



Thanks to the
Fellows
of the Mineralogical Record

Back around 2008, Wendell Wilson and Tom Gressman were brainstorming fundraising ideas for the *Mineralogical Record* with Bryan Lees of *Collector's Edge Minerals*. Rather than try to find a major single contributor, Bryan suggested that a Fellows Program be initiated. Donors of a minimum sum would become Fellows of the *Mineralogical Record* for one year, and their names would be listed on the masthead of the magazine; "I'll be the first to join," said Bryan. It was an excellent idea, but it needed a point man.

At the end of 2008, the *Mineralogical Record* hired Tom Gressman (a former corporate CEO) to begin taking over for the retiring Mary Lynn Michela, who had been Circulation Manager since the founding of the magazine. While learning the ropes from Mary Lynn, Tom was assigned the new responsibilities of Development Officer in charge of fundraising. Thus, the Fellows program was established (with Bryan as the first Fellow). Tom went right to work in December, talking to potential contributors, and by the end of the month he had signed up nine Fellows (including two couples), all of whom were then listed on the masthead of the following six issues, in the order in which they joined the program. By the end of 2009 the total stood at 40 Fellows and three Sponsoring Organizations.

The creation of the Fellows program came just in time, as the third and last of the *Mineralogical Record's* original benefactors, Philip Rust, passed away in 2010 before making that year's annual contribution. The Fellows took over for him, and the *Mineralogical Record* has remained prosperous and vital, thanks to their help. Their willingness to support the magazine has not waned since then, and nearly all of them have continued with their annual contribution. As of the beginning of 2016, we have 69 Fellows, 11 Senior Fellows (two of whom are now deceased), and two Sponsoring Organizations.

Each person, couple or organization who joins the Fellows program receives an attractive certificate each year, which can be framed on an office or mineral room wall. And in 2016 we began presenting gold medallions—large pins with a magnetic clasp—that can be worn on a shirt, blouse or collar point at shows and get-togethers (the medallion is pictured actual-size at the top of this article). The Fellows' medallion is a proud symbol of material support for the

Mineralogical Record; if you see someone wearing one, please give him or her a vote of thanks and a handshake for helping to make the *Mineralogical Record* what it is today. The medallion can also be a conversation starter with potential new Fellows. In the case of a couple's Fellowship (more couples are becoming Fellows these days, with the addition of two new couples just this past Tucson Show), both persons receive a medallion to wear.

The support given by the Fellows has now gone considerably beyond the level supplied by Philip Rust when he was alive, and has had a dramatic effect on the magazine. Excluding supplements (which are entirely funded by the supplement participants and not by the Fellows), the total number of pages in the regular six issues for 2007 was 503. By 2014, with the help of the Fellows, that number had risen to 712 pages; and in 2015 (thanks in part to a special donation by one of the Fellows, Daniel Trinchillo) the total for the six issues was 912 pages! Imagine how much the articles in the issues for 2014 and 2015 would have suffered if we had needed to cut 209 pages and 409 pages respectively, for financial reasons. How much interesting reading, and how many photos of beautiful specimens, would never have appeared? Thus the Fellows have made, and continue to make, a lasting and substantial contribution to the literature of mineralogy and mineral collecting.

At the Tucson Show this past February we held our first Fellows Breakfast at the Westward Look Resort (graciously sponsored by Gail and Jim Spann). Close to 40 people attended, many of whom had never met each other. It was a very enjoyable and convivial gathering of people who love minerals and are dedicated to supporting the *Mineralogical Record*. We'll be holding it again next year, and hope to see even more of our treasured Fellows.

If you would like to consider joining our distinguished band of Fellows, feel free to call or email Tom Gressman now for the particulars (tgressman@comcast.net; (520) 529-7281). We would love to add your name to our Fellows page in the magazine. The *Mineralogical Record, Inc.* is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. If you decide to come on board, you can be assured of one thing above all: you will make a difference.