

"God Bless
America"



THE STREAKPLATE

NORTHERN BERKSHIRE MINERAL CLUB
North Adams, Massachusetts

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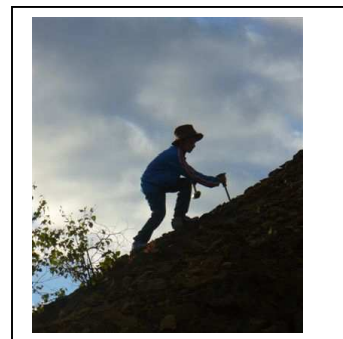
The next meeting of the Northern Berkshire Mineral Club will be:

DATE: Sunday, March 21, 2010 **TIME :** 2:00PM

LOCATION: The Community Room at the Spring Park Apartments,
45 Spring St., North Adams

PROGRAM: The ANNUAL AUCTION!!

This is a great time for kids (and adults) to pick up reasonably priced gems and minerals to add to their collections!! For those of you who are updating your collections, have unwanted specimens, or have multiple items that you don't need, please consider bringing them to donate to the auction! Items such as books, magazines and other fossil & mineral related items can also be donated, as well as non-mineral related items. All proceeds benefit the club, so PLEASE try to bring something to donate!



Tyler Ethier climbing a pile of tailings at the end of a long day of rockhounding.

REFRESHMENTS: Refreshment will be provided by Larry Michon of North Adams and Cheryl LeClair of Williamstown

Letter to the Editor: *A letter from Betty Kelley, original and life-time member of the Northern Berkshire Mineral Club:*

I've been away too long so I'm coming back. There are good things going on here like interesting programs, fun collecting trips and a great yearly show, but this is not enough-something is needed.

This club belongs to you, our members. I understand we have approximately 55 members and yet only a handful volunteer. We need help from each and every one of you. I want to see you running for office in the next election or volunteering to help the show committee wherever they need it, or plan a program for one of our monthly meetings, or write something for our monthly bulletin- the younger members should contribute to this even if it is only one line or maybe an original poem.

I think every one of us needs to be kept up to date on what is happening at our club. I'll do what I can to put more information in our monthly bulletin. If there is something you would like to hear, let us know. I'm going to make our monthly meetings more interesting to the younger members. I want you to help with this by bringing "Bragging Rocks" to club meetings. Let's work together and make this a club we can brag about.

Betty is interested in improving the Club and would like your comments and suggestions. Please complete the questionnaire on page 4 and return to her by mail or at an upcoming meeting

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COMMITTEES**Programs:**

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Vice President, 413-663-8430

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*Amy Feld, Cheryl Gasperetti, Jim Groves,
Cheryl LeClaire, Bob Michaels, and Larry
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Lisa A. St. Cyr, 413-664-0750
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“The Club” was founded in 1959. The purpose of the club is to develop and educate students, the community, and our members in the field of mineralogy, including the formation of rocks and minerals, the collection of minerals, their identification and display, and in the lapidary art of cutting, polishing and faceting; and to serve the educational needs of the communities in which club members live.

...from the Constitution of The Northern Berkshire Mineral Club

After the April Streakplate I will be resigning as the Editor. Anyone wishing to volunteer for this position should contact me or Dan Washburn. Thank you, Lisa

Upcoming Field Trip... Lafarge Quarry

Dan Washburn, our Club President, has started a dialogue with the folks at Lafarge Quarry in Ravena, Albany County, New York. He has been working toward setting up a field trip to this large working quarry. I am announcing this to allow interested members to start accumulating required equipment for this trip. These items are MANDATORY per the guidelines of this business. These are required items and non-negotiable. If you show up without all of these items you will not be allowed in.

Items needed are: safety glasses, safety shoes (workboots at the very least), high visibility vest either orange or chartreuse, gloves and a hard hat. Other items that will be useful include heavy hammers (sledge hammer, hand sledge, etc), and heavy bars.

Lafarge Quarry is an active limestone quarry. A trip to this location will be an eye-opener for those who have never been in a large quarry. The following minerals can be found there: quartz, pyrite, calcite, and quite pretty calcite coated with pyrite crystals. Please look up the location *Lafarge* on mindat.com for details and photos of these materials.

Please note that the appropriateness of this trip for children is still being determined. We are shooting for April or May for this trip, so please start gathering the required items if you are interested in this trip. More information to follow when it becomes available.

Upcoming.....April Program

The April 18th meeting will have a 2-part program. The first part will be a discussion of possible options for upcoming field trips. Your input will be appreciated. Bob will bring material from some of the locations to give you an idea of what is available.

The 2nd half will be a program on fluorescent minerals presented by Bob Michaels. Fluorescent minerals respond differently to short and longwave ultraviolet light. A variety of minerals will be available for your viewing pleasure, and members are asked to bring any mineral specimens that they think may be fluorescent.

As the Upcoming Field Trip Season Approaches.....

Field Trip Etiquette

- Be considerate, show good manners, and be on time. Give Bob your cell number in case you get separated from the group.
- Make car pool arrangements ahead of time if possible and have a tank full of gas before we gather.
- Offer money for gas if car-pooling. In convoy driving, please watch the car ahead and behind you.
- Pay your own way. Most trips are free, but if there is a fee it will be noted in the field trip description.
- Follow the instructions of the Field Trip Leader. Wait for the Field Trip Leader and don't go anywhere until the leader gives the okay. Remember, the leader has arranged the trip, but is not responsible for your trespassing or disobeying rules. We may want to be invited back to the location, so PLEASE act in a responsible way, don't leave trash behind, no drinking of alcohol, and please be friendly, respectful, and appreciative to the land or mine owners.
- If an area has been claimed by a fellow-collector, please be respectful and honor their right to the area.
- Be independent. Don't expect other people to carry a heavy load of rock out for you. Remember, if you want it, you have to carry it!

Field Trip Safety Precautions

- Children are welcome on most trips but must be accompanied by an adult. Trips not appropriate for children will be described as such. When bringing children, PLEASE watch them and keep them off of ledges or any dangerous areas. We don't want anyone getting hurt!
- Glasses or safety goggles are mandatory for eye protection.
- Hard hats are not required on most trips. However, many active quarries insist on hard hats and safety boots. If you do not comply with requirements set in a field trip description, you will not be allowed access to the site.
- Alcohol is strictly forbidden on all field trips.
- Remember you are a member of a group and your actions could endanger those next to you. If you are breaking rock, make sure others are not endangered by flying particles. In going over loose rock slopes or cliffs make sure there is no one below who may suffer from falling rock.
- For your own protection, keep clear of members who are sledging rock and watch out for dangerous over-hanging rock, both for your self and for those who are with you.

Field Trip Equipment

- Generally a rock hammer or geologist's pick, a long chisel, a garden claw or shovel and gloves and goggles will be sufficient. Some locations may require bigger tools, such as a sledge hammer and hard hat. Details for each field trip will help you determine what tools are appropriate.
- Bring a backpack or bag to carry a snack in and your garbage out.
- Bring a bucket to carry your finds out. Egg cartons or other containers to put your specimens in and/or wrapping paper to protect your finds will also be helpful. Believe it or not, small diapers are awesome for wrapping a specimen to protect it!
- Other things you may want to bring include spring water, insect repellent, sunscreen, knee pads, small magnifier, magnet, tweezers, pocket knife and/or camera. A small rug or pad helps so you don't have to sit in the dirt!

Field Trip Clothing

- Wear appropriate outdoor clothing. Short pants and sandals are NOT ACCEPTABLE. Wear boots or at least sneakers.
- Note weather conditions. If you're worried that you may get wet, bring rainwear or a poncho. On sunny hot days, sunscreen and a hat are strongly recommended.
- In the spring, mosquitoes and black flies can be a nuisance. Wear long pants and a shirt with button-up collar and long sleeves. Bugs are attracted to dark colors so wear light colors if possible. Bring bug spray!

YOUR INPUT is requested regarding how to improve the Club. Here's your chance to share any comments or concerns that you may have. You do not need to include your name. **Please return to Betty Kelley at an upcoming meeting or mail to her at: P.O. Box 54, North Adams, MA 01247.** Please use additional paper if necessary Thank you in advance for your help!!

1. What do you like about the Club?
2. What do you dislike about the Club?
3. Do you feel the Club is inviting to children?
4. What could be done to improve the Club?
5. What types of programs would you be interested in seeing?
6. Please list any ideas or suggestions to improve the Club:
7. Any additional comments:



Larry Michon & Tyler Ethier presented a program on Meteorites at the February Meeting.



Members enjoying the program.