

ROCK TRAILS

VOLUME 49
ISSUE XII
DEC 2009



Presidential Ponderings

Hello and Merry Christmas to one and all! I hope this newsletter finds all of you doing well. At the last meeting it was suggested that in lieu of a gift exchange we should all just donate the money to the club that we would have spent on gifts. I think that is a splendid idea and it still reflects the giving spirit of the season. I believe there was also mention of a cookie exchange.....Hmmm.....Yummy!

Thanksgiving and Christmas are my two favorite holidays. For me, I believe it stems from the comfort of being with family and friends. We can spend time with one another at any time throughout the year, but I believe the comfort comes from the focus being redirected from ourselves onto others. Through much of the holiday season you will find people putting their petty differences aside....ahhhh....what a difference that makes!

As we see this year to a close and usher in a new one let us always be looking forward, to brighter days and new beginnings. One of the best ways for the StateLine to grow and prosper in this economic crisis that we are all living through is to continue exhibiting throughout the entire year those virtues which are so readily apparent during the holiday season. By the simple act of giving, whether it is of our time or of our resources, we can help propel the club through this time in our history and prepare ourselves for other trials that we will most assuredly encounter.

Sometimes the tasks that lie ahead seem daunting, but that is because we rely too heavily on our own abilities. We are a club...we need to act like a club. We all need to help shoulder the responsibilities that come with running a successful club. It will not only strengthen the StateLine but it will also entice others to join because they will want to be a part of the magic that they will be able to see taking place. It will be the endeavors of many (preferably ALL) that will help make the future a reality.

I would like to thank all the club members and their friends who have helped support the club in one way or another over the past year. We would not be where we are today if these generous people did not believe in The StateLine Gem and Mineral Society. I'm sure the coming year will be filled with yet loftier goals and ambitions than last year or the year before, or the year before that, etc.

It will be awesome to see what the future will bring; we all just need to keep believing! And what better time to believe....after all this is the season for miracles!

*Merry Christmas to all
and a Happy New Year!*

Steve Nichols

The Vice-President's Words



Our program for the December meeting will consist of a cookie exchange. Bring cookies - take cookies home. I am really looking forward to this event. Just not quite sure of what my favorite cookie might be, so I will probably have to sample several.

At our latest meeting, we discussed what the club had done for Christmas in the past. Most of the members present at the meeting thought it was silly to exchange gifts that most folks didn't want or need, so we agreed to just donate whatever we would have spent on a gift directly to the club for expenses. I hope to see as many folks as possible at our December 6th meeting.

We are trying to make the club house more user friendly by installing temporary insulation for the winter. Bill Sipes and Charles Swanson have been going to the depot on Thursday evenings to help me get insulation on to the ceiling. I am sure it will make a big difference once we get heaters going.

We will also vote for the new club officers so that they can be installed at our January meeting. I have noticed that it is a lot more fun to visit with other members after the meeting when the room is warmer than it was last year. I wish everyone Happy Holidays.

Richard Brzezicki



In This Issue:

- | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|-------|---|
| 1 - | President's Ponderings | 6 - 7 | How to Clean Minerals
(A Little Humor) |
| 2 - | The Vice-President's Words | 8 - 9 | Christmas Gifts for a Rock
and Mineral Collector |
| 3 - | Treasurer's Addition | 10 - | Upcoming Events |
| 4 - | Secretary's Notes | 11 - | Officers & Directors |
| 5 - 6 | Amber, The Jurassic Gem | | |

Treasurer's Addition

Treasurer's Report:

At the January 2009 meeting a proposal was made to increase individual dues from \$10.00 per year to \$15.00 ; family dues are currently \$15.00 per year with a proposed increase to \$25.00. The decision was tabled in order to determine the correct procedure for raising dues. According to the Constitution, a two-thirds vote of the active members present at the regular meeting of the Society succeeding mailing of the written notice shall be necessary for the approval of an amendment to the Constitution. (This is actually the second written notice as the minutes of the January meeting also contained the proposal.)

Also, I have prepared a budget for 2010. It is based on our income and expenses for 2009 and with its

approval, I would be able to pay monthly bills that are included in the itemized list without having to submit each separate bill for club approval i.e. I can pay the interest payment , utility bills, etc. without submitting them for approval each time. We can review it more closely at the meeting and I will be happy to send a copy to any member who is not at the meeting. As I mentioned in previous reports, it is imperative that we find ways to bring funds into the club. We were very fortunate to have added several fund raising events to our calendar this past year. Our Building Fund revenues were drastically lower than projected. Richard told me that the club suggested that members make a donation to the club in lieu of exchanging Christmas gifts. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

Doris

SHOW REPORT:

The position of Co-chairperson is still available. The position of "Chairperson " has developed into significantly more responsibility than it was back in 2001 when I first became Show Chairperson. Since that time we have increased the number of dealers and demonstrators participating, and added the mine safety and soapstone carving classes. Our advertising has expanded from a few newspaper notices to include more newspapers, bead and lapidary magazines, and many related web sites on the internet. Next we began printing flyers with the Show information and two years ago Steve Nichols suggested we create posters. Miner Al was created by Steve's brother and has a prominent place at the show entrance. We added the attraction of door prizes so we could track the number of people attending the show. Bill Waycaster brought in catalogs for lapidary supplies and a few years ago we began asking these companies for donations for our raffle. We began developing Children's Activities three years ago, and took a huge step forward this past year. There were some wonderful handouts available from the post office and the U.S. Government.

The games we bought from Linda Sharkey were a big hit- especially "Geode," our lion grab bag attraction. One of the most profitable additions was our geode cracking. It certainly generates a lot of excitement and has been profitable at other fund raising events. Our Raffle, Silent Auction and Kitchen have also shown increase in profits. This year we added a "Member Sales" table. Ideally the Chairperson would just oversee the separate areas and co-ordinate them. We need more member participation. There are many ways you can help make this event better. Bring your ideas to the meeting.

This month I am contacting dealers and demonstrators who came to the 2009 show. Also, I will post the show information to quite a few websites. We have been handing out flyers to folks at all the events we were at- Fulton County Fair, Antique Tractor Club, Art-a-licious, Hidden Lake Garden Fall Festival and Lenawee County Heritage Festival. Richard and I also leave a supply when we attend another lapidary club's show. I will have a supply available for members to take at the meeting.

Doris



The Secretary's Words

On Sunday, November 7th, sixteen members met at the clubhouse for the monthly meeting. Richard gave the opening prayer, which was followed by the group pledge to the flag, then Steve opened the meeting for business. First order was the Secretary's report from the previous month; Richard made the motion to accept it as printed in "Rock Trails", Pat H. seconded the move, and it was unanimously accepted.

Since our Treasurer (Doris) was home sick, her husband Richard gave the report on the status of club finances. The club is in good shape at the present time, with sufficient funds to cover interest and property taxes on clubhouse and property. Brian made the motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, with a second by Bob H. Motion carried.

The assembled group warmly welcomed back Pat and Bob Husband. Pat suffered a nasty fall and severe injuries in late May, so they had to miss the Gem Show as well as other events since that time. Pat, though still restricted in her activities, is now back to helping with the project she and yours truly have been working on; said project being to go back through "Rock Trails" since the beginning, and list every person who has ever belonged to this club, for whatever period of time. This is being done as part of the club's celebration in another year of its 50th anniversary.

Several members have been showing up for the work "bees" on Thursday afternoons. It was such a pleasant surprise to walk in on this meeting day, and to experience the sidewalls being filled with insulation batts, as well as the ceiling being a good 1/3 done. It created a very warm feeling, and will be well appreciated as we go into the winter months. Also, Richard had cleaned that dirty old floor, and painted it gray. And Charles had provided a door to go between the meeting room and the other attached

building behind it. What a difference! A brief discussion was held about the heating for the coming months, and a decision will be reached soon, I am sure.

Some of our newer members gave a report on their field trip to collect Ohio Flint a couple weeks prior to this meeting. From their enthusiasm, I think we have some budding "rockhounds", and that is what we are about.

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers to be voted on at the December meeting.

President: Richard Brzezicki
Past President: Steve Nichols
Vice President: Brian Duncan
Director (3 years) Charles Swanson
Secretary: Kathy Moskar
Director (2 years) Pat Husband
Treasurer: Doris Brzezicki
Director: (1 year) Nancy Lewis

Since next meeting will be our Christmas party, a discussion covered most of the areas, and it was decided that in lieu of a gift exchange, each member would contribute the gift amount to the club. Refreshments will be cookies. It was suggested that members bake a batch of their favorite cookies, and bring the batch. That way we can sample the various kinds, and then collect one of each kind to take home., a so-called "Cookie exchange." Sounds like fun.

The meeting was adjourned so that members could browse the Silent Auction table and make their bids. In spite of a smaller than usual crowd, the table was covered with a wide variety of things, and after it was over it was reported that the club made \$75.00. Between bidding, assorted refreshments were enjoyed. A good meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Dahlke, Secretary



Amber: the Jurassic gem



Dinosaurs have been more popular than ever since their starring role in the film Jurassic Park. A more surprising result of the film's popularity has been a worldwide surge in demand for amber jewelry. Although amber's use in adornment is probably as old as mankind itself, in recent times it has had a limited market. Of course, that was before millions of people saw dinosaur DNA extracted from a mosquito trapped in amber in the film.

Millions of people learned from the film that amber, which is fossilized pine tree resin, is ancient and valuable, like an antique from history.

Demand is especially strong for amber with insects inside it. "Amber is like a time capsule made and placed in the earth by nature herself," said David Federman, author of the Consumer Guide to Colored Gemstones. "It has helped paleontologists reconstruct life on earth in its primal phases. More than 1,000 extinct species of insects have been identified in amber."

The two main sources of amber on the market today are the Baltic states and the Dominican Republic. Amber from the former is older, and thus preferred on the market, but that obtained from the latter is more likely to have insect inclusions. Amber prices can range from \$20 to \$40,000 or more.

"Stone Age man imbued amber with supernatural properties and used it to wear and to worship," says Mr Federman. "Amber took on great value and significance to, among others, the Assyrians, Egyptians, Etruscans, Phoenicians and Greeks. It never completely went out of vogue since the Stone Age. Between 1895 and 1900, one million kilograms of Baltic amber were produced for jewelry."

There are many myths surrounding the origin of amber. Ovid wrote that when

Phaethon, a son of Helios, the sun, convinced his father to allow him to drive the chariot of the sun through the heavens for a day, he erred too close to the earth, scorching it. To save the earth, Zeus struck Phaethon with a thunderbolt and he died, plunging out of the sky. His mother and sister turned into trees in their grief but still mourned him. Their tears, dried by the sun, are amber.

The Greeks called amber 'elektron', sun-made, perhaps because of this story, or perhaps because it becomes electrically charged when rubbed with a cloth and can attract small particles. Homer mentions amber jewelry - earrings and a necklace of amber beads - as a princely gift in the Odyssey.

Another ancient writer, Nicias, said that amber was the juice or essence of the setting sun congealed in the sea and cast up on the shore.

The Romans sent armies to conquer and control amber-producing areas. The Emperor Nero was a great connoisseur of amber. During his time, according to the Roman historian Pliny, the price of an amber figurine, no matter how small, exceeded the price of a healthy slave.

The ancient Germans burned amber as incense, so they called it 'bernstein', or 'burn stone'. Clear colorless amber was considered the best material for rosary beads in the Middle Ages on account of its smooth silky feel. Certain orders of knights controlled the trade, and unauthorized possession of raw amber was illegal in most of Europe by the year 1400.

So could a mosquito trapped in amber really contain dinosaur DNA? Most amber just isn't old enough, having had some 25 to 50 million birthdays at the most. The dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago at the end of the Cretaceous



Period. The Jurassic period was 144 million years ago. But in 1994, Dr Raul Cano of California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, a molecular biologist, reported in the British journal 'Nature' that he and his colleagues had extracted DNA from a weevil that was trapped in amber 120 to 135 million years ago, when dinosaurs did indeed roam the earth.

The amber, which was from the Lower Cretaceous period, was mined in the mountains of Lebanon south of Beirut by Aftim Acra, who has a collection of amber pieces containing 700 insects, including termites, moths, caterpillars, spiders, pseudo-scorpions, and midges, which do, after all, suck their host's blood.

<http://www.gemstone.org/gem-by-gem/english/amber.html>

*A Little
Humor*

How to Clean Minerals

Hello, everyone.....

As you know, I like to clean my own minerals after collecting or buying them. On this, the Christmas Season, I thought I would share some of my cleaning secrets with my fellow rockhounds. Follow the instructions exactly as written below, and you will be sure to get the same excitement and enjoyment from your beautiful crystals that I do.....

Cheers, and.....Merry Christmas!

Required cleaning devices and agents;

Plastic gloves, plastic pail
Oxalic Acid powder
Ultrasonic Cleaner
Muriatic Acid
Household Detergent
Cleaning Water Gun
Phosphoric Acid
Hand-held Dremel
Steel wool soap pads
Super Iron-Out powder
Hot and cold running water source

1 bottle Jose Cuervo Tequila

Start with a carefully filled level cup of the Cuervo to make sure of the quality. Drink this before doing anything else. This will insure that you have the necessary discipline of thought and action before starting the critical next steps.

Next, make a solution of very hot water and detergent in a plastic pail, and mix thoroughly. Do not put on the gloves, as these dilute the sensitivity in your



touch that you will need in handling the Cuervo that will be helpful in the succeeding steps.

Take two sips more of the Cuervo to be sure your mind is clear and your touch is steady.

Dip the specimen in and out of the hot water. Isn't this fun, see the bubbles!

Turn on the Dremel and test the wire attachment on your mineral table to see if it works well....whoops! Where did those scratches come from? Oh, well... take a sip of Cuervo, this is going to be a long night!

Dip your Dremel into the Phosphoric Acid (no, not the whole drill, you dummy) you need another drink!

Throw the Dremel away, and load up the water gum with soapy water. Take another drink, to make sure that the Cuervo is still good. Umm, that is good, just one more before we get down to business.

Add a teaspoon of sugar, and mix with the cinnamon....oh, sorry, wrong receipt!

The damn directions on the Iron-Out are blurry, need to have my eyes checked by the Optometer in the AM, but first, a little break and a fresh cup of Cuervo. Darn, did I put my stir rod in the acid??

Next, sift 2 cups of soap pads in something or ever, who gives a sheet anyways. Is this drink losing its consistency?

Maybe if I have another good slug of this joy-juice, I can stink fretter. Did I turn off the Dremmer or is that still running in the pail of muritic acid?? Now where is that piece of rockite or whatever I was doing.....can't find a thing except this bottle of Cuervo. I hope my leg heels before my wife sees that burn!

At these stage, you should just throw the stupid rock out the window, drink up the last of the Cuervo, and wish you had put up that tree a lot sooner.

Cherry Frimas!

Larry Rush

larryrush@worldnet.att.net

This article is copywritten. Please email for permission before copying



Christmas Gifts for a Rock and Mineral Collector

A Guide to Buying Geology and Paleontology Tools

© Alexandra Matiella Novak



Rock hammer

A new or seasoned geologist, or anyone interested in fossils, rocks and minerals, needs tools to make the most of their time in the field.

Buying gifts for a rock hound can be somewhat of a challenge if you don't know what kind of tools they need out in the field. There are a variety of tools and instruments that can come in handy to a rock enthusiast at any level. Whether they are just starting their collection, or already have one, these tools will help them find the best specimens in the field and further develop their collection.

The basic tools that any geologist, rock collector or fossil collector needs are:

- * Rock lens
- * Rock hammer
- * Compass
- * Geologic maps
- * Rock and mineral guide
- * Field notebook
- * Geology notebook pouch

Basic Rock Collecting Tools

A rock lens is useful for looking at minerals and fossils that are too small to see with the naked eye. Rock lenses can range in magnifying power from 7X to 20X - the most commonly used rock lenses have a magnification of 10X. They are small enough to fit in your pocket, although many geologists hang them around their neck with a lanyard or cord for quick and easy access. Rock lenses range in price from \$15 to \$45 depending on the brand and the power of magnification.



Rock lens

A rock hammer is very useful for revealing the fresh surfaces of rock for more easy identification. When rock surfaces are weathered, the color of the rock can change and visible minerals can be altered. This can make identifying a rock and the minerals within the rock more difficult. Carefully using a rock hammer to chip away chunks of weathered surfaces can reveal fresh surfaces where the true color of the rock is exposed and minerals look exactly the way they are meant to. Younger geologists may want to use safety goggles when first learning how to use their rock hammer as small chips of rock can fly out towards the user. Looking away from the rock as you hammer it can also protect your face and eyes. Rock hammers range in price from \$20 to \$40.

Other Tools Useful for Rock Collecting

Geologic maps can also be very useful for assisting rock, fossil and mineral collectors. A geologic map, which, for the U.S., can be purchased from the U.S. Geological Survey, helps geologists to know what kind of rock is in which areas. Since sedimentary rocks are known for their fossil loads, a person looking for fossils would consult a geologic map to locate areas of sedimentary deposits. A geologic map of a state, or a geologic quadrangle, costs about \$7.



Field notebook

Rock and mineral guides can be especially useful for new rock and mineral collectors, who may not be as familiar with finding specimens out in the field. These guides can vary greatly in prices - from textbook-like guides that can go for around \$100 to books that are written for children, which can cost about \$10. Be sure to buy a guide that is age and experience-appropriate.

A field notebook is inexpensive - usually about \$5 - and is necessary for the collector to record where he is gathering his specimens and marking them out in the field. This is a common practice for geologists who collect specimens out in the field and then bring them back to their office for further analysis and description. Most field notebooks are made of sturdy paper and water resistant covers so that they can be used in rainy weather.

Another important accessory for a geologist to have is a notebook pouch to carry around all the tools. Most notebook pouches have enough pockets for a notebook, a compass, a folded map, pencils and pens, and can be easily attached to a belt. More elaborate notebook pouches may also have a strap for carrying a rock hammer. Geology notebook pouches cost around \$10.

Online sites can also offer collector gift sets, which include rock hammers, notebooks and a rock lens to get geology students off to a great start.

Sources:

Compton, Robert R., *Geology in the Field*. NY: John Wiley and Sons, 1985

http://geologyecology.suite101.com/article.cfm/christmas_gifts_for_a_geologist

Graphics from *GeoTools* <http://www.geo-tools.com/products.htm>



*Upcoming
Events*

Dec. 6, 2009

State Line Gem & Mineral Society
monthly meeting
2:00 p.m.
Morenci Train Depot
325 W. Main St.
Morenci, MI 49256.

Every Thursday: 5p.m.- ?

Work party at the Clubhouse. Please
come and help as often as you can.

Dec. 4-6, 2009

Indianapolis, IN
Show; GemStreet USA
Indiana State Fairgrounds Pioneer
Our Land Bldg.
1202 E. 38 St.
Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5
Web site: www.gemstreetusa.com

Dec. 12 - 13, 2009

Sheboygan Falls, WI
Glacial Drifters Geological Society's
5th Annual Rock, Fossil, Mineral, and
Jewelry Show
Sheboygan Falls Municipal Bldg.
375 Buffalo St.
Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4

*MERRY
CHRISTMAS!!!*



This newsletter is the official publication of the State Line Gem and Mineral Society. It is published and mailed about the 20th of each month. Submissions *must* be in by the 15th. The State Line Gem and Mineral Society is a non-profit group. Its purpose is to promote interest and increase knowledge in the fields of mineralogy, geology and the lapidary arts. Meetings are held the first Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM at the Morenci Train Depot, 325 W. Main St., Morenci, MI 49256. The June meeting takes place during the annual show/sale. If the first Sunday is a holiday, the meeting will be held one week later.

OFFICERS

President	Steve Nichols	10480 Wesch Rd	Brooklyn MI 49230	517 403-6722
Vice President	Richard Brzezicki	419 N. Broad St.	Adrian MI 49221	517 263-1669
Treasurer	Doris Brzezicki	419 N. Broad St.	Adrian MI 49221	517 263-1669
Secretary	Donna Dahlke	2411 Occidental Hwy	Adrian MI 49221	517 263-0561

DIRECTORS

Past President	Edmund Jarzembki	26984 US 20	Fayette OH 43521	419 237-2000
First Year	Pat Husband	1035 Scotdale Dr.	Adrian, MI 49221	517 263-5983
Second Year	Nancy Lewis	5400 S. M 52	Adrian MI 49221	517 263-3651
Third Year	Charles Swanson	3121 W. Weston Rd.	Sand Creek MI 49279	517 436-9299

COMMITTEES

Editor	Sandy Gerhart	210 Chestnut St.	Adrian MI 49221	517 265-6553
	email: <i>s_gerhart@yahoo.com</i> or <i>stateline1961@yahoo.com</i>			
Show Chairman	Doris Brzezicki	419 N. Broad St.	Adrian MI 49221	517 263-1669
Publicity	Jo Waycaster	5426 Shady Lane Dr.	Adrian MI 49221	517 265-2665
Exhibits Show	Richard Brzezicki	419 N. Broad St.	Adrian MI 49221	517 263-1669
Building	Steve Nichols	10480 Wesch Rd	Brooklyn MI 49230	517 403-6722
Library	Bon Duritsky	4206 Gilhouse Rd.	Toledo OH 43623	419 535-7342
Hospitality	Joan Duritsky	4206 Gilhouse Rd.	Toledo OH 43623	419 535-7342
Sunshine	Catherine Choske	707 Wenonah St.	Tecumseh MI 49286	517 423-3572
Field Trips	Steve Nichols	10480 Wesch Rd	Brooklyn MI 49230	517 403-6722
Historian	Donna Dahlke	2411 Occidental Hwy	Adrian MI 49221	517 263-0561
Education & Lapidary	{ Edmund Jarzembki	26984 US 20	Fayette OH 43521	419 237-2000
	{ Richard Brzezicki	419 N. Broad St.	Adrian MI 49221	517 263-1669

Rock Trails

Sandy Gerhart, Editor
210 Chestnut St.
Adrian, MI 49221



Meetings are held the first Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM at the Morenci Train Depot, 325 W. Main St., Morenci, MI 49256.

