

DIABLO



**Contra
Costa**

MINERAL + GEM SOC.
WALNUT CREEK, CA



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**Next General Meeting of
the CCM&GS is: Friday,
May 11th, 2007 at 7:30
PM at the Presbyterian
Church in Concord.
Please mark your
calendars.**



May Board of Directors Meeting

There will be **NO BOARD MEETING IN MAY 2007**. The next BOD meeting will be held in June.

Mary Hicks, President

Refreshments

We ask the following members to please bring a treat to share during our social period at the **May** General Meeting.

Bobbie Littlefield
Mike & Sherry Luebke
Glen & Betty Mackenzie
George & Ann Matthew
Barbara Matz
Shannon & Richard Merrill
Ed Miller
Linda Minnich
Bill & Naomi Morgan

President's Message

The Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society had a great April Meeting. It was wonderful to see so many members and guest at the meeting to enjoy Member Ken Whitlatch's program on adventures in rock collecting at Happy Camp, California. The DVD we watched was very interesting and the mineral specimens we got to touch were fantastic. Thanks to Ken and his friend Steve for putting on such an entertaining evening.

It was very nice to present Member Brownie Cameron with her Antioch Petrified Wood thank you award for working at the Antioch

Club show. Member Betty Pankey received her thank you award at the Board Meeting.

I had fun giving the class on Double X Knots and ten members learned how to use satin cord to create a necklace to show off a favorite rock pendant. I am looking forward to participating in the upcoming classes that are planned.

I need to announce the club needs a member to step forward to volunteer to do a scrape book record of the club activities for 2007. There is an example of what the book needs to capture in the two prior books. I have retrieved these books from storage to show them to anyone who is interested in doing this job. Please call me.

I will not be at the May General Meeting and so Vice President of Programs Harry Nichandros will lead the meeting. Be safe rocking out and I look forward to seeing you all at the June 8th General Meeting.

Mary Hicks, President

April Board of Directors Meeting Notes

The BOD meeting was held at Mary Hicks' residence. The meeting started at 7:00 pm. Present: Joanne Caskey, Kim & David Kleesattel, Sam & Hazel Woolsey, Mary Hicks, Harry Nichandros, Therese Clark, Rana Owen, Luree Heese, Dick Pankey, Sharon Neuhauser, Connie Klein and Joe Yarbrough.

President Mary Hicks started the meeting by handing out copies of the meeting agenda. Mary then requested any Old or

New Business items that need to be added to the agenda.

1st Vice President and Program Chair Harry Nichandros reported that Member Ken Whitlatch would present the program this month. The program will be on Ken's rockhounding for "Happy Camp Jade" (Vesuviate). Harry has programs scheduled for May, June, and September. More information on those programs is forthcoming.

2nd Vice President, Dennis Freiburger was unable to attend the meeting, but provided the following: The CCM&GS field trip for May 19 to Sibley Volcanic preserve is being promoted within the club and was also announced to the North Bay Field trip Group and to the CO-OP.

Treasurer, Connie Klein provided the club's financial information. Back up copies of the club's financial files were emailed to Mary Hicks.

Membership Chair Kim Kleesattel presented Membership Applications for eight applicants: Susan Yoshizaki, Ko Ijichi, Loretta Mason, June and John Rosploch, and junior member applicants Sabrina, Jason, and Stephen Mayberry. The membership into the CCM&GS was approved unanimously for each of these new members.

Hospitality, Therese Clark announced that she will miss the April 13 meeting and that Sharon Neuhauser will fill in for her.

Federation Director, Dick Pankey reminded us that the CFMS show is in Lancaster CA this year on 14-17 June. Dick requested volunteers for preparing and submitting an

"All American Book" about our club's activities. This is a great way to show off our club. **Mary Hicks** will retrieve the last one we did from the library and bring it to the General Meeting for an example.

Publicity, **Mary Jernigan** (not present) is still looking for help preparing a pamphlet to describe our club that could be distributed at various shows and other community functions.

Sam Woolsey, Property Chair and Show Chair reminded us that show meetings will begin in June. The old equipment we were storing in Connie's "barn" has been sold as a lot and the space will be cleaned up. The club may need to buy some 80-grit tumbling media. At Sam's request, Connie Klein presented an Agreement for storage space in her barn and for our trailer storage. Sam made a motion that the CCM&GS accept the Agreement which includes paying **Connie Klein** a monthly fee of \$150 for this storage. **Joe Yarbrough** seconded the motion. The Board voted and the motion passed.

Joe Yarbrough, Display Chair. Joe will not be present at the April General meeting and will see that the church key is given to **Al Schleif** to open the doors.

Historian **Hazel Woolsey** was present, but had no news to announce regarding the club's history. If you have anything of interest regarding the club's history, please contact Hazel.

Secretary and Past President **Dave Kleesattel** was present, but had no news to report.

Education, Arts & Crafts Chair **Joanne Caskey** and assistant **Rana Owen** presented education classes updates. Please read the

newsletter for scheduled classes. Upcoming classes include gem carving with Dick Freisen, slate carving, beading, and fish fossil preparation. Rana announced that the beading group will meet at **Joanne Kilpatrick's** on April 21.

Editor **Luree Heese** reminded everybody that the deadline for submitted newsletter information is the 18th of April for May's newsletter. When submitting electronic information, please use 12 pt. Times New Roman font, and please don't use indentations or special formatting.

New Business: Received correspondence was distributed as appropriate. **Hazel Woolsey** made a motion to stop requesting donations for refreshments at the general meetings. **Joanne Caskey** seconded the motion. The Board voted and the motion passed. A form for Reimbursement Requests was prepared and handed out. Please use this form when requesting a check from the treasurer.

There will be **NO BOARD MEETING IN MAY 2007**. The next BOD meeting will be held in June. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm. Refreshments were provided by **Mary Hicks**, and enjoyed by all. Thank you again Mary for the goodies and hospitality.

David Kleesattel, Secretary

April 13th General Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President **Mary Hicks** at 7:35 pm. The pledge of allegiance was lead by **Marlow "Hawkeye" Hicks**. There was a great turnout, no official count, but unofficial estimates put the attendance at about 65.

President **Mary Hicks** started the meeting with some introductions and presented **Brownie Cameron** with an award for being a demonstrator at the recent Antioch Club's show. The award was a very nice piece of engraved Antioch Petrified Wood. **Nancy Whitlatch** thanked everybody for their support in her bike ride for the Lymphoma/leukemia fund raiser (*Team-in-Training*).

Birthdays and Anniversaries were announced by **Sharon Neuhauser** (filling in for Hospitality Chair **Therese Clark**). There were nine guests visiting. Sharon, as Ecology Chair, also provided some information on classes she will be taking to support her Committee and read a short article about how we need to start taking responsibility for our environmental actions.

Member and "Sergeant of Arms" **Sherb Brown** collected 25¢ from those members who forgot to wear their name badges. Less "clinking" sounds are coming from Sherb's "Cup-of-Shame", so we're doing better about wearing our name badges.

Second Vice President and Field Trip Chair **Dennis Freiburger** reminded us to please check the newsletter for field trip information. There are two CCM&GS sponsored trips coming up (Sibley Volcanic

Preserve and Echo Mtn/Davis Creek). Also please remember you **must** contact Dennis for specific information about the field trips (like where & when to meet – you can't just show up to the field trips).

Membership Chair **Kim Kleesattel** announced eight new members and gave out their name badges (see the Membership Report below for the new member names). Kim also has Diablo Dan Pins and Patches for purchase.

Rana Owen filled in for **Joe Yarbrough** as Display Chair. We had 1 Novice Cab, 2 Pro Cabs, 1 facet, and 1 Shape of the Month Cabs to vote on. The **Shape-of-the-Month** for May will be "TRIANGLE". **Mary Hicks** displayed necklaces from the Chinese XX knotting class. **Ken and Nancy Whitlatch** brought in rock samples "Happy Camp Jade" and Grossular garnet. These rocks were the topic of the evening's program.

Rana Owen, Assistant Education Chair, announced this month's classes (to be held on April 28 & 29) – Gem Carving with Dick Freisen. There is limited space for these two classes and a \$40 fee. There will be two classes in May, Fossil Preparation (Green River Fish) on May 12, and Alabaster carving on May 20. Please see Rana to sign up.

The door prizes were drawn. Guest **Cheryl Morgan** won a nice piece of rhodochrosite crystals, and Member **Mike Luebke** won a nice uncut Brazilian Agate.

Program Chair **Harry Nichandros** introduced our very own **Ken Whitlatch** (a.k.a., "*the Rock Hunter*") as the evening's program presenter. Ken also brought along

his friend, Steve Jackson. Ken's stepson, Adam, produced a wonderful DVD of Ken's rockhounding adventures in Northern California. Ken's rockhounding started out as a quest for gold with dredging in California rivers. He met some others, Steve Jackson and Rich Kelly, who had the same interests. But they also found that there was more than just gold in the rivers. They started looking for idocrase (a variety of Vesuvianite) which is also sometimes referred to as "Happy Camp Jade." The idocrase that Ken is seeking is a "gemmy" variety of idocrase. It has a beautiful emerald green color and is translucent. If you missed this presentation, talk to Ken, maybe you can borrow the DVD, as it's well worth your time.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm. Refreshments were enjoyed after the program, members voted for their favorite cabochons entered in the monthly contest (thank you contest entrants), and display items were looked at and enjoyed. Please bring in any display items you have and tell us about them.

David Kleesattel, Secretary



May 11th CCM&GS Program:

Identifying Gems: Analysis of Quality and Value

Have you ever pondered the value or quality of that mysterious gem or mineral in your collection? Is it Beryl or Corundum? - Garnet or Quartz? Does it have quality? Does it have value?

On Friday, May 11 you are invited to the monthly meeting of CCM&GS with Barrie Bieler. Join us for Barrie's talk on gem identification. Barrie will cover the identification of cut and rough precious and semiprecious stones, and the analysis of quality and value. He will help answer the questions many of us have in identifying gems in our collections and identifying stones prior to purchase.

Among the items to be covered include hardness, cleavage, crystal forms, color, and tools and instruments. His talk will be accompanied with colored slides.

For those desiring in-depth instruction, Barrie will conduct an extensive two-hour identification class on the evening of June 12. In this class you will receive hands on experience with gem identification. To participate in the follow-up class, please sign up with Rana Owen or Joanne Caskey.

Barrie's expertise in this field is without equal. He is considered by most gem & mineral society members to be a primary resource on the topic of minerals, gems, and gem faceting.

He has been an active member of the Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society for many years. Barrie is registered with the CFMS speaker's bureau, and gives regular talks to community groups, youth organizations, and mineral societies. Barrie has taught geology, mineralogy, and photography in local schools and adult education classes.

He is an active member of the Gem Faceting Group and has developed and published new faceting designs that have been adopted and used by many other faceting amateurs. Barrie demonstrates faceting at the CCM&GS annual Gem and Mineral Show, and he is regularly invited to demonstrate at other shows in the area.

Barrie received his PhD. in Mineralogy from Penn State in 1955. He earned his Bachelor and Masters of Science Degrees in Geology at Cal Tech. After college he worked at the USGS in Denver, before making his greatest contributions to material science as a Dow Chemical Company Scientist in Walnut Creek. There he explored the technical aspects of ceramics and high temperature chemistry, published numerous papers, and now holds several patents.

Harry Nichandros – *VP, Programs*

Future Program **Calendar Events**

May 11, 2007: Identifying Gems and Minerals by Barrie Bieler. D.r Bieler will lecture on the identification of loose and rough, precious and semiprecious stones.
Follow-up: For hands-on experience, sign up for Barrie's extensive two-hour

identification class, June 12, 7:00 to 9:30 pm. See Rana Owen or Joanne Caskey.

June 8, 2007: California Geoscapes by John Karachewski. John's magnificent photography takes us through California as he describes the geology of our state – This is a "don't miss" opportunity.

July 13, 2007: The Benitoite Gem Mine - Past, Present and Future by Rick Kennedy. Rick is one of the foremost collectors and experts on the state gem, Benitoite.

August 10, 2007: To be announced by Harry Nichandros.

September 14, 2007: Geology of the San Francisco Bay Area by Doris Sloan, University of California, Berkeley, and John Karachewski. Magnificent photography accompanies Doris' description of Bay Area Geology – another don't miss opportunity. Their award-winning book will be available for sale and signing.

October 12, 2007: CCM&GS Auction.

November 9, 2007: *To be announced by Harry Nichandros.*

December 14, 2007: Christmas Potluck Dinner and Officer Installation.

Harry Nichandros – *VP, Program*

Membership Report

Wow! April was a great month for new members. I am pleased to announce 8 new members:

Susan Yoshizaki. Susan is a professional chef and caterer and is interested in Bead Stringing, Casting, Enameling, Faceting, Fossils, Geology, and Mineralogy.

Ko Ijichi. Ko is retired and living in Walnut Creek and heard about our club and wanted to join. His application didn't list his interest, so we'll just have to assume he's interested in everything we do.

Loretta Mason. I understand that Loretta has already attended some of our monthly classes and wanted to join our club. She is interested in Bead Stringing, Casting, Faceting, Fossils, and Mineralogy.

June and John Rosploch. If you've been to our annual show, you've probably seen June and John helping in the kitchen. June is **Mary Hicks'** sister (which by the way also makes her **Ophelia and Marlow Hicks'** daughter). June and John are interested in just about all aspects of lapidary arts and rockhounding.

Sabrina Mayberry. Sabrina is a Junior Member and is the niece of **Steve Davis**.

Sabrina is interested in Bead Stringing, Field trips, Fossils, Geology, and Mineralogy.

Jason Mayberry. Jason is a Junior Member and is a nephew of **Steve Davis**. Jason is interested in Carving, Field trips, Fossils, Geology, and Mineralogy.

Stephen Mayberry. Stephen is a Junior Member and is a nephew of **Steve Davis**.

Stephen is interested in Carving, Field trips, Fossils, Geology, and Mineralogy.

Please help me in welcoming these new members. I encourage each of the new members to get active and involved in club activities...that's the best way to get the most out of all the things the club has to offer. We look forward to meeting you all. Remember, our annual show is the first weekend in November and we expect all club members to help where they can.

Kim Kleesattel, Membership Chair

May Birthdays

Ann Matthews	5/4	
Pam Harris	5/7	
Susan Yoshizaki		5/7
Kelly Plumb	5/8	
Madison Teta	5/11	
Joe Yarbrough	5/12	
Patty Wintroath		5/13
Dick Pankey	5/19	
Michele Roma	5/20	
Elfie Pingree	5/21	
Don Tompkins		5/22
Jorge Chinchilla		5/23
June Rosploch	5/24	
Connie Klein	5/26	
Thomas Rouze		5/26

May Anniversaries

Dick Canales 5/25

Federation Report

What's Happening in the California Federation?

The CFMS annual Show and Convention is just a few weeks off. This year the Palmdale G&MC will host this big event at the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds in Lancaster, CA. The Show dates are June 15 - 17, a three-day show. It is not too late to enter a case for display and to make reservations to attend. There is good camping at the Fairgrounds. Entry forms and reservation forms are available on the CFMS website: www.cfmsinc.org.

Betty and I will be attending both the Rocky Mountain/AFMS Show in Roswell, NM and the CFMS Show in June. We leave for Roswell following the Reno Show in early

May and spend time sight seeing and collecting as we wind our way through Nevada, Utah Colorado and New Mexico. We only have 3 days to get back to Lancaster. I will be representing CFMS at the AFMS directors' meeting and Betty will run the Ye Old Timers Mineral Club table. Both **Lyle Roessler** and I are entering cases in competition at both Shows and Betty will also display cases at both Shows. We have attended AFMS show all around the country the last few years and look forward to seeing our rockhound friends from the other Federations again.

We will miss the May and June meetings, but I hope to have some good show-n-tell and reports when we return for the July meeting.

Dick Pankey, Federation Director

Antioch Lapidary Club's Annual Rock Swap and BBQ

The Antioch Lapidary club will host its annual Rock Swap and BBQ on Saturday, June 2nd from 10 till 4. It is always have a great rockhound time.

People are always looking for events that are close by; here is a perfect one. Well here it is: a great silver pick field trip with food.

This is a perfect opportunity to see the Antioch Lapidary Club's Workshop and Museum. Both are outstanding. If you would like to be a tailgater and sell contact John or Ellen Bauer at 925-458-2539 or jbauer@wwwfdb.org. Don't miss this fun and close by event.

Dick Pankey, Federation Director

Volcanic Bonanza in August

Contra Costa M&GS will host 2 field trips to northern California at the end of August. The first to Echo Stone Mountain on August 24 - 27, then on to Lassen Creek/Davis Creek on August 27 - 31. The details and trip fliers are available at the meetings or from me by e-mail (dickpankey@juno.com). Echo Stone Mountain is a fee dig for unique volcanic materials. There is a limit of 30 people for this fee dig so sign up early to insure your spot. Lassen Creek/Davis Creek is one of the premier obsidian collecting areas in the western United States. No limit; everyone welcome. We will join the Fossils for Fun petrified wood collecting trip on 8/31 to 9/4.

Dick Pankey, Federation Director

Field Trip Calendar

May 12-18. Glendive, Montana. To collect fossils, petrified wood, and Montana moss agate. Hosted by Fossils for Fun Society.

* **May 19. Berkeley, CA.** - Geologic tour of Sibley Volcanic Preserve in Berkeley Hills. Hosted by Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society

June 9. Taylorsville, CA. (Babcock Mountain). To collect rose quartz. Hosted by Paradise Club.

* **June 23 - 24. Hallelujah Junction, CA.** - To collect quartz and scepter crystals. Hosted by Roseville Rock Rollers Gem & Mineral Society.

June 24. Lone Pine, CA. - (Cerro Gordo Mine) To collect Smithsonite and 50 other minerals. Hosted by California Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

June 30 - July 1. Elko, NV. - To collect fossils, petrified wood, brachiopods, crinoids, and horn coral. Hosted by Fossils for Fun Society.

June 26 - July 9. Minas Gerais, Brazil. - Gem, Mineral, & Mining Tour. Sponsored by Gem & Mineral Council/Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. Information at www.nhm.org/gmc/brazil. Contact Jean Brandt at jbrandt@nhm.org or telephone (213) 763-3326. This trip is almost full, so act now if you are interested.

July 7. Forest City, CA. Tour of 16-1 Gold Mine & ghost town. Hosted by Carmichael Club.

July 18. Edward's Crossing, CA. Gold panning on the Yuba River, North San Juan/North Bloomfield area. Hosted by Sutter Buttes Club.

July 21 - 22. Edward's Crossing, CA. (Yuba River). To collect gold (by panning). Hosted by Sutter Buttes Gem & Mineral Society.

* **July 28 - 29. Fairview, NV.** To collect agates & geodes. Hosted by Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society.

August 20-24. Virgin Valley, NV. To collect opal. Fee dig. Hosted by Stockton Lapidary & Mineral Club.

August 24 - 27. Echo Mountain, CA. (Near Lava Beds National Monument). To collect combination fossil and igneous specimens. Hosted by Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society.

August 27 - 31. Davis Creek, CA. To collect obsidian. Hosted by Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society.

September 1 - 3. Cedarville, CA. To collect petrified wood. Hosted by Fossils for Fun Society.

September 24 - October 1. Southern Utah. To collect petrified wood. Hosted by Fossils For Fun Society.

For more information about these trips contact Dennis Freiburger.

Dennis Freiburger, Field Trip Chairman

Various Shows & Events

May 4 – 6. Valley Springs, CA. Snyder's Pow Wow. 1290 Paloma Road.
www.ValleySpringsPowWow.com

May 4 – 6. Bishop, CA. Lone Pine Gem & Mineral Society Show. Bishop Fairgrounds.

May 5 – 6. Bakersfield, CA. Kern County Mineral Society Show. Kern County Fairgrounds, Ming Avenue at South P Street.

May 12 – 13. Reno, NV. Reno Gem & Mineral Society Show. Reno Livestock Center, Exhibit Hall, 1350 North Wells Avenue.

June 2. Antioch, CA. Antioch Lapidary Club Rock Sale, Swap, & Bar-B-Q. Wilbur & Fulton Shipyard Road.

June 15 – 17. Lancaster, CA. California Federation of Mineralogical Societies / Palmdale Gem & Mineral Show. Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, Highway 14, exit H Avenue.

More listings at Rock and Gem Magazine website: www.rockngem.com/showdates

Dennis Freiburger, Field Trip Chairman

Club Hosted Filed Trip

May 19. Berkeley, CA - Geologic tour of Sibley Volcanic Preserve in Berkeley Hills. Join us for a unique opportunity to explore a prime example of California volcanism and see first hand the inner structure of the

"inside out" - and -"sideways" volcano.

Round Top Volcano in the Robert Sibley Volcanic Preserve - A gentle two mile hike is open to all AFMS clubs. - Hosted by Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society.

Harry Nichandros, VP Programs

Education Report

Lapidary Arts and Crafts

CLASSES COMING UP!

May 12, 2007: Fossil Fish Picking w/Greg & Dave



Greg Johnson will be teaching a class on hand preparing a Green River Formation fossil fish. These fish fossils (as you may remember if you attended the January 2006 meeting) are approximately 51 million years old and come from the fossil quarries near Kemmerer, Wyoming. A fossil fish kit will be provided to each of the students at the class. The kit will contain an unprepared fossil fish, and a small pick. By-the-way, Greg is **Dave Kleesattel's** business partner in case you didn't know!

Open to ten (10) students, each student should bring safety glasses or reading glasses, a small paint brush (to wipe away the dust from the fossil), and a "gum" eraser. Several pneumatic tools (like the professionals use) will be available for you to try. Students pay \$10 to Dave (this kit is a \$20 value). Sign-ups will be taken at the

April meeting. The "pickin and a'grinnin" will take place at **Connie Klein's** "Barn" in Concord from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Bring a lunch or fine dine on the world's greatest hamburgers at the joint down the road. Beverages are furnished.

Note that anyone who took the class last year and would like to finish their project is welcome to join the fun.

May 20, 2007: Alabaster/Calcite Carving w/ Dick Dennis

Dick Dennis who loves to sculpt and carve alabaster seashells and does a marvelous job of it, will be showing us how to carve and finish a small and simple "freeform" object out of alabaster and/or calcite (the materials are gorgeous). Seven (7) members are invited to participate in this class which will be held outdoors on a **Sunday** at the **Caskey** residence in Concord. The hours are from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Bring a lunch. Beverages are provided. Materials and tools are provided, but check with Dick on what tools you will need if you want to bring your own. Bring safety glasses, glasses or goggles, hats and especially gloves. A sign-up sheet will be available at the May meeting. If you missed previous sign-ups, call Rana or Joanne to be included.

June 2, 2007: Beading Workshop w/Rana Miller-Owen

All members are invited to bead for the fun of it. Enjoy the company of fellow bead-ers and while sharing stories, ideas, etc. Bring your own supplies and ideas... We all get to help each other in this Workshop. Held at Therese's house 11:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

June 12, 2007: Gem Identification w/Barry Bieler

Take a hands-on class with Barrie after his presentation to the club at our May or June meeting. As Rockhounds, it is important for us to recognize the gems and minerals we are collecting! The time for this class is 7:00 – 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday to be held at Barry's house. Directions will be available at the next meeting.

The following classes are tentatively scheduled, look for additional information in the next News Letter:

June 23, 2007: Copper Enamel w/Joe Yarbrough & Al Schleif. (Al's house)

June 30, 2007: Beading Workshop w/Rana Miller-Owen

July 14th & July 15th: Beginning Fused Glass - Firefly Pin w/Connie Klein (Connie's house)

August TBD: Slate Carving w/Brownie Cameron (Connie's Barn)

Camp Paradise (CFMS lapidary arts workshop classes) is coming your way for two weeks in September. All you new members please ask someone what that is all about!

Joanne Caskey, Education & Rana Miller-Owen, Assistant Education

Display Report

There was one Novice Entry of Stone Canyon Jasper from Mary Hicks.

We had 2 Pro entries: David Kleesattel did Cinnabar in Agate. Lyle Roessler had a Jade piece. Lyle's Jade piece was voted the favorite.

There was one entry for Shape of the Month of Stone Canyon Jasper from David Kleesattel.

We also had one faceted piece. Unfortunately, the person did not fill out a form so I do not remember who it was or know what the piece was made from.

May's Shape of the Month will be a triangle.

SPECIAL INTEREST:

We had 2 necklaces from the Double X Knot class on display. In addition, Ken Whitlatch brought examples of the Happy Camp Jade and Rhodinite to show after is Presentation.

Rana Miller-Owen for **Joe Yarbrough**, Display Chair

Show Corner

Grab Bags:

Hazel Woolsey has begun her annual effort at grab bags and will have her normal lot of 300 bags ready for show time. For many years, Hazel cut out and sewed all the bags herself, and by hand. Last year, though, Hazel cut them out, but Ann Matthews and I machine sewed them. (Same for this year).

Hazel buys some of the material at bargain sales, and some is given to her. Recent donors have been Betty Pankey and Ann Matthews.

Hazel's finished bags are roughly 1/2 pound, mostly stones, but with small trinkets and other specialty items tossed in. Some of the current specialty items come from Jim High's "bubble" machines. Hazel picks up additional things from the bargain tables at Quartzite, Dollar Store, and elsewhere. Ophelia Hicks has donated bracelets last year, and Joanne Caskey is giving something like 100 small crystals for the bags. Last year (2006), Sody Sodestrom donated 25 bags already filled and ready to sell! That way, Hazel brought 300 bags to the show, and sold 325. (Didn't know that grab bags could multiply, did you!)

As I said, Hazel's finished bags are roughly 1/2 pound, mostly stones. The greater part of that is polished stones. Means I've started crushing, sorting, and tumbling stones for this year's bags. We'll need roughly 80-90 pounds of polished stones. While I polish most of what goes into the bags (more on that below), Glenn Young has donated a welcome amount for the past couple years. Recently, too, Charlott Bochra, Matt Matthews and Dick Pankey have also contributed. Many, many thanks to all!

Tumbling for Grab Bags:

It seems that everyone has a way to tumble stones. I've developed mine through trial-and-error, with the goal of getting good, smoothly polished stones with minimum cost and waste. Here's how I do it -- and why.

For the first round, I tumble in the barrel tumbler with 60-80-90 grit (whatever course

I have). Gives the best shaping of the rough stones, but uses a lot of grit (3/4 - 1 pound of grit for a 10-12 pound barrel of rough rock. This takes 10 days to 2 weeks to get the best shaping of the stones, particularly when the rough is really hard and really rough. Also, produces a lot of thick slurry to dispose of at the end of this tumble cycle. For the next 3-4 grit cycles (220, 600, 1200 grits, and polish -- sometimes skip the 1200 grit), I use a vibratory tumbler. (Not to advertise, but Harbor Freight has a really nice 10 lb. vibratory tumbler, sometimes on sale, for \$39.99, regular price \$49.95.) Advantages here are that each grit cycle takes only 2-3 days, uses roughly 1/2 teaspoon (yes, teaspoon) of grit, and produces a correspondingly small amount of slurry!

Explaining the waste-slurry problem: In the barrel tumbler, you fill the tumbler roughly 2/3 to 3/4 full of rocks, then add water to cover them. This is where the large amount of waste slurry comes from. In the vibratory tumbler, on the other hand, you just get the stones "wet," then add a very small amount of water -- just enough to keep the developing slurry liquid. In that way, the volume of waste slurry is an absolute minimum!

For this year, I've borrowed a 4-barrel tumbler rack from Matt Matthews, bought one of the Harbor Freight tumblers (for myself), crushed up 40-50 pounds of rock, and am about to embark on another tumbling frenzy -- if you can call a 10-day to 2-week process a "frenzy"!

Dealers:

Looks like we will have another 100% return of our dealer force this year. Such dealer loyalty speaks well of our lovely venue -- Centre Concord -- and the "show"

we put on. You can all take pride in that endorsement.

Parking:

You're going to get tired of reading this -- but it'll be in every Show Corner 'till show time. The show income is what pays the bills for our club. Our monthly dues do not even cover the cost of preparing and mailing our monthly newsletter! So, please, as parking at Centre Concord is both limited and shared with other full-time businesses in the shopping center, recognize the benefit the show attendees provide to us, as well as the obligation we owe to our neighbors, and leave the nearby parking for our paying (and buying) visitors. Your cooperation will be appreciated by all.

Sam Woolsey, Show Chair

Editor's Notes

Tool Store

✂ A new Harbor Freight Tools is opening soon at the north end of Contra Costa Boulevard in Pacheco where the old JoAnn's Fabrics used to be. (For you fellas that would be next to Rockler's Woodworks).

Mineral Storage Tip

When storing gem material outdoors, be careful! Many colorful pink and purple minerals are faded by intense sunlight. These include rose quartz, amethyst, lepidolite, and fluorite.

✂ Fossil specimens may be destroyed outdoors by wetting, freezing and thawing. Many fossil specimens are clay bases (although

there are some specimens that are in sandstone sediment.) Common opal, if left in the elements, will craze, crack and fall apart.

Vi Jones, Skagit Gems 12/01, via "The Rollin' Rock" 11/06

The California Poppy

Plants have been used by prospectors searching for minerals since the middle ages. Some plants favor soils that contain or have an abundance of a particular element. Many use the desert trumpet as a gold indicator. Plants of the mustard family excel in absorbing uranium and may be of use to the geo-botanical prospector who is searching for uranium minerals.

The California poppy is a known indicator of copper, as it requires copper to exist.

Some copper compounds are soluble in water, so the presence of poppies does not necessarily indicate that there are copper minerals in the immediate area. Roadside occurrences of poppies should be ignored due to the presence of contaminants from passing cars and trucks. The presence of poppies in the open desert is much more meaningful.

Near San Manuel Mine, (north of Tucson, AZ) poppies grow in profusion on ground known to be mineralized. On non mineralized ground, the poppies terminate abruptly, and the fault line can be traced by the poppies. Often, dumps at copper mines are completely covered by poppies. Since gold, silver and other metals are frequently associated with copper, the presence of the California poppy can be a clue to the possible presence of valuable metal deposits.

The Petrified Log via "The Agatizer" 09/06

Astorite

Swirling pinks, clear and little fibers of gold and silver make up Astorite. The color ranges from pink, red, clear, white, dark with translucent to opaque areas, showing little flecks of gold and silver. This stone, its contradictions, colors, minerals and metallics, from composition to formation, is one of a kind.

Astorite is basically rhodonite, but in addition also contains - pardon us if we get rock-geeky here! - rhodochrosite, quartz (in the form of pseudomorphs, and chalcedony, after quartz), and ore gangue silicified (complex sulfide ore with native metallics of gold, silver, copper, lead and chalcopryrite). This combination is what gives it a special look - as far as we know, astorite is only found in a very remote area of Colorado in a mine located 12,000 feet above sea level in an avalanche chute.

The mineral and mine are named after the previous mine owner JOHN JACOB ASTOR IV. The wealthiest man in the United States at his death, his estimated value in today's dollars would be approximately \$1.3 Billion. John Astor left a fortune that has continued to make the family name prominent.

The Astor Mine in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado

Astor was a well traveled man and knew quality and value. So it's not surprising that he found and purchased the Astor Mine in the San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado. The mine was closed when John Jacob Astor IV went down in 1912 with the Titanic in the Atlantic. The portal was sealed upon John's death not to be reopened until

2001. Today this mine produces the finest unique ore body in the world, now known as "astorite."

Excerpted from:

<http://www.trashcity.com/historyofastorite.htm> and

<http://www.trashcity.com/astorite.htm>

Trash City Beads, Scottsdale, AZ, 31 Mar. 2007

Luree Heese, Editor

The Unsolved Mystery of Blue Amber

By Hermann Dittrich

Blue amber is only found in one country: in the Caribbean, in the Dominican Republic. There are several theories about the origin of the color and it is not fully understood what causes the blue color in amber. We know that it is a result of fluorescence and no solid color. Ultra-violet or violet light is re-emitted as blue or green light attributed to the presence of poly-nuclear aromatic molecules. (Gemology, Cornelius S. Hurlbut, Jr., Robert C. Kammerling). This makes a lot of sense, because the best way to test blue amber is by holding it under an ultra-violet lamp where even the darkest space-blue amber changes its color to a radiant cobalt blue and we have noticed that blue amber can be recognized by a very agreeable smell, which is different from regular amber when it is being cut and polished.

One theory links the color in Dominican blue amber to the occurrence of volcanic ash or dust which was present when the resin was first pressed out from *hymenaea protera* millions of years ago. Another suggests that due to volcanic activity hot lava must have

flowed over these areas where regular amber was buried under ground. Due to extreme heat, the amber changed its color first to green and then to blue. Experiments have shown that a change of color occurs when normal amber is heated up. Another detail seems to fit this theory: There are virtually no animal or plant inclusions to be found in blue amber. Dr. G. Bechly of the Naturkunde museum in Tubingen, Germany writes: "The large absence of inclusions could fit very well into the hypothesis, that the blue amber was secondarily warmed up and melted, since this way such inclusions were destroyed (cooked) (as it is also in the case with the Sarawak amber)."

While the mystery around the origin of its color has not been cleared, one thing is sure: Blue Amber is beautiful and is extremely rare.

This article was obtained from <http://www.ambarazul.com> via Calgary Lapidary Journal 03/05, The Mountain Gem 01/06, Breccia 3/06 and published in the April issue of Rollin Rock.

Luree Heese, Editor

The Gem Faire
Is coming to Cal Expo
Friday—Sunday, May 18-
20

Sponsored by the Sacramento Mineral Society

Contra Costa Mineral and Gem Society

PO Box 4667, Walnut Creek, CA 94596

General Meeting: Second Friday of the month at 7.30 p.m.

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Free Parking at the City of Concord garage located across Salvio

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