
THE BADGER DIGGIN'S

The Badger Lapidary and Geological Society, Inc.
Monroe, Wisconsin

Devoted to the Earth Sciences

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June 2010

President's Message

Dear Badgers,

The Badger Club Picnic is on Saturday June 12th and will be held at the Monroe Recreation Park at 1700 22nd Avenue. The picnic will start at 10 a.m. and we have the shelter nearest the tremendous Swiss A.L.P.S. playground area until 6 p.m. The shelter includes grills, tables, bathrooms, and electricity. We are allowed to have beer and wine. We are also next door to the Monroe Pool and it has been a scorcher so far so bring your swimsuit. You can check these out at www.cityofmonroe.org.

The club will provide charcoal, burgers, brats, & marinated chicken on the grill as well as plates, utensils, and condiments. Everyone else please bring your own drinks and a dish to pass such as a salad, fruit, casserole, or desert. Please bring folding chairs for yourself and of course please bring a mineral from your collection or a recent find to show off at the What's Rockin' Table. Please RSVP to Laurie Trocke lor3@netscape.com or call us at 608-935-0597 so that we can be prepared to bring enough meat & buns for everyone.

We'll have the geode cracker at the picnic so bring your geodes and we'll have a crackalackin' good time. Time, weather, and interest permitting, we will go to several local road cuts and possibly a quarry in Juda so bring along a few good tools.

Teri Marché has kindly offered to run the silkscreen printing activity at the picnic again this year. So everyone should bring an article of clothing that they would like to have screen printed with the Badger Lapidary Club logo (i.e. shirts, jacket, book bag, boxers, nightgown, etc.).

We should have information at the picnic about the June 26 fieldtrip – Dehnel's aegerine pit & soapstone pile (leader: Cathy Romeis) and the July 10-18 Minnesota to Canada fieldtrip (leaders: Teri Marché, Cathy Romeis).

I hope all of you are having a great summer and can join us for the upcoming picnic and fieldtrips.

On a final note, I'd like to announce that my most dedicated rockhound, Kenzie (my dog that can always be found

carrying a rock in her mouth), is the proud mother of 8 new pebble pups. Pictures to follow.

Take care,

Dan Trocke

Next Meeting

The annual Club Picnic will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, June 12, 2010, at the Monroe Recreation Park, 1700 22nd Avenue.

Plan to bring (a) your own drinks; (b) a dish to pass (e.g., salad, fruit, casserole, or dessert); (c) a folding chair; (d) a specimen for the What's Rockin' Table; (e) any geodes that you want to have cracked that day; and (f) any T-shirt or item to be silkscreened with the Club logo.

Again, please RSVP Laurie Trocke to let her know how many in your family plan to attend.



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Tentative Calendar of Club Events – through Dec. 2010

- June 12** Annual Picnic: Recreation Park, 1700 22nd Ave., Monroe, WI. 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- June 26** Field trip – Dehnel’s Aegerine Pit
Leader: Cathy Romeis
- July 10-18** Field Trip – Minnesota to Canada
Leaders: Teri Marché, Cathy Romeis
- July 25** Field Trip – Rufer Quarry, Monroe
Leader: Dan Trocke
- Aug. 14** Field Trip – TBA
- Aug. 28-29** Field Trip – Wyalusing & Prairie du Chien
Leader: Teri Marché
- Sept. 11** Regular meeting – Show & Tell
- Sept. 25** Field Trip – TBA
- Oct. 9** Lapidary Day; Host – Trockes
- Oct. 23** Field Trip – TBA
- Nov. 13** Regular meeting
- Dec. 11** Christmas party

Represent the Club at the MWF Annual Meeting, August 28, Peoria, Illinois

We have received the annual reminder that our club is entitled to send one Delegate and one Alternate to represent it at the Midwest Federation’s upcoming 47th Annual Meeting, held in conjunction with its Show and Convention, on August 28. The Delegates Meeting (along with the Show and Convention) will be held at the Grand Hotel on Brandywine, 4400 N. Brandywine Drive, Peoria, Illinois.

Additional information, in the form of a latter from Tony Kapta, MWF Credentials Chairman, about the Delegate’s and Alternate’s roles, will be available at the BLGS Annual Picnic. For those members who live in northern Illinois and would like to attend a MWF Show/Convention, this would be an ideal opportunity for you to do so. Please let the officers know if you are interested.

MWF (& related) Club Events

June 5-6: Viroqua, WI: Coulee Rock Club's Annual Show. Viroqua Junior High School Gym, 100 Blackhawk Drive. Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4. Contact: Gary J. Krause, (608) 637-2574 or garyjkrause@yahoo.com.

June 12: Skokie, IL. Chicago Rocks & Minerals Society's 3rd Annual "Geode Fest." St. Peter's United Church of Christ Gymnasium, 8013 Laramie Avenue. Contact Craig Henize, (847) 584-8637 or chenize@flash.net.

August 28-29: Peoria, IL. Midwest Federation's 47th Annual Convention and Show, Grand Hotel on Brandywine, 4400 North Brandywine Drive. Sat. 9-5; Sun. 10-5. Contact: Jim Travis at (309) 645-3609 or boatnick@aol.com.

April Meeting Minutes

The first order of business, before the meeting even really got started, was to hand out thank you gifts to everyone that helped so very much at the March show. Gifts were given to: Dennis Westby for being willing to do anything and to help out wherever needed; Dan Trocke & Jack Hoxie for taking care of advertising; Laurie Trocke for running the hand polishing activity; Mary Westby, the keeper of the fish(pond); Ted Tinker for quietly, but effectively helping where needed; Chris Konetski, Linda Neill, Brian & Cindy Green, and Dave Cress for running the sales table; Erich Hessner & Clay Schroll for being general helper-outers; Dave Reese for helping at the front door; Donna Reese, the keeper of the coffers & provider of psychological & philosophical support; Neil & Linda Trickel for serving as demonstrators; and Tyrel Rouse for being a guest speaker. Gifts were also given to some of the kids for their help: Connor & Erin Trocke, teachers to be; Jayden Trocke and Cassie Hoxie for helping out with the fish pond and the other kids' games. Thanks to all! We've heard many good things about the show and everyone's hard work really paid off.

The meeting was called to order and the minutes from the March meeting were approved. We welcomed Lucas, Laura, Hannah & Megan — who were visiting because they are thinking about joining. Donna presented the Treasurer's Report and said that most of the show expenses were already counted. She said that three new members joined at the show.

We moved on to Announcements. The April field trip is set for Jacobs Geode Mine in Iowa. This should be a fun trip. Also, Bud Higgins recently made a second donation to the club. It contains a lot of jewelry findings and some very nice specimens. He also donated a polisher/trim saw. We will have a club auction later in the year.

The first door prize was won by Jayden Trocke. He won a beautiful piece of creedite & fluorite.

Moving on to Old Business, Dan explained that Ted Tinker is in the process of moving; thus, the process of getting the web site up and running has been delayed. He also said that he picked up thumb drives for the club. One went to Donna to save the Treasurer's information and one went to the Trocke's. Dan also said that he would be happy to take care of the repair work on the club's Genie.

Dan Trocke won the second door prize, a beautiful ammonite.

Dan said that he has been researching information on purchasing a chop saw for the club. He said that a 14-inch saw weighed about 21 lbs. and cost about \$1,000 new. He said that the next size up was too heavy and the next size down wasn't quite strong enough. He also said that he could look into used ones and see what was available. A motion was made to have Dan look for a chop saw and purchase it with just the officer's approval if he found one. The motion carried.

Moving on to New Business, Teri Marché explained that Barbara Tabor contacted her regarding the material from the rock shop in Minnesota that had been through a fire and is now available at Delany's. She said that we could set up an

appointment to see it. Jack Hoxie said that they have the smoke-, water-, & fire-damaged material listed at retail prices, but if he had a chance to check it out, he would report back.

Teri then finished off the Show Business report. She said that if anyone had suggestions on ways to make the show better for next year, to please tell her at the meeting or e-mail her. We then watched Teri's videotaped interview on Channel 15. She did a great job and said, "The most amazing thing is that it was 6:40 a.m. and I was awake!" Jack Hoxie said that there was a very nice article on the show and the club in the Monroe newspaper. Donna gave the breakdown of how we did at the show; she has provided a hard copy of this report if anyone wants to see it. Teri asked if we wanted to do a show again in 2011. A motion was made to do the show and it carried unanimously. Jack Hoxie made a motion for Teri to be the show chair again, Daisy Peterson seconded it, and the motion carried.

Donna said that she had received the bill for our accident insurance and will take care of it.

The last door prize was won by Donna Reese. It was a very nice quartz pendant.

Thanks to Clay Schroll for the treats! The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Trocke

May Meeting Minutes

The May meeting was called to order at 11:40 a.m. after a very interesting presentation by Dan Trocke on meteorites and rock terms. The first door prize was won by Donna Reese. She won a very nice piece of specular hematite. The minutes from the April meeting will be printed in the May newsletter.

Donna presented the Treasurer's Report and said that we had income from dues and expenses for insurance, the newsletter, and a few remaining show expenses.

Teri gave a run-down with the details for the May field trip. This trip will be to several quarries in Iowa. Wendling Quarry employee John Tuthill is leading the trip. Teri will send out an e-mail with additional information, an RSVP, and the waiver form that is needed for this trip. The Bellevue, Iowa trip that was originally planned for May will be rescheduled for later in the summer.

The June field trip is going to Dehnel's agerine pit near Wausau. There are 28 different minerals that have been found there. There are three old pits and one newer one. There is another possible location for this trip that has soapstone available to collect. The plans for the Canada trip are also coming along. We are planning to leave on Saturday, July 10th and meet in Thunder Bay on Sunday. Monday will be at the Blue Points Mine for Amethyst. Tuesday could also be spent at Blue Points or at several other locations in the area that are known for agates and other minerals. Wednesday will be spent at Dan & Bill's Mine, also for amethyst. Thursday we will leave Canada, and stop at several places along Lake Michigan on our way to Moose Lake. We will spend Saturday and possibly Sunday at Moose Lake for Agate Days.

Daisy announced that the trailer could no longer be kept in the barn at her neighbor's. Dan said that we could store it in the machine shed if someone could bring it out to our place. Dennis Westby said that he could move it.

Dan said that he would continue to look for a saw for the club and that he had several leads. Donna gave him a check in case he found one so that he could get it right away.

Dan also explained that he had found a new possibility for a field trip for the club. The Trockes had visited a new quarry in the Dubuque area and found it to be an excellent location for agates. Dan said that he would try to contact the owners and get permission for a club trip.

Ralph Burgener won a very nice piece of fluorite for the second door prize.

We then moved on to Old Business. Teri Marché said that she was taking the geode cracker and that

it would be put back in the trailer when she was done.

The first item for New Business was the picnic that is planned for the June meeting. The picnic will be held at a park in the Monroe area. Daisy Peterson will talk to the city parks department and reserve the park. The Trockes will bring the meat, buns and condiments. Everyone else should bring a dish to pass. [Ed. Note – The picnic has been [re]scheduled to start 10:00 a.m.] We may go to some local road cuts and a quarry near Juda to do some collecting in the afternoon. We will be doing silkscreen printing again, so bring T-shirts. We will also bring the geode cracker along, so if you have geodes that you want to open up, bring them with you!

After new business, we all sang Happy Birthday to Jimmy Westby. He turned four that day and the Westbys brought Spiderman cupcakes for everyone to share.

Teri asked that if anyone had any ideas for a theme for next year's show, to please let her know.

The third door prize was won by Dave Reese. He won a very pretty piece of azurite.

Thanks to the Westbys for the cupcakes and all the other wonderful treats. Also thanks to Cathy Romeis for the donation towards the food for this meeting. The meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Trocke

What's Rockin'

This month we had a very full table with a wide variety of very nice specimens. Dan Trocke had some rutile crystals, lazurite in matrix, turgite var. hematite that he mined in Graves Mountain, Georgia, and a scraper artifact from Dubuque, Iowa. Erin Trocke had a trilobite and Connor Trocke had some agates.

Harold Carter brought an assortment from a recent Utah collecting trip. Cathy Romeis had some

aegerine from Wausau, Wisconsin. Clay Schroll had a nice green fluorite from China. Jack Hoxie brought agatized coral from Tampa Bay and Georgia.

Jordan Marché brought a piece of selenite from Alberta, Canada that showed an hour glass pattern under UV radiation. Teri Marché had a heart shaped geode that she found on the geode trip in April.

Tyrel Rouse brought some Tampa Bay coral, moss agate, petrified wood from the southwest, jade cutouts, moss jasper/agate from Texas, and a *Triceratops* tooth.

Last but not least, Dave Reese brought some purple fluorite that he mined at a household auction in Rockford for \$1. He also brought some flowstone, something else that no one knew what it was, and a number of sawed geodes that he was told (by someone who will remain nameless) were too heavy to be hollow.

The Greens

Calcite Cavern Update

by David Zimmerman

Bonjour from Quebec! Life has been good up here . . . but immigration is painfully slow. I realized that I had not sent an update on the Calcite Cavern, and thought I would send some pictures down as well.

The cavern eventually opened up (after 6 weeks of hard digging and about 8 cubic yards of material moved) and revealed its full extent. Initially, it had a chamber about 10' tall, 3' wide, and about 12' deep with a deep pool of water in the back. Many museum plates were removed from the floor that were loose floaters in the pocket debris. I was constantly walking on plates and feeling them slide into the pool of water. I must admit that I was spending way too much time collecting and not enough time exploring. We thought we were collecting in paradise . . . but we were wrong, though.

One weekend, while showing some recent photos to the in-laws, I noticed something in the pool of water. It was a large museum plate of calcite that only revealed itself with the flash of the camera! It looked to be in about 4 feet of water. I told Jane, “just one more piece,” so back we went the following weekend. We purchased a small (200 gal./ hr) 12- volt pump that I hooked up to the car battery, via a 25’ Romex wire, and proceeded to pump the cavern out. The pump whined for hours and the water level only dropped maybe 2’. It was enough to collect some new floor material, including the large plate in the photo.



David in mineral-collecting heaven, also known as the 35’ level of the cavern.

There was also a piece found in the 10’ level that was like an iceberg; it was just the tip sticking out of the floor debris. After weeks of digging around it, we still did not have final dimensions on the piece, and we are not able to label it as a floater or a burr piece attached to the floor. The exposed piece was about 8’ long by 8 inches wide, and 5’ of height exposed. I would guess the piece must have weighed WELL over a ton and had crystals on all exposed areas. It was partially removed by a previous collector, and fully removed by us in about 14 pieces. Do the math on the weight for each “piece.”

During that trip, some friends happened to stumble across our good fortune, and we felt obliged (or maybe proud?) to show them the new cavern. We also gave them a few plates and some nice points. They spent the rest of the day digging with us and giggling at all the material found.

A few days later, they took a small pump there and explored and collected in the 25’ level of the cavern. A strange pattern was forming, too: the wall material, while beautiful, was rather difficult to remove without shattering the crystals, and the real prizes were to be had in the pocket debris in the floor. Mind you, this pocket debris was a full 4’ thick in areas, so there was plenty to go through. We actually had a “glory bucket” which was about a ½ gallon pail that was constantly being fed up to the mouth of the cavern with loose points and clusters found in the debris. Also, a brigade of 5 gallon buckets with barren debris was being fed up and spread out over our “sorting area,” where hundreds of points were collected in the 1” to 2” size.

After hearing the report from our friends that the cavern continued, we went back shortly thereafter with a big man, a big pump (2,000 gal./hr), and a small generator. The man was Guy Ouellet, who is a local collecting legend up here (primarily at the Jeffery Mine in Asbestos). It took over 3 hours of constantly pumping using the two pumps to finally reveal the nether-regions of the calcite cavern. A strange thing happened near the end of the pumping operation: the ground started to shake and tremble!! Actually, it was a deep (and loud!) gurgling sound that was happening in the back of the cavern. I would describe it to you if I could, but all I can say is that it was exciting to hear! It was obviously an extension to the cavern that was allowing air to get sucked back as the water-level dropped for the next 15 minutes or so. This finally revealed the 50-foot level of the cavern, which was verified with a tape measure and was also probed to its probable end.

This was like collecting in a dream. In every direction you looked, all you saw were calcite points staring at you. I have told many people that I felt like that classic rock-shop pewter figurine in a geode! As always, we managed to salvage some massive plates in the floor. We were also able to string up some electric lights in the cavern, which was MUCH better than the headlamps we had been using.

This, as it turned out, managed to be our last trip of the year (Dec. 8, 2009), and also the last trip to the cavern to date. Snow was starting to fall heavily,



Dave and Guy posing with the surprise (best plate collected) 250-lb. floater!

and we feared ice would be a problem for people, machinery, and safety. In April, we tried to get in after the quarry opened, but unfortunately they probably had 100 people trying to get in, so they temporarily closed their gates to collectors. The owner had been in the cavern and said he wants to preserve it, which is fantastic news if it is true. He also wanted to put a door on the cavern and do proper liability release waivers. Hopefully, we will find out the final chapter by late summer.

Of the 30 or so museum plates that were removed, numerous ones have been donated to the largest museums in Canada, including the Royal Ontario Museum, McGill University, Laval University, Ottawa Museum, and Thetford Mines Museum. A professor at McGill will be having a graduate student do her thesis on the calcite formation, as the growth patterns are beyond bizarre. It was rather amazing to have all these professors and museum folks looking through our garage and picking out pieces for their museum! At some point, Jane and I were placing bets as to which “baby” was going to be the next one to leave the flock!

Attached are some photos to back up this fish-story. It is Canada after all and I have heard some good ones up here, too! Also, the first picture is one that will be blown up and shown in the McGill University Museum, right above the donated specimens.

Have fun!

The Collecting Cycle

by Betty Thompson

[1st Place, 2009 AFMS Adult Poetry Competition; reprinted from May 2010 *AFMS Newsletter*, p. 8.]

Minerals come in many forms
(like boulders, chunks, and dust)
and within each, we know well
lurk beauties that we must
search for, at both site and sale;
pay for, with our sweat or cash;
show off, at our various clubs; and
take home, to display or stash.

Year on year, our treasures grow
and still we keep collecting,
drawn by loveliness that leads
to learning and reflecting
and grateful memberships in clubs
where experts generously share
clues to the earth's unfolding
in minerals complex and rare.

Then comes the day we look around
and wonder what to do
with our accreted holdings,
our mineralogical zoos
that far surpass our storage space
and would really stump our heirs,
How to pass on the joys we've found?
What to do with our wares?

Aha! A club – a show – a table!
That's one way that we are able
First to display and then to sell
Minerals that we've loved well.
And if we're past the days when we
Want to spend our own energy
To organize and price and cart
Our collection to the mineral mart,

A lucky club could be quite grateful
if we offer them some crates full
of what we've reaped – so they can sow
new seeds that help others to grow
a love of what the earth has done
and of deep forces that have won
such beauty and complexity
which give much joy to you and me.

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