



MWF News

**Midwest Federation
of Mineralogical and Geological Societies**

November 2025 - Issue No. 646

Website – www.mwfed.org

**Member of the American Federation of
Mineralogical Societies**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tom Barnhizer, MWF President

People have been collecting rocks and minerals long before history began. Over those millennia, interest in rocks and minerals has not declined, as some may have recently thought.

My own journey began chasing behind a rock sled for a local farmer trying to clear his field of those pesky stones. Over time I was able to amass quite a collection. Of course, I didn't really understand what I was doing but I knew what I liked. My mother, on the other hand, didn't have the same appreciation for my hobby and often asked, "What are you going to do with all those rocks?" As it happens, I had become a Boy Scout and my answer was simple. I'm going to earn the Rock Collecting Merit Badge.



(Continued on page 7)

OFFICERS ELECTED, BUT HELP STILL NEEDED

Donna Moore, MWF Secretary

The results of the recent election of MWF officers are in, and the following were elected to serve for 2025-26.

President – Tom Barnhizer
1st Vice President – John Rettler
2nd VP – J.C. Moore
Secretary – Donna Moore
Treasurer – Steve Shimatzki

Three people were elected to the Nominating Committee. David Root was chosen to serve a two-year term, replacing J.C. Moore, and David Rich and Valerie J. Meyers will serve three-year terms.

We are finding it harder and harder to locate people who are willing to serve as officers for the MWF. J.C. Moore has agreed to serve as 2nd Vice President in the hopes we can find someone else to take that position or be ready to step up to serve as 1st Vice

(Continued on page 7)

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Club Bulletins Give Glimpse of '50s-'90s Rockhounds	8
Deadline Calendar	11
Field Tripper Gives Equipment Tips	9
Final Details for MWF Execs Meeting	3
Garnets and People Share Long History	8
In Memoriam Larry Nawojski	2
Minnesota Club Honors Rockhounds of Year	3
MWF Clubs That Renew on Time Get Benefits	4

MWF Club Dues and Events Forms	5-6
Officers Elected, But Help Still Needed	1
President's Message	1
Prior President Says Thanks to All	2
Techniques Can Spot Counterfeit Bills	11
That Thing Last Month? Never Mind	4
Treasurer's Death Leaves a Gap	3
Upcoming Events	10

PRIOR PRESIDENT SAYS THANKS TO ALL

Cheryl Neary
MWF Immediate Past President

“How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.”

I was at a baby shower this past weekend. The theme was Winnie the Pooh. There were several sayings on the cookies and paraphernalia throughout the room. I saw the above saying which was a quote from Winnie the Pooh – or at least I thought it was! It turns out that not once did the original author, A.A. Milne, write that line. Regardless, when I saw it I wanted to use it – and so I am.

I have made several meaningful relationships as I worked my way to president of this fine organization. Although I am leaving the post, I am not leaving the ship! I have made many great memories throughout the years and will have these memories thankfully, the rest of my life.

Thanks again for all who helped me as I climbed the ladder. The organization’s new President is Tom Barnhizer – please be supportive and helpful!

I am sorry that my plans fell through for visiting with all at our October meeting! I am planning on being in Chicagoland. Hopefully, I will be visiting the sites I spoke about in the previous messages!

Please continue to support our Scholarship and Endowment funds! You can always make a donation to honor a living club member – and what a great tribute to that person!

Enjoy your field trips and collecting, your meetings and special events. Spread the word of what a great club you are in. Support your youths! Donate your time and rocks!

. . . Till we see each other at the joint AFMS/MWF convention in St. Charles, Illinois next Memorial Day weekend!

*2026 Dues and Events
Information is on pages 4-6!*

MWF OFFICERS

President: Tom Barnhizer
5060 Arbor Way
Sylvania, OH 43560
419-381-4418
superscouts258@gmail.com

1st VP: John Rettler
1921 W. Sumner Street
Rubicon, WI 53078
262-617-0022
johnrettler@gmail.com

2nd VP: J.C. Moore
2535 N. Illinois Highway 97
Cuba, IL 61427
309-231-2116
jcmoore3d@gmail.com

Secretary: Donna Moore
25235 N. Illinois Highway 97
Cuba, IL 61427
309-231-2116
mwfsecretary@gmail.com

Treasurer: Steve Shimatzki
4295 County Road 16
Woodville, OH 43469
567-868-8794
woodvillerocks@gmail.com

IN MEMORIAM LARRY NAWOJSKI

We just received word that former Midwest Federation President Larry H. Nawojski of Shorewood, Illinois, died last year. He had been a member of the Chicago Lapidary Club, doing mostly cabochons but also trying his hand at jewelry making and faceting. He was MWF President in 1981-82.



His interests included fishing on Minnesota lakes, painting, wood carving, and singing in church choirs. He got his pilot’s license in 1982, and was active in Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 95 in Morris, Illinois.

He began building a two-seater plane in 2012. “Unfortunately, he never got a chance to finish it,” his obituary says, “but perhaps, his EAA Chapter 95 friends will finish his dream, and it will soar one day through the skies – just as Larry now soars to the Heavens on Angels’ wings.”

Nawojski is survived by his wife of 59 years (and fellow choir singer), Jacqueline. His other survivors include a sister, nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews. He is interred at Holy Family Catholic Church in Shorewood.

MINNESOTA CLUB HONORS ITS ROCKHOUSES OF THE YEAR

The Carlton County Gem and Mineral Club of Minnesota honors Bob and Nancy Lynch as 2025 Rockhounds of the Year. The Lynches joined the club in 1995 and have held many board positions, presented programs, and given generously of their time and resources.

Bob studied lapidary and metalsmithing at the Apache College in Douglas, Arizona, and creates exceptional jewelry in gold and silver, with Lake Superior agates as a favorite focal point. Nancy grew up in Two Harbors, Minnesota, where her grandfather owned the Agate City rock shop, and she also creates stunning Lake Superior agate jewelry. The couple has owned Agate City since 1992.

With their son Dan R. Lynch, the Lynches published their first book, *Lake Superior Rocks & Minerals*, in 2008. Since then, the team has written 23 rock guides and books including *Agates of Lake Superior: Stunning Varieties and How They are*



*Bob and Nancy Lynch.
Photo courtesy of the
Lynch family.*

Formed, Petoskey Stone, and the most recent release, Turquoise: Identifying and Collecting the Southwest's Iconic Gemstone.

The club has treasured their sharing of knowledge and friendship. Thank you, Bob and Nancy!

FINAL DETAILS FOR MWF EXECS MEETING

Donna Moore, MWF Secretary

Here are final details for the MWF Executive Committee meeting that will be held Oct. 25th in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.

A suggested hotel is the Comfort Inn and Suites at 1420 Main Street in Cuyahoga Falls. This is fairly close to the clubhouse where we will hold our meeting. We do not have a block of rooms because it was more reasonable to book online through an online booking site.

We are planning an informal get-together at the Summit Lapidary Club/Akron Mineral Society clubhouse on Friday the 24th at 7:00 p.m. The clubhouse is at 244 Chestnut Blvd., Cuyahoga Falls. There will be light refreshments, since we assume you will have eaten dinner by that time. This will just be an informal meet-and-greet for any MWF and club members who are in the area.

The meeting will be held in the same clubhouse on Saturday, Oct. 25th, at 9 a.m. After the meeting, we encourage you to visit the show at Emidio & Sons Banquet Center, 48 E. Bath Road, Cuyahoga Falls.

TREASURER'S DEATH LEAVES A GAP

Donna Moore, MWF Secretary

Alan Hukill, the MWF Endowment Fund Treasurer, passed away June 20, 2025. A former laboratory supervisor for Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories, he was a member of the Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral Society. He was predeceased by his wife, Sandra, and survived by children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and five brothers.

He did good work for the MWF, and we are in desperate need of a replacement treasurer for the Fund. It would be great if someone near Lansing, Michigan could step up to fill this position. You only have to receive donations, make deposits, and write a few checks a year. The investing is handled by someone else. Cindy Root is the MWF Endowment Fund Chair, and sends out the thank-you notes for donations.

If someone near Lansing is not available, we can make arrangements to move the accounts if need be.

If you might be interested in this position, please contact Cindy Root, d-root@comcast.net, or me, mwfsecretary@gmail.com.

MWF CLUBS THAT RENEW ON TIME GET TWO GREAT BENEFITS

The 2026 Midwest Federation forms for renewing club memberships are on the following two pages of this issue of MWF News. Please alert club officers to collect information for the forms.

One important piece of information needed on the DUES AND INSURANCE form is the total number of individual adult and youth members during the year completed during 2025. These figures are used for dues and insurance calculations. The rationale is that your total membership, by the end of the year, is usually about the same, so you always pay the current year dues based on your past experience. The treasurer needs this information **before January 15th** so our insurance can be activated on time.

The Midwest Federation will only publish each club's public contact information. Please make sure that the mailing address is checked at least weekly and the phone number connects to a real person who can answer questions about your club. We still need direct contact information that will be distributed on a need-to-know basis to Federation leaders.

Clubs are encouraged to provide name, position and email address for additional officers or board members who would like to receive the *MWF News*. This information will only be distributed to our editor and secretary. This is a great way to make sure that all of your officers are "in the know."

Clubs who renew on time will receive an email subscription to the juniors publication Mini Miners Monthly, distributed only via email. If you wish to have the Mini Miners Monthly subscription sent to someone other than your junior program coordinator or your editor, please provide a name, position and email address for that person and indicate that he or she is to receive the Mini Miners materials.

Use the EVENTS form to submit details of shows and events during the coming year and the first four months of 2027. If the Events form is submitted with the dues, we will make sure it gets to the website, newsletter and directory coordinators. If it is submitted later, or separately, it is more likely to get overlooked.

Insurance will stay the same for 2026. Our current rate is \$4.50 per club member, and all members must be covered. Clubs that submit their dues on time

(postmarked no later than January 15, 2026), may take a discount of 25¢ per member.

Remember: The Federation insurance policy will cover groups of clubs jointly sponsoring shows or events **only if all** of the sponsoring clubs are current federation members and **all** of the sponsoring clubs purchase federation insurance. Requests for insurance for these jointly sponsored events must include a list of all sponsoring clubs.

Questions about your MWF forms or dues? Contact Stephen Shimatzki at 567-868-8794 or woodvillerocks@gmail.com. Direct insurance questions to Sue Goedert at 616-337-1162 or sonbeams2000@yahoo.com.

THAT THING LAST MONTH? NEVER MIND . . .

Valerie J. Meyers, Editor
MWF News

Faithful readers of MWF News may recall that last month, we had an article about the correct way to request an insurance certificate for your club's event from MWF's insurance company. Well, never mind.

The insurance company MWF used was abruptly sold to another company, A.J. Gallagher ("AJG"), so the way to request a certificate has changed. AJG doesn't have a form for these requests, so a letter needs to be sent to them containing the following information: The name of the club; the dates of the event; the address of the event's site; and the email address of the site's management, in case AJG wants to get in touch with them. **Requests for certificates must be sent by email to select_certificatesajg.com.**

A second insurance issue has arisen. No coverage can be added to our master policy without discussing it first with MWF Insurance chair Sue Goedert. Clubs are welcome to purchase their own policy for club property or for a higher liability with the agency, but it should not be added to the MWF policy. An AJG form will soon be on the MWF website.

For questions about either of these issues, please contact Sue, sonbeams2000@yahoo.com.



Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies 2026 Annual Club Dues, Insurance and Club Contact Information

DUES AND INSURANCE FORM, AND EVENTS FORM, ARE DUE BY JANUARY 15, 2026
Use black INK. Mail to: MWF c/o Steve Shimatzki, 4295 County Road 16, Woodville, OH 43469

CLUB NAME: _____ STATE: _____

2026 Annual Club Dues Use membership figures from year completed December 31, 2025

Number of Adult Club Members: _____ X \$2.00 = \$ _____.

Number of Youth Club Members: _____ X \$0.50 = \$ _____.

Do You wish MWF Membership Cards: YES / NO

2026 Club Insurance (Optional, but if chosen, must pay for all members)

Total number of members from above: _____ X \$4.50* = \$ _____.

(*Renewals postmarked by January 15, 2026 receive a discounted insurance rate of \$4.25 PER MEMBER)

(Make check payable to Midwest Federation) TOTAL DUES AND INSURANCE REMITTED: \$ _____.

Club Public Information for Directory & Website

Club mailing address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Info phone number: _____ Website: _____

Email: _____ Facebook Name: _____

Meetings Location: _____

Date & Time: _____

Check following that apply to your club: Kid friendly FRA Club Lapidary workshop Field trips
 Rock Show Educational outreach

Direct Contact Information for Mailings (THIS WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED)

Individual (**other than Treasurer**) designated to receive official Federation materials:

Name: _____ Position: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Alternate phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Treasurer _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

CLUB BULLETIN NAME: _____

Editor: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please use separate sheet to list additional officers and members (name, position, email) who would like to receive the Federation newsletter and/or juniors materials via email.

Calendar Of Events Listing Information For Publication In MWF Directory, Website & Newsletter

Use black INK. Print, type, or complete form online, then print out and mail, with dues, to:
MWF, c/o Stephen Shimatzki, 4295 County Road 16, Woodville, OH 43469

DEADLINE FOR DIRECTORY INFORMATION IS JANUARY 15, 2026

**** Please include event listings for January, February, March and April 2027. ****

CLUB NAME: _____ STATE: _____

Show Chair: _____ Email: _____

Event Type: ___ Annual Show ___ Rock Swap ___ Other: _____

Dates: _____ Days/Times: _____

Facility/Location Name: _____

Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____

EVENT CONTACT INFORMATION (This will be published!)

Contact Person's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Club Website: _____

ADDITIONAL EVENT

Event Type: ___ Annual Show ___ Rock Swap ___ Other: _____

Dates: _____ Days/Times: _____

Facility/Location Name: _____

Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____

EVENT CONTACT INFORMATION (This will be published!)

Contact Person's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Club Website: _____

Questions? Call 616-498-4698

REMEMBER, this information, including contact information, will be published in the *MWF Directory*, posted on the *MWF Website*, and listed in the *MWF News*.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE DISCUSSES THE VALUE OF MWF AND AFMS, CONTINUED**

(Continued from page 1)

I quickly discovered that I could do a great many things with those rocks. Thanks to my Scouting Field Book and the local library, I was able to organize my collection and determine which rocks were of general interest, like fossils, and which were of greater value historically and commercially.

I also discovered that I could cut and polish many rocks to make them more interesting to other collectors and people who just liked pretty stones. I'm sure that many of you have a similar story on how you first became aware of rockhounding and its many facets.

Years later I joined a local gem and mineralogical club and through its members became aware of how much I didn't know. That club, and others that I have joined since, were supported by programs under the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Society and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Organizations like MWF and AFMS are critical to furthering the interest of both hobbyist and individuals seeking careers in environmental sciences like geology and related fields. The practical knowledge and resources that they provide – ethical standards, legal protections, and support of adult and youth programs, including students pursuing post-graduate studies – insure a thriving interest in the future of the sciences and rockhounding in general.

Of course, all of this would not be possible were it not for the many individuals, like yourself, who step forward to steer a course toward the future for others to follow. That is where we can all play a part in this hobby that we are so passionate about.

We can make a difference. Responsible collecting will ensure that we can conserve our resource, protect our environment, and keep rockhounding in the good graces of the public and lawmakers who can impact our hobby.

Making an investment of time and resources to become a rock crafter, a gemologist, or an amateur geologist will increase interest in rock collecting as well as add to your own appreciation of the hobby.

In our modern times rockhounding is in constant competition for the public's interest. Sharing your collection and artist creations through rock talks, public displays, rock and gem shows, and published articles increases the awareness of the value and fun that rockhounding offers. You can make that difference.

And now it begins – or more correctly, continues. I will do my best as President of the MWF to support those who have committed to our joint mission.

Communication is key. I hope to visit as many clubs, field trips, and rock and gem shows as time will allow, so that I can get to know you better and learn how I can best support your ideas and activities. I'm sure there is much more to learn, and going it alone is not an option.

HELP STILL NEEDED, CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

President next November. If you are interested in what is involved in serving in the offices of the MWF, please contact one of the present officers for an Operating Procedures Manual, which tells about what's involved for each position. The officers' contact information is on page 2 of this newsletter.

The MWF offices are strictly volunteer positions with two meetings each year – one being the annual convention and the other the spring or fall meeting of the Executive Committee.

The MWF President and the 1st Vice President are on the Board of Directors of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, and attend the AFMS annual meeting and the AFMS Scholarship Foundation meeting (which are on the same day). Their mileage or airfare is paid to attend these AFMS annual meetings, except when the meeting is held in their home federation; the AFMS meeting locations rotate around the seven federations.

It is fun to travel to these meetings and see the shows put on by the sponsoring clubs, meet new people, see new sights, etc. Sometimes field trips are even included with the conventions.

CLUB NEWSLETTERS, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, GIVE GLIMPSE OF '50s-'90s ROCKHOUDING

Kreigh Tomaszewski, President
Indian Mounds Rock & Mineral Club (MI)

Recently I finally finished my project of scanning 36 years of my old rock club's newsletters and putting them on my website.

The Grand Rapids Mineral Society was my first rock club; I joined when I was 8 years old. The club ran from 1958 to 1998, when it folded. When I came back to the hobby and went looking for a club it was gone, so I joined the Indian Mounds Rock and Mineral Club, which started in 1965, held many joint events with the Grand Rapids Mineral Society, and absorbed many of the remaining members.

When I joined Indian Mounds I started asking what happened to the Grand Rapids Mineral Society and never got a clear answer. Declining and aging membership, failure of the Juniors program, financial issues, issues with a host for meetings, and leadership issues, all got mentioned as contributions to why the club decided to fold.

In April 1985 the Grand Rapids Mineral Society and the Indian Mounds Rock and Mineral Club explored the possibility of merging and scheduled multiple joint picnics and programs to try it out, due to declining enrollment and participation in both clubs (it did not end up happening). By 1989 the club directory fit on one sheet of paper, and the club no longer met January through March because too many members went south for the winter.

I had saved most of the Grand Rapids Mineral Society newsletters from when I was in the club, plus three club directories. In addition, I received newsletters from another source. Bob Beauvais was a longtime member of both clubs, and publisher of the Grand Rapids Mineral Society newsletters almost from the beginning. When he died, his daughter said he wanted me to have his personal archive of the both GRMS and Indian Mounds newsletters. I have an almost complete set of newsletters from both of my rock clubs.

Back in the day newsletters had to be typed and drawn on mimeograph stencils, printed double sided, collated, stapled, addressed, and stamped. The average newsletter had eight sheets of paper, was published monthly, and went to hundreds of people. Making a

newsletter was serious work. Old newsletters contained significant rockhounding information, collecting localities, the MWF newsletter, and lapidary lore.

I finally made the resolution to scan the 40 years of newsletters that I had in my possession; I knew it would be a labor of love. It would be a shame to lose that history and lore. I thought I had the only remaining copy of the newsletters when I started, but I recently discovered that the Vanderveen Center for City History of the Grand Rapids Public Library claims to have a hard-copy set of the newsletters, donated when the club folded, that they decided was too much effort to put online.

The newsletters can be found by going to tomaszewski.net, The Tomaszewski Family Public Web Pages, and clicking on Grand Rapids Mineral Society on the home page.

GARNETS AND PEOPLE SHARE LONG HISTORY

Written by Nick Smith
Three Rivers Gem & Mineral Society (IN)
From the January, 2025 Strata Data

When one thinks of garnet, the color red first comes to mind; however, garnets come in a myriad of colors. Certain properties, however, are common to all garnets.

Fun Facts and Historical Facts About Garnets:

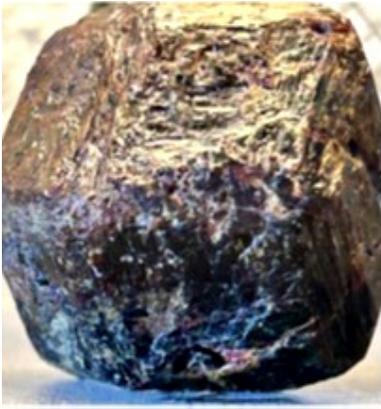
- The name is from the Greek word for “grain” because of the round shape of the crystals, similar to the seeds of the pomegranate fruit.
- Garnet is the traditional birthstone for January.
- It is also the gemstone for the second wedding anniversary.
- In Ancient Egypt, pharaohs wore garnet necklaces that would be buried with them when they were mummified and entombed for the afterlife.
- In Ancient Rome, signet rings were made of garnet and used to stamp official documents.
- During The Middle Ages (approximately 475 -1450 AD), garnet was a favorite gem of church leaders and the wealthy.

(Continued on page 9)

GARNETS AND PEOPLE, CONTINUED

(Continued from page 8)

● The discovery of a major garnet deposit in Central Europe around 1500 led to a booming jewelry industry that reached its height in the late 1800s.



This photo by Nick Smith shows a garnet crystal exhibiting typical crystal structure.

Properties Common to All Garnets:

1. The color of streak is white.
2. Hardness ranges from 6.5 to 7.5.
3. Cleavage of garnets is indistinct.
4. The crystal system is cubic with shapes being rhombic dodecahedron (twelve congruent faces) and icositetrahedron (twenty-four faces).
5. The fracture of garnet can be conchoidal (glasslike), splintery or brittle.
6. Transparency ranges from transparent (see-through) to opaque (can't be seen through).

Sources:

Bonewitz, RG. Smithsonian Nature Guide: Gems
 Borelli and Cipriani. Simon and Schuster Guide to Gems and Precious Stones
 Schumann, Walter. Gemstones of the World
 Sisk, Jerry. The Sisk Gemology Reference, Volume 1: Prominent Gems
<https://www.gia.edu/garnet-history-lore>

FIELD TRIPPER GIVES EQUIPMENT TIPS

Reggie Rose, Past Field Trip Chair
 Columbus Rock & Mineral Society (OH)
 From the April, 2025 Glacial Groove

If you want to take part in field trips of your rockhounding club, you will need the proper clothing and equipment. Here's what you will need to get started, but over time you will probably want to make improvements and/or additions to your equipment based on handiness and experience.

CLOTHING

A hard hat, safety glasses, sturdy jeans, steel-toe boots, heavy gloves, and a rain suit.

Hard hats are available at Home Depot, Menard's, and Lowe's.

Safety glasses: Even if you wear glasses, these are a good idea since bits of rock can fly into your face if you are bashing on a big rock. If you wear glasses for vision correction, wear an older pair and leave the good pair in the car for the drive home.

Gloves are available at a low price at Home Depot, Menard's, and Sutherland's.

Jeans: I think everyone has these. A quarry is no place for fashion jeans or shorts.

Steel-toe boots: You can spend an astronomical amount of money on these, or you can go to Walmart or shop online and get an inexpensive pair. Add a pair of arch supports or sole inserts to increase comfort. Nothing will kill your enthusiasm for collecting faster than going on a four-hour field trip in two-hour boots.

Rain suits, especially the pants, are good for keeping off both rain and dust.

ACCESSORIES

Tool belt: You may want to invest in an inexpensive tool belt, or start out with a hammer carrier that you can loop over your belt. You can get these at Sutherland's, Spartan Tool Supply, or Menard's.

Knee pads: Some people invest in knee pads. You might want to check for used pads at Play It Again Sports before purchasing them at Home Depot, Menard's, or Lowe's. A used pair of volleyball knee supports may be more comfortable than what is available at home and garden stores.

(Continued on page 11)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date and Time	Organization	Place	Contact
Oct. 25 Sat, 9-1	St. Croix Rockhounds	Valley Creek Mall, 1750 Weir Drive, Woodbury, MN	Dave Rusterholz, stcroixrock@gmail.com
Oct. 25-26 Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	Akron Mineral Society	Emidio & Sons Banquet Center, 48 E. Bath Road, Cuyahoga Falls, OH	Cathy Milhoan, slcmembershipchair@gmail.com
This show is being held in conjunction with the MWF Executive Committee Meeting. See article on page 3.			
Oct. 25-26 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4	Anoka County Gem & Mineral Club	Crystal Community Center, 4800 Douglas Drive N., Crystal, MN	Martha Miss, martha@rock-biz.biz
Oct. 25-26 Sat 9-5, Sun 9:30-4	Black Hawk Gem & Mineral Club	Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds, 2815 W. Locust Street, Davenport, IA	Bret Henderson, reminerals@gmail.com
Nov. 1 Sat: tables open 6, oral auction 7	Midwest Mineralogical and Lapidary Society auction	Democratic Club of Taylor, 23400 Wick Road, Taylor, MI	Dwayne Ferguson, shelby0671111@yahoo.com
Nov. 1-2 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4	Gem City Rock Club	Quincy Town Center, 3347 Broadway, Quincy, IL	Brad Fanning, bFanning@yahoo.com
Nov. 1-2 Sat & Sun, 10-5	Mid-Michigan Rock Club	Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S. Badour Road, Midland, MI	Laura Foster, pop345corn@sbcglobal.net
Nov. 1-2 Sat 9-6, Sun 10-4	Nebraska Mineral & Gem Club	Liberty First Credit Union Arena, 72 nd and Q Street, Ralston, NE	Tammy Jeanneret, tjeanneret@hughes.net
Nov. 1-2 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4	Racine Geological Society	Fountain Banquet Hall, 8505 Durand Avenue, Highway 11, Sturtevant, WI	John Lowman, 262-989-9193
Nov. 8-9 Sat 9-5, Sun 10-4	Northwest Illinois Rock Club	Eagles Club #679, 1200 W. Galena, Freeport, IL	Brian Green, nwilrockclub@gmail.com
Nov. 10 Mon, 7:30	Michigan Mineralogical Society auction	Cranbrook Institute of Science, 39221 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, MI	David Lurie, dlurie2001@comcast.net
Nov. 21-23 Fri 3-7, Sat 10-7, Sun 10-5	St. Louis Mineral & Gem Society	Affton Community Center, 9801 Mackenzie Road, St. Louis, MO	Beth Schlegel, beth.schlegel@att.net
Nov. 22-23 Sat 9:30-5, Sun 10-5	Madison Gem & Mineral Club	Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison, WI	Nevin Franke, burniesrockshop@gmail.com
Nov. 22-23 Sat 9-5, Sun 10-5	Northwest Ohio Rockhound Club	St. James Lutheran Church, 4727 W. Sylvania Avenue, Toledo, OH	Suzanne Shimatzki, sshimatzki@gmail.com

*December Issue Submission Deadline Is
November 5th!*

FIELD TRIP EQUIPMENT TIPS, CONT.

(Continued from page 9)

TOOLS AND GEAR

Carriers: Shower totes with two compartments are handy for carrying rocks. Get two. As you scramble up a rock pile you can also use them in hand to support yourself so that you actually have four points of support as you climb, which is one better than the three points of support needed for safety. Find them at Target and Walmart.

Chisels: When you are hammering on a rock using a chisel you can miss hit and wind up breaking your hand rather than the rock. So go to Sears and get a good quality chisel with a collar.

Hammers: I do not have a good cheap source for a mason's hammer, which has a square head on one end and a chisel point on the other. Eastwing products are the best. Look for these at Lowe's, Menard's, and Home Depot.

Sledges: You'll find good prices on a good old-fashioned sledge hammer at Harbor Freight. If you want to upgrade to a short-handled sledge, get the Mercedes of sledges: the Wilton. Shop online or at Spartan Tool Supply.

Specimen containers: I always have on hand Ziploc bags in snack, sandwich, quart, and gallon sizes. I also keep a hunk of small and large plastic grocery bags handy. Not only are they good to put big specimens in, but you can use them as packing between specimen bags. And then there are egg cartons. You can store 12 fragile small crystal specimens in each one to protect them from damage.

Paper towels and toilet paper: Both are good for protective packing, and the latter is very handy for nature runs if you are out in the wild. Always bury or pack out litter.

Other tools: Occasionally a hand rake or hand mattock comes in handy. Look for these in the garden tool section at Lowe's, Menard's, or Home Depot.

There it is: everything that you need to collect your favorite specimens. Develop your equipment cache gradually to suit your needs. At first, you may want to stop at paper towels on the above list.

You may have noticed while reading this that a lot of collecting equipment is available at gardening stores. That is a strange coincidence because, like the gardener who harvests vegetables before they rot, as a collector you are harvesting nature's bounty of minerals before they are sent to the crusher!

TECHNIQUES CAN SPOT COUNTERFEIT BILLS

Sandy Fuller

MWF Technology Resources Chair

"Oh, I just printed that today! Isn't the ink dry yet?" the customer teases as the cashier holds the bill up to the light.

What's happening? It's US currency, isn't it?

Or is it?

The government has made it more difficult to reproduce paper money, but not everyone has been informed of the changes. So dispose of those obsolete marking pens and get informed.

Currency is printed on a combination of linen and cotton. It's a type of paper that is specially made for currency and is different from regular paper. The old marking pens could detect if rag stock was used, but little else.

Unfortunately, thieves have become more sophisticated. They now bleach a dollar bill which has the proper rag stock and then they copy a larger bill, such as a twenty, fifty, or hundred, onto that paper.

Fortunately, the new bills take this into consideration. Feel the bill. The printing is raised on this unique combination of cotton and linen. A photocopy is flat, so the difference can be felt.

(Continued on page 12)

DEADLINE CALENDAR

The **MWF Fall Executive Committee meeting** will be held **Oct. 25th** in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. See the article on page 3.

The **MWF Bulletin Editors Contest** deadline is **Jan. 22, 2026**. Bulletin issues, articles, and other categories can be entered; top winners go to the AFMS contest. Contact Bulletin Editors Chair Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich, mafr43@hotmail.com.

Club Rockhound of the Year Awards may be submitted at any time for certificates and a mention in the MWF News. Contact ROTY Chair Jeanine Mielecki, jaynine9@aol.com.

Valerie J. Meyers, Editor
Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies
vjmwriter@yahoo.com
Post Office Box 13456
Overland Park, KS 66282-3456

Non Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fiatt, IL
Permit No. 1

**It is MWF policy that its name and logo may not be used for commercial purposes.
Please notify the Secretary of any violations.**

TECHNIQUES CAN SPOT COUNTERFEIT BILLS, CONTINUED

(Continued from page 11)

Now, tilt the bill. Denominations 10 and above change the color of the number on the lower right side. This gold-green shift can be easily seen.

Embedded within each of them is a hologram of the person featured on the bill. The hologram can't be copied, so the fake bill has a hologram that does not match the picture when the bill is held up to the light.

Finally, if you want to check out all the anti-copying features of the bills, get out your black light and examine them. Newer bills, other than the ones, have a security thread embedded vertically in each bill. Looking closely, you can see that the security thread has writing verifying the denomination.

If you only have time for one check, hold the bill to the light and look for the hologram. This is the quickest and easiest way to prevent theft.

Need more information? Check out uscurrency.gov.



Money printing plates. Photo via uscurrency.gov/media/multimedia-library.

**2026 Dues and Events
Information is on pages 4-6!**