

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



March 2015 Volume 55 Number 3

Next Meeting 03/22

THE
ROCKFINDER

We're on the Web! See us at: www.MichianaGMS.org

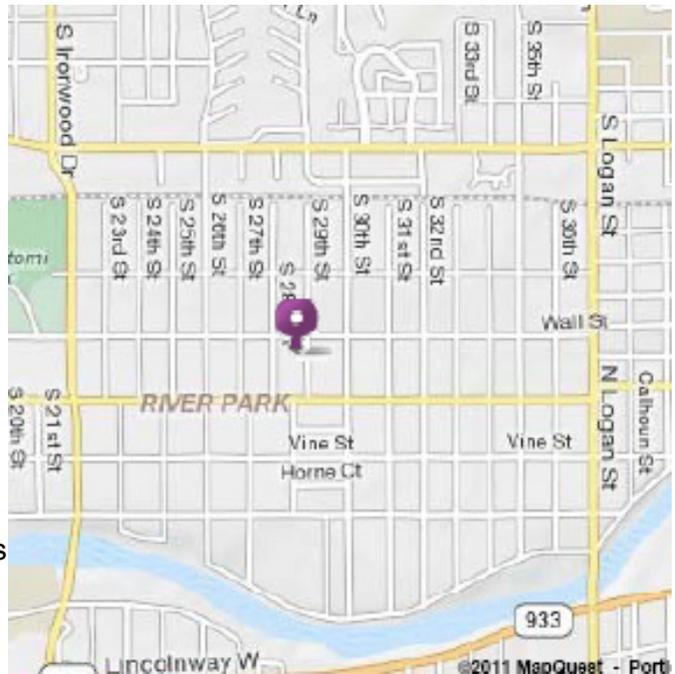
The purpose of the Michiana Gem & Mineral Society is to promote the study and enjoyment of the earth sciences and the lapidary arts, and to share lapidary knowledge and techniques. General meetings are usually held the fourth Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m. at,

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 choose 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) _____
 Email _____

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: _____
 Name: _____ Birthday: _____

Michiana Gem & Mineral Society
 c/o Marty Perry
 29154 Frailey Dr
 Elkhart, IN 46514

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.MichianaGMS.org, is a not-for-profit organization affiliated with the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies <http://www.amfed.org/mwfi/> and with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies 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 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.

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.

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



President's Message - President Bill Foreman

Wow! Blue skies, sunshine, melting ice outside my office window. Weatherman says 50 degrees in a couple days. I feel the familiar itch of the digging season stirring...time to check out equipment and tools and start making travel plans for the year. It's always so hard to decide where to go and what to collect. For me, no vacation is complete without picks, hardhat, and collecting clothes. And remember, we don't have to travel far to find interesting things. Geodes, fossils, Petoskey stones, Laker agates and tons of other things lie just under our feet in Indiana and Michigan. You can even find cool things just walking along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Rock collecting should never require a lot of money or specialty, high-priced tools. Just a set of open eyes and a desire to look down. Get away from those TVs and smartphone screens and spend a while in the fresh air and sunshine.

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Up & Coming

Next Meeting: March 22, 2015 Visitors are always welcome. Doors open at 1:30. Meeting starts at 2:00.

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

Program:
Landscaping Ideas
by the Zeigers

Refreshments:
Holly & Dennis Krafter
Jessie & Lynn Zeiger
Betty & Allen Gearhart
Carolyn Gargis

Board of Directors

President: Bill Foreman
574-233-9178

Vice-President: Randy Hill
269-465-5814

Secretary Jan Pellus
574-264-4772

Treasurer: Marty Perry
574-295-9050

Liaison: Bob Bell
574-233-7352

Committee Chairs

Displays: Mike Skoczylas
574-251-0255

Editor: Jason Hefner
574-858-9837

Educational: Jesse Zeiger
574-259-5944

Facebook: Danielle Wilborn
574-344-3385

Field Trips: John Davis
574-232-8823

Historian: Ed Miller
574-498-6513

Hospitality:
Linda Miller 574-291-5027
Marsha Miller 574-498-6513

Juniors: Trista McIntosh
574-780-1162

Librarian: Pat Bell
574-233-7352

Membership: Nancy Foreman 574-233-9178 & Jennifer Thompson 574-360-9886

Programs: Rev Larry Calhoun
574-631-1887

Publicity: Nick Pellus
574-264-4772

Safety: Julie Wieger 574-291-2597
Jennifer Hefner 574-858-9837

Show Chair: John Davis 574-232-8823

Sunshine: Annette Freel 574-293-8193,
Sherrie Kobie 574-522-0189

Webmaster: Joe Perry 574-295-9050

President's Message Continued from page 1

Speaking of collecting season, John Davis (thanks, John!) has arranged our next MSHA training class for Saturday, April 25. This class will run from 10 to 4 pm and will be held at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church just like our regular meeting. Cost is \$30 for the class, only \$15 if you still have the book you purchased last time. Remember to bring along the pink certificate you received previously as this will be updated by Mr. Vicary who presents the class. We also hope to have a potluck style lunch available so we don't all have to run out for lunch. Your MSHA certificate gains you access to virtually all quarry digs we will attend, so believe me, it should be a don't miss class.

Hopefully everyone has renewed their membership by now. I understand things get busy and we can put things off (me included), but please, please re-up! We want a strong, healthy membership to keep this Club vital and active for another 50 years. By the way, we all need to send along current, signed applications with those membership checks. Your signature is required for legal reasons to participate in club meetings, activities and trips.

At the next meeting I will begin taking orders for Club T-shirts. Short sleeve, long sleeve, and zip-up hoodies will be available (same artwork and color as last year), and I will have prices as well as a hoodie sample so you can see the quality before deciding if you want to purchase one.

Final note, I just received notice that a local collector wishes to sell off his collection including amazonite and quartz. I have invited him to the March meeting to show samples of what he has, or I may meet with him to get photos for the Club. I will post more info as he responds. I just wanted everyone to have an equal shot at purchasing what he has to offer.

I hope to see everyone at the next meeting and thanks for letting me work for you and your Club.

-Bill

February 2015 Meeting Minutes by Jan Pellus, Secretary

Members in attendance / Adults_41___ **Children**_7___
Guest_3___

Call to Order: President Bill Foreman

Pledge of Allegiance

Continued on next Page

February 2015 Meeting Minutes

Continued from previous page

Welcome

Secretary report: Jan Pellus / Motion made and seconded to accept minutes as printed in the Rockfinder

Treasurer's report: Marty Perry / Motion made and seconded to accept report

Liaison report: Bob Bell / No Report

Parliamentarian: Bob Miller / No Report

Midwest Federation/ Our club will host the Midwest Federation in 2016. We have received the packets for the show. We will be preparing our material, as we get closer to show time.

American Federation/ American Federation will be held in Texas during July. If you want more information, contact Bob.

American Lands Access: Tom Noe / No Report

Committee Reports

Displays: Mike Skoczylas /New members who bring specimens are welcome to place them on the corner of the display table. If they need help to identify the specimen, members can do so after the meeting. Material was brought from the Tucson show for members to take. Jerry Lemple brought several cabs. Some need to be identified. Al Gearhart brought some rock specimens. One specimen shows a creature by natural inclusions. John Davis brought some unusual specimens of calcite and marcasite, fluorite, thunder eggs, and geodes. He also brought individual applications for American Lands Access. This organization fights to keep lands open for public usage, such as rock collecting.

Editor: Jason Hefner /Rockfinder is being sent from the treasurers membership list. Please be sure your information is correct.

Educational: Jesse Zeiger /No Report

Face Book: Danielle Wilborn / Updating our face book information. It is now linked to our website.

Field Trips: John Davis / We have scheduled our MSHA training for April 25 at 10:00 a.m. The certificate must be renewed every year. If you have the book, it is not necessary to purchase a new one. Members must be certified to go on field trips. We discussed having a carry in for lunch. Sign-up sheets will be available at the next meeting.

Historian: Ed Miller / No Report

Hospitality: Linda Miller & Marsha Miller/ Thank you for the refreshments to Joe and Marty Perry, Babe and Jay Miller, Randy and Joan Hill, and Nick and Jan Pellus.

Juniors: Trista McIntosh/ The juniors made top hats with river rocks. Next month, March, Trista will be unavailable and needs a substitute. The project for March is planned. Please help

Librarian: Bill Foreman/ No report.

Membership: Nancy Foreman and Jennifer Thompson/ Welcome guests Samantha Bontrager, Carla and Jim Vargis, and Brian Pedersen. Thank you for visiting with us in this winter weather.

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American Federation of Mineralogical Societies News Just in Time for the New Year

by John Washburn,
MWF Geology Chair excerpted from [AFMS Newsletter Volume 68, Number 3 – February, 2015](#)

Just in time for The New Year– 3 new DVD presentations by notable scholars for a mere \$20 dollar donation for each to go to the MWF Endowment Fund. The three presentations were given at the 2012 Geo-fair in Cincinnati, Ohio. Not only are the, scholar's great speaker's they are also nationally known – Jeff Scovil for his photography and a collector of minerals. Dr. Carl Francis, Harvard Museum's former mineral curator, and Dale Gnidovec, well known Ohio paleontologist.

All the titles of these DVD's are as follows: "The Beauty of Carbonates" by Jeff Scovil, "Collectable Carbonates" By Dr. Carl Francis, "Teeth Jaws and Claws" by Dale Gnidovec. Indicate which DVD(s) you would like with you order.

Again for only a \$20 dollar donation you will receive a DVD of your choosing. Order today - you will not be disappointed – satisfaction guaranteed. This donation will be credited to your club or the individual making the donation. Regardless your donation is tax deductible. Please enclose an additional \$2.00 for postage for each. Send your request to MWF Endowment Fund Treasure, Alan Hukill 15785 Park Lake Road, East Lansing MI 48823. Please make the check payable (no cash please) to MWF Endowment Fund. Click on the link above to be taken to the rest of the article

Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies News

President's Message

by Jim Marburger, President excerpted from [MWF News March - Issue No. 540](#)

March is blowing in on us. The year is fluttering by us so fast. Plans have got to be made very soon so we all can meet in Chicago in May for the Big 75th Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies Convention being held in conjunction with the Chicagoland Gems & Minerals Association's 39th Show on May 23 and 24, 2015. The Show Packets are about ready to be sent out. Get your room reservations made and order your show tickets. This is looking to be a great show with many opportunities to visit world famous museums in the area, along with the Retail and Wholesale show at the Fairgrounds. The convention information in the packets will have the full schedule of events along with maps and local ideas. Camping is also available at the fairgrounds.

Plan to display at this event and please bring material for the Federation's Silent Auction. We will have one day to make money for the Federation, and we will need help and quality material. Materials from your area are important to share because this might be the only place visitors can easily obtain them.

Click on the link above to be taken to the rest of the article



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

March 2015

14 – Skokie, ILLINOIS Chicago Rocks & Minerals Society Announces 66th Annual Silent Auction of Rocks, Minerals, Fossils and Lapidary Treasures

**Saturday, March 14, 2015
6 to 9 p.m.**

St. Peter's United Church of Christ gymnasium 8013 Laramie Ave., Skokie (across the street from the public library on Oakton)

Bid on rocks, crystals, minerals, fossils, geodes, handmade jewelry, lapidary materials, books, magazines and much more! Families with children are welcome. First table closes at 6:30 p.m. Free admission and parking. Children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, call Jeanine N. Mielecki at (773) 774-2054 or email jaynine9@aol.com. Visit www.chicagorocks.org.

February 2014 Meeting Minutes

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Programs: No report

Publicity: Nick Pellus / No report

Safety: Jennifer Hefner and Julie Wieger / No report

Show Chair: John Davis & Joe Perry / John is working on the new contract with the fair grounds. Joe reported that he has sent out the dealer contracts. The information for the ads has also been sent. Show fliers are available.

Sunshine: - Annette Freel & Sherry Kobie / No report

Webmaster: Joe Perry / Our web page is now linked to face book. All membership information is based on the current membership files. Please be sure your information is correct.

Old Business

Science Alive was a great success. We ran out of bags to pass out. Some visitors had their photo taken with a specimen of dino poop provided by Randy Hill. Please share any extra specimens and materials you may have. This is a great way to connect with the children of our community.

Bill Foreman brought up the SB Library's involvement in SB First Friday, a great way to stay involved.

All members need to fill out membership forms with their renewals. It is important that we have a signed release from all members.

We need programs. If you have any ideas, please pass them on to Kathy Miller or Bill Foreman.

New Business

We are considering selling tee shirts at our rock shows, perhaps a different design. Before Bill can get a quote, he will need more specifics. It has been suggested that committee be formed to gather the information, and that the juniors be involved in the design.

Adjournment : Motion made and seconded

Program: Social time with members

Next Meeting: March 22, 2015

New Wilderness Areas in Montana and the Reason Why

A News Report from: Citizens for Balanced Use

summarized by Tom Noe, ALAA

CBU has always been opposed to new wilderness and “land of no use,” and we will continue to fight for multiple-use recreation, active forest management, and responsible resource development on our current federally managed public lands. Maybe it is time to start an orderly transfer of these public lands back to the states—for us to effectively manage them in a way that benefits our state and our communities.

The Defense Spending Bill was a must-pass piece of legislation and legislators attached their pork in order to pass some things they wanted. Senator McCain was the first. His bill opened a large copper mine in his state, producing 6,000 new jobs. Then the environmental groups got enraged about that and wanted something in return. So Senator Tester added his Forest Jobs and Recreation Act, setting aside another 650,000 acres of new wilderness in Montana.

CBU worked hard to have this added piece of legislation removed and in the end Congressman Daines succeeded. But in return for removing the FJRA, the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act was inserted. It adds approximately 67,000 acres to two wilderness areas and designates roughly 208,000 acres of adjacent federal land as Conservation Management Areas. The bill protects existing agricultural uses, prohibits management of a buffer zone to the Conservation Management Area, and protects valid and existing mineral rights, among other things.

Are we happy? No. But it could have been worse.

CBU is very disappointed in how Congress jammed these bills into a must-pass Defense Spending Bill. We are saddened for the people close to the Rocky Mountain Front because of the further restrictions and closures they received. We are angry that these political stunts are pulled and we are frustrated by all the thousands of miles driven and the hundreds of hours spent by our members and supporters in fighting this bad legislation. The Rocky Mountain Front wilderness bill was opposed by local government, recreation, agriculture and resource groups. In the end we lost. If we had more control over these lands, rather than the D.C. bureaucrats, these actions would not occur.

—Adapted from *ALAA Newsletter* (Oct.-Dec., 2014).
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.

ALAA is a 501(c)(4)(non-profit) organization, which means that all moneys raised by the association can legally go toward lobbying activity. Donations and memberships to ALAA are not tax-deductible.

MSHA, MSHA, MSHA

by Jason Hefner, Editor

I cannot stress how important it is for you to take an MSHA safety class. If you want to go on collecting trips, most (95 %+) places require you to take the MSHA class. John Davis has been able to line up an instructor for us again to take the class at our normal meeting place. The details are below, along with a few other MSHA training class opportunities.

SOUTH BEND, INDIANA - FRIDAY APRIL 24, 2015

The Michiana Gem & Mineral Society of South Bend, IN will be hosting a MSHA class this year. The class will be instructed by Joel Vicary on Saturday April 25th, 2015 from 10am to 4pm. An instruction book is included in the course. The cost of the course is \$30 if you don't have a book, \$15 if you have the book. The location is, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 805 S. 29th St. South Bend, IN.

DAYTON, OHIO - TUESDAY MARCH 24, 2015

The MSHA training is March 24th 8:30 am-4:30 pm at Dayton Liederkrantz Turner, 1400 East 5th Street, Dayton, OH 45402. Becky Newberry will be teaching. The Friends of Mineralogy Midwest Chapter has been working with Scott Kell at the ODNr to develop and deploy collector-specific training. If you have questions about the course contact Kim Ehret at the following email: Kimberly.Ehret@WPAFB.AF.MIL

MANSFIELD, OHIO – TUESDAY MARCH 17, 2015

MSHA training in Mansfield, Ohio will be offered Tuesday March 17th at 10am at the Mansfield public library, in downtown Mansfield. The address of the library is 43 West Third Street. Use the parking area to the east of the library. Do not use the parking structure. To get questions answered about this MSHA course, contact Bill Bryley: phone 614-268-6828 and email: bbyrley@insight.rr.com

COLUMBUS, OHIO - FRIDAY APRIL 03, 2015

The central Ohio version of MSHA hazard training will be offered Friday April 3, 2015 at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Facility at 2045 Morse Road (on Fountain Square), in Columbus, Ohio (43229). The course will be in building E1 the Assembly Center; from 8am to 5pm. Hazard training is required by many quarry operators to enter their work site for field trips. Sign up with Reggie Rose: email: captaino@core.com; phone: 614-875-2675.



<http://www.msha.gov/>

Planes, Trains, Buses, and Cars... a Tucson to Remember

by Everett Harrington, MGMS member

After an uneventful series of flights to Tucson Az. for the annual Rock and Mineral show I found myself in one of the craziest expeditions of my life on the way home. I had spent 6 days and nights traveling around to the different Tucson Mineral shows throughout the city. I had met wonderful new people, ate great meals with even greater people. My trip home gave me time to reflect.

I was due to fly out of Tucson Saturday morning, which also happened to be Valentine's Day. Unknown to me, there was a major storm brewing towards home that had not even begun to start yet. I had a 7 am flight from Tucson International Airport to Atlanta where I was supposed to change planes for the final leg home to South Bend IN., where my car was waiting in the cold and snow. With my very early flight out of Tucson I phoned Yellow cab to come get me at 4:30 am so I could get my bags, which were full of minerals, and myself through security at the airport with time to spare. Sitting waiting on my flight gave me a chance to think back to all the wonderful things I'd seen. The minerals that are presented for sale at the shows are some of the finest in the world. Foot tall Tourmalines from Brazil, 18 inch Stibnites from China, 6 inch pyrite cubes from Spain, plus many more other treasures were seen. The colors of the minerals, the sizes of some of the crystals are just mind blowing. It is a rock hound overload to see all the wonderful specimens all nicely lit up and available for anybody to purchase.

I boarded the plane headed for Atlanta, thinking about all of my house mates that I stayed with. My good friend Ray Hill sets up a house every year in Tucson where mineral collectors can stay and be able to visit with others of like kind. This year was no exception. Besides Ray and myself, we had two others staying in the house with us. Steve Stuart was one of those fellow mineral collectors, staying with us. Steve and I have had crossed paths in previous years, mostly at the Detroit Mineral show in the fall. He had purchased several specimens from a mineral partnership that John Davis and I share. Steve's micro photos are among the best on the web and wonderful landscapes of beautiful minerals. His galleries on Mindat.org are not to be missed.

Landing in Atlanta, I had 4 hours until my last leg of my trek home began. Reflecting back to another fellow collector staying at the house with us by the name of Stephen Kotlowski, I trotted off to grab some food and something to drink before my next flight. Stephen and I hit it off from the start. We share like passions such as rocks, and even fishing! Funny thing is, we were facebook friends already and didn't even know it. Stephen is a world class faceter; you've probably seen his work and not known that it was his faceting you were looking at. If you happen to watch Prospectors on the Weather Channel on TV, you have seen the huge faceted Topaz crystals from Richard Fretterd and Jean Cowman. The two that come to mind are the Agnus Dei tribute Topaz which weighs in at a whopping 1345 carats earning it the title of the largest North American faceted Topaz, and the Sweetheart Topaz at 524 carats. I was lucky enough to be able to hold the Sweetheart Topaz in my hand and see it up close. Stephen had a case at the main show and had a whole slew of very large fine faceted gems including a 1.62 carat faceted Zektzerite, which is also a record, in its own right. Stephen is a new friend that will become a longtime friend, an amazing man, a true artist of cutting ugly rocks and making them pretty.

One hour before my flight to South Bend I go back to the gate to see if I could change my seat from an isle to a window so I could sleep on my way home. I had been up since 4 am when I started this journey. As I approached the gate, I knew something had happened.

Continued next page

Planes... Continued from previous page

The gate that read hours before, South Bend IN, had changed to Phoenix Az. Talking with the Delta agent that was at the gate confirmed my worst fears, my flight to South Bend had been canceled owing to bad weather back home and no rescheduling had taken place. I was directed to the Delta Help desk about a mile away in Concourse C. After arriving at the help desk and waiting in line for over an hour. I was able to talk to the first of my guardian angels on my way home, Tina P was her name. She told me that due to the huge storm roaring its way across the Midwest, every airport east of Lake Michigan was closed down. This included places like Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Detroit, the further east the worse it became, Boston, LaGuardia, none of the airports were taking any more flights. I asked Tina if there was any way to get a flight to O'Hare in Chicago, knowing in my mind that I could find a way home from there. Only one more flight was available that day and was boarding in 35 minutes at Concourse A. Tina printed me off a ticket and I was off to the races, I had about 4 miles of escalators and Concourses to cover before I was able to get to gate A 20. Out of breath and time, I made it to the gate with just a few minutes left before the door to the aircraft was closed. To my surprise, my seat happened to be in the first class area of the plane. I have never flown first class, nor would I pay the extra thousands to do so, but this freakish trip had a little bit of a silver lining.

After settling down in the first class seat I was so blessed with, I reverted back to my thoughts of being able to spend time with my friends, wonderful miners and mineral photographers that I have known for years. Guys who I consider brothers, brothers I am only able to connect with every year in Tucson. My brother John Cornish, whom I spend time with every couple of weeks talking minerals over the phone was one of those close friends I was able to see. John owns quite a few claims throughout the west including Rat's Nest in Challis Idaho, where those amazing Heulandites of the rich pick salmon color come from. Snails replaced by agates, the New Beginnings claim for quartz stalactites, John mines them all, he even just had mined at the Himalaya mine for Tourmalines on his way to Tucson, prove showing on a dinner plate in his room to any of the lucky people he shares his digging adventures with. The stories of mining you hear from John could fill a book, and probably should!

Being in Tucson allows me to catch up with another brother, from a different country. Michael Bainbridge, from Canada, a photographer and miner who is published in just about every book Lithographie Publishing has recently published. Michael is also an avid field collector like me, within the past year he brought to grass the best clinohumite crystals from Wilberforce that the world has ever seen. We always have a grand time harassing our mutual friends as we tour around the different shows together.

Touching down in Chicago at O'Hare was a tricky feat thanks to the lofty winds that had followed the weather front across the upper Midwest. Once we had rolled into our gate and deplaned, I stopped by the Delta agent, he printed me an Indiana Coach bus pass that would see me my final 90 minutes of travel home. We started out of Chicago with dry streets and hardly any traffic. Settling back into my perch at the front of the bus, my thoughts wander back to the dinners we shared and campfires we chatted around at the house in Tucson. We had quite a few well known mineral collectors from Canada including, Les Horvath of Quebec. He is extremely active in the Canadian Mineralogical Society, has also had the mineral Horvathite named after him. One of his books is on minerals that were discovered first in Canada.

Continued next page

Planes... Continued from previous page

About 12 miles outside of Michigan City we were moving right along traveling at 65 mph, abruptly we go from dry concrete pavement to an instantaneous white-out blizzard. The bus driver was having an exceedingly hard time keeping us on the road even though we had slowed to a slug's speed. At that point he announced that we ALL would be getting off the bus in Michigan City and that he would be going no further. I phoned my brother to ask him to drive the one hour from home to Michigan City. The weather being the way it was, there was no way for him to come pick me up, so again I'm stuck this time in Michigan City. As we pulled up to the bus stop, in what looked like an abandoned strip mall, an older lady behind me asked if she could give me a ride. She had overheard my conversation with my brother and knew what dire straits I was in. My final guardian angel was sitting behind me this whole time. Her name was Karen. Not knowing who I was or if I was even safe to talk too, she had offered to take me to the train station about 7 miles away. As we disembarked the bus trying to find her car, we were now fully aware of just how bad the storm was. Gusts of wind, whipping snow at 50 mph felt like bees stinging you all over. After brushing her car off and jumping in I was on my way to sit and wait for the last train of the night at 10:57.

Pulling up to the train depot (which was a glass box with 3 benches) I noticed a bar across the street that I could sit in and stay warm until the train came 2 and a half hours later. This gave me time to reflect back to the previous days. After dinner one night, Michelle Picard, the curator from the Museum of Natural History in Ottawa shared his rare species that he had found around the show with us. Another night we were lucky enough to have Bob Downs stop by after the Spann/Jordi party at the Casa Vicente. Bob is in charge of all of the mineral experiments on Mars using the Curiosity Rover. Every day they have to program the rover to do all of the tasks for the following day. Learning from Bob that they have currently found Jarosite on Mars was interesting since that mineral cannot form without water present.

Hearing the whistle of the train almost brought tears to my eyes, I knew that I was going to be able to make my final leg of this unpleasant trip to South Bend. I boarded and the conductor came around and charged me \$6 for the hour long trip. I told the conductor he made an oversight because I would have given him \$300 to get me home. Overwhelmed by the terrible string of bad luck, and smiling because of my good luck with strangers helping strangers in need, my thoughts drift back to the main show with all of its glorious display cases. People were wooing and awing over the cases that are full of minerals that you'd never get to see other than at the TGMS. Being able to sit and talk with friends like Jared Freiburg, owner of Saga Minerals. Jared is a Geologist for the state of Illinois, working on Co2 sequestration projects. He is the reason you see all of the Linwood Iowa Barites and Calcites that have been coming out the past couple of years. Knowing the miners that bring these wonderful things out of the ground always helps. I hung around Jared's booth for quite some time, helping where needed. Enjoying the conversations, the education you get when you are around knowledgeable mineral people has no comparison.

Pulling into South Bend airport on the train was nothing short of a miracle. Everything had aligned just right for me to be able to make it home that day. As I cleaned off my car and started it, I noticed that it was 2 am. I had traveled on two planes, a bus, and a train for 22 hours to reach this point. Home safe after a short drive, all I could do is smile, and wish all of my friends, my angels, and myself a Happy Valentine's day.