

MINI MINERS MONTHLY

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR YOUNG MINERAL COLLECTORS

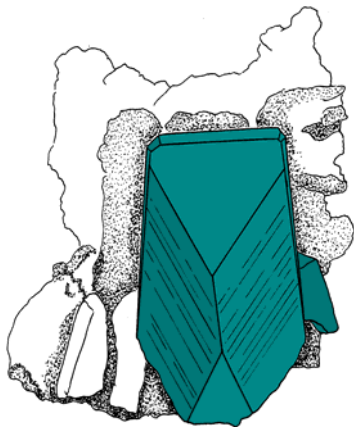
VOL. 12 NO. 4

APRIL 2020

What To Do When We're All Stuck At Home?



Diamond Dan is hoping that when you read this issue of Mini Miners Monthly that you are healthy! As I write this issue, we are all being forced to stay at home to avoid catching the Corona Virus. It was all kind of exciting at first: sleeping in late, enjoying fun things on TV, visiting with friends on the computer and cell phone.



As we spend more and more days inside, we will need more fun things to do to help pass the time. This expanded issue of Mini Miners Monthly is created to give you some special mineral collecting activities while you wait for your chance to get out of the house again.

You have our permission to share this issue with anyone and everyone you wish to send it to. Email it to your family and friends. Email it to your teachers and club leaders. Email it to the President...maybe he needs something to do, too.

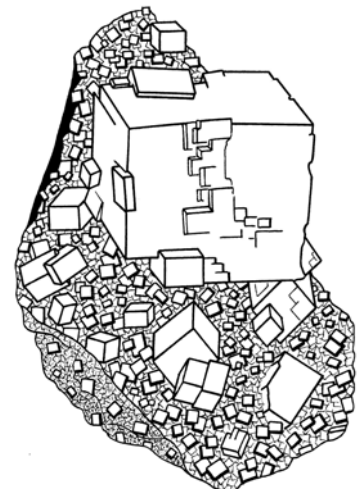
Hang in there, Mini Miners. We will be able to go out again before too long. And once we can leave our houses, we can go digging for minerals and attend mineral club meetings again!

What Mineral Am I?

I am a very tasty mineral. I crystallize in the Isometric (Cubic) Crystal System. I will dissolve if you put me in a cup of water. People use me to flavor their food. In ancient Roman days, I was used to pay soldiers for their work: I was their "salary." Every animal needs a little bit of me in their body to be healthy. But if a person has too much of me in their blood, I can cause high blood pressure. When pure, I am colorless. But I can be other colors, like pink, when impurities are in me. In very special situations, changes in my crystal structure can cause me to be blue or purple. My common name is "salt."

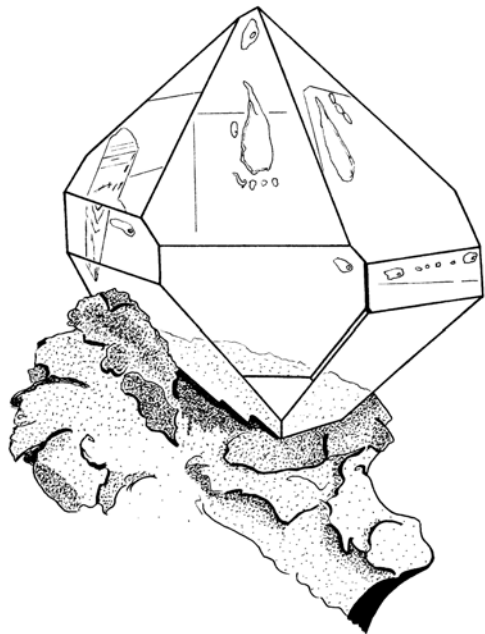
My mineral name is

Check your answer on the next page.



Amazing Scientific Discovery

(The following information has been passed around through many mineral club and society newsletters. The original reporter is not known.)



Nearly every mineral collector can give the chemical formula for **quartz** without even looking it up in a book. **Quartz is Silicon Dioxide (SiO_2)**. HOWEVER, recent studies with the most sensitive scientific equipment have revealed that this is not true. Quartz is, as the ancient Roman scientist, Pliny the Elder, claimed, petrified Dihydrogen Oxide (H_2O). Do you recognize that chemical formula? Dihydrogen Oxide is . . . WATER! Scientists around the world are stunned, and embarrassed, to learn that

quartz is indeed water that has frozen so hard for so long that it actually became stone. (Simple proof of this fact can be made if you touch a quartz crystal on the hottest summer day, you will instantly feel that it is *cool to the touch*.)

Publishing companies around the world are scrambling to reprint their field books and textbooks with this new information. College professors are offering extra lectures to clear up this confusion with their students. Mineral collectors around the world are making new labels for all their quartz specimens.

This new information teaches us three things:

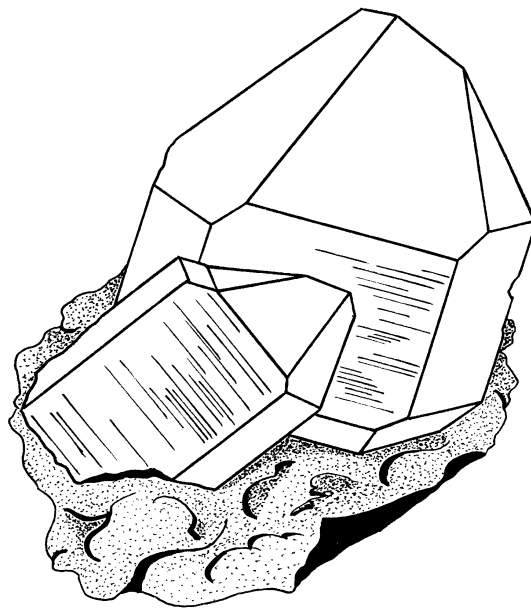
1. Science is always growing and developing and new discoveries can happen at any time.
2. Scientists must always be ready to work with new information, even if that information completely changes our understanding of the world around us.

AND

3. Don't believe everything you see in writing.

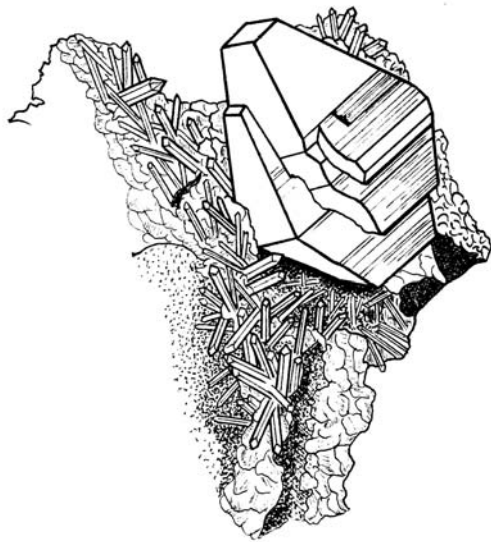
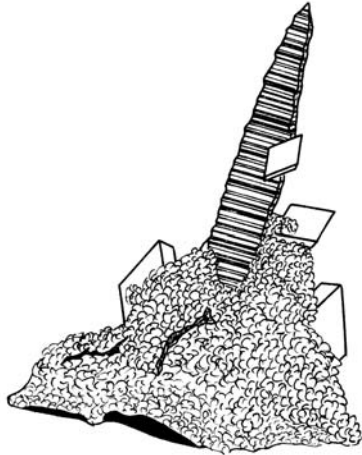
APRIL FOOL'S!!!!

(Did we fool you? Some version of this story goes around every year. We thought you might get a laugh out of it! Quartz is silicon dioxide!)



Mineral of the Month

Anatase



Chemical Formula: TiO_2 ; **Crystal System:** Tetragonal;
Color: Blue to Black; **Hardness:** 5.5 - 6; **Luster:** Adamantine
to Bright Metallic; **Streak:** Pale Yellowish-White;
Specific Gravity: 3.95; **Fracture:** Subconchoidal

Anatase is usually found in masses. But it does form in small, very sharp four-sided, pyramid-like crystals. Sometimes the crystals can be short and fat, and sometimes they are long and thin.

Anatase is not the only mineral with a chemical formula of TiO_2 (titanium dioxide). Two other minerals also have the same formula. They are Rutile and Brookite. When two or more minerals have the same chemical formula but crystallize in different crystal systems, they are called “dimorphs,” if there are two different minerals and “trimorphs” if they are three different minerals. Therefore, Anatase, Brookite and Rutile are trimorphs. Some mineralogists use a single word and call them “polymorphs” which means “many forms.”

An old name for Anatase that is no longer in use is Octahedrite. This name was first given because many crystals have eight faces and look like an octahedral diamond crystal. You might see this name in old mineral books, but it is no longer used in the field of mineralogy.

Anatase is made in the laboratory. This is because it can be used in some special electronic equipment that needs what are called *semi-conductors*. A semi-conductor is a material that conducts electricity, but not as strongly as a metal like copper, silver or gold.

What mineral am I? Answer: Halite



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