

THE ROCKFINDER

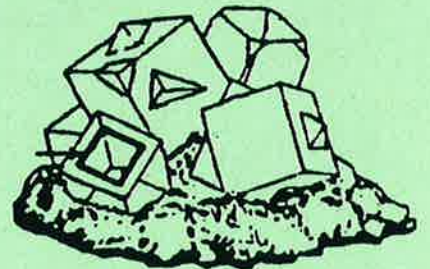
Michiana Gem & Mineral Society
Tom Noe, Editor
305 Napoleon Blvd.
South Bend, IN 46617



NOVEMBER, 1996



THE ROCKFINDER



MICHIANA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY
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Field Trips	Kathy Miller	1106 Clayton Drive, South Bend, IN 46554

THE PURPOSE of the Michiana Gem & Mineral Society is to promote interest in and study of the earth sciences and the lapidary arts, and the sharing of knowledge and techniques.

General meetings are held the fourth Sunday of each month, 2:00 pm EST, at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 805 S. 29th St., South Bend, IN. Exceptions include field trip meetings, June (field trip), July (no meeting), August (club picnic) and December (Christmas Party).

Board meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month, 7:00 pm, St. Joseph County Public Library, basement level.

The annual club show is Labor Day Weekend.

The Michiana Gem & Mineral Society, a not-for-profit organization, is affiliated with the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Rockfinder staff:

Editor, Tom Noe, 305 Napoleon Blvd., South Bend, IN 46617
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Reporters, Bob Heinek, Herb Luckert, club members
 All contributions for publication should be in the hands of the editor by the 10th of each month. Call (219) 289-2028 or (219) 654-3673. Permission is hereby granted to reprint any original *Rockfinder* articles, as long as due recognition is given along with the reprint.

cut _____

Yearly Membership Dues (Payable before January 1)

_____ Individual	\$ 6.50 per year
_____ Family	\$10.00 per year
_____ Junior	\$ 2.00 per year

Please send your dues and this form to
 Michiana Gem & Mineral Society
 c/o Margaret Heinek
 7091 E. East Park Lane, New Carlisle, IN 46552-9400

Please make address corrections to the mailing label (reverse side) and/or fill in the optional information below.

Check your SPECIAL INTERESTS:

List Family Members (spouse and children):

- General Geology _____ Beads _____
 Gems & Minerals _____ Silversmithing _____
 Fossils _____ Artifacts _____
 Cabochons _____ Rockhound _____
 Faceting _____ Crystals _____
 Carving _____ Micromounts _____
 Other _____

- Name _____ Birth Mo/Date _____
 will attend meetings, yes ___ no ___
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 will attend meetings, yes ___ no ___
 Address _____
 Phone _____ Anniversary Mo/Date _____

Name _____
 City, St., Zip _____

THE ROCKFINDER

Volume 36
Number 11



NOVEMBER, 1996

The Newsletter of the
Michiana Gem & Mineral Society

Meeting: Sunday, November 24, 1996
Doors open at 1:30 PM
Meeting begins at 2:00 PM
Guests always welcome.

Place: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
805 S 29th St. (29th & Wall)
South Bend, IN

Hosts: Kathy Miller & Gladys Pacholke

Program: Share your ideas! Okay, so you have unpacked and cleaned your field trip treasures. Now what? Come and share your ideas for cataloging and storing your rocks, fossils and gems. Just bring a few samples from your collection along with examples of your storage and bookkeeping system. I think many of us are looking for suggestions, while others have had their act down for years! So please come and join us for the meeting November 24. I'm sure everyone will benefit from the experience. See you there!

Note: We will also hold elections for club officers.

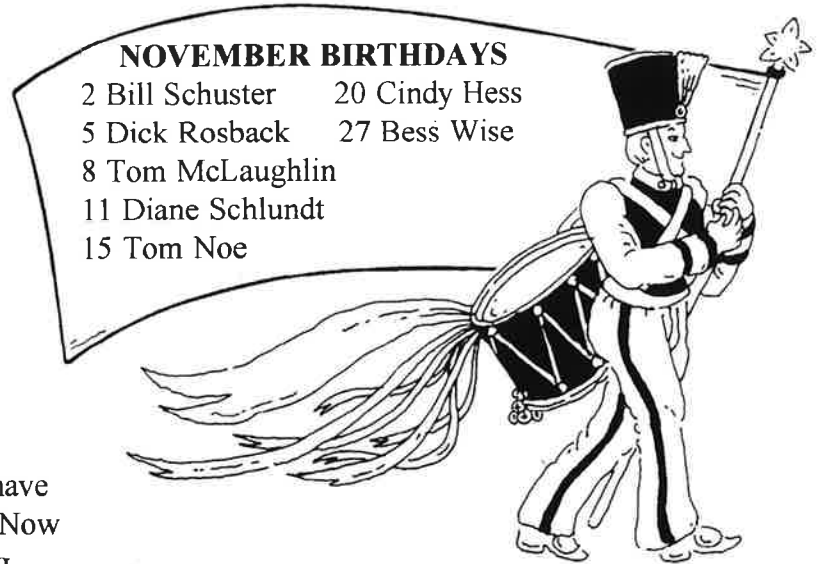
Also note: Bring yearly dues to the meeting, or mail them to Pam Rubenstein before the January 1 deadline.

Up and coming: December 8 Christmas Party.

The proposed slate for club officers in 1997 still has an open slot for the position of secretary from January through April. If you are able to make this four-month commitment, please contact Mike Slattery before Sunday, November 24. 273-9532.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Bill Schuster	20 Cindy Hess
5 Dick Rosback	27 Bess Wise
8 Tom McLaughlin	
11 Diane Schlundt	
15 Tom Noe	



KEEP YOUR ROCKS HONEST

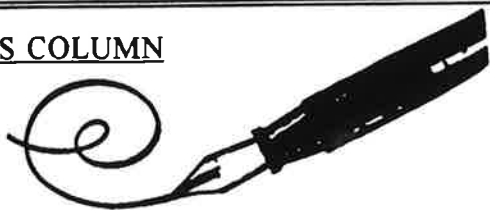
Quarrymen in ancient Rome sometimes rubbed wax on their marble blocks and pillars to conceal cracks and flaws, at least until after the sale was made. Then the wax would wash off in the first rainfall and the imperfections would reappear. The Roman Senate passed a law that all marble purchased by the government had to be "*sine cera*," or "without wax." From this root comes the word "sincere," a word that we use to mean "without deception."

From *Glacier Gravel*

A FUTURE PETRIFIED FOREST?

A future petrified forest with a great number of standing trees has been started at the site of Mt. St. Helens. Trees were blown into lake water with enough material in their roots to sink them so that they are upright but under water. Scientists believe that there may be a petrified forest in 10 or 20 million years.

From *The Mountain Gem* (Feb., 1996)

MARGARET'S COLUMNHAPPY THANKSGIVING.

Where has the year gone? Here it is almost Thanksgiving and Christmas is not too far behind! Most of the people I have talked to say they have gotten quite a bit of their shopping done. I haven't even started.

Remember, November will be election of officers; come out and vote. The nominating committee has presented their slate, so let us show our appreciation by coming and vote. If anyone would like to nominate a club member for any of the offices, you may do so, just make sure you have their permission to nominate them.

Our Christmas/Holiday pot luck will be on December 8th at 1:30 at our regular meeting place. The club will furnish the meat, coffee, punch and rolls. Let someone on the board know what kind of meat you would like, beef or chicken.

Reservations are requested by signing up at the November meeting, or phoning Margaret at 654-3673 or Marie at 272-7209, this will help us know how much meat to purchase. PLEASE let us know! We hope all Club members will come and celebrate the season with us. Let us know what you are willing to do to help with the preparation and activities. There will be a gift exchange, something rock related, gifts should cost \$3.00 to \$5.00. Men buy for men, women for women and juniors for juniors, please mark category.

Pam would like to have your dues at the November meeting, or by mail, and if we have them before January 1, we will be able to print the membership roster early. Make checks payable to Michiana Gem & Mineral Society.

Our sincere sympathy to Jessica Zeiger and her family, on the death of Jessie's mother, Mary K. Martin on Nov. 1st.

Ask Kathy Miller what she is doing to clean crystals, and make them really sparkle.

See you at the meeting on November 25th!!

Update: HR 2943 - The Fossil Preservation Act of 1996 (Excerpts from article by George Loud, AFMS Conservation & Legislation Chairman)

As of this writing, Congress is in recess for the political conventions. Marion Zenker, Legislative Co-coordinator for the American Lands Access Association (ALA) tells me that Senator Keyhole (D-WI) intends to introduce a bill into the Senate as a companion to HR 2943. Marion believes that we have a 'fighting chance' to have the legislation passed by Congress in the current session and requests that we write our Senator in support of the Senate bill once it is introduced by Senator Keyhole. Upon introduction into the Senate, I will do my best to advise you on the number assigned to the Senate bill so that it can be identified in correspondence with the Senators representing your state.

If you have followed the progress of HR 2943, you are aware that Sarah Dahlin in the office of Tim Johnson (D-SD) has assumed primary responsibility for securing passage of the bill by the U.S. House of Representatives. Tim Johnson is now seeking election to the United States Senate and will not return to the House, regardless of the outcome of that Senate election in South Dakota. Accordingly, looking ahead to a new Congress and a new session in January, if not enacted in this session, ALA will need to find someone else to take primary responsibility for reintroduction of the legislation in the House. The logical choice would be Congressman Joe Skeen (R-NM) who is now a primary cosponsor of HR 2943.

via EFMLS News, 9/96

* * * * *

AFMS 50th Anniversary Celebration

Jackson, Mississippi

October 17 -19, 1997

On June 12, 1947, the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies came into existence at Salt Lake City, Utah. The commemoration of its 50th anniversary began in Riverside, CA, in August 1996, and will continue through the joint EFMSL-AFMS show hosted by the Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society at the Fairgrounds in Jackson, Miss. The weather should be nearly perfect. Plan on being there. More about this show later.

SCIENCE ALIVE!-St Joseph County Public Library

The Michiana Gem & Mineral Society has been asked once again to participate in the library's Science Alive! to be held on Friday morning Feb. 7th, 1997, 9:30 - 11:30 am, and Saturday Feb. 8th 1997, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm.

My thought is that we should take displays and machinery for Petosky polishing. We need members that are willing to be there and demonstrate.

They are also asking for a donation. A discussion about this will be held in November so that the form can be sent back to the library by Monday, November 25th. That is one day after our meeting.

**Now for something to be concerned about:
Federal Government To License Rockpicks**

At this time of political rhetoric, promises, and threats, the following was lifted and edited from *Lithosphere* 4/96.

"As part of a sweeping set of new federal regulatory guidelines, the US Congress has created an office within the Department of Interior to license and register public ownership of rock hammers. The legislation, signed into law on November 31 of last year, established the Hammer and Rockpick Department (HARD). For this purpose HARD Director, I.M. Phulin, stated that starting January 1, the public will be required to register all currently owned and newly purchased rock hammers by completing a form obtainable from gem and mineral dealers. A completed form must include an inked imprint of the hammer's striking surface and a profile of the hammer's head. Predictably many mineral collectors of anonymity stated: "The only way they'll take my rockpick is if they pry it from my cold, dead fingers!""

* * * * *

**MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 20, 1996,
MICHIANA GEM AND MINERAL
SOCIETY AT OUR REDEEMER LUTHE-
RAN CHURCH**

President Heinek opened the meeting at 2:05 P.M. Lisa Gilman was introduced as a new member and Diana Flora was a guest. Everyone welcomed them.

Sister Jeanne entertained a motion to accept the minutes as printed in the ROCKFINDER. All members were in favor.

Pam Rubenstein read the treasurer's report which will be filed for audit.

Jessie Zeiger read letters from the Midwest Federation regarding our club getting credit for \$36.50 from sale of material donated by Bill Crull at McComb, IL. Club now at 900%.

Mike Slattery read the names for election of officers for 1997 as follows:

President	Margaret Heinek
Vice President	Emily Johnson
Secretary	Marie Crull(May - Dec) (Jan - Apr)
Treasurer	Pam Rubenstein
Liaison	Mike Slattery

Everyone recognized Bonnie Brueske and Kathy Miller for the fine job done on the September field trip. Also to Matt Brueske for finding the spots to hunt fossils. Several members brought in their findings from the trip to share with each other.

President Heinek received a request for our club to help with Science Alive at the library in 1997.

Christmas Party will be held on December 8th at the church.

Bessie Wise and Addie Niebauer thanked people for coming to see what they had for sale.

Leo Heynssens ask club members to come and see his petrified wood he got in the Blue Forest. Please call him first at 232-5050.

A video on wire wrapping was shown to the members.

Thank you to Loraine Jordan and Mike Slattery for the goodies!

Prizes were given to Mark Oakley, Matt Oakley, Gladys Pacholke, Herb and Phyllis Luckert and Margaret Schultz.

There were 24 adults, 3 juniors and 1 guest present.

Respectfully Submitted
Marie Crull, Secretary



LETTER OF THANKS RECEIVED

Kathy Miller, our field trip chair, received the following letter from the head of the Limper Geology Museum at Miami University, who hosted a visit by club members during the field trip in September.

Dear Kathy,

Thank you for your kind letter of October 6. It was my pleasure to meet your knowledgeable and enthusiastic club members. Most of the museum's visitors have little background in geology and so they move through quickly, stopping to view only the most eye-catching specimens, which are generally minerals. The Michiana Society members studied our fossil displays and were generous in their comments. I enjoyed your visit very much and hope that you will return soon.

Please thank the members of your club for the generous contribution to the Limper Museum. It was unexpected, but greatly appreciated and it will be utilized to further our outreach programs.

Sincerely yours, Joe H. Marak

The club field trip to Hueston Woods in September gave our members the chance to collect some finely preserved fossils and to enjoy one another's company. Pam Rubenstein took the photo above; the group shot is from Kathy Miller.





AMERICAN LANDS ACCESS ASSOCIATION INC.

Dear Club Members:

RE: American Lands Access Association, Inc. (ALAA)

Some really substantial progress has been made toward getting federal legislation enacted to protect the rights of amateurs to collect fossils from public lands. A feat that has never before been accomplished by an organization such as ALAA has now taken place in the U.S. House of Representatives, where HR 2943, the Fossil Preservation Act of 1996, has been introduced. This bill is ready for committee consideration and has been referred to the National Parks and Lands Subcommittee of the House Resources Committee. We hear that the subcommittee membership is favorable to it.

Prime House sponsors of HR 2943 are representatives Tim Johnson of South Dakota and Joe Skeen of New Mexico. (Cosponsors now signed on are David Obey, Wisconsin; Pat Kennedy and Christopher Shays, Connecticut; Carlos Romero-Barceilo, Puerto Rico; Owen Pickett, Virginia; Blanche Lincoln, Arkansas; William Lipinski, Illinois; Bill Emerson, Missouri; and John Porter, Illinois. On the Senate side, Herbert Kohl of Wisconsin has indicated that he will introduce a companion bill into that body in July. Verbal commitments for cosponsorship have been received from Senators Tom Daschle, South Dakota; Larry Craig and Dirk Kempthorne, Idaho; and Conrad Burns, Montana.

As can be seen from the above listing, we have good Midwest support in the Senate but need more representatives from the Midwestern states to sign on. That is where everyone reading this can be of help. WRITE A SIMPLE LETTER to your congressman, telling him you are in favor of this legislation and asking him to support it. Even though we have senatorial support from the Midwest, we need more.

The ball is rolling now, so let's keep it rolling!

ALAA has been the primary drafter of this bill and has expended a great deal of effort to move it as far along as it is now. We have been criticized for not expending more efforts on other aspects of public lands usage by rockhounds, but the fact is, whether you are a fossil collector or not, you will benefit if this legislation becomes law. Harassment of fossil collectors by land management personnel is common. If allowed to continue, this will become even more pervasive than it already is in other types of collecting. Getting a firm statutory base for fossil collecting will greatly help us in combating harassment in other areas. Furthermore, our critics should note that we are not exclusively fossil people and that, while our primary thrust thus far has been the fossil bill, we have worked on and been instrumental in getting problems corrected in other areas also.

ALAA is the only national organization whose goals are solely devoted to aiding the rockhound through lobbying and influencing of public land management activity, and our budget has been severely strained in doing what we have done so far. For this reason, WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A PLEA FOR EVERYONE WHO IS INTERESTED IN ROCKHOONDING TO JOIN OUR ORGANIZATION. The annual dues of \$25.00 should, in our opinion, be viewed by anyone who is a rockhound as a small price to pay in support of an effort to preserve his freedom to collect. Rockhound support for the American Lands Access Association (ALAA) has thus far been, well, dismal. If you care at all about field collecting, please support the ALAA by joining. A form for ALAA membership is below and may be duplicated.

The ALAA is a separate organization with its own charter, bylaws and officers. The fact that it was formed by members of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies at an AFMS show is of no consequence. The ALAA is currently supported by a relatively small number of members. It actively attempts to protect the collecting rights of all rockhounds, including all members of the AFMS, which means YOU. ALAA is a small organization with very little support. In fact, their coffers are practically empty. They are so small that they can only effectively focus on one thing at a time. They initially focused upon fossils because

there was a real threat to a loss of all fossil collecting rights for amateurs. In that effort they achieved tremendous success. To write a bill and get it introduced into Congress is almost unheard of for a small organization. ALAA deserves congratulations, your support AND YOUR HELP.

The bottom line is that you need to get involved in your organization. That includes your club, the MWF, the AFMS, and the ALAA. Only if a significantly larger portion of our membership get involved will our organization(s) prosper.

Sincerely,

Kathy & Bob

Kathy & Bob Miller, ALAA Representatives

(This letter was sent to all MWF Indiana clubs. It includes excerpts taken from articles by ALAA directors John Alf, Dr. Robert Carlson and George Loud.)



AMERICAN
LANDS
ACCESS
ASSOCIATION, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please enroll me as a member of the ALAA!
Annual Membership Fee: \$ 25.00

---- Protecting the Public Lands for the Public ----

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ HOBBY INTEREST _____

CLUB AFFILIATION _____

Remit fees to: ALAA, R. Ed. Romack, Treasurer, 655 Eighth Street, Idaho Falls, ID 83401

The A.L.A.A. is a 501(c)(4) organization. Its purpose is promoting and ensuring the right of the amateur hobby collecting, recreational prospecting and mining, and the use of public and private lands for educational and recreational purposes; and to carry the voice of all amateur collectors and hobbyists to our elected officials, government regulators and public land managers. Contributions to the A.L.A.A. are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal Tax Purposes.

The U.S. Geological Survey has 125 pamphlets available on all sorts of rockhound-related topics, and they're free. Ask for an order blank from Geological Survey Branch of Information Services, Box 25386 Denver Federal Center, MS306, Denver, CO 80255. (I hear they also have videos available for rent, but that may not be the same address.)

Note to Windows users on the computer: Check out the "Software for Rockhounds" feature on the Internet at Bob's Rock Shop. Lots of programs are available for download, including one for identifying minerals.

CLEANING MINERAL SPECIMENS

by John Betts

(continued from last month)

Muriatic Acid

Now we are going to get more aggressive with our mineral cleaning techniques. Hydrochloric acid is available in most hardware stores as muriatic acid. It is sold in one-gallon containers and is used to clean masonry and as a rust remover, which is what we will use it for. In spite of its availability, it is dangerous. Do not inhale the fumes or get any on your skin or in your eyes. Always wear gloves and eye protection and old clothes. Keep your arms covered, even if it is a hot day. Always observe the safety precautions on the container.

There are two main uses for hydrochloric acid: removing carbonates such as calcite that often are the last minerals to form in a pocket and therefore are obscuring other mineral crystals, and the more aggressive removal of iron oxide rust stains (faster than oxalic acid). The former use is the more common and often produces staggeringly beautiful specimens because the calcite being dissolved protected the minerals underneath. If hydrochloric acid is being used to remove iron oxides, you should be sure that the specimen has no carbonates that you want to keep. The acid will dissolve them. No matter which minerals you are cleaning, always test your cleaning agents on lesser pieces to make sure you will not ruin your best pieces. The basic procedure is: First, wash your minerals carefully in water to remove any loose sand and dirt. This will make the acid last as long as possible. Sand and dirt contain iron oxide and will exhaust your acid quickly. Place your minerals in a large plastic container with a lid that can be tightly sealed. I prefer a five-gallon joint compound bucket found at construction sites.

Let your specimens dry and move the container outdoors to an area with good ventilation. Pour in enough acid to cover the specimens. Always wear heavy rubber gloves and be very careful not to splash any acid on yourself.

Depending on what you are removing with the acid, you will want to leave the specimens in from 5 minutes to 5 days.

If you are etching carbonates or calcite off a specimen, then you should check it after five minutes. Be careful not to inhale any fumes when checking the progress. When removing calcite or marble from specimens, the action is very fast and active. Your bucket should be large enough to prevent the bubbling foam from overflowing.

If you are removing rust stains from quartz, the action can take up to a day and is less energetic. When removing the "sphalerite" crust on quartz crystals from the Spring Glen Mine in Ellenville, it is not uncommon to repeat three-day sessions, removing any loose material between each session.

You can place the lid on the bucket to prevent children and animals from exposure (but provide a small vent hole for relieving gas pressure). According to Jerry Call, a commercial mine owner in Brazil and North Carolina, you should not leave the bucket in the light. He says this results in a yellow stain. Whether light is the source of the stain I cannot tell, but it is not uncommon for some residual acid/rust stain to remain after your first treatment. Then you need a second treatment in fresh, clean acid reserved for such a purpose. You will see the stain disappear quite quickly and you can remove your specimens for neutralizing and washing. This final batch can be diluted 1:1 with water. When diluting, always add acid to water, NOT WATER TO ACID.

People neutralize the acid in many different ways. I prefer to dissolve ordinary household baking soda in a bucket of warm water, then immerse the specimens in it (after a brief pre-rinse). Let them sit in the baking soda solution for 15 minutes, then proceed with washing.

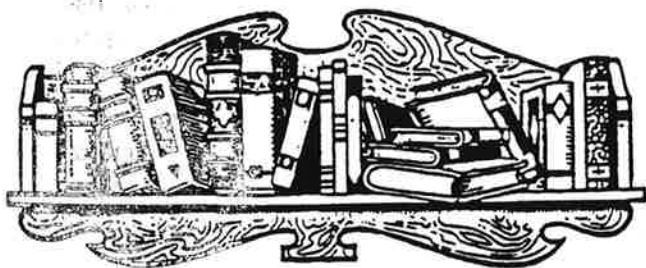
Because the acid has penetrated the specimen, it is best to wash it very thoroughly. I prefer the rule of thumb of washing three times the time the specimen was in acid. If you just briefly dipped it for 5 minutes to remove some calcite, then a 15-minute wash will be adequate. But if you left in your quartz specimens for a full day, then you should wash them for at least three days. The washing is essentially placing them in clean water and keeping the water clean as the acid diffuses out of the specimens. It is best if you can set a water supply on a slow trickle into the bucket to constantly provide clean water. Otherwise, changing the water as often as possible will work. If

you are washing for a full day, then a water-change schedule like this would be appropriate: change the water every 15 minutes for an hour; then every hour for four hours; then every four hours for the rest of the day.

As the acid is used up, it will eventually turn yellow/green/brown. It can be used until it is no longer effective or until it starts to stain your specimens. If you are using it to dissolve carbonates or calcite, the acid will exhaust itself long before the color changes. You will see that it no longer actively dissolves the calcite. It should then be discarded. You can fully neutralize your old acid with crushed limestone or marble or with baking soda. When it no longer fizzes, then you can dispose of the acid safely.

A last warning--if you are removing calcite from a specimen, do not dissolve all the calcite. Often it may be the only thing holding the specimen together. A little calcite can provide a nice contrast and make it more aesthetic.

(continued next month)



WORTH NOTING

Research by scientists at MIT, reported in the October *Nature*, shows through mathematical modeling that some stromatolites may not be fossil byproducts of microbial life, as often thought. Some types could have formed strictly through physical processes. However, there are still good reasons to believe that most stromatolites are biological in origin.

From *South Bend Tribune* (Oct. 17, 1996)

In the Blue Mountains of Wollemi National Park in Australia, pine trees believed to have been extinct for 125 million years have been discovered alive and well. They have been named the Wollemi Pines, and last year horticulturists succeeded in germinating a seed from one of the trees.

From *Hy Grader*

The *Mankato Free Press* reports that Scott Gooler was on a hunt for clay when he came across some 95-million-year-old leaves near Courtland, MN. The find is important because at least 15 species of leaves were found, which indicates the environment back then (Cretaceous) might have also had large animals such as dinosaurs, though no bones have yet been found.

Element 112 has been created in Darmstadt, Germany, by a team at GSI, the center for heavy ion studies. Researchers succeeded in making a single nucleus of the element, which has not yet been named. They fused a zinc ion with a lead nucleus, and the element lasted for about a millisecond.

From *Science News* (March 2, 1996)

Research into deep ice cores taken in Greenland has revealed chemical traces that map the progress of mining in human history. For example, signs of copper smelting start showing up around 2,500 years ago, during the heyday of ancient Greece. The rise and fall of trace evidence parallels what we know from historical and other records.

From *Science News* (April 6, 1996)

Robert Bakker has announced that his studies of the small *Drinker nisti* dinosaur indicate that it could climb quite well. The ankle had five ball and socket joints, which would have allowed movement in any direction. Since this is one of the earlier dinosaurs, Bakker believes that later members, including the raptors, retained the flexible ankles. So, if you're ever being chased by a raptor, a tree won't provide any protection.

From *New Scientist* (June 22, 1996)

A flawless ruby weighing about 9 1/2 pounds and said to be the world's largest has been discovered in northern Myanmar. The 21,450-carat stone was found in the gem-mining region of Mogok, 435 miles north of Yangon. No estimate of the stone's value was given. Reports say the ruby will be put on display at the state museum and will not be cut or sold.

From (Minneapolis) *Star Tribune* (May 16, 1996)