

BC student presents poster at regional geological convention

Brevard College senior Billy Swords recently traveled to a regional geological convention with Professor Jim Reynolds to present a poster about a rare mineral they discovered during a College trip to Iceland last summer.

Swords presented the poster, titled "Discovery of Aegirine as a Vapor-Phase Sublimate at Torfajökull Caldera, Landmannalaugar, Iceland", at the Southeastern Section of the Geological Society of America meeting in Wilmington, NC.

The poster describes the chemistry of submillimeter aegirine-augite crystals that they found while hiking in one of the canyons of the stark but beautiful caldera, Iceland's largest.

"One of our co-authors, Dr. Stan Williams from Arizona State University, actually found the specimen," said Swords a General Science major from Atlanta. "Dr. J. William Miller, from UNCA, our other co-author, conducted X-ray diffraction and scanning electron microscope analyses on some of the crystals at his UNCA laboratory. The presence of the mineral indicates an eruption temperature of about 700° C."

The only other place where this mineral might have precipitated out of hot gases is at Kudryavy Volcano on one of the Kurile Islands, north of Japan. Ironically, Williams once spent three weeks at Kudryavy, investigating the volcanic gases with one of his graduate students.

"We intend to write a short scientific paper about the mineral for publication in an international mineralogical journal." added Reynolds, who teaches geology classes at Brevard College. "This was one of those serendipitous moments in science. We were just banging on the rocks with our hammers to see what they were.

"We weren't on a mission of discovery; it just fell in our laps. Fortunately, we had the backgrounds to recognize the mineral as something unusual and had access to the equipment necessary to prove our point. The rock that contained the mineral was just a random cobble in a broad stream bed so we still aren't exactly sure where it occurs in outcrop. I hope to return to Landmannalaugar in 2012 with another group. Perhaps we can find the source then."

Students needed for Earth Day Earth plays

BC's Earth Fest is scheduled for April 16. Among other many earth friendly activities and education opportunities on campus that day, Brevard will host a series of short plays, written and preformed by students. The plays will be judged and the winners will receive a donation in their name to an approved charity by the Sierra Club (approximately \$250)

Each play must:

- Be no longer than 5 minutes
- Original material
- Family friendly
- Be performed by students at BC.
- Contain a message of environmental stewardship.

Five judges are also needed. Judges will be selected from the student body as well as be representative of different demographics, backgrounds and interests within the Brevard College community. Judges must be available all day, Saturday, April 16.

Contact John McGuire (mcguirjp@brevard.edu) no later than April 11 if you wish to enter your play to receive a time slot, or would like to volunteer as a judge.

Pastimes History Club presents:

This week in history (April 8 - 14)

April 8, 1820

The Venus de Milo is discovered. The famous armless sculpture was discovered by a Greek peasant in the ruins of the ancient city of Melos. The arms of the statue were reportedly in pieces near the site, one arm draped in fabric and one hand holding an apple. The fame of this statue is mostly due to French propaganda efforts, who, having recently returned art to the Italians that had been taken in the time of Napoleon, wanted to show that their new acquisition was of far greater value.

April 9, 1865

Robert E. Lee surrenders to Ulysses S. Grant, marking the end of the Civil War. The surrender took place at the Appomattox Court House in Virginia following the failure of Lee's Appomattox Campaign in which the Confederate forces were outnumbered more than two-to-one. Following the surrender the Union troops provided the starving Confederate soldiers with rations and allowed them to return to their homes.

April 10, 1912

The Titanic leaves Southampton, England on its way to New York. 2,223 people boarded the ship that day; it was the maiden voyage of the largest and most technologically advanced passenger steamship in the world. Unfortunately, the infamous future shipwreck only carried enough lifeboats for 1,178 of those people. 1,517 died on that voyage, making it one of the deadliest peacetime maritime disasters in history.

April 11, 1976

The Apple I is created. The Apple I was a personal computer and the

first Apple product ever created, each was designed and hand-built by Steve Wozniak, with his good friend Steve Jobs having the idea to sell them. Only about 200 were ever produced.

April 12, 1945

Franklin D. Roosevelt dies in office; Harry Truman is sworn in as the 33rd President. Roosevelt, the president who pulled the United States through the Great Depression and World War II died of a massive stroke on this day while in the middle of sitting for a portrait which is, to this day, unfinished.

April 13, 1970

An oxygen tank on board the Apollo 13 explodes, damaging the spacecraft and endangering the lives of the crew. The explosion was due to damaged wires which caused a short circuit. Nowadays, NASA acknowledges this mission as a "successful failure," in that though the mission's objective was not actualized, the entire crew made it back to earth safely after relying entirely on mission control's ingenuity.

April 14, 1865

Abraham Lincoln is assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. It was the first successful assassination of a United States president, though an attempt had been made previously on Andrew Jackson's life. It was planned by actor John Wilkes Booth as a part of a conspiracy intended to inspire the Confederate troops to continue fighting. Though Lincoln died the next day, the rest of the plot failed, and the conspirators all ended up deceasing themselves, though Booth was shot before he ever made it to trial.