

# ROCK TRAILS



## No May Meeting

### Newsletter of the StateLine Gem and Mineral Society

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MAY 2020

#### 2020 Officers and Directors

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

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## President's Tidings

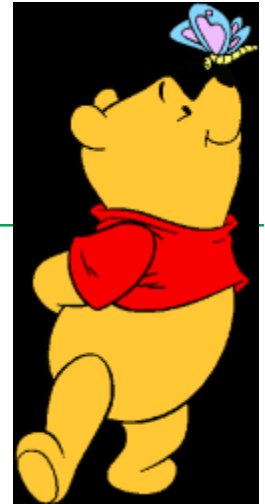


Well, not much for this month. I did call all the officers and the board about the show and it was unanimous to cancel our show. Doris did call the fair and they said that if they canceled the show we would get the deposit back, but if we canceled it would not be returned.

The club meeting is also canceled for May.

Hope everyone is staying safe and making things at home. I talked to Ed, he has been tumbling rocks. Glenda is making things for her shows, Henry making cans and setting in bezels from two ( nice). I have been slabbing grinding cabs, Shirley making earrings and bracelets, so sounds like everyone is keeping busy and making things.

Everyone stay safe. Hopefully we will be able to get together soon.



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## No May Meeting

Because of the Corona Virus and the Stay Home mandates, there was no meeting in April. Therefore, there is no Secretary's Report

There will also be no meeting held in May. We are hoping that things will return a little more to normal during the next month.

In the meantime, here are a couple of items to keep you busy for a short time.

Sandy, Editor

## The Smoking Hills of Canada

by Kaushik Patowary



In 1850, British Captain Robert McClure was sent on an expedition aboard the Investigator to the Arctic to search for the lost expedition of Sir John Franklin who had departed England five years earlier. It was the second search party who went looking for the 129-crew Arctic exploration team, and one of many dozens that were to follow for the next four decades.

The Investigator sailed north through the Pacific and entered the Arctic Ocean by way of Bering Strait, sailing eastward past Point Barrow, Alaska to eventually link up with another British expedition from the north-west. When McClure's search party approached the mouth of the river Horton on Beaufort Sea near Cape Bathurst in Canada's Northwest Territories, he noticed smoke in the distance. Suspecting the smokes could be from campfires, perhaps from Franklin, McClure at once sent a search party to investigate.

The party found not flames from Franklin's campfires, but thick columns of smoke emerging from vents in the ground. The sailors returned with a sample of the smoldering rock, and when they set it down on McClure's desk it burned a hole in the wood.

McClure assumed the rocks to be volcanic, but the truth was something else. The mountains contain large deposits of sulphur-rich lignite (brown coal) which ignite spontaneously when the hills erode and the mineral veins are exposed to the air. The fumes they give off contain sulphur dioxide, sulphuric acid and steam, all of which has acidified the surrounding shallow pools creating a pocket of distinctive acidic biota, in contrast to the typically Arctic biota in adjacent alkaline ponds.



The Smoking Hills is believed to have been burning for centuries, and will do so for many more.



[https://www.amusingplanet.com/2015/09/the-smoking-hills-of-canada.html#disqus\\_thread](https://www.amusingplanet.com/2015/09/the-smoking-hills-of-canada.html#disqus_thread)

## Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

### DRILLING SMALL ITEMS

Small pieces need to be held securely while drilling to prevent them from spinning if the drill catches. Having sliced my fingers occasionally in my younger days, I avoid band-aids now by using flat-jaw pliers or a ring clamp. Pliers also save you if the piece gets hot. Put a little tape or a piece of vinyl tubing over jaws of the pliers if needed to avoid scratches.



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### DRILLING A STONE

One of the things my students often ask to do is drill a hole through a piece of gemstone. The usual thought is to get a diamond drill, but I've been disappointed with them. I think the reason is that the tip of the drill is just pivoting in the hole and fails to cut well. When it looks like the drill isn't cutting, the tendency is to push with more force. The drill gets hot, and the diamond grit falls off.

A much better approach is to use a core drill. This is a small hollow tube with a coating of diamond grit at the business end. The diamonds easily carve out a circular arc without undue pressure or heat buildup.

Core drills are readily available from lapidary and jewelry supply companies. They come in sizes as small as 1mm and are very reasonable in price. For instance, a 2mm diameter drill is about \$7.

Chuck the core drill in a drill press, Dremel or Foredom and be sure to keep the drilling zone wet to cool the tool and to flush out debris.

Also, if you're drilling a through hole, go very easy on the pressure as the drill is about to cut through. Otherwise you will usually chip off some of the stone surface around the hole.



Continued on page 5

## **Bench Tips**

Continued from pg 4

In addition, you might be interested in an experiment we did yesterday with my rock club. At the request of local authorities, we had to close down all club activities several weeks ago. But as the date for our April meeting grew near, and with no end in sight to the quarantine situation, we decided to experiment with the idea of a virtual meeting.

So last night the Culver City, CA club held its first ever online meeting. Members were able to communicate via cell phone, laptop, tablet or desktop. After a quorum of members signed on, we had a quick business meeting followed by a slide show of Death Valley historic mining & collecting sites.

We did this via Zoom.com which allows up to a hundred people to participate in a 40 minute chat free of charge. Simply download the app from Google Store or Apple Store and you're ready to go. Tutorials are available at zoom.com or youtube.com We found it useful to have one person act as the tech for the meeting and control the sequence of speakers. When we ran out of time, we simply opened a second session and continued with the 140 slides.

See the result on our Facebook page -  
<https://www.facebook.com/CCRMC/posts/10158383154896098>



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## ***Pratt Rock***

New York's Mount Rushmore  
Prattsville, New York

Believe It or Not, Ripley once called this chiseled mountainside "New York's Mount Rushmore".

A prominent and wealthy New York businessman just about single-handedly established the Upstate town of Prattsville. He also had a mountainside monument built to himself, so that no one would forget it.

Zadock Pratt, Jr. was a true 19th century Renaissance man - the complete package. He was tanner, a banker, a US Congressman, a land developer, town magistrate and planner, a colonel in the New York state militia, and a husband five times over. Not enough hats? Add veteran of the War of 1812, trader in the Canadian provinces, endower and builder of the Prattsville Academy, and instrumental in the founding of the US Bureau of Statistics. So is it any wonder that a man like this would create something like Pratt Rock – "New York's Mount Rushmore".



Pratt had had a long and storied career throughout most of the 19th century, and at the height of his many achievements, in 1843, a stone-cutter sought him out, mostly looking for a hand-out. Instead, Pratt set him to work. The stone-cutter was given the task of carving Pratt's own life story into a cliff overlooking his 350-acre farm. The stone-cutter started with an image of Pratt and his son, added a sort of folksy-looking horse, then a brawny arm holding a sledgehammer... and he kept carving, for the next 28 years. It wasn't until Pratt had died that the task could finally be called "finished".

Pratt had wanted to be buried in his beloved mountainside memorial, but the terrain and leaky site that was chosen didn't quite work out. He's instead buried in the cemetery in Prattsville. While Pratts desire to be buried in the mountain didn't come to fruition for the man it did for his horses and dogs as a number of them were buried there in the rocks of "New York's Mount Rushmore."



Word Search Puzzle  
Solution on page 8

Note: a few words are written backwards

Find the words in the grid. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions.

H R E A N D K Z Z S R E W O L F  
M R U X D B M R D P R A T T F H  
G M M S P A Y T G G N N L F I V  
W O G H H L N B J K V F Q L K R  
Y U N N R M O A T T S L L L T C  
Q N I W I X O R C Q M S D E V B  
J T L L K B E R A J O M K L T J  
G A L L M V B L E T K P J Z N T  
K I I L O F Z A V D I Y M Z G J  
R N R L C H V N L M N O F U G S  
E S D P G G Y B L S G D N P P Y  
H I D K Z Z T V G L H W K R E N  
T D B K T V I R U S T M I L Q M  
O E V N A R E T E V H N P N O D  
M T R U H P L U S B G I Y O M Z  
D R M P C A M P F I R E Z M W F

[www.WordSearchMaker.com](http://www.WordSearchMaker.com)

campfire

puzzle

canada

ripley

drilling

rushmore

exploration

slabbing

flowers

smoking

hills

spring

love

sulphur

mother

veteran

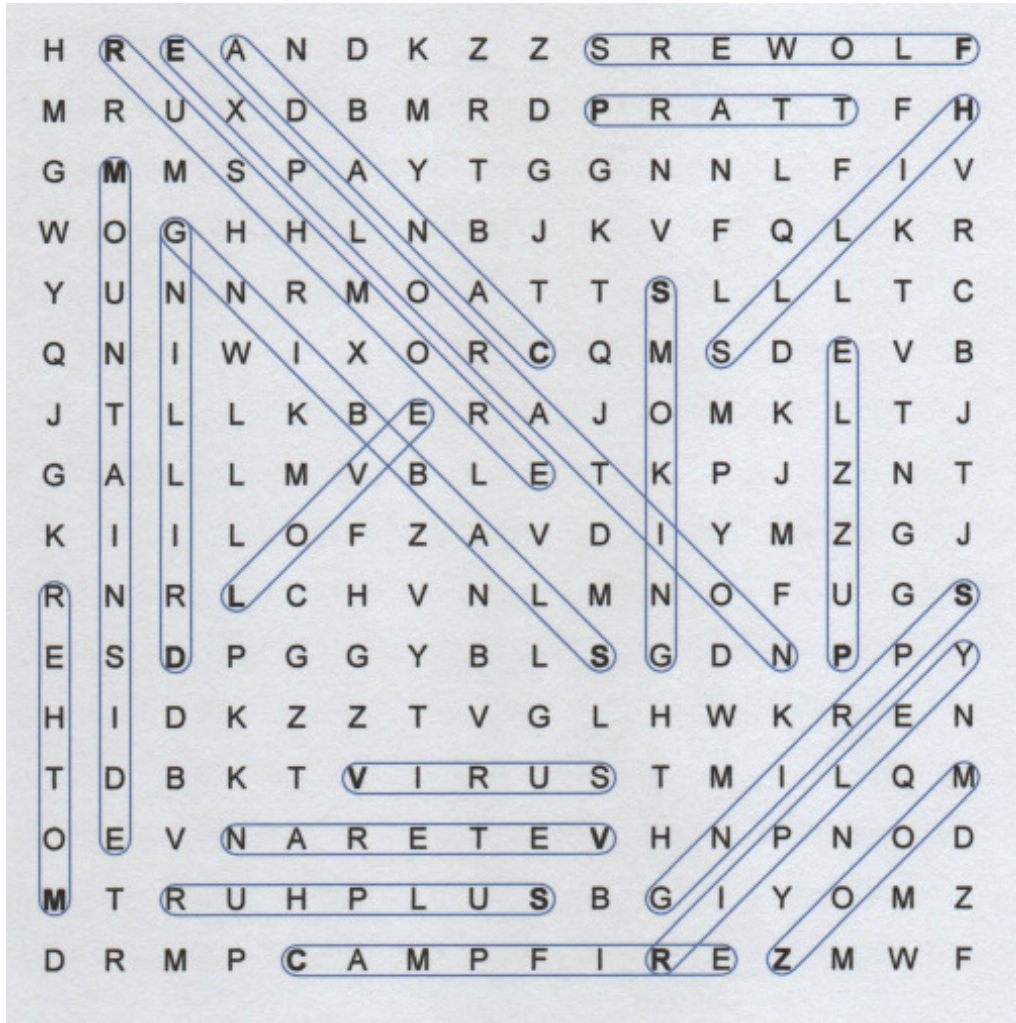
mountainside

virus

pratt

zoom

Solution to puzzle on page 7



*Happy  
Mother's Day!*



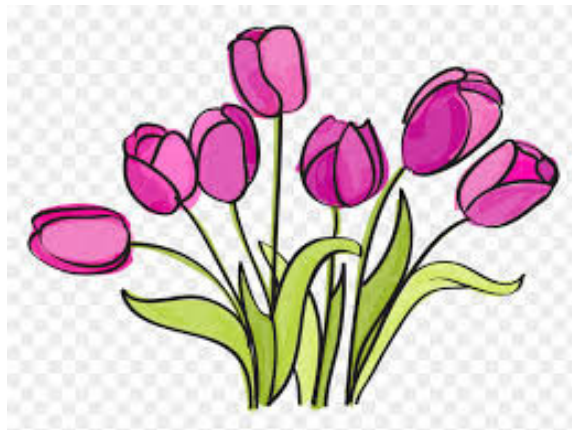


# Upcoming Events

## No May Meeting

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

Because of the Corona Virus, all upcoming shows scheduled for the next month have been canceled.



### Ongoing - **Currently canceled**

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

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

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

