

GEODE FEST

3 DAY BUS TRIP – Keokuk, IA / Hamilton, IL

We're on the road! Transportation is via a 56 passenger Cardinal Motor Coach payed by the club in the amount of \$4,000 (this includes bus driver's room for 2 nights) for **September 22 through September 24, 2017**. We will be going back and forth over the Mississippi River in pursuit of the famous beautiful Keokuk geodes (and some fossils) found in the area. We are very pleased to hear more collecting sites have been opened up on private lands for us to collect. This is the 15th year for the Geode Fest and in talking to the coordinator, he said folks from National Geographic came this past year to participate. We are noticed, how can you miss a 56 passenger bus full of "rockhounds". This Geode Fest attracts people from all over the USA. We will be collecting at 2 sites on Saturday the 23rd, and 1 site the morning of the 24th before starting home. This trip is open to active members who take time to participate in attending meetings, or helping at our show, Science Alive, picnic, or any other club activity. It's great for kids and no one needs to have Mine Safety training credentials. This trip fills up fast since so many collecting sites have been closed to us these past few years. **DO NOT** in all fairness sign up if there is any doubt of another commitment you may have for that weekend. I DO NOT keep a stand by list and if you were to back out even a few weeks before, the rest of the folks would lose the block room rate at the motel and our restaurant for Saturday night would have to raise their prices for the meals.

The following is a brief itinerary for those going on this weekend field trip. It is rain or shine, lots of fun and good collecting..

Friday, September 22nd we meet at Meijer's Store located at S.R. 331 S. (Union St.), Mishawaka, IN 46544. We board at 3:45 p.m. and leave promptly at 4:00 p.m. There will be one quick stop on the way to Keokuk where our motel is located, arrival time between 9 and 10:00 p.m.

Saturday we board the bus at 6:45 a.m. (Remember the time change), to report to the Chaney Creek Access area across the River to register in at 7:00 a.m. At 8:00 a.m. we are on our way for a full day of collecting. Late afternoon we return to our motel to rest up or go swimming in the motel's heated pool, then clean up for dinner.

Reservations have been made for a private dining room at the Hawkeye Restaurant (where we have been before) for 7:00 p.m. It is only 2 blocks from our motel, so some of you may even wish to walk it if you still have energy and it's a nice night. If not our bus driver will take you.

Sunday we board the bus at 8:00 a.m. and we're off collecting at 9:00 a.m. After a good morning of collecting we head back home. Arrival time is approximately 6:00 p.m.

YOUR COST: We are staying at the Hampton Inn. I have reserved 20 rooms at block room rate. The cost for your 2 nights is \$266.56 (this includes tax). As I spoke with the manager the price has gone up these past few years, but every motel is sold out and all prices in all motels have gone up. We are lucky to get a block of rooms with a group price break. The Hampton is only 10 years old, serve a hot and cold breakfast with a variety of food and an indoor swimming pool. The block of rooms have 2 queen beds to a room.

Their phone number is 1-319-524-6700. **You must tell them to put your room under Michiana Mineral Group for the block and rate. Please try to do this by the end of February. When you get your reservation, let me know your confirmation number.**

The Hawkeye Restaurant-with private dining offers us a buffet dinner consisting of 2 entrees; cat fish and fried chicken, comes with a full salad bar, mashed potatoes & brown gravy, green beans, dinner rolls, dessert, coffee, water, tea. The price is \$18 adults, 12 and under \$8.75, under 3 free. They have asked that I collect ahead and pay full when we arrive to avoid the confusion that happened before when everyone paid individually. I can take check or cash, make check out to Bob or myself. NO CREDIT CARDS. The food is great and the fellowship together wonderful.

(I have been asked to tell all going to pay prior to going a \$5.00 bus seat fee (this will be given to the bus driver at the end of the trip for his tip. The drivers are always accommodating. No refunds on that if you cancel) Remember if you cancel someone else may have to pay more if block room rate isn't met, or restaurant price met.

The Geode Fest registration remains the same as in past years.\$20 (single person) or \$30 (family fee) for hunting. Some of the sites are on private property not normally open to general public for geode hunting.

An additional fee of \$20 / 5 gallon bucket will be collected at each site. YOU have to provide the buckets. BE PICKY, YOUR LOOKING FOR LIGHT WEIGHT GEODES THAT ARE HOLLOW INSIDE! Also since we are so close to the Mississippi River, there are fossils in the area.

I will have printed up copies of the Registration forms for members going to fill out which we will have ready on arrival at the Geode Fest Access on Saturday morning. All of us who have gone to this before have never been disappointed and came home with "goood stuff"!

WHAT TO BRING:

Food Brown bag dinner for Friday night unless you grab a quick fast food when we make our pit stop along the way. A brown bag lunch for Saturday, we will eat at the sites. Snacks for on the bus or in your motel room. A small cooler for on the bus to fit under the seat for pop, water. Regular shoes for the bus that are not your collecting shoes or boots We are responsible for not trashing the bus with muddy shoes or boots.

Collecting shoes/boots and clothes that are comfortable to collect in. Be aware of the weather.

Buckets for your geodes, rock collecting tools, gloves, eyeglasses.

SPACE IS LIMITED BECAUSE OF WEIGHT AND STORAGE. Do not get carried away with a whole bunch of extra stuff, example ..huge coolers, chairs, tables, etc. Let's leave more room for what we came to collect GEODES!!

Sign up for bus starts at our Christmas party. Start saving your pennies!

Rock on,

Kathy