

The Sierra Pelonaagram



October 2009

... Member of the California Federation of Mineralogical Society Inc. ...

The Sierra Pelona Rock Club is a non-profit organization founded in 1959 with the objective to sponsor activities and promote interest and education in: mineralogy, lapidary, geology, paleontology and related subjects.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fall is here and the weather is more agreeable for rock hounding. Not that the hot weather stopped most of us. We had some great trips over the summer but I know some of you were waiting for it to cool a little.

A few months ago the club had a successful field trip to the Green Horns for rose quartz but the weather was a bit too warm so we will be going back up there this month. The material is great even gemmy so it is worth the second trip. Shep sent out an email and will keep us informed on times etc.

Shep is asking for help with club field trips since he is also the Federation field trip chairperson and as such keeps busy planning field trips for all of southern California. If you have an interest in helping him plan field trips check with him. Don't worry if you don't know many collecting areas yet, he and others will help.

Shep and I marked out two new claim areas and the club should go out there and see the material and get acquainted with the areas. Also some of our regular collecting spots will be new to all the new members. It will be fun to show them Ant Hill or Gem Hill or the honey onyx and others.

The club continues to grow with four members welcomed at the General Meeting and three more members to be welcomed this month. We are growing so fast we are having trouble keeping the roster updated. Not that I'm complaining. Some great ideas have come with the new members and great abilities,

This Pelonagram is edited by a new member and our web site was set up by, at the time, a new member and will be maintained by Debbie, a new member. Although it is hard to call anyone who has been in the club over a year, a new member with so many newer members.

Again no complaint, I hope the club membership continues to grow so mention the club to your friends and neighbors and please show your support at meetings, field trips, and fund raisers.

See you Saturday.

RON LAWRENCE
PRESIDENT
SIERRA PELONA ROCK CLUB

General Events from the CFMS Web Page

October 10-11 2009, Trona, CA

Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society
Searles Gem & Mineral Show Building
13337 Main Street
Hours: Sat. 7:30-5; Sun. 7:30-4
Jim & Bonnie Fairchild (760) 372-5356
Email: sigms@iwvisp.com
Website: www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub

October 17-18 2009, Santa Rosa, CA

Santa Rosa Gem & Mineral Society
Santa Rosa Veterans Building
1351 Maple Ave. (Opposite Fairgrounds)
Hours: Sat. 10-6; Sun. 10-5
Kendra
Email: Summer_skys_27@yahoo.com
Website: www.gem-n-i.org

November 7-8 2009, Lancaster, CA

Palmdale Gem & Mineral Society
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds
2551 W. Ave. H, Hwy 14
Hours: 9 - 5 both days
Susan Chaissin-Walblom (661) 943-1861
Email: SLChaisson@yahoo.com
Website: palmdalegems.org

November 7-8 2009, Ridgecrest, CA

Indian Wells Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.
Desert Empire Fairgrounds
520 S. Richmond Rd.
Hours: 9 - 5 both days
John DeRosa (760) 375-7905
Email: schiller@ridgecrest.ca.us

November 21-22 2009, Oxnard, CA

Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society
Oxnard Performing Arts Center
800 Hobson Way
Hours: Sat. 9-5; Sun. 10-4
Norb Kinsler (805) 644-6450
Email: info@oxnardgem.com
Website: www.oxnardgem.com

December 5-6 2009, Barstow, CA

Mojave Gem & Mineral Society
Community Center
841 Barstow Road
Hours: 10-5 daily
Gene Haines (760) 256-0595
Email: janetwentz@earthlink.net
Website: www.mdgms.org

A Trip with Shep

This trip, weather permitting, will take place Saturday Oct 24.

The final meet spot will be at the CalTrans Sand Shed on Route 155 just past Alta Sierra near the summit coming up from Wofford Heights. This is a steep drive. To get to the rose quartz a high clearance vehicle is mandatory. 4WD not necessary. From the parking area is a short hike to the quartz wall. A portion of this trail is steep. We will meet at the sand shed at 11am. The quarry is about 20 minutes from the shed. This will be our only stop here. The reason for the later start is to allow "warmer" temps. We will be about 8000 feet altitude. Dress accordingly, in layers that can be removed. While there is abundant float and debris the better material will require exhaustive hard rock mining--heavy hammers, chisels and pry bars.

To gauge drive time to the shed bear in mind that this is by Lake Isabella and about a 15-20 minute drive from the lake.

The club can meet in Rosamond by the Chevron station across from McDonald's for carpooling and caravan. We can also carpool from the sand shed to minimize the number of vehicles on the drive to the quarry.

This will still allow quite a few hours of collecting during the afternoon. Bring lunch and refreshments.

TOOLS: hammers, chisels, collecting bags or buckets, goggles and gloves- the quartz shards can be razor sharp.

Be advised that this is National Forest land and collecting will be limited to no more than a 5-gallon bucket.

Collect responsibly.

Shep Koss

New Members of the Sierra Pelona Rock Club

The Sierra Pelona Rock Club would like to welcome new members, Paul, Jeannine and Tom Kinney, Bill and Heidi Webber, Ioan Panaitescu and Barbra and Jerry Farrar. Congratulations and Welcome!



October Birthdays:
It appears that no one is claiming an October birthday.

Officers:

President – Ron Lawrence

Vice-President – George Lawrence

Secretaries: Minutes-Colleen Clough

Treasurer – Greg Mazourek

Federation Director (CFMS/AFMS) – Shep Koss

Chairpersons:

Bulletin Editor – Heidi Webber

Claim - Ralph Hyde

Donation Rock Table - Al Brown

Field Trips – Shep Koss

Historian - Frank Humelbaugh

Hospitality – Karen Kubota

Membership – Ron & Akiko Strathman

Programs – Mike Serino

Publicity – Diane Southwell

Storage - Mike Moreno

Sunshine - Sarita Hyde

Web page – Debbie Merideth

The Sierra Pelona Rock Club, is a member of the California and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. (CFMS/AFMS). The general club meetings (Open to the public) are at 7:30 PM, on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at:

**The Clubhouse of the Greenbrier
Mobile Estates EAST
21301 Soledad Canyon Rd
Canyon Country, CA 91351**

Contact the Club or the Sierra Pelonagram Editor at:

Sierra Pelona Rock Club

P.O. Box 221256

Newhall, Ca. 91322

Or E-mail: hwebber@pacbell.net

Visit the *SPRC website* designed by Earl Kangas

<http://www.sierrapelona.com/>

During the September general meeting, Diane Southwell was admiring a necklace with a Widow's Mite pendant worn by Janelle Williams. Diane loves the story behind the Widow's Mite and wanted to share. Thanks Diane.

Lesson of the Widow's Mite

The *Lesson (or Parable) of the widow's mite* is a story present in the Synoptic Gospels (Mark 12:38-44, Luke 20:45-47, 21:1-4), in which Jesus is teaching at the Temple in Jerusalem. The Gospel of Mark specifies that a *mite* was worth less than a quadrans, the smallest Roman coin, implying that Mark's intended audience were more familiar with Roman culture than with Jewish.

In Jesus' times there actually was no coin called a mite. However, there was a mite in the time of the King James translation. The denomination is well known in the Southern Netherlands. Both the duke of Brabant and the count of Flanders issued them and they were sometimes imitated in the North. Originally, the Brabant milt (maille in



A bronze Mite, also known as a Lepton (meaning small), minted by Alexander Jannaeus, King of Judaea, 103 - 76 B.C. obverse: the blooming lotus scepter of ancient Egypt in circle, reverse: star of eight rays.

French) was 1/76 stuiver, the Flemish milt 1/48 stuiver. When the two areas were united under the dukes of Burgundy and later under the Habsburgs, the rate of the milt was set at 1/32 stuiver. More important, they were the very smallest copper coins. By 1611 they were no longer made, but they still circulated.

It was almost a social obligation to give a silver coin at church collections, for there were many framed money galleries and armored safes that needed to be filled. Only the very poor could get away with giving a copper coin and only the desperately poor would give a copper coin as small as a milt, as their social status could hardly sink any lower. A widow would in principle have to live without any income. The translator probably had a beggar and a contemporary widow in mind. In 1611, all this would have been self-evident to the readers.

Witnessing the donations made by the rich men, Jesus highlights how a poor widow donates only two *mites*, the least valuable coins available at the time. But, Jesus observes, this sum was everything she had to her name, while the other people give only a small portion of their own wealth.

Taken literally, the widow's donation of one mite could have been by obligation, since she could not have given any less. Following this reasoning, some interpreters note that Jesus sits down in judgment "opposite" (over against, in opposition to) the treasury; the lesson drawn emphasizes that, while people are impressed with the large sums that are put in, they did not notice that the temple took half of what the "poor widow" had to live on. Connected with Mark 13:1-2, "there will not be left one stone upon another, that will not be thrown down", the lesson is then interpreted as promising the overthrow of any worship of God sustained by robbery.

However, since the woman would have been under no obligation to give the second mite, when she gave "all her living" she could not have given any more. Following this reasoning, the tale is typically understood by Christians as a condemnation of the rich as they are described, for their inflated self importance displayed by the ostentatious announcements of their own generosity: which Jesus dwarfs by comparison to the widow's mite. Also, in light of its proximity to the widow's mite story, Mark 13:1-2 may imply that the widow's worship is of greater value than the Temple. Accordingly, the story is typically taken as an admonition to be wholeheartedly devoted to God, rather than concerned with pleasing men.

In earlier times, many Christians, especially the Gnostics, Ebionites, Waldensians, and Franciscans, argued that the passage is an encouragement to live in poverty, and not seek riches. In the introduction to the passage, Jesus is portrayed as condemning the Pharisees who feign piety in order to gain the trust of widows, and thereby gain access to their assets; although most interpretations of this read it as criticism of the actions of certain individuals, racist groups have historically argued that the passages in question justify anti-semitism, particularly as the Gospel of Mark argues that severe punishment awaits those who follow such actions (Brown et al.).

Reference: Wikipedia

Topaz, the Modern Birthstone for November



Topaz is the birthstone of November (yellow topaz) and December (blue topaz), it is a talisman for the sign of Sagittarius and the suggested anniversary gemstone for the 4th, 19th or 23rd year of marriage.

The name topaz comes from the Sanskrit and means fire.

Topaz occurs in a wide range of colors including red, orange, peach, pink, gold, yellow, brown and clear and is found in Brazil, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Russia. Naturally pale to medium blue topaz is enhanced by irradiation to produce a more intense blue color.

Red and pink topaz gems were used in the jewelry of the 18th and 19th Century Russian Czarinas and is why topaz is sometimes called “Imperial Topaz”.

The most famous topaz is actually a colorless topaz that was originally thought to be a diamond. It is a 1680 carat stone known as the “Braganza Diamond” set in the Portuguese Crown Jewels. Another beautiful topaz is in the Green Vault in Dresden which has one of the world’s most important gem collections.

Although topaz is a very hard gemstone, an 8 on the Mohs scale of hardness, it can be split with a single blow and should be protected from hard knocks.

Folklore, Legend, and Healing Properties:

During the Middle Ages topaz was thought to heal both physical and mental disorders and prevent death.

The Greeks believed it had power to increase strength and to make its wearer invisible while the Romans believed it had power to improve eyesight. The Egyptians wore it as an amulet to protect them from injury.



Reference: Bernadine.com

Pyrite

At the September general meeting of the Sierra Pelona Rock Club, Diane Southwell brought to “show and tell” a piece of Sunflower pyrite. Many people expressed surprise that the pyrite wasn’t in the normal cubic format. I decided to look into the matter and found that pyrite can present in many different forms. Read below to learn just a little bit about pyrite and to see some photos of various forms in which pyrite can actually show itself.

Pyrite, commonly also known as “Fools Gold” because of its color and shape, is popular for its crystal habit, hardness, streak, luster and brittleness. It is composed of iron disulphide having a pale brass-yellow color. The name pyrite has been derived from the Greek word, pyrites lithos, which mean ‘stone which strikes fire,’ in allusion to the sparking produced when iron is struck by lump of pyrite.

This gemstone is found in Peru, Germany, Spain, Russia, South Africa Bolivia, Italy, Colorado, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York and Missouri in the US. The specific gravity of the stone is 4.9 - 5.2 and hardness is 6 - 6.5 on Mohs scale.

Reference: Mineralszone.com

Various forms of Pyrite

Photos from Wikipedia



As a replacement mineral in a fossil mussel shell



From Elba, Italy



Spherical form from China



Disc from Desert Casino, south of Tucson, Arizona; diameter 10 cm



Octahedral form from Peru



As a conglomerate (image from Natural History Museum, London)



Cubes in a bedrock.



A large (4x4x4cm) single cubic crystal from Spain



As a replacement mineral in an ammonite from France

Sierra Pelona Business Meeting
Greenhouse Cafe
October 6, 2009

Ron called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. A quorum was met with board members Ron, George, Greg and Shep in attendance.

Greg gave the Treasurer's Report for the second quarter.

The club's table at Lombardi Ranch on October 10 & 11 was discussed. Supplies will be picked up at the shed about 2pm and set-up starts about 7am on Saturday. Please come to help set up if you can. This is the club's main fund-raiser of the year.

Ron's term as president is up in January, as is Shep's. Neither plans to continue their position on the board, so members need to start thinking of someone who is willing to fill their seat. The nominating committee is Greg, Ron .S. and Earl.

New Claims: Ron and Shep placed a discovery point post about 3-4 miles from our claim. It has lots of travertine, agate and jasper in good colors. Also, near the onyx mine past Trona they found a nice vein of onyx in gold, green and yellow and placed a discovery point post there.

Discussion: Regarding the cost of the new claims—Rules change next year (2010) and anything we do now will be grandfathered so any higher costs, environmental restrictions and restorations, etc. would not apply if we move to establish the claims now. New expenses and restrictions are expected to be prohibitive for small groups. Insurance of the current claim is \$40 a year and Greg said it shouldn't be much more to cover all three claims. Ron asked for a vote to proceed with investigating the two claims. It was agreed he could spend up to \$400 for both claims. If it is more, then he will initiate an email vote to the board. Ron, Shep and Ralph will pursue the establishment of the new claims.

The next general meeting on October 20 will be an open-book identifying meeting to label a bunch of rocks Ron Strathmann needs labeled. If you have any identifying books, loops or magnifying glasses, etc, please bring them to the meeting. Several tables will be set up. This should be both fun and educational for persons new to rock collecting (me!) and seasoned collectors.

New Members: Ioan Panaitescu and Barbra and Jerry Farrar were voted in as our newest members. Congratulations.

Ron announced that Debbie Meredith would be our new Webmaster, replacing Earl Kangas who is in the process of moving out of the area. Debbie will also be responsible for keeping the club roster up-to-date.

Ron asked that Ron S. and Greg forward all new member info to himself, Heidi, Debbie and each other so that we can make sure all our records and mailing lists are correct and no one is left out.

Dues are due in January and considered late by the February business meeting. Dues are \$20 per year.

Sarita is taking care of candy and toys at Lombardi's this weekend.

Shep will organize a rose quartz field trip October 24 or 25. He will give details at a later time. (See page 2)

Wearing Badges at Meetings: It was suggested that visitors be given a paper badge with their names on them when they sign in. We want to know who they are and make sure they feel welcome. In the same light, while many members do wear their badges at the general meeting, it was felt that if everyone wore them, then it would help the new and not-so-new members put a name to a face and get to know each other better.

The meeting was adjourned at 8pm.

Upcoming Trips with Shep

October 24, Saturday: Greenhorn Mountains for quality rose quartz, garnet, epidote, quartz and fluorescent scheelite. This trip will require a short strenuous hike and a longer gentler hike. Hard rock mining may be required for the rose quartz. See article on page 2 for details.

November: Ant Hill fossil shark teeth and marine fossils. A moderate hike of about 3/4 mile is required from parking area uphill to fossil trenches. This is a known Valley Fever area. Bring facemask if concerned. Collecting tools should include a sifting screen, bucket, shovel, hammer and chisel or pry bar. Bring plenty of water for both drinking and cleaning specimens and baggies for storage of finds.

Concretions require heavier hammer and chisel and may contain surprises inside. Again, this trip will be either on a Saturday or Sunday probably Nov 21 or 22.

November 7 is a CFMS trip to Afton Canyon for the wedding of Adam Dean and Teresa Felix, (CFMS Field Trip Co-chair) and will be a "Rockhouser Wedding". Afterwards we will collect black plume agate, sagenite, jasper and much more. 4WD required from the campground to the collecting areas.

Come dressed to rockhound. The wedding will start at 10am sharp and will be followed by a potluck lunch.

Exit Afton Canyon Rd off I-15 and head south about 3 miles to the Afton Canyon BLM Campground on the right.

Do not bring wedding gifts although a money tree will be provided.

**Sierra Pelonagram
Sierra Pelona Rock Club
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