



June 2016 issue

Our next meeting: Silent Auction Club Fundraiser

Our June **program (June 21, 6:45 pm at the Woodmere Library)** is a silent auction. Your part is to bring items that others might be interested in. Rocks, slabs, equipment, food, crafts or craft items are items that have been sold before. Cookies, pies, and breads are welcome in case you don't have rock items! No excuse, bring some things to donate to the club fundraiser.

May Hosts:

Pierre & Loretta LaFoille
Elaine Lounds
Suzi Gugel
Sarah VanderKleed

Door Prize:

Sarah VanderKleed
Pierre LaFoille

Five Minute Program: none in June, more time for our auction

We have our business meeting, then the 5 minute program, refreshments & social time, then our main program. Don't leave early and miss our feature presentations!

Field Trip coming

On June 11 Randy Sundstrom has arranged access to a gravel pit for rock picking. The hours are 10-4. The May trip resulted in lots of happy rock hounds, so join the fun. Directions are take M-37 south to M-115, then east 11 miles to No 29 Rd. Go north 3.5 miles to No 24 Rd (Meauwataka) then east 1 mile. South on No 31 Rd, gravel pit is on the right (1/2 mile). Randy's number is 231-429-9626.

Rock Tumbling Contest

The MWF newsletter announced a tumbling contest; the featured rock is petrified wood. You pay \$30 entry fee, a 3# package of rough rock is shipped to you, and then you tumble and submit your best 3 pieces. For more information see www.featherriverrocks.org.

Midwest Federation News

Our Junior Club members can participate in the Youth Poster Award. The contest is for a poster on the theme of Amazing Agates. **Deadline is extended to June 15.** For more info: <http://www.amfed.org/mwf/Federation/forms.html>

The Upcoming Regional Federation Convention MWF Convention is August 19,20,21 at South Bend, Indiana, an easy drive down! The theme is Midwest Minerals, but a dinosaur display may also be present. See the website for more info. You might want to go and participate in rock hounding events in that location and meet new friends

August Rock Hunting in the UP

If you are new to the club and rock hounding 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 place to hunt rock. Sign-up information is posted now at <http://www.tamarackminerals.com/CCRMC/KewWeek/index.html> (sorry, you'll have to cut and past) or for July activities see http://www.museum.mtu.edu/keweenaw_mineral_days/events.html
Don't miss these three fun rock event!

From the Club President, Pierre LaFoille:

Agates and Diamonds

As Loretta and I dug for agates along what Minnesotans call the "Northshore" (northeast from Duluth along the Lake Superior Shoreline) last fall, I couldn't help but think of "Punch" Jones of Peterstown, West Virginia.

In 1928, while playing horseshoes with his dad, Punch found a really shiny rock. He called it his "diamond". He put it in a cigar box (like any good rockhound would) for 15 years, then decided to mail the shiny find to a Virginia geology professor. Somehow the Smithsonian got their hands on the rock, and promptly displayed it in their museum; after all, it turned out to be the second largest diamond ever found in North America at 34.4 carats.

Punch, unfortunately, was killed in combat during World War II. In the 1960's the family asked the Smithsonian to return the stone, then stored it in a safe deposit box until 1984. That year, Sotheby's of New York finally sold the diamond for the family. It fetched \$74,000.

What does all this have to do with agate hunting in Minnesota? Well, diamonds are rare. One carat (based on the weight of a dried locust tree seed) is about a fifth of a gram, and diamond deposits are measured in carats per 100 tons. After a week on Minnesota's Northshore hunting agates, we determined that agates were every bit as rare as diamonds.

I'm sure that our "haul" was just a few carats among the more than 100 tons of beach stones and gravel pit debris that we moved. Lucky for us, the large cup (pail) of agates so generously supplied to us by the Moose Lake Chamber of Commerce kiosk on the last day of the "season" really boosted our results.

Note to myself: Remember to stop in Moose Lake on any visit to Minnesota in the future; a great museum and the state's largest agate in the lobby of the local bank.

Even though the agate hunting was tough, it was all made worthwhile by the new friends we made, the beautiful Lake Superior beaches and sunsets we sampled, and the excellent food we discovered. And.....I'm still waiting for my Sotheby's call.....



Looking Ahead:

July meeting Deb & Gary Bull are doing programs about Gem Trees and Tourmaline.

Recap of May Meeting

The Petoskey Stone Festival that our club sponsors is May 28. Volunteers are needed to set up the tent, help give away information and answer questions about our club.

Tom reminded us to use the whole wheel when working on the grinders, and to work safely, watching for loose pieces that might come off and cause you damage! And 1/4" slabs are still needed for the workroom. The summer Picnic will be at the home of John and Jane Matz again, on Sunday August 21. Elaine agreed to get the count of people coming so we know how much meat to purchase.

The report on a Christmas dinner resulted in a vote to party at Sleder's. Forty participants are needed, and members will prepay. The cost will be around \$17.

Jane Matz did a brief report on polyhedral rocks from Brazil, with many specimens for us to see. Lucy Gaskell did the main program on beadwork, and she had many books and magazines, plus beadwork samples for us to look at.