

ROCK TRAILS



**VOLUME 62
ISSUE III
APRIL 2022**

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2022 Officers and Directors

President: Edmund Jarzembki, 419 237-2000
Vice President: Charlene Hacker, 517 270-8061
Secretary:
Treasurer: Doris Brzezicki, 269 267-1123
Past President: Glenda Gafner, 517 403-6310
First Year Director: Kurt Miller
Second Year Director: Sherman Kardatzke
Third Year Director: Jan Hauter
Show Chairman: Sherman Kardatzke, 517 673-5487
Co-Show Chair:
Publicity: Edmund Jarzembki, 419 237-2000
Sunshine and Membership: Judy Snyder, Kathy
Boyers
Library: Curt and Linda Miller
Education and Lapidary:
Sherman Kardatzke, 517 673-5487
Richard Brzezicki, 269 267-7666
Newsletter Editor: Kathy Boyers,
517 917-5036, kboyers@mail.com
Website: <http://statlinegms.com/index.html>

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

Cover Photo by Doris Brzezicki - Richard Brzezicki breaking geodes at the Jackson show in 2019.

Last Month's Cover Photo by Kathy Boyers – Heidi Storehalder and her faithful sidekick, Cowboy, collecting Chryscolla at Planet Ranch, AZ, January 2022

Last Month's Article, "How to Polish Large Rocks", found on Rockseeker.com

President's Letter

Show Them Your Stuff

I went to the Fort Wayne, Indiana Home and Garden Show the first Friday in March. As is my custom, I dressed appropriately and with the added accent of a bolo tie and complimentary belt buckle. I received quite a few compliments from both guys and gals at the show on my "Charles Swanson" spear point pudding stone bolo tie. They would ask me about it and I would tell them. "An old rock cutter in our rock club made it and I bought it from him. It's a local rock found in the tri-state area. I thought it would fit the mood of the Home and Garden Show today, Thank you."

From there I went up to Fremont, Indiana, Clear Lake to St. Paul's Chapel. They have a great fish fry. The parishioner's cook up a wide selection of entries, deserts galore, and of course fish. Chris the fry master and his crew serve the tenderest fish to about 250 people. They loaded my plate and I sat across from some people I didn't know. I found out they were from Camden, Michigan, farmers, a husband, wife, and sister. The wife quickly points to my bolo tie and exclaims "That's a pudding stone! Where did you get that?" As at the Home and Garden Show, the four of us had a similar conversation about rocks over our fish dinners. They've been looking for a rock club in the area. I invited them to look up our club on the internet and go to the Michigan Gem and Mineral Society show at Jackson, Michigan, St. Patrick's Day weekend.

So don't forget to wear your stuff so there will always be something interesting to talk about with the people you meet.

Best regards,
Eddie

Secretary's report

The March 6, 2022 meeting of the State Line Gem and Mineral Society was called to order at 2:15 PM by Ed Jarzembki, President. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Richard Brzezicki. There were eight members present and one visitor, Mr. Al Wielfaert, Linda Wielfaert's husband. Also in attendance after a long absence was longtime member, Mr. Charles Swanson.

The first order of business was to appoint a secretary. No nominations or volunteers were forthcoming, so Ed Jarzembki volunteered as pro tem secretary for the meeting. There was no meeting in February as most members were out west at Tucson and Quartzsite, Arizona. Therefore no secretary report was given.

Doris Brzezicki, treasurer gave the treasurer's report, which was voted on and approved. Mrs. Brzezicki also presented her proposed budget for 2022 to the membership for approval. It passed by unanimous vote.

Walt Koskowski offered to the club his collection of slabs at a price per pound basis. After some discussion and interest from membership, Richard Brzezicki made a motion to purchase slabs up to a \$700 limit for the club. It was voted on and passed. Ray Hall and some other members were eager to see what Mr. Koskowski had to offer.

Also on the agenda was the annual Michigan Gem and Mineral Society show at Jackson, Michigan, at which we have been invited for demonstrations and cracking geodes. Bill Schultz organized the schedule of member volunteers for the event from Thursday set up until Sunday tear down.

Bill also made known to the club that he purchased an enclosed trailer for the purpose of hauling and storing club equipment and geodes between shows. Thank you, Bill!

The meeting adjourned about 3:30 PM with the next meeting scheduled for April 3. The door prize was won by Linda Wielfaert, a copper specimen from an old private collection donated to the club. Congratulations Linda!

Respectfully submitted
Edmund Jarzembki
Secretary Pro tem

Not Your Normal Sand Dunes -The Wonder of White Sands National Park

White Sands National Park is located in the state of New Mexico. What makes it such a wonder is that the snow-white sands are made of the mineral, gypsum, not quartz, like the sand you usually see piled high on lake shores when you go to the beach. Great wavy dunes of gypsum sand are spread over 275 square miles of desert at White Sands park, creating the world's largest gypsum dunefield.

The story of these dunes began way back in the Permian Period of Earth's history, over 250 million years ago, when shallow tropical seas covered the area where White Sands National Park is today. When the seas dried up, they left behind crystals of a mineral called gypsum (calcium sulfate). Later on, the Earth's crust lifted up and the gypsum-rich seabed became the top of mountains.

Over time, rain dissolved the gypsum in the mountains and rivers carried it to the Tularosa Basin, where it sat. The trapped water sank into the ground or formed shallow pools that also dried out, leaving gypsum on the surface in a crystalline form called selenite.

During the last Ice Age, a 1,600-square-mile body of water named Lake Otero covered much of the basin. When it dried out, a large flat area of selenite crystals remained, named the Alkali Flat. Lake Lucero is a dry lake bed in the southwest corner of the park, at one of the lowest points in the basin. Rain and snowmelt from surrounding mountains will sometimes fill Lake Lucero with water containing dissolved gypsum. As the water evaporates, small selenite crystals about 1 inch in diameter form on the surface of the lake. Most of the crystals form during large floods every 10-14 years. Wind and water break down the crystals into smaller and smaller particles until they become fine grains of white gypsum sand.

Another amazing thing is the gypsum crystals in the Alkali Flat and along Lake Lucero's shore can grow up to 3 feet long! Weathering and erosion eventually break the crystals into sand-size grains that are carried away by the winds from the southwest, forming the white dunes. The dunes constantly change shape and slowly move downwind.

Since gypsum dissolves in water, the sand in the dunes may dissolve and cement together after rain, fanning layers that are more solid, which increases

the wind resistance of the dunes.

By the way, White Sands park is new. It's been a National Park only since December 2019.

Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Sands_National_Park

Bench Tips

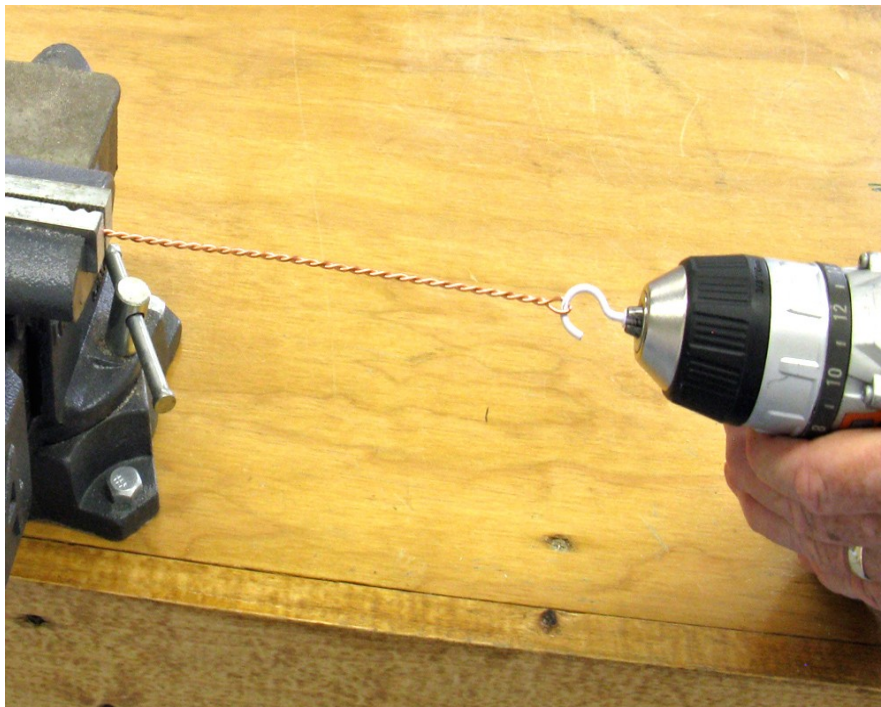
ISmart Solutions for Your Jewelry Making Problems

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

Happy hammering,

Brad Smith

BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com



Twisting Wire

Twisting wire can be done with an old hand drill but goes much faster with a power tool. My preference is to use a screw gun, although a Foredom should do well.

Just make a little hook out of coat hanger wire (or use a screw-in cup hook) and chuck it up in your screw gun. Grip the free ends of the wire in a vice and slip the looped end onto your hook.

Keep a little tension on the wires as you twist.

Note that a power drill is too fast a tool for this unless you have one with variable speed.

SOLDERING PRONGS

I often use prongs to hold an irregular cab or other objects on rings and pendants. But prongs can be a little tricky to solder. You have to find some way to hold them all upright while soldering, and the simple butt joint that looks strong sometimes breaks when you start to bend the prong over the stone. There's nothing worse than having a prong break off when you're setting the stone *#~*!

I solved both problems with one little trick. It keeps the prongs in position for soldering, and it gives you a stronger joint at the same time.

Locate and center punch the position for each prong. Then drill holes a little smaller than your prong wire. Sand a small taper on the ends of your prong wires and stand them up in the holes. The wires support themselves, soldering is easy, and the joint is stronger because of the increased soldering area.

2022 State Line Gem & Mineral Society Membership List

Anita Anderson
23490 Norwood
Oak Park, MI 48237

Patricia Baier-Hay
1035 Ottawa Dr.
Adrian, MI 49221
patbaier-hay@gmail.com
(517) 750-7065

Kathy Boyers
14156 Evergreen Trail
Manitou Beach, MI 49253
kboyers@mail.com
(517) 917-5036

Ken and Doris Brailean
4275 Skinner Hwy
Manitou Beach, MI 49253
kenanddorislive.com
(517) 861-0762

Richard and Doris Brzezicki
409 Broad St.
Adrian, MI 49221
rychard@tc3net.com
(269) 267-1123

Jim and Margaret Chagnon
7192 St Rt 582
Woodville, OH 43469
jc123mb@yahoo.com
(419) 849-2213

Sandy and Rita Cline
580 Coon Lake Rd
North Kawartha, ON LOL240
sandy@sandycline.com

Terry Doherty
25007 County Rd R
Fayette, OH 43521
willowhollow@webtv.net
(419) 237-2147

Patricia Featherston
202 Trevor Trail
Onsted, MI 49265
chimera_1@msn.com
(517) 467-6133

Sandy Gerhart
704 W. US 223 #205
Adrian, MI 49221
s_gerhart@yahoo.com
(734) 347-4796

Charlene Hacker
2261 Woodridge Dr.
Adrian, MI 49221
psikic101@aol.com
(517) 270-8061

Ray and Debra Hall
3034 E. Valley Rd.
Adrian, MI 49221
hallringo1@gmail.com
(734) 649-4263

Jim Heller
16673 Co. Rd. O
Pioneer, OH 43554
ohshooter@williams-net.com
(419) 819-7007

Jan Hauter
16857 Lime Creek Rd.
Hudson, MI 49247
rhauter@wcomco.net
(517) 286-6971

Ed Jarzembksi
26984 US 20
Fayette, OH 43521
(419) 237-2000

Sherman and Linda Kardatzke
1355 West Maumee
Adrian, MI 49221
sakardatzke@gmail.com
(517) 673-5487 (734) 718-8338

Walt Koskowski
1997 N. Erie St
Toledo, OH 43611
(419) 304-2176

Shirley McGovern
PO Box 766
Fayette, OH 43521
(419) 237-8009

Linda McConahey
3063 March Dr.
Toledo, OH
(563) 277-8238

Henry Porter
15351 Windemere St.
Southgate, MI 48195
porterhenry411@gmail.com
(313) 694-7642

Bill and Mary Schultz
12921 County Rd H
Wauseon, OH 43567
maswas@embarqmail.com
(419) 335-6791

Bill and Phyliss Sipes
2108 Wolf Creek Hwy
Adrian, MI 49221
(517) 263-3816

Richard and Judy Snyder
416 Stockford
Adrian, MI 49221
(517) 902-3990
judy9795@gmail.com

Charles Swanson
530 James St.
Adrian, MI 49221
(517) 759-0337

2022 State Line Gem & Mineral Society Membership List

Harlan and Christine Taylor
U O31 Cty Rd 5b
Liberty Center, OH 54532
budvtwin@embarq.mail.com
(419) 966-6142

Linda Wielfaert
4385 Wixom Hwy
Britton, MI 49229
uptownws@yahoo.com
(517) 673-4127

How to Take a Shower- at a Campground - NOT!

By Joe Slovak From the Rockpile October 1995

In the article that follows Joe Slovak tells about his experience at a campground shower room during the club's summer field trip to Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

After a hot, dirty, mosquito and fly-infested fun rockhounding day in various hot, dirty, mosquito and fly infested rock dumps in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, I decided to take a shower at the campground facilities.

With all my clean clothes in a clean Meijer's plastic bag (always ask for plastic, not paper) along with soap and towel, I started on my 100 yard hike to the showers. Upon reaching the shower building, I was lucky to find all three working showers empty. If you are not a lucky person, bring a book or magazine to read while you wait. This is also a good place to meet new people and other rockhounds who are also waiting.

The process of taking a shower and dressing which I am about to describe will prove to be invaluable for newer club members as well as experienced campground persons. SUGGESTION: Keep a copy of this article in your wallet and/or your How-To Book.

HINT: If you are lucky and have a choice of unoccupied, working showers, pick the one with the least crawling things in it.

For you uninformed "Motel People," the shower has a privacy door with a lock (which doesn't work) on the inside of the door, a three foot by three foot undress/dress area with a three foot bench and a shower with a narrow plastic shower curtain. Remove your clean clothes from the Meijer's plastic bag and hang them in reverse order of dress on the single door hook: shirt, socks, slacks

and underwear. Put the soap in the shower (if there is a soap dish) and the towel on the bench within reach near the narrow shower curtain (very important). Get undressed, jam your underwear into the closed entry door crack to keep it closed. Place your shoes near the narrow shower curtain (very important). Put your dirty, smelly clothes in the Meijer's plastic bag; this way you can just throw them in the trash on the way out. Get into the shower and close the narrow shower curtain. CAUTION: Don't get under the shower yet. Turn the shower handle on - it will not matter what temperature setting you select. Turn the handle to "cold," the water will be "hot." Turn the handle to "hot," the water will still be "hot." (The campground owners live in a cold climate and like hot showers.) Get wet, soap up, move under the shower, count to ten and move away, or you will look like a relative of a boiled lobster. CAUTION: Listen for anyone flushing a toilet. When this happens, immediately jump away from the shower because the water temperature will raise 200 degrees. You will not hear a member of the opposite sex flushing the toilet in the other side of the building, but using the ten count technique will reduce burn time. HINT: You may want to practice this at home before camping.

Being finished, turn off the shower, pull back the narrow shower curtain (take your soap). You will find that the floor, bench, towel, Meijer's plastic bag and shoes are wet (so what did you expect with a narrow shower curtain)? Avoid the wet, dirty floor by standing with one foot on each wet shoe. After using the driest part of the towel, lean on a clean part of the wet wall opposite the bench, lift one foot at a time and put on your underwear. Slacks are next - roll up the legs before attempting to put them on, because they will get wet from the floor. Putting on socks is very tricky and there is risk of bodily injury. Place one foot on the wet towel lying on the wet bench, dry your foot as much as possible, (keeping the other foot on the wet shoe). Now try to put a sock on your damp foot without falling down. The shoe ready for the foot with the sock on it is crushed from standing on it. With one foot on the bench and the other on the wet shoe, reach down and open up the crushed shoe and put the foot from the bench into it without falling down. Repeat all this for the other foot. HINT: Next time, forget the socks.

Go outside in the sun and walk around the campground until your clothes and shoes dry off to your comfort level. CAUTION: Too much sun exposure may require another shower. (Find alternate methods for evening showers.)

HINT: This entire process can be avoided if you don't want to be sociable, or as an alternate, buy a six pack as a gift and convince a motel person that you are just passing by and would like to use their shower.

Happy Camping

MARCH 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
					Jackson show	Jackson show
					Jackson	Jackson
					Fairgrounds	Fairgrounds
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Jackson show						
Jackson						
Fairgrounds						
27	28	29	30	31		

APRIL 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
State Line				Indian Mounds	Indian Mounds	Indian Mounds
Meeting				Rock and	Rock and	Rock and
2 PM				Mineral	Mineral	Mineral
Clubhouse				Show	Show	Show
				Wyoming, MI	Wyoming, MI	Wyoming, MI
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
					Kalamazoo Rock and	Kalamazoo Rock and
					Mineral Show	Mineral Show
					2900 Lake St.	2900 Lake St.
					Kalamazoo, MI	Kalamazoo, MI

Meetings held the first Sunday of the Month at 2 PM
at 201 W. Main St, Morenci, MI 49256

