

Michiana Gem & Mineral Society  
Jason Hefner, Editor  
229 East State St  
Etna Green, IN 46524



May 2011 Volume 51 Number 5



# THE ROCKFINDER



**We're on the Web! See us at: <http://www.sauktown.com/Michiana>**

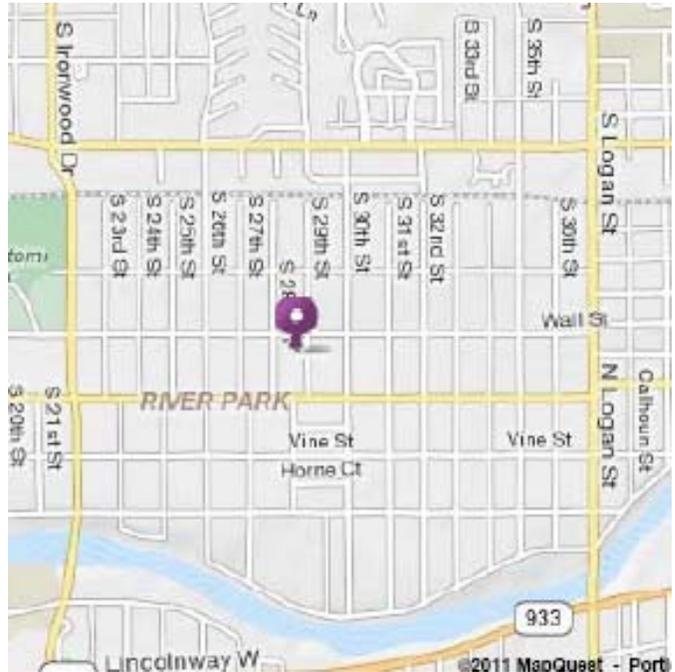
The purpose of the Michiana Gem & Mineral Society is to promote the study and enjoyment of the earth sciences and the lapidary arts, and to share lapidary knowledge and techniques. General meetings are usually held the fourth Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m. at,

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
805 S. 29th St.,  
South Bend, IN.  
Please see the map to the right.

Doors usually open at 1:30 for meet & greet time.

Regular meeting exceptions include May (third Sunday), July (Club Picnic), August (Club Show) and the November/December meeting and Christmas party.

Board meetings are held before the monthly meetings. The annual club show is in late August.



**DUES**

Yearly Membership Dues are payable by December 15th of each year. Please chose type of membership below.

- Individual \$15.00     Family \$20.00
- Junior \$1.00         Subscriber \$7.50

Please indicate areas of special interest.

- General Geology     Gems & Minerals
- Fossils              Micro mounts
- Crystals             Field Trips
- Cabochons          Faceting
- Carving             Beads
- Jewelry Making

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City, ST, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
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Please send your dues and the bottom half of this form to:



Please read and sign this section

With my signature I hereby release the Michiana Gem and Mineral Society, Inc., and its individual members and the owners of any premises upon which I enter under permit granted to the society, absolutely free of any liability whatsoever, to my person or property, and further I will respect the equipment and property of the aforesaid owners.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Family Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Michiana Gem & Mineral Society  
c/o Marty Perry  
29154 Frailey Dr  
Elkhart, IN 46514

# THE ROCKFINDER

Volume 51 Number 5  
May 2011

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Michiana Gem and Mineral Society  
([www.sauktown.com/Michiana](http://www.sauktown.com/Michiana)), is a not-for-profit organization affiliated with the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies <http://www.amfed.org/mwf/> and with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies [www.amfed.org](http://www.amfed.org)

The *Rockfinder* is published monthly except July and August.

Please note that all items for a given issue of the *Rockfinder* are due to the **Editor** no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the previous month. This means that the due date for the March Issue will be February 5<sup>th</sup>. Advance items are appreciated. Material may be e-mailed to [hefner\\_family@hotmail.com](mailto:hefner_family@hotmail.com) or submitted via the U.S. Mail.

Editor:  
Jason Hefner  
229 East State St  
Etna Green, IN 46524

Permission is hereby granted to reprint any original *Rockfinder* articles as long as recognition is given along with the reprint.



## Kathy's Column - President Kathy Miller

We made it through a long winter and a soggy spring, now it is **our** season to start collecting! With one fine field trip behind us in April, I am looking forward to this month's for fossils. Field Trip Chair, John Davis has really found some neat places to collect. For anyone who may have gone to the Lafarge quarry on May 7, please bring in some of your finds to display.

I hope all who attended the April meeting had a chance to see the aluminum lanterns our junior members made under the guidance of Trista McIntosh with Ed Miller helping. It was a great way to teach them about metals. Thank you Trista and Ed.

As always Co-Host Linda Miller, with the aid of our monthly hostesses and other members who contributed additional snacks produced a refreshment table fit for royalty. I'll bet our club rates #1 in fellowship refreshments for all occasions!

[Continued on Page 2](#)

## Up & Coming

**Next Meeting:**  
**May 22, 2011**

Visitors are always welcome. Doors open at 1:30 and meeting starts at 2:00.

**Place:**  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
805 S 29<sup>th</sup> Street  
(29<sup>th</sup> & Wall)  
South Bend, IN.  
This is in the River Park area.

**Refreshments:**  
Jan Pellus  
Florie Schuler  
Jessie Zeiger  
Lois Krillenberger

**Program:**  
To be announced.



## Board of Directors

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574-291-0332

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269-465-5814

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269-683-4088

Webmaster: Jim Daly  
219-778-2196

## Kathy's Column..... continued from Page 1

Special thanks go to all the members who brought in so many displays to share, it is fun and educational for everyone.

Please make a point to attend this month's meeting on May 22. This is the last one until we come together at our July 31st picnic at Potawatomi Park. Marie Crull, Show Chairman will have more information about our annual club show, her Chair people will continue to pass around signup sheets for their area of expertise and Linda Miller and Carrie Brown will have the club picnic signup sheet too.

Bob and I will be attending the Midwest Federation spring meeting in Kalamazoo, MI this month held at their annual show. Not only will we be listening to MWF reports, but I will be checking out their hospitality room for ideas for us, and Bob will be on the hunt for new or additional demonstrators. We are also taking a stack of our show flyers to hand out 😊 !

During the coming months Editor, Jason Hefner will continue to send The Rockfinder out to you by email or hard copy (paper) mail, he is doing a super job with that and The Rockfinder. Please be sure and let Jason know which way you would like our newsletter delivered to you. There will be a Rockfinder for June and a picnic reminder sent out in July.

That's it for now, I am going outside to see if all that rain helped us wash off more mud from the fluorite we collected, see you at the May meeting.

Rock on ----- **Kathy**

## March Minutes – Secretary Michelle Winters

The April meeting was called to order with 37 adults and 6 juniors attending John Davis made motion to accept the minutes from the previous month meeting and sister Jean seconded it...

New Guest in attendance was Kathy Smith from Elkhart ( Welcome )

Liaison - Linda Garwood is doing a fabulous job and brought in lots of information on other up and coming shows and sales ( Good job keep it coming )

Mike Skoczylas- over the displays area had a lot nice displays brought in as well.

Ed Miller - brought in 2 Michiana Gem & Mineral history books.

## March Minutes continued from page 2

John Davis - talked about the latest field trip to Kentucky and stated that there was 22 people in attendance and the weather was great there and they found lots of neat specimens.

Junior Leader - Trish McIntosh- had the juniors busy making lanterns and had the juniors learning about metals from metal coffee cans (big and small ones) very creative and neat idea to make with little cash out of pocket (thanks!).

Joe Perry- spoke about having the club show flyers and passed them out and if you are in need if any, please contact Joe Perry.

Marie Crull - Sign UP SHEETS ARE READY - to bring food to the Club show in August and to the July Club Picnic, please contact her if you have any questions.

Patty Enos - has the Volunteer sign up sheets for the show (for workers) please contact her about this if you have any questions.

Lana - has the sign up sheet for the Kids Korner is looking for volunteers to help in this area, please contact her with any questions.

The meeting was adjourned - by David Peltz and was seconded by Tom Church (hopefully I got this right this month).

Jesse Zeiger- has a huge piece of coral (that her daughter in law found while cleaning her sons bedroom) that came from Bloomington, In. and she hopes to bring this in soon for show.

Randy Hill - spoke of a friend of his who makes animal calls out of ceramics, wood, stones, and slate and will contact him to see if he will do a program in the near future for our club meeting.

Michelle

## Field Trip Announcement

### Duff Quarry collecting trip

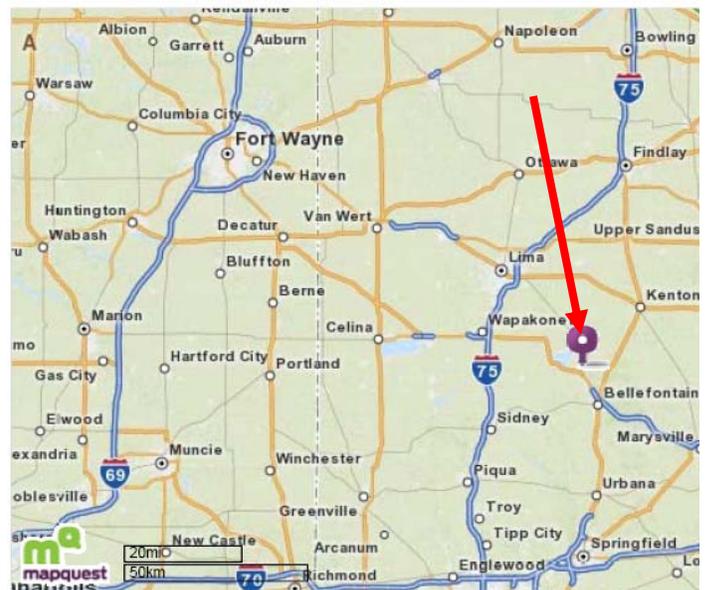
I have scheduled a collecting trip for Duff Quarry in Huntsville, Ohio. This trip takes 4 hrs to drive and our meeting time will be at 11:30 am, on Saturday June 4th. We will have the quarry for our pleasure until 4:30 or 5:00. On this trip you can expect to find dolomite, sphalerite, fluorite and some fabulous pyrites.

This quarry is somewhat dangerous due to loose shale and sharp edges on the rocks, so I would advise leaving small children home for this trip. Safety equipment required will be hard hat and long pants. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call me. I am including a link to their official site and also their mineral site.

John Davis  
(574) 232-8823  
Cell (574) 850-3219

<http://duffquarry.com/locations.html>

<http://vasichkominerals.com/Dufflatest.html>



# Junior Rockhounds

Metals are usually solid, good conductors of electricity and heat, shiny when clean, strong and malleable (meaning they can be bent and shaped).

Gold is shiny and doesn't corrode, this means it is a great metal for making jewelry.

The chemical symbol used for silver is Ag, this comes from the Latin word for silver, argentum.

While aluminum is the most common metal found in the Earth's crust, the most common metal found on Earth is iron, mostly because it makes up such a large part of the Earth's core.

Copper is a good conductor of electricity and is often used for making wires.

At room temperature, mercury is the only metal that is in liquid form.

Aluminum is a good conductor of heat and is often used to make cooking pots.

Alkali metals such as sodium, potassium, rubidium, caesium and francium are extremely reactive elements, just putting them in water can result in an explosion! They are carefully stored in oil to prevent this happening.

Tungsten has a very high melting point, after carbon it has the second highest melting point of all elements.

Metals are strong and are useful for making tools, buildings, bridges and other structures where strength is important.

Steel is an important alloy that is created from a mixture of metals, mostly iron. There are many different types of steel including stainless steel, galvanized steel and carbon steel. Steel is commonly used to make a number of products including knives, machines, train rails, cars, motors and wires.

Bronze is a metal alloy made from copper and tin. Copper makes up the larger amount, usually between 80 to 95%.

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/metals.html>

## Metal is the Word!

Y O H Z Y A N L B S R S P W R B E E Y C  
 H R K I C P J I P R R S L X E L W I N H  
 F K U N J Q H F C M R A A E P P E J C A  
 H I J C L S W E E K Z R T M P O T A Z L  
 C C W E R O D T M Z E B I U O B I N D C  
 K A E R B E E N U A R L N Z C I H X Y O  
 H T B X Q O M I E T T K U M G C C J B P  
 S L A E R P M A Z B P I M N I T A V A Y  
 G O G I T F J G L F S C T U T N L M H R  
 K L T F U I O A G E T I T E N G A M B I  
 T E S A A L S V N U U K F S M N M D U T  
 S X I C D F F A R W V A N V E X A J H E  
 R K L G P D A Q C X X E T J D J L O B D  
 V U V Q Z M H Q N R T F F O C N L A E Q  
 W R E U E G Y Q N T A S H X Z K U Z B I  
 A V R T J S B M A I E M T F C X N O W N  
 L W A G R J A L U M I N U M I O I G J D  
 O L I H K U F R L U Q N X T R K Y K A Y  
 Y S L W R L X U M M Q G E B I R O N C S  
 E T I R U Z A P Y R I T E U Q S J K I P

ALUMINUM	AZURITE
BAUXITE	BENDS
BRASS	BREAK
BRONZE	CHALCOPYRITE
COPPER	FLATTENS
GOLD	HEMATITE
IRON	LEAD
MAGNETITE	MALACHITE
MARCASITE	MERCURY
METAL	METEORITES
NICKEL	PLATINUM
PYRITE	SILVER
STEEL	TIN
ZINC	

I would like to give a special thanks to all of the members that donated coffee cans for the Junior's projects!

## Trista

## American Federation of Mineralogical Societies News

### From The Top! by Bob Miller, President

I'm Ba-a-a-ck !

Altho some might ponder over that. I'm getting to feel like a rusty old car. Had to get my tail pipe fixed and now I'm busy with getting new head lights installed !!

May is a great time of the year in Northern Indiana with the snow finally melted here and the sap buckets that are seen attached to the many maple trees plus the many spring flowers that are coming up. With the snow gone you're now able to go out and rediscover the treasures found last year, The ones you decided to leave out, but now reconsider and decide that maybe they look more usable so you bring them inside, with the others from the year before that, After you make room putting the ones from the year before that back outside.

It is nice to see that the Endowment fund raffle is getting so many donations, but don't forget to purchase a ticket for the raffle. You could be a winner of one of these prizes. Continued on Page 8

AFMS Newsletter – May 2011

## Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies News Copper Country Mineral Retreat

by Darlene Comfort – May 2011 MWF News

The Copper Country Mineral Retreat, which is taking place this year August 8th through the 13th, now has the scheduled events and registration form available on the museum's website. Please visit [www.museum.mtu.edu](http://www.museum.mtu.edu) and click on the Copper Country Mineral Retreat tab to view all the details. On Thursday, August 11th, during the museum's open house, small groups will be able to preview the entire exhibit space (all mess included) as well as the collection management part of the building (not accessible to the public). To make this a fun event, there will also be an outdoor picnic. To participate in the food, you must pre-register. Make your plans to attend this year's **COPPER COUNTRY MINERAL RETREAT! From J.C. and Donna Moore:** If you have never attended this mineral retreat, you have missed a really fun week. It starts with the swap and show in Ishpeming, MI. They normally have 2 field trips included in their agenda. Then the action moves to the Keweenaw Peninsula/Houghton/ Hancock/Calumet, etc. for the field trips, swap, and open houses, etc. The weekend brings an open house at Keweenaw Gem & Gift and the Copper Country Club's Show. With the old mine piles disappearing due to materials being used for roads, etc., it is hard to tell how much longer this mineral retreat will be held. Granted, there are lots of fun activities to do in the area, but this has been so much fun to participate in for us for many years.....



### Purpose of the AFMS

To promote popular interest and education in the various Earth Sciences, and in particular the subjects of Geology, Mineralogy, Paleontology, Lapidary and other related subjects, and to sponsor and provide means of coordinating the work and efforts of all persons and groups interested therein; to sponsor and encourage the formation and international development of Societies and Regional Federations and by and through such means to strive toward greater international good will and fellowship.

[www.amfed.org](http://www.amfed.org)



### Purpose of the MWF

To promote interest and education in geology, mineralogy, paleontology, archaeology and lapidary, and to sponsor and provide means of coordinating the work and efforts of groups interested in these fields.

[www.amfed.org/mwf](http://www.amfed.org/mwf)

## Coming Events

### May

14-15: BEREA, OH. 43rd Annual Show, Parma Lapidary Club, Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds, 164 Eastland Rd, Sat 9:00-6:00, Sun 10:00-5:00, Contact: John Zaborowski, 926 Lake Breeze Rd, Sheffield Lake, OH, 44054, (440) 949-8242, [j751@centurytel.net](mailto:j751@centurytel.net)

21-22 Rock and Mineral Sale, Marv & Kitty Starbuck. 7636 East V Ave, Vicksburg, MI 269-649-1 991 cell1-231-740-5512. Sat 9 - 6, Sun 9 - 4

### June

10-11-12, 2011 MISSOURI MINES ROCK SWAP 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sunday, Historic Site on south side of Highway 32, 1.5 miles west of US Highway 67

11: SKOKIE, IL, 3rd Annual Geodefest, Chicago Rocks & Minerals Society, St Peter's United Church of Christ, 8013 Laramie Ave, Sat 1:00-5:00, Contact: Jeanine Mielechi, 6304 W Highland Av, Chicago, IL 60646, (773) 774-2054, [jaynine9@aol.com](mailto:jaynine9@aol.com)

11-12: CARROLLTON, MI, Annual Seminar, Michigan Geology & Gemcraft Society, Carrollton Middle School, Sat 9:00-5:00, Sun 9:00-4:00, Contact Donald Brown, 32832 Illinois, Livonia, MI 48150 (734) 421-8159

24-26: BLOOMINGTON, IN. 46th Annual Show & Swap, Lawrence County Rock Club, Inc., Monroe County 4-H Fairgrounds, Airport Rd & Hwy 45, Fri 10:00 AM-6:30 PM (setup 8:00 A.M.), Sat 9:00 AM-6:30PM, Sun 10:00 AM-4:00 PM, Contact :Dave Treffinger, 13101 E 250 N, Loogootee, IN 47553, (812) 295-3463

## Is your granite countertop killing you?

Popular Mineralogy newsletter #29, ©2009, Andrew A. Sicree, Ph.D.

For trendy, up-scale kitchens, granite countertops are all the rage. They are beautiful, durable, and expensive. But over the past several years, concerns have been growing over the fact that some granite countertops are rather radioactive. Could they be a health hazard?

### Not all granite is granite

Strangely enough, much of the granite sold for "granite countertops" is not true granite. The ornamental cut stone trade has two broad classes of materials. Stone dealers tend to label all carbonate rock as "marble" and all silicate rock "granite." Sold as "marble," a rock might be a marble (a metamorphic rock), or it might really be something like a travertine (which is a layered, chemically-precipitated sedimentary rock). In the trade, "granite" can be a true granite, or it might be a diorite, granodiorite, gabbro, pegmatite, or even a gneiss. It is important to distinguish between a trade name, devised to help sell the stone, and the petrologically-correct name. For instance, the stone sold as "Nero Black Granite" is known to petrologists (the guys who study rocks) as a gabbro.

### Where is the radioactivity?

First, it is helpful to understand why your kitchen countertop might be radioactive. Naturally-occurring radioactive isotopes can be found throughout your environment. Your body, for instance, contains a small amount of the radioactive isotope carbon-14 (C-14). Any rock that contains potassium feldspars contains a small amount of radioactive potassium-40 (K-40). Likewise, there was radioactive potassium-40 in all those bananas that your mom made you eat because they were "good for you!"

In granite and related rocks, the elements of concern are uranium and thorium, which can be present in a variety of minor minerals. Much of the uranium content of a granite, for instance, is usually present in minerals such as uraninite, thorite, monazite, allanite, zircon, epidote, sphene, rutile, and apatite. Minerals like uraninite (UO<sub>2</sub>, cubic) are always radioactive because uranium is part of the chemical make-up of the mineral. Other minerals such as rutile (TiO<sub>2</sub>, tetragonal), zircon (ZrSiO<sub>4</sub>, tetragonal), and apatite (Ca<sub>5</sub>(PO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>3</sub>F, hexagonal) may be radioactive if they contain traces of uranium or thorium, but uranium and thorium are not essential parts of their formulas.

Continued on Page 7

## Is your granite countertop killing you?

Continued from page 6 Popular Mineralogy newsletter #29, ©2009, Andrew A. Sicree, Ph.D.

Although these minerals may be radioactive, at best they only make up a minor part of any granite. Some granites may have few of these minerals and thus be only slightly radioactive, while other granites with more uranium- or thorium-bearing minerals can be much more radioactive. Uranium is present as the isotopes uranium-238 and uranium-235 and thorium is mostly thorium-232. All three of these isotopes slowly decay to lead isotopes, giving off alpha and beta particles and gamma rays in the process. Naturally-occurring radioactivity confined within the granite has little health impact because exposure levels are low (because, for instance, you don't spend much time sitting on your kitchen countertop).

Uranium and thorium decay, eventually, to lead, but along the way they must pass through a step in which they are in the form of radioactive radon isotopes. Because radon is a noble gas (as are helium and neon, for instance), it is possible for it to escape from the granite countertop. Once the radon gas is floating around in the air in your kitchen, it might impact your health adversely if the radon levels are high enough.

### Problems with testing

Radioactivity in a granite countertop does not automatically translate into a radon problem. Common sense tells us that a granite with low levels of uranium is less likely to release radon than one with higher levels of uranium, but it also matters where the uranium is located. Heterogeneity (uneven distribution of uranium-containing minerals) may occur within the particular slab that was cut to make your kitchen countertop. If most of the uranium is locked up in rare uraninite grains and your countertop happens to be cut so that some of the grains are right at the surface of the polished granite, radon can easily escape the granite. On the other hand, if few of the grains are near the surface, the radon may remain trapped with the granite. Variations may also occur from one slab to the next. For instance, granite slabs from one quarry may be consistently low in radon production. But if the quarry hits some coarse-grained pegmatite zones within the granite, radon problems may occur with slabs that contain portions of the pegmatite, because pegmatites tend to concentrate uranium and thorium in their crystalline centers.

Thus, while the industry can take steps to exclude stone from quarries that are known to produce highly-radioactive slabs, individual slabs from otherwise "safe" quarries might still produce enough radon to be of concern. The only way to be sure that your particular slab doesn't produce much radon would be to perform a radon check on your kitchen air before installing the slab, then again after the slab is installed. The radon monitor should not be set directly on the slab, by the way. Note that it is possible for radon to get into your kitchen even if you do not have a radon-producing granite countertop. Radon can move upward through or along the sides of the kitchen drainpipe, for instance.

I note that in general, risks presented by radon-producing countertops are minor, especially because levels are low and most kitchens are well-ventilated – which limits radon accumulation. It all boils down to a question of risk. Just about everything you do has some level of risk associated with it, and those countertops sure do look nice. Are you going to live forever?

## From The Top! by Bob Miller

Continued from Page 5

Remember that the money is invested and only the interest is spent for programs such as the junior program, film library, judges training and so on. The more that's invested in the principal of the fund, there is the more interest that's earned and can be spent on these and other programs that ultimately benefit you and your club.

The Syracuse club is working hard to provide a great convention so make your reservations as soon as possible and plan to attend. I'm sure you won't be disappointed.

Meanwhile get out and enjoy some of the warm sunshine. I think we all could use a little "vitamin D" after the long winter season.

**Check it out.....**

[www.lat-long.com](http://www.lat-long.com)

**Click State, Click Feature type:**

**"Mine" for all the mines in each state.**

### **Mine Safety Class Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> (Ohio) or 25<sup>th</sup> (Indiana)**

Many quarries require specialized training to enter their site due to government regulations. Taught by Joel Vicary, the classes run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (with an hour break for lunch) the cost of the class is \$15 and the required Mine Safety Manual costs an additional \$15 (total \$30). This class is normally hard to find, but a MSHA Mine Safety Class will be offered at either;

**1)** State Line Gem & Mineral Club's annual show in the Junior Fair Building at the Fulton Co. Fairgrounds in Wauseon, OH on June 4<sup>th</sup>. To register, contact Doris Brzezicki at 517-263-1669 or [rychard@tc3net.com](mailto:rychard@tc3net.com).

**2)** 46<sup>th</sup> annual show and swap at Lawrence County Rock Club; Monroe County 4-H Fairgrounds Bloomington IN on June 25<sup>th</sup>. To register contact Dave Treffinger, 13101 E 250 N, Loogootee, IN 47553, (812) 295-3463; Web site: [www.lawrencecountyrockclub.org](http://www.lawrencecountyrockclub.org)

## Newton County Stone - Kentland, IN

Newton County quarry is believed to be the only meteorite impact site in the United States that is also a commercial mining operation. The quarry has many visitors, from all over the world, who are interested in geological history and in studying the various types and layers of stone.

The quarry contains the oldest exposed stone in Indiana, dating from the Ordovician age of the Earth's history.

The quarry was begun by three different land owners on various sections. John McKee opened a quarry on the East side around 1881. Samuel Means opened a quarry soon after on the West side. A third quarry was opened by Vanetta and Evans around the year 1900. The Vanetta and Evans quarry changed ownership to USF&G, then former Governor of Indiana Warren T. McCray (1928), then George Hart.

Ralph Rogers bought the former Vanetta and Evans quarry in 1946 and named it Newton County Stone. Newton County Stone eventually expanded to include both the McKee and Means properties.



<http://192.241.47.201/locationsandproducts/indiana/norind/newton.htm>

Field trip anyone???????