Volume 6, No. 9 ~ ~ May 1964

the GLACIAL DRIFTER

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The Grand Rapids Mineral Society is a non-profit corporation affiliated with the Midwest Federation and American Federation of Mineral Societies.

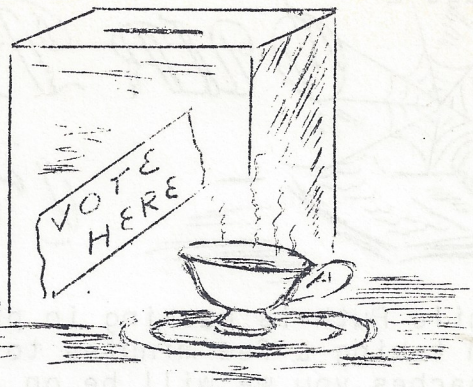
Meetings are held at Riverside Elementary School, 2420 Coit N E the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 8:00 P.M. (Sept. thru April). Annual meeting second Wednesday of May at Riverside Junior High. Summer meetings at different parks as announced.

Advertising in the DRIFTER is at the rate of $3.00 per issue. (Advertisements published Sept. thru May only)

All material to be published must be in the hands of the editor no later than the 25th of the month preceding publication.

Member - Bulletin Editors Association.

ANNUAL MEETING MAY 13



Our May meeting will be held in the Riverside Junior High School which is directly south of the Riverside Elementary School where we usually meet. This being our annual meeting it will be the election of officers, Pot Luck Dinner, a top notch speaker and lots of fellowship. Details on the election of officers and the potluck will be found elsewhere in the DRIFTER. As to the program, I think that you will find this to be one of the outstanding programs of the year.

Dr. B. T. Sandefur, Professor of Geology, at Michigan State University will present a slide program on the Geological History of Michigan. This is presented in a manner completely different from any that we have seen, his is an exciting program - it stresses the whys and hows of Michigan Geology. His diagrammatic sketches will teach you more Geology in a half hour than many hours of study would do. His pictures are well chosen and the photography is good. He will spend more time on the geology of the Upper Peninsula with its ancient rocks, its mountain building, its erosion, its igneous and metimorphis rocks and its valuable ore minerals than we have had the pleasure of hearing before. All in all this program should br a must on your agenda this month.

Richard W. Rose.

ATTENTION ALL F. L. R. H.*! ! !

Make your reservations for the Annual Dinner Meeting
May 13, 1964 at 6:30 P.M.
Riverside Junior High School

Call or mail in your reservation to:

Mrs. James Waldrom phone CH3-1474
1111 Hazen S E
Grand Rapids, 7.

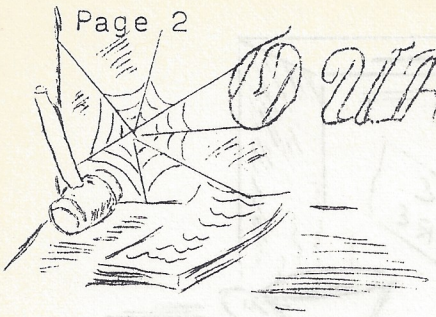
Number of family attenting_____
We will bring the following:
Hot Dish _____ Salad_____
Dessert _____ Relishes_____

If there is just one of you bring enough to serve about six, if two of you come bring a larger bowl - and if you're bring the whole family bring two items. Use your own judgement and I'm sure we'll all have lots to eat.

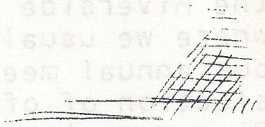
Coffee, milk, rolls and butter will be furnished.
PLEASE bring your own table service.

Mrs. J. Waldron,
Chairman

* Food Loving Rock Hounds



OUR PRESIDENT'S CORNER



While Ruth is packing in preparation for our coming trip, I am taking a few minutes to write this column. By the time this reaches you we will be on a rock hunting trip in Utah. By "rock" I mean that we will be looking for "my" rock, agate, although we won't pass up any other likely looking material which we may see. I hope all of you have a chance to take a rock hunting vacation this year and I wish each of you success in finding the material which is of interest to you.

The Nominating Committee has been successful in getting a complete slate of nominees. Those of you who were at the April meeting will recall that we had not found a candidate for president by the time the meeting was over. At the Board of Control meeting in the following Monday, we found that two of our loyal members were willing to run for office, each with the proviso that there be another candidate for the office. We are happy to report that Jerry Morris and Mrs. Dorothy Waterman are candidates for the office of president for the coming year.

Now it is up to you to decide which of our members will serve you in 1965. The election will take place at the Annual Dinner Meeting on May 13th at Riverside Junior High School. An excellent speaker has been obtained for this meeting. Mrs. Marilyn Damstra has made a piece of sterling silver jewelry which will go to some lucky ticket holder.

Just heard that the attendance for our show was 24,000 persons. This must be a record of some kind, don't you think?

See you all at the May meeting.

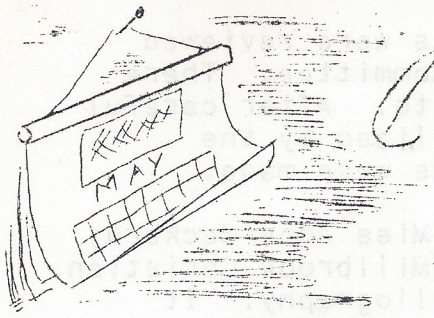
August Post, President

* *

MINERAL STUDY GROUP

The Mineral Study Group spent a very interesting evening at the Home of Mr & Mrs Arnold Wendt on April 23rd.

The next meeting of this group will be held on Thursday, May 28 at 8:00 p.m. at the home of Mrs. Lucile Pearl, 1598 Gridley N ..
All interested members are invited to attend.



CALENDAR of EVENTS

MAY 13 - Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner and Annual Meeting Riverside JUNICR HIGH School. Please get your reservation in to Mrs. James Waldron no later than Monday noon, May 11. Excellent speaker. Election of Officers.

May 18 - Monday at 8:00 P.M. Board of Control meeting at home of Mr & Mrs August Post, 5647 - 84th St. Caledonia All present members and those elected for the coming year are urged to be present

May 16 - Saturday, 10:00 A.M. Field Trip to Cheney Quarry, Bellevue, Michigan. Meet at the quarry at 10:00. From the Quarry those who are interested may proceed to Kalamazoo, Recreation Park, for the Kalamazoo Geolgical & Mineral Society show.

May 17 - Sunday - 10 to 6 - Kalamazoo Gem & Mineral Round-Up This is an excellent show, well worth a trip to see.

May 28 - Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Mineral Study Group meeting at home of Mrs. Lucile Pearl, 1598 Gridley N W All are welcome.

June 6 - Saturday - Field Trip to Sylvania, OHio for fossils and then on to Frontier City for their Rock Swap

June 10 - Regular monthly meeting. This will be our first outdoor meeting of the season

June 13-14 - Saturday and Sunday - Field Trip to Nashville and Terre Haute, INdiana for geodes and fern fossils.

JULY 23-24-25-26 - Midwest Federation Convention, Walker Arena, Muskegon, Michigan

1964 KENT COUNTY SCIENCE FAIR AWARDS

On Tuesday, April 7, 1964 the Science Exhibits were reviewed by the Grand Rapids Mineral Society Judging Committee. There were several very good "earth science" exhibits. After careful deliberation using the same judging rules utilized by the general judging committee the following awards were made.

Our first place award of $25.00 was given to Miss Anne Deckard, 4243 Plymouth Ave S E. Anne is a student at Millbrook Christian School. The theme of this project was Crystallography. It was felt by our committee that this was definitely one of the better exhibits in the entire junior section of the Fair. Anne's display was outstanding and her written report was very comprehensive and well arranged.

Our second place award of $15.00 was also given to an entrant in the Junior Division. This project also dealt with crystallization. The winner of this award was Miss Nancy Alcumbrack 1419 Pickett St. S E. Nancy is a student at Kentwood High School. Her exhibit was very good and displayed several crystals she had grown from base minerals. It was noted that her report was thorough and well prepared.

Both of these young ladies are to be congratulated for fine exhibits and for good scientific thought in organizing their projects.

There were no Earth Science exhibits in the Senior Group. It is hoped that parents in the society will encourage our young people to enter displays in future Science Fairs.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those volunteered(?) workers on this committee with me and especially Ray Kerr who took off work to help judge the exhibits.

Jim DeZwaan, Chairman
Science Fair Judging Committee

* *

THANKS FROM HOST-HOSTESS COMMITTEE

To those of you who were host and hostess during our show at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, many thanks. Your help was part of the reason our show was a success--meeting many of the some 24,000 people who are interested in this hobby. Several visitors became new members and we hope, as a result of this Club effort, they too will become an exhibitor in our Annual Show next year.

I would like to also thank those who furnished cookies and coffee for the exhibitors enjoyment on closing day.

Lucile Pearl, Chairman
Hospitality Committee

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE CHANGES

As we were unable to obtain permission for a field trip to the limestone quarry at Rogers City, we have taken the liberty of changing the field trip schedule as reported in the last DRIFTER.

On Saturday, May 16th, we will have a trip to Cheney Quarry, at Bellevue, near Battle Creek. We will meet at the quarry at 10:00 A M to hunt for pyrite, marcasite and calcite crystals and fossils. In the afternoon and evening we will proceed to Kalamazoo where we will attend the Gem & Mineral Round-Up which is being put on by the Kalamazoo Geological & Mineral Society at Recreation Park. There will be many displays to see, demonstrations to watch, and lectures to attend. And a number of dealers will have material for sale. There will also be an Auction with much outstanding material available.

Then, on June 6th, we will go to Sylvania, Ohio for trilobites and other fossils, and for those who are interested, we will proceed to Frontier City, Onsted, Michigan for the Annual Swap Session

The trip to Nashville and Terre Haute, Indiana for geodes and fern fossils has been scheduled for June 13-14.

We hope these changes will not inconvenience anyone and hope to see many of you on these excursions.

Casey Doornbos,
Field Trip Chairman

POETS' PAGE

Chicago Field Trip

The bus moves off with all on board
Let's get going, we must travel far.
As we get underway the chairman relaxes
And we speed through the fields past truck and car.

Between games and coffee and munching and crunching,
We glance out the windows as fields whiz by.
And then the chimneys of steel city Gary
Pour out their smoke into the sky.

Then Chicago ahead! With buildings tall,
Skyways, highways, people and all.
It's not long now, the ride's near done.
Destination, here we come!

We're almost there, we stretch and yawn,
Sit up and take notice, the bus has stopped.
Gather the bundles and kids and coats.
(Here's my purse, where's that glove I dropped?)

Climb off the bus and look around.
Up all those steps is where we're bound.
Into the building of the strange and new.
It's beautiful and, oh, so huge!

In the great halls creatures abound
From Africa, the Americas, and all around.
Then rocks and more rocks, all shapes and kinds
Each one, to me, a treasured find.

The fossils bring wonderment, and even awe
As you look at the dinosaurs, the Tooth and claw.
For, so near their bones, but so far away
Their lives, though I'm really glad they didn't stay!

Then, the gems, the beautiful gems
The translucent agate and flawless quartz.
The deep, bright green of the emerald rare,
And the ancient gold of royal courts.

You look and think, and want to look again
But, so much to see, so much to learn!
Then, our time is gone, and we must leave.
Perhaps someday we may return.

Homeward bound, we relax once more
And as twilight falls, relfect on our day.
Some break into soothing? song.
Yes, perhaps we may return, someday.

Joan Afton.

I GAVE A CHILD A STONE

Rejected, tossed aside it lay,
Bright and shiny, lovely but not right,
Cracked or marred, a bit of beauty
But not up to standard.

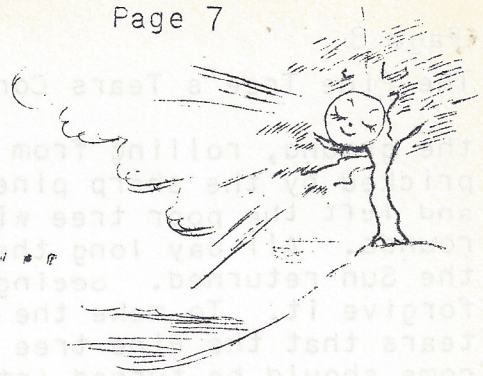
Among others, it was offered
As consolation to a child
Who picked it from the rejects
To pocket - a treasure for a day.

He dumped it in his box of bits a and rocks,
He's picked from sidewalks, street and alleys,
And passed it on.

A loving friend, just five,
Then took it home and fondly placed it on a throne
Where light could shed it's beauty thru the room
At night, at dawn it was
A shining symbol of a friend.

Late summer came a change -
New house, new friends, new school,
But dolls forgotten, old toys thrown out,
One treasure still remained -
The shiny stone, new throne, same sun, same beauty
And the memory of a friend.

A. Whitcomb



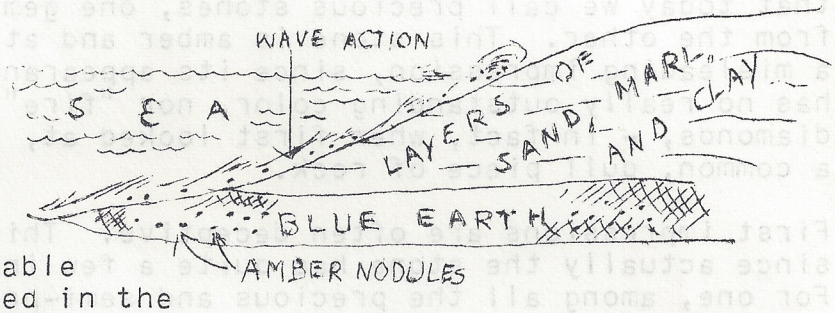
The Pine-Tree's Tears...

Gem-stones, or the so-called precious stones, are many and varied. They have many colors, show different degrees of sparkle or "fire", and occur in all kinds of places. Among all these attractive rocks that today we call precious stones, one gem is peculiarly different from the other. This stone is amber and at first glance it leaves a misleading impression, since its appearance is quite common. It has no really outstanding color, nor "fire" such as can be seen in diamonds, - in fact, when first looked at, amber appears to be just a common, dull piece of rock.

First impressions are often deceptive. This is the case with amber since actually the stone has quite a few interesting characteristic For one, among all the precious and semi-precious stones it is the only one of non-mineral origin. On the contrary, it comes from vegetable matter, having been produced from the sap or resin of pine trees in northern Europe millions of years ago. Resin from these pine trees was buried under ground in chunks by itself, or together with the trees from which it had exuded, during the great changes that have taken place in earth's surface. Buried underground over a period of time, resin gradually hardened in irregularly shaped lumps of various sizes, until eventually it was petrified and turned into the semiprecious stone we call amber toda

There is an interesting legend about the origin of amber, which indicates that even people in the old times were aware of the fact that amber came from pine sap. It seems that once upon a time Sun did not disappear below the horizon in the evenings to go and give light to the other side of the world. Instead she was supposed to have stayed around the lands where amber is found today. Like all living creatures, Sun decided to rest and sleep at night. Not having a home, she thought it would be a good idea to sleep in the soft leaves of the trees. She tried a different tree each night to see which of them had the softest leaves. That tree would then be selected as Sun's permanent bed. Oak, Birch, Maple - all had their turn. The Pine tree wanted to have a chance at the glory of giving Sun a bed, too. Sun looked askance at the rough branches and sharp needles of the Pine, but the tree smoothed down its needles until they looked like a layer of silk and begged the Sun to come. She agreed at last and settled down for the night. The Pine tree held its branches as still as it could, so that the Sun would not be disturbed, and everything was going along nicely, when - toward morning - wind came skipping across the sea and started teasing the Pine. The tree pleaded with the wind to be left alone as it had to hold the Sun. The Wind would not, however, and at last Pine's tired branches could not hold out any longer and the Sun fell to

the ground, rolling from one rough branch to the other, poked and pricked by the sharp pine needles. The Sun was quite red with anger and left the poor tree without a word as she went on her daily rounds. All day long the Pine wept and wept. Finally, come evening the Sun returned. Seeing how sad the tree was, she decided to forgive it. To make the tree feel better, she decreed that all the tears that the Pine tree had cried during that day and for days to come should be turned into amber which people would wear and prize greatly. So the Pine was quite happy, after all - but the Sun decided it was not a good idea to sleep in the trees and has been going round the world continually ever since.



So much for legends. Another interesting feature of this stone is the fairly frequent inclusion of minute life forms. Often we see in amber wonderfully preserved insects and vegetable matter. They were trapped in the resin as it seeped from the trees, and petrified along with the pine sap. Today they are an interesting and valuable source of historial information about life forms long ago. Especially more so, since most of the flora and fauna that can be seen trapped in the stone are not to be found anywhere in the world today. Needless to say, at the same time this record of life long ago serves an ornamental purpose in decorating this unusual stone.

When it is rubbed, amber becomes strongly electrified, and is able to attract light bodies to itself. To the superstitious people of ancient times such an unusual feature was an outward sign of the great mysterious powers that amber was sure to possess. This magic power was held in very high esteem. Consequently the stone was greatly prized, and the scarcity of its occurrance only increased its value and people's superstitious beliefs about amber. To cite a few, amber necklaces were supposed to protect their wearers from secret poisons. They were also considered very handy as a defense against all kinds of sorceries and witchcraft. With people believing that amber had all these powers, it is no wonder that a small statuette in the form of a man, carved out of amber, was worth as much and more as an adult slave in good health with all the desirable characteristics. From these superstitious beliefs about amber it naturally followed that amber would be worn as charms which eventually turned

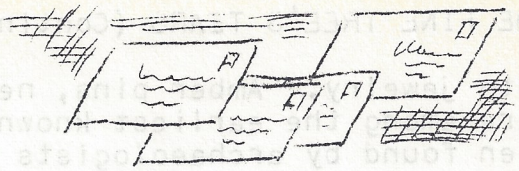
into jewelry. Amber pins, necklaces, rings and other ornaments were among the earliest known in the history of jewelry and have been found by archaeologists in various ancient ruins. As a memento of the former high regard for amber and in recognition of its electrical properties today our word for electricity comes from the old Greek name for amber.

In appearance amber is truly quite common. That is, at least apart from its unusual insect inclusions. It comes as an irregularly shaped amorphous mass in varying shades of yellows and browns. These shades range all the way from a very pale milky yellow to a deep rich brown variety with attractive shades of reddish brown tones included. Amber can be relatively clear and translucent - which appears to be more common in the darker shades - but generally comes completely opaque. Curiously, at times it resembles quite closely a red-brown variety of chalcedony found here in Michigan. The two stones can be distinguished quite readily, since the lustre of amber is resinous, while the chalcedony is waxy.

Amber occurs in nodules of different sizes lacking any particular uniformity. Generally these nodules are quite small, but at times it has been found in lumps weighing up to 15 or 18 pounds. As for place of occurrence the stones can be found on the seashore where they have been deposited much like beach agates. They are quite abundant after storms - especially the great autumnal storms. However, most of the material is obtained by mining. A stratum of so-called 'blue earth' can be found in places of amber occurrenceunder superficial layers of marl, sands and clays. This blue earth holds a plentiful supply of amber, and it is to this layer that mine shafts are sunk. The blue earth stratum extends out to sea, and here amber is freed by the action of the water and slowly brought back to the seashore. The coasts of the Baltic Sea produce most of the world's supply of amber. However, small amounts of amber are found also in Sicily and the coasts of Adriatic, shores of Great Britian, and various parts of Europe. Amber has even turned up here inthe United States. Konigsberg in East Prussia (today known as Kaliningrad in Soviet Union) just north of Poland on the Baltic Sea, is considered the amber capital of the world.

In ancient times amber was thought to have magic properties and hence was used in charms from which it graduated to ornamental use. Today it is still considered desirable in jewelry, although synthetic resins have replaced it to a great extent in costume jewelry. It is also used to make cigarette holders and mouthpieces for pipes. Cheaper grades of amber have found their use in varnishes, though lately with modern methods the value of amber in this industry has decreased. Even though it has no particular commercial value outside of ornamental usage, amber still remains today an unusual and interesting stone with its unique origin and fascinating records of life in the past.

Barb M. Roys



M.W.F. LETTER OF THE MONTH

AN INVITATION FROM CANADA

A note from Mr. Bill Benson of the Winnipeg Rock & Mineral Club of Winnipeg, Canada, one of our Midwest Federation members north of the border invites anyone coming their way between June 17 and 27 to visit the Red River Exhibition to be held in the Winnipeg Arena where their members will present a showing of lapidary art, mineral specimens and fossils.

FEDERATION MEMBERSHIP FIGURES

As of December 31st, 1963 the total membership of the Midwest Federation was 8970, this was a gain of 342 individuals since the previous report. The MWF continues to grow not only in enthusiasm but also in ideas and membership. The membership of our neighbor Federations is:

California	14,520
Eastern	6,216
Northwest	7,871
Rocky Mtn.	5,223
Texas	2,191

Total is now 45,404

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The MWFhas responded very well to the request for funds to help start and support the AFMS Scholarship Fund. Many clubs in the Midwest have sent in donations from their treasury and several individuals have also contributed. The Betty Crocker Coupon Plan is beginning to show very active results. This plan is gaining momentum and a flood of coupons is beginning to be converted to financial aid to the Scholarship Fund. We want to encourage the clubs and their individual members to continue their publicity about the collection of coupons. As of February 21 the AFMS Scholarship Fund had reached a total of $3,504.73. The fund is off to a good start but to reach the $50,000 goal we must continue to publicize it!

Betty Crocker Coupons may be turned in to your Editor, Mrs. Nina Rozema, 776 Leonard NE, Grand Rapids, Mich 49503. A shipment of coupons will be sent in shortly after the May meeting. Please turn in any you may have before then.

The Grand Rapids Mineral Society
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