

Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club News



November, 2023

Always Looking for Places to Dig!



Littleton schist (see page 3)



<http://www.wcgm.org>
FACEBOOK link



Workshop (more photos on page 5)

November Meeting

Friday, November 10th 7:00 PM.
Park Presbyterian Church,
Maple Court, Newark, NY

Program Australian Boulder Opals by James Keeler

The presentation will provide a narrated, visual exploration of the diverse nature of boulder opals from different locations in Australia. Terms used by sellers of boulder opals can be unclear or confusing and will be explained (with images to illustrate). Basic tips for cutting boulder opal will be discussed and the magic (i.e. science) behind opal's play of colors (opalescence) will be reviewed in an accessible fashion. A variety of examples will be brought for folks to admire while connecting the pictures and concepts to actual stones.

Note, this talk will be picture heavy and is designed to entertain while gently educating. Only two true "science" slides are included. There will be no excuse (or tolerance) for falling asleep during it.



boulder opal

Bonus Program Item in November:

Kathleen Cappon will present a short show and tell on the glass beads used in road paint as featured in two previous club newsletters. Small samples of the glass "spheres" will be available for those interested.

WCGMC Holiday Party is December 8th

Please note: We ask that you sign up at or before the November club meeting to attend. An email to Teresa Ferris will work.
[rockhoundingft\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:rockhoundingft(at)gmail.com)

We will be back at the church in Newark again for this year's event, potluck dinner. Club will provide meat, potatoes, and drinks. Please sign up to bring either a side dish or a dessert.

Two remaining 2023 workshops

Saturday, November 11th

Saturday, December 9th

(10:00 AM until mid-afternoon)

Where: 6676 E. Port Bay Rd, Wolcott, NY

Eye protection is required.

Training on equipment is available.

\$5/adult to offset maintenance costs

President's Message

Heidi Morgenstern



October is making its way out as fast as it arrived, as it always seems to do. There will be (or was) a rockhounding show in Rochester this final weekend for us to enjoy, but after that rockhounding for us northern folks will slow down immensely. Of course this gives us time to sort, display, and give away some of our summer finds. And, of course plan for our annual Holiday Party in December.

This October, however, was even more special for me. My cherished rockhounding friends nominated me and then elected me to represent them as the new WCGMC President. I am really excited to delve into this role, leading this club forward into more fun, activity, education, and camaraderie. Fortunately, I am not alone with this work as all officer positions were filled by eager volunteers.

It will be my honor to serve what I consider is the best rock club that I know. In this club we can all make our lifelong passions in this hobby come true, whether at meetings, in the field, or in our wonderful workshop.

But first, there is a Holiday Party to enjoy, and we have an active committee working to make December 8th a memorable evening. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will read that they are requesting that everyone sign up early (at or before our November meeting) to ensure that they can optimize all their planning efforts. Please do so.



Whether in the workshop in Wolcott or pounding on a pegmatite in Maine, I hope my enthusiasm for rockhounding is contagious.

Results of WCGMC 2023 Elections

After nominations in September, WCGMC elected its new slate of officers at its October meeting. Congratulations and thanks to those who have volunteered to serve.

The four officer positions are two-year terms. Two director positions become open each fall.

Here are your newly elected WCGMC officers.

President – Heidi Morgenstern

Vice-President – Scott Jones

Treasurer – Bill Lesniak

Secretary – Beth Webster

Directors (2- year term)

Bob Linderbery, Kathleen Cappon

Directors (1 year term)

Michele McDonald, Karen Lazar

Past-President

James Keeler

DUES: Our dues season runs from October 1 through September 30th. For those who did not renew at the picnic in August or at the meetings since then, dues can be paid in November or by sending a payment to:

**WCGMC, P.O. Box 4,
Newark, NY 14513**

Dues are only \$15 individual or \$20 family

Garnets from Schist

by Fred Haynes



In mid-September, I attended my 50th High School Reunion in East Longmeadow, Massachusetts (near Springfield). It was a great chance to see classmates that I had not seen in 50 years. But the six-hour trip east also provided an excellent opportunity to do a bit of wandering about in the metamorphic rocks of south-central New England, maybe even find something interesting and, of course, to collect some new sand.

One such location I decided to visit was a small wedge of Devonian Littleton Schist that outcrops in north central Connecticut just 15 miles from my hometown near Springfield, Massachusetts. Originally deposited as shale in the Devonian Iapetus Ocean, this region of Connecticut was involved in two major tectonic plate collisions: first when the Avalonia microcontinent collided with North America in the Devonian Period (~400 million years ago), and then again when the African continent collided into North America 230 million years ago to build the Appalachian Mountains. The marine sedimentary rocks in between these colliding plates were deeply buried and converted to schist as Himalayan-size mountains were created. The clay-rich Littleton shale was converted to mica-rich schist that is full of 1-2 millimeter-sized garnets, sometimes with blades of staurolite. I sought both on this trip, in both hand specimens and as garnet-rich sand.

I had been to a location in Tolland, Connecticut near the southern end of the wedge on the geology (red X at the center of the geology map in the second column). I returned to that location where recent construction had exposed large amounts of the schist, but I also wanted to wander the rural county roads.

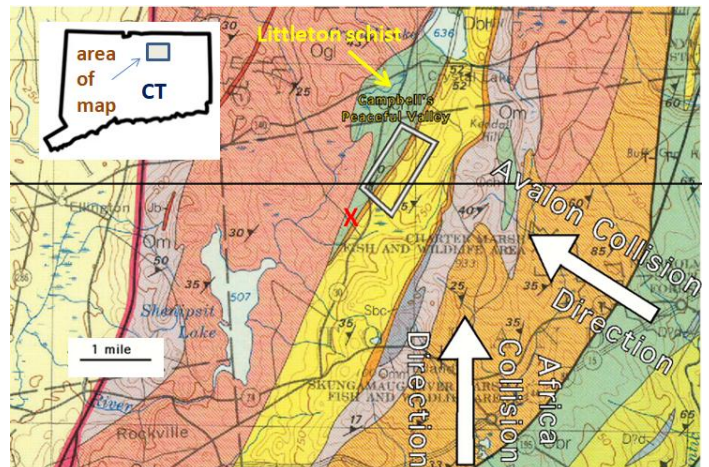
I got lucky in two places in Tolland. Broken rock from just off Gerber Drive in Tolland allowed the host schist to be collected. All the schist contained ruby-red almandine garnet, but some also contained dark staurolites exceeding one inch in length. Garden rocks for sure, but since almandine and staurolite are listed on the National Science Olympiad Minerals list and mica schist is a rock type on that same list, I now have some great teaching rocks also.



Littleton garnet mica schist: specimen is 8" across.



This schist also contains a few 1-2 mm garnets, but the larger, elongated crystals are staurolite. Specimen is 3.5" across.



Bedrock map of a small section of north-central Connecticut: the Devonian Littleton schist is mapped in green. Modified from Philpotts, 2020

But the real find from my day of wandering about in the Devonian woods of Connecticut may have been when I stumbled on Campbell's Peaceful Valley, also in Tolland, but a bit north of Gerber Drive. The site

is a town conservation area with hiking trails. I had only walked 100 meters along the loop trail into the park when I encountered a footbridge over a small creek. Imagine my surprise when I looked down into the stream and saw nothing but small red garnets covering significant regions both in the water and above the current water line. It is at times like this that I wish I was a better photographer and had something better than an iPhone. But I tried! If you are reading online, I suggest you enlarge these two photos to see all the sand-sized garnet grains. Maybe even try counting them for me.



Can you see all the small red garnets glistening in the stream bed?



Here is the same sand all dried out. Many of the 1-2 mm diameter garnets are showing off all their crystal faces.

The close-up photo on page 1 illustrates how the garnets are released from the host schist during weathering. The softer mica minerals (mostly biotite) weather more rapidly and the contacts between the massive white quartz and the euhedral garnets are also surfaces of weakness. Some of the garnets do break, but many, perhaps even most, are released as fully complete sand-sized grains into the surrounding streams.

Reference:
Philpotts, A., 2020, [A Brief Geological Guide to Campbell's Peaceful Valley](#), Town of Tolland webpage

Party Time is Approaching

Several club members are working on making decorations and planning supplies needed for the upcoming Holiday party. The theme features Candy Land and Gingerbread characters. Creating and making the decorations will take place at Linda and Teresa's homes on several chosen dates in October, November, and the first week of December.

This past Sunday was lots of fun to meet and work on the projects together for the first time. A lot of recycled materials and cardboard is being utilized to make the church basement look like a candy land. Some really nice rocks from the WCGMC collection were selected for the gifts for each person at the party!



It is very important for our committee to know the number of attendees at the party in order to make enough favors, place settings, and best of all, rocks to wrap for everyone. **Please remember to sign up at or before the November meeting** if you plan on coming and include your dish to pass. If you do not make the meeting, contact Teresa Ferris through the club member list or the E-mails on the last page of the newsletter.

By Kathleen Cappon

The WCGMC Workshop was a busy place in October



Beth

You would be smiling too if you were slicing up a septarian nodule as lovely as the one Beth has.



Many members were thinking of slicing and polishing Holiday presents, but Scott Jones had something else in mind. He was making dinner!



Raffle time at the workshop. You can see where Scott obtained his ham slice.



Gary



Bob



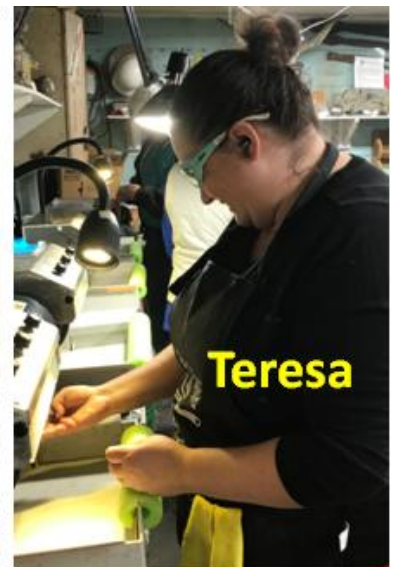
Karen



Mark



Rob



Teresa

More WCGMC artisans at work



Splendid Sands Calendar

November, 2023
Brush Creek,
Serpent Mound Historic Site, Ohio



Photo by Leo Kenney

by Leo Kenney, Kate Clover & Carol Hopper Brill

This fossil-rich sample from Ohio tells of a time when a vast part of North America was covered by a warm shallow sea. During the late Ordovician Period, 450 million years ago, Ohio was located south of the equator, about where Australia is located today.

The ring-shaped fossils are segments of crinoids, or sea lilies. Despite a plant-like appearance, these are echinoderms. The stem-like structure is formed by a column of ring segments which disarticulate after the animal dies. Twig-shaped fossils are bryozoan (moss animal) colonies. Each small opening housed an individual bryozoan. The sample also includes honeycomb textured coral fragments and a brachiopod, near center. The limestone rock formed on a muddy sea floor.

Nearby, on a bluff above Brush Creek, is Serpent Mound, a snake-shaped Paleo-Indian effigy. It sits on the site of geologically significant crater that resulted from an asteroid or comet that struck Ohio between 256 and 330 million years ago. The impact structure was named after the effigy site.

Lake Ontario Finds by Kathleen Cappon

After the recent workshop on Saturday Oct. 21st, I headed home, **but** the urge to collect rocks got the best of me and I ventured to the shoreline at the east end of Chimney Bluff. The waves were raging and rocks of all sizes and colors were visible along the shoreline. There were even some daredevil surf-sail riders out on the waves in their wet suits! Despite the damp rain and the wind I went back to the car with a few keepers and two wet feet.



Here are the finds from that day. They include a nice group of cephalopods, a beautiful striped layered rock (in the back) and a concentrically layered sandstone.

These new finds will join other rocks I have found from several Lake Ontario locations over the years.





WCGMC: Always Looking for Places to Dig!



By Teresa Ferris (WCGMC Field Trip Coordinator) [rockhoundingft\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:rockhoundingft@gmail.com)

There are no field trip announcements this month. Unfortunately, every year about this time, Mother Nature brings an end to our collecting season and we must manage through the winter working with what we have collected during the summer.

But I have an idea. While we wait for 2024 and a new collecting season let's share some of our collective experiences in the upcoming winter newsletters. Specifically, answer one more of the following questions and send a note to our editor.

1. How did you find and start coming to our club? What year?
2. Do you have a favorite story that has happened to you at a club activity?
3. What do you like to do with your rocks, minerals and fossils?
4. How long have you been collecting?

To kick-start this series, here is my story:

I belong to a Beading Guild and several years ago we were doing a bunch of projects with cabochons. I looked up making cabochons online which brought me to lapidary and I learned there was a Rochester Lapidary Club. I mentioned this at a beading meeting and one of the guild ladies said she was part of it. I met her at their next workshop.

While there I noted that I needed rocks and wanted to find my own. Ed Smith was there and he suggested that I check out the WCGMC and he invited me to go to a talk that a fellow WCGMC was presenting at the Victor-Farmington Library in February of 2016. This person was Fred Haynes. His talk was entitled "Adventures in Mineral Collecting in New York. It sounded fascinating.



I even took a picture of Fred as he explained the geology and minerals found at Iliion Gorge that evening at the library.

After his talk I decided to join the club. My first meeting was in March and my first field trip was to Ace of Diamonds in April and then to Iliion Gorge. Everyone knows how much I have come to love that location!!!



Here I am enjoying Iliion Gorge with a number of WCGMC members.

I have now been on more than 40 rockhounding field trips (not all official club trips, but with club members). I have collected in 13 different states, around all 5 Great Lakes, and I have many wonderful stories to tell. I have also introduced collecting and the club to family and friends. I think I am now a fully addicted rockhound.

Wayne County Gem & Mineral Contacts

ELECTED OFFICERS

President – Heidi Morgenstern

Morgensternheidi@rocketmail.com

Vice-President – Scott Jones

Secretary – Beth Webster

Treasurer - Bill Lesniak

Board of Directors

Bob Linderbery

Kathleen Cappon

Karen Lazar

Michele McDonald

Past President – James Keeler

Visit us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1675855046010058/>

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Field Trip Coordinator – Teresa Ferris, *help wanted*
rockhoundingft@gmail.com

Fossil Field Trip Leader - Stephen Mayer

Fred Haynes – Newsletter Editor

fredmhaynes55@gmail.com

Bill Lesniak – Website Coordinator

Glenn Weiler – Workshop Coordinator

Linda Schmidtgal – Collection Curator

Fred Haynes – Facebook Administrator

Jim Rienhardt – Sand Chapter

Club meets 2nd Friday of each month starting in Sept.

Social meeting at 6:30 PM Regular meeting at 7:00 PM

Park Presbyterian Church, Maple Court, Newark, NY

Website – <http://www.wcgmc.org/>

Dues are only \$15 individual or \$20 family for a full season of fun. Renewal is in October. Send to:

WCGMC, P.O. Box 4, Newark, NY 14513

