

CRYSTAL LINES

October 2009

The Peoria Academy of Science - Geology Section

Picnic at Ina's

We had a really great picnic at Ina Eckhoff's suburban estate and if you feel guilty about missing it – good. It was truly a beautiful day. You may have noticed what a perfect day Saturday was. Unfortunately, it was one of those weekends that pulls people in different directions. Several people have shows that they are selling in. Several others have other clubs or groups that are doing events also. And there is family. So we didn't have so many attending as we have had, but it worked out.



Some fishermen pulled enough fish out of the lake to supply their dinner table for a week or more. Wendy the Wonder Dog was there in all her languid glory. My mother brought her dog. The kids chased him and he loved it (they tried to chase Wendy but she would just lay down in the grass). Some brought

a few of the rocks we had found (in one fashion or another) to show. There were crystals from Arkansas, epidote and copper from the Upper Peninsula, and geodes from western Illinois.

Paul Volpe brought his geode cracker and a some geodes for the kids. He has found a new hunting ground in Hamilton for geodes and it just goes to show the incredible variation of what can be found in same general vicinity. Some of what he cracked showed a rich concentration of dolomite and barite crystals. Not far from Jacobs it may prove to be a favorite site.



Ina had a photo album she brought that had photos of club events going back almost 25 years. There is a history of the club that is about to be lost as we lose older members. It would be good to have some of that history written down. I am open to any stories, anecdotes, or photos anyone would like to share. A conversation is all we need, I can write down what is said.

A lot of good food and a little wine (maybe more than a little) and we all had a great time. Well, there is always next year.

-Field Trip Reports-

The Yooper of Michigan

The week after Labor Day I, my mother and her pampered puppy spent several lovely days in the Keweenaw peninsula of Michigan. We traveled to Ironwood, MI on Sunday where (as it turned out) the pampered puppy became host to dreaded fleas at a motel with a dedicated room for guests with pets. We found this out later to our great disappointment. Monday, we spent the day at Little Girls Point, a Geobic County park north of Ironwood on the Lake Superior shore. Not so much luck there. It is a beautiful beach with campsites just above sand and waves. Some interesting rock but no agates or much else.

We moved on to Ontonagon. Not much rock hunting but a very nice stay at Scott's Superior Inn and Cabins. Stopped in at Red Metal Minerals for books and information on mining on the peninsula where I discovered that the proprietors are also the owners of the Caledonia Mine. I bought a copy of Lawrence Molloy's "Guide to Michigan's Historic Copper District". It is a wonderful description of the old mines but has little information about collecting minerals. In fact, he tends to avoid any mention of tailings piles or waste rock so it is somewhat worthless to a rockhound.

Next up was Houghton. On the way, we stopped at the Victoria Mine southwest of Rockland. We went first to the old mining camp which has been reconstructed in bits and pieces. The guide there told me how to get to the tailings pile (or poor rock pile). Without a metal detector I felt somewhat lost, but I did come across some chunks of massive lovely epidote that I collected. Victoria Reservoir was within a quarter mile where we had lunch. Apparently, most of the shoreline is for sale by the power company that owns the lake. A nice place to visit but it is going to be awfully cold to live there in the winter.

Once in Houghton I made pilgrimage to the Seaman Museum. A wonderful place with mineral specimens most of us can only dream of. It is a great place to check out if only to find out what you are looking for on the peninsula. There I found a copy of "Mineralogy of Michigan", at \$36 for paper

binding, it seemed expensive but is very much worth the cost. It has been updated by George Robinson, the current director of the Seaman Museum using photos of museum specimens and is a remarkable directory of what can be found and, most importantly, where.

From Houghton we spent several days at Gratiot River County Park just north of Allouez. Again, a very lovely area. Gratiot Beach is found by going north from Allouez on Route 41 on



Bumbletown Rd about a mile. Then onto Gratiot River Road for about 4.6 miles to the beach. Along the way are numerous signs to buy property. It appeared that most of it has been logged prior to a potential sale. The road is easy enough for most vehicles. The beach is fairly primitive with only a port-a-potty. While we there most of the people on the beach appeared to be like us, searching for the elusive agate. I didn't find much that could be considered agate but it was a rich source of epidote, prehnite, some thomsonite and (so far unverified) greenstone known as chlorastrolite or more recently as pumpellyite. It is one of those places that you might be tempted to keep to yourself but, obviously, since Gratiot Beach is on everyone's list so there is no point. My mother (and the pampered puppy) had a great time checking out what she could find within arm's reach. There was probably as much to find above the waterline as below it. The high point was a bald eagle that flew overhead along the tree line with a lake trout in its claws. The low point was Friday afternoon when a frat house group gathered to drink and shoot their guns off over the water. I guess that is okay as long as someone isn't on a boat out in the water.

Adventures of Pam and Megan Cramer (In Missouri and Arkansas)

Since a trip to Texas was necessary, I thought, "Why not add a few days and have a 'Rocky Road Trip'!" That's exactly what Megan and I did. Our first stop was Valles Mines, MO. Steve met us at his office then proceeded to take us to an area he recently opened. We found a deep reddish-purple type drusy which Steve said was rare, and he did not have a sample. We hunted about 3 hours, had nice pieces, and felt we had our quota for the day. We followed the GPS to Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas. Since the rain, we searched in mud and got stuck, besides slipping and falling two times. We bought ponchos, but I was so hot, we were wet inside and out. The storm clouds rolled in and we were caught in another monsoon. Enough of that and since no diamonds were found in 2 weeks, we headed south. After 4 days in Texas, it was hit the road again and back to the Diamond Mine, but still no diamonds. We were to dig 5 feet deep and 5 feet wide and sift through the soil, which was just too difficult with the tools we brought with us. It was still muddy, so I collected a bucketful of jasper and called it quits. Continuing through Arkansas, next was a crystal hunt. Mt. Ida was an eye opener. We stayed at the Crystal Inn, which was a nice homey place. After another rain drenched night, we took off to find the Arrowhead Mine. The road was flooded so we turned around and stopped at Judy's. Judy let us know that Arrowhead hasn't been open since the owner was in an accident. She said we could go to her mine up the road, but it would be slick. I could see myself sliding on the Arkansas red clay right off the mountainside, so we decided to save it for a another trip. To come home with some Arkansas crystals, I decided to buy a few \$1 pieces and hit the road. We consulted our map and found Boxer's Crystals. Niles Boxer gave us an education on crystals and we spent an hour exchanging stories. He gave both Meg and I a crystal to be our "lucky" crystals. He said that if someone gives you a crystal, it is lucky, and we need all the luck we can get! Niles also said as soon as he gets the legalities in order, we could bring the Club down and hunt on his 11 acres! We exchanged contact information and headed for the Coleman Mine just north of Hot

Springs. There are two Coleman brothers in competition and we chose Ron's for our adventure. Meg and I dug through some piles and found a few small pieces. Then the dump truck came with a new load of sloppy, sticky mud. We dug through the mud and found some really nice pieces. We had to quit because the mine closed at 5:30. We were muddy, tired, and pleasantly pleased with our first crystal finds. We were soon back in Illinois with the end to our "Rocky Road Trip!"

Pam Cramer

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Rock PUNS

(in the spirit of Henny Youngman)
from the Rockhounds Digest –

Mathematical Conversions:

1. The ratio of an igloo's circumference to its diameter = Eskimo Pi
2. 2000 pounds of Chinese soup = Won ton
3. 1 millionth of a mouthwash = 1 microscope
4. The time between slipping on a peel and smacking the pavement = 1 bananosecond
5. The weight an evangelist carries with God = 1 billigram
6. The time it takes to sail 220 yards at 1 nautical mile per hour = Knotfurlong
7. 16.5 feet of silver in the Twilight Zone = 1 Rod Sterling
8. One half of a large intestine = 1 semicolon
9. 1,000,000 aches = 1 megahertz
10. Basic unit of laryngitis = 1 hoarsepower

More next month (unless we get a new editor).

June Culp Zeitner

The following is from the Rockhound's Digest by Neal Larson regarding the passing of June Culp Zeitner a long time mineral and fossil collector.

Sunday night, Oct. 11, at 8:08 pm, with family and friends by her side, June Culp Zeitner passed peacefully away at her home in Rapid City, she was 93 years of age. She was preceded in death by her husband Albert.

June's first job was teaching on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota where she met, and subsequently married Albert Zeitner. Albert's father, G.B. Zeitner, was a true rockhound. He moved to the Rosebud Reservation around 1920 and his collection of fossils, minerals, artifacts and rocks grew into the Zeitner Geological Museum in Mission, SD. Albert and June operated the Zeitner Geological Museum following the death of Al's father G.B. Zeitner in 1954. Soon after, the two traveled around North America collecting minerals, rocks and fossils from nearly everywhere. June would write of their travels, adventures, discoveries, and how and where anyone could go to collect along with who they should meet. For the rest of her life June wrote monthly articles in Lapidary Journal (she was the contributing editor to this magazine for decades) and also was a major contributor to Rock & Gem Magazine until about one year ago.

June influenced thousands and helped spur interest in people from all around the world in collecting minerals, cutting materials and fossils. She published a series of ³Gem Trail² books (from her travels) and was the author of several other lapidary books. June helped form and organize many of the rock clubs in South Dakota and elsewhere. She was a major spokesperson for the hobby as well as the profession.

June was named the "First Lady of Gems" in a White House ceremony by President Jimmy Carter in 1976. She established the National Lapidary & Mineral Hall of Fame in 1987 currently at the Pioneer Auto Museum in Murdo, SD. She was

inducted into the Hall in 1992 for her contributions to education (her husband Al was inducted posthumously in 1996). In 2003, She was awarded the very first AFMS Recognition Award for her contributions to the various American Mineralogical Society Federations.

In 2005 June received the Carnegie Mineralogical Award (award, established in 1987 by Carnegie Museum of Natural History honors outstanding contributions in mineralogical preservation, conservation and education. It is considered one of the most prestigious awards in the fields of mineralogy, lapidary art and geology). June was a Board Member of the Black Hills Museum of Natural History and very active in the rock, gem and mineral world until her death. June and her husband Al were lifelong friends and mentors of Neal & Peter Larson along with so many, more in the field. She will be missed.

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GEOLOGY SECTION of the Peoria Academy of Science

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Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month except September and December. They start at 7PM at the Ameran CILCO Building at 8420 North University, Peoria, IL. Annual dues are \$10 single or \$16 family.

Membership committee is Mary Bodell (647-9523), Pam Cramer (360-2785), and Beth Sullivan (692-6431). Please contact any one of them with any concerns, ideas, or questions.

www.pasgeology.com