



The Official Publication of the Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.

# THE PICK & SHOVEL

In association with



The Midwest Federation of  
Mineralogical and  
Geological Societies



The American  
Federation of  
Mineralogical Societies

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.

Current club by-laws can be found at [www.lincolngemmineralclub.org/About/General Information](http://www.lincolngemmineralclub.org/About/General%20Information).

## GENERAL MEETINGS

Third Thursday of the Month, except for January (3rd Sunday), December (1st Sunday), and summer break (June, July, August).

**New Meeting Times:** Juniors meet at 6:15 p.m.  
Adults meet at 7:00 p.m.

**Next meeting:** January 21, 2024 (following Mid-Winter Swap)

## BOARD MEETINGS

Until further notice, Board Meetings will be held at 6:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month.

**Next Board Meeting:**  
Thursday, February 1, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.  
Vera Lyman's Residence

Persons of general membership are invited to attend Board meetings and offer agenda items.

# HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM YOUR 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Brett Jurgens, 402.850.3256, quartz89@aol.com

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President:** Corey Beer, 402.466.6628

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President:** Jayne Beer, 402.890.3307, JBeer60070@aol.com

**Treasurer:** Vera Lyman, 402.464.6089

**Secretary:** Sharon Marburger, 402.429.3323, lgmc.editor@outlook.com

**Board Member:** James Marburger, 402.430.6703, james.marburger@outlook.com

**Board Member:** Clyde Ogg, 402.326.8682, clydeogg55@gmail.com

**Board Member:** Mike Stiles, 402.890.1760, mcstiles72@outlook.com

**Board Member:** Charles Wooldridge, 402.975.0416, charles.wooldridgeii@gmail.com

## 2024 LONG RANGE PLANNING & BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

Jayne Beer, Chairman

1 year: Jayne Beer & Brett Jurgens  
2 years: Sharon Marburger & Clyde Ogg  
3 years: Vera Lyman & Jim Marburger

## 2024 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Jayne Beer, Chairman

1 year: Jeff Kubitz & Vera Lyman  
2 years: Jayne Beer & Brett Jurgens  
3 years: Charles Wooldridge & Donitte Stiles

# ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLUB FUN

## ATTENTION!!!!

We have a club member with a severe peanut allergy.  
 Please bring peanut-free foods to Club functions.  
 Please provide any nut information on your foods.

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/223555904325876>

## Omaha Rock Swap Saturday, February 24, 2024 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Grace Baptist Church  
 205 E. Halleck St.  
 Papillion, NE

Contact Tammy Jeannerete by February 1 at 402.873.6515 or  
 tjeanneret@hughes.net to register as a vendor  
 Vender set up 10 a.m. - 11 a.m., tear down 4 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Please send your hobby-related photos with captions or explanations for publication in the Pick & Shovel. Field trips, lapidary projects, fossil projects, metal projects, wire wrapping, tumbling, or any other activity of interest to the club. Your project may inspire someone else. Send via email (lgmc.editor@outlook.com) or via Facebook Messenger to Sharon Marburger (<https://www.facebook.com/mamamar7880>).

### JANUARY BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Brian Beer



### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

February: Juniors: Pouring a Plaster Cast by Shane Tucker  
 Everyone: Ashfall Fossil Beds by Shane Tucker  
 March: TBD

### PICK & SHOVEL STAFF

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 Vera Lyman;  
 402.464.6089  
 Sharon Marburger;  
 402.429.3323

**DEADLINE:**  
 Last Sunday of the month.

All articles, tidbits, and photos not individually identified as being contributed to this publication are provided by the Editor.

### ACTIVITY NIGHT

By LGMC Board

The Board has scheduled a club activity night for Saturday, January 27, 2024. It will be held at Hidden Gems by The Jewelry Connection Ltd. from 3:00 p.m. through 9:00 p.m. (or later, if needed to complete).

This will be a good opportunity to use the club lapidary equipment for free! You can also earn your equipment certification, which will allow you to use the equipment for \$5.00 per hour, without supervision, at any time Hidden Gems is open for business.

And don't forget that Hidden Gems also holds lapidary



**CLUB DUES ARE DUE  
 BY JANUARY 31, 2024.  
 DUES PAID AFTER  
 THAT DATE WILL  
 INCUR A \$5 LATE FEE.**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Brett Jurgens



Hello.

Welcome to a new year. I hope you had a great holiday. Working retail, I am glad to be past the holiday season. Every year it seems to fly by faster. But once we hit January, I know two things; our club's Mid-Winter Swap is only three weeks away and the annual show is three months away.

I'd like to focus this year on growing the club. By growth, I am looking to both increase membership and increase active members. We have had growth in attendance at our shows the last couple of years. There is a lot of interest in the hobby. Let us encourage those interested in the hobby to join the club, or at least attend a meeting.

I have noticed familiar faces absent at meetings. Lots of routines and rhythms were interrupted the last few years. If you are still a paying member and not attending events, I encourage you to join us. I also ask our club members to think of a face they haven't seen recently, and reach out. I am not great with names, but I plan to look through our membership directory from the past few years and reach out to people I have not seen. Please join me in making the club and our events warm and welcoming.

Sunday, January 21 is our Mid-Winter Swap. This is open to the public from 1:00-5:00 p.m. Dealers are able to begin set up at noon. We can use help from club members starting at 11 a.m. to help set up tables. With the limited parking we do ask that once you have unloaded to please park in the far parking lot. In the time we are there multiple customers will have utilized the parking space. The club will have a pizza party (cost this year will be approximately \$10 per person) following the swap, followed by a quick meeting. A big part of the meeting will be the first chance to sign up to volunteer at the show. Please volunteer to help out the club. We need help with setup on Friday, during the show, and tear down on Sunday. We will also be signing up members for display cases. Every year we get compliments on the quantity and quality of our clubs displays. I have not been to a recent show that rivaled ours. Please don't think you have to have a museum worthy collection to display. I would like to see displays of different collection levels to encourage newcomers to start a collection.

See you at the swap!

SCIENTISTS DISCOVER UNKNOWN PREHISTORIC WORLD - ON EARTH

From <https://mashable.com/article/earth-unique-alien-life>  
Submitted by John Moss

In the profoundly remote Argentina desert, at over 12,000 feet high, and in a place where no roads go, scientists found an exotic world new to science.

Among white salt plains atop the Puna de Atacama plateau, there's a system of greenish lagoons harboring vast bacterial communities, called stromatolites, that create layered mounds as they expand. The unique ecosystem might be a glimpse into Earth, billions of years ago, when primitive organisms first appeared on our planet.

"This lagoon could be one of the best modern examples of the earliest signs of life on Earth," geologist Brian Hynek, one of the scientists who found this elusive ecosystem, said in a statement. "It's unlike anything I've ever seen or, really, like anything any scientist has ever seen."

"It's just amazing that you can still find undocumented things like that on our planet," Hynek, a professor at CU Boulder, marveled.

Some of the oldest evidence of earthly life are preserved stromatolites, like the 3.45-billion-year-old fossilized structures found in Marble Bar, in Western Australia. Back then, photosynthesizing microbes called cyanobacteria created these layered mounds. Significant amounts of oxygen from cyanobacteria wouldn't even appear in Earth's atmosphere until much later, around 2.5 billion years ago.

This newly discovered environment could also hint at what the desert planet Mars was once like when it was a temperate, watery world with lakes and even roaring rivers.

"If life ever evolved on Mars to the level of fossils, it would have been like this," Hynek said. "Understanding these modern communities on Earth could inform us about what we should look for as we search for similar features in the Martian rocks."

It's little wonder these strange lagoons remained unknown - to modern scientists, at least. While staying in a tiny high desert village (population 35), the researchers spotted hints of the lagoon on satellite images. They drove until the road ran out, and then traversed on foot, ultimately arriving at the greenish bodies of water.

"In some places, we were sinking up to our knees in salt slush," Hynek said.



Mark is an award-winning journalist and the science editor at Mashable. After communicating science as a ranger with the National Park Service, he began a reporting career after seeing the extraordinary value in educating the public about the happenings in earth sciences, space, biodiversity, health, and beyond.

You can reach Mark at  
[mkaufman@mashable.com](mailto:mkaufman@mashable.com).

**GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

November 16, 2023, Bethany Park Shelter House  
By Jeff Kubitz, Secretary

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m. by President Brett Jurgens.

29 members in attendance, including two new members, Owen and Catlin.

Motion to accept the minutes as printed in the Pick & Shovel by Sheryl Olson, second by Jim Atkins. Motion carried.

Treasurer Report read by Vera Lyman. Motion to accept Treasurer's Report by Wooly, second by Sharon Marburger. Motion carried.

**Announcements:**

November Birthdays of those in attendance: Gene Mulinix and Clyde Ogg.

Reminder that the Lancaster County Event Center's name will change to Sandhills Global Event Center in December.

The November Rock Party will be held at Hidden Gems on the 19th at 5:00 p.m. Soups and comfort food will be the theme.

The Club Christmas Party will be here, at Bethany Park Shelter House, Sunday, December 3 at 5:00 p.m. There will be social time, a meeting, awards, and food. Bring one hot and one cold dish.

Nikki Lytle's last jewelry class was drusy pendants. She will be teaching a ring class on Thursday, December 21 at Hidden Gems.

**Old Business:**

Brett announced we have the new screen and projector, and the UV lights will be coming soon.

Wooly hosted the October Rock Party. There were lots of attendees. Wooly also led a field trip to the Nemaha River. The field trip will have an article in the April issue of NebraskaLand Magazine. Wooly also mentioned that the petrified wood stump that Hank found will be on display at the Ashfall Fossil Beds Museum during April.

Our Mid-Winter Rock Swap will be held at the Bethany Park Shelter House on Sunday, January 21. Setup is at noon. The public hours are from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Members attending the Christmas Party can have first choice of tables with Advanced Reservation. The Advanced Reservation form and floor plan of available tables will be available on the website beginning December 4. Tables are first come, first served. Each swapper is allowed a maximum of one table.

Vera talked to the City Parks about allowing cash and credit cards sales instead of Swapper Dollars. The application must be approved before the Swap. In the event the application is approved, LGMC will charge \$3 admission for adults, 11 and under are free.

**New Business:**

We are looking for a new place for the 2025 Mid-Winter

Rock Swap and beyond. The main concerns are parking and having more vendors.

**Elections:**

Jayne read the slate for the 2024 Board. She then called three times for nominations from the floor. Arvid Olson asked to be added to the ballot for a Board position. Hearing no further nominations, Sharon moved to close the nominations, second by Wooly. Nominations closed.

Ballots were collected and tallied by Jim Atkins and Judith Bay.

Your 2024 Board of Directors:

President:	Brett Jurgens
1st Vice:	Corey Beer
2nd Vice:	Jayne Beer
Secretary:	Sharon Marburger
Treasurer:	Vera Lyman
Board Members:	Jim Marburger
	Clyde Ogg
	Mike Stiles
	Charles Wooldridge

**Show Business:**

The 2024 Show theme is Nebraska's Geologic Treasures.

Brett mentioned he would like to see 70 display cases and they don't have to be museum quality and can be any rock or mineral you like collecting.

In 2025, we will host the Midwest Federation Show and Convention. Sharon Marburger is in charge of the Federation side of the event, and has been ordered to delegate duties.

Clyde Ogg introduced Professor Robert F. Diffendal, Jr. who presented how to identify minerals and rocks.

Brett Jurgens adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m. after which Professor Diffendal made his presentation.

**GENERAL MEETING MINUTES AND CHRISTMAS PARTY**

December 3, 2023, Bethany Park Shelter House  
By Jeff Kubitz, Secretary

Meeting called to order at 6:53 p.m. by President Brett Jurgens. Thirty-seven members and three adult guests and one junior guest in attendance.

**Old Business:**

Minutes of the November meeting and the Treasurer's Report will be reviewed at the January meeting.

**Announcements:**

Sunday, January 21st will be the Mid-Winter Rock Swap. This is the last night for members to sign up early for a table. After tonight's meeting, the public can sign up through the website.

Jim and Sharon Marburger will host a Rock Party at their home on Saturday, December 16 at 5:00 p.m.

The Show postcards have been ordered. If anyone wants

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**DECEMBER GENERAL MEETING MINUTES—CONTINUED***(Continued from page 4)*

to be a demonstrator at the show, please contact Vera Lyman.

There will be no Rock Party in January, however there will be an Activity Night at Hidden Gems on January 27, 2024. Members may use the lapidary equipment at no charge. The regular charge is \$5 per hour. Gene asked if the club could have more activity nights during the months we don't have a Rock Party. The response was that it is a goal to have more activity nights.

**Awards:**

Sharon presented awards for those who contributed articles and/or pictures to the Pick & Shovel. Donitte Stiles, Jim Marburger, Corey Beer, Clyde Ogg, Wooly, and Jayne. Jeff Kubitz was awarded for contributing meeting minutes. Brett received double recognition for writing President's Messages and Juniors articles.

Jim Marburger moved to adjourn the meeting and Sharon Marburger seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Time for Rock Bingo and gift exchange for those that brought something.

**NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

by Sharon Marburger, Acting Secretary

Thursday, November 2, 2023 at the Lyman Residence.

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Brett Jurgens.

**Roll Call**

President:	Brett Jurgens	Present
1st Vice Pres.:	Corey Beer	Present
2nd Vice Pres.:	Jayne Beer	Present
Treasurer:	Vera Lyman	Present
Secretary:	Jeff Kubitz	Absent
Board:	Charles Wooldridge	Present
	Sharon Marburger	Present
	James Marburger	Present
	Ed Ridge	Present
Guests:	Mike & Donitte Stiles	

Minutes of the October meeting were distributed. Wooly moved to accept the minutes as printed, second by Jim. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's Report was handed out. Sharon moved to accept the Report, second by Jim. Motion carried.

**Announcements:**

Sharon reported that an email was sent to all members of electronic notifications regarding the purchase of MWF T-shirts. No responses have been received. Several Board members put in requests for T-shirts. Sharon will send out a

**NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES—CONTINUED**

reminder email since her deadline to order is November 10.

**Old Business:**

Brett stated that the new projector and screen have been purchased. The screen was damaged in transit and had to be returned. A new one should arrive soon. Brett inquired if we should buy the extended warranty for the projector. Sharon moved, with a second by Wooly, to purchase the extended warranty. Motion carried.

Brett reported that he is still waiting for a response from the UV light vendor. Those lights will hopefully be purchased before the end of the year.

Brett asked if anyone was able to attend the Loup Valley Show. Eddie said he went, and it was good. They had four dealers; two exhibits; raffled six items; had a children's area; and the dealers had jewelry, fossils, rocks, and gemstones. There were also demonstrations and coins on display.

Wooly said the October Rock Party was well attended. Some folks went to the basement to cut cabochons.

The Nemaha River field trip had 12 members attending, and one reporter from NebraskaLand magazine. Corey found about two pounds of Lakers and a 5¼-inch spear point. The group went to the Six Mile Café for supper after the hunt. The food was good and plentiful.

The November Rock Party will be held at Hidden Gems on Sunday, November 19 at 5:00 p.m.

**New Business:**

None.

**Swap Business:**

Jim completed an application for permission to have cash sales on park property. Vera will hand deliver the application to the Parks Department. We now have to wait for the Director to approved the application. The Board went forward with plans for the Swap, in the event that the Parks Department approves the application. The following is contingent upon approval. With cash sales approved, we can eliminate Swapper Bucks and charge admission to offset the loss of revenue from the Bucks. Admission will be \$3 per adult, children 11 and under are free. Advance reservations will be accepted from Swappers. Sharon will offer first choice to club members at the Christmas Party. The regulations were approved. Regulations for sales, a floor plan, and a reservation form will be made available on the club website following the Christmas Party. All other reservations must be made through the website. Sharon will update the table availability on the website following each received reservation. Reservations are made on a first come, first served basis, and must be paid via PayPal. Reservations are not complete until form and payment are received through the website.

We seem to have outgrown Bethany Park Shelter House so discussion was had regarding finding a new venue for 2025 and beyond. Auld Pavilion was considered, but the floor there is delicate and we probably would not be allowed to take rocks in. There is Park Centers Banquet Hall on Parks

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**NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES—CONTINUED**

*(Continued from page 5)*

Blvd. near the Humane Society to check into. Suggestion to check out other social halls in town was accepted.

**Show Business:**

Vera picked up the Event Center contract. Brett asked if we could have the Event Center specify more tables in the contract, and fewer chairs. Since we use almost the same number of tables each year, it would be useful to have good, sturdy tables reserved.

Vera has mailed the Dealer Agreements via certified mail.

The advertising post card was selected. Jim will have 5,000 cards printed.

Brett would like to have 70 display cases at the 2025 Show because it is the club's 70th anniversary that year. The show theme will be "American Petrified Wood". Discussion to have a special display by Norm Balliet. Brett will discuss with Norm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m. on a motion by Wooly, second by Corey.

**DECEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

by Jeff Kubitz, Secretary

Thursday, December 7, 2023 at the Lyman Residence.

Meeting called to order at 6:37 p.m. by 2nd Vice President Jayne Beer.

**Roll Call**

President:	Brett Jurgens	Absent (working)
1st Vice Pres.:	Corey Beer	Present
2nd Vice Pres.:	Jayne Beer	Present
Treasurer:	Vera Lyman	Present
Secretary:	Jeff Kubitz	Present
Board:	Charles Wooldridge	Absent
	Sharon Marburger	Present
	James Marburger	Present
	Ed Ridge	Absent (ill)

Guests: Mike & Donitte Stiles, Clyde Ogg

The Minutes from last meeting were discussed and Sharon moved to accept the minutes, second by Jim. Motion passed to approve the minutes.

Treasure's report was looked over. All dealers have paid show booth rent except Papiro Creek. Jim moved to accept the Treasurer's report, second by Corey. Motion passed.

**Old Business:**

Parks and Recreation approved our application to charge admission and to not use Swapper Bucks at the Swap. Sharon reported that most of the Swapper tables sold out on Monday following the Christmas Party. We have 1½ left as of Board

**DECEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES—CONTINUED**

meeting. Sharon mentioned, if we don't have the Club Booth (aka silent auction), we could sell another table. Tables go for \$20.00. It was mentioned the silent auction usually brings \$100.00 to \$300.00. The club will not be using Square at the admission table for the SWAP, as admission is only \$3.00. Square doesn't charge a fee, but others, like Pay Pal do. We will use Square at our annual show. We can charge extra to cover fees, as long as everyone pays the same amount, no matter how they pay. We discussed raising admission by one dollar beginning in 2025. The subject may be brought before the rank and file before final determination.

We are researching larger venues in which to hold the Swap. We need a larger place with more parking. The places that are being looked at are Park Center Banquet Hall, the Cornhusker Hall, and the Fireman's Union Hall. This year, Parks charged us \$240.00 for the use of Bethany Park Shelter House from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 21st.

The Facebook ads for the Swap cost \$50.00. We can get more ads placed for another \$50.00. Because we're having the Swap on a Sunday, Sharon wants to monitor how many customers we have this year compared to last year's Swap, which was held on a Saturday.

**New Business:**

Sharon had some lessons on interactive interface for the Swap and Gem Fest, for which she paid \$200. The Board voted to reimburse her the price of the lessons since it is for the club's benefit. The motion was put to vote on a motion by Vera, second by Jeff. The motion passed.

Clyde asked about how the Board functions. The Board makes decisions on matters and determines if the rank and file needs to discuss and vote. If we spend more than \$500 on an item, the whole club must vote on the purchase.

Jim said the website has the club by-laws and articles of incorporation. The website also has general information about the club. Clyde would like to remind members at all meetings that the minutes are published in the newsletter.

Vera asked how the replacement lights purchase was coming along and Clyde explained Brett can't get all his questions answered as good as he would like.

The Swap information has been put online. The Omaha club would like to do the same with their swap.

Clyde asked who to contact if he can't make it to a Board meeting. He can call any of the Board members and let them know, or post on the 2024 Board messenger feed.

**Show Business:**

Vera said she has heard from 7 paying and 3 nonpaying demonstrators.

Clyde would like to make a poster or two describing the fluorescent trailer rocks and minerals. Sharon and Jim have a fluorescence description flyer that would help with this.

Brett will keep track of the displays. Clyde talked to Brett about the show entry design and set up. At the last show,

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## DECEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES—CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 6)*

there was a bottleneck issue at the entrance and we discussed what would help with that.

Ideas discussed were to utilize Square for admissions so there wouldn't be tickets to tear in half, move the concession stand to the rear, and move the raffle ticket booth around the corner.

Jayne thought we should nail down a weekend for the Summer Gem Fest. We decided it will be June 22-23, 2024. The only problem was that Brett may not be able to make it that weekend.

Vera said she has 144 mailing labels with customer names and addresses, completed at the last show. These will be affixed to the Show Postcards and mailed. We've had 300 to 400 in recent past years. More people are moving to electronic means.

Jim moved to adjourn the meeting, second by Vera. Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

## JUNIORS

by Brett Jurgens, Junior Leader



Hello Juniors.

I hope you all had a great holiday break! Our next club activity is our Mid-Winter Swap on Sunday, January 21st. Please note the day change from previous years. The swap is a great chance to see specimens from different dealers and pick up some items for your collections. Save some of your money for the pizza party after the swap. We won't have a lesson, but I will have a specimen for you, and we'll have a quick meeting with the entire club.

Our annual show is quickly approaching. We are down to less than three months before, and only three meetings before. Please mark down April 6th and 7th on your calendars. I will be asking for volunteers to help man our junior booth, and we will be looking for volunteers for other spots around the show. This is a great way to meet fellow club members and learn more about the hobby. The show is the biggest club event to connect with the public who have an interest in the hobby. For the club to continue, we need more membership willing to step in an help out, and it is very appreciated.

I mentioned in a past message that I would like to see some juniors display their collections at the Show. Let people see what you get as your monthly specimens! Too often people think they need a museum worthy collection to display. I would like people to see what a collection in the early stages looks like.

I'll see you at at the swap!

## DECEMBER ROCK PARTY AT THE MARBURGERS'

By Sharon Marburger

The rock party at the Marburgers' on Saturday, December 16 was attended by Mike & Donitte Stiles; Ed Ridge; Wooly; and Brian, Jayne, and Corey Beer. There was plenty of food and fun to go around. And, as always, the food was delicious.

Mike and Donitte arrived early in order to miss traffic caused by the Hickman Arts Council's First Annual Parade of Lights. They joined Jim in the basement to work on some rock projects they brought. Donitte got a fabulous polish on her Texas Springs limb cast. It was her fourth time using the machinery and we were all proud of her success. Mike worked on a lovely piece of petrified wood, but didn't finish it because mean ole me called them to supper. Both projects shown in photo below.

After eating and some lively conversation, Sharon had Eddie remove the foil from the Christmas ball. What is a Christmas ball, you ask? It is a ball of plastic wrap with rock and other hobby related items trapped within the layers of the wrap. Each person, in turn, gets 30 seconds to unwind the layers of wrap, earning the prizes contained therein. There were tumbled stones, sterling silver charms, slabs, and specimens. The ball made it 2½ times around the table before Jayne got to the not-so-goopy center containing a chunk of jade. It was a lot of fun. Corey was excited by one of his wins - a slab of laguna agate.

After the game, Jim and Corey went downstairs for a lively conversation about rocks. Just as people straggled in to the party, they also straggled out. While waiting for Corey to reappear, Brian took a nap on the couch and Jayne and I looked at a bunch on my late mother's rock jewelry that she and my dad made. She had pendant and earring sets for all of her outfits, plus extras. She was quite proud of her pieces and, until she retired, never went anywhere without one of them on.

Getting tired, we wrapped it up at 11:30 p.m.



Photo by Donitte Stiles

**TIDBITS FROM WOOLY**

by Charles "Wooly" Wooldridge

**2023 Rocked, but I keep seeing old people and realize they are my age or even younger!**

My year in rocks began with the Mid-Winter Swap and Club's 68th Anniversary. Bethany Park Shelter was packed! We are now searching for an alternative site for 2025.

The next big thing was the Annual Lincoln Gem & Mineral Show, held on the first weekend in April. It was AMAZING! with great vendors and attendance.

The LGMC Summer Gem Fest in June was a huge success and loads of fun.

We restarted monthly club meetings in September, following the summer break. The excellent job that Clyde Ogg is doing with programs became apparent immediately and remains very high quality.

The club events ended with our annual Christmas Party where good food and presents were abundant.

I participated as a vendor in six swaps or shows this year including: LGMC Swap, LGMC Show, LGMC Summer Gem Fest, the Sioux Empire Show in Canton, S.D., and the Northwest Nebraska Rock Swap in Crawford. You meet so many wonderful people at swaps and shows. Each year I reconnect with old friends and make new ones. The Crawford Swap is special because it is a four day event and I make it a week long camping and field trip event. We had 13 members of the Lincoln club in attendance. There was some unfortunate excitement this year when a sudden microburst of wind hit Jayne and Corey's vendor site/tents and tried to blow them into the next county. It severely damaged tents, pop ups, and merchandise while threatening to storm. Everyone pitched in to pick up all their things and get them packed into the van.

I went on many field trips to South Dakota, North Central Nebraska, and Southeast Nebraska. I did not find anything to write home about this year, but I sure had a lot of fun and adventure.

I worked with Renae Blum of NebraskaLand magazine on an article on Rock Hounding in Nebraska. She attended the April Gem Show, a meeting, a rock party, and went on a field trip with the club. Her article will be in the March 2024 issue of NebraskaLand Magazine.

January is named for the mythical god Janus who is the god of transitions. As we transition from 2023 to 2024 may we look back at the past year with fondness and look forward to the next with positive anticipation.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



**NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY AT HIDDEN GEMS**

By Sharon Marburger

The Beer Family opened the doors to their business, Hidden Gems by The Jewelry Connection, to host a club New Year's Eve party. As always, there was lots of food and snacks, laughter, conversations, and some rock grinding. This night, not being an official Rock Party, also included games.

Several club members and a few personal friends arrived at the shop, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Jim and I arrived extra early which allowed some lively conversations and rock sharing with Corey.

We ended up the night playing a card game called "Deer in the Headlights" purchased at a yard sale, which I still declare is the best 25 cents I've ever spent on a game. The game was declared FUN by those playing!

Collage by Donitte Stiles



How totally embarrassing! Brian and Sharon wore the same outfit to the New Year's Eve party at Hidden Gems. Major fashion *faus pax!*

**Photo by Jim Marburger**

## BOULANGERITE FROM THE SIBERWIESE MINE, GERMANY

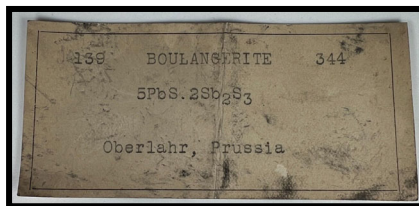
By Eric Fritsch

I don't usually buy minerals off the internet as I like to see them in person. You see a lot of overpriced minerals on-line. A lot of overhyped specimens, altered colors, misrepresentations, etc. I personally know this dealer and trust his photographs and authenticity. I recently became infatuated with a specimen I saw offered on his E-bay site: a massive piece of boulangerite, a copper antimony sulfosalt. I often enjoy these black ugly minerals as they are often underappreciated and therefore cheap, yet still represent mineralogy very well. I looked at the specimen several different times, however didn't want to spend money on minerals right before Tucson. Dealers are also under the same financial stresses and Phil was in a selling mood, wanting to generate revenue so he could buy things in Tucson. An offer surprisingly came across my inbox that he had lowered the price a second time; and this time, I was ready to buy it.



Besides being a large and very good example of this lesser-known mineral, I was intrigued by the history and age of the specimen. Not the geological age, but rather the time this specimen was collected and preserved. Later, I was able to track the original owner of the specimen.

The specimen is from a long-closed iron mine, that operated from pre-1795 through 1941. Phil had acquired the specimen in a trade from the University of Michigan collection. Along with the specimen came an interesting old label describing the specimen as coming from Oberlahr, Prussia. Today we call this area Germany and Prussia changed to Germany in 1877, so it gives me an idea of how long ago the specimen was collected and labeled. The specimen has been sitting in collections for at least 147 years. The mine area was switched from Oberlahr to Silberwiese around 1827 so this specimen is perhaps even older (197 or more years). That is a long time for a specimen to be preserved and kept with its label. Creating records and labels that accompany the specimen are important in preserving its history.



Silberwiese means silver meadow and the mine is located in the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate. Postcards and photographs from the 1930s show this place looks very industrial--with few trees, large rock dumps and mills/hoists for mining. Since the mine shut down in 1941, the mine has changed a lot. Collectors who visit the site today have taken pictures of tree overgrowth on the dumps, almost hiding this was once a mining area. Nature is very resilient.

The location is not very well known with specimen preservation and there are only about a dozen specimens from this mine on Mindat. This is sometimes a good way of determining how many such specimens are out there from this mine or area. Many of the specimens on Mindat are small

micromounts collected from the dumps and larger specimens are less common. Iron mines are not typically noted as good mineral specimen producing mines, other than a few iron minerals or gangue minerals.

Going back to the specimen's origin, it came from the University of Michigan. This collection was started in 1838, before the Smithsonian, when Douglass Houghton (for whom the city in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan is named and was a renowned geologist) urged the newly created board of Regents to purchase a 4,000-specimen mineral collection from the Austrian Baron Louis Lederer. Douglas Houghton's collection was later purchased by the University, however his collection would unlikely have contained European specimens. It is likely that this specimen was in the Baron Lederer's collection, sold to the University of Michigan in 1838. The University of Michigan collection later was moved to and joined with the Michigan School of Mines (Michigan Tech) collection in Houghton (2015). It is likely that at this time or soon after, the boulangerite was declared excess and traded.

The numbers on the specimen tag are likely catalog numbers. The values are fairly low 139 or 344 which would fit in nicely with the theory this is an old University of Michigan label. All this evidence lends me to believe these were part of the initial 1838 purchase of the Lederer collection. When I travel to Tucson in a few weeks, I hope to meet up with a couple experts on these collections to discuss this specimen.

Baron Lederer was the Austrian Consul in New York. He signed a treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the young United States and Austria in 1829 with President Martin Van Buren. Shortly thereafter, a U.S. Consulate was established in Vienna.

A mineral "lederite" was named for him, however Benjamin Silliman discredited the species as titanite in a heated public debate with Charles Shepard, even though Silliman hired Shepard to work at Yale with him. "Lederite" was red brown to dark brown titanite that had a distinct parting, that was erroneously thought to be a cleavage. George Williams finally solved that debate in 1885, publishing his results in American Journal of Science (a magazine established by Silliman, who also had passed on by that point). Alois "Lewis" Joseph Xaver Freiherr (Baron) von Lederer would not see his mineral discredited, dying on 20 December 1842.

The specimen in size is impressive at 9.8 x 6.7 x 4 cm and it weighs over a pound (the specific gravity of boulangerite is 6.2 grams/cubic centimeter, or about 233% heavier than a comparably sized piece of quartz). I like minerals with heft. There are likely other copper sulfide minerals on this specimen, including tetrahedrite, bournonite, and semseyite.

Yes, you can find interesting minerals on the internet and this specimen was not very expensive. It helps to keep constantly looking and be ready at the right time in the right place. Without the label and without the research, this specimen is probably worth about what I paid for it. The backstory and thrill of the chase for information make it worth much more to me.

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**Admission \$3.00**

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**Setup begins at 12:00 Noon**

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Swappers are responsible for collecting Nebraska State Sales Tax and remitting it to the State.

LINCOLN GEM & MINERAL CLUB

Box 5342

Lincoln, NE 68505-0342

Contact: Sharon Marburger, 402.429.3323 or Jayne Beer, 402.890.3307

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Floor Chairman: ..... Jayne Beer  
Insurance ..... Vera Lyman, Jim Marburger  
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Web Master: ..... Sharon Marburger  
Youth Activities: ..... Brett Jurgens

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Fluorescent Booth: ..... Clyde Ogg  
Forms ..... Sharon Marburger  
Indoor Rock Pile: ..... Jim & Sharon Marburger  
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Web Master: ..... Sharon Marburger  
Youth Activities: ..... Brett Jurgens

**ADVERTISING INFORMATION**

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

- Adults (age 16 and over) - \$20 per year or \$30 per couple (within the same household)
- Juniors - \$3 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 or club event before paying dues. Applications are available on the website:  
<https://www.lincolngemmineralclub.org/about/membership>, or you may contact Treasurer Vera Lyman for a printed copy.

Mail Exchange Newsletters to:  
Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.  
P.O. Box 5342  
Lincoln, NE 68505-0342



Or e-mail newsletters to:

A color version of the Pick & Shovel is available at:

<http://www.lincolngemmineralclub.org/index.php/newsletters/current>

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Session 3: Apr 30—Jun 18

Session 4: Jun 25—Aug 13

Session 5: Aug 20—Oct 8

Session 6: Oct 15—Dec 3

#### Wednesdays

Session 1: Jan 10—Feb 28

Session 2: Mar 6—Apr 24

Session 3: May 1—Jun 19

Session 4: Jun 26—Aug 14

Session 5: Aug 21—Oct 9

Session 6: Oct 16—Dec 4

**Contact: Jayne Beer 402-890-3307 or look up "Hidden Gems by The Jewelry Connection LTD" in Facebook and send message**