

\*\*If you have a red dot on your mailing label, you have not paid your 1995 dues!\*\*

PRESIDENT'S CORNERSTONE--

I want to thank all of you for your cards and support in regards to Barb's condition and surgery. Your thoughts and prayers are very much appreciated and very much needed. Will keep you informed as things progress.

The club is in need of a new library chair-person. This person is responsible for the club's lending library and needs to be able to attend regular and board meetings. We are also in need of someone to assume responsibility for organizing refreshments at our regular meetings. If you are interested in either job, please give me a call.

Chuck Smith

Barb Update 2/11/95 The doctors were able to locate what they were after yesterday, and were going to go back in today to correct the problem.

GYPSUM CARVING ON THE AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY MEETING-- jawp

Given our usually small crowds at winter meetings, I thought another hands-on program might be appropriate. This month, Royal Olson will guide us in gypsum carving. The program may also inspire some folks to join George's field trip on Saturday and collect their own carving material!

As you might recall from the article in last month's Rockhound News, the type of gypsum used for carving is alabaster. Fine grained pieces work best as the "sugary" pieces tend to break up. Pieces with large seams of shale should be avoided for the same reason. We will have pieces of gypsum for you to work on, or you may bring your own if you like.

Tools for working the gypsum include knives (Royal says serated steak knives are great), files, dental tools, nails, and coping saw-- basically anything that will scrape or cut. We will have some extra tools on hand, but it would be a good idea to bring your own sharpened pocket knife, etc. if you wish to carve.

If you are a person who likes structure, you might want to be thinking of the shape that you wish to coax out of rock. Royal says that he prefers to just work at a piece and see what the shape begins to suggest. Either way BE SURE TO WEAR YOUR GRUBBIES AS CARVING WILL CREATE A GOOD DEAL OF DUST!

FIELD TRIP TO GRAND RAPIDS, FEBRUARY 18--George Heaton

The February field trip will be to the Michigan Natural Storage Co. gypsum mine in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We will meet on Saturday, February 18 at the Michigan Natural Storage Co. office at 10:00 am. The storage company charges \$2.50 per person. Bring flashlights, lanterns and spare batteries since the mine tunnels are dark. You will need hammers, sharp chisels, and buckets or boxes to carry tools and rocks. If you collect

selenite crystals, you will also need tissue paper to wrap them.

Be sure to pack efficiently as it can be a long walk through the mine tunnels with a heavy pack. We also traverse muddy spots and climb piles of rock, so boots and a hard hat are recommended. The mine is around 54 degrees, making it most comfortable to dress in a few layers of clothing which you can adjust to your level of activity. Do not forget to bring a lunch and something to drink. We stay down in the tunnels until about 3:00 pm.

Material to be collected includes massive gypsum in the form of "pencil ore" and alabaster, and gypsum crystals called selenite. I would like everyone to collect and carry out a couple of good pieces of massive gypsum for the children's table. If everyone does this it will add up to a good quantity of material and I won't have the back breaking job of hauling out one huge and heavy bucketful by myself. I would appreciate this very much.

To get there take I-96 to the 28th Street-West exit at Grand Rapids. (This will be the 2nd 28th St. exit.) Go west on 28th st. to Clyde Park Ave, turn right (North) on Clyde Park. Take Clyde Park to Grandville Ave. and turn left (West.) Grandville Ave becomes Chicago Drive just west of Clyde Park. Take Chicago Dr. to Judd Ave. and turn right (North.) Take Judd to Michigan Natural Storage which is on the right just before the railroad tracks. Allow about 1 1/2 hours of driving time from Lansing. Look for a map on the last page of the newsletter.

#### EDUCATION & COMMUNITY SERVICE--Florence Hill

This month's mineral is smithsonite, a zinc carbonate. David Piotrowski will speak to us about this attractive mineral.

There is still time for those of you who wish to join the crystal study group with Bettie Patterson. We also have three lapidary experts who are willing to have you visit their home workshops to cut a cab. They are: Roger Laylin, Grit Turner and Dale Harvey. You may sign up for these activities at the next meeting, or contact one of the above members by phone.

The Michigan Science Teachers Convention will be held on March 3-4, from 8:30-5:00 on Friday, and 8:30-2:00 on Saturday. This year our club has been given space in Exhibition Hall B of the Lansing Center. We will need lots of folks who are willing to man our booth so the long hours won't be a hardship on anyone. We will also need plenty of displays and demonstrators. Please be thinking of what you can do to help in this effort.

\*\*\*\*\*

On Friday, January 27, Grit Turner spent the morning at the Dimondale Elementary School service day. Grit used his copper mine minerals and the Kreps cases as a starting point for his talk.

Saturday, January 28 was "Science is Fun" day at Okemos High School. Several members were on hand to share their expertise: Diane Baclawski, dinosaur tracks; Florence Hill, Michigan rocks; Connie Snapp, fossils; Royal & Arlene Olson, crystals; Bettie Patterson, micromounts; Rich & Lila Stevens Field tripping; Grit Turner, copper mine specimens & Kreps cases. Approximately 640

people attended the event, and our displays attracted a good deal of attention.

Royal Olson spoke on crystals to the sixth grade science classes at Otto Middle School on Monday, January 30.

JANUARY POTLUCK REPORT-- George Heaton

Our potluck at the Alaiedon Township Hall on Sunday, January 22 attracted about 20 folks who weren't afraid of the snow. This was a sufficient number to produce a good quantity and variety of good food to eat. Especially good were the red simmered chicken wings and pumpkin bread that someone brought. The vegetable soup made by Royal & Arlene Olson was very tastey, and all the other food was good too. George Heaton ate just the right amount to feel pleasantly stuffed, as usual!

Special thanks to Bettie Patterson who provided entertainment with her talk on the "Myths, Medicines and Minerals of Your Birthstone." Bettie brought a large display of gems and minerals to illustrate her talk. Those of you who stayed home because of the snow, or missed the potluck for other reasons, missed out on an enjoyable afternoon.

EGG CARTON MATERIAL NEEDED --Florence Hill

Wanted: egg carton size (about 1" diameter) specimens, at least 60 of a kind. It is important that the specimens be identified as to type and location. How about some pyrite from Bellevue, calcite or any other oddities you might have?

GREETINGS OF THE NEW YEAR!

Many thanks for electing me Corresponding Secretary for the year 1995. It is an honor for me to report of personal activities of our membership. I would be most appreciative if you would telephone me at 351-1107 in the event of any occasion, whether it be someone's graduation, an unfortunate illness or untimely death. Engagements and weddings are particularly exciting to publish in our "Rockhound News." Whenever a milestone in one's family occurs, it is always a kind gesture to receive a warm remembrance or note of encouragement from the members of the Society; I am sincerely pleased to fulfill that responsibility on behalf of the club.

My first act as corresponding secretary was to send a card to the family of Dorothy Rothman who passed away in early January. All who were acquainted with her will miss her terribly.

Barb Smith, our librarian and the President's wife, has been suffering from several medical conditions and I'm sure she would appreciate hearing from anyone else who would care to send her a card. Barb, our prayers are with you.

Again, please do not hesitate to inform me of any "news" regarding club members. If you would prefer to write a note, my address is: 1619 Wintercrest, East Lansing MI 48823. I'm looking forward to hearing from YOU!

Richest blessings,

Mary Kay Bean  
Corresponding Secretary

CRYSTAL STUDY GROUP-- Bettie Patterson

It is not too late to join the Crystal Study Class which meets at the home of Bettie Patterson. The class will meet every Monday evening at 7:30 pm, except the 3rd Monday of each month. It is almost imperative that you attend nearly every meeting if you truly wish to learn about crystals. Please let Bettie know if you are interested in attending, phone 482-3437.

PROGRESS REPORT ON MSU MINERAL DISPLAYS--Neil Snapp

On January 28, 1995 Marie Lewis, George Heaton, Roger Laylin and I worked with Dr. Dorothy McMeekin in revising the rock and mineral display cases in North Kedzie Hall on the MSU campus. There are eleven cases on the first and second floors. Cases were opened, cleaned, inventoried and re-arranged. I will complete the inventory of the remaining four cases in the near future.

This is the first step in compiling an inventory of rock, mineral and invertebrate fossil specimens for the MSU Museum. When complete, we will have a computer database of materials and their location. Later steps will include assisting the Geology Department in completing a similar data base. The long term goal is to enhance geological resources for teaching and display at MSU, and to develop an earth science display for the new MSU Museum. These goals will take considerable work over the next few years. Thanks to all who have helped.

On April 2, 1995 (Sunday) from 1:00-4:00pm, the Museum will sponsor an "Identification Day." The public will be invited to bring items-- rocks, minerals, bones, shells, artifacts, etc.-- that they wish to have identified. This is not an appraisal. Staff members will be on hand to provide answers. CML&MS has been asked to provide persons to assist with rocks/minerals and invertebrate fossils. If you can assist in this public service please see me or call 339-2863. Thanks for your cooperation!

JANUARY PROGRAM REPORT-- jawp

Once again I would like to thank Richard & Kara Miller for leading us through the steps of hand polishing petoskey stones at the January meeting. Thanks also go to Lila & Rich Stevens for their help in rounding up supplies for the evening.

About 20 people got into the act of polishing while we visited. (The other folks at the meeting just visited.) Personally, I found it very satisfying to have polished my very first stone, and from the smiles on faces I think others felt the same way. I was surprised that it only takes about 20 minutes of work if the stone already comes with a fairly smooth surface from the lake (or a saw). It was also good to know that the materials we provide in our kits at the show are sufficient for completion of more than one stone as the sand paper can be reused several times.

We learned two tricks that I don't think are specified in our standard instruction sheets: 1) after doing the 600 grit polish wet, rub the stone on a DRY piece of worn out 600 grit sand paper; and 2) the polishing compound should be wet as you rub to achieve you final polish. Number two might be obvious to those of you who are old hands at this lapidary stuff, but for me it was a terrific revelation!

I'm looking forward to learning some carving skills at the February meeting, and to the silent auction in March. I would like to arrange for a live speaker in April-- are there any special topics you would like to have addressed? Please share your ideas with me at a meeting or give a call (616-948-9589).

DISPLAY CASE FOR SALE:

The Friends of Fenner Arboretum has a large display case to sell to the "best offer." It is 61" wide, 54" tall, and 24" deep. It includes a storage area; shelf brackets but no shelves; and, the sliding door back is lockable. Call Roger Laylin for more information: 349-3249.

A NEW LITTLE ROCKPUP IS BORN       jawp

The club would like to extend a warm welcome to Kelsie Rachel Krup! Kelsie, daughter of Nate and Cindy, was born on January 26. Those of you who attended the January meeting will remember that Cindy was anxiously awaiting delivery at that time. CONGRATULATIONS!

LEGISLATIVE NEWS FROM THE MWF & AFMS via MWF Newsletter

We are being asked to write to our representatives in Washington requesting their support for the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act of 1995. This bill was written by the American Lands Access Association in consultation with academic and private paleontologists as a response to the Baucus Bill. (If you recall, Baucus wished to eliminate all amateur fossil collecting on public lands. The ALAA was created by mineral & fossil collectors to allow them to lobby as our non-profit rock clubs may not do so.)

If you would like a copy of the bill or other pertinent information, contact Marion Zenker, ALAA Legislative Coord., c/o Black Hills Institute of Geological Research, Inc., PO Box 643, Hill City SD 57745. Phone 605-574-2518. Fax 605-574-2518.

STATISTICS YOU SHOULD KNOW-- Richard Hull, Tucson AZ via MWF Newsletter

The cement industry is the biggest user of fossil bearing rock in the United States. So when you are confronted by idiotic statements about the loss of fossils by collectors, keep the following in mind.

One cement plant (Arizona Portland Cement) processes the following: \*2.5 million tons of fossil bearing rock per year or approx. 1 million cubic meter. \*There are about 180 such "rock crushers" in the United States. This works out to 450 million tons per year. \*This also works out to 6,850 tons per plant, or about 2,740 cubic meters (340 dump truck loads) of fossil bearing rock PER DAY! This is easily more than all fossil collectors (amateur, commercial & academic) collect in ten years! Collectors are not a problem, indeed, there is no problem.

\*\*Please excuse the lack of polish on this newsletter. My alternator went out on the way to the board meeting, so I wasn't able to get reports in person. Our new computer "ate" all the notes from my phone conversations with board members, along with the more than halfway completed newsletter. Then came the ordeal of getting the new computer to talk to the old printer. To top it all off, thanks to the West wind, it's only 53 degrees in

the newsroom. Royal mentioned something about a guy named  
Murphy.... I'm going to stop here and call the newsletter long  
enough. If we don't run away & join the Amish to hide from  
technology, we'll see you Thursday! Jean Ann & Dave



□□□t□□□#□□□/□□□-:□□ands. The ALAA was created by mineral & fossil collectors to allow them to lobby as our □ □ Arial□□□ock clubs may not do so.)

If you would like a copy of the bill or other pertinent information, contact Marion Zen