

News from Savannah River National Laboratory

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Media Contact: Lana Cox
Savannah River National Laboratory
803.725.4396
lane.cox@srnl.doe.gov

DOE Media Contact: Bill Taylor
803.952.8564
bill.taylor@srs.gov

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SRNL Researcher Donates Collection for Education

AIKEN, S.C. (May 12, 2014) – When Dr. Carol Jantzen was just one year old; her father gave her a mineral pick. Even though she was barely able to hold the tool, it sparked a lifelong interest in rocks, minerals and fossils. Jantzen is now a Materials Scientist and Geochemist at the Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) and has donated her extensive mineral collection to the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center at the University of South Carolina – Aiken for the creation of the Fredericks Mineral Gallery. The gallery is named for her parents and features a 250-pound feldspar crystal.

Jantzen has been collecting minerals, rocks, and fossils since she was a child. “My dad had me collecting minerals and rocks when I was barely able to walk,” she said. “My father was a geologist and a rock and mineral ‘dealer’. We made educational kits for the Hayden Planetarium and Museum of Natural History in New York City. When I was seven or eight, I got the job of gluing the little numbers on each rock or mineral in the educational kits. I got good at gluing and watching television at the same time. Later, after



Dr. Carol Jantzen with the donated feldspar crystal on display



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I had my BS and MS, I wrote guide books for the educational kits with titles like ‘How is Coal Formed?’ and ‘What is a Mineral?’.”

“My father went on to supply educational kits for schools and later universities around the country, as well as dinosaur bone and other minerals for cereal giveaways. He also bought and sold large quantities of minerals and I was paid in minerals rather than money.” Jantzen said she received the best of the specimens.

Jantzen said it’s important for this collection to continue educating students. “I am a strong believer in science education as I lived it all my life. I hope students learn a love of geology from this collection, a love of earth science and how natural minerals form in wondrous shapes and sizes. The 250-pound feldspar crystal can be touched, stroked, and hugged, so children can run their hands along the crystal faces and consider how neat it is that it wasn’t cut that way, but it grew that way.”

Jantzen said it’s vital for scientists and researchers to share their knowledge with the next generation. “If the current scientists, researchers and collectors do not reach out to the next generation and beyond, we will be a country without scientists. The time to interest a child in science is early. The earlier the interest, the more certain one can be that the boy or girl will carry that interest into adulthood.”

More of Janzen’s collection will be donated to the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center over the next ten years.

The Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) is a multi-program applied research and development laboratory for the U.S. Department of Energy. SRNL applies state-of-the-art science and engineering to provide practical, high-value, cost-effective solutions for our nation’s environmental cleanup, nuclear security and clean energy challenges. Visit us on the web at <http://srnl.doe.gov>

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