



THE VIRGINIA PEN

GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY OF THE VIRGINIA PENINSULA



January 2020

President's Corner

Deborah Rice

Special Points of Interest:

- Gold Panning with Mike
- Onslow Quarry, February 21st
- TOTE Show, VA Beach Convention Center, Apr 3-5
- GAITHERSBURG, MD Show March 21-22
- GMSVP Meeting, February 6th
- Thundereggs with Holly



Welcome everyone to the start of the New Year. I hope everyone is well.

Spring is around the corner and with it the start of the TOTE Shows. I would like to invite you all to **join me on Saturday, February 15**, at Sandy Bottom storage area at Noon. We will be cleaning out the storage area. We have totes to sort out and display pieces to properly tag.

To get to storage area. Take a right once you get into Sandy Bottom. We will be the left at the end of the drive. Bring gloves and dress to play with some Rocks.

Come learn what we do at Tote shows, learn to display specimens, see the geodes we sell, or just come have some fun. Then in April join us for the first TOTE Show. You can sell Geodes, cut them, talk to people about Rock Hounding, demonstrate different projects that can be done with rocks or demo panning for gold.

In This Issue

President's Corner	1
February Meeting Program	1
January Meeting Program	2
2020 Meeting Calendar	2
Thundereggs	3
Help Wanted	4
Bench Tips	5
Onslow Quarry Fossil Hunt	6
Upcoming Shows	7
AFMS Code of Ethics	8

GMSVP February 6th Meeting Program

Michael Griffith

Join us Thursday, February 6th, at Sandy Bottom Nature Park to explore **Micromounts** with Michael Griffith. Micro minerals are those that require magnification and we hope to have a few tools to aid in viewing our tiny minerals and gems. Micro minerals can be fun because the prices are often micro too! In last months issue of The Virginia Pen, the Shoebox Adventures article featured microminerals that form rings less than a millimeter in diameter.



GMSVP Purpose: The purpose of the GMSVP is to: facilitate the exchange of information and general cooperation among its members by promoting the study of lapidary techniques, mineralogy, paleontology, and allied fields of Earth sciences; provide the community with a knowledge of the hobby through lectures, demonstrations, and exhibitions; and enjoy good fellowship.

Visitors Welcome: The GMSVP welcomes any visitor with an interest in geology, mineralogy and the lapidary arts. Whether you are a hobbyist, artist, collector or interested in Earth Science, the club has something for everyone.

Dues: Individual \$15, Couple \$20, and Family \$25. Dues information is under: [Documents and Membership Information on the GMSVP Website Homepage.](#)

Meeting Location: Our meetings are held at [Sandy Bottom Nature Park](#) in Hampton, VA. Check the GMSVP website [Events](#) page for actual dates and times. The upcoming meeting information is in the Special Points of Interest area on the left of this page.



GMSVP

P. O. Box 6424
Newport News, VA 23602

Web: <http://www.gmsvp.org>
Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/The-Gem-and-Mineral-Society-of-the-Virginia-Peninsula-GMSVP/275041405841489

Officers

President: Deborah Rice,
Heritageeducation@yahoo.com
1st VP Membership: Walter Priest,
wetlanddesign@gmail.com
2nd VP Programs: Michael Griffith,
MGriff8645@aol.com
Secretary: Dave Scharff,
chap_dad@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Gary Bergtholdt,
gbergtholdt@gmail.com

Committee Chairs

Communication Advocate:
Dan Fontaine,
maineguy@cox.net
Facebook: Michael Griffith,
MGriff8645@aol.com
Faceting: Chuck Rogers,
car3rd@verizon.net
Field Trips: Bo Mulcahy,
bomulcahy@gmail.com.
Hospitality: Joyce and Bob Kennedy,
joycekennedy63@yahoo.com
Librarian/Historian: **Vacant**
Newsletter: Hunter Thurmond,
HLThurmond@outlook.com
Mineralogy: Walter Priest,
wetlanddesign@gmail.com
Pebble Pups: Co-Chair:
Christine Hempley,
offalstuff@gmail.com (**Need another Co-Chair**)
Property: **Vacant**
Silversmithing: Tim Savage,
savagegems@yahoo.com
TOTE Shows: **Vacant**
Webmaster: Bob Kennedy,
rdkennedy14@gmail.com

January Meeting - Gold Panning

Mike Mulcahy



Mike Mulcahy gave an informative demonstration on panning for Gold at the club's January meeting. Gold mining in Virginia dates back to 1804 and predates the California Gold Rush. Gold is still found in Virginia but by no means easily. Check out the GMSVP Facebook page for more informative articles!

GMSVP 2020 Meeting Calendar

Gary Bergtholdt

- Feb 6: Club Meeting
- Mar 5: Club Meeting
- Mar 9: Exec Board Meeting
- Apr 2: Club Meeting
- Apr 3-5: VA Beach TOTE Show
- May 7: Club Meeting and Auction
- May 9: Club Picnic
- Jun 4: Club Meeting
- Jun 8: Exec Board Meeting
- Jul 2: Club Meeting
- Jul 17-19: VA Beach TOTE Show
- Aug 6: Club Meeting
- Sep 3: Club Meeting
- Sep 12: Picnic
- Sep 14: Exec Board Meeting
- Oct 1: Club Meeting
- Oct 9-11: VA Beach TOTE Show
- Nov 5: Club Meeting (Elections)
- Dec 3: Christmas Dinner
- Dec 14: Exec Board Meeting

GMSVP 2020 Pebble Pups Calendar

Christine Hempley

- Yet to be announced

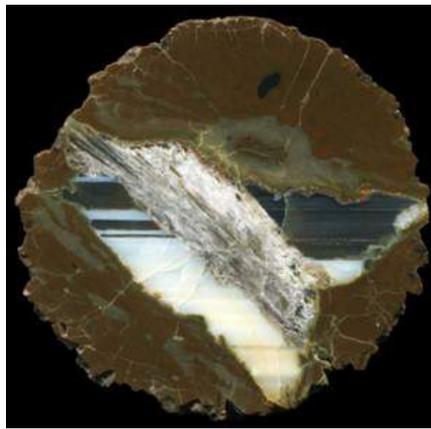
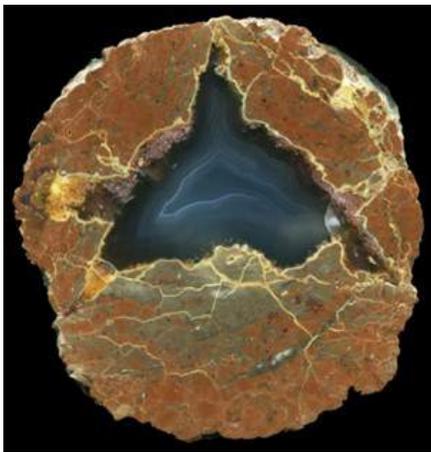
GMSVP's "The Virginia Pen": Non-commercial reprint permission is granted to non-profit organizations, unless otherwise noted.

FAIR USE NOTICE. This publication may contain copyrighted material the use of which has not been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in our efforts to advance the educational understanding of the amateur jewelry fabrication and rock collecting hobbies. We believe this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the U.S. Copyright Law. If you wish to use material from this publication for commercial or purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

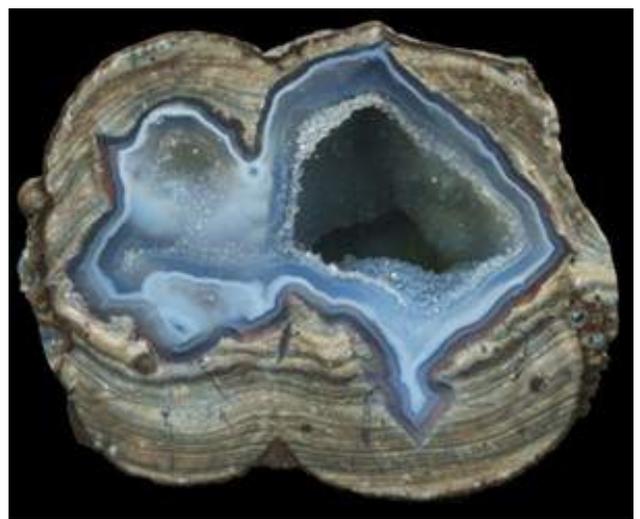
A few years ago, I did research on geodes and thundereggs. I wrote several articles back in early 2017, so for newer members I thought this would be worth another article. One of the websites I found and used in my research was the <https://thundereggs.wordpress.com/> (Eibonvale Thundereggs blog) written by David Rix. David gave me permission to use the photographs from his website and any information that I found of interest for others. He has recently posted some new finds, so I thought I would mention them in another article. This site contains information on thundereggs from all over the world.

If you check out David's site, please read the "[What are thundereggs?](#)" page. There is great information on thundereggs in his answer. You can also subscribe to receive his blogs if you would like to keep up to date on his finds.

From one of his recent blogs "[A few New Specimens](#)", David has added these thundereggs to his gallery. The Donnybrook, Ochs Ranch and Richardson Ranch are located in Oregon and I have seen (and own) a few of these really cool thundereggs. Dugway's come from Utah and I have one of these as well. Burgstall thundereggs come from Germany.



Left: Ochs Ranch / Pony Creek thunderegg – a simple but rather sweet specimen. Center: A specimen from one of the rarely seen non-public beds on the Richardson Ranch – this one described as a rare and small location “close to the main road”. Right: A more complex Donnybrook thunderegg with a fair amount going on.



Left: Burgstall thunderegg with an unusual pseudomorph core. Right: A fine Dugway thunderegg with some very delicate agate.

GMSVP CLUB HELP WANTED

Property Manager

GMSVP is in need of a Property Manager, who would manage our shed at Sandy Bottom Nature Park and maintain our club's Genie grinding/polishing machines and rock saws. The Property Manager may also assist the TOTE Show committee by ordering geodes to be sold at the shows. These property manager duties are presently being done by various club officers, who have other important responsibilities. Please volunteer! Just let Deborah Rice (Heritageeducation@yahoo.com) know, if you are interested!

TOTE Show Coordinator

GMSVP also needs a club member to lead our club's Treasures of the Earth Show activity. Our treasurer, Gary Bergtholdt, is presently coordinating the shows as a collateral duty, which takes away from his prime duty as the club's treasurer. The Show Coordinator orders the geodes and coordinates club volunteers and activities at the shows.

Pebble Pups Coordinator

GMSVP also needs a club member to assist our Pebble Pups Coordinator, Christine Hempley. The Pebble Pups Coordinators plans activities for our club's young rockhounds to work toward AFMS Future Rockhounds of America Badges. The coordinator leads a breakout meeting during our monthly meetings with our club's Pebble Pups.



Also check out page 7 for more **Up-coming Shows!**

If you have any shows you would like to share information about please send information, fliers or links to me at HLThurmond@outlook.com. I am always looking for submissions whether it just be information to share, an article you have written, or some other personal creation you would like to share.



This coming year, 2020, we have three show in VA Beach.

Apr 3-5, Jul 17-19, and Oct 9-11



CUTTING MOLDS

Cutting molds is easier and more precise with a sharp blade. A new Xacto blade is sufficient for cutting RTV molds but is usually not sharp enough for vulcanized rubber. For that it's best to use scalpel blades available from most jewelry supply companies. The #11 blade is triangle shaped, and the #12 is hawksbill shaped. I find the hawksbill is particularly nice for cutting the registration keys of the mold.

USING YOUR THUMB

When using multiple bits in a Foredom, we often have to deal with different shaft sizes - the usual 3/32 inch burs, the larger 1/8 inch shafts sizes and of course the many different sizes of twist drills. For some reason I really dislike having to turn the key multiple times to open or close the jaws of the handpiece chuck.

So I have two ways to speed up that task. For opening up the jaws, I just remember "four", the number of turns I have to make to open the chuck just enough from the 3/32 bur shaft size to the larger 1/8 bur shaft size.



For closing the jaws around a smaller shaft, there's a neat trick. Hold the new bit in the center of the open jaws of the chuck, put your thumb lightly onto the outer toothed collar of the chuck, and gently start up the Foredom. As the chuck turns, it will naturally tighten the jaws around the bur shaft or the drill bit. Then all you have to do is a final tightening with the key.

Discover New Jewelry Skills With Brad's

"How To Do It" Books at:

www.Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith.



New GMSVP Member—Welcome New Rockhounds! 123 Members!!!

No new members during the past month.



2020 TOTE Show Dates

- April 3-5, VA Beach Convention Center
- July 17-19, VA Beach Convention Center
- October 9 -11, VA Beach Convention Center

Next Treasures of the Earth Show: VA Beach Convention Center on April 3 - 5

Its almost time for the first opportunity of the year to participate in the public fossil hunts at the Belgrade and Onslow Quarries of Martin Marietta in North Carolina. The Martin Marietta corporation has been very gracious in letting the public hunt for fossils at their quarry. It is a great location to find shark's teeth, fossil sand dollars and urchins, and the occasional nautiloid. They are both fossil marine environments and are very similar to the famous Aurora material (which is only about 45 minutes away) Megalodon teeth, as well as fossil mammal bones, have been found, but are rare.

The dig dates are always on a Friday, and it's roughly a four hour drive from the peninsula. You need to be at the location before 8 AM for the mandatory safety briefing, so you either need to be on the road by about 4 AM or start your journey the night before and get a place to stay. The safety briefing involves watching a film, getting briefed on the particular mine, regulations, and waiver signing. I shouldn't need to remind folks that it's been getting harder and harder to get into quarries these days and this is a fantastic opportunity, so be sure to LISTEN and OBEY all rules given at the safety briefing.

Required Safety gear is: Steel-toed or ANSI equivalent boots, long pants, safety glasses, hard hat, and a high visibility safety vest (preferably red/orange.)

Recommended gear: Sun screen(!), bug spray, WATER(!) as it's going to be VERY HOT, food, buckets. You might want to pack some rags and old towels as it can get quite muddy there (like the last two trips I went to).

The Onslow consist of mostly transported overburden and loose sand and dirt. Surface looking is recommended and has been quite productive. Hammers and chisels might be needed, but unlikely. I've seen people dig and sift with some luck but that seems like too much work for me. You're free to try it, if you like.

The Belgrade quarry hasn't been hunted for about a year as it's been underwater since last year's hurricane.

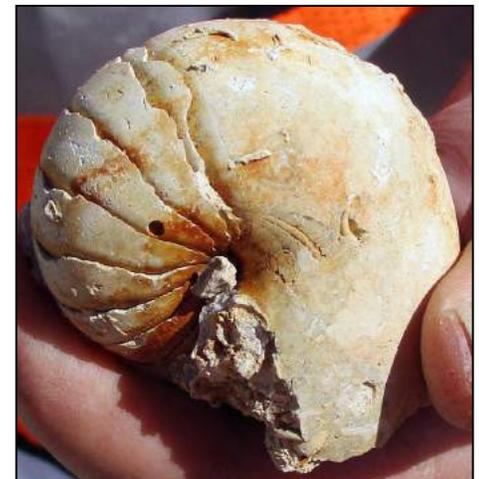
Date/Location:

Onslow Quarry, Friday, February 21st

- 131 Duffy Field Road, Richlands, North Carolina 28574
- Tel: (910) 324-7430
- (Note: This address on your GPS will take you to a wide part in the street...the office is about a half-mile down the road on the left.) I would recommend calling or texting Danny Humphrey (910-376-4001) about a day ahead of time as trips have been cancelled due to weather in the past.

Belgrade Quarry, Friday, March 20th

- 5678 Highway 58 South, Maysville, North Carolina 28555
- Tel: (910) 743-6471



March 21-22, 2020 – GAITHERSBURG, MARYLAND

56th Annual Gem, Mineral, Fossil Show; Montgomery County Fairgrounds. 16 Chestnut Street Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 11am-5pm. 20+ vendors, 40+ exhibits.

Contact Doug Baum at Gem, Lapidary, & Mineral Society of Montgomery County, MD. for more information at **240-888-7485** or at www.glmsmc.com



56th Annual Gem, Mineral, Fossil & Jewelry Show

Date/Time: **March 21-22, 2020 Saturday 10-6, Sunday 11-5**

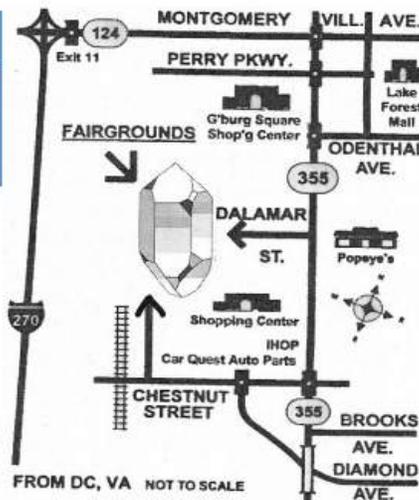
Location: **Montgomery County Fairgrounds; Building #6
16 Chestnut St. Gaithersburg MD 20877**

Featuring:

Hourly Door Prizes	20+ Vendors of minerals, beads, fossils, gems & jewelry
Gold Panning	40+ Exhibits by club members - including junior exhibits
Fluorescent Minerals	Learn to make a gemstone in the shop
Raffle Prizes	Mini Mine, Free minerals & activities for children
Free Parking	Demonstrations of Faceting, Beading, Jewelry Making, Physics

Children (11 and under) Free! Ages 12 and over \$6
Scouts in Uniform Free! 4H youth with 4H identification Free!
More info at: www.glmsmc.com

Show this flyer for
\$1 off admission price
(applies to each member in your group)



Visit a Show

Source: EFMLS (<http://www.amfed.org/efmls/>) & SFMS (<http://www.amfed.org/sfms/>) Websites

February 22-23: 27th Annual James Campbell Memorial Gem, Mineral, Fossil Show and Sale sponsored by Capital District Mineral Club and the New York Academy of Mineralogy. New York State Museum, 4th floor, Empire State Plaza, Madison Avenue, Albany, NY 10:00 am to 5:00 pm both days. <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/programs/minerals>

March 7-8: 57th Annual Earth Science and Mineral Show sponsored by Delaware Mineralogical Society. Double Tree by Hilton, 4727 Concord Pike (Route 202), Wilmington, DE. For info Email Gene Hartstein at gene@fossilnut.com.

March 21-22: Buffalo Geological Society's 52nd Gem-Mineral-Fossil Show. The Fairgrounds in Hamburg, Market, Grange & State Police Buildings, Hamburg, NY. For more info email Jerolde Bastedo at jcbastedo@gmail.com.

March 21-22: 56th Annual Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Show sponsored by the Gem, Lapidary and Mineral Society of Montgomery County, MD. Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Building 6, 16 Chestnut Street, Gaithersburg, MD Saturday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm, Sunday 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. www.glmsmc.com.

March 27-30: Annual EFMLS Convention hosted by the Catawba Valley Gem and Mineral Club, Hickory, NC www.efmls.org/annual-convention.

March 28-29: 51st Annual Gem, & Mineral Show sponsored by the Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club. Wysox Volunteer Fire Co. Social Hall, 22 Lake Road, Wysox, PA Saturday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. www.chehannarocks.com.



AFMS Code of Ethics

(<http://www.amfed.org/ethics.htm>)

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.