

The Mineralogical Cabinet

A Newsletter for the Friends of the New Mexico Tech Mineral Museum



Volume 1, No. 1, May 2016

From the Director's Desk

A little slow in coming, but here is our inaugural "Friends of the New Mexico Tech Mineral Museum" newsletter. Now that we've started, we plan to launch these newsletters quarterly. Their content will consist of museum news, highlight recent acquisitions, announce plans for improvement, and solicitations for assistance. I envision the "Friends" helping us with projects typically greater than our ability to generate funds in house. However, the number of contributions or size of any donation will not be considered criteria for membership.

I will state in this first newsletter that the mission of the "Friends" is to assure the existence of the NM Tech Mineral Museum into perpetuity. The mechanisms for this assurance can vary significantly, but our goal will be to further enhance the stature and reach of this museum in order to maintain an internationally recognized facility that is considered one of the best. We will assure the museum's survival by building the collections, maintaining excellent exhibits, outreach programs, and provide contributions to research.

How can the "Friends" help? Donations of both specimens and money are obvious ways for us to pursue our goals. Funds donated to the museum can be used for tax purposes since we are a tax-exempt educational institution. We have a number of mechanisms for accepting gifts of money, specimens, books, and ephemera in order to generate funds:

THE MINERAL MUSEUM ENDOWMENT FUND

(MMEF) is a perpetual fund that returns 90% of the interest generated from the corpus per year to the museum. The remaining 10% remains in the fund to provide continual growth. Any donations to the MMEF are invested in the corpus, no portion of the gift is used by the museum, only money generated later as interest. Interest money from the MMEF is deposited into the museum operating account once a year (usually in May). The endowment fund is the best mechanism for estate or trust gifts.

THE MINERAL MUSEUM GIFT FUND (MMGF) is an unrestricted fund that is used at the discretion of the
(continued on next page)

New Atrium Exhibits!



Phil Simmons helps position a large fluorite specimen from Elmwood, Tennessee.



Large scolecite specimen from India requiring some gentle treatment, those crystals are sharp!

New displays have been recently installed in the atrium of the New Mexico Bureau of Geology Building, immediately outside the museum gallery. In addition to the cases, new "hands on" displays have been added. These displays consist of an amazonite-quartz group from Colorado and chalcedony replacing coral from Florida. Lots of selfies showing up on Facebook posed with our newest rock stars!

director and curator. These funds are immediately accessible and are generally used to acquire new specimens, develop exhibits (lighting, cases), or offset show costs. This account is where cash donations from patrons are deposited in addition to some larger gifts. The donor can request an “ear-mark” type purchase that we generally honor, e.g. buy a top piece at a show, new case for the atrium, etc. Membership dues from the “Friends” is placed in this account.

THE MINERAL MUSEUM OPERATING ACCOUNT

(MMOA) is an unrestricted fund that is used at the discretion of the director and curator. These funds are generated from the sale of minerals, any infrastructure (cases, etc.), or special services charged to the public. We use this account to buy minerals, supplies, equipment, and pay salaries for students (and perhaps staff ...). Materials donated to the museum that are not integrated into the collections, are used to generate these funds.

But being a “Friend” is not just about donating money, more subtle and inexpensive ways to contribute also exist. We ask that you promote our museum to friends, colleagues, and fellow collectors. Encourage them to visit and consider joining like-minded people in the preservation of our mineral heritage. And be sure to participate in our museum functions like the Mineral Symposium, Friends Museum Reception and NMT Alumni/Friends receptions at major shows (This is new, watch for more info in later newsletters!).

I look forward to working with our “Friends” to better the New Mexico Tech Mineral Museum and assure its long future. The collection is over 100 years in the making, with your help we can build it another 100 and beyond.

—Dr. V



Chalcedony replacing coral specimen from the Withlacoochee River area of Florida is one of our new “touch and feel rocks.” They are secured to their tables by cables that run through the specimens, that’s what the bolt cutter is for...



Albert Baca and Brian Wheeler, Bureau carpenter and mechanic (respectively), installing our new guest book pedestal.

Curator’s Corner

Hey folks! Since the grand opening, I have been pretty busy processing new donations, organizing multiple databases (mineral, fossil, & gemstone) and the respective collections. Our donors are pretty excited about the new location, with much more room to display beautiful pieces. Over 350 mineral specimens have been added to the database since my start date!

Outreach is also a big part of the job, and Susie Welch and I have been nothing but busy with K-12 classes. New and improved scavenger hunts have been drafted for kinder, elementary, and high school students. They are a big hit, according to the numerous ‘Thank You’ letters received by children of all ages. I’ve devoted a bit of my time to help Susie out with Rockin’ Around New Mexico, a program for K-12 science teachers to learn about the geology, water issues, and geohazards in different parts of the state.

In addition to these items, I’ve been shadowing Virgil in the X-ray diffraction lab and managing five NMT undergraduates who work as museum assistants. I think I need a (insert 4 letter word for adult beverage)!

The museum just keeps getting better. Thanks so much for all of the support.

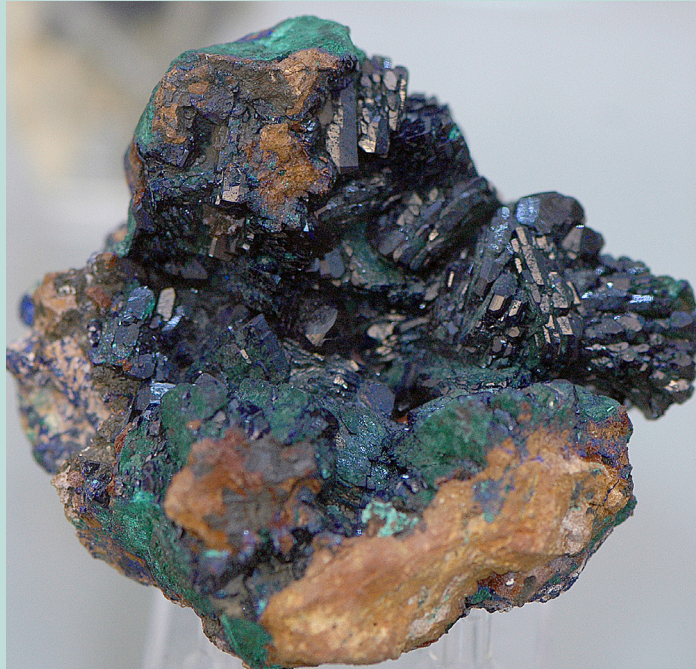
—Kelsey McNamara

NMT Museum Grand Opening Featured in Rocks & Minerals Magazine!

The Mineral Museum was recently featured in the May-June issue of Rocks and Minerals magazine. Peter Megaw authored an excellent article about our new facility. Check it out.

Tucson Treasures

We acquired some very nice pieces during the Tucson Show this year. A couple of the recent acquisitions are shown below in display position in our gallery. We obtained an Australian azurite disks on kaolinite, a French pyromorphite, a blue hemimorphite from the Congo, and a brochantite from Milpillas, Mexico.



Azurite from Chessy, France. Specimen is about 4 inches across.



A small cabinet specimen of wulfenite from the Jianshan Mine, China. The specimen is about 1.5 inches across.

2016 Museum Show Calendar

Sept. 3–5	Silver City (NM) Show	(exhibit)
Sept. 16–18	Denver (CO) Show	(exhibit)
Oct. 1–2	Roswell (NM) Show	(exhibit)
Nov. 11	Mineral Museum Friends Reception	
Nov. 12–13	37th NM Mineral Symposium	
Dec. 3–4	Los Alamos (NM) Show	(exhibit)

Facebook Friends

To those who are interested in keeping up with the museum on social media, you can “Like” our public Facebook page at:

https://www.facebook.com/NMBGmineralmuseum/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

We are also sponsoring a ‘Friends of the Museum’ Facebook Group, which will be offered only to the Friends of the Museum. In order to belong to this particular page (which is private and not open to the general public); please email Kelsey directly at

kmcnamara@nmbg.nmt.edu

We use the public Facebook page mainly for museum announcements and events, Mineral Symposium highlights, and showing off new donations, interesting minerals, and sales material. The ‘Friends of the Museum’ Group page will show our generous supporters how contributions are being used for improving both the museum collections and displays.

A Friendly Reminder

Because of our last-minute idea to create the “Friends of the New Mexico Tech Mineral Museum” we did not collect dues from everyone. Some of you chose to “pay later.” If you did not pay this year’s dues on site, please remit a payment to: **NMT—Mineral Museum Gift Fund** and send it to:

Friends of the NMT Museum
NMBGMR Mineral Museum
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Socorro, NM 87801

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We thank you for your support!