

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



January 2014 Volume 54 Number 1

THE ROCKFINDER



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.

Michiana Gem and Mineral Society (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

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Please note that all items for a given issue of the *Rockfinder* are due to the **Editor** no later than the 5th day of the previous month. This means that the due date for the March Issue will be February 5th. Advance items are appreciated. Material may be e-mailed to hefner_family@hotmail.com or submitted via the U.S. Mail.

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REMEMBER – Items in The Rockfinder that are **BLUE & UNDERLINED** are links to the internet or email addresses. Just click on them for more information.



Kathy's Column - President Kathy Miller

As I write this message it is still in the holiday season of 2013. New Year's Eve is three more days away. Looking through today's paper (South Bend Tribune – December 29) there was a picture of our club member Susan Huffman.

Congratulations Susan, on winning the Gingerbread House competition at the Mishawaka Penn-Harris Public Library!

The attendance at our annual Christmas party on December 8th, was around 80 members. It was a time of good fellowship, food and fun. We are continuing to grow and can appreciate how many of us enjoy our "rockhound" hobby. I hope all of you have had a Joyous Christmas and Hanukkah and are looking forward to 2014 as I am.

I plan to use any free time during January filling small plastic bags with labeled rocks, fossils, or minerals to be put into larger bags at our January meeting with our logo.

Continued on Page 2

Up & Coming

Next Meeting: January 26, 2014

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

Place:
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
805 S 29th Street
(29th & Wall)
South Bend, IN.
This is in River Park.

Program:
Getting ready for
Science Alive

Refreshments:

HAPPY NEW YEAR

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

This is in preparation for "Science Alive", a South Bend community event we will participate in the first of February. Please try to make this meeting January 26, to give a helping hand with bagging.

Just a note, have you paid your 2014 dues? In order for our Treasurer, Marty Perry to send in our annual dues to the Midwest Federation which we are members of, she has a deadline. Your dues also cover your/our insurance, get your name in our club directory and allow you to go on club field trips, get our newsletter, etc. DUES are DUE. We have a lot to offer this year, don't miss out!

Looking forward to seeing you at the January meeting,

ROCK ON - Kathy

One more thing.....

As I said I have been busy making up ziplock bags, of Talc, Selenite, Gypsum, Crinoids and a few sharks teeth for Science Alive. Jen Thompson is busy making up bags of sharks teeth. We could use more material like small geodes, or colorful stones, minerals etc.

Last year we had neat posters to add and lots of stuff, not so this year. With 500 MGM bags to fill at the meeting we need all we can get.

Kathy

January ALAA Public Meeting in Quartzsite

By Shirley Leeson, ALAA President
Friday, January 24, 2014
7 p.m., Quartzsite Alliance Church
720 Desert View

If you enjoy spending time in Quartzsite during the winter months and you ride your ATV or off-road vehicle during that time, then you need to attend the ALAA meeting!

The La Posa Travel Management Plan has been commented on and the results of those decisions are coming. BLM Field Manager John MacDonald from Yuma will be with us to speak to this issue. In addition, we will have a staff member, Penny Pew, from Congressman Gosar (R. 4th District, AZ) as an observer. Continued on Page 3

January ALAA Public Meeting in Quartzsite continued from page 2

We urge you to attend and bring a friend. Rockhounds & off-road enthusiasts must step up and attend or all is lost.

Last year in January we were complimented by a number of people who stopped by our information table and thanked us for putting on the meeting. We were also complimented by the local off-road group: "We didn't realize rockhounds were off-roaders too and were concerned with road closures." Second Annual ALAA Quartzsite Cleanup
Sunday, January 26, 2014

We did such a good job at our cleanup last year (we picked up about three TONS of trash, old tires, bed springs and other junk!) the Bureau of Land Management has invited us back. BLM Ranger Bill Alexander will be with us to haul all the trash away. We'll meet east of Quartzsite on I-10 at the Gold Nugget Road Exit. 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Bring: heavy gloves, sensible shoes, hat and long-sleeved shirt. Tools: lawn rakes, broomstick with nail, grabbers like the ones you use to reach for things on high shelves. Be creative!

--Excerpted from the Oct. to Dec., 2013, *ALAA Newsletter*

ALAA is the lobbying arm of the American Federation, working on behalf of rockhounds to keep public lands open and accessible to all, including the elderly and handicapped.

GEODE FEST 2014 – REVISED INFORMATION

3 Day Bus Trip - Keokuk, IA / Hamilton, IL By Kathy Miller

Transportation is via a 56 passenger Cardinal Motor Coach provided by the club September 26 through September 28, 2014. We will be going back and forth over the Mississippi River in pursuit of the famous beautiful Keokuk geodes (and some fossils) found in the area. We are very pleased to hear 2 more collecting sites have been opened up as of this past September on private land. This is the 10th year for the Geode fest and in talking to the coordinator, he said they are planning a lot of activities for 2014. He does remember us from the last time we were there. How can you miss a 56 passenger bus! People come from all over the USA for this event. We will be collecting at 2 places on Saturday the 27th and 1 place the morning of the 28th before starting home. As of this writing I have 21 seats left. **Do not sign up to go if there is any doubt of another commitment that weekend!** It is not fair to other members for block room rate or seating. I do not keep a standby list!

The following is a brief itinerary for those going on this weekend field trip. It is rain or shine, lots of fun and good collecting.

Friday, September 26th we meet at the Meijer's Store located at S.R. 331 S. (Union St.), Mishawaka, IN 46544. We board at 3:45 p.m. and leave promptly at 4:00 p.m. There will be one quick stop on the way to Keokuk where our motel is located, arrival time between 9 and 10:00 p.m

Continued on Page 4

GEODE FEST 2014 continued from page 3

Saturday, September 27th we board the bus at 6:45 a.m. (Remember the time change), to report to the Chaney Creek Access area across the River to register in at 7:00 a.m. At 8:00 a.m. we are on our way for a full day of collecting. Late afternoon we return to our motel to rest up or go swimming in the motel's heated pool, then clean-up for dinner at the Hawkeye Restaurant (where we have been before) at 7:00 p.m. It is only 2 block from our motel, so some of you may even wish to walk it if you still have energy and it's a nice night.

Sunday September 29th we board the bus at 8:00 a.m. and we're off to collecting at 9:00 a.m. After a good morning of collecting before we head back home. Arrival time home is approximately 6:00 p.m.

YOUR COST:

We are staying at the Hampton Inn. I have reserved 20 rooms at block room rate. The cost for your 2 nights is \$199.36 (this includes tax). You must tell them to put your room under **MICHIANA GROUP** for the block and rate. Their phone number is 1-319-524-6700. When you get your reservation, let me know your confirmation number. Please try to do this by the end of February. The motel is only 7 years old, serve a hot and cold breakfast with a variety of food and an indoor swimming pool. The block of rooms has 2 queen beds to a room.

The Hawkeye Restaurant – with private dining offers us a buffet dinner consisting of 2 entrees; cat fish and fried chicken, comes with a full salad bar, mashed potatoes & gravy, corn, green beans, dinner rolls, dessert, coffee, water, tea. The price is \$12.95 adult, 12 and under \$6.75 and 3 under, free. Each person or family is responsible for paying their own meal. The food is great, our club has enjoyed their food before.

The Geode Fest registration fee is \$20 (single person) or \$30 (family fee) for hunting. Some of the sites are on private property not normally open to general public for geode hunting. An additional fee of \$20 / 5 gallon bucket will be collected at each site. YOU have to provide the buckets. BE PICKY, YOUR LOOKING FOR LIGHT WEIGHT GEODES THAT ARE HOLLOW INSIDE! Also since we are so close to the Mississippi River, there are fossils in the area.

I will have printed up copies of the Registration forms for member going to fill out. I would like to send them in early with the fees to save time and confusion on arrival. Those who have gone before have never been disappointed and have come home with “gooooood stuff”!

WHAT TO BRING:

Food Brown bag dinner for Friday night unless you grab a quick fast food when we make our pit stop along the way. A brown bag lunch for Saturday, we will eat at the sites. Snacks for on the bus or in your motel room. A small cooler for on the bus to fit under the seat for pop, water.

Regular shoes....You must have shoes for the bus that are not your collecting shoes or boots. We are responsible for not trashing the bus with muddy shoes or boots.

Collecting shoes/boots and clothes that are comfortable to collect in. Be aware of the weather. Buckets for your geodes. Rock collecting tools, gloves, eyeglasses

SPACE IS LIMITED BECAUSE OF WEIGHT AND STORAGE. Don't get carried away with a whole bunch of extra stuff, for example, huge coolers, chairs, etc.

When we went on our last 3 day field trip, there was so much extra “stuff” there was hardly any space for our specimens.

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies News

From my Desk to Yours

by Richard Jaeger, AFMS President excerpted from [AFMS Newsletter Volume 67, Number 2 – December, 2013–January, 2014](#)

Communication is important at all levels in any organization and our rockhound hobby is no exception. The Internet and cell phones have made better communication easier and less expensive to achieve. The newsletters of the AFMS, the regional federations, and the local clubs have always served as the basic means of sharing information. At the local level, clubs used to have telephone committees to pass on important news that could not wait for the next newsletter. Today, much of that is done via e-mail but we shouldn't forget that many of us have members who don't use e-mail.

I would hope that each club has someone, or soon will have someone, who maintains a group e-mail list of club members. Information such as changes in meeting times or field trips, rock sales and swaps, member concerns, or other news and events can thus easily be passed on. A telephone committee can still be used for those members who don't have e-mail. News from other area clubs can also be passed on. For example, in Oklahoma, we just had two clubs which sent out an e-mail inviting members of other clubs to attend one of their field trips.

Use the hyperlink above to read the rest of this month's AFMS President's message as well as other interesting articles

Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies News

Presidents Message

by Tony Kapta excerpted from [MWF News JANUARY 2014 - ISSUE NO. 528](#)

I hope that everyone had a happy and healthy Holiday Season. Here we are at the beginning of a new year of rockhounding; how exciting. Most clubs are already deep into planning for this year's show as well as programs and field trips for the year.

It is also the best time to do some indoor rockhounding with the weather a bit too cold for a real field trip. We can go through all of the treasures that we collected over the years, cataloging the ones we want to preserve and getting the extras ready for donations to our clubs for silent auctions and our kids' corners. Sometimes this is almost as exciting as the field trips were to begin with.

Once again I have been asked the question, "Why should our club belong to the MWF?" I was telling my wife, Regina, what I was planning on putting together to answer this question when she suggested making a list of "Star Points," like they do where she works, to highlight the reasons for choosing their company. So I sat down and started to put one together. As it took shape, even I was surprised at how many perks clubs get for their yearly dues.

Use the hyperlink above to read the rest of this month's MWF President's message as well as other interesting articles



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



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

Upcoming Events

Not much going on around here due to the season unfortunately.

January

25 - LINCOLN, NE. Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.'s Annual Mid-Winter Swap; Bethany Park Shelter House, Cotner & Vine Streets; Sat. 1-5; Contact: Richard Peterson, 402.489.2996, padr20@yahoo.com, www.lincolngemmineralclub.org

FEBRUARY

9: LINCOLN, NE. Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.'s Geology Day; Pioneer Park, Prairie Life Center, Coddington & West A; Sun. 1-4; CONTACT: Karen Messenger, Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club, P.O. Box 5342, Lincoln, NE 68505, 402.946.2281, kamessenger@hotmail.com, www.lincolngemmineralclub.org.

Cubic Crystal Class Minerals

by Kreigh Tomaszewski

The crystal form of a mineral is a visible clue to the fundamental atomic arrangement of the elements that make up a mineral. Knowing the crystal form of an unknown specimen gets you a long way down the path to identifying the mineral. There are six crystal systems, isometric, hexagonal, tetragonal, orthorhombic, monoclinic, and triclinic, in order of declining symmetry. Within these six systems there are 32 crystal classes that represent the possible symmetries of crystal faces. We elected to start with the Cubic Class because it is the most symmetrical.

Our Mineral Study Group likes to learn about the science and practical uses of the minerals we study, but we really want to learn to hand identify them. Hand identification is a skill you learn from holding and studying many different specimens of a given mineral (and doing some homework on its physical properties). We do our homework on the science and come prepared to discuss the mineral (class or group) of the month, but we also dig through our collections and come with one or more specimens for everyone to handle. We really do learn from each other (and you have to share your specimens with others before they can be appreciated). Many of our specimens this month were provided by more than one person.

The concept behind our crystal class study theme was to have as many different minerals of a given class, to examine together, so we can learn to distinguish between them as we also learn to identify the class from multiple examples. Our group came up with an good collection of cubic habit minerals. I suspect the names are not all going to be spelled correctly, and I think I missed writing down a couple specimens, but we got to hand examine specimens of Pyrite, Galena, Diamond, Fluorite, Chloroargyrite, Boleite, Pharmacosiderite, Skutterudite. Carrolite, Franklinite, Magnetite (yes, we really did have a rare specimen of cubic magnetite), elemental Lead, Sal Ammoniac, Thorianite, Halite, and Gold. I think it would be fair to say a couple of the specimens were museum quality.

It is one thing to look at the pictures in the field books, but you get a much deeper appreciation when you can hold a specimen and look at it thru a lens (feel the heft, shine a bright light on it, etc.). And then look at another specimen of the same mineral (and maybe another). And then look at something else that is close but different.

Continued Next page

Cubic Crystal Class Minerals...from previous page

Some homework was done, and we learned a bit about the specimens we studied; some were self collected so there were stories to share. Mindat.org got a workout during the study session because of interest in mineral compositions.

The next meeting of the West Michigan MWF Mineral Study Group will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2014, from 7 pm to 8:30 pm, at the home of Kreigh Tomaszewski, 653 Burton St. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49507. We are going to study minerals that have a octahedral crystal form. Everyone should have a few octahedral minerals in their collection (cleaved fluorite counts for half credit) that they can bring to talk about and pass around, so there is no excuse for not participating.

We try to start (and end) on time; please do not arrive more than 20 minutes early (and everyone gets thrown out at 9). All West Michigan rockhounds are invited to attend. Please look up a few facts about octahedral minerals, and bring some of the specimens from your collection. I hope you can join us as we learn about minerals from each other (and you are welcome even if you can't bring any specimens).

We usually have some time at the end to look at some unknown you might need help on (no promises of a positive ID, but we are getting better at identifying minerals). Hope you can join us for the next meeting (and let part of your collection get to meet some other rockhounds).



I remember this field trip.....Looks like Marty was having a great time. Not sure if I took this picture or if Joe took it, but it is a great picture. Jason



Come on
SUMMER