



Tulip City Gem & Mineral Club **Conglomerate**

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

October 2020

Volume 53, Edition 10

From my Rockpile

YES! We are extremely lucky to live in Michigan. Having grown up in West Michigan, attending college in the Upper Peninsula, and returning back to the Great Lake State after 20 years working in the Metro-NYC area, I find the we are very fortunate to live here. And actually even though I did return home for vacations, I believe we really don't realize or are thankful for how much there is here.

Before the pandemic started, many of us were still too busy most days to "smell the roses". It's my experience that we don't truly take the time to enjoy what is around us. I enjoy and appreciate the sunsets, the waves crashing the beaches, the wildlife that visits my backyard, the uncountable starry nights and the amazing fall colors much more today than I did when I was younger. It always seem to me that the world around me just isn't the same without that piece of Michigan that is a permanent part of my life. I understand that many other regions of the U.S. has autumn colors that's part of their four seasons, star-filled nights, and lakes & rivers to enjoy, but I find that here in Michigan, ours is special and unduplicated anywhere else!

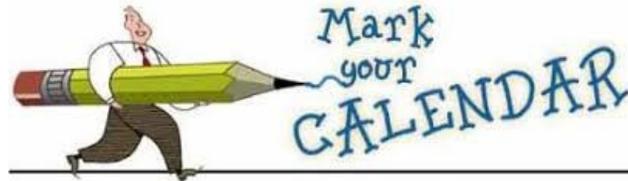
Among your stressful, busy and never-ending days, take a moment to drive to the beach or find a scenic lookout and soak in that which is why we call Michigan home. "Smell the Roses"

Stay healthy, be safe, and register to vote!!!

M.B. Larson



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



2020 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
kbrinks@hollandpublicschools.org

Field Trip Coordinator - Jon Mull
solace247@yahoo.com

Field Trip Coordinator - Bob Sinke
bobsinke@comcast.net

Historian - Betty Hoekstra
kbhoek@att.net

Jr. Club Coord. - Rick Smith
Hollandrsmith@gmail.com

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
rlplumert@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

Wednesday, 10/28/20

TCG&MC General Meeting for October is going ONLINE

We have decided that it is time to get everyone back together for a monthly meeting. Your Board has been meeting every month since this pandemic began using ZOOM, a video communications application using a cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, chat, and webinars. Weather is turning colder, and from all indications from our two summer General Meetings held outdoors, our member need to assemble and socialize. So, using the web address shown below, please JOIN US for a virtual General Meeting. It will be bring your own refreshments to the living room and enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow members.

Headlining our meeting will be a presentation by our own Jon Mull on their family trip to "Devil's Tower, The Badlands, Yellowstone, and The Tetons, with a couple of "rock-reational" stops". A synopsis can be found on the next page. Should be an enjoyable trip.

Can't wait to see everyone . . .

When

Wed Oct 28, 2020 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Where

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82982164988>

President Mike and Robin also visited the Badlands and the Black Hills this summer.



There is a current opening for a Newsletter Editor. Responsibilities include the creation of a monthly newsletter, attendance of club meetings, and a point of communications for the club.

Anyone interested in the position or in assisting in the duties, please speak with Michael B. Larson or Shari Luttikhuizen.

Open Position



2021 Board Election

Tis the season where your leadership is up to you to decide. Every November it is the role of the membership to choose the men and women that will guide our organization through the upcoming year. At right is shown a proposed slate of candidates. Nominations are still open and can be submitted to C.H. Falstad if you are interested to serve on the Board.

During the General Meeting in November, our by-laws requires our membership vote for the 2021 Board. Details are still being formulated; voting either online and/or by paper ballot. Stay tuned !

President	Mike Larson
Vice President	Shari Luttikhuizen
Treasure	Kurt Brinks
Secretary	Brenda Olson
Newsletter Editor	(open)
Membership	Christine Silich
Juniors	Linda Winkelmann (assisting Robin Kreun)
Field Trips	Jon Mull
Liaison	Rhonda Gehringer
Social Coordinator	Linda Plumert
Historian	Betty Hoekstra
Social media coordinator	Julia Sherwood
Member-at-large	Mary Johnson
Member-at-large	(open)
Past president	C.H. Falstad.



Mull Family Vacation

I'm sure we can all agree that 2020 has not been a great year for traditional vacations. Covid has stranded most of us with no prospects of "getting away." After a furlough of over two months my employment of over 25 years at Johnston Boiler ended in June with a permanent layoff. At that point things hadn't really begun to open up around here, but things were not so gloomy in Wyoming. I had expressed an interest in seeing the Tetons again and realized that I had never actually been inside the national park. The kids had been wanting to see Yellowstone as well. So in the second week of July we headed out to the South Dakota and Wyoming. We made our way to Devil's Tower, The Badlands, Yellowstone, and The Tetons, with a couple of "rock-reational" stops (a new phrase Becky started using on the trip) mixed in. I have photos and some video and some pins on the map to share. I will try to do the geology some justice as well, but just think of it as being dragged along on our family vacation ;) I even have a surreal video of a Yellowstone parking lot with almost no one in it. Join me if you like!

Juniors sifted Sapphire Gravel for Small Gems!

On Sat, Oct 10th at a grassy area in Holland's Kollen Park, TCGMC junior families used screens with assorted size mesh to find pastel-colored sapphires. Sapphires are the non-red Corundum crystals, see related article on the next page. The unwashed SW Montana gravel originated in El Dorado Bar "placer deposits" by a river near Helena MT. The Club ordered several packages from Montana Gems of Phillipsburg.



Nine kids from five families – plus the ten adults - enjoyed the sunny morning and worked on tarps with paper plates. None of the gravel was lost in the grass. It took some patience, but it was easy to see the roughly 6-sided, translucent Sapphire gems! Each scoop of gravel was like a lottery ticket but the small sapphires were jumbled in with clay, jaspers, quartz, hematites etc. Every junior went home with several gems-in-the-rough and all were pleased with their prizes.



Of course, part of the joy was "just getting out" with friends who love the outdoors and in finding treasures created within the earth. Erosion worked on the uplifted Montana mountain. Rain and gravity over eons "sluiced this gravel" in preparation for our gem discovery.



Thank you to Jon Mull for making this special event happen (and donating half of the gravel) and to Betty and Ken Hoekstra for their assistance with sifting tips in preparation for this program!

- Linda Winkelmann

On the Calendar:

10/28/20	TCG&MC General Meeting	Virtual / ZOOM
11/4/20	TCG&MC Board Meeting	Virtual / ZOOM
11/18/20	TCG&MC General Meeting	Virtual / ZOOM
12/2/20	TCG&MC Board Meeting	TBD

The Mineral corundum

Corundum is best known for its gem varieties, Ruby and Sapphire. Ruby and Sapphire are scientifically the same mineral, but just differ in color. Ruby is the red variety, and Sapphire is the variety that encompasses all other colors, although the most popular and valued color of Sapphire is blue. Sapphire is also only used to describe the gem variety; otherwise it is simply called Corundum.



Corundum is a very hard, tough, and stable mineral. For all practical purposes, it is the hardest mineral after Diamond, making it the second hardest mineral. It is also unaffected by acids and most environments. Translucent brown Corundum and Emery (Black, caused by mixture of Magnetite, Hematite, and Spinel) are the most common forms of Corundum. These are fairly common forms, and due to their great hardness and prevalence are the most favorable abrasives. The industrial term "emery" describing Corundum abrasives is derived from the variety Emery which is mined specifically for its use as an abrasive. Erosion may cause Emery to crumble and form sand, which are sometimes called "black sands."



Chemical Formula	Al_2O_3 (Aluminum oxide)
Color	Many colors, including blue, red, violet, pink, green, yellow, orange, gray, white, colorless, and black. Occasionally also multicolored or striped.
Streak	White
Hardness	9
Crystal System	Hexagonal

Did you Know?

Mammoth Cave near Cave City, Kentucky, is the world's longest cave. More than 367 miles (591 km) of passages have been mapped. To get an idea of how long Mammoth Cave is, you should consider that the second longest cave in the world, Optimisticeskay Cave, in the Ukrainskaya region of the C.I.S. (former Soviet Union), is only 143 miles (230 km) long.

Mammoth Cave was formed in Mississippian-age limestone rock. The cave is 379 feet (118 m) deep, and contains at least 5 levels of passages. The levels were formed in response to changes in the Ohio River during the late Tertiary and Quaternary Periods.

Rock&Gem

**Rockhounding and Clubs
Create Lifelong Connections**

<https://www.rockngem.com/rockhounding-and-clubs-create-lifelong-connections/>



October 14, 2020

By Jim Brace-Thompson

Indian Mounds Rock & Mineral Club has a juniors program that took on new life with 11-year-old Joan (Afton) Stoker. While 9-year-old Kreigh Tomaszewski looked on, Joan kept asking, “Mr. Pearl, what’s this rock?” But I’m getting ahead of myself. That was the 1960s, and there was no Indian Mounds Rock & Mineral Club, yet.

About now, you may be asking yourself, “Huh?” Trust me, and keep reading!

Returning to Roots

Every Saturday, as a youth, Joan attended the Grand Rapids Public Museum’s Rock Club in partnership with the Grand Rapids Gem & Mineral Society in Michigan. Geology activities in the morning, lunch, then lapidary lessons. Mary Jane Dockeray created the program while volunteers Les Pearl and Russ Girard oversaw the program. Joan soaked it in, becoming Junior Helper for the summer Nature Program. By age 15, she wasn’t just a helper; Joan was asked to teach the kids’ geology group! She, her friend Kreigh, and others also attended meetings of the Grand Rapids Gem & Mineral Society, without knowing what the future held.



A young Joan (Afton) Stoker at age 13, engaged in a lapidary lesson via the GRPM and the Grand Rapids Gem & Mineral Society. (photo courtesy of Joan Stoker)

Fast forward several years and as an adult, Joan, with her husband Craig, went on to a career with the Salvation Army. However, working with kids and rocks remained a thread throughout her life as she continued to teach summer camps, worked with scouts, helped with home-school workshops, and Science Olympiads. Upon retiring, Joan returned to her hometown. By that time, the Grand Rapids Gem & Mineral Society had dissolved, but a new club had taken its place: Indian Mounds Rock & Mineral Club (IMRMC).

IMRMC had long served children with school visits, show activities, and field trips, but starting in 2016, they kicked it up a notch. Just like when she was a teenager, Joan was back teaching rocks to kids, while serving as the club’s juniors coordinator. As it turned

out, her childhood friend from way back when, Kreigh Tomaszewski, was president of the club and the two reconnected.

Joan, Kreigh, and fellow members have put together quite the juniors program. Not only do kids participate in adult events like silent auctions and Best-of-Year contests (including Most Unusual Specimen and Ugliest Rock), but kids also enjoy separate activities that, since 2016, have focused on the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies Future Rockhounds of America Badge Program.

Evolving Juniors

The club started with 16 kids, but that number quickly doubled. Joan customizes the program each month, with binders for participants and folders, as well as offering learning packs with rock samples. Joan also celebrates the junior club members' successes and discoveries by reporting the happenings in the club newsletter.

Routinely, during summer months, the club hosts events such as fossil hunts, rock crafts, and a metal detector hunt. I can attest personally just how much fun they have. While visiting my son's family in Michigan, Joan invited us to participate in a fossil-collecting trip to a quarry in Rogers City, Michigan. We saw a wall of limestone blasted, witnessed a "mixing bowl" crush truckloads of boulders, and collected beautiful fossils.

Fossils were also a theme when the group met Michigan's Joseph "PaleoJoe" Kchodl, who has written a book about Michigan fossils. Fun is further enjoyed as junior members participate in the club's annual show, entering displays and helping at children's tables.

Kreigh proudly notes how Joan has created a community environment, bringing kids and adults together in ways that are fun and meaningful. Joan herself says the hobby is all about "DISCOVERING for the rest of your life," Adding, "Always ask why, how, where?" She is quick to thank her parents, who created a lifelong love of science for their rock-loving daughter, and she is thankful to parents of current IMRMC juniors who similarly support their rock-loving kids and teens.

If you, too, would like to embark on a journey of discovery that includes fun and friendships that might last a lifetime, look for a rock club near you.



Joan Stoker (far right, in black) and today's Indian Mounds Rock & Mineral Club juniors. (photo courtesy of Joan Stoker)

Advertising rates for club members are: \$5 for business card size, \$10 for $\frac{1}{4}$ page, \$15 for $\frac{1}{2}$ 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



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.

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

