



Diablo Diggins

Newsletter of the Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society

December 2021

President Donna Albrecht's Message

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Our club has weathered two very trying years and come out on a high note! Let's celebrate at our annual Holiday Party on December 13 at 7 pm at Centre Concord. Bring a dish to share, the club will provide the main dish. We'll be having our ugly sweater contest, gift exchange, and more. See Kelly Plumbs announcement for the details and how to sign up.

After taking a year off our show because of COVID, we were able to put on a remarkably good show in November. We had some beloved vendors and a mix of exciting new ones. Mike Hopkins pulled it all together with his team that included Kelly Plumb, Terry Caskey, and more. Check out his report for more details.

Our December meeting includes the installation of officers for the coming year. I'd like to take a moment to thank this year's board for all their hard work through this exceptionally challenging period. It allowed us to get our feet back under us and we're ready to flourish in 2022. My board has included, Kelly Plumb, Karen Oliver, Taylor Thompson, Vikki Hotopp, Caryl Taraldson, Dick Pankey, Mike Hopkins, Terry Caskey, Johanna Fenton, Cheryl Morgan, and Naomi Morgan,

I would also like to thank all the members who have stepped up and participated during my 2.5 years as president and 3 years as program chair. I truly appreciate each and every one of you! May your holidays be filled with love and joy, and your New Year offer you new opportunities to achieve your goals.

Best,
Donna Albrecht

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

Unless you joined or renewed your membership at the Show, dues for 2022 are now due. They are \$20 per adult or \$10 per junior. You can pay them in person at the December Holiday meeting or mail them to CCM&GS, P.O. Box 842, Concord, CA 94522

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Upcoming Meetings-

Board of Directors- Wednesday December 8th, 7pm at the Donna Albrecht’s



General Meetings-

2021 Holiday Party - Monday December 13th at 7 pm (2nd Monday of the month), Centre Concord

Save the Date! The Contra Costa Mineral and Gem Society invites all fully vaccinated members to our annual Holiday potluck party on December 13th at 7:00 pm at the Centre Concord. There will be a funny hat contest and an ugly sweater contest. Winners to be chosen by applause from members who are attending. There will also be a gift exchange. Bring something to exchange if you want to participate. There will be places to put them for a male, a female, or for anybody. Gifts should be rock related. It is suggested that the gifts should cost no more than \$10.00. A great rock that you collected yourself is an inexpensive idea.

Please bring a dish to share. The categories are main course, side dish, salads, and deserts. A call or text to Hospitality Chair Kelly Plumb at 510 693-9075 would be appreciated so we can be sure to have a variety of dishes and an idea of how many people are going to attend, but it is not required.

Our 2022 officers will be installed at the party. We are still without a President or a Field Trip chairperson. The board (since we have no President) will also need to appoint an Education Chairperson, a Hospitality Chairperson (this is a really easy one) and several other positions. If this club is going to survive and appeal to new members, we need full participation. If you or a club member you know, has these talents or is willing to learn, please talk to any Board Member. There are lots of people ready to help and guide you.

Have your proof of vaccination card, its' picture or proof of a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours with you, and let's party!

CCM&GS T-Shirts-

Club shirts are available in limited adult sizes. Cost \$15- \$17 plus postage._Contact our designer - Bob Rigor rrrigor@aol.com

December Birthdays

- Terry Caskey 12/2
- Margaret Henrich 12/ 8
- Suzanne Garrett 12/16
- Barbara Roderick 12/7
- Kathleen Baird 12/26

OUR CLUB SHOW 2021

Thank you all for the fantastic turn out at our club show this year. Considering the committee had only three full months to plan, I think we had a great success. I watched many kids and families enjoying the great demonstrations and activities. And judging from the dealer comments, they too had a fun and profitable show.

Now is the time to thank the show committee, each person was instrumental to making the show a success: KELLY contributed many, many hours to organize our dealers, demonstrators and the case exhibitors. DONNA and TERRY thank you for allowing me bounce ideas off you, and to keep me from bouncing off the walls. KAREN for the family activities and help with her scouts. Thank you, VIKKI for keeping us on track in the finances. And thank you to TAYLOR, DICK, AND CHERYL and many others for the planning hours that go into preparing and hosting the show.

We all should say a special thank you to PRIMO for saving our bacon when our volunteer labor backed out at the last minute! He and his crew moved trailers, set up and moved tables and repacked the cases and just were everywhere. We truly could not have put on the show without your help.

Last, but most importantly, I must thank my wife Janelle for allowing me the time to indulge in my 2nd passion. Thank you, love.

I would greatly appreciate any comments on ways to improve your show, please email me at mhopkins@ironhorsesdesign.net

Michael Hopkins
Show Chair





Balmorhea Blue Agate

The agate fields around Balmorhea Lake is well known to the collectors for their strong blue colored agates as well as black plume agates and the classic example would be one with strong white and blue color combos. Lake Balmorhea is mainly a fishing site and also a great birding site where many migrating birds stop by to rest. The flat areas to the south of the lake will produce bleached agate fragments and it's possible to find larger fragments and the washes are best places to look for the agates. Some agates are also found in the hills on the northern side of the lake. Alan and I did not have a much of luck anywhere around the lake but received directions from a local rock shop owner and were able to find quite a few agates on the north side of the town of Balmorhea. Some people have also found calcite with plume inclusions which would indicate that the plume material formed independently of the agate formation.

Since the area around the lake is a private land that is open to recreation including rock-collecting, at the time we went there anyone wishing to try their luck at finding any agates must stop by the fishing store to pay a small fee before venturing out around the lake. Take a route toward the Lake Balmorhea and keep going till you see the white fishing store on the right side.

One author I read expressed the possibility that the agates of Balmorhea might share the same basaltic volcano systems as those of Marfa agates since they show similar colors.

Balmorhea is famous for their blue agate, banded often with black plumes. The skin is usually black with a white patina on the surface. It appears to be fairly wide spread in isolated pockets northwest of the Davis Mountains. The Blue Agate Rock and Gift shop in Fort Davis has a nice collection (432.426.2924)

The collecting areas is the north east area around Lake Balmorhea. In Balmorhea, TX, which is about 25 miles north of Fort Davis off of Hwy 118 and just south of I-10, find Houston Street. It will be marked with a sign pointing the direction to the lake. Follow Houston to the lake and be sure to pay a daily use park fee at the park store.



Field Trip News!

This is Kevin Bell from the Delta Gold Diggers Gold Club in Stockton California we are having a gold show at the Lodi Grape Festival grounds in Lodi California December 4-5, 2021.

We would like to have your members, family and friends attend our show - We would appreciate if you would email them with the details.

We also have RV spaces with hookups available for rent.

If you have any questions please contact me at 916 833-5947

Thank You,

Kevin Bell

General Membership Meeting Monday November 8, 2021

Not 24 hours after we finally put the last case away and closed the trailer, a small group of hardy club members met at our regular club meeting. We discussed how much we were able to achieve in the short time we had to prepare for the show and how smoothly things ran during the show. I will be passing on a full report in the January newsletter. Thank you everyone for making our show a success.

Our club was formed in 1950, over 70 years of celebrating, enjoying, and sharing this great hobby. The three main pillars of our club are EDUCATION, ART & FUN STUFF. Below are some of the comments about ways we can better our club that came up during the "skull Session" that was ran by Cheryl Morgan.

A. EDUCATION

a. The general agreement was that youth activities are a must. Promote with other groups and clubs, not just rock clubs: 4H, outreach with demonstrations, enter county fair, 4th July booth

b. Ask members to have a short 5 -10-minute discussion on trips, outings or rock related doings at the general meeting.

c. Record the presentations to keep the knowledge/ skills of the members

d. Possibly use the recordings for promotion, link to Face Book and web page

e. Member of the month, likes, presentation at meeting, link that to FB page

f. Suggest change of time and day of week for our meetings Monday's conflict with youth groups

g. Need to bring back classes: beading, silver work, possibly go to other clubs classes?

h. Set up, if possible, a beginner introduction to shop equipment (possibly Antioch)

i. Long term goal is to reestablish a shop of our own.

B. ART

. Classes! Beading, silver, rock ID. Short presentations at out meetings to share knowledge with new members.

a. Adult Ed – go as a club whenever possible

b. Set up a shop of our own, with CC Adult Ed or a location on private property.

C. FUN STUFF

. Trips and Outings

i. Black Diamond, tour and picnic

ii. Bus trip to State Mineral Museum at Mariposa and see other stuff on the way

a. Saturday 1/2-day activities, local rock and mineral related

b. Schedule as close as possible after meeting

***Need orientation for new members what to expect and what to do, written down? *** Orientation, and go over at first meeting, invite new members to meetings at least a couple times (membership chair). ANY comments on ways to continue to make our club a better place for members and visitors are always welcome.

Michael Hopkins

2022 Elected Officers:

President:

1stVicePresident/Programs:

Kelly Plumb

Kellyplumb900@yahoo.com

2ndVicePresident/Fieldtrips:

Secretary:

Karen Oliver

925 876 3247

Cockroach1454@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Vikki Hotopp

hotoppvikki@gmail.com

Federation Director:

Dick Pankey

(925) 439-7509

dickpankey@juno.com

2022 Appointed Officers:

Annual Show Chair

Mike Hopkins

mhopkins@ironhorsesdesign.net

Display

Cheryl Morgan

Cherylmorgan09@yahoo.com

Hospitality

Librarian

Caryl Taraldson

lynn@taraldson.net

Membership

Taylor Thompson

925 808 5168

DreamBug1157@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Mike Hopkins

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Newsletter of the Contra Costa Mineral and Gem Society

Like us on Facebook!

Contra Costa Gem and Mineral Society

Website:

www.contracostamineralandgemsociety.org

The Contra Costa Mineral and Gem Society was formed in 1950 to encourage the study of mineralogy, lapidary arts, and field collections.

General meeting on the 2nd Monday of each month on Zoom, stay connected for updates.

CCMGS

P.O. Box 842

Concord, CA 94522-0842

FIRST CLASS

Member of the American and California Federation of Mineralogical Societies