



What's New in the Mineral World?



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Already, yikes, it's December, and Holiday Spirit manifestations are all around us, and it's with some dismay that I note that the posting date of my last online report is—yikes again—August 22. Since that date (I will say in my defense) I have travelled to Denver and Munich and written reports on those major shows; I've completed the text of a big article (coming soon in the print magazine); and I've proofread the whole 1600+ pages of *Moore's Compendium of Mineral Discoveries 1960 to 2015*, which finally went to the printer just a few days ago—see the last section of this report. Anyway, I hope to win a few points from the fact that this report is the longest I've ever put up online: web dealers have been busy during the autumn show season. And here's what I mean...

On the Web

Rod Tyson is one of Canada's champion field collectors, and in years past I greatly looked forward to seeing the stock he would bring to the Denver and Tucson shows from localities where he had been at work— my thumbnail collection today contains a great many Tyson-originating examples from, oh, St.-Hilaire and the Jeffrey mine in Quebec; Ontario's Flamboro quarry and Liscombe deposits; the very far north's Pine Point, Polaris and Nanisivik mines; and, of course, the Big Fish/Rapid Creek area of Yukon Territory. But around eight years ago Rod stopped coming to Denver and Tucson, and all those bargain-priced (as they usually were) Canadian goodies were suddenly nostalgia-bait; nor has much been seen on the Tyson website during these recent years. But now the good news is that the website has been revived, and on its "About Us" page you can learn that in 2008 Rod and Helen Tyson moved from their long-time home in Edmonton, Alberta, thousands of kilometers eastwards to Parrsboro, Nova Scotia, where they are doing quite nicely, thanks, digging zeolites from basalt cliffs and setting up a new house...and once more Rod is looking in, at least, on U.S. mineral shows. At Denver this past September he was to be seen hanging out mostly at and around Dave Bunk's stand at the Main Show, to which he'd contributed some pretty specimens of pyrite-coated calcite



from Alaska. And on that re-energized *Tyson's Fine Minerals* website (tysonsfineminerals.com), you'll find a miscellany of superb Canadian pieces, mostly thumbnail and miniature-size, on offer: some standouts include **wardite** and **gormanite** from the Yukon; **serandite**, **elpidite** and **rhodochrosite** from St.-Hilaire; **pyrite** and **pyrite after marcasite** from Nanisivik; and beautiful orange-yellow **fluorite** from Ontario's Flamboro quarry. For some of these specimens you may click on "collecting history" to learn how and when someone (usually Rod himself) unearthed them. Welcome back, Tysons!

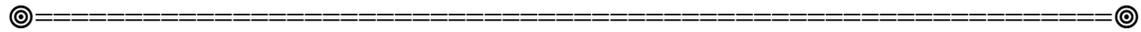
(Unfortunately the specimen photos on the Tyson site don't have quite enough pixels to lend themselves to really effective enlargement: I'll show two of them anyway, because the specimens themselves are clearly first-rate.)



Gormanite, 3 cm, from Rapid Creek, Yukon Territory, Canada. *Tyson's Fine Minerals* specimen and photo.



Elpidite, 1.4 cm, from St.-Hilaire, Québec, Canada. *Tyson's Fine Minerals* specimen and photo.



Another Canadian dealership, Todor and Nadya Georgieva's *Quebul Fine Minerals* (quebulfineminerals.com) of Quebec City, maintains a spectacular website whose many pages of one-of-a-kind specimens are constantly being updated, so you can visit at just about any interval and take in beauty you hadn't seen before. There are no great rarities here; rather, nearly all Quebul specimens are chiefly notable for their aesthetics, emphasized by the uniformly high quality of the photography. Of the worldwide array currently on view, I'll keep up momentum from the Tyson paragraph above by choosing three more Canadian pieces of Quebul's to show you. The **stilbite/chabazite** from Nova Scotia is a splendid zeolite thumbnail if I ever saw one; the **analcime** from St.-Hilaire argues for why this great quarry complex should probably be called the world's finest locality for this species; and the **safflorite-coated silver** from the old Cobalt District of Ontario is a nice old-timer: identical-looking specimens were offered at the 2015 Tucson Show by Wendy and Frank Melanson, who said that they had been found 50 to 60 years ago at a site called the "Cobalt Lode mine" (the Quebul specimen is attributed to the "Castle mine").



Stilbite and Chabazite, 2.5 cm, from Wassons Bluff near Parrsboro, Nova Scotia, Canada. *Quebul Fine Minerals* specimen and photo.





Analcime, 3.6 cm, from the Poudrette quarry, St.-Hilaire, Québec, Canada. *Quebul Fine Minerals* specimen and photo.



Safflorite coating silver, 5.2 cm, from the Castle mine, Gowganda area, Timiskaming District, Ontario, Canada. *Quebul Fine Minerals* specimen and photo.

Terry Szenics runs an extensive website on behalf of top-level collector Scott Rudolph, called *Shelter Rock Minerals* (shelterrockminerals.com), with a “New Arrivals” page that contains, at present, some medium-old to *really* old classics. For instance, it has been many years since I’ve seen examples of the world-class **anhydrite** which came from the Naica district, Chihuahua, Mexico in the 1970s and 1980s, but Shelter Rock has two small-cabinet-size clusters of palest blue, bladed anhydrite crystals with drusy quartz along their edges. And in the “Europe” section there are five specimens of the beautiful and elusive **calcite** first found during road construction work in the 1980s near the town of Pau, 50 km north of the Spanish border in the Department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques, France. Even in the wide world of calcite it’s hard to beat the limpid, lustrous, very face-rich crystals usually seen squatting in cavities in off-white limestone from Pau. The specimen shown here, at 21.6 cm, is the largest and likely the best I have seen from “Pau” (in French the pronunciation is “Poe,” or, as mineral people might prefer, “Pough”). And don’t forget to check out “the Vault” of the Shelter Rock site: for me, a large, magnificent Sicilian **sulfur** once in the Scott Rudolph collection is the superstar of the assemblage there.



Anhydrite, 7.9 cm, from Naica, Chihuahua, Mexico.
Shelter Rock Minerals specimen and photo.



Calcite, 21.6 cm, from Pau, Pyrénées-Atlantiques, France. *Shelter Rock Minerals* specimen and photo.



Sulfur, 18 cm, from Agrigento, Sicily, Italy. *Shelter Rock Minerals* specimen and photo.
(NOTE: The petroleum stains prove that it's not one of the fakes produced by Dr. Martinat.)

Jordi Fabre of *Fabre Minerals* (fabreminerals.com) has posted an “Initial Munich 2015 update.” Therein he offers three miniature-size specimens representing a new find, from which he also had specimens at his stand at the Munich Show: **andalusite** of the unusual green variety sometimes called “viridine,” collected in June 2015 in the Theologos area, Thasos Island, Kavála Prefecture, Macedonia, Greece. Subhedral, simple orthorhombic-prismatic crystals of dark green andalusite to 1.4 cm are partially embedded in massive quartz matrix. These are not beautiful specimens but represent an interesting, uncommon type of the common aluminum silicate (seldom found in what you’d call aesthetic examples in any case).



Andalusite (variety *viridine*), 5.8 cm, from the Theologos area, Thasos Island, Kavála Prefecture, Macedonia, Greece. *Fabre Minerals* specimen and photo.

Jordi also offers just three small thumbnails of **wulfenite** from the Shah Kharbuzeh (also rendered “Chah Kharboze”) mine, Anarak district, Esfahan Province, Iran. The brilliantly red-orange to blood-red wulfenite crystals from this mine were noted in the 1950s and 1960s, when Pierre Bariand, then curator of the Sorbonne collection, visited Shah Kharbuzeh, and they were noted again when a German party came through Iran in the early 1970s; the contemporary market incursion began when a few specimens appeared at the 2014 and 2015 Tucson Shows. But a pessimistic report published recently in *Rocks & Minerals* says that “The Shah Kharbuzeh mine is now reported to be almost exhausted and is extremely dangerous and hard to access from its 110-meter-deep shaft...fine specimens from this mine are consequently a rare sight.” Because of this rarity and because of their dramatic beauty, even thumbnails of Shah Kharbuzeh wulfenite I’ve seen **for sale** since 2014 bear four-figure prices, but Jordi’s three specimens are priced only around \$100 (specifically, the one shown here costs \$96).



Wulfenite, 1.4 cm, from the Shah Kharbuzeh mine, Anarak district, Esfahan Province, Iran. *Fabre Minerals* specimen and photo.

The December update of *Fabre Minerals*—the last of the year—offers two interesting **stibnite** specimens from the Desmond Sacco collection, with medium-lustrous, fairly stout, prismatic crystals of stibnite to 6 cm in low-angle sprays that rise from and penetrate masses of tiny white, lustrous barite crystals. These specimens come from Kadamzhay in the Fergana Valley, Alai Range, Osh Oblast, Kyrgyzstan—a low-temperature, near-surface, hydrothermal deposit of Sb and Hg ores which has been exploited intermittently since the 1930s. Stibnite from Kadamzhay has been seen only occasionally in the West since the Soviet collapse of 1991, and was very rare before that; the Sacco/Fabre stibnite miniatures are not of Chinese or Japanese quality but still are excellent specimens, and are especially desirable as “locality” items.



Stibnite with barite, 5.7 cm, from Kadamzhay, Fergana Valley, Alai Range, Osh Oblast, Kyrgyzstan. *Fabre Minerals* specimen and photo.

A November 10 update on the site of Rob Lavinsky’s *The Arkenstone* (iRocks.com) speaks of a single-pocket discovery in August 2015, somewhere in the Shigar River Valley of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan, which yielded a few floater crystals of the manganese fluoride/phosphate **triplite**. These flattened, translucent to transparent, red-orange crystals range from 3.2 to 4.5 cm in size, and there’s a single matrix thumbnail measuring 2.5 cm. Similar, gemmy orange triplite crystals which showed up on the Western market in the mid-1990s were said at first to have come from near the village of

Alchuri, in the Shigar Valley, but Dudley Blauwet later traced them to a phosphate pegmatite mine called the Namlook mine, on the Braldu River (a tributary of the Shigar), about 25 km northwest of Alchuri. According to Rob Lavinsky the triplites of the August 2015 find do *not* come from the Namlook mine but rather from some other pegmatite, presumably not far away. They are pretty specimens of a very rare mineral: the 4.5-cm crystal shown here is priced at \$6,000.



Triplite, 4.5 cm, from the Shigar River Valley, Skardu district, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan. *The Arkenstone* specimen and photo.

Dan and Diana Weinrich's website (weinrichmineralsinc.com) is always worth checking out. Currently the Weinrichs are offering a handful of miniatures of the excellent **inesite** specimens from the Fengjiashan mine near Daye, Hubei Province, China which first reached the Western market in 2001 but have not been seen in any significant numbers since that year. The thin-prismatic, raspberry-red to reddish orange inesite crystals typically form bowtie-shaped or spherical aggregates, commonly with little apophyllite crystals and/or microcrystals of reddish brown to black hubeite. On these "new," busy-looking specimens of the Weinrichs' the inesite bowties reach 2.5 cm long and are well situated on quartz/calcite matrix.



**Inesite, 4 cm, from the Fengjiashan mine, Daye district, Hubei Province, China.
Weinrich Minerals specimen and photo.**

In my print reports on the 2015 Denver and Munich Shows—coming up in the issue of January-February 2016—you will see that among the sensations of both of these shows are sizable lots of outstanding **pale blue euclase** specimens from a recent (fall 2015) find at the La Marina mine, just outside the Muzo District of emerald mines in the Department of Boyacá, Colombia. For several decades now we have known of the rare, occasionally quite splendid euclase specimens found in the emerald-bearing carbonate veins in these mines, but this find may break all records for the sheer numbers of first-class euclase specimens which have emerged: one dealer had about 50 of them on show in Munich, and these already were leftovers from the debut of the stock at the Marriott hotel show in Denver. The specimens bear four-figure or even five-figure prices but they are indeed impressive, with partially gemmy, pale greenish blue, bladed, wedge-terminated euclase crystals reaching 4.5 cm, sometimes as loose singles, sometimes as clusters, and not too uncommonly with pink fluorapatite crystals in association. *Collector's Edge* (collectorsedge.com) has latched onto some thumbnails and miniatures, and these are offered in a “2015 Fall Mineral Acquisition Update!” on the *Collector's Edge* site. The example shown in the photo here boasts a 2-cm main crystal on a 3.5-cm matrix, and it typifies the very high quality of the material.



Euclase with pink fluorapatite on albite, 3.5 cm (main crystal 2 cm), from the La Marina mine, Boyacá Department, Colombia.
Collector's Edge specimen and photo.

And now for something (as they say) completely different. The very rare sulfosalt **geocronite**— $Pb_{14}(Sb,As)_6S_{23}$ —is known in good lead-gray crystals to 3 or 4 cm in a few 19th-century specimens from the Pollone mine, Pietrasanta, Apuan Alps, Tuscany, Italy, and during the 20th century the old workings of the same small, long-dormant barite/pyrite mine sporadically yielded geocronite crystals to an amazing 15 cm. A mid-October update on the site of *Italian Minerals* (italianminerals.com) features a few loose geocronite crystals from the Pollone mine. Collected in an unspecified year, the very sharp crystals are lustrous and metallic gray, and some show interesting, mica-like parallel folia along their edges. Although small (no larger than 1.5 cm), these are fine representatives of the species. For the crystal shown here the asking price is 600 Euro (about \$625).



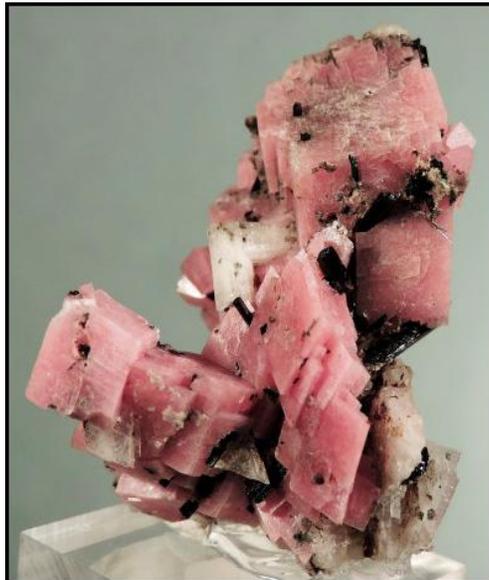
Geocronite, 1.2 cm, from the Pollone mine, Valdicastello Carducci, Pietrasanta, Apuan Alps, Tuscany, Italy. *Italian Minerals* specimen and photo.

Among the prettiest and most distinctive **amethyst** specimens so far found on our planet are those from the forested, hilly, wild region surrounding the settlement of Las Vigas, in Veracruz state, Mexico—see the thorough article by Werner Lieber and Gerhard Frenzel in the November-December 2003 issue (“Mexico III”). Amethyst from Las Vigas has generally been common enough on the market such that there’s some danger of jadedness, but a new lot of unusually fine specimens turned heads at the Denver Show in September 2015. In case you missed them there, Isaias Casanova of *IC Minerals* (icminerals.com) is offering some highly aesthetic specimens in a November 30 update: a few of the amethyst crystals in this lot are sceptered, and all are gemmy and bright; most specimens show the crystals rising from small bits of matrix.



**Amethyst, 2.7 cm, from Piedra Parada, Veracruz, Mexico.
IC Minerals specimen; Isaias Casanova photo.**

The November 30 *IC Minerals* update is also noteworthy for showing several miniature to small-cabinet-size specimens of **rhodochrosite** from various classic localities. No Sweet Home mine rhodochrosites are here, but Isaias does have fine specimens from other rhodochrosite localities in Colorado, Peru and elsewhere; one is the dignified-looking miniature of rhodochrosite/leifite/aegirine shown here, with sharp rhodochrosite rhombs to 3 cm, from (where else but?) Mont St.-Hilaire, Quebec.



**Rhodochrosite with leifite and aegirine, 4.2 cm, from
Mont St.-Hilaire, Québec, Canada. *IC Minerals*
specimen; Isaias Casanova photo.**

Moroccan-minerals expert Tomasz Praszkiel of *Spirifer Minerals* has informed John Veevaert of *Trinity Minerals* that the occurrence of the lovely blue **barite** at the Ouichane mine, Beni Bou Ifrou, Nador, Morocco has now been exhausted, and that no new lots of the barite specimens which have been so common during the past few years will be forthcoming. If you don't yet have an Ouichane blue barite, John Veevaert is more than willing to help: the "Munich Update" on his *Trinity Minerals* site (trinityminerals.com) has miniature and small-cabinet-size specimens with clean, lustrous, undamaged sheaves of barite crystals on gossanous matrix. But hurry and order, as many of John's specimens (including the one shown here) are already marked "sold." I should add that more, just as impressive, specimens of the same barite are to be found on the December update of Jordi Fabre's site (fabreminerals.com).



Barite, 5 cm, from the Ouichane mine, Beni Bou Ifrou, Nador, Morocco. *Trinity Minerals* specimen; John Veevaert photo.

Robert Kunze and Martin Gruell of Linz, Austria run the very enticing website of *Via Mineralia* (viamineralia.com), full of tastefully selected specimens and very strong (as you might expect) in minerals from Europe. Witness the **quartz/hematite** specimen from the classic Pallaflat mine in the iron-mining country of Cumbria, northern England. The mine closed commercially in 1914 but this piece was taken out by local collectors during the 1980s. And witness the splendid **vivianite** from the limonitic "bog iron" deposit on the Kerch Peninsula, Crimea Oblast, Ukraine—the finest example I've seen of this "organic" vivianite, with deep blue bladed crystals in fan-sprays associated with fossil bivalve shells.



Quartz and Hematite, 4.8 cm, from the Pallaflat mine, Cumbria, England. *Via Mineralia* specimen and photo.



Vivianite, 6 cm, from the Kerch Peninsula, Crimea Oblast, Ukraine. *Via Mineralia* specimen and photo.

On the “Asia” page of *Via Mineralia* is something which is much more of a “what’s new” persuasion: about 15 fine **wulfenite** specimens from the Amad Abad mine, Yazd Province, Iran. Familiar from recent, fairly prolific appearances on the show scene, especially with another Austrian dealer (Anton Watzl), this wulfenite typically comes as yellow to caramel-colored to red-orange, opaque, thin and very fragile crystals standing at high angles from matrix. In some of the specimens, cream-white, opaque calcite lies like a snow blanket over the wulfenite crystals. Robert’s and Martin’s examples range between medium-miniature and small-cabinet size, and their prices range from about 300 to about 2500 Euros (\$325 - \$2975). Word is that specimen-gathering in the Amad Abad mine has now ceased, so get ‘em while you can.



Wulfenite, 9.8 cm, from the Amad Abad mine, Yazd Province, Iran. *Via Mineralia* specimen and photo.

At the 2015 Denver Show, Ed Rosenzweig of *Edwards Minerals* (edwardsminerals.com) had newly collected **stellerite** specimens from a find by Skip Colflesh and Scott Snavely in August 2014 in the Dyer quarry (sometimes called by its

older name: the Gickerville quarry), Birdsboro, Berks County, southeastern Pennsylvania. This quarry, which since the 1950s has exploited an intrusive body of diabase for aggregate stone, has occasionally given up specimens of stellerite and other zeolites, but clearly these new stellerites are the locality's best so far, and they have been verified as to species by X-ray diffraction analysis; that is, they're really stellerite, not stilbite. Flattish plates of black diabase matrix from 5.5 to 10.6 cm across host glittering snow-white spheres, to 1.5 cm in diameter, of stellerite microcrystals, the spheres either intergrown in dense coatings or attractively individualized on the black substrate.



Stellerite, 6.1 cm, from the Dyer quarry, Birdsboro, Berks County, Pennsylvania. *Edwards Minerals* specimen and photo.

I don't remember whether I've ever mentioned the English dealership *Broadstone Minerals* in this space before, but anyway I'll hereby point out that their website (broadstoneminerals.com) harbors excellent English classic specimens in its depths—you must scroll patiently through the *tiny* pictures of one-of-a-kinders until you're inspired to click on "larger image." And then you might find something really terrific such as this antique specimen of **bornite pseudomorphous after chalcocite** from the Cook's Kitchen mine in Cornwall.



Bornite pseudomorph after chalcocite, 5.2 cm, from the Cook's Kitchen mine, Illogan, Cornwall, England. *Broadstone Minerals* specimen and photo.

Being English, the *Broadstone Minerals* people no doubt are keeping close track of the specimen-mining project now being conducted by Pete Ward at the old Greenlaws lead mine, near the village of Daddry Shield, Weardale. *Broadstone* offers nine lovely **fluorite** specimens from the site, presumably newly dug. I learned something of Greenlaws fluorite myself at this past Munich Show, and there's a relevant paragraph in my show report (coming up in January-February 2016)—so this won't be the last time you'll hear of these first-rate fluorites with the subtle color effects. Lustrous, translucent to transparent, purple, yellow and zoned purple-yellow, cubic crystals to 2 cm individually are gathered in clusters to large-cabinet size, and occasional partial coatings of brown drusy siderite only enhance the aesthetics, lending these very contemporary pieces, somehow, an "old classic" look.



Fluorite, 7.8 cm, from the Greenlaws mine, Daddry Shield, Weardale, England. *Broadstone Minerals* specimen and photo.

My last dealer-citation will be along the lines of a friendly salute to Colorado's Dave Bunk, collector/dealer *par excellence*. Dave could use a little saluting, since he's had fairly serious health problems of late (so *get well* already, Dave, if you're reading this), and thus it's admirable as well as exciting that the website of *Dave Bunk Minerals* (davebunkminerals.com) is so lavish and so loaded with fine specimens from at least four former collections. It is well known that in 2008 Dave acquired part of the world-class thumbnail collection of Jim and Dawn Minette (plus an extensive suite of borates from Boron and Death Valley), and he still has surprisingly many superb Minette pieces up for sale. Among the other former collections now in Dave's hands are those of Donn Cook (also mostly thumbnails), David Byers, Beau Gordon, and Bill and Carol Smith. To suggest the richness of this site I'll show two specimens each from the Cook, Byers and Minette collections; I hope you'll enjoy ogling them as much as I enjoyed the process of choosing them over their stiff competition:



Barite, 2.4 cm, from the Magma mine, Superior, Pinal County, Arizona. Ex Donn Cook collection. *Dave Bunk Minerals* specimen and photo.



Amethyst, 3.4 cm, Ashaway Village, Hopkinton, Rhode Island. Ex Donn Cook collection. *Dave Bunk Minerals* specimen and photo.



Cuprite on copper, 4 cm, from the Old Dominion mine near Globe, Gila County, Arizona. Ex David Byers collection. *Dave Bunk Minerals* specimen and photo.



Fluorapatite and quartz, 4 cm, from Mount Apatite, Androscoggin County, Maine. Ex David Byers collection. *Dave Bunk Minerals* specimen and photo.



Cassiterite, 2.3 cm, from Horni Slavkov, Bohemia, Czech Republic. Ex Jim and Dawn Minette collection. *Dave Bunk Minerals* specimen and photo.



Meyerhofferite pseudomorph after inyoite, 8 cm, from Mount Blanco, 20 Mule Team Canyon, Death Valley, Inyo County, California. Ex Jim and Dawn Minette collection. *Dave Bunk Minerals* specimen and photo.

***Moore's Compendium of Mineral Discoveries, 1960-2015, to be published in
February 2016***

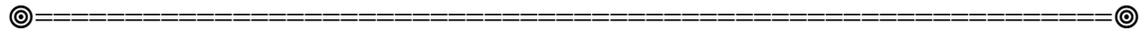
You may have seen Wendell Wilson's account of the *Compendium* in his short piece in the November-December 2015 issue, but still I might just mention here...okay, I'm plugging my own book, but after putting in 14 years of work on it a certain entitlement to publicize it might arguably be invoked...

A thorough description of the *Compendium* is also to be found in the "Bookstore" section of this website. Suffice to say here that in it I've set out to offer a prose account of every mineral find in the world since 1960 which has yielded specimens with crystals of 1 cm or more (though colorful druse coverages of microcrystals are also noted in many cases). Entries on individual finds range from less than a line to several pages long, depending on the importance of the occurrence and on the extent of available information. Whenever possible, the entries take account of the morphologies, habits and maximum sizes of crystals; associated minerals; geological settings; the histories, especially collecting histories, of the localities; names of the collectors and other relevant people; marketing information (i.e. where and when specimens were first offered for sale); and any other data felt to be significant, interesting or amusing. Unfortunately, there are no specimen photos, crystal drawings or other "graphics"—just the written voice that you've been tolerating for years now in my print reports and in the present online space.

My sources include articles from major collector-oriented journals in five languages (English, German, French, Italian, Spanish); show reports in these journals; book-length regional mineralogies; books on various other mineralogical topics; books on private and museum mineral collections; hundreds of old printed dealers' price lists; dealers' Internet sites; personal correspondence and interviews; and personal observations—the bibliography fills about 85 double-column pages, and the book as a whole, in two volumes, fills about 1640 pages and takes note of 1079 mineral species. While, of course, the *Compendium* can't be a literally *complete* account, taking in *every* find in the world since 1960 which has produced crystals of 1 cm or more, it offers at least a very extensive *selection* of such finds, such that Wendell Wilson has been moved to write:

We don't see how any serious mineral collector, mineral curator or mineral dealer can stand to be without these two volumes for reference. In addition to their usefulness when deciding on purchases, or researching the background of your own specimens, they are simply fun to read. You can jump in to any random page and find interesting reading on minerals.

The price of the *Compendium* is \$399 plus shipping, and copies will not be available until mid-February, but if you'd like to pre-order, call Tom Gressman at (520)-529-7281,



or order directly through the online Bookstore. The press run will be 500 two-volume sets, and it is unlikely that there will be a second printing.

Happy Holidays to all!

