



Cedar Valley Gems

Cedar Valley Rocks & Minerals Society
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

CEDAR VALLEY GEMS

SEPTEMBER 2014

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CVRMS Field Finds and Summer Fun



Cedar Valley Rock & Mineral Society members dug for geodes along with members from the Black Hawk Gem and Mineral Society in June. Rain put a halt to digging all day at the Hamilton, Illinois site.



Trenching is easy when you have a system and a clay dirt mixture instead of solid rock. Buckets of geodes including some softball-size specimens were excavated from the Gary Jacobs owned property.

Over the summer CVRMS conducted two field trips, both of which occurred on days where the weather was not the most cooperative. The first outing was a joint field trip on June 28th with the Black Hawk Gem and Mineral Society to Gary Jacobs' place to dig for geodes. Between the two clubs about 13 people made the trip.

The day started out nice, but as we got into the afternoon we saw billowing clouds against the blue sky and eventually heard thunder. Radar seemed to bear out that we were probably going to get dumped on, so several started to leave. By a little after 3 p.m. more of us were driving out when the skies opened up. Most members were out by then although a couple vehicles were late in leaving the dig site. However, the group from St. Louis digging on the other side of the creek probably got drenched.

Many geodes were found. I believe Glen Rocca was the champ with 3 buckets full and Dave Malm and Mike Powelka just behind with 2 buckets full, not that anyone was counting. Glen hit a productive pocket where he found

many softball-size, or larger, geodes that seemed light. It was a fun time with lots of kidding and laughs. The digging, while not real easy, was better than some places since we were digging in mostly a clay dirt mixture and not the solid rock where we sometimes find geodes. We talked about another possible trip back there this fall, so watch your emails and newsletters for further plans.

The second field trip was to the Conklin Quarry in Coralville on August 24, which ironically turned out to be the hottest day of the year in a summer which has been cooler than average. We had 27 participants that braved the heat, with more than half sticking around for the full day. We did cry "uncle" and quit about 3 p.m. A few trilobites were found along with other fossils and some millerite and sphalerite. This wasn't one of our better collecting days, but I'm sure the heat affected people's ability to focus on collecting.

Remember we have a trip scheduled for October 12 to Klein Quarry. There is a limit of 60 people on this trip. We already have 46 collectors signed up, so reserve quickly.

Article and photos by Marv Houg, President

CVRMS September Board Minutes

The following are CVRMS Board Minutes. The meeting was held on September 2, 2104.

Present: Joy Cummings, Bill Desmarais, Marv Houg, Dave Roush, Sharon Sonnleitner, Dale Stout, Tom Whitlatch

Auction: Marv read through the list of consigners and lots, which total between 1,000 and 1,100. Tom will contact Tim Thye and pick up his items. Marv, Dale and Dave will pick up **Zobac's items September 5 between 12:30 and 3:30 p.m.** Sharon check with Blin's and will also reserve a truck with a lift, which Tom will drive to haul Darren's and the stored material to Amana on Thursday; Dale and Dave will assist. All other consigners will transport their own material. Sharon will provide the concessions. It was decided to keep the lots to about 1,100 so we can finish around 7 pm Saturday, which will eliminate the need for the usual Saturday night dinner. Some lots of magazines may be sold by silent auction to help speed up the auction. Sharon will get addresses for flyers to Tom in a form that they can be printed directly on the flyers, **will create business cards with next year's show and auction**

dates and get printed, will create and print labels for the auction lots, and will create the Order of Sale at set-up on **Friday. Publicity will be put on Craig's List, Hoopla, The Gazette/Penny Saver, Collectors Journal, and Busy Bee.**

Field Trips: Forty-six members attended the August 26th field trip to Conklin Quarry. A trip to Klein Quarry in Coralville is scheduled for October.

Show: Marv talked with Barbara Sincak who let him know **that because of Michael's death, they will no longer be doing many shows, including ours.** Marv will contact Ray Garton to see if he wants to be a dealer. It was noted we need to set a theme and send dealer contracts. Joy moved that we raise the adult admission donation to \$3 and keep \$1 admission for ages 12 to 18. Dave seconded and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Sonnleitner, Acting Secretary

Help Needed: Sept. 20-21 Rock and Mineral Auction

Are you ready for two big days of auctioning rocks, minerals, fossils, and machinery on September 20th & 21st at Amana RV Park Morton Building? The building is at the corner of Central & 7th St. in the park. This promises to be a good — and probably long — auction. See the auction ad at the back of the newsletter (page 7) for details, and check our website for photos of some of the material for sale.

We all like to *ooh* and *aah* over specimens and hopefully end up with some choice ones, but before the auction takes place, help is needed to move material, sort it, arrange into lots and get numbers on the lots during Friday's setup. During the auction, help is needed to run auction sheets, spot for auctioneers, move lots to the front of the hall, and to tear down. Please help if you can!

Friday, September 19, Setup: Meet at Amana RV Park at 8:30 a.m. to unpack boxes and arrange material into lots. Bring **flats, gloves and your energy. It is extremely important to keep each person's material together.** Because of the large number of consigners, it is extremely important to be careful not to move material from its assigned area, especially equipment.

If you don't know what to do, just start working with somebody who looks like they know what they're doing. If you are unsure about how to make lots, just use your best judgment to get started. It is tremendously helpful to have all the material laid out in approximate lots, even if they have to be refined later. Darren Cruse, Jeff Groff, Marv Houg, Dale Stout, and others who are experienced judges will look over the lots and rearrange them if necessary. Lots of like material will be arranged so that some will sell each day. When all lots are properly arranged, a number will be put on each one. All this has to be done by 5 p.m. for viewing. Some members are needed during viewing until 7:30 p.m., so if you have time on the 16th, please help.

Set-Up Day Meals: The club will furnish lunch at noon - Dell James always has great food planned. There will also be rolls and coffee/pop in the morning. We will order pizza for supper during viewing.

Come spend a few hours or stay the day. WE'LL BE LOOKING FOR YOU! Check the website for updated lists of auction items.

Article by Sharon Sonnleitner



Next Presentation - Australian Hurricanes Past and Present

The September 16th CVRMS meeting will feature Rhawn Denniston, Professor of Geology from Cornell College. Professor Denniston will talk about hurricane activity in Australia and around the world prior to the start of the satellite era.

In particular, he will focus on why hurricanes form, what drives variability in the number of storms over time, and how we reconstruct the numbers of hurricanes over previous centuries and millennia using geological deposits including ocean sediments and stalagmites.

SUMMER PICNICS RECAPPED

Monthly Rock Club meetings are replaced in the summer with potlucks, followed by activities at three local parks.

June took us to Noelridge Park and the chance to try some lapidary equipment. About 15-20 people attended and tried their hand at polishing and grinding.

In July we met at Squaw Creek Park, where 20-25 people had the chance to ooh and aah at the insides of the many geodes that were cracked right on the spot.

We wrapped up in August at Morgan Creek Park where 30-35 people played bingo. This is always a fun time since we usually have lots of kids (little and big!) who are excited to win a rock prize. We play several games before clearing cards, so the games go quickly and everyone has a chance to win.

The weather was unusually cooperative this year, providing cool, comfortable evenings, even in August. Plan to join in the fun next summer.



Change of Meeting Place

Cedar Valley Rocks & Minerals Society will meet on Tuesday, September 16th, at 7:00 p.m. at ROCKWELL COLLINS 35TH ST PLANT CAFETERIA, 855 35th St. NE, in Cedar Rapids.

The Science Center, where we have been meeting, is on the verge of closing and moving to a smaller facility.

We are moving our monthly meetings back to the Rockwell Collins cafeteria. The cafeteria entrance is at the inside corner of the complex, and the doors face 35th Street.

Our website, www.cedarvalleyrockclub.org/ has a detailed map of the building and instructions about how to enter the building.

Cracking geodes at one of the club's summer outings was a big hit with young rockhounds at Squaw Creek Park.

Complacency Has Led Nowhere



*By Shirley Leeson,
ALAA President*

As president of American Lands Access Association, I have been working on the many problems rockhounds are having because we are not receiving the recognition we deserve. We have only ourselves to blame.

For many years in the 1970s and 1980s, rockhounds were involved in land-use decisions made by both the National Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

Then complacency set in, and we were mistakenly told that getting involved in government policy-making would jeopardize our 501-C3 status. So, many of the clubs who had participated earlier went to the sidelines and sat. A lot has taken place on our public lands since then, and rockhounds

for the most part have not been included in the process. The sad outcome of this is that now we are not recognized in many states. Rockhounding was once identified as a category under "Recreation," but now it's been eliminated, and in southern California last year some BLM managers were under the impression that rockhounds and rockhounding were dead, which I objected to vigorously.

So here's my challenge to you. GET INVOLVED. Make your voices heard. The bitter truth is this: if we don't get out there and participate in decisions that will change the way our public lands are administered, then we are all doomed to backyard garage sales to find suitable lapidary material.

Edited and excerpted from the ALAA Newsletter (April-June, 2014). ALAA is the lobbying arm of the American Federation, working on behalf of rockhounds to keep public lands open and accessible to all, including the elderly and handicapped.

Contact Shirley at president@amlands.org.

Spotlight — Opals Give Diamonds a Run for Most Valuable Gemstone

Opal is considered by many to be the most colorful of gems and sometimes valued even more than diamonds. The opal's color consists of iridescent color flashes that change with the angle at which the stone is viewed.

This phenomenon is called opalescence. Color may consist of large, individual flashes of color, or may be of tiny, dense flashes. The intensity and distribution of the color flashes is a determining factor in the value of an Opal.

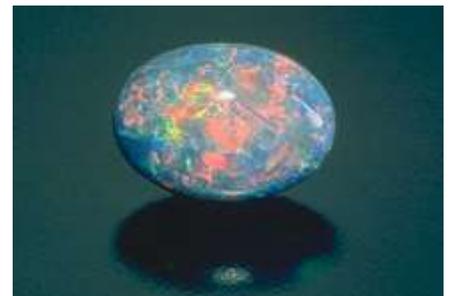
Opal doublets, often used in jewelry, are thin slices of precious opal glued onto a base material. Such gems are considerably cheaper than solid opals, yet provide the same play of color. Opal doublets are sometimes coated with a thin layer or dome of clear Quartz to make them more resistant to scratches (since Opal is a relatively soft gem). These are sometimes called Opal triplets.

A condition called crazing affects certain Opals, causing them to form internal cracks. Crazing is an interesting phenomenon, as it lacks consistency and is sometimes unpredictable.

Although it can occur at random, its often takes place when an Opal removed from damp conditions is allowed to dry too quickly, or when an Opal is exposed to sudden intense light.

Precious Opals are cut and polished and used in all forms of jewelry, especially as pendants and ring centerpieces. Fire Opals are faceted into several gemstone cuts for jewelry. Boulder Opal is also a popular form which is used as jewelry. Opal, especially Common Opal, can also be carved into small ornamental figures.

Australia is the largest producer of Opal providing 97% of world's supply, especially in the state of South Australia where 80% of the world's opals are



Opal's chemical makeup is $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$, Silicon Dioxide. The gem's colors can be white, colorless, blue, red, green, yellow, orange, brown, pink, purple, gray, black, banded and multicolored

mined. Closer to Iowa, gem quality opals can be found in Nevada, Oregon, California, and Idaho.

Edited from several sources including minerals.net.

Father—Son Kickstarting Mineralogy

Editor note: Although the deadline for funds recently expired and was unsuccessful, this submitted article may inspire similar thoughts or renew the author's Kickstarter directive.

We're trying again on Kickstarter to raise awareness for mineralogy and mineral collecting! Please note, we're not selling anything. But we do need your help, chatter and support to get this project rolling! We're creating free downloadable educational content for kids and educators and we're trying to get a more formative television show going about mineral collecting! Please, if you value mineral collecting, you won't have to put in much effort at all to help out a bunch! It's as easy as forwarding a link, reviewing the project, "Liking" us on Facebook and "Re-Tweeting" our content on Twitter. Simple!

Kickstarter.com is a crowd funding website, where projects are submitted and approved by the staff to get a much needed funding boost from people all over the world. Well our project "Minerals or Bust!" was approved and we launched it on the Fourth of July! Now we need your support! We have specific goals, aims and budgets listed on the project website, so please take a minute to look it over. Two years ago we launched a project that failed to get the funding we needed, but we're not ones to roll over and give up! So we regrouped and created a bigger, better project!

Sadly, Mineral collecting is an interest that is dying out and we want desperately to breathe some new life into this great past time. There are practically no young faces at swap meets, in local clubs and at conferences and if we don't do something fun and entertaining to grab some new interest now we'll lose an entire branch of scientific study.

Every year notices circulate about friends and colleagues who made great strides in mineralogy who've passed away. Their collections and research materials disappear, sometimes just



into the dumpster! Oh, what a true shame that is!

But that's where we can help! There's no better bunch to put a comical spin on some educational awareness about minerals right now than a goofball father/son team with an extensive mineralogy background.

Our project deadline is August 28th, 2014. Please help us Kickstart an entertaining and informative series about gems, minerals and mineralogy!

Our project on Kickstarter.com: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/jbarwood/minerals-or-bust-season-one-episode-one>
 "Like" our Facebook.com page with additional news/info: <https://www.facebook.com/Minerals3DHD>
 Follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MineralsOrBust>
 Website coming soon: <http://www.mineralsorbust.com>

All support, be it a "Tweet", a "Like" or just good word of mouth, is greatly appreciated!

Article by Dr. Henry "Bump" Barwood and John "Adam" Barwood, seekers of funding.

SHOWS & CONVENTIONS

October 17-19 DES MOINES, IA. Midwest Federation (MWF) Convention.
 Paul Knapp Animal Learning Center
 Iowa State Fairgrounds
 3000 East Grand Avenue
 Des Moines, IA 50317

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

The International Gem Society hosts an online gem and rock encyclopedia site that contains numerous articles related to all things gemstone and mineral.

The society has been compiling material since 1996 for this information packed site. The website also features an application for a gemology scholarship.

Here is a link to the Gem and Mineral Reference Library, <http://www.gemsociety.org/reference-library/>

Field of Boulders Alter Farming Options

Take a drive thru most of Iowa's northern half of counties and you'll see them. Sometimes they are piled along the end of fence rows and other times the larger ones stand alone in a field. Sometimes a moderate sized one can be seen as a lawn ornament. They are Iowa's glacial erratics, the result of massive ice sheet transportation and erosion.

In eastern Iowa larger erratics tend to be granite in makeup having been deposited from sources in Minnesota and Canada. Mechanical grinding during the transportation process and environmental weathering generally define the shape of these well-rounded boulders today. The most massive exposed erratic locally is Lisbon, Iowa's Standing Rock as described in the May 2014 newsletter.

Recently I came upon an open field of much smaller erratics located just north and to the west of Urbana, Iowa. The current land owner has elected to leave the immediate surrounding area as pasture for livestock. Sometime in the past other portions of the field were cleared for row crop production.

In Cedar Rapids the Highway 100 project is finally moving dirt in the northeast part of town and surrounding area. Near the



A fairly common site in many northern counties in Iowa are erratic deposits courtesy of the last glacial period. This field is littered with weathered granite boulders and football size stones. The site can be found north of the 55th Street and 29th Avenue intersection just north and west of Urbana, Iowa.

unincorporated town of Covington dozers have been moving topsoil and clay around for the four lane arterial construction. Erratics have been uncovered in the process and are being piled into small mounds ready for transportation yet again to another destination. *Article and photo by David Chase, Editor*



Parallel lines are straight grooves gouged in limestone by tons of moving ice.



Native copper from northern reaches was deposited by the massive ice flow in Iowa. Visitors to the Museum of Natural History are encouraged to touch these samples.

Touch Iowa's Ice Age Relics at Univ. of Iowa's MacBride Hall

Where else in the world can you actually touch remnants of Iowa's last ice age? Located at the Museum of Natural History at MacBride Hall on the University of Iowa's campus is an unique display of the Hawkeye state's icy past — some 8,000 to 12,000 years ago.

Just across from Rusty, the museum's iconic giant sloth display is a story telling machine that features a relief map of Iowa and three touchable items; a glacier grooved limestone slab, a hunk of well rounded copper and a fossilized mammoth thigh bone.

Two things make this display unique - the slide show technology from 35 years ago and the fact that you can touch authentic glacial era relics. Once the start button is activated the slide show whirls into action telling the story of the last ice episode in Iowa complete with several advances and retreats that are still evident on the state's landscape.

Museum officials say that the display will be updated but couldn't estimate as to when or if these touchable pieces would remain accessible. For now you can see this display and many other Iowa related artifacts at 17 North Clinton Street in Iowa City. Open Tuesdays through Sundays.

Article and photos by David Chase, Editor

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Club meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month from September through November and from January through May at 7:00 p.m. at the Rockwell Collins 35th Street Plant Cafeteria, 855 35th St NE, Cedar Rapids, IA. The December meeting is a Christmas dinner held on the usual meeting night. June, July, and August meetings are potlucks held at 6:30 p.m. at area parks on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

CEDAR VALLEY ROCKS & MINERAL SOCIETY

CVRMS was organized for the purpose of studying the sciences of mineralogy, geology, and paleontology and the arts of lapidary and gemology. We are members of the Midwest (MWF) and American (AFMS) Federations. Membership is open to anyone who professes an interest in rocks and minerals.

Dues are \$15.00 per family per calendar year. Annual club dues can be sent to:

Dale Stout, 2237 Meadowbrook Dr. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403.

CVRMS website:
cedarvalleyrockclub.org

Change of Meeting Place:
Back to ROCKWELL COLLINS
35TH ST PLANT CAFETERIA



David Chase, Editor
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