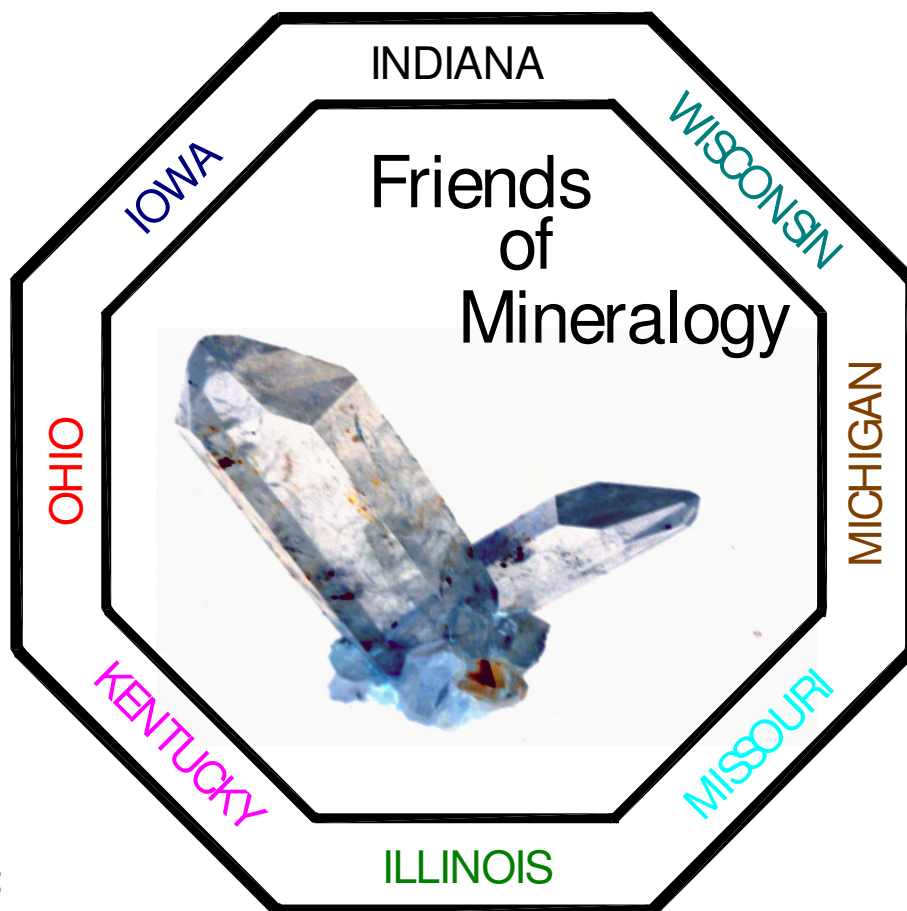


Friends of Mineralogy

Midwest Chapter Newsletter for

September – October 2015



Affiliations:

THE MINERALOGICAL RECORD

THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

AMERICAN GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

ROCKS & MINERALS MAGAZINE

Our purpose is to organize and promote interest in and knowledge of mineralogy; to advance mineralogical education; to protect and preserve mineral specimens and promote conservation of mineral localities; to further cooperation between amateur and professional and encourage collection of minerals for educational value; and to support publications about mineralogy and about the programs of kindred organizations.

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Chapter Website:

www.indiana.edu/~minerals/

National Website:

www.friendsofmineralogy.org

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*A classic concretion
from the Melvin
stone quarry.
Thank you Kathy
Bailey for the Foot
Modeling!*

President's Message

Things have been relatively quiet since the last newsletter. Reggie invited Scott Kell and me to attend a tour of the quarry that Jurgensen Aggregates operates in Latham (OH), in the NE corner of the Serpent Mound disturbance. Scott found some sphalerite. However, the consensus was that the locality is not sufficiently mineralized to support a large group of collectors. We probably will not be going there in the future. I've been agitating with Reggie to try to get us into the Plum Run quarry – so far, without success.

The Toledo Gem and Rockhound club and the Dayton Gem and Mineral Society had a joint field trip to the Graymont Dolime quarry in Genoa (OH) on August 1st. I mention it primarily because there were some FM members present who belong to one of the two clubs. As has been the practice in the past, the group was taken initially to the upper bench where the famous pocket of dark-brown fluorite was found several years ago. Things hadn't changed much since last October, except that most of the larger boulders had been removed near the center of the bench and there was a front-end loader working on the blast pile that I think was from last year. With one exception, I'll remark about below, most people weren't doing too well. The host, Gary, offered to lead the group down to the lowest level, which had a fresh blast pile that still had a lot of dust on it. The lowest level is a lot more fossiliferous than the material on the upper bench. However, about all I saw in the way of exotic mineralization were some knots of massive celestine. Now, back to the exception: Mike Royal did find one large boulder with a lot of yellowish-brown fluorite cubes; Mike's new gas-powered drill was used to drill holes. Randy Marsh then helped by swinging a sledgehammer to drive Bull Pins into the holes to crack off large pieces. After observing them, I went home and ordered a couple Bull Pins on eBay. Should you be tempted to do the same, you can probably get them cheaper at Home Depot, as I discovered after being impulsive.

I will miss out on the Williamsport quarry field trip on the 15th. (I'm writing this on the 13th.) I will be driving to Thunder Bay (ON) to collect amethyst with friends from Colorado. If I find any decent material, I'll share pictures and descriptions in the next newsletter.

We have been talking with Tim Renneker (safety manager) of Jurgensen Aggregates about formally submitting a training plan to MSHA for annual safety and hazard training. He offered to show us what was required to do that. I'll keep you posted on the progress of this project.

FM National will not be holding a general membership meeting in Denver in September. Hopefully, that will resume next year. However, as VP of National, I have been asked to coordinate judging of the educational exhibits. I think that there are a couple of people lined up who did it last year. However, if you are planning to attend the Denver show, and would be interested in participating in judging, let me know. At the very least, it would be desirable to have some backups in case someone gets ill.

Friends of Mineralogy

From The office of the President

Clyde Spencer

Incidentally, If you have not visited our website (<http://www.indiana.edu/~minerals/>) Please do so. You will find a number of interesting things there, not the least of which is an archive of past newsletters. So, if you are a new member, or a long time member who has accidentally deleted a past newsletter, you can read them at the website. While you are there, if you think that we should add something to improve the website, please let me know.

Lastly, on behalf of the chapter, I'd like to sincerely thank Katherine Bladh for her donation of \$200 as an anniversary gift to her husband, Dr. Kenneth Bladh of Wittenberg University. I'll talk with him to see if he has some suggestions on how we can most constructively use the money.

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Treasurers Report

2015 Chapter Treasury Report as of 8/15/2015

New items

Since the last report in June, we've had 4 new members register. This resulted in \$80.00 in dues deposited. We also received the \$200.00 grant from the National treasury for our symposium.

Special Donation

We received a \$200.00 contribution from Katherine Bladh as an anniversary gift to her husband, Ken Bladh, who is a member. Thanks from the chapter and congratulations to them both!

We also sold 2 additional t-shirts for \$40.00.

Altogether, this adds an additional \$520.00 to the treasury for a total of \$3198.54.

Outstanding Items

Due to 6 new members signing after we paid our national dues, we owe an additional \$24.00.

Jeff A. Spencer - Treasurer

Quarry Travel & Event Guide

For trip type - **FT** = Field trip with only our club **OH** = Open House with several other clubs

For training - **MSHA** means MSHA is required **OS** means on-site training is sufficient

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Time:</u>	<u>Trip Type:</u>	<u>Training:</u>	<u>Company Locale:</u>	<u>To collect:</u>
Sat Aug 29	7:00a- 12:00p	FT	MSHA	Stoneco Clay Center, OH	calcite, celestine, dolomite fluorite, galena, gypsum, marcasite, pyrite, sphalerite
Sat Sep 12	9:30a-2:00p	OH	OS	IMI Corydon, IN	apatite, aragonite, barite, calcite, chalcopryrite, chert, dolomite, fluorite, glauconite, gypsum, hydrozincite, malachite, marcasite, millerite, pyrite, quartz, sphalerite
Sat Oct 10	6:45a-2:00p	OH	OS	Dolomite Group Walworth, NY	calcite, dolomite, selenite, sphalerite and cubic fluorite
Sun Oct 11	6:45a-12:00p				
Sat Oct 31	8:00a-1:00p	FT	MSHA	Graymont Genoa, OH	calcite, celestite, dolomite, galena, marcasite, pyrite, sphalerite

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Field Trip Reports

Pipe Creek Quarry, June 20th – Swayzee, Indiana

I was glad that I was able to make it to the field trip at the Pipe Creek Jr. quarry. No shows or family outings to attend, and the trip that was only 3 hours away. I'm one of the few who live in Illinois.

The day started out overcast and pleasantly cool. There were over 60 people in attendance. A large segment was from the 500 club in Indianapolis, with others from various places in Ohio. Because of the size of the group, one geologist from IMI took half into the quarry, and the other geologist brought half to work along the debris piles on either side of the ramp. The plan was to switch positions about noon. As I was steadily working, the four hours flew by and I never left the side of the ramp. The most abundant finds were fossils, mostly corals, lots of bivalves, gastropods, and fragments of trilobites. In the last hour of collecting, I finally started finding calcite crystals. They were clear, colorless, equant, modified rhombohedral twinned types. The largest I found was 1 centimeter across; others were only a few millimeters. All of them were found in the hollowed sections of corals.

Mike Litt

GLA Quarry, July 25th – S. Rockwood, Michigan

SOMETIMES SMALL IS GOOD

There is a cliché that says "bigger is better." Usually, that is the case for mineral collectors. We would all prefer to look over blast piles that extend for a long distance rather than only have a small amount of blast rock to peruse. Before the trip, we had nine cancellations which reduced our number to 20. So our group was smaller than first anticipated.

When we arrived at the quarry for our July 25th visit, it turned out that GLA was working that day, so our group would be restricted to part of the middle bench. As we descended down the ramp, I was concerned that there would not be enough rock to inspect. But delightfully, I left with a different impression. The small area in which we worked had enough to keep us busy. The neatest combination specimen that I was privileged to see was a calcite-celestine specimen collected by Dave Esch (Ann Arbor, MI). South Rockwood, and in fact this whole area in southeast Michigan, is and has been known for its celestine deposits. Mike Royal (Defiance, OH) can confirm that history since two years ago he ran into some deep-blue crystal clear celestine, and this year took home a 4" celestine crystal in matrix. As it turned out, there was plenty of rock to inspect, and we all kept busy. But more importantly, we still are finding enough time to socialize and to get better acquainted. In the collecting department, this author even came away with a celestine cluster in matrix; a 2 inch, white, stout blade with two 1.5 inch little brothers. No one wanted this specimen because the biggest celestine crystal was cracked. By the time I pared the boulder down to portable size, the biggest crystal fell apart. Once I got it home, Weldwood contact cement (available at Walmart) came to the rescue. Sticking with (no pun intended) the theme of "bigger is better", our host Bill Begley has a great big heart for our cause, which is a love of minerals and all we can learn about them. When we emphasize the educational nature of our trips, he gets it. By going to quarries, we learn more about the specimens we collect, and in turn can teach others about the wonderful world of minerals. I have for a long time believed that I would rather have a nice \$5 specimen that I collected rather than a \$20 specimen that is given to me. Here's why. The celestine specimen I collected at South Rockwood needed repair, and is of little commercial value, so it is one which may not interest most purist collectors. It does mean something to me because it is a memory of a trip where I was privileged to collect with the best collectors in this region, all of you.

Reggie Rose

Below – celestine, Mike Royal's (left) and Reggie's (right)





Melvin Stone Quarry, August 15th – Williamsport, Ohio

Williamsport: An Unusual but Wonderful Place

Tucked in amongst fields of soy beans and corn, the Melvin Stone Quarry in Pickaway County is an unusual place. First, it is called the Williamsport Plant because it is near Williamsport, yet it has a New Holland address. Perhaps for this reason, or maybe because there is no large smokestack visible, we have had a few members have difficulty finding it. Another reason that quarry locality is unusual is that it produces unusual specimens. Last year it produced very sharp calcite scalenohedrons with a smoky-like color. As well, after Tom Bolka found it, John "Big Boulder Man" Medici drug home a 150 pound pyrite nodule! John Vasichko came up with a barite specimen and Alan Dewitt took home the back half of a large trilobite impression. Also in the fossil department, I also saw a lot of horn corals up to 9" in length, though they were "leverites" in the middle of boulders.

This year was different, much different. Staying with the fossil department, Bob Boyd showed us an extractable horn coral and a cephalopod section, both of which were at least 6" in length. But even more in line with our group name, there were plenty of minerals to go around. In the "yard rock" department, we all saw it, and all but one of us "waved farewell" as we walked by a large iron concretion. This elliptically-shaped honker was two feet in diameter and best guesses marked it at 400 pounds. Note that I said almost all of us walked by it. All of us except Mike "Big Boulder Guy" Royal. He decided to christen the bed of his new GMC pickup, so he got three friends to help him load it. You may wonder where I get all these nicknames. Well, the Ohio State football team has three "superfans" named Buckeye Man, Buckeye Guy and Big Nut. So I borrowed the first two of these nicknames for John Medici and Mike Royal. I'm sure and I hope that these nicknames won't stick, because for the next member who takes a huge boulder home, there's only one nickname left. No one wants to be called a nut. Going back to the trip and the minerals, we spent the first hour and a half outside the pit in an area where the quarry dumps its shale overburden. This place was loaded, and I do mean loaded with sulfides, most notably marcasite. Most specimens displayed moderately nice to really great tabular arrowhead shapes typical of marcasite. There were also some specimens, which when broken, exhibited a radial crystal structure, also typical of marcasite. Most of the specimens were smaller in the 1" to 2" range, but very abundant. Since the larger specimens that I saw were not worth taking home, I cracked one in half and interestingly liberated a sulfur smell. One more find has to be mentioned from this year's trip that puts it in the "way out there" of unusual trips. Jay Medici (Fredericktown, OH) discovered and took home a piece of petrified wood, which showed the bark structure and measured about 9" x 11" x 3". It is reminiscent of the wood found around Oelrich, SD.



After our first hour in the dumping area, it was off to the pit where mineral extraction from hard rock took place. This year calcite was found, but it had a brown, not black hue, and was of intermediate, not scalenohedral form. With the old mercury in the thermometer rising, I would hazard a guess and say that most of us did not approach the hard

rock mining part of our visit with ultimate vigor. In fact, a good number of us defected from the pit to another shale dump area to gather more marcasite. When the temperature climbs into the 80s in the area around a quarry, it must be higher in the pit as rock absorbs and re-radiates heat our way. So most of us chose a path more in line with discretion than valor and deserted our sledges for rock picks to conclude the trip. Even though the Williamsport quarry was rather chameleon-like in revealing different treasures this year, the fact that it was different was not necessarily a bad thing. I believe everyone had a good time and had something nice to take home, and that is a good thing. Speaking of good things, there was one good thing about this quarry that was the same as last year. That was the warmth of hospitality that was offered to us by our host, Tim Renneker. Tim gives his personal time to us because he finds the educational side of what we do of value. Without hosts like Tim, we would cease to exist as an organization. We are dedicated to mineral collecting and appreciate the beauty of minerals. We learn from our trips, our symposiums and from each other. These are educational endeavors. Without hosts like Tim, our educational endeavors would not flourish.

Reggie Rose



Marcasite – Randy Marsh



Petrified Wood – Jay Medici