

# **Front Royal, VA area and W. VA.**

**May 15 & 16, 2010**

Field Trip Report

Submitted by: Renee Eichman, GMSVP Field Trip Co-Chair

All nine GMSVP members in attendance carpoled from the motel to our first fossil site in Front Royal. It was a beautiful sunny morning and everyone was filled with anticipation of what we might discover.

Within minutes of setting foot upon the outcrop area, members were spotting fossils, mostly brachiopods. After working this location for several hours, we headed to our next stop only a few miles away. With permission from a small local church, we parked on their grassy lot within yards of our collecting destination. Everyone enjoyed a quick picnic lunch before we were off to see what else we could discover. This rocky area was smaller than the last, but it did provide members with some nice crinoid stems and brachs. Due to the rising temperatures and area being smaller in size, we wrapped up this site fairly quickly and headed to Gooney Creek.

Gooney Creek did provide us with some unakite, red and yellow jasper and amygdaloidal basalt. Without a doubt, rocks were plentiful here. However it could be quite difficult to decipher one type from another because of the amount of mud caked on them. With the aid of Rowan's experienced eyes and the use of crack hammers, we could more easily determine if it was considered a "keeper" or something to be left behind...otherwise referred to as "rotten" by Rowan. It was late afternoon, folks were getting tired, so we called it a day.

On Sunday morning, five of us embarked on a journey into the hills. This time we headed westward across the George Washington National Forest and into West Virginia about forty miles.

Our first site, showed significant geological interest in its formations and colors. In this general area, Rowan was the first to discover some nice calcite crystals. In addition, we gathered up some mud flats, evidence of an ancient water floor. The sedimentary rock was abundant and filled with the most interesting color and pattern combinations.

Two hours later we drove about a mile or two to a popular site for finding trilobites. Another club had arrived before us and were busy at work. It was here that Heather discovered her first trilobite. She'd been dreaming of this day for almost two years and the smile on her face showed exactly how

happy she was. Not bad for a nine year old. I was lucky to have found several tiny terminated crystals and one double terminated one. By 2:30 p.m., it was time to say goodbye.

This trip was made possible by two very caring and knowledgeable members...Rowan Rose and Anne Kramer. Thank you both very much!

