

# Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club News

November, 2022

Always Looking for Places to Dig!



The late afternoon crew is ready for work.  
WCGMC goes salt mining (see pages 3-5)  
Photo by Michelle McDonald



Click on the image above and spend 7 minutes revisiting our August picnic. A big thank you to producer extraordinaire Rich Garabedian. See page 2

## November Meeting

Friday **November 11<sup>th</sup>**, 7:00 PM.  
Park Presbyterian Church,  
Maple Court, Newark, NY

### The Rocks and Minerals of Mars

by Calvin K.  
Prothro



**Abstract:** Why do we want to, and need to, go to Mars? By looking at the past robotic probes to Mars we will review and discuss the geologic wonders of the fourth planet. We will use common minerals on earth as analogies for mineral resources of the red planet and see how these resources can be used to build a long-term, sustainable human settlement on Mars.

**Calvin Prothro** is a consulting geologist with Environmental Resource Management (ERM) in Syracuse. For 18 years, he taught geology courses at Onondaga Community College and is currently the President of the Central New York Association of Professional Geologists. Calvin is the author of the science fiction trilogy entitled "Dark Solar System."

Come join us as we learn about one of our nearby neighbors in the solar system!

### Saturday Club Workshop **November 12<sup>th</sup>**

(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.

### WCGMC Christmas/Holiday Party **December 9<sup>th</sup>**

Yes, that time is fast approaching and we will be celebrating the coming holidays on Friday night December 9<sup>th</sup>. If you are a long-time member you know this will be a can't miss event. For those who joined this year, you will want to mark your calendars and plan to join us. Check out page 2 for details including helping us plan by signing up.

## WCGMC News



### The Party Planning has begun

Long-time members know that the WCGMC Christmas/Holiday party is one of the club's premier events, and one that requires a lot of planning and work by volunteers among the membership. This year's committee has met and is now soliciting help from anyone and everyone.

**The Holiday Party is Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. The doors will open at 6:00 PM, we plan to eat ~6:30 PM, and the program to follow at ~ 7:30 PM. The event will be at the Marbletown Fire Hall 6416 Silver Hill Rd., Newark, NY. NOTE: not at the normal meeting location.**

The club will provide meat, potatoes and drinks. All who attend should plan to bring a dish to pass, either a salad, a vegetable dish, or a dessert. If you know which category you would like to offer, include that when you sign-up.

**PLEASE SIGNUP:** To make it easy, there are multiple ways to signup to attend if you did not do so already at the October club meeting. Members who did not signup at the October meeting can do so at the November meeting OR by contacting **Holly Woodworth** at [autum4513@yahoo.com](mailto:autum4513@yahoo.com) or 315-729-3908 OR by entering your name and number of quests at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D48ABA62EA6F58-wcgmc>

**Kathleen Cappon** will be directing the talent show that will be the evening program after the feast. She sends the following request.

*"I encourage members to be in the talent show at our December Christmas Party: kids and adults alike!! Rock prizes for all! Please contact me [kcappon4039@gmail.com](mailto:kcappon4039@gmail.com) or call my cell at: 585-489-4139 about what you would like to perform and I will place you on the list. This can be anything one could think of: reading a poem, signing/leading a song, juggling turtle stones, telling jokes, showing off your yodeling, acting out a modern skit for 'Stone Soup' or perhaps how far can one spit a Taconite pellet?? We can all have fun and many laughs!*

**Nancy Guilfoyle** suggested a kid's concert where we can have groups of kids play or shake instruments for sound effects from where they sit. When they perform, someone

*can be the spotlight and shine the light on them. Please speak to any of your kids that are attending and ask if they want to join. Include their names in your e-mail to me. They can bring their own "instruments" or I can provide them"*

**Teresa Ferris** is organizing the decorations and the set-up in the venue. She asks that anyone interested in helping should contact her at [teresa.a.ferris@gmail.com](mailto:teresa.a.ferris@gmail.com).

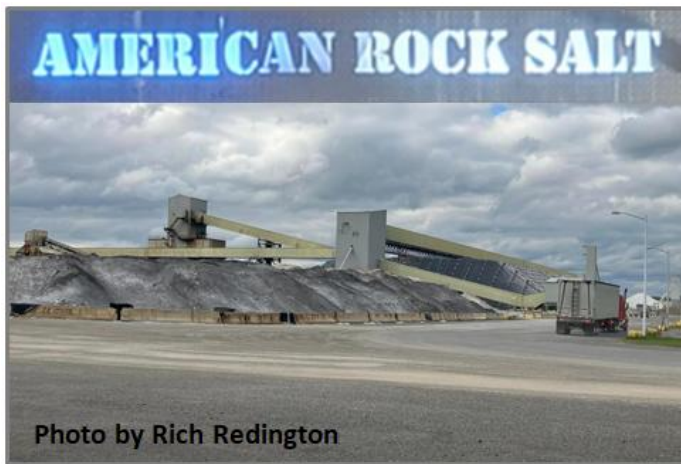
The party will be a great way to end the first full week of December and put everyone into the holiday spirit. The more members that find a way to help and participate the better it will be.



**Do you remember seeing this shirt at the picnic in August?**

**Rick Garabedian** was capturing the day's action. He has since compiled it all into a non-stop thriller of a seven-minute video. If you were there you may have made the final cut. If you were not, you can watch his production to see what you missed. Perhaps Rich will bring his talents to the Christmas Party? We can only hope. Here is the link to the Rich's production: [link to WCGMC August Picnic Video](#)





On Friday October 7<sup>th</sup>, twenty WCGMC members were treated to a wonderful tour of the American Rock Salt Mine in Mt. Morris. At the September club meeting, mine geologist Bill Glenn gave a comprehensive talk about the mine and 20 members were randomly selected for the subsequent tour, a limitation due to the size of the underground transportation vehicles. Here are some thoughts and pictures provided by the lucky group of newly inducted salt miners.



But first, here is a group shot of the newly anointed WCGMC salt miners. Picture taken somewhere under Livingston County!

### Rich Garabedian

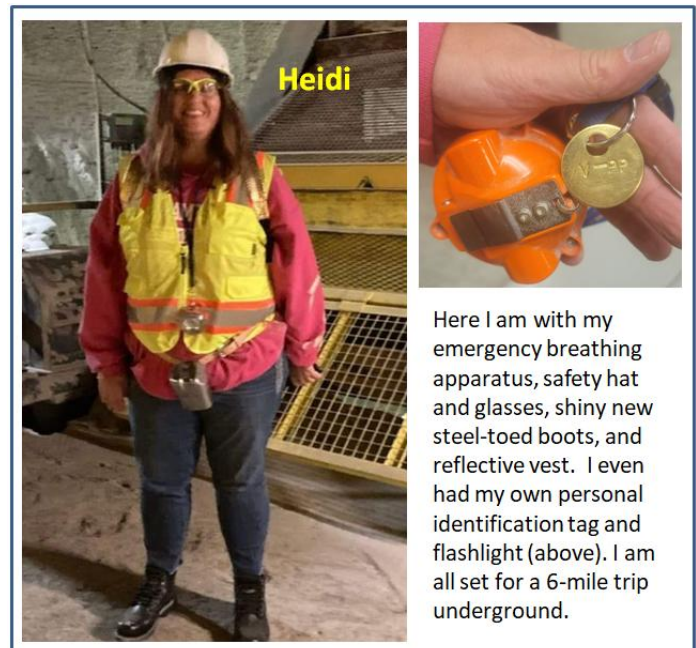
I was concerned that I'd be claustrophobic being underground 1500 feet but the mine ceilings were 10' to 13' high and the elevator that took us down was a huge freight type with open ceiling that took us down in just a few minutes. My ears popped due to the depth we had to travel. It wasn't too warm, think I've seen too many journey to the center of the earth movies, but a comfortable 60 degrees or so. We all sat in a hay ride style wagon towed by a John Deere tractor. It was slow going, taking us quite awhile to get to the active cut being worked and seeing other aspects such as how they drill, blast and take away

large chunks of rock salt to the crushers and upload shaft. Always present was the syncopated rhythm present of miles of conveyor belt carrying rock salt to the primary crusher.

It was an utterly alien experience, with miles of antlike maze turning around columns of rock salt supporting the 1500 foot roof over us! The walls sparkled with a myriad of stars reflecting the slightest glimmer of light. Thank you Wayne County Gem & Mineral Club for a unique opportunity with a unique rock club!!! And, thank you to the American Rock Salt Company people who were outstanding guides, knowledgeable, courteous and proud of their community heritage! It was a privilege to experience, one I shall not forget.

### Heidi Morgenstern

Chalk this up as one of the coolest things I have ever done. All of us were overwhelmed by the immense size of the mine and all the underground operations. Travelling 6 miles through an underground maze of "roads" was pretty neat too.



Here I am with my emergency breathing apparatus, safety hat and glasses, shiny new steel-toed boots, and reflective vest. I even had my own personal identification tag and flashlight (above). I am all set for a 6-mile trip underground.

### Karen Wilkins

About a decade ago I read a book about salt mining and thought how wonderful it might be to get to go underground and see one. Imagine my thrill to having my name called in the raffle and be able to attend this trip. It was everything I could have imagined and more, all the underground equipment to crush and transport all that salt was simply amazing to see first-hand.





Photo by Karen Wilkins

### Rich Redington

American Rock Salt is the biggest salt mine in North America. I will never forget the opportunity to go down a mine shaft as tall as the Empire State Building. And then going miles and miles in tunnels to get to where they were actively drilling the salt pay.



They let us collect what we could carry. Here is a little bit that will not be used to melt road ice! Of course, I must keep it inside.

Photo by Rich Redington

### James Keeler

Like everyone else, I want to express my gratitude to American Rock Salt for allowing us to see their impressive mine and facilities. The salt was great to see and I carried my share out, but I was also impressed with all the underground equipment required. From the drilling at the salt face and the

large undercutting saws to the conveyors sending salt through the large and smaller crushers, there was equipment everywhere. Hidden a bit, but not forgotten was the ventilation system and other safety equipment. I will not take road salt for granted this winter or in the future.



Photo by James Keeler

The "little" tool in the photograph above is a magnet that rescues all the broken teeth from the undercutting saw after the salt has been through the primary crusher (below) but before it reaches the secondary crusher where these teeth can damage the equipment. There are broken teeth still attached to the magnet and a pile of them in the bin at the lower right.



The primary crusher awaits the next round of salt.

Photo by James Keeler



More photos from a memorable evening:



Miles of tunnels like this one, more than 1200' underground and full of large mining equipment. Salt mining is a truly large operation.

Photo by James Keeler



The six mile ride to the active faces of the mine took over an hour for the orange-hatted visitors.

Photo by Heidi Morgenstern



More than 1000' down and six miles later we reached an active face and watched the evening crew drill into salt.

Photo by Karen Wilkins



It was safety first and everyone was outfitted for the journey. The plan was for everyone who went in to exit in the same condition that they entered. And they did!

Photo by Heidi Morgenstern



Another view of drilling at the salt face.

Photo by James Keeler



Heads were counted when it was time to enter the elevator for the ride to daylight. Well, to the surface anyway as the sun had long set while they were underground.

The twenty WCGMC mineral collectors who visited that evening will have an extra appreciation when the salt truck drives past them this winter.

A final word of thanks to the American Rock Salt employees who took the time and effort to share their mine with us: our adventure in your mine will last a lifetime.



## Splendid Sands Calendar

**November, 2022**  
**Horseshoe Bay Beach,**  
**Southampton, BERMUDA**



Photo by Leo Kenney

by Leo Kenney, Kate Clover & Carol Hopper Brill

Bermuda began as a volcanic seamount in the North American tectonic plate. Now covered in carbonate sediments and rimmed by active coral and coralline algal reefs, the island is known for beaches. The most famous beach is nestled between two limestone headlands in a horseshoe-shaped cove on the southeastern shore. Ranked as one of the world's top beaches, it is known for pink sands that accumulate along the shoreline.

The pink grains are from the benthic foraminifera, *Homotrema rubra*. This amoeba relative lives attached to reef surfaces and secretes a branched carbonate test. Other forams include white seed-shaped species.

The Y-shaped rod near the center is a piece of branching coralline algae. Scattered chunks of reef-building coral have more irregular surfaces, e.g. just below 12 o'clock. Small gastropods include small white snails on the left. The ribbed tubular shell in the lower right is from a *Caecum* snail. Bits of bivalve in white and blue show the gentle curvature of the original shell. And, of course, there are green and pink sea urchin spines.

## Open House at Penfield Quarry

It was not a collecting opportunity, but Penfield Quarry did host an Open House the first Saturday in October and some WCGMC members checked it out.

Photos provided by Teresa Ferris





## More WCGMC News



No you are not seeing double. The club has two large rock saws in Wolcott. And as of this month we also have a third polishing and cabbing machine. More places to work and play. Come see for yourself on November 12<sup>th</sup>.



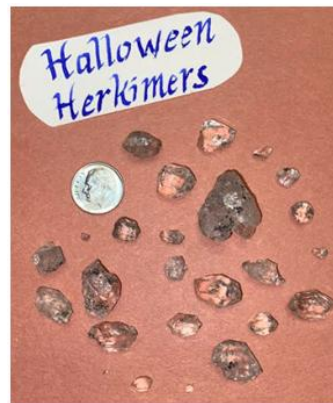
You are still not seeing double. This is a Botswana agate that Rich Redington recently cut and polished at the club workshop. Surely you have something that you would like to subject to a bit of lapidary art.

Photo by Rich Redington



Pat and Bill Chapman hosted a rock sale on October 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>. There were lots of Herkimers to be had and much much more.

Photo by Fred Haynes



Speaking of Herkimers, Dana and Greg Atwood took their children, Amber and Chase to Ace of Diamonds on the final day of "hunting" season, October 31<sup>st</sup>. They came away with some Halloween Herkimers. But Dana reports that her favorite find was some of the Cambrian stromatolites that can be found along the left side of the road to the hilltop. Photo by Dana Atwood



Kathleen Cappon reports that her newest out building is nearly complete. It will be a rock, mineral, and fossil museum complete with a homemade work table. She will be telling us more about her creation in a subsequent newlsetter. .

Photo by Fred Haynes

## Wayne County Gem & Mineral Contacts

### ELECTED OFFICERS

President – James Keeler

[jamesrocks\(at\)keeler.com](mailto:jamesrocks(at)keeler.com)

Vice-President – Holly Woodworth

[autum14513\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:autum14513(at)yahoo.com)

Secretary – Beth Webster

Treasurer - Bill Lesniak

### Board of Directors

Bob Linderbery

Heidi Morgenstern

Karen Wilkins

Ed Smith

Past President – Linda Schmidtgal

Visit us on Facebook:

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

### APPOINTED POSITIONS

Field Trip coordinator – Teresa Ferris, *help wanted*

Fossil Field Trip Leader - Stephen Mayer

Fred Haynes – Newsletter Editor

[fredmhaynes55\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:fredmhaynes55(at)gmail.com)

Bill Lesniak – Website Coordinator

Glenn Weiler – Workshop Coordinator

Linda Schmidtgal – Collection Curator

Fred Haynes – Facebook Administrator

Jim Rienhardt – Sand Chapter

Club meets 2<sup>nd</sup> 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**

