



The PRESQUE ISLE PROSPECTOR

Official Publication of the Gem City Rock and Mineral Society
Monthly Meetings, First Friday at 7:30 PM

December 2005

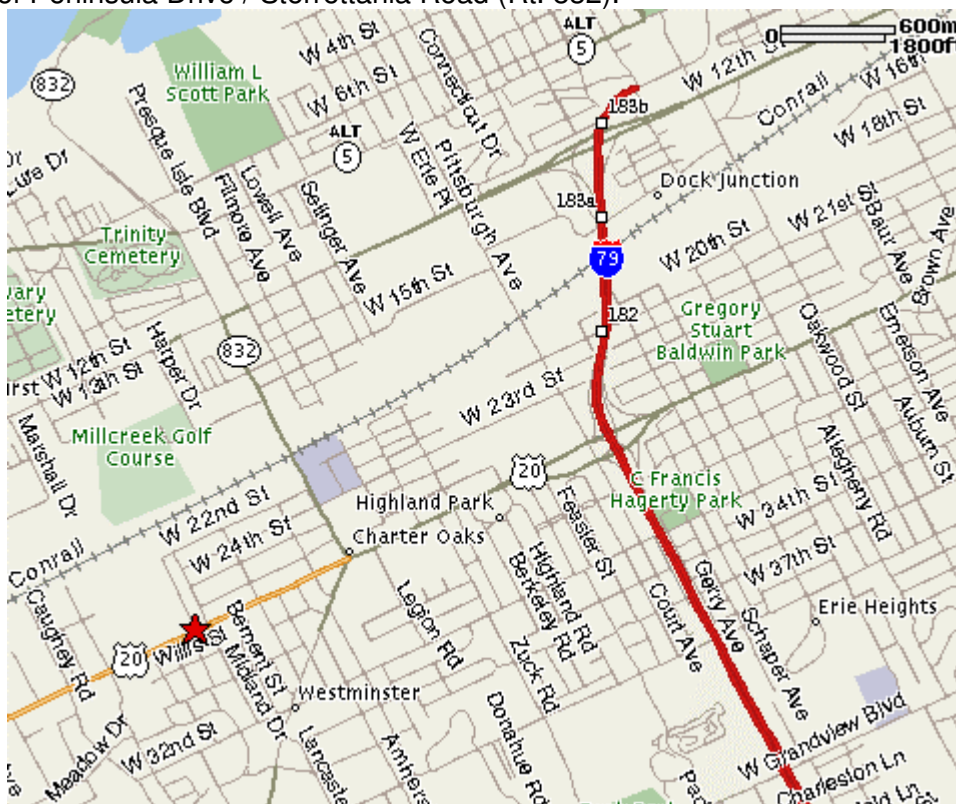


Last Month's Meeting:

Last month we watched a video on faceting. We've been getting some replacement parts for our club faceting machine and cleaning and truing it up, to get it ready to learn faceting this winter! Yeah!

This Month's Meeting:

This month our meeting will be our Holiday Dinner, which will be Sunday, December 11th at 5:30PM at **Hoss's Steak and Sea House**, 3302 W. 26th Street (Rt. 20) – which is about 4 blocks west of Peninsula Drive / Sterrettania Road (Rt. 832).



If you haven't been there since last year, they tore down the whole building and built a new one on the same site, so the parking lot and building entrances have moved a bit.

When you get inside, don't order in line, just ask to be directed to the Gem City Rock Club party -- we'll order at the table. Families and / or S.O.s are welcome, since we pay individually. Just call Harriet (455-4851) with a headcount by December 8th so I can tell them how many to set up for.

We aren't bothering about the gift exchange this year since interest has been minimal in recent years.

Club Web Site address: <http://www.treebeard.net/gemcity/index.htm>

President	Robert Gallivan	427 Colleen Dr.	Erie PA 16505-2101	(814) 454-6770
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Board Members:	Robert Perry	Dale Pysher	Mary Thomson	

This is also our annual Election of Officers meeting -- see the December Newsletter for the nominations. But that shouldn't take too much time away from our fun and socializing.

While other nominations may be made at the meeting, the slate of proposed officers as presented by the nominating committee is as follows:

President:	Kirk McFadden
Vice-President:	Sarah Boesch
Treasurer:	Val Engelleiter
Secretary:	Harriet Beckman
Board Members (3):	Bob Perry and Mary Thomson (Bob Gallivan as Past President is automatically on the board)

The other thing we generally do at our December meeting is discuss proposed program topics for the coming months. Please give this some thought – the officers can come up with something to do, but we'd really like some input as to what YOU would like to see us do.

Field Trip Report: Carnegie Gem Show

The Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh hosted the Carnegie Gem & Mineral Show (<http://www.carnegiemnh.org/minerals/gemshow/home.htm>), Nov. 18-20 (the weekend before Thanksgiving), this year's "Silver Spectacular" show also celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Hillman Hall of Gems & Minerals. Five of us from the club (Val, Mary, Margaret, Brad driving, and I) went down to the show on Sunday, and we met Margaret's son and his friend on the way down and her grandson Geoff (who's also a club member) just as we went in the door – so we were a good-size party, and ended up splitting up to look around. Brad and Val took the opportunity to see the special temporary exhibit on the Bog People (<http://www.carnegiemnh.org/bogpeople/>), and it sounded pretty interesting (you'll have to ask them about it), but the rest of us chose to concentrate on the show.

I looked briefly in the cases of the high-end jewelry dealers, especially the one that said they had the largest collection of naturally colored diamonds between New York and Chicago (and they had some very nice yellows, including some bright Canary, and a couple of pretty impressive pinks), but mostly I was interested in the less-finished stuff – minerals, rough, crystals, etc. Of those, the highest-ticket item I saw was a huge Japan-twinning (V-shaped) quartz crystal, both twins slightly tabular so less than 1½" thick, but the whole specimen about 12" long and 13" wide – for a mere \$22,000! That was even more than the \$20,000 aquamarine crystal (about 4" tall and 3" diameter, a beautiful transparent blue). There were at least 3 dealers with clusters of Rose Quartz *Crystals* – not often seen, and ranging from \$100-\$2200 per specimen. One of the more interesting things one dealer had was a display of pairs of doorknobs, one set made of rose quartz spheres for the knobs and one set with blown-glass decorative-paperweight-type spheres for the knobs, and a display of a couple dozen cupboard-door-knobs /drawer-pulls made of ~1" spheres of all kinds of minerals – hey, cool, another way to display rocks around the house!

There were a few familiar faces among the dealers – Don Smoley was there, as was Mike's Minerals and Silvertown, but I admit I didn't spend much time looking at them since I wanted to see *new* stuff – and there was way too much to see and not enough time to see it all! I didn't even step into the Hillman Hall, which I haven't seen in many years and was looking forward to; guess that'll have to wait for another trip.

I did take my camera along to share all the sights with you, but discovered that the "fresh" batteries I'd put in for the occasion weren't so freshly charged after all – sorry, you'll have to depend on my memory, which isn't so hot, so you only got the really high points that stuck in my mind. Most of us walked out with a few things, and we had a nice show-and-tell on the way home. I'm sure some of them will find their way to a meeting some time, so you may get to share in a small part of our adventure!

Federation News:

Not too much actual news from the federations this month, but a nice article on the most recent Wildacres session in the Eastern Federation Newsletter, and a heads-up on the sessions

scheduled for 2006 – this year the spring session will be May 22-28, and the fall session September 11-17. Check out the whole article at <http://www.amfed.org/efmls/newsletters.htm> to see the speakers and classes scheduled for each session. The Safety First article is on “Saving Energy and Its Costs” – something more on our minds this winter with rising fuel prices.

The American Federation newsletter had a different safety article: “Metal Smithing – Is it Dangerous?” which examines what the dangers are and how one deals with them. The author says that while new students are usually most worried about the torch – the most obvious hazard – he’s never had a torch injury since it is well respected. It is the less obvious, or at least less intimidating, items in the shop that cause most injuries, though luckily mostly minor. It is worth reading at <http://www.amfed.org/news/news2005.htm> . Another major article discusses further the current version of the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act and its potential problems for rockhounds and fossil collectors alike.

Rockhound TV This Month:

PBS: Over Alaska. This travelogue uses helicopter and wildlife photography to capture “the sheer spectacle” of the 49th state. Soar over Mt. McKinley and through the craggy crevasses of electric blue glaciers. Follow the Iditarod and kayakers as they navigate past icebergs. Then touch down to Earth and get as close to bears, whales and wildlife as humanly possible. From the bustling city of Anchorage to the ghost town of Kennecott, from the history of the Klondike Gold Rush to the heritage and culture of Alaska’s Native population -- *Over Alaska* portrays Alaska as it’s never been seen before. Shot over 3 months with the world’s most experienced High Definition aerial production team and an acclaimed wildlife photographer, the stunning imagery is enhanced with evocative words and an original music score. Dec. 4, 9:00PM.

NOVA: Wave That Shook the World (<http://www.pbs.org/wqbh/nova/tsunami/>) Experts examine the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in an effort to prepare for the next big one. Dec. 27, 8:00PM. And, uh, lots of Christmas Specials.

Discovery Channel: Extreme Engineering: Excavators. At the world’s largest open pit iron mine, a \$10 million new, custom-built super shovel is commissioned to meet a sudden worldwide surge in the demand for iron. Will miners find success with the fastest, most technologically advanced excavator ever made? Dec. 7, 7:00PM. **Supervolcano.** Amidst the stunning wilderness of America’s most famous National Park, steam and hot water bubble and hiss from thousands of colorful, mineral-encrusted springs and vents. These geothermal phenomena make Yellowstone a time-bomb that could spell disaster. Dec. 18, 5:00PM.

America’s Tsunami: Are We Next? On December 26, 2004 the world’s deadliest Tsunami hit the coast of Thailand. Now a team of leading scientists investigates what happened as they search for clues to discover if this massive wave will strike the same place twice or hit closer to home. Dec. 18, 9:00PM, 1:00AM; Dec. 22, 9:00PM, 1:00AM. **America’s Volcanoes: Sitting on a Powder Keg: Mount St. Helens.** On May 18th, 1980 the most active volcano in the continental United States exploded. Journey into the past to experience one of nature’s most memorable natural disasters and find out whether recent activity means another explosion is in the near future. Dec. 18, 11:00PM. **Walking with Prehistoric Beasts: The New Dawn.**

Follow 24 hours in the life of a female Leptictidium, a small hopping insectivore, as she endeavors to keep her offspring safe from the dangers of the forest. The Leptictidium mother protects her young from giant birds and walking whales waiting in ambush. Dec. 20, 11AM.

Walking with Prehistoric Beasts: Land of the Giants. The giant forests have started to open up and the wide open spaces have allowed mammals to evolve into much larger forms. But size isn’t everything. Follow the early years of a young Indricothere as it encounters predators. Dec. 20, 12Noon. **Walking with Prehistoric Beasts: Mammoth Journey.** When South America eventually joins up with its northern neighbor, clashes between the two ecosystems are bound to occur. The native giant ground sloths and giant terror birds are joined by the incoming Smilodon, the largest of all the sabre-toothed cats. Dec. 20, 1:00PM. **Walking with**

Dinosaurs: Pod’s Travels. Pod is alone in the world after his sisters die in a tidal wave that sweeps him out to sea. After landing on an island populated with dwarf-sized dinosaurs, Pod discovers that he’s become the apex predator. But, Pod learns it’s lonely at the top. Dec. 24,

9:00AM. **Walking with Dinosaurs: Little Das' Hunt.** As a young male, it's Das' job to herd unsuspecting prey towards the rest of the pack. But he's easily distracted and ruins several hunts getting him in deep trouble with his mother, the pack leader. When a volcano threatens, the dinosaurs are unprepared. Dec. 24, 10:00AM. **Walking with Dinosaurs: Alpha's Egg.** The world is a very dangerous place for tiny hatchlings like Alpha, a female saltasaur. Follow Alpha along the road of her growth years, from before her birth through adolescence and on to adulthood, as she learns how to survive and beat the odds. Dec. 24, 11:00AM. **Walking with Dinosaurs: White Tip's Journey.** When White Tip loses the rest of her pack, she must struggle to survive on her own. In time, she locates a new pack, as well as a mate, only to find that her hardships are just beginning in the harsh desert environment. Christian Slater narrates. Dec. 24, 12:00Noon.

TLC: Had trouble with the TLC web site, so couldn't access listings.

Travel Channel: Had trouble with the Travel Channel web site, so couldn't access listings.

History Channel: Empires of Industry: War of the Copper Kings. More than a century ago, two men controlled nearly all of U.S. copper production, transforming Butte, Montana from a washed-up gold-mining camp into a global powerhouse. William Clark, a ruthless banker known for preying on the misfortune of miners, and Marcus Daly, a self-made man with a knack for knowing where to dig, created huge empires and lived like kings, while fighting a ferocious, personal, battle that lasted nearly 25 years. We follow the rivalry between these giants of American industry. Dec. 14, 10:00AM, 4:00PM. **Modern Marvels: Quarries.** Dynamite explodes hills to bits, drills divide sheer stone walls, 400,000-pound blocks are pulled from pits by giant cranes, and men work around the clock to wrest rock out of the earth. Not diamonds or gold...rock, the raw material of civilization! Without rock, modern society wouldn't exist. Roads, sewers, dams, bridges, buildings, paint, glue, make-up, antacids, and even chewing gum need crushed stone. From ancient days to the present, we explore the evolution of quarrying techniques. Dec. 14, 8:00PM, 12:00Mid. **Modern Marvels: Glue.** It's Super! It's Krazy! And it can be found in everything from carpet to computers, books to boats, shoes to the Space Shuttle. It's even used in surgery! Without it, our material world would simply fall apart. In this episode, we'll visit the stuck-up, tacky world of glue. Glue's sticky trajectory spans human history and we'll cover it all--from Neolithic cave dwellers who used animal glue to decorate ceremonial skulls to modern everyday glues and their uses, including Elmer's glue, 3M's masking and Scotch tape, and the super glues. Remember the Krazy Glue commercial in which a man held himself suspended from a hard hat that had just been glued to a beam? Well, that 1970s vintage ad understates the power of glue. With the help of a crane, we're going to hoist a 6,000-pound pickup truck off the ground by a steel joint that's been bonded with glue! Dec. 28, 1:00PM, 7:00PM.

Upcoming Shows in the area:

Well, you missed it! There won't be any more shows in easy driving distance (3 hours or less) until April. There aren't all that many shows anywhere from now until TUSCON, and what there are tend to be in warmer climates – so if you're planning to travel, be sure to check out the complete online listings at the Rock and Gem Magazine Calendar (<http://www.rockngem.com/showdates/showdates.shtml>), and the Lapidary Journal Calendar (<http://www.lapidaryjournal.com/cal1.cfm>). Note that while 90% or better of these listings are exactly the same, if you only check one, you could miss one in the 10% that *aren't* in both that's just the one you wanted!

We have been down in the club room many Saturday mornings (which sometimes extend to 2:00-3:00PM), but **check the club web site** at www.treebeard.net/gemcity or call and find out if you would like to join us for any *particular* Saturday. The web site is usually updated with a 'definite' status Friday night or early Saturday morning -- or call me (Harriet) at 455-4851 or Bob Gallivan at 454-6770 to make sure. You can also call to arrange another time for a work session if Saturdays aren't good for you, and someone will try to accommodate you.