

Smoke Signals



**Black Hawk
Gem and Mineral
Club, Inc.**

February 2008

Volume 53

Number 2

Black Hawk Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.

2008 Officers and Directors

President	Kellie Moore	(563) 445-3034
Vice President	Bret Henderson	(309) 626-0107
Treasurer	Connie Huber	(563) 355-7131
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Director (2-year)	Delores Bates	(309) 796-0616
Director (1-year)	Lori Johnson	(563)-441-0149

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Membership	TBA	(563) 445-3034
Publicity	Craig Moore	(563) 445-3034
Youth Group	Joelle Henderson	(309) 626-0107
Field Trips	Bret Henderson	(309) 626-0107
Displays	Bret Henderson	(309) 626-0107
Rock Show	Kellie Moore	(563) 445-3034
Scholarship	Board of Directors	(563) 445-3034
Bulletin Editor	Lori Johnson	(563) 441-0149
Property	Board of Directors	(563) 445-3034
Ways and Means	Board of Directors	(563) 445-3034
Historian	Delores Bates	(309) 796-0616
MWF Liaison	Shirley Coven	(309) 743-2653

The purpose of this non-profit organization is to promote interest in collecting, studying and working with gems and minerals and fossils. Organized in 1955, the Black Hawk Club joined the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical & Geological Societies in 1959. It is also a member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month, September through May at 6:00P.M. in the Hauberg Civic Center, 1300 24th Street, Rock Island, IL. Picnics are held at various locations during June, July, and August. Annual Dues: Individual Membership: \$15.00, Senior Couples: \$12.00, Senior Individual: \$10.00, Family: \$20.00.



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Next Meeting February 20th Hauberg Civic Center

This month's meeting will be held one day early on **Wednesday February 20th** at Augustana's Fryxell Museum. Augustana students and Professors would like to welcome the club to attend the meeting starting at 6:30pm. Students will be able to identify any rocks or minerals you may have unidentified in your collection. Please bring them along. We will also be awarding our annual scholarship to a student that night. As an extra special event that night they are also inviting us to accompany them to the observatory to witness the Lunar eclipse. That will begin at 8:00.



Upcoming Events

March 7-9	Kansas City, MO: Kansas City Gem and Mineral Show - The Association of Earth Science Club of Greater Kansas City, Inc. New Location - MCC-BTC Exhibition Hall 1775 Universal Ave. I-435 at Front St. Mar 7 th 9-8, Mar 8 th 10-7, and Mar 9 th 10-5. Contact on website at www.kcgemshow.org .
March 8-9	MACOMB, IL: Geodeland Earth Science Clubs, Inc 28th Annual Show, WIU Student Union, Murray St, Sat 10:00-6:00, Sun 10:00-5:00, Contact: Steve Holley, 30795 N Norris Blacktop, Farmington, IL 61531, (309) 647-8864, ifossil@hotmail.com

<p>March 8</p>	<p>CHICAGO, IL: Chicago Rocks & Mineral Society Annual Silent Auction! Open to the public, no admission fee. The first tables close at 5:45 P.M., with viewing beginning at 5:30 P.M. The auction is expected to last until approximately 10 P.M. Salvation Army, 4056 N. Pulaski Avenue. That is 2 blocks east on Irving after exiting the Kennedy at Irving Park Road.</p>
<p>March 14-17</p>	<p>CEDAR RAPIDS, IA: Cedar Valley Rocks & Minerals Society Annual Show, Teamsters Union Hall, 500 J St SW, Sat 8:30-6:00, Sun 9:30-5:00, Contact: Marv Houg, 1820 30th St Dr SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403, (319) 364-2868, m_houg@yahoo.com</p>
<p>March 15-16</p>	<p>Cedar Valley Rocks and Minerals Society 2008 Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show. Sat 8:30-6, Sun 9:30-5, Meteorites of Iowa: Space Junk - Earth's Treasures. Admission: Adults \$2, Children Free. Contact: Marvin Hoag 319-364-2868, m_hoag@yahoo.com; Sharon Sonnleitner 319-396-4016, sonnb@aol.com</p>
<p>March 29-30</p>	<p>MONROE, WI: The Badger Lapidary & Geological Society 38th Annual Mineral, Gem & Fossil Show; Monroe High School, 1600 - 26th St. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Dealers, Speaker, Education Exhibits, Gold Panning, Fluorescent Mineral Tent Demonstrations, Hourly Door Prizes, Videos and a "Fish Pond" for the kids</p>
<p>July 10-13</p>	<p>Menasha, WI: Wonderful World of Agates 2008 - Weis Earth Science Museum - University of Wisconsin Fox Valley, 1478 Midway Rd, Menasha, WI 54952. Visit www.weismuseum.org and click on Agate Show 2008 for show updates and information. Our special display area will contain items rarely seen and of great value-even the Smithsonian will be there! More than 30 dealers will have all things agate for sale. Contact: Gary (920) 832-2925 or e-mail garold.richards@uwc.edu.</p>

Dues!

For those of you who may not have paid your dues yet for this month please do so now. If dues are not paid this will be your last newsletter. We have indicated if our records show you have not paid this year's dues by placing a star on the cover. **If you have a star we have not received your dues.** If you believe this to be an error please let us know. For those of you who have already paid your dues - Thank you. We look forward to another year with you. We hope you enjoy what we have in store for you.

Individual - \$15.00
Family - \$20.00
Senior Couple - \$12.00
Senior Single - \$10.00

Please mail to your payment to :

**Connie Huber
2903 Woodland Ct
Davenport, IA 52803**

Tumbling - In the Beginning

During late September 2006 I attended a rock auction in Palo, IA. If you haven't been to one, you should. Wonderful rocks, minerals, and equipment galore. I ended up with nearly 100 lbs of various agates. The question then is what to do with your treasures. Most are wear-worn or have some matrix covering the outside. You could always grind and polish each one, but that would take a long, long time and be a big expense in diamond wheels. I had already heard about rock tumbling so I turned to a supplier's catalog and ordered a couple of books on the subject. When they came I read them cover to cover. I decided to go with a rotary tumbler rather than a vibratory model. A rotary was less expensive to buy, would remove more crust and matrix, and smooth more edges on rocks. Plus, I felt it would probably be easier for a beginner to get used to than a vibratory would be.

I ended up with a Lortone tumbler with 2-6lb barrels. A barrel is rated by about how many pounds of rock it will usually hold. I later added another Lortone with a single 12 lb barrel. Following the directions in the various books, I bought some #80, #220, and #600 grits. These are silicon carbide abrasive grains. The bigger the number, the smaller the grits. I also bought some polishing compounds. I settled on tin oxide and cerium oxide. I also added one more thing to my list. Plastic pellets. These are used to cushion the rocks in the tumbler so they don't slam into each other with enough force to crack or chip them. I now use them in every load.

Every tumbler you buy will come with instructions to avoid problems. READ these instructions very carefully! FOLLOW the instructions to avoid problems. Probably the most important advice is to CLEAN, CLEAN, CLEAN everything between grit changes. I have a gravel driveway and I washed my rocks off in the driveway with a pressure washer. Don't forget to wash the barrels and lids carefully too. I went to Target and bought a couple of plastic colanders to wash the rocks in. Works great! NEVER put any washings from the rocks down the drain. It will turn to cement in the pipes. Not fun!

Next time I'll take you through my first barrels of Lake Superior agates and how they turned out.

Submitted by Paul Heuer.
Part 1 of 3.

Great article by Paul! Thank you. We look forward to the next installment. If anyone else would like to help out we are always looking for items for the newsletter. Rock related Articles, cartoons, Tips, Poetry, Notes of interest. Please let us know. Put it in writing and either mail it to us or e-mail kalsinean1@aol.com. We would love to put it in. You can become published! Also needed are Questions and Answers that can be turned into crossword puzzles for our website and newsletter. You supply the Q&A and we will turn it into a puzzle. The question must be short because of the limitations of the program, and please try to keep it rock related.

Kellie Moore

Our Website:

If you have not yet visited our website please check it out. We are open to ideas on how we can make it better - as well as letting us know what you like about it. Visit our site at: www.blackhawkgemandmineralclub.com .

If you would like to start **receiving your newsletter by e-mail** please let me know by going to the Contact Us button on the site. The newsletters will be sent to you in PDF format and are generally one Meg or less in size depending on what images they may contain. Receiving your newsletter this way can mean getting your newsletter up to a week earlier.



Online Gems

By Marilyn Westman, Publisher

"How I collected a 10 ton fossil tree and what I did with it."

"Jeff Schabilian, a Biological Sciences Professor at the University of Iowa, found a coalage fossil tree near Pella, Iowa, in 1970. The tree, measuring 13 feet long and 12 feet high and weighing over 16 tons, was discovered in an abandoned quarry on the Jake Rus family farm. Jeff collected the tree with the help of the National Guard, which built a road and provided other services as part of their training. The giant fossil plant sat outside at the University of Iowa until the summer of 2005, when it was donated and moved to the Museum of National History at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., where it is being reconstructed for display."

(reprinted from the *Cedar Valley Gems*, March 2006.)

Tech Talk #10

By Val Carver, MMC Member

Via: *The Rock Rustler's News* April 2006

This Months Article: Different Types of Rock Collections

I will drop discussion of “equipment” for several months and talk about rocks. In specific I want to talk about some of the different type of rock collections I have seen on display through my travels.

Yes, I have seen the multi-million dollar displays that all of us drool over and can never hope to own even a single specimen of the type seen in these displays. However, I have also seen some utterly fantastic rock and mineral displays that were done for almost nothing.

Granite:

This display consisted of golf ball to baseball sized chunks of granite in rough form. I never knew that granite came in so many colors until I saw this display. There was every color of the spectrum shown, every imagined crystal pattern with several hundred specimens on display, no two were alike. What was great with this collection was most of the specimens were free or at very little cost.

Iron Pyrite:

That's right the homely iron pyrite mineral. What a fantastic display I once saw with about 100 specimens all of different iron pyrite specimens. If I remember correctly, I once read that iron pyrite has more crystal states than any other mineral. Iron pyrite specimens are usually inexpensive.

Micro Mounts:

This type of collection has small mineral or rock specimens less than finger nail sized usually mounted in clear plastic boxes. With this type of collection you can have a world class mineral collection with very reasonably priced specimens. (A lot of micro mounts can be purchased for several dollars a specimen).

Rough with Cabs:

Another collection I saw one time was a collection of fist sized chunks of rock with an associated “cab” cut out of it. What a treat

for the eye. This collection had several hundred specimens. The cost per specimen was usually a dollar or two.

Food Collection:

Once at the Kansas City show, I saw the quintessential low cost rock display. This display was a 12 piece place setting with a full 7 course meal and ALL of the food was ROCKS!!! There were rocks that looked like muffins, meat, bread, appetizers, candy, pie, ice cream, popcorn etc. Almost all of the food items were rocks in their natural state. Even some of the dinnerware was carved rocks. The cost for this collection was minimal, however it took 20 years to collect all of the food looking rocks.



Rocks for sale:

Lorie Wilcken contacted us and asked that we publish "a rock collection for sale"? It was her father's collection of 60 some years and although they had his estate sale last October, not all sold. He had ALOT and the remainder they would like to sell. It includes some small collector specimens. There are also fossils and at least 30 to 40 old wire milkcrates filled with petrified wood, agate, druzi quartz and much more. Unfortunately she can not identify all of the pieces. They are asking around \$1800.00 for the entire remaining collection. Please contact her to inquire.

Lorie Wilcken (563) 326-1195



Newsletter

If you have an article you would like to see published let us know! You can e-mail the President at:

kalsinean1@aol.com

Contributions: Submissions (announcements, photographs, notes, letters, articles, etc.) are actively solicited from BHGMC members. Submissions from non-members may be included at the discretion of the Editor. Copyrighted material submitted for publication must be accompanied by a written release from the copyright holder. All material submitted is subject to editing. Unless previously arranged, all submissions become property of the Black Hawk Gem & Mineral Club, Inc. When requested, original and personally-written articles will be published with a copyright notice in the author's name, otherwise all submissions will be published without individual copyright. No anonymous submissions will be considered; however, the submitter's name will be withheld or a pseudonym may be used at the submitter's request.

Please send all submissions to the editor.

Deadline: The deadline for all submitted work is the 20th of the month before it is to be published. Late and/or unused entries may be published in later issue.

Disclaimer: The conclusions and opinions expressed in *Smoke Signals* are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Officers, Editor, or members of the club.

Exchanges: Free reciprocal exchanges for the bulletins of other gem and mineral clubs are welcomed. **Please send all exchange bulletins to the Editor.**

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Affiliations

Midwest Federation of Mineralogical & Geological Societies

<http://www.amfed.org/mwf/>

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies

<http://www.gamineral.org/afms.htm>

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Note: NEW Address!