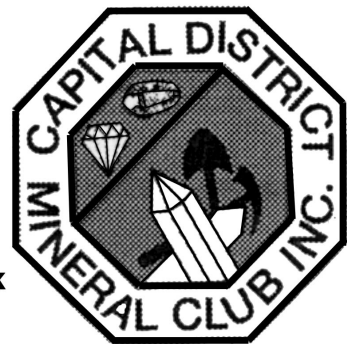


# THE CAPITAL ROCKHOUNDER



Publication of the Capital District Mineral Club, Inc.  
Chartered by the Education Department of the State of New York  
P.O. Box 12814, Albany, New York 12212-2814

**SEPTEMBER 2004**

## **September Meeting**

Yes, it's time once again to hold our monthly meetings. We hope you all had an enjoyable and productive summer. The September meeting of the Capital District Mineral Club will be held on Thursday, September 2, 2004. We will meet in the Student Center on the first floor of the New York State Museum, Madison Ave., Albany, NY (unless otherwise noted at the front security desk). Please sign in and out at the security desk. The museum doors will be open from 7:00-7:15pm and the meeting will begin around 7:30pm. Please be on time as, after 7:15pm, we will not be able to let you in.

### **September Program: "Show and Tell"**

Members are asked to bring in their "best" addition to their collection, display it, and tell how and where they found this treasure (field trip, roadside collecting, purchase at a mineral show, or as a gift). Each person will be allowed up to five minutes to tell their story. While this is going on, a new feature - a small ten-item silent auction - will be taking place.

The auction will end as soon as the "show and tell" portion of the program ends. Immediate settlement (cash or check) and possession will then take place. This is an experiment; its continuation will be decided by members and trustees. The reason we have decided on this experiment is that, over the years, members (and sometimes complete strangers) have donated one or more items to the club. Occasionally, an entire collection has been donated. With our current policy of limiting only 3-10 items (depending on who gets the cash) to our two annual auctions from any one donor, it takes a long time before the items become part of someone else's collection. We still have some items from Margo Gitlan's collection (1995) and six plastic cartons from Charlie Brown's (1999).

The items to be offered at the September meeting came from Elaine Shaw (Pittsfield, MA) and include: crack hammer (wooden handle); rockhound's hammer; uvite and quartz from Pierrepont, NY; golden calcite from Delta Quarry, York, PA; large geode halves from Alexandria, MO; fluorite crystals in matrix from Westmoreland, NH; hackmanite from Mt. St. Helaine Quarry in Quebec; diopside from the Oxford Nickel Mine, de Brompton, Quebec; and two separate celestite crystals on matrix from the Meckley Quarry in Mandata, PA. All proceeds from the auction will go to the club.

## **Upcoming Field Trips for September**

**Sept. 11. Stoddard Mine. Westmoreland, NH.** The trip leader will be Richard Hartnett. The meeting place will be the Walmart Parking lot on Hoosick St. (Route 7 to Vermont) in Troy leading up towards Brunswick. Please be there at 9:30am. If you are late, we will be gone. We will have our usual stop in Wilmington, Vermont, at Dot's Diner, for coffee and breakfast.

Minerals to collect include fluorite (green, blue (rare), purple, clear), quartz crystals, malachite, barite, galena (rare), chalcopyrite, and pyrite. Things to bring include bug spray, rockhammer, chisel, bucket. Most of the specimens are already broken up (dump pit). You could bring a sledge hammer if you wish, but this is probably not necessary. There will be a large pit that we will be working near. Please do not bring small children that could wander off and fall in the pit (once you are in the pit, it would be next to impossible to get you out). Hard hats are not required, but hiking boots, gloves, and safety glasses are a must. There is a limited amount of parking spots on the site, so please carpool as much as possible. If you have anymore questions, please feel free to call Richard at 439-7243.

**Sept. 25. Margaret Hastings Diamond Acres - #34. Fonda, NY.** The trip leader will be Jim Palmer. The meeting place is the icecream place across from Fonda Raceway at exit 28 Fonda off of I-90 at 9am. We will be hunting for herkimer diamonds in dirt and in the rock layers. Please bring screens, buckets, gloves, safety glasses, and other material for breaking up hard rock. If you have any questions, please contact Jim at 399-9090 or <palmit@nycap.rr.com>.

## **Trustee Meeting**

*Submitted by Bob Ballard*

The next board meeting will be held on September 19, 2004 at 1pm at Chairman Bob Ballard's house [3 Hillside Drive, Scotia NY]. He will give directions out at the meeting, or you can call him at 377-8656.

There is enough business for a trustee meeting. Instead of the usual evening dinner, George Gearhardt suggested a picnic, which sounds like a good idea. Bring a dish to share. I will have a tub of cold sodas. We can have a nice lunch and follow that with a trustee meeting. All club members are invited and encouraged to attend.

## Agenda

### -Old Business-

Constitution and By-Law Wording: Times change. The constitution and by-laws should be reviewed every so often to see if they should be updated to reflect the current reality. I will have copies of these at the September club meeting for review.

Scholarship: The chairman blew this one. I rapidly discovered I did not have a clue as to how to award a scholarship this last spring. Discussion will be on how to give it, who can receive the grant, how much, do we want a seminar by the recipient in the fall, etc.

### -New Business-

EFMLS: George Gearhardt will give a report on the EFMLS meeting at Syracuse this past July.

Club Logo Jacket / Sweatshirt: Some of us have the club T-shirt from a while ago, but many of the new members do not. It has been suggested the club order a new item, either a jacket or sweatshirt for colder weather with the club logo.

Other new business...

## Dues Are Due

The Capital District Mineral Club, Inc. has a fiscal year that begins with September 1 and ends with August 31. That means the new year starts NOW. Look at the mailing label on your newsletter and if, after your name, the numbers "8/04" appear, your membership is expiring August 31, 2004. Please renew by completing the membership form included in this newsletter or print one from our website (address on last page). Send checks, payable to the Capital District Mineral Club, to our post office box (address on last page), or you can renew at our monthly meeting. You will receive your new membership cards (ours and EFMLS) either by mail or at the meeting.

## EFTA September 2004 Field Trips

*Submitted by Bob Hartig*

*<rockbob@nycap.rr.com> for more info*

**Sept. 4-5.** Fluorite Fantasy #3 - Walworth Quarry, Walworth, NY.

**Sept. 11.** Wayne County. Spring Creek, Alden, NY. Limey Devonian shales. Pyritized fossils - cephalopods, gastropods.

**Sept. 11.** Rock and Mineral Club of Lower Bucks County, PA. Perkiomenville, PA. Zeolites, calcite, stilbite, aragonite, actinolite, chalcophyrite, epidote, pyrite.

**Sept. 11.** Capital District Mineral Club. Stoddard Mine, Westmoreland, NH. Old mine tailings for fluorite (green, purple, clear), barite, quartz.

**Sept. 12.** Fulton County. Benson Mine, Star Lake, NY. Huge, old iron mine with associated minerals.

**Sept. 18.** Worcester Mineral Club. VAG Mine. Eden Mills, VT. Vesuvianite, garnet, diopside, serpentine. [www.worcestermineralclub.org](http://www.worcestermineralclub.org).

**Sept. 19.** Keene Mineral Club. Globe Mine Pegmatite, Springfield, NH. Minerals found: asterated quartz, schorl, and other pegmatite minerals. Mostly dump digging, some boulder breaking.

**Sept 25.** Fulton County. Whitton Prospect, near Harrisville, NY. Private property for quartz, hematite, barite, limonite after siderite/ankerite. Small donation (\$2) requested. Will try to get some backhoe work done

prior to the dig to expose new material.

**Sept. 26.** Connecticut Valley Mineral Club. Green Farm, Roxbury, CT Garnets.

## Upcoming Shows

**Sept. 4-5. Augusta, ME.** 15th annual show; Kennebec Rocks & Minerals Club; National Guard Armory, Western Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; contact KRMC, (207) 873-6270.

**Sept. 4-5. Johnstown, PA.** "The White Rose City Intergalactic Bead Festival" Intergalactic Bead Shows; Frank J. Pasquerilla Conference Center, 301 Napoleon St.; Sat.-Sun. 10-5; admission \$5 Sat., \$4 Sun.; contact Ankur Yadav, (888) 729-6904; [www.beadshows.com](http://www.beadshows.com)

**Sept. 11-12. New Milford, CT.** 54th annual show; Danbury Mineralogical Society; New Milford High School cafeteria, Rte. 7; Sat. 10-5:30, Sun. 10-5; adults \$3.50, seniors and full-time students with ID \$2.50, children under 5 and Scouts in uniform free; contact Jack Pawloski, (860) 354-0296.

**Sept. 11-12. North Adams, MA.** Northern Berkshire Mineral Club; VFW Hall, Rte. 2; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$2, children under 12 free; contact Cindy Lee Hancock, (413) 664-4115.

**Sept. 11-12. Pittsburgh, PA.** Holiday Park Volunteer Fire Dept.; Rte. 286, 2 miles east of U.S. Hwy. 22; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; contact C.E. Walton, (412) 856-8354.

**Sept. 18. Albany, NH.** Show and Swap; Saco Valley Gem & Mineral Club; Albany Town Hall, Rte. 16; Sat. 9-5; admission \$2; contact Jonathan Herndon, P.O. Box 520, Center Ossipee, NH 03814-0520.

**Sept. 18-19. Harrisburg, PA.** 39th annual show; Central Pennsylvania Rock & Mineral Club; The Zembo, Third St. and Division St.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4; contact Ted Keck, (717) 474-0112; [ted@blacks tonemill.com](mailto:ted@blacks tonemill.com); [www.rockandmineral.org](http://www.rockandmineral.org)

**Sept. 18-19. Norwich (Salem), CT.** Sale; Thames Valley Rockhounds; Norwich Regional Technical High School, 590 New London Tpke.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; contact Mark Slaga, (860) 546-2091, Andrey Shashok, (860) 823-1717, or Bob Reynolds, (860) 663-2541.

## Tumble Stuff

*Submitted by Bob Ballard*

From Charlie Brown's collection, I got a hundred pounds or so of rocks for tumble polishing. Some of the members with tumble polishers were going to do a lot of tumbling for the sandbox at the club show in February.

I seem to have a lot left. Anyone wanting tumble material, slabs or some bigger cutting material, come to the trustee meeting.

## Donating Specimens or Collections

*Submitted by George Gearhardt*

Occasionally, members and sometimes complete strangers contact our club to offer all or part of a mineral collection. These calls are always welcome and very much appreciated. Some may prefer to offer their New York minerals directly to the state museum collection. This may be done by a single call to the Geology Collection Manager, Michael Hawkins at (518)486-2011. Other minerals should go to a mineral club (us or a local club in your area). Family members often do not want a mineral collection when the collector is no longer able or willing to continue with the hobby. At that time, call the number above for the state museum or a local club, but do NOT ever take them to the dump (pardon me, I mean

the landfill).

It has been suggested that, since we are a “non-profit organization,” we may be able to provide the donor a certificate for the “fair market value” of the specimens donated. This may be of use at tax time, if you are itemizing your deductions to get a lower taxable income figure. More on this topic later.

## **EFMLS Wildacres**

*by Carolyn Weinberger, EFMLS Editor*

Tucked away on Pompey’s Knob near Little Switzerland, NC, Wildacres is a wonderful place to spend a week. No newspapers, television, auto or truck noise disrupts the quiet of the mountainside. Laughter pervades the air.

The Eastern Federation enjoys the use of the Wildacres facility for two weeks each year. We offer classes in a variety of subjects plus the expertise of a guest speaker. A free day allows workshop participants time to explore the wonderful countryside, go rock hunting or rock shop silver-picking, etc.

You can share the wonderful ambience and comradeship of a week at Wildacres this fall for \$280 per person, which includes room and board. Where else can you spend a week’s vacation for less? Where else can you spend a week among folks with similar interests?

Guest speaker for the September 20-26 session is Dr. Steve Chamberlain of Syracuse University. Steve is a dynamic speaker and terrific person who always has wonderful things to share in his talks.

Although one of the classes being offered this fall is filled, there are still spots available in silversmithing, wax modeling & casting, wire-wrapping, cabochon cutting, and certified judging/exhibiting. Our instructors are wonderful, talented, and caring individuals who will teach you a new skill or reinforce one you already have expertise with.

Why not plan to join the fun this fall at Wildacres? There is still time for you to reserve your spot. An application form can be downloaded from the EFMLS website <[www/amfed.org/efmls](http://www/amfed.org/efmls)>. Be sure to indicate which of the classes above you would like to take.

Questions? Feel free to contact me at <[cweinber@bcpl.net](mailto:cweinber@bcpl.net)> or registrar Debbie Bard at <[debbard@frontiernet.net](mailto:debbard@frontiernet.net)>.

We hope to see you at the EFMLS Wildacres Workshop this fall!

## **Eurypterids in Ilion, NY**

*Submitted by Bruce and Charlyn Murray*

Forty-eight million, nine-hundred thousand, six hundred and twenty-seven years ago, the land of New York State was south of here in the tropics and underneath a salty sea. Swimming along the bottom was a variety of sea life which has left behind impressions in the state’s limestone and shale as fossils. Notable among them were the subphyla Merostomata and the Arachnids, the ancestors of the lobsters, scorpions, spiders, etc. Two exceptional groups of the Merostomata were the trilobites and the eurypterids. Many of the club members have seen

all or portions of the trilobite fossils, but how many have seen the far less common (read “rare”) eurypterid fossil?

Halfway between Ilion on the Thruway and Richmond Springs lies Lang’s Quarry, where many spectacular eurypterid specimens have been found. We called Mr. Lang and said we were from the CDMC and were interested in visiting the quarry. He said that, unfortunately, they were not set up to handle visitors from rock clubs but were organizing their time for students from schools, colleges and universities. We said that we would be happy with only a half-day and, after checking his schedule, he said possibly on a Monday afternoon. We agreed on a fair-weather Monday and, assembling our tools, went to the quarry. Mr. Lang showed Bruce, Charlyn and Fred Dobert his museum, which had an extensive collection of fossils and meteorites. Then we very cautiously drove up the quarry road to the digs. Large slabs of possible fossil-bearing dolomitic limestone rock lay everywhere. He explained that the process was to split apart a slab and look for the eurypterids, a daunting task since some of the slabs were as large as 10 feet across, 8 inches thick, weighed many tons, and were very hot from the sun. We carefully split several slabs, eventually finding what we wanted. Then Mr. Lang cut out the eurypterids with a diamond saw. Charlyn had found two ‘partials’ which Mr. Lang said she should keep. He carried the fossils down to the shop, and as the policy is to ‘pay for what you find,’ we paid \$50 for our fossils and Fred paid slightly more. We thanked Mr. Lang for the experience. He repeated his earlier remarks that, regretfully, the organization was not set up for rock clubs at present since they were concentrating on students from schools, colleges and universities. We said goodbye and headed back to Albany.

## **Two Member Notes**

*Submitted by George Gearhardt*

Philipp Wickert, Sr. passed away on August 10th. He will be remembered as a quiet collector. We were at our site in Fonda cracking rocks when Phil joined us. He had a better day than we did. We met on several field trips to the quarries south of Albany over the following years. Phil’s address was: 14 Pettibone Drive, Albany, NY 12205.

On a more pleasant note (relatively speaking), Chuck Inman had a six-way bypass procedure in August and then had to return to the hospital for an infection. He is recovering at home and his address is: 2360 County Rt. 46, Fort Edward, NY 12828. Chuck is a long-time club member, as well as a volunteer at the Geological Survey of the state museum in Albany.

## **Eastern Industries, Inc.**

*Submitted by Rich Stein*

Eastern Industries, Inc. will not be holding an Open House for mineral collecting in 2004. Winfield has not been actively mined lately and the lower level is under water. The Shamokin Quarry has been working on Saturdays and will have to continue doing so through the Fall.

There is some good news, however. Meckley’s Quarry will be open on Sunday, September 26, 2004 from noon until 5:00 pm. Note that this date is a bit later than usual, so perhaps it will be more comfortable in the quarry.

## **Gilsum Swap 40-04 Sales Were Hot, Weather Was Not**

*Submitted by Don Kauffman*

The 40<sup>th</sup> annual Gilsum Rock and Mineral Swap has passed. Gilsum has always been a fun show. Never perfect, however, a few rough spots threatened to spoil our trip.

Car problems plagued us right up to three days before departure for New Hampshire. Nonetheless, our transportation performed well under its first out-of-state show load.

Saturday morning, we woke up to sounds of steady rain on the motel roof. The rainy start on Saturday probably prevented most vendors from making money that was abundant last year. Rain gradually wound down to slowing drizzle and ceased to be a problem. By around 10:30AM, we achieved full setup.

Sunday activity for the rock and mineral swap began unusually early. A continuous crowd of mainly newcomers lasted through to the end of the second day.

A single complaint passed to Show Chair Rob Mitchell was by a vendor who said there were "too many vendors." Rob said that there were not many more vendors than last year. Perhaps the complainant just didn't have the right mix for those who visited his stand.

From our experience, the key to being successful at any show is, of course, having what visitors want. Since none of us have crystal balls, creating a good mix is important.

Last year, Linda was very successful in selling jewelry and bulk rocks from a display she dismantled. Mineral sales were a sore point since I had worked so hard on preparations. This year, jewelry was not as en vogue. Mineral sales were hot.

Our display prominently shows off Pennsylvania mineral and fossil materials. We wear PA T-shirts and advertising shirts for a mineral shop owned by our friends Jim and Jean Bey from Boyertown.

Just as with any other mineral or fossil display set, you have some items that catch the attention of that first-time visitor or a serious collector, but you have many that don't.

For the show next year, we believe we can leave about one dozen flats home and still have enough to sell at the show. Every dealer's dream is to go home with an empty car.

Two years ago, deweylite and serpentine group minerals from south Lancaster County's Penn Maryland Quarry were selling like gold. That same show, iridescent anthracite coal from St. Clair was also popular.

This year, cave travertine from the counties of Northumberland and Snyder proved fascinating to a lot of customers. St. Clair fossil fern plates priced from \$3 to \$10 apiece, depending upon size and quality, were huge hits.

Another popular item was tyuyamunite, a rare and slightly radioac-

tive trace mineral from Carbon County that sold extremely well, as did yellow calcite from York County. Miniature quartz crystals from New York displayed in 35mm film vials brought \$1 a piece.

Minerals were very popular items for this 40<sup>th</sup> show. Perhaps it is justly so, since the past history of show and area is mineral intense. Our evaluation of the Gilsum show spelled an overall success. We gauge success of a show by whether table rental costs are recovered in the first day. Apparently, our prices were right. Pricing should offer something everyone can afford. Often, selling a huge amount of small items carries the show for you. There are some dealers who just plain overprice themselves.

Flexibility of pricing can also make a sale. By labeling prices slightly higher than actual value, lowering a price by reading a customer's interest can close a sale. This system works fine with self-collected material, especially when there is an over-abundance squirreled away at home.

The Gilsum Show Committee had some interesting new attractions this year. Last year, a commemorative T-shirt for the 39<sup>th</sup> Gilsum show was a sellout. Besides offering the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary show T-shirt for sale, free copies of the local **Keene Sentinel** newspaper were available on both days. Sunday's edition had a full front-page article featuring the show by a reporter that attended opening day on Saturday.

Last, but not least, there was a continuous broadcast advertising the show by a Keene radio station. All of these elements most certainly helped make the Gilsum 40-04 show a success this year.

Both evenings, post-show, were topped off by fellowship with show workers, vendors, friends old and new. Saturday evening, we ate at the traditional ham and bean supper, topped off by the long awaited pie-eating extravaganza.

Sunday, we joined out-of-state friends at a highly recommended Chinese Buffet in Keene. Accompanied by these associates from eastern Pennsylvania and nearby New Jersey, we ate from a very excellent and filling buffet menu.

Returning to our room in Newport, we planned Monday to have a collecting adventure at a Westmoreland collecting site. But that is another story.

We anxiously look forward to the 2005 show. Perhaps some of you will visit us there.

## **Newry Park Mineral Update**

*Submitted by Don Kauffman*

Maine Department of Conservation and Maine Geological Survey have reported a temporary setback in efforts to acquire property for a State mineral park and education site. The following Internet website message was posted as an UPDATE August 2, 2004:

"We regret that recent developments have forced us to terminate plans to acquire the Newry Mines for a State mineral collecting park and education site. The 100-acre parcel proposed for the park has

been sold by the owner, and then quickly re-sold as part of a much larger tract of land.

“The Newry fundraising committee is looking into the possibility of acquiring an alternative-collecting site of good quality. Any such use of existing funds would be announced on this website and subject to individual approval by those who already donated to the project. But if no suitable alternative is found during the next few weeks, we will refund all donations.

“Those of us who have put much time and energy into this project greatly appreciate the support and donations from clubs and individuals all over the country. We are sorry about this turn of events.”

This may come as a profound shock to some contributors. We must be reminded that there are no certainties in life except death and taxes.

There was no prior guarantee that Newry was exclusively ours until the target money was finally raised. It is doubtful anyone in MGS knew of competitors for the purchase of the land.

Those of us who were involved in promoting the Newry Mineral Park Project have witnessed the enthusiasm of project creators. We have faith behind-the-scenes activity will present us with another property alternative.

There is yet another story behind this disconcerting announcement. A friend of mine who is an experienced mineral collector and participant in the original Newry proposal called me on July 28, just about mid-afternoon. He knew of our pro-active involvement with Newry Mineral Park here in PA. My source said there was some interesting news. He then told me, “The project land was bought out from under us.”

The 100 acres of Newry land was sold for a price of \$1,000,000. He further said that the acreage would be available as a “fee collecting site.”

Purchase of Newry land and resale as attachment to “much larger tract” points to the buyer as being part of a speculative land purchase venture. We certainly hope the new entrepreneur landowner keeps the price of admission reasonable.

Providing this much information is valid, we should be able to see a silver lining in this unexpected pothole. Perhaps roads to the Newry properties may be only temporarily blocked.

There is also another scenario. My source indicated to me that some mining property just a little northeast of Newry might be considered for purchase at the cost of just a little more sweat to raise \$500,000.

When information about any proposed property acquisition is posted by the Maine Geological Survey, our club members will receive a report on that location. I am currently doing research for that newsletter article feature.

This setback may turn out to benefit all. The great state of Maine may eventually list two additional collecting areas for generations to come.

Don't give up hope for more collecting land. When we all work as

a team, everyone can win.

## **Humor Section**

*Submitted by Amy Sternstein*

*(used with permission by <www.geoscience.org.za>*

Geologists are amazing. They know hundreds of words for different sorts of dirt and hundreds of words for things it does when left alone for a few million years. (By: Thomas Kettenring)

You Might Be a Geologist If ...

- ◆ Your rock collection weighs more than you do.
- ◆ Your rock garden is located inside your house.
- ◆ You can pronounce the word “molybdenite” correctly on the first try.
- ◆ You think the primary function of road cuts is tourist attractions.
- ◆ You find yourself compelled to examine individual rocks in driveway gravel.
- ◆ You're planning on using a pick and shovel while you're on vacation.
- ◆ Your internet home page has pictures of your rocks.
- ◆ You will walk across eight lanes of freeway traffic to see if the outcrop on the other side of the highway is the same type of rock as the side you're parked on.
- ◆ You can point out where Tsumeb is on a world globe.
- ◆ The baggage handlers at the airport know you by name and refuse to help with your luggage.
- ◆ You have ever found yourself trying to explain to airport security that a rock hammer isn't really a weapon.
- ◆ You never throw away anything.
- ◆ You have ever taken a 22-passenger van over “roads” that were really intended only for cattle.
- ◆ You consider a “recent event” to be anything that has happened in the last hundred thousand years.
- ◆ You have ever had to respond “yes” to the question, “What have you got in here, rocks?”

## **Turritella Agate**

*Submitted by Betty Phillips*

This concerns the Turritella agate that was given as a favor to everyone at the June dinner. It is an excerpt from an article I copied years ago.

“For many years, collectors and cutters alike have been calling the agate from Wyoming, which has long tapering shells, ‘Turritella agate’. Recent studies have shown that the fossil shells do not belong to the genus Turritella, which is a marine snail. The agate comes from the Eocene rocks in the Green River Basin in southwestern Wyoming, which is of fresh water origin. It is a mystery where the name started from. Probably from someone who thought the high-spired shell was a Turritella.” (source unknown)

Capital District Mineral Club  
P.O. Box 12814  
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**Officers:**

|           |                  |              |
|-----------|------------------|--------------|
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**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.