Nuggets From The Prez

For a while I thought that I was the only one in the world. I say this because of all of the thick smoke that had been around. I had to wear my mask just to get the paper and mail. I went out once without the mask and my asthma "told" me that I had better not do that again. So now when I go out of the house the mask is just a part of me. Many places strongly suggest that you can’t enter without one. In time the smoke has left and there are actually blue skies with fluffy clouds. You know that you know our Oct. Gem Show had been canceled. That will give you more time to work on your show project for next year. I’ve been working on some carvings trying different stones and subjects. That are just so, so but it’s a learning process.

John has been going on some field trips. He brought back some beautiful purple and green stripped pieces. Went up to the Clipper Mills area before the fires for soap stone and blackberries.

For those of you having birthdays between Oct. 24 - Nov.22, your sign is Scorpio, the Scorpion. Your gems are Opal, Topaz, Malachite, and Onyx.

For those of you whose birthdays are between Nov.23 - Dec. 21, your sign is Sagittarius, the Archer. Your gems are Turquoise, Topaz, and Amethyst.

Perhaps the Scorpion had better stay hidden and out of sight if it doesn’t want to get shot by the Archer.

In the coming months, there will be Halloween, Thanksgiving, and then Christmas, dinner. Don’t know how that will be handled, if any. A nominating committee will be needed to find next year’s officers, that will be chosen and voted on in the Dec. meeting.

I always get my flu shot in Oct and more so now with this virus going around. I’d like to suggest that you do likewise BUT you do what you want. Stay healthy and please take care of yourselves. Your little president, Edwina
2020 Earth’s Treasures Show

The fairgrounds are closed and in all likely hood will remain so. The State of California owns the Fairgrounds and all mass gatherings are prohibited. There are no other venues available that can support a show, the Veterans Hall included. There have only been eight vendors returning applications, five vendors outright cancelling and many vendors inclined not to participate. A majority of Board members are also not in favor of having the show. Also it would be almost impossible to put on the show without face to face planning with all the members of the club and I have heard from very few members regarding the show. As show chairman, I waited until the last possible moment to be able to successfully mount the show before pulling the plug. A tailgate sale may be something the club may consider in the future. I hope this provides further clarification to my earlier email. You may also call me 575-4252.

-Best regards as always, Frank Van Hecke

Golden Empire Grange Rentals

The GEG is welcoming back those of you who feel ready to return. If you do plan on returning give me a call and I can explain our protocols.

Hope to see you soon. If I've already spoken w/your rental manager about returning you need not respond to this message. At present we have three of our on-going renters committed to a return.

Looking forward to resuming activities at the Hall.

Bruce S. Lester
530-477-9586
bvlester@att.net
Golden Empire Grange Event Coordinator

Editor’s notes

Elections are soon, PLEASE consider a position! Please take time to volunteer, step in to fill a role, if even for just one year or on a committee. If we all pitch in a little, it is not too much burden for a small few, and the club will benefit from your unique perspective and experience.

Rock shows: Most have cancelled, only one possibly left in NorCal for 2020 in Yuba City.

Suiseki Contest: John Dolman is looking to have a Suiseki contest at a fall meeting with prizes, so start looking for that winning rock now! Besides it is a good safe/solo activity! And (hint hint) he is lookig to maybe do another similar for natrually-found heart shaped rocks – maybe for February meeting – who knows!

Lapidary Shop at the Grange: Frank discussed this topic at a Grange Board meeting last year. The Grange was receptive to having a small lapidary shop set up on their grounds. Are there any members who would be willing to do follow-up on looking at the feasibility of using the Grange property for a shop. Contact Frank Van Hecke @ 575-4252 for more details and a synopsis of previous discussions with the Golden Empire Grange Board of Directors.

A Request from Dawn Ackerman, geology instructor at Sierra College: Come fall, all geology classes will be solely on-line. Sierra College doesn’t have the resources to provide rock and mineral kits to each student taking Physical Geology
Laboratory. So rather than have the students learn about rocks and minerals from photographs, we’re collecting as many specimens as possible this summer to build laboratory kits to be loaned out for the fall term.

I’m interested in knowing if you, or your colleagues at the Nevada County Gem and Mineral Society, would like to donate rocks and minerals to help us build laboratory kits. We’re building four laboratory kits; minerals, igneous rocks, metamorphic rocks, and sedimentary rocks. Ideally, we’d like about 15 specimens per kit. And we hope to build 75 kits. So, come late August, each geology laboratory student would pick up four bags, containing 60 different specimens. It’s an aggressive goal but I think our students are worth it. Sincerely, Dawn. dackermand@sierracollege.edu

October Birth Stone - Opal

Happy October Birthday to Wayne B., Terry B., Woody B., Joyce E., Cat S., Nancy S., Rudy T., Jeffery W.!

Its name—which comes from ancient Greek and Latin languages—means to "perceive a change in color." The opal, one of October's birthstones, was first discovered in a cave in Kenya around 4000 B.C. Opals were commonly used for amulets and jewelry in ancient times, and many cultures (like ancient Rome) associated the mysterious stone with love and hope. Opals, which have been mined in Hungary and, more recently, Australia, once had a reputation for bringing the wearer bad luck. Empress Eugenie of France refused to wear the stone, but most admirers of the stone (like the ancient Greeks) believed the stone to be lucky and magical because it supposedly bestowed the gifts of prophecy and protection against disease. Arabic legends even went so far as to give the stone supernatural origins—they believed it fell from the heavens among flashes of lightening—and powers. This may be why the opal, with its multitude of colors, was given romantic nicknames like Pandora, Light of the World, and Empress.

Iconic figures throughout history have sported the stone, including Marc Antony, Cleopatra, and Queen Victoria. Emperor Napoleon gifted a large red opal called the Burning of Troy to Empress Josephine, and it is rumored that one Roman emperor traded one-third of his kingdom for a single magnificent opal.

Andy Warhol, the New York City artist, film director, and leader of the Pop Art movement in the United States, had his own love affair with this effervescent gemstone. He was known for his collection of opals, and in 1977, he included photographs of the gemstone in his exhibition "Opal the Rainbow Gem" at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London.

Mineral Specimen Collecting

Mineral collectors generally differentiate six specimen sizes, starting with the smallest, termed micromounts, followed by thumbnails, toenails, miniatures, small cabinet and ending with large cabinet or museum-size pieces. In some cultures massive size is equated to quality, but collectors past and present have more often observed that bigger is not always better. Rather, the opposite is usually the reality with minerals. Large, perfect crystals are uncommon for several reasons. Most notably, bigger crystals require more space to grow, which often is unavailable. Even with open space, the diffusion rates are typically
such that it is ‘easier’ to nucleate a new crystal than for ions to migrate to the surface of an already growing crystal, encouraging the growth of more crystals rather than larger ones. Large, pristine crystals form only in environments allowing both ample space and high diffusion rates, such as pegmatites. Therefore, smaller crystals offer the highest degree of perfection and for this reason they have historically been very collectible.

In particular, Wendell Wilson and James Houran (2012) documented the long but somewhat quiet history and development of thumbnail collecting as a specialization. Thumbnails are specimens that can be oriented to fit within an imaginary 2.5 cm (1-inch) cube. In formal exhibit competition the unspoken amendment to this rule is that specimens should be oriented aesthetically within this space. Thumbnail specimens — for private collection or public competition — typically measure over $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ inch but generally not much larger than $1 \times 1$ inches and are considered to be the smallest size that can be appreciated without optical magnification.

This makes thumbnails ideal for collecting, study and display. Prominent USA dealers and collectors such as Jim and Dawn Minette, Willard "Perky" Perkin (1907-1991), after whom the standard Perky Box is named, and others advanced the collecting of specific suites of minerals deemed "competitive thumbnails sizes, by the 1970s. Although it seems that "collector-dealers" started the trend to competitive thumbnail collecting, it was not long before "collector-collectors" got in on it as well. A well known example from the East Coast circuit is the collection of Jennie Areson of New York Left: Areson's mineral collection was highly appreciated by the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. Early scorecard from the Long Island Gem and Mineral Festival judging Areson's competition case, back in 1971!

An aside on Perky, courtesy of (Wendell Wilson's) biography archive on the Mineralogical Record Site "Perkin was one of the first dealers to specialize in thumbnail-size specimens, and he had a talent for aesthetically trimming and mounting them. He built a fine personal mineral collection of high-quality cabinet-size and smaller specimens which he placed in drawers and on glass shelves in big glass-fronted display cases lining the walls of a small garage in his Burbank home. He also developed a strong interest in micromounting." In the early 1956-1959 he worked for three years for mineral dealer George Burnham ("Burminco") (q.v.) in Monrovia, California. While working in Burnham's shop, Perkin was shown a small, cubical, black plastic box by a traveling salesman. It inspired the invention of what became known as the "perky" box, a 1.25-inch box for thumbnail specimens, which Perkin had manufactured and which he began selling to other collectors. When the number of orders coming in became overwhelming he sold the box business to someone else, but the name "perky box" stuck. In 1971 tragedy struck in the form of the Sylmar earthquake, which shattered the glass cases and shelves in his garage; the beautiful specimens crashed to the bottom of the cases together and out onto the concrete floor amid piles
of broken glass. Perkin appeared to take the loss with good grace, but much of his enthusiasm for collecting minerals had died. Soon he began selling off the surviving specimens from the drawers, retaining only his thumbnails and micromounts."

Although traditionally most popular in the United States, thumbnail collecting is an important and quickly growing segment of the mineral hobby due to several factors working in tandem, for instance, generally lower prices than popular hand-size specimens, easier handling and storage requirements and of course, the higher tendency for crystal perfection. Numerous mineral species also are known only in smaller sizes, meaning that some unique thumbnails may even qualify for a coveted "world's best" designation. Top pieces exemplify the quality and importance small specimens can achieve when there is a balance of aesthetics, scientific relevance and historical importance. This is why many major collections have included thumbnails even though it may not have been a deliberate intention. Or, collectors who amassed large collections in the 1960s-1980s later separated out thumbnails into discrete suites once they went down that road by love of the minerals anyhow. A prime example is John Barlow, who had 5000 larger pieces and loved all sizes, yet eventually had separated out his thumbnails into a separate display collection with separate numbering. He later sold them to Rob Lavinsky apart from the sale of the main part of the Barlow Collection in 1998, and they remain in circulation today, recognizable by his own custom special display bases that fit his custom cabinets for thumbnails designed to make them "show off" amongst larger pieces.

Thumbnail collecting is a flexible and egalitarian specialty, open to beginning and advanced collectors who want inexpensive yet highly diverse specimens that require minimal storage space. That said, top-quality thumbnails have received a resurgence of interest and market value. This article reviews a confluence of three forces that have arguably helped to produce this heightened interest in fine thumbnails or what Thomas Moore, Mineralogical Record editor, aptly termed “connoisseur thumbnails” (Mineralogical Record, 33, p. 183).


NCGMS 2020 Field Trips (please double check before the trip to ensure it is still planned):

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trip</th>
<th>Trip Leader/Contact/Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>None planned for rest of 2020</td>
<td>John Dolman</td>
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Field Trip Report (Submitted by John Dolman)

After Fred's F/T stayed in Fallon for the night. Next morning the air was much cleaner at am so I hit the road. Drove to a Selenite crystal site, found 1 med. lg crystal and hundreds of small ones. After 5 hours of digging, time for lunch. After I went to find some Mines, that turned out to be only Dolomite digs. Back to US-50 = 10 miles. On to Austin, NV. The time was 3:00 pm., so I had only 2 hrs to dig for Fluorite. Mostly broke up garden rocks. Finding green and some purple. Then it was 5pm. Back to the motel in Fallon. Next am very smoky. So ended the F/T.
Climbing Mt. Whitney

It was 4 a.m. when we left our tent in Lone Pine to drive up to Whitney Portal, at 8500 ft elevation, the starting point for the Mt. Whitney trail. It was still dark and would be for another hour or so. We were a day or two early for the best climbing days, days starting with a full moon. But we, daughter Erica and myself, were not alone on the trail as we saw other flashlight beacons up the hill. A 22 mile round trip day hike up to the 14,497.61 ft summit was an ambitious trek but we felt ready to give it a try. The first part of trail, trod in darkness, was well treed and a fairly easy climb. As early morning light dawned revealing to us the towering Sierras, we realized that soon we would leave the treeline behind and be in stark granite.

My mid-morning we had gotten to Trail Camp with its small tent city and last reliable water. Six miles in, we were only slightly more than one-half way. At 12,000 feel I was beginning to feel the effects of the elevation. But Erica was full of energy and encouragement. “Come on, Dad, Let’s get going!” We started up the notorious switchbacks, the steepest part of the trek. Snow remaining from this year’s El Nino, even in August, made the climb more difficult but doable, 150 trail passes are issued for each day and many attain the summit.

But I was not to be one of them. Half way up the switchbacks my progress became so slow I gave Erica my watch and told her to get to the top but turn around by 3. She was soon out of sight and I sat down to absorb the awesome view and better look at the rock. Mostly gray granite, there was a lot of intrusive pinkish volcanic rook that looked like andesite (I had just taken a geology class at Sierra College). Also noticed a few quartz dikes and some dark, basaltic material, attesting to later volcanic epochs. From this viewpoint Mt Whitney rises straight up perhaps 3000 feet from the talus heaps. Quite a view!

Later that afternoon was reunited with Erica. She had gotten to the John Muir trail which runs along the crest, and was making good if tiring progress towards the summit. But lacking proper ice climbing tools, the last ice field proved to be too much. However, the view from the crest was worth the climb. Sequoya Park to the west. Owens Valley and the White Mountains to the east. A great divide, where one drop of water ends up in the central valley and another goes to Los Angeles via DWP. She reported sighting columnar basalt near the crest.

It was dark and tired when we returned to the car. We did not get to see the water falls near the bottom in daylight either way. The spa at the campground never felt so good! Next time we will try the two day hike, giving time to get acclimated to the altitude and more time to drink in the views.

-Charles Lindquist (Webmaster & Membership Chair)
California Federation of Mineralogical Societies Updates

General: Please keep clipping any used stamps from your mail. Long time CFMS member Dick Panky, Contra Costa Gem and Mineral Society, collects bags of stamps from member societies at the annual CFMS Directors meeting, in November. These stamps are donated to the Easter Seal Society, which sells them to dealers and collectors as a fund raiser for Easter Seals. Please bring your stamps to any future meeting and give them to Frank Van Hecke. *Submitted by Frank Van Hecke, CFMS Director*

**CFMS SHOWS 2020** ([https://www.cfmsinc.org/](https://www.cfmsinc.org/))

*All cancelled club shows removed. Those listed were still planned as of 29 Aug 2020*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Fall</th>
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| October 11: Fallbrook, CA  
Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society  
123 W Alvarado St  
Hours: 9-4  
Contact: Michelle Shearer; 760-805-2184  
Email: info@fgms.org  
Website: www.fgms.org | November 14 – 15: YUBA CITY  
Hours: Sat. 10 – 5, Sun. 10 – 4  
Sutter Buttes Gem & Mineral Society  
Yuba-Sutter Fairgrounds  
442 Franklin Hall, Yuba City, CA 95991  
Contact: (916) 677-6696, horita@comcast.net  
Show web site: http://sutterbuttesgemmin.org  
29th Annual Festival of Gems & Minerals: Raffle, silent auction, kids table, door prizes, exhibits and 14 dealers. |
| March 13-14, Arcadia CA  
Pasadena Lapidary Society  
"Inspiration Unearth", 62nd Annual Tournament of Gems  
Arcadia Masonic Center, 50 W. Duarte Rd.  
Hours: 10-5 Daily  
Contact: Ellen Ferrell 1-727-512-0381  
Email: ellenbf207@aol.com  
Website: pasadenalapidary.org |  |

**November Meeting, Newsletter, and Membership Updates**

Important news: the Golden Empire Grange (where we meet) is open under COVID conditions. The meeting space is big enough for all to maintain distance, and masks please!

Frank tells me that we will have a meeting in NOVEMBER, more details in the November newsletter. The November meeting is important, election of officers. Yes, this has been a "crappy" year for all of us, and the club, as well. We hope to be going next year, PLEASE consider an officer position! We need a secretary, if you can stay awake during meeting and take notes you can do this for OUR club. Thank you.

As always, when new newsletters arrive they are posted to the website (certain officer and chair information, such as email addresses and phone numbers is omitted). We keep newsletters going back a year.

Membership: I am the new membership chair. It looks like some members got missed last year, I will be emailing members whose membership is unclear.

ALL Paid-up members for 2020 will be considered paid-up for 2021! This is why we need to update the 2020 membership list. *Regards, Charles Lindquist*
Planning where to Rockhound

First, plan the mining site, day, and time well in advance. Listed below are some important rockhounding planning tips used by rockhounds.

Be Creative – There is a story of friend of a friend who drives a truck for UPS on the weekends. When the UPS driver passes by a construction site, he calls his buddy, who drives by on a Sunday with his gear to see if it is worth his time to crack some rocks in the rubble. So the place to go rockhounding may be closer to you than you think. Some rockhounds spend Thanksgiving and Christmas at construction sites cracking open rocks because they know everyone else is home. They are “True Gentlemen” and “True Ladies” of rockhounding because they leave no mess or evidence that they were ever on the property. So be careful, and do not trespass when the site is clearly marked “No trespassing,” but otherwise use your own discretion.

New Places, New Faces - There are other websites run by gem, mineral, and rockhound professionals who have been in the business much longer than most who offer maps and directions to very accessible sites, but we are determined to help you find a new site, and a new local for gems and minerals.

Phone a Friend - Do you have any friends who own private property? Perhaps a cabin or a summer house or a shack out in the woods? Have you ever asked them if they have unusual stone or rock structures on their property?

Sharing is Caring - Splitting up your loot at the end of the day can be tricky. Here’s how we do it: As we rockhound, we collectively assemble all the minerals, literally set them in one pile. Then at the end of the day, over a cold refreshing beer, we determine whose fundamental expenses were the most, either because they supplied the generator and jackhammer, or maybe they drove 700 miles, whatever, but we split the booty via a round-robin method. The person who incurred the highest costs picks their favorite rockhounding gem first, and then go around in a circle “choosing”. There is not a fairer or democratic way to split rockhound finds.

Freeze Frame - Take pictures of all your minerals and detailed information at the mine site from a distance to the “in situ” gemstone itself. Remember, the importance of gemstone/specimen provenance.

Stay Connected - While you are driving to the locale, or the night before, making sure your cell phones, video recording/mobile devices are fully charged is essential. You will need to place a call to family and loved ones if you are running late in addition to filming your prized minerals and finds while being discovered. The camera and video on your phone are perfect for preserving the wonder and amazement of discovering a perfect gemstone.
Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society
P.O. Box 1686, Grass Valley, CA 95945

2020 Elected Officers

PRESIDENT          Edwina Swenson
VICE PRESIDENT      Keven Clark
SECRETARY           Vacant
TREASURER           Frank Van Hecke
DIRECTORS           Christie Harris
                    Eric Trygg
                    Christy Busch

2020 Committee Chairpersons

FEDERATION DIRECTOR Frank Van Hecke
TREK LEADER         John Dolman
HISTORIAN           Beverly Glenn
HOSPITALITY        Vacant
LIBRARIAN           Beverly Glenn
MEMBERSHIP         Charles Lindquist
JUNIOR PROGRAM     Vacant
CLUB PICNIC         Lori Woodhall
REFRESHMENTS       Birthday Honorees
SUNSHINE           Lori Woodhall
NEWSLETTER EDITOR  Blaze Baker (Acting)
WEBMASTER          Charles Lindquist
2020 SHOW ORGANIZER Frank Van Hecke
                    Dan Chaplin
SCHOLARSHIP        Joyce Emerson

* Call if sending email

Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society Meetings
The Nevada County Gem and Mineral Society meets monthly with few exceptions. Membership is informed of exceptions at meetings and through Rock Writings. You are welcome to attend any meeting.

General Membership Meeting: First Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m.
Executive Committee Meeting: First Tuesday of the month, 6:00 p.m.
Golden Empire Grange Building, 11363 Grange Ct., Grass Valley, CA

NCG&MS is a non-profit organization with the following objectives:
• To promote the study of mineralogy, geology & 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

Membership Information
Yearly membership dues for NCG&MS are $25.00 for singles and $30.00 for families. *Deduct $5.00 if you receive your newsletter via email* For information or an application, email our Membership Chairperson Charlie Lindquist at gvrunner99@yahoo.com

Check out our website at: http://www.ncgms.org
Program: **Cancelled**

First Tuesdays Monthly at 7:00 p.m.  
(no meeting in July - Picnic)  
Golden Empire Grange Guild  
11363 Grange Ct., Grass Valley  

** Bring a Friend! **

2020 Membership dues
Yearly membership dues for NCG&MS are $25.00 for singles and $30.00 for families. Deduct $5.00 if you receive your newsletter via email. Dues are annual and payable in January.