



# THE AGATEER

The Newsletter of the Madison Gem and Mineral Club

Volume 8, Issue 10

October 2008

## ***October 28 Meeting:***

### **Agates of Mexico**

***Eugene Mueller***

Our October meeting will feature Eugene Mueller speaking on the agates of Mexico. Eugene is president of the Gem Shop in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, a lapidary business that has operated for 37 years.

From the Gem Shop Web site:

*The Gem Shop is a true lapidary dealing with everything from the mining of fine agates and jaspers to the cutting of unique designer cabochons. Our rock yard and basement are filled with tons of different types of rock for every lapidary need. Our world-wide contacts and number of years in business (37) have allowed us to gain a vast knowledge of the world gem and lapidary markets. If you are looking for any particular rock, email us and we will try to get it for you, or we will try to send you in the right direction.*

The Gem Shop has sold Mexican Agua Nueva agate for many years, and in 1995 Eugene established a claim in an area near Chihuahua, south of El Paso, Texas. The Agua Nueva agate from this claim is formed in veins and is basically a moss agate. So plan to attend our October 28 meeting. It will be a good one.

## **November 22-23 Annual Gem and Mineral Show - Alliant Center**

Our 46<sup>th</sup> annual Gem and Mineral Show is fast approaching. Chairman Nevin Franke will need YOUR help in making the show a success. Help is needed for set-up, ticket sellers, security, sales table, greeters, etc. So, if you can spare a few hours to help with the show, it would be very much appreciated. Many hands make light work. Nevin will have sign-up sheets at the October meeting. Or, you may call him at 251-2601 with questions,

### **Next Meeting:**

**Tuesday, October 28, 7:00 PM**

**AB20 Weeks Hall**

**UW Department of Geology and Geophysics**

**1215 West Dayton Street**

**Madison, Wisconsin**

### **??????**

Ever wonder how a lapidary makes those spheres?

Or

If the layers in agate form from the inside out, or from the outside in?

## 2008 Member Competition

All members are urged to bring specimens for the monthly competition.

**October - favorite material found by member**

November - faceted gems (by member)

December - holiday party, no competition

Questions may be directed to Metje Butler, Education Chairperson, at 244-3659.

### Calendar

Oct 25 Tyrel Rouse Open House

Oct 28 Madison Gem and Mineral Monthly meeting  
Agates of Mexico

Nov 1-2: Sturtevant (Racine) WI. Racine Geological  
Society Annual Show

Nov 4 Board Meeting MG&MC

Nov 8-9: Freeport, IL. Northwest Illinois Rock Club  
Annual Gem, Fossil, and Mineral Show.

Nov 22-23 Madison Gem and Mineral 46<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Show

### Tyrel Rouse - 1st Annual Moving Rock Showing and Open House

Date: 10/25/2008 Club Member Tyrel Rouse and wife will have a rock sale and open house on Oct 25. The schedule:

5pm to 7pm is an open sale of jewelry, rough, slabs, specimens, magazines, and books. Along with free dinner; chili, bread, cornbread, fresh fruit and other refreshments.

7pm to 8pm will be a live auction featuring some of the larger more specialty items mostly rough, specimens, and equipment.

8:30pm to 9:30 pm will be lecture time on favorite collecting areas in the U.S. accompanied by specimens from those areas.

9:30pm to 10pm on is open house to my new apartment. Swimming may be permitted . Please call to confirm.

Tyrel Rouse and Danielle Poulton

Rare Earth Arts and Lapidary llc

Cell : (608) 235-2865

### Words 101

#### Psilomelane

I've always liked the word psilomelane. It is a mineral composed of a hydrated barium and manganese oxides. Psilomelane is amorphous and occurs as botryoidal and stalactitic masses with a smooth shining surface and submetallic lustre. The mineral is readily distinguished from other hydrous manganese oxides (manganite and wad) by its greater hardness 5 to 6; the specific gravity varies from 3.7 to 4.7.

In pronunciation the p is silent, so it is 'si lom eh lane'. It comes from the Greek psilos, meaning bare; and melan- meaning black.

### Grab Bag Request

Here is a chance to clean out your garage/basement! We need lapidary 'stuff' to fill grab bags offered for sale at the annual show. So small fossils, tumbled stones, small geodes, etc – anything that will fit in a sandwich sized bag is what we need.

You can bring donations to the meeting, or drop them off at Burnie's Rock Shop prior to Nov. 4.

If you want to help stuff the grab bags, come to the Nov. 4 Board meeting, 7 pm, Student Lounge of Weeks Hall.

## From MWF News Oct 2008:

### A Mineral That Was Good As Gold

Once upon a time, a mineral we now consider common was “worth it’s weight in gold” - literally! Roman soldiers were paid in this mineral. Ancient trade routes were established for its transport. One such route (in Africa) was still active in 1960, moving 15,000 pounds across the desert by camel! People once rubbed this mineral on infants to bring them luck. Can you name it?

### Interested in optical phenomena (such as iridescence) in minerals?

Check out Dr. Barbara Smigel’s “Optical Phenomena of Gemstones” at [www.bwsmigel.info/Lesson6/DE.Optical.Phenomena.html](http://www.bwsmigel.info/Lesson6/DE.Optical.Phenomena.html)

This is just part of a tutorial that covers the scientific side of gemstones and is a very easy read.

### Three Minerals for the Price of One!

This rock is valued for its attractive combination of yellow, gray and brown colors. Found only in nodule form, these concretions are typically made up of three successive layers of three different minerals (always the same three). What makes this rock unusual is that all of the minerals have *exactly the same chemical formula!* The rock is **Septarian Nodule**, also known as Dragon’s Egg. The grey outer layer is Limestone, the yellow center is golden Calcite, and the brown layer separating the two is Aragonite. Although differing internal structures make these different minerals, all three have the same chemical formula:

CaCO<sub>3</sub> - calcium carbonate. Some are even nine feet in diameter on the shores of New Zealand!

The Agateer is the official publication of the Madison Gem and Mineral Club. It is published monthly, and mailed as a benefit of membership to all Madison Gem and Mineral Club members.

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Membership is open to all individuals, and applications for membership will be accepted upon payment of annual dues, which are \$12.00 for adults (18 and older), \$5.00 for junior members (ages 6-17), and \$16.00 for families.

Visit the official website of the Madison Gem and Mineral Club at [www.madison.com/communities/madisonrockclub/contact.php](http://www.madison.com/communities/madisonrockclub/contact.php) for more information

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