



Tulip City Gem & Mineral Club Conglomerate

Monthly Newsletter of the TCG&MC, PO Box 2082, Holland, Michigan

March 2021

Volume 54, Edition 3

Robin Williams has been quoted to say "Spring is nature's way of saying, Let's Party!" Well, why not make an adjustment and say Spring is nature's way of saying, **Let's Rockhound** ! I can only imagine how bad your itch is growing to grab a bucket and head for the hills. Recently, Robin & I got our itch scratched a little by going over to the Westover's and learn how to cut and polish Petoskey Stones. Thanks Rance & Anne :)



Several of our members will be attending to their itch this weekend as the first club field trip for 2021 will be held. Thanks to the effort of Jon Mull, our Field Trip Coordinator, we have four days filled with several sites to search for Ordovician and Devonian fossils. To enhance our collecting experience, a member of the local paleontological club will serve a tour guide and expert. Check back next month here to get a report!

I like to welcome our newest member, Lisa Mull and son Redmond. Looking forward to see you and everyone else at a club meeting and field trips soon. It is the intention of the Board to begin in person events in April. We feel that with the improvement of the Spring weather and continued vaccinations, it should be safe to schedule a General Meeting outside; we welcome suggestions. Stay Tuned !!!

On the Calendar:

| | | |
|---------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 3/31/21 | TCG&MC General Meeting | Virtual / ZOOM |
| 4/14/21 | TCG&MC Board Meeting | In-person @ TBD |
| 4/28/21 | TCG&MC General Meeting | In-person @ TBD |
| 5/12/21 | TCG&MC Board Meeting | In-person @ TBD |

Keep Current with the club: www.tulipcity.org or www.facebook.com/tulipcityclub/



2021 TCG&M Board

President - Michael B. Larson
mblarson300@yahoo.com

Vice President - Shari Luttkhuizen
sluttikh@oaisd.org

Secretary - Brenda Olson
brendaolson01@gmail.com

Treasurer - Kurt Brinks
kdbrinks1@gmail.com

Field Trip Coordinator - Jon Mull
solace247@yahoo.com

Historian - Betty Hoekstra
kbhoek@att.net

Jr. Club Coord. - Linda Winkelmann
lindawinkelmann@att.net

Liaison - Rhonda Gehringer
rgehringer@homeoftheshamrocks.org

Membership - Christine Silich
CSDS77@icloud.com

Newsletter Ed. - < open >

Social Media Coord. - Julia Sherwood
bobandjulia@accn.org

Show Coord. - Sue Goedert
sonbeams2000@yahoo.com

Social Coord. - Linda Plumert
rplumert@gmail.com

Dir. at Large - Mary Johnson
maryjohnson299@gmail.com

Dir. at Large - Randy Wake
rgwake@charter.net

Past President - C.H. Falstad
cfalstad@ameritech.net



Fossil plate from St. Leon, Indiana

Field Trips Update

- ⇒ **Spring Break: April 2 - 6** (*Friday to Tuesday*)
- Fossils in Indiana / Ohio / Kentucky
- ⇒ **April 17** (*Saturday*) - Beach Hunting in Port Huron
- ⇒ **May 1** (*Saturday*) – Beach Hunting in Petoskey
- ⇒ **Memorial Day Weekend: May 27 - 31** (*Thursday to Monday*)
– Geodes around Keokuk, Iowa

Details for all of these and future trips will be provided as trips get near !

Questions or Interested to join the FUN, please contact Field Trip

TCG&MC General Meeting for March

Wednesday, 3/31/21

Look for the ZOOM link in your e-mail a day or two before the meeting. Those unable to attend online can join us through a phone number that will be provided at that time as well.



Tulip City Gem & Mineral Club
Zoom Meeting
February 10, 2021, 7:00 PM Board Meeting Minutes

7:11 PM – Board Meeting

President Michael Larson called the meeting to order. Stated he desires an in person General Meeting in April. There will be no April banquet; the possibility of a banquet held in the fall was discussed.

Approval of minutes - Mike Larson made a motion to approve the January 13, 2021 Board Meeting minutes and the January 27, General Meeting minutes with corrections, seconded by Jon Mull. All in favor.

Vice President Shari Luttikhuisen- Shari discussed options for the virtual February general meeting. In the newsletter there were some links to promote the field trips or the show theme. The best place to meet may be outside in spring.

Treasurer Kurt Brinks- gave the treasurers report. The club received another membership. Kurt reported we are in fine condition.

Juniors-Linda Winkelman would like a Saturday zoom gathering at 10am, February 20. Rhonda will help set it up. Linda has an article for the newsletter to promote the meeting. Mike Larson requested that Linda check with the juniors if they are utilizing the Mini Miner.

Membership Christine Silich. The board thanked Christine for an updated membership report. For the members information in the newsletter they can be told we can email or send a membership list upon request, minus the juniors. Linda will invite 2019 families to the Saturday meeting and will invite them to join as members.

Hospitality Linda Plumert – Discussion followed on an alternative to an April banquet. Discussion followed on the option of an October banquet. We will have no coffee or water in general meetings when we meet in person again.

Liason - Rhonda Gehringer was wondering if will need to hold raffles to support scholarships. Shari would like to have silent auctions when we meet in person again. Kurt Brinks said we would have scholarships for Hope College and Grand Valley State University that he would send in the mail, but we will not do the Gibson scholarship.

Director at Large - Mary Johnson has club materials in her garage for raffles.

Historian Betty Hoekstra – no report

Social Media Julia Sherwood – no report

Field Trip – Jon Mull offered to share a preview of the places where the field trips are going to happen for the February Virtual General Meeting. Received a message from Mary regarding the spring break trip at the beginning of spring break works better for Jon. Jon has announced field trip dates for April and May.

Budget 2021 – Kurt made a motion we accept the 2021 budget as presented, Mary seconded. All in favor.

Some discussion followed on whether to do an exchange with another club. The pros were we make good connections with other clubs, the cons were we have a lot of material already left over from past exchanges. One option that was discussed was an exchange of field trips, possibly with a Canadian club.

Mike asked the board members to check out the link in the January newsletter to the Rock and Gem opal page.

Show –Sue reported that she would like to send out contracts to see if vendors are interested but not take payment until July, when we are sure we are able to do a show. Linda W. shared that she is doing publicity this year for the show. She is working according to a schedule and has a number of contacts with our show information already.

Adjourn meeting: by 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Brenda Olson

Tulip City Gem and Mineral Club
Via Zoom
February 24, 2021, 7:00 PM; Minutes General Meeting

7:09 PM – Call to Order – Michael Larson, president

Present: about 18 adults.

Board Reports

President-Mike Larson is hoping we can meet in person by March or April 2021. Mike announced there will be no April Banquet this year. An alternative fall banquet may be held instead. Social distancing and wearing masks will be required when we meet in person again. The club will try to get interaction with field trips. Mike shared that Indian Mounds has canceled their club show in April.

Treasurer-Kurt Brinks gave a brief report. Kurt reported the club is in fine shape and will give scholarships to GVSU students and Hope College students.

Juniors-Linda Winklemann reported that a Zoom meeting where 30 families were invited only had one family respond. Discussion followed on options for juniors to meet in person to make shark tooth necklaces, possible outdoor meetings, hands on meetings, and the possibility of sending Petoskey stone kits. Jon and Shari had some Petoskey stones available to donate.

Field Trip-Jon Mull has some dates for field trips:

- ◇ April 2-6 fossils in the Cincinnati area (Indiana and Kentucky)
- ◇ April 17 Port Huron for beach material
- ◇ May 1st Magnus Park, Petoskey, MI,
- ◇ Memorial day weekend 27th to 31st geodes in Keokuk, IA.

Jon followed with a virtual presentation on the areas where the field trips were planned. Club members wanting to participate in the field trips should email Jon expressing interest soon.

Social Media-Julia Sherwood no report.

Vice President-Shari shared for Sue, Show Chair, that the club is planning a September show. Shari encouraged the club to get the dates and location figured out for the South Haven tailgate figured out.

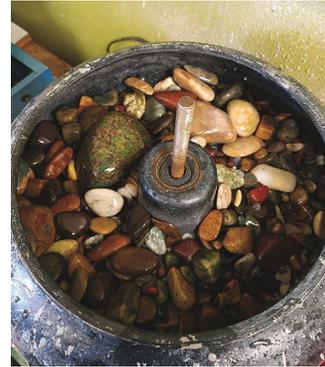
Meeting adjourned 8:35 pm

**Did you
Know?**

Planetary geology, alternatively known as astrogeology or exogeology, is a planetary science discipline concerned with the geology of the celestial bodies such as the planets and their moons, asteroids, comets, and meteorites

Rock Tumbling for Autism

<https://www.rockngem.com/rock-tumbling-for-autism/>

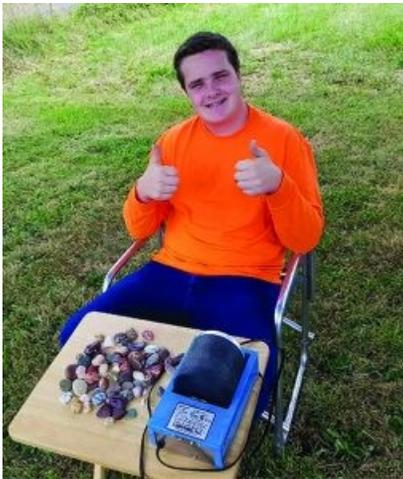


By David Leaton

October 29, 2020

Rock tumbling is a worldwide sensation. It does not matter the age or geographic area of the participant. I see young and old together looking for rocks to tumble, one just as enamored and excited as the other. Many people live in rural areas or states where there are plenty of materials to find in nature. Yet, many more reside in cities and towns or live in states where there is little or no availability of materials to hunt, so they order online or through catalogs. There is no deterring those who have been bitten by this “rock tumbling” bug. For some, it even seems to be the glue that holds them together.

Through the group *Rock Tumblers for Autism* (<https://bit.ly/2WFMB4f>), we have identified a new group of rock tumbling fanatics, and we have embarked upon a mission to create new avenues of support and success for them.



I don't believe I've met a kid who is not fascinated with rocks at some stage of their life. Growing up, I spent a lot of time on the shores of rivers and lakes with my dad and my two granddads. We were all avid anglers, or at least I became one as I aged. However, the rocks always called me away from my post at the water's edge.

Like many others, I have always been fascinated with and wondered about how rocks formed, where they came from, and, most of all, what they might look like “inside.” Of course, they had other uses beyond causing me to dream and wonder. I think, to this day, my dad would cringe if he thought I was going to throw a rock in the water near where he was fishing. Of course, I am not above doing so just to torment him a little.

If you enjoyed what you've read here you're invited to consider signing up for the FREE Rock & Gem weekly newsletter at <https://bit.ly/2xttsZP>

Rockhounding Runs in the Family

However, back to the topic at hand, what is one to do with all of those rocks? My children have rocks that they picked up when they were toddlers. My oldest is 35, my youngest 14, and we have a plethora of rocks streaming in and out of our lives. Even my oldest son, who is much more a “techie” than an outdoorsman, loves rocks. His grandfather, the person who created my passion for rock tumbling, gave my son a Diamond Pacific MT4 Mini Sonic when he was about ten years old. I still have it in my arsenal and recently ordered a refurb kit for the machine. My daughters, especially my 28-year-old, Elizabeth, always bring me bags of rocks they have picked up, and ask me to add them to my tumbler loads. Elizabeth even hunts one of the local Facebook rock shows on the Hollywood Ranch page and buys slabs and rough for me to tumble or cut. It is my younger son, though, who changed how I look at rock tumbling, and created a new direction for not just me but also my family and even my friends. Thomas is my 14-year-old son, and he has *Autism Spectrum Disorder* (ASD).



One never knows where inspiration will come. Several years ago, my dad called me from Mississippi and said he and his wife were going to drive out to Oregon for a visit. We had all lived in Ontario, Oregon in the past, and dad had gotten deep into lapidary work. I wanted so badly at the time to work with him, but I had just opened a new business that was struggling to get off the ground, and it took every waking moment to nurse it to full health.

Finally, it did explode into a full-fledged business that led me, again, to involve myself in what was to become a budding passion. Eventually, I would sell the business. During my dad’s visit, he brought 20 years’ worth of rock tumbling and lapidary equipment and dumped it in my garage. Among all of the parts and pieces was a nearly 30-year old Thumler’s UV-18 vibratory tumbler.

Some people might scream, “Eureka! I’ve hit gold.” However, I had never seen a vibratory tumbler and had no clue what to do with it. So, while I tinkered with the CabMate lapidary polisher and a couple of other pieces of ancient equipment from my dad’s arsenal, I started searching Facebook groups for tumbling advice. I’d be remiss if I did not mention those faithful friends and fellows who do their best to share some basic geological information that provides insight for tumbling. However, it was on Facebook that I ran across a group called “Rock Tumbling Hobby Lapidary Discussion.” It became my near-daily devotional and set me on the path that I am traveling now, overseeing “Rock Tumblers for Autism.”

Inspiration Close to Home and Heart

My son wanted to start tumbling, so I got him a Lortone 33A. At the same time, a friend of mine who lives in Oregon as well, whom I have known since we were teens, and also happens to have a son with autism, wanted to start tumbling rocks. Today he is an avid tumbler. To provide a broader picture of my background, I am also a special education teacher. Through my training, I began to make a connection between rock tumbling and people who have autism. Growing up, I also had learning disabilities, and it impacted me a great deal. After school, I spent 30 years as a truck driver, as well as a computer technician, that is, until I decided to take the plunge and attend community college. Four years later, I had a degree in teaching children who have disabilities. Then I went on to earn my master’s degree in special education with an emphasis on autism. As I was finishing my final year and preparing to graduate, something on the Rock Tumbling Hobby Lapidary group caught my attention. An 8-year-old boy who needed a rock tumbler.

It was the boy’s mother who was searching and explained to our Facebook group that she did not have a tumbler,

but wanted both her and her son to connect with people who did. She explained that her son has autism and that his favorite thing in life was tumbling rocks. As a point of reference, some of the typical traits of autism are difficulties regulating sensory input, regulating behavior, and diminished social skills. The mother explained that for her son, the sound of the tumbler and the rocks' feel was what helped him stay calm and regulated. BAM! It was like a lightning bolt between the eyes. When we gave my son his rock tumbler, we realized that the response was, greater social and emotional regulation.

Taking Action On a Passion

How many of you like to rub your smoothed and polished stones after they come out of the tumbler? Well, imagine that feeling of soothing calm assurance on a much grander scale. Sadly, the mother who approached the group explained that they wanted to stay connected because her son's old tumbler had "given up the ghost," and died. That gave me a grand idea.

I went to my wife and told her the story. At the time, I was still in college, as was my wife. We both worked, but we were at the bottom of the food chain at our jobs, so money was a bit tight. However, we wanted to help this mother and son. I sent the mother a private message and asked her if it would be okay to raise funds in order to purchase her son a new rock tumbler. She was ecstatic, and we were off. I asked the permission of the moderator to post the request to the members, and she approved. The response was unbelievable. I posted it to my personal Facebook page as well, and in a week, we were able to purchase a Lorton 33B dual drum tumbler, which we shipped to Montana as a gift to a young man with special needs. He was the first, and he was not the last.



Today we continue to raise funds to buy rock tumblers for kids who have autism. We have shipped units to Montana, Illinois, Utah, and of course, my home state of Oregon. Speaking of Oregon, another of our fundraisers allowed us to purchase a new three-pound tumbler kit for a young man in the town where I live. Alex is a middle teen who has autism and is a bit lower functioning. Can you guess what his favorite thing to do is? You guessed it. He hunts rocks.

We got word through a member of our Facebook group that this young man could benefit from a tumbler. We connected with his parents, raised funds, and met the family at their house to present the tumbler. Alex was so excited about the rocks that he took out his collection box and explained each rock he had. We had such a wonderful time with him that I told my wife I wanted to continue what we were doing.

Valuable Partnerships

There is one additional and important aspect of this effort, and that is Sherman Rowland at [High Land Park](#). After hearing the story of our mission and purchasing his company's shaping machine, Sherman and I discussed the different uses and benefits, and he informed me of his company's forthcoming plans to offer a brand of rock tumblers for both the hobbyist and the professional. Highland Park is also known for its high-quality slab saws, sphere machines, and other lapidary equipment. I am excited at the prospect of receiving our first tumblers from them.

Sherman also helped our group regarding promotional efforts and provided advice about other elements. As a result, Rock Tumblers for Autism is now a registered 501(c)(3) charity with nonprofit status under the name CogWheels for Autism and is registered with Amazon Smile. We will be purchasing rotary and vibratory tumblers from Highland Park when they are made available to the public.

While my goal is to present rock tumblers to 100 kids in a year, under the registered charity, we are also expanding into helping purchase specific supports for children with autism that their families cannot afford. The progress is slow, but our fundraising is picking up speed. That progress is due in part to Brad and Hannah at HolleyWood Ranch, Sherman at Highland Park Lapidary, and the support of the rock tumbling and lapidary communities. Also, a local construction company has offered to build our local group a new shop to work out of so that we may expand our efforts.

Autism is the fastest-growing disability among children, and we have a driving passion for giving the children and their families the extra support they need, in many different ways.

Who would have thought a child with a rock would become such an inspiration? There is no experience equal to seeing the excitement on children's faces when they talk about collecting rocks. Many of my students have brought rocks to me from their beach and river excursions. There is also a depth of joy and relaxation in preparing and tumbling rocks that I have never experienced in any other hobby. I hope to inspire the world to delve into a kind of art that requires no physical talent, but only imagination, a little bit of patience, and the rock tumbler of their choice.

To see what recipients of the gift of rock tumblers are up to, visit the *Rock Tumblers for Autism* group on Facebook: <https://bit.ly/2WFMB4f>.



Junior Families of 2021 – Ideas!

TCGMC members are eager to keep kids involved in our hobby as the pandemic recedes!

Sign up for One Day Field Trips to Michigan beach sites. Bring picnic supplies, rock buckets, tools and water-proof boots. Fresh air and the extra company of “senior rockhounds” will be both delightful and educational. Jon Mull, Angie & Jack will lead these adventures!

Pencil in **Saturday, April 17th** for an exciting collecting experience on Lake Huron's large-gravel beaches – starting at Fort Gratiot in Port Huron, MI (just north of the International Bridge). Lots of colorful varieties to be found including unakite (green & orange granite), puddingstone, tillite, petoskey, favosite, corals, limestone, jasper, and milk quartz.

On **Saturday, May 1st** join the club as it will GO NORTH to some of Lake Michigan's favorite collecting sites. You will need a collecting bag or bucket to put your exciting finds. Petoskey, favosites (aka Charlevoix stones), horn corals, chert, basalts, gneiss, assorted granites, and sandstone. P.S. You don't need to know their names to find these beauties!

Join us on **Friday, April 28** from 5:30-7:30 pm at the Lakeshore Museum Center (www.lakeshoremuseum.org) in Muskegon. It is hosting “Rocks of Michigan” from the GVSU Geology Dept. This FREE event is outdoors and includes rock & mineral experiments to uncover the importance of these resources. Mask & social distancing expected.

West Michigan MWF Mineral Study Group

Our current study structure is to look at minerals by elemental composition, working our way thru the periodic table. When we have an abundant element we often have to divide up our study by letters of the alphabet so we have a reasonable number of specimens. This month we had the opposite problem and needed two elements to have a reasonable number of specimens.

Our Mineral Study Group likes to learn about the science and practical uses of the minerals we study, but we also want to learn to hand identify them. Hand identification is a skill you learn from holding and studying many different specimens of a given mineral. We also try to do our homework on the science and come prepared to discuss the mineral(s) of the month, but we also dig through our collections and try to come with one or more specimens for everyone to handle.

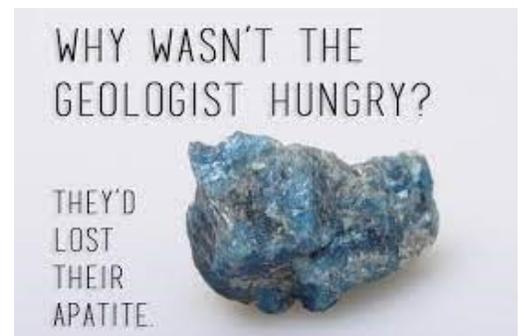
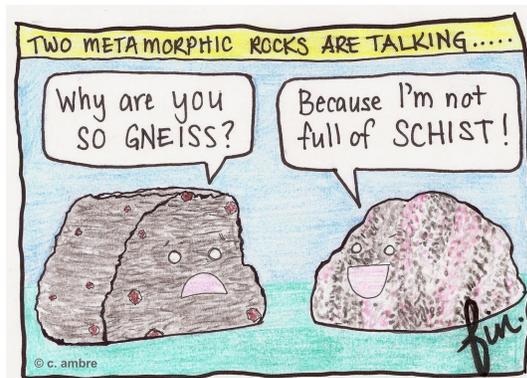
The next monthly meeting of the West Michigan MWF Mineral Study Group will be held on April 13, 2021, from 7 pm to 8:30 pm, at the home of Kreigh Tomaszewski, 653 Burton St. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49507. **Face masks will be required** (unless everyone attending has been fully vaccinated against covid-19).

We will be studying minerals that contain Manganese and have names beginning with the letters A thru K. We try to limit our study range so we have 25-30 specimens to fit them into our time frame (we will probably have at least 35). We often have some time at the end of the meeting to look at some unknown you might need help on - remember to bring that questionable specimen.

We try to start (and end) on time; please do not arrive more than 20 minutes early (and everyone gets thrown out by 9). All West Michigan rockhounds are invited to attend (but our governor wants us to keep it down to ten). I hope you can join us as we learn about minerals from each other, but you are always welcome even if you can't bring any specimens. **Please join us and let part of your collection get to meet some other rockhounds and be appreciated.**



- 1) What do you call a rock that never goes to school?
- 2) Why did the tectonic plates break up?
- 3) What do you do with dead geologists?



- 1) A skipping stone!
- 2) It wasn't her fault, but there was just too much friction between them.
- 3) You barium.

Meetings are held monthly on the last Wednesday of the month at the Howard Miller Community Center, 14 S. Church Street, Zeeland, MI at 7pm, unless announced otherwise in the **TULIP CITY CONGLOMERATE**. Junior Club welcomes young rockhounds and meets separately during the meeting. To become a member, complete the form at www.tulipcity.org

Our club is a non-profit organization sponsored by the Holland Recreation Department. It is a member of the Midwest Federation and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. The general purpose of this club is to develop interest in and increased knowledge of minerals, rocks, gems, fossils, and the lapidary arts. The objectives of this club shall be promoted whenever possible, through family participation.

Advertising rates for club members are: \$5 for business card size, \$10 for $\frac{1}{4}$ page, \$15 for $\frac{2}{4}$ page, \$30 for full page. non-member rates are double. Make check payable To: TCG&M with ad copy to Editor.

Tulip City Conglomerate
 c/o Tulip City Gem & Mineral Club
 P.O. Box 2082
 Holland, MI 49424

