



MWF News

**Midwest Federation
of Mineralogical and Geological Societies**

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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We've come to the end of a very busy year and it's time to take stock and think about the year ahead. We've had a great time going on field trips in 2025. Fossil hunting in southern Nebraska and northern Michigan were both highlights of this year. Rockport Quarry just north of Alpena, Michigan was an adventure I will always remember. After a couple days of rockhounding, we stopped for a short time beneath the Mackinac Bridge to tour the fort and visit the local history museum.



Throughout our travels, we kept an eye out for the many rock and mineral shops that lined our route.

Later this year we traveled to the Michigan State Museum of Natural History in Ann Arbor, Michigan to see their fine collections of minerals and

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MWF CLUBS CAN PAY DUES DIGITALLY

Steve Shimatzki,
MWF Treasurer

First, A BIG thank you to State Line Gem and Mineral Society of Michigan! They were the first club to renew their membership for 2026! No prize, but Doris gets to know that she was the first treasurer to complete the forms and send them in. Thanks, Doris!

I wanted to follow up and let everyone know that we will be able to accept a digital payment if you wish, with Zelle. Zelle is NOT an app, but it is usually in your bank app. For the MWF, I see it when I'm in the banking app and click on BILL PAY. Your banking app may be different. If your bank supports Zelle, then this is the secure bank-to-bank type of digital payment that is safest. This is currently the only digital payment we can take with our banking without having to setup a third-party type of account.

If you wish to send a Zelle payment for your club instead of a check, it will cost the MWF an extra

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HAIR-RAISING STORY STRESSES SAFETY

Erin Irwin, Lubbock Gem and Mineral Society (TX)
 From the June, 2025 A.F.M.S. Newsletter
 Via the June 2025 Strata Data of the Three Rivers Gem
 & Mineral Society (IN)

We've all seen the safety rules posted around the club shops. Most of us tend to overlook them—until someone speaks up. That's usually when we roll up our sleeves, tie back our hair, and maybe dig around for a pair of safety glasses.

At home, though, I know many of us let our guard down even more. I'm definitely guilty of that. A few weeks ago, we were using a bench grinder and a Dremel at home. No one was wearing safety glasses, and no one had their hair pulled back. One thing people rarely talk about is the importance of posture and body positioning when working with machinery. It can make all the difference.



My 15-year-old son, who's been taught proper safety protocols and has used many machines without issue, had a scary experience that day. In a split second, his hair got caught in the spinning mechanism. He shouted, and while I rushed to unplug the machine, he managed to shut it off himself.

Thankfully, the only thing he lost was a lot of hair—not his scalp. Still, for a teenage boy, losing that much hair was a big deal. He was angry and swore he'd never touch the machines again.

I hope with time he'll reconsider and get back to making cabs – something at which he's genuinely talented. But one thing is for sure: we won't be taking safety for granted again.



Photos by author Erin Erwin.

COMMITTEE CHANGES FRA PATCHES, BADGES

Reinee Hildebrandt, Chair
 MWF Junior Activities Committee

This year the Juniors Committee of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies has been busy redesigning the Junior Rockhound membership patch given to juniors who have attended at least three meetings of their club's Future Rockhounds of America (FRA) program. Members who have already earned the older badge will be able to buy the new badge design without further qualification when the new design is finished.



Current FRA membership patch. The newer patch will also have the group's name, plus hopefully AFMS, on it. It will picture a rock hammer, fossil, and gem cluster, with mountains in the background.

The national committee is also working on dividing the FRA's Rocks and Minerals badge into two separate badges. Coordinators will be able to have juniors redo those units with more specificity get the new badges associated with this split. We are also redoing the Earth Processes badge requirements.

More details will be available at the joint MWF -AFMS meeting in St. Charles, Illinois the weekend of May 22nd through May 24th. If space is available, the AFMS Juniors Committee will have a "Juniors Cracker Barrel" and information table during the meeting and show. Come join us and learn more about these updates.

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 to the club's juniors coordinator. 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.

YOU'RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER CAKE



The Kettle Moraine Geological Society (WI) Junior Rockhounds Club recently met at the Horicon Marsh Education & Visitor Center for the center's 10th anniversary celebration. This photo is from the November, 2025 issue of the club's Kettle Krier.

The center is between Mayville and Horicon, Wisconsin. Activities at the marsh include educational activities at the center, including exhibits of the region's extinct mammals, hiking, geocaching, bird and wildlife observation, kayaking, and canoeing. For information, check out horiconmarsh.org.



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: _____

Email Address of Person to Receive Mini Miners Monthly (if applicable) _____

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*.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES: TREASURER'S AND STATE DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Donna Moore, MWF Secretary

The MWF Executive Committee met October 25, 2025, in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. First Vice President Tom Barnhizer called the meeting to order. David Root announced that we had a quorum.

J.C. Moore gave the invocation. Tom led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mary Ann Rich welcomed everyone on behalf of the host clubs, Summit Lapidary Club and Akron Mineral Society. She encouraged everyone to go to the show after the meeting.

Tom introduced the past MWF Presidents who were present: Mary Ann Rich, David Rich, David Root, Cindy Root, and J.C. Moore. Jim Marburger was present online. J.C. Moore was also recognized as the president of the AFMS. He noted that he had six days left in that position.

Cindy Root reviewed the rules of order for the meeting, which were printed on the back of the agenda.

The minutes of the April 5, 2025 meeting of the MWF Executive Committee had been handed out. J.C. Moore moved to approve the minutes. David Rich seconded the motion, which carried.

Stephen Shimatzki handed out the treasurer's report and highlighted some expenditures. Our insurance is increasing because we had more members. We also pay 75 cents per person (adult and junior) to the AFMS for dues. At this point we are healthy and doing well. J.C. Moore moved to approve the treasurer's report. David Rich seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

There were two black T-shirts left, which were purchased. The red ones will be shipped shortly.

Reports of State Directors

David Rich, 2nd Vice President, reviewed the state directors' reports and additions.

Iowa – No report.

Illinois – No report, position open.

Indiana – Michele Yamanaka had a written report and was present.

Michigan – No report.

Minnesota – No report.

Missouri/Arkansas – Bruce Stinemetz had a written report and nothing to add.

Nebraska – Jim Marburger had a written report.

Ohio – Catherine Clevenz had written reports from two assistants Joyce Kish and Judy Budnik. She added that the Toledo Gem & Rockhound Club was growing, but having some problems getting people to be in the show and run it. They are growing and doing well with lapidary. They are offering classes even to outsiders. Northwest Ohio Rockhound Club has a new secretary. They are getting ready for their November show in Toledo.

North and South Dakota – Aletha Hoogeterp was online. She noted her e-mail is not able to send right now. The Sioux Falls club show went well. They have expanded their vendors to more than 20. Attendance was about 450. They have several new members. The club took three field trips to local gravel pits. She had no contact from the North Dakota club.

Wisconsin – David introduced the new state director, Mary Rettler from the Kettle Moraine Geological Society. She said she is brand new and very excited. She is looking forward to working with the Wisconsin clubs.

David noted that we need volunteers for the future to move the federation forward.

Michele Yamanaka added to her written report for Indiana that Three Rivers Gem & Mineral Society held their show the previous weekend. It was very good, probably the best show at the present location. They had 23 parochial-school classes that brought 400 children and 26 families to the show.

The club had their trailer stolen last year and lost a lot of their supplies. She thanked the Tulip City Gem & Mineral Club (Michigan) for donated specimens for their juniors.

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IN MEMORIAM OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

These members have passed on since the MWF convention last May.

OFFICERS

Alan Hukill, MWF Endowment Fund Treasurer, former MWF President (2003-4)

Rose Blue, past president of MWF (2008-09)

Willis Smith, MWF past president (1999-2000)

Larry Nawojski, past MWF President (1981-2)

ARKANSAS

Sharon Waddell, Ozark Earth Science Gem, Mineral and Fossil Club; mineral dealer and former MWF Assistant State Director for Arkansas and Missouri

ILLINOIS

Helen Joann Gasdorf, Peoria Academy of Science, Geology Section

Lyle Backus, Chicago Rocks & Minerals Society

Henry Schmidt, Chicago Rocks and Minerals Society

Darrell Ransom, Northwest Illinois Rock Club

INDIANA

Rhonda Dunn, Brown County Rock and Mineral Club

MINNESOTA

Lois May Allen, Minnesota Mineral Club

Bernard Sporre, Minnesota Mineral Club

MISSOURI

Deborah Booker, Central Missouri Rock and Lapidary Club

Ray Marlatt, Independence Gem & Mineral Society

Jim Hartman, Independence Gem & Mineral Society

NEBRASKA

Karen Messenger, Lincoln Gem and Mineral Club

Jim Schermerhorn, Nebraska Gem and Mineral Club (Omaha)

OHIO

Joe Codney, Parma Lapidary Club

Harris Precht, Cincinnati Mineral Society, Richmond Gem & Mineral Society

MINUTES, CONTINUED: COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Reports of Permanent Committees

Tom Barnhizer reviewed the permanent committees.

Archaeology – Skeeter Kish had a written report to which he added that the societies were doing well. Their picnics were over and they were getting ready for their Christmas parties. They had an Archaeology Day and invited the public to bring artifacts for identification. It didn't go as well as hoped. He noted that archaeologists are the living dead. (Of ancient peoples). He noted that if you purchase artifacts you should be careful because there is a lot of fraud.

Boundaries – Sandy Fuller's written report said there was nothing new to report.

Bulletin Editor's Contest – Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich had a written report. The deadline for the contest for 2026 would be January 22. Hard-copy submissions are needed again. Do not send them FedEx, because she will be in Tucson after January 1. Her mail is forwarded. Her phone is (330) 715-8866. That will be the same while she is in Tucson. She will have a temporary post office box, which will be assigned when they get to Tucson. She has priority forward from her Ohio post office. Call to let her know what is coming and how. The entries are going back to hard copies. Send two copies.

Merit Awards – The deadline will be February 1. These are electronic submissions only.

Club Rockhound of the Year – Jeannine Mielecki had a written report.

Convention and Shows – J.C. Moore had a written report.

Credentials – David Root had nothing to report, except we had a quorum for the meeting.

Director of Supplies & Information – Sharon Marburger had a written report.

Education – No report.

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES, CONT.: INSURANCE TO CONVENTION AND SHOW ADVISORY

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Environment & Legislation – No report.

Geology – No report.

Historian – Written report.

Insurance – We have a new agent. Sue Goedert is working with the new agent to get a new form to apply for a certificate on the website. She noted that anything that needs to be added to the original policy must be negotiated through her.

Junior Activities – Reinee Hildebrant had a written report. She added that there are 24 junior clubs signed up. There are three new clubs. The Midwest Federation had the longest running junior club in the nation at the Three Rivers Gem & Mineral Society in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, started by Michele Yamanaka. Reinee had sent out a survey to all the MWF Clubs on how the Junior Activities Committee can meet their club's needs with the junior program. She noted that the junior program is the future of our hobby. She told that her home club had lost the person who oversaw the junior activities at their show. This year, three parents of juniors stepped up to help fill the void.

Lapidary – No report.

Long Range Planning – No report.

Membership – Jim Marburger reported no membership inquiries had been received.

Mineralogy – Vacant.

Newsletter – Articles are always welcome.

Paleontology – No report.

Program Competition – Bob Powers had a written report.

Program Requests – Bob Powers had a written report.

Program Review – Jim Travis had nothing to report.

Public Image and Courtesy – Sandy Shorter had a written report. She feels we are still not getting

information out about such things as the T-shirts. Steve Shimatzski suggested she send him information to post on the MWF Facebook because a lot of people are not reading their e-mails or the newsletter. We need more feedback from the club members.

John Rettler from Kettle Moraine Geological Society (WI) said they have a new editor who is including more information from the MWF Newsletter. A phone tree from the MWF Directors to the clubs was suggested.

J.C. Moore reported that the AFMS Newsletter will be delivered electronically only starting in February 2026. The AFMS Editor will send the link to the regional federation editors who will send it to the club editors who will send it to the members. Any members who do not have email will have to get a printed copy from the club editor. Cindy Root said she has all the emails from Valerie J. Meyers, the MWF Editor, on the website. Tom Barnhizer said we have to improve communication.

Safety and Field Trips – David Rich had a written report on the table.

Scholarship – Marge Collins had a written report. She added that she is always welcoming donations.

Silent Auction – Leslie Hartman, the new chairperson, was online while on a field trip to collect geodes in Iowa. She will need donations for the silent auction in St. Charles, Illinois, on Sunday, May 24, 2026.

Uniform Rules – J.C. Moore had a written report.

Website – Cindy Root had a written report.

Website Competition – Brad Zylman had a written report.

Convention and Show Advisory – J.C. Moore presented this information.

- 2025 – Lincoln, Nebraska, in April. J.C. Moore thanked Sharon Marburger and the club for doing a great job of hosting the MWF.

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES, CONTINUED: OLD BUSINESS, NEW BUSINESS

(Continued from page 9)

- 2026 – The clubs of the Chicagoland Gems and Minerals Association will host the MWF and the AFMS, May 22-24. They are working on a trip to the Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art.



One of the hundreds of amazing displays at the Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art in Oak Brook, Illinois.

- 2027 – Kettle Moraine Geological Society will host March 6-7, 2027 in Pewaukee, Wisconsin.
- 2028 – Minnesota Mineral Club will host in Cottage Grove, Minnesota.

J.C. noted that in 2033 the MWF will again host the AFMS. The information about the 2026 convention will be on the MWF website and in the newsletter. He said he would like to have a future convention back in Michigan.

Old Business

Media Committee – The new equipment is now working for Zoom.

Updated MWF Logo – Stephen Shimatzki will send it to Cindy Root for the website. He is colorizing it. It was noted that the old logo will still be on things until they are replaced, but new information should have the new logo.

Electronic Payment – Stephen Shimatzki, MWF Treasurer, reported that Hampton Bank accepts Zelle payments. If anyone is sending a Zelle payment, they need to let Stephen know it is coming. If clubs wish to pay dues this way, they still need to use the actual forms. He noted that January 15 is the cutoff for payment of dues. Cindy Root noted that any club that has not paid by January 15 will come off the website.

New Business

News from the AFMS – J.C. Moore, AFMS President, reported on the meeting in Hickory, North Carolina, in March. The item of business that affects the most people is that the AFMS Newsletter will now be distributed only electronically. It is hoped it will reach more people. He reported that in the past two years (he had filled in for the president in 2024) he had attended twelve of the fourteen regional conventions held throughout the country. He noted that starting November 1, David Rich will be serving as AFMS 5th Regional Vice President. Tom Barnhizer said he had been reading up on the MWF and the AFMS and was in awe of the breadth of the programs of the AFMS and MWF.

2nd Vice President – J.C. told that he ran for 2nd Vice President of the MWF because we could not find anyone willing to run. He does not plan to move up to 1st VP or President again, so we need to find people to step up without having to recycle officers. The rewards of traveling to shows and meeting people in different clubs is definitely worth it. If people aren't ready to step into the vice president chairs, they might take on a committee chairmanship or even volunteer to be an assistant to one of the committee chairs. We also need some new state directors. These people are the lifeline between the clubs and the MWF.

Changes to Insurance – Hopefully, our policy is set up with the new agent. Just a reminder that it is strictly liability. (The new certificate should be up on the MWF Website mwfed.org). Sue Goedert is working with the new agent to facilitate the changeover.

Field Trips – There was a question as to whether federation field trips were feasible due to the long distance from one end to the other of the MWF. There are also limited places to collect in the MWF. It

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MINUTES: ANNOUNCEMENTS, ADJOURNMENT

(Continued from page 10)

was suggested that regular field trips might be shared with local clubs. The State Directors might be able to encourage clubs to share field trips. Michele Yamanaka reported that Indiana clubs are trying to open their field trips to other clubs in the state.

Endowment Treasurer – Alan Hukill passed away, so a new treasurer is needed. We need a new treasurer to handle the Endowment Funds, which are separate from the MWF general fund. If anyone is interested in this position, get in touch with Cindy Root, Tom Barnhizer or Donna Moore. This needs to be done soon.

Announcements

David Root announced that he has a three-wheel Loratone grinder that will be donated to the MWF silent auction at St. Charles. Bidders must be present to take the grinder home.

Cindy Root proposed that people think about whether we should continue to do the Executive Committee meetings that are not with the convention in person. She suggested the meetings could be conducted strictly on Zoom or other electronic means. (Today we were having some problems with Zoom, but normally it should work. At this meeting there were six people on Zoom.) J.C. Moore brought up that by doing these meetings in person, we meet members throughout the federation, see their shows, and we get to communicate among ourselves in person. Many times issues have been worked out over breakfast or dinner. It was agreed to discuss this at the Executive Committee meeting in St. Charles. If adopted, it would require a by-laws change. Changes would need to be made to the rules of the meeting if it is strictly by electronic means.

A moment of silence was observed for those members we had lost since the last meeting.

David Rich moved to adjourn the meeting. Cindy Root seconded the motion. Tom Barnhizer adjourned the meeting.

EXEC COMMITTEE: STATE DIRECTORS REPORT

INDIANA

STATE DIRECTOR MICHELE YAMANAKA

The Indiana Society of Paleontology has been active in collecting fossils. They do not have a show. They do have a student member who is pursuing a degree in paleontology, and the club is interested in finding out how to recommend her for a MWF scholarship.

My Zoom meeting was not well attended so I do not have more to report, except that no one has reported any deceased members since April.

MISSOURI/ARKANSAS

STATE DIRECTOR BRUCE STINEMETZ

Arkansas Clubs

Central Arkansas Gem, Mineral, and Geology Society: The club has their annual show scheduled for October 4-5. I believe they were moving to a new location this year, so hopefully that will work out for them.

Ozark Earth Science Gem, Mineral and Fossil Club: The club has been holding regular monthly meetings. At each meeting information is presented on a new mineral or fossil. They are currently preparing for their annual show. It will be held December 6-7, 2025 at the Ramada Inn in Mountain Home, Arkansas.

Missouri Clubs

Central Missouri Rock and Lapidary Club: The club held a successful club show over the Mother's Day weekend. They had 14 vendors, good attendance, and increased profits. Their silent auction area was boosted this year by donations from Kingsley-North Lapidary Supplies and Crystal Grove Herkimer Diamond Mine. They had an increase in volunteers this year, and several new members joined the club after attending the show.

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*January Issue Submission Deadline Is
December 3rd!*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date and Time	Organization	Place	Contact
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 Sat 9-4	Cuyuna Rock, Gem, & Mineral Society holiday rock and craft sale	Lower level, Franklin Arts Center, 1001 Kingswood Street, Brainerd, MN	Club Facebook page
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
Jan. 18 Sun 11-5	Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club rock swap Please bring canned food items for the Food Bank of Lincoln.	Lincoln Firefighters Reception Hall, 241 Victory Lane, Lincoln, NE	Jayne Beer, 402-890-3307

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, CONTINUED: REPORT OF THE MISSOURI-ARKANSAS STATE DIRECTOR

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The club worked with the Columbia, Missouri Parks and Recreation Department to present three classes at the summer camp program. This included classes on fossils, fluorescence, and geodes. They also maintained a display at the Boone County Library. Mary Nichols and Don Taylor donated space for the club equipment for the members to use. These activities have attracted new members. Field trips this year included trips to the crystal mines in Arkansas, and a trip for drusy quartz at the Haunted Ridge Mine in Cadet, Missouri.

Independence Gem and Mineral Society: The club will be hosting a silent auction on October 11. They will be selling items from the collection of the late Donna Ashley. Club members will be participating in the November Kansas City Gem and Mineral Show. Several members went to Copper Valley Mines in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri to collect specimens. Some very unusual minerals for Missouri can be found at this location, including malachite, azurite, chrysocolla, chalcocite and tenorite.

Mozarkite Society of Lincoln: The club's primary activity is the Lincoln, Missouri club show which was held in September. The show appeared to be a success. The club also sponsored an outreach booth at

the Missouri State Fair this year. The club sponsors scholarships for some area students.

Osage Rock and Mineral Club: The club held their annual show in June at the Eldon, Missouri Community Center.

Ozark Mountain Gem and Mineral Society: The club is planning on having its annual show October 17-19. The show will be held at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds and Events Center in Springfield, Missouri. This is a new location for them, so hopefully it will work out well.

St. Louis Gem and Mineral Society: The club has had a busy year. They have taken numerous field trips. They went to Bluff View Farm in April 12; Haunted Ridge in May, July, and September; and Copper Valley Mines in May and July. Other activities included the annual club picnic, the sale of the lifetime collection of member R. Condray, and the Hawks Bluff Crazy Lace Agate and Drusy Event. This event included classes on cutting and cabbing. The club operated an information booth at the event.

Roy Hurlburt and a few other members attended an event to help raise funds for a local food pantry. They cracked geodes and sold them to people who

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, STATE DIRECTORS REPORTS, CONTINUED: NEBRASKA AND OHIO

(Continued from page 12)

came to the event. They raised \$590 for the food pantry, and they made so many people happy with their sparkly geodes.

Upcoming scheduled events include a rock-breaking party on October 18, the annual fall Mineral & Gem Show November 21-23, and the annual Christmas party on December 5. At their monthly meetings they have a Person on the Rock Pile report, speaker presentations, and a Pebble Pups presentation for the younger members.

Show-Me Rockhounds of Kansas City: Programs included presentations by Bruce Stinemetz on mineral identification techniques and Jon Groskurth on faceting. Several members attended the field trip to Copper Valley Mines in August. The club held two sales, in May and June, of rocks and minerals from the club's collection.

Tri-State Gem and Mineral Society: The club held two shows in 2025 at the Historical and Mineral Museum in Joplin Museum. The shows were held in May and September.

**NEBRASKA
STATE DIRECTOR JIM MARBURGER**

Nebraska Gem and Mineral Club (Omaha): We lost a great member in July, Jeff Schermerhorn.

The club's annual Rock Show at Liberty First Credit Union Arena will be held Nov. 1 and 2. Election of club officers will be held in December, and there will be a swap meet in February 2026. The club holds an open workshop every Tuesday and Thursday for members, and instructional classes in cabochons and faceting on Saturdays by appointment. The group has a Facebook page and a website, nerockgem.org.

Lincoln Gem and Mineral Club, Inc.: We lost a long-time member, Karen Messenger, this summer.

We have had a busy summer with field trips – river collecting, a trip to the Crawford, Nebraska rock swap with 16 members in attendance, and daily field trips to the Oglala National Grassland. Fairburn agates and lots of cutting materials were found. Our next project is the Mid-Winter Rock Swap in January. All booth spaces have been claimed, and preparations have

been started. Now if we can just have nice weather in the winter.

**OHIO
STATE DIRECTOR CATHERINE CLEVENZ**

The Cincinnati Lapidary Guild is having classes, monthly meetings and open workshops.

The Cincinnati Mineral Society had a good show at their new location at the Butler County Fairgrounds in Hamilton, Ohio. The show was cut back a little due to the space at the fairground. Their next show will be in May 2026, also at the Fairgrounds.

The Dayton Gem & Mineral Society is doing well.

Summit Lapidary Club, reported by Judy Budnik, Assistant Ohio State Director: Members are very busy getting ready for our fall show. Numerous classes in the lapidary arts have been held and are ongoing. We have several new members this year. The club held its annual trip to Fantasha and the Flint Ridge dig. Several members attended lapidary schools.

Our past few shows have done well. Attendance is holding.

WOE IS ME

Sharon Marburger, Secretary
Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club (NE)
From the June, 2025 Pick & Shovel

I walk along the gravel bed
A small voice goes unheard,
"I am Laker" says the voice
But I don't hear a word.
Big man Corey walks behind
His ears attuned to quiet,
What is that sound? He looks around,
He will not walk right by it.
He bends and picks up treasured Laker
He laughs and taps my shoulder.
You just walked over this precious stone,
Were you looking for a boulder?
I turn and look at what I missed,
I sigh my rueful sigh,
I can't see Lakers in the wild,
Brown jasper grabs my eye.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPORTS: ARCHAEOLOGY-JUNIOR ACTIVITIES**ARCHAEOLOGY
SKEETER KISH, CHAIR**

The State Archaeological Society of Ohio is holding meetings in Mid-Ohio. All local chapters are doing well. We have attended several very informative chapter presentations on the topics of archaeology, anthropology, and paleontology.

Most chapters have had their planned events and summer picnics featuring educational programs, food, displays, and silent auctions. Field activities have been completed, and research continues for the season. There were several Archaeological digs being conducted by professionals with the help of amateurs. If you're purchasing artifacts, be sure to check the authenticity.

**BULLETIN EDITORS AIDS
MARY ANN FERGUSON-RICH, CHAIR**

Entries for the Bulletin Editors' Aids Contest, which must be in hard copy, should be mailed to me by January 22, 2026 to 1166 Broadview Road, Tallmadge, Ohio 44278. **DO NOT SEND BY FEDEX OR UPS!** After January 1 you can send directly to Tucson (although I do get a weekly priority mail forward). Call or text my cell phone or email me to get the temporary Tucson address, as each year I get a temporary post office box at the RV resort at which I stay. My email address is mafergusonrich@gmail.com, and my phone number is 330-715-8866.

Last year I was dismayed to discover that entries were sent both electronically and in hard copy from one club and I did not receive them. This year, please let me know by phone or email that your entry is on the way, and make sure I get back to you to verify receipt. I am so sorry that occurred – I want to get each and every entry submitted for an award!

**CLUB ROCKHOUND OF THE YEAR
JEANINE N. MIELECKI, CHAIR**

Since the MWF's convention this past April, a new Rockhound of the Year for 2025 has been announced. This exemplary rockhound, who has been honored by his club and received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Midwest Federation, is Dewey Buck, Miami County Gem and Mineral Club of Troy, Ohio.

Doubling the recognition, Judi Allison, AFMS Rockhound of the Year Committee Chair, ensures the announcement of each Rockhound of the Year honored by the MWF is published in the AFMS Newsletter. Judi sends a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the AFMS, too, which is forwarded to the recipient's club.

**CONVENTION & SHOW ADVISORY
J.C. MOORE, CHAIR**

Preparations have begun for the 2026 MWF convention on Memorial Day weekend. This will be a joint MWF and AFMS Convention at the Chicagoland Gems and Minerals Association show. The 2027 Convention will be at the Kettle Moraine Society Show in March at the County Fair Park in West Bend, Wisconsin. 2028 will be hosted by the Minnesota Mineral Club. I am still looking for a site for conventions in 2029 and beyond.

**DIRECTOR OF SUPPLIES & INFORMATION
SHARON MARBURGER**

There has been one request for supplies since the last meeting.

**INSURANCE
SUE GOEDERT, CHAIR**

I just got notice that the company we have been using for insurance the entire time I have been with the MWF has been sold, and is now being serviced by a different group. Our new contact is Chris Bell from Gallagher Select Specialty. Her email address is chris.bell@ajs.com, and her phone number is 779-220-3566.

If people need a certificate, the address is now select_certificate@ajg.com. They will need to provide the name of their club, the dates of the event, the address, and where the certificate needs to be emailed to.

**JUNIOR ACTIVITIES
REINEE HILDEBRANDT, CHAIR**

As of October 2025, the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Society (MWF) has 24 clubs signed up for the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) Future Rockhounds of America program.

(Continued on page 15)

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPORTS, CONTINUED**

(Continued from page 14)

Lora Hall, chair of the AFMS Junior Activities Committee, sent a survey to all AFMS junior program leaders in the United States to determine the status of their local juniors' programs. There were no responses from clubs in the Midwest region. Your club can still respond to the survey to let us know how we, the national committee, can serve your programming needs.

Since our last MFW meeting, three new clubs from the Midwest Federation have joined the Future Rockhounds of America program. They are the Chippewa Valley Gem and Mineral Society (WI), the Northwest Wisconsin Gem and Mineral Society, and the Des Moines Lapidary Society (IA) (DMLS Junior Rockhounds).

We should also congratulate the Three Rivers Gem and Mineral Society (IN) for being the longest standing registered Junior Rockhound program in the nation.

MERIT AWARDS**MARY ANN FERGUSON-RICH, CHAIR**

Electronic submission entries into the AFMS All American Club Awards contest are due to Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich by February 1, 2026. Information about the contest is at amfed.org/contests/all-american-club; my email address is mafergusonrich@gmail.com.

NEW PROGRAM COMPETITION**BOB POWERS, CHAIR**

The New Programs Competition slowed down at the AFMS level and below. Only two regions have a New Programs Competition committee. DeLane Cox took over as AFMS New Programs chair in 2023. The forms are now available on the AFMS website, amfed.org/contests/program-competition. Please review those documents.

The MFW will use the same scoring criteria. The program submission sheet will soon be revised for the MFW so that your program can be submitted to the MFW Program Competition committee. Please review the AMFED competition and prepare your program to those guidelines.

**PROGRAM REQUESTS
BOB POWERS, CHAIR**

The Program Library is open for business! Clubs continue to request DVDs regularly. The DVDs are mailed out well in advance of the meeting when the rental request is submitted early. The cost is \$5. The U.S. Postal Service is being slower than in the past. Clubs have received the requested DVD up to three days later than stated delivery date, so please try to get the order in early. DVDs should be returned after they are shown, and mailed as "Media."

VCR tapes are available but may not be reliable. The last one was rented five years ago. It broke while being played. VCR tapes have a limited life. One of the MFW members is looking into transferring a few selected VCR tapes to DVD. If that works out, it would help expand the MFW DVD library. Please look through the wide selection of DVDs and send in a request!

SAFETY & FIELD TRIPS**DAVID RICH, CHAIR**

In the lapidary hobby, the protection of one's vision is paramount. High-speed saws, grinding wheels, and polishing units constantly generate hazardous projectiles: rock fragments, abrasive grit, and metallic debris. Safety glasses provide an essential first line of defense against these threats, preventing potential blinding eye injuries.

Safety glasses are specifically designed to withstand high-impact forces. Therefore, safety glasses are a non-negotiable requirement for every person entering the workshop. This is not merely a suggestion – it's the cornerstone of a safe and sustainable practice ensuring the beauty of our hobby does not come at the cost of your eyesight.

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

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

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE, CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

fossils. Of course, we had a number of opportunities to attend many rock and gem shows in our region and beyond.

Along the way we met many other hobbyists who were happy to share their own stories and collections made over the years. I’m sure that many of you have had similar experiences that can provide each of us with an opportunity to share with fellow rockhounds and the community over the winter months by contributing to local and regional newsletters and “rock-talks.”

Looking back is fun but planning ahead can be just as exciting. The winter months spent organizing our specimens can be as important as collecting them in the first place. Tumbling, cutting, cabbing and mounting rocks and gems for future rock shows or just for our own enjoyment is a reward for all of the effort made in collecting them.

I get a lot of pleasure reading books and magazine articles on prospecting and collecting rocks, fossils, gemstones, and meteorites. I would recommend that you check out the numerous instructional and

entertainment videos that the internet has to offer. These programs range from tours of famous rock shows such as Quartzite and Tucson to fossil digs in Wyoming and Utah. Many programs feature information and techniques on lapidary and gem crafting that can increase one’s skills and knowledge.

While these videos offer a less expensive way to enjoy rockhounding from the comfort of your home, there is no substitute for boots on the ground. I hope that many of you can visit these locations in person. The American Southwest and Gulf Coast regions offer rich prospecting opportunities in addition to milder temperatures than many can expect sometimes during these winter months.

I hope that each of you will continue to grow in your knowledge of rocks and minerals and geology in general in the months ahead. Plan to use these days to look back as well as ahead and prepare for the adventures you know will come. I hope to see you out on the road in 2026 as we all enjoy this wonderful hobby.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season and a happy and prosperous New Year.