

# Rough 'n Tumbled Times



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**Official Publication for the Northwest Wisconsin Gem & Mineral Society**

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**Our regularly scheduled meeting would have been July 16.**

**Newsletters are off schedule this year, just like all other activities.**

Business Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, March – November

<http://www.cameronamericanlegion.org/rockclub.html>



phillemartin.info



## The President's Pen...

### President's Message for July 2020

Greetings fellow Rock Hounds,

I hope this finds you healthy and staying safe from the covid 19 virus, and other stuff too. As we complete our 5th month of covid precautions I think it is safe to say that we are all tired of it. Yes, face masks are an annoyance, but it's still our best defence / offence from catching and spreading the virus. Limiting our social interactions are very tough on us. I miss seeing all of you. Hopefully an affective vaccine is within reach. OK, enough of that.

I hope you have had a chance to visit our Facebook page. Adding some comments and photos would help entertain us all. If you've been out in the field collecting and have something to share, you can either send it to me or put it on our page. I did add a photo that I took of comet Neowise. Did anyone else see it?

I've been out collecting in my local field. No major finds yet, and now the soybeans are getting too big to see the ground well enough. I'll have to wait until fall when the field is harvested.

This month I've chosen to look back into our old newsletters and have picked a piece to revisit from John Park in 2007 about how to become a Rock Hound. Enjoy. (Thanks again John)

Stay well and as always Peace,  
Dave

### **HOW TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL ROCKHOUND IN THREE EASY LESSONS**

By John Park

#### **Lesson 1**

The first stage in becoming a Rock hound of any kind is self-evaluation. Just how much natural talent for collecting do you have?

The best way I know to judge this is for you to take a quick trip through your den or office and then out the door and run through your garage. This should take about three or four minutes, unless you are a natural collector, in which case you are still trying to get out of (or perhaps into) your office.

Even if you are a very tidy and organize collector, you could not just walk through the room without pausing to rearrange, fondle, or at least admire some of the accumulation of whatever you have amassed so far. If this is where you are at the time in self-evaluation, forget the garage part. You may not have noticed, but you can't get into your garage anymore and opening the overhead door quickly might not be a good idea, and may even be dangerous

because of falling rocks. In any case, congratulations, you are a natural born rock hound collector. Of course, it is possible that you are just a messy slob in need of some serious help.

## **Lesson 2**

Read everything you can get your hands on that focuses on the area of rock collecting you think you might want to pursue. There are many areas of rock collecting including: agates, minerals, fossils, artifacts, gemstones, lapidary or whatever. For some of these areas, there is a very limited amount of research material available. If you are in your late fifties or older, this isn't a problem, because you can read the same material over and over, and it is fresh and exciting each time. Sometimes you even forget you have a particular book and buy a second or even a third copy. When you finish reading it and go to file it away with the rest of your research material, you realize you have what collectors call "a collection" of the same book. Collecting just seems to run in some people's veins.

There are a lot of good rock books on the market that deal with rocks in general. I think it's a good idea to look up your better rocks in several books by different authors to compare information and maybe values. This will give you a more complete and accurate evaluation of that special rock.

Some of the more generalized rock books are good to study if you really haven't figured which area of collecting you want to focus on. The more established way of figuring this out however is to collect everything that is about rocks and then figure out later what area you like best. By later, I mean when all your money is gone and you have to sell some of what you bought so you can keep buying the rocks you absolutely have to have. We call this rock swapping, and there are many rock clubs organized to help you with that

You can find rocks in nature. Just spend a few hours out in the hot sun walking a few miles. Pick up rocks and carry them back home. Later, you will find the same rock being sold on the corner, which naturally you purchase for just a few dollars a pound. It's OK, because you needed the exercise.

Any of these ways of choosing your area of collecting work are just fine. Many collectors do it all at the same time; read all the books available, buy every rock that comes along, and find all the rocks they can in the field. Financially, it doesn't matter much, except that you will begin rock swapping sooner.

## **Lesson 3**

Get some serious help. I'm talking "pickers" here. Real friends that think your only purpose in life is to write them checks for the rocks they find for you. The reason they think this is because when they call and tell you they found some really nice stuff. Your only purpose in life to write them a check for whatever they have found for you. There are other some other things in life that are more important than your rock hound collection, but when they call, nothing else of importance even seems to come to mind. I have even, on occasion stopped to check out a source on the way to a funeral. My spouse was with and never seemed to indicate that this was unusual behavior for the collector's spouse, so it must be OK. I suspect some of us have more natural collecting talent than others.

Get to know the rock dealers in your area. If asked for your opinion on a rock they are offering for sale, give them an honest answer, even if you are interested in purchasing it. Your honesty might cost you a little in the short run, but you will certainly get a better shot at whatever they find down the road, and probably for better prices than a customer they haven't developed a friendly working relationship with. I've become a picker for other rock hounds and the dealer will keep my cost at a level that enables me to make a small profit. They benefit by turning over merchandise quickly and don't have to worry about unknowingly selling a valuable rock for peanuts. The important thing is that everyone can make a buck along this rock's journey to its new collection home, where it is loved and cared for. Gee, that almost brings tears to my eyes, kind of like a "Lassie Come Home" movie.

### **The Exciting Conclusion**

Rock clubs, such as the Northwest Wisconsin Gem and Mineral Society or the Indianhead Gem and Mineral Society, or any of the great clubs across the country come into play here. They are like Alcoholics Anonymous for rock hounds, except they help you stay addicted. The clubs are full of people, each collecting in their own little specialty area. Of course, these areas often overlap, but that just gives us a little heated competition that helps keep us sharp and alert and increases rock values.

It constantly amazes me when another club member sells me a really nice rock which fits my collection. Apparently they have little interest in it, but it is something I really want. They probably bought it at a good price just to turn it over, or maybe saw it somewhere and knew I would want it. We have a great time buying, selling and trading to build up our collections. Rock clubs also make available to us all the combined knowledge and expertise of members, along with the fellowship of people with common interests.

### **Lesson 4**

Learn to say NO! I have absolutely no insight into this lesson, but my spouse says it's important, so I'll include it here. Well, enough about that, there were only supposed to be three lessons.

(The idea for this, John Park Sr. found in the North Star Blade Club's newsletter, and was originally written by David Nelson. I guess if the shoe fits, wear it!)

***1961 – 2020 OUR CLUB IS 59 YEARS OLD!!***



**OUR SUNSHINE PERSON:**

**Laura Finley**

If you know anyone that has been ill or could use some sunshine in their lives – please contact us.

**MEETING TIME -- 7:30 p.m. -- During the adult meeting**

Dirt



Devils

**Dirt Devils Chairpersons:**

**Kris Martin, Joyce Jacobson**

**If there will be children attending, please let us know BEFORE the day of the meeting.**

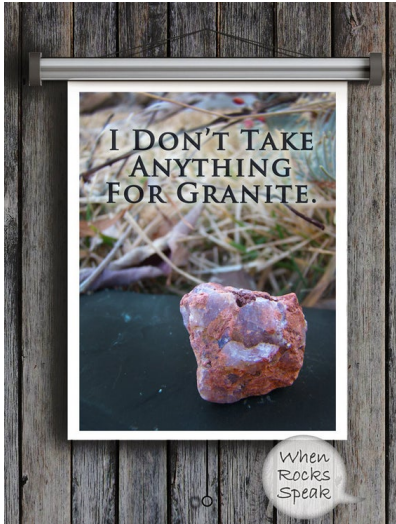
**For further information contact** Kris at [kristine.e.martin@hotmail.com](mailto:kristine.e.martin@hotmail.com)

Message from editor:

Here we are, only 4 months into the COVID-19 pandemic. Who would have known that our entire year would be so interrupted? Definitely not me, I don't know much about viruses; I guess no one does really as it is a Novel virus. I naively thought the virus would run its course in the spring and go away during the hot summer months--wrong!

The stay safer at home recommendations have kept us at home, mowing the grass, working in the garden, and sorting through items in our house and storage building. We have been watching several orioles and hummingbirds at our feeders. They sure can drink a lot of nectar and eat a lot of jelly.

Hopefully you have had extra opportunities to get out looking for rocks this year as most festivals and shows have been cancelled. I do miss the gem and mineral shows. The weather has been alternating this year with stretches of dry weather, hot weather, wet/stormy weather. Stay safe.



from Rock Humor Geology

***PLEASE PAY YOUR 2020 DUES NOW  
THANK YOU.***

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION – pass to anyone that might join**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ PH \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**(CHILDREN ARE FREE WITH EACH PAID MEMBERSHIP)**

**Send \$8 for each adult member to:**

**Roy Wickman, 1127 7<sup>th</sup> St, Almena, WI 54805**

