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WHITTIER

ROCKHOUNDER
GEM & MINERAL
SOCIETY

To Infinity... er... I Mean Big Bear and Beyond



Beautiful Piece of Horse Canyon Agate
(from the collection of Bill & Izzy Burns)

ROCKHOUNDER

THE PREZ SEZ:

September President's Message

As you read this, summer for the most part will be over. We'll probably be heading into the annual Indian summer. Trips will be over and memories made and pictures filed away. Then it will hit you the show is only about 6 weeks away. There may be a flurry of activity.

Case displays get set up, re-arranged and re-re arranged. New stones may be cut and put into the display and so it gets re-arranged again. Somewhere between now (August) and sometime close to the show we hopefully will have a work party to repair or build cases.

Hopefully, you got through the summer trips safely. Safety is a big thing in this hobby (if it isn't then it should be.) In the fieldtrip report in this bulletin you'll find out how some training I had at work enabled me to help someone in distress. Perhaps some safety and first aid training is in order. It will enable you to help yourself or someone else in a crisis. Either way you may get a nice feeling from helping someone.

Be safe and I'll see you soon

Joe Goetz

WGMS General Meeting

Thursday, September 27, 2007

at 7:30 PM

Big Bear and Beyond

Since the September field trip is to the San Bernardino Mountains, I have asked Phil Terrio to be our speaker. Phil has lived in the San Bernardino Mountains on and off for most of his life and has an in-depth knowledge of the area. On past field trips to the San Bernardino's we have gone to lots of places and also looked for places that seem to exist in lore only...but we looked anyway. Come and enjoy Phil talk about the locations and what can be found.

Marcia

Rockgabbers

Saturday, September 22, 2007

The August class was a lesson in wire wrapping, taught by Ginger Ragazzi at her home in Canyon Lakes. Everybody made a pendant which was a wire wrapped coin or glass. There were 11 people in attendance, and everybody had a good time and learned some new tricks. We tried something different for pot luck; everybody brought something to put on the barbeque, and Ginger provided all the accoutrements, Travis and Melissa brought a peanut butter pie, which was a real treat! It was great, and we think we might try something similar again.

The next meeting will be on **September 22nd at Jerry and Kathy's home** in Whittier. The workshop will involve making bezels and getting things ready for our case at the show on October. If you need directions to their house please email them at **jerryt_2@charter.net**.

The group decided to purchase a rolling mill, and we plan on having that available by the next Rockgabbers meeting. We will then be discussing what we would like to purchase next. Some people thought a jump ringer could be useful. Please come with your ideas.

Tony & Sandie Fender

WGMS 2007 Gem Show Update

The **WGMS 2007 Gem Show** is coming up fast, **October 20 & 21**. As always, it will be fast and furious, fun and hard work (glad when it gets here, glad when its over.) Most of our Club preparations are in place to produce another fine, quality show and you need to be thinking of your own preparations. Are you ready to (rumble) put on a gem show?

By popular demand, we will have the kitchen back again. It will be run by Larry & Vivian Rice, Jay Valle and other volunteers to be appropriated later.

The following are things you can be considering now:

Show Cases: Display cases are available for you to showcase your creations and treasures. Our theme is "Amazing Agate", but don't let that limit your ideas. Contact Izzy Burns to reserve your case or cases today.

Donation Awards: Raffle tickets sales are our big money maker at the show, and the show provides the lion's share of the income needed to continue the club each year. Please sell tickets and buy tickets; Kathy has more if you need them. And it is certainly NOT too early to give Kathy Valle your prize donations for the Show raffle.

Setup and Teardown: These two important phases of our show are the most physically demanding, and literally, *the more hands the less work*. If you don't mind a little manual labor and getting somewhat dirty then we can use your assistance. Setup starts at about 3 PM on Friday, October 20 and teardown begins right after the show closes Sunday, October 21.

Working the Show: Show time is about the busiest event of the year and we can use all the help you can give. We can use helpers at the Sales Table, Donation Awards Table, Greeter's Table, Kitchen, Security and with the Demonstrators. These positions also can use relief during the show.

2 six packs: Members are asked to donate 2 six packs of name brand sodas, diet or regular, or a case of water. Our menu in the kitchen is not fixed as yet but we are going to skip the pies this time around.

So there you have it. Prepare your cases, tell your friends, sell tickets and come out to help us put on a great show.

Jay Valle
2007 Show Chairman

Summer Gold Panning Fieldtrip

"Going up river without paddle or even a canoe!"

Marcia and I got to the road's end by 7:30A.M. Jay was already there and as it turns out Rex was also there with two of his children. We had gotten our adventure pass at Williams' Camp; others who arrived didn't see the sign and had to go back and get it, which means they had to park further down the road. Perhaps it might just be better to get an annual pass just to avoid hassles like this.

People arrived, some with passes and others had to go and get them. We finally headed up the river by about 9:15 AM. There were approximately 20 people. We had our wagon very loaded, almost to overflowing.

When we started down the trail that went to the river bank, we found the trail ended abruptly 6 to 8 feet above the river bank. We were here two years ago and that following winter had been very wet. The trees that once shaded the river by the bridge foundations were gone! The center bridge support had been toppled and now was partly in the river. Last winter was dry, as you know, so not much material came down. Still we were there and you never know, we may still have a good day.

Some of us set up below the bridge and I, Marcia, Todd, Jay, Drew and others were upstream of the bridge. So in all, we were along 30 to 50 yards of river. Martin was helping people by teaching them how to pan and to set sluices. After Todd set his sluice in the river, Jay and I went up a side canyon. This particular canyon had yielded some colors two years ago.

What Jay and I found at the upper waterfall was very surprising. Someone had made a bed from some plastic coated paper and we found the remnants of a crack pipe and adult picture magazines. We did however pick a spot just downstream of this scene and fill some canvas buckets with dirt to pan.

This year it didn't yield any colors. Others were working the river bank on the other side. More colors were showing up in the pans. Marcia was doing the panning from the cleanup from the sluices. Some material from Todd's sluice Marcia yielded a fragment of a garnet. The garnet was clear, red and large enough to facet. As the day wore on people would come by and let me know they were going home.

Finally all that were left was Marcia, Todd, Drew and I. We gathered our stuff together loaded it on the wagon. We slowly but surely headed down the trail

and it was hot, the river water was cold but refreshing and now it was only a memory. Todd and I stopped by the can (outhouse) to wait for Marcia and Drew. When they caught up, Todd and Drew headed up the trail and Marcia rested for a couple of minutes. Then she and I started walking, we hadn't gone very far when we came upon a young couple. At first we thought they were having an argument, but as we got closer we both could tell the young woman was in some sort of distress. Marcia and I took a closer look and it was plain to see the girl was shaking, pasty white, not sweating as you would expect for the heat that day and she complained of blurred vision. I dropped my hydration pack and gave it to Marcia to use the water to cool the girl off by putting some of it on her and I hoofed it out of there.

It wasn't a jog or a run but a fast walk. I knew with how hot it was, and if I got overheated, me going face down wouldn't help anyone. After what seemed like a long time, I got back to the parking area. I got some water to cool me down and headed up to the fire station. When I got there I looked around for someone to report to. After what seemed like forever, a ranger came out of one of the houses and I told her the symptoms. She became very concerned when I told her she wasn't sweating. She got on the radio and there must have been a paramedic unit near by. I heard a siren and I knew help was on the way. Todd told them that the hiker was about ½ mile down the fire road. I got back to the truck and started loading our gear into it. Then I heard the sound of heavy engines coming up the road.

What arrived were a LA County fire truck, paramedic unit and a maintenance unit as well as a Forest service fire truck. The paramedic and the maintenance unit went up the road along with the ranger I first reported to. Soon the fire trucks left and Todd, Drew and I saw them bring out the girl, her boyfriend and someone else. I found out later from Marcia the girl had declined transport to the hospital. The fire ranger went back to pick up Marcia, which I thought was nice. Todd had taken a bottle of water and was headed up to walk Marcia out and give her some water when the fire ranger went to get her. When Marcia arrived in the fire patrol truck she had her stop where I was standing. Todd was not far behind. He closed the gate and rearranged the traffic cones.

What is interesting is that I had gotten heat distress training just two weeks before. I was actually able to use it and it helped me in telling the symptoms to the fire ranger. Marcia and I got a nice feeling from helping someone in need. It was a good day.

Joe Goetz

**Field Trip to Big Bear
September 29-30, 2007**

Our field trip for September will be the 29-30th in the Big Bear Lake area. Camping will be in the historic Holcomb Valley near where Van Dusen Canyon Road, from Big Bear City, joins Holcomb Valley Road. This is a forestry campground so you will need the Adventure Pass or equivalent.

This area is close enough to the San Gabriel Valley to be a one day affair. We will meet at 9 am Saturday morning at the “Discovery Center”, just west of Big Bear City, past Fawnskin, for our hunting and gathering.

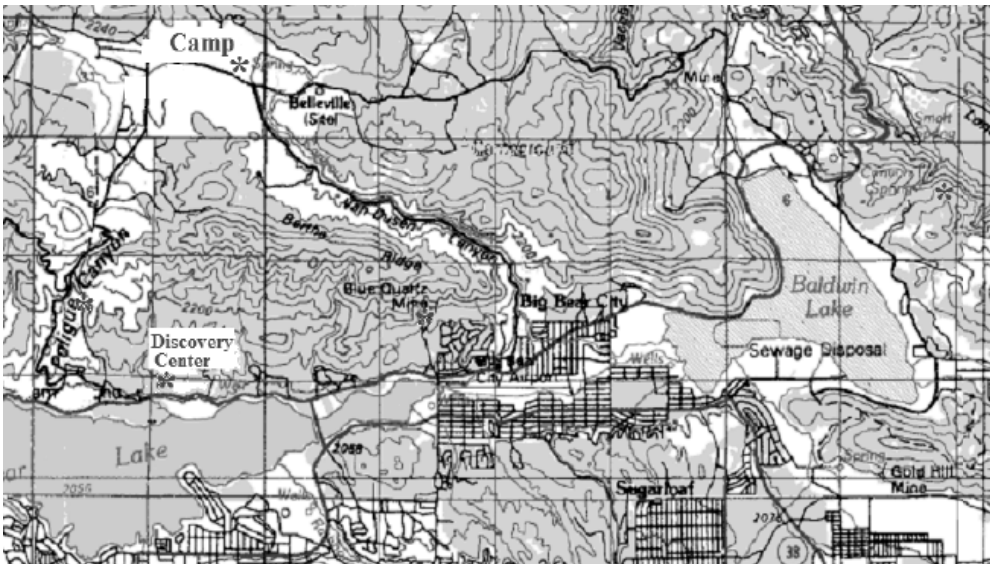
We will hike the .65 mile to the hill that has the beautiful clear quartz crystals laying about. Bring water, shovel, small mesh screen, hat. Other possibilities for this area are the marble quarries, and the Blue Quartz Mine, if it is not now the skeet range. Phil Terrio of the Pasadena Club has other areas in mind also.

Saturday night will be our pot luck dinner.

Information and signup sheets will be available at our September 23 meeting.

See you on the mountain,

Dave



Special Field Trip Book Review

**Rockhounding the Wiley's Well District of California
The GPS User's Guide**

A new book of keen interest to rockhounds has been authored by **Delmer G. Ross**, Professor of History at La Sierra University. This book is called "**Rockhounding the Wiley's Well District of California, The GPS User's Guide**" and it is about collecting rocks within the Wiley's Well area, just as the title says.

Now trust me on this, if you don't know where to stop while driving through the Wiley's Well area you can easily miss even the classic sites (such as the Cinnamon Beds.) Usually, a reliable guide is needed the first time out to take you to the various collecting areas and place you in the right zone. Except for a couple of exceptions, such as the Hauser Beds, there are no signs telling you that you have arrived at a particular named location. There are a number of rockhound map books which give directions to some of the more popular Wiley's Well destinations and will, if you are lucky, get you within a 1/4 mile or so of your desired collecting location. Mother nature (and the BLM) frequently obscure old collecting places and landmarks, often making them hard to locate or identify, even with a map.

Professor Ross' new guide goes way beyond the usual rockhound gem trail book. It is written with the GPS user in mind, so first of all, you need a GPS unit. A GPS works by locking onto an array of satellites and provides coordinates for your current location. That means that if you find a special place and want to go back to the spot years later, as long as you have the GPS coordinates, you can go back to the exact place that you took the readings at. Pretty cool, huh.

There are no maps in this guide; you start at defined locations and follow the explicit turn-by-turn directions from one GPS coordinate to the next until you reach the desired destination. This book is full of precise directions to a huge number of special places including the world famous geode beds to be found here. And once you arrive at a collecting location, Professor Ross describes what to look for and relates a little about the history of the site. The book is also full of historical, geological and anecdotal information that can only add to your collecting experience.

Those wishing to purchase a copy of this cool new book can go to amazon.com and enter the title of the book in the search box. It is also available at many local bookstores and has a suggested list price of \$16.99.

Reviewed by Jay Valle

George Snyder died a few weeks ago. Though he was not a member of the WGMS, he was a friend to many of our members and participated in many of our field trips and events over the years. He was a special person and a exemplary rockhound. Jay Valle

George Snyder

1916 to 2007

By Tony & Sandie Fender

George Snyder was born in Idaho in 1916, and he moved to California when he was 15. During the depression years, he worked on the Panama Canal and Hoover Dam. It was when he was in Panama that he and Mona got married. When they returned to Pasadena, George built the house on Palm Ave that they lived in for over 40 years raising their two children, JorJan and Jon.

George was very active in the Boy Scouts for a number of years, being an assistant troop leader. He enjoyed taking the boys on their camping trips up to the Sierra Nevada Mountains and hiking with them.

The family was “bitten” by the rock collecting bug in 1957 on a camping trip to Walker Creek. It was on this trip they found a huge piece of Jade, which they brought home, it turned out to be a piece of Jadeite, but they where hooked. They joined the Pasadena Lapidary Society and became very active members. George was field trip leader for many years, and show chairman for several years. One of the members even wrote a poem about George’s field trip leading expertise, which centers around his ability to always have the right spot for the outhouse (see facing page).

George took a liking to making silver chains and anything out of silver. He enjoyed trying out new designs and experimenting in silver. He taught silver making at Zzyzx for the CFMS for many years. He gave up teaching there about 4 years ago.

After Mona died, it was hard for George to live in the house on Palm, so he decided that he was going to travel. He sold the house and bought a new motor home. He went on several trips, including one to Saskatchewan and Washington State for family reunions.

Three years ago, George moved back to Idaho, but coming to California for several visits. He passed away on July 15 at 5 pm due to complications of pneumonia and a broken hip. He will be missed.

In Our Rock Club

We have a rock a rock club, and in it
A real nice guy. I think you'll agree
Everyone should try - - to know him better.

He takes on Rock trips - - that are Special
Even for you - - and me, and he does it
For free, in good, bad or awful weather.

He pick the place - - makes the arrangements
Digs the hole deep, and
Around it put the Special Hiding Tent
Puts up a sign called, "occupied"
That is for the good of our soul, and
The froth of our derangements.

He gathers the wood... and builds the fire
Plans the pot luck... Never seems to tire.

Tries very hard...to make each one happy
Ignoring the whisper - - - Everything is crappy.

He has a smile... and helping hand
That makes the trip...A good trip
And makes us... feel grand.

And when it's all over, often alone
He takes that "Thing" down
And lugs it all back to his very own home
And always he does it
Not making a sound.

He does it for us - - he and his wife
Keeping it stored for the next time
So we can have the time our life
Does it over and over again..

He's our Field Trip Chairman
Let me think - - What is that
Guy's name?

Now that I think of it
Thinking harder and wider
His name is ... Oh, yes,
Now I remember, his name is
George Snyder.

Purcell G. Schube M.D.
Jan. 14, 1972

Horse Canyon Agate

By George Cyrog

If you are ever discussing some of the great agates to be found in this world and you get to talking about Horse Canyon agate, and then wish to point out Horse Canyon on a map, you have a problem. On the south end of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the northeast arm of the Tehachapi range there is a 6700 foot point named Cache Peak. In its shadow is a broad, open canyon with a base level of 4000 feet. This is Cache Canyon, the home of Horse Canyon agate. I like the name Horse Canyon agate. To gemologists all over the world Horse Canyon agate is the finest, most delicate pastel green moss, plume and lace agate there is.

When Horse Canyon was first discovered is not known. The geology of the area was first described by Professor Andrew Lawson in a University of California bulletin, 1906. Sometime later a man sent to the University of California a three inch fossilized bone to be identified which had been found in Cache Canyon. It was part of the femur of a three-toed horse.

The find stimulated interest in the area and a team of paleontologists consisting of John Buwalda, Clarence Moody, John Douglas and Edward Thatcher worked several weeks in the area during the fall of 1914. Their report, published in a bulletin of the University of California issued November 18, 1916, was titled, "*New Mammalian Faunas from Miocene Sediments near Tehachapi Pass in the Southern Sierra Nevada.*" In this paper the specialists state: "Though the collections are not large, they are thought to contribute new information relating to the history of the Mammalia and the geology of the southern Sierra Nevada area."

In Horse Canyon they found fossils of three-toed horses, *Merychippus* and *Hypohippus*; two species of camels; the antelope-like *Dromonelix*, the cat-like *Felid*. The scientists concluded that the faunas, consisting as they do in the large part of horses, camels and antelope-like forms point to a plains or open valley environment in this region in the middle Miocene time, and the climate was one of semi-aridity. Fossil wood and palm leaves in the area seem to bear out this climatic deduction.

The workmen on this expedition referred to the canyon appropriately as Horse Canyon, since they were engaged in digging up fossils of the three-toed horse. None of the fossil hunters was interested in the lapidary art and paid no attention to the tons of moss agate lying everywhere, but the name caught on. That is how the agate got its name.

Nothing further was heard of Horse Canyon until 1921 when a group of men

became interested in the story of an Indian cowboy who told them of a place where large petrified tree trunks lay in windrows like matchsticks. They made up a party and the Indian led the group to the location in Horse Canyon where the trees were as described. These trees were later removed and their present whereabouts are unknown. Some of the men in the group were gem minded and recognized the irregular pitted rocks for what they are: moss agate. Since that time thousands of people have traveled to the canyon and collected the beautiful specimens.

The majority of the agate is milky white, often with concentric banding parallel to the seam surface, or more commonly with straight banding lying more or less at right angles to the length of the seam. High grade agates contain delicate moss like growths, predominately green in various shades, or white; occasionally brown, yellow, red or black. The growths commonly take the form of dendritic (tree like) moss or sagenitic (needle like) moss. Often the collector finds delicate plumes, minute tubes, seamlets, specks or masses, wisp like shapes or combinations of these. Most specimens are stained with traces of minerals which give infinite variations of soft pastel colors.

The largest sized piece on record is a 60 pound piece in the Kern County Mineral Society's exhibit. Today the collector has to be satisfied with cabochon sized pieces, yet during Easter week this year, the writer saw a ten pound piece dug out. In addition to the agate, there is to be found brecciated jasper, sard, palm fiber and root fossils, petrified wood other than palm, altered Bentonite and others.

The road to Horse Canyon is rough, but passable. You cross Cache creek about twenty times. The new low slung cars would have a problem so take it easy. Be sure to bring plenty of water. There is water there at times, but not for drinking. The summer days are hot and the nights cool. During fall and spring be sure to take along plenty of warm clothing for the cold nights.

One of the musts on the trip is to explore the Indian Caves. They are situated in the steep walls of a large cliff before you come to the diggings and are only a hundred yards or so from the road. There are two of them. One apparently used for cooking and living quarters as the walls are blackened with smoke; the other was probably used for ceremonial purposes.

Note: In 1962, when this was written, the lease holder required a one dollar fee per person. This area is now closed. ED

From WGMS Rockhounder, April 1961

Upcoming CFMS Gem Shows

- Sept 15-16 Paso Robles, CA.** Santa Lucia Rockhounds
Pioneer Park Museum, 2010 Riverside Drive
Hours: 10-5 both days
- Sept 20-23 San Bernardino, CA.** Orange Belt Mineral Society, Inc.
Western Region Little League Ball Park
6707 Little League Dr.
Hours: 9 a.m. - Dusk each day
- Sept 22-23 Downey, CA.** Delvers Gem & Mineral Society
Woman's Club of Downey, 9813 Paramount Blvd
Hours: Sat. 10 - 6; Sun. 10 - 4
- Sept 22 Los Altos, CA.** Peninsula Gem & Geology Society
Rancho Shopping Center, Foothill Expressway & Springer Rd
Hours: Sat. 9:30am - 4:30pm
- Oct 7 Fallbrook, CA.** Fallbrook Gem & Mineral Society
FGMS Museum, 123 W. Alvarado
Hours: 10 - 4
- Oct 13-14 Lakeside, CA.** Cajon Valley Gem & Mineral Society
Lakeside Rodeo Grounds, 12584 Mapleview
Hours: 10-5 both days
- Oct 13-14 Trona, CA.** Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society
Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society, 13337 Main Street
Website: www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/tronagemclub.html
- Oct 20 West Hills, CA.** Woodland Hills Rock Chippers
First United Methodist Church, 22799 Sherman Way
Hours: Sat. 10 - 5
- *****
- Oct 20-21 Whittier, CA.** Whittier Gem & Mineral Society
Whittier Community Center, 7630 Washington Ave.
Hours: 10 - 5 both days
- *****
- Nov 3-4 Anaheim, CA.** American Opal Society
Clarion Hotel Anaheim Resort
616 Convention Way (off Harbor Blvd.)
Hours: Sat. 10-6; Sun 10-5

WGMS MEETING LOCATION!
Whittier Community Center
7630 Washington Ave. Whittier



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Meeting Date: September 27, 2007 at 7:30 PM
Location: Whittier Community Center
(see page 4 for info - map on page 15)