

The Sierra Pelonagram



December 2015

... 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.



Don't forget that dues for 2016 are due in January and late by the board meeting, the first Tuesday of February, at which time a \$2 charge will be added for reinstatement. Dues are \$20 a year and \$3 for Junior members (age 7 and up). For convenience, Ron Rackliffe will be glad to take your poor, hard-earned money at the Holiday Party on Saturday!



New Members

Please welcome our newest members, Bob and Shannon Peters and Rick Ane, aka "Boulder Boy" a name earned from his collection methods at Clear Creek while gathering plasma agate!

Winter Birthdays

December

Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel	Dec. 20
Nancy Hilliard	Dec. 1
Bob Krug	Dec. 7
Morgan Langewisch	Dec. 14

January

Larry Holt	Jan. 29
Martin Schreiner	Jan. 9
Bruce Velie	Jan. 3
Austin Williams	Jan. 5



Officers:

President – Greg Langewisch
 Vice-President – Trina Aeen
 Secretary: Tina White
 Treasurer – Ron Rackliffe
 Federation Director (CFMS/AFMS) – Shep Koss

Chairpersons:

Claim--Mike Serino
 Donation Rock Table--Akiko Strathmann
 Equipment--Bill Webber
 Field Trips – Open
 Historian -Open
 Hospitality – Tina White
 Membership – Heidi Webber
 On-Line Presence (website)-- Larry Holt
 Pelonagram Publisher, Editor – Heidi Webber
 Programs – Shep Koss
 Publicity –Bruce Velie
 Storage--Bill Webber
 Sunshine--Brigitte Mazourek

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:

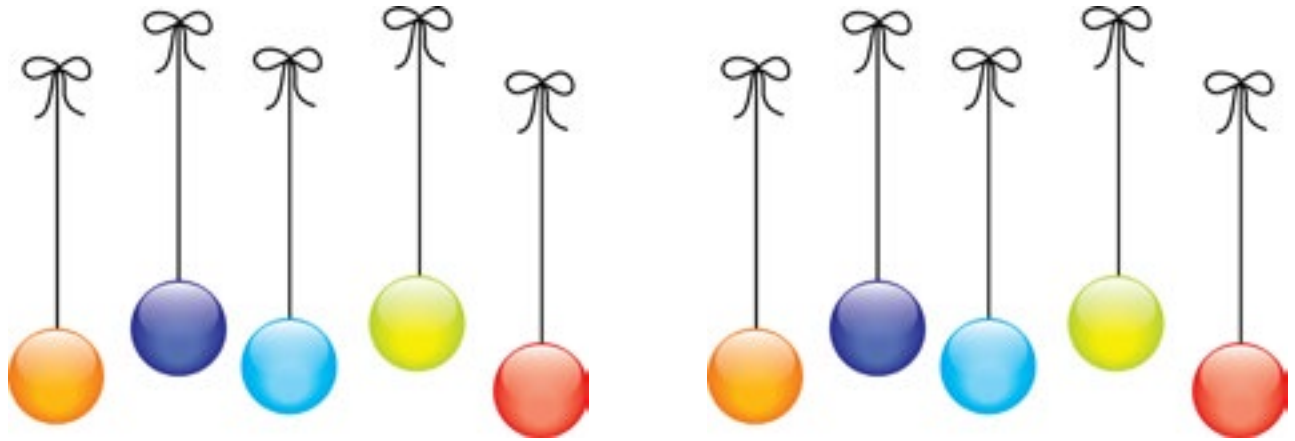
Sierra Pelona Rock Club

P.O. Box 221256

Newhall, Ca. 91322

Or e-mail: hwebber@pacbell.net

Visit the *SPRC* website www.sierrapelona.com



SPRC General Meeting
November 17, 2015
Greenbrier Estates Clubhouse

Greg Langewisch called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m., and then led the group in a flag salute.

In attendance were 19 members, and 5 guests.

Greg announced that this would be the last general meeting of the year; in December we will gather at our holiday party.

As the subject had been broached, a discussion about the party ensued, with the following outcome:

- The SPRC Holiday Party is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 19th from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- The Club will provide meat (turkey & likely ham), potatoes, and stuffing
- The event will be a potluck, with members to provide veggies, other sides, bread, salads, desserts, and beverages.
- There will be a silent auction of rocks and minerals, and the traditional Bingo games

Plans and arrangements for field trip scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 21st were discussed, to wit:

- Location: In the Argus Range in Panamint Valley
- To be collected: Speolothems (cave onyx), calcite w/fluorite, and root beer calcite
- Vehicle required: High clearance, 4WD not necessary
- Meeting time & place: 8:00 a.m. at Mammoth Lane/Soledad Canyon
- Bring: Snacks, beverages (We'll all go to dinner on our way home)

Elections for next year's officers will be held at our December gathering; Omid Aeen volunteered to serve as the Nominating Committee; anyone interested in serving on the Board should contact Omid.

Greg shared that tonight's meeting will include a silent auction and the customary raffle.

The Club's next workshop is (tentatively) scheduled for January at Bill & Heidi Webber's; weather (and Heidi's health) permitting. (Weather permitting, Bill and I have set January 30 for the workshop.)

The next Wire Wrapping Workshop will be held the following Wednesday evening.

Before all adjourned to claiming raffle prizes, eating snacks, and visiting, Tina White gave a presentation on *Speliothems*, e.g. stalactites, stalagmites, and other minerals and rocks found in caverns.

As she (the Secretary) was busy talking about CaCO₃, the adjournment time of the meeting was not noted.

Modern December Birthstones

The December birthstone list is somewhat more unusual than that of other months of the year because the modern birthstone chart has three gemstones for December instead of just one or two, like most months have. They are Turquoise, Zircon and recently added Tanzanite.



Turquoise

December Birthstone - Turquoise

Turquoise is the oldest and most popular of December's birthstones. It was found on artifacts dating back 5000 years, in ancient Egypt, Sumeria and Mesopotamia. Its name means "Turkish Stone" in French because that's where the first deposits of turquoise were first found in the ancient world, before the first mines in Egypt, and it is the route that the gemstone took when it was introduced in Europe.

The Egyptians were the first who to recognize the value of Turquoise and use it as a precious stone. The tomb of Tutankhamen was packed with turquoise jewelry, the stone being used on its sarcophagus and mortuary mask. Most likely, Cleopatra used ground-up turquoise for her eye paint.

Millennia later, Turquoise became a sacred stone for Tibetans and Native Americans who used it extensively in their specific religious rituals officiated by the shamans. Both Tibetans and the Native Americans believed Turquoise to promote spiritual and mental clarity and also help build trust, understanding and kindness within the community.

Unlike other precious stones, Turquoise was not a stone only for rituals or for the rich. It is believed that ancient warriors wore turquoise rings that they believed would save them from falling off the horse. Many cultures believed that turquoise helped children have a healthy night sleep preventing nightmares and also protecting against harm.

The Native Americans in the southwest used turquoise as money, believing it would bring animals to the hunter, riches to the warriors and overall happiness.

Turquoise ranges in color from sky blue to green. Very often, to enhance this color, jewelers use a layer of wax coat of the gem which means that the color is not permanent.

This December birthstone is relatively easy to scratch so you need to avoid hits and also hot water and household chemicals.

When shopping for turquoise jewelry, make sure you avoid "Vienna Turquoise". It sounds exotic and refined, but in reality it is just a cheap class imitation.

Modern Turquoise sources are Iran, China, Australia, Afghanistan, Mexico and the US.

Tanzanite

In 2002, the American Gem Trade Association officially added tanzanite to the modern list of birthstones for the month of December.

It was first discovered in 1967 in Tanzania by a local Masai shepherd and it would soon become 'the stone of the 20th century', being popularized only two years later by Tiffany's with a massive marketing campaign.

Tanzanite has a beautiful, intense blue color. It varies from ultramarine blue to light violet-blue. In sizes over 10 carats, the effect is impressive. Some tanzanite crystals need to be treated at 500 degrees Celsius to enhance their color and resistance.

Tanzanite is so popular today both because of its fascinating color but also because of its rarity, the only known deposits being in Tanzania, at Merelani.

Without a long history like that of the other December birthstones, tanzanite does not have any powerful, mysterious powers associated to it. But what it lacks in history, it compensates with beauty.





Hyacinth Zircon

Zircon

Not to be confused with zirconia, cubic zirconia, or zirconium.

Zircon is another alternate birthstone of the month. Zircon is actually the oldest known mineral on Earth; the oldest samples are even older than the moon, which formed about 4 billion years ago. Zircon was the first crystal to form in molten granite as it cooled to form rock. Low zircon formed as the result of a process associated with the presence of uranium and thorium. The natural radioactivity disrupts the crystal structure and produces the changes in color and density through a process known as metamictization. Most zircon deposits are alluvial. Sri Lanka is the best known source for green metamict 'low' zircon. Specimens are also found in Burma (Myanmar), and may possibly exist in other well-known zircon deposits in Cambodia. Most zircon deposits come from Burma, though Australia boasts the oldest deposits dating back more over 4.4 billion years.

Other notable sources include Brazil, Korea, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Thailand and Vietnam.

Zircon in its purest form is completely colorless (white), but owing to trace impurities, it can occur in a wide range of interesting colors, including yellow, orange, red, green, blue, violet, brown and combinations in between. Yellow-brown to orange and red zircon are the most common occurrences, along with colorless. Blue is the most popular, but its color is obtained through the heating of brown zircon, usually from Cambodia and Burma. Due to pleochroism, blue zircon can look greenish from certain angles. Medium dark, pure blue stones have the most value. Green zircon is very rare and typically very expensive.

References: Birthstone-Jewelry.com and Gemselect.com



SPRC Board Meeting

December 8, 2015

Greenbrier Estates Clubhouse

In attendance were Trina Aeen, Greg Langewisch, Ron Rackliffe, Ron Lawrence, and Tina White.

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. with a discussion of the announcement in the AFMS Newsletter of the SPRC's designation of Shep as Rockhound of the Year.

Details of this month's Holiday Party were discussed:

- Tina will send out a reminder asking for definite yes/no/bringing what responses by Sunday 12/13
- Ron L. will be there to call Bingo for us (though he may arrive after the food fest)
- Ron L. called and left a message for Sarita Hyde, asking if she will be willing to provide lovely centerpieces, as she has done in the past.

The board voted in unanimous approval of the applications of three (3) new members: Shannon Peters, Robert Peters, and Rick Ane. Welcome, newbies! The issue of the sale of tumbled rocks to another club through Janelle was reintroduced; Ron L. contacted her and it was agreed that they will purchase 50% of what we have for \$100, which is what it cost the SPRC.

We do not yet have a location selected for the January field trip; as Greg will be "giving up the gavel", he is leaving it that to others. Trina will ponder the issue, and may be able to make a suggestion at the December event. (The January general membership meeting's program will likely reflect that selection.)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

