



Member
California
Federation of
Mineralogical
Societies



Member
American
Federation of
Mineralogical
Societies

The Lapidarian

Newsletter of

The *Rockatomics* Gem and Mineral Society



Rockatomics Gem and Mineral Society

P.O. Box 346 Canoga Park, CA 91305-0346

Or on the web at: www.rockatomics.org

Objective:

The objective of "**Rockatomics**" is to assemble a group of people who are interested in the geological, mineralogical, lapidary, gem craft and precious metal jewelry hobbies in an atmosphere of good fellowship, sportsmanship, and community service.

Affiliations:

The **Rockatomics Gem and Mineral Society** is under the auspices of The Foundation of Pierce College, Woodland Hills, California. **Rockatomics** is a member organization of the California Federation and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

General Meetings:

A monthly general meeting is held on the second Monday of each month at Pratt & Whitney Employees Rec. Park in West Hills. Meetings generally consist of a short business session, refreshments, and a program. Meetings are from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.



2008 Officers and Chairmen of the Rockatomics Gem and Mineral Society

President	Antonio Buendia	
Vice-President	Jim Gerik	
Treasurer	Cathy Buendia	
Secretary	Amira Rucker	
Federation Co-Directors	Gary & Maureen Levitt	
Membership	Ken Pazera	
Bulletin Editor	Linda Ralph	
Web Master (rockatomomics.org)	Gary Levitt	
Historian		open
Librarian	Ken Pazera	
Publicity	Louise Gerik & Amira Rucker	
Program		open
Amenities	Virginia Kilkka	
Lapidary Shop		open
Silver Shop		open
Tail Gate Show	Gary Levitt	
Classes		open
Refreshments/Holiday Parties		Club Members
Field Trips		open

Category	Mineral Variety
Chemical formula	aluminium oxide , Al ₂ O ₃
Identification	
Color	Every color except red (which is ruby)
Crystal habit	massive and granular
Crystal system	Hexagonal
Cleavage	None
Fracture	Conchoidal, splintery
Mohs Scale hardness	9.0
Luster	Vitreous
Refractive index	1.762-1.778
Optical Properties	Abbe number 72.2
Birefringence	0.008
Pleochroism	Strong
Streak	White
Specific gravity	3.95-4.03



September's Beautiful Sapphire

Birth Stone for
September



Natural sapphire (from Wikipedia)

Sapphire is one of the two gem varieties of the species corundum. Although blue is the best known hue, the gem occurs in virtually every spectral hue excepting red. Red corundum is ruby. Sapphire may also be colorless and occurs in the non-spectral hues, gray and black.

The cost of sapphire gems varies depending on their color, clarity, size, cut, and overall quality. As of 2000, the cost of 1 carat (0.2 g) of a typical uncut, gem quality sapphire was about \$1,600 USD.^[1] Significant sapphire deposits are found in Eastern Australia, Southeast Asia, and Sri Lanka. Sapphire and rubies are often found together in the same area, but one gem is usually more abundant.^[2]

Historical and cultural references(from Wikipedia)

- Sapphire is the [birthstone](#) associated with September.
- The 45th [wedding anniversary](#) is known as the sapphire anniversary.

The theft of a sapphire known as the "Blue Water" is central to the plot of the novel [Beau Geste](#) by P. C. Wren and its various film adaptations.

Mining (from Wikipedia)

Sapphires are mined from [alluvial](#) deposits or from primary underground workings. The finest specimens are mined in the disputed territory of [Kashmir](#), [Myanmar](#), [Madagascar](#) and [Sri Lanka](#). Both the [Logan sapphire](#) and the [Star of Bombay](#) originate from Sri Lankan mines. Sapphires are also mined in [Australia](#), [Thailand](#) and [China](#). Madagascar leads the world in sapphire production (as of 2007) specifically in and around the city of [Ilakaka](#). Prior to Ilakaka, Australia was the largest producer of sapphires (as of 1987). Ilakaka is prone to violence, but sapphires are found everywhere including on the ground and in the river mud. [Pakistan](#), [Afghanistan](#), [India](#), [Tanzania](#) and [Kenya](#) also produce sapphires, and less commercially-significant deposits are found in many other countries. The US state of [Montana](#) has produced sapphires from both the El Dorado Bar and Spokane Bar deposit near [Helena](#). Well-known for their intense, pure blue color, yogo sapphires are found in Yogo Gulch, near Utica, Montana. Gem grade sapphires and rubies are also found in and around Franklin, North Carolina, USA. Several mines are open to the public.



Birthdays for the Month of September are:

Jim Gerik
Linda Ralph

September 11th
September 12th

Happy Birthday

Anniversaries for September are:

Linda & Gordon Ralph
Rodger & Joyce Stegall

September 24th
September 26th





Proposed Dues Change

By Gary Levitt

When an article relates to money, it typically gets everyone's attention and I hope this article gets your attention.

This past year (2008) we changed our dues structure rather significantly. And, of course, it was higher, not lower. As a result of that, and in some cases for other reasons, our membership decreased.

As I see it, the dues went up due to two reasons:

- Additional costs due to expenses for membership in the CFMS and insurance.
- Increased bulletin costs, well those costs – paper, photocopy, and postage – well they just plain went up.

And this is at a time when we want to attract new members from the Pierce College student body (read that as individuals having limited funds). So Maureen and I have been trying to figure out a way we can keep expenses down and pass it on to our membership. And at minimum not increase the cost from what it is presently.

Part of the solution is the internet, the other part is simply separating the cost associated with the bulletin from the cost of membership.

So here's the suggestion:

- Annual dues for an individual - \$10
- Dues for additional individuals residing at the same address - \$7.50
- "Subscription" to a mailed copy - \$11
- Still no charge for membership or bulletin for life or honorary members

With the dues structure described above, the present cost to a member would stay exactly the same as it is now. If they were to stop receiving a mailed copy of the bulletin, their costs would decrease by \$11 per year.

So how would those members get information without getting the bulletin? Good question! The assumption is that those individuals have email and web access (like all students do!) and will read their copies 'on-line' with no expense to them or the club.

Come to this month's meeting prepared to discuss and vote on this.





Southern California Rock and Mineral Shows

September 13 & 14: Downey, CA

Delvers Gem & Mineral Society
Downey Women's Club
9813 Paramount Blvd., Downey
Hours: Sat. 10-6; Sun. 10-4
Guynell Miller (562) 633-0614
Email: guynellallen@sbcglobal.net

September 25-28: 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
Emma Rose Couveau (951) 288-6182

October 18: West Hills, CA

Woodland Hills Rock Chippers
First United Methodist Church
22700 Sherman Way
Hours: 10-5
Virginia Rotramel (951) 403-2634
Email: show@rockchippers.org
www.rockippers.org

September 20-21: Paso Robles, CA

Santa Lucia Rockhounds
Pioneer Park Museum
2010 Riverside Drive
Hours: 20-5 both days
Mike Doherty (815) 466-4061
Email: mdoherty@tcsn.net

October 5: Fallbrook, CA

Fallbrook Gem & Mineral Society
"Fall Festival of Gems"
FGMS Museum, 123 W. Alvarado
Hours: 10-4
Mary Fong-Walker (760) 728-1130
Diane Tjepkes (780) 468-8028

October 18-19: Whittier, CA

Whittier Gem & Mineral Society
Whittier Community Center
7630 Washington Avenue
Hours: 10-5 both days
Jay Valle: (626) 934-9764
Email: res19pnb@verizon.net



President's Report

Thanks for all the members that attended the August meeting. It was good to see our former club secretary Eleanor Bienvenue. Good meeting discussions took place on future meeting program options. Asking members to remember our future goal is to grow by establishing ourselves at Pierce College. I'm looking forward in hearing back from members attending the Mt. Gleason field trip. Unfortunately our family had previous vacation plans in San Diego.

Tony Buendia



Minutes of *Rockatomics* Meeting Monday, August 11, 2008

- Flag Salute given by Evan Buendia
- Topics of discussion:
 - Congratulated Antonio Buendia's and Gary Levitt's birthdays this month.
 - Show Chairman; at La Pomo, spoke with dealers about next year's show location options at Peirce College. Next year's contract will contain a questionnaire. Next year's show plan to including an information booth.
 - Gary suggested soliciting paid professional program presentations. The typical range in cost would be \$75 - \$100. Another option is to solicit P.C. student presentations for extra credit.
 - A suggestion was made to decrease the membership dues by way of reducing cost internet access bulletin instead of hardcopy mailing.
 - Action to notify Dennis of the club's intent to invite a program presenter at the October's meeting at P.C. – Tony Buendia
 - Sept.'s meeting Program on Sequoia's Crystal Cave DVD.
 - Field Trip: Gary asked for sign up list for members interested in attending the Aug. 23 Mt. Gleason rock hunting trip.
 - Snacks: A special thanks to Cathy for bring in the delicious cheese cake and Allan for making us great coffee as usual. Our dietitian also thanks us for supporting future business.



Next Club Meeting

Monday, September 8, 2008

6:00 p.m.

The Ranch Ho use in Pratt & Whitney's Park
West Hills, California

Deadline for all articles to be printed in the next bulletin is **September 15, 2008**





Federation News via the CFMS Newsletter of September 2008

From the desk of Shirley Leeson, AFMS President



**WE NEED YOUR HELP!
PLEASE RESPOND IMMEDIATELY!**

You have a five week window to contact your Congressman about this VERY important matter. Please take advantage of it!

On July 29, 2008 I received information from Wendell Mohr (AFMS Commemorative Stamp Project) that U.S. Congressman JOHN CULBERSON, R, from the 7th District (West Houston, Texas) regarding the Paleo Bill H.R. 554. He is trying to either stop the bill or change it. He asked for our help.

I immediately contacted everyone on our email list both in San Diego and Idaho. I forwarded the information Wendell has supplied me. I also talked directly to Assistant to the Congressman, Brittany Hooten.

They asked us to do a “grass roots” movement to help him stop this bill. Helping me was John Martin, CFMS Public Lands Advisory Committeeman from Southern California. We contacted everyone we could think of. The response was abysmal. Only a few responded. **SO NOW WE HAVE A FIVE WEEK WINDOW WHILE CONGRESS IS CAVORTING ON THEIR VACATION ONCE AGAIN.....**

Here are a few things you can mention when you contact your congressman:

1. Tell them you are a rockhound/amateur collector.
2. Tell them that as the bill stands, we can be put in jail for picking up a rock that might look like a fossil to the “untrained eye” of a BLM or Forestry person. Which will result in the confiscation of your vehicle and all equipment and the burden of proof will be on you IN COURT.
3. Amateur collectors have been responsible for many of the finds of important fossils over the years. All this will now stop.
4. Fossils are not renewable. Once fossils are exposed by wind and rain they will disintegrate. Professional paleontologists usually don't have the time, the money or the staff to check out paleo sites found by amateurs but they don't want us to collect them either.
5. This bill is a disaster for rockhounds, and I urge you to stop it.

One last thing: please contact me with your name, city and state and the name of the congressman you contacted. I'd like to know who responded to this emergency.



Federation Report

By Gary Levitt

One of the recurring themes heard by the CFMS is ‘what do we get out of being part of the CFMS’? Immediately, most club members respond with – liability insurance and then have difficulty thinking of anything else.

Right now, we are looking to expand membership in our club. One of the ways clubs ‘draw’ people to their meetings is by having interesting and informative programs. How do clubs accomplish this? With assistance from the CFMS of course!

The CFMS has a library of slides and videos that may be loaned to a club. The cost is merely the nominal expense for postage and handling. In addition, the CFMS has compiled a list of speakers that, for a charge (by the speaker, not the CFMS) will give a presentation to your club. The speaker list is referred to as ‘Podium People’.

Presently, we are planning on having a live speaker at our October meeting. And, of course, the speaker will be one from the Podium People. We are also planning on holding our October meeting at Pierce College in the hope of attracting students into our club. There will be more information at the meeting.



Solution (but don't cheat!)

Common Minerals

Solution:



Field Trip: Saturday, August 23, 2008 – Mt. Gleason

Mount Gleason Field Trip – August 23, 2008



By Gary Levitt

As you may know, Rockatomics and the Rockchippers held a combined field trip on Saturday August 23, 2008. And I have to admit (of course, since I led it with a bunch of help from Steve Dover so I may be a tad biased), it was great!

Fortunately, Steve was able to do a scouting run earlier in the week. Keep in mind neither he nor I have been on this dirt road in the last 10 years, so it was a relief not having any surprises for the group! And the weather was as 'well behaved' as anyone could ask for in August.

Between the two clubs there were 10 adults and 2 youngsters on the field trip. And many who participated were 'newbies'! For those of us who have been in the hobby for a long time it is gratifying to share our hobby with people that are just getting started.

Everyone in the group ended up with some 'keepers' – hopefully the leaverites got left...right there.

Hopefully, this will be the start for both clubs to get in the 'field trip habit'.



Here we all are holding our prize finds of the day! In attendance were Mark, Diane, Steve, ? I'm so sorry, Jason, Toni, Andy, Gene, Gary, Gordon and Linda. (Maureen is taking the picture)

And just to prove Maureen was actually there - there she is having lunch with us in the only shade for MILES around!!!





News of Our Members, Our Club, Etc.

If you have any articles or news to share with our members, it would be appreciated. Please call or send information of birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, promotions, retirements, illnesses, deaths, accidents, member news, selling of hobby materials, moving, etc., etc. You are part of our **Rockatomics** family and we want to hear from you and share your news!

Rockatomics Gem & Mineral Society

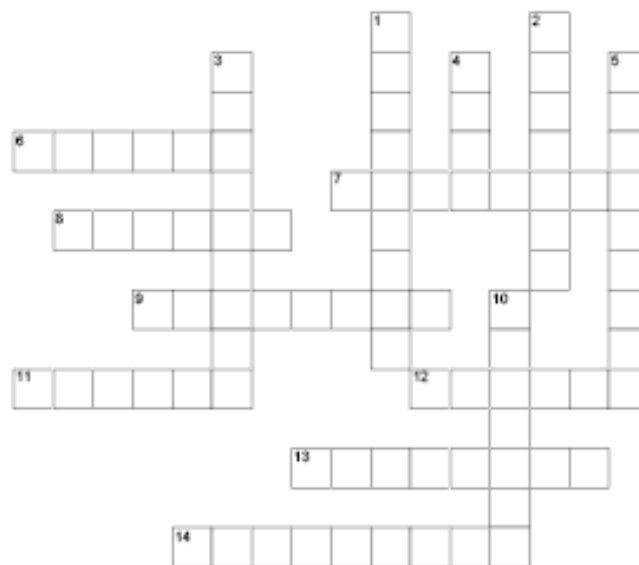
Linda Ralph

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Common Minerals



www.rockandminerals4u.com

ACROSS

- 6 the main source of lead
- 7 an iron ore, sometimes used in jewelry
- 8 sometimes called fool's gold
- 9 sulfide mineral, long metallic slender bladed crystals
- 11 a very heavy sulfate mineral
- 12 rock salt
- 13 calcium fluoride
- 14 a bright green copper carbonate

DOWN

- 1 a naturally magnetic rock
- 2 a bright blue copper carbonate
- 3 metamorphic quartz sandstone
- 4 a silicate mineral known for its perfect cleavage into thin sheets
- 5 strontium sulfate, its name means celestial
- 10 a common carbonate mineral, often a replacement mineral in fossils

