

# CEDAR VALLEY GEMS

## CEDAR VALLEY ROCK & MINERAL SOCIETY

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

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APRIL 1995

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Cedar Valley Rocks and Minerals Society will meet at the AEGON/LIFE INVESTORS Bldg, corner of 42nd St. and Edgewood Rd. N.E., Cedar Rapids, IA at 7:15 PM, April 19, 1995

Jeff Groff, vice-president, reports Randy Litro, of the University of Iowa, will give a slide presentation on the geological structures in the Canyonlands of Utah. Randy's presentation is based on his thesis.

Hostesses will be Bill Mitchell and Gladys Wanek.

We need two hostesses for the May meeting. Hostesses provide whatever 'finger-food' they choose and punch, juice or cool-aid. The club has a coffee pot. Water can be heated for instant coffee, or coffee can be brought from home. The May meeting will be our last indoor meeting for this season.

In June, July and August we will have potlucks in one of the nearby parks. There will be more information about this in the May and June bulletins. The June bulletin will be the last issue until September.

The new membership books were printed in March. There is one for each family. If you have not gotten yours, be sure to pick it up at the meeting.

### CLUB FIELD TRIP

April 30 Field trip to the Conklin Quarry near Coralville, Iowa. Take exit 242 off I-80, turn north. Meet at the gate across from the Days Inn. Be there promptly at 9 AM. The gate will be locked after the group goes in. Bill Mitchell will be in charge and will take those who cannot stay all day, to the gate around noon or so. Otherwise, bring your lunch and plan to be there for the day. You will be hunting for millerite, coral heads, and various fossils.

If you have further questions, be at the meeting April 19, or phone Marv Houg in Cedar Rapids, or Bill Mitchell in Iowa City.

### EASTERN IOWA SCIENCE FAIR - March 25, 1995

The Science Fair was held at Westdale Mall. The club's first place award went to Nathan Krause of Muscatine High School. His Senior Physical Science Project was "Fractional Distillation and Gasification of Coal." He was awarded a Brazilian agate penholder and pen, \$20, and a certificate.

The Second Place award went to Laurie Fett of Central Lee in Donnelson, IA for her Junior Biology Project, "Effects of Water Types on Root Formation." She was awarded a Brazilian agate penholder and pen, \$10, and a certificate.

The pen holder bases were fitted with a brass plate inscribed with the club name. Robert & Leslie Blin and Pappé Phillips were judges.



**FIELD TRIP - GEOLOGIC SOCIETY OF IOWA**

April 23, 1995 Geological Society of Iowa - Springfield trip - The Natural History of Backbone State Park, Delaware County, Iowa.

"The trip will meet at Backbone Park Headquarters on Sunday, April 23, at 8:30 am. The park headquarters is located about 1/8 mile east of the east gate to the park on county road C-57. It is easiest to approach the park from the east, on county road W-69 south out of Strawberry Point (Clayton County) or north out of Dundee (Delaware County) until you reach county road C-57. Then proceed west for about 1.2 miles and look for the turn-off to the south that leads to the park headquarters. Restrooms will be available at the headquarters. As always, there is no charge for participation in the field trip; guidebooks will be free to GSI members and available at a nominal cost to others." (Membership is only \$5.00)

"This year marks the 75th anniversary of the dedication of Iowa's first state park, Backbone State Park. In honor of this event, the Department of Natural Resources has initiated a new publication series that will examine the natural history of Iowa's state parks. The first of these new publications will be the Natural History of Backbone State Park. This volume will include discussions of the geology, vegetation, animals, archaeology, and more recent history of the park."

"This trip will cover topics similar to the planned publication, including stops and discussions of the rock and glacial geology and the river deposits at the park; the vegetation including a look at a savanna restoration project; an overview of the animals and habitats in the area; and a discussion of the more recent history of Backbone Park itself, including WPA projects."

from the GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA NEWSLETTER

Dr. Brian Witzke will lead the geology portion of the field trip; John Pearson (DNR Program Administration) will lead the vegetation trip; Lisa Hemaseth (DNR Wildlife Bureau) will lead & discuss the wildlife in the park. There will also be a discussion of the archaeological history of the Backbone region. Park Ranger Bob Schaut will discuss the history of Backbone Park at the old boathouse.

In addition to the natural history of the area, there will be an opportunity to visit the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) museum located near the west gate of the park.

**HERE AND THERE WITH OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS**

Bill Myers had back surgery, March 28, 1995, in Iowa City. He is at home recovering and doing very well. Hope to see you at the meetings soon, Bill.

Bernard Bekker, of Muscatine, Iowa, passed away Sunday, March 12th. Immediate survivors are two daughters and two sons. Marilyn Bekker, along with her father, were very active in all the shows and swaps, and for years, never missed exhibiting at our show. We extend our sincere sympathy to the family.

Marilyn Bekker has finally returned to her home following several months in the hospital, then a nursing home, and finally the hospital again. She had had to have her second leg amputated last November. Because of an infection which would not heal, it required a long hospitalization. She returned to the hospital to be fitted with her prosthesis and for rehabilitation.

## WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Gerry D. Pogue  
265 Ripon St. S.W.  
Cedar Rapids, Ia 52404  
364-7037

Major interests: Geodes & fossils

Joan Smith  
2628 Falbrook Dr. N.E.  
Cedar Rapids, Ia. 52402  
393-3581

Warren Bromann  
314 Union St.  
Iowa Falls, IA 50126  
515-648-9174

Interested in minerals

Ron and Roh Hong Tan Lough  
2204 Hendershot Rd. N.E.  
North Liberty, IA 52317  
319-626-8164

Interested in rocks and minerals

Don J. Rinner  
117 E. College St.  
Iowa City, IA 52240  
319-354-1522

Goldsmith and lapidary. Primary  
interest gems and agates. Teen age  
son and daughter also interested

Please add these names to your membership books so you can keep it up to date.

## LOOKING BACK at the SHOW

Several people stopped past the book booth wanting books or maps that would tell them where they could go, close by, to do a little collecting. One lady wondered about a creek. "Is that a good place?" I said she might find jasper, chert or agate. She did not know what they are or what to look for. We suggested they join the club or visit a meeting to learn about places to collect.

Mr. Bromann, a school teacher, wants definite directions for tumbling - How long for each grit and how long for different stones. What stones can be tumbled together. He explained that several of his students have tumblers and it is a problem to give advice when each one is tumbling different materials and at a different stage in the tumbling process.

Perhaps we need to give some thought to the more basic facets of rockhounding at our show so we can be of help to those who are just getting interested. I'm wondering if George or Larry will write up their particular directions for tumbling - something we could use in the May bulletin. Another suggestion -we might have a prepared list of names and telephone numbers of members who will be willing to take guests out hunting with them. Is there a place close by where we could be sure they would be admitted and that we could prepare a map, or directions? Think about these things. We want your input.

A bit about the book booth. We did not have nearly as many books this year as in the past. We did have books from more sources. Many books were sold at cost so we probably did not make much money. This year for the first time we had some booklets from The State Historical Society Of Iowa - back issues of the PALIMPSEST were especially popular. One issue dealt with the meteors of Iowa. I think we could have sold a dozen if we would have had them. I picked up a couple extra copies when I returned what we had not sold. One copy is available for 50 cents if anyone is interested. We also had a new book on AGATES from Nebraska, and several other publications from there. We have several of those left, which can be seen at the meeting.

### 1995 CEDAR VALLEY SHOW A GREAT SUCCESS

A great new location, lots of willing workers, extended advertising, and a wonderful *Gazette* article on Jim and Myrna Shetterly's geode collection and business contributed to a very successful show with record attendance in spite of a move from our familiar location. Our new building was a great improvement over the IBEW Hall in doubling the space, and lighting was good. However, there was a problem with the amount of available power, but that problem was solved through the persistence of the electrical committee.

It was great to see so many members show up for set-up and to help run the various aspects of the show. There were several members helping at the show who never make it to the meetings, and your help was greatly appreciated. We also thank the chairmen of the various committees and their helpers for making all the parts of the show run smoothly. Special thanks to Alberta Cray, who as dealer chairman, spent many hours before the show contacting dealers and ironing out problems and to Larry DeSotel who drives many miles and speaks to hundreds of school children throughout the year and lets them know about our show. It's always good to see new members get involved, and we'd like to especially thank Tom Whitlatch and Julie Sova, who, as pretty new members, took on some big responsibilities and put in a lot of work. Also a special thanks to the kids who helped: Michelle and Heather Houg, Shelly and Becky Johnson, and Theresa Sonnleitner.

This year was the first in a long time that all our display area was filled and that's really important because part of the purpose of the show is to educate. We had some fantastic displays of Midwest minerals, including one from Cornell. A special thanks to Maynard Green and Professor Paul Garvin for their programs. Both of their programs and the Fluorescent program were very popular.

From the responses we received, this was also a great show for the dealers. Our attendance of over 2900 topped by about 300 the previous high for recent years. Our net income from the show was down, however, largely because of expenses for advertising, electrical equipment, and security, but we should be able to cut back on both advertising and electrical next year. All in all it was a terrific show! Thanks to all of you who helped in any way!

Sharon Sonnleitner and Marv Houg, Co-chairmen

### ECHOES FROM WHITEWATER CANYON: AN ESSAY ON JONES CO. LANDSCAPES

Last month I mentioned Jeff Nekola's article in the Wapsipinicon Almanac. Thanks to Leslie Blin, I now have a copy of the article, "Echoes from Whitewater Canyon: An Essay on Jones Co. Landscapes". The article is several pages long, and is beautifully written. Sometimes it is hard to realize this young man, who we all thought of as our kid as he grew up - and up, became a very active member of our rock club, is now a doctor - a professor at Green Bay, Wisconsin. I believe Leslie will have a copy of this article at the meeting. I hope you will take advantage of the opportunity to read it. It is so well written, and it is about the countryside that we all love - IOWA. Wish I could write that well, and wish I could see some of the countryside and plants of which he writes. We miss so much in our rush to do too many things.

**OPERATION WILDFLOWER WORKSHOP**

June 3, 1995 - CEDAR VALLEY NATURE TRAIL, Community Center, La Porte City, IA. Pre-registration due May 26 - \$12. Fee includes lunch, morning coffee and daily trail pass. 8am Coffee & exhibit viewing. A day filled with programs on Iowa's Nature Trails, Birds of Iowa, Butterflies of Iowa, Area Wildflowers, Roadside Vegetation, winding up at 2pm with field trips for Wildflower Identification and Eagles Nest Viewing. Write Laura Froning, 2071 Mallard Ave., Sheffield, IA 50475 or Marian McNabb, P.O.Box 56, 311 Sweet Ave., Linn Grove, IA 51033.

**LINN COUNTY CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRAMS**

June 12-16 Monday - Friday - ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOL for TEACHERS - WICKIUP HILL NATURAL AREA. This basic course is for those without previous experience. Contact Jim Schieb at Grant Wood AEA 399-6700 or the Conservation Dept. 398-3505.

June 18 FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL Archaeological Hike - Visit the Cedar River Greenbelt at Wickiup Hill Natural area to view the latest archaeological work and Indian Burial Mounds. Meet at 2 PM - Outdoor Learning Area parking lot north of Morris Hills Road

June 19-23 Monday - Friday - Advanced Archaeological Field School for Teachers - Wickiup Hill. This field school is for teachers with previous field experience, including the June 12-16 school.

**SEED COLLECTION-VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

"Highway 151 between Walford and Fairfax is scheduled for work in 1995. This road work will impact a native prairie between Highway 151 and the railroad tracks. Many of you may be familiar with this remnant of Iowa past. The Linn County Conservation Board coordinated the collection of prairie seed during the fall of 1994 for replanting following the construction work. Numerous groups and individuals participated in this effort. The Conservation Board has agreed to contribute money toward the "Connections" speaker series based on the quantity of seed collected by these volunteers. This is a good way for groups to help restore a quality prairie and help out a good program at the same time. Prairie seed collection will again be collected during 1995. If your group is interested in assisting with this collection, call Dennis Goemaat at 398-3505 for more information."

If you are interested in other natural history field trips, THE NATURE CONSERVANCY - IOWA CHAPTER has lots of great summer trips including:

- Cedar Hills Sand Prairie, May 27-1 pm Geology and Spring Flora and other dates throughout the summer BLACK HAWK COUNTY
- Hanging Bog & Williams Prairie, June 17 - 10-4 - LINN COUNTY
- Southern Loess Hills Prairies, June 24 - 10 - 5 Western Iowa
- Freda Haffner Kettlehole, July 1 10-12 DICKINSON COUNTY

**SECRETARY'S REPORT - Board Meeting, March 8, 1995.**

The Board met at the home of Marv & Sue Houg, March 8, 1995. The meeting was called to order by President Marv Houg. There were 11 members present.

The 1st order of business was to confirm 45 to 50 are on the list for the catered dinner Saturday evening at the show. 2nd - Marv will pick up 12 more rolls of paper. 3rd - Marv will place the order for the USGS books.

The 4th order of business - insurance was discussed. There were several questions, ie: shed coverage, deductible, special events & quarry liability. Marv had received the following information: The price for Midwest Federation is \$1.65 per club member, per year, without coverage for any property. Commercial company insurance is \$2.63 per member, per year and \$150 per year for property. ie: The shed \$1000., contents \$2000. with unknown deductible. Sharon will check on the accuracy of this information.

Fifth - overnight security at the show - will be provided by Al Johnson. Sixth - the generator set up for the show has been ordered. Seventh - slide projector with remote and a screen needed for programs at the show. Eighth - TV Ad times for KCRG-TV - try for Thursday 5-5:30 pm, Fri. 6-7 am; Sat. 6-8am x 2. Marv will follow up on this. Price about \$225. Motion by Tom Whitlatch to run ads. Seconded and carried. Ninth - Gazette ad to run March 12, and 16 - 19 for about \$60. The Penny Saver ad will run March 15 for about \$14.00. Tenth - tables are ordered. Eleventh - change date for next year's show to March 30 & 31, 1996. Motion made, seconded and carried. Adjourned at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Whitlatch, Secretary

**SECRETARY'S REPORT - General Meeting, Wednesday, March 15, 1995**

Cedar Valley Rocks & Minerals Society met at the AEGON Bldg, March 15, 7:15 PM.

The meeting was called to order by Marv Houg. Sixteen members present.

The secretary's report was approved as published.

The treasurer's report was read, Moved, seconded and carried to approve.

Committee reports were given. Publicity is finished except for the TV ad which will be aired several times (see Board minutes). Jim & Myrna Shetterly's geode collection and business will be written up in NEIGHBORS in the Gazette Wed., 3/15/95. It was suggested a poll be taken at the door to find out how and where people heard about the show. A suggestion made to put charcoal in the display cases when they are put in storage. Dinner will be served at 6:30 pm both Friday and Saturday evenings.

1996 show dates had to be changed back to March 23 & 24, because of a booking date conflict.

The auction will be October 21, 1995, American Legion Hall in Ely, Iowa.

A motion was made by Julie Sova to provide \$5. gift certificates from the dealers, to give as door prizes. Seconded and carried.

Motion made by Dick Smouse to provide trophies and prize money, not to exceed \$100., for the 3 winners at the Science Fair. Seconded and carried.

Insurance was discussed. Sharon reported the following corrected insurance information: Show Insurance will be provided by American Special Risk for \$100. The Midwest Federation Insurance covers the shed contents up to \$15,000, but not the shed. It also covers any damage done to property on a field trip by members and guests for \$1.65 per active member. For next year Special Events (Show) coverage is included in the basic coverage.

A suggestion to increase the annual dues to \$10. a year was brought up. It was tabled until the board meeting.

Field trips: April 1 & 2, Julie Sova & Tom Whitlatch plan to go to Sheffler's geode mine. July 9, '95 MAPS has a field trip planned (Burlington formation - SE Iowa). We will meet at the Karl Stuekerjuergen home, West Point, IA, at 10 AM. for the field trip. Return to Karl's for a potluck at 1 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Whitlatch, Secretary

### LOBBYING THE RS 2477 RIGHT-OF-WAY PROPOSED CHANGE EFFECTIVELY

A letter was received on February 11th, from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) that the comment period for proposed changes on RS 2477 Right-of-Way regulations has been extended to August 1st. George Loud, AFMS C/L Chair, reported earlier that he had requested an extension so everyone could comment.

Arbitrarily closing all dirt roads and paths off paved roads in BLM managed public lands, is completely unfair to rockhounds, hunters, fishermen, and the general public. This land has not been put into Wilderness by an act of Congress. The proposal would require local governing bodies to identify all roads that they want open and explain why. Of course, this is very expensive and labor intensive, so the tendency for these local bodies, would be to record only what they thought was absolutely necessary. In many cases, this could exclude the access means of the rockhound, hunter, and fisherman to their favorite spot.

If the revised RS 2477 Right-of-Way regulation becomes enforceable by the BLM, the recreational groups will not travel to the affected areas and this will be a great loss of tourist dollars to local merchants and lodgings.

To effectively lobby an arbitrary decision like this, we need to find a win-win solution. The recreationalists will win by getting it stopped and the local communities will win by not having to expend money and time (unfunded mandates). When you write a letter to Secretary Bruce Babbitt, Department of Interior, 1849 C. St. NW, Room 5555, Washington, DC 20240, relate the unfairness to the recreationalists, and the unfunded mandates to local communities and loss of tourist dollars. List copies to Senators, particularly Republican western Senators like R. Doles (KS), A. Simpson (WY), C. Burns (MT), M. Hatfield (OR), O. Hatch (UT), L. Craig (ID), P. Domenici (NM), R. Packwood (OR), D. Nickles (OK), D. McCain (AZ), S. Gorton (WA), and H. Brown (CO). Send a photocopy of your letter for each Senator listed to the Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510. Many of these Senators are on the Senate Public Lands subcommittee and a call from any one of them to Secretary Babbitt will carry a lot of weight in addition to your letter. These Senators have many concerned merchants and local officials at home. If you belong to a hunting or fishing organization, write to them and suggest that they encourage their members to write.

John Boland MEMBER of AFMS C/L COMMITTEE

### WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT PUMICE??

This might be called the "igneous rock that floats". Dr. Albert Johansen tells how. After the eruption of Krakatoa, sailors could leave their ships and walk to shore over two miles of floating pumice. "Pumice is a sort of rock froth - a kind of obsidian expanded by floating gas," says Dr. Richard M. Pearl. Besides being used in pencil erasers, it is used in toothpaste, as an insulator, and as a light weight aggregate for concrete. It has long been known for its abrasive and polishing properties.

Glacial Drifter, via Achates 6/94

### PUMICE FOR A FINE FINISH?

If you are doing some silver work and want a soft finish, use pumice. What? You don't have any? Guess again. Use a bit of your favorite toothpaste. Most people do not realize that pumice is the polishing agent in toothpaste. If it is a fluoride toothpaste, it can also be used for cleaning crystals.

From Pick and Dop Stick via MWF NEWSLETTER

**NEW QUARTZ COLLECTING SITE**

By Betty M. James

The U.S. Forest Service has opened a new collecting site which they have named Crystal Vista, to amateur rockhounds for collecting with hand tools only and for personal use only. Located on Gardner Mountain near Mt. Ida, Arkansas, the collecting area is the quarry of an unnamed mine operated in the 1980s by various persons. No fee is charged and it is open daily, year-round. According to the ranger's office, very few days are too cold for collecting in that part of the state. Summers, though, can get extremely hot with dehydration being a possible problem unless one carries along plenty of water.

This site is easily accessible from Mt. Ida by following these directions: Go south on State Highway 27 for 3.8 miles, turn east onto Owley Road, and then travel another 4.1 miles. A graveled parking area is maintained at that point. A forestry sign here lets you know you are at the right place. A good reference point is Wegner's mine which is also located on Owley Road and displays a large sign at the intersection of Owley Road and Highway 27. Wegner's has a new, well marked entrance which is just one mile before you reach the Crystal Vista parking area. We did not personally investigate their accommodations, but their advertisement indicates that they also have RV Hookups.

Motorized vehicles are not allowed on the trail which is actually the old mine road and is in excellent condition. According to a flyer from the Forestry Service, "The trail starts at the base of the mountain at an elevation of 900 feet and continues about a mile to a final elevation over 1,200 feet. The hike is steep and takes about 25 minutes."

This might be a 25 minute walk for someone in good physical condition and acclimated to the altitude. However, if you are an out-of-shape desk jockey, plan to spend about one hour on the trail going up and another 45 minutes in your descent. You will definitely want to "pull over and let your engine cool" more than once during the steep climb. Even so, it is a shaded, pleasant walk.

After you have had time to get your breath, you will also want to climb another 100 feet or so up to the crest of the ridge and take a look at the fantastic view of Lake Quachita to the northeast. To the northwest there is a tiny settlement nestled in the valley and to the south you will find a colorful display of shades of green as the evergreen and deciduous trees mingle their hues. At this point you will be glad you remembered to bring your camera.

There are no restrooms or drinking water at either the parking area or the quarry. Remember to bring along an ample supply of food and water and, that "if you pack it in, you must pack it out." Camping and campfires are prohibited. The Ranger also stressed the need to be careful with cigarettes and to remember that any cigarette butts are considered debris which should be packed out with your other trash.

You will need to take along a garden trowel, a small hand rake, a chisel, a rock hammer or other like hand tools as well as a container and plenty of wrapping material for carrying out your finds. Be sure to include sunscreen and bug spray.

Once on a field trip with a group which included the Doyleses of Florida, we were impressed with a cart Ed had made for just such locations. He used the bare frame from a big wheel Yazoo mower, added a handle for pulling, and one of



those plastic milk crates which holds four of the gallon jugs for the container. It would be ideal for carrying your tools, water, and other supplies up the mountain and for bringing your crystals back down.

Several exposed veins of quartz in the quarry walls and loose crystals scattered over the dumps and floor of the quarry make collecting easy. Each rain uncovers more loose crystals which are retrievable simply by picking them up off the ground. We found many good micros and thumbnails along with a few cabinet size specimens. Mostly because of the weight and bulk, and having to carry them out, we did not pick up some really nice larger specimens. Instead, Tom took photographs of them. Some of the crystals we found had manganese inclusions and much resembled the famous "blue phantoms" produced by the Robbins Mine.

Incidentally, while we were in Mt. Ida, the Robbins people told us their "blue phantom" location is mined out. What they now have on hand will end the supply unless they find another deposit. They also have a small supply (only about 4 lbs.) of the Jeffrey solution quartz crystals left in stock, and as you probably know, the Jeffrey has been closed for years.

For more information about Crystal Vista and maps to the area, you may contact the Womble Ranger District, P. O. Box 255, Highway 270 East, Mount Ida, Arkansas 71957, phone (501) 867-2101. The ranger station is located about one mile east of the Mt. Ida Motel on Highway 270.

References: Mineral News, Vol.10. No. 7, July 1994, Ream Publ. Crystal Vista Information Flyer, U.S. Forestry Service.  
Conversation with Mary Stiles, Dist. Ranger's Office, August '94  
Personal Collecting Trip, August 1994  
from Rocky Echoes 9/94, to us via EARTH SCIENCE NEWS 12/94

### IOWA CORAL

Iowa has few native cutting materials. There is only one fossil coral that may be cut. It is called Lithostrotionella coral or a few common names as Honeycomb or Iowa pink. This coral was formed during the Mississippian and later geologic periods. There are two major regions of coral in Iowa. One is around Iowa City and the other is in the south east corner, around Keokuk. The Iowa City material is soft and colored a light brown, with very large colonies. It is undesirable for jewelry but does make fair carvings and bookends. The Keokuk material is harder, colored white to dark red, with some pieces showing a tint of blue. The colonies are smaller than in the Iowa City coral. The Keokuk material is thought to have been formed at a depth of eight to one hundred feet in the inland sea, about 325 million years ago. The coloring that has made this coral so famous is caused by iron oxide ingested by the coral animals. This coral is highly silicified. The corals grew in a colony of individual cones, each cone was made by one small animal and is almost always a hexagon shape from very small to nearly a half inch size. The colony forms from a single base into a spherical shape, called a head. The top of the colonies are rough with a raised edge and a raised center. When cut, this coral makes a very unique stone. Slice across the heads and you get a hexagon shape showing the coral to its best advantage. Cut lengthwise, the stone will show the ribs of growth. Angle cut may show both of the above.

via Shawmish Roktawk

## FOSSIL STAMPS

(from "Ghost Sheet", February, 1995 via 'CFMS Newsletter')

Everything we know about early life we learn from the study of fossils. In the United States, we have a fine fossil heritage. The pride we have in our fossil heritage could be advertised to the world by releasing several sets of stamps picturing fossils. Three sets of fossil stamps, one for each era, would be the best way to honor the science of Paleontology (study of fossils).

Paleozoic Era (570 million to 225 million years ago) Includes Trilobites, Crinoids, Brachiopods, Armored Fishes, Ammonites, Plants, Ferns.

Mesozoic Era (225 million to 65 million years ago) First mammals, Reptiles (dinosaurs), Early Insects, Sharks and Bony Fish, Cycads and Early Flowering Plants.

Cenozoic Era (65 Million to present) Early Birds, Early Whales, First Horses, Early Apes, Woolly Mammoth, Saber Toothed Cat, Man.

People at the Smithsonian Museum could consult with the postal people in design of the stamps. The fossils could be shown in early reconstructed scenes or as fossils of today.

It takes thousands of letters to convince the postal service. I asked interested collectors (rocks and stamps) to write and request that our fossil heritage be recognized. Thank You. TONY VERDI

Write to:  
US Postal Service  
Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee  
Room 5800  
475 L'Enfant Plaza West, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20260-6352

FFF Editor's Note:

*I included this because I believe this is a great idea, but we need to get involved ourselves and make sure the facts are straight. We certainly don't need another "Brontosaurus" stamp.*

(via FOSSILS FOR FUN)

(Cedar Valley - Editor's note - Toni Verdi spoke to MAPS members and guests at the recent National Fossil Exposition, Western Illinois University, Macomb, Ill. Toni urged us to push for invertebrate fossils, such as trilobites, and crinoids, to be used on the stamps, noting that the dinosaurs have been used.)

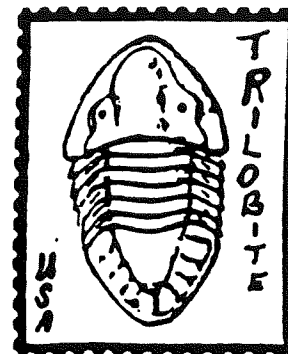
## SAFETY... 'HELLO - 911'

by Mel Albright...RMFMS Safety Chairman

Have you ever considered rockhounding as a fire hazard? Do you ignore the possibility? Do you have 911 memorized? Some spare skin saved up? A wig to replace your natural hair?

Well, maybe we all should slow down and consider what we have around that might catch fire and burn. Rocks? Well, no...unless you have some Colorado oil shale. But oil and solvents and glues? You bet they will.

If I look around any shop, I find acetone (for cleaning facet material, for releasing epoxy for releasing super glue, household cement (one of the most dangerous), alcohol, and occasionally commercial solvents for various purposes. And, the proverbial oily rags...and a wastebasket I haven't emptied in years. Every one of these will burn. And I bet you have some I don't have! Some will ignite extremely easily...acetone and alcohol for example. And my shop is indoors, shame on me! Not one solvent is in a safety container. Not one glue is in a fireproof box. And I seldom worry about ventilation when I use these things. I've been lucky...not careful.



They tell us it takes three things to have a fire: heat, fuel and oxygen. As I have shown, most of us have the fuel. The oxygen is in the air all around us. The only thing needed to start a fire is heat--from an alcohol lamp, from a sparking brush on a motor, from smoking, from a spark when using a tool (remember flint and steel starter kits)?

SOLUTIONS; Keep all solvents outdoors in a safe location. Bring in only small quantities in a safe container, and have them in for only the time you need them. Place glues and the like in a metal box with a lid. Remove oil rags and other combustible materials and discard them. Practice good housekeeping. Be aware of fire danger and avoid it at all times. And most important, keep a Class A, B, C, fire extinguisher in you shop. The ABC rating means it is good for any fire -- paper/wood, electrical or solvent. Be sure you know how to use it. It's hard to read the instructions while a fire is burning in your shop.

from Pick and Hammer News via The Shawmish Roktawk

### HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING

- April 21-23, 1995 BLACKHAWK ROCK CLUB - SHOW, NORTH TOWNE MALL, 3600 North Main at Riverside, Rockford, Ill. Fri. 10-9; Sat. 10-5:30; Sun. 12-5. Dealers, demonstrations and more
- April 29-30, 1995 HEART OF WISCONSIN - SHOW - South Wood Co. Recreational Center, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisc.
- May 5-7, 1995 CENTRAL ILLINOIS GEM & MINERAL CLUB - SHOW, Macon County Fairgrounds, Decatur, Ill.
- June 3-4, 1995 COULEE ROCK CLUB - SHOW, Viroqua High School Gym, Viroqua, WI
- June 23-25, 1995 LAWRENCE COUNTY ROCK CLUB - SHOW & SWAP - Buying Selling & Trading, Monroe County 4-H Fairgrounds, Bloomington, IN Fri. 8 - 7; Sat. 8-7; Sun. 8-4. Camping \$6. per night. Bring your own tables - \$2. per front foot space charge. Reservations taken when number of feet requested and money accompanies reservation. Space reserved according to postmark. No telephone reservations. This is a really big event.
- September 23-24, 1995 AUSTIN GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY - SHOW, St. Edwards Community Center, Austin, Minn
- October 13-15, 1995 MICHIGAN MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY - MIDWEST FEDERATION CONVENTION AND SHOW, Detroit Light Guard Armory, 4400 East Eight Mile Road, Detroit, Michigan Fri. 9-7; Sat. 10-9; Sun. 10-6
- October 21, 1995 Auction, American Legion Hall, Ely, Iowa (more in May or June)
- October 28-29, 1995 BLACKHAWK GEM & MINERAL CLUB - SHOW, Milan Community Center, Milan, Illinois
- October 27-29, 1995 - AUSTIN & DALLAS PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETIES - FOSSILMANIA XIII, Somervell County Expo Center, Glen Rose, Texas. Fri. 10-6; Sat. 9-6; Sun. 9-2. This is a new, larger location. Tables are \$20. each.  
BUY SELL TRADE

CEDAR VALLEY ROCKS & MINERALS SOCIETY  
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