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## Off the coast of Virginia—35mya



**MICHAEL RUANE; NOV 2, 2005:** A white fire-ball two miles across thunders from the sky at 30,000 mph and crashes into the ocean off the Virginia coast. The impact vaporizes billions of tons of water, rips a hole in the sea floor six miles deep and fractures the bedrock far into the Earth.

The splash is 30 miles high. Debris is

lofted over the horizon and rains down on an area of 3 million square miles. Towering tsunamis surge toward the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Nearby life -- ferocious-looking sea creatures and dog-sized proto-horses along the tropical shoreline -- is blasted and then swept into the abyss by the boiling ocean. A calamity of unimaginable scale, it is probably the most stupendous geological event ever on the East Coast.

For more than a decade, geologists have believed that a gigantic object, an asteroid or a comet, struck the Earth north of Norfolk about 35 million

>> see *Off the Coast of Virginia* on page eight >>

## November MAGS events

03 6:30p MAGS Board Meeting • Blue Plate Café, 5469 Poplar Avenue

05 9:30a DMC Field Trip to Hewitt, NC [see page 6]

11 7:30p MAGS Membership Meeting • Shady Grove Presbyterian Church  
5535 Shady Grove Road • Bring refreshments and display

Youth are having a party tonight -- could it be a Native American party!?!

13 2:00p MAGS Field Trip to Memphis Stone and Gravel [see page 4]

2006 dues are due on January 1, 2006 -- pay early and avoid the holiday rush!

# 2005-2006

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## President's corner: WC McDANIEL



George Fulghum, life member of MAGS, passed away on October 2.

George was one of the most interesting and rewarding persons I have known. In late July, I visited with him at his home and we discussed his long work project list, the discovery of the ivory billed woodpecker in Arkansas, and above all, how proud he was

to be a member of MAGS.

George had a zest and quest to understand and appreciate the things around him, from growing his towering and robust bamboo, solving the mole problem in his yard, tinkering with his rock saw's electrical problem or enjoying the most recent interesting items one of his daughters had sent him. George was a viable, valuable and active participant in the "Greatest Generation." Thanks George.

MAGS will be busy the remaining two months of the year. In November our field trip will be to the Memphis Stone and Gravel Company. This is a popular and perennial favorite. The collecting site is fairly close, the material is good and abundant and it is an easy collecting site. Please note the trip is scheduled on a Sunday afternoon, November 13. Details at our November membership meeting.

The end of the year is also the time to look ahead to 2006. The first task of the list is yours. Its time to renew your dues. Dues are the primary source of club income and it pays for the rental of the building, publishing and mailing our award winning newsletter and other expenses. Please renew NOW.

WC

## Welcome new members

**CORNELIA McDANIEL:** Please join me in welcoming the newest members to the MAGS family.

**Stan, Anne, Simon and Zoe Laulederkind**  
1662 Faxon, Memphis, TN 38112  
slaulede@midsouth.rr.com  
901.728.4306

# William Holland – October 2005

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NANCY FOLDEN

Anticipating the leaves to be colorful, I set out for Young Harris, Georgia. The seasons have really changed but not the trees. Due to either too much rain or warmer weather, the color was still green.

Fifty-one SFMS members registered for lapidary classes the second week of October. It was great seeing friends made while attending earlier classes, and meeting new members. The discussions can really vary during mealtime from how to attract new club members to suggestions on how to operate a workshop. And there's always time to compete in a game of "Sequence."

Classes are conducted from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. daily except on Wednesday. When you break for lunch at noon, you're free to visit attractions in the area. This includes Gloria's Rock Shop just around the corner and up the hill. This year I choose to drive to Franklin, North Carolina, which is 42 miles over the mountain. Much to my surprise and delight, they must have had frost on the other side because the leaves were various shades of yellow and gold. In the median strip going into Franklin on Hwy 64, were burning bushes and dogwoods that had turned brilliant reds.

The Franklin Gem and Mineral Society, with the cooperation of the county commissioners and local

## November meeting note

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WC McDANIEL: The November meeting's theme display is gravel fossils. With the abundant gravel bars in the Memphis area, MAGS members should have some good specimens. So be sure to bring them.

Dates to remember			
	Board Meeting	Membership Meeting	Due Date for Newsletter Articles
Nov	3	11	October 23
Dec	1	9	November 20
Jan	5	13	December 18
Feb	3	10	January 21
Mar	3	10	February 18
Apr	6	14	March 24

business, founded the Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum in 1974. The Museum occupies the old jail, which was built in 1850. The members, who volunteer their time to operate and answer questions of their many visitors, completed the renovation and creation of the Museum. The Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday thru Saturday between May 1st and Oct 31st. My guess would be that there is no heat in the building!

The Society has set up a North Carolina Room to display gems and minerals found in their state. Another room is States Room and rock and minerals from all fifty states are displayed in alphabetical order. In one of the windowless cells, fluorescent material is on display using both long and short wave ultra violet lamps. The viewer controls the switches and running of the tape that describes the many minerals, which come to life with nature's hidden rainbows. I'm so glad there is no time limit on the number of times to restart the program. In addition to Indian and Civil War Artifacts, Shells, Geodes, Opals and Fossils, the society has books and handcrafted items by local artisans to sell. I had to buy one more book for our MAGS library - Turquoise Unearthed by Joe Lowry and Joe P. Lowry, who operate the Turquoise Museum in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## Special Mineral Auction

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WC McDANIEL: The November membership meeting will feature an auction of minerals that are part of a collection recently donated to MAGS. This will be a great opportunity to add some good and unique minerals to your collection. Come early to check them out and stay late to take your new acquisitions home.

## Website statistics for October

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MIKE BALDWIN: Here's a brief look at our website [www.memphisgeology.org] 01.21.02 through 10.31.05:  
122,228 Visits • 523,430 Hits • 316 avg visits/day in Oct  
Top pages in the past 30 days:

argon2003.pdf ..... 1,081 hits  
Home page ..... 728 hits  
Explorer0203.pdf ..... 494 hits  
rocknews1005.pdf ..... 370 hits  
explorer0604.pdf ..... 334 hits

*A visit is every time someone comes to our website. A hit is every page viewed once a user enters our website.*

## November MAGS Field Trip to Memphis Stone and Gravel

ALAN PARKS: In November we will be collecting chert gravels with fossils, petrified wood, agate, conglomerate, and a variety of local rocks and minerals associated with regional Pleistocene/Pliocene alluvial terrace deposits.

**Site Description:** We will be collecting the gravel from stockpiles.

**Estimated Driving Time:** 25 minutes from Memphis

**Date/Time:** November 13, 2005 2:00 p.m.

**Meeting Site:** We will meet at Memphis Stone and Gravel Company's Bridgeforth Mine and will collect there. Time permitting, we may visit other mines in the area. Plan to collect about 3 to 4 hours.

**Directions:** The site is located south of Memphis in Olive Branch, MS. From Memphis get to Hwy 302 (Goodman Road) by either Interstate -55 or US Hwy 78. At Goodman Road you go east from I-55 or west from US Hwy 78 to Pleasant Hill Road. Go south on Pleasant Hill to Latham Road (appx. 1.5 miles) and turn left (east). Take Latham Road down to the Memphis Stone & Gravel Company scale house (1/4 mile).

**Difficulty Level (1 {easiest} to 10):** 1

**Restrictions:** This field trip is open to anyone

**Tools:** Bucket and rock hammer, we will be surface collecting and no digging is necessary. Spray bottle with water is very helpful.

**Safety:** All safety rules must be followed. A copy of the safety rules can be obtained from the Field Trip Leader. Remember, any time eye hazards may exist, such as hammering or prying, safety glasses must be worn. This is an active mine with DANGEROUS AREAS. All young children must be under CONSTANT ADULT SUPERVISION and NEVER allowed to roam around.

**Field Trip Leader:** Alan Parks (home phone 853-6898) (mobile 481-9730)

## Dues will be due soon!

CORNELIA McDANIEL: 2006 dues are due before the end of the year. The November Membership Meeting would be an excellent time to go ahead and pay your dues to ensure that you don't miss out on any of the fun in the coming year. Make your check out to MAGS. Thanks for paying early.

Family	\$20.00
Single	\$16.00
Junior	\$ 8.00

## November Birthdays

MELBA COLE: Birthstone for November is Topaz.

- 1 - W. C. McDaniel
- 6 - Gwen Lum
- 9 - Michael Herren
- 10 - Docia Lenz
- 15 - Megan Givens
- 16 - Briana Burns
- 16 - Abbey Randolph
- 17 - Edward Lindsey Rucks
- 17 - Ed Wagner
- 18 - Cathie Jacobs
- 18 - David McIlwain
- 19 - Chris Chrisman**
- 19 - Nina Riding
- 20 - Simon Laulederkind
- 21 - Celeste Long
- 22 - Melba Cole**
- 23 - Shirley Ruth Chrisman**
- 24 - Rena Everett
- 24 - John Jones (deceased)
- 26 - David Shankman
- 28 - Alan Parks
- 30 - Robert Neill

*Bold type indicates lifetime members.*

## November Topaz

Topaz comes in an assortment of colors, the most precious of which are golden yellow and pink. The gems are found in Russia and in parts of North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia. Because it can be clear, blue, pink, or yellow, topaz has often been confused with other stones. Golden topaz stones, which highlight the mellow colors of autumn, are very rare and expensive.

Reference: Laurie Steding; [Birthstones](#); Nancy Hall, Inc.; 1995. Information used for educational purposes under the provisions of the Fair Use Act of 1976.

WC McDANIEL: The November Roadcut focuses on our theme display for the November membership meeting, Gravel Fossils:

- Gravel/chert fossils consist of a wide variety of Devonian to Mississippian age marine fossils ranging in age from 320 to 480 million years including brachiopods, bryozoans, corals, crinoids, and trilobites.
- Brachiopods: Brachiopods are marine invertebrates that lived at the bottom of warm shallow seas that covered large parts of the United States during the Paleozoic Era,
- Bryozoans: Bryozoans are colonial marine invertebrates, often called "moss animals", that were abundant in shallow Paleozoic seas along with the brachiopods
- Tabulate corals: Tabulate corals are colonial corals composed of numerous small individual organisms, called "corallites." which exhibit a fine polygonal pattern when viewed from the top. When viewed from the side, they look like a bunch of straight tubes with numerous partitions perpendicular to the sides of the tubes
- Rugose corals: Rugose corals, are corals with a well-defined four-fold symmetry. Some of the rugose corals lived as solitary individuals, commonly called "horn corals" for their horn shape. Barrel-shaped fossils with prominent ribbing are typically the worn and rounded remains of solitary rugose corals.
- Crinoids: The most common fossils found in the chert gravels are of crinoids. Although they are called "sea lilies," crinoids are a group of animals including sea urchins and starfishes. A typical crinoid consists of a cup-like body, called a "calyx," from which tentacle-like arms radiated from the rim of the cup. The body, or calyx, of a typical crinoid is attached to the sea floor by a long, segmented stalk that ends in a holdfast that anchors it in the seafloor or to some object on it. Both the body and stalk are composed of interlocking plates. The circular to star-shaped plates that compose the segmented stalk are the most common fossil found in the chert gravels.
- Trilobites: Trilobites are an important group of extinct marine arthropods characterized by a segmented body. They are rarely found within chert gravels.

Information from <http://www.intersurf.com/~chalcedony/gravel1.html>

## Volcano believed responsible for rise in sea level

DAVE SCHUMAKER (NOV 2, 2005; GEOLOGY NEWS; <http://geology.rockbandit.net/>): Researchers believe that Mount Pinatubo was responsible for an increasing rate of sea level rise that was observed in the mid to late 1990's. The average sea level increase from 1950 to present is roughly 1.8 millimeters a year. After Mount Pinatubo erupted, sea level rates rose at nearly 3.2 millimeters a year!

Observations of the oceans' heat content, combined with climate simulations were used to calculate that ocean surface temperatures fell by up to 0.5°C in the months after the eruption in 1991. Since cooling reduces the water's volume, Pinatubo should have taken 5 millimetres off sea levels worldwide during this period.

Since then, the oceans have been regaining heat, but this warming happens more slowly than it does in the atmosphere. Church calculates that the Pinatubo rebound explains half of the surge in sea level rise measured by satellites between 1993 and 2000.

## Tracks of a swimming dinosaur found

DAVE SCHUMAKER (OCT 18, 2005; GEOLOGY NEWS; <http://geology.rockbandit.net/>): A graduate student at the University of Colorado at Boulder has found tracks in Wyoming that were made by a swimming dinosaur. The fossilized tracks of this previously unknown dinosaur are thought to be around 165 million years old.

Debra Mickelson of CU-Boulder's geological sciences department said the research team identified the tracks of the six-foot-tall, bipedal dinosaur at a number of sites in northern Wyoming, including the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. "It was about the size of an ostrich, and it was a meat-eater," she said. "The tracks suggest it waded along the shoreline and swam offshore, perhaps to feed on fish or carrion."

The dinosaur currently does not have a name.



## **DMC program of the SFMS field trip committee** **An official field trip of Southern Appalachian Mineral Society** **9:30am - 5:00pm • November 5, 2005 • Hewitt, North Carolina**

**WHERE:** Nantahala Talc and Limestone Quarry, Hewitt, North Carolina (in the beautiful Nantahala gorge).

**WHAT:** Banded pink, gray and yellow marble, calcite, dolomite, pyrite, travertine and talc.

**COLLECTING HOURS:** Participants must arrive at 9:30 A.M. to check-in, sign a release form, and receive a brief safety briefing. The dig will last until 5:00 P.M. There is no fee for this dig.

If children come, they **MUST** be in **CLOSE** proximity to their parent(s) at all times. All young people under 18 must be with an adult/parent at all times. This is a working quarry with high unstable walls so everyone must stay away from the walls.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Hard hats and safety glasses are required. It is also recommended that you wear sturdy shoes, gloves, and appropriate outer clothing. The average daily high temperature for November 5th is 64°F, but the day will most likely start out in the mid-40s. Collecting is possible rain or shine.

**WHAT TO BRING:** Bring buckets and containers, rock and crack hammers, picks, sledge hammers, and flat and pointed chisels. We will drive into the large quarry and park on a mid-level bench. Bring a lunch and water and be prepared to do your "duty" in the woods as there are no nearby facilities. It will be possible to drive about 1/4 mile to the quarry office for "relief", if necessary.

**WHERE TO STAY:** Towns within 30 miles from the meeting spot with motels, campgrounds and other facilities: Andrews; Bryson City; Cherokee; Robbinsville; and Murphy.

**DIRECTIONS:** We will meet at 9:30 AM at a Roadside Park/Rest Area on US-74 at Hewitt, North Carolina and proceed as a group to the nearby quarry.

**From the West:** From the intersection of US-19 business and US-74E at Andrews, NC, drive approximately 12 miles east on US-74E to the roadside park/rest area on the left-hand (north) side of highway (just past the bridge over the Nantahala River).

**From the East:** From the intersection of US-19 business and US-74W at Bryson City, NC, drive approximately 17.5 miles west on US-74W to the roadside park on the right-hand (north) side of the highway (just before the bridge over the Nantahala River).

### **FOR ONLINE INFORMATION AND PICTURES OF THE QUARRY:**

[www.mcrocks.com/page11.html](http://www.mcrocks.com/page11.html)

[www.mcrocks.com/images/FieldTripReportMikeStreeterOctober%2025,%202003.html](http://www.mcrocks.com/images/FieldTripReportMikeStreeterOctober%2025,%202003.html)

[www.mcrocks.com/images/FieldTripReportEverettHarrington-October2003.html](http://www.mcrocks.com/images/FieldTripReportEverettHarrington-October2003.html)

**CONTACT:** Mike Streeter, SFMS North Carolina Director • [mcstreeter@charter.net](mailto:mcstreeter@charter.net) Phone: (828) 667-8290

*Field trips are open to all members of associated clubs of the DMC program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee and to all members of SFMS member clubs who have provided their membership with SFMS liability insurance. Because of insurance requirements, members of the GENERAL PUBLIC are NOT invited on this or any DMC program field trips!*

## Southeast Federation shows and other events

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**November 4-6, 2005, Reidsville, NC:** Rockingham County Mineral Club • 14th Annual Show • Wentworth Recreation Center, intersection of Gibbs Road and Hwy 87 • Hours: 4th and 5th, 10:00 A.M.-6:00 P.M.; 6th, 12:00 Noon-5:00 P.M. • Contact: Iris Conner at 336.342.3958.

**November 5-6, 2005, Winter Haven, FL:** Imperial Bone Valley Gem, Mineral and Fossil Society • Gem, Mineral and Fossil Extravaganza! • The Nora Mayo Hall, 500 3rd Street NW • Hours: 5th, 9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.; 6th, 10:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M. • Show contact: Susie Percefull, Show Chair at 863.858.1846 or Misubrea@aol.com.

**November 5-6, 2005, Fort Pierce, FL:** The St. Lucie County Rock and Gem Club • Annual Show • Contact Norm Holbert at 772.873.0787.

**November 11-13, 2005, Pascagoula, MS:** Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society. Cancelled due to damage from Hurricane Katrina. The civic center building where the show was to be held had very little damage, but many other county facilities received severe damage and their operations have been relocated to the civic center. The civic center building will not be returned to normal use until after the first of the year.

**November 12-13, 2005, Melbourne, FL:** Canaveral Mineral and Gem Society • 29th Annual "Parade of Gems" Show and SFMS Annual Meeting • Melbourne Auditorium, 625 E. Hibiscus Avenue • Hours: 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. • Show and dealer chairpersons: Bruce and Anita Lane at 321.723.0742 • Contact for SFMS activities is Bill Harr at 321.777.1171.

**November 18-20, 2005, Marietta, GA:** The Cobb County Gem and Mineral Society • 20th Annual Gem and Mineral Show • Cobb County Civic Center, 548 South Marietta Parkway • Hours: 18th and 19th, 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 20th, 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. • Contact Mary Ingram at 770.427.1108.

**November 25-27, 2005, Columbia, SC:** The Columbia Gem and Mineral Society • 38th Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show • South Carolina State Fairgrounds in the Moore Building, corner of Rosewood Dr. and Assembly Street • Hours: 25th, 10:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.; 26th, 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 27th, Noon - 5:00 P.M. • Contact Susan Shrader at 803.7369317; email ashnader@midspring.com.

**November 25-27, 2005, Mobile, AL:** Mobile Rock and Gem Society • 11th Annual Jewelry, Gem and Mineral Show • Greater Gulf State Fairgrounds, Zeigler and Cody • Hours: 25th, 2:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.; 26th, 9:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 27th, 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. • Contact Ed Harris, Show Chairman, at 251.865.9157; email ed\_harris\_jr@hotmail.com; website [www.geocities.com/mobilerockandgem/MRGChome](http://www.geocities.com/mobilerockandgem/MRGChome).

**December 2-4, 2005, Montgomery, AL:** Montgomery Gem and Mineral Society • 35th Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show • Garrett Coliseum on Federal Drive • Hours, 2nd, 9:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 3rd, 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 4th, 11:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. • Contact Jane Barkley at 334.277.2722 or Iris McGehee at 334.262.7275.

**December 2-4, 2005, Spring Hill, FL:** Withlacoochee Rockhound Gem and Mineral Society • 31st Annual Rockhound Gem and Mineral Show • Solvene American Club, County Line Road • Hours: 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. • Contact Jerry Johnson at 352.688.7810. Dealers needed.

### September 2005 board meeting notes

**Susan Thom, MAGS Secretary:** The MAGS board of directors meeting met on September 1, 2005 at the Blue Plate Cafe, 5469 Poplar Avenue, presided by W.C. McDaniel who opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. In attendance were Mike Baldwin, James Butchko, Nancy Folden, Sherida Helms, Idajean Jordan, W.C. and Cornelia McDaniel, Terri & Park Noyes, Raynee Randolph, Susan Thom, and Lou White. Reports given as follows: (1) Treasurer - treasurer's report; (2) Field Trips - Richardson Landing waters are on the rise. In October, hopefully Blackrock trip (selenite site 50 miles away). With gas prices rising, Lou and David will try to find collecting site nearby. Lou White will not be available to lead field trips on Saturdays until middle of October. David McIlwain may be able to lead; (3) Adult Program - (a) Doris Jones will present a slide program on John Jones' collecting paintrock agate fields in middle Tennessee. Yard Sale Saturday, Sept. 9 at Jones home--includes rough and polished materials, saw, and a few minerals. (b) Gemological conference to coordinate study for state and federal government to locate strategic mineral investigation into what minerals are located in Arkansas, where, and quantity of resources. (c) Bill Pyrro to possibly give program in January. (4) Youth Program - For September program, Mike Baldwin will give Indian Lore program including regalia and how Indians used rocks. Park Noyes will bring in points. In October, focus will be on the Earth Science Week; (5) Library - Looking for book in memory of John Jones perhaps about North Carolina, Franklin, or ruby fields; (6) Show - James Butchko announced first committee meeting September 8th; (7) Old Business - Purchased TV. Now searching for cabinet; (8) New Business (a) Considering waiver of liability form for field trips participants; (b) W.C. initiated a new event--Membership Auction and "I made It" Contest; (c) Newsletter -- need help possibly with printing duties; (d) Show relocation for 2007--possibly at the Agri-center or CBU. Possibility fairground buildings will not be available. Time to look for locations so that we can keep our same weekend in April; we need to be able to fit in dealer schedules. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

### September 2005 membership meeting notes

**Carlene Bell:** The MAGS membership meeting was held at Shady Grove Presbyterian Church on September 9, 2005, presided by W.C. McDaniel. There were 59 members and 9 visitors--Nelson Eddlemon, Katey Jo Henry, Bruce Henry, Rita Lander, Jane Lanksford, Neville Mayfield, Lorraine Bradford, Parker Bradford and Nathan Bradford. (1) Show Chairman James Butchko announced show committee meeting Oct. 13 at his home. Next show is April 24-26, 2006. (2) W.C. McDaniel discussed probable location changes in 2007 for Show site.. (3) Ida Jean introduced Doris Jones, our speaker who presented a slide show on agates her husband John had collected. (4) Sale at Doris Jones home is Saturday morning 9/10/05. (5) There were several displays. Door prizes were presented to Ivon B. Clark (member) and Bruce Henry (visitor). Meeting adjourned @ 8:20 p.m.

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## Off the Coast of Virginia--35 mya

<< continued from page one <<

years ago in a cataclysmic occurrence that left behind a 53-mile-wide, long-buried crater. An international team of scientists, seeking clues to the origins of the planets, have assembled near the crater's center to try to determine, among other things, exactly what happened when the object struck.

The team has been working with a large drilling rig that uses diamond-tipped bits and brings up core samples to bore through eons of sediment toward the floor of the crater and the place where the impactor hit, believed to be about 7,000 feet below the surface. As a farmer harvested his soybean crop just north of Cape Charles on Virginia's Eastern Shore and the wind off the Chesapeake Bay blew dust and grasshoppers across the drilling site, it was hard to imagine the scale of what geologists believe happened there.

"This is so big that we can't really picture it," said David Powars, a U.S. Geological Survey geologist, who said he first suspected the presence of an impact crater in the 1980s. "You could take the whole nuclear arsenal in its heyday: Russia, China, U.S. ... That's a firecracker compared to what this explosion would be." be honest: I can't imagine the event."

Their work is the culmination of a five-year project in which the USGS has drilled six holes probing the crater's landscape. This hole will be the program's deepest, and the last, officials say.

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## It's a Jungle Out There

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DON MONROE, SFMS SAFETY CHAIRMAN

(First published in October 2005 issue of LODESTAR):

The members of our clubs have many varied interests. Some are interested in collecting specimens. Others collect stones (gems, minerals, etc.) to use when they produce jewelry or they hunt fossils. One of the things that we all seem to have in common is that we enjoy field trips. As we enter the fall and early winter, the weather really entices us to get out and do fun things. As we go out in the wilds, we need to recognize that this can be a hazardous time of the year. As a matter of fact we may encounter some hazards that are not always around us or, may be not be quite as severe as they are right now.

An article in the Atlanta Journal recently pointed out that poisonous snakes should be more of a concern now than in mid-summer. Rattlesnakes and copperheads bear their offspring at this time of the year and, like all new parents, are very protective. That means they will bite you. I know that when I am out looking for whatever, I may not be really attentive to what is happening around me and may do something extremely stupid like reaching down in a hole or lifting up a rock or log to see what may be under there. Mr. "No shoulders" may be resting there out of the sun or rain and will not appreciate your visit. This would be particularly embarrassing to me since I have been bitten by a rattlesnake before because I was not paying attention.

Another hazard that can be extremely dangerous for those with a sensitivity to such is insect stings. Yellow

jackets, wasps, bees and hornets are making their final preparations for winter. A nice warm place to live such as a nest or a hole in the ground becomes a priority item. Based on some of my encounters, the yellow jackets become very combative if you venture close to their nest, which is usually a rather unobtrusive hole in the ground. Hornet's nests are sometimes collected as souvenirs on the assumption that they are no longer inhabited. Not necessarily so!

Those plants that have the ability to cause skin problems such as poison oak, poison ivy and some of the sumac varieties do not become safe when the leaves fall off. As a matter of fact the sap in the roots can be extremely potent and create a real problem for us, particularly if you get it in your eyes. Also, if for any reason you burn some of these plants, the smoke can transmit the irritant to eyes, nose and skin which is the worst way to become infected.

The last hazard I want to spotlight is fire. In most parts of the country, the woods are very dry and it is so easy to start a fire. Not only will you be probably violating the law, you can place yourself and your companions in real danger. If a wild fire can trap and kill professional firefighters, aren't we in greater danger?

The solution to all of the hazards mentioned as well as many others is simply to keep our wits about us. Be alert to our surroundings and don't do stupid or very unwise things. If we take care of ourselves, we can continue to do the things we enjoy and introduce the next generations to our great hobby.

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## Off the Coast of Virginia—35 mya

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<< continued from page eight <<

Since the formal announcement in 1995 of what is now called the Chesapeake Bay Impact Crater, studies have detailed its dimensions and outline, experts say. Last year scientists for the first time found rock that had been melted by the impact and fossils of microorganisms that had been smashed in the event.

There are scores of known impact sites around the world and millions more on planets and moons across the solar system. The one near Norfolk is Earth's seventh-largest site and the biggest in the United States.

On Earth, such impacts can dramatically alter the landscape in seconds, geologists say. And some scientists believe that understanding the moment of impact, "the soul ... the spirit" of the collision, as one said, might be a key to understanding the formation of the solar system.

"If you think about how the Earth was formed," geologist Henning Dypvik of the University of Oslo said at the drilling site. "The Earth was formed by a meteorite that came from here, an asteroid that came from there and a comet that came from here."

>> see *Off the Coast of Virginia-35mya* on page ten >>

He moved his hands as if making a snowball. "This is the base process for the formation of the Earth and the universe," he said. "By studying (impacts), by understanding the mechanisms, then we can know much more about the Earth and the formation of the planetary system."

And then there is the question: What if such an object struck today?

Even one a fraction of the size of the Chesapeake's would cause a disaster, said Powars, one of the people who discovered the crater. An impact by something a half-mile in size, and "the East Coast is in trouble," he said. "Lights out."

Impact science is fairly young, the geologists said. The Earth's visible craters were thought to be remnants of volcanoes.

REFERENCE: "Team Digs for Scoop on Huge Crater"; <http://www.detnews.com/2005/nation/0511/02/A12-368808.htm>. Information in this article and picture on page one are used under the provisions of the Fair Use Act of 1976 for educational purposes.

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**November 3**

DMC Field Trip  
**November 5**

Membership Meeting  
**November 11**

MAGS Field Trip  
**November 13**

Dues Are Due  
**January 1**