

“The New Mexico Mineral Museum – Inspire a love of science”

Welcome to Earth Matters – field notes on the geology of New Mexico’s enchanting landscapes.

Celebrating Earth Science Week, I’m John Rakovan.

The New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, a research and service division of the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (or New Mexico Tech), is a non-regulatory agency that serves as the geological survey for the State of New Mexico.

One of the missions of the Bureau of Geology is to provide public education and outreach through numerous programs and facilities, including the New Mexico Mineral Museum, which is located just inside the entrance to the Bureau Building in Socorro.

The mineral collection and displays are truly world-class and are hidden gems in the state (pun intended). The dominant focus of the displays is minerals of New Mexico, but the collection has great strengths in minerals of the Southwest United States as well as localities worldwide. Entry to the museum is free and the displays are designed to be accessible and of interest to everyone, from young children to professional mineralogists. Most first-time visitors exclaim that they had no idea how fantastic the museum is, and staff spend their days listening to oos and wows from visitors.

The museum’s mission “is to procure, display, and curate mineralogical and geological materials, primarily from the State of New Mexico, for the purposes of research, education, posterity, and enjoyment for the citizens of the state.” But I think the most significant role of the mineral museum is to **inspire**. To inspire interest in science and the natural world around us.

The mineral museum (and Bureau Book Store) are open weekdays from 9 am to 5 pm and weekends from 10 am to 3 pm. To learn more about the museum online, search “New Mexico Bureau of Geology Mineral Museum”.

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