

# The Living Stones

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Livingston Gem and Mineral Society

November 2010

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## President's Message

November. Where did the year go? I hope there was a lot of "SHOW" going.

I am still walking the beach to find stones, fossils, and beach glass. The only difference is that I'm wearing hooded sweatshirts, gloves and ear covering. I'm finding treasures though.

I've been putting my flower garden to bed; raking leaves, digging up the bulbs that are not hardy for replanting in the spring, and still pulling the hardy weeds.

I'm trying to put together my rock/stone work area so I can more efficiently work on my projects at home this winter. So many ideas, so many ways that they can be arranged but only so much space, time and energy. I wonder if it will ever be finished.

We have election for officers and board members at the November meeting. We have some nominations. Think about the positions. Hopefully, the new people will help the club be stronger. Please do not take this lightly. You have to be present to vote. Hopefully I will see you.

Thanks to George and Anna and their volunteer set-up/clean-up group for the lovely banquet catered by Buon Gusto Italian Bistro. Once again George and Anna made the Taramisu which we enjoyed while the presenter set up. Thanks to the club members who generously donated gifts for the door

prize raffle and for the Tuesday Cookie Lady. They were much appreciated.

Thanks to Bryant for the wonderful presenter of agates, Jeff Anderson and his father Bob Anderson, narrator. He shared his knowledge about colors, shapes and how they were formed, and where found worldwide. He had calendars that he signed for those who purchased them. There were about 60 attendees; it was nice seeing you there.

Be thinking about our December Potluck. Everyone is to bring a wrapped stone or mineral present.

See ya, *Maru*



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**LGMS Workshop Hours**  
**Monday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
**Tuesday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.**  
**Wednesday 2:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.**  
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*Congratulations*

to

**Bryant Hiiter**

2010 winner of the  
Max Schultz Award

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### **2010 Officers and Chairpersons**

President: Marv Martin, 517-521-3135

Vice President: Bryant Hiiter, 248-889-3974

Secretary: Violet Porritt, 810-235-6286

Treasurer: Peggy Petito, 248-887-8847

Second year Directors:

David Riggs, 810-632-7146

Bill Barnett, 734-449-2907

First year Directors:

Ken Blake, 810-750-6078

John Petito, 248-887-8847

Sunshine and Hospitality:

Mary Barnett, 734-449-2907

Shop Chairpersons:

Bob Krautheim, 810-701-3776

Chuck Amberger, 248-446-0818

Marv Martin, 517-521-3135

Newsletter and Membership:

Isla Mitchell, 248-685-7804

Chuck Amberger, 248-446-0818

Library: Bryant Hiiter 248-889-3974

General Membership Meetings are held monthly on  
the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 6 p.m. (Except in January and  
February when they are held in the shop at 1 p.m.)



## **Nominations for Officers and Board for 2011**

President: Bryant Hiiter  
Vice President: Ken Blake  
Secretary: Margaret Edmundson  
Treasurer: Peggy Petito  
Second year Directors: John Petito  
Paul Maitre  
First year Directors: Lorelei Hosler  
Violet Porritt  
Shop Chairman: Alan Zielinski  
Historian: Chuck Amberger

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## **Upcoming Events**

### **45<sup>th</sup> Annual Auction**

#### **Midwest Mineralogical and Lapidary Society**

Saturday, November 6, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. (Sale tables are open from 6:00 p.m.)  
Democratic Club of Taylor  
23400 Wick Road, Taylor, MI

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### **Mid Michigan Gemcraft and Mineral Society**

#### **Show and sale**

Sat. November 6 from 10-6 and Sun, November 7 from 10-4  
Midland Resort Hotel Convention Center  
1500 W. Wackerly St, Midland, MI

### **Our Mission**

Our purpose is to promote, through educational means,  
public interest and increased knowledge in the fields of mineralogy, archaeology,  
paleontology, and the lapidary arts.

## **Lapis lazuli**

Lapis lazuli is a gemstone of the kind that might have come straight out of the Arabian Nights: a deep blue with golden inclusions of pyrites which shimmer like little stars.

This opaque, deep blue gemstone has a grand past. It was among the first gemstones to be worn as jewellery and worked on. At excavations in the ancient centres of culture around the Mediterranean, archaeologists have again and again found among the grave furnishings decorative chains and figures made of lapis lazuli – clear indications that the deep blue stone was already popular thousands of years ago among the people of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Persia, Greece and Rome. It is said that the legendary city of Ur on the Euphrates plied a keen lapis lazuli trade as long ago as the fourth millennium B.C., the material coming to the land of the two great rivers from the famous deposits in Afghanistan. In other cultures, lapis lazuli was regarded as a holy stone. Particularly in the Middle East, it was thought to have magical powers. Countless signet rings, scarabs and figures were wrought from the blue stone which Alexander the Great brought to Europe. There, the colour was referred to as 'ultramarine', which means something like 'from beyond the sea'.

### **The most expensive blue of all time**

The euphonious name is composed from 'lapis', the Latin word for stone, and 'azula', which comes from the Arabic and means blue. All right, so it's a blue gemstone - but what an incredible blue! The worth of this stone to the world of art is immeasurable, for the ultramarine of the Old Masters is nothing other than genuine lapis lazuli. Ground up into a powder and stirred up together with binding-agents, the marble-like gemstone can be used to manufacture radiant blue watercolours, tempera or oil-paints. Before the year 1834, when it became possible to produce this colour synthetically, the only ultramarine available was that valuable substance made from genuine lapis lazuli that shines out at us from many works of art today. Many pictures of the Madonna, for example, were created using this paint. But in those days, ultramarine blue was not only precious and so intense that its radiance outshone all other colours; it was also very expensive. But unlike all other blue pigments, which tend to pale in the light, it has lost none of its radiance to this very day. Nowadays, the blue pigment obtained from lapis lazuli is mainly used in restoration work and by collectors of historical paints.

### **The stone of friendship and truth**

Lapis lazuli is regarded by many people around the world as the stone of friendship and truth. The blue stone is said to encourage harmony in relationships and help its wearer to be authentic and give his or her opinion openly.

Lapis lazuli is an opaque rock that mainly consists of diopside and lazurite. It came into being millions of years ago during the metamorphosis of lime to marble. Uncut, lapis lazuli is matt and of a deep, dark blue colour, often with golden inclusions and whitish marble veins. The small inclusions with their golden shimmer, which give the stone the magic of a starry sky, are not of gold as people used to think, but of pyrites. Their cause is iron. The blue colour comes from the sulphur content of the lazurite and may range from pure ultramarine to a lighter blue. At between 5 and 6 on the Mohs scale, this stone is among the less hard gemstones.

### **When the cutter turns up his nose ...**

Many a cutter 'turns up his nose' when cutting lapis lazuli, for as soon as the stone comes into contact with the cutting-disc it gives off a typical smell. An experienced cutter can even tell from the odour how intense the colour is. When polishing this stone, he must handle it gently on account of its modest hardness and not subject it to much pressure. But there is no need for the wearer to worry: a lapis lazuli that has grown matt from having been worn too much can easily be repolished at any time. Lapis lazuli is often sealed with colourless wax or synthetic resin. As long as these substances are not mixed with any colouring agent, this sealing process simply has the effect of improving the stone's wearing qualities. Having said that, the stone should always be protected from acidic substances, and it should not be exposed to too much sunlight.

As they did more than 5000 years ago, the best raw stones still come from the steep Hindu Kush in the north-east of Afghanistan. The lumps of blue rock, extracted from the inhospitable mountains by blasting, are brought down into the valley in the summer months by mules. Nature also created deposits in Russia, to the west of Lake Baikal, and in the Chilean Andes, where the blue rock often has white or grey lime running through it. In smaller amounts, lapis lazuli is also found in Italy, Mongolia, the USA and Canada, Myanmar and Pakistan, but in really good qualities it is rare all over. That is why the prices of jewellery with lapis lazuli vary very widely, from luxurious to quite inexpensive. The prices of this gemstone are largely dependent on the beauty and intensity of the colour. The most popular is an intense, deep blue. Women with a pale complexion, however, often prefer the lighter shades of blue. Finely distributed crystals of pyrites which shimmer in gold and look like sequins will increase the value of the gemstone, whilst a restless, rough or blotchy grain will reduce it.

Lapis lazuli is a versatile and popular gemstone which has shown extraordinary stability in the turbulent tides of fashion. No wonder, since it has fascinated both men and women for thousands of years with its fabulous colour and those golden points of light formed by pyrites.

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The Livingston Gem and Mineral Society is a nonprofit organization and member of the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Our purpose is to promote, through educational means, public interest and increased knowledge in the fields of mineralogy, archaeology, paleontology, and the lapidary arts. This society was established in 1970. Annual dues are \$15 per person or family. Annual shop fees are \$10.00 per person. There is an additional fee of \$1.00 per day for workshop use. Annual dues and annual shop fees are due on January 1 of each year. The Livingston Gem and Mineral Society publishes The Living Stones. Non copyrighted articles may be reprinted provided that they are properly attributed. Newsletter deadline is the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Articles or correspondence can be sent to LGMS, Hartland Consolidated Schools, 9525 E. Highland Rd. Howell, Michigan 48843-9098.

Livingston Gem and Mineral Society

9529 E. Highland Road

Howell, MI 48843-9098

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**Next General Meeting**

6 p.m. Tuesday

**November 16, 2010**

at the shop

Come and participate !