



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

September 2009

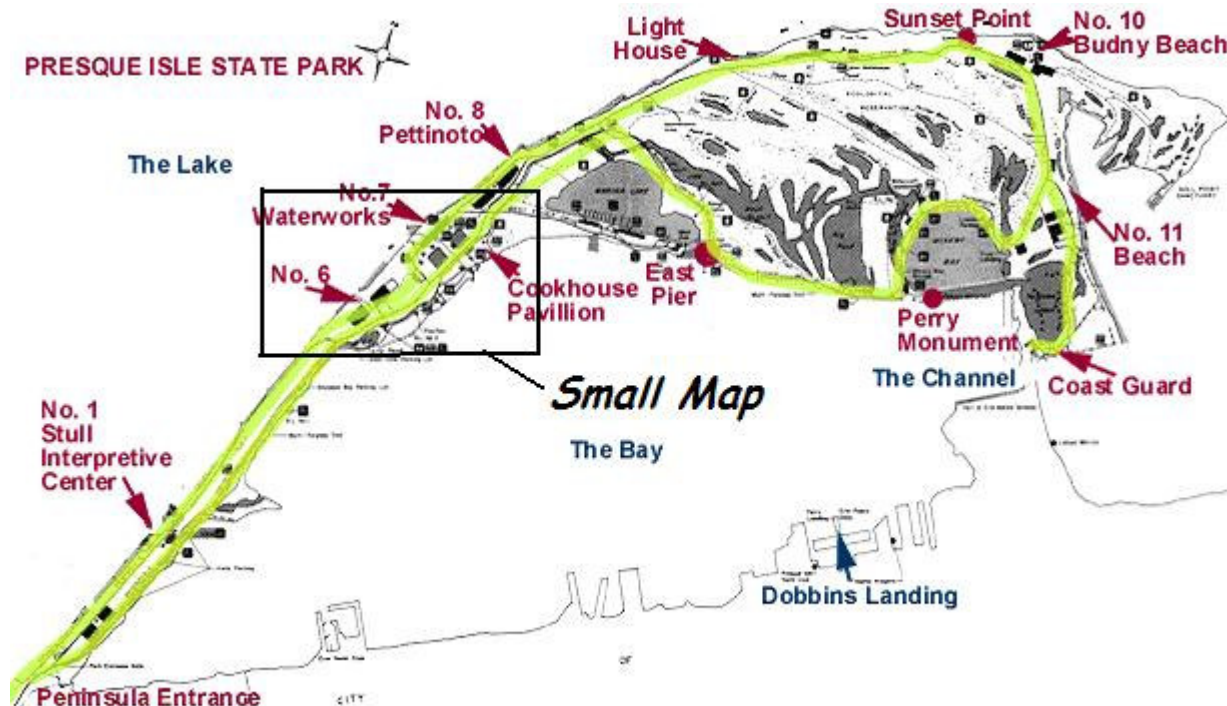


Last Month's Meeting:

Last month we had our Gem Show wrap-up and report. We did better than last year, so the Show continues to gain exposure! Great!

This Month's Meeting:

This month our meeting will be the annual **Club Picnic**, scheduled this year for **Sunday, September 13th, at 1:00 PM, at the Niagara Boat Launch** picnic area on Presque Isle, where we have been the last few years. Families / Significant Others are welcome to come join the fun. For our out-of-town members not familiar with the area, the easiest way to get there is to take I-90 to Exit 18 and take Route 832 north – Route 832 becomes Peninsula Drive, and goes right on out to the park. See the maps below for directions to the spot where we plan to stake out some tables.



The yellow lines are the main road -- take it past the Park Office and look for the Rock Club sign on the right side of the road. We will stake out some tables, and we'll have a big sign. If you pass Waterworks, you've gone too far. We will be sharing the date with the Erie Marathon, but since that starts at 7AM, it should be mostly over before we get there and not interfere with us.

We plan to eat around 1:00, and start arriving anytime after 12:00. The club will provide Ox Roast sandwiches, and you are asked to **bring a side, salad or dessert to share**. As usual, please **call Harriet at 814-868-8422 before September 11th** (even if you signed up at the last meeting, please call to verify) to let me know what you plan to bring so we'll have a good distribution and a head count. Some cooler space may be available to keep cold things cold, but please let me know if you need to take advantage of this.

Club Web Site address: www.gemcityrockclub.org

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In addition to your dish, please **bring your own table service and something to drink**. You might also want to bring folding chairs.

We have several new members who joined at the show, and we are eager to meet you all! This will be a good time to get to know one another, and relax and share good food. If you have ANY questions, call me (Harriet) or anyone else listed in the newsletter footer.

In the event of heavy rain, we will meet at the Presque Isle Gallery, just before Sara's Diner as you head onto Presque Isle. Call Harriet at 868-8422 or 218-1774 (cell, if calling after ~11:00AM on the day) to be sure which spot we're using.

Also please be aware that we will learn how to make the **Tree of Life Pendants** next month for the **October meeting**, so we will need to **put together the Club Wire Order at the picnic** – if you want to make a pendant (or two or ten) but can't make it to the picnic, please call or email Harriet to **let me know how many pendants to get wire for**. Also, **if you have chips to share, please bring them to the picnic!**

Field Trip:

We have fixed the date for our fall field trip to collect Staghorn Coral at Batavia, NY for Saturday, September 19th. We will meet at **9:00AM** at the **Harborcreek Exit of I-90 (Exit 35)** at the TA Gas Station -- there's a small parking area just to the left as you turn in, between the pumps and the motel just beyond. We will meet up and see how many people we have, and which vehicles it makes most sense to take and carpool from there. We can leave the other vehicles in the parking lot behind the motel.

The trip is open to anyone over 5 years of age, though anyone under 18 must be accompanied by an adult (no more than 2 children per adult) and must have a permission form / release signed by a parent / guardian. For insurance purposes, anyone participating must either be a club member (you may join that morning) or be a Boy Scout or Girl Scout traveling with a troop on a tour permit (they have their own insurance).

We will be collecting fossils weathered out of a small creekbed, and walking up and down in the creek, so wear rubbers or galoshes, and bring dry shoes / socks for the ride home (dry pants might be a good idea too). Also bring buckets for collecting (or coffee can or cool-whip tub with lid), water bottle, clothing appropriate for the weather forecast, and a hat / sunscreen / bug spray. Gloves and a trowel might be handy, but not necessary. Bring drinks / snacks, since it's a 2-1/2 hour drive each way, and we'll probably stop for fast food, so bring some cash. Since we'll be carpooling, also bring some gas money.

A flyer to print out is available on the club web site from the Field Trip page, as well as reports of prior trips, at <http://www.gemcityrockclub.org/fldtrip.htm>.

Work Sessions:

We have scheduled a couple of work sessions to go through all the stuff that we haven't unpacked yet, and mostly to see just what we have in rocks – all those buckets and boxes of crystals, fossils, and cutting rough that we tossed together to move and now have to *keep* moving to get at other stuff. We need to get that down to a more manageable amount, especially since it looks like we may have to move again. Some of it we definitely want to keep, some of it really isn't worth much, but lots of it could do us much more good by selling it off, either by resuming our Silent Auctions to club members or at the Gem Show next year (since none of the dealers this year had much rough to shop). Who knows what we'll find in our "indoor field trip"? :-)

But the first step is to identify it all and see which category it belongs in. This would require some time, some space, good light, and probably a couple of different opinions. So we decided to set up a session Saturday, September 12th, at 9:30AM until we get tired of it; and another session Sunday, September 20th at 1:00 until we get tired of it. The hope is that we can get somewhat organized and get some stuff together to begin the silent auctions we had before the last move, setting out a table or two of rocks after each meeting and letting members write down their bids for a fixed 5-minute period and the winner is the final bidder (so bring a few extra bucks to meetings for a while!)

Federation News:

The American Federation Newsletter, online at http://www.amfed.org/news/n2009_06.pdf, has an article on more proposed legislation titled "Words of Caution" that I have printed in total here, since I think it's important that we know what's going on and while I always refer the readers of this newsletter to things they should check out in the Federation newsletters, I doubt many of you actually go read them. The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act, which we wrote to our representatives opposing, was folded into the truly massive Omnibus Public Lands Bill and passed – even though it is unlikely that any representative or even any staff really read the whole thing to know what they were passing (just like the stimulus package). These things are always pretty reasonable-sounding in the title, and I'm sure they are well-intentioned, but on reading the details they end up having far-reaching unintended consequences that will impact us as rockhounds for many years to come. There's another article on "What's Happening with ALAA" (American Land Access Association), of which I have only included the first paragraph, but please do check out the rest of the article online.

The Safety article is on radioactivity in your mineral collection, how to find out if you have any and what to do about it; the Junior Activities article is on the progress made, and still needed, in expanding the Future Rockhounds of America Program to all 50 states (if you're wondering, it's pretty easy to get involved, there's *lots* of support materials available!).

The Eastern Federation Newsletter, online at <http://www.amfed.org/efmls/efjune09.pdf>, has an article on the EFMLS Convention, this year held October 16-18 in Bristol, Connecticut, including: "The Saturday night banquet speaker is Dan Record whose talk is entitled 'To The Rocky Moon – Man's Greatest Adventure'. Using slides from the NASA archives, you will journey to the Moon through the eyes of the Gemini and Apollo astronauts. Dan's presentation will highlight the Apollo 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 missions and summarize what we have learned about the Moon as a result of the landing missions. The presentation will conclude with some rarely seen slides of the Apollo lunar samples." Cool! The Safety article is on Safety Glasses – I'm sure we all wear them *sometimes*, but do we wear them *all* the times we should?

Words of Caution by John Wright, RPG, AFMS Conservation & Legislation Chair

In the past six months several important pieces of legislation were bundled into a couple of major packages and passed by Congress that is going to have a drastic impact on our hobby. There seems to be a lot of apathy and lack of interest on the part of our membership about legislative matters, but the main problem is that our members are just not well informed. Pending legislative matters that could adversely affect recreational activities on public owned lands have been covered by articles in the AFMS Newsletter for many years. The newsletters are available online and copies are sent to officers in every member society and area federation, but that is where the information seems to stop. Most of our members have never seen an AFMS

Newsletter or their Federation's Bulletins and important pending legislative matters are seldom mentioned at meetings or published in bulletins.

There is currently more legislation pending that could affect our hobby and their sponsors are working hard to bring them to the floor of the House and on to the Senate for a vote prior to the 2010 midterm election cycle. There are three in particular that I think we need to be aware of:

1. Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2009. This is a massive bill (just the summary is a 100 pages) that is going to be devastating to many rural areas and small communities that depend on mining for their livelihood. Most of the problems for activities like rockhounding are going to be the result of collateral damage. (This means we are going to get zapped even though the bill does provide for recreational activities like rockhounding.) This "Act" is going to affect both "public and private" lands. Not only is this going to limit a lot of desirable materials, it is also going to limit a lot of prime areas for outings. The bill is out of committee and on a fast tract for passage this fall. By the time you read this article it will probably be too late for contacting your Representatives, but we still have an opportunity to write our Senators and stop this insane legislation.

2. Clean Water Restoration Act (S787) (Wetlands). This bill is still in committee as I write this article, but remember I'm working a little more than a month in advance and it may well be on fast tract for passage by the time you read this Newsletter. In my opinion this bill is one of the largest power-based and massive land grabs in decades. The sheer scope of this proposed legislation is mind boggling. Every body of water from little streams to the Great Lakes and boundary lands "**public and private**" are going to be placed under government control. Millions of acres considered to be seepage areas that replenish subsurface aquifers are going to be severely restricted. "Wetlands" are going to be significantly expanded to include massive areas considered marginal under previous criteria. Even mountain, high plains, and desert runoff areas are going to be controlled and protected. The few things I've mentioned here are just the tip of the iceberg so to speak.

3. Antiquities Act of 1906: Major Acts of Congress and Act 58 of 1967. Effort to up-date this law is in the very early stages of committee work. This situation could change quickly as it has a lot of bi-partisan support. Don't pick up any arrow heads, pottery shards, or anything else that looks old and man made, particularly on any state or federal lands. If this law is up-dated, it will more than likely include private property also.

There was not much effort made by our members to stop the recently passed legislation and while there seems to be some growing concern, there probably will not be much opposition to the pending legislation on our part in the near future unless there are some dramatic changes. A lot of effort to research and glean the information needed by our members is being done at all levels within AFMS and ALAA, but if this information is not passed on to the membership, we will never get the grass-root support needed to promote, change, or defeat legislative matters that affect our hobby.

What's Happening with ALAA by dick Pankey, President, ALAA

The Omnibus Public Lands Bill passed the House and the Senate, was signed by the President and is now the law. However, the exact effect on the public, on rockhounds, on our rights to access our Public Lands is still not known. And it will not be determined until each BLM District/office, each Forest Service District/office, each of the other affected governmental agencies *interprets* these laws, and incorporates them into their specific Management Plan. This is where we can still have a say. This is where we can still have a voice and have affect on the final implementation. How? By becoming involved in the process. By talking with the managers of our Public Lands; by participating in the meetings called for public input; by providing our ideas and wishes with letters, e-mails and telephone calls. By being involved in the process.

How do we, how do **YOU** get started?

Just for Fun:

I don't know about you, but I wear a lot of T-shirts, especially when I'm doing something that is liable to get me dirty, like – oh – digging up rocks, or shifting around boxes of rocks in my garage, or cutting / grinding / polishing rocks, or just *walking* down at the club ☺. And I have a lot

of T-shirts, and lots of them are cute or interesting or whatever, but let's face it, the club's T-shirt is great for identifying us, but I'm not likely to wear it other than around club activities. So I've been searching for a cute, funny, eye-catching Rockhound-related T-shirt for quite a while now. I'm really looking for the shirt I saw in the gift shop at Crystal Grove when we went there to dig Herkimers, but since it was the end of the season, they only had 2 left, both way too small ☹, but it said something like, "Lies Rockhounds Tell" and listed things like "It was THIS big – but of course, I had to leave it there because I couldn't carry it" and "Oh, sure, it's a little far from the nearest road, but it's not a bad walk". Haven't found it again yet, but it was pretty funny.

So I keep thinking you ought to be able to find *anything* on the Internet, right? So I went Searching, and sure enough, I found a bunch of Rockhounding-type T-shirts (and hats, and mugs, and...) and thought I'd share a few with you, in case you were looking too. These are from 3 big web sites, and each site has lots more:

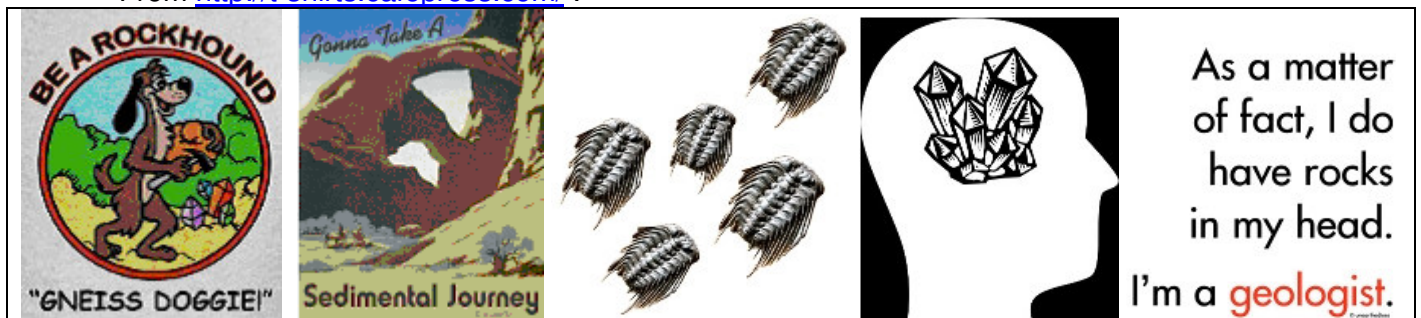
From <http://www.unearthedtees.com/> :



From <http://www.zazzle.com/> :



From <http://t-shirts.cafepress.com/> :



Fall Club Project:

Remember that the Fall Club Project is learning to make Tree of Life Pendants like these, so if you didn't find Gemstone Chip strands at the show, you'll want to shop for them elsewhere – though this could be from other club members who did already find their chips, since the pendants seem to take somewhere around 6" of chips to make for a pendant about 1½" in diameter. **If you have extra chips to share, please bring them to the picnic.**

Please be thinking about how many pendants you want to make, since **we will need to put together a Club order for the wire**; then you'll know if you have more chips than you'll need, so you know what you can offer to other club members. In general, most chip strands are around 36" – though they vary, so measure yours. Chip strands of more valuable stones may be a lot shorter – I've gotten Peridot strands that were 28", and Tourmaline strands that were 10", so

measure to see what you have, and keep a generous amount for yourself before you decide what you have to offer to others. Also keep in mind that smaller chips may require more branches (and therefore more inches) to fill the space, while larger chips will require fewer.

Also look at other shapes of Tree of Life Pendants – I've found oval ones and rectangular ones on the Internet, so look around for images to see what you like. I think we'll start with the basic round one, but if you want to get fancy later, allow for extra wire.



Upcoming Shows in the area:

September 11-13--Toledo, OH: 38th annual show; Toledo Gem & Rockhound Club; Stranahan Complex, 4645 Heatherdowns Blvd.; Fri. 2-8, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; adults \$4, seniors and students \$3, children under 12 free; free kids' mineral kits, kids' games, exhibits, demonstrations, mini classes, Touch & Feel Area, scholarship raffle, silent auction, club sales, more than 20 dealers, beads, jewelry, gems, precious metals, fossils, minerals, carvings, gem trees, tools, equipment; contact Jerri Heer, 247 Decatur, Toledo, OH 43609, (419) 531-8124; e-mail: jheerx6@aol.com; Web site: www.toledogemandrockhounds.com

September 25-27--Cleveland, OH: Show; GemStreet USA; Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds, Bagley Rd. entrance, 0.5 mile west of I-71 and Bagley Rd.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; adults \$7, seniors (60+) and students (12-17) \$5, under 12 free, ticket good all weekend; fine gems, jewelry, mineral specimens, fossils, beads, findings, display items, Scout badges, discount coupon on Web site; contact Jane Strieter Smith, (216) 521-GEMS (4367); e-mail: spi@stratos.net; Web site: www.gemstreetusa.com

October 24-25--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 .

October 24-25--Henrietta (Rochester), NY: 37th annual show, "Rochester Gem, Mineral, Jewelry & Fossil Show"; Rochester Academy of Science Mineral Section, Rochester Lapidary Society; Minett Hall, Monroe County Fair & Expo Center, corner of E. Henrietta Rd. and Calkins Rd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; dealers, jewelry, beads, minerals, mineral carvings, fossils, demonstrations, gemstone faceting, cabochon making, jewelry making, fossil preparation, member displays, minerals, fossils, jewelry, door prizes, kids' activities, starter mineral collection, sluice, soapstone carving, mineral bingo; contact Paul Dudley, 140 Railroad Mills Rd., Pittsford, NY 14534, (585) 385-2368; e-mail: show@rasny.org; Web site: www.rasny.org/show

November 13-15--Hamburg (Buffalo), NY: Show; GemStreet USA; Fairgrounds at Hamburg, The Grange Bldg., 5600 McKinley Pkwy.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; adults \$7, seniors (60+) and students (12-17) \$5, under 12 free, ticket good all weekend; fine gems, jewelry, mineral specimens, fossils, beads, findings, display items, Scout badges, discount coupon on Web site; contact Jane Strieter Smith, (216) 521-GEMS (4367); e-mail: spi@stratos.net; Web site: www.gemstreetusa.com

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>). There are lots more shows outside daytrip range!

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.