



MWF NEWS

Midwest Federation
of Mineralogical and Geological Societies

October 2026 – Issue No. 655

Website: www.mwfed.org

Member of the American Federation
of Mineralogical Societies



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tom Barnhizer, MWF President

Well, here we are near the end of summer, and what a summer it has been.

It has been packed with rock and gem shows, rock talks, field trips, and regular meetings of local clubs. Over the course of this summer my family has had the good fortune to vacation and collect rocks in some fantastic geologic regions, from Illinois' glacier moraines to the shorelines of Michigan's Great Lakes and the canyonlands of Arizona. I hope that this has been the case with many of you as well.

The good news is that those activities will continue on into the fall and beyond, thanks to the efforts of our Federations to keep these areas and others open and free to future rockhounds.

I have made it a priority to visit as many county fairs and state natural history museums as I could in an effort to gauge the public's interest in

(continued on page 2)



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The MWF Executive Committee met September 12, 2026, in Bowling Green, Ohio. Jerri Heer, Toledo Gem and Rockhound Club Show Chairperson, greeted the group and encouraged them to visit the show after the meeting. She handed out admission tickets to the show.

President Tom Barnhizer said he appreciated the club hosting our meeting. He then called the meeting to order using the MWF jade gavel. First Vice President John Rettler led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Tom introduced the MWF and AFMS past presidents who were in attendance. From the MWF were Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich, David Rich, Catherine Clevenz, J.C. Moore, Sandy Fuller, and Cheryl Neary. On Zoom were Cindy Root and David Root. Past Presidents of the AFMS in attendance included Sandy Fuller, Cheryl Neary, and J.C. Moore.

(continued on page 3)

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Convention Registration Forms	5-6
Deadline Calendar	9
Editor Warns About Loss of Publisher	13
Executive Committee Minutes	1
Executive Committee: State Directors' Reports.....	13
Fire-Engulfed Rocks Draw Awards.....	2

Insurance Chair Gives Information.....	4
Money Market Fund Proposal Discussed.....	10
President's Message	1
Register Early for MWF Convention	4
Upcoming Events.....	11-12

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, CONTINUED

rockhounding and the geologic history of our region. I am pleased to report that I found great enthusiasm for the historical and artistic displays of rocks, minerals and fossils throughout my travels. Many rock and mineral shops provided a chance to enhance my own collection with specimens from other countries. In addition, many retail displays promoted interest in geology and collecting.

In short, we are not alone. People like rocks. We should be encouraged to do whatever is needed to feed that interest.

It was great to attend the fall meeting of the Midwest Federation Executive Committee Bowling Green, Ohio, on September 12th. It was held in conjunction with the Toledo Gem and Rockhound Clubs' annual show, which is a must-see for anyone interested in rock collecting and lapidary arts.

The next convention of the Midwest Federation, including representatives of member clubs as well as the Executive Committee, will be held in March 5th through 7th in Wisconsin, hosted by the Kettle Moraine Geological Society in conjunction with their rock and gem show. The article on page 4 gives you an exciting glimpse.

As I near the completion of my term, I look back on our Federation's efforts to strengthen ties between our regional clubs and the whole AFMS. I am confident that our leadership, with your support, will continue to be effective in supporting rockhounding clubs throughout our region.

It would be impossible to thank everyone personally who has offered support and encouragement to me over the past year. Without you, putting in the everyday work, we couldn't complete our mission for the broader rockhounding community.

This is not a farewell message, as I plan to continue to be an enthusiastic supporter of my local clubs and the MWF/AFMS at large. Thank you all, and hope to see you on the trail ahead.

MWF OFFICERS

President: Tom Barnhizer
5060 Arbor Way
Sylvania, OH 43560
419-381-4418
superscout258@gmail.com

1 st VP: John Rettler 1921 W. Sumner Street Rubicon, WI 53078 262-617-0022 johnrettler@gmail.com	2 nd VP: J.C. Moore 25235 N. Illinois Highway 97 Cuba, IL 61427 309-231-1952 jcmoores3rd@gmail.com
---	---

Secretary: Donna Moore 25235 N. Illinois Highway 97 Cuba, IL 61427 309-231-2116 mwfsecretary@gmail.com	Treasurer: Steve Shimatzki 4295 County Road 16 Woodville, OH 43469 567-868-8794 woodvillerocks@gmail.com
--	--

FIRE-ENGULFED ROCKS DRAW AWARDS

Via the Rocky Mountain Federation News
of May, 2026

[This is an excerpt from a post dated August 12, 2025, on the website of the Pasadena Library Society, pasadenalapidary.org. Though it doesn't involve the MWF, it still holds real interest.]

Sue Dekany, PLS Secretary, had been working toward entering a competitive case in late 2024. Then came the Eaton Fire, and Sue's accumulated work was trashed. Out of the ashes, however, Sue thought the remnants would make an interesting educational display. Boy, was she right!

Over Mother's Day weekend she set up her display, showing her rocks that had been cooked in the Eaton Fire, and submitted the case in the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies show. The result: a double win with Best of Show and the President's Award.

Sue's observations from her rock debris: many rocks were massively oxidized (pyrite, some jaspers, onyx and serpentine); metal lost its protective polish; obsidian fractured in a spiral but otherwise looked normal; quartz crystals and fluorite turned white and brittle; and amazingly, an apatite cabochon survived, looking the same as before the fire.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES, CONT.: REPORTS OF TREASURER, STATE DIRECTORS

Sandy Fuller reviewed the rules of the meeting. The minutes of the May 23, 2026 Executive Committee Meeting had been printed and handed out. David Rich moved to approve the minutes as printed. Catherine Clevenz seconded the motion, which passed.

Stephen Shimatzki gave the treasurer's report. He noted that he had to reissue the AFMS dues check because of a mistake, but it was taken care of now. There was a question about how much newsletter printing costs. He noted it was about \$3,220 plus postage to mail it, and \$1,396 to print the MWF Directory. We had received about \$515.75 in interest. David Rich moved to accept the treasurer's report. Sandy Fuller seconded the motion, which carried.

Stephen then presented the proposed budget. He noted each committee chairperson is allotted \$25 for expenses, but few use it. One of the big expenses is printing and mailing of membership cards to clubs. He proposed a budget of approximately \$54,000. J.C. Moore moved to accept the proposed budget for 2027. Cheryl Neary seconded the motion, which carried.

J.C. Moore reported on the **State Directors:**

Illinois – Ashley Boyd had a written report. She was on Zoom and had nothing to add to her report.

Indiana – Michele Yamanaka had a written report.

Iowa – Timothy Hill had a written report.

Michigan – No report from John Donker.

Minnesota – Marcia Opatz had a written report.

Missouri/ Arkansas – Bruce Stinemetz had a written report and was on Zoom. He added that the Central Arkansas club had been struggling, but is now doing better. They are planning an October show. There was a question about the MWF logo being available on the website. Stephen thought he had posted it, and will check on it. The renewal form for clubs will be in the newsletter and on the website.

Nebraska – Jim Marburger had a written report.

North and South Dakota – Nothing new.

Ohio – Catherine Clevenz thanked her assistant Joyce Kish for helping with the report. She also reported that the Northwest Rockhounds had lost their meeting place. Right now they are meeting at her store.

Wisconsin – Mary Rettler was present and had a written report. She had nothing to add.

John Rettler reviewed **Reports from the Permanent Committees:**

Archaeology – Skeeter Kish was present and had a written report. He added the archaeology groups are struggling to keep membership. They are trying to reach out to younger people.

Boundaries – Sandy Fuller reported no activity.

Bulletin Editors – Mary Ann reported the MWF had a great year with awards. Next year the deadline won't be so early since the AFMS convention is later. She will notify everyone. Later she announced that, due to the MWF convention being in early March, there will be a MWF deadline of February 1.

Club Rockhound of the Year – Jeanine Mielecki had a written report.

Convention and Show Advisory – J.C. noted that St. Charles went well this year when we hosted both the MWF and AFMS. They had a good show and meetings went well. Kettle Moraine Geological Society will host the MWF convention March 5-7, 2027 in West Bend, Wisconsin.

Minnesota Mineral Club will host the convention in October 2028 at the State Fairgrounds in Falcon Heights, Minnesota. It will be in the grandstand, all on one level. J.C. noted that he is still looking for hosts for 2029 and 2030. He is looking around for someone to be his assistant who can eventually take over the duties of the committee.

Credentials – David Root reported nothing to report. J.C. Moore, who was filling in, reported that we had a quorum for business.

Director of Supplies – Sharon Marburger had a written report.

(continued on page 7)

REGISTER EARLY FOR MWF CONVENTION WITH BUS TRANSPORT AND FIELD TRIPS

John Rettler, MWF 1st Vice President
Kettle Moraine Geological Society Show Chair

The Kettle Moraine Geological Society of Wisconsin is proud to kick off the Wisconsin End of Winter Weekend by hosting the 2027 convention of the Midwest Federation! Convention activities, March 5th through 7th, will be held in conjunction with our rock and mineral show at the Washington County Fair Park & Conference Center in West Bend, Wisconsin.

Pre-convention activities on Friday, March 5th will include side tours to three amazing places: the Great Horicon Marsh Explorium (interactive exhibits and a 33,000-acre wildlife reserve); Kettle Moraine State Forest glacial landscape, including the Henry Reuss Ice Age Visitor Center; and Holy Hill/St. Mary's Basilica, a historic building atop a glacial kame.



Narrated interactive exhibits at the Horicon Marsh Explorium trace the history of the wetlands carved by glaciers from the Ice Age through the present day. Photo via horiconmarsh.org/visit/explorium.

Friday will also include a sneak peek of the show and a sampling of Wisconsin wine and craft beers.

The MWF Executive Committee will meet on Saturday morning, the 6th. A box lunch will be offered at noon (attendees can also buy lunch at the 4H counter), and the Delegates' meeting will follow that. A catered dinner will be served at the annual MWF Awards Banquet on Saturday night.

The show will offer more than 20,000 square feet of displays, demonstrations, vendors, and authentic American Indian artifacts and ancient tools. It will be held Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Guest speakers at the convention will present programs about the megafauna of the Ice Age, fossils of the Midwest, Wisconsin caves, and Wisconsin geology ("A Story of Fire, Water and Ice").

Two Milwaukee excursions on Sunday will go to the Potawatomi Casino and the Harley-Davidson Museum. You can go to either or both.

March weather in Wisconsin has never been a factor for our show. However, for those who prefer a leisurely ride to avoid early spring weather and possible roadway conditions, KMGS has made arrangements with Riteway Transportation Group for motor coach transport.

Buses will begin in more than 20 cities as far west as Omaha, as far south as St. Louis, as far east as Detroit, and as far north as Minneapolis, and take attendees to West Bend. More details will be in upcoming issues of MWF News.

You can get early registration for all events here: zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/mwf-convention-package-2027. Registration forms are on pages 5 and 6 of this issue; for more information, call John Rettler, 262-617-0022.

INSURANCE CHAIR GIVES INFORMATION

Sue Goedert, MWF Insurance Chair

Forms from the MWF's insurance company have changed, and it's creating some confusion. The Named Insured is the MWF; club name and other details should be listed in Remarks.

The only coverage we provide is liability, for \$1 million. If you need more, you can contact the carrier to make that arrangement separately.

REGISTER FOR 2027 MWF CONVENTION AND KETTLE MORaine GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW

Register via email or through zeffy.com/en-US-ticketing/mwf-convention-package-2027 (you can scan the QR code). Or mail this form, with a check made payable to The KMGS, to:

John Rettler, KMGS Convention
1921 W. Sumner Street
Rubicon, WI 53078



Full Convention Package – All for \$55 (save \$35!).

Early-bird price until Nov. 1.

Includes Friday “sneak peek” to the show, admission to Friday VIP Wisconsin wine or craft beer sampling with hors d’oeuvres, Saturday night catered dinner and MWF Awards Banquet, and weekend pass for KMGS rock, gem, mineral, fossil, and earth science show.

OR A LA CARTE OPTIONS:

Friday VP Package Only – \$30.

Includes: Wisconsin wine or craft beer sampling with Wisconsin appetizers, “sneak peek” to the KMGS pre-show sales, and a pass for the show on Friday and Saturday. (Does NOT include MWF Banquet dinner.)

Weekend pass only for early admission – \$10.

Saturday catered dinner at MWF Awards Banquet (menu TBD) – \$25.00

FRIDAY & SUNDAY SIDE TOURS (Prices TBD – Reserve your seat – Pay later!)

Approximately four-hour excursions. Availability and pricing depend on participation. Side trips may be canceled due to low numbers or late entries. So, the key here: **REGISTER EARLY!**

YES – I AM INTERESTED IN THESE TOURS (CHECK PREFERENCES)

GREAT HORICON MARSH EXPLORIUM, FRIDAY: Indoor Explorium and 33,000-acre wildlife reserve/habitat. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Estimated transportation: \$68/person (10-passenger), \$67/person (12-passenger), or \$33/person (mini-coach).

KETTLE MORaine STATE FOREST, FRIDAY: Scenic glacial landscape and Henry Reuss Ice Age Visitor Center. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Estimated transportation: \$68/person (10-passenger), \$67/person (12-passenger), or \$33/person (mini-coach).

HOLY HILL/ST. MARY’S BASILICA, FRIDAY: Historic basilica atop a glacial kame. 7:00-11:00 a.m. Estimated transportation: \$68/person (10-passenger) or \$67/person (12-passenger).

HARLEY-DAVIDSON MUSEUM, SUNDAY: Milwaukee museum excursion. Approximately 9:15 a.m.-2:15 p.m. Estimated transportation: \$80/person (10-passenger), \$78/person (12-passenger), \$35/person (mini-coach), or \$24/person (passenger coach).

POTAWATOMI CASINO, SUNDAY: Milwaukee excursion. Approximately 7:00 a.m.-noon. Estimated transportation: \$80/person (10-passenger), \$78/person (12-passenger), \$35/person (mini-coach), or \$24/person (passenger coach).

HARLEY-DAVIDSON MUSEUM WITH POTAWATOMI CASINO, SUNDAY: Visit both Milwaukee destinations. Approximately 9:15 a.m.-2:15 p.m. Estimated transportation: \$35/person (mini-coach) or \$24/person (passenger coach).

MIDWEST CHARTER TRANSPORTATION – ROUND-TRIPS TO THE CONVENTION! THURSDAY, MARCH 4 TO SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2027

Charter transportation (coaches and mini-coaches) from communities throughout the Midwest will make round trips to and from West Bend. In addition, there will be continuous hotel-to-event shuttle service Friday through Sunday.

Thursday, March 4: Regional pickups, transport to West Bend.

Friday through Sunday, March 5-7: Convention weekend. GO Riteway buses providing continuous hotel-to-event shuttle.

Sunday, March 7: Transport from West Bend to original pickup locations.

Anticipated round-trip cost: Approximately \$150 to \$250 per person. Final cost depends on route, pickup location, bus size, and number of passengers.

Current proposed pickup communities: Actual pickup points to be decided. Your address will help determine nearest pickup spot. Reserve your seat on the bus now, pay later!

- _____ Minnesota: Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester
- _____ Iowa and Nebraska: Omaha, Des Moines, Davenport
- _____ Missouri: Kansas City, St. Louis
- _____ Illinois: Springfield, Chicago
- _____ Wisconsin: Madison, Rhinelander, Minocqua, Pickerel, West Bend
- _____ Indiana: Indianapolis, South Bend, to be announced
- _____ Michigan: Grand Rapids, Zeeland, Lansing, Detroit
- _____ Ohio: Toledo, Columbus, Cincinnati

Names of All Passengers _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **ZIP** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Special Considerations (such as bringing a walker): _____

Mail this form to: John Rettler, KMGS Transportation
1921 W. Sumner Street
Rubicon, WI 53078

Or email it to: johnrettler@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES, CONTINUED: COMMITTEES AND CONVENTIONS

Directory – Martha Miss had nothing to report. There were extra copies of the 2026 directory available at the meeting.

Education – No report.

Endowment – Cindy Root reported that she had been able to close the bank accounts at Independent Bank. She had sent the checks to Stephen who had opened new accounts in the bank in Woodville, closer to him.

Environment and Legislation – Nothing new to report except that they are trying to make several trails in the national monuments only for non-motorized access.

Geology – Cheryl Neary had nothing to report.

Historian – Cindy Root had nothing new to report.

Insurance – There had been some inquiries about difficulty applying for certificates for shows and field trips. Sue Goedert had reported that **the MWF must be the named insured**. There was some confusion about the section for the certificates on the website, which will be addressed.

Junior Activities – Reinee Hildebrandt had a written report. She was on Zoom.

Lapidary Arts – David Root had nothing to report.

Long Range Planning – Cheryl Neary had nothing to report, except she noted we need some new blood in our organization. Ashley Boyd added that she couldn't agree more. We need to start stressing this at the club level. The clubs need to hear what the MWF is and does. She had given presentations to clubs in her area after the convention in Lincoln, Nebraska. We need to educate our members.

Membership – Jim Marburger had a written report.

Merit Awards – Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich had a written report. She noted the Minnesota Mineral Club had received a gold award for the second year in a row. She also announced the new inductees in the Bulletin Editors' Hall of Fame. (New editors are inducted in the MWF when the AFMS is hosted in the MWF.) They are Valerie J. Meyers for the MWF News, Stuart Reid for the Minnesota Mineral Club bulletin Rock Rustler's News, Regina Kapta for the Central Illinois Gem and Mineral Club's CentrILL Gems, and Michele Yamanaka for the Strata Data from the Three Rivers Gem and Mineral Society in Indiana.

Mineralogy – VACANT

Newsletter – Valerie always needs articles. Joe Johnson suggested we need a marketing blitz beyond the newsletter to clubs of the benefits of the MWF as well as the AFMS, showing how interlocked they all are. He suggested that a video package on the website might be one way to do this. Tom asked Joe if he and Keith Cook would be willing to head this up.

Paleontology – Tom Barnizer will be the new chairman for this committee.

Program Competition – Bob Powers had a written report.

Program Requests (Lending Library) – Bob Powers had a written report.

Program Review – Jim Travis reported that there was nothing new to report.

Public Image – VACANT. Keith Cook will be taking this chairmanship.

Safety and Field Trips – No report.

Scholarship – Marge Collins had a written report.

Silent Auction – VACANT. (Cheryl Neary later offered to oversee this in West Bend in 2027.)

Technology Resources – Sandy Fuller had nothing to report.

Uniform Rules – Donna Moore had a written report. She encouraged more competitive exhibits.

Website – Cindy Root noted that she and David have new e-mail addresses. Hers is queencindy1051@gmail.com, David's is ravedoot@gmail.com.

Conventions – John Rettler had brought paper copies of the registration survey to the meeting. He asked people to respond soon, so they can determine which options will be offered. Registration is now open. There is a QR Code on the form, or registrants can go to www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/mwf-convention-package-2027. This will be on the website. He is mailing the material to each club in Wisconsin. He asked the

(continued on page 8)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES, CONTINUED: OLD BUSINESS AND NEW BUSINESS

state directors to contact their clubs. Transportation is being arranged by Riteway Bus Service. There are 10 routes proposed, if people are interested, ranging from Kansas City to Toledo, Ohio. They will have hotel blocks by November 1st. There are optional side tours interest being surveyed in the material. This will be an awesome opportunity. They would like replies by November 1st. Information will be in the newsletter and on the website. There will be guest speakers at the show on Saturday and Sunday. There are two hotels within two miles of the show. They are looking at camping opportunities. There is a state park within 15 miles that offers winter camping.

2028 – Sandy Fuller reported that the show is at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds in the grandstand, which will be all on one level. There will be more information at the next meeting.

Old Business:

Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich announced that the deadline for submitting articles and newsletters for the MWF Bulletin Editors Contest will be February 1, due to the early convention. This year, entries will be all electronic, so they can just be scanned and e-mailed to her. She noted we have increased number of entries and are doing well in the AFMS.

Report of Media Committee about equipment for Zoom: We have a camera, sound system, mic and use of a projector. We can run a successful Zoom meeting. We need multiple people who can run the electronic portion of the meeting if Catherine is not available. John Rettler said there is a new screen in the meeting room where the meetings will be held in March. He will let her know about wi-fi.

It was suggested that it be advertised that there will be people at the convention who can ID specimens. That will be set up with the silent auction.

New Business:

Report from the AFMS – J.C. Moore noted that the AFMS meeting was in May in St. Charles, Illinois, along with the MWF convention. It was well attended. There were three competitive exhibits. David Rich added that the AFMS Newsletter is now entirely digital. This has saved the AFMS \$18,000. The 2027 AFMS Convention will be held in Huntsville, Alabama, October 8-10. He said he hoped all members are seeing the AFMS Newsletter. (If not, ask your newsletter editor to forward it to you, or look at it on the AFMS Website.).

Endowment Fund – Stephen and Donna had gone to the bank in Woodville to set up accounts for the Endowment Fund, which will be separate from the general MWF funds. Cindy Root will be added as a signatory electronically. Stephen noted that Cindy can deposit checks at a branch near her if needed. They are still working to get the funds from the investment account that Alan Hukill had.

John Rettler presented information the Board of Directors had discussed about investing a portion of the MWF general fund. *[Editor's Note: John's complete report is on page 10.]* He was recommending investing some of the money not being used to generate interest that could be used for special funds, and recommended leaving some in the money market account for emergencies. He recommended finding someone near Stephen to oversee the investments. Stephen said the Huntington Bank has a person who does this. John recommended the Franklin Income Fund because they have an excellent track record. This would be a trial basis using revenues only. No money would be removed from the principal.

He suggested we might take half of the earning for travel reimbursement to those who travel to each of the MWF Executive Committee meetings. The idea would be to see if there is any incentive to get more people to travel to meetings. It is important to get people to come to meetings in person. The environment among the leadership contributes to the business of our organization. He noted that group participation has a trickle-down

(continued on page 9)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES, CONTINUED: INVESTMENT PROPOSAL TO ADJOURNMENT

creative incentive. Zoom is still great if you cannot make the meetings in person.

Ashley Boyd noted her first experience was as a club delegate. She got the “bug” to share about the MWF to area clubs. She didn’t think the financial incentive was necessary. It was noted this is a reimbursement for travel, not an incentive. This is a wording issue.

Cindy Root moved that we use the income from the investment fund for the benefit of executive committee members who ask for reimbursement for attending executive committee meetings. The amount is to be capped at \$50, as determined by the treasurer. Cheryl Neary seconded the motion. The motion passed with no nays.

After more discussion, John Rettler moved to amend the original motion to say: Take steps to better use the funds in the money market account. Cindy Root seconded the motion, which passed. Joe Johnson noted we should have at least two signatories, which was planned. A question was raised about taxes. Sandy Fuller noted we don’t make enough to be taxed.

Reinee Hildebrandt (online) asked about the funds being used instead for junior activities and marketing. Stephen explained that this is a rainy-day fund that we need to make work better for us. It was hoped that incentives for people to attend meetings in person would push them to share about the MWF.

Tom Barnhizer added that communication is important. It is best to have face-to-face interaction, which will cement the organization. David Rich noted that these face-to-face meetings build relationships that last a lifetime.

Martha Miss had a report for those doing newsletters that Microsoft Publisher would be discontinued October 1st. She had shared this, but had not had much response. She noted that anyone using Publisher should save all their files as .pdf (or Adobe). Then they should be able to call up the files. Or, the files could be saved as Microsoft Word to be

able to salvage. The formatting might be altered, but at least people would have the files. There are several options for replacement programs to use, but there will be a learning curve on some. *[Editor’s Note: Martha’s more detailed report is on page 13.]*

The ad hoc committee looking into making programs more accessible had not met. Tom needed to appoint members for the committee and meet before the convention in March.

Cheryl noted that if people are not doing their jobs in the MWF, they need to be replaced. Tom will take this under advisement.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be Saturday, March 6.

Steve reminded anyone needing reimbursement for expenses to get the request to him so he can close the financial year on October 31st. Cheryl Neary presented the MWF Past President’s Award to Tom Barnhizer, whose term ends October 31st. J.C. Moore reminded everyone he was selling tickets for the AFMS Endowment Raffle, which funds the Future Rockhounds of America badge program and other activities.

J.C. moved to adjourn the meeting. David Rich seconded the motion, which carried. Tom declared the meeting adjourned.

DEADLINE CALENDAR

Registration has begun at Zeffy.com for the **2027 MWF convention**, to be held March 5-7 in West Bend, Wisconsin. Host club will be the Kettle Moraine Geological Society. Mail-in registration form, and an associated article, are on pages 3 through 5 of this issue.

MWF entries for the **Bulletin Editors’ Contest** should be sent in electronic form by **Feb. 1, 2027**, to Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich, mafergusonrich@gmail.com. Rules and forms are at amfed.org/contests.

USE OF INVESTED MONEY MARKET FUNDS FOR TRAVEL ALLOWANCE DISCUSSED

John Rettler,
MWF First Vice President

After the meeting of MWF Officers on August 18, 2026, a proposal for the utilization of the funds in the Money Market Account was discussed.

The primary concerns were:

The utility of, and difference between, money market accounts and mutual funds.

The potential for higher returns if a portion of the money market account is reallocated into a mutual fund that includes risk-averse investment-grade funds.

The preservation of a portion of the capital in the money market fund for emergency use if needed.

What the best use of the earnings is from such an investment, and whether it could be used to encourage meeting attendance by Executive Board members and State Directors.

The appropriateness of the proposed mutual fund, including operational details, details, internal costs, sales charges, risks, fund management, track record, and returns, in comparison to the current plan.

The availability and utilization of a mutual-fund portfolio in congruency with history, desires, and needs of the MWF.

The suggested proposal is:

1. The suggested mutual fund discussed is The Franklin Income Fund (FKIQX) due to my familiarity and experience with the fund, its history, performance, risk aversion, and applicability.

2. While I am Security Licensed, I WILL NOT be the Broker for the investment, but will locate, contact, interview and introduce a qualified representative, and will introduce the representative to the Treasurer to establish the account if decided so.

3. The proposal is to be an ongoing process to be re-evaluated on a year-to-year basis for its efficacy, and adjusted or expanded by the Officers annually if needed, based upon both the performance and results of the program.

4. A starting sum of \$50,000 is to be invested into the mutual fund, with the balance to remain in the money market account for use if needed.

5. **Only the interest or earning of the fund is to be utilized (like an Endowment)**, as an incentive to encourage designated members to attend events in person. In doing so, the preservation and protection of the original investment is to remain untouched.

6. It is only expected that there will be two withdrawals annually. However, the Treasurer will have full access to the account if needed for authorized uses.

7. There will be two authorized users and signatories listed on the account, those being the Treasurer and another Officer or Executive Committee member yet to be determined. Both will (could / should) have signatory authorization and access via online or phone. *[Secretary's note: There will be three signatories.]*

8. After each convention or Executive Committee meeting, the Treasurer will withdraw 50% of the balance over the originally deposited amount, and will issue a payment in equal proportions for each Officer and Executive Committee member who **attended in person**, as a Travel Allowance for attending the meeting.

9. This disbursement will be **capped to not exceed \$50.00 per attendee**, and will be sent within a reasonable amount of time after the meeting, at the discretion of the Treasurer.

10. This may be sent via mail, electronic transfer, ACH (Automatic Clearing House), or whatever means agreed upon between the Treasurer and the attendee.

11. This Travel Allowance program **is not** applicable to those attending via Zoom or any other electronic application allowing remote attendance or involvement.

(continued on page 11)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date and Time	Organization	Place	Contact
Sept. 25-27 Fri & Sat 9-5, Sun 9-3	Tri-State Gem & Mineral Society	Joplin Museum, 504 S. Schifferdecker Ave., Joplin, MO	Chris Wiseman, jmc-cwiseman@sbcbglobal.net
Sept. 26-27 Sat & Sun 10-5	Flint Rock & Gem Club	Crossroads Village, 6140 N. Bray, Flint, MI	Bill Wendling, bwrockbarn@century.net
Sept. 26-27	Grand Traverse Area Rock & Mineral Club	Cherryland VFW Post 2780, 3400 Veterans Drive, Traverse City, MI	Lauren Vaughn, gtarmc@trockhounds.com
Sept. 26-27 Sat 9-6, Sun 10-4	Nebraska Mineral & Gem Club	Papillion Landing Fieldhouse, 1046 W. Lincoln St., Papillion, NE	Tammy Jeanneret, tjeanneret6515@gmail.com
Sept. 26-27 Sat 9-5, Sun 10-4	Oshkosh Earth Science Club	Sunnyview Expo Center, 500 E. County Road Y, Oshkosh, WI	Mike Lenz, 2817@sbcbglobal.net
Oct. 3 Sat 10-4	Miami Gem and Mineral Club rock sale	Troyview Church of God, 1770 N. County Road 25A, Troy, OH	Mary Manning, maryelainemanning@gmail.com
Oct. 3-4 Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society	Orr Bldg., State Fairgrounds, 801 E. Sangamon Ave., Springfield, IL	Ed Wagner, loesseditor@gmail.com
Oct. 3-4 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4	Minnesota Mineral Club	Grandstand, State Fairgrounds, 1265 Snelling Ave., Falcon Heights, MN	Merys Raymer, show@minnesotamineralclub.org
Oct. 3-4 Sat 9-5, Sun 9-4	Worthen Earth Searchers	County Fairgrounds, 4200 Archer, East Moline, IL	Cindy Cottrell, cc31068@yahoo.com
Oct. 9-11 Fri 9-6, Sat 10-7, Sun 11-5	Michigan Mineralogical Society	Bldg. P, Macomb Sports & Expo Ctr., 14500 E. 12 Mile Road, Warren, MI	John Peters, joopett13@hotmail.com
Oct. 10-11 Sat 9-5, Sun 9-3	Loup Valley Gem & Mineral Society	Methodist Outreach Ctr., 3602 16 th St., Columbus, NE	Deb Gonsior, loupvalleynew@gmail.com
Oct. 10-11 Sat 9-5, Sun 9-4	Sac & Fox Lapidary Club	Old Armory, Blue Rose Ballroom, 122 E. Broadway Ave., Fairfield, IA	Ron Brown, ron1947@ronbrownfamily.net
Oct. 16-18 Fri 1-7, Sat 10-6,	Central Michigan Lapidary & Mineral Society	County Fairgrounds, 700 E. Ash St., Mason, MI	Robin Smith, rsmith@radsmith.com

*November Issue Submission
Deadline Is October 8th!*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date and Time	Organization	Place	Contact
Oct. 16-18 Fri-Sun, 9-5 (subject to change)	Ozark Gem & Mineral Society	E-plex, Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, 3001 N. Grant Ave., Springfield, MO	Amy Hinkler, blitzy08@gmail.com
Oct. 16-18 Fri & Sat, 10-6; Sun 10-5	Three Rivers Gem & Mineral Society	Bldg. east of Home & Family Arts, County Fairgrounds, 2726 Carroll, Fort Wayne, IN	threeriversgemand mineral.com
Oct. 17-18 Sat 9-6, Sun 9-4	Des Moines Lapidary Society	Elwell Family Food Ctr., State Fairgrounds, 3000 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA	Melanie Overton, moverton0613@gmail.com
Oct. 24-25 Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	Akron Mineral Society and Summit Lapidary Club Gemboree	Emidio's Banquet Center, 48 E. Bath Road, Cuyahoga Falls, OH	Cathy Milhoan, slcmembershipchair@gmail.com
Oct. 24-25 Sat 9-5, Sun 10-4	Anoka County Gem & Mineral Club	Community Center, 4800 Douglas Drive North, Crystal, MN	Martha Miss, martha@rock-biz.biz
Oct. 24-25 Sat 9-5, Sun 9:30-4	Blackhawk Gem and Mineral Club	Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds, 2815 W. Locust St., Davenport, IA	Bret Henderson, reminerals@gmail.com
Oct. 24-25 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4	Evansville Lapidary Society	CK Newsome Center, 100 E. Walnut St., #1, Evansville, IN	Nancy Dassell, evansvillelapidary1304@gmail.com
Oct. 31 Sat, 9-1:30	St. Croix Rockhounds	Valley Creek Mall, 1750 Weir Drive, Woodbury, MN	Dave Rusterholz, stcroixrock@gmail.com

USE OF INVESTED MONEY MARKET FUNDS, CONTINUED

12. This Travel Allowance is not available for attendees who reside in the state where the meeting is being held. It will be paid on a single per-person basis; multiple payments will not be made to members holding multiple positions. *[Secretary's note: This item was eliminated in the approval at the meeting.]*

13. Variable or the suspension of payouts: As this is a new program and being implemented in a conservative fashion to protect the assets of the MWF, the Officers (Board of Directors) may elect to temporarily suspend the Travel Allowances.

Example 1: The Travel Allowance payout will vary based upon attendance and ROI (Return On Investment). Higher ROI and lower attendance can result in higher payouts. Conversely, lower ROI and higher attendance can result in a lower payout.

Example 2: If the ROI is low or negative, and payouts amount to less than \$15 per attendee, the Officers (Board of Directors), may suspend these payouts until the account is replenished to a sufficient level to return to a positive cash flow basis, and then reinstate Travel Allowance payments.

This is all to protect the MWF's assets while keeping the Travel Allowance in place for the future.

EDITOR WARNS ABOUT LOSS OF PUBLISHER

Martha Miss,
MWF Directory and Calendar of Events Chair and
Newsletter Editor,
Anoka County Gem & Mineral Club

A fair number of us use Microsoft Publisher to create our newsletters. SO, in case you haven't heard or have forgotten:

Microsoft Publisher will reach end of life in October 2026, after which it will no longer be supported or available in Microsoft 365.

End-of-Life Timeline: Microsoft Publisher will officially reach its **end of life on October 1, 2026** for perpetual versions like Office LTSC 2021 and Office 2021, and on **October 13, 2026** for Microsoft 365 subscribers.

Microsoft 365 users will **no longer be able to open or edit Publisher files**, or access the Publisher application. Perpetual license users can still install and use Publisher, but it will **no longer receive updates, bug fixes, or security patches**, which may pose security risks over time.

Implications for Existing Files: Users should prepare their .pub files before the end-of-life date.

Convert to .pdf for viewing purposes while preserving layout. **Convert to Word (.docx)** for documents that may require future editing, though layout may vary, especially for graphics-heavy files.

Do a search on "Microsoft Publisher End of Life" to get more details.

One of my local clubs thinks Adobe InDesign might be an alternative.

I would be interested in hearing from editors as to what program you currently use; whether, if you use Publisher, you have found anything to replace it; and any other thoughts or suggestions. Send info to martha@rock-biz.biz.

EXEC COMM. STATE DIRECTORS' REPORTS

[Editor's Note: Several of the reports were cut to fit into the newsletter. If you want to read the full reports of the State Directors, contact me, vjmwriter@yahoo.com.]

ILLINOIS**ASHLEY BOYD, STATE DIRECTOR**

I'm still getting my footing as State Director; I hope to have a higher level of communication and engagement with clubs over the next year. In preparation for my fall report, I asked clubs to share information that they felt was important to them.

Des Plaines Valley Geological Society, by Connie Lavin: DPVGS can only report that we had our annual picnic and four new members signed up at our show this year. All members are doing well and looking forward to beginning our meetings once again in September.

Earth Science Club of Northern Illinois, by Dave Carlson: Current membership is 446, up 10% over the same time last year. The club's newsletter, "The Earth Science News" has a new editor, Melanie Berg. She took over the position from Don Cronauer, who served on the board for more than 30 years!

ESCONI provided support for Burpee Museum's PaleoFest in early March. The club's annual Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show later in March was a great success, with attendance just short of 3,000 – a record for the club! Nearly 500 children participated in the Kid's Korner.

ESCONI provided silent auction material for the Chicagoland Gem and Mineral Association show in May, and many ESCONI members volunteered at that show. Eric Gyllenhaal represented the club at three "Sundays on the Boulevard" activities in Chicago. A very soggy Rock Swap and Sale was held in August at College of DuPage.

Jody Gosain, taking on the newly created position of Community Outreach Coordinator,
(continued on page 14)

EXEC COMMITTEE STATE DIRECTORS REPORTS, CONTINUED: ILLINOIS, INDIANA, IOWA

along with club member Jim Bigler, participated in two elementary-school STEM events in the Chicago suburbs, as well as a kid's summer activity at the Coal City Illinois library. Another event is scheduled for the KidsWork Children's Museum in New Lenox, Illinois in November.

The fourth annual Mazon Creek Fossil Day is set for October 10th at the Coal City library.

[Note from Ashley Boyd:] In addition to Dave's thorough report, I would like to add that ESCONI has had multiple field trips this year. They not only coordinate with other Illinois clubs for joint field trips, but other MWF clubs, including a field trip with Kalamazoo Geological & Mineral Society in September. I felt that it is important to highlight their collaboration!

Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society, by Thomas Williams and Ed Wagner: Our upcoming show will be Oct. 3rd and 4th at the Illinois State Fairgrounds. It will feature mineral, agate, and fossil dealers, as well as displays of minerals and fossils from different famous localities in the US. There will be a large kid's area with plenty of activities. A representative from the Dinosaur Museum in South Bend, Indiana, will have a booth with information about their museum.

Our juniors' program is still moving forward, although our chair has had to step back to handle family obligations. We have more than normal junior activities planned for the show, with the addition of an outreach program from a Midwest museum.

INDIANA

MICHELE YAMANAKA, STATE DIRECTOR

Of the nine Indiana clubs, three have new presidents this year. I emailed each of them the New President's Guide.

The **Indiana Society of Paleontology** worked with the Indiana State Museum for GEOFEST in February, and had a great attendance. The **Eastern Indiana Gem & Geological Society**

had its annual show in March, and it was well attended by people and at least one "dinosaur" strolling around. **Lawrence County Rock Club** held its annual show in June, with 47 indoor and 26 outdoor vendors and rain. In spite of the rain, vendors were pleased with the attendance and sales. The **Michiana Gem & Mineral Society** had their annual show in August. No report yet on how it went.

Shows for the following clubs are yet to happen as of the date of this report: **The 500 Earth Sciences Club** of Indianapolis, Sept. 11-13; **Brown County Rock and Mineral Club**, Sept. 19-20; **Three Rivers Gem & Mineral Society**, Oct. 16-18; **Evansville Lapidary Society**, Oct. 24-25.

The Three Rivers Gem & Mineral Society has had a good educational opportunity. The Junior Indiana Master Naturalists invited the club to give instruction to 31 young people at the Ouabache State Park, and the organizers were impressed enough with the presentation to suggest the possibility of having the club do it again in 2027.

A second opportunity has recently surfaced. The club has been asked to teach An American Heritage Girls group about geology to help them earn their Geology badges. Fifteen members of the club just returned from six days in Ontario, Canada, where they hunted for amethyst and had a fantastic time. The last time the club hunted there was 29 years ago.

IOWA

TIMOTHY HILL, STATE DIRECTOR

All clubs remain on their summer break, except for **Sac & Fox Lapidary Club** and the **Gold Prospectors Association** Iowa chapter.

Fall shows are fast approaching: The Sac & Fox show on October 10th and 11th at their new location in the Old Armory building in Fairfield, and the **Des Moines Lapidary Society** and **Central Iowa Mineral Society** combined annual show October 17th and 18th in the Elwell Family Food Center on the Iowa State Fairgrounds.

(continued on page 15)

EXEC COMMITTEE STATE DIRECTORS REPORTS, CONTINUED: MINNESOTA**MINNESOTA
MARCIA OPATZ, STATE DIRECTOR**

Anoka County Gem and Mineral Club, by Beth Fratzke: The Anoka County Gem & Mineral Club held a successful May Open House meeting hosting many interested guests at our new location in Crystal, Minnesota. We advertised the Open House meeting at our April spring rock show with postcards that invited people to attend. We had two great programs presented by members, about starting a rock business and making cabochons. Our show chair created a member information sheet that explained the benefits of membership and what to expect at each monthly meeting. We also advertised the rock show and the Open House meeting invitation on Facebook.

Carlton County Gem and Mineral Club, by Dave Fellerer: This year I became President of the club. Not much has changed. A few new members added. Our presentations at meetings were all done by members. Our Agate Days show did well this year, even though attendance was a little less than last year.

Cuyuna Rock, Gem, and Mineral Society, by Marcia Opatz: The Cuyuna Club has seen a growth spurt, now having 190 members. We are active in the area, with the annual show in May and bringing the spinning wheel to a number of events in the area. The club has a number of agate picks every year (almost exclusively Lake Superior agates), which gives members access to picking locations not available to non-members. The May show this year was a successful event. It is one of the largest in the state, with 78 indoor and outdoor vendors.

The club recently had Dr. Alex Hastings, the Science Museum of Minnesota's paleontologist, speak about the recently named state fossil, the giant beaver. We have a number of speakers every year.

Minnesota Mineral Club, by President Ben Chorn: Membership for the Minnesota Mineral Club has been stable at just over 1,000 members! Come September we will be meeting at a new location, the Wilder Center in St. Paul. We have moved our annual show to the Grandstand at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Both moves are going to allow our club to grow well beyond its current level without the need to move in the future. The move also allows the MMC to better host the MWF Convention in 2028!



Full elevated view of the Grandstand at the Minnesota State Fair; where the club show will be held when MMC hosts the 2028 MWF convention. Photo by Ben Franske, via Wikimedia Commons.

Members can still use lapidary equipment at our clubhouse. Our educational outreach has increased as well: the MMC participated in the Science Museum of Minnesota's Dino Fest, and I gave a talk to kids at the Princeton Library, the same location we have recently installed a public rock and mineral display! Our junior members have earned many badges in the AFMS Future Rockhounds of America program.

New Ulm Gem and Mineral Club, by Betsy Holm: The club has seen a steady increase in membership over the last few years, from 33 members in 2022 to 52 by early 2026! We meet at the Morgan Public Library in
(continued on page 16)

Valerie J. Meyers, Editor
Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies
vjmwriter@yahoo.com
Post Office Box 13456
Overland Park, KS 66282-3456

Non Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fiatt, IL
Permit No. 1

**IT IS MWF POLICY THAT ITS NAME AND LOGO MAY NOT BE USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.
PLEASE NOTIFY THE SECRETARY OF ANY VIOLATIONS.**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STATE DIRECTORS REPORTS, CONTINUED: MINNESOTA, ARKANSAS

Morgan, Minnesota. Meetings generally consist of a short presentation by various club members, Show and Tell, a Quarter Raffle, and end with a silent auction.

St. Croix Rockhounds, by Dave Rusterholz: We are a small (about 25 members) but energetic group of rock and mineral enthusiasts who meet in Stillwater, Minnesota nine months out of the year. This year we had a public show in Woodbury in April, and our club made three visits to grade schools to present informative demonstrations about rocks and minerals. This summer we had an agate hunt in June and a four-day trip to the Keweenaw Peninsula to look for copper, datolite and yooperlites. We will hold a summer potluck party later this month and then be back to our regular meeting schedule in September, with video presentations and a silent auction.

MISSOURI/ARKANSAS BRUCE STINEMETZ, STATE DIRECTOR

Arkansas

Ozark Earth Science, Gem, Mineral and Fossil Club: The club is continuing to struggle. They are having difficulty attracting new members, and the existing members aren't willing to step up and take positions of responsibility. They canceled the August meeting due to excessive heat. They plan to meet again in September and will decide on the future of the club. On a more positive note, they did participate in a Dino Days at their local library in June. They passed out fossils and had people dressed up in blow-up dinosaur costumes.

[COMING IN THE NOVEMBER ISSUE: State Directors' reports from Missouri through Wisconsin, and Permanent Committee reports! Don't tell anyone the stunning twist ending!]