

ROCK TRAILS



Newsletter of the StateLine Gem and Mineral Society

VOLUME 60
ISSUE III
MARCH 2020

2020 Officers and Directors

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President: Sherman Kardatzke, 517 673-5487
Vice President: Glenda Gafner, 517 403-6310
Secretary: Richard Brzezicki, 269 267-7666
Treasurer: Doris Brzezicki, 269 267-1123
Past President: Edmund Jarzembki, 419 237-2000
First Year Director: Jan Hauter, 517 286-6971
Second Year Director: Bill Schultz, 419 335-6791
Third Year Director: Curt Miller, 419 923-2090
Show Chairman: Sherman Kardatzke, 517 673-5487
Co-Show Chair: Glenda Gafner, 517 451-2079
Publicity: Edmund Jarzembki, 419 237-2000
Sunshine & Membership: Jan Hauter, Judy Snyder,
Shirley McGovern
Library: Curt and Linda Miller.
Education & Lapidary:
Sherman Kardatzke, 517 673-5487
Richard Brzezicki, 269 267-7666
Newsletter Editor: Sandy Gerhart,
734 347-4796, s_gerhart@yahoo.com
Website: <http://statelinegms.com/index.html>



Meetings are held the first Sunday of each month
at 2:00 PM
at 201 W. Main St., Morenci, MI 49256

Secretary's Scoop



The 02-02-2020 meeting of the State Line Gem and Mineral Society was called to order by President Sherm at 2:16 PM. Eddie gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Doris made a motion to accept the secretary's report as printed in the newsletter, seconded by Judy and passed with all in favor.

Treasurer's report – Doris paid the rent and utilities, Ohio sales tax, newsletter related expenses and equipment replacement costs. Sherm inquired about the Ohio sales tax, as he recalled that being mentioned in last month's meeting. Doris explained that since the meeting was held on Jan 05, she included the expense in the report so the current balance as of Jan 05 would reflect the correct information. The February report was for the income and expenses incurred in the month of January, which included the afore mentioned Ohio Sales and Use Tax. They were paid one time.

Linda Miller made a motion to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Carl and passed with all in favor.

Old business – Sherm reported that Greg (our landlord) was going to have the water leak at the front of the building sealed and the light in the office replaced. Greg said that since he was not able to do the work himself, he asked Larry Sines, the previous landlord to have his work crew do the work. Sherm said that Greg definitely was not going to be moving any inside walls.

Sherm stated that he received information regarding a possible new clubhouse site in Onsted. He had not called on it. He doubted that it would be any better than what we already had as it was only 1500 square feet and a two story building for about \$800.00/month.

Doris gave Sherm a list of storage rental places that she had researched and thought we could store some of the geodes and tents at one of these 5' by 8' storage units for about \$40.00 per month. Glenda said she called a realtor and gave our specifications for a new clubhouse, and he found nothing in the area within our price range. Sherm said he felt we had our own members looking for possible sites that hopefully would be able to locate other properties.

Sherm reported that he replaced the saw blade on the slab saw and all six diamond wheels on the Genie at our work day last week. Other members also cleaned up other areas and got some rocks cleaned up and organized. Eddie removed some of the old oil from the machines in the front room, and replaced the bearings in one of the machines. Sherm stated that he will have additional expenses related to other machines. Richard B. made a motion to reimburse Sherm for the aforementioned parts, seconded by Kathy and passed with all in favor.

Secretary's Scoop

Cont. from page 2

Sherm had his first lapidary class on Thursday January 30, 2019 from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM. He had 5 students attend. He plans to continue Thursday evening classes.

Jan reported that we have enough grab bags for the Jackson show but we would need another work day to create enough bags for the rest of the season. After some discussion, it was decided that the grab bag work day would be February 18th at 10:00 AM.

Doris noted that the small stained glass donation box was a bit cramped with donations from the lapidary classes so she brought a slightly larger candy jar for donations. It will be located on top of the microwave for easy access. The suggested \$2.00 per session was to help replace worn saw blades and diamond wheels. Doris also mentioned that we had a problem with members leaving their pop cans and water bottles all over creating a messy situation. She feels that it is not unreasonable to expect members to clean up after themselves. Some discussion followed and Eddie suggested that we have a separate container for the Michigan cans which have a 10 cent deposit attributed to them. He said that he rinses out the empty cans but was not sure of where to store them so he just left them around the sink. Kathy said that if the cans were collected, she would be glad to take them to a Michigan store and give the deposit money back to the club. Glenda made a motion to have members take care of their own bottles and cans seconded by Kathy and passed with all in favor. There was a question of who should take out the trash so that there is no food left to attract critters. Sherm said the last person out of the building should take out the trash.

Bill Schultz had asked if the club has a procedure to notify members if other club members had a loss in their family. After some discussion, Kathy said she could notify the members who receive email and the few members who receive snail mail she would volunteer to call on the phone. If Kathy is not available, Judy volunteered to be the back up person to notify. If you know of someone who has a loss or illness in their family, let Kathy and Judy know so they can spread the word to the rest of the club.

Questions arose about advertising and dealers for our show. Sherm said he would call the dealers who have not yet returned the contracts he gave them at our show last June. Glenda and Kathy will work on posters and cards.

Doris started a sign-up list for volunteers at the Jackson show. The show is March 20, 21 and 22, 2020. The hours are 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM Friday, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM Saturday and 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Sunday. Set up for the Jackson show will be 10:00 AM on Thursday March 19th.

Glenda mentioned that the Bedford Indiana show is June 26, 27 and 28th. The show hours 10:00 AM to 6:30 PM on Friday, 9:00 AM to 6:30 PM on Saturday and 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Sunday. Let Glenda know if you need her to make a reservation at a motel for you.

Glenda gave a program about her Arizona trip with Kathy and Heidi. They brought some beautiful samples of what they collected. They made a lot of friends and had some interesting adventures.

Continued on page 4

Secretary's Scoop

Cont. from page 3

Linda W. made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Heidi and passed with all in favor.

Please add the following names to your membership roster:

Carol McDaniel 6229 Valleystream, Toledo, OH 43615 carol.mcdaniel39@yahoo.com (419) 472-4928

Cynthia J Bauschka 608 E Charch St, Adrian, MI 49221 4hisglorybycj@gmail.com (517) 442-4093

Laura & Dave Curry 505 Sherwood Lane, Delta, OH 43515 dcurry9@woh.rr.com (419) 261-9190

Treasurer's Statement

2020 Dues for membership in the State Line Gem & Mineral Society are now due.

The Dues are: Family Membership (Husband and Wife and Children under 18 years of age, all living under one roof)- \$15.00, Individual Adult Membership (All individuals over 18 years of age) - \$10.00.

After the regular February meeting, all members whose dues remain unpaid shall receive a statement from the Treasurer. A Delinquent Member shall be that member whose dues are not paid by March 15th of the current year. Thereupon, voting privileges shall be revoked and publications discontinued. Full privileges shall be restored immediately upon payment of delinquent dues.

So, simply stated, what all the above information says is: Please pay your dues by the February 2020 meeting so I don't have to remind you to pay them, and if you don't pay them by March 15, you will be delinquent and won't receive the newsletter until you do pay dues. You can pay your dues at the meeting on Feb 02 or mail a check made out to State Line Gem & Mineral Society to me at my home address: Doris Brzezicki, 419 N Broad St, Adrian, MI 49221. If you have any questions please call me at (517) 263-1669.

Doris Brzezicki, Treasurer



Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

IDENTIFYING UNMARKED SOLDERS

There are plenty of ways to mark your sheet or wire solders, but suppose you forgot to mark them and have a couple that you can't identify. The answer is to compare the melting temperature of the unknowns with that of a known solder. What I do is take a thick scrap of copper or nickel and arrange several solders on it. Ideally, I would have a sample of easy, medium and hard known solders surrounding the unknown solder. Then I heat the plate from the bottom and watch the order in which the solders melt.



INEXPENSIVE ELECTRIC WAX PEN

You can make your own wax pen from a small soldering iron plugged into a light dimmer switch for heat control. Both components are easily found at a big hardware store or at Harbor Freight. As an example of the components, see items # 43060 and # 47887

File the tip of the soldering iron into the shape you prefer or even better get a soldering iron with replaceable tips. Then you can make several tip shapes for different tasks. Set the dimmer control just hot enough to melt the wax without producing any smoke.

A tip design that I find ideal for some work is a length of small gauge wire that lets me reach in around the model to melt some wax. The wire is 18ga and about 15mm long. I use Sterling wire to conduct heat easily to the tip, and I silver solder it into a hole on the end of a copper or brass rod that fits into the soldering iron.



Work Smarter & Be More Productive With Brad's "How To" Jewelry Books
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

Pistachios and Minerals - How are they Linked?

We are Pistachio Farmers. We have about 200 nut bearing trees that are around 20 years old.

We take great joy in mining minerals to use in production of our pistachio harvest – We want to share with you what we do with the minerals and, most importantly, give you the chance to enjoy some of our harvest!

Pistachio trees are either male or female. You can graft the two together and have one hermaphroditic tree, as we have one of these in our grove, however, for the most part, they are separate and do different things.

The female tree has big broad leaves and branches that have lots of curves and style. The male tree has very thin leaves and sharp pointed branches that have sharp, straight, shoots. The female tree is the one that bears nuts, the male tree is responsible for the pollination. They are wind pollinated, so the timing has to be perfect every year during pollination.

The first mineral we mine and use is raw gypsum/selenite. Just a few miles away from our orchard, we have extensive deposits of raw gypsum, which we then water tumble in a giant 50 pound vibrating tumbler. The “waste” water is a large part of what we need for the grove. Every year we make a fertilizer for the tree including pistachio wood ash, steer manure, a rich compost and tea, plus, crushed gypsum, all watered down with our waste water from the gypsum tumbling.



Gypsum has a wonderful effect on soil, creating a path way for water to seep deeper into the ground. This is especially useful for this climate as the soil around the trees needs to soak in the water rapidly to the trees, rather than evaporating away from the top of the soil.

The larger pieces of gypsum are then sold as tumbled stones by us at mineral shows and even on Amazon.com.



There are two important times in the pistachios tree's lives every year. In the beginning of spring, which is around March, the branches start to bud.

During this time, pollination is right around the corner, but first, they need a treatment of minerals to help them through the year. A mixture of Borax and Zinc are prepared and sprayed onto the tree's branches, in order to do two things. The Borax, which we mine in Searles' Lake every October, makes the hard shell form thinner, which allows the pistachio seed to break open the shell

while on the tree, something we want to happen.

The Zinc allows the stems and seeds to hold fast onto the tree, which is very important because the winds in this part of the world can be devastating to a non zinc treated tree, dropping all the blooms and seeds onto the ground, resulting in a loss of pistachios.

Pistachios

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At the end of October and beginning of November, the trees are harvested. Most orchards harvest with a tree shaker, we harvest ours by hand. It requires a lot of labor and time, but it is what we choose to do. It makes us appreciate these delicious tree seeds a bit more! We separate the nuts from the stems by rolling them around on a large tarp, where the stems start to float to the top of the pile, then, scoop up the pistachios, put them in an industrial peeler which removes the fleshy coating, then float the nuts in a vat of water. The empty nuts float to the top and the ones with nuts sink to the bottom. They are then air dried and roasted with pistachio wood to fuel our ash needs for the following year. We brine some of our nuts with pink salt that we collect every year in Trona, California. We separate only the finest crystals for this use!



The end result?



Lightly salted, lightly roasted, pistachio seeds in shell – ready to be delivered to you!



This is a developing pistachio, before it grows the thick brown shell you are familiar with. The Boron helps to keep the nut wall from being too thick, which results in more split nuts during harvest.

Arizona Field Trip 2020

Submitted by Kathy Boyers

Once again, some of our more adventurous club members embarked on a trip to Arizona to collect some awesome rock specimens. In January. Kathy Boyers, Glenda Gafner, and Heidi Storehalder loaded up Glenda's UTV they lovingly call Vroomin, and headed west.

However, upon arriving in Arizona, Glenda realized she forgot the key to Vroomin. So, she had it "overnighted", which took four days due to the remote location, according to the ever dependable US postal service. This glitch did not deter the slightly crazy trio from having a good time though. They found plenty to do until the elusive key arrived.

Shopping in Quartzsite is always a fun experience. A flat tire in Parker slowed them down only slightly.

For the first ten days they stayed in a hotel in Blythe that left much to be desired,. But the AirBnB north of Phoenix more than made up for the hotel in Blythe. It was amazing! And the owners were such a hoot!

All in all they went on a whopping NINE field trips to collect purple jasper, porcelain jasper, green band rhyolite, mushroom rhyolite, chrisacola, apache tears, onyx, malachite infused quartz, and agate. They met up with one of our club's new members, Jim Heller, who winters in Arizona. He accompanied them on three of the field trips.

In fact, the slightly crazy trio, and Jim, collected so many specimens, an entire front loader bucket full had to be left behind at the AirBnB. The owners are saving them to be collected next year. They were the best hosts ever!

I understand that another field trip was made by some of the other club members, but you will have to ask them for details.



Upcoming Events

Sunday, Mar. 1, 2020

State Line Gem & Mineral Society
monthly meeting
201 W. Main St.,
Morenci, MI 49256

Feb 29-Mar 1, 2020

LIVONIA, MI

The Roamin Club Annual Auction.
Sat 11 am - 6 pm; Sun 10 am - 6 pm.
Schoolcraft Community College
18600 Haggerty Rd.
Livonia.

March 20 - 22

Jackson, MI

**ANNUAL MICHIGAN GEM & MINERAL
SOCIETY SHOW**

See Flyer on page 9
200 W. Genson St.
Jackson, MI 49202

Mar. 28, 2020

**48TH ANNUAL
METRO ROCK SWAP**

Hosted by the
Midwest Mineralogical & Lapidary Society.
At the St. Johns Lutheran Church
13115 Telegraph Road
Taylor, MI.



Ongoing -

Richard Brzezicki is at the clubhouse on
Thursdays 1:00 pm - 6:00 pm. It is best to check
with him first before you go. Cell (269) 267-7666

Sherm Kardatzke will be holding cabbing classes
on Thursday evenings, 6:00 pm - 9 pm.

Wire Wrapping Sessions at Hobby Lobby in
Adrian on Fridays 11:00 am - 3:00 pm.

Linda Miller (419) 923-2090 and
Judy Snyder (517) 902-3990
(check to verify there will be someone there)



Rock Trails

Sandy Gerhart, Editor
704 W. US Hwy 223, #205
Adrian, MI 49221

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first Sunday of each month
at 2:00 PM
at 201 W. Main St.,
Morenci, MI 49256

