

Tulip City Gem & Mineral Club Conglomerate

Monthly Newsletter of the TCG&MC
PO Box 2082, Holland, Michigan 49422

Website: www.Tulipcity.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/tulipcityclub

October, 2025

Volume 58, Edition 8



Wow, where has time gone? Here we are in October facing our last chances to get to the beach or go on a rock hunting trip. Well I am planning a local field trip for 11/8 to Point Betsie Lighthouse to look for rocks on the beach. It will be a fun time, some rock hunting, identifying, maybe some coffee or tea to keep us warm. If you are interested please email me at vice-president@tulipcity.org, or text me at 616-490-9529. Weather is unpredictable so dress in layers bring

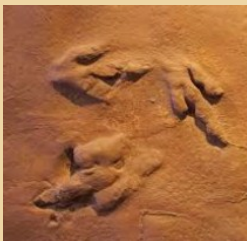
more than you think you may need to wear. There may be some carpooling opportunities as well. If nothing else it'll be a day with fellow rockhounds!

Id like to extend a thank you to all of those who came out and helped at the show. It was a huge success... more to follow on that.

As we look to the new year, we will be calling upon our members to help decide what they would like to see. We have some huge visions for where the club will go!



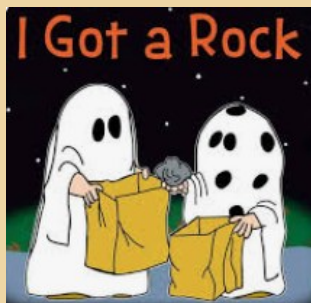
Now onto this months presenter....



Ill share a short story about him prior to him speaking on the 29th. Our speaker will be Fossil Whisperer John VanRegenmorter Adjunct Geology professor at GVSU and GRCC.

John will be sharing an amazing story about his recent trip "A Paleontology Emergency", this trip took place in St. George Utah. This is a great story of how this hobby brings people together to help in so many ways.

Being so close to Halloween, feel free to dress up and we can enjoy our meeting in costume, or come dressed as you are and be a rockhound!



Color of the Month contest Well it is October.... Black it'll be! Brink you favorite black rock or mineral for a chance at a little prize, and bragging rights!





Events



For Our Club and Beyond!

2025 TCG&M Board

President - Jodi Miller

V.P. - Justin Moore

Secretary - Jordan Zych

Treasurer - Kurt Brinks

Field Trips - Jon Mull

Historian - Alexandria Vanderski

Junior Club - Steve Miller

Liaison - Chris Silich

Membership - Rhonda Gehringer

Newsletter Editor - Megan Moore

Webmaster - Aaron Nelson

Show Chair - Steve Miller

Social Coordinator - Michelle Lanting

Dir. at Large - Bill McDonald

Dir. at Large - Patsy Williamson

Past President - C.H. Falstad

Meetings are held at 7:00 pm at the Community Center in Zeeland.

10/29 (Wed.) Tulip City General Meeting

11/5 (Wed.) Tulip City Board Meeting

11/8 (Sat.) Point Betsie Lighthouse Field Trip

11/19 (Wed.) Tulip City General Meeting

Member News

WELCOME to our newest Members

Anne Rivers & Mark Werkema

Lennis & Danielle Baggech/Moran Family

John Bentancourt

Linda & peter Burrows/Stieler

Justin & Michaela Dore/Majava Family

Julie & Justin Dueweke Family

Bruce Echert & Family

Cecelia & Joseph Fenwick Family

Laura & Sam Gustafson

John Hoffnagle Family

Philip & Michelle Huizinga

Calvin & Lori Schutte

Edith & Scott Modzelewski

Lisa & Kahn Need

Lisa & Brian Staple Family

Mary Wilkinson Family

Andi & Josh Simmons Family

Bill Astle

Elizabeth Blue

Barb Yost

Priscilla Schultz

Doreen Reurink

Jennifer Elwood

Susan Salee

Tania Snyder

Matthew Kuehl

Mary Tenbrock

Sue Porter

What did the
rocks want to be
for
Halloween?

Field Trip Fun

Local Field trip with VP Justin to Point Betsie Lighthouse Beach

- Saturday 11/8/25
- 11:30 AM until whenever
- 3701 Point Betsie Road Frankfort, Mi 49635

We will make a likely **crazy** attempt at one more beach trips for rocks and fossils, friendship and identification. We are looking to add in a day trip for any club members who are interested. Please text Justin at 616-490-9529 if you would like to join.

It will be pretty chilly, I'd imagine, so dress warm in layers, don't forget a decent hat! There is a nice mix of rocks that can be found here, fossils, unakite, chert, CWA, Petoskey, slag and more. This is a fun beach. We will have an opportunity to stop at other beaches as well- Old Faceful comes to mind if we would like to hit that area on the way back.

Juniors Section

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

**FOR THE NOVEMBER 16TH MEETING, PLEASE
ARRIVE AT 6:30 AS WE HAVE A SPECIAL PRO-
GRAM PLANNED THAT WILL TAKE US A LITTLE
BIT LONGER THAN NORMAL**

**JUNIORS! WERE COUNTING ON YOU TO COME
DRESSED IN COSTUME FOR OUR OCTOBER
MEETING; NO TRICKS NEEDED FOR SOME
TREATS**



The
Rolling Stones

PETOSKEY POLISHING CLASS WITH RICK AND DEB



There were about 25 people that showed up for the polishing class held by Rick and Deb in August. They had a great time and taught a large group a great skill they can use at home! Polishing a Petoskey is one of the more satisfying things in life. Taking from rough to shine is such a wonderful feeling! A prize they can look back on and say "I did this". A huge Thank you to

Rick and Deb Smith for putting on this yearly class and sharing one of the best parts of our hobby. A big Thanks to Bill and Tanya McDonald for their assistance as well. Teaching others is one of the foundations of our hobby.

FRIENDS IN NEED FOLLOW UP

Michele Yamanaka of Three Rivers Gem and Mineral Society was able to travel up to our show on Friday where we presented her with all of the donated rocks from club members. She was extremely grateful and wanted the club to know how much this means to her and her club. This will be enough rocks to get thru the show and the rest of this year into next as well. Thank you to all of those who donated! Helping others is another great part of being in a rock club! This is an excerpt from their newsletter "The Strata".

Thank you to CH for reaching out and coordinating this exchange so they were able to have specimens for their juniors and the show!



A BIG THANK YOU TO THE TULIP CITY CLUB FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATIONS TO HELP REPLACE SPECIMENS FOR OUR SHOW!

A Message from our President

Happy fall y'all! The weather has changed and with it begins the putting away of all the outdoor activities. Especially noticed by rockhounds, it means the end of another year of rock collecting in Michigan. But there are always things to do inside, including rock and gem shows, club meetings, dusting collections, lapidary activities, etc. Steve and I enjoy this time to go through the buckets we have and pick out the specimens that we've collected that we want to make into our knife handles and jewelry and things. It can be almost as fun as finding the rocks the first time.

Speaking of rock and gem shows. WOW!! What a success our first show in the new location was. I am sorry that I couldn't be there, but motherhood required me to be in El Paso, Texas to assist with the birth of our grandson, William Michael. Many of you know our daughter, Mallory, and it was her first child. I was confident that Steve (with help from me before I left) had all the details in place for the show, and it allowed me to relax and be there for her. Steve kept me informed the whole weekend, and I was sent a lot of pictures of the layout, the turnout, and the many volunteers who made it all so successful. Like the weather, there were changes that had to be adjusted to, but once they were made, it felt normal and comfortable, like a wool sweater! The great news is that the Holland Charter Township was extremely pleased with how the whole thing went, and we are booked for next year. So plans can begin immediately, and you can spread the word that we will be there again, September 18, 19, and 20. Again, congratulations to the show committee and to Steve for putting this event together and having the flexibility to make a new location so successful!

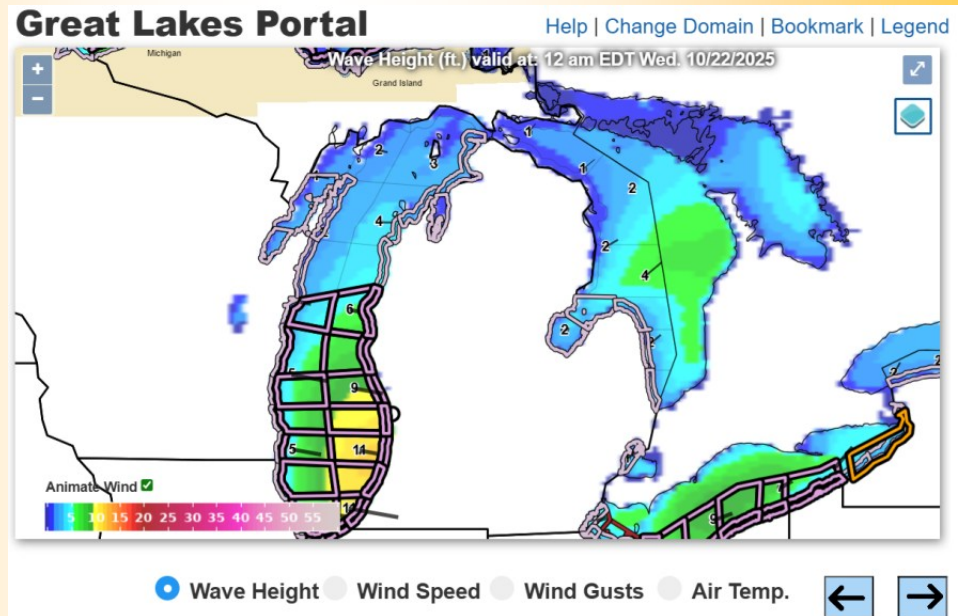


GREAT ROCKHOUND RESOURCES

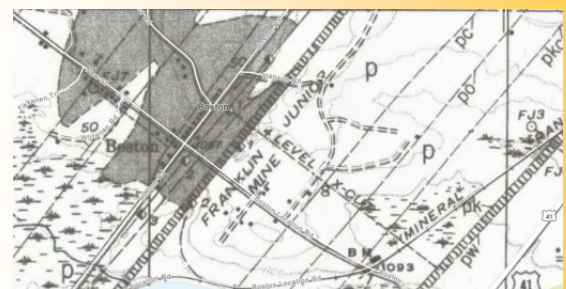
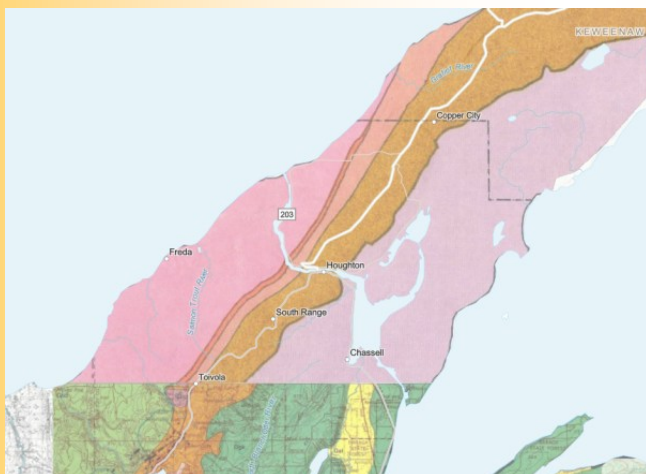
Did you know that Rockhounds have online tools at our disposal?

Do you enjoy going to the beach but you never know what the weather and waves will be like? Well with this great website, now you'll never have to guess!

[https://
www.weather.gov/
greatlakes/](https://www.weather.gov/greatlakes/)



Need to know what's going on under our feet? Well look at this great new USGS Geological Map!!! This is exciting for those of us who need to know more, AND as a bonus, can help us find cool specimens! The more you zoom in, the more detail you see! <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/mapview/>



Did you know???

Our club has MANY opportunities to be involved. Not only can you be on the board, but there are a lot of Committees and Sub-Committees.

We have newly created a Nominating Committee who has been tasked with finding fabulous folks like YOU to bring fresh ideas to the board and Committees. If you are interested in learning more, please reach out to CH Falstad, Rudy Silich, or Rhonda Gehringer.

If you are interested in learning more, please get with one of the committee members and hear what a difference you could make.

THANK YOU to **EVERYONE** who placed road signs for the show!

If you placed road signs and have not yet returned them to Linda Winkleman, please bring them to the October or November meetings. Unless you have spoken with Linda directly, she would like to get them all stored away for next year.



Pictures are worth a thousand words..or more
Our Historian, Alex, is looking for any pictures that you have taken during the 2025 year that we can save to use on our website or in future Conglomerates. Please email them to her at historian@tulipcity.org

Also, if you have any printed Conglomerates from the past, please contact Alex as she is hunting some down so we can have a more complete history.

ALL ABOUT OPALS

What Does an Opal Symbolize?

Opals evoke passion, linked to desire, seduction, and freeing inhibitions while inspiring love. They aid in attracting partners, boosting appeal, and nurturing relationships.

Opal History

In 1939, anthropologist Louis Leakey unearthed opal artifacts in Kenyan caves dating to 4000 BC - proof humans crafted opal jewelry over 6,000 years ago.

"Opal" derives from Sanskrit "upala" (precious stone), via Greek and Latin terms.

Early sources were Ethiopia, Eastern Europe, and Turkey. Rarity persisted until 1800s discoveries in Mexico and Australia. Today, Australia supplies 95% of precious opals.

Opal Patterns

Beyond colors, opals feature distinct patterns. No two are identical, but certain arrangements stand out and fetch admiration.

The harlequin pattern reigns supreme: large, uniform color patches resembling a mosaic or checkerboard. True harlequins are exceptionally rare and prized.

Other patterns worth noting include

Flagstone: Large color sections with random straight edges.

Straw: Thin, overlapping color ribbons.

Chinese Writing: Strips resembling Chinese characters.

Pinfire: Tiny color dots or flecks.

Floral: Flowery designs

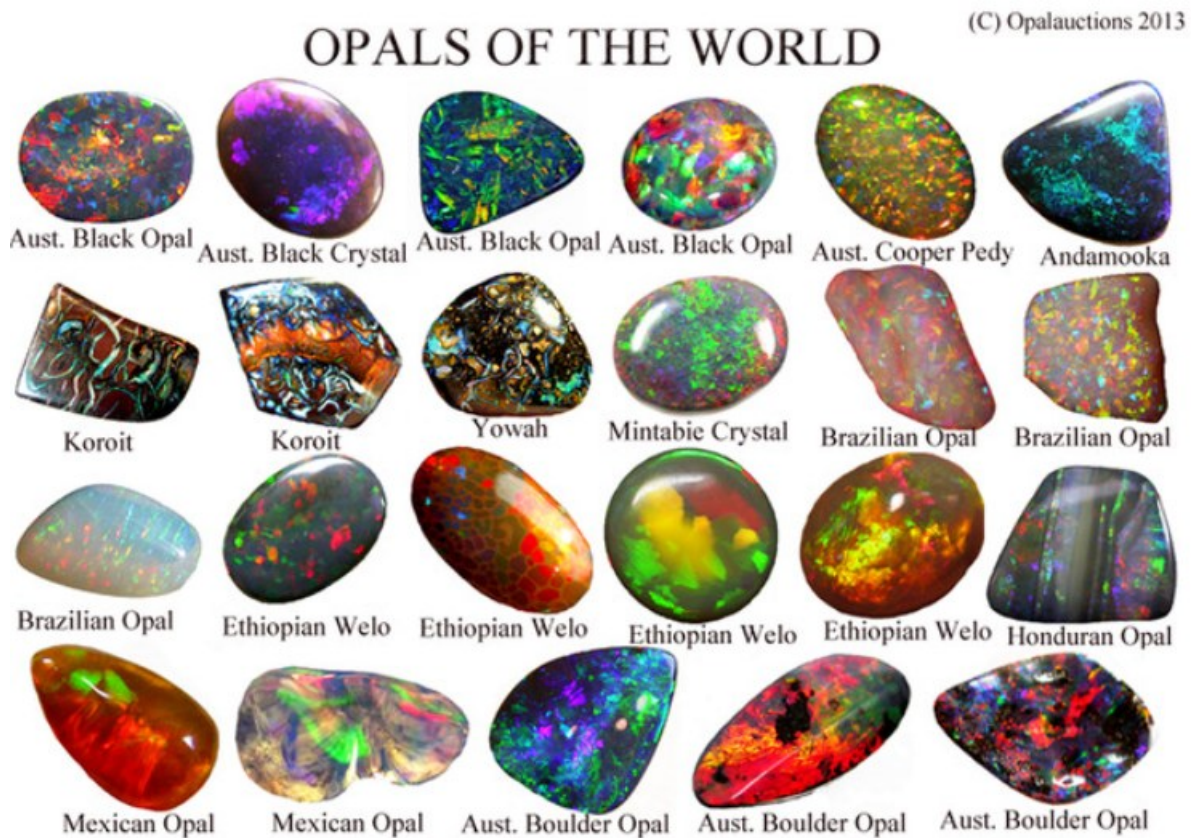
Broad Flash: Large flashing color sections as the stone moves.

With brilliant flashes of color, opals are one of my favorite stones. Mainly found in Australia, opals are also mined in Mexico, South America, Ethiopia, and the U.S.

Although gemologists do not grade opals, they are classified into 5 main categories:

1. **White or light opal:** Translucent to semi-translucent, with play-of-color against a white or light gray background color, called body-color.
2. **Black opal:** Translucent to opaque, with play-of-color against a black or other dark background.
3. **Fire opal:** Transparent to translucent, with brown, yellow, orange, or red body color. This material, which often doesn't show play-of-color, is also known as 'Mexican opal.'
4. **Boulder opal:** Translucent to opaque, with play-of-color against a light to dark background. Fragments of the surrounding rock, called matrix, become part of the finished gem.
5. **Crystal or water opal:** Transparent to semitransparent, with a clear background. This type shows exceptional play-of-color." (Source: GIA)

Energetically, opal is a stone of love and wisdom. In ancient times, Romans regarded opals as the most precious because of the play-of-color. Ancient Greeks believe it gave them powers of prophecy and protected them from disease.



Kreigh's Mineral Moment

Isometric (cubic) Crystals

The crystal form of a mineral is a visible clue to the fundamental atomic arrangement of the elements that make up a mineral. Knowing the crystal form of an unknown specimen gets you a long way down the path to identifying the mineral.

Our Mineral Study Group likes to learn about the science and practical uses of the minerals we study, but we really 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 (and doing some homework on its physical properties).

We do our homework on the science and come prepared to discuss the mineral (class or group) of the month, but we also dig through our collections and come with one or more specimens for everyone to handle. We really do learn from each other (and you have to share your specimens with others before they can be appreciated). Many of our specimens this month were provided by more than one person.

The concept behind our crystal class study theme was to have as many different minerals of a given class, to examine together, so we can learn to distinguish between them as we also learn to identify the class from multiple examples. Our group came up with a good collection of isometric/cubic habit minerals to share

We started with the nesosilicate Almandine, the sulfide Altaite, and the sulfate Alum-K. Yup, that is the same as found in your spice rack. It is also used as a flocculant in water purification. There is also a sodium variant.

We got back on track with the oxide Bixbyite, the halide Boleite, the oxide Carfarsite, and the toxic sulfide Coloradoite. We had cubic native Copper crystals, and cubic Diamonds. We had Fluorite with cubes from 1/4 inch to six inches (and twinned), and the oxide Franklinite.

Then it was time for the sulfide Galena to shine, followed by the nesosilicate Grossular, and generic Garnets. Everyone had samples of the halide Halite (yup, another common spice). We moved on to the nesosilicate Kimzeyite, the tectosilicate Lazurite, native Lead, the oxide Magnetite, and the carbonate Northupite.

We had crystals of native Platinum, the nesosilicate Pyrope, and the sulfides Pentlandite and Pyrite. We finished up with the sulfide Skutterudite, the tectosilicate Sodalite, and the oxides Spinel and Thorianite.

It is one thing to look at the pictures in the field books, but you get a much deeper appreciation when you can hold a specimen and look at it thru a lens (feel the heft, shine a bright light on it, etc.). And then look at another specimen of the same mineral (and maybe another). And then look at something else that is close but different. Some homework was done, and we learned a bit about the specimens we studied; some were self collected so there were stories to share. [Mindat.org](https://www.mindat.org) got a workout during the study session.

The next meeting of the West Michigan MWF Mineral Study Group will be held on Tuesday, November 11, 2025, from 7 pm to 8:30 pm, at the home of Kreigh Tomaszewski, [653 Burton St. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49507](https://www.google.com/maps/place/653+Burton+St,+SE,+Grand+Rapids,+MI+49507). We are going to study minerals that have an octahedral crystal form. Everyone should have a few octahedral minerals in their collection (cleaved fluorite counts for half credit) that they can bring to talk about and pass around, so there is no excuse for not participating.

We try to start (and end) on time; please do not arrive more than 20 minutes early (and everyone gets thrown out at 9). All West Michigan rockhounds are invited to attend. Please look up a few facts about octahedral minerals, and bring some of the specimens from your collection. I hope you can join us as we learn about minerals from each other (and you are welcome even if you can't bring any specimens).



Our club is a non-profit 501c3 organization. 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 increase knowledge of minerals, rocks, gems, fossils, and the lapidary arts. The objectives of this club shall be promoted whenever possible, through family participation.

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 otherwise noted in the *TULIP CITY CONGLOMERATE*.

Our Junior Club welcomes and encourages young rockhounds and meets separately during the meeting.

To become a member, complete the form at www.tulipcity.org

Advertising rates for club members are: \$5 for business card size, \$10 for ¼ page, \$15 for ½ page, \$30 for full page. non-member rates are double. Make check payable To: TCG&M with ad copy to Editor.

Image: Black Opal

Image credit: <https://gem-a.com/gem-hub/understanding-precious-black-opal-and-its-properties/>

Tulip City Conglomerate
Megan Moore, Editor
Grand Rapids, MI 49505



Background photo is:
Drift wood that looks like a duck's head