

Rockhound News

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 16, 2009

PROGRAM: "Grandpa's Tooth"

REFRESHMENTS: Members with last names M-Z bring goodies!

Program: Lois Synder-Downing, the author of *Grandpa's Tooth, A Michigan Mastodon Story* will talk about the mastodon tooth found on her grandfather's farm in 1914, and the fight to get the mastodon named State Fossil. She will have copies of her book *Grandpa's Tooth* for sale.

Please bring children and grandchildren to this event!

Location & Time: The CMLMS April 16 meeting will be held at 7:30 pm at the North School, 333 E. Miller Rd, Lansing, MI. Please get there a little early to help set up.

CMLMS Calendar for May 2009

Thursday, May 7, 2009 Board Meeting-7:00 pm at the Okemos Library

Thursday, May 21, 2009 CMLMS Annual Banquet at Masonic Hall, Okemos

Tickets on sale at the April meeting! Come for a great meal plus a talk on the Western Michigan University archeology dig at St. Joseph. Tickets are \$10.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children. More volunteers are needed for the Banquet: Contact Sharon Bacigal [517-694-8547] bacigal@aol.com.

CMLMS Directory – LAST CHANCE!!! If you have any changes in your name, address, phone # or email address, please mail or email your information to Elaine Beane, Editor, who is working on the CMLMS Directory (gebeane@comcast.net). DO IT NOW, P L E A S E.

Club News

- **Corresponding Secretary Mary-Anne Hanlon-Smith & Webmaster Lyle Laylin** have set up a CMLMS site on **Facebook**, the social networking website. This is another way to get the word out on CMLMS meetings and events. Just sign up for a Facebook account (free), get in on the fun, and talk

to old friends & new friends.

- **Display and Field Trip Chair Dan Sine** is planning the first field trip of the year, which probably will be a **trip to the quarry in Paulding, Ohio** in April or May. If you are interested, please call or email Dan. Talk with him at the membership meeting, call him, or send him an email.
 - **If you have fossil or mineral specimens (preferably bagged and tagged)** for distribution at school science events, please bring them to Dan Sine at the CMLMS membership meeting.
 - **This also is the time of year that we collect polished stones for Ele's Place**, which gives them to grieving children as "remembrance" stones. Ele's Place does a lot of good work, and we like to help them. **Please bring your polished stones to the April meeting.**
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- **Roger Laylin, Show Chairman**, has all the egg cartons needed for the October show. However, if you want to bring your egg carton collection to the April meeting, he will keep them for the 2010 show. Roger also notes that member Archie Ammerman will join the 2009 show as one of eleven dealers.
 - **Show fliers are available at the April meeting. Get some and post them everywhere you go!!!**
 - **We are just one month away from the CMLMS Annual Banquet**, which will be held at the Okemos Masonic Hall (Hamilton St.) on Thursday, May 21. Social Hour starts at 5:30 pm and dinner is at 6:30. **Adult tickets are \$10; Children's tickets are \$4; get them at the April meeting or from Ernie Aughenbaugh.**
 - **Volunteers are needed for various banquet tasks:** Lee Laylin is doing the Banquet Program, but we still need help with taking tickets, invitations to other clubs, help with setting up exhibits, and bringing snacks for the hospitality table. **Please call Sharon Bacigal [517-694-8547] bacigal@aol.com. One brave volunteer cannot do it all. Step up, folks, and help with this annual event. This is the CMLMS' 52nd anniversary!**
 - **Gordon Lewis** will be working with MSU Geology to select a recipient for the annual scholarship that CMLMS grants to an undergraduate student in geology.

Places To Go & Things To Do

- April 17-19: Mt. Clemens Gem & Lapidary Society, *Crystal Reflections*. Roseville Recreation Center, 18188 Sycamore, Roseville MI. Fri: 9-7, Sat: 10-7, Sun: 11-4. Adults \$3, Students \$1. Contact Ron Rolfe, ymrolfe@comcast.net or 586-726-1578. Website: www.orgsites.com/mi/michigan-club/index.html.
- April 25-26: Blossomland Gem & Mineral Society "Swap & Sell". St. Joseph/Lincoln Senior Center, 3271 Lincoln Ave., St. Joseph, MI. Contact 269-983-4900 or blossomlandgemandmineral@yahoo.com.
- May 1-3: Kalamazoo Geological & Mineral Society, *Workshop Wonders*. Kalamazoo County Expo Center, 2900 Lake Street, Kalamazoo, MI. Fri: 4-8, Sat: 10-6, Sun: 10-5. Adults \$3, Kids under 12, free. Contact Kitty Starbuck 269-649-1991 or Bill Mitchell 269-375-5678.
- May 16-17: Midwest Federation Convention (Holiday Inn, Strongsville, Ohio) and Cleveland Area Gem & Mineral Show *Beautiful World of Rocks and Gems*. Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds (camping & free parking). Bagley Road, Berea, Ohio (Cleveland area). Sat: 10-7, Sun: 11-5. Adults \$6 (good for both days), children 12 and under free with adult. Hosted by the Parma Lapidary Club: John Zaborowski, 440-949-8242 or J751@centurytel.net. Information at: www.parmalapidary.com.

Check the MWF News at www.amfed.org/mwf for more shows and

The Misery Mine – A Cautionary Tale by Marvin Oesterle

The Pioneer History of Ingham County states that: *in 1872 it was announced that coal had been found three miles north of Mason in Alaiedon Township. ...the vein that is now being worked is about four feet thick, lies about twenty feet below the surface, and can be taken out with little expense.* Thus began what I call the Misery Mine, since it has not had a happy history.

The 1872 mining effort soon fizzled out despite the efforts of property owner Almira G. Brown and miner, James Jenkins of Jackson. It wasn't until sixty years later (1933) that property owner Allen Smith leased the mine to the Chippewa Coal Co. of Saginaw, MI. This venture didn't even get off the ground before the lease was canceled in 1934, due to the Great Depression. Dr. Corsaut of Mason then leased the mine and began mining operations in 1935. The lease terms were 25 cents per ton for the first 3000 tons & 35 cents per ton thereafter.

Two of my uncles worked at the Corsaut Mine for the princely sum of 25 cents per hour -- at least it was princely during the Depression. One uncle was hired to haul coal in his Model T truck to the woolen mills in Eaton Rapids. On the night shift, he worked the pumps to make sure the mine would be dry in the morning for workers. The other uncle pushed a wheelbarrow to transport coal out of the mine. The mine closed after two years. Lawsuits followed, and in 1939 the property was surrendered in a mortgage foreclosure.

Today, the mine is filled with water and the tailing piles are covered with a 70-year stubble of trees and brush - perfect prospecting land for me and my "mule", a Black Lab named Boo. The two of us were walking the crest of a tailing pile when I slipped in the mud and tumbled through a wild raspberry patch, pulling some muscles along the way. Boo came bounding up with that silly dog laugh on his face. I could tell he was thinking "that wouldn't have happened if you walked on four legs instead of two." Knowing the hardships that this mine has caused, I should have exercised more caution. My superior friend got his turn on our next trip to the mine. While I was diligently digging, Boo discovered a new friend with black fur and a white stripe down his back. Rock-hounding suddenly took a back seat. On the ride home, I wished my back seat was IN another county.

When the glaciers passed through our area, they left an esker that runs near the Misery Mine. Since we try to farm on top of it, we have more than our share of rocks. We pick up the rocks and take them back to the mine, mostly because it makes such a satisfying "Ker-splash" when you toss them into the mine pond. One day, I was pitching rocks into the mine and found a specimen that just begged to be broken open. Not carrying my goggles or my cracking hammer, I thought, "Why don't I just fire this rock against that big one? What could happen?" Well, I was lucky: a small chip flew up and put a scratch in the middle of my right prescription lens, rather than in my eye, and the bigger chunk scored a direct hit on my shin. -- Of course, as I was doing my dance, I didn't feel lucky. So, Misery Mine is the perfect name for that blasted hole in the ground!

Thanks to Mr. Oesterle for his cautionary black lab tale. If you have a rock-hounding tale, please email it to

the CMLMS Newsletter Editor, Elaine Beane at gebeane@comcast.net. We'll have lots of Minutes for May's issue.

