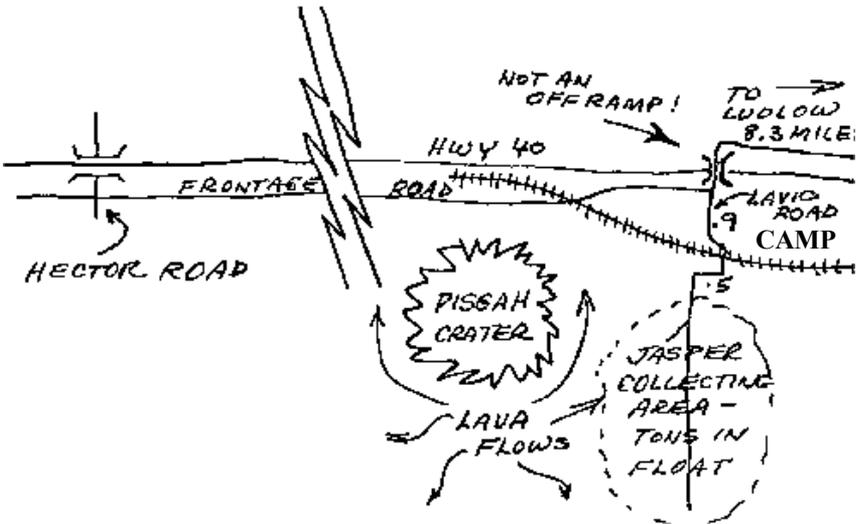


February 2003

WHITTIER



**ROCKHOUNDER**  
GEM & MINERAL  
SOCIETY



Looking for Lavic (in all the right places)

# ROCKHOUNDER

## THE PREZ SEZ:

**T**his being the shortest month of the year, I will be making this month's President's message a short one. I need some reason for not having a lot to say this month.

I hope many of you were able to "make the trek" to Quartzsite this year. It just never came together for Ginger and I to make it. Hopefully next year. Also all the more reason to make next month's Stoddard Wells Tailgate.

Next on the calendar is the first (February 20) of the three classes that the **WGMS** is sponsoring at the Whittier Senior Center as part of our community outreach program. By the time you are reading this I hope to have seen several of you at the Center supporting this program.

If you have not already done so, don't forget to pay your dues for the new year. You do not want to risk losing contact with one of the greatest groups of people in the L. A. area.

That's it for now (I said it was going to be short). Keep those gems polished!

*Art*

### Squash Blossoms

**D**id you know that the "blossoms" are not squash, but a stylized version of the pomegranate flower or its immature fruit? That the design originated in Mediterranean countries? That the pomegranate configuration, a common Spanish motif, was probably brought by the Spaniards to Mexico, where it was adopted by the Mexican platero (silversmith)? Later it was used by the Navajo, who apparently began working with it sometime between 1850 and 1870 and are believed to have been the first historic North American Indian silversmiths. The crescent-shaped pendant the naja - was also brought to the Indian Territory by the Spaniards.

*From Westminster Colorado via Rocky Review 02/03*

**February Regular Meeting  
Thursday, February 27 at 7:30 PM**

**T**he February meeting will feature a video about the Kartchner Caves in Arizona. This is the newly opened “living” cave system located down south of Tucson, Arizona which is in pristine, virtually untouched condition.

Hopefully, this will also give us a chance to try out the big-screen TV in the meeting hall.

See you there!

*James LaBorde*

**2003 Dues Are Still Due!**

**Y**es, WGMSers, DUES ARE DUE.

I want to thank those of you who have already sent in or handed me your annual dues. There are still a few members who need to get their 2003 dues in to the Treasurer.

The dues schedule is unchanged:

Single Adults: \$15  
Married couple; \$25  
Juniors: \$5

Please send your dues to Jay Valle, the WGMS Treasurer at:

Jay Valle  
1421 Latchford Ave.  
Hacienda Heights, CA 91745

If you \_\_\_\_\_ joined during the 2002 Annual Gem show or have already paid, thank you and you may disregard this message.

*JValle  
WGMS Treasurer*

**IS “PERMANENTLY BONDED” REALLY FOREVER?**

by Rita O'Neal

**R**ecently I purchased a beautiful Brazilian agate which was glued to a bola slide. when I asked the dealer how I could remove the agate, so I could display it rather than wear it, he replied that he glued it with epoxy, and it was on to stay.

Later I happened to ask another dealer if he knew of a way I could remove the agate from the tie slide. He said they do it all the time. Just put it in the freezer over night. The next morning use a knife with a thin blade and gently push or pry the blade under the edge of the fastener. The tie slide will just pop off. I followed his instructions, and sure enough, it popped right off. I cleaned off the remaining glue with nail polish remover, which was the dealer's second suggestion if the freezer method didn't work.

*From THE POST ROCK 6/01 via The Glacial Drifter 01/03*

**Bucketite**

**T**his is a type of rock that forms in buckets, milk crates, boxes, and other containers in the backyards and garages of long-time rockhounds. Its properties vary widely; any color, texture, or hardness may be found in these deposits.

Often the best material is found in small pieces at the bottom of the container; great patience is needed to sift through a typical deposit. These deposits are typically pretty filthy, though the stones are easily removed and cleaned. Beware of spiders and other vermin, especially in larger deposits and in hotter climates.

On the other hand, the material is quite often pre-slabbbed, and the slabs will occasionally already have cabochon outlines marked on them.

How can you tell if a piece of rock is bucketite? If you can't tell what it is and someone asks you, just tell them it's bucketite. If you got it out of a bucket, even if you can identify it, it's still pure bucketite. For more information or to see some bucketite, contact a long-time rockhound. (Also known as "backyardite".)

*From SMS News 11/02, via The Pegmatite 02/03*

## **Quartz, Agate, Jasper, Chert?**

**by Chuck Boblenz, SCVGMS**

**O**ur first exposure to our hobby is often the excellent geometric shape of quartz crystals; it is very appealing to many of us.

Smooth faced angular shapes are assumed by the mineral as it solidifies from its molten state. When this action takes place within an open space, such as a cavity or gas pocket, the mineral will take the form that is normal to the mineral itself.

### **Squish... agate**

As the space where these crystals are formed becomes filled with more crystals, the closeness creates a crystalline structure, and is often shown as bands of quartz. This layering and the coloring of these layers, and distinct grouping of these colors provide us with the term agate.

Agate is often found in nodules and veins in the field and the banding seen is the key to its identification.

### **Drusy quartz, chalcedony, botryoidal**

As the quartz crystals become smaller, they become microscopic in size and create drusy quartz. This is often seen layered inside cavities or nodules and, occasionally, seen layered on boulders in the field. This material is known as *chalcedony* and is often found in a botryoidal (grape-like form). [Say bah-tree-oy-dul.]

### **Jasper isn't banded**

Red, brown, green, impure, slightly translucent forms of this quartz material are referred to as jasper. The distinction is whether it is banded, or not. The absence of layering provides the hint that it is jasper.

### **Poor dull chert**

The term *chert* can be heard in discussions about cutting material and is vague in its meaning in the literature; however, authors now seem to agree to

a definition that the name chert be given to the poorer colored material within the jasper family. The more colorful material is still referred to *as jasper*.

The preparation of the material for use in jewelry is the same as they both can take very high polishes. Its selection rests with the artisan as to how it will be used, whether in jewelry, mosaics, carvings....

Do not hesitate to use the term *chert* in your conversations, or the material in your applications.

*From Breccia 12/02 Via Delvings 02/03*

### **OKLAHOMA "RATTLESNAKE EGGS"**

**R**attlesnake eggs is an interesting common name for a gypsum crystal, "Variety selenite". Unlike the Great Salt Plains, it is not well known. It is called rattlesnake egg because it grows in a roughly egg shape with twelve selenite crystals, each in a rough diamond shape, around a white spar center. These joined gray crystals resemble a rattlesnake skin, hence the name.

The crystals grow in books of very thin diamond shaped leaves. In the best eggs, all crystals will grow flat from the center. Some may not.

To sand and polish an egg, use hand methods since selenite is very soft. Use a fine sandpaper. Try to get an eye in each diamond crystal - formed by different colors in the layers of selenite. The center of each diamond should be higher than the edges to show this effect. For polishing, I have found white clay is the best - the same clay umpires use to rough up new balls. Silver polishing paste may also be used.

When the egg is polished, the light striking the crystal makes it luminous and the crystals change from light to dark as it is turned in the hand.

*From Hunting & Digging 4/90 via The Glacial Drifter 01/03*

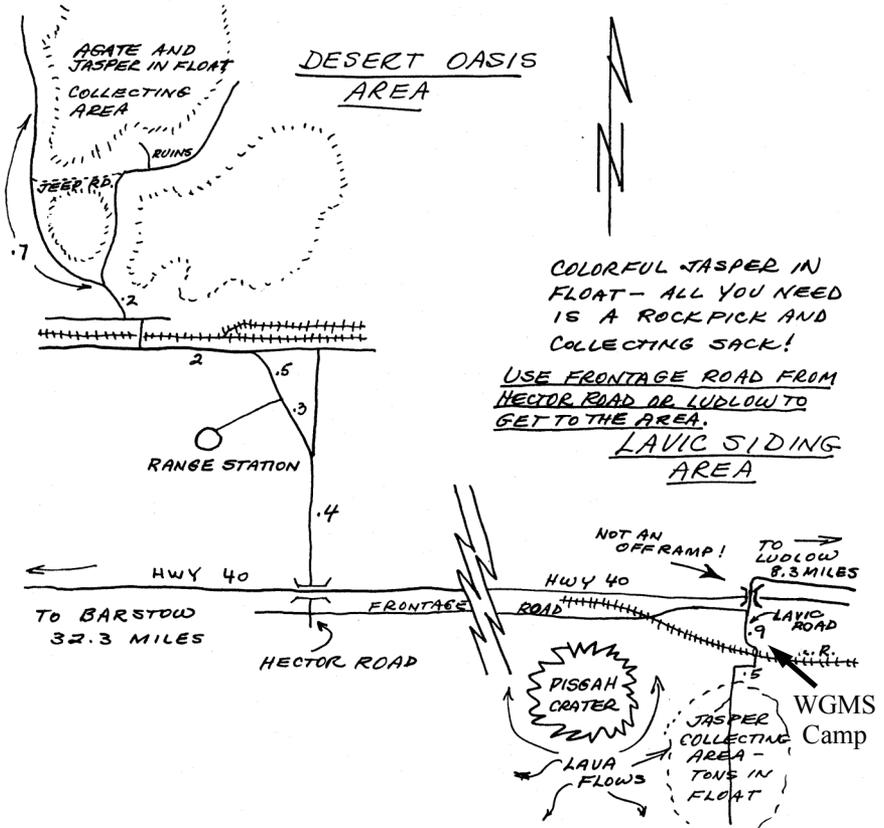
### February 22 - 23 Field Trip to Lavic Siding

This month's field trip is to Lavic Siding. We will camp in the usual place with a potluck dinner Saturday night. Several locations will be explored with possible multiple field trip leaders.

Directions to camp: take the Hector Road exit off of Hwy 40. Turn onto the frontage road which can be seen just off on the right side of the freeway and go left (East). Follow this road about 10 miles to where the road crosses the freeway. Turn right onto the dirt road and follow the WGMS signs to camp.

Call Joe for more information at (626) 914-5030.

Joe Goetz



## **How Many Minerals Does it Take to Make a Light Bulb:**

**Bulb** - Soft glass is usually used, made from silica, trona (soda ash), lime, coal and salt. Hard glass, made from the same minerals, is used for some lamps to withstand higher temperatures and for protection against breakage.

**Filament** - Usually made of tungsten. The filament may be a straight wire, a coil, or a coiled coil.

**Lead-in-wires** - Made of copper and nickel to carry the current to and from the filament.

**Tie Wires** - **Molybdenum** wires support the lead-in wires.

**Stem Press** - The wire in the glass are made of a combination of nickel-iron alloy core and a copper sleeve.

**Fuse** - Protects the lamp and circuit if the filament arcs. Made of nickel, manganese, copper, and/or silicon alloys.

**Gas** - Usually a mixture of nitrogen and argon to retard evaporation of the filament.

**Support Wire** - Molybdenum wires support the filament.

**Button and Button Rods** - Glass, made from the same materials listed for the bulb (plus lead) is used to support and to hold the tie wires placed on it.

**Heat Deflector** - Made of aluminum, used in higher wattage bulbs to reduce the circulation of hot gases into the neck of the bulb.

**Base** - Made of brass (copper and zinc) or aluminum. One lead-in wire is soldered to the center contact and the other soldered to the base.

*From Glacial Drifter 12/96 via The Petrified Log 02/03*

**SAFETY DANGER OUTSIDE:**

**Hypothermia and frostbite are ready to grab you!**

**By Chuck McKie, CFMS Safety Chairman, 2003**

**E**xposure to cold can cause injury or serious illness such as frostbite or hypothermia. The likelihood of injury or illness depends on factors such as physical activity, clothing, wind, humidity, working and living conditions, and a person's age and state of health.

Follow these tips to stay safe in cold weather:

- Dress appropriately before going outdoors. The air temperature does not have to be below freezing for someone to experience cold emergencies such as hypothermia and frostbite. Wind speed can create dangerously cold conditions even when the temperature is not that low. If possible, dress in layers so you can adjust to changing conditions. Avoid overdressing or overexertion that can lead to heat illness.
- Holiday traveling and winter can be a dangerous combination. Allow extra time when traveling. Monitor weather conditions carefully and adhere to travel advisories. Keep a winter storm survival kit in your car. This should include blankets, food, flares, chains, gloves and first aid supplies. Visit the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website for a more extensive list.
- NEVER allow anyone who has been drinking alcohol to drive.
- Cold and heat-related emergencies can occur quickly. To learn more about signals of and how to care for cold and heat-related problems, take a Community First Aid and Safety course from your local Red Cross.
- Learn more about how to prepare for winter weather! Read "Winter Storms: The Deceptive Killers." "Are you ready for a winter storm?" The Weather Channel NOAA's interactive Weather Site National Warnings Area.

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*Via: Talking About Disaster: Guide for Standard Messages. Produced by the National Disaster Education Coalition, Washington, D.C.. 1999*

### **And more DANGER INSIDE your home!**

Falls are the leading cause of injuries, hospitalizations and deaths among the elderly. In the United States, one of every three adults aged 65 or older falls each year. The majority of falls happen in the home. Many falls can be prevented by following these guidelines:

- Maintain a regular exercise program. Exercise improves strength, balance and coordination. Talk with your health care provider about the best type of exercise for you.
- Make your home 'fall-proof. Remove tripping hazards such as papers, books and shoes from floors and stairs. Remove throw rugs that may slip - or secure them with double-sided tape. Use non-slip mats in bathtubs and showers. Have grab bars and/or a bath chair installed in bathrooms. Make sure that your home is well lit and that staircases have handrails.
- Have your health care provider review your medicines to reduce side effects and avoid drug interactions. Have your vision checked by an eye doctor. Poor vision can increase the risk of falling.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/>)  
American Red Cross Lifeline is a Personal Emergency Response Service that can help elderly people and those with physical limitations live independently in their own homes.*

*CFMS Newsletter 2/03*

## **Color Enhancement of Gemstones**

**by Dean Johnston**

**M**any gemstones are routinely subjected to heat or radiation to enhance the natural color of the stones. In most cases, treating is considered to be an acceptable practice because both heat and radiation commonly play a part in the coloration of natural gemstones. However enhanced coloration of stones should never be misrepresented as natural coloration.

### **HEAT TREATED STONES**

Subjecting stones to sophisticated heating procedures is the most commonly used method of changing or enhancing a gem's color. Heat treatment is routinely applied to the following:

- AMBER -- to deepen the color
- AQUAMARINE -- to produce a "bluer" blue
- TANZANITE -- to produce a more desirable shade of blue
- TOURMALINE -- to lighten the darker shades, especially green
- AMETHYST -- to change color of pale material to "yellow" to be sold as citrine.

### **RADIATED STONES**

Radiation techniques are now in common use. Sometimes radiation is used in combination with heat treatment. As long as the radiation produces stable results, color enhancement by radiation techniques is not considered fraudulent. Radiation is routinely applied as follows:

- AQUAMARINE -- used in conjunction with heating to improve blue
- DIAMOND -- to change colorless diamonds to fancy colors (green, yellow, etc.)
- TOPAZ -- to change colorless topaz to dark blue
- TOURMALINE -- to intensify pink, red and purple shades.

Enhancement of gemstones through radiation and heat treating has become commonplace, yet often dealers are elusive (or unknowing) as to whether a particular gemstone has been treated. It is a question that should be asked of the dealer prior to buying an expensive colorful gem.

*From Victoria G & M, via The Glacial Drifter 01/03*

**The Rules of Chocolate!**

*Author unknown*

1. If you've got melted chocolate all over your hands, you're eating it too slowly.
2. Chocolate covered raisins, cherries, orange slices & strawberries all count as fruit, so eat as many as you want.
3. The problem: How to get 2 pounds of chocolate home from the store in hot car. The solution: Eat it in the parking lot.
4. Diet tip: Eat a chocolate bar before each meal. It'll take the edge off your appetite and you'll eat less.
5. A nice box of chocolates can provide your total daily intake of calories in one place. Isn't that handy?
6. If you can't eat all your chocolate, it will keep in the freezer. But if you can't eat all your chocolate, what's wrong with you?
7. If calories are an issue, store your chocolate on top of the fridge. Calories are afraid of heights, and they will jump out of the chocolate to protect themselves.
8. If I eat equal amounts of dark chocolate and white chocolate, is that a balanced diet? Don't they actually counteract each other?
9. Money talks. Chocolate sings.
10. Chocolate has many preservatives. Preservatives make you look younger.
11. Q. Why is there no such organization as chocoholics Anonymous?  
A. Because no one wants to quit.
12. If not for chocolate, there would be no need for control top pantyhose. An entire garment industry would be devastated.
13. Put "eat Chocolate at the top of your list of things to do today. That way, at least you'll get one thing done.

*Via AFMS Newsletter 2/03*

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**Upcoming Local Gem Shows**

Feb 14-23 **Indio, CA.** San Gorgonio Mineral & Gem Society  
Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival;  
Gem & Mineral Bldg. (on the Fairgrounds)  
46-350 Arabia Street. Hours: 10 am - 10 pm

Mar 1-2 **Arcadia, CA.** Monrovia Rockhounds, Inc.  
The Arboretum of Los Angeles County  
Ayers Hall: 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia  
Hours: 9-4:30 both days . Fee to enter The Arboretum

Mar 1-2 **Ventura, CA.** Ventura Gem & Mineral Society  
Seaside Park/Ventura Co. Fairgrounds  
10 W. Harbor Boulevard  
Hours: Sat. 10 – 5; Sun. 10 – 4

**Mar 8-9 San Marino, CA. Pasadena Lapidary Society**  
Show Theme: "Gems, Minerals and Jewelry of the Southwest"  
San Marino Masonic Center  
3130 Huntington Drive  
Hours: Sat. 10 - 6; Sun. 10 - 5

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**Bulletin exchanges** are welcome and should be sent to the editor.

**Affiliations**



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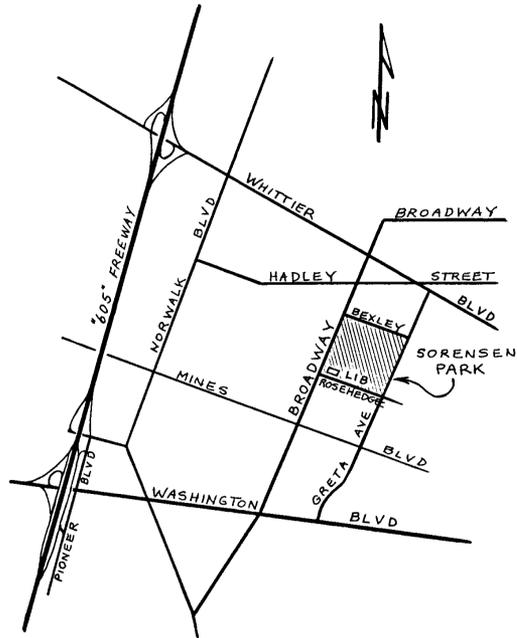
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Whittier, California 90608-0865

**Editor: Jay Valle, 1421 Latchford Ave.**

**Hacienda Heights, CA 91745**



Meeting Date: **February 27 at 7:30 PM**  
Location: **Sorenson Park**