

The Living Stones

Livingston Gem and Mineral Society

February 2011

President's Message

February, yup, February! It's a very special month. There are birthdays, anniversaries and, some big name presidents were born this month (Nobody know about this president.) Oh yeah, it's a short month, and it brings us closer to gem and mineral shows. Don't let us forget Valentines Day! So happy Valentines Day! I was gone a few weeks in January. (The shop was a lot quieter - I don't understand.) Oh, well, I'm back for a little while.

The 4H classes started on Monday, January 31. They will run for about 10 weeks. Help is always needed to oversee the kids and help out where needed. We do not need everybody all at once - rather, some this week and some next, and so on. So think about it. It makes you feel good. See Chuck for details. Thanks! Chuck is working with 2 or 3 students on Tuesday, as well.

The shop is looking pretty good lately. Let's keep it that way. Watch the water on the floor, and the oil drips and polish drips. Feel free to run a broom or mop any time.

Have a good month. See ya in March.

Marv



Important Notice

to all members who use the
lapidary shop on **Monday evenings**:
For the next three months, the shop will be
reserved from 6 to 8 p.m. for the
exclusive use of the 4H classes.

Last Call

2011 dues are due.

2011 dues are payable from September 2010
through February 2011.

Notice to the general membership

The LGMS will begin 4 H Lapidary classes on January 31st, on Monday evenings from 6PM until 8PM for the next three months. I know that this may be an inconvenience for some of you but I am asking you to put away your own projects at this time for a while. We need teachers (many) to help us in this effort. If you would like to help, please contact me, Chuck Amberger, at 248-787-6586- and I will incorporate you into our teaching schedule. It's fun and I'm sure you will enjoy it as much as we do.

Chuck

ROCKHOUND'S LAMENT

Kathy Johnson

from Yakima Gem and Mineral News 7/02

I find I not only have rocks in my head
I have rocks in boxes and under my bed.
I have rocks on shelves where whatnots
should be
And rocks outside under a tree.
I stub my toe on rocks on the floor.
And I find I have placed rocks to hold open
my door.
I have rock in boxes, all labeled and coded.
And rocks in sacks just left where they're loaded
The rocks keep piling up more and more.
I'm afraid they will sink right through the floor.
I fear the whole house will sink down in
the ground.
And I'll live down there with rocks all around.

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.

Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

~~~~~

## 2011 Officers and Chairpersons

President: Marv Martin, 517-521-3135

Vice President: Ken Blake, 810-750-6078

Secretary: Margaret Edmundson, 248-634-5046

Treasurer: Peggy Petito, 248-887-8847

Second year Directors:

John Petito, 248-887-8847

Paul Maitre, 248-961-4947

First year Directors:

Violet Porritt, 810-235-6286

Lorelei Hosler, 810-789-3687

Sunshine and Hospitality: Mary Barnett, 734-449-2907

Isla Mitchell, 248-685-7804

Shop Chairperson:

Alan Zielinski, 810-632-6616

Newsletter and Membership:

Isla Mitchell, 248-685-7804

Chuck Amberger, 248-787-6586

Historian: Chuck Amberger, 248-787-6586

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  
board meetings are held in the shop at 1 p.m.)

## From the desk of the Historian

I've been interviewing early members of our society in an attempt to get a better understanding of the origins of our club. I've also been looking through our past Newsletters where, thankfully, there is a lot of useful information that goes right back to the very first meetings of the LGMS. I'd like to share with you the the President's Message in the December Newsletter of 1971. It was written by Nelson Short, the first president of the club:

***“This being my last chance to write to you in this capacity, I would like to outline the things the club has accomplished in the past year: On November 24th, 1970, 27 interested people gathered together at the Howell Recreation Center and organized the Livingston Gem and Mineral Society. We have had many happy meetings since and for me it has been a lot of fun. We have been on many field trips and enjoyable picnics at the Howell City Park. A showcase to display gems and minerals was acquired and displayed at the Lansing Show and also at the at the Waterford Show. Thru funds received from the refreshment committees, a coffee maker and electric tea kettle were added to our inventory.***

***Silent auctions also have added to the enjoyment of our programs (also the treasury). Name plates were also added to help us get acquainted with one another. This was a big help to me because I can't remember names nohow.***

***Another important item was getting our club incorporated, according to the Midwest Federation's advice. Oh yes, we also affiliated with the Midwest Federation. The club also instituted a monthly bulletin, another worth- while project. Nelson Short”***

There is more to his report but I think its main theme has been recorded and still rings true today... our immense pride in faithfully continuing that great effort started in 1970.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chuck Amberger

### Information on building closures for snow days/ holidays

Hartland Community Education  
810-626-2150

#### Our Mission

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.

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.

## Coming Events

### Special Auction

The Roamin' Club

Schoolcraft College

February 26, 2011, 11 am - 6 pm

February 27, 2011, 12 noon - 6 pm

Information: 248-969-2196 or 734-421-8159

~~~~~

39th Annual Metro Rock Swap

The Midwest Mineralogical and Lapidary Society

Democratic Club of Taylor, 23400 Wick Road, Taylor, MI

March 26, 2011, 10 am to 5 pm

information at www.midwestmineralogicalandlapidarysociety.com

~~~~~

\*\*\*\*\*

Tear off and mail

## 2011 Livingston Gem and Mineral Society Dues

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ adult member ..... \$15

\_\_\_\_\_ family membership .....\$15

\_\_\_\_\_ annual workshop fee .....\$10  
(each member who uses the shop must pay this fee)

\_\_\_\_\_ total payment

Please note any changes in address, email address or phone number \_\_\_\_\_

newsletter preference: \_\_\_\_\_ printed \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_ shop mail folder

## OPAL

Opal has been a popular gem for many centuries and has a very interesting structure. Opal is considered a mineraloid because this structure is not truly crystalline. The chemistry of Opal is primarily SiO<sub>2</sub> and varying amounts of water. The amount of water varies from 5 -10% and greater. This water can help geologists determine the temperature of the host rock at the time the opal formed.

Although there is no crystal structure (meaning a regular arrangement of atoms), opal does possess a structure nonetheless. Random chains of silicon and oxygen are packed into extraordinarily tiny spheres. These spheres in most Opals are irregular in size and inconsistent in concentration. Yet in Precious Opal, the variety used most often in jewelry, there are many organized pockets of the spheres. These pockets contain spheres of approximately equal size and have a regular concentration, or structure, of the spheres. This has the effect of diffracting light at various wavelengths, creating colors. Each pocket produces a different color and with a different intensity, depending on the angle from which a viewer sees it. The multicolored flashes of light that Opal emits gives it a truly beautiful and valuable look. This effect is called a "play of light", and not "opalescence". The latter term describes the milky nature of the translucence of opal, and is more properly compared to the appearance of water to which a few drops of milk have been added.

The name opal probably is derived from the Sanskrit name for precious stone; *upala*. It has been mined for centuries, at least since Roman times when they extracted the opal from areas now within the Czech Republic. The Aztecs made use of local Mexican sources as did the Spaniards when they exported the material back to Europe. Today most precious opal comes from Australia with significant sources in Mexico and the Western United States.

Not all opal is so precious however. Common opal lacks opalescence, color or luster and is . . . after all . . . common. Opal is often imitated, forged and "enhanced". Fluorescence, while somewhat unreliable is a good method to determine authenticity.

### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Color is white, colorless, pale yellow, pale red, gray or black when impurities are common. Diffraction can cause flashes of any color of the rainbow (lay of light).

Luster is vitreous to pearly.

Transparency: Specimens are transparent to translucent (opalescent).

Crystal System: Does not apply because opal is amorphous.

Habits include massive, cavity-fillings such as in fractures and geodes, nodular, reniform or as a replacement of other minerals and wood.

Cleavage is absent.

Fracture is conchoidal.

Hardness is 5.5-6

Specific Gravity is approximately 2-2.5 (light)

Streak is white

Other Characteristics: Most specimens will fluoresce white or pale green, some phosphoresce and all specimens can be very sensitive to impacts and low temperatures.

Associated rocks are chert (a form of microcrystalline quartz), volcanic rocks and many others.

Notable Occurrences include many Western USA localities, Mexico, Australia, England, Czech Republic and many other localities around the world.

Best Field Indicators are color play and opalescence, low density, fluorescence, fracture filling tendency and lack of cleavage or crystal faces.

**Livingston Gem and Mineral Society**

**9529 E. Highland Road**

**Howell, MI 48843-9098** \_\_\_\_\_



*No General Membership meeting in February*

---