

# Rockhound News

NEXT MEETING: December 20th

PROGRAM: Installation of Officers and Partying.

REFRESHMENTS. Every one bring their favorite treat.

## CLUB CALENDAR

**Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>** Regular club meeting at North School 7:30

**Jan. 3<sup>th</sup>** Board meeting at Okemos Library 7:00 p.m.

**Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>** Regular club meeting at North School 7:30 p.m.

**Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>** January field trip-Pot luck at Alaiedon Township Hall 1:pm

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The program for December will be # 1 the installation of Officers for 2008

*#2 We sing Christmas songs*

*#3 We eat and exchange gifts. Bring a hobby related wrapped gift. (Rock, mineral, tool fossil, book etc.)*

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**Dues are due: If you have not paid your dues, Ernie will be glad to accept them at the Dec. meeting or by mail. Ernie's address is**

Ernie Aughenbaugh, P.O. Box 67, St. Johns, MI  
48879-0067

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Reminder if your dues are not paid by the February Meeting you will not be included in the 2008 directory.

There were a lot of mistakes in the 2007 directory (most of them my fault) please check your entry in the

2007 directory and if it is not correct please let me know.

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How about a little humor?

Peter called his doctor's office for an appointment. "I'm sorry," said the receptionist, "we can't fit you in for at least two weeks." "But I could be dead by then!"

"No problem. If your wife lets us know, we'll cancel the appointment. "

And remember... don't knock the weather, if it didn't change, 9 out of 10 people couldn't start a conversation

## Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral Society

### Board Meeting Minutes

**November 1, 2007**

President: Elaine Beane called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm at the Okemos Public Library.

Vice President: Kris Wood - Program for November will be a talk by Dr. Mike Gottfried, Paleontologist, MSU Professor.

Program for January - Bessie Rogers, Historical talk of our rock club.

Board Members Present: Elaine Beane, Kris Wood, Sue Casler, George Heaton, Alan Hukill, Roger Laylin, Gordon Lewis, Arie Koewelyn, Ernie Aughenbaugh, Elaine Angstman, Milt Gere and Dan Sine. Also present were Bob Mosher and Mary Gowans. [Board members absent: Mary Anne Hanlon-Smith, Jenny Martin, and Kara Mille

Recording Secretary: Sue Casler - Summarized minutes from Oct. 3, 2007 (minutes not typed or printed in newsletter yet).

Corresponding Secretary: Mary Anne Hanlon-Smith - Absent.

Treasurer's Report: Alan Hukill - Reviewed receipts/disbursements for the month of October, 2007.

Directors: 3-YR, George Heaton (NR); 2-YR, Arie Koelewyn (N.R.); 1-YR, Milt Gere (N.R.)

Roster Secretary: Ernie Aughenbaugh - No Report

Liaison Officer: Alan Hukill - No Report

Past President: Dan Sine - No Report

Membership: Elaine Angstman - Presented membership applications; three reinstatements and two new memberships.

**Alan Hukill moved to accept the three reinstatements [Jim Moses; Larry Bourland; Wendy Bierling] and two new Memberships [Marv Martin; Sharon & Steve Pavlik] for club membership; motion seconded by Milt Gere.**

**Vote taken, and motion approved.**

Web Master/Site: Arie Koelewyn - working on business cards for the club.

It was announced that Lyle Laylin will be the new Webmaster for the club, effective January 2008.

Show: 1) Alan Hukill reviewed expenses/income on the show to date (will change somewhat as bills come in);

2) Elaine Beane reviewed her report on Admission Tickets; 3) Mary Gowans reviewed her

report on the Children's Tour; 4) Elaine Angstman reviewed her reports on the Silent Auction and the Spinning Wheel. Further discussion/wrap up on the Show will be at a Show Board Mtg. to be scheduled.

Old Business: Slate of new (2008) Officers needs to be decided in order to vote on at the November meeting.

Nomination for Bob Mosher for new 3-YR Director (Milt Gere has finished Director term).

Still looking for a Vice President.

New Business: Ran out of time - have to be out of the Library by 8:45 pm.

Had an out-the-door motion by Elaine Beane and second by Dan Sine.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Casler, Recording Secretary

Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral Society

Membership Meeting

November 15, 2007

- a. **Call to Order.** The November membership meeting was called to order by President Elaine Beane at 7:38 pm at the North Elementary School.
- b. **Welcome and Introduction of Guests/Visitors.** New member Sharon Pavlik.
- c. **Minutes of Last Meeting.** Sue Casler - The October membership meeting minutes were printed in the November newsletter.
- d. **Treasurer's Report.** Alan Hukill - Reviewed receipts/expenses for month to date.
- e. **Announcements.**

- \*Show Board meeting scheduled for Mon., Nov. 19 at 7pm at the home of the Laylin's.

- \*Roger asked for a show of hands from the membership for having a show again in 2008, mostly unanimous.

- \*The presentation of the 2008 slate of officers and election thereof:

- President - Kris Wood

- Vice President - Milt Gere

- Recording Secretary - Sue Casler

- Corresponding Secretary - Mary Anne Hanlon-Smith

- Treasure - Alan Hukill

- 3-YR Director - Bob Mosher

**Richard Miller moved to accept the entire slate of officers as nominated and to elect said slate of officers for 2008; Grit Turner seconded the motion. Vote taken, and motion passed.**

The 2008 Officers will be sworn in at the December Meeting.

- \*Dan Sine - Door Prizes

- \*John Juroszek - Reported on the Raffle from the show; the raffle had 32 prizes and there were 1171 tickets sold.

- \*Webmaster Change - Lyle Laylin will be replacing Arie Koelwyn as Webmaster effective Jan. 2008. Thank you to Arie for putting the club out on the web!

The Program following the meeting: Dr. Michael D. Gottfried (MSU) will speak to us on New Fossil Discoveries from the Rift Valley of Tanzania.

f. **Adjournment.** Alan Hukill moved to adjourn the meeting, supported by Roger Laylin. Meeting was adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Casler, Recording Secretary

Time for a little more humor

SUMMARY OF THE PAST YEAR ON MY COMPUTER

I must send my thanks to whoever sent me the one about rat poop in the glue on envelopes because I now use a wet towel with every envelope that needs sealing. Also, now I scrub the top of every can I open for the same reason. I no longer have any money at all, but that will change once I receive the \$15,000 that Bill Gates/Microsoft and AOL are sending me for participating in their special e-mail program. I no longer worry about my soul because I have 363,214 angels looking out for me, and St. Theresa's novena has granted my every wish. I no longer use disease-causing deodorants even though I smell like a water buffalo on a hot day. I have learned that my prayers only get answered if I forward an email to seven of my friends and make a wish within five minutes. I no longer drink Coca Cola because I've learned that it can remove toilet stains. I no longer buy gasoline without taking a man along to watch the car so a serial killer won't crawl in my back seat when I'm pumping gas. I now know that I can't boil a cup water in the microwave anymore because it will blow up in my face...disfiguring me for life. I no longer check the coin return on pay phones because I Could be pricked with a needle infected with AIDS. I no longer go to shopping malls because someone will drug me with a perfume sample and rob me. I no longer receive packages from UPS or FedEx since they are actually Al Qaeda in disguise. I no longer shop at Target since they are French and don't support our American troops or the Salvation Army. I no longer answer the phone because someone will ask me to dial a number for which I will get a phone bill with calls to Jamaica, Uganda, Singapore, and Uzbekistan. I no longer have any sneakers -- but that will change once I receive my free replacement pair from Nike. I no longer buy expensive cookies from Neiman Marcus since I now have their recipe. Thanks to my many internet friends, I can't use anyone's toilet but mine because a big brown African spider is lurking under the seat to cause me instant death when it bites my butt. And thanks to the great advice, I will never pick up \$5.00 dropped in the parking lot because it probably was placed there by a sex molester waiting underneath my car to grab my leg. If you don't send this e-mail to at least 144,000 people in the next 70 minutes, a large dove with diarrhea will land on your head at 5:00 PM this afternoon and the fleas from 12 camels will infest your back, causing you to grow a hairy hump. I know this will occur because it actually happened to a friend of my next door neighbor's ex-mother-in-law's second husband'scousin's beautician...

Have a wonderful day....

Hope to see you at the December meeting. Wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas

# And a New Year full of fun, fossils and rocks. The editors.

## MINERAL PRICES: WHY SO HIGH?

By John Betts

I am a part-time mineral dealer. I get many questions about the prices of collectable mineral specimens. Novices are the most confused because they have yet to understand the many factors that affect mineral values. The following is a chronology of prices and events of a typical mineral specimen.

### The Beginning

All minerals start in the ground. A specimen is not worthless (because collectors may still lust after the undiscovered specimen) but it does not yet have a price tag. It will lie there undisturbed until one of two things happen. Either it will erode from the solid rock, work its way into a sedimentary deposit and start another cycle or man will interfere and do something with it. It could become an industrial resource, or it could become a collectable mineral specimen. I am going to focus solely on the latter path

### Price Evolution

A collector digs it up and stores it wrapped in newspaper in his basement. Typically it will remain in this state for two or three years until his wife threatens to toss out all of the "junk" in the basement.

Price = \$0

The collector washes it off for the first time and decides it is still worth keeping even though most of the other material he collected should have been left in the ground. He trades it at a swap along with ten other pieces to a collector that can see through the iron staining and dried pocket clay. He gets an amethyst from Brazil in exchange.

Price \$0.50

The experienced new owner dissolves the pocket clay and iron staining to reveal the beauty of the crystals. It is now clean and lustrous.

Price \$5.00

The specimen is donated to the local mineral club for their fundraising auction. It sells for \$12.

The new owner trades it away at a local swap to a savvy collector who knows the location has just been closed and no more specimens will be found. He values it at \$25.

Years later the Mineralogical Record runs an article on the lost location. The author identifies a rare left-handed twin crystal form as unique to the location. The owner revalues to \$50.

The owner dies leaving most of his collection unlabelled. His heirs have no idea what to do. A local mineral dealer calls the widow and offers \$1,800 for the lot and will take it all away. Price paid for each specimen about 50 cents. Now the mineral, unlabelled, is misidentified by the dealer as originating in Austria and a \$50 price is assigned along with the "classic" locality.

The specimen does not sell for two years. The dealer discovers there is no money in selling minerals and decides to sell wire wrapped amethyst pyramids instead. Sells his whole stock for 20% the labeled prices. Specimen goes for \$10.

The new owner recognizes the true origin of the specimen. He researches the location and makes a Xerox copy of the article in the Mineralogical Record as a sales prop and prices it at \$100.

An “instant” collector, who has just started collecting minerals again now that he makes enough money at age 35 (after giving up in high school) buys the specimen for \$90, happy at the cut.

Meanwhile there is so much demand for minerals from the old location that prices climb. Brian Wayne Lees-Thompson reopens the mine, attracting attention to the location again. Because of savvy marketing and the perceived shortage of specimens, prices are set at numbers that look like long distance telephone numbers (though the small specimens are only priced at numbers that resemble zip codes).

After two years the market is saturated. Mr. Lees-Thompson can't give them away. The minerals from the mine become a commodity worth about as much as Uruguayan amethyst. Our specimen is sold to a new owner for \$150.

He shows the specimen to an experienced collector who owns a microscope. They spot rare inclusions of baloneyium. They write an abstract that is accepted for presentation at the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium. They give a 15 minute presentation. The specimen is sold for \$500.

It is bought by a locality collector that specializes in only that location. It is placed in a position of honor in his collection. The abstract is published in Rocks and Minerals magazine. The collector refuses an offer of \$1,000. As the owner's age goes up, so does the mineral's value in the owner's mind. But he also knows that he can't take it with him when he passes on. He offers it to a local museum for \$5,000. The museum has an annual acquisition budget of \$1,000. They try to find someone to purchase the mineral and donate it to the museum.

To be continued

In the meantime the owner dies. The heirs know nothing about the collection- they just want to move into the house. So everything is hauled away by the trash hauler. The mineral specimen ends up in the local landfill and starts the rock forming cycle again.

So what is a mineral really worth ?

This silly chronology illustrates that price is determined in varying parts by aesthetics, rarity, location, associations, uniqueness, marketing and scholarly study. As in art, the value increases with knowledge of the subject. There is no absolute value. As a result there are no hard and fast rules.

If there were not mishaps along the way the greater fool theory would prevail. Each owner would buy a specimen and sell it to a greater fool that will pay more. Eventually it works its way up the price ladder until it reaches a practical limit. As a collector, all that matters is whether there is a bigger fool out there to pay more than we did. And there is.

The above article was taken from MicroScope, Newsletter for the micro-mineral collectors of New Zealand. Editor Jocelyn Thornton of Wellington.

November 1998