

MWF News

Midwest Federation
of Mineralogical and Geological Societies

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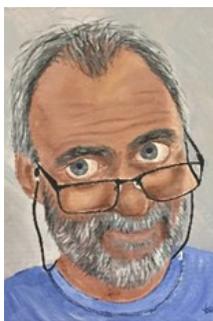


PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Kevin Ponzio, MWF President

Greetings Everyone!

By now you know, if you came to the show in Holland, Michigan, that I wasn't eaten by a bear, bitten by a rattlesnake, or carried off by a vulture on my trip to Wyoming. I had a great deal of fun and adventure. I'm thinking many of you have had adventures in your travels. I would love to hear all about them. Not all have the opportunity to get out in the field. Please share your adventures of rocks and minerals with the rest of the membership. From collecting in the field, to lapidary shop experiences and tips, I believe each of you has a unique experience to share. I can't wait to hear all about it. Submit articles to Valerie at vjmwriter@yahoo.com.



October is a great time to think about opals. Everyone knows someone who has an October birthday. (Opal is the October birthstone.) You may

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HELP URGENTLY NEEDED

Donna Moore, MWF Secretary

Help Needed!!! The MWF Executive Committee has several vacant positions that we need qualified people willing to fill.

First and most urgently needed is an Insurance Chairman. This person is the go-between for the MWF and our insurance company. The chairman is also the one to answer questions from the clubs about coverage and how to obtain certificates of insurance.

This person needs to have working knowledge of insurance, specifically liability insurance. The person needs to be able to answer questions on short notice.

Information concerning the number of clubs and members to be insured is tabulated by our treasurer, Sandy Fuller. She sends this information to the insurance company.

The MWF Insurance Chairman is welcome to have two or three assistants to help with this job.

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MWF OFFICERS

President: Kevin Ponzio
 Post Office Box 44
 Plymouth, WI 53073
 920-980-6413
 earthprospect@frontier.net

1st VP: John Donker
 29 Edgewood Avenue
 Jenison, MI 49428
 616-457-0556
 jjredon65@comcast.net

2nd VP: Susan Stanforth
 850 Palau Parkway
 Rockford, IL 61108
 815-229-4009
 sstanforth123@yahoo.com

Secretary: Donna Moore
 25235 N. State Route 97
 Cuba, IL 61427
 309-789-6501
 mwfsecretary@gmail.com

Treasurer: Sandy Fuller
 8445 Grange Boulevard
 Cottage Grove, MN 55016
 651-459-0343
 mwftreas@rock-biz.biz

DEADLINE CALENDAR

Scholarship Honoree: Nominations for the honoree, who selects the college to which two MWF scholarship grants will be presented, are due **Nov. 15, 2019**. For information, see the MWF website under "About Us," then "Scholarships."

AFMS Video/Slide Program Contest: Entries in the contest, which offers cash prizes, are due **Nov. 15, 2019**. For information, contact Cindy Root (d-root@comcast.net).

All American Club Awards: Entries are due to the MWF program on **Feb. 1, 2020**. For information, contact Mary Ann Rich (birdman035@hotmail.com).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, CONTINUED

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already have a fascination or love for opals. Then you know how much fun they can be. If you haven't played with opal yet, you may want to try. There are numerous opal locations and varying costs. Start with the less expensive material until you master working with it. Opal can be delicate but all you have to do is be patient. Take your time and keep it wet. There is someone in your club that has worked it before and would be glad to help you get started. Perhaps jewelry is not your thing. Opal can make beautiful specimens too! Even some fossils are replaced by opal. Something for everyone! Have fun!

Do you like a good challenge? I challenge MWF members to fill all the remaining officer and chair positions by November. You can do it! And yes, there are always assistant positions available too. Imagine the MWF running like a well oiled piston, clicking like the turnstile in the subway, and buzzing like a beehive. All that rock-related activity at once! We are so close right now that just a few more people will put us over the top. To think, you may be the one that completes and fills the slate. (Dream sequence of balloons and confetti with you in the middle of everyone cheering you!) YES! Wow, what have I been waiting for? Call, email or text now!

Just a few reminders: Get your Scholarship Honoree nominations and AFMS Video/Slide Program Contest entries in by Nov. 15th, submit your articles for the MWF Newsletter by the 1st of each month, and enjoy all the great shows across the Midwest during October. Keep the Scholarship Fund donations coming. Thank you to all that have donated already.

See you all next month!

November Issue Submission Deadline Is Oct. 9th!



CALL FOR ROCKHOUND OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS!

Steve Shimatzki, Chair
MWF Club Rockhound of the Year

Every year, starting about November, I get emails from clubs with nominations for Rockhound of the Year awards. Of course, they have to be in by the end of December (Christmas break for me and the family), and it's always a rush to print the certificates and send them out before holiday parties, etc. This year, I think we should be more "proactive" in this approach, and I would like to remind the MWF clubs to submit your Rockhound of the Year profiles **Now**. (Or at least before November!) You will still be able to request they not be published until December's MWF Newsletter for Christmas party reveals, but at least all the hard work will be done and no rushing to the post

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HELP — YES, YOURS! — URGENTLY NEEDED, CONTINUED

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Second, we have been without an Endowment Chair for some time. This is a fundraising position for the MWF Endowment Fund. We have been building up this fund since 1989. Only the interest from this fund is used for special projects, one being covering the extra cost for every club member when the AFMS raises its dues. Special publications for the clubs have been paid for from the endowment fund. Donations to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation honoring the winners of Member Increase Club Awards are paid from this interest. The MWF Silent Auction and e-Bear auction proceeds contribute to the MWF Endowment Fund.

Two other chairmanships that need to be filled are Bulletin Editors Aids and Club Rockhound of the Year. Both Sharon Marburger and Stephen Shimatzki have asked to be replaced, but have covered the duties until someone is found to replace them.

The Bulletin Editors Aids Chair coordinates the MWF Bulletin Editors Contest. He/she posts rules in the newsletter and on the website, sets a deadline, receives entries, finds qualified judges, coordinates the judging of bulletins and articles, and sends the top placing articles to the AFMS for their competition. Trophies are ordered for the awards presentation at either the Editors Breakfast or the Awards Banquet. If there is an Editor's Breakfast, the BEAC coordinates it with the Website Competition Chair and the AFMS Chair. After the awards are announced, the results are sent to the MWF News editor for publication.

The Club Rockhound of the Year chair is the person who coordinates recognizing the person from each club who earns extra recognition each year. He/she writes an article for the MWF Newsletter encouraging clubs to recognize an adult and/or junior member for their contributions. When the chair receives nominations, he or she puts together a certificate the club can present to the Rockhound of the Year nominee. The chair also sends the nomination to the MWF News for publication and to the AFMS chair.

All permanent committee chairs are members of the MWF Executive Committee, which meets at the annual convention and again in either spring or fall each year. These meetings travel around the federation and are hosted by various clubs during their shows. The conventions and meetings offer the chance to see other shows you might never have visited and meet other rockhounds you would never have met. The more shows we visit and people we meet, the more ideas we can share with our local area clubs.

Terms for permanent committee chairs and state directors are three years, and can be renewed. You might consider offering to assist your state director by sending him or her information about your club and its activities. We need assistants to help with this form of communication for our state directors.

Anyone interested in or having questions about these positions, please contact Kevin Ponzio or Donna Moore. There are specific operating procedures for each of these positions that we would be glad to email to anyone interested or just curious.



CARBON: THE HARDEST AND SOFTEST

By Brandon Poy

Jan. 2019 Pick & Dop Stick,

Chicago Rocks & Minerals Society

Ever since humanity invented writing, there have been many different methods. One of the most common means of writing in past centuries has been pencil and paper. Many people know that pencil “lead” is actually graphite. One of the softest minerals known, graphite is a crystalline form of carbon. This is an ideal mineral for pencils because it has a low hardness and forms in sheets that break off onto the paper.

On the other side of the spectrum is diamond, the hardest natural material known. Graphite under high pressure and intense heat converts to diamond. Around 30% of the diamonds found are gem quality. When faceted, these diamond crystals become beautiful, precious gems sparkling with “fire.” These two minerals, despite having the same chemical compositions, are complete opposites of each other.



Napoleon diamond necklace at the Smithsonian institution in Washington, D.C. Photo by annemoss.com, via Wikimedia Commons.

“Lead pencils” is a misnomer. Historically, the element lead or any of its ores has never been used in the making of pencils. The modern pencil, invented in 1795 by Nicholas-Jacques Conte, traditionally consists of a core of graphite mixed with a clay binder within a wood casing. Graphite was first discovered in Bavaria, in Europe, at the start of the 16th century. It was

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CALL FOR ROTY NOMINATIONS, CONTINUED

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office or people pulling out their hair hoping it gets delivered in time.

Oh, let’s back up. WHAT IS Rockhound of the Year?

The Rockhound of the Year is an award that a club may bestow upon a club member for a number of reasons. It’s presented to a member who is or has been helpful or instrumental to the club, now or in the past.

How about a club member who has been extremely helpful to the club in the last year? Yes, that’s a good nomination. How about a club member that has been helpful over MANY years with the club? Yes, that’s a good nomination. How about a club member that has very helpful in the past but is sick now? Yes, that’s a great nomination. How about a club member that donated a large pile of rock items for the club’s fundraiser? Yes, that’s a good nomination if they didn’t get promised it in return! There should be some self-discipline there.

Hopefully you get the picture. These awards are so the club can say THANK YOU in a very loud and public way.

What do you get out of being nominated as Rockhound of the Year by your club? Well, MWF will send a certificate and a printed copy of the nomination write-up sent by your club. You can frame either of those items and hang them on your best wall. This is also published in the MWF newsletter. AFMS also reviews the nominations and picks them based on ALL of the federation nominations.

With that out of the way, you may now be wondering HOW do you nominate someone for “Rockhound of the Year” (ROTY)?

There are a few guidelines that were handed down to me and I think they will serve us all well, so when your club has a nomination for ROTY, please send me the following information by email (Subject:

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SCHOLARSHIP HONOREE COMPETITION: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS, UPDATE ON SCHOLARS

Susan Stanforth, 2nd Vice President

Hey, Michigan clubs! Last count, there are 24 clubs in Michigan. Wouldn't it be great if the Scholarship Honoree came from your great state? The award will be handed out at the 2020 Convention in Howell, Michigan.

I just hope this stirs up some club members who have a favorite rockhound expert, who will choose two post-graduates to receive this money. Get busy and interview your nominee. Send the nomination to Board of Selectors, c/o Susan Stanforth, 850 Palau Parkway, Rockford, IL 61108, or email ssstanforth123@yahoo.com. The deadline is Nov. 15, 2019!

CALL FOR ROTY NOMINATIONS, CONTINUED

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MWF Rockhound of the Year) or regular mail so that we can process it properly:

1. The person's name.
2. Accomplishments that warrant the nomination. (How you would like it to read in the MWF News announcement.) Please try and **limit it to 100-125** words or less.
3. Name, phone number, and address of **where the award is to be sent**, not necessarily the recipient if you plan to present it to the recipient at a club event.
4. The year the award is for.

My contact information is:

MWF Rockhound of the Year
c/o Stephen Shimatzki
4295 County Road 16
Woodville, OH 43469

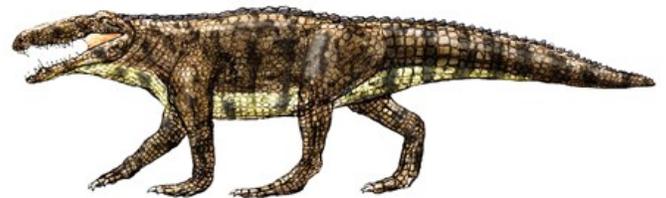
My email address is sjs132@gmail.com, and my cell phone number is 567-868-8794 (feel free to call or text).

Marge Collins, Scholarship Committee Chair

Earlier this year, the MWF Scholarship Honoree for 2019, Prof. Tiffany S. Adrain, was announced, and there was an article about her in the MWF News. She is the Collections Manager of the Paleontology Repository at the University of Iowa Department of Geosciences. She was nominated by the Cedar Valley Rocks & Minerals Society of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, with which she has been involved since the early 2000s, promoting amateur interest in paleontology within the club and the wider community.

Here is some information about the students she chose to receive MWF scholarship grants. Both are graduate students at the University of Iowa, and each will receive a one-year grant of \$4,000.

Amanda Adams' primary interest is vertebrate paleontology. Her doctoral thesis will update information about Cenozoic crocodiles of North and East Africa. Her work experience is deep and varied, including time as excavation manager at The Wyoming Dinosaur Center in Thermopolis.



Life re-creation of Langstonia huilensis, a Cenozoic crocodile. OK, this one is from South America, but do you think the African ones were less terrifying? Work by Rextron, via Wikimedia Commons.

Alex Bradley expects that his master's thesis will compare individual species and higher taxa of Trilobites. He participated in six field expeditions to Trilobite locations in the past four years. He has some teaching experience, and 300-plus volunteer hours in the fossil prep lab at Virginia Tech while he was working on his bachelor's degree there.

Congratulations to both MWF Scholarship Grant recipients!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Date and Time	Organization	Place	Contact
September 20-22 Fri and Sat 9-5, Sun 9-3	Mozarkite Society of Lincoln	Mike Hare Memorial Field, under the water tower, Lincoln, MO	Karl David Parsons, mozarkiterocks@gmail.com
September 21-22 Sat 9-7, Sun 9-3	Cedar Valley Rocks & Minerals Society rock auction	Marten Building, Amana RV Park, 39 38 th Avenue, Amana, IL	Marv Houg, m_houg@yahoo.com
September 21-22 Sat 9-6, Sun 10-4	Livingston Gem & Mineral Society	Hartland Schools Service Center, 9525 Highland Road, Howell, MI	Ed Oller, edleathercraft@gmail.com
September 27-29 Fri & Sat 9-5, Sun 9-3	Tri-State Gem & Mineral Society	Joplin Museum, 504 Schifferdecker Ave., Joplin, MO	Chris Wiseman, jmc-cwiseman@sbcglobal.net
September 28-29 Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	Brown County Rock & Mineral Club	Brown County History Center, 90 E. Gould Street, Nashville, IN	Rhonda A. Dunn, BCRMC2010@gmail.com
September 28-29 Sat 10-5, Sun 11-4	Grand Traverse Area Rock & Mineral Club	Cherryland VFW Hall (Post 2780), 3400 Veterans Drive, Traverse City, MI	Jared Bowen, JaredJBowen@gmail.com
September 28-29 Sat 9-5, Sun 10-4	Oshkosh Earth Science Club	Sunnyview Expo Center, 500 E. County Road Y, Oshkosh, WI	Ann Voges, hankemps@milwpc.com
October 5-6 Sat & Sun 9-5	Central Arkansas Gem, Mineral, & Geology Society	Jacksonville Community Center, 5 Municipal Drive, Jacksonville, AR	Lorri Norwood, ShadowBearVision@aol.com
October 5-6 Sat 10-6, Sun 10-4	Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society (LOESS)	State Fairgrounds, Orr Building, 801 E. Sangamon Avenue, Springfield, IL	Ed Wagner, loesseditor@gmail.com
October 5-6 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4	Midwest Mineralogical & Lapidary Society	Wayne County Fairgrounds, 10871 Quirk Road, Belleville, MI	Bill Barr, wbarr@umich.edu
October 5-6 Sat 10-6, Sun 10-4	Nebraska Mineral & Gem Club	Westside Middle School, 8601 Arbor, Omaha, NE	Bruce Sturges, bsturges@yahoo.com
October 11-13 Fri 9-6, Sat 10-7, Sun 11-5	Michigan Mineralogical Society	Macomb Sports & Expo Center, Bldg. P, 14500 E. 12 Mile Road, Warren, MI	John Peters, joopett13@hotmail.com
October 12-13 Sat 9-5, Sun 10-4	Loup Valley Gem & Mineral Society	First United Methodist Church Outreach Center, 3602 16 th Street, Columbus, NE	Greg Johnson, loupvalleynew@gmail.com
October 12-13 Sat 10-4, Sun noon-4	Parma Lapidary Club	Parma Lapidary Club, 2130 W. 110 th , Cleveland, OH	Amanda Balog, parmalapidary@yahoo.com
October 18-20 Fri 6-9, Sat 10-6, Sun 11-5	Central Michigan Lapidary & Mineral Society	Ingham County Fairgrounds, Main Arena, 700 Ash Street, Mason, MI	L. Roger Laylin, www.michrocks.org
October 18-20 Fri & Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	Three Rivers Gem & Mineral Society	Allen County Fairgrounds, 2726 Carroll, Fort Wayne, IN	Russell Greim, 3riversshow@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date and Time	Organization	Place	Contact
October 19-20 Sat 9-5, Sun 10-4	Des Moines Lapidary Society	State Fairgrounds, Knapp Center, 33 rd Street & E. University, Des Moines, IA	Ken Belzer, DMLS.2019show@ DMLapidary.com
October 19-20 Sat & Sun, 10-5	Flint Rock & Gem Club	Carter Middle School, 300 Rogers Lodge Drive, Clio, MI	Bill Wendling, bwrapkarn@centurytel.net
October 19-20 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-5	Minnesota Mineral Club	Nat. Guard Training & Community Ctr., 8180 Belden Blvd., Cottage Grove, MN	Maureen Scaglia, mascaglia@comcast.net
October 19-20 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4:30	Ozark Mountain Gem & Mineral Society	Springfield Expo Convention Center, 333 S. John Q. Hammons, Springfield, MO	Larry Lillich, omgms.57@gmail.com
October 19-20 Sat & Sun, 10-5	South Suburban Earth Science Club	Prairie State College, 202 S. Halsted St., Chicago Heights, IL	Jan Podbielski, Jan@Janskidesigns.com
October 26 Sat, 9-1	St. Croix Rockhounds	Valley Creek Mall, 1750 Weir Drive, St. Paul, MN	David Rusterholz, 715-760-0479
October 26-27 Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	“Gemboree” sponsored by Akron Mineral Society and Summit Lapidary Club. Emidio & Sons Expo Center, 48 E. Bath Road, Cuyahoga Falls, OH.		Gujo Kotch, Gemboree@outlook.com
October 26-27 Sat 10-5, Sun 11-4	Blackhawk Gem & Mineral Club	Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds, 2815 W. Locust Street, Davenport, IA	Craig or Kellie Moore, Kalsinean@gmail.com
October 26-27 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4	Evansville Lapidary Society	C.K. Newsome Community Center, 100 E. Walnut Street, Evansville, IN	Sara Rappee, sararappee@yahoo.com

CARBON: THE HARDEST AND SOFTEST, CONTINUED

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mistakenly believed to be a form of lead and was called “plumbago” or black lead centuries ago. The name graphite came into use in 1789; it is derived from the Greek word, “graphein,” which means to write.

Graphite in massive form is common while graphite crystals are quite rare. Black to silver in color, graphite has a hardness of 1–2 on the Mohs Hardness Scale for minerals.

The mineral diamond is much rarer than graphite because of the way this mineral is formed. Diamond is the product of immense pressure and temperatures of 1,652–2,372° Fahrenheit deep, between 90 and 120 miles within the Earth. Because of its structure, it has many unique characteristics. Diamond

can conduct five times as much heat as copper, and it also conducts sound very well, but it doesn’t conduct electricity. A faceted precious-gem grade diamond can also act as a prism, creating a highly desirable “fire” effect with the colors in the gem.

So why, if both are made of carbon, is one the hardest mineral while the other is one of the softest? The answer lies in their crystal structures. Within diamond, the carbon atoms form in a tetrahedral pattern, where each carbon is bonded with four others to form a 3D structure.

Also, because of the intense pressure that diamonds undergo, the atoms are very compact. On the other hand, graphite atoms form layers made up of hexagonal molecules. Graphite, due to its planar

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Valerie J. Meyers, Editor
Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies
vjmwriter@yahoo.com
Post Office Box 13456
Overland Park, KS 66282-3456

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CARBON: THE HARDEST AND SOFTEST, CONTINUED

(Continued from page 7)

structure, can conduct electricity, has a lower density than diamond, and absorbs light, making it appear black. Graphite is so soft that its layers cleave easily.

Photo of graphite from the U.S. Geological Survey and the Mineral Information Institute, via Wikimedia Commons.



That two polar opposites are actually made of the same element is fascinating. There are many cases similar to this in the mineral world. Crystal structure has a lot to do with the properties of a mineral, especially with cleavage and hardness. How remarkable is it that the graphite in a pencil, which snaps if it is sharpened too much, is actually made of the same element as diamonds? This is a reminder of how amazing nature and geology are.

Sources:

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