

Lake Superior and the Midcontinent Rift: Solving a Billion Year Old Mystery

presented by Seth Stein

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Photo by Jim Breit

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The Firehouse Grill 750 Chicago Avenue Evanston Researchers are learning more about the Midwest's biggest geological mystery: how Lake Superior and the spectacular scenery around it resulted from a huge geological structure. The Midcontinent Rift is a 1.1 billion-year-old 2000-mile long scar along which North America started to tear apart, but failed to form a new ocean. The rift gave rise to Lake Superior that is the basis of the area's water-based history and economy, the copper deposits that shaped the region's settlement and growth, and to day's tourist industry.