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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

MSA at the Tucson Gem & Mineral Show 2024



Donna Whitney

In the last MSA Society News, I wrote about new ideas for interactions between MSA and other mineralogical communities beyond those involved in mineral sciences research. One example that I gave was the Tucson (Arizona, USA) Gem and Mineral Show. I wrote about this example in advance of the show, which takes place annually in February, and now I am writing about my experiences at the show, which I attended for the first time.

The official center of the show is held at the Tucson Convention Center, where there is an

exhibit hall with minerals and mineral-related items for sale, as well as a place for educational and information booths such as the MSA booth. There are also many other sites around Tucson where minerals, gems, fossils, and related items are sold—these sites range from enormous tents to small shops and hotel rooms.

At the convention center, MSA has a booth similar to the one that we have at the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting, but with some differences to account for the different audience. For example, on the Friday of the show, many school groups from the Tucson area come to the convention center. On the weekend, there are a lot of families at the show. MSA is very grateful to the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society, the organizers, and, in particular, Patricia McClain, for their help in facilitating the workshops and other aspects of MSA's involvement in the show.

The efforts and creative energies of MSA Executive Director Ann Benbow, Emeritus Executive Director Alex Speer, and MSA members Thomas Hale and John Rakovan, as well as Monica Rakovan, are the reason for



Joint booths of the MSA, MAC, and Minerals in Context at the 2024 Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. PHOTO: J. ALEX SPEER.

the success of the booth, which MSA shares with the Mineralogical Association of Canada (MAC) and the Minerals in Context non-profit organization created and led by Thomas Hale.

The MAC booth had publications—including two books on pegmatites, both of which sold out. (Not surprisingly, as the theme of the 2024 Tucson Show was pegmatites.) The MSA booth had free items such as an *Elements* magazine-themed periodic table of the elements. MSA brought 400 copies, and all were taken. Also popular were geology-themed stickers, MSA logo stickers, and educational displays such as the ones on cobalt, mineral density, electric car batteries, and the mineral content of pencil “leads.”

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McKay Award Committee

Nominates candidates for the best student presentation at the annual meeting

Alex Ruzicka (chair) 2024

Vincianne DeBaille (vice-chair) 2024

Jessberger Award Committee

Recommends candidates of outstanding mid-career femal isotope geochemists for the Jessberger Award

Noriko Kita 2025

Sara Russell 2025

Larry Nittler (Leonard Medal Committee liaison) 2026

Thomas Stephan (chair) 2027

Monica Grady 2029

Impact Cratering Committee

Defining criteria for the identification of impact craters/structures; publication of a terrestrial impact crater database

Natalia Hauser 2024

Christian Koeberl 2024

Gordon Osiniski 2024

David Baratoux 2025

Aaron Cavosie (chair) 2025

Anne-Marie Pickersgill 2025

Sanna Alwmark 2026

Thomas Kenkmann 2026

Ex officio members:

Guy Consolmagno (Vice-President)

and Ludovic Ferriere (Database-Editor, 2026)

Outreach ad hoc Committee

Publicizes the society's content to the broader scientific community

Adriana Araujo 2024

Soukaina Arif 2024

Sophie Benaroya 2024

Philippe Claeys 2024

Cari Corrigan 2024

Dustin Dickens 2024

Ania Losiak 2024

Hayley Lowe 2024

Gordon Osinski (chair) 2025

Petanki Soro 2024

Jason Williams 2024

ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE

2024	28 July–2 August	Brussels, Belgium (EU)
2025	13–18 July	Perth, Western Australia (Australia)
2026	9–14 August	Frankfurt, Germany (EU)
2027	Dates TBD	Flagstaff, Arizona (USA)



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The first-ever “walk-by mini-workshops” on various mineralogical topics were a great success based on the number of people who came to them. Ann Benbow, Alex Speer, Thomas Hale, and I each sat at a table on the exhibit floor hall for 90 minutes on the Saturday of the show and talked to anyone who came by about our particular topic. For example, I set up an array of garnets of different colors, sizes, and shapes. I also had various garnet-themed items, such as books, the 2013 *Elements* issue on garnets, a poster with garnet images (outcrops, photomicrographs), two postcards that I made with garnet images (element maps showing zoning, various images of inclusions in garnet), and a page with line drawings of garnet crystal forms for kids to color in (though many adults also wanted these!). I made a sign that said, “Ask me about garnets!”, and people did in fact stop by and ask me a lot of questions about garnets. The most common question was about color, as many people had only seen the red variety and were interested to know about the other colors and what caused the variation.

The other workshops—on topaz (Ann), pencils (Thomas), and cobalt, trinitite, and mineral density (Alex)—were also very popular and generated a lot of interesting questions. A highlight for me was learning from Alex about element deficiencies in sheep and goats and how minerals can greatly improve the health of animals.

Ann Benbow created a survey form with questions about what show attendees would be interested in for possible interactions with a Society such as MSA. Although we did not get a large number of responses, those that we received indicated an interest in webinars or other ways to interact with mineral experts. These webinars could be similar to what we did in-person at the show in terms of topic and scope, but would allow for interaction with a wider audience.

I came away from the show with the strong impression that this was an excellent venue for MSA to interact with the public. I also came away with a few new garnets (and some green kyanite).

Donna Whitney
2024 MSA President

NOTES FROM CHANTILLY

- **Renewal Season!** Don't forget to renew your memberships for 2024, as well as subscriptions to MSA's publications. Member dues are: Regular Members and Fellows (\$85); Early Career Members (\$45); Student Members (\$20); Senior Members (\$0); Sustaining Members (\$135 – membership plus a \$150 contribution to support MSA's many activities). You can renew via the home page of MSA's website: www.msaweb.org. At that time, we hope that you will also make a contribution to one or more of MSA's funds. These funds support our student research grants, lecture series, websites, education and outreach activities, awards, and much more.

EVENTS

42nd FM-TGMS-MSA Tucson Mineral Symposium: The symposium was held in conjunction with the *Tucson Gem and Mineral Show*[®], and took place on Saturday, February 10, 2024. The symposium is co-sponsored by the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society, the Friends of Mineralogy, and the Mineralogical Society of America. On that same day, MSA held a “walk-by workshop” on the Exhibit Hall floor from 11:00 to 12:30. Topics included garnets, topazes, density, and much more. Those who dropped by received colorful information cards, stickers, and flyers about MSA.

NEW WEBSITE FOR AMERICAN MINERALOGIST

MSA recently launched a brand-new website for their flagship journal *American Mineralogist*. The website was designed to increase ease-of-use for both authors and researchers, and to highlight various aspects of the publication.

NEW VIEWS OF THE MOON 2

This new publication of *Reviews in Mineralogy & Geochemistry* Volume 89: *New Views of the Moon 2* is selling quickly. Volume editors are Clive R. Neal, Lisa R. Gaddis, Bradley L. Jolliff, Samuel J. Lawrence, Stephen J. Mackwell, Charles K. Shearer, and Sarah N. Valencia. The series editor is Ian P. Swainson, and *American Mineralogist* Managing Editor Rachel Russell is responsible for production. The volume is available in both hard copy and online via a subscription to the *Reviews* series. For more information, visit the Publications section of the MSA website: www.msaweb.org. While there, you can also view the list of MSA's other publications. The next *Reviews* volume to be published in 2024 will be Volume 90: *Exoplanets*. This volume will be accompanied by a Short Course at the Goldschmidt Conference in Chicago, IL, USA this summer.

2024 RESEARCH GRANTS

March 1, 2024 is the deadline to submit proposals for the Edward H. Kraus Crystallography Research Grant and the Mineralogy/Petrology Research Grant. There is one Kraus grant of \$5,000 awarded each year, two \$5,000 Mineralogy/Petrology grants for graduate-level research, and one \$2,000 grant for undergraduate research. For more information about the proposal format and how to submit, visit <https://msaweb.org/awards-grants/>. For any questions, please contact Ann Benbow at abenbow@minsocam.org.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Many members donate to MSA by including a contribution with their annual dues and/or by responding to special appeals. The *MSA Forward* Annual Fund supports MSA's infrastructure. Depending on the wishes of the member, contributions are deposited with the principal of the MSA Endowment, the J. Alexander Speer Outreach Fund, MSA Mineralogy/Petrology Fund, J. B. Thompson Fund, Edward H. Kraus Crystallographic Research Fund, F. Donald Bloss Fund, or the Peter R. Buseck Lecture Fund. The income of these Funds is used to support MSA's research grants in crystallography, mineralogy, and petrology; the MSA Undergraduate Prizes; the Mineralogical Society of America Award; the Distinguished Public Service Award, the Dana Medal, the Roebing Medal; the website; and the Distinguished Lecturer program. If you have not done so previously, please consider contributing at the next opportunity.

DID YOU KNOW?

MSA has a collection of teaching resources for the K–12 audience. These include the online teaching resources contributed by MSA Members during the pandemic shutdown, the Minerals Day website (www.mineralsday.org), and the Mineralogy for Kids website (www.min4kids.org). All of these are available online and free of charge.