

St. Croix Rockhounds  
Doug Olson, Editor  
211 Interlachen Way  
Stillwater, MN 55082



## First Class

# March, 2006

Please send exchange bulletins to:

Doug Olson, Editor  
211 Interlachen Way  
Stillwater, MN 55082

**March 21<sup>st</sup>** - Is this month's meeting date.

***The program: The "Other" Lake Superior Agates***



St. Croix Rockhound's

# LEAVERITE NEWS

Vol. 31, Issue 3; March, 2006

Member of:



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# ST.CROIX ROCKHOUNDS

MEETINGS: Club meetings are held the third TUESDAY of each month, at Stonebridge Elementary School on W. Elm. St. in Stillwater, MN at 7:15 P.M.. Everyone is welcome.

MEMBERSHIP: Full membership for a single person over 16 is \$7.50 per year. Family membership is \$10.50 per year.

## OFFICERS:

President	Brad Bonse	(651) 439-6832
Vice President	Vic Martinsen	(715) 247-3700
Secretary	Doug Olson	(651) 430-9035
Treasurer	Lin Rawlings	(651) 735-4691
Program Committee	Mark Rasmussen	(651) 275-0607
	Bill Cordua	(715) 425-9544
	Victor Martinson	(715) 247-3700
Show Committee	Bill Cordua	(715) 425-9544
Refreshments	Freya Kask	(651) 777-6371
Librarian	June Young	(651) 429-3887
Historian	John Parsons	(651) 257-2724
Sunshine Committee	Marie Newlander MN	(651) 439-7809
Tour Director	Susan Dustin	(651) 430-3933
Liaison Officer	Freya Kask	(651) 777-6371
Newsletter Editor	Doug Olson	(651) 430-9035

The purpose of our organization is to bring together rock and mineral enthusiasts on a regular basis through membership and through pooling of individual knowledge, talents and skills, to improve the lapidary skills of participating members. Affiliation: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies.

## COMING UP!

**March 21<sup>st</sup>:** St. Croix Rockhounds club meeting will be at the Stonebridge Elementary School. The Program will be *The "Other" Lake Superior Agates* a CD presentation of the book by John Marshall.

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

**March 21<sup>st</sup>:** St. Croix Rockhounds club meeting will be at the Stonebridge Elementary School

**April 8<sup>th</sup>:** St. Croix Rockhounds club show at the Valley Creek Mall in Woodbury, MN

**April 18<sup>th</sup>:** St. Croix Rockhounds club meeting will be at the Stonebridge Elementary School

**April 29<sup>th</sup>:** Cuyuna Agate & Mineral Show at Westside church, Hwy 210, Aitkin, MN. For info call Kat Thomas 218-678-3298 or e-mail: katmoose@emily.net

**May 19-21<sup>st</sup>:** Midwest Federation convention and show in Southgate< MI

**June 9-10<sup>th</sup>:** California Federation convention and show in Angels Camp, CA hosted by the Calaveras Gem & Mineral Society

**June 9-11<sup>th</sup>:** Rocky Mountain Federation convention and show in Stillwater, OK hosted by the Stillwater Mineral & Gem Society

**July 14-16<sup>th</sup>:** Northwest Federation convention and show in Longview, WA hosted by the Southern Washington Mineralogical Society and the Mt. Hood Rock Club

**August:** South Central Federation convention and show in Bossier City, LA

**August 14-20<sup>th</sup>:** Southeast Federation convention and show in Nashville TN

**November 18-19<sup>th</sup>:** Eastern Federation convention and show in West Palm Beach, FL hosted by the Gem & Mineral Society of Palm Beaches, Inc.

# Minutes of the Saint Croix RockHounds

February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005

The meeting was **called to order** at 7:15 by president Brad Bonse.

Brad congratulated the **Find of the Year winners**. A correction was announced: Earl Kask had won the Laker class and not Lin Rawlings.

The **treasurer's report** was read and approved.

**Programs chairman** Bill Cordua reported that the spring show was still planned for April 8<sup>th</sup>. The sign-up sheet is available for presenters. Fliers will begin to be distributed at the Anoka Club show on February 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Refreshments** were provided by June Shalander and Elaine Martinsen

Three **guests** were present.

**Tours to South Dakota and Montana** are being planned by Sue Dustin. Sue was not present to provide information.

There was discussion on the **disposition of the club library** but no decision was made.

Brad stated that a library that he had contacted was interested in receiving club newsletters. A **motion was made and passed** for the club fund publication and mailing of the newsletter to non profit groups. – Name and addresses can be provided to Lin or Doug.

**Door prizes** were won by June Young, Catherine Sanders, Ron Lewis, Freya Kask, Reuben Shalander, and Mark Rasmussen

St. Croix Rockhound/MidWest Federation **membership cards** were sign by Brad Bonse for any member wanting one. Member who were not present can request a membership card from Lin Rawlings at a future meeting or by mail. The Certificate of Liability Insurance is not yet available.

The **meeting was adjourned** at 7:40

**Minutes** submitted by Lin Rawlings, secretary pro-tem

# Celebrate!

If you can picture the cerulean blue waters of the Mediterranean, you will understand why the birthstone for March is named Aquamarine. Derived from the Roman word "Aqua," meaning water, and "mare," meaning sea, this pale blue gem does indeed resemble the color of seawater. The ancient Romans believed that the Aquamarine was sacred to Neptune, the god of the sea, having fallen from the jewel boxes of sirens and washed onto shore. Early sailors wore aquamarine talismans, engraved with the likeness of Neptune, as protection against dangers at sea.

The association with water led to the belief that the Aquamarine was particularly powerful when immersed. Water in which this gemstone had been submerged was used in ancient times to heal a variety of illnesses of the heart, liver, stomach, mouth and throat. Aquamarines were also used to reverse poisoning and to aid in fortune telling.

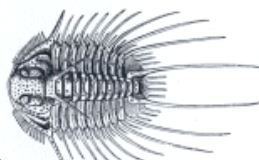
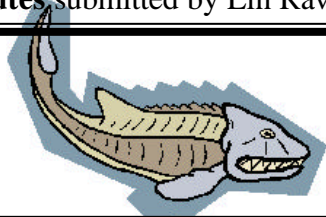
## March Birthdays:

Avis Klinkhammer 4<sup>th</sup>  
John Parsons 14<sup>th</sup>  
Sandy Parsons 18<sup>th</sup>  
Mark Rasmussen 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Doug Olson 27<sup>th</sup>  
Rodney Harvey 31<sup>st</sup>

**March Anniversaries:** None

Those who wish to receive the **Leaverite News** via e-mail can send an e-mail to the editor: [doug@implan.com](mailto:doug@implan.com). If you should later decide you prefer hard copy, send another e-mail so stating.

*If paying dues by mail, send to treasurer:*  
**Lin Rawlings**  
**850 Woodduck Rd**  
**Woodbury, MN 55125**



If you have news - good or bad - please call Marie at (651) 439-7809.

# Tucson Talk – Definitions

By George Campbell *from Ososoft Mineral via CFMS 2/06*

- Keystone: 1/2 the price marked. The real retail price. Wholesale is less in most cases, as long as you buy in flat quantities.
- Double Keystone: 1/4 the price marked. This stuff has been in the dealer's stock for years and hasn't sold, despite being at Tucson for two decades. But....look closely at this stuff...the dealer hasn't looked at it for years and there may be a Sleeper(see below) in there.
- Wholesale: The price everyone but you is paying for the same specimens.
- Flat: How my wallet looks after returning from Tucson. Also a flat cardboard box, roughly 12"x18" in size, more or less full of specimens, generally boxed and labeled.
- Mexican Flat: A flat with no boxes....each specimen wrapped in very interesting foreign-language newspapers you can read after you get home. NOTE: The newspaper also hides the dings, bruises, and cracks. (see below)
- Killer Specimen: One you can't afford
- Sleeper: That elusive specimen in the flat, which the seller missed. As in a Powellite specimen in a flat of cheap Indian zeolites.
- Keeper: A specimen so overpriced that the dealer will be taking it home.
- Flat Price: How much you pay for the entire flat. Generally, there's one specimen in there that makes the whole flat look good.
- NFS: Not for sale. But everything's for sale.
- Kid Rocks: Cheap specimens kept on hand so everyone buys <>
- New Find: The dealer just found this flat of specimens in the back of the storage locker just before the show.
- Type Locality: Where you wish the specimen you're looking at came from.
- Gemmy: You can see some light through the crystal, as long as the light is a halogen lamp.
- Cutting Rough: Oops...the hydraulic trimmer worked a little too well.
- Museum Specimen: A specimen too large to fit in any cabinet affordable by a collector. Double Keystone on this.
- Clearance Specimens: Buy these or they'll be in the motel dumpster when the show's over.
- Rare Species: Anything not available in at least 50% of the rooms at the show.
- Mexico: The default locality for any specimen which has an unknown locality (See also: Pakistan) (See also: Russia)

## Wax -Strange Mineral Tales

A long time ago, if you wanted a candle, you went to a beekeeper. His wax and your wick made a candle. In modern times, candles are mass produced from paraffin, which is a commercially refined product of petroleum. What is not widely known is that wax can also be mined!

There are very few places where wax has been mined on a commercial basis, because of the quantities available. A location in Austria was the only place where wax was being mined in the last century, until a discovery was made at Soldier Summit, Utah.

The wax is related to petroleum and is called ozokerite. It is apparently a high-quality form of natural paraffin, developed from the residue of crude oil percolating through fissures in rocks. Compared to beeswax and man-made paraffin, its melting point is much greater (between 155 and 190 degrees). Ozokerite was sometimes found in large veins that were almost 100% pure. The majority, however, is found in a brecciated form, bound up with sandstone and shale. Once mined, it must be crushed, then dumped into tanks of boiling water, where the wax is skimmed and pored into molds. The "wax belt" of ozokerite covers an area of about 12 miles in Utah. Large tailing piles from the mining operation of the American Ozokerite Co. are strewn alongside U.S. 50 near Soldier Summit.

*from Opal Express, 4/03 via Diablo Diggin's, 4/05 via Stoney Statements 10/2005*

# The Truth About Tiger's Eye is Now Told by Art Smith,

*Houston Gem & Mineral Society via the Pineywoods Rooter 1/05 via Backbender's Gazette 11/03 via Fractured Agate 3/05*

I am writing to correct what I have told many people including club member concerning what I thought was the composition of tiger's eye. Up until recently, it was believed that tiger's eye was a pseudomorph of chalcedony (a cryptocrystalline form of quartz) that had replaced (pseudomorphed) crocidolite fibers. The characteristic chatoyancy (shimmering effect) was believed to be caused by tubes of quartz that replaced crocidolite. Tiger's eye occurs in several areas of the world, but most of the commercial material comes from South Africa.

Recently, two researchers, Peter Heaney and Donald Fisher, from Penn State University initially studied tiger's eye to learn about pseudomorphism. What they apparently discovered is quite surprising. First, they say that it is not the chalcedony variety of quartz that is in tiger's eye but normal clear crystalline quartz. Then they say that the crocidolite fibers are not pseudomorphed but are still present and encapsulated in the quartz. It is the encapsulated crocidolite that gives the characteristic chatoyancy to tiger's eye. Note that the two references listed at the end this are secondary references that neither gives a specific reference of an article or paper by the original researchers. I am assuming that the researchers looked at enough samples so that their findings are valid and apply to all South African tiger's eye as the two referenced articles imply. I do not know if this applies to other occurrences of tiger's eye not in South Africa.

Many people have asked me if tiger's eye is safe to work with and wear as jewelry because crocidolite is a form of asbestos. I always said no problem because pseudomorph means that the material (crocidolite) was completely replaced and so was completely absent. Now with it known to still be present in tiger's eye, what is the story?

Briefly, there are two common types of asbestos, crocidolite, a fibrous variety of riebeckite, an amphibole and chrysotile, now called clinichrysotile that is much softer than the riebeckite variety crocidolite.

Breathing a lot of dust of both types of asbestos is bad for your lungs, but the harder riebeckite variety fibers are more deadly and when breathed in can actually stick to the lung lining and more readily promote cancer. So is this crocidolite variety of riebeckite encapsulated in quartz dangerous to work with and cut and polish for jewelry? Very doubtful. Since most cutting and polishing is done with lubricants, there is seldom any dust created, and since the crocidolite is completely encapsulated by the quartz, it should be perfectly safe to wear as jewelry. If there were a tendency of the crocidolite fibers to separate from the encapsulating quartz, we would have known long ago that tiger's eye was not a pseudomorph.

Another question arises concerning its origin. Since it is now known not to be a replacement deposit, it is considered a vein deposit. No doubt the crocidolite fibers formed first in an open fracture or fissure that was later completely filled by quartz, thus encapsulating the riebeckite variety crocidolite fibers into solid veins of tiger's eye.

Now, how should the specimens of tiger's eye be labeled when displayed? Obviously it cannot be considered a pseudomorph of crystalline quartz or chalcedony after crocidolite because it is still there. Using the correct minerals, it probably should be labeled as quartz with riebeckite inclusions, or quartz with riebeckite variety asbestos inclusions. However, as lapidary material it could be labeled as any of the above or just as quartz with crocidolite inclusions.

## References:

- Sicree, A.A. 2003 Mineralogy FAQs: What is Tiger's Eye? *Friends of Mineralogy Newsletter* 33(2):1  
Sasso, Anne 2003 A Second Look at Tiger's Eye. *Colored Stone* 16(4):36

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**Now you know:** There's no Betty Rubble in Flintstones Chewables Vitamins.

A "jiffy" is an actual unit of time for 1/100<sup>th</sup> of a second. *from Jim Pape via Hidden Treasures 02/06*

**False Fossil Oddities** - Dendrites are perhaps the most common geologic oddity which resembles a tiny fern frond or colony of algae. The term "dendritic" refers to the branching figure resembling a fern frond, branch or tree. They are usually formed in thin, hard-bedded shales and limestones. Concentrations of the manganese mineral called pyrolusite percolate into the fissures of shale and limestone, leaving behind a residue which forms the dendritic patterns. *via Ghost Sheet, 11/96 via CFMS 01/06*

**Did you know?** Vulcanian eruptions are named for Vulcano, one of the Aeolian Islands north of Sicily. In fact, the word volcano itself comes from this island, home to the Greek god of fire, Hephaestus (called Vulcan by the Romans). *from Stoney Statements 02/06.*

**Heat Treating Agates:** Some agates respond well to heat-treating to restore colors. For example, many Lake Superior agates have lost their vivid reds and oranges. The structures are intact but the color has faded to almost uniform light tans and browns. Heating them restores much of their original vibrancy. Some other stones that especially benefit are Brazilian agate and carnelian. To treat, place a layer of clean sand or kitty litter ½ inch deep in a Pyrex dish. Place a layer of rocks/slabs in the dish. Cover thinly with sand or kitty litter. Repeat until all rocks are used. Place in oven at lowest setting (150 degrees) for two hours. This drives out the moisture that could cause the stones to explode, then raise the temperature 50 degrees every ½ hour until 500 degrees are reached. Leave at 500 for two hours then turn off oven to let cool, preferably overnight... NO PEEKING! Allow container to cool completely to room temperature before opening the oven door. This process takes approximately 10 hours. *from the Rolling Stones Beacon 1/06 via Rock Chips 2/06*

**Caution:** Never put any rock in a microwave oven! All rocks contain some water which will make them explode when heated in a microwave oven. *from the Coral Geode 12/02 via Rock Chips 2/06*

**Glass specimen covers:** or what to do with unused wine glasses. Wouldn't it be nice to get "cheap" clear glass covers for your valuable crystals, minerals, etc. without having a custom made glass cover? Try this one out. At a flea market or yard sale, (or your friendly Dollar Tree store) pick up a few odd wine glasses, large or small, with no patterns etched on them. With your trim saw, cut the stem off as close to the base of the globe as possible. Polish the goblet end to a glass finish, place over your specimen and there you are. No more dust on them. Also, looking down through the cut end magnifies whatever you have under it. The stem can be polished flat to mount anything else you fancy. One word of advice though, don't get caught in you wife's china cabinet! *from Rockhound Ramblings 2/06 via Rock Chips 3/06*

**The ideal tumbling load** is slightly less than 3/4 full. Use only enough water to fill the voids between the stones with no more than 1/8 of an inch over the top of the stones. Use only enough abrasive to cover the surface areas of the stones. This usually takes about one pound of #100 grit for each 8 pounds of rock. This may even be further reduced as the #400 and #600 grit is used, as the finer particles possess more surface area and 3/4 pound of grit with 8 pounds of rock is usually sufficient. *from the Rockpile via the Coral Geode 4/98 via Ventura Gem 7/98*

**If you put vaseline** around the rim of your tumbler before bolting on the lid, you will get a tighter seal and an easily removable lid. You can do the same on a tube of epoxy; the cap will not stick or cause trouble when you want to use the epoxy again. *from Tumbler via The Coral Geode 4/98 via Ventura Gem 7/98*

**Tip for tumblers:** If you are lacking tumbler pellets for your final polish, try using a package or two of rubber bands available at most stores. They work well and can be reused. *from Rear Trunk via The Coral Geode 4/98 via Ventura Gem 7/98*

**There are two words** in the English language that have all five vowels in order: "abstemious" and "facetious." *from Jim Pape via Hidden Treasures 2/06*