



ROCKONTEUR

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2016

Words from the President:

The last club event of 2015 was the Club's Officer Installation Dinner and Winter Solstice Celebration. This event was to thank the outgoing Officers for their hard work during 2015, and welcome the new Club Officers for 2016. Everyone seemed to have a great time, and the happiness and joy in the room was addicting. Thanks to all for making every moment memorable.

With many Club Members going to Quartzsite and Tucson, Arizona this January and February, the Club is once again having a Show & Tell for its January meeting. Bring your favorite rock, mineral, or rockhound item for everyone to see and talk about. If people would like to share an adventure they have had rockhounding, they can have 3-5 minutes to speak to the club. Denise and I were not at last year's Show & Tell meeting, but after everything we heard about it, we want to be there this year. So prepare your story and/or shine up your prize rock, and we'll see you at our January Meeting.

Tina Clark, our Santa Lucia RockHounds Newsletter Editor, is starting to interview Club Members to put their stories into the Newsletter. This will be another way for people to get to know others with the same interest. The rockhounding knowledge of the Club members ranges from amateur to expert, with some members professionals in many rock or geology fields. The goal is to have Club members know more about each other and whom to contact to help them with their passion, from learning more about local geology, jewelry making, polishing, or simply more information about their favorite rock or mineral. Tina may be contacting you by phone or e-mail for an interview. If you don't want to wait for her to call you, email her at the club's email address, srockhounds@gmail.com.

I know it's hard meeting and getting to know people, especially when you see them only once a month at our busy meetings. Tina and I hope to create a listing of Club Members who know more about certain fields related to rocks, minerals, geology, lapidary, jewelry making, etc. and are willing to share their expertise. Example: Fred Flintstone likes petrified wood and wants to learn more about it. With this list he would know who to talk to at the meeting. I hope Club Members come forward with their names and interests to help current and new Club Members become more educated in their passion.

For the next three months the Club will have its Board Meeting one hour before the General Meeting. We welcome all Club Members to join in and see what the Board does. The Board is hoping this will make it easier for all members to attend the Board Meeting. With only one hour before the General Meeting, the Officers of the Board will have their items prepared so things will run quickly. We look forward to seeing many familiar and new faces at the Board Meetings!

The beginning of 2016 is going to be an exciting time for rock hounds. The weather is bringing much needed rain to California. In turn we will have dry streams running with water again and bringing up new material to find. The storms are moving more material along the coast line as well. Invest in a Tide Chart or get a Tide Chart app for your phone. The best time to rock hound at the coast is at low tide. Remember to never turn your back to the ocean.

I have been wishing we had a detailed map of rock locations for all Club Members to use. It is something we have been working on for a long time, but it never materialized. Luckily, Wayne Mills wrote a rock hound location article for the Ocrutt Mineral Society Newsletter. Wayne has given the Club permission to print it in our Newsletter. It was originally printed in the September 2015 "Ore Cutts". Thank You Wayne Mills!

~~~~Mike Judy~~~~

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PAST PRESIDENT  
Open Position

### Board Meeting

Monday, January 18th  
6pm

Templeton Community Center  
601 Main St., Templeton  
Everyone is Invited

### General Meeting

Monday, January 18th  
7pm

Templeton Community Center  
601 Main St., Templeton  
Everyone is Invited

## Hospitality Happenings!

After hanging around the Hospitality Table for almost 3 years, I have decided to hang up my ice bucket and pay more attention to the Drawing Table. Thankfully, Cathy McIntosh has come our rescue and offered to be our esteemed Cookie Wrangler for the General Meetings! Yay, Cathy!

Let's all give her a warm "Thank You" when you visit the Hospitality Table for a RockHounding snack. We have all been doing a wonderful job bringing goodies to share. I know that Cathy will appreciate it if we continue to do so. Thanks to all! ~~~DH~~~



## Junior Rockhounds:

Our Junior Rockhounds played quite a humorous part in the record breaking number of gift "steals" at the club's annual December club party! Though they didn't wear crazy hats themselves, they got a big laugh at the adult club members who did. In January, Juniors will be joining the adults for the Club's annual Show & Tell Meeting. Junior Rockhounds are encouraged to bring their favorite rock and story and participate! Badge earning activities will resume in February. ~~~TC~~~



**Why did the prospector throw his ore samples away?  
He took them for granite.**

*Good Humor from Jr. RockHound*

## Winter Solstice & Installation Dinner Highlights:

The December's Officer's Installation Dinner and Winter Solstice Party was a night that will go down in club history! Guests couldn't help grinning ear-to-ear when they were greeted with warm welcomes and club members wearing humorous hats of holiday dinner foods and other related items. The Paso Robles Culinary Institute served up a delicious buffet, setting the perfect stage for the evening's entertainment.

Club President, Michael Judy kicked off the festivities by thanking 2015 club officers for their service and treated them all to a "Rocky Road" candy bar to start them off properly on their journeys ahead. The installation and welcome of the 2016 officers included a gift of candy "Pop Rocks" in hopes of a "bang-up" year ahead.

The gift exchange certainly lived up to its name! Numerous items were coveted, and already opened gifts exchanged hands again, again, and again as treasures members shamelessly snatched items from one another. The three steal limit definitely had to be enforced! Lessons to be learned from the evening included that good things come in small packages and that club member Tom W. has a knack for picking out great wrapped gifts.

A special thanks was given to the club members that made the party happen. The night will long be remembered and several Rockhounds are already looking forward to next year's fun! ~~~TC~~~



**When the prosecutor presented the new evidence,  
she had the defense over a beryl**

*Good Humor From Doren Strane*

## 2016 COMMITTEE CHAIR

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**January Club Meeting:****"Show & Tell"**

It's time to dust off your favorite, most interesting rock specimen and share your story about it! January's meeting program is the club's famed annual "Show & Tell". Participants will have three minutes to wow the crowd! After all the presentations have been made, Club members will vote for their favorites. Prizes will be awarded for both the best specimen and the most entertaining story. Join us for a night to remember!~~TC~~

**2016 COMMITTEE CHAIR****Show Chairperson****Michael Judy****(805) 238-4469**[mrhaludy@gmail.com](mailto:mrhaludy@gmail.com)**Show Chairperson****Kim Noyes****(805) 610-0603**[kimnoyes@gmail.com](mailto:kimnoyes@gmail.com)**Show Chairperson****Barbara Bilyeu****(805) 434-2708**[bbilyeu2001@yahoo.com](mailto:bbilyeu2001@yahoo.com)

# Last Month for Due's

**Interview with a Rock Star:****Name****Jim Mills****How long have you been a club member?**

Since around 1997

**What rocks you about rockhounding?**

Nearly everything about rocks, minerals, fossils and gemstones fascinates me. I have been a collector since I was around eight years old in the early 1950s. There is astounding beauty in geology – but it is more than just the mineral crystals, the fossil preservations and the fine faceted stones. There is also beauty and elegance in the science of geology, and I am equally fascinated with the science of it all as I am with the aesthetics of specimens. From a very young age, my heroes were the pioneers of geology. People like Charles Lyell, James Hutton and Louis Agassiz who developed the earliest theories of how the earth evolved and why it looks like it does. As a result, I majored in Geomorphology at UCLA.

**What has been your greatest or most memorable find?**

You might occasionally see black jade with starbursts of magnetite in it from Stoddard Wells near Victorville. I was involved in locating and mining the best of the material in the early 1960s, and it made enough to put me through University.

**Tell us about a current project you are working on.**

I have just finished co-authoring an article about rediscovering an old petrified wood site in Idaho. It has been accepted for publication by Rocks and Minerals magazine, and we expect to see it appear in a late Spring or early Summer issue of that magazine.

**What is your favorite rock?**

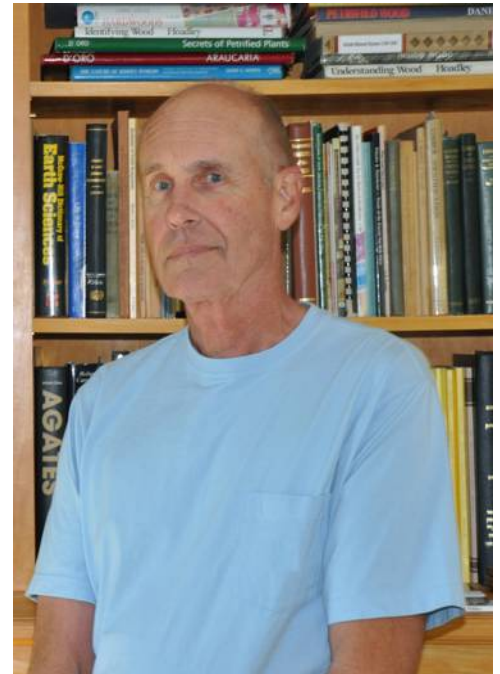
Certainly petrified wood leads my list of favorites. In addition to an extensive collection of specimens, Beth and I also have an internet business selling petrified wood and plant fossils to serious collectors worldwide.

**What is your favorite mineral?**

I would have to pick quartz and all of its varieties. Silicon dioxide can be found in crystalized form as well as amorphous forms such as agate and jasper (and of course, opalized and agatized petrified wood also fall into this category!)

**Is there anything else you would like the club to know about you?**

We have always enjoyed sharing our knowledge with others and appreciate the many invitations we have had to present programs to the club on various topics of geology.~~JM & TC~~



**VENTURA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY**  
**54<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL VENTURA GEM, MINERAL, LAPIDARY, & FOSSIL SHOW**  
**MARCH 5-6, 2016**

**FIELD TRIPS NEAR SAN LUIS OBISPO**

Wayne Mills, OMS Field Trip Coordinator

*This article was originally published in the 2001 Ore Cutts. At a meeting held back in 2001, I was asked about local field trips and why we didn't publish a list of them. I had to respond that I didn't know what local areas are public or private, and that most of the local areas are sedimentary (meaning potentially fossil bearing). The club (at that time) had been working on a detailed map local collecting areas, but a past president absconded with it! The Santa Lucia Gem and Mineral Society has already published a general map of local collecting areas, but, to my knowledge, there are no (detailed) written guides to collecting in the local area. "Open to collecting" status seems to be continually changing (for the worse) on government land, and collecting on private land can be touchy.*

*We will try to give a list of approximate locations here, with the hope that the input of members will help refine and enlarge the list. (I have had no input in the last 14 years, but am still hopeful). Please let me know how you fared at these or other locations, and if possible provide me better descriptions. Remember that any time you want to go on private property, get permission from the landowner first! Also, when collecting on private lands, follow all applicable local, state and federal laws regarding collecting. Note: Beach and creek collecting is notably better after winter (or summer) storms, and (beach collecting) is also better at low tide.*

**Scott's Valley, Santa Cruz County** near Lockhart Gulch. There are sandy exposures that have yielded fossil Shark teeth and *Astrodapsis* sp. sand dollars.

**Clear Creek Management Area** near Idria in San Benito County has a wide variety of materials including: jade, serpentine, chrysoprase (plasma agate), benitoite, (fee dig area), and several other rare minerals.

**Near Templeton** (hospital) and in Paso Robles off Highways 46 and 101, San Luis Obispo County. In roadcuts and unfenced fields (if any) are the occasional biconoid, mushroom rhyolite, geodes, and occasional concretions containing Miocene aged whale bone.

**West of Atascadero** on Highway 41 about PM 5.0 San Luis Obispo County. Phosphorescent aragonite has been reported.

**Cayucos Beach** off Highway 1 in Cayucos San Luis Obispo County. Chert, brecciated jasper and other wave- rounded rocks.

**Moonstone Beach** in Cambria, San Luis Obispo County has river and ocean tumbled chalcedonies, NOT moonstone (which is a feldspar). Also found are small, rounded agates and jaspers and wave smoothed wood.

**San Simeon State Beach** and Creek off Highway 1. Mushroom rhyolite, chert, brecciated jasper and rarely sagenite agate may be found here.

**Willow Creek Beach** off Highway 1, Monterey County. Jade, chert, serpentine and even gold can be found here.

**Jade Cove**, Highway 1, Monterey County. On the beautiful Big Sur Coast, the drive is worth it even if you don't find any jade. Serpentine (our State Rock), chert and soapstone can also be found here.

**Behind the TV Towers** off Cuesta grade, San Luis Obispo County. Small quartz crystals have been found, but it is a tough trip!

**Nipomo off Highway 101**, San Luis Obispo County. In many local creeks and fields, Sagenite agate, marcasite agate, beanfield agate, chert and bone can be found. Most property owners here DO NOT like rockhounds because of trespassing in past years. Find a friendly landowner...Nipomo is the only location in San Luis Obispo County mentioned in [California Gem Trails](#) (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition).

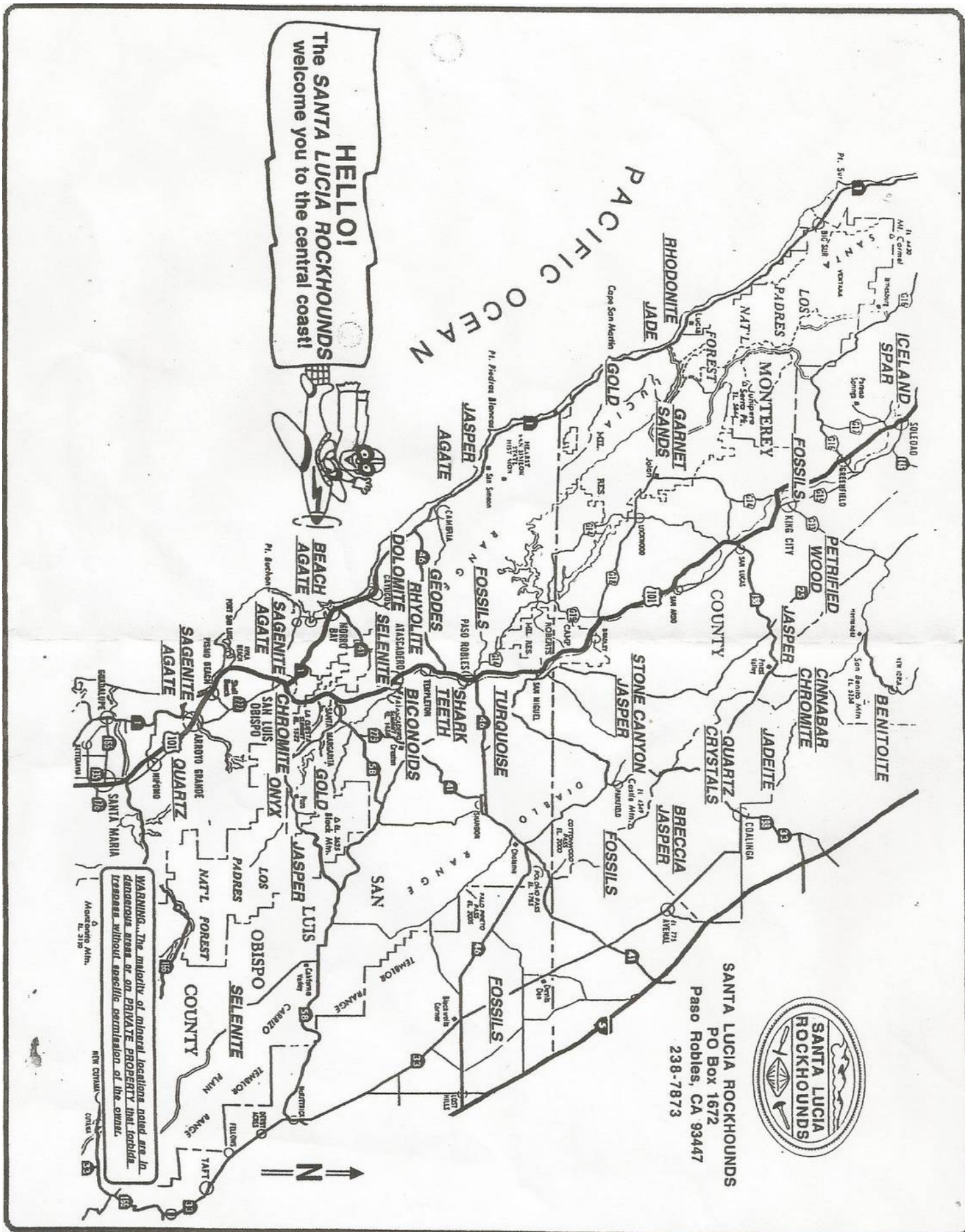
**Behind Lake Lopez**, San Luis Obispo County. Off High Mountain Road near Pozo, you can find Upper Miocene age shells (Santa Margarita Formation). Closer to the Lake you can find Pecten discus (scallop) shells from the Middle Miocene (Monterey Formation).

**Figueroa Mountain** Road off Highway 154, Santa Barbara County. Take Figueroa Mountain Road north to the top of the Mountain. Pass Michael Jackson's former Neverland Ranch on the way. In the little valley next to the southern continuation of Catway Road (before you get to the campground) you can hunt for a variety of jaspers and chert. I found no soapstone (but a lot of serpentine) on Soapstone Hill there. Out on Davey Jones Road there is a geode patch wway down in the valley, but is hard to get to (ask Ralph Bishop). [Gem Trails in California](#) shows cinnabar near the old Red Rock Mine, and soapstone in many roadcuts on the eastern limb of the loop back to 154. This is Happy Canyon Road to Armor Ranch Road. The soapstone is about 11 miles from 154. The entire loop appears to be about 49 miles. The mountain is a beautiful place to camp and explore in the Spring—wildflowers and lupines galore (assuming normal rainfall).

**Jalama Beach** off Highway 101 Santa Barbara County. Go north up the beach about 2 miles to find brown travertine just before the cliffs appear to cut off beach access. There is (was?) a cool rock near here that you can crawl into. Go south (of the campground) down the beach and you can find fossil whalebone (Monterey Formation) at certain times of the year. Remember to save enough time for Jalama Burger—we're told they are delicious!

**Gaviota and Refugio Beaches** off Highway 101 Santa Barbra County. Here can be found fossil whalebone. The occasional fish fossil in the shales, brecciated jasper, beach agate and tan limestone concretions containing fossilized wood and bone.

Map from the Archives: (Wayne mentioned in his Article)



# Quartzsite & Tucson January & February

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## Thundereggs

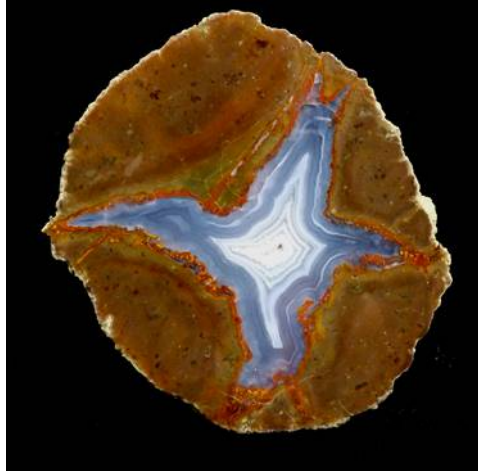
by Barbara Bilyeu

As we continue our tour of thundereggs of the American West, we will now leave Idaho and head south, stopping briefly in the world-famous McDermitt area, near the Oregon-Nevada border. Known for petrified wood and picture jasper, McDermitt is also the location for numerous thunderegg beds with names like "Pinnacle", "Praying Hands", "Devils' Gate", "Bed 79", "Calico Bee" and "Red Wing". This is a prolific area and the thundereggs are often identified by their vivid coloring and their crescent- or star-shaped agate interiors.

Leaving McDermitt and heading south into Nevada, we find several very well-known locations for thundereggs in this vast, rockhound-friendly state. The best-known are probably the thundereggs from the Black Rock Desert, north of Reno. True to their name, the thundereggs from this area usually feature black in the agate, often with brick-red or brown matrix, and sometimes with beautiful moss and other inclusions. Further to the east, near Austin in the center of the state, is a very different type of thunderegg, found in the Mt. Airy vicinity. These thundereggs feature blue agate in a tan matrix. The thundereggs are often mined exclusively for the blue agate or chalcedony which is used in making jewelry, but thunderegg collectors prize intact specimens which often feature blue biconoid interiors and rarely amethyst. Thundereggs from McDermitt, the Black Rock Desert and Mt. Airy can usually be found for sale at the Quartzsite PowWow during January.

A third location, not as well-known because the location is difficult to get to and somewhat undisclosed, is near the ghost town of Aurora, Nevada. These thundereggs do not generally feature the brilliant or contrasting colors of the other sites, but have their own unique "look" and often contain biconoid cores. Again, more than one bed is found in the vicinity.

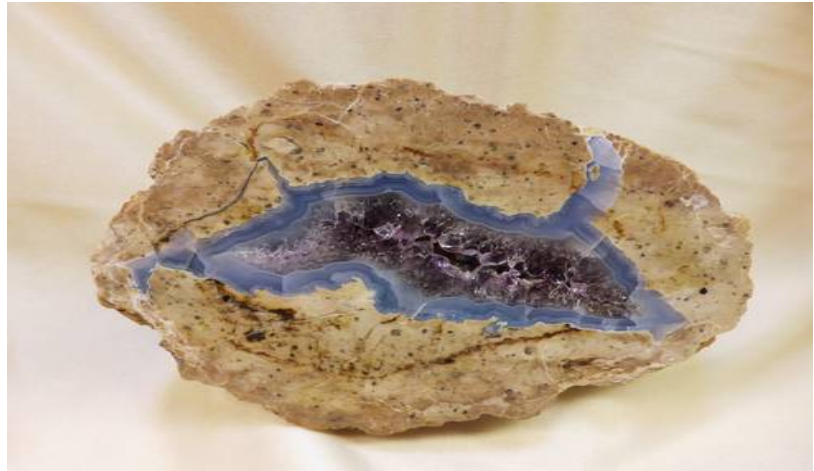
A new location, just being developed by the claim owner and as yet unnamed, features red and white agate interiors. Hopefully this miner will be attending our show in April and will bring some of his thundereggs to sell! Additional locations are known in Nevada, but these are some of the main ones prized by collectors.



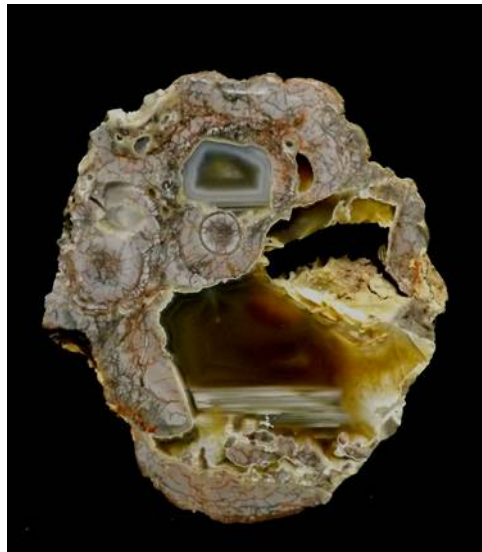
McDermitt



Black Rock



Mt. Airy with Amethyst



Aurora



Unnamed Claim

## JANUARY

January 16 - 17: **EXETER, CA**  
Tule Gem & Mineral Society, Visalia

## FEBRUARY

February 12 - 21: **INDIO, CA**  
San Gorgonio Mineral & Gem Society

February 20 - 21: **ANTIOCH, CA**  
Antioch Gem Club

## MARCH

February 27 - 28: **VALLEJO, CA**  
Vallejo Gem & Mineral Society

March 4 - 6: **NEWARK, CA**  
Mineral & Gem Society of Castro Valley

March 5 - 6: **ARCADIA, CA**  
Monrovia Rockhounds

March 5 - 6: **VENTURA, CA**  
Ventura Gem & Mineral Society

March 12 - 13: **SAN MARINO, CA**  
Pasadena Lapidary Society

March 12 - 13: **SPRECKELS, CA,**  
Spreckel's Veterans Hall

March 12 - 13: **TURLOCK, CA**  
Mother Lode Mineral Society, Modesto

March 19 - 20: **LEMOORE, CA**  
Lemoore Gem & Mineral Society

March 26 - 27: **ANGELS CAMP, CA**  
Calaveras Gem & Mineral Society

March 26- 27: **ROSEVILLE, CA**  
Roseville Rock Rollers Gem & Mineral Society

## APRIL

April 2 - 3: **TORRANCE, CA**  
South Bay Lapidary & Mineral Society, Palos Verdes

April 8 - 10: **VISTA, CA**  
Vista Gem & Mineral Society

April 9 - 10: **MARIPOSA, CA**  
Mariposa Gem & Mineral Society

April 16 - 17: **SAN JOSE, CA**  
Santa Clara Valley Gem & Mineral Society

April 23 - 24: **ESCONDIDO, CA**  
Palomar Gem & Mineral Club

April 23 - 24: **PASO ROBLES, CA**  
Santa Lucia Rock Hounds



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The **Rockonteur** is the official monthly newsletter of the **Santa Lucia Rockhounds**. It is an independent publication containing news and information consistent with the mission of SLR and of interest to its members.

Circulation is approximately 90 copies per issue.

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**Member submissions** are encouraged and may be made by email or snail mail. We reserve the right to accept or refuse submissions and advertising that, in our opinion, do not reflect the standards of this newsletter, or are inconsistent with the objectives and purpose of the Santa Lucia Rockhounds. Submissions may be edited for content, grammar, spelling, punctuation and length without consent.

**Rockonteur** is not a creative writing outlet. However, all submissions that may be of interest to its readers and reflect the standards of the newsletter, will be considered for publication at the discretion of the editor or publisher.

**Deadline:** All submissions are due by midnight of the last day of the month but early submissions are highly appreciated and strongly encouraged. The publisher reserves the right to accept, reject or hold-over late submissions.

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**Santa Lucia Rockhounds, Inc.** is a charitable group organized as a California non-profit public benefit corporation. The specific purpose of the group is to promote the study of mineralogy, including (but not limited to) the fields of lapidary, metal working, jewelry design & fabrication, geology and field trips for collecting and related history. We encourage learning and good citizenship in a congenial atmosphere. We respect both private and public property and we strive to protect natural resources.

**Annual Dues** are \$20 for the first adult and \$8 each for every additional member in the same household. Dues are payable between 1 September and 31 December, in person at the meetings or by mail. Members in good standing receive the **Rockonteur** by mail or email. We are a member of the **California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS)** and affiliated with the **American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS)**. **Santa Lucia Rockhounds, Inc.** is also a member of the **American Lands Access Association (ALAA)**.

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