

Volume 10, no. 6 - Feb, 1968



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The Grand Rapids Mineral Society is a Non-Profit Corporation affiliated with the Midwest Federation and the American Federation of Mineral Societies.

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month at 8:00 PM at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, Multi-purpose room, East Building. Summer meetings at various parks as announced.

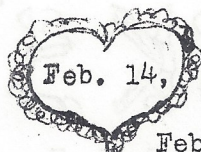
Membership dues are \$3.00 per year for a family, \$2.00 for single adult, and \$1.00 for students under 18 years of age. Dues are payable to Treasurer-year is from September 1 through August 31 of the following year.

Advertising in the GLACIAL DRIFTER is at the rate of \$3.00 per issue, September through May only.

All material for publication shall be in the hands of the EDITOR no later than the Wednesday after the regular monthly BOARD OF CONTROL meeting which is the third week of the month.

Permission to reprint article appearing in the GLACIAL DRIFTER IS HEREBY GRANTED, PROVIDING PROPER CREDIT IS GIVEN.

Member--National Bulletin Editors Association.



Feb. 14, 8 p.m., Regular meeting, Museum East Bldg. side door
"Rocks in Southern Europe" (see below)
Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m., Board of Control, R.B. Smith, 1445 Breton S.E.
Feb. 28, 8 p.m., Mineralogy Group, Mrs. Lucille Pearl, 1598 Bridley N.W.
Mar. 2, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Set up Exhibits for March Show
Mar. 3, 1 p.m. -- OPENING DAY, "Living With Rocks"

NOTED SPEAKER TO SHARE EUROPEAN ADVENTURES
WITH US AT FEBRUARY MEETING

Dr. Edwin H. Palmer, a member of our club and pastor of the Grandville Ave. Christian Reformed Church, will bring us a special account of the adventures he and his family enjoyed while camping in Europe for 13 weeks, when he addresses the Feb. 14 meeting on "Rocks in Southern Europe". His talk, illustrated with slides, will cover scenes in Italy, Greece, France, Spain and Switzerland.

Dr. Palmer has become nationally noted as Chairman of the National Board of Trustees of Citizens for Educational Freedom (CEF) which has over 1000 chapters in the U.S. In this capacity he has testified before a Congressional sub-committee on a Federal Aid to Education bill, and was interviewed by a panel of newsmen on "Face Michigan" on TV. He was formerly instructor in systematic theology at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia; is author of several books, one of which is in the G.R. Public Library; and was editor-in-chief of a Biblical Encyclopedia.

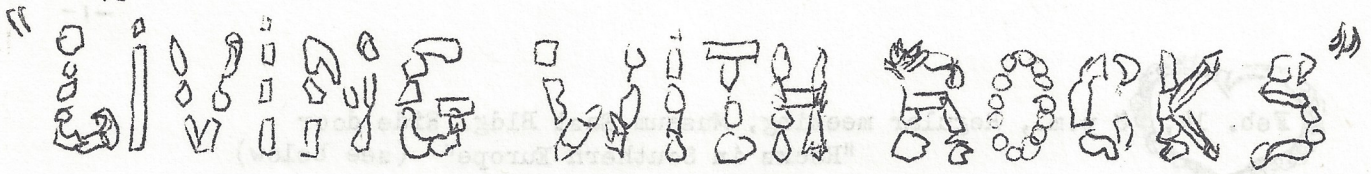
Of particular interest to our group, however, is the fact that the Palmers have long been interested in rocks and minerals. When Dr. Palmer was pastor of a church in Ann Arbor, he sometimes accompanied geology students at the U. of M. on their field trips. Thus when the family had its European camping adventure, they were sure to look about them with eyes for just the kinds of things in which rockhounds would be most interested. Remember--guests and visitors are welcome, so bring a friend.

LAPIDARY DEMONSTRATIONS TO START THIS MONTH -- but.....

A number of our members have expressed the desire to not only see demonstrations of lapidary work, but actually to have a chance to try some grinding, sanding and polishing for themselves. Since we believe that a good group of lapidary workers is one of the greatest assets of any club, we have arranged for the Museum Craft Shop, in the garage at the rear of the East Bldg., to be opened at 7:15 p.m. on Feb. 14 for a half-hour try-out of a lapidary workshop. If the class seems successful and desirable, it can be continued for several months.

There is one problem involved. To do this will cost the club an extra hour's rental and caretaker service, and we are already on a tight budget. Therefore, it is important that the time (and the instructor's time as well) not be wasted. If you signed up as interested (you can come even if you didn't sign up), COME, without fail, on Feb. 14 and any other night such a class is arranged. If you really cannot make it a given night, but wish to participate, call Dr. R.B. Smith at 949-4093.

IF YOU EVER WANTED TO TRY POLISHING A STONE, NOW IS YOUR CHANCE!



EVERYONE'S HELP IS REALLY NEEDED

FOR SUCCESSFUL MARCH MUSEUM SHOW

The 9th Annual Grand Rapids Mineral Society Gem and Mineral Show -- with the theme, "LIVING WITH ROCKS",--will be held at the G.R.Public Museum from March 3 through April 14, 1968. This longer-than-usual time of exhibit is at the special request of the Museum; all displays are to be installed between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturday, Mar. 2.

James DeZwaan, Sr. and Miss Marian Jennings, co-chairmen for the 1968 show, point out that "Living With Rocks" can include any sort of display you might contemplate--we live with rocks as specimens on our shelves, as jewelry which we make, or as geological features in the world around us. Ruth Steele is in charge of lining up the slide shows and other programs which are featured every Sunday afternoon. Fay Reed is in charge of arranging for demonstrations every Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, while Mrs. Reed is arranging for weekend hosts and hostesses. As a special help this year, Bob Rozema, Casey Doornbos and others will be on hand at the February meeting and on Mar. 2 as an "Identification Committee" to help you identify and classify your material. Jane Cichaniewicz will be on hand Mar. 2 at the big typewriter to assist with registration and typing out signs and labels; and Nellie Mead and Emily VanVuren will provide expert help with the coffee and cookies on "set-up" and "knock-down" days (Mar. 2 and Apr. 14).

Each year has seen a bigger and better show, with increasing public interest, but this is not to be achieved without a good deal of cooperation from our members. Displays and exhibits do not make themselves--they are the result of imaginative planning and patient work to create something with rocks which will be of interest to others. Every exhibitor receives a handsome Exhibitor's Award Ribbon, which looks mighty good on the home display shelves later! There are other ways to help the show, too -- read about them below and do just as much as you can, please. We can take pride in the fact that no other Mineral Society in the country presents such a long-running show, free to the public, every year. Let's make 1968 an outstanding Show year!

DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITS: While some large, special displays are needed, you do not have to be able to fill a whole case in order to exhibit in this show. Even one fine specimen, or a group of them, is very welcome, and can be combined with others (each properly identified as to owner as well as material) to make very worthwhile displays. Chmn. DeZwaan says, "Getting your display ready also makes a fine winter field trip, again getting acquainted with the many pieces of junk and the few good ones which you picked up last year or some time ago...which you did not get cleaned up and identified. Do it now, put it in the show, and improve your own collection at the same time." **IMPORTANT:** Whether your display is large

or small, the Chairmen must know what you have, in order to reserve proper display space for it. So do fill out exhibit registration blanks (in this Drifter or available at the meeting or from the Show Chairmen) as soon as you have an approximate idea of what, how much and how large material you will be displaying. Space assignment is on a first-come first-served basis; avoid disappointment by getting your registration in promptly.

DEMONSTRATORS: The live demonstrations are an important and very popular feature of the show-- could you help? The committee will help in trying to have demonstration equipment on hand if you do not have it or yours is not portable. Demonstrations (1-3 p.m. Thursdays, 2-4 p.m. on weekends) cover lapidary techniques and silver working, but might include other subjects such as mineral testing, jewelry mounting, etc. Call Fay Reed.

You'll be proud
of that G.R.M.S.
Exhibitor's Ribbon!



HOSTS & HOSTESSES: This requires no talent--just a friendly smile to wear behind that "Host" ribbon, to assure visitors that our club welcomes them. You should be prepared to answer questions about the club (and we will have a new club folder ready to aid you there). If you get some hard questions about rocks or minerals that you can't answer, you just look around frantically for one of the club experts while you say, "Well, I really don't know--that's one of the reasons I joined the club, so I could find out more about things like that--but as soon as I see someone who might know, I'll be glad to have him help you." Easy, huh?

COOKIES, EVERYONE? It is always more work to put up a display than you think, and past experience has shown that exhibitors often work through the lunch hour, and really need a little nourishment. So cookies--the more the merrier--are being requested from any of you who could help in this way (the club furnishes coffee). If there's too many for Mar. 2, they can be stored in a freezer until closing day. That's when exhibits must be taken out at 5 p.m., and everyone heaves a sigh of relief that the big show has been a success again this year, and how about a cup of coffee? (We'll surely need more cookies on Apr. 14--yours are welcome then, too.)

The registration sheets enclosed with this Drifter are for your convenience, as well as to help the Show Chairmen. Their work is so much easier if they know what help they can count on. Fill out your blank and mail it to Jim or Marian--they'll pass the word along to the proper committee people.

VISIT THE SHOW OFTEN !

BRING YOUR FRIENDS ! IT'S GREAT FOR FAMILIES !

SEE YOU THERE !

TIPS ON PREPARING SPECIMENS IN YOUR COLLECTION.

(from "Of Rocks and Things" by Dick Matych, State Line Gem & Mineral Soc.)

...Here we are back home with a few choice minerals. We should now select our best specimen and prepare it for our collection. Many "purists" collect only individual crystals, but generally a specimen is deemed more valuable if a small amount of the mother rock or "matrix" is left on the specimen. So, when trimming the specimen try to retain a small amount of the matrix. Not too much, or it may divert attention away from the mineral.

Our goal is to prepare a specimen so that it might win a prize in competition, even though we never intend to display in a show. It might, therefore, be well to review the "American Federation Uniform Rules" before we start to prepare our rock. The "Uniform Rules" must be met on a point score basis to ever win an award in National or Federation shows. These rules are set by a group consisting of an expert representative from each Federation, and are reviewed and changed every three years to keep them current. Your club library or one of your officers will have a copy of the Midwest Directory and the "Rules".

The point I would like to make is, if a specimen is prepared and displayed according to the Uniform Rules it will be shown at its best for your own enjoyment, for competition, or it may even be so valuable as to repose in a museum some day. We've spent a lot of time and energy collecting this rock.....let's give it the attention it deserves.

In the Uniform Rules for the "Minerals" class, points are awarded for each item as follows -- 100 is the perfect score: Quality - 65 points; Showmanship - 20; Rarity - 5; Labeling - 10 ... Total 100.

Note that "Rarity" amounts to the least number of points in the judging while "Quality" is the big item. Even the commonest of minerals such as calcite, pyrite, or marcasite can contribute a great deal to your collection. And we all know that some of the crystal forms of these minerals are unbelievable in their perfection. The trick is to bring out these fine points when the mineral is prepared for your display.

Any of us who have seen a Herkimer Diamond will vouch for its perfection. This quartz crystal is fairly common, but a display of these won the "best in show" trophy at the Midwest show in Evansville two years ago. As I remember, they received 99 points and their owner earned every bit of it for the method in which they were displayed. "Rarity" of this one mineral class was judged on crystal forms.

To define these four standards, I will quote directly from the rules. These are the things we should remember when preparing our specimen.

1. Quality - Quality in mineral specimens shall refer to conditions of crystals (freedom from bruises and flaws); size of crystals (typical of species); crystal arrangement (attitude, (angle and position) of crystals on the specimen; clarity, freedom from excess foreign material; and the amount of identical material that is visible. (65 points)
2. Showmanship - Showmanship shall refer to the ability of the exhibitor

- to use the material exhibited, the background material, lighting arrangement, and labeling features (such as size, neatness, etc.) to create a display which will be educational and will attract and hold the interest of the viewer upon the specimens exhibited. (20 points)
3. Rarity - Rarity shall refer to the world-wide availability of each specimen being judged. If a common species, rarity will be judged on the quality, habit, or other characteristic which may be exceptional for that species. (5 points)
 4. Labeling - Labeling points are won for legibility, correct identification and correct spelling only. (10 points)

In "Labeling", I've underlined "correct" spelling" because this is one of my special weaknesses. No matter how many times I go through my labels I always seem to miss one or two. Actually there's no excuse to lose any points on labeling. This is the category where everyone should get 10 points by simply checking your spelling in the book. And those 10 points might decide whether you're the winner or not, when the judging is right down to the wire. Incidentally, I lost 6 points in spelling at Washington this year! How do you spell "waxey", "smokey" and "sulphur"? Oh there I go! -- I've just spelled 'em wrong again!

I THANK THEE, LORD

I thank Thee, Lord
That I was given eyes to see--
Not just the dusty earth and cloud flecked sky
The wave tossed oceans deep and mountains high
But so much more.

Thou gavest me
A glimpse into the story of the earth--
How it was formed and changed
By constant flood and dust, by fire and rain
Thru millenniums of time from sea to shore.

Thank Thee, Dear Lord
For showing me the beauty Thou hast hid
The pristine crystals buried deep within a mine
The lovely agate hidden neath its dirty rind
A privilege granted but to those who know Thy lore.

Grant me, Dear Lord
The wisdom to use wisely what Thou gave
To share with others that which I most prize
And help them learn to use their hands and eyes
To find this world much richer than before.

--by Ellen Mortensen, in "Rear Trunk"

LAST CALL FOR SAUK COLLEGE DONATIONS -- If you have any specimens, particularly of Michigan material, which might be good for either cabinet display or classroom use in that new geology department in Illinois, please bring them to the February meeting. All material collected will be shipped before the end of the month.

SCHOLARSHIP BY COUPON: Something else to bring to meetings--Betty Crocker coupons! The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies has established a scholarship foundation which annually provides a \$500 per year two-year scholarship in one of the earth sciences. The scholarship honors an outstanding scientist or educator in the field by being given in his name to a school of his choice, after which a student is selected to receive the award. This worthwhile project builds good public relations for our hobby, and is something which individual clubs could not accomplish on their own.



How can you help? It's very simple--turn in Betty Crocker coupons, which can be redeemed by the AFMS at $\frac{1}{3}$ ¢ each. When our club has sent in the equivalent in coupons (or cash) of \$1 per member, we will receive a 100% Certificate. Many clubs have already done this, and much more. So bring all the coupons you can, supplement them with cash if you care to do so, and let's see if within the next year we can put ourselves "100%" behind this scholarship.

IT'S NICE TO KNOW -- that Mr. and Mrs. George Arnold, and young Dave Veenstra are new members of G.R.M.S., and have received their "Welcome" bags of Mich. mineral and fossil specimens Among the visitors who enjoyed hearing Dr. James Zumberge's fine talk at the Jan. meeting were Perry and Goldie Mitchell from Spring Lake, also Truman and Eunice Mars, from Grand Have Rock & Mineral Club. Other visitors were Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Colburn, Mrs. Veenstra, Mrs. John Schippus and Disck Bogard The lucky winner of the Montana agate locket was Glen Moerdyke, while Dick Damstra got the beautiful Brazilian agate slab. Other happy winners were Jim VanVuren, R.J.Holloway and Art Ferguson, with barite roses donated by Casey Doornbos; Phillip Wise received the celestite given by Don Crabbs; and Marian Jennings won the copper specimen donated by Jim DeZwaan Sr. The Don Crabbs and R.B.Smiths had a great time the night of Jan. 18 as guests of Central Mich. Lapidary & Mineral Society at their tenth annual banquet and installation of officers. The dinner had a Hawaiian theme, with pineapple and cocconut centerpieces supplemented by "bragging rocks" brought by members (and there were some beauties!); the gals who organized the potluck had even made colorful muumuus to wear with big flower earrings. Guests received tæbars and pins, and orchid corsages (artificial, but pretty) several Midwest Fed. officers were present. Featured speaker, Ellis Courter gave a slide and sound program on "The Rock Pageant at Grand Canyon". All in all, a most pleasant evening. By the way, instead of a gavel, this club transfers a "Rock of authority" to its incoming president. It's almost time to award our annual scholarship to the annual Summer Conservation Camp at Higgins Lake. IF YOU KNOW of a possible candidate for this award-- someone, perhaps a teacher or youth leader or other interested person, who would receive particular benefit from special studies in conservation, you are welcome to submit their names and qualifications to Pres. Don Crabbs. Candidates need not be members of the club.

MUSEUM OFFERS HELP TO EXHIBITORS FOR MARCH SHOW

"Well, I suppose you're busy getting ready for your show," is the cheerful greeting which Ardith Allen, Curator of Exhibits for the Grand Rapids Public Museum, is likely to extend to any member of the Mineral Society these days. And she will add, "If there's anything we can do to help, just tell us....."

The Museum does offer us a great deal of help in preparing our exhibits for the March show, and perhaps some of you newer members and first-time exhibitors may not be aware of just what is available. A visit to Miss Allen in her office near the back door of the Museum will help to stimulate many new ideas for you in displaying your own work or specimens.

In the big, back storeroom you will find drapery cloths of many colors, textures and finishes. (Special note: Miss Allen recommends, however, that we press the materials we use -- she felt that unnecessary wrinkles detracted from the appearance of several of our displays last year.) There are colored art boards, cardboards, papers and paints. "Be judicious," says Miss Allen, "but have a variety of these things in your display." Grass cloth is another background possibility; also fishnet.

Glass and wooden shelving is available to fit the cases. Three-foot lengths of thick, dark cork could make effective shelves or backgrounds. Manzanita and sea grape branches provide an attractive way to hang jewelry. Ornate picture frames could be backed in velvet for dramatic displays. Cardboard cutouts can focus attention on a particular area or item. Openwork panels make interesting dividers in a display case.

There is a wide variety of boxes, platforms, and free-form tables to be combined in any way that best suits your materials. New this year is a series of step tables on a pole. Pegboard pieces, odd pieces of wood, tree and telephone pole cross sections, even a section of old fencing may give your display that "different" look. Three-foot barnwood ovals, some with driftwood attached, could make dramatic backgrounds. A variety of 9-inch square vinyl tiles offer possibilities, such as alternating light and dark ones for different items. A large styrofoam cutout of Michigan, both upper and lower peninsulas, sprayed in coppertone, is another interesting display we may use.

Don't forget the large-type typewriter, invaluable for preparing labels which can be read at some distance. And while each exhibitor should plan to have his own needed staple supplies such as tacks, pins, tapes, etc., many of us have received emergency help with these things too.

"Do try to come up with something new and different, something creative and imaginative, not just shelves and layers," Miss Allen pleads. She will be happy to help us -- and if you take a few minutes to scan the storeroom supplies, you will surely find something around which you can build an outstanding display.

NAVIGATION . . . MAGICAL STONES OF THE SUN

Without benefit of compass, Viking sailors of the 9th century managed to ply their watery routes of conquest and commerce, navigating by stars at night and by sun during the day. No matter what the weather, according to ancient Scandinavian sagas, the sun could always be located with the aid of magical "Sun Stones". In a recent article in an archeology magazine, Danish archeologist Thorkild Ramskor lamented that none of the sagas clearly described the sun-stone. "But there seems to be a possibility," he wrote, "that it was an instrument which in clouded weather could show where the sun was."

To the ten-year-old son of Jorgen Jensen, chief navigator of the Scandinavian Airline system, the instrument described in this article sounded much like the twilight compass used by his father on flights at high latitudes, where the magnetic compass is unreliable. The twilight compass is equipped with a polaroid filter that enables a navigator to locate the position of the sun--even when it is behind clouds or below the horizon--by the sunlight polarized by the atmosphere.

Intrigued by his son's observation, Jensen passed it on to Ramskou, who immediately recognized its scientific implication. Enlisting the aid of Denmark's royal court jeweller, the archeologist collected minerals found in Scandinavia whose molecules are all aligned parallel to each other, just as the crystals are in a polaroid filter. Ramskou found that one of these minerals, a transparent crystal called Cordierite, turned from yellow to dark blue whenever its natural molecular alignment was held at right angles to the plane of polarized light from the sun. Thus, he reasoned, a Viking could have located the sun by rotating a chunk of Cordierite until it turned dark blue.

Putting Cordierite to the test, Ramskou accompanied navigator Jensen on an SAS flight to Greenland, keeping track of the sun with his stone while Jensen used the twilight compass. His observations were accurate to within $2\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of the sun's true position, and he was able to track the sun until it had dipped 7 degrees below the horizon. "I now feel convinced," Ramskou concludes, "that the old Viking sailors with the aid of their sun-stones could navigate with enormous accuracy."

-- Illowa News Grinder

PLANNING A SUMMER TRIP? The Corn Belt Lapidary and Geological Society is hosting the combined Midwest Federation Convention and the American Federation Convention at Normal, Ill. August 22-25. This combined convention should be of exceptional interest. As the Earth Science Club of Northern Illinois puts it: the normal place to be THIS year in August will be at Normal, Illinois!

You might also enjoy a stop at the Chicago Academy of Sciences, 2001 N. Clark St., Chicago. After many years of neglect and obscurity, the Chicago Academy has undergone complete renovation. One of the newest exhibits is the re-creation of a Pennsylvanian era forest.

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO BE AN EXPERT -- EQUIPMENT SCRAPBOOK CHAIRMAN NEEDED! Approved at the Jan. meeting was the idea of keeping up a club scrapbook of information on the various types of lapidary equipment available. A Chairman is needed for this project -- one who will take the time to send out a special G.R.M.S. letter to the manufacturers requesting up-to-date illustrations and information about their products (we do not wish to get into mere catalogues from suppliers, which our own local rock shops could duplicate). We think that manufacturers might respond to a large club request, where they might not or might charge an individual. Whoever takes over on this will have the fun of becoming an expert in a field where detailed knowledge is often lacking. VOLUNTEERS?

DID YOU KNOW? -- that the Lincoln Memorial is sprouting stalactites and stalagmites in its basement? This phenomenon is caused by water seeping through the marble. The the Memorial is only about 45 years old, the formations have grown to several feet. When the Memorial was built, engineers sank 122 steel cylinders to bedrock 50 feet underground. The base is set high above ground on a rectangular platform, thus forming a cavernous space beneath the floor, and this is where the stalagmites and stalactites are growing.

-- from Miami Gemcrafter

DID YOU KNOW? -- Apache tears are not obsidian. According to findings, as far back as 1945, Apache Tears are Marekanite, a variety of perlitic rhyolite glass. The principal volcanic glasses are obsidian, perlite, pitchstone, vitrophyre tachylite, pumice, and vitrie or glassy tuff. Positive distinction between obsidian, perlite and pitchstone is based upon the amount of water present.

--Nebraska "Rear Trunk"

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Midwest Federation's NEWSLETTER

Published monthly except July & August as a Service to Member Clubs.

Editor: Haydon Peterson, Route 5 - Box 229, Des Moines, Ia. 50317



CHANGES IN AFMS MAILING PLAN

The Midwest has been asked to obtain information from each member club concerning AFMS mailing. The request from Bob Hagglund, AFMS Newsletter editor, reads in part:

"Member clubs of each Regional Federation will be asked to choose a responsible member to act as their receiving agent for the number of copies of the AFMS Newsletter to which they are entitled. . . 2 copies to be given to officers of their choice, plus one copy for the bulletin editor of those clubs which publish one.

The member chosen, not necessarily an officer, should be one who can be depended upon to see that the Newsletter copies are delivered to the proper persons.

Regional Secretaries are requested to publish this plan and to see that the requested addresses are forwarded to the Newsletter editor immediately.

The information should include: the name and address of the member who is to receive the Newsletter copies for his club; the name of the club; the correct zip code number; the number of copies to which the club is entitled (2 copies for each club, plus one copy if the club publishes a bulletin."

Please send this information to the your Midwest Secretary, Jean Reynolds, 107 Tuttle Ave., Clarendon Hills, Illinois 60514 as soon as possible so you will receive all your AFMS information for 1968.

SIOUX EMPIRE GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY

has set April 20 from 10 A.M. to 9 P.M. and April 21 from Noon to 6 P.M. as the dates for their first Sioux Empire Rock Show to be held in the Odd Fellows Temple in Sioux Falls, S.D. Dealers and exhibitors should contact Robert Johnson, Route 3 - Box 230, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Issue No. 82 - February 1968

THE 1968 MWF DIRECTORY

will be published very soon and the Directory Chairman, Olive Ellersick, is now sending out the forms in search of the information from each club to be included in the new directory. When you receive the information request forms will you see that the officer or club member responsible for getting this information, recording it on the form, do so as quickly as possible and get the form returned to our secretary, Jean Reynolds, in the self-addressed envelope included with the form. This cooperation from each club will enable the directory to be printed and sent to our member clubs on time.

THE WORD "ROCKHOUND"

is mentioned three times in the February 1968 issue of Woodall's Trailer Travel... in the "letters to the Editors" and in the articles "Camping With the Apaches" and "A Home In the Desert", according to word from our Education Chairman Gail Alexander.

WE STILL NEED

your Betty Crocker / General Mills coupons for our Scholarship Foundation. Your response has been wonderful but we are still collecting them to continue the work which has been started.

KEEP THIS ONE ON YOUR CALENDAR

The American Federation - Midwest Federation combined show will be in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois on August 22-23-24-25, 1968. It's the BIG ONE for 1968.

HUNTING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

-by Ellis Courter, MWF President
-an editorial in the Conglomerate, bulletin of the
Michigan Mineralogical Society.

Listening to the gossip emanating from some of our rockhound gatherings, I can hear rumblings about some of the admission charges that collectors are assessed for the privilege of entering privately owned collecting grounds.

Admittedly, during the past season or so, some owners have "upped" their "diggin" fee to a point where it may seem high-- BUT-- before we condemn them or go into any tirade about the whole thing, let's give it a fair look.

Let's suppose, for instance, that you owned property that yielded gems or minerals. Would you feel justified in granting everyone free collecting privileges merely for "the good of the cause"? Of course not! Certainly the owner of any such property is entitled to a benefit--and this benefit should bear some relation to the value of the material involved, along with equal consideration for his investment, cost of operation, risk of property damage, accidents, vandalism and what not-- and if it doesn't, you'll have to admit the man isn't a very smart operator.

Let me go back a few years and cite a striking example of over generosity. Nearly every rockhound who has been around for any time has heard of the famed Priday Ranch out in Oregon. For years, this ranch, which spreads over several thousand acres, was open to the collecting public without charge. But then, as its fame spread-- and the hobby expanded-- it became necessary to hire someone to supervise things. At the same time, a nominal charge of \$1.50 was effected for each visiting car. For this fee, you could stay as long as you liked, dig anywhere, and enjoy free camping and firewood. For ten years this went on. And then came the day of reckoning-- when Mr. Priday decided to sell his ranch holdings and divorce himself from the operation. And herein lies the point of my story.

During his ownership, it is claimed that the collecting public dug up-- and carried away-- no less than \$150,000 worth of rough gem material. And what did Mr. Priday get in return for all this? It is said that his entire life work on the ranch netted him less than one half of this amount. In short, the public with no investment or any responsibility, received over twice as much as did the owner of the property.

Today, the Priday ranch location is still one of the most noted collecting spots in the west, and even yet, it is a very generous producer. Under the new owners, however, the collecting fee has been hiked considerably. Even so, the privilege granted is a bargain considering the speculative aspects, as some of the rough material gathered from these wide spread acres has sold upwards of \$10 per pound.

Maybe this is an extreme case, but I'm inclined to think not. I venture to say that in the majority of cases the public collector is very likely to profit more than the private owner.

In some cases the owners may even be denying themselves a financial gain in offering this kind of a service to collectors. They could, for instance, lease the area to wholesalers, or work it themselves and sell in quantity to wholesalers. Either way, it is likely that the overall consideration would be greater, the return realized more quickly, and all brought about with less bother.

Most of us are inclined to forget about the things for which an operator has to pay in granting us collecting rights. We forget his responsibility in protecting the public he serves. This, by itself, usually requires the payment of a substantial premium to offset unforeseen accidents or injuries that sometimes occur when careless or reckless people forget their manners. Nor is it all for public protection. With vandalism on the rise, some must to protect his own property from those who are wont to bespoil.

Again in areas where heavy digging is required, it may be necessary at frequent intervals to bring in heavy equipment to turn over the ground and expose new and more fruitful working areas-- and while this can lighten the pick and shovel work of collectors-- it is expensive for the owners.

Some dissent might come from those who claim that too often the pickings are skimpy-- that they seek but do not find. Naturally, no owner can ever guarantee a bonanza. He doesn't put or distribute the minerals in the good earth nor can he be expected to gather them and tne sprinkle them atop the ground to be picked up like potatoes.

In a few places, good material may be lacking-- but of the better known localities, just how often do you pay a fee in vain. Rarely does a visitor leave a noted collecting ground empty handed-- at least not if he lets his fate be known. Usually the owner upon hearing of any collector's ill luck will present him with enough material to equal the admission fee.

Another consideration that we often forget is the convenience of it all. A collector on vacation with only a limited amount of time can be assured of reaching an established site and by paying the going rate can enjoy the fruits of a popular "diggings", have protection from undue risks, and in the shortest possible time be on his way to the next stop. Count your time as dollars, and you can't lose. Nor will you drive a couple hundred miles seeking some out-of-the-way spot only to find a water-filled hole when you finally get there-- or be confronted with a bold sign that says "Keep Out", "No Collecting" or the like. Yes, I'd much rather go where I'm welcome-- and where there is something reasonably sure in the offing-- even though it may require the payment of a collecting fee. All this, of course, is reserved for those times when I'm in a hurry!

E N T R Y B L A N K

GRAND RAPIDS MINERAL SOCIETY
NINTH ANNUAL GEM & MINERAL SHOW

March 2 - April 14,
1968
G. R. Public Museum

Again the members of the Grand Rapids Mineral Society have an opportunity to show the community what 'rock hounds' do. We can share with others our knowledge and our prized possessions, and at the same time interest othes in our hobby.

Our theme will be E D U C A T I O N.

There will be room for a single piece or a complete display. You name it and the Committee will fit it into the show....
ENTER NOW so we can plan the space.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

Type of Exhibit: Mineral () Lapidary () Fossil ()
Geological Oddity () Educational ()

Space Requirement _____

I WILL HELP: Arrange a neighborhood display ()

Demonstrate Thurs. Sat. Sun. () Be Host or Hostess
for a Sat. or Sun. ()

Bring Cookies - Mar. 2 () Apr. 14 ()

Fill in this blank as soon as possible and give, or send to

Miss. Marion Jennings or Mr. James De Zwaan
Hillmount Apartments 8250 Cherry Valley
Apt. No. 101 R. # 2
505 Cherry St. S.E. Caledonia, Mich. 49316
Grand Rapids, Mich. 49502

(Remember that the show committee will not be able to insure exhibits this year. If you are displaying something which you feel must be insured you should arrange for this yourself. All display cases at the show are locked, but especially valuable items should be in the wall cases.)

Grand Rapids Mineral Society
Mrs. R. B. Smith, Editor
1445 Breton Rd. S.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506
Return Postage Guaranteed



March 2 - April 14,
1958
G. R. Public Museum

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Again the members of the Grand Rapids Mineral Society have an opportunity to show the community what "rock hounds" do. We can share with others our knowledge and our prized possessions, and at the same time interest others in our hobby.

Our theme will be EDUCATION.
There will be room for a single piece or a complete display. You name it and the show will put it into the show...
Mrs. Bernice Wienrank Rexin
6935 W. Herbert Ave.
Milwaukee, Wis. 53218

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

Type of Exhibit: Mineral () Lapidary () Fossil ()
Geological Ability () Educational ()

Space Requirement _____

I WILL HELP: Arrange a neighborhood display ()
Demonstrate Tours, Sat. Sun. () Be Host or Hostess for a Sat. or Sun. ()
Bring Cookies - Mar. 2 () Apr. 14 ()

Fill in this blank as soon as possible and give, or send to

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