

WHITTIER

# ROCKHOUNDER

GEM & MINERAL  
SOCIETY

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**Picnic in the Park!**  
**Thursday, June 28 at 6:00 PM**  
**at Michigan Park**



*Isabella "Izzie" Burns*  
*1928 - 2018*

**Whittier Gem & Mineral Society**  
**Elected Officers and Committee Chairmen**

**2018-19 Elected Officers**

President: ..... Marcia Goetz .....(joenmar1@verizon.net) ..... (626) 914-5030  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:... Joe Goetz .....(joenmar1@verizon.net) ..... (626) 914-5030  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: .. Kathy Valle.....(bunnie1962@yahoo.com)..... (626) 934-9764  
Treasurer: ..... Jay Valle .....(res19pnb@verizon.net)..... (626) 934-9764  
Secretary: ..... Sandie Fender ....  
Federation Director: Tony Fender.....  
Directors: ..... Kim Winn .....  
..... Yvonne Morton .  
..... Art Ragazzi.....

**Appointed Chairmen**

Budget/Finance: .....  
Bulletin Editor: ..... Jay Valle.....(res19pnb@verizon.net)..... (626) 934-9764  
Bylaws & Rules ..... Jerry Turner.....  
Claim Secretary: ..... Art Ragazzi .....  
Community ..... Kathleen Turner.....  
Relations: .....  
Displays: .....  
Door Prizes: ..... Marvin & Judy Belcher  
Field Trips:..... Joe Goetz .....(joenmar1@verizon.net) ..... (626) 914-5030  
Librarian: .....  
Rockgabbers: ..... Tony Fender .....  
Show Chairman:..... Frank Winn.....(Rkhndfw@gmail.com) ..... (626) 239-5457  
Social Secretary: ..... Kathy Valle .....(bunnie1962@yahoo.com).... (626) 934-9764

**Regular Monthly Meetings:** 7:00 PM 4th Thursday each month, 3rd Thursday in November & December. No regular meetings in July & August.  
(See Map on pg. 15 or Write-up on pg. 4 for meeting place.)

**Board of Directors:** To be announced.

**Rockgabbers:** To be announced. See pages 4 & 5.

**Field Trips:** Monthly except July & August. See inside bulletin for details.

**Annual Dues:** Adults – \$15.00; Married couple – \$25.00, Junior – \$5.00  
1-time initiation fee - \$5.00 per person

# ROCKHOUNDER

## THE PREZ SEZ:

Gentle members,

June would be a great month for a picnic in the park, oh, wait - we do have a picnic in the park. The picnic is a well attended get-together for us. The club will furnish hot dogs and buns and the rest is potluck. It is a good time for members to visit without the formality of a general meeting. We like to talk about the rock that got away or the trip planned for the summer (where we will look for rock).

We are going to hold another show meeting and some things are moving along. Ray and Jo Anna Ritchey are very generously going to donate some rock for the children's egg carton mineral collection. Joe and Frank will be going to pick them up. Joe, Frank and Jay took a trip to collect some other material for the egg cartons also. Joe and I went to a pre-estate sale and picked up some tumbled rock which will be used for the sand scoop. Things are shaping up.

At the board meeting we were able to find time before adjournment to look at a couple more of the Operating Rules...we may finish by the end of the year!

I want to remember Izzy Burns and remind everyone what a wonderful and kind person she was. She stepped up and helped out with many of the positions on the board. Even though she hasn't been able to be with us at our meetings for a while, she will be remembered with love.

*Marcia*

WGMS Webpage: <http://wgmsca.com/>

**WGMS General Meeting**

**Thursday, June 28, 2018 at 6:00 PM**

**"Picnic (Potluck) in the Park"**

*(Michigan Park, That Is!!!)*

So once again it is time for our annual **WGMS Picnic (Potluck) in the Park**. It is going to be held on **June 28 at 6:00 PM**. The place is **Michigan Avenue Park** (see map below). Come enjoy the camaraderie and delicious food with our fellow club members and friends.

As always, you should bring an entrée, salad, dessert or side dish to share, and don't forget that it is **BYO** (bring your own) plates, silverware (or plasticware) and drinks. You should also bring conversation, friendship and perhaps a little attitude to enhance this pre-Summer outdoor dining experience.



Picnic in the Park Location Map

### **Rockgabbers Report for June 2018**

**T**he April project was copper fold forming of leaves. Attending was Jerry and Kathy, Sylvia and Tony and Sandie. The group cut and pounded to their hearts' content, and ended up with ruffled leaves.

The project for June will be a pendant which is a circle with curlicues inside it. Over Christmas I got a 3D printer, and I have printed out a form which I have used to make this pendant.

The materials are:

- 20 Gauge silver wire,
- Silver Solder paste.

The workshop will be on June 2nd because of Founder's Day in Whittier. As usual, the workshop will conclude with a pot luck dinner.

*Tony and Sandie*

### **June thru August Fieldtrips**

**T**he summer months are often filled with trips to the beach, mountains or across the country. As summer progresses and temperatures rise above the 100 degree mark, especially in the deserts. There won't be any fieldtrips with the exception of a possible daytrip or two.

Those daytrips will be announced as soon as I am able to arrange them for the upcoming months. Or if by chance you have a suggestion about a daytrip you'd like to go on, please let me know. If it is feasible and not dangerous I'll consider it.

So have fun this summer.

Still lost somewhere in Calif.

*Joe Goetz*

**Isabella “Izzie” Burns  
May 28, 1928 to May 15, 2018**

Izzie Burns was admitted to hospital on May 8<sup>th</sup>, and on May 10<sup>th</sup> she was transferred to a hospice facility to keep her as comfortable as possible for what time she had left. On May 15<sup>th</sup> she quietly fell asleep and passed away.

Izzie had a long relationship with the rockhounding community, and was president of both CFMS and AFMS. Izzie was also instrumental in the establishing of the earth sciences group at Zzyzx and Paradise, and enjoyed attending the events there for several years. She also served on the BLM Desert Advisory Committee for several years working to keep the desert open for rockhounding.

The family requests that any donations be made to the CFMS Earth Sciences fund.

**Old Daggett Road**

Once a major stage stop between Victor Valley and the east, approaching Daggett, a lone, mostly depleted water hole continues supporting scant desert life as it has for 140 years. Hawks hunting circle fashion explore the area for small rodents while an occasional scrubby coyote chases long eared rabbits along this time worn wagon trail long ago called, Daggett Road.

Here, in 1853, Arvin Stoddard, one of several pioneer brothers born in Canada and arriving in California from Utah, dug a water pit to assist his placer mining efforts. This well could also furnish water to raise crops to help feed his four children and farm stock. Both he and his wife, Caroline, were strong Mormons who gave more to their church than they took for themselves. After eight years of prospecting the vicinity, the family gathered about \$60,000 in gold, which one news report says was taken to Utah and given directly to Mormon leader Brigham Young. Arvin, 5 feet, 5 inches and weighing 135 pounds, was dwarfed by his 6 feet, 200 pound spouse. The late Fred Holladay, who specialized in San Bernardino County history, wrote, instead of Arvin's gold being given to Young, the Stoddard's were robbed by what Caroline said were renegade Mormons. She, however, had hidden enough gold dust in her undergarments to allow the family to build a small hotel and re-settle in Milford, Utah.

Sheldon Stoddard, a younger brother of Arvin's, died in San Bernardino in 1919 at 89 years. He was part of the ill fated wagon train trek of 1849 which brought about Death Valley's naming. Later, he rode for the San Bernardino-Salt Lake Pony Express delivering mail and established a freight business between the two locations. Seeking to improve travel time between Cajon Pass and Daggett, Sheldon built a road past Arvin's well and later placed a stage station there. This stop allowed tired "skins" (horses) to be exchanged for rested teams, and afforded some supplies for weary, dust laden travelers. The older bypassed river road was extremely sandy and heavily loaded wagons needed a more solid bed to handle the weight. Besides, Sheldon's new road was shorter.

Although only one well remains, Old Daggett Road was renamed years ago, Stoddard Wells Road. Along this lonely, mostly dirt highway, the Stoddard name is amply represented. Stoddard Mountains, Stoddard Hills, Stoddard Valley, Stoddard Gulch, Stoddard Well and Stoddard Wells Road stem directly from Arvin's and Sheldon's efforts during the 1850's and 1860's.

Ellsworth Sylvester, Victor Valley's statewide award winning historian, relates while prone, sipping water at the well side, Arvin saw the reflection of an Indian above him raising a spear. Dodging, the spear missed and the attacker escaped amid a hail of poorly aimed bullets. Another tale tells of an Apple Valley milkman's son finding twenty \$20.00 gold pieces near the well hidden under a large rock. John Tye, master barb wire researcher and authority on wire, recently found very rare "Kelly" barb wire of the 1864 era near Arvin's well. This valuable find surprised Tye, for "Kelly" had never been reported in this part of the country. Remaining at the extinct stage way station's location are square nails and other evidence of past life sprinkled about the vandalized site.

Today's adventure seekers wishing to relive the thrill of traveling this historical stretch made famous through the blood, sweat, toil, and tears of numerous pioneers will find Stoddard Wells Road beginning across the Mojave River Bridge from Victorville on I-15.

The well, about 14 miles from this off ramp, is missing a marker long ago stolen by addled-headed dim wits. Once protected by fencing, the venerable old fount is now in ill repair. Destroyed obviously by uncaring delinquents who rob us all of San Bernardino County's exciting, treasured and fast fading past.

*From John M. Swisher's book, Bits 'N Pieces of the Mohahve Desert's Weathered Past."*

**The More They Stay the Same**

by Kevin Dermody

From *Rock Busters News* 2/98

(7th Place, 1998 AFMS Adult Article-Advanced Contest)

A fabulous fossil is found and becomes a sensation. A man with claims to the property where the fossil was found declares the fossil is his and wins it by legal means. He then proceeds to use the find for his own benefit. Meanwhile, the discoverer of the fossil loses in court and is forced to pay money. Government troops confiscate the fossil, which eventually makes its way into a respectable scientific establishment for proper study.

I'm talking about the story of Sue, the tyrannosaur, again, right?

Wrong! I'm talking about the first recognized giant reptile fossil discovered seven decades before Richard Owen first coined the word, "dinosaur." In 1770 or 1780 a pair of immense jaws was discovered in an underground chalk quarry near Maestricht, Netherlands. The quarry was already well known to collectors for the many shellfish fossils found there, but these jaws were something else! One collector for the Teyler Museum in Haarlem, Dr. C.K. Hoffmann, generously paid the quarry workers to remove the jaws intact. He then took it home and summoned Pieter and Adrien Camper, father and son Dutch anatomists, to examine the find. Adrien Camper declared, correctly, that the jaws were of an unknown type of giant marine reptile.

News of the fossil find reached the clergyman Canon Godin, who owned the lands directly above the quarry. Proclaiming the fossil was his under feudal law, Godin sued Hoffmann for ownership and, backed up by other clergymen, won his case in court. Hoffmann had to give up the find that he had already paid for, and to pay the court expenses as well. Godin then built a chapel near his estate and put the jaws in a glass shrine for all the world to see.

Eventually, the world did more than just see. By 1795 the French Revolution was in full swing. The army of the French Republic had defeated the army of Austria and was about to bombard Maestricht and the nearby fortress of St. Peter's Mountain. The reputation of the fossil jaws had spread far and wide by this time, however, and General Pichegru, commander of the French army, gave orders that Godin's chapel, which was near the fort, was to be spared. The grateful Godin used the



opportunity to hide his treasure within the town. When Maestricht surrendered, and the disappearance of the jaws was discovered, Pichegru offered a reward of 600 bottles of fine wine to anyone who could find the lost bones. Soon several grenadiers returned from town with their booty to claim the Prize.

The jaws were taken to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, where they would be examined by Baron Georges Cuvier, France's leading anatomist. Cuvier came to the conclusion that Adrien Camper was right -- the jaws were of a giant marine reptile. This study verified two points. One was that organisms can become completely extinct naturally without any help from Man. Many extinct plants and animals seemed to become extinct even before Man existed. Cuvier had already demonstrated this by his examination of fossil elephants. The uniqueness of the Dutch find brought up the second point, that the lower, and presumably older, rock strata held fossils of animals that were less and less like the animals that live today, including reptiles of a form and size unlike any known today. In 1822, a decade before the first bones of what would be recognized as those of dinosaurs were discovered, the animal was named *Mosasaurus*, the lizard of the Meuse River, where Maestricht was situated. *Mosasaurus*; would be recognized as lizards, not dinosaurs, that were the last marine reptiles to arise before the extinctions at the end of the Mesozoic Era.

Today, fossils are being found world-wide at an enormous rate, giving new insights into how life existed in the past, and how those past worlds compare with our own. There is also a vast commerce in these same fossils, many legal, some illegal, and a few that are perfectly legal but still seem unjust. As they say, "The more things change . . .".

Sources:

- Bell, Gordon L., Jr. 1997. *Introduction to Mosasauridae*.
- Jack M Callaway and Elizabeth L. Nicholls (eds), *Ancient Marine Reptiles*, pp. 281-292, Academic Press (San Diego, London, Boston, New York Sydney, Tokyo, Toronto)
- Desmond, Adrian J. 1975. *The Hot-Blooded Dinosaurs A Revolution in Paleontology*. The Dial Press/James Wade. 238 pp.

## **Some Notes and Safety Tips on Using Oxalic Acid**

by Duane Leavitt from Rocky Road

**O**ne often reads about and sees reference to oxalic acid (wood bleach) in publications such as our newsletter when the topic of cleaning minerals is discussed. Oxalic is used to dissolve the iron oxide (brown) stain on all minerals. This chemical, while an excellent cleaner for some types of minerals, poses some serious health risks which are not widely understood and can be confusing when considered in light of other acids that are sometimes used for cleaning purposes.

Oxalic acid, chemically  $H_2C_2O_4$ , is an organic acid, which means that it contains, among other things, the element carbon. At room temperature it is a white, crystalline, odorless, solid looking a lot like granular sugar in physical appearance.

When we look at oxalic acid we find that, as acids go, it is quite weak. Acid strength is measured by how much hydrogen acids give up in water solutions. It is obvious that oxalic acid is nowhere near as strong or as soluble in water as hydrochloric acid or nitric acid. These two acids, are also used in mineral cleaning. There is NO correlation between acid strength and how poisonous it is, its toxicity.

As an organic acid, oxalic acid, and/or its water solutions, can be absorbed directly through the skin into the bloodstream, powders from the dry acid and vapors from solutions can be absorbed into the body through the lungs. This has serious implications for those who like to clean specimens in a crock pot of simmering oxalic acid solution in their basement; residues from improperly neutralized and rinsed specimens may be absorbed through later handling. Dust from the solid acid can damage the cornea of the eyes.

In the body, oxalic acid removes calcium from the blood, forming insoluble crystalline masses of calcium oxalate that eventually wind up in the kidneys where they will obstruct and abrade the kidney tubules causing the kidneys to bleed. They may block the kidneys and have to be removed surgically - kidney stones. In respiratory passages the material will cause severe irritation, possible hemorrhaging of these tissues and burns. When the material gets into the digestive tract it causes severe gastroenteritis and vomiting, shock and convulsions, cardiovascular collapse and/or kidney failure can lead to death. A lethal dose of oxalic acid is somewhere between 5-15 grams. Severe health problems occur at much smaller levels of exposure. OSHA recommends a threshold limit value (TLV) for airborne concentration of no more than 1 mg (that is one thousandth of a gram)/ cubic meter. For comparison, 1 restaurant packet of sugar contains about 1 gram of material or 1000 times the recommended exposure value!

Unlike neutralized hydrochloric, muriatic and nitric acids, the products of “neutralized” oxalic acid are STILL poisonous - they just are no longer acidic. Oxalate compounds of any nature are still a threat to your health. People wishing to use oxalic acid can do so successfully and safely provided they incorporate the following procedures into their mineral cleaning:

1. Always use long sleeved rubber gloves, a splash proof apron, and full eye/nose protection when handling either dry oxalic acid crystals or oxalic acid solutions.
2. Avoid heating solutions of oxalic acid.... it will work cold, it just takes longer.
3. Keep containers of soaking specimens covered so that acid vapors stay inside the container. Lids should NOT be airtight.
4. Rinse any specimens cleaned with oxalic acid with copious amounts of water and test with pH paper to ensure that all acid is gone. A post treatment bath in dilute (household) ammonia or sodium bicarbonate solution is a good idea.
5. In the event of a spill removed affected clothing immediately, rinse affected areas with copious amounts of water, rinse and wash affected clothing. If there is any doubt as to the severity of the exposure seek medical help immediately.
6. Small amounts of used solutions of oxalic acid can be disposed of by the following method:
  - A. Neutralize the solution with sodium bicarbonate or sodium hydroxide; TEST with pH paper to make sure it is neutral (or slightly basic).
  - B. Dilute the solution from step A above, 20 fold with water (example, to 1 pint of neutralized acid solution add 20 pints of water).
  - C. Pour solution B down the drain with plenty of cold water. This disposal technique is identical to Flynn Scientific disposal technique 24A (Flynn,2006).
7. Read up on cleaning techniques (*Cleaning and Preserving Minerals* by Richard Pearl is a good place to start) and educate yourself about techniques, materials and alternatives.

Summary: POISON! DANGER! MAY BE FATAL IF SWALLOWED. CORROSIVE. CAUSES SEVERE IRRITATION AND BURNS TO SKIN, EYES, AND RESPIRATORY TRACT. HARMFUL IF INHALED OR ABSORBED THROUGH SKIN. MAY CAUSE KIDNEY DAMAGE.

*Adapted from Gem Cutter's News Dec. 2008, via GLMSMC The Rockhounder*

**Ask Rocky**

WAMS expert for all your rockhounding questions.

**Question:** I bought some rocks in Colorado that the dealer called "dinosaur gizzards". He assured me that dinosaurs had used these rocks to digest their food. As I understood him, dinosaurs swallowed rocks, which then tumbled around in their stomachs while digesting food, and then came out somewhat polished. The rocks have a matte finish, which support his story, but on closer inspection, they also have some white specks (tripoli?) in some of the cracks. Was I snookered? If his story is true, how do they know that's how the rocks got polished?

**Answer:** No, you didn't get snookered Dinosaurs had a crop like a chicken. They swallowed rocks to grind up food, and eventually passed them. These polished rocks are called gastroliths. The white in the cracks is called collegie, or alkali. It is not uncommon for gastroliths to have a coating of collegie, especially if found near a river.

Rocks can be identified as gastroliths because they are a round smooth rock that seems out of place, they are found in areas dinosaurs are know to have lived, and you won't find many of them. Some gastroliths have even been found sticking out of copralite (dino dung), which is the best proof of all they came from dinosaurs.

**Question:** I have soaked crystals in oxalic acid for a couple of weeks, but they still have rust. What else I can do?

**Answer:** I too have also experienced rust stains not coming out after using EITHER oxalic or muriatic acid. Another chemical which is a little safer and has worked nicely happens to be sodium bisulfide which is a common compound found in several rust removal substances. The best source for the price is Scott's Janitorial on 13th St. SE. The product is called "Rust Out" and sell for \$5.00. A little goes a long way. It also works great on sinks and toilets after leaving it soak for a short time - very short - usually within an hour. For rocks, just leave it soak for several days and see how it works.

*Via Willamette Agate and Mineral Society, Inc. (WAMSI)*

**25 Signs That Say You Are Now Grown Up**

1. Your houseplants are alive, and you can't smoke any of them.
2. Having sex in a twin bed is out of the question.
3. You keep more food than beer in the fridge.
4. 6:00 AM is when you get up, not when you go to bed.
5. You hear your favorite song in an elevator.
6. You watch the Weather Channel.
7. Your friends marry and divorce instead of "hook up" and "break up."
8. You go from 130 days of vacation time to 14.
9. Jeans and a sweater no longer qualify as "dressed up."
10. You're the one calling the police because those %&@# kids next door won't turn down the stereo.
11. Older relatives feel comfortable telling sex jokes around you.
12. You don't know what time Taco Bell closes anymore.
13. Your car insurance goes down and your car payments go up.
14. You feed your dog Science Diet instead of McDonald's leftovers.
15. Sleeping on the couch makes your back hurt.
16. You take naps.
17. Dinner and a movie is the whole date instead of the beginning of one.
18. Eating a basket of chicken wings at 3 AM would severely upset, rather than settle, your stomach.
19. You go to the drug store for ibuprofen and antacid, not condoms and pregnancy tests.
20. A \$4.00 bottle of wine is no longer "pretty good stuff."
21. You actually eat breakfast food at breakfast time.
22. "I just can't drink the way I used to" replaces "I'm never going to drink that much again."
23. 90% of the time you spend in front of a computer is for real work.
24. You drink at home to save money before going to a bar.
25. When you find out your friend is pregnant you congratulate them instead of asking "Oh S\*\$# what the hell happened?"

Bonus:

26. You read this entire list looking desperately for one sign that doesn't apply to you and can't find one to save your sorry old butt. Then you forward it to a bunch of old pals & friends 'cause you know they'll enjoy it and do the same.

*From the Internet via Nancy Bird*

**Upcoming CFMS Gem Shows**

- Jun 8-10 LA HABRA, CA.** North Orange County Gem & Min. Soc.  
La Habra Community Center, 101 W. La Habra Blvd.  
Hours: Fri 5 - 8; Sat & Sun 10 - 5  
Website: [www.nocgms.com](http://www.nocgms.com)
- Jun 9-10 ESCONDIDO, CA.** Palomar Gem & Mineral Club  
California Center for the Arts, Escondido  
340 N. Escondido Blvd.  
Hours: 10 - 5 daily  
Website: [www.palomargem.org](http://www.palomargem.org) [Show Page](#)
- Jun 9-10 GLENDORA, CA.** Glendora Gems  
Goddard Middle School, 859 E. Sierra Madre Avenue  
Hours: Sat 10 - 5; Sun 10 - 4
- Jun 23-24 CULVER CITY, CA.** Culver City Rock & Mineral Club  
Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 4117 Overland Blvd  
Hours: Sat 10 - 6; Sun 10 - 5  
Website: [www.culvercityrocks.org](http://www.culvercityrocks.org) [Show Page](#)
- Aug 3-5 NIPOMO, CA.** Orcutt Mineral Society  
Nipomo High School, 525 Thompson Avenue  
Hours: Fri-Sat 10 - 5, Sun 10 - 4  
Website: [www.omsinc.org](http://www.omsinc.org)
- Oct 13-14 TRONA, CA.** Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society  
Gem Show Building  
13337 Main Street (corner of Main & Trona Rd)  
Hours: Sat 7:30 - 5; Sun 7:30 - 4  
Website: [www.l.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub](http://www.l.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub) [Show Page](#)
- Oct 20-21 WHITTIER, CA.** Whittier Gem & Mineral Society  
**Whittier Community Center**  
**7630 Washington Avenue**  
**Hours: 10 - 5 daily**  
**Website: [www.wgmsca.com](http://www.wgmsca.com)**

**WGMS MEETING LOCATION!**  
**Whittier Senior Center**  
**13225 Walnut Street, Whittier**



**Affiliations**



California Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors



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**Meeting Date: June 28, 2018 at 6:00 PM**  
**Location: Michigan Park**  
**(See page 4 for information)**