that they opened at 8:00 a.m. She was wrong. They opened at 8:30 a.m. I arrived at 7:00 a.m. I tempered my disappointment

with the knowledge that, when I called previously, the receptionist had said that Dr. Gallini would allow me to take pictures of the meteor. I was thankful. Secretly, I had a little bribery in mind. Armed with a copy of our December newsletter, my camera, extra batteries, a

mineral/magnification sample box and a "small gift" for trading purposes, I anxiously awaited Dr. Gallini's arrival. It was finally 8:30 a.m. I entered the office feeling a bit nervous. The receptionist said that she'd tell me when Dr. Gallini arrived. I pulled out a book and tried to read. I wanted to look and act as "normal" as possible. I was so nervous!

Dr. Gallini arrived and the receptionist beckoned me to the window. Dr. Gallini couldn't have been nicer as he told me, to my total disbelief, that he didn't have the meteor with him. I wondered for a split second whether or not my head had cocked over to one side the way that dogs often do when they have that look of inquisitiveness on their faces. "Not here?" I thought, but didn't ask aloud. "How could that be?" I wondered. Interrupting my train of thought, he continued by telling me that the meteor had been taken to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural Science. "Drat!" I did remember seeing his son climbing the steps of the Smithsonian holding a box of rocks on the late night news. "None of it is here?" I asked weakly, now thinking about all of the traffic that I'd have to face driving empty-handed into D.C. "No." He replied smiling. "But, WUSA Channel 9 has very nice, clear, pictures of the meteor on their website!" I blinked and said nothing for a moment. I was at a loss in more ways than one. "Uh-huh." "Well," I continued, "I wanted to take a picture of you with the me-

teor for my rock club meeting.” I said, losing all hope now. He must have sensed this and threw me a bone. “My son took pictures, but he’s on his way back to school with them. He may have mentioned Virginia Tech, or VCU—who knows? My mind had become blurry. “The pictures are on his camera. He could send them to you!” He continued. “Our meeting is this Monday.” I replied with no emotion. I tried to make a smile appear, hoping that it didn’t spread across my face and turn into a sneer. I was wishing that he’d make something magically appear. He didn’t, but said, “My son can email them to you on Sunday!” He was so cheerful. I was glad that at least one of us was happy. “Here.” I said. “I brought you a copy of our club’s newsletter. It has our website, meeting address, and other pertinent information in it in case you’d like to come to a meeting!” “That’s great!” He added still smiling. “One of my staff member’s husband is a geologist!” “Really?” I asked brightening up a little. “I know that people think that we rock hounds are a bit strange, but these kinds of things excite us!” “No, no!” He said, “I think it’s great and I will show your newsletter to her so that she can show her husband.” “We’d love to have him come. Please have him call me if he has any questions.” I said concluding my meteoric efforts. “Nice meeting you!” He said as if he meant it.

Giving Dr. Gallini my email address and contact information, I thanked him. Now, I had to hang on to the hope that his son would, in fact, email me pictures of the

meteor. It wouldn’t be as thrilling as having an actual piece of the rock to show and share, but it would be something. Turning to leave, I fingered the camera, batteries, and mineral sample box in my pockets. I also fingered the small gift that Dr. Gallini would not be getting for a trade. No, my Smithsonian-labeled pencil, filled with tiny polished rock chips, would remain with me. I had tried. Anyway, it would make a nice addition to our club’s door prize acquisitions. In the meantime, I’d better get the lead out and prepare for our next meeting! See you soon!

January 24, 2010: A Happy Ending

True to his word, Dr. Gallini emailed me pictures of the meteorite! All I can say, is “WOW!” Maybe I’ll just send him one of my Smithsonian pencils filled with tiny, polished, rocks after all!



Jan. Meeting Minutes

By Robert Winsor

Unfortunately by the time of publication of this newsletter, the minutes were not received.

Feb. Meeting Agenda

By Robert Winsor

Unfortunately by the time of publication of this newsletter, the February meeting agenda was not received.

Sterling Hill Diggg

Jim Cooper of UVWorld recently announced that Jeff Winkler, TripMaster of the annual event will soon be sending out information about this year’s dig. For now, the date of the event has been set for 24 April.

This is an event that fluorescent mineral enthusiasts will not want to miss. Attendance is \$20 and the rocks you carry out will set you back \$1.50 a pound (if the same price as last year). Minerals include the famous blend of Franklinite, Willemite (fluoresces green), Calcite (fluoresces orange/red), sphalerite, zincite, hydrozincite (fluoresces blue), wollastonite (fluoresces yellow-orange), and many other minerals far too numerous to list here.



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PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
[HTTP://www.novamineralclub.org](http://www.novamineralclub.org)

The Northern Virginia Mineral Club

You can send your Newsletter articles to:

Robert Winsor
35740 Roundleaf Ct.
Round Hill, VA 20141

Or via email: photech @ comcast.net

Visitors are Always Welcome at our Club Meetings.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

SEND YOUR DUES TO:

**Rick Reiber
Treasurer, NVMC
PO Box 9851
Alexandria, VA 22304**

OR

Bring your dues to the meeting

Purpose: To promote, educate and encourage interest in geology, mineralogy, lapidary arts and related sciences. The society is a member of Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS)

<http://www.amfed.org/efmls> and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS)

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

Dues: Due by 1 January of each year; \$15.00 Individual, \$20.00 Family, and \$6.00 Junior (under 16, sponsored by an adult member).

Meetings are held at 7:45 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month (except

May and December*) at **Long Branch Nature Center**, 625 Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204. Phone (703) 228-6535. (No meeting in July & August.)

(*Changes announced in the newsletter.) Snow schedule - Arlington county schools.