

THE CAPITAL ROCKHOUNDER



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July 2009

July-August Meetings

There will be no meetings in July or August. The next meeting is scheduled for September 3rd. The September meeting will be a show and tell. The October meeting will feature John Betts.

June Banquet Review

Many members assembled together for our June Banquet held at the Gateway Diner in Albany, NY. A live auction was held with our lively auctioneer Mark Kilmer leading us on.

Minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting Thursday May 31, 2009 *Curtis Breuer, Secretary*

Attendance: Bob Ballard, Anne Woods, Gerry Boileau, George Gearhardt, Barbara Gearhardt, Bob Hartig, Mark Kilmer, Bob Stitham, Joseph Almasi, Curtis Breuer, Pam Hartig

Meeting called to order at 4:55 by Bob Hartig. Curtis Breuer read the minutes. George Gearhardt motioned to accept the minutes, Bob Stitham seconded. We discussed when a member is actually a member. Mark said that a member should be a member if they have paid in cash or their check has been cleared. We then discussed how to enforce safety rules and what happens if someone will not obey the rules and they refuse to leave if told to do so. Bob Ballard moved to accept the rules as passed, Joseph Almasi seconded. All were in favor. We discussed into great detail with much heated debate: the Field Trip rules including immediate family, members visiting field trips before or after field trips, and violations of rules. Bob Ballard motioned that a new member is a club member when the payment has cleared. Gerry seconded the motion. All were in favor. Anne made a motion that Rich Steins notes from 1970 to present and Helen Ecklers minutes as secretary be added to the club history. Bob Ballard seconded. Pam motioned a close of the meeting, Bob Ballard seconded, everyone accepted.

July 2009 Field Trips

July 18-19, Gouverneur NY St Lawrence County. Meet at Save a Lot gas station 10am, (210 West Main) on the corner of West Main (Rt.11) and McKean St. This trip is a follow up to last years. There are a few road side spots that yielded great minerals. We will focus on those sites explored last year and add some new ones. Minerals found last year included pyrite, diopside, feldspar, epidote, calcite, apatite, actinolite, and talc. There is a lot of hard rock so you will

need to bring sledge and crack hammers, crowbar, wedges, and chisels. The trip will be two days for all who want to stay overnight. Regardless of where folks stay, either camping or stay at hotels, we will meet at the gas station each morning. Call Gerry Pratt for more info and to sign up for the trip 518-392-0453. No open toed shoes!!!

July 25. Batchellerville Quarry. Richard Hartnett. Batchellerville, NY. Meet at General Store/ Deli Batchellerville at 11am. 20 people limit. Digging tools, claw hook and hoes, hammers not needed, black flies will be there (head net), bug spray. Minerals to be found (aquamarine beryl, rose quartz, mica (muscovite, biotite), smokey quartz, feldspar, betaphite (radioactive), etc. Trip Leader Richard Hartnett 518-439-7243. Must receive reply from field trip leader before you are considered signed up. Release provided by Richard Hartnett must be signed prior to collecting. Must enter collecting site with trip leader. No open toed shoes!!!

Lackawanna Coal Mine *by Stephanie LaRose*

In May I traveled to Pennsylvania with some friends and, knowing my interest in geology, we stopped at the Lackawanna Coal Mine in Scranton, PA. We arrived just as a tour was leaving so we jumped on board. They filed us into a mine car, basically a metal cage with a padded seating area. However, there were slightly too many people so some of my friends ended up in areas without a back to their "seat," so when we started descending at a very steep angle, they were hanging on for dear life, lest they slide into the people seated behind them.

When we reached the bottom, the first thing we notice was the cold, 53 degrees year-round. We were 300 feet below the surface. The tour guide began by telling us how the different levels and tunnels are arranged and how they circulate air in the mine. The air must be well circulated because there are two deadly gases that can accumulate, one that is lighter than air and one that is heavier than air. They use air locks to keep the air from bypassing important areas when you move between levels.

A young child (known as the nipper) would be the one to manually opening and closing the air lock doors as a cart of coal came barreling through. The child had to quickly open the door when he heard a cart approaching, close the door behind it, run ahead of the

cart, and open the next door in the airlock. He could easily be run over in the process. Light was limited and speed was necessary.

It was almost all manual labor. There was very little machinery down there, especially in the early days of the mine. It was opened in the early 1900's. Every day a worker had to load a huge amount of coal into the carts (3 tons I believe). The type of coal they were mining was anthracite, which was used for heating homes during that time.

There were often fatalities in the mine. The columns of tree trunks in the mine did not hold up the ceilings of the mine—the pillars of rock they left behind did. The wood acted as an early warning system that a collapse was imminent. If the wood started to buckle, it meant the ceiling was about to come down. If there was ever a collapse, the miners were told to immediately put their hands and arms over their heads so, if they were buried, their hands would be sticking out above the rubble and they could move them to signal that they were still alive. If a worker's hands were not moving, he was presumed to be dead and they would retrieve his body at the end of the shift (time was money after all). His body was then brought to his family and dumped onto their porch. (Our tour guide said his grandmother told him that she could about remember when her father's body was brought home this way.) The family was given three days to mourn, then the company came back and asked if they had anyone to replace him in the mines. If the family did not, they were immediately kicked out of the town, which was owned by the mining company. It did not matter what time of year it was—they were gone.

Work was in 12-hour shifts. No women worked in the mine—instead they were put to work in textile factories. An example of hourly wages paid at the mine in 1902 are as follows: Laborer \$0.18, Nipper \$0.11, Track Layer \$0.24, Mason \$0.25, and Drivers of Mule \$0.13. An engineer was paid \$78 a month.

After the tour, we returned to the surface. There was various machinery and remains of the previous industry laid out over the property as well as lots of coal.

There is a museum, but we did not go to it. The area is a park, so there are places to hike around farther up from the site. It is a nice place to check out if you are in the area. I recommend it!

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Things You Want In Your Rock Hunting Kit *by Bob Ballard*

Item: Mirror

Use: Reflecting sun light to light up deep pockets in the rocks.

How: What fantastic crystal is hiding in that deep pocket in the rock? Rock hounds often carry a flashlight to look into pockets.

This is fine for cloudy days but reflected sunlight is thousands of times brighter and lets you light up the whole pocket. Note: this is not a new idea. Reflected sunlight is how the Egyptians

lighted the deep chambers in the pyramids for their artists to do their fantastic paintings.

Source and cost: Two for a dollar, Dollar Store.

Item: Long tweezers.

Use: Picking up crystals. Exploring deep pockets in the rock.

How: Have you ever tried to pick up a good crystal in a pile of gravel only to have your big, clumsy fingers shove the crystal out of sight? Long tweezers will safely grab what you want from everything else. Warning: As you walk around picking up crystals with the tweezers, you look like a crane with a long beak catching fish.

Source and cost: Lapidary supply houses, rock shows. Local supplier; Double Dog Rock Shop, Corinth. Less than \$10.

Website

Please note that only about 5% of you are making use of the secret section of the website. Directions for signing up are on the free side of the website. Please note that pictures are frequently updated. If you have any pictures you would like to share with the club, please email them to the club website.

CAPITAL DISTRICT MINERAL CLUB ADDITIONAL FIELD TRIP RULES (5-31-09)

- 1) MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT:** **a.** All persons attending a Capital District Mineral Club (CDMC) field trip must be paid up CDMC club members in good standing; **b.** Field trip leaders must verify this and may require proof of membership (a.k.a. Membership Card) in order for you to attend.
- 2) COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS:** **a.** The Membership Committee Chairman must provide the Field Trip Committee Chairman with a list of current members as dues are received. This can be done via E-mail; **b.** The Field Trip Committee Chairman must provide Field Trip Leaders with a list of members that are banned from certain or all field trips and update them as necessary; **c.** The Field Trip Committee Chairman must also provide the Field Trip Leaders with a list of the current members of the club and update it as needed.
- 3) ALL PARTICIPANTS:** **a.** Participants must read and follow the CDMC Safety Manual provided at time of membership (also available on club website). **b.** Participants must listen and obey any additional rules provided by Field Trip Leader or Field Trip Guide at site.
- 4) RETURNING TO SITE:** Members are prohibited from visiting a planned trip site prior to or after the club trip on that day.

5) FAMILY PARTICIPATION: **a.** If an entire party or family is signing up with the Field Trip Leader, all names need to be disclosed to the Field Trip Leader at least 2 days prior to the trip, unless posted otherwise. **b.** You must get a confirmation by a phone call, in person, or E-mail from the Field Trip Leader to be registered for the trip. **c.** Field Trip Leaders will verify your membership and give you pertinent information and changes at that time.

6) ARRIVAL TIME: **a.** On trips into quarries or private land that require the club to enter as a group, participants must arrive at the meeting location at least 10-15 minutes prior to the posted leaving time. **b.** You must sign in and provide proof of membership prior to leaving for the trip location. **c.** If the group has left the meeting place – **DO NOT GO TO THE LOCATION AND REQUEST ACCESS !!!!**

7) REQUIRED QUARRY RULES: **a.** Quarries are governed by state and federal laws and regulations that we must also follow. **b.** We must enter the quarry with the trip leader as a group, participate in the REQUIRED safety talk presented by the quarry and sign the required paperwork of the quarry. Therefore individuals are prohibited from going to the quarry office or entering the quarry on their own. Again – this will be considered a serious violation. **c.** All participants must remain with the group in the designated collecting area. **d.** All participants must leave as a group. Exception with Field Trip Leader permission and escort. **e.** All drivers must obey posted speed limits. **f.** Seat belts must be worn at all times by everyone in the moving vehicles. **g.** All participants must stay away from high walls and drop offs. **h.** All participants must notify the Field Trip Leader before the end of a trip of lost equipment. Metal objects WILL damage expensive rock crushing equipment. **i.** All participants must report all injuries to the Field Trip Leader and Quarry Management.

8) REQUIRED QUARRY SAFETY ITEMS: Quarries require certain safety equipment. You can not enter the quarry without it. Participants are responsible for providing their own equipment. Requirements as of this date (subject to change). Check with the Field Trip Leader. **a.** Hard hat, (bicycle helmets OK for children). **b.** Neon safety vest. **c.** Sturdy boots (preferably steel toed). No sneakers or open toed shoes. **d.** Eye protection, preferably with side shields. **e.** Work gloves. **f.** Long pants.

9) SAFETY ADVISORS: **a.** Safety Advisors will be available on certain trips. **b.** Either the Field Trip

Leader will choose a few individuals on the trip to help them out, or Official Club Safety Advisors will be present. **c.** All field trip participants must listen and obey the Safety Advisors.

10) FIELD TRIP LEADERS / LAND OWNERS / QUARRY MANAGEMENT can: **a.** limit the number of participants; **b.** exclude individuals for past inappropriate behavior; **c.** impose age restrictions. **d.** ask certain people who misbehave to leave the Field Trip. **e.** make rules and restrictions for a particular trip.

11) VIOLATION OF RULES: **a.** If a participant violates these or the safety rules, the Field Trip Leader has the authority to decide if the participant is allowed to remain on the trip with a warning or asked to leave. **b.** Participants asked to leave must do so with the aid of an escort at the discretion of the Field Trip Leader. **c.** Failure to do so will result in suspension from all field trips for one year and possible expulsion from the club. **d.** All infractions shall be documented by the Field Trip Leader and presented to the Field Trip Committee Chairperson. **e.** The Field Trip Committee Chairperson will keep a permanent record of all infractions. **f.** Penalties for violations shall be decided by a vote of the Field Trip Committee. **g.** Individuals receiving penalties shall be given them in writing (handwritten or E-mail). **h.** A permanent record of such shall be kept by the Field Trip Committee Chairman and provided to all trip leaders (via E-mail or letter).

12) PENALTY CHART: Penalty (Who Can Impose This) **a.** Individual is given a warning for minor infractions (Field Trip Leader or Safety Advisor) **b.** Individual is banned from a specific location. (Field Trip Committee decision on serious infraction) **c.** Individual is banned from ALL trips for one year. (Field Trip Committee decision on serious and/or repeated infractions.) **d.** Individual is expelled from the Capital District Mineral Club. (Board of Trustees).

13) SIGNATURE: a signature will be added to the bottom of the newly revised Safety Manual to be signed with membership renewal and for new members.

I have read and understood the Additional Field Trip Rules and the Safety Manual for the CDMC.

SIGNED _____ DATED _____

Mineral Show

July 11-12. Syracuse, NY: 43rd annual show; Verizon Center of Progress Bldg., State Fairgrounds, I-690; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; adults \$6, kids under 12 free, coupon on Web site; more than 50 retail and wholesale dealers, contact Carlotta Brown, (315) 458-4636; www.gmss.us



Happy new member *Greg* with trilobite find from Howes Cave Quarry, Schoharie, NY. We also saw this juvenile fox in the same quarry. .

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All submissions to the newsletter must be in my hand before the 18th of any given month, or they will be used in the next subsequent newsletter.

The purpose of our club is:

- To promote and encourage the study of mineralogy and other applied sciences.
- To cooperate with educational and scientific institutions in order to bring about a better and more general understanding of earth sciences.
- To provide a program with suitable speakers for scheduled meetings.
- To sponsor, direct, and assist in the planning of excursions to mineral localities and other places of geological interest.
- To cooperate with organizations whose purposes are similar to those stated in the foregoing items.

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