

THE ROCK LICKER

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APRIL —2008

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You know it's finally spring when the daffodils, flowering quince, and forsythia come alive! In a few weeks, the dogwoods will burst into bloom as well. I love this time of year! With snow still in the mountains and our little valley filled with blossoms, it feels like we're living in a postcard.

With the official passing of winter comes field trip weather! Keith Bacus and company have been working to put the finishing touches on the field trip schedule. Our first trip of the year will be on Saturday, April 12, to Saddle Mountain. Look inside this edition of The Rock Licker for more details!

I am also excited about our club meeting on April 8, which should prove to be "facet-nating." Okay, poor punning aside, Jack Edwards will be presenting an interesting program on faceting. And don't forget to bring a cabochon or faceted stone to share for Show and Tell.

Enjoy the nice, sunshiny weather and we'll see you in a few days!

Tim

Keith's trip to Tucson Gem and Mineral Show

To call the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show the largest is an understatement. Try at least 44 separate shows according to one of the guide books. Each show fills a huge tent or motel complex with every kind of rock, gem, mineral, or fossil you could imagine, and then some. In five days I was only able to see parts of several of the shows. It was a learning experience.

Stunning minerals were on display from all over the world. A lovely orange one is crocoites. You can see it at www.theadelaidemine.com. There were many opals, and I talked to a miner from Australia. He showed me a rare pseudo-morph known as a pineapple. It starts out as a gypsum crystal cluster and is replaced by opal. They are lovely, but the house was a better investment, so I just took pictures! Maybe I should have picked it up and looked at it closer when he put it on the counter? The Alma Rose from the Northwest Rice museum in Portland was on display too. It is a stunning rhodocrosite crystal specimen!

Although the quantity and quality was breathtaking, the airline and my wallet limited me to a few minerals and some small agates. Oh well--- maybe next time.

Keith Bacus

COMING EVENTS

- *The next meeting will be on April 8 starting at our new time, **6:30 pm**.*
- *Don't forget to bring faceted stones or cabochons for show and tell.*
- *First field trip is April 12th.*

April

Refreshments

Members whose last name begins with N-Z bring either sweet rolls or vegetable and dip

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April Club Meeting Program

Did you ever wonder how they cut those flat surfaces or facets on diamonds or other small gemstones. Come to the April club meeting and learn. Jack Edwards will present a short lecture and demonstration on faceting. He will talk about the equipment used and how to identify material that can be faceted. There will be samples of faceted stones to look at.

Bring any questions that you may have about this process for working fine stones.

Rock of the Month—Obsidian

Obsidian is the result of volcanic lava coming in contact with water. Often the lava pours into a lake or ocean and is cooled quickly. This process produces a glassy texture in the resulting rock. Iron and magnesium give the obsidian a dark green to black color. Obsidian was used by ancient people as a cutting tool, for weapons, and for ceremonial purposes and is sometimes found by archaeologists in excavations.

Obsidian occurs in many varieties. It sometimes contain small bubbles of air that are aligned along layers created as the molten rock was flowing just before being cooled. These bubbles can produce interesting effects such as a golden sheen, known as *Sheen Obsidian* or a rainbow sheen called *Rainbow Obsidian*. Other common varieties include snowflake, mahogany, lace, silver sheen and green obsidian. Small nuggets of obsidian that have been naturally rounded and smoothed by wind and water are called *Apache Tears*.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- **Color** is dark green to dark brown and black, also can show sheens of gold or green, yellow, blue and/or purple coloration. Sometimes with white inclusions (snowflake obsidian).
- **Luster** is vitreous (glass like).
- **Transparency:** Obsidian is translucent in any stone of appreciable size.
- **Crystal System** does not apply because obsidian is amorphous.
- **Habits** include compact nodules or as massive layers between other volcanic rocks
- **Fracture** is conchoidal.
- **Hardness** is 5 - 5.5 (much softer than quartz). **Specific Gravity** is approximately 2.6 (average)
- **Streak** is white.
- **Other Characteristics:** Generally lacks open voids or large bubbles like other volcanic rocks.
- **Notable Occurrences** include Arizona, Colorado, Texas, Utah and Idaho, as well as the Cascade Volcanic Mountain range which stretches from Northern California into Washington State.
- **Best Field Indicators** are color, fracture, flow bubbles, softness, association with other volcanic rocks and lack of crystal faces.

Show and Tell Schedule

An important part of our monthly meeting is the Show and Tell segment. It is one of the ways members can learn about different gems, minerals or fossils collected by other club members.

The following is the show and tell schedule for the next few months.

April—Faceted stones or cabochons

May—Begins with “O”. Opals, oxides, obsidian or ores.

June—Jasper and Jade

July—A pin, button, buckle or necklace

What is a Moldavite?

For those who questioned whether the name of the winning team at last months "Who Wants to be a Mineraliere" game was a real gemstone or just a made up name, I offer the following description of Moldavite. It is a naturally occurring glass first found in a small area along the Moldau River in Czechoslovakia in 1787. It is believed to be the outer surface of a meteorite that fused and melted during entry into the earth's atmosphere. It is one of a handful of gems that can claim to be of extraterrestrial origin.

Moldavite is olive green in color but can also be muted yellows and browns and is used extensively in jewelry.

Federation News—Jack Edwards, Federation Director

The 2008 NFMS Mid-year meeting will be held Saturday, April 19 at the Benton County Fair Grounds, Building #5, Kennewick, WA. The meeting is being held during the Lakeside Gem and Mineral Club Annual Show. All NFMS members are invited to the mid year meeting and show (there is a entrance fee for the show)

There have been two field trips identified at this time for the NFMS Show in Ontario, OR. One trip will be to Glass Butte, June 13 thru 15. The Hines, OR Club Show will be held during that weekend. A second trip is planned to the Succor Creek area, but no date has been set.

Initial plans for the Northwest Rockhound Retreat for 2008 have been published in the March newsletter. More information will be available at the mid year meeting.

Time is short for anyone wanting to enter their Junior Member into the NFMS Junior Achievement Award Program contest. The deadline is the 1st of April. See the March NFMS Newsletter for details.

NFMS Past President Rocky McCall has submitted a nominee for 2nd Vice President. The nominee is Fritz Mack from the Everett Rock and Gem Club. A bio will be available on him soon.

If anyone is interested in being nominated for 2nd Vice President please see me. Nominations will be identified at the annual meeting in Ontario.

Life Members

Doug Anderson
Paula Bremrose
L. A. Davin
Bill Smelcer
Charlotte Smelcer

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES SCHEDULE

FAMILY—\$15.00
SINGLE—\$10.00
JUNIOR—\$3.00*

*WITH ACCOMPANYING
ADULT MEMBERSHIP

--
**BLUE DIAMOND CLUB
NAME TAG
\$6.50**

A Note from the Editor

I am always looking for material to include in the Rock Licker. My goal is to make the Rock Licker your newsletter, not limited to board members reporting club activities. If you have something you would like to have included, send it to me at.

jrbrain@gte.net

Or call 509-522-2261

A few web links to learn more about Gems and Minerals include:

www.minerals.net

www.mnh.si.edu/earth/text/2_0_0.html

<http://geology.about.com>

<http://www.desertusa.com/Thingstodo/geo/geology.html>

<http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/commodity/gemstones/sp14-95/index.html>

March Program Highlights

"Who Wants to Be a Mineralaire?" was the featured activity of the March meeting. It was a game developed by Past President Warren Rood designed as a fun way for participants to both learn more about rocks and minerals as well as about fellow club members.

Participants were randomly organized into three teams, each having both Juniors and adult members. The teams chose names such as The Gold Diggers, Rockhounds, and The Moldavites.

Each team consisted of a spokesperson and "consultants" with whom the spokesperson could consult with regarding the answer to the question. The spokesperson could only be a junior member and rotated with each question. The spokesperson was the only one on the team who answer the question.

Warren served as "Game Show Host". He asked a question and the first spokesperson who thought they knew the answer would signal such by ringing a bell. Points were awarded for each correct answer.

Ralph Trethewey was the scorekeeper and Bill Stonecipher was the judge. The winning team was the Moldavites. Each member of the team received a piece of petrified wood.

Thanks Warren, for all your hard work in putting the game together!

Local Area Club Shows Coming Up—Plan on attending one

April 19-20—Lakeside Gem and Mineral Society—Kennewick

April 19-20—Yakima Rock and Mineral Parade of Gems—Yakima

May 17-18—Hatrockhounds Annual Gem and Mineral Show-Hermiston

(See the April NFMS Newsletter for additional details or information on other shows.)

Kid's Corner—

At the March meeting, we had 11 members from the Juniors group attend and work on the "Turn That Bone To Stone" activity. It was a quick activity showing how things become petrified. A thank you to Karen Bumgarner, who helped with the group.

In April the older group will begin a long term activity, which includes starting their display shelves. This activity will be a club members only activity, due to it being an on-going project. Please bring a hammer and plan to be on time.

Kim French,
Juniors Advisor

Never To Early To Get Started

Have you started thinking about what you will be entering in the Walla Walla County Fair or show at our club's annual Gem and Mineral Show later in the summer. Both venues offer excellent opportunities to show off your work as well as let the rest of the community see the beauty of our hobby. It also promote the club's activities.

The club is again sponsoring two \$25.00 "Best of Show" awards at the fair this year and all junior entrants compete for small cash awards. Put on your thinking cap.

April 12—Field Trip to Saddle Mountain

Keith Bacus will lead the first club field trip of the season to Saddle Mountain. Members planning on going on this trip should meet at the Lyon's Park club house at 0800 on Saturday, April 12 to consolidate rides and get directions.

Since there are new rules affecting some of the traditional areas we have gone to in the past, it is important that we stay together to avoid problems.

Smaller pieces of petrified wood can be found near the surface but you will have to dig for the bigger pieces.

Sign up to go on this trip at the April 8th meeting.

Highlights From The Board Meeting

- Warren Rood led a discussion on his game "Who Wants to Be a Mineralaire" would be played at the as part of the March meeting program. The game will be a way to see how much members know about rocks and minerals and about other club members.
- Board decided to give the rock of the month to all Juniors, but limit the shelf building for the older Junior members.
- Board voted on not having a Spring auction.
- Warren presented a sampling of Mr. Boyd's rock collection that the club is considering making an offer to buy for resale at the club's auction. There was extensive discussion on whether or not to increase our budget for the purchase of rocks from Mr. Boyd. After a long discussion by the board Ralph Tretheway moved that the club purchase only \$250.00 worth of Mr. Boyd's rock collection. Jack seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

Secretary's Report—March 11, 2008 Club Meeting Minutes

President Tim Tiffin called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

He asked if there were any corrections to the February meeting minutes printed in the Rock Licker. No corrections were needed.

President Tiffin reminded the members to save their stamps for the Federation Stamp Drive for cancer and to give them to Jack Edwards.

Welcome of Guests: We welcomed Jessie, Holly, and Gavin.

President Tiffin announced that the Board voted on not having a spring auction.

Show & Tell: Vice-President Keith Bacus led off the show & tell with some tektites, fluorite, and garnets from China.

Jack Edwards showed some pyrite with gold from central City, Colorado. He also had some

silver pyrite and other pyrite samples.

Yvonne Brewer showed a chunk of concrete from the Berlin Wall.

Linda Stonecipher showed a pyrite cube and galena.

Bill Stonecipher showed a sphere made from basalt from Whisky Creek.

Dave Williams showed a pyrite sunburst and pyrite from Logrono, Spain.

Jessie showed rainbow obsidian, an agate and some blue obsidian.

Jennifer van den Dikkenberg showed some crystal, opal, thunder eggs and a geode.

Swap & Sale Info: President Tim shared a letter we received from Gary L. Litchfield, a rock hound and flint knapper, who is looking for good quality obsidian in medium to large chunks or

opalite. He is willing to trade topaz, crystals, and fossils that he has for the obsidian.

Gary Litchfield
Address: 409 Miller
Milton-Freewater, OR
97862

541-938-4978.

garylitchfield@aol.com

Wally Mandigo had some rock working equipment for sale.

Raffle Drawing: Bill Stonecipher did the raffle and he gave some silver galena, pure gold and a nice collection of minerals.

Featured Rock of the month: Bill Smelcer made a short presentation on Pyrite. Afterwards, he gave each of the juniors a pyrite cube and a write up about the material. Dave Williams donated the pyrite cubes.

Monthly Program: See article on page 4.

Treasurer's Report

Received dues from two new families who have joined the club in the past month. We have also received deposits from three vendors for our annual show in September.

2008 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

Saddle Mountain (Mattawa, WA)

1 day—petrified wood - - 240 miles round trip- - - - - April 12 - Keith

Roosevelt (Roosevelt, WA)

1 day—petrified wood - - 220 miles round trip- - - - - May 4 - Warren

Tri-federation field trip (Jackpot NV)

5 days—petrified wood, Pink limb cast - -844 mi round-- - May 21-16 ext miles for field trips

Lewiston club claim (Clarkia, ID)

2-3 days—crystals - - - 382 mi round trip- - - - - June 6-9 - Jack

NFMS show and field trips (Ontario OR)

5 days— Plume agate, thunder eggs, extra miles for field trips

Picture jasper, leaf fossils - - -394 mi round trip- - - - - June 20-22

Visit Collections and shops of club members

Stops at Janice's, Jack's and Warren's homes. June 28

Pow Wow (Madras, OR) (extra miles for field trips)

2-3 days—crystals - -476 miles round trip- - - - - July 2-7

Kaner Flat (above Naches, WA)

2 days—thunder eggs - - -290 + miles round trip - - - - - July 11-12 - Warren

Goethite pit (above Jubilee Lake, OR)

1 day—goethite spheres - - - - - July 27 - Tim

Diatamaceous earth pits (Mattawa, WA)

1 day—opal, fossils, Ginkgo museum - - 228 miles R/T- September - Keith, Jack, or
Warren (check access to pits with company)

Fossils (Lewiston, ID)

1 day— fossils - - - -200 miles round trip- - - - - October - Jack

Regional Museum (Baker City, OR)

1 day— mineral collections - -262 miles round trip - fee - - October - Bill

Fossils (Fossil, OR) Junior trip - fee

1 day – fossils 334 miles round trip

THE CLUB LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors:

President: Tim Tiffin	509-525-3766	ttiffin@innw.net
Vice-President: Keith Bacus	509-529-1248	keithbacus@yahoo.com
Secretary: Sandy Kinsfather	509-529-1455	sandyj@bmi.net
Treasurer: Ralph Trethewey	509-529-9209	
Federation Director: Jack Edwards	509-529-3673	edwardsj@wwics.com
Federation Delegate: Charlene Edwards	509-529-3673	
Junior Activity Director: Kim French	509-525-7387	frenchke@hscis.net
Past President: Warren Rood	509-522-2330	wrood@coffeycomm.com

Supporting Cast:

Classes: Steve Rice, Ralph Trethewey
 Drawing: Bill Stonecipher
 Historian: Charlene Edwards
 Lapidary: Paul McCaskill, Ray Wister
 Librarian: Yvonne Brewer
 Photographers: David Walk, Russell Kinsfather
 Programs: Warren Rood
 Refreshments: Crystal Walk, Charlotte Smelcer
 Show and Tell: Keith Bacus
 Publicity: Linda and Bill Stonecipher
 Stamps: Jack Edwards
 Sunshine: Marilyn McCann
 Web Master: David Walk

Working Groups:

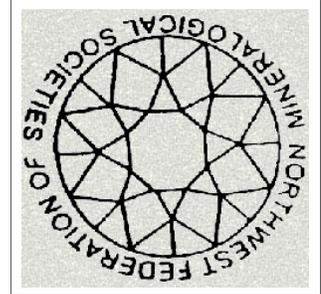
Field Trips: Bill Stonecipher, Steve Rice, Ray Wister, Keith Bacus, Warren Rood
 Junior Club: Kim French, Tracie Tiffin, Kellie Casebier, Bill and Charlotte Smelcer, Karen Bumgarner
 Membership: Charlene Edwards, Sandy Kinsfather
 Show: Warren Rood-chairperson, Jack and Charlene Edwards, Bill and Linda Stonecipher, Kim and Kevin French, Bill and Charlotte Smelcer,

Affiliations:

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) <http://www.amfed.org>
 Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies (NFMS) <http://www.amfed.org.nfms>

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<http://mwrocklicker.googlepages.com/home>

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THE NORTHWEST FEDERATION
OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES

THE ROCK LICKER is the official monthly publication of the **Marcus Whitman Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.** (NFMS Club # 719), PO Box 338, Walla Walla, WA 99362.

The objective of the Society is to encourage the study of earth science through suitable programs, field trips, exhibits and other educational activities. People of all ages are welcome to join us. There are junior club activities for youth under the age of 17.

Regular club meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month (except July and December) at the Lions Club Field House on the corner of SE 8th St and SE Larch Ave. in College Place, WA. Both the Juniors club activities and general club meeting start at 6:30 pm.

Note: July is reserved for a club picnic and December is reserved for the Christmas party and potluck.