

Sterling Hill Super Dig

April 21, 2010

Greetings again, GlowHounds!

We are in the last week before the big event... On-line registration CLOSED at 1 a.m. on Tuesday, April 20th because there is a lot of work and printing that needs to be done once the registration list is closed ... doing the work early in the week means that when you arrive at the site, you can be quickly checked in and get to having fun -- instead of waiting in a long line while everyone ahead fills out forms, etc. You will still be welcome to register at the site (CASH only), but you will have to wait behind those who are pre-registered and you will have to wait while all the forms and releases are filled out just for you.

We have 114 pre-registered diggers, so it should be an exciting day at the mine! You can see a list of who has already registered using the link on the main UVworld.org page, in case you're wondering if a friend from last year will be there again.

The schedule for the day on Saturday has been finalized and there is now a link to both a web page and a PDF file on the UVworld.org Trip Info web page -- I suggest you print it out and keep it with you at the site. Note that although you can check in early in the morning, no one is allowed into the dig areas until the 9 a.m. "opening bell." Also, digging must end at 11 p.m. sharp -- if you are not out of the dig areas by 11pm you'll be locked in until next year's dig! (check-out will continue after 11pm until everyone is checked out, of course).

For check-in, please be sure you have with you a valid affiliated club membership card (to qualify for the required insurance coverage) -- if you don't have such a card, or you are not a member of an affiliated club, you will be able to join the Delaware Valley Earth Science club at the registration table and you will then be covered by their club insurance. We all seem to get a million address labels in the mail these days -- bring a few along and you can use them on the sign-in forms (save a lot of writing, and they are readable too!) and maybe to share with new friends you meet at the site.

When you drive in the Ogdensburg, NJ area on Saturday, DRIVE CAUTIOUSLY and follow all traffic laws to the letter -- it's been noticed in the past that the Mineral Show and Sterling Digg are seen as a 'field day' for the local police to generate traffic tickets. Follow the local speed limits very carefully, watch out for the places where the speed limit drops down with little warning -- that's where the traps will be, and don't do anything to attract attention to you while driving in the area! Nuff said.

Reminder: be sure to review the Safety Handbook (http://jimcooper.biz/uvworld2/Safety_handbook.pdf) as well as the insurance requirements and Federation safety rules (links on the Trip Info page).

Very important safety info – **REQUIRED** –

- Standard Federation safety rules apply at all times and by all people on the site
- Safety goggles (with UV protection)
- Work boots or good shoes – NO sneakers or sandals
- Hard hats are recommended (not required)

RECOMMENDED gear you should bring along –

- Rain gear (jacket, boots, etc)
- Hat, with a visor for sun-shade
- Sun block
- Sturdy gloves
- Something to drink and eat
- First aid kit
- UV lamps, batteries, etc
- Camera if you're into pictures
- Buckets or a wagon to carry your treasures
- Hammer, pick, shovel etc.
- Lots of cash to spend at the Mineral Show!

BRING YOUR CHILDREN,

they will never forget this expedition and excitement ... especially when they take their new-found "rocks" into the darkened UV tent and see them GLOW right there on the digg site !!

You can rent rock hammers on site, but they are "first come, first served" and not enough for everyone. Short wave lamps will be available in the Black Tent out in the Pit collecting area, and also in the small building at the Mine Run Dump area.

A "new glowhound" Orientation meeting will be held at 10 a.m. to go over details and let you know where things are located and when things will happen. Meet across from the Registration Tent.

Be sure to bring your umbrella and boots so it won't rain!... however, like in the past, the Digg is on whether it rains or not -- we only get one shot each year at this fantastic opportunity site, so come well prepared. And don't forget your safety gear -- goggles, helmets, flashlights/lamps, buckets, Radio Flyer wagon, warm jacket for the evening, etc. (It still gets a bit chilly in the evenings).

A reminder that this event is especially SPECIAL because areas of the Sterling Hill property will be open to us that have not been open to anyone except our Digg registrants (or, for some areas, only for a special few) before. Also, the inside of the giant conveyor will be open to us -- with the really special privilege of picking a piece of the last minerals to come out of the mine on the day it was suddenly shut down. (The quantity to pick from is decreasing each year).

The INSIDE of the mine, with a special UV session, will also be a feature again this year. One of the intriguing situations at the Sterling Hill mine is that it appears to have been running normally one moment and just “shut off” the next moment, with everything left just as it was at the moment things were shut down. In fact, the ore from the mine that was on the conveyor at that moment is still sitting on the conveyor belt! (see above).

Again this year the admission fee, which is the same as it has been for many years, will also include a tour of the MINE as well as the mining museum, conducted by the “docents” (knowledgeable guides) from the museum. At about 7 p.m. there are plans to have a special “blackout” tour of the mine so those with UV lamps can explore the fluorescence IN the mine itself.

In addition, around mid-afternoon there will be a staff-guided tour of the upper mining operations. This area is not open to the public, and has never been open as a regular tour. This area will be open only on this one day, for those participating in the Super Digg. This will be a “camera rich” day as well as a “mineral rich” day! You will get to see the mining equipment up close, in person.

There will NOT be a difference between ‘daytime’ poundage fee and ‘night time’ fee – so there will be no need to close down and re-open for evening/night time collecting. In addition, the age limits this year are more accepting: age 13 and above will be allowed in the “pits” and age 9 and above will be permitted in the “mine run dump area” – which is along the ‘road’ between the Registration Tent and the Pit area. Of course, safety equipment and clothing will be very important.

Have you seen the “fluorescent wall” lit up at night at the Trotter Digg? Did you know that there is also a fluorescent wall at Sterling Hill? This wall has only been “lit up” with UV light for very special Foundation “members only” events. At that time it was found that there is a “horse head” that appears on the wall when it is lit with the UV light. What is intriguing is that the company logo for the NJ Zinc company, that ran this operation, was a horse head! VERY STRANGE INDEED!! We will light up the Sterling Hill wall again this year... a rare and special event.

Still more... the Ellis Observatory is now located with the mining museum -- and weather permitting (not cloudy) those interested will be able to observe the heavens through the telescopes of the observatory.

I'm looking forward to seeing the many "old timers" who come back every year, and also to meeting new folks who have joined us this year for a rare mineral-collecting adventure.

Jeff Winkler

TripMaster – Sterling Hill Annual Digg

