

ROCK WRITINGS

Official Monthly Publication of the Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society

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Nevada City - Grass Valley, California

January 2010

President's Message by Jan Longacre

Hope you all have had a wonderful Christmas and are ready to start another wonderful year. You all know what a great club we have and it was really nice when a member of another club noticed that we had so many participating in running our show. I am proud to be part of you!!



Stay healthy and see you at the meeting on the 5th of Jan 2010. Oh, doesn't that sound far off.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Jan

Our January Program will be about Yuba Blue

You probably have heard people speak about a rock called "Yuba Blue" Just what is it and where does it come from?

That is what you will be learning about at our next program. Ralph Mullican, owner and proprietor of Smartville Rock will be giving a presentation on the famous water washed Yuba Blue boulders.



When we speak about them being boulders, they come anywhere from basketball size to the size of a car. They are used for landscaping, waterfalls and ponds. Well, that's all you get to hear about Yuba Blue in this article...you have to catch the program to hear more!

Our next General Membership Meeting is on Tuesday, January 5th at 7:00 p.m. The presentation about Yuba Blue starts a few minutes after that.

**Deadline for the February 2010
Newsletter is January 19, 2010**



Why was Rudy Thompson smiling? Because he had a great time at our annual Christmas Dinner/ Party and Installation last month. It started with a great potluck with the turkey and ham provided by the club and everything else by the members. Following the meal, triangles and bars were handed out to the 2009 officers and chairpersons, followed by the installation of the 2010 officers. The evening was topped off with the traditional reading of "Twas the Night Before Christmas", while gifts were passed around the circle each time the magic word was spoken. For more photos of the evening, go to page 3. You might see another photo or two throughout the newsletter.

Photo by Jon North

Calendar of Events For January

January 1 Happy New Year!
January 5 Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
January 5 General Membership Meeting 7:00 p.m.
January 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 19 Newsletter Items Due

January's Birthstone is Garnet

The garnet is a delightful rock that can be either igneous in origin or more commonly, a product of metamorphism.



The garnet has a vitreous luster, and its hardness ranges from 6½ to 7½. It has no cleavage, however it sometimes parts in six directions. Garnets will not streak.

Garnets are found in a variety of colors ranging from deep red, purple, rose, pink, white, yellow, green, brown, reddish black, and black. They come from a group of aluminum silicates and calcium silicates. Its color is determined by other ingredients present like magnesium, iron, manganese, or chromium.

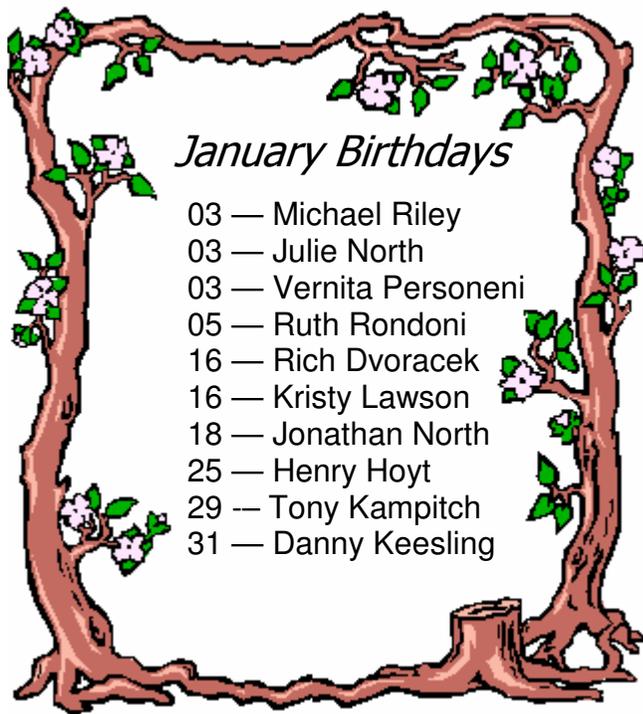
Garnets that rate the title of January's Birthstone are also the ones that are considered semi-precious stones. These are primarily of the pyrope or almandine variety. Pyrope is an aluminum silicate with manganese, while almandine is an aluminum silicate with iron. Pyrope garnets are usually the best quality, free from flaws. A variation of this is a combination between pyrope and almandine, called rhodolite. It too is usually flawless. Some garnets are better suited for industrial uses like garnet sandpaper and other abrasives.

Garnets can be found throughout North America, however gem quality garnets are not found everywhere. Pyrope comes from Arizona and Utah. Almandine comes from Alaska and Idaho, while rhodolite comes from North Carolina. Idaho is home to some magnificent star garnets.

In California, the garnet deposits most worth mentioning are found in pegmatites in San Diego County, the benitoite locality in San Benito County, and in magnetite deposits in Kern County. Garnets can be found in our area also, but they are not normally gem quality. Garnets are plentiful in local rivers and streams, but are usually quite small.

Garnets are made into jewelry by faceting or by making cabochons called caruncles. Gem quality garnets are fit for a king...definitely an appropriate gem for January's Birthstone.

By Jonathan North



January Birthdays

03 — Michael Riley
03 — Julie North
03 — Vernita Personeni
05 — Ruth Rondoni
16 — Rich Dvoracek
16 — Kristy Lawson
18 — Jonathan North
25 — Henry Hoyt
29 — Tony Kampitch
31 — Danny Keesling



2010



Sunshine Update



Alan Boone is still battling his cancer. Remember Alan and Jeanne in your prayers.

Bill Budd is contending with chemo. We wish the best for you Bill, we are all hoping you rebound soon.

Our Sunshine Lady sends out cards on behalf of our club, but that doesn't stop you from sending your own too.

Mary Tucker is our Sunshine reporter. Mary would like any news you would like to share with our members reported to her by calling (530) 265-8320 or you can also contact Jonathan North, editor at (916) 768-0137.

NOTICE: In accordance with Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society By-Laws, members are notified about membership renewal in the November and December Newsletters. No further notification is to be provided because it is the member's responsibility to renew.

Twass the Night Before Christmas...



Photos by Jon North

HUNTING SMOKY QUARTZ IN AUSTRALIA

By Lori Woodhall

BLUE MOUNTAINS, AUSTRALIA..... The Woodhall family recently returned from the trip of a lifetime – 3 weeks in Australia. But a bonus we hadn't planned on was a side trip to go smoky quartz hunting, west of the Blue Mountains, outside of Sydney. This unexpected adventure came about in the most interesting way, that is a story in itself.

My husband Rob was an exchange student in Sydney 30 years ago, in 1979, so this trip was to go back and visit his host family and high school “mates.” While in Katoomba visiting with one of his mates, our 12 year old daughter, Anna insisted we stop at a rock shop we had driven by earlier that day. Even though it was minutes before closing time, we told her, “You have 5 minutes to shop,” as we pulled up near the store. We all hurried in, looked at the pretties, Anna made her selection, and we rushed out as the keeper was preparing to close. The next night, back in Sydney at a reunion dinner with about 5 of Rob's high school mates, I asked the man sitting across from the table from me, “So what is it that you do?” He answered, “I have a rock shop in Katoomba.” I said, “The one at #63 Katoomba St?” He said, “Yes, as a matter of fact, you do look familiar.” Astonished at this coincidence I remarked, “We were THERE yesterday!!” Well, one thing led to another and I had to ask if there was any good rock hunting in the area. He told me about a great smoky quartz site about 50 minutes from his home in Little Harley Valley, west of the Blue Mountains. I talked him into taking us there a few days later.

The site is a functioning rock quarry, but accessed frequently by local rock hounds. The parent material is sandstone and weathered mica, and Peter showed us where to look for the crystals in pockets.

We happily dug in the dirt for several hours, finding many small points, but Rob found the prize of the day – a dark, clear, doubly-

terminated beauty that Peter said was worth about \$35. Near to where we were digging, in some mud, were fresh kangaroo tracks!



Anna, Rob and Stuart in smoky quartz quarry



Rob in his happy hole

On the drive back, through beautiful green rolling hills dotted with small farms with cattle and sheep grazing, Peter suddenly pulled his van off the side of the road, backed up and said,

Continued on page 5...

Continued from page 4...

“There's a Spiny Echidna!” We all hopped out, sneaked through the fence and had to pet this prickly character who just curled up and hunkered down in the grass. Right next to him was a huge Wombat hole which Peter said wasn't there yesterday. The burrow was big enough for Anna to crawl into, but we couldn't talk her into it!

Back at Peter's house he showed us his storage shed full of stock for his shop – much of it was purchased on buying trips to China – like huge 10 -12” quartz crystals with powdered carbon in them (you could see it sifting as you tilted the crystal). He also showed us cut opals from his mine in Lightning Ridge. Of course I had to buy some!!

One other “rock highlight” was a visit to the Crystal Caves in Atherton in the Northeast. It's a tourist stop, but home to the Empress of Uruguay, the largest amethyst geode in the world – over 10' tall, filled with gem-quality amethyst, weighing 2.7 tons. It was truly a sight to behold!

We have many happy memories of our trip “down under”, but especially with Peter!

Photos by Lori Woodhall



The Empress of Uruguay, largest amethyst geode in the world.



Christmas party photos by Rudy Thompson



CFMS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**Grow the Federation!****By Fred Ott**

Happy New Year!

I am very honored to be your Federation's President for 2010 and promise to work diligently throughout the year to further the goals of the CFMS.



Starting this month, we will begin a process to expand the Federation by 1) developing methods of attracting new societies to the Federation and 2) providing information and opportunities to current CFMS Societies for increasing their membership rolls.

The California Federation has a long and wonderful history and owes a debt of gratitude to the many men and women who contributed so much throughout the years. The best way in which we can honor those who came before us is to see that the Federation continues to prosper.

While the value in "Growing the Federation" may appear obvious, there may be those who don't understand the benefits, particularly in increasing each society's membership. Here are just a few reasons:

- 1) Societies that do not attract new members will eventually be forced to disband.
- 2) If 15% of the membership "does all the work", wouldn't you rather have 15% of a large membership?
- 3) Without "new blood", the same individuals have to serve as officers and directors each year, leading to "burn-out".

Each month, I will be working with Elizabeth "Beth" Myers, Chair of the recently formed Membership Committee, to provide some "silver bullets" which have been instrumental in the success of several CFMS societies. These will represent the "specific actions" which led societies such as the Mother Lode Mineral Society and El Dorado Mineral and Gem Society to double and triple their membership rosters, now with over 300 rockhounds in each society!

Does your society have something to contribute to the conversation? If you have a success story, please contact me or Beth Myers so that it can be shared with the other societies in the Federation.

I invite you to come along for the ride!

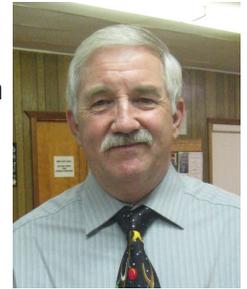
Rockhounding is MORE than a hobby; it's a PASSION!

-Fred

CFMS Newsletter, January 2010

CFMS Field Trips – North**By Jonathan North**

Permit me to introduce myself as the CFMS Field Trips North Chairman. My name is Jonathan North and I live in the northern California area, more precisely, Roseville. I am a member of the Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society, representing CFMS as their Federation Director. I have held practically all of the elected and many appointed positions in the club including President during my 13 years membership. I am also a member of the Roseville Rock Rollers and am currently the President, among other things. During my time with both of these clubs, I have learned quite a lot about the workings of gem and mineral clubs and what members are interested in within the hobby, and what they expect from their field trip leaders.



This year I want to concentrate on providing a two-way communication between CFMS and all the clubs in the northern part of the state. Two organizations I want to work closely with are the Cooperative Field Trip Chairmen's Association and North Bay Field Trips. I had the pleasure of attending the last COOP meeting in Oroville last month and we exchanged some good ideas.

Plans are in the works to have a couple CFMS North field trips. I have some good ideas already, but would like any inputs you may have on collecting sites that could accommodate a large number of collectors.

-Jonathan

CFMS Newsletter, January 2010

CFMS 2010 SHOWS

January 16-17 2010, Exeter, CA

Tule Gem & Mineral Society
Exter Memorial Bldg.
420 N Kaweah (Hwy 65), Exter
Hours: Sat. 10 - 5, Sun. 10-4
Pepper Okada (559) 733-5842
Don Vieira (559) 733-7739
Webpage: tulegem.org

February 12-21, 2010, Indio, CA

San Geronio Mineral & Gem Society
Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival
Gem amp; Mineral Building Bldg #1
46-350 Arabia Street
Hours: 10 am - 10 pm
Bert Grisham: (915) 849-1674
Email: bert67@verizon.net

February 26-27 2010, Northridge, CA

Del Air Rockhounds Club
United Methodist Church
9650 Reseda Blvd. (at Superior St.)
Hours: Fri. 3 p.m. -9:30 p.m. - Sat. 10-5
Julie Marin (818) 886-7190
Website: <http://delairrockhounds.blogspot.com>



AFMS/CFMS Gem Show 2010





**Gems
Fossils
Jewelry
Supplies
Grab Bags
Kid's Room
Silent Auction
Display Cases
Raffle Prizes
Field Trips
& more**

HIDDEN TREASURES



**June 18-20, 2010
Fri-Sun 10am-5pm**
So. CA Univ. of Health Sciences Campus
16200 E Amber Valley Rd., Whittier, CA 90604

Host: North Orange County Gem & Mineral Society
Show Chairman: Mike Beaumont (714-510-6037)
Email: diamond.crest@yahoo.com
Website: NetworkingWave.com/AFMS2010/

Shop Tips

Polishing Jade: When using chrome oxide for polishing jade, mix it with a solution of 1/2 water and 1/2 vinegar.

from RockCollector, 01/2006,
Via T-Town Rockhound, 11/2005 via Quarry Quips, 12/2005



RELIABLE RV

530-272-4858
530-272-6950
13368 Grass Valley Avenue
Grass Valley, CA 95945

**PARTS
SERVICE
STORAGE**

CO-OP MEMBER & OTHER FIELD TRIPS FOR 2010

- Contact your club's field trip leader for further information and revisions.
- CO-OP website also has information: www.ourfieldtrips.org (Password is needed.)
- These trips are open to all rockhounds who agree to abide by the AFMS Code of Ethics, the directions of the field trip leader and practice safe rockhounding.
- Call the field trip leader beforehand to sign up and for further information.
- Remember to wear your name badge and sign in with the field trip leader.
- A Consent and Assumption of Risk Waiver of Liability form must be signed upon arrival at meeting site, contact field trip leader for any further insurance requirements.

Jan. 24 Stories in Stones - Educational Lecture, Calaveras Co. Club

Source: Florence Brady, Co-op Fieldtrips

AFMS CODE OF ETHICS

- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations of rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind - fences, signs, buildings.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material - matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and Will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule", will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public "image" of rockhounds everywhere.

AFMS Newsletter, November 2009

ARE YOU READY FOR TROUBLE?

By Mel Albright, 1999 AFMS Safety Chair

Most of us cruise through life expecting no major health problems and getting none. But, fate has a way of surprising us. Accidents happen, strokes come, heart attacks come, sudden changes happen, snakes bite. And then we go or are taken to an emergency room to get help. When you get there, are you ready? Ready? How? Well, there are some things you should carry at all times. Otherwise, the emergency treatment may hurt you rather than help. What should you carry?

1. A list of all the medicines you take. This should include everything. Your regular prescriptions, of course are part. List the medicine, it's strength, and the frequency you take it. Over the counter stuff should be listed, too. What vitamins do you take? What herbals? Anything you take regularly should be listed - name, strength and frequency. Then there is the occasional stuff. Over the counter pain killers, cold medicines, cough medicines, allergy pills, etc. should all be listed.

2. A short health summary. List whatever problem you might have. Sinus, heart, diabetes, allergies, asthma - whatever. Remember, you may not be in shape to tell the doctors.

3. A list of who to contact if you are taken ill or hurt. Some hospitals either cannot or are reluctant to treat you without your family being aware of what's going on. Names, addresses, phone numbers, and relationships should be listed.

4. Your identification. Frequently, joggers and the like go out without identification. When they are stricken, no one knows who they are or who to tell.

5. And, of course, your health insurance information. Surprise health problems are a shock to all of us. We all like to pretend they won't happen to us. But they might! Don't make them worse by not being prepared. And don't bet that you can remember all of the above information while worrying about your health.

AFMS Newsletter, 5/99



Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society



2009 ELECTED OFFICERS

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| PRESIDENT | Jan Longacre |
| VICE PRESIDENT | Dan Chaplin |
| SECRETARY | Julie-Anne Lay |
| TREASURER | Todd Lawson |
| DIRECTORS | Kim Moore Snakes Hoffmann Terry Bartels |

2009 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| FEDERATION DIRECTOR | Jonathan North |
| FIELD TRIP DIRECTORS | Vicki Black Tony Kampitch |
| HISTORIAN | Vacant |
| HOSPITALITY | Melba Sagaser |
| LIBRARIAN | Alex Lay |
| MEMBERSHIP | Jonathan North |
| PARLIAMENTARIAN | Vacant |
| CLUB PICNIC | Anita Wald-Tuttle |
| PROGRAM | Dan Chaplin |
| PUBLICITY | Robert & Joyce Emerson Kim Moore |
| REFRESHMENTS | Birthday Honorees |
| SHOW CHAIRMAN | Kim Moore |
| SHOW CHAIRMAN, ASSISTANT | Marty Patton |
| SHOW DEALER CHAIRMAN | Joyce Emerson |
| SUNSHINE | Mary Tucker |
| NEWSLETTER EDITOR | Jonathan North (916) 768-0137 1440 Musgrave Dr. Roseville, CA 95747-6257 |
| WEBMASTER | Jonathan North (916) 768-0137 |

jonnorth@comcast.net

<http://www.ncgms.org/>

Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society Meetings

The Nevada County Gem and Mineral Society holds two meetings every month with certain exceptions. The membership is informed of exceptions during meetings and through Rock Writings. You are welcome to attend any meeting.

Executive Committee Meeting:

First Tuesday of the month, 6:00 p.m.
Golden Empire Grange Building
11363 Grange Ct., Grass Valley

Tues. January 5, 2010

General Membership Meeting:

First Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m.
Golden Empire Grange Building
11363 Grange Ct., Grass Valley

Membership Dues: Yearly membership dues for NCG&MS are \$20.00 for singles and \$25.00 for families. For more information or an application, contact Membership Chairman Jonathan North (916) 768-0137. *Deduct \$5.00 if you receive your newsletter via email*

NCG&MS is a non-profit organization that has these objectives:

- ◆ to promote the study of mineralogy, geology and fossils.
- ◆ to encourage the collection of minerals and gems.
- ◆ to foster the study and practice of the lapidary arts.
- ◆ to provide field trips to mineral localities.
- ◆ to promote good fellowship, education and recreation.



NEVADA COUNTY GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY IS A PROUD MEMBER OF:
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES, INC. (AFMS)
CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES, INC. (CFMS)



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Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society
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Nevada City, CA 95959-0565

First Class Mail



January 2010

General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, January 5, 2010

7:00 p.m.

Golden Empire Grange

11363 Grange Ct., Grass Valley

January Program

Ralph Mullican of Smartville Rock

will be talking on:

"Yuba Blue"



**** Bring a Friend! ****