

# ALBERTA ROCKHOUND NEWS

Publication of the Alberta Federation of Rock Clubs

Happy  
Thanksgiving



Volume 47 No. 3

Sept 2017

## President's Message



Greetings from the Alberta Federation of Rock Clubs (AFRC).

Summer has come and gone and time is running out for clubs to go on field trips to find some rocks to work with over the winter time. How many clubs had field trips this summer? I think new and long time club members, all get excited about going on rock hunting trips during the summer. Is that what happens?

I didn't go on the trip our club had this summer. I wanted to, but I was too busy! I'm sure most of us have that problem. Besides, most of us have enough rocks, right? That's not the point...

We are renovating a house on the farm, it's taking all summer and we still aren't done so I haven't thought too much about rocks, jewelry or club activities. Our club has started up again in September so now there are demands on my time to teach classes or help out in general. If you are also being asked to share your knowledge through courses or hands on training, that's a good thing. Someone probably taught you and now you can pass that training on to someone else who is new in the club.

At the last directors meeting we discussed the possibility of new rock clubs forming in Alberta. Years ago there were over 25 rock clubs in Alberta, now there are only six left! What happened to bring about such a change? I think we all get too busy and forget to pass on the skills that we learn, from one generation to the next.

Our club actively promotes itself and we often hear people say, "I didn't know Lacombe has a rock club". So it is also important to get new members through advertising, demos, rock shows, websites, Facebook, etc. And if new members join, be prepared to pass on a few of your skills. You may know more than you realize! So get involved in your club and help out. Also, the AFRC needs a new secretary. For the time being, Stacy Glaubitz is filling in and is doing a great job. Thanks! So if you are interested in helping out in this way, let us know and come to the meeting which is on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

It would also be good to get some new, and also more of the current directors coming to the AFRC meetings. There aren't too many meetings every year, even less if the weather doesn't cooperate. (Snow!) The meetings are held in the Calgary rock club room three times a year (Sept, Nov, & April) and then the AGM is held during May Daze every May long weekend. How hard is that? Very hard you may say but there are always very interesting things discussed and they may not always be about rocks!

So if you are someone who is too busy with too many demands on your time, that's a good thing, learn to say no, but not to everything. Enjoy the fall.

HAPPY  
THANKSGIVING

## **ALBERTA FEDERATION OF ROCK CLUBS**

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*Medicine Hat Rock & Gem:* Kiwanis Centre, 826-11 St. S.E. Medicine Hat, AB (403) 527-0068

*Southern Alberta Rockhounds:* Kendra Grams 2106-12 Ave. N. Lethbridge, AB T1H 1S1

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE ALBERTA FEDERATION OF ROCK CLUBS**

1. To promote and encourage the study, cutting, polishing and engraving of gemstones and rocks and other geological materials and lapidary work as a hobby other than for the purpose of trade, industry or business.
2. To encourage the exploration of Alberta for lapidary materials, and to promote and create a greater interest in Alberta finished and unfinished rocks and minerals.
3. To encourage and promote the close association with, and exchange of information between rock hobbyists and lapidary groups to stimulate interest in and disseminate knowledge about mineralogy and earth sciences.
4. The Alberta Federation sponsors a website which its members may use to promote the activities and events of their club.
5. The operations of the Alberta Federation are to be mainly carried out in the Province of Alberta, under the Canadian Rockhound Code of Ethics.

THE ALBERTA FEDERATION OF ROCK CLUBS is a member of THE GEM AND MINERAL FEDERATION OF CANADA. Each club pays their members dues to the AFRC Treasurer by February 1<sup>st</sup> and each paid up member is entitled to 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Liability Insurance which covers events such as field trips, rock and gem shows, and other organized events.

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This is your magazine. We need articles & suggestions. Send submissions anytime. If possible, send your article about two weeks before publication date to get them into the current month's publication. Otherwise the article will be included in the next publication.

**ROCK CLUB NEWS**

from Lacombe club 2017(fall)  
by Beverly Calkins

Well friends, another season of rock hounding is here. Our club kicked off the season by participating in the "Active Living Fair". This year our table display took first prize for 'most interesting' table and we were awarded some very special "sweets" from our Italian bakery here in Lacombe. If you're ever here visiting, check out their sweets. Absolutely delicious.

In July, we took a day trip to "Em-tee" town...a town built on the edge of a creek (replicating an 'old western town'. We did some gold panning, walked thru' the town and seen all the antiques, had lunch at Ponderosa City....there's a camping and hiking along with a fully furnished motel to stay in. The little town is located by Alder Flats.

In August, we had a 'ladies only' day trip to Edmonton to Bead World. This all came about because one of our members, Kim Strand 'liked and shared' a link on Carolyn Cave's

facebook page and Kim won a gift certificate to Bead World. Kim Strand, Carolyn Cave, Dale Haynes, Trish Duckett and Bev Calkins took the day in. Our stop at Bead World was very interesting.....millions of beads...then it was off to A & W for lunch...(onion rings were at the top of the list). From there we went to Bedrock.....MORE BEADS....then down the road to Wetaskwin to the "Wild West Art Gallery".....(MORE BEADS) from there down the road towards Ponoka and a stop at 'Bear Paws' pawn shop (EVEN MORE BEADS) ...I think it's safe to say we all had a great time----spent toooooo much money and totally got "beaded out". All this bead shopping prompted a request for a bead class this winter, probably January. Our first class this fall will be a beginner silver-smithing. In January a bead class-----then a copper class of something and maybe finish our season with a cuttle fish casting.

Jason Biel, (son of Ron & Roberta Biel) competed in a National Pipe Organ competition and received 1<sup>st</sup> prize for his efforts. He got a \$500 scholarship from GMFC.

On a closing note, I drove to Kelowna on the long weekend of September to see my granddaughter Erynn. She happens to work for Eagle Builders in Blackfalls----well, Eagle Builders supplied the cement arcs for the new wildlife overpass near Field. B.C....this was such a huge undertaking to build something to go over all lanes of traffic. That it was actually aired on the 'Discovery Channel' on, or about September 7/8. Totally worth checking it out on Youtube.



## MEDICINE HAT NEWS JULY 25 2017

BY TIM KALINOWSKI ON JULY 25, 2017.

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Retired DRDC Suffield military scientist John Cherwonogrodzky recently returned from an interesting teaching experience at Shaanxi Normal University in Xi'an, China.

Cherwonogrodzky was one of 15 international lecturers invited to spend nearly two weeks from July 3 to July 14 teaching Chinese students. Cherwonogrodzky spoke on "bio-threats" at the university's College of Life Sciences.

"China is serious about investing in its youth, and these youth are serious about learning," said Cherwonogrodzky. "I had total freedom to talk on whatever I wanted. There was no censorship, guidance or demands. Whatever I wanted, it was fine. I think it is because they invite so many professors each summer and they assume you know what you are doing when they bring you in."

Cherwonogrodzky says unlike many of the academics brought in for this lecture series, he has tons of practical field experience and research backing up his conclusions on bio-threats such as viruses, bacteria, natural toxins and chemical agents. It was a perspective his students seemed to find refreshing.

"A lot of the professors they get talk about other peoples' work, but I spoke to them about the work I actually did... So when I spoke about what the state of knowledge is, and where I believe it is different from their course textbooks, they really perked up."

Besides having a jam-packed schedule of lectures over the two weeks he was in China, Cherwonogrodzky also enjoyed several local cultural opportunities.

"In terms of sightseeing, I think the Terracotta Army, (depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China), was jaw-dropping. It's a 56 square kilometre city which had been buried there. It was amazing seeing the Terracotta soldiers which had been reassembled over the years," he said.

Cherwonogrodzky also admits to being amazed by how well the Chinese have integrated modern technology into even very traditional industries.

"We went to buy some fruit, and here is this peasant lady with her big hat and rough, orange farmers' coat. She pops out an iPad, and she is doing all these deals right there on the street with customers using these E-transfers through their phones. I asked my translator if I were to buy something, would she have change? And I was asked: 'Why on earth would she carry change?'"

Cherwonogrodzky felt privileged to have been asked to share some of his knowledge in China.

"It was a very positive experience," he confirmed.



## The *Borealopelta markmitchelli*

This was the find!!



Photo courtesy of Google

While digging at the Suncor Millennium Mine north of Fort McMurray, Alberta in May, 2011 machine operator named Shawn Funk noticed a change in the color and texture of the underlying rock. Because the area is rich in fossils, Shawn suspected that this could be a fossil. He called his supervisor who in turn contacted the Tyrrell Museum. The museum staff did verify that it was a member of the dinosaur family but it will have to be removed and studied.

Upon further observation it was obvious that excavators had already smashed through the animal's tail and rear end. The rest of the creature's body was still there and the remarkable

realization was that it had rare features such as fossilized skin. Before the specimen was removed to the museum and studied no one realized how magnificent the specimen was going to be.

The task of removing the specimen was started. The Tyrrell team spent three days safety training and then spent two weeks of 12 hour shifts to encapsulate the specimen in burlap and plaster. The single block was estimated to weigh 15,000 pounds.

In the process of lifting the block it split and broke and collapsed to the ground. Fortunately, everything broke cleanly and in big pieces which were usable. They were shipped to the museum and the task of reconstruction begun.

Because the Tyrrell Museum has so many specimens available to work on and many are still left in the ground, one person rather than a team was allocated to work on this specimen. Technician Mark Mitchell spent 7,000 hours and over 5.5 years working on this dinosaur. Because of Mark's dedication to process the assembling and chipping away of rock and material from the specimen, the dinosaur was given the name *Borealopelta markmitchelli*. The first half of the name comes from the Latin for "northern shield" and the second is clear.

The finished specimen is now on display to the public at the Tyrrell Museum. Because of the completeness of the specimen, except for the tail, this display required no guessing as to what it looked like. The face and body are plain to see but the color is somewhat debatable. It has lost its natural color and is now tar-black with ochre spots because it had lain in the oil saturated material. Specialists are working on determining the animal's original colour by using special scientific techniques but the results are not available at the present time. In the meantime, based on pigments that still exist within the skin of the specimen the scientists think they can guess as to what the colors were.

The *Borealopelta markmitchelli*, a nodosaur is one of the ankylosaurs group of heavy set, low slung, tank like dinosaurs. Because it is covered in the preserved natural scaly skin, and preserved in 3D therefore retains its original shape of the animal and the dinosaur looks almost the same today as it did back in the Early Cretaceous. This nodosaur at the museum is about 18 feet (5.5 m) long and weighs 2,500 lb (1,134 kg).

The speculated colour. Shape would be quite accurate



Photo courtesy of Google

## Rock Hunt at the Lafarge Gravel Pit: Edmonton Tumblewood Lapidary Club

The ETLC had a grand field trip to the Lafarge Gravel Pit. Initiated by Trena Sheppard and thanks to Ernie from Lafarge for getting the members through the safety orientation, and into a old re-claimed pit with plenty of fist sized rocks.

Members met at Timmys at 10:30 am August 13<sup>th</sup> and headed west to the gravel pit. Other members joined us there at noon for a brief safety orientation, and confirmation that we were all packing steel toed boots, hard hats, gloves, and Hi Visibility vests. Then a short drive to a worked out pit, where there were acres of gravel and fist sized rocks to check out. Members scattered to the far corners of the old pit, returning regularly to drop off treasures. It was noted that there seemed to be much more stuff closer to the cars and much more high grading the farther away from the cars.

As the afternoon progressed, more member joined us and some left for other commitments. In the end 14 members had a dig and found some stuff. As none of our members had specifically been in this pit, we were not sure what we would find. Trena had worked here in a past life, but as she admitted she just “picked up pretty rocks” and did not know what they were.

We were surprised that there was very little petrified wood and the “lumber” found was mostly carbonized and agatized. We were also surprised at the petrified coral, there was plenty about and it is not that common in the area. There were tons of jaspers and quartzite and lots of other interesting pieces. Bruce Smith won the nicest rock with a small carnelian, and Scott won the largest rock hauled out, a 50 plus pound display rock.

We had a community lunch break about 2 pm and enjoyed the farmers market snacks from Trena.

Some members left after lunch, and others arrived, having spotted the signs and following the directions provided to members.

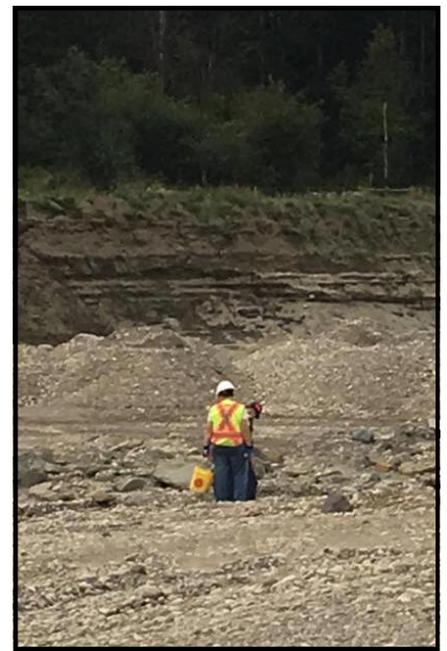
### ***Where to begin hunting?***



### ***Did anyone bring a gold pan?***



### ***Digging for treasure!***



ALBERTA FEDERATION OF ROCK CLUBS  
DIRECTORS MEETING, Sunday, September 17, 2017  
Held at CRLC Club premises--#13 3650-19 Street NE Calgary, AB.

**Present:** Ron Biel; John Cherwonogrodzky; Stacy Glaubitz; Pauline Zeschuk; Edward Zeschuk; Doug Schatz; Brett Jensen; Kendra Grams; Leola Grams; Tony Cave; Darek Nowicki

**Called to order 10:35 am**

Consideration of Agenda

John Cherwonogrodzky accepted the agenda. Pauline Zeschuk Seconded. Carried.

**2. Roll Call:** Clubs present were:

Calgary Facetors Guild  
Calgary Rock & Lapidary Club  
Edmonton Tumblewood Lapidary Club  
Lacombe Handicraft & Lapidary Guild  
Medicine Hat Rock & Lapidary Club  
Southern Alberta Rockhounds Assoc.

**3. In Memoriam:** no report;

**4. President's Message:**

Please note that the Elections are in November. Get ready for the next May Days and it will be hosted by the Calgary Rock and Lapidary Club (CRLC); If anyone knows anyone from their clubs wishing to join the board, please forward their names, as we will need to fill the secretary role.

**5. Minutes of the May 21, 2017 meeting**

Required Changes:

The travelling library is in Medicine Hat.

Kendra Grams accepted the minutes with the above revision. Seconded by Leola Grams. Carried

**6. Business Arising from the Minutes:** no business arising from minutes

**7. Correspondence:** no correspondence

**8. Committee Reports:**

**8.1 Treasurer's Report:** John Cherwonogrodzky

Treasurer's Report- John Cherwonogrodzky. A summary of finances was given to each attendee with hard copies of the full report for each of the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.

John made note that the May Days went very well. Money was saved on the venue; in fact, the team did wonderful at saving money.

Volunteers for next year's event have already come forward; and set up of the event was very well executed.

Director's insurance has been tabled, John would like to look into it further.

John will get name tags arranged.

A Fraudulent email was sent to the AFRC. The email said it was from Ron Biel and to send an

email money transfer to Kentucky for \$5000.00. John did not sent the money and will report the incident to the police. It is noted that Lethbridge Rock Club had a very similar email and had reported it to the police as well.

Lethbridge's actions was to take all personal emails off the website and have a general site web address. There was consensus that AFRC will mirror the Lethbridge club and omit all personal email addresses off the website.

John will report the outcome at the next meeting.

#### 8.2 Custodian/Librarians Report:

The Library is in Medicine Hat, in John Cherwonogrodzky's home.

Motioned by Pauline Zeschuk to keep the library in John Cherwonogrodzky's home until another club has interest in housing it. Seconded by Darek Nowicki. Carried

#### 8.3 GMFC Report: Brett Jensen

There was a conference call on June 25. The GMFC has been delisted by the Federal Government for lack of Financial Statements. They are working to rectify this. They will be making a change to their by-Law to the number of board members to be a minimum of 7. The GMFC has \$17,800.00 and their Manulife investment amount was not available. GMFC received AFRC's annual cheque and has been processed.

The Tumbling booklet GMFC has been working on will be available in electronic format this month.

#### 8.4 Newsletter Report –Ed Zeschuk

Ed has asked if we can reminds clubs to get items in quickly so he can include them in the newsletter.

#### 9. Old Business:

A discussion was held about the possibility of changing the date of May Daze from the May long weekend to the weekend just after. This has been bounced back to the club level to do a survey of the issue. (10.4 – May 21, 2017)

Clubs that discussed it indicated they like it on the May long weekend.

#### 10. New Business:

10.1 May Daze 2018: Calgary CRLC

10.2 May Daze 2019: Medicine Hat

10.3 May Daze 2020: to be determined

#### 11. Announcements: Rocktoberfest in Red Deer.

There will be an Open house/Silent Auction/Christmas Party in Edmonton on December 9<sup>th</sup>. See Newsletter for more information.

#### 13. Adjournment

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 12:08pm

## Information for AFRC Members:

The Edmonton Tumblewood Lapidary Club is holding an "Open House" on Saturday, December 9, 2017, at the Elmwood Hall, 16415 - 83 Ave. NW, in Edmonton beginning at 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. There is no admission fee to attend and is open to the public. A large Silent Auction will be going on during this time, as well as demonstrations, displays, tables with vendors selling their handiwork and collections, also other activities. A concession will be open during this time.

A potluck Christmas Dinner will be held after 5:30 pm for club members. AFRC members are invited to join Edmonton club members for the potluck and activities after the meal. Two conditions (same as for ETLC members) apply. People attending the potluck are asked to inform the committee that they are coming to participate in the dinner and we ask that each family brings a potluck item to share. It is important for the Social committee to know how many guests to expect for the Dinner in order to set up the needed tables and chairs.

We also have a Dutch gift exchange for those who wish to participate. Details will be sent out to those who register for the meal.

ETLC would be delighted to have AFRC members join us for our "Christmas Party"!

To let us know that you are coming, please email Pauline Zeschuk at [paulinez8@shaw.ca](mailto:paulinez8@shaw.ca).

I will reply to your email to confirm that I have received your message and I will send out more details about our evening activities. If I missed getting your email, you may phone me at 780 430 6694.

Pauline Zeschuk



*Merry Christmas*