



MWF News

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With the beginning of spring and Easter this month, our thoughts are of warmer weather, possible field trips, and visits to gem and mineral shows. Next month the Midwest Federation will hold its annual convention in Berea, Ohio, hosted by the Parma Lapidary Club. Parma club members have set aside a large space for both competitive and non-competitive displays, so get your forms sent in to reserve your space.

Don't know what you have to display, check out the Guidelines for Exhibitors on the Web site at www.amfed.org if your club does not have a copy available. There are guides for everyone to display their treasures.

This year we are hoping to resurrect a past tradition with a "Hall of States" display area. We are asking each State Director to display rocks, minerals, and

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

APRIL

17-19: Decatur, IL. Central Illinois Gem & Mineral Club 57th Annual Mineral Gem & Jewelry Show. Macon County Fair Grounds, 3700 N Westlawn Ave, Decatur IL; Fri. 11:00-6:00, Sat. 9:00-6:00, Sun. 10:00-4:00; Admission \$5.00 for all three days, seniors \$2.00, kids under 15 free; gemstones, fossils, jewelry & beads, minerals & findings, kids corner with the "Running Water Sluice," dealers, demonstrators and displays, IL DNR Oil & Gas Trailer; Sat. & Sun. Grand Door Prize entries all three days and hourly door prizes on Sat. & Sun. CONTACT Tony Kapta (309) 830-6516; e-mail: tkapta@comcast.net

17-19: Joplin, MO. Tri-State Gem & Mineral Society 3rd annual outdoor swap meet, "Spring Rock Swap." Redings Mill Inn, intersection of Hwy. 86 and Hwy. NN; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission. CONTACT Joplin Museum Complex, (417) 623-1180; or Christopher Wiseman, jmc-cwiseman@sbcglobal.net

17-19: Roseville, MI. Mt. Clemens Gem & Lapidary Society Show, "Crystal Reflections." Roseville Recreation Center, 18185 Sycamore; Fri. 9-7, Sat. 10-7, Sun. 11-4; adults \$3, students \$1, children under 12, police, firemen, and active military with proper ID free; lectures, more than 40 display cases, lapidary demonstrations, Tin Can Auction, raffle, kids' grab bags, ID table, activities; CONTACT Ron Rolfe, 42729 Fortner Dr., Sterling Heights, MI 48313, (586) 726-1578; e-mail: ymrolfe@comcast.net Web site: www.orgsites.com/mi/michigan-club/index.html

18-19: Des Plaines, IL. Des Plaines Valley Geology Club 44th Annual Show. Des Plaines Park District Leisure Center, 2222 Birch St. (just west of River Rd. off Touhy); Sat. 9:30-5; Sun. 10-4; adults \$3, seniors \$2, students with school ID \$1, children under 12 free with adult; kids' room, live demonstrations, educational exhibits, door prizes, raffles, silent auction. CONTACT Lois Zima, (847) 298-4653; e-mail: Jaynine9@aol.com Web site: www.desplainesgeologyclub.org

10-19: Davenport, IA. Black Hawk Gem and Mineral Club annual Rock, Gem and Jewelry Show. Putnam Museum, 1717 W. 12th St., Davenport; Sat. 10 a.m.- 5 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; featuring rocks, minerals, fossils, agates, geodes, tumbled stones, carved stone, beads, silver and beaded jewelry, carved stones, spheres, arrowheads, and much more. CONTACT (563) 445-3034; e-mail btwnjbs@netzero.net

18-19: Eau Claire, WI. Chippewa Valley Gem & Mineral Society 46th Annual Show. Eau Claire County Expo Center, Lorch Ave.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; silent auction, minerals, fossils, crystals, gems, rocks, artifacts, jewelry, demonstrations. CONTACT Mike Schoenfuss, (715) 456-0664.

25: St. Joseph, MI. Blossomland Gem & Mineral Society "Swap n Sell." St. Joseph/Lincoln Senior Center, 3271 Lincoln Ave.; swap spaces and some tables available. CONTACT 269-983-4900. e-mail: blossomlandgemandmineral@yahoo.com

25-26: Troy, OH. Brukner Center Gem & Mineral Club 26th Annual Show. Miami County Fairgrounds, Duke Lundgard Bldg., County Rd. 25A; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; admission \$1; dealers, gems, specimens, jewelry, rough, demonstrations, displays, silent auction, raffle, children's activities. CONTACT Donna Kuszpa, (937) 435-8297, or Tom Dilsworth, (937) 602-1929.

25-26: Cuyahoga Falls, OH. Summit Lapidary Club, Akron Mineral Society "Gemboree;" Emidio & Sons Expo Center, 48 E. Bath Rd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-6; minerals, rocks, gems, jewelry. CONTACT Warren Salchak, (330) 929-3798, or Carl Miller, (330) 633-4250. Web site: www.LapidaryClubofOhio.org

MAY

1-3: Kalamazoo, MI. Kalamazoo Geological & Mineral Society, "Workshop Wonders." Kalamazoo County Expo Center, 2900 Lake Street; Fri. 4-8; Sat. 10-6; Sun. 10-5; Adults - Donation \$3.00, Kids under 12 - Free; 40 member cases of

What's Happening

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of minerals, gems, and lapidary creations; games, door prizes, geode cracking, gold mine.

CONTACT Kitty Starbuck (269) 649-1991, Bill Mitchell (269) 375-5678

2-3: Aitkin, MN. Cuyuna Rock & Mineral Club "Cuyuna Agate & Mineral Show." Aitkin Minnesota High School, Hwy. 210, three blocks west of the stoplights; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; free admission; demonstrations, special Kids' Corner, door prizes, jewelry, vendors, Ask the Wizard, Wheel of Fortune. CONTACT Kat Thomas, 45962 Tame Fish Lake Rd., Aitkin, MN 56431, (218) 678-3298; e-mail: katmoose@emily.net

2-3: Marshfield, WI. The Heart of Wisconsin Gem & Mineral Society 36th annual show, "Midwest Copper Treasures." Marshfield High School Fieldhouse, 1401 Becker Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4. CONTACT Cynthia Kelman (715) 387-8782; e-mail kelman@tznnet.com

9-10: Hanna City, IL Edwards River Earth Science Club "Rock and Reptile Show." Wildlife Prairie State Park, 3826 N. Taylor Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; ages 13 and up \$5.50, ages 4 to 12 \$3.50, children 3 and under free; demonstrations, fluorescent booth, reptile exhibits (snakes, turtles, lizards). CONTACT Lyle E. Kugler, 612 S.E. 3rd St., Aledo, IL 61231, (309) 582-7364; e-mail lekugler@frontiernet.net

9-10: Oconomowoc, WI. Kettle Moraine Geological Society 47th annual show. Olympia Resort, 1350 Royale Mile Rd. (I-94 exit 282, 1.5 miles north on Hwy. 67); Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; adults \$2, children 50 cents; exhibits, demonstrations, children's activities, fluorescent room, dealers, club sales, silent auction. CONTACT Liz Fuher, (262) 246-6684

16-17: Berea (Cleveland), OH. Parma Lapidary Club 41st annual show and Midwest Federation Convention, "Beautiful World of Rocks and Gems." Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds, 164

Eastland Rd., enter from Bagley Rd. entrance; Sat. 10-7, Sun. 11-5; adults \$6 (ticket good for both days), children 12 and under free with adult; gems, minerals, fossils, lapidary demonstrations, educational exhibits, silent auction, raffles, door prizes, kid's activities. CONTACT John Zaborowski, 926 Lake Breeze Rd., Sheffield Lake, OH 44054, (440) 949-8242; e-mail J751@centurytel.net

16-17: Wauwatosa, WI. Wisconsin Geological Society 52nd annual show. Muellner Bldg., Hart Park, 72nd and W. State St.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; adult \$3, 2 for \$5, accompanied children under 16 free; 20 dealers, lapidary supplies, tools, books, rough material, slabs, finished specimens, cabochons, jewelry, carvings, fossils, children's activities, exhibits, displays, presentations. CONTACT Paul Schmidt, 8213 Red Arrow Ct., Wauwatosa, WI 53213, (414) 771-8668; e-mail pvs@wi.rr.com

23-24: Wheaton, IL. Chicagoland Gems & Minerals Association Show. Dupage County Fairgrounds, 2015 W. Manchester Rd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$5, seniors and students \$3, children under 13 free; dealers, beads, books, cabochons, equipment, findings, fossils, gemstones, handcrafted jewelry, minerals, supplies, tools, demonstrations, exhibits, silent auctions, door prizes, children's activities. CONTACT Rich Dillon, P.O. Box 360, Wasco, IL 60183, (630) 377-0197; e-mail cgma@sbcglobal.net Web site: www.chicagolandgemshow.org

30-31: Columbus, OH. Columbus Rock & Mineral Society 35th annual "Central Ohio Mineral, Fossil, Gem & Jewelry Show." Veterans Memorial, 300 W. Broad St.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; adults \$7 (2-day pass \$12), seniors \$6 off, children 6-16 \$3, under 6, Scouts, and 4-H members in uniform free; speakers, demonstrations, ID booth, swap area, silent auction, educational exhibits, children's games, gold panning, 28 dealers, free children's specimens. CONTACT Ken Harsh, 297 E. Selby Blvd., Worthington, OH 43085, (614) 433-9778; e-mail karmakenha@aol.com

President's Message

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fossils native to their state. The MWF has purchased a state flag to enhance each display. If asked by your State Director, please assist in this endeavor.

Display forms, registration forms, show ticket requests, banquet and lunch ticket requests are all included in the show packet. **April 20 is the deadline** for advance registration. Don't delay, time is running out.

Lastly, each club should have a delegate appointed to attend the MWF Council Meeting to conduct the business of the Federation. The form for registering a delegate was in the March issue of the *MWF Newsletter*.

See you in Berea,

Rose Blue
MWF President

IN MEMORIAL . . .

Remembering **DEANNE I. SLATER**

Submitted by Ann Richardson,
500 Earth Sciences Club

Deanne Slater, age 68, of Indianapolis, IN, passed away on February 24, 2009. She was born June 28, 1940, in Yonkers, NY. Dee was a graduate of the Vassar Brothers Hospital as a Registered Nurse. Dee took up residency in Indianapolis as the result of a failed trip back to New York. She was traveling with a six-week-old son, Michael, and a very sick, old car at the time. The old car died in Indianapolis. So Dee found a job in one of the local hospitals and a comfortable apartment to live in. She only returned to New York to visit but always returned to Indianapolis.

Dee was an active member and officer of the following organizations; the 500 Earth Sciences Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Club of Indianapolis, The Midwest Federation, the Indiana Society of Paleontology Club, the Friends of Mineralogy Club, ScienTec, and the Lost River Conservation Association in Orange County, Indiana.

After retiring from Nursing, Dee became a volunteer at the Indiana State Museum, Geology Department and the Indianapolis Children's

Museum, Geology Department. Surviving is her son, Michael (Alice) and grandson Joseph Mcdermott of Fishers, Indiana, and Joseph K. (Maureen Mooney, Stowe) of Vermont.

Dee will long be remembered for her "Gung- Ho" enthusiasm and for always "Going That Extra Mile" in whatever she did! She will be missed by those who knew her and worked with her!

Note: Dee was, at one time, MWF Indiana State Director. She died of complications during open heart surgery. See below for memorial donations.



● Looking for a place to honor the memory of a loved one or one who has passed? Check this out:

● Donations to the **Endowment Fund** can be sent to:

Alan Hukill, Treasurer
15785 Park Lane Rd.
East Lansing, MI 48823

● Donations to the **Scholarship Fund** can be sent to:

Marge Collins, Chair
3017 Niles-Buchanan Rd.
Buchanan, MI 49107

● **Acknowledgements will be sent to the individual or family.**

ENDOWMENT FUND NEWS ...

Midwest Federation Endowment Fund

by Pamela Hecht, Endowment Fund Chair

At the end of 2007, we reached our goal of \$50,000 through your efforts and donations. I had set then a NEW GOAL of doubling that amount in the next 5 years.....2011 is the target now!

Every dollar that is added to the Endowment Fund is now, more than ever, so very important to our future as a Federation and to the future of our hobby that we all love dearly.

In this economy of 2009 and beyond, we need to take note of our financial directions so that we are headed toward a financial base growth. Again, I state that we need to build our principle fund, as the interest we are making is lower, and to keep our growth at a level increase.....NEW MONEY needs to be added to build our future income.

I personally express my thanks to all MWF clubs, societies, and organizations for your generous donations over the years to build our fund to over \$50,000.....now let's all do it again!!!!!!

Remember, this is **YOUR Federation**.
THANK YOU for your time and support of it.

INSURANCE NEWS ...

About Your MWF Insurance

by June Young, Insurance Chair

By the time you receive this newsletter, the Federation insurance policy will have been renewed for the period 3/1/09-3/1/10. The General Liability rate increased a small amount this year. You may want to consider raising the dues in your clubs to offset the additional cost. The insuring companies are starting to increase their overall rates in all areas.

This year, we have put the informational Certificate of Insurance on the Web site: that's www.amfed.org/mwf. If your club or officers have not received the renewal Certificate of Insurance, it can be printed directly off the Web site. Also, on the Web site is a form to complete for the clubs that need a Certificate of Insurance for a show or meeting place. These particular certificates are not automatically renewed each year. They need to be requested. These forms can be e-mailed directly to Michelle at michelleh@ilselectrick.com or to me at jayhawkmn@yahoo.com

Is there any additional insurance information you would like to see on the insurance page of the Web site? Contact me and let me know.

MINERALOGY NEWS ...

Notes from the MWF Mineralogy Chair

by Kevin Ponzio, Mineralogy Chair

Hi, everyone. I am looking forward to seeing all the submissions for our MWF virtual museum. It is easy to do, just send your "jpeg" digital photos and information on mid-west minerals from your area to me by mail, on a CD, or by e-mail - limiting the number of photos to no more than five at a time for easier upload and download.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me or your state directors. I would like to invite all the members from each club in the MWF to send me new mineral information from your local area so that I can list it in the November issue of the *MWF Newsletter*. Please get the data to me by October 1st. However, you don't have to wait until then to send it in. Participation in this endeavor will make for great reading in your local club's December newsletter.

Mineralogy News

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There is a new Mineral Study Group outline available to clubs. It details steps you can take to develop and coordinate a mineral study group in your area. You may get a copy of the outline from me directly or contact your State Director for a copy. A renewed enthusiasm with the mineral collectors in your club may develop and some new member interest too. Get together and enjoy the hobby!

Contact information:

Kevin Ponzio

MWF Mineralogy Chair

P.O. Box 44, Plymouth, WI. 53073

1- 920 - 980 - 6413

Earthprospect@verizon.net



Continued from last month:

Millerite, Violarite, and Polydymite - Part II

by David F. Hess, MWF Mineralogy Assistant

The source of the nickel in millerite in the sedimentary limestone-dolomite occurrences away from ore districts has been puzzling to mineralogists. Some, such as Pough (1976), have speculated that the ultimate source may be micrometeorites which fell into the oceans, then the nickel was redistributed by other means and eventually found its way into groundwater to deposit millerite in cavities and geodes. Another possible source is nearby asphalt or oil produced by micro-organisms from which the nickel was released to react with H₂S and produce the

millerite. This theory was espoused by Bagrowski (1940) for the Estabrook Park, Wisconsin, occurrence. Asphalt is also associated with the Levias member occurrences in southern Indiana. In some chemical analyses, echinoderms (crinoids, starfish, etc.) and corals have high trace element concentrations of nickel. Witness the close association of millerite with crinoids in the Montgomery County, Indiana, and the Coralville, Iowa, occurrence (with corals). Secondary nickel minerals also can be trapped by interlayer clay minerals.

Western United States and Canada occurrences (except for a very few) are less spectacular than those in eastern and mid-western United States and Canada, a reverse of the usual situation with metallic minerals. One Montana occurrence is listed at the Wake Up Jim Mine, Emery County. Millerite also is known from the Copper King Mine, Gold Hill District, Boulder County, Colorado. The Blackhawk Mine, Blackhawk District, Grant County, New Mexico, is another source of millerite. This mine is unusual for New Mexico (Voynick, 1997) in that it contains a nickel skutterudite (chloanthite)-silver-pitchblende association. The Orphan Mine in the Grand Canyon, Arizona, has produced some millerite within barite cavities! There are a few millerite occurrences in Nevada, including the Lovelock Mine, Cottonwood Canyon, Nevada, and the Barrick Goldstrike's Metals mine that has produced some nice velvety masses of acicular millerite (Jones et al., 2003). Violarite has been found at the Key West Mine, Clark County, Nevada. There are a number of California occurrences, but few of these are spectacular; included are Jamestown Mine, Jamestown District, Tuolumne County, California, not to be confused with the district of the same name in Boulder County, Colorado; New Idria Mine, Idria, San Benito County, California, where millerite crystals are perched on top of cinnabar crystals on serpentinite; Carson Hill, Angels Camp, Calaveras County, California, where crystals of millerite are intergrown with albite; Ventura Mine, Triunfo, Ventura County, where millerite is associated with pyrrhotite and pentlandite; and La Libertad Mine,

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Millerite

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Adelaide Mining District, San Luis Obispo County, where bronze, needle-like crystals of millerite up to 1.25 cm. occur in ore. Some millerite and pyrite have been found on slickensided surfaces of serpentinite near San Francisco. Violarite has been noted at Julian, California, and at an undisclosed location in southeastern Alaska. In the state of Washington, good brassy to bronze-yellow millerite specimens have been noted at Van Epps Mine, Solomon Creek, Chelan County, associated with stibnite, berthierite, galena, and sphalerite along a diorite-serpentinite contact. Finally, at Howard's Pass, Yukon Territory, Canada, millerite has also been collected. There is one notable location in Mexico in Sinaloa at Gloria Mine, Alisito, Municipio de Badiraguata, where millerite is associated with gold, erythrite, gersdorffite, jarosite, goethite, pyrite, pentlandite, and also violarite. The writer is aware of no occurrence in Central or South America, despite the abundance of metallic deposits in the Andes, although small amounts may occur.

There are a number of well known locations in Europe, and it is Johannegeorgenstadt in Germany, which is the type locality. The mineral was named in honor of W. H. Miller, a 19th century mineralogist. Other locales in Germany are Joachimstal, Bohemia; Dillenburg, Hessen-Nassau, in association with iron ores; Freiberg; Saarbuercken, Rhineland; Wissen on the Sieg, Rhineland; and Littfeld, Westphalia, where it occurs in masses of gray whiskers which look like moss and may be altering to polydymite. Polydymite is also found at Wissen on the Sieg, Rhineland, and Grunau Mine, Schutzbach, Germany. At Mina Eugenia in Spain, clusters of radiating millerite rods are imprinted with chartreuse morenosite and associated with chalcopyrite and calcite. The United Kingdom has a famous locality at Glamorgan, Wales, where it was first discovered in the coal mines by Wilhelm Haidinger and occurs as silvery needles in cavities in siderite. Another British locality is at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, in sandstone cemented by ankerite. Millerite is also known at Pemborothy Croft, Cornwall, England. Millerite is known at Trearne Quarry in Scotland. Millerite crusts occur

at Ca' dei Ladona, Bologna, Italy. At Saravnowski Mine in the Urals, Russia, millerite needles are associated with calcite, titanite, pyrite, and chlorite.

Despite the wealth of minerals in Africa, occurrences of millerite are not very noteworthy. Minor amounts have been found in the ores at Tsumeb, Namibia, Africa; Katanga Copper Crescent, Katanga; Nsuta Mine, Tarkwa, Ghana; and Palabora Mine, Limpopo, South Africa. Some nice radiating silvery clusters of crystals in quartz are known in the norite of the Bushveld Igneous Complex, Pafuri District, Transvaal.

Asia has developed several millerite locations in China. The best known are at Xiangshan, Xinjiang, China, and Dexing, Jiangxi Province, China. Some millerite occurs in the mines at Bihar, India. Nice, velvety masses are found at Oktyabr'skoy, Okrug, eastern Siberia, Russia, in a copper-nickel deposit.

Australia has recently produced several nice millerite sites. Older sites include Broken Hill, New South Wales, and Heazlewood District, Tasmania. Western Australia possesses more recently discovered localities at Otway Nickel Deposit, East Pilbara, and at Agnew Nickel Mine in Western Australia, where thick seams of velvety sprays of silvery to grayish divergent needles are typical.

Millerite is a desirable mineral, and the writer was surprised at the number of locations where it occurs. We are fortunate to have notable locations in the eastern and mid-western United States.

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Millerite

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[NOTE: **Millerite, Violarite, and Polydymite, Part I** appeared in the March '09 issue of the *MWF Newsletter*.]

New Treasurer Appointed

Nominated and endorsed by the Executive Committee at the Spring Meeting, former President **Sandy Fuller** was approved to fill in the remaining term of Norm Hanschu as our MWF Treasurer.

Good luck, Sandy.

GEOLOGY NEWS ...



Meteorite Streaks Across Texas Sky

by Judith Washburn,
MWF Geology Chair

The National news reported on Monday, February 16th, that a meteorite, the size of a pick-up truck, was seen by numerous observers streaking across the sky over Texas in the vicinity of Dallas. Ron Diulio, director of the planetarium and astronomy lab at the University of North Texas in Denton said that the reason it created such a fireball was because the meteor expanded and broke into pieces.

On Wednesday the 18th, two samples of the fresh meteorite the "size of large pecans" were found by astronomers from the University of North Texas in a pasture east of the small town of West, Texas. The pieces that were found had a beautiful ablation crust and were as black as charcoal. Underneath the crust, they found the color of the rock to be a concrete-like gray.

The pieces were found about 5:00 pm after starting the search from Fort Worth at about 3:00 am using calculations from all the calls they had received. The searchers had just about given up looking and were driving back, when they got a call from a friend asking them to meet him at a certain intersection. That location coincided with conversations they had had earlier that day with citizens at a restaurant.

"We had decided, rather than try to get permission from land-owners, there would be pieces in a line that would spread out a mile across. We decided to just do the county roads, and we just started walking down that road," Dilulio said. It was fairly easy to see, and within 15 minutes they found a piece. The astronomers placed the samples in Ziplock bags to keep them out of the air. They planned to transfer the samples into membrane cases and take them back to the University for further study.

The astronomers said they were not alone in the search and ran into others including "a

41st ANNUAL
**CLEVELAND AREA
 GEM & MINERAL SHOW**
Fun for the whole family!!!

Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds

Bagley Road • Berea Ohio

Sat. May 16 & Sun. May 17
 10 am -- 7 pm 11 am -- 5 pm



Sponsored by the **PARMA LAPIDARY CLUB** (A non-profit organization)
www.parmalapidary.com

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 and take the kids on a **TREASURE DIG!***

**ADMISSION: ADULTS -- \$6.00 (ticket good for both days)
 CHILDREN -- 12 and under FREE when with paid adult
 SCOUTS IN UNIFORM -- FREE**

We will have people from our club and the Summit Lapidary Club and other clubs that have generously volunteered to help demonstrate their abilities. Demonstrations will be going on during Show hours. Some of the things being worked in the demo area are: silver, glass, chain maile, bead weaving, soapstone carving, wire wrapping, faceting, and more.

The Silent Auction and Chinese Auction are both located in the same area. For children of all ages from the very young to the very old (whoever that would be) there's a new and improved Kids' Korner. Our local fossil club features a Fossil Dig for treasures.

All of this and more - in a family-friendly setting. May 16th and 17th, 2009; Saturday 10 to 7 and Sunday 11 to 5. For more information about the Parma Lapidary Club go to www.parmalapidary.com.

An Invitation from Your Show Hosts

Close to the Holiday Inn in Strongsville, OH, where all the Convention action will be taking place, you will find the small college town of Berea wherein lies the Parma Lapidary Club's 41st Annual Gem, Mineral, and Jewelry Show. Here at the Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds, you will find camping available and free parking.

The admission price to the Show this year is \$6.00, but if you're smart enough to come on Saturday, you can ask for a Courtesy Ticket to come back on Sunday for free.

Inside the Show, there will be 26 dealers, all hand-chosen, all different, and something for everybody. Many display cases, not only featuring Lapidary Arts and Metal Arts, but the Minerals Around the World, too.

FOCUS ON JUNIORS ...**JUNIOR ACTIVITIES**

Michele Yamanaka, MWF Junior Activities Chairman

For this lesson, purchase bulk vermiculite from the gardening section of a local store. Fill enough small bags with it so that each junior can have one, and include a label.

THE "UGLY FAMILY" OF THE MINERAL KINGDOM**Meet VERMICULITE**

Minerals are not always beautiful. We like to see pretty crystals and patterns and colors. Which would you rather have, a quartz crystal cluster or a bag of vermiculite? Even among related minerals, some varieties are attractive, like a sheet of mica, and some you would rather scrape off your shoe, like clay.

There is a big group of minerals that are not pretty or glamorous at all, are not well-known, and yet are more common and universally useful than the metallic minerals, ores, and gemstones. We call them the INDUSTRIAL MINERALS. The oldest mineral industries used these minerals from the "ugly" family.

POINT TO REMEMBER: The value of a mineral can be in how it is used, rather than how it looks.

VERMICULITE is one of the "ugly" family members. It is actually a group of minerals that are mica-like. They are all hydrous silicates of aluminum, magnesium, and iron. When they get very hot (1400-2000 degrees), they expand or pop. They uncoil like an accordion or like a worm moves. That is where the name "VERMICULITE" comes from. It is a Latin word that means, "little worm." You can think of it as "hydrated mica," or mica that can hold water. Mica can weather and become vermiculite. Vermiculite is considered one of four types of clay minerals.

VERMICULITE is used for different things, depending on the size of the pieces.

- △ If it has big pieces (coarse), it is used for chicken litter.
- △ If it is not so big (medium), it is used as loose fill insulation, in plaster and concrete, and as a soil conditioner.
- △ If it is small (fine), it is used with agricultural chemicals and fertilizer.

It can also be used for packing things, making imitation marble, or bonded with glue or other things and then shaped into items.

Sometimes rubies and sapphires (which are aluminum minerals) are found with vermiculite.

There are actually vermiculite mines. The biggest one is in Libby, Montana. Other states with vermiculite mines are Colorado, Wyoming, North Carolina, Georgia, Texas, and Pennsylvania. South Africa has a big mine too.

CONCLUSION: It's okay to enjoy minerals because they are pretty, but remember that beauty is not the only quality that makes a mineral valuable. Ugly minerals are valuable and useful, too.

SUBMISSION OF NEWS & ARTICLES

Please note that all input for a given issue of the *MWF Newsletter* is due to the **Editor** no later than the first day of the previous month. This means that the due date for the **MAY Issue** will be April 1st. Material submitted after April 1st may be delayed until the June Issue.

Material may be e-mailed to **Sharon Marburger** at mwf.editor@yahoo.com, or submitted via the U. S. Mail. Acceptable e-mail formats include MS Word (.DOC), Adobe (.PDF), rich text format (.RTF), or plain text (.TXT). If e-mailing an article, it may be included within the body of the e-mail message or sent as an attachment.

Address Changes or Corrections

Please submit any address changes or corrections to the **MWF Secretary, Donna Moore**,
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Found: An Editor!

The Midwest Federation **has found** a newsletter editor! We're planning to fill up her spare time with the creative task of putting together our Federation newsletter that will reach hundreds of our members across the Midwest.

We introduce **Sharon Marburger** who has been serving as the Secretary of the Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club, Inc. of Lincoln, NE. Sharon is a Legal Administrative Assistant and Site Office Manager for a legal team in Lincoln. She has organization and computer skills to fill this role. Sharon stepped up to fill this position in the spirit of wanting to help out where help was needed. Thank you, Sharon.

Rose Blue, MWF President

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