



# The PRESQUE ISLE PROSPECTOR



Official Publication of the Gem City Rock and Mineral Society of Erie, PA  
Monthly Meetings, First Saturday at 9:30 AM

April 2009



## Last Month's Meeting:

Last month we determined that the theme of this year's Show and Library display will be "From Rocks to Gems" and incorporate what small, portable lapidary equipment we have available and several types of lapidary projects in various stages of completion. This was in some part inspired by the program Bob gave demonstrating the use of the club's less-portable lapidary equipment that is mostly re-assembled and up-and-running now -- and we even had several new people show up to check out the club! Welcome!

## This Month's Meeting:

This month our meeting will be Saturday, **April 4<sup>th</sup>**, at **9:30 AM**, at the club room at the **Renaissance Centre building at 1001 State Street in downtown Erie** (southeast corner of 10<sup>th</sup> and State Streets). To find the club rooms, go in the front revolving door of the building on State Street (just south of the nut shop, which is on the corner), and look for a stairway to the basement on the right-hand side of the lobby just before the small hallway containing the elevators. If you can't take the stairs, the third elevator goes down to the basement level. At the bottom of the stairs or the elevator, you will see the entrance to our space.

There is also a parking ramp on the south side of E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street just east of the Renaissance Centre building (toward French Street), and it is free to park there on Saturdays!

We have several more things to plan this month, including a date for our next trip up to the Batavia, NY area to collect more Staghorn Coral some time this month – see more on this below. If you want to go, and can't get to the meeting but want to have input as to the date, be sure to call Harriet at 868-8422 **before the meeting**.

We need to choose something for our Fall Project -- see more on this below.

We also need to do a little more planning for the Library display (see article below), so people can decide what they have to contribute and what they might make / do for it by the time it goes in the window in July.

Just after the regular meeting, we will have a meeting of the Show Committee. We want to have more displays and activities this year, especially for the kids since our new venue in the Erie Zoo Complex did seem to generate some cross-over traffic – and we have some more junior members (and their parents) this year, maybe they can help out!

We will also need as much publicity for the show as we can get, of course, so please also be thinking about where we can advertise without breaking our budget (which has traditionally been – um, nothing). We got more publicity last year than in years past, but also thought of some things we didn't get done, or done in time; let's all think about possibilities now, so we can get moving earlier!

## Dues are Due:

Last chance to get your dues in! If you joined at the show last July (2008), your dues are paid through the end of 2009; if not, you'll be dropped from the mailing list. Dues are as follows:

\$10.00	Junior (under 18 or full-time student)
\$15.00	Individual
\$20.00	Couple (or parent and one child)
\$25.00	Family

Club Web Site address: [www.gemcityrockclub.org](http://www.gemcityrockclub.org)

President	Kirk McFadden	2976 Clark Rd.	Erie PA 16510-4422	(814) 602-5225
Vice-president	Sarah Boesch	1223 Lake St.	Lake City PA 16423-1808	(814) 774-4234
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Board Members:	Robert Gallivan	Ted Oslak	Mary Thomson	

Please try to remember to bring your dues and Membership Renewal Form along to the meeting, or mail a check to the club. To remind you, the club address is

Gem City Rock & Mineral Society  
P.O. Box 475  
Erie, PA 16512

We will give you a month or two to get your dues in, but those not current on their dues will stop getting the newsletter and not be eligible to participate in any club activities!

### **Federation News:**

The March American Federation Newsletter at [http://www.amfed.org/news/n2009\\_04.pdf](http://www.amfed.org/news/n2009_04.pdf) has more on the field trips planned for just after the American Federation Convention hosted this year by the Billings Gem and Mineral Club, Billings, Montana, July 30-31 and August 1-2, so if you're thinking about a summer vacation, think about the cool things you could do / see / collect in Big Sky Country! There's an article on prospective legislation to limit imports of more gem materials from "sanctioned" countries, like the recent ban on all gemstones and minerals from Myanmar (formerly Burma), which includes the majority of gem-quality rubies, due to the government's treatment of its citizens. Of course, this type of legislation presents problems in that 1) it takes specialized labs to determine the origin of most gems with any degree of accuracy, and even then it's sometimes not possible; and 2) if you already own something whose import gets banned, do you have proof you purchased it before the ban went into effect? Let alone the fact that most jewelry is manufactured somewhere different from where the stones were cut, which may well be different again from where they were mined, so how can a seller, let alone a consumer, possibly tell the origin of the stone? There is also a Junior Activities article on putting together a display of minerals and their everyday uses, including the author's lists of what is in his display and resources online for more information.

The March Eastern Federation Newsletter, online at <http://www.amfed.org/efmls/efapr09.pdf>, has an announcement of field trip opportunities in Maine:

**"In 2002-04, the Maine Geological Survey (MGS) conducted a fund raising drive with the intent of purchasing the pegmatite mines in Newry, Maine for a public mineral collecting site. Many people and clubs donated to this effort, but unfortunately we were able to raise only a small fraction of the money needed to purchase either the Newry mines or an alternative site.**

**MGS believes that the funds should be used in the spirit for which they were donated - to enable recreational mineral collecting opportunities for the public. With assistance from the Maine Mineral Symposium Association (MMSA), we are arranging with New England quarry operators to hold a series of collecting trips that will be open to the public. We plan to set up at least three field trips each year, starting in 2009 and continuing until funds are exhausted."**

More info is available at <http://www.maine.gov/doc/nrimc/mgs/mgs.htm> -- if you happen to be going to Maine!

### **Field Trip – Staghorn Coral:**

We are planning to go back to Batavia, NY to collect Staghorn Coral some time in April, on a Saturday or Sunday. Since we will need a little time to put it together, and the meeting when we'll pick a date is the first Saturday, that pretty much means the first weekend is out; and since Easter is the second Sunday, that almost certainly means the second weekend is out, too. So we'll be looking at Saturday or Sunday of the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> weekends, April 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>. Please check your calendars **before** the meeting, so we can choose a date. Info will be posted on the web site as soon as we get it settled.

Last year, we went on April 20<sup>th</sup> – look at the May 2008 Presque Isle Prospector for a report on how much fun we had ( <http://www.gemcityrockclub.org/files/PIP08-05.pdf> ), or the Field Trips page on the web site ( <http://www.gemcityrockclub.org/bethany.htm> ) for an earlier trip. This trip involves about a 2-1/2 –hour drive each way, so it's an easy day trip, and the collecting is *really* easy – the site is a small stream-bed, so new material is always being eroded out – so you pretty

much just look down, and pick stuff up. The hardest part is carrying your full bucket the length of the field back to the car! This is a great first trip for kids, but please, have at least one adult for every two kids, preferably one per kid – it's pretty easy to wander just a step farther to pick up *that* one, and then you'll see another...and the next thing, you're around a bend and out of sight.

If you are interested in coming with us, you will need to bring:

- Sunhat & sunscreen, or rain gear (or more likely both – it is April, after all!)
- Water bottle and / or snacks for the car
- Buckets, cans, or sacks to carry home your finds (and carry for a good way – I can only carry a five-gallon bucket about 1/3 full, so smaller ones are fine if they're sturdy, or coffee cans with lids, or tote bags, even doubled or tripled blue grocery bags, but be careful these don't get away from you before you've weighted them down a bit)
- Boots, galoshes, or extra footwear (or both), since we will be wading in a stream
- Money for lunch on the way home – we usually get fast food to replenish our strength!

You won't need digging equipment unless you really want it, there should be plenty to just pick up. Join us, and have some fun!



**"Remember, we agreed. I'd carry the canned goods in  
if you'd carry the rocks out."**

by Ebners from Dust & Grit 2/00  
via Golden Spike News 3/00

### **Other Field Trips:**

Ed is still trying to plan a trip south, to the Carolinas and / or Georgia, for late spring / early summer. He'd like company, and someone to spilt the gas with, and has several ideas for mines and collecting locations – but so far he's only gotten vague expressions of interest. He's flexible on dates – just before it gets too hot down there – so if you are interested in a trip with an experienced field guide and one who has local connections, please firm up your availability dates and what exactly you'd like to do, so you and he can start making firmer plans. Last time he led one of these trips – to Arkansas, with Val and Sarah – they had some unplanned automotive adventures, but had a lot of fun anyway.

### **Federation Swap Box Program:**

While we are out collecting material, we might want to keep in mind the Federation Swap Box program, where we pack a box of at least 10 pounds of material to trade with another club. It would cost about \$10 to mail a flat-rate box. I have a list of currently offered stuff for trade, or we can put our offer on the list for future trades.

### **Library Window Display:**

We will have the wonderful big display window at the downtown Public Library for July this year, the perfect time leading up to our Gem Show, so we want to come up with a bang-up display to generate interest for the show. Our theme this year is **"From Rocks to Gems"** showing the lapidary processes involved in taking a chunk of rock and cutting it into cabs, or faceted material, or other decorative objects.

We will incorporate what small, portable lapidary equipment we have available – we will have at least some small tumblers, a 6” trim/slab saw, and an All-U-Need lap machine to put in. Does anyone have a small wheel-type cabbing machine that they could get along without for the month of July? Can anyone think of any other lapidary equipment that individuals or the club might have that will fit in a display window 25” deep? Other than the depth, we have *plenty* of room! ☺

We’d also like to put in several types of lapidary projects in various stages of completion. We have previously made-up displays of a couple of rocks being slabbed, and Ed’s very nice display of stones in various stages of being faceted, but we could use bunches of cabs, both finished and in-process. We could also use tumbled stones in various stages – it’d be nice to have similar batches of stuff, at each stage – before any tumbling, and after each stage up to finished, but we’ll take what we can get. I have some of this, but I never seemed to get beyond the rough grind!

I’d also like to get photos of some of these machines in action, since none of it will be in motion while inside the window. Could we set up a work session with this in mind, so I can get some action shots of hands and stones with the machines?

Any other ideas of what might go into this display?

Then the next big challenge is, how much of this can we set up for demos at the Gem Show?



**Fall Club Project – and beyond:**

We need to start thinking about choosing a Fall Club Project – something we can all make in a session or two, and for which we can shop at our show in July. It’s also a great way to generate interest and show people what sorts of things the club does.

In the past, we’ve done beading projects, lapidary projects, and wire-wrapping projects, and the wire-wrapping got the most participation by far, so that’s probably what we’d look for again; but if you have an idea for a club project of any type, please bring it to the meeting so we can have a range of options to choose from. It should be suitable for beginners, but can be somewhat challenging for them. Bring a picture, and if you can, the directions too. Here are some possible examples:

			
Rose Quartz Breast Cancer Tree of Life Pendant	Memory Wire Bracelet	Amethyst Christmas Tree Ornament	Snowflake Obsidian Christmas Tree Orn.

In addition, we should be thinking about program topics for the rest of the Fall and Winter – if we set up our calendar of programs before the Show, we will 1) have something more to show prospective members, 2) have more to entice current members to show up for meetings, and 3) be able to sit back and not worry about a meeting topic for a while!

	
Slab candle holder	Slab Nightlight

So please be thinking about this. If anyone wants a particular topic or project that is not suitable to be the Fall Club Project, still bring it with you – it could be something we've done before that you'd like to do again, or something more in the way of a show-and-tell, or a topic you'd like to see a program on from the Federation Library. It's **your** club, what do **you** want to do?



### **Upcoming Shows in the area:**

We're heading back into Show Season in our region – check out what's coming up:

**April 4-5--Canton, OH: Show, "A 'Flintastic' Weekend";** Stark County Gem & Mineral Club; Stark County Fairgrounds, 305 Wertz Ave N.W.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-6; collectors' displays, dealers, minerals, gems, fossils, finished jewelry, lapidary arts, supplies, mineral identification, children's games, silent auction, door prizes; contact Dave Behringer, 2930 Mason St. SW, Massillon, OH 44646, (330) 830-1578; e-mail: [darojreg@att.net](mailto:darojreg@att.net) .

**April 18-19--Pittsburgh, PA: Show; Monongahela Rockhounds;** West Mifflin Volunteer Fire Co. #4, Skyview Hall, 640 Noble Dr.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; free admission; contact Bret Howard, P.O. Box 18063, Pittsburgh, PA 15236, (724) 327-8618; e-mail: [mononhahelarockhounds@yahoo.com](mailto:mononhahelarockhounds@yahoo.com) ; Web site: [www.monongahelarockhounds.org](http://www.monongahelarockhounds.org) .

**April 25-26--Cuyahoga Falls, OH: Show and sale, "Gemboree"; Summit Lapidary Club,** Akron Mineral Society; 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](http://www.LapidaryClubofOhio.org) .

**May 2-3--Washington, PA: Show, "Greater Pittsburgh Area Gem, Mineral, Bead & Jewelry Show";** F.M. Fossils; Washington County Fairgrounds, 2151 N. Main St.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4, children 12 and under free with parent; select dealers, loose gems, minerals, fossils, finished jewelry, beads, bench jeweler, wire-wrapper; contact F.M. Minerals, P.O. Box 252, Farmington, WV 26571, (304) 825-6845; e-mail: [frankoz@juno.com](mailto:frankoz@juno.com) .

**May 16-17--Berea (Cleveland), OH: 41st annual show and Midwest Federation Convention, "Beautiful World of Rocks and Gems"; Parma Lapidary Club;** 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 handcrafted jewelry, lapidary demonstrations, educational exhibits, silent auction, raffles, door prizes, Kiddie Korner, Treasure Dig; contact John Zaborowski, 926 Lake Breeze Rd., Sheffield Lake, OH 44054, (440) 949-8242; e-mail: [J751@centurytel.net](mailto:J751@centurytel.net)

If you're planning to travel, check out the complete online listings at the Lapidary Journal Calendar (<http://www.lapidaryjournal.com/cal1.cfm> ), and especially the Rock and Gem Magazine Calendar (<http://www.rockngem.com/showdates/showdates.shtml> ).

We will have Work Sessions on some Saturdays, depending on interest. Check the club web site or call me (Harriet) at 868-8422 or Bob Gallivan at 454-6770 to find out about any specific Saturday, or to let us know you're interested.



# GEM CITY ROCK & MINERAL SOCIETY

## Membership Renewal Form 2009



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City & State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you like to receive the newsletter?       Email       Snail Mail

- Junior (under 18 or full-time student)      \$10.00
- Individual      \$15.00
- Couple (or parent and one child)      \$20.00
- Family      \$25.00

Names of additional family members who are members:

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Bring completed form with dues to next meeting, or mail to:

Gem City Rock & Mineral Society  
P.O. Box 475  
Erie, PA 16512