

Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club, Traverse City, Michigan

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February program, review of January, other club news

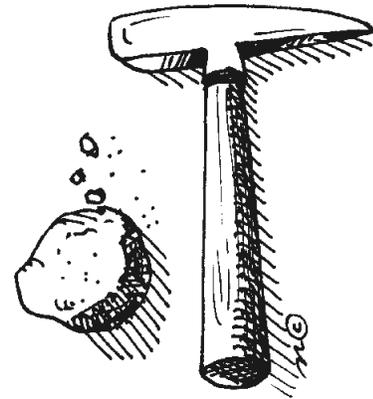
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Let's See Your Favorite Tools!

Our February program (February 17 7:00 pm at the Woodmere Library) is RockTools, and requires member participation! If you are a rockhound with a favorite tool this is your chance to bring it and help others to figure out what tools they might like to have.

February Hosts:
Don & Kathy Flegel
Ron Howard
Rhonda Hudson



Door Prize: Donna Kaysserian

Five Minute Program: Deb and Gary Bull on upcoming Kentucky Agate Field Trip in April

Time to Renew your Dues!

Individual \$15, Youth \$5, Couple \$20 (plus children \$3) They can be mailed to GTARMC, c/o Maria-Anne D'Hooghe, PO Box 218, Kewadin, MI 49648. Dues can also be paid at the meetings.



History Center Update

Lauren reported that a committee is still researching options for the History Center and that he was looking for other possible locations. No decision has been made

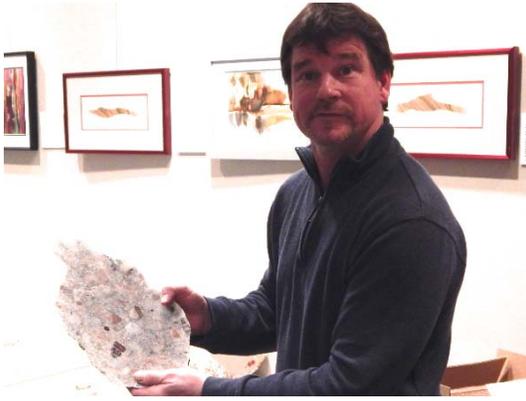
by the City yet. We may have to move equipment and supplies out on short notice.

Life of a Copper Miner

An excellent turnout and great programs were the highlights of the January club meeting held for the first time at the Traverse Area District Library on Woodmere. President Lauren Vaughn presented the main program on the Life of early Copper Miners and donated a door prize of Keweenaw minerals which was happily won by Marian W....For our five minute program Vice President Kevin Gauthier presented information about puddingstones.

Business included reports from the officers. Treasurer Maria-Anne pointed out that our account is decreased several thousand over the last few years and that our club may be required to relocate and have considerable expenses related to that. Our membership is just over 200. President Vaughn reported that committees are still discussing the fate of the Carnegie building and our relationship there. No decisions yet on the way the building will be managed and used. Rockhound of the Year was former vice president Jim Gary who arranged our varied programs during his tenure.





Rock Hunting in the UP

If you are new to the club and rockhounding you may want to consider joining rock collectors from around the country to gather in the Keweenaw Peninsula every August to hunt for rocks. Many members of our club participate in this special week. You can watch for sign-up information at http://www.museum.mtu.edu/keweenaw_mineral_days/events.html New information will be posted here when they are ready!

Brad's Bench Tip

TESTING FOR SILVER

With the price of silver as high as it is, jewelry people need to keep their scrap metals sorted. Part of that process is identifying some of those unknown "silvery" pieces in the bottom of the toolbox.

Silver testing solutions can be used to distinguish high silver content alloys like Fine (.999), Sterling (.925) and Coin (.900) from alloys that have the same appearance but no silver content, like German Silver or Nickel.

I purchased a half-ounce bottle of JSP Silver Testing Solution #GT41 for \$3. With a fresh solution you have an instant reaction after applying it to the metal being tested. Procedure is simple - as you apply a small drop, look for a color change. Note that the acid will leave a slight mark, so choose a spot that is out of the way or will be easy to polish.

If you suspect the object is silver plated, you should file a little notch somewhere inconspicuous to expose what metal is below the surface. Otherwise, all you test will be the surface plating.

Here's the reaction I get when testing various materials:

Fine silver	Red/Orange
Sterling silver	Brick Red
80% silver 20% copper	Dark red changing to gray
Brass	Yellow changing to blue
Nickel	Gray-green
Copper	Yellow changing to blue
Steel	Black
Stainless Steel	No color change

Caution - If you do any of this testing, know that you are handling a reasonably strong acid. The GT41 label says it includes nitric acid and potassium dichromate.

Wear safety glasses.

Do not get any testing solution on your skin.

Always have a solution of baking soda and water handy to neutralize acid.

Wash and clean up well when you're done.

Speakers Needed:

Big Rapids has a new rock club that is seeking speakers for 20 minute programs. If you are interest please contact Norma Bull at oreothedog53@gmail.com. The club meets on the Ferris Campus on the first Thursday of the month.

Classes on Hold for Now



The Rock Club has two classes we offer to our members. The Cabochon Class is one evening, a Tuesday or Thursday, three hours taught by Tom Fordyce or other volunteers. The fee is paid in advance. Often a second class is needed to master the equipment and procedures. After successful completion of this course you can use our equipment on scheduled

Monday nights when we have someone to oversee the room. These work times are scheduled by Tom, and are on hold until our building issues are resolved. Our other class is Silversmithing which is a 7 week class. Both of these classes are on hold for now.

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