

THE BADGER DIGGIN'S

The Badger Lapidary and Geological Society, Inc.

Southern Wisconsin
Devoted to Earth Science

Vol. 61, No 2

February 2026

Hello Badger Rockers,

How can I not comment on the strange weather we are *again* having for this winter season? Parts of November were warm enough to feel like September, and ~~most~~the second half of January was like, well, the way January used to be. Perhaps you are headed south for the winter or for part of the Tucson Rock Show; if not, you may find it a little hard to maintain your excitement about collecting rocks when the weather is so inhospitable. Well, I've got a solution for you.

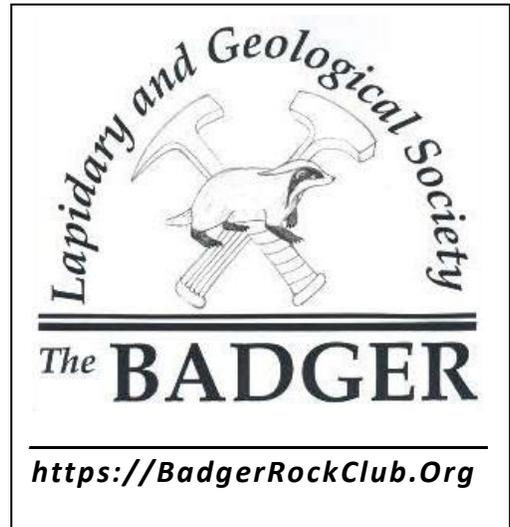
Jeremy Hall wrote an interesting online article - [10 Things You Can Do As A Rockhound In Winter - Rock Seeker](#) . If you are like me, perhaps you have a few* boxes, crates, bags or other containers of rocks that you've collected and set aside to sort through some day. Winter months have a lot of "some days" in them, and it's a perfect time to sort the stones by type, location or trip. Are you surprised by the type, quantity and quality of rocks in your collection – how does this information guide you in planning your future field trips? Winter is a good time to do research on locations. You will find a wealth of information by studying maps, geological data and old handbooks. Are you ready to tumble, make cabochons, do wire wraps, crack geodes, make slabs or prepare the materials in other ways? Mr. Hall's suggestions will help you sharpen your rockhounding skills so when the spring thaw occurs, you will be well-prepared for your future finds.

Rocking away,

Laura

Laura Petranek Arneson | H: 608-924-7924 (608-WAG-SWAG) | C: 608-513-1751 | laura_petranek@hotmail.com OR LollyPetArn@gmail.com

*ha ha ha!



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Badger Rock Club Business Meeting Minutes Saturday, January 10, 2026 at 10:30 A.M. by Dawn Dennis, Secretary

*Nineteen rockhounds attended this meeting which was held at Festival Foods in Janesville.

The Meeting called to order by Darsha (1. Shannon; 2. Kim)

Meeting Minutes were accepted from the December 13, 2025 business meeting.

The Roll Call process included folks telling about a rock they brought to share with the group.

New Business/Announcements:

- EVENT NOTICE – A gentleman named Blake will host “Darwin Days” on Saturday, 2/14/26 at UW Milwaukee’s Greene Geological Museum, complete with lectures, children’s events and a glow room. *(See article on this museum)*
- Treasury Report (Dan): The branch of the bank that we typically use closed, so we will have to use a different branch.
 - Outstanding expense: \$1500 for our BLGS March Rock Show venue;
 - Seven out of ten rooms in the Tuscon rental house have been filled for the February field trip.

Show business: (Laurie T) (March 28-29, 2026)

- Worker sign-up sheets were sent around; Members are encouraged to PLEASE sign-up to help!! ***THIS is the event that supports what our club does throughout the year!***
 - Help is needed to staff the kids’ activities
 - “Save the date” flyers are complete and were sent out via email on January 12, 2026; please print these out and post wherever you can to ensure the

success of our event – the sooner the better!

- Any help with sharing the show on Social Media or posting to local calendars or any other advertising is appreciated!
- All show vendors are booked
- All speakers confirmed:
 1. Scott Rippe (Rippeology) “Nothing in Moderation”
 2. Marv Hanner “Old Mines and Historic Collecting Sites”
 3. Donald Baumgartner (Fossil Hut) “The Science of Jurassic Park”
 4. Robert Humpries (Dir. Of Great Plains Welsh Heritage Center) “The Welsh in Wisconsin’s Lead Mining Region”
 5. John Dean (FS Hunter owner) “Fluorescents – Catch the Wave!”

Old Business:

- Elections were held for 2026 club officers:
 - President: Darsha Olsen
 - VP: Herb Bunger
 - Treasurer: Dan Trocke
 - Secretary: Dawn Dennis
 - Officer at Large: Laurie Ross
 - 1. Kim 2. Shannon – motion to accept the officers as a slate.

New Business:

- Dan T: discussed that some of the club machines need work; Craig offered to help work on them

Door Prize winners:

1. Darsha (Mexican garnet)
2. Mike (Amythest from Thunder Bay trip)
3. Herb (Bag of Lake Superior Agates)

Meeting adjourned (1. Marv; 2. Penny)

Next Meeting: Saturday, February 28, 2026

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2026

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Description	Location
February 2-8, 2026	Attend Tucson Rock Shows	Tucson, AZ
February 28 (switched dates of Feb meeting/field trip)	Meeting Recap of Tucson Trip	Festival Foods, Janesville, WI
March 14, 2026	Meeting Show Prep/Potluck	Herb Bunger's House, Whitewater, WI
March 27, 2026 4-10:00pm	Set-up for Annual Show	Craig Center, Janesville, WI
March 28, 2026 9am-5:00pm	Annual Show	Craig Center, Janesville, WI
5:30pm	Group Dinner	T.B.D.
March 29, 2026 9am-4:00pm	Annual Show	Craig Center, Janesville, WI
4:30pm-?	Pack-up/Tear Down/Clean Up	
April 11, 2026	Meeting Rock ID and Mystery Rock Identification	Festival Foods, Janesville, WI
April 25, 2026	Field Trip Phil Burgess Houseum	Prairie du Chien, WI
May 9, 2026	Meeting Dan Graf Demonstrations	T.B.D.
May 23, 2026	Field Trip Fossil Quarry	Monroe, WI
June 13, 2026	Meeting Annual Summer Picnic	T.B.D.
June 27, 2026	Field Trip Geodized fossils, crinoids, other treasures & the Bedford Show	Bedford/Bloomington, IN
July 11, 2026	Field Trip Chippewa River	Eau Claire, WI
July 25, 2026	Field Trip Rock Quarry	Janesville WI
August 8, 2026	Field Trip Moonstone & Soapstone	Wausau, WI
August 22, 2026	Field Trip Lion's Den Gorge	Cedarburg, WI
September 12, 2026	Meeting Show and Tell	Festival Foods, Janesville, WI
September 26, 2026	Field Trip Lapidary Days	Trocke's Farm, Highland, WI
October 10, 2026	Field Trip Iron Quarries	Iron Country, MI
October 24, 2026	Meeting Wire Wrapping	Festival Foods, Janesville WI
November 14, 2026	Meeting Speaker (T.B.D.)	Festival Foods, Janesville WI
December 12, 2026	Meeting Annual Holiday Party	Richmond, WI

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The BLGS On-Line Store is Open!



We will close at
MIDNIGHT
(Eastern Standard Time)
on
**Wednesday, March 4,
2026**

Now is your chance to order this year's Club T-Shirts. Please refer to the Club Email that was sent out on Friday, January 23, 2026 which gives you a link to our store and shows you the styles and sizes that are available.

*Two Shirt Design are Available

- A short-sleeve pocket-tee with our traditional logo on the back
- The crystal Badger design - available in either a short- or long-sleeve option

*Sizes run in Youth, Regular and Tall Options (*so make sure you order the right one!*)

*You may place your own order with home delivery (you pay for shipping); or You can have your shirt(s) shipped with a bulk order and pick them up either at the March show or at a future meeting (this option is free).

**The Badger
Lapidary &
Geology Society
Apparel**

Contact Laurie Trocke at glowyrocks@gmail.com if you have any questions.

➤ Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 10:30 A.M. -

This field trip to History Museum at the Castle in Appleton, WI., was cancelled because south central WI and northern Illinois was under the dreaded Winter Alert status – temperatures and windchills way below zero with possibilities of lots of snow for those in the southern area of our club. We didn't want anyone to risk driving in temps that were potentially dangerous. We'll send the updated date and information out soon.

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SAVE THE DATE

The Badger Rock Club Presents the **55th Annual** Rock, Gem, Mineral, & Fossil Show!

Dates: **Saturday March 28** and **Sunday March 29, 2026**
Hours: **9am-5pm** **9am-4pm**

Location: **Rock County Fairgrounds, Craig Center Building**
1301 Craig Ave, Janesville, WI 53545 [Download Map](#)

Description: **Ten dealers, excellent speakers, many beautiful club displays, fluorescent mineral tent, lapidary demonstrations, club sales table, hourly door prizes, educational films.**

Activities for kids: Fishpond, spinner game, gem panning, scavenger hunt, rock crafts, and roaming rock wizard.

Food: **Herb will once again be grilling and providing food for the show.**

Thank you for your support! Our 54th annual show (March 15 & 16, 2025) was a big success!

*****Reminder*** - Club members can sell at the club table for only a 10% fee of what you sell!**

See Club meeting minutes report about accessing Show Flyers and *please post!*

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UWM CLS Thomas A. Greene Geological Museum | University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee | Dept. of Geosciences
<https://uwm.edu/geosciences/greene-museum/>

"Inside Lapham Hall, Room 366"

3209 N. Maryland Ave.

Milwaukee, WI 53211

(414) – 229-4561

DARWIN DAYS

Celebrating the life and times of
Charles R Darwin - one of the
most brilliant and influential
Victorian naturalists

Saturday, February 14, 2026

10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Darwin Days Speakers:

- **11:00 AM** Underworld Wonders: Exploring Cave and Climate Connections (*great for kids!*)
Mel Reusche | Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey
- **12:30 PM** Setting the Stage for Life: How the Universe Created the Conditions for Evolution on Earth | Dr. Michelle Thaller | NASA astrophysicist
- **2:00 PM** Museum Collections and the History of Life | Dr. Jonathan Hendricks | Milwaukee Public Museum

Special Activities:

- **Scavenger Hunt** -all day
- **T. A. Greene's Glowing Cavern** - all day - Come see fantastic glowing fluorescent minerals
- **Touch Room** - all day - feel nature under your fingers with real specimens you can actually touch
- **How Animals Defend Themselves** -all day - Experience live animals and learn how Earth's organisms defend themselves from predators
- **Student Research Discussion** - 10:30 AM – 2:30 PM - Hear UWM student researchers discuss their amazing scientific research
- **Student Research Poster Display** -all day - Check out the past research of UWM's student researchers and learn what's happening on campus
- **Children's Activities Hall** - all day - Let your kids have a ball with coloring, jewelry making, button stamping, and many other fun activities!
- **Star Lab Portable Planetarium Show** - 10:00 AM – 2:30 PM - see the stars with this awesome planetarium show hosted every thirty minutes by the Wehr Nature Center

If you plan to go to this event, check the museum's website for information on parking.

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Good to Know / Place to Go File

The **Thomas A. Greene Geological Museum** is a place we should know about and put on our list of places to visit. This “gem” is a place to learn about Wisconsin natural heritage through a wide assortment of beautiful minerals and cool fossils collected by Thomas A Greene. The Museum is free to the public and located on the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee campus within the Lapham building. It is open twenty hours per week, with hours that change each semester.

Today this museum contains the single greatest collection of Silurian reef fossils in North America and, possibly, the world. The fossils and rocks that Mr. Greene collected are truly irreplaceable due to urbanization and changes in quarrying techniques (many of the original localities from which these specimens were harvested are now closed or destroyed).

To help put this into perspective, the Silurian Period refers to the third period of the Paleozoic Era and spanned from 443.8 million to 419.2 million years ago. The local Silurian reef was under a shallow, tropical sea that covered Illinois up to the Milwaukee area which was, at that time, *south* of the equator.



A Frozen Niagara Falls
www.istockphotos.com



Klintar formations in Gotland,
Sweden

Distinctive features of the **Silurian geology** includes Niagara Falls, which is one part of the greater Niagara Escarpment (a rock formation laid down during the Silurian Period). The Niagara Escarpment is a curved ridge of resistant Silurian dolomite that stretches about 600 miles from Niagara Falls through Michigan’s U.P. to Wisconsin’s Door Peninsula and beyond.

Silurian rock manifestations can also be seen in the rolling hills of eastern Iowa and central and southern Indiana, as well as in similar rounded hills, called klintar, which can be found on [Gotland](#) Island, Sweden. Here, the Silurian mound reefs reached the surface. These ancient reef deposits (now limestone) stand about 26-33 feet tall and have been eroded into remarkable shapes where they still stand in ranks along the shores of Gotland at Killej.

The klintar, or fossil reefs, in the Upper Wabash Valley in Indiana are a testament to the geological history of this region. These ancient reefs, formed in Silurian seas, were buried and later exposed during regional uplift and postglacial erosion. Hanging Rock in Wabash, Indiana is one example.



Hanging rock National Nature
Landmark in Indiana
www.acreslandtrust.com

Thomas A. Greene Geological Museum

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In Iowa, the youngest Silurian rocks can be seen near certain areas of the Cedar River that cut through Silurian carbonate mounds and intermound facies, displaying exposures along forested slopes, bold cliffs, and overhangs that form scenic palisades. Hiking trails in the Palisades-Kepler State Park provide access to many of the exposures. There are other areas about ten miles southeast of downtown Cedar Rapids and four miles west of Mt Vernon where the exposures can be seen.



Palisades-Kepler State Park www.Explore.com



Palisades-Kepler State Park [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

[UWM CLS Thomas A. Greene Geological Museum](https://uwm.edu/geosciences/greene-museum/) | University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee | Dept. of Geosciences
"Inside Lapham Hall, Room 366"
3209 N. Maryland Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53211
(414) – 229-4561
<https://uwm.edu/geosciences/greene-museum/>

Thomas A. Greene Geological Museum

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2026 Officers Roster

Chair	Name	Contact Information
President	Darsha Olsen	darshakay@gmail.com
Vice-President	Herb Bunger	herbertbthree@yahoo.com
Secretary	Dawn Dennis	muirwyn@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Dan Trocke	Daniel.trocke@slh.wisc.edu or glowyrocks@gmail.com
Officer at Large	Laurie Ross	laurie.j.ross@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Laura Petranek Arneson	laura_petranek@hotmail.com or LollyPetArn@gmail.com

If you have any questions, please contact a Club officer.
For Member information changes, please notify the treasurer.

CLUB INFORMATION

Meetings are typically held on the **2nd Saturday** of each month at 10:30 A.M. at FESTIVAL FOODS in the 2nd Floor Community Room (2233 Humes Rd / Janesville WI 53545).

Field Trips are usually held on the **4th Saturday¹** of the month. Trip Announcements are made on our Facebook Page, but locations and details are shared through emails addressed to *paid* Club Members.

- **Website:** BadgerRockClub.Org
- **FACEBOOK – “Badger Rock Club”**
Private group
[1.4K members](#)
Members can post pictures to this site. Note – when placing pictures on Facebook, members are giving BLGS permission to use them in the monthly newsletters.
- **Membership Email Address:** glowy.rocks@gmail.com
 - \$15 for an individual/per calendar year
 - \$20 per family/per calendar year
 - Dues are payable at meetings and field trips, or you can mail your check to the club Treasurer
 - Please remember that dues must be paid *before* you can participate in field trips with the club
- **Newsletter Submissions:** Send to Laura_petranek@hotmail.com or LollyPetArn@gmail.com by the 21st of each month



¹Except in January (Brrrr), March (our show!), November (Thanksgiving) and December (Christmas Holiday)