



MNCA Website dcmicrominerals.org
The Mineral Mite



Vol. 48 – No. 10

Washington D.C. – A Journal for Micromineralogists December 2016

December 19 Time: 6:30 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd. Arlington, VA 22206

Merry Christmas

Happy Hanukah

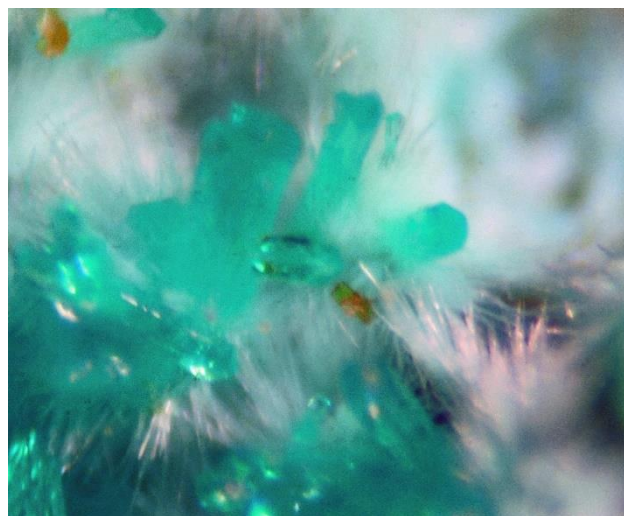
Holiday Party Dec. 19

By David Fryauff, V. President

The Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area and the Northern Virginia Mineral Club are jointly hosting this year's holiday party at the Long Branch Nature Center.

The NVMC will provide barbeque from Red Hot & Blue. The MNCA club will provide drinks. We are asking club members, on a voluntary basis, to provide appetizers and desserts. Details are listed on page 2. In the holiday spirit, we are asking club members, on a voluntary basis, to bring a wrapped gift marked Micromount.

Photo of the Month



Vauquelinite (tiny, brown) and Diopside (blue-green) on Plancheite (light blue), from the Blue Bell Mine, San Bernardino County, CA. Close-up, FOV 1 mm.

Read Michael Pabst's article on page 3.



President's Message:

By: Dave MacLean

As I looked thru the December 2016 EFLMS News, I am amazed at the large number of awards by MNCA and NVMC members. I count for us ten recognitions for 'well done's'.

Here are the particulars:

Small Bulletins

Trophy Kathy Hrechka, *The Mineral Mite*

Educational Articles

*2nd place Kathy Hrechka, Snow Storm Thor's Snow Crystals

*5th place Dave Hennesey, Lirconite, a Fortunate Find

*6th place Kathy Hrechka, Natural History Museum in London, search of the "Aurora Pyramid of Hopes" Colored Diamond Collection

Original Non-Technical Articles

Trophy Scott Braley, Crystal Grove Diamond Mine & Ace of Diamonds Mine, Herkimer NY

Honorable Mentions

*David Fryauff, My Travelogue of Hard and Fast Rockhounding in North Carolina

*Kathy Hrechka, Natural History Museum in London, in Search of Smithsonite

*Steve Weinberger Mineral of the Month-Hydrated Borates

Written Features

*Cynthia Czapek, Barnes Payne recollection of Cynthia Barnes

Continued on page 2



Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.

*Wayne Sukow, the Mineral Newsletter the Prez Says

*Sheryl Sims, Microminerals-Maximum Appeal

*Sheryl Sims, Mineralogy is a Stitch

*Sheryl Sims Cool Weather Fun

*Dave MacLean, BMS Symposium 2015 Lou D'Alonzo and Dr. Donald Howard-October 11, 2015

What a wealth of expertise and enterprise are from MNCA members. Well done. Let's keep it up.

2017 MNCA Officers Nominations:

Karen Pabst agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee for 2017 officers. She reported nominations of Dave MacLean for President, Dave Fryauff for Vice president, Michael Pabst for Treasurer, and Bob Cooke for Secretary.

Membership Dues are Due: 2017

\$15 (single) or \$20 (family)

**Payable to MNCA - Michael Pabst, Treasurer
270 Rachel Drive
Penn Laird, VA 22846**

Previous Meeting Minutes: 11/30/16

By: Bob Cooke, Secretary

President Dave MacLean convened the meeting at 8 PM November 30, 2016. Thirteen members were present. There were no guests.



Minutes of the October meeting were approved as written in the Mineral Mite. Michael Pabst gave a Treasurer's Report. Dave reminded everyone that 2017 dues are now due.

The December meeting will be a joint Holiday Party with the Northern Virginia Mineral Club from 6:30-9:30 PM on December 19th at the Long Branch Nature Center. Kathy Hrechka will send MNCA members the email from Sue Marcus providing details on the party and what food items to bring.

Old Business: Kathy reviewed planning for the 2017 Atlantic Micromounters Conference (AMC). The event will be March 31 and April 1 (Friday / Saturday) at the SpringHill Suites by Marriott in Alexandria, VA.

New Business: Kathy asked if the club would honor Fred Schaefermeyer by making a scholarship donation. Following group discussion, the club approved a motion by Karen Pabst to donate \$200 to the Fred Schaefermeyer Scholarship of the NVMC. Half the money would come from the MNCA general account and the other half from the AMC conference account.

Announcements: Dave announced the 53rd Annual GLMS-MC Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show will be March 18 & 19, 2017. MNCA will have a micromount demonstration table. Bob Cooke announced arrival of an additional fifty illuminated 20x loupes to replenish stocks sold at the NVMC show November 19/20.

Field trips: Dave Fryauff announced field trips on December 2 to the Haynes Kibblehouse Quarry, Peach Bottom, PA and on December 6 to the Medford Quarry, Westminster, MD. Meeting adjourned at

Previous Program Reviewed 11/30/16

By: Bob Cooke, Secretary

The business meeting was followed by a DVD presentation featuring Herb Oboda from the 2012 Dallas Mineral Collecting Symposium entitled "Dangerous Beauty, Minerals of the Hindu Kush".

Holiday Party details for December 19

Email Sue Marcus akumaldreams@gmail.com how many guests you will bring, and what you will bring from the suggested menu below.

*1 green salad *1 cake *1 veggie plate *2 pies
*1 Frito salad *3 plates of cookies *1 pasta salad
*2 plates of brownies *1 can of nuts *1 plate of fudge/candy
*3 platters of shrimp *1 jar pickles
*1 platter of cheese *2 boxes of crackers or loaves of bread *2 plates of deviled eggs (24 halves each)

Vauquelinite (continued)

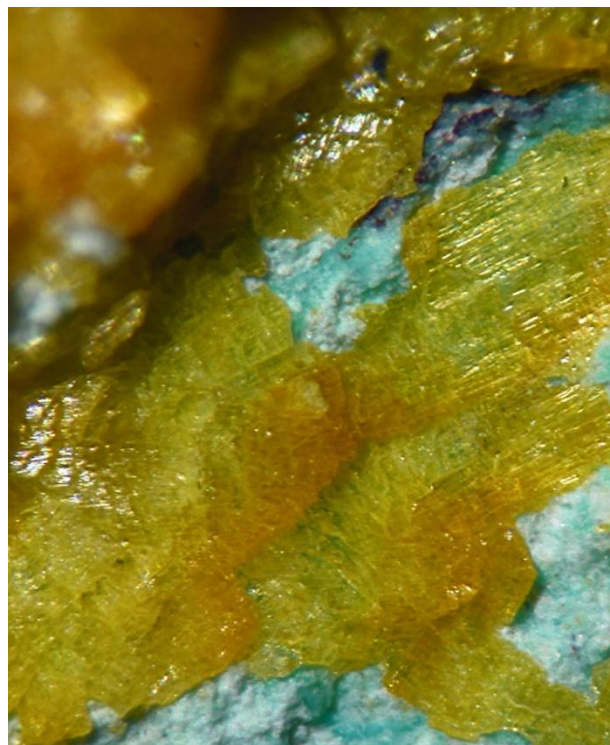
By Michael Pabst

Here are the photos of Vauquelinite that I did not have room for in last month's article.

First, let me point out a few nice photos in Mindat of Vauquelinite from Berezovsk, Russia, which is the type locality for Vauquelinite and Crocoite:

www.mindat.org/photo-737400 and
www.mindat.org/photo-544001.html.

The first of my Vauquelinite photos shows the entire specimen of bright yellow Vauquelinite from Arizona, followed by a close-up photo.

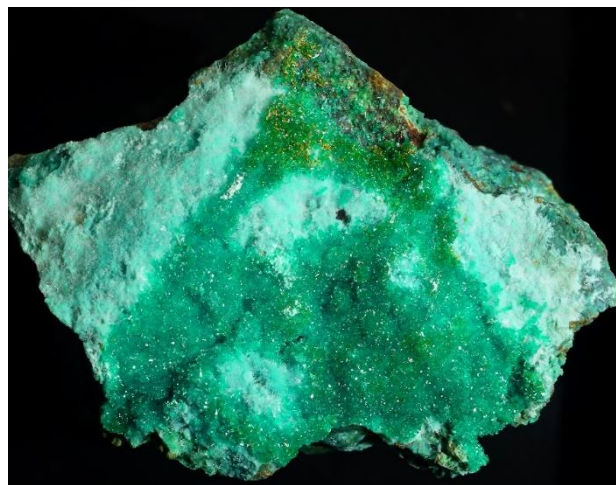


Vauquelinite, Evening Star Mine, Big Horn Mountains, Maricopa County, AZ.
Close-up, FOV 3 mm.

The next Vauquelinite specimen comes from California.



Vauquelinite, Evening Star Mine, Big Horn Mountains, Maricopa County, AZ.
Entire specimen, FOV 15 mm.



Vauquelinite and Diopside on Planchete and Chrysocolla, Blue Bell Mine, San Bernardino County, CA
Entire specimen, FOV 28 mm

Continued on next page

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.



Vauquelinite and Diopase on Plancheite and Chrysocolla? or Allophane?, Blue Bell Mine, San Bernadino County, CA. Zoom-in, FOV 3 mm.



Vauquelinite (tiny, brown) and Diopase (blue-green) on Plancheite (light blue), from the Blue Bell Mine, San Bernadino County, CA. Close-up, FOV 1 mm.

After my admittedly brief experience photographing Vauquelinite and Fornacite, I don't believe it is possible to distinguish Vauquelinite from Fornacite by visual inspection. So, the identifications here are based on the labels, which are presumably based on analysis of typical specimens from each locality.

One last thought: By analogy to the Hemihedrite-Iranite series (October's article), which contains Cr, Pb, Si, and either Zn or Cu, one would expect Zn analogs of the copper minerals Vauquelinite (PO_4) or Fornacite (AsO_4).

But zinc analogs of Vauquelinite and Fornacite have not been reported. In fact, there are no minerals containing Cr, Pb, Zn and either P or As. Surprising. Perhaps an opportunity for discovery?

Smithsonian: The Foxtail Diamond

By Kathy Hrechka

The largest gem-quality rough diamond mined in North America is on display in the Geology, Gems & Mineral gallery adjacent to the Hope diamond.



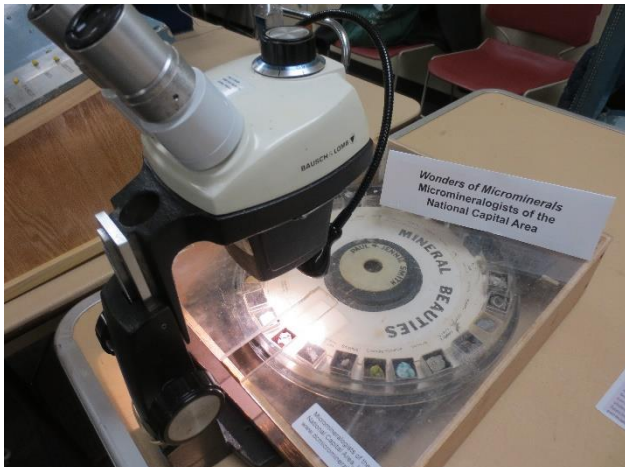
Photo courtesy of Kathy Hrechka

Weighing 187.63 carats, the Foxtail Diamond was un-earthed in 2015 at the Diavik Mine, located 138 miles (220 km) south of the Arctic Circle in the remote frozen tundra of Canada, known as Barren Lands. The diamond is currently on loan from Deepak Sheth of Amadena Investments LLC-New York. Deepak purchased the uncut diamond at auction and is allowing the Smithsonian to display it for three months. The name Foxtail came from the aboriginal name for the aurora borealis; foxtails swishing through the sky.

MNCA Micromounters Demonstrate The Art of Micro Minerals

By Kathy Hrechka

Club members volunteered their time and talents demonstrating the art of micromounting at the Northern Virginia Mineral club show on November 19 and 20 at George Mason University. MNCA volunteers included John Kress, Erich Grundel, Dave MacLean, Kathy Hrechka, and Dave Fryauff.



Shoebbox Adventures 64: What's New?

By Mike Seeds, MICRONEWS, Vol. 50 Dec. 2016
Ask a mineral collector "What's new?" and you will probably hear about something found a month or two ago on a collecting trip, or maybe a new purchase at the rock show last spring. Ask micromounters, and you will hear about what they discovered last night.

There is a shoebox sitting on the end of my bench, and when I sit down, I reach in and pull something out. It's always a nice surprise. The current box is full of things from the Atlantic Micromount Conference last spring. There are rocks in the box from dealers, from auctions, from giveaway tables and from trades with other collectors. When I found something at the conference, I made sure it was labeled correctly, put it in a baggie to keep it safe, and dropped it in the box. Now I'm mining that box, and it is full of goodies. I just finished a shoebox labeled "Tucson February", and that was a good box too.

So what's new? I just pulled out a specimen of barite on mottramite from the Total Wreck Mine in Pima County, Arizona. Under the scope it looks as dramatic as a huge sculpture by a modern artist. Imagine great black sheets of glittering textured steel with a brilliant white crown at the top balanced on a pivot and swinging to the breeze turning slowly slowly in the sunlight. My specimen isn't quite that ponderous. It is only about 8 mm in diameter, but the mottramite is rugged sparkling black and the barite crystals balanced on top are milky white. Through the microscope it has the grandeur and dignity of a colossus by a great artist.

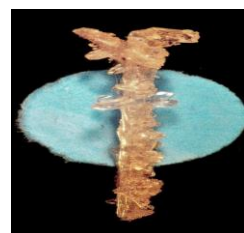


Barite on Mottramite, Total Wreck Mine, Pima Co., AZ. Field of view 8 mm

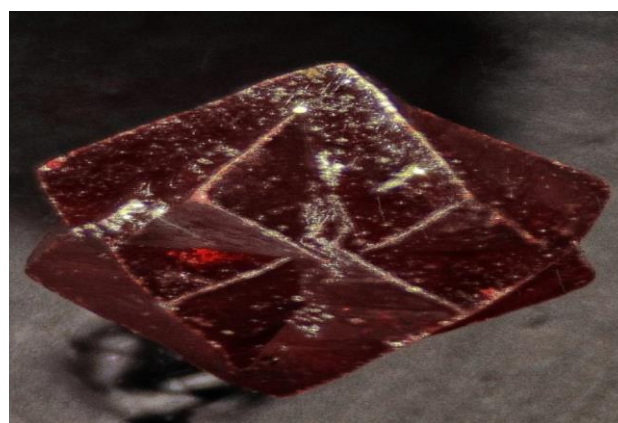
Recently I reached in my shoebox and pulled out a little box with a few long natrolite crystals. The label said they were "natrolite with apophyllite from Dotty". Dotty? It took me a little time to research them on Mindat, but I eventually tracked the location to the Weyerhaeuser Lincoln Creek Quarry, Doty Hills, Lewis County, Washington. And the beautiful crystals on the natrolite are actually fluorapophyllite-K. I thought about mounting these delicately balanced on a squirrel whisker or a brush bristle, but they are too long and the lever arm would make the glue joint break easily. Besides, I do this for fun.

In the end, I mounted them on blue paper dots. They show up better on blue paper than on white, and the glue on the paper holds them securely. The little box contained three natrolite crystals, so I saved one for my collection and made up two for my trade box.

Right- Fluorapophyllite-K on natrolite. FOV 16 mm



What else is new? How about a lovely cinnabar twin from the Sofiya Mine, Donetsk, Ukraine? It's a classic example of twinning in this beautiful mineral. I got it at the Atlantic Conference from Al Pribula and it has been resting in my shoebox. I had forgotten all about it until I pulled it out just a few days ago. What a nice surprise.



Cinnabar, Sofiya Mine, Konetsk Oblast, Ukraine. Crystal 6 mm

Photos by M. Seeds

Shoebox Adventures continued

Sometimes you are surprised by what comes out of your shoebox, but sometimes you are surprised by what you see turning a rock under your scope. Some time ago I pulled a specimen labeled natrolite out of a shoebox. It hadn't looked really promising when I got it, but it went into the shoebox. Under the microscope with light striking down into a tiny vug you can see stubby natrolite crystals with lovely terminations growing like square stalagmites up from the bottom of the vug. I didn't see those when I decided to put the little chunk in my shoebox. So I'm glad I kept the rock. It carried a surprise down inside.



Natrolite crystals hiding deep inside a tiny vug only 1.2 mm across

Ask a micromounter "What's new?" and then leap back. There is always new stuff under the microscope. So, what's new with you?



GeoWord of the Day and its definition:

miomirite (mi-o-mir'-ite) A variety of davidite containing lead.

All terms and definitions come from the [Glossary of Geology, 5th Edition Revised](#).

MNCA Field Trip to James Madison U Dr. Kearns - Saturday January 28, 2017

By Michael Pabst

Dr. Lance Kearns has scheduled our Field Trip to James Madison University for January 28, 2017 according to our wishes. Note: He will be retiring this spring.



MINERAL MUSEUM

James Madison Univ. - Harrisonburg, Virginia

The room is slightly over 600 square feet in size, hosting sixteen display cases plus a special Ultraviolet display room. Security for the specimens is provided by a multilevel state-of-art security system. Generous gifts from individuals and mineralogical societies around the region allowed for a complete purchase of the mineral display cases. The Grand Opening took place October, 2007.



Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.



American Federation of Mineralogical Societies

AFMS)
www.amfed.org

Purpose of the AFMS: 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; to sponsor and encourage the formation and international development of Societies and Regional Federations and by and through such means to strive toward greater international good will and fellowship.

The A.F.M.S. Newsletter is published monthly except January, July and August by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies

Subscriptions are \$4.50 per year Remit payment to the AFMS Central Office Checks should be made payable to "AFMS" Address maintenance and mailing labeling are the responsibility of the AFMS Central Office. All changes & questions should be sent to: AFMS Central Office Steve Weinberger PO Box 302 Glyndon, MD 21071-0302 410-833-7926. Each Regional Federation Club is entitled to receive three (3) copies of the AFMS Newsletter. These are usually sent to the President, Editor and Federation Director or Secretary.

Content, Letters, Editorial Comments, Submissions: Any communication concerning the content or format of the newsletter should be sent to the Editor: Carolyn Weinberger PO Box 302 Glyndon, MD 21071-0302 410-833-7926.

Deadline is the 1st of each month preceding publication (i.e. April 1 for the May issue) Material in this Newsletter may be duplicated for non-commercial purposes provided credit is given this publication and the author. For commercial use, the individual author(s) must be contacted for approval.



C. Weinberger



Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies

(EFMLS)
www.amfed.org/efms

**Communication and Involvement
Are the Keys to Our Success!**

Geology Events: December:

19: MNCA & NVMC Holiday Party
6:30 p.m. Long Branch Nature Center, Arlington, VA 22206 (MNCA provides beverages.)

January 2017:

28: James Madison trip: 9am – 3pm
Dr. Lance Kearns has again invited MNCA along with MSDC and NVMC, to visit the mineralogy labs at James Madison University, Saturday, January 28, 2017. Details will be as usual. It's quite possible that this will be our last invitation to JMU, as Lance will be retiring in May, 2017 Details on page 7 MM.

March:

31–April 1: Atlantic Micromounters' Conference - SpringHill Suites Alexandria, VA. 6065 Richmond Highway Alexandria VA 22303. Speakers TBD

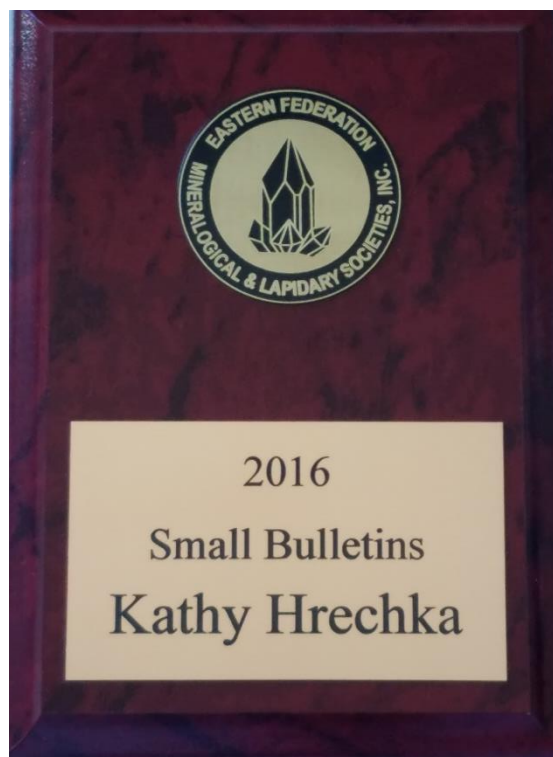
Snow Alert: MNCA Meeting is canceled, when Arlington county schools are closed on the day of our meeting.



Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.

The Mineral Mite Awarded EFMLS "Trophy"

Editor, Kathy Hrechka was awarded the EFMLS "Trophy" as editor of *The Mineral Mite* newsletter at the editor's breakfast in Rochester, New York this past October.



Editor's Note: *I wish to thank each club member personally, who has submitted articles, photos, geology in the news, etc. in 2016. Your inputs are very interesting, while reflecting our micro mineral club.*

When I accepted the volunteer position as your newsletter editor, I remember declaring the newsletter as our club's newsletter, not just mine. Therefore, this award belongs to all our club members.

Thank you. Sincerely, Kathy Hrechka

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area Meeting: The 4th Wed. of each month 7:30 -10 p.m.
Long Branch Nature Center, (Except Easter & Dec.)
625 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington VA 22204

MNCA Purpose: To promote, educate and encourage interest in geology, mineralogy, and related sciences.

Pres: Dave MacLean, dbmaclean@maclean-fogg.com
Vice Pres: David Fryauff, fryauffd@yahoo.com
Secretary: Robert Cooke rdcooke@verizon.net
Treasurer: Michael Pabst, Michaeljpabst@yahoo.com
Editor/ Historian: Kathy Hrechka, kshrechka@msn.com
Website: Julia Hrechka, dcmicrominerals@gmail.com
Conference: Kathy Hrechka, kshrechka@msn.com

The society is a member of:

- * Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS) www.amfed.org/efmls
- * American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) www.amfed.org Affiliation

Dues: MNCA Membership Dues for 2016
\$15 (single) or \$20 (family)
Payable to MNCA - Michael Pabst, Treasurer
270 Rachel Drive
Penn Laird, VA 22846



Editor's Note:
by Kathy Hrechka



Send your articles and photos to your editor.
Club Article Deadline is 5th of each month.
The Mineral Mite will be emailed on 10th.
No newsletter July/August

AFMS Editor's Award
First Place 2011 - Mini Bulletins



Member inputs:
*Bob Cooke
*Kathy Hrechka
*Dave MacLean
*Michael Pabst
*Mike Seeds
* David Fryauff

