

**Diablo
Diggins**

Contra Costa Mineral and Gem Society

Since 1950

"We Dig Rocks"

Concord, CA

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This Newsletter is available by e mail - contact the Editor

July 2014

Presidents Message



Wow, it's July already!

Rock collecting season is well underway. Have you planned a trip to find some gems and minerals for yourself? Be sure to check out Kelly Plumb's column listing upcoming group events you can join.

June was a spectacular month for CCM&GS members. We had our annual picnic at the park with delicious food, great fun, and beautiful weather. It opened with a special treat; local Girl Scouts from several troops and under the direction of our Mary Jernigan, did a solemn Flag Ceremony including a sing-along of patriotic songs to celebrate the fact that we were having our picnic on Flag Day. I'd especially like to thank our member Debbie Blevins and her committee for setting it all up.

As always, our June meeting was our annual auction. Members brought in an incredible variety of items for rock hounds, jewelry lovers, and much more. The auctioneers, runners, and counters kept things moving along and my thanks to everyone who worked, brought items, and bought items!

The heat of summer seems like an unlikely time to be thinking about officers for 2015, but now is the time for the nominating committee to be doing just that. Paul Black has generously agreed to take on the post. We will need to elect a president, vp programs/show, vp field trips, treasurer and secretary. If you're interested in running for one of the positions or helping Paul find people who will, please get in touch with him.

Have a joyous July 4th! I'll see you at our July meeting on the 14th!
Donna Albrecht

July Program
Hallelujah Junction

Next General Meeting
Monday, July 14, 7:30 PM
Centre Concord

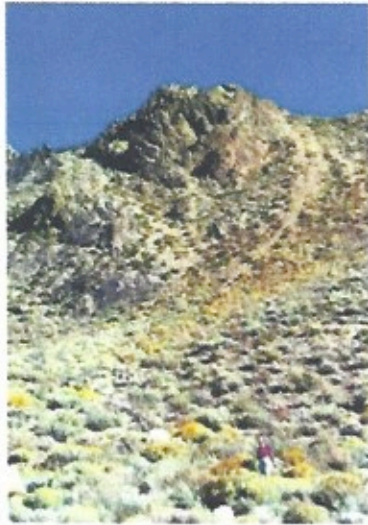
Board Meeting
July 9, 6:30 PM

July Program.....	2
Meeting Minutes.....	3
Announcements.....	3,4
Birthdays/Anniversaries.....	5
Field Trips.....	6
Boards and Committees.....	7
Club Calendar.....	8



July Program

Hallelujah Junction



Some of the world's finest quartz scepters, cathedral crystals, clear, smoky, and amethyst crystals have come from Peterson Peak, Nevada near an area known as the Hallelujah Junction.

Just a short 3-1/2 hours to the junction and a short 4-wheel jaunt to Hallelujah Mountain as it is affectionately called, and you can be looking into a two-foot pocket of smoky quartz crystals and crystal scepters. Don't have a 4-wheel? A mountain bike will do – once you get there, it's all down hill!

Well, in your dreams, you say! Yes, you need some luck. But the mountain is truly a great resource of collecting material.



Talus slope of crystals. Quartz crystals can be found loose in the lower talus slopes of Hallelujah Mountain. Used with permission from Bob Drummond, <http://mtlilygems.com>

Quartz crystals can easily be found loose in the lower talus slope or embedded in pockets. And for the more energetic, the heavily weathered bedrock can be ripped to expose abundant quartz veins and spectacular

scepter specimens, some over 16 inches in length and close to the surface.

Quartz crystal from Hallelujah Junction. Source: gemandmineral.com



This month, professional mineral dealer and specimen hunter, Rick Kennedy will entertain us with the colorful tales of his diggings for the prized quartz scepter crystals of Hallelujah Junction. Plus he will share the mining history and recent heavy equipment projects in use at this fabulous and unique area.

For display, Rick will bring a number of incredible samples he has collected over the years. If we are lucky, and his supply holds out, he may also bring a box of crystals for us all.

July Speaker, Rick Kennedy

Come for a great evening; hear the history of Hallelujah Junction, and find out how to find your own quartz scepters this month in *Hallelujah Junction* with Rick Kennedy.

By Harry Nichandros
Program Chairman



Antioch Lapidary Tailgate

I was a tailgate participant at the June 21st Antioch Lapidary event. It was a nice summer day, we had a gentle breeze from the near-by delta. I was able to share some of the collected treasures with other rock hounds. I enjoyed a bbq hamburger lunch at a modest price. If you have not come by to this annual event, remember next year. No charge, and it's nice to see what people bring, and to visit with everyone. Mary Hicks, Secretary



Taylor Thompson, Jr. Member, and Diablo Shadows Girl Scouts provided the CCM&GS Flag Day ceremony

Secretary Report for June. Mary Hicks

No BOD meeting was held.

The General Meeting was focused on the Club Auction. Many interesting items were donated by members. The evening generated \$744 and many treasures were welcomed into new homes that evening. We missed ex President Therese Clark and Vice President of Programs Harry Nichandros. Sadly, Therese's dear father Ken recently passed away and our thoughts are with them and the Clark family at this difficult time.

A Big Heartfelt Thank You

We cannot thank everyone enough for all of the phone calls, emails, cards, prayers and condolences. The sudden sadness of my Dad's passing has come with many, many blessings. The first is that that he was only sick once in his life, the night he died. We all have each other and we were all with him, some in record time. We are very blessed.

Thank you for your support.
Therese, Harry, Sophie & Family



Diablo Shadows Girl Scouts with President Donna Albrecht help celebrate Flag Day

**ROCKHOUNDS ON A ROLL!**

Vacation time is here! By the time you see this, July 4th and all it's fireworks will be past! It is time to get out and get all those rocks we will be cutting this year, showing off in our cases for our November show, and donating to next years' auction.

I missed the personal touch for my column last month because I was too far out in the middle of nowhere rockhounding to get a wi-fi signal. However it was a great trip. We started out at the Reno, NV gem show which we enjoy every year. The next stop was Colorado where we visited friends in the high country. It was still so cold that my Prius was covered with 5 inches of snow in the morning and the local dogs walked right up to the windows (which the snow came up to) and stuck their heads through the icicles to beg for treats.

Next we made a run for the Cheyenne Wyoming gem show. It was a small show with some really great people. I really cleaned up on the black turritella at the silent auction. We had originally planned to stop at the collecting site and had some great directions from a friend at the Reno show, but the Cheyenne folks kept heaping it up so much that when I was done we decided to spend the time elsewhere.

Next stop was Custer Wyoming and a trip to Mount Rushmore. It is impossible to stop for a really good close-up picture without paying \$11- for their parking palace! Oh, well, I got good pictures of the mountain goats and some big horn sheep. We met up with a local collector who took us to a location for teepee canyon agate. We got some good small patterns, but he teased us unmercifully with a huge chunk with a 4 inch wide, 6 inch long pattern filled with amethyst that he said he would have taken us to if we had 4 wheel drive. Did I mention that we were camping out of my Prius? We also tried the actual teepee canyon site. Talk about steep slopes! Actually we found a lot more in the rock shops in town. The same goes for the jade we were so anxious to find. We tried all the spots in the book that the Prius would go to and that we had time for, but it was hard to

find. (Now why would that be a surprise??) However we found several great deals in shops all over Wyoming and Utah. The big surprise was that the jade with quartz crystal was very expensive! The book says "this is regarded as lower quality." Well, guess what? The crystal lovers have discovered it and now it cost 5 times what the "higher quality" stuff does.

At the end of this month we are off again to the Terry Montana Interregional field trip that I have been talking about for the last several months. Hopefully we will be coming back with some good Montana Agates. I hope that many of you have also been able to sign up for this fun event and I hope to see you there!

On a less fun note, the attendance at our local field trips has been very poor. No one showed up for the Pinole Fossil trip although several originally said they were interested. If you still want to have day trip field trips, please suggest something that will interest enough people so that we have some attendance. Do you want to try for Mariposite? Agate Beach? Soap-stone? Please see me with your ideas and preferences.

Field Trips

July 19 – 20 Davis Creek, CA, for obsidian (various sheens) and needles Hosted by Sacramento Mineral Society

Jul 30-Aug 4 Inter-regional Field Trip, Terry, MT, for fossils, agate, etc. AFMS Inter-regional Field Trip Details pdf via AFMS newsletter

Shows

August 1 - 3: NIPOMO, CA Orcutt Mineral Society, Santa Maria

Nipomo High School, 525 North Thompson Avenue
Hours: Fri/Sat 10 - 5; Sun 10 - 4, Contact: Wes Lingerfelt, (805) 929-3788, Cell (805) 710-1983
Email: info@omsinc.org Website: www.omsinc.org

August 16 - 17: TEHACHAPI, CA Tehachapi Valley Gem & Mineral Society

St. Malachy's Catholic Church, 407 West E Street
Hours: Sat 10 - 6; Sun 10 - 5, Contact: Robert Papac, (661) 821-7103
Email: getback@csurfers.net or getback@antelecom.net, Website: www.tvgms.org