

WHITTIER

**ROCKHOUNDER**  
GEM & MINERAL  
SOCIETY

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October 25 at 7:30 PM  
"Stan McCall Talks Beads"



A Desert Tortoise comes to check us out at Kramer Junction.  
(Picture by Don Ogden.)

# ROCKHOUNDER

## THE PREZ SEZ:

Yes, it's SHOW time! On Friday afternoon, October 19th, the first contingent of WGMS members will descend on the Whittier Community Center to begin setting up for this year's annual show. The rental contract has been signed with the City of Whittier, the dealers have committed, members are putting final touches on the materials that they will place in their cases, and demonstrators are assembling their equipment. We are prepared to set up for our show.

Getting to this point in show preparation is no simple task. Marcia Goetz, as this year's show chairperson has done a wonderful job of keeping us focused and on track. I can report that every member of your Board, and others have worked with Marcia to get us this far. On Friday afternoon, and Saturday and Sunday, October 19th, through the 21st., it will be necessary for everyone who has not yet been involved to pitch in to ensure a successful show.

This year for the second time we will again not only have the Gymnasium, but also the adjacent room. This means once again more room for seating for visitors purchasing food from the kitchen, but also more room for the silent auction, demonstrators, and a place to again set up the wonderful recruiting slide show that we previewed last year.

If you have not yet let Marcia know that you will want to display

*(Continued on page 4)*

**WGMS General Meeting**

**Thursday, October 25, 2012**

**at 7:30 PM**

**"Stan McCall Talks Beads"**

**A**t our October meeting Stan McCall will give a program on beads. Stan McCall is a exceptional jewelry designer who works in many lapidary genres. Stan has been one of our show dealers for many years who always has exciting pieces. Stan has started making beads with metal on the side for a few years now.

*M a r c i a G o*

***T h e P r e z S e z***

*(Continued from page 3)*

a case, let her know right away. If you have not yet been approached about filling any specific duty at the show do not fret. Our object this year is to share the show work burden in such a way that no one feels that at the end of the weekend all they did was work, and never had an opportunity to enjoy the show and camaraderie that everyone should come away from the show with.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find information describing in more detail how everyone can participate, including donating drinks, snacks, etc. Please carefully check out the rest of this month's newsletter in particular for more show details.

Looking forward to seeing you at the show and around the campfire.

***A R T***

**NEWS BREAK!!!**

**THE WHITTIER GEM & MINERAL SHOW APPROACHES**

**I**t was discovered in the early hours of early September that our gem show was approaching with the speed of a runaway freight train. There was only one thing to do...jump on and plan on having fun.

We are excited this year about our show. This will be the second year we have used the second room at the Community Center as it worked out well for us last year. We will again have the kitchen, demonstrations, silent auction, and DVD show in the second room. Many people enjoyed the relaxed area for eating and chatting with more seating. The kitchen will have hot dogs and chili, chips, and deserts. Speaking of deserts, the kitchen will be accepting deserts that are pre-wrapped – for instance brownies and cookies. Also, recognized soft drinks are wanted.

Our raffle will have donated items, the Goetz' will be donating 2 metal detectors, one for an adult and the second one for a child. It is shorter and good for a kid's height. There will be at least one wire wrapped necklace from myself and we need nice donations from our members to make the raffle a success. We are looking for donations that are the kind you would be happy and pleased to receive. Of course the sand scoop can use donations also. Kids of all ages love to play at the sand scoop game and we appreciate the generosity of the many parents and grandparents that have played along with the kids.

The WGMS rock sales table should have some new items on it this year. This is a way to beef up your supply of rock for your projects.

There is only 3-4 cases left to be filled – if you want to fill a case please let Marcia know. We will have a special case this year which is a memorial case for Bill Burns. We thank Tony and Sandie for signing that one up. Remember, a case doesn't have to have something you have made, it can also be an educational case or a case to show off your favorite rock finds (even if you bought it). We are going to have a case set aside for a game this year, so bring your thinking hat (even adults

*(Continued on page 12)*

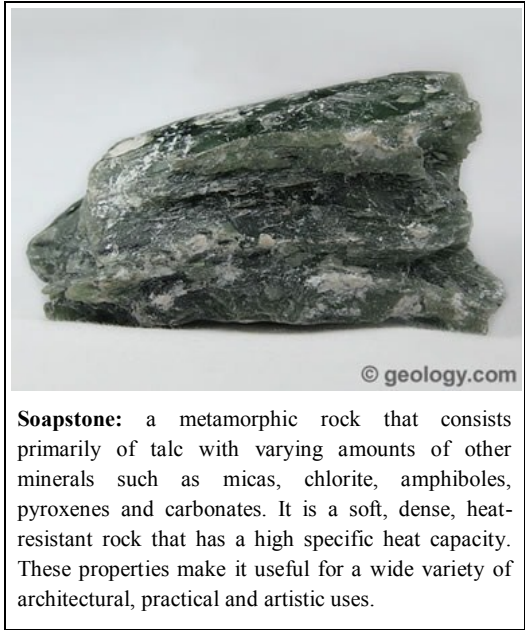
## So what is it good for: Soapstone

What is Soapstone? How does it Form? How is it Used?

### Some Soapstone History

People have quarried soapstone for thousands of years. Native Americans in eastern North America used the soft rock to make bowls, cooking slabs, smoking pipes and ornaments as early as the Late Archaic Period (3000 to 5000 years ago). [1] Native Americans on the west coast traveled in canoes from the mainland to San Clemente Island (60 miles offshore!) to obtain soapstone for cooking bowls and effigy carving as early as 8000 years ago. [2]

The people of Scandinavia began using soapstone during the Stone Age and it helped them enter the Bronze Age when they discovered that it could be easily carved into molds for casting metal objects such as knife blades and spearheads. They were among the first to discover the ability of soapstone to absorb heat and radiate it slowly. That discovery inspired them to make soapstone cooking pots, bowls, cooking slabs and hearth liners. [3]



**Soapstone:** a metamorphic rock that consists primarily of talc with varying amounts of other minerals such as micas, chlorite, amphiboles, pyroxenes and carbonates. It is a soft, dense, heat-resistant rock that has a high specific heat capacity. These properties make it useful for a wide variety of architectural, practical and artistic uses.

Throughout the world, in locations where the soapstone is exposed at the surface, it was one of the first rocks to be quarried. Soapstone’s special properties continue to make it the “material of choice” for a wide variety of uses.

### What is Soapstone?

Soapstone is a metamorphic rock that is composed primarily of talc, with varying amounts of chlorite, micas, amphiboles, carbonates and other minerals. [4] Because it is composed primarily of talc it is usually very soft. Soapstone is typically gray, bluish, green or brown in color, often variegated. Its name is derived from its “soapy” feel and softness.

The name “soapstone” is often used in other ways. Miners and drillers use the

name for any soft rock that is soapy or slippery to the touch. In the craft marketplace, sculptures and ornamental objects made from soft rocks such as alabaster or serpentine are often said to be made from “soapstone.” Be careful when purchasing if the type of rock used in making the object is important to you.

Many people use the name “steatite” interchangeably with “soapstone.” However, some people reserve the name “steatite” for a fine-grained unfoliated soapstone that is nearly 100% talc and highly suited for carving.

### **How Does Soapstone Form?**

Soapstone most often forms at convergent plate boundaries where broad areas of Earth’s crust are subjected to heat and directed pressure. Peridotites, dunites and serpentinites in this environment can be metamorphosed into soapstone. On a smaller scale soapstone can form where siliceous dolostones are altered by hot, chemically-active fluids in a process known as metasomatism.

### **Physical Properties of Soapstone**

Soapstone is composed primarily of talc and shares many physical properties with that mineral. These physical properties make soapstone valuable for many different uses. These useful physical properties include:

- < soft and very easy to carve
- < nonporous
- < nonabsorbent
- < low electrical conductivity
- < heat resistant
- < high specific heat capacity
- < resistant to acids and alkalis

Soapstone is a rock and its mineral composition can vary. Its composition depends upon the parent rock material and the temperature/pressure conditions of its metamorphic environment. As a result, the physical properties of the soapstone can vary from quarry to quarry and even within a single rock unit.

The level of metamorphism sometimes determines its grain size. Soapstone with a fine grain size works best for highly detailed carvings. The presence of minerals other than talc and the level of metamorphism can influence its hardness. Some of the harder varieties of soapstone are preferred for countertops because they are more durable than a pure talc soapstone.

*(Continued on page 10)*

# **71<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GEM-O-RAMA**

**Sponsored by the Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society**

**October 13-14, 2012** Sat 7:30AM to 5PM - Sun 7:30AM to 4PM

SLG&MS Lapidary and Show Building - 13337 Main St. (corner of Main & Trona Rd.)

**TRONA, CALIFORNIA**  
**OUTSTANDING SHOW - FREE ADMISSION**

## **FIELD TRIPS**

**SEARLES DRY LAKE - (2 1/2 hour trips on Saturday, 4 1/2 hours on Sunday)**

Registration: **7:30-9:00 am** and **1:30-2:30 pm** - you must register during these times to go on field trips

**Mud Trip**- Saturday Only - Departure 9AM- Cluster & barrel hanksite, trona, borax - **\$10 per car**

**Blow Hole** - Saturday Only - Departure 2:30PM- Hanksite, halite, borax, sulfohalite - dry surface- **\$10 per car**

**Pink Halite** - Sunday Only - Departure 9AM- In brine, beneath hard salt - **\$15 per car**

**Pinnacles National Natural Landmark** - Self guided, information at show - **FREE**

**Searles Valley Minerals' Plants** - **Saturday only**: 11:00,11:40, 12:20, 1:00 and 1:40 - in bus - **FREE**

**SEARLES LAKE PINK HALITE**  
**FROM THE SOURCE - WHOLESALE PRICES**

All Pink Halite collected with permission of  
Searles Valley Minerals

**OTHER SHOW ACTIVITIES**

21 Dealers - 50 exhibits - Geode cutting and sales - Demonstration - Games - Gem dig - **Free** parking

Snacks & drinks - **Grand Prize Drawing** - Hourly door prizes

**Good Food in CATERED Cafeteria in Show Building**

**LUNCH:** Sat. and Sun. - 10AM to 4PM

**DINNER:** Fri. (\$9.00) and Sat. (\$9.00)- 5PM to 7PM

**COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**PANCAKE BREAKFAST- TRONA COMMUNITY**

**CHURCH** (2 blocks north of show)

Sat. 6 to 10AM, Sun. 6 to 9AM - **Adults: \$5.00, children under 7: \$3.00**

**OLD GUEST HOUSE MUSEUM** - Sat. 10AM to 4PM, Sun. 10AM to 2PM

**TRONA'S HISTORY HOUSE** - Sat. 11AM to 4PM, Sun. 10AM to 2PM

**FORMER TRONAN'S PICNIC** - Sat. 10AM @ Trona Elementary School on Athol St.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

**VALLEY WELLS RECREATION AREA** - 5.3 miles north of show, **\$5/vehicle (dry camp, no resv.)**

**Find LOCAL AREA MOTELS** (Most in Ridgecrest, 25 miles west, **2 o f f e r s p e c i a l p r i c i n g**)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Visit our web page at [www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/](http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/) or call Jim or Bonnie Fairchild (760)372-5356

Note: above times and prices for show may change - check here for updates - last updated on 09/23/2012

**THANKS FOR COMING -- HAVE A SAFE TRIP**



*S o a p s t o n e**(Continued from page 7)***How is Soapstone Used?**

The special properties of soapstone make it suitable, or the material of choice, for a wide variety of uses. A number of examples of soapstone use are explained below

- ◁ Countertops in kitchens and laboratories
- ◁ Sinks
- ◁ Cooking pots, cooking slabs, boiling stones
- ◁ Bowls and plates
- ◁ Cemetery markers
- ◁ Electrical panels
- ◁ Ornamental carvings and sculptures
- ◁ Fireplace liners and hearths
- ◁ Woodstoves
- ◁ Wall tiles and floor tiles
- ◁ Facing stone
- ◁ Bed warmers
- ◁ Marking pencils
- ◁ Molds for metal casting
- ◁ Cold stones

**Soapstone Kitchen and Laboratory Countertops**

Soapstone is often used as an alternative natural stone countertop instead of granite or marble. In laboratories it is unaffected by acids and alkalis. In kitchens it is not stained or altered by tomatoes, wine, vinegar, grape juice and other common food items. Soapstone is unaffected by heat. Hot pots can be placed directly on it without fear of melting, burning or other damage.

Soapstone is a soft rock and it is easily scratched in countertop use. However, a gentle sanding and treatment with mineral oil will easily remove shallow scratches. Soapstone is not suitable for use as a workbench top where it will receive rough treatment and where sharp or abrasive objects will be placed upon it.

**Soapstone Tiles and Wall Panels**

Soapstone tiles and panels are an excellent choice where heat and moisture are present. Soapstone is dense, without pores, does not stain and repels water. Those properties make soapstone tiles and wall panels a good choice for showers, tub surrounds and backsplashes.

Soapstone is heat resistant and does not burn. That makes it an excellent wall covering behind wood burning stoves and ovens. Fireplaces are also lined with soapstone to create a hearth that quickly absorbs heat and radiates it long after the fire is out. This property of soapstone was recognized in Europe over 1000 years ago and many early hearths there were lined with soapstone.

### **Soapstone Woodstoves**

Soapstone does not burn or melt at wood burning temperatures and it has the ability to absorb heat, hold heat and radiate heat. These properties make it an excellent material for making wood-burning stoves. The stove becomes hot and radiates that heat into the room. It also holds heat, keeping the coals hot and often allowing the owner to add more wood without the need for kindling.

### **Soapstone Cooking Pots**

Soapstone cooking pots absorb heat readily from the stove and radiate it into the soup or stew. Because their walls are thick they take a little longer to heat than a thin metal pot. However, they heat their contents evenly and retain their heat when removed from the stove - the contents of the pot keep cooking until the pot itself begins to cool. Soapstone pots are highly prized by people who learn how to use them.

Stone Age people made the first cooking pots from soapstone without the aid of metal tools. The soft rock could be worked with sharp stones, antlers or bone. Skilled craftsmen carved the pots directly from the outcrop. Small soapstone pots were highly prized and traded widely. Large soapstone pots were very heavy and difficult to move. Archaeologists believe that large soapstone pots were used at sites where the residents had intentions of living for a long time.

### **Soapstone Information**

[1] **[Origin of Soapstone within the Wissahickon Formation](#)**: Analyses of Native American Quarries along the Lower Patuxent River, Maryland; Rachel Burks, Steven Lev and Wayne Clark, Geological Society of America, *Abstracts with Programs*, Vol. 38, No. 7, p. 234, October, 2006.

[2] **[California's Ancient Maritime Heritage](#)**, John W. Foster, California Department of Parks and Recreation, website article accessed, June, 2012.

[3] **[Soapstone Production through Norwegian History](#)**: Geology, Properties, Quarrying and Use; Per Storemyr and Tom Haldal; in: *Asmosia 5: Interdisciplinary Studies on Ancient Stone*; ppg. 359-369; J.J. Herrmann, N. Herz and R. Newman, editors; Archetype Publications Ltd, 2002.

[4] **[Talc: The Softest Mineral](#)**: Website article by geology.com staff, April, 2012.

From <http://geology.com/rocks/soapstone.shtml>

**GEM & MINERAL SHOW APPROACH**  
(Continued from page 5)

can play).

We will have 10 dealers this year, the most we have had in recent history, so there will be many options for finding what you need.

What the club needs from you are your volunteer hours. We will have many areas where you can give us assistance. Please let Art or Marcia know when you are going to be available or let us know when you are in the building and we can find something for you to do.

*S h o w   C h a i r m*  
*M a r c i a   G o*

**Show Schedule**

**O**ur **2012 Gem Show** is here on **October 20 & 21**. As always we are planning a quality experience for our members and guests.

**Show Schedule:**

<b>Fri, Oct 19:</b>	8:00 AM	Meet at Joe & Marcia's
	9:00 AM	Go to Art & Ginger's to load cases & show equipment
	3:00 PM	Take to Community Center by 3:00 P.M. for setup
	8:00 PM	Community Center access closed for the evening
<b>Sat, Oct 20:</b>	8:00 AM	Doors open for venders and members
	10:00 AM	Show opens to the public
	5:00 PM	Show closes for the day.
<b>Sun, Oct 21:</b>	9:00 AM	Doors open for venders and members
	10:00 AM	Show opens to the public
	5:00 PM	Show ends. After all public gone from hall, teardown begins

8:00 PM All done

**Mon, Oct 22:** 8:00 AM Meet at Joe & Marcia's  
9:00 AM Drop equipment off at Art & Ginger's  
warehouse

**Raffle Tickets:** 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. And don't forget 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 dirty (we are rockhounds, after all) then we can use your assistance. Setup starts at about 3 PM on Friday and teardown begins right after the show closes on Sunday.

**Working the Show:** Show time is the busiest event of the year and we can use all the help you can give. We need helpers at the Sales Table, Raffle Prize Table, Silent Auction, Kitchen, Security and with the Demonstrators. These positions also can use much-appreciated relief during the show.

**2 six packs & Baked Items:** Members are asked to donate 2 six packs of name brand sodas, diet or regular and a baked goods item. Here is a list of bakery items members could donate for the show: Cookies, Brownies, Cup cakes, Muffins, Pie slices, Sliced loaf cake, Pastries. All items should be individually wrapped in clear plastic wrap or clear zip locked bags.

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

**The Digital Rockhounder**

This Newsletter is available by e-mail as a full-color PDF. If you wish to receive the WGMS Rockhounder directly to your computer, send an e-mail to **res19pnb@verizon.net**.

**Editor**

**Upcoming CFMS Gem Shows**

**Oct 3-8 JOSHUA TREE, CA.** Hi-Desert Rockhounds of Moronga Valley, Joshua Tree Sportsman's Club, 6225 Sunburst Street  
Hours: 9 – 7 daily  
Website: [www.jtsportsmansclub.com/gemshow.htm](http://www.jtsportsmansclub.com/gemshow.htm)

**Oct 13-14 TRONA, CA.** Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society  
SLGMS Show Building, 13337 Main Street  
Hours: Sat 7:30 - 5; Sun 7:30 - 4  
Website: [www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub](http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub)

**Oct 13-14 VISTA, CA.** Vista Gem & Mineral Society  
Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum  
2040 North Santa Fe Avenue  
Hours: Sat 10 - 5; Sun 10 - 4

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**Oct 20-21 WHITTIER, CA. Whittier Gem & Mineral Society**  
Whittier Community Center  
7630 Washington  
Hours: 10 - 5 daily

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**Oct 26-27 WEST HILLS, CA.** Woodland Hills Rock Chippers  
First United Methodist Church, 22700 Sherman Way  
Hours: Fri 3 pm - 9 pm; Sat 10 am - 5 pm  
Website: [www.rockchippers.org](http://www.rockchippers.org)

**Nov 3-4 LANCASTER, CA.** Palmdale Gem & Mineral Club  
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, 2551 West Avenue H  
Hours: Sat 10 - 5; Sun 10 - 4  
Website: [www.palmdalegemandmineral.com](http://www.palmdalegemandmineral.com)

**Nov 3-4 RIDGECREST, CA.** Indian Wells Gem & Mineral Society  
Desert Empire Fairgrounds, 520 West Richmond Road  
Hours: 9 - 5 daily

**Nov 3-4 SAN DIEGO, CA.** San Diego Mineral & Gem Society  
Al Bahr Shrine Center, 5440 Kearny Mesa Road  
Hours: Sat 9:30 - 5; Sun 10 - 4

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



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

**Affiliations**



California Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
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**Date: October 25, 2012 at 7:30 PM**  
**Location: Whittier Community Center**  
**(See page 4 & 15 for info & map)**