



# PICK & SHOVEL

P.O. Box 5342, Lincoln, Nebraska 68505-0342, [www.lincolngemmineralclub.org](http://www.lincolngemmineralclub.org)

The purpose of this corporation shall be to study, promote an interest in, and disseminate knowledge of lapidary and various Earth Sciences including but not necessarily limited to Geology, Paleontology and Mineralogy. It shall be a particular purpose of the corporation to provide education in these fields to its members and the general public, especially to youth and student groups.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 2014 Meetings and Activities

#### Board

Wed., Sep 3 (Gere Library)

Wed., Oct 1 (Gere Library)

Wed., Nov 5 (Gere Library)

Wed., Dec. 3 (Gere Library)

#### General

Thurs., Sep 18

Thurs., Oct 16

Thurs., Nov 20

Sun., Dec 7

#### Activities

Rock Party - August 23

Regular monthly meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. at the Bethany Park Shelter House. Youth activities begin at 6:00 p.m. Summer activities will be announced as they are planned.

#### General Meeting

Summer Break

Check "Activities"  
at the left to find summer fun!

#### Mineral Monkeys

Summer Break

Check "Activities"  
at the left to find summer fun!

## REGIONAL SHOWS

### AUGUST

**15-17 ST. LOUIS, MO.** Greater St. Louis Association of Earth Science Club's Annual Show; Machinist Hall Auditorium, 12365 St. Charles Rock Rd., Bridgeton; Fri. 3-8, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; Contact: Willis Smith, 314-521-8896 or Robert Morse, 636-462-4423.

**23-24 PEORIA, IL.** PAS Geology's Annual Rock and Mineral Show; Grand Hotel, 4400 N. Brandywine Dr.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-5; Contact: Jim Travis, 309.645.3609, [boatnick@aol.com](mailto:boatnick@aol.com), [www.pasgeology.com](http://www.pasgeology.com).

### SEPTEMBER

**13 ROCKFORD, IL.** Rock River Valley Gem & Mineral Society's Rock, Mineral & Fossil Swap; Odd Fellows Hall, 6219 Forest Hills Rd.; Sat. 9:30-4; Contact: John Wood, 815.978.6960, [gotwood63@gmail.com](mailto:gotwood63@gmail.com).

**Support other clubs by attending their shows. Let Sharon Marburger know about the other club shows you attend.**

August Birthdays:

Rowdy Cropp

Karen Messenger

Taylor Gerlach Suhr

Andrew Tiedje

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Ed Dvorak, President

For everyone who went to Terry, Montana, I hope you had a good time and will bring some of what you found to our next club meeting - September 18.

I have written this message early because I will be going to Montana. Afterwards, Pat and I are going to visit South and North Dakota and wherever else the road takes us from there!!

No matter where you are or where you plan to go, PLEASE BE CAREFUL, and enjoy the outdoors.

Be safe and happy!



# August Rock Party

**Bring Your Own Grinder,  
project, or plan to teach  
someone else!**

**August 23**

**All Day Event**

**Bruce Sturges' Home in Omaha  
Potluck lunch with BBQ grill available**

Contact Bruce at [bruce@tftgeo.com](mailto:bruce@tftgeo.com) or call 402.680.4051 to let him know you will be attending. He needs to know what type/size of machine you are bringing (if any). If you have a few pieces of rough you want to grind but have no machine, you have an interest in what cutting is all about, you want to learn how to do another art form of the hobby, or you just want to talk about rocks/minerals/gemstones, this is the place to be!

Bruce has to limit the number to 20, so let him know you will be there. He will give you directions to his place when you contact him. Plan to have a great time visiting with Omaha club members and meeting new people.

**Last month's Rock Party at Bruce's  
was a success. Help to make this  
month's party a success, too!**

## REFRESHMENTS

### **Sep 18:**

Carrie Burkhart & Sharon Marburger

### **Oct 16:**

Sara Burden & Sharon Marburger

### **Nov 20:**

Carolyn Ashmore & Vera Lyman

### **December 7:**

Christmas Party

### **January 2015**

Everyone brings snacks for Swap;  
Anniversary Cake

## GEODE FEST 2014

by Mark Awakuni-Swetland

The Tenth-Annual Geode Fest will be held September 26, 27, and 28 in Hamilton, Illinois. Guided trips will depart the Chaney Creek Boat Access, located on Highway 96 North. The hunts will be held as scheduled, rain or shine. Portable restrooms will be available at the registration area, but not at the collecting areas.

A \$20.00 registration fee per person, or a \$30.00 family fee, entitles you to two (2) hunts per day on Friday and Saturday, and one (1) hunt on Sunday morning. Some of these guided hunts are on private property, not normally open to the general public for geode hunting at any other time. An additional fee of \$20.00 per 5-gallon bucket of geodes kept will be assessed. The St. Francisville site fees are a flat rate of \$.55/pound for anything you decide to keep.

The first guided hunt of each day leaves the Chaney Creek Access Area parking lot just north of Hamilton at 8 a.m. and returns at 12 noon. The second trip of the day leaves at 1 p.m. and returns at 5 p.m. Please arrive at the parking lot one hour prior to departure time to check in, find the group leader, and leave at the appointed times.

You are responsible for your own transportation to and from the collecting sites, your own 5-gallon buckets, proper clothing, collecting tools, water, sunscreen, bug spray, etc. Tour guides will lead you to the sites and be available during the hunts.

There will be daily prizes awarded for the "Prettiest", "Most Unusual", "Largest", "Smallest", "Oddest", "Rarest", "Ugliest" and a couple other categories. The prizes will be given away at 5:30 p.m.

each day at the Chaney Creek Access Area. We will have a separate 12-and-under-division so the kids aren't competing with adults for the awards.

Go to [http://geodefest.org/Home\\_Page.php](http://geodefest.org/Home_Page.php) for further information, registration form, and release form. And have a great time!!

## SUMMER ROCK FINISHING

by Bill Ray

The polished rocks shown below are those that were finished at the end of July. The white rocks are Colorado White Quartz that I have had since 1972, and have just now gotten around to polishing. The other rocks are from down around Hebron, Nebraska.

I built my first rock tumbler when I was 18 years old. Since then, I have built a few more over the years. The tumbler I now use I built in 1998, and it holds 10 pounds of rock.

I've polished three loads of rocks so far this year. I always give a nice dish of polished rocks back to the farmer who allows me to go rockhunting on his land. He is always surprised that those rocks came from his place.



## J J & L Rocks &

P.O. Box 68 Hickman, NE 68372 **Minerals** 330 Locust Hickman, NE 68372

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Eric Harrison  
402.792.2337

James Marburger  
Sharon Marburger  
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## HOW TO DECONSTRUCT AND REHABILITATE AN OPAL TRIPLET

by James Marburger

An opal triplet is a composite stone of three different materials. The base of the triplet is usually made up of almost any black material: basalt, agate, jade, or onyx; even some hard plastic materials or ceramics have been used. This layer might even be opal patch, a non-fire opal with lamp black in the epoxy or glue to give a black background under the fire opal layer. The fire opal layer is a very thin section of that might have been salvaged from chips or layers of opal that would not cut a solid cabochon. On top of this, a cap is added to protect and magnify the opal's play of colors. This layer can be optical clear quartz, natural or man grown quartz, or even glass.

Opal triplets are fantastic for opal jewelry. The color play usually is bright and vivid. With a quartz cap on the opal, the hardness and durability is increased. However, triplets need some special handling. The play of colors in the opal actually is water within the spherical makeup of the opal. Therefore, the best advice is to avoid extreme heat or cold because the water contained in them will either convert to steam or freeze, thereby breaking the opal. Opals are like people; if one can stand the temperature, the opals can, too.

Submersion in water will pose problems for the glue used in an assembled triplet. If a triplet becomes cloudy, or has bubbles under the clear cap, more than likely it is water damage. The glue probably has failed due to temperature change or over-soaking in water, such as washing dishes. To repair this damage, we now come to the deconstruction of a triplet.

### USING SOLVENTS

Historically, many types of glue have been used in the making of triplets. How do we dissolve or loosen the glue? One way is to use a solvent, such as mineral oil, paint thinner, alcohol, lacquer thinner, or acetone. All of these carry a fire danger, so use of a sealable glass jar and plenty of ventilation is needed, as well as a work area free of flame hazards. If this does not work, a commercial product called "Attack," by Hughes Associates, might be used. This product is methylene chloride, and it is nasty stuff. The use of a NISOH-approved full-face respirator with organic vapor cartridges and major ventilation is needed when using "Attack."

The use of solvents poses another problem; both glue joints will be affected. If you are lucky, they will separate from one another. Clean off any remaining glue from all the pieces, then carefully wash the pieces to remove any remaining solvent. Be careful! Breakage of the thin opal layer is possible. Once the layers are cleaned, reassembly can begin.

### MANUAL DECONSTRUCTION

The safest deconstruction of a triplet is to start from the black side. Grind off the backing material, down to the opal layer. When grinding the material, the hardest part will be keeping the stone flat. Use of a horizontal flat lap or facet lap will be the safest way to control the flatness of the stone. Proceed slowly so the stone does not slip off of parallel to the opal layer. Use a 600 grit wheel to finish off the grinding. Once the opal layer is exposed, the new backing can be glued to the opal. Adding a small amount of "lamp black" to the epoxy when mixing will add color to the glue. "Lamp black" can be made by burning a candle and placing an old spoon just above the flame upside down. The soot will collect in the spoon. After it cools, the epoxy can be mixed in the spoon, thus turning the epoxy black. The back material is glued to the opal and dried for 24 hours.

Now start to grind the cap off in the same manner as the back. Once the cap is ground down to the opal, and finished using a 600 grit wheel, a new cap can be added. You can use quartz to make your own cap or a new, ready-made quartz cap can be used. Mix the epoxy slowly so not to introduce air bubbles to the mix. The most common epoxy used is 330 Epoxy by Hughes Associates because it dries water clear and is a slow set (24 hour) for maximum strength. When gluing the cap, apply the epoxy to both surfaces. The cap is placed on the opal using a screwing twist motion of the cap to force out any air bubbles and excess glue. If air bubbles are trapped, separate and reapply glue. Once you are happy with it, a spring clothes pin can be used to act as a glue clamp.

Now that you have the triplet back together, the backing material can be shaped to match the cap if a commercial cap was used. Otherwise, both the cap and backing material will need to be shaped and polished. Use super glue as a dop medium if a dop stick is used. Once the triplet is polished, you have a reconstructed, rehabilitated opal that will please someone for another bunch of years.

## WHAT IS A DENDRITE?

From *Rockhound Ramblings* June 2010 via *Stoney Statements*, July 2014

Dendrites - crystalline, black, fern-like patterns that resemble forest scenes - have captured the fancy of collectors for centuries. Dendrites produce an amazing original work of art by Mother Nature.

You may have heard the term dendrite or more likely the adjective, dendritic, used when describing a gemstone and wondered exactly what it was. They are attractive patterns, usually black or dark brown that are seen in many types of gemstone material. They are most often associated with agates but are sometimes found in quartz, opal, limestone and other stones. They are sometimes called picture stone or painted stone. The patterns occur naturally due to the presence of iron and manganese oxides. Dendrites are the branch-like formations of manganese oxide crystallizing within the stone.

Metaphysically, these mineral dendrites symbolize growth or change. The word dendrite comes from the Greek word for "tree" because a dendritic inclusion in a stone looks like a branching tree or at least like some type of plant life. They are often said to look like ferns or moss and many people mistakenly speculate that they are fossil imprints of moss. Actually dendrites are inclusions of manganese crystals. They are formed when manganese rich water seeps into tiny crevices in rocks and the manganese crystals are deposited in intricate branching patterns.

*Photograph taken by Mark A. Wilson (Department of Geology, The College of Wooster).  
Permission to use - Granted*



## ASSIST A FELLOW ROCKHOUND?

My name is Rod Welander. My father spent more than 40 years in the sand and gravel business in Dodge County. For most of those years he was a "rock hound" and had very many interesting finds. Upon his death, my siblings and I divided up the rocks that he had cut and polished. I was left with all the uncut rocks. Among those rocks are petrified wood, agates, and fossils. My father had an arrangement with someone of similar interest who would cut and polish his rocks for one half of the rock. I was hoping to find someone who might be interested in that same type of arrangement. Please pass my name and information on to your members with my request. Perhaps someone would indeed be interested.

Rod Welander  
310 N. Christy St.  
Fremont, NE 68025  
402-727-1272  
rwelander@msn.com

## Silversmithing classes

**The Jewelry Connection Ltd.  
Indian Village Shopping Ctr.  
13th & Arapahoe, Lincoln**

**Tuesdays**

**August 12, 2014**

**thru**

**September 30, 2014**

**7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.**

**Tuition: \$120 plus \$30 supply deposit**

**Contact:**

**Jayne Beer 402-890-3307**

**Judith Bay 402-423-7058**

**or e-mail**

**jbeer60070@aol.com**

## MINERAL MONKEYS

by Carolyn Ashmore

Hello Again Juniors,

With summer vacation almost over, and school right around the corner, I hope you all had a safe, exciting, and wonderful time hunting and perhaps finding that special rock, mineral or even fossil you always wanted for your collections. I've been taking some time this summer to do some catching up on tumbling for next year's Science Fair and for our Show. You can never have enough polished stones to give away.

I am looking forward to the September meeting to catch up with all of you, and see what you found over the summer.

## A PERSONAL NOTE TO MEMBERS

Submitted by Carolyn Ashmore

I would like to mention what a great bunch of juniors we have here in the club, and what a pleasure it has been for me to be a part of it all.

This may be a repeat for many of you, but once again I would like to take this time and say thank you to all of the members of LGMC for all the help and continuing support you all give to Susy and me, in our efforts to teach our juniors, not to mention the wonderful specimens you've donated. Some of the donations were out of your own collections, which is very special! Your donations help us in the teaching of our youth and adds to our program, and ultimately the club and the hobby. With so much knowledge and personal experience in this club, it's satisfying to know our kids' interests are being encouraged, as well as their many questions being answered correctly for them. THANK YOU!!

From Carolyn, Susy, and all the Mineral Monkeys



## OUTREACH

by Nancy Akins

On Monday, July 14, 2014, 16 children ages 5 through 12 enjoyed a field trip to Lincoln Curios Rock Shop. Christopher Akins held a large specimen of dogtooth calcite for them all to examine. The large Dugway geodes were one of their favorites. Other activities included splitting shale to look for trilobites, seeing if they could indeed scratch talc (softest mineral on the Mohs Scale of Mineral Hardness), looking at the fluorescing rocks, a brief look at examples of sedimentary, metamorphic & igneous rocks, and looking at assorted fossils with their magnifying glass. Of course, the old standards magnets (natural & man made, vinegar & baking soda volcano, and "The Claw" never seem to grow old. Pictured are the children enjoying the large specimens of petrified wood.



On Thursday, July 17, two groups participated in a field trip to Lincoln Curio Rock Shop. Each child is shown holding up their favorite find of the day. After their hands-on examination of both red & black lava, lepidolite, turitella, peridot and many more, they participated in the volcano eruption, splitting shale to find trilobites, and other rocky adventures. They all hunted rocks in the driveway. You know, us old timers do drop a lot of rocks! They hunted until it was time to go. We all had a good time.

Sometimes there is more than one kind of gem to discover: one of the children thought I was so wise that I must be a "rockologist."

# GRINDING PARTY AT PIONEERS PARK NATURE CENTER

by Karen Messenger

by Jayne Beer

Another Grinding Party has ground to a halt! It was not as busy as Geology Day was. As of 4:05 p.m., the count was 58 adults and 55 kids, for a total of 113. At least we broke 100!

There were 11 displayers and a mostly steady but slow attendance. Maybe the heat and humidity had something to do with it - - - or not.

Thanks to all the "Old Faithfuls," and the two new contributors, for all their work and educational interactions.

Mark your calendars now for 2015! Geology Day will be March 8 and the Grinding Party will be July 12.

Thanks, again, to all.

At the grinding party, I met Hal and his daughter, who were trying to sell some of their wife's/mom's rocks. After talking to them for quite a while, I asked what her name was. It was Bobbie Allen! Bobbie was in Lapidary Class when I started long ago. I had been to her house a couple times and she had commissioned me to make this belt buckle long ago for her husband. It was sad to learn that she had passed away earlier this year. She had been a club member in the late '70s and early '80s. I was always happy to see her at the gem and mineral shows that she rarely missed.



Corey organizing his specimens before starting his demonstration

photos by the Marburgers

BELOW:  
Thanks to Charlie & Karen Messenger for organizing and setting up for the Grinding Party every year!



photos by Jayne Beer



New Mineral Monkey, Ruby, explaining items in her display

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## SUGGESTION TO HELP ACHIEVE OUR CLUB MISSION STATEMENT

SCRIBE - Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors - Volume 38 No 2 April-June, 2014

### Mineral Study Groups

*by Kreigh Tomaszewski*

I'm sure your club objective says something about encouraging an interest in the study of minerals, gems, fossils, rocks, lapidary arts, and the earth sciences (we can agree to disagree about the exact wording).

Would you like your club bulletin to contain a regular educational article about identifying rocks and minerals as a way to meet your club objective? Could you use an extra page of regular science content? My club has had a regular educational article for years, and I can let you in on the secret.

**Step one:** Find someone who is willing to host/facilitate a monthly mineral study group the week before or after your regular club meeting.

**Step two:** The host picks a topic for the (next) meeting. It might be a mineral. It might be a mineral group. It might be a color. It might be a metal ore. It might be a crystal form. It might be a locality. It might be an element.

You should get the idea. After the first meeting, the group should influence the choice, because there are thousands of options (the group can meet forever). It needs to be focused enough for one meeting but broad enough to interest beginners and professional geologists.

**Step three:** Members do some research on the subject mineral (locality, etc.), and they search their collection for example specimens to share. Your collection is useless if you don't share it. Specimens need to be seen by others.

**Step four:** You meet and have an opportunity to learn from each other. You share your specimens and research in a roundtable format. If you have seen a dozen specimens of gypsum, held them, and looked at them under a lens, you will probably be able to identify a 13th gypsum specimen presented as an unknown.

BTW, this should be a low impact meeting. No refreshments. Fixed start and end times. Perhaps 90 minutes with a bit of slack time at

the beginning and end for social time so you don't need more than a two hour commitment by the host.

**Step five:** Someone in the group (maybe the host) writes up minutes of the meeting and submits them to the bulletin (including an invite to the next meeting, and its subject). You get a few paragraphs to teach others; stick to the high points, but toss in a few odd facts (and a teaser of what you missed). This is the mineral study group's deliverable. Learning to hand identify a mineral, and seeing some eye candy specimens, is gravy for the study group members. Everyone has a chance to be the star since a cool fact counts as much as a cool specimen.

The host does not need to be an expert (but it does help if they have a passion for learning about minerals). The study group learns from each other. And you just need someone to happily take and publish "minutes". The learning comes from the group. The monthly article (minutes) enhances your bulletin. Successful groups focus on finding and sharing details that can be published to help other rockhounds.



My club's bulletin was enhanced years ago when Kevin Ponzio (MWF) convinced me to start a regional mineral study group. We have had members from three clubs participating, and share our monthly updates with several other regional clubs. If your club does not have a mineral study group supporting your club bulletin, you need to think hard about starting one. And don't be discouraged if it is small, its impact will be huge.

Rockhounds really can learn from each other and become better at mineral identification (and you need to let part of your collection get to meet some other rockhounds) as they improve your bulletin and meet your club objective for education.

[Article from the April - June SCRIBE Newsletter](#)

# MULTI-FEDERATION FIELD TRIP TO TERRY, MONTANA

by Jayne Beer (photos by the Beer family)

We arrived in the Terry, Montana area on Wednesday night, July 30th, and signed up for daily trips. Along the way, of course, we hit several landscape rock collecting spots.



Linda Guenter and three of her grandchildren were the only other Lincoln club members we saw here.

*(Continued on page 10)*



On the first day, we went to the river and hunted for Montana agates. We found a few but not as many as we found in the landscapes. There was lots of nice petrified wood.



It didn't take long for Corey to find some people to talk their ears off and show them what he had found.

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## TERRY, MONTANA - CONT'D



(Continued from page 9)

Corey and Logan Guenther on the second day looking for Ammonites. We didn't find much and Logan, Cameron, and Ivy were not too thrilled to be there.



We left the Ammonites area early. I'm not sure what Linda and the kids did, but Brian, Corey, and I went to a little dinosaur museum. Most of these things were found on the ranch that we are headed to today. I hope that we find something there.



The Beer boys were wishing we could get to the other side of the Yellowstone River, where they could see rocks on the shore. We, of course, did find a way down to the river. It was one of the best spots we went to on our trip.



Linda's and the Beers' cars. Yes, we took the LeSabre to new heights by putting a car topper on it.

The weekend seemed very well organized with so many activities planned each day. There were speakers in the evening and there was even a benefit bar-b-que.



We found a little bit of bone, but mostly the best petrified wood we have EVER seen. The car was soooooo over loaded.

At the end of the day, we were given an idea of a place to go, so we did - but we shouldn't have. The roads were not made for our kind of vehicle. It was nice out there but not much worth picking up.



### STANDING COMMITTEES CHAIRMEN

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2 years:	Vera Lyman Ed Dvorak
3 years:	Edward Ridge Robert Cropp

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Jim Marburger, Chairman

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2 years:	Vera Lyman Edward Ridge
3 years:	Robert Gritmit Sharon Marburger

### ADVERTISING, SUBSCRIPTION, AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Advertising by rock / hobby business or interest is permitted with the approval of the Board of Directors. Contact the Editor with your proposed ad. The rate is set at \$20.00 per full page; \$10.00 per 1/2 page; \$5.00 per 1/4 page (minimum) per issue, paid in advance to the Club treasurer. Ads will be placed throughout the newsletter as space permits.

Subscription to the Pick & Shovel is \$15.00 per year for mailed copy.

Membership dues for the Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club are as follows:

- Adults (age 16 and over) - \$15 per year or \$25 per couple (within the same household)
- Juniors - \$2 per year (with a responsible adult)

All new memberships must be accompanied by a written application. Prospective members must gain Board approval and attend one regular meeting before being approved for membership.

### 2015 SHOW COMMITTEE

Chairman:	Ed Dvorak
Breakfast:	Vera Lyman
Dealers:	Charles Wooldridge
Demonstrators:	Carrie Burkhart
Displays:	Jayne Beer, Ed Ridge
Event Center Liaison:	Vera Lyman
Finance & Ticket Sales:	Jim Atkins, Vera Lyman
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LGMC Club Booth:	Bob Gritmit
Nebraska Gem Dig:	Charles Wooldridge
Plants:	Ed Ridge
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Ribbons & Recognitions:	Sharon Marburger
Security:	Vera Lyman
Show Flyer:	
Silent Auction:	Carrie Burkhart
Special Features:	
Web Master:	Jim Atkins
Youth Activities:	Carolyn Ashmore Susy McMahan

**If there is something you would like to do for the Show or to help with planning of the Show, let Ed Dvorak know.**



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# PICK & SHOVEL

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