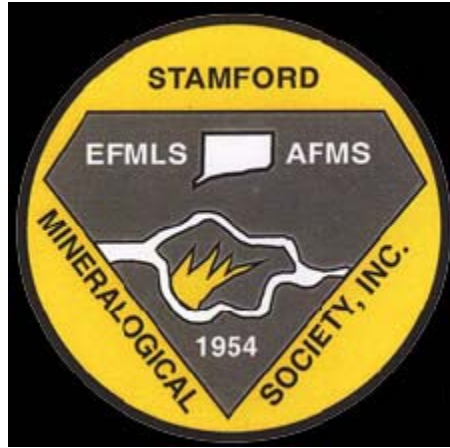


The Vug Examiner



The Stamford Mineralogical Society Newsletter of March 2008

Founded: April 9, 1954

Purposes: To encourage the study and science of mineralogy and related subjects and exchange knowledge about mineral locales. To encourage the collection of rocks, minerals and fossils. To encourage the cutting and polishing of gem materials. To cooperate and affiliate with other hobby groups and educational and scientific organizations. To increase knowledge and popular interest in mineralogy and related subjects. To conduct educational programs and activities for its members and the public. **Dues:** Individual - \$15, family - \$20, senior - \$12.50, senior family - \$15

Affiliated with, and member of: Eastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies, American Federation of Mineralogical Societies

Board of Directors

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Nancy Mattson (914) 935-8893 - President, **Monica Roth** - Director

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Committees:

Dean Powers - Field Trips, **Ed Mattson** (914) 935-8893 - Editor, Auction & Sales, Property Manager, **Peter Casalina** - Hospitality

Program - March 11, 2008 by Alfredo Petrov

We will enjoy another fine, educational and fun program by Alfredo Petrov, who has given our group many fine lectures in the past. The topic is.....

Jadeite Mining In Japan

The program will be about a site where the Jadeite variety of Jade has been mined for about 5,000 years. **Only bring any Japanese specimens you may have, particularly any jade work.**

Nancy's Notes

Hello all: Well the snow started early, and so there went our February meeting. Perhaps Howard can accommodate us with the Fluorescence program on another dark night. I have posted our meeting on the calendar section of Norwalkplus.com and Stamfordplus.com, and was able post that the meeting was cancelled by eight the morning of the 12th. For this month, Alfredo Petrov brings us back to Japan with one of his travelogs/mineral programs.

Coming up is our April Auction. Time to start spring cleaning and sell off those things that no longer appeal to you, and replace it with what does. Who needs e-baytm to make a deal! Deal live and in person! Try it on for size. No waiting for overnight delivery services. No pay-paltm accounts. See, Feel Touch, and even Taste the item in question and get instant gratification. And most importantly of all, what will Vanna wear?

Bulletin Editor's Note

The book that I had referenced in the article about Geological Timeline names was recommended by Professor Gutmann from the Wesleyan Museum field trip. I sent Prof Gutmann a copy of the Vug as part of an E-mail about the work I had done and some difficulties in research, and besides saying "Good job" he sent me a clarification of how geologists use some of the terms. Ol' Editor Ed

It may be of interest that geologists distinguish between the names for the blocks of time and the names for the strata (rocks) formed during those blocks. For example, an AGE is the formal geochronologic unit of lowest rank, below EPOCH, during which the rocks of the corresponding STAGE were formed. Thus, an Era is made up of Periods, the Periods are made up of Epochs, and the Epochs are made of Ages in formal parlance. The rocks formed during a given Age constitute a given Stage. (A formation is also a group of rocks, but it is one that formed in the same general environmental conditions, such as on a sandy beach, but it may be time-transgressive... that is, it formed during one time in Nevada and can be traced into Utah, where it formed at a somewhat different time. (Sea level was rising and the beach migrated east!)) Stratigraphy is the branch of geoscience that is relevant here.

From Jim Gutmann, Curator Wesleyan Mineral Museum.

Article by Ed Mattson

I am always looking for sources and ideas for articles and I got this from the "Roadside Geology of Ohio" by Mountain Press. There is a photo of the geological, now earth sciences, school and museum of Ohio State University called Orton Hall built in 1891. Via the Internet, I contacted the university and obtained detailed information and permission for use of the photos from the mineral museum curator, Dale Gindovec.

Orton Hall was named after one Edward Orton, an Ohio state geologist in the late 1890's. The building was built using as many of the most important Ohio building and decorative stones of the time inside and out. The exterior stonework was laid up in stratigraphical order from the foundation up, which is truly rare in stone structures. Generally, an architect picked stones for their color, texture and pattern. Many of these stones from Ohio, as well as many other places across the country, were once commonly used across the country before the modern glass clad box became the norm.

Orton Hall is an interesting building. Originally it was constructed of about 40 varieties of Ohio

building stone, but unfortunately due to the many renovations it has undergone through the years many of those stones have been replaced (especially those that were used in restrooms and such). The foyer still contains 24 numbered columns showing various colors and patterns found in Ohio sandstones (and one limestone) and the exterior courses of stone are in stratigraphic (geologic) order with the oldest rocks at the bottom.

The photo below is the north-facing front of the building.

The second photo shows a close-up of the southeast corner of the building. The lowest layer (ending at the top of the bumper of the van) is the Brassfield Limestone. The white layer is Dayton Limestone followed by the cream-colored Springfield Dolomite and then the brown Berea Sandstone (most of the rest of the building's exterior).



The bottom layer of the building is Brassfield Limestone, quarried from Silurian rocks near Piqua. Next come the Dayton Limestone and the Springfield Dolomite (both also Silurian but younger) and finally the famous Berea Sandstone (Devonian). The building houses some of our geology department (now called the School of Earth Sciences) as well as the library (one of the top geology libraries in the country) and the Orton Geological Museum.



Dale Gindovec, Curator, Orton Geological Museum, Ohio State University

Nature's Window on the World by Elmore Easter, 1/28/08

"Oh granite, finite vaults of ingenious rock, come ignite my eyes." Diane Ackerman

It all began when I read that fascinating article in the Lapidary Journal in 1993 (1). Mr. Frank of Tyler Texas wrote that for 20 years he had been crafting framed rock pictures, and selling them at mineral shows at many places in the west. I was more than intrigued because I had practiced lapidary from ~1967, when I became a member of the Club (3), and was looking for novel applications. I wrote to him who helpfully sent me a sample picture of Arizona limestone, plus some squares and templates to get started -- and I was on my way!

For the procedure, slabs of most any kind of stone (agate, jasper, limestone, rhodonite, etc.) in which a picture could be envisioned by the beholder, might be used. The picture is carefully framed rectangularly, using an adjustable template, and then marked off. The rectangle containing the optimum scene is trimmed to size using a small 6" diamond saw. The cutout is then checked for squareness, and adjusted using a diamond-grinding wheel of perhaps 100-200 grit. The picture face is then polished on a horizontal vibrating lap.

Wooden picture framing (small) is cut at 45 degrees with a miter saw, using exact millimeter measurements, and glued with 5-minute epoxy, being clamped by a rubber band until set.

The polished picture slab is dropped into the frame, and then sealed by a layer of spackle -- and applying a backing of sticky felt paper. Plastic easels are usually used in a display mode, or whatever seems best. I've exhibited these pictures in several libraries, and for a few years at the Club's annual show, receiving many favorable complements.

Lately a new photographic book was published which had great interest for me (2). The author depicts photos of colorful polished slabs of minerals, much like the ones I've written about here -- but with some differences-- dwelling mostly on esthetic qualities of the scenes. He assigned well-known science writers to compose short essays and poems on what they extracted from each of the photographs, which was quite interesting. However, they didn't dwell much on the scenic aspects of the pictures, as I do. I stressed the idea of perceiving natural scenes, such as panoramas, portraits, or faces imagined in the pictures. My idea was imagination running amuck-- and with satisfying results. The best picture rock I have worked with is called Ocean Picture Rock, from British Columbia. It has the best ocean scenes in blue, white and brown that I have seen. -- very realistic.

Even now, I have numerous picture blanks in the lab waiting to be polished and framed as works of art. It takes real ingenuity and imagination --- ending with a full feeling of satisfaction.

Conclusions: Extracting natural and beautiful scenes from faceless rocks has been a wonderful and rewarding experience, and I hope to the viewer also. Loose your imaginations, and find the joy in nature!

References:

- 1.) "Picture This", Lapidary Journal, March 1993, p61, by G.E. Frank, Tyler, Texas
- 2.) Within the Stone, Bill Atkinson, 2004
- 3.) Stamford Mineralogical Society History: 1954-2000, by

John Kenny, Historian, 2001

Let's all welcome SMS'er Ramon Ramos to the hallowed halls of authorship for The Vug. Let his story, one of three parts, remind all of us of one of the reasons we all joined our club.

COLLECTING MINERALS IN SPAIN. PART I by Ramon Ramos

Not long ago Elmore Easter asked me to write an article for the *Vug* relating my experiences collecting minerals in Spain and, in preparing to do so, I realized how much time had passed since the last time I went collecting, either to visit a mine or on a collecting trip to some promising site.

Most of my collecting took place in the 1980's, beginning in 1981, a short while after Myra Zeleznik invited me to join the club. The fervor that I felt at that time translated into spending a good many summer days collecting in Southern Spain, always guided by a couple of new friends that I met in a mineral shop in Malaga. Jose and Carmen were always ready to go anywhere.

My first and most memorable adventure was the most dangerous as well. The task consisted of climbing 40 feet of a vertical wall in a working limestone quarry, aided by a piece of old rope that my friends had attached to a rock close to the small entrance to the cave. It could only be done after all the workers left and with the blessing of the guard, who they had befriended. The prize could be a great specimen of calcite.

The cave was narrow, had a low ceiling, and was very humid. We were wearing mining helmets and carrying candles and acetylene lamps to guide us in the dark. It took us over one hour to reach the "Salon de los Cristales". In this wider section of the grotto you could see beautiful "flowers" of calcite in narrow cavities in the wall, sometimes difficult to reach. There were some especially wonderful specimens in a fairly large vug that could only be reached by squeezing through a very small opening -- requiring a contortionist's skill. My friend Carmen was the only one who was successful in getting through the opening. We collected a good number of specimens, wrapped newspaper, and place them with the rest of the equipment in our



Calcite from Spain

them with
backpacks.

While eating lunch in the cave we noticed that the candles were starting to die out, signifying a lack of oxygen. So we wisely decided it was time to leave. It took us forever to get back out. It was midnight by the time we made it to the cave's entrance. And there, in the middle of the night, an almost full moon illuminated the whole quarry. What a sight! I am including a picture of one of the pieces that we collected that night. A few years later, the cement company that owned the property fenced in the quarry

and it has been out of bounds for any collector since. Next time, I'll tell you about my visit to the oldest and largest mercury mine in the world.

This and That by Nancy Mattson

Answer to last month's question. If Ira Gershwin was Mr. Lyrics, and George was Mr. Music, then sister Frances was Mrs. Color. Frances Gershwin along with hubby Leopold Godowsky Jr. and Leopold Mannes (Mannes School of Music) invented the Kodachrome color process. Also on the photography front, Polaroid has announced that it plans to discontinue its instant film. They are looking for a contractor to make its various instant film for them. I hope so, they have many specialized products, (including instant B & W with negative) that can not be replaced by digital imaging processes.

The Germans have a wonderful word that is just so applicable to computers. The work is Schlimmbesserung, and it means an improvement that isn't an improvement. We recently had an "upgrade" of one of our servers, and as a consequence, lost one of our email accounts. It still keeps deleting our e-mail. Ed called and had it restored, and we found lots of old email that we deleted years ago in one of our folders. Please use ngm11@msn.com right now. Remember never put in an email anything you wouldn't want to be waved about in court--or posted on YouTube. Also, just a few days ago someone took a picture off of E-bay and posted it on one of these sites, asking how one can tell this picture was taken by a man. It was a picture of a dining room table with two place settings and an orchid. But if you look at the stray reflection in the glass covering the picture on the wall, you see a nude, male torso. Oops! Watch out for those stray reflections!

Over twenty years ago, I worked with someone whose husband was a computer geek working in the early internet. Apparently, he found a hate site of some sort, and reported it to the authorities. The FBI called back, saying that this hate site was one of theirs. I believe this person repeated this without any guile. So that is where some of our tax dollars go to--hosting hate sites. Again, if you stumble upon an inappropriate site, never, ever, ever, email an inappropriate site to a law enforcement agency. They will happily bust you. Write down the address on a piece of paper, and then inform law enforcement agencies.

Rochester Mineral Symposium this March

The Rochester Symposium is a four day event with speakers from all over the world. There are also a number of dealers there. The program is not yet posted on the Internet. It should appear soon at <http://www.rasny.org/MinSymposium/MineralSymp.htm>. The early registration deadline for the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium is March 9, 2008. Anyone not on the mailing list who wants to attend should contact contactrms@hotmail.com or call 315-682-0387. RMS is April 10-13 at the Radisson Hotel Rochester Airport. Full registration is \$60.

With thanks for the information from Carolyn Rebbert and Howard Heitner

In The News

"Great Hopping Horny Toads!" At least 70 million years ago in what is now Madagascar,

Paleontologists have been piecing together a frog ancestor that is about the size of a small beach ball. Estimates have it about 16 inches high and about 10 pounds in weight. It appears to be related to a modern group of frogs in South America who have large mouths and are aggressive hunters, hence it's name, *Beelzobufo* or "Devil Frog". From National Geographic News, 2/18/08

It gets worse! From giant frogs to giant rodents! In Uruguay, the largest species of rodent found to date has been identified. The find is about 4 million years old. The skull is some 20 inches long and the animal may have been about 8 feet long and a range of 1,700 to 3000 pounds in weight. It was most likely a herbivore and played prey to the saber tooth cats, a sort of prehistoric Tom & Jerry. Artist renderings resemble the rounded, blunt head of Hamsters, Guinea Pigs and Capybaras, rather than mice or rats. From the Royal Society via The Associated Press via *The Journal News*, 1/17/08.

On the distant Mediterranean Island of Cyprus, Paleontologists have uncovered a collapsed cave that is filled with the bones of dwarf hippopotamuses. So far, some 80 individuals have been uncovered with possible hundreds more yet to be found. Was this a natural shelter turned death trap? A trap set by early humans? The scientists are assigning a date of 9,000 - 11,500 B. C. The earliest known hippo traces are about 8,000 B. C. The earliest known human traces are about 3,500 years earlier.

If they can prove that this was a human hunt site, rather than a natural disaster of some type, then that means Man was on the island at that time. The ancestors of the hippos were most likely closer to the modern animals and arrived on Cyprus about 100,000 - 250,000 years before, and as got smaller to adapt to the island resources.

And Dorothy was worried about Lions, Tigers and Bears!

As anyone who studies human history knows, the earliest stage of Mankind was "The Stone Age" based on the fact that the various tools in daily use were made from assorted stones. Also known is that many cultures advanced beyond this stage and many did not. What with the ease of obtaining the know how to duplicate many stone tools and artifacts, this has led to the problem of forgeries, be it accidental or intentional.

In and around Worcester, Massachusetts, there have been found for several decades cobblestones with crude eyes and a grinning mouth chipped into one flat face. Think of them as a crude "Happy Face". The debate, still unsettled, is that are these genuine from some earlier culture, or someone with too much time on their hands for their own good? From an undated *The Journal News* article via The Associated Press.

One of the major milestones in Planet Earth's evolution was the development of true soils for early plant life to grow in. Prior to this event, the rocks weathered into barren gravels, sands and clays, and while the mineral nutrients were there, such deposits were barren of life. As any gardener is familiar with, the addition of organic matter turns such material into a living biosystem capable of supporting life. And the type of soil is one factor for what can be raised or grown by the farmers of the world.

Such items are of importance in some very unexpected businesses also, namely turf farming. Buying sod or "turf" is one way of having a green lawn very fast. It seems that many major league sports stadiums that prefer grass fields have a strong preference for turf from turf farms in New Jersey. It seems the sandy soils allow fast drainage that the clay soils of the Midwest don't and the northern grasses are far more

hardy to cold climates and sports use than grasses from more southern areas. From *The Journal News*, 1/21/08

Reports & business

February 12, 2008 meeting minutes

The February meeting was cancelled due to the weather.

January Board Meeting Minutes of 1/22/08

Minutes of the SMS Board Meeting 1/22/08

The meeting began at 7:30PM with Nancy Mattson, Ed Mattson, Howard Heitner, Emil Calleja, Peter Casalina, Dean Powers and Maureen Caswell in attendance.

Good and Welfare - \$50 memorial sent. Second this year.

Programs - Programs Planned so far for the year : , March – Alfredo Petrov, April – The Annual Auction, May – Annual Dinner Speaker to be scheduled, June – John Sanfacon will speak on agates, July – Meeting will be held at the Bruce Museum. Climate Changes is the exhibit. August – Picnic, September – Program to be determined, October – Program to be determined, November – Program to be determined, December – Annual Holiday Party. It was suggested that we look into going to Bear Mountain as a combined Program/Field trip.

Finance Report - Concern was expressed by Emil over the lower Membership numbers .He has finalized the budget spreadsheet. He is going to a cash flow analysis to see how much, if any, we should put into some sort of savings plan. Insurance and dues are due to EFMLS. They will be paid. He presented a bill he received from the Stamford Advocate for \$997. Is it outstanding? Ed believes it was paid. He will investigate and find out why they are still billing us. Ed has gotten guidelines as to what we need to keep in our club paperwork.

Field Trips - It looks like the trip to the Museum of Natural History will most likely take place in April, when we have transportation. Dean will check with Walter Carey about access to the IMAX and the planetarium. Other places suggested: Peabody Museum at Yale, Vassar Museum in Poughkeepsie. He is still going through some old material he has trying to determine which places still exist. He has also been asked about returning to Big Brook.

Hospitality - Peter reports that all is going well.

Bulletin - Ed has resent material to the Bulletin Editors contest. **Property Sales & Auction** - Ed plans the same format for the Auction. We will try and publicize it beforehand. Encourage members to bring a friend. Encourage only good minerals.

Show- Dean will order geodes by late spring. He will buy 3 ½ and 2 inch sizes. He will then pick them up in August at the Springfield Show. We will develop a map before the show for placement of the banner and stepsigns to make putting them easier and to have them in the most strategic places.

It was agreed upon to raise the price to \$6 for adults and leave it at \$1 for children under 12. **Odds and Ends** - It was noted that member dues would have to go up in 2009 because EFMLS dues are going up. - The Franklin Show is the 26th and 27th.

Board Minutes from February 26, 2008

In attendance were Howard, Maureen, Emil, Dean, Ed and Nancy; with Boo and Todd arriving much later. Emil went over club financial activity so far. We went over reimbursements, and when they were accrued. He was given a copy of the membership list, as per the bylaws. Ed and Nancy had been collecting and depositing the dues to collect the addresses for the dispersal of the *Vug* bulletin. Since we will not be hiring a motor coach in the foreseeable future, Dean's field trip income and expenses were adjusted on paper accordingly.

Howard has programs lined up for the first half of the year. March will be Alfredo Petrov, Annual Dinner on Tuesday, May 13th is Tony Nikisher on the Minerals of the Kola Peninsula (near Finland) for a donation to his foundation. June will be John Sanfacon on Agates, July we will be at the Bruce for two traveling exhibits on climate.

We discussed the format for the April Auction. A donation will be made to The Bruce Museum for mineral acquisition, as arranged by Carolyn and Ed. Ed also detailed where donations in kind were going to. The bulletin is getting more response and articles from club members. Costs unfortunately keep going up for the *Vug*, off setting the savings as more people get online.

Dean has been in communication with Walter about a field trip to the AMNH on Saturday, April 26th to see an Imax film and or planetarium show. This is the same weekend as the Franklin Show. May 17th is to Vassar College to see their mineral collection, and June may be Yale and the Peabody and July for Big Brook.

Good and Welfare

A few weeks ago, severe tornados struck west and central Tennessee, "*I don't think we're in Kansas anymore*" near to where SMS'ers, John & Phyllis live now. We sent an E-mail to see how they fared and the report they are all right and in good health and say hello to all their friends in the club. They also now have two E-addresses, which are noted in the membership list, jholms13@tds.net & jholms13@earthlink.net

Member news

This bit of news came in from Mickey Marks about Bob MacCallum

I would like to add to the news item about Bob MacCallum which appeared in the February *Vug*. Bob, Bill Gregory and I formed a triumvirate of avid field collectors. The three of us made many collecting trips together to quarries such as Gillette, Strickland, Roebing (Upper Merryall), Hale-Walker, East Morris Dam, Thomaston Dam, Bierman, Ridgefield, Branchville, Cinque, etc., etc. There were times that we would go out every Sunday during good weather, and kept our wives waiting for our return when we struck paydirt, which was often. I hadn't seen Bob since I moved to Oregon 23 years ago, but we kept in touch. There never have been better collecting partners than Bill and Bob. Bob's passing was devastating

to me. I miss him.

Sincerely, Mickey Marks

Annual Auction - April 11, 2008

Our auction is your fun way and easy way to obtain new & interesting minerals, tool, fossils, finished jewelry, cutting rough, books, equipment and other hobby related items at what can be dirt cheap prices.

The material could be “starter” items from a collector and has been upgraded by better specimens. Or perhaps the collector has specialized in one topic or his or her interests have changed. A jeweler could have some excess stock they want to clear out or because styles and tastes have changed. It could be as simple as just having to clean out the basement or shop for some reason. (We all know what these reasons are.)

This year, the *Cause Celebre* will be a donation for the Bruce Museum to Science Curator Carolyn Rebbert for mineral acquisition. Please make certain that you have a filled in label with each item (Numbers will be assigned at the meeting. Blank labels are in this issue of the *Vug*. There will be additional labels available at the meeting if you need extras.)

Members can bring up to 4 items, one of which must be donation to the club. The seller will receive will receive 80% of the final bid price and the club will receive 20%. on the other items. There will some of the club’s own material at the auction. Multiples of one item (for example, Herkimers) will be considered one item.

Enter those special items that will please another buyer and add quality to the evening. Encourage friends and relatives to come. It is also a way to get unique gifts for Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. (Unless you like giving Mom the same old flowers and perfume and Dad those tacky ties) The more people there are, the merrier.

Please arrive early - at 7:00 P. M. if possible - to set up your auction items and have a brief business meeting and preview the material. The auction will start at 7:45.

The Auction & Sales committee is also putting out a call for volunteers to help in the auction itself. I am looking for two people to act as auctioneers, 3 people to act as spotters to help the auctioneer, write names/numbers on the labels of sold items and deliver the auction slips to the treasurers/bookkeepers and items to the bidder and two people to act as treasurers/bookkeepers and a resident Pro Tem mineral identifier in case of a “mystery mineral”. If you want to help, or you intend to place items in the auction, please call Ed Mattson at 1-914-935-8893 or e-mail @ mineralwood@optonline.net. ASAP.

Thank you. Ed Mattson, Auction & Sales

CALENDAR

Tuesday, March 11, 2008 at 7:30 PM. At the EGCC, Old Greenwich. Alfredo Petrov, Jadeite Mining in Japan. Bergen County Mineral/Palontology Soc. & New Jersey Earth Science Soc., mineral/gem/fossil show, Saturday, May 3rd, 10-5. Rain date May 4th - Bergen County Courthouse parking lot, River & Court Sts., Hackensack, NJ., **Tuesday, April 8th, 2008 at 7:30 PM. At the EGCC, Old Greenwich**

April Auction: members may submit minerals, jewelry, books, etc. for auction; members and guests may bid on

auctioned material.

New Haven Mineral Club mineral/gem/jewelry/fossil show, April 12 , 9-5, 13, 10-4:30 Amity Regional Jr. High School, Sheffield Rd. off Rte 34, Orange, CT.

May Dinner, Tentatively the 13th, at the Adam's Rib Restaurant, The Norwalk Inn. Tony Nikisher on Minerals of the Kola Peninsula.

May 17th-tentative trip to Vassar Mineral Museum

Tuesday, June 10th, 2008 at 7:30 PM. At the EGCC, Old Greenwich. Program - John Sanfacon on Agates
Tuesday, July 8th, 2008 at the Bruce Museum. One Museum Drive, Greenwich, CT. Phenomenal Weather, Climate Change.

August 2008. Annual Barbeque/Picnic. Location and Day, TBA

Tuesday, September 9th, 2008. At the EGCC, Old Greenwich, CT. Program details TBA.

Tuesday, October 14th, 2008. At the EGCC, Old Greenwich, CT. Program details TBA.

The Stamford Mineralogical Society Show and Sale. Tentatively Saturday, November 1st and Sunday November 2nd. At the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center, 90 Harding Road, Old Greenwich, CT 06836-2540 . Admission to be determined.

Tuesday, November 11th, 2008. At the EGCC, Old Greenwich, CT. Program details TBA.

Tuesday, December 9th, 2008. At the EGCC, Old Greenwich, CT. Holiday Dinner and Pot Luck, with Infamous Grab Bag.

Meetings are free and open to the public. We request children to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

**THE STAMFORD MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 4148, STAMFORD, CT 06907**