

# Rockonteur

Volume 31, Issue 1

January 2021



## NAME THAT ROCK

The banner photo (above) changes each month - can you identify what type of rock it is? Answer is on last page but don't peek until you've tried to guess!

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### NOTE FROM EDITOR

We need your input to make this newsletter relevant and interesting. Please submit articles, photos to the editor.

## AMAZING HEART-SHAPED AMETHYST GEODE DISCOVERED BY MINERS IN URUGUAY

By Sara Barnes, <https://mymodernmet.com/natural-heart-geode/>



Gems and minerals are often given as tokens of affection. But one discovery of a naturally occurring amethyst geode doesn't need any help in expressing love—it's already shaped like a heart! [Uruguay Minerals](#) made this amazing find at the border of Uruguay and Brazil when workers broke open a rock that revealed a heart on either side of it.

The miners had no idea that they were about to dis-

cover this lovely geode; in fact, they were struggling to get the excavation going. "We were opening the mine to work normally," Marcos Lorenzelli of Uruguay Minerals tells My Modern Met, "but the land was difficult to work and our employees said, 'We have to find something really nice due to the hard work we are doing.'" Their patience was rewarded with this once-in-a-lifetime find. Read story at above link.



**Santa Lucia Rockhounds** is a non-profit public benefit corporation with the specific purpose to promote the study of mineralogy,

including (but not limited to) the fields of lapidary, metal working, jewelry design and fabrication, geology and conducts field trips for collecting and education. We encourage learning and good citizenship in a congenial atmosphere. We respect both private and public property, and we strive to protect natural resources. Meetings are held during the third Monday of each month, except December, at the Templeton Community Center.

We are a member of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS) and affiliated with the American Federation on Mineralogical Societies (AFMS). Santa Lucia Rockhounds, Inc. is also a member of the American Lands Access Association (ALAA).

**Annual dues** are \$20 for the first adult and \$8 each for every additional member of the same household. Annual dues are payable between August 1 and the third Monday of December, in person at Club meetings or by mail to P.O. Box 1672, Paso Robles, CA 93447.

### **The Rockonteur**

This is the official monthly newsletter of the SLR and an independent publication containing news and information consistent with the mission of SLR and of interests to its members. Circulation is approximately 100 copies per issue.

Member submissions are encouraged and may be sent to the editor. We reserve the right to accept or refuse submissions inconsistent with the objectives and purpose of the SLR. Submissions may be edited as needed without consent. Deadline are due by midnight of the last day of the month but early submissions are highly appreciated and strongly encouraged.

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# 2021

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Kim Noyes

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Happy New Year, Rockhounds!

Thank you all for renewing your memberships for 2021.

2020, what a ride that was! Don't take your seat belt off, 'cause the ride ain't over yet!

2021 promises inoculations against Covid-19 and hopefully things will clear up by September. However, with new strains of the virus popping up, I don't see us being able to have monthly meetings (as we have in past years) for some time to come.

Fear not! That doesn't stop us from taking an exercise walk on the beach, in canyons or mountain trails, to experience the treasures that only nature can provide. Who knows what other club members you may cross paths with while you're on your outing (from six feet away, of course).

Nothing can really substitute the social gathering of a club meeting but, we can still give you a program! James, (my husband) found some YouTube videos of geology presentations from: "NICK on the Rocks" of Central Washington University (Unfortunately we haven't found anything like that from our local area, but we are still looking). We have really enjoyed them, and we'll be emailing the link out to

you on the third Monday of the month as a program substitute for our general meeting. I hope you will enjoy them as much as we have.

Don't let the Covid cloud of depression get you down. We still have telephones; we can call and support each other. We can do other things to lift our spirits too. I know that in the dark drearies of winter, we are expected to wear dark colored clothing but it is my belief that "Covid needs color!" I have a couple of brightly colored pastel tie-dyed shirts that I have started wearing when I go to town. The bright colors lift my spirits and I have found that, when I do this, other people tell me that they either like the shirt or how good they felt seeing the bright colors. You never know how the smallest thing you do for yourself, can be a blessing to someone else along your way. Happiness is what you make it.

Between the "Shelter at Home" lifestyle cast upon us by Covid-19, followed by a derailed election. We find ourselves to be the participants of a crazy historic era. This too, shall pass!

So, mask up, stay strong, stay healthy, keep up your social distance and we should survive this. Rock on!

Lisa King, President

## CLUB SHOWS

ALL LISTINGS SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO COVID - Contact POC to check if it is still scheduled

### Antioch Lapidary Club Show

FEB 20-21, 10-5 Daily

Contra Costa Fairgrounds, 1201 W. 10th Street

For more info: [Brenda.miguel@yahoo.com](mailto:Brenda.miguel@yahoo.com),

925-301-6957, [www.antiochlapidaryclub.com](http://www.antiochlapidaryclub.com)

### Vallejo Gem & Mineral Show

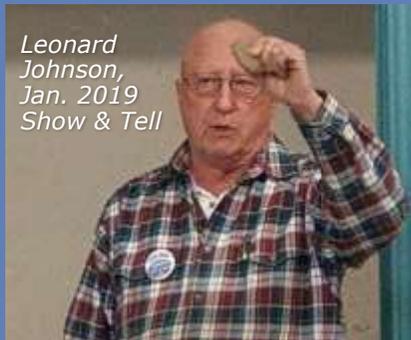
FEB 27-28, 10-5 Daily

900 Fairgrounds Drive

For more info: [dduhonvgms@gmail.com](mailto:dduhonvgms@gmail.com),

415-254-1506, [www.vjgems.org](http://www.vjgems.org)

## You might be a Rockhound if...



Leonard Johnson,  
Jan. 2019  
Show & Tell

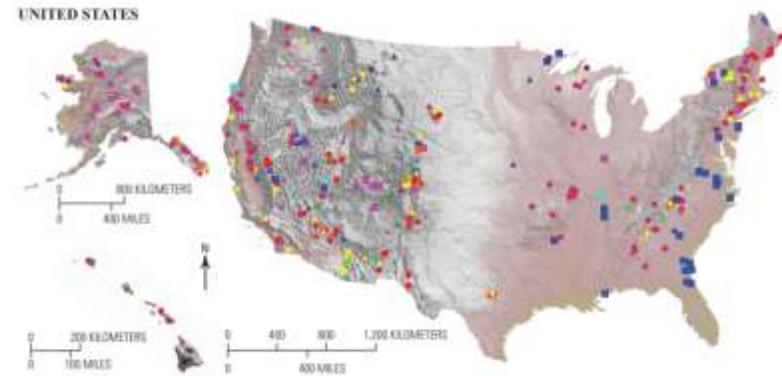
- You gave rocks, tumblers, or rock tools for Christmas.
- You can pronounce "molybdenite" correctly on the first try.
- The bookshelves in your home hold more rocks than books; and the books that are there are about rocks Your PC screen saver features pictures of rocks.
- You planted flowers in your rock garden.
- The first thing you pack for your vacation is a chisel and a hammer.
- Your company asks you not to bring any more rocks to the office until they have time to reinforce the floor.

Text reprinted from the AFMS Website:  
<http://www.amfed.org/rockhoun.htm>

## NEWS

### CRITICAL COOPERATION

How Australia, Canada and the United States are Working Together to Support Critical Mineral Discovery



Base from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ETOP01 1 Arc-Minute Global Relief Model, 2017

#### EXPLANATION Critical Minerals

• Antimony	• Manganese
• Barite	• Niobium and Tantalum
• Beryllium	• Platinum Group Elements
• Cobalt	• Rare Earth Elements
• Fluorite	• Rhodium
• Gallium	• Rhenium
• Germanium	• Tellurium
• Graphite	• Tin
• Iodine	• Titanium
• Lithium	• Vanadium
	• Zirconium

Figure 1. Critical mineral resources in Australia, Canada, and the United States (Labay and others, 2017). Critical minerals support a broad range of industrial sectors and a diversity of high-tech industries important to global economies (see Primary Uses of Critical Minerals sidebar).

Just as alloys make steel stronger, research allies make mineral science better. Geoscience Australia, the Geological Survey of Canada, and the USGS are coordinating their critical mineral mapping and research efforts to create a shared foundation of mineral information to help ensure a safe and secure supply of the materials needed for each country's economy and security.

It is no secret that the United States is heavily dependent on foreign sources for many of the mineral commodities necessary for America's economy and security. Of the 35 mineral commodities deemed critical by the Department of the Interior, the United States was 100 percent reliant on foreign sources for 13 in 2019.

To address this dependency, the Administration published A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals, and, as part of that strategy, the USGS has begun multiple domestic projects to increase knowledge and understanding of the country's mineral endowment. But in addition to that work, the USGS has also reached out to international partners, particularly those in Australia and Canada. Learn more from the USGS press release: <https://on.doi.gov/3pXUzSj>

Rockonteur Sept 2001

## New Method of Tumbling

By Al Nutile of Santa Clara Valley G+M Society.  
The writer believes that the following idea can take much of the work from the popular method tumbling. All of the instructions we have seen state: wash stones and tumble very clean between each change of grit or final materials, at the same time stating "if liquid is too thick add some slurrp or grit from previously used materials". We know "Some" will argue against our method, but here goes.

Don't wash at all after each week of tumbling with grit. Start with #50 grit, tumble a week. Then don't empty the tumbler, but add 5 teaspoons of new grit (one step fines) to the mixture in the three pound tumbler. Follow this procedure through #190, #320 and #600 grit. Now < finally, thoroughly wash the stones and tumbler before pre-polish and final polish. For a really glossy finish, after washing out the polishing powder add three (3) spoons of sugar, one (1) level spoon of Cascade or All (this is dishwasher soap to you fellows), or any non-sudsing detergent and about ten (10) drops of muriatic acid. Let stand one (1) minute - close tube, and tumble for a week. We have run eleven (11) tubs using this method and found that even ordinary sandstone comes out highly glossed. Except for extra final steps, you save three washes and getting rid of the slurrp each time. Saves time, work, and mess and still gets better polish. Reprinted Breccia, Aug 2001

Submitted by Don Huntington from the 2001 Rockonteur



*Extrusive lava rocks from Mojave Desert*

Granite colors range the spectrum from red to green to gold to white to black to pink - even Blue Bahia granite from central Brazil, used as the background for this page! Granite is one of the most commonly known types of rocks, a component in everything from buildings to sculptures. It has been utilized for thousands of years and is regarded as a symbol of status, strength, and durability. How did granite form, and why is it found in so many colors?

### **What is Granite?**

Granite is an intrusive igneous rock with large grains (minerals) easily seen by the naked eye. An igneous rock is a rock that has solidified from molten rock. This is in comparison to the two other major types of rock, sedimentary and metamorphic. In Southern California, we see a lot of igneous lava rocks everywhere in the Mojave Desert.

### **Why aren't all of these rocks granite?**

This is because those lava bombs are extrusive rocks, and granite is an intrusive rock.

Extrusive rocks are expelled and cool during a volcanic eruption and allow no time for orientation of minerals, creating a homogenous looking rock with

no discernible grains. An intrusive rock is one where the molten lava rock cooled within the earth's crust and was never expelled as molten rock.

The gradual cooling of the molten rock is imperative to create the large crystals of a singular mineral that we see in granites. With time, there is differential lithification or solidifying of molten rock dependent on chemical makeup, this allows for different types of minerals to form at different periods of time and alter the final resulting granite.

Granite is a conglomerate of minerals and rocks, primarily quartz, potassium feldspar, mica, amphiboles, and trace other minerals. Granite will typically contain 20-60% quartz, 10-65% feldspar, and 5-15% micas (biotite or muscovite). While most granites are grey in color, it can be black, dark-red and the rarer green or bluish-grey color. The minerals that surrounded the forming granite gave it the unique colors we see in different types of granite.

### **What Determines Granite Colors?**

Granite colors are most commonly pink, white, variations of grey and black. However, it's important to note that some stones marketed as black 'granite' are in fact likely gabbro (a type of basalt) as granite must contain at least 20% quartz within a rock to make it granite.

White granites tend to have more albitic plagioclase,

along with some dark mica and hornblende. The color of feldspar especially strongly influences the decorativeness of granite. But — feldspars are naturally white! Feldspar breeds get grey and black colors from the admixture of dark-colored minerals, mica or pyroxenes.

Where does the red come from in some granite stones? Red or pink feldspars are included into

their mineral composition. Granite feldspar acquires the pink coloring when the amount of hematite does not exceed 3 to 4%.

Granite which is green in color is due to inclusions of green potassium feldspar and was known for a long time as a semi-precious stone. The early American Indians used it as decorations.

Blue Bahia granite gets its color from inclusions of blue sodalite foidolite of the Precambrian period.



**It almost makes a person want to go rock collecting in a kitchen counter store, doesn't it?**

# Rockhounds Out & About

## TRIPPIN' IN TERRY

Story and photos by Wayne Mills, SLR, OMS

In August, 2014 I missed the Orcutt Mineral Society (OMS) Gem Show-the first one I had not participated in since I joined OMS in 1994. The reason I took a pass was because the American Federation of Gemological Societies (AFMS) decided to hold a field trip in Terry, Montana that same week. It was a pretty easy choice. Montana Agate is one of my favorite agates, there were also neat fossils to be found nearby, and the birth-places of both my parents were within a few hour's drive of Terry.

The field trip leader was Doug True, a frequent dealer at Santa Lucia Rockhound (SLR) Shows, and (currently), immediate past president of the AFMS. The trip itself brought together rockhounds from across the country. Our campground was in the fairgrounds in Terry, a small town in Prairie County, east-central Montana.

We traveled to several near-by areas for agates (in the river gravels) and petrified wood and fossils in the rocky hills. My new Subaru Outback ("Jade"), performed like a champ in the new and unfamiliar surroundings.

One evening, we had a tailgate sale with lots of neat treasures "on the tables" for admiration and purchase. Doug shared some of his experiences with the assembled rockhounds.

One of my interesting side trips was the Creationist Museum in Glendive Montana. They had some amazing vertebrate fossils on display. Note the fish fossil with another fish inside! And note the onlookers for scale.

After the tailgate ended, I visited Outlook, Montana where my Mother was born, and Fortuna, North Dakota where my Dad was born. I even found a picture in the Plentywood Museum of my Grandmother Deck's Café next door to the Mills Hardware and Funeral Parlor -places where my Mom and Dad grew up next door to each other.

I would have to say it was a wonderful, memorable vacation.



# Rockhounds Out & About



*Kathy Clarke, Estero Bluffs*



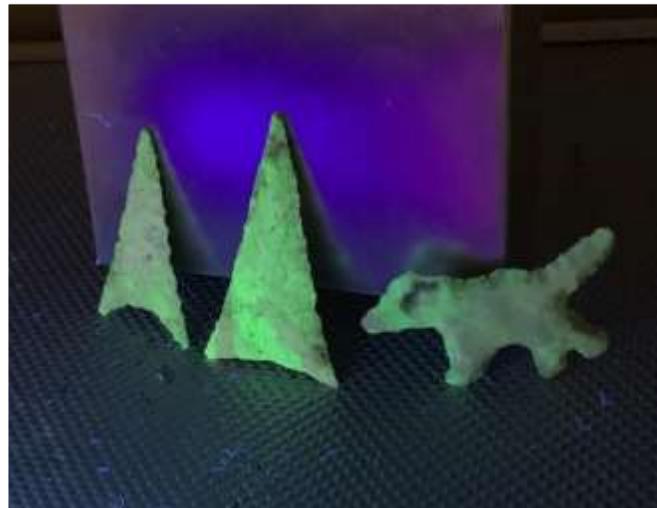
*Photo saturated to highlight colors*



*Ted Gray - Shark Tooth Hill, California*



*2019 Work Ranch Field Trip. Club members took turns going in the field viewing station to look at fluorescent rocks. Harold Lawless made arrow points and a dog from fluorescent rocks he found during the field trip.*



*He intends to give them to the Ranch when it is possible to visit again. Photos by Amy Phillips & Harold Lawless.*

**Present:** Kim Noyes, President; Lisa King, Senior Director; Tina Russell, Treasurer; Kathy Clark, VP Membership; Don Barton, VP Communications; Jacque Hughes, Secretary; Amy Phillips, Newsletter Editor/Publisher.

The meeting was called to order via Zoom app at 7:03 p.m.

**President Report:** As Kim's leadership as President will be ending, he has passed on a box of supplies (flag, sound system, key to Community Center, etc.) to Lisa King, his successor. He expressed his thanks to his board members as well as to Amy Phillips for all their hard work this year. The members also acknowledged Kim's hard work and commitment and the fact that he stepped in as President when no one else would. Tina Russell and Kim will retain the debit cards and the keys to the P.O. Box. Kim will be contacting fairground personnel regarding a potential outdoor show next year, as he will continue to be our show chairperson. He will also take the lead as the field trip Coordinator with the assistance of various club members who plan to organize future trips. He also shared updated information regarding the Smithen family.

**Senior Director Report:** On the website, members have free advertising and Lisa questioned how the non-members were being charged the \$10/month fee, as there are no electronic online collection op-

tions, and no one seems to be keeping track of who is advertising. According to the treasurer, apparently no money has been collected through advertising this past year. Lisa King made a motion to discontinue the practice of allowing non-members to advertise on our site. If someone wants to advertise, they can pay the \$20 to become a member. Kim seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed. Don Barton will follow-up with the webmaster.

**Treasurer's Report:** The balance of both the CD and the checking account were reported. Don Huntington sent, along with his membership renewal, a 2001 article regarding a new tumbling method. Tina will make a copy of this and send to Amy for inclusion into the newsletter. Tina also paid off various bills. Lisa King asked about our 501 (C) (3) status and Tina responded that the only way to contact the state agency is through email, and the agency has yet to respond to our past email inquiries. All that can be done at this point is to await their response. Lisa King stated this will be an issue once we start making money again, especially if we do an April show. Tina questioned why we do not have an interest-bearing checking account. She also felt that since the CD is due annually in January it may be the time to reevaluate where the money could be placed to earn more interest. She will follow-up with the bank.

**Communications:** Amy Phillips joined us tonight and all members praised her work on the newsletter. She stated that she will be submitting our publication to the newsletter competition with AFMS and she will share the national application with the board for review once completed. Don Barton stated he was unable to log into the Gmail account. Kim Noyes stated that the google account required a password change due to security reasons, and he shared the new password.

**Membership:** Kim noted that some databases require updates, including the 2021 membership list for the mass emails and Don Barton requires an updated list of members who have paid the \$10 fee for the newsletter to be mailed. Kathy will update the list with the new additions and will contact Don with the individuals who have paid for the newsletter home delivery. Lisa King wants addresses listed on the membership list as was discussed and agreed upon in the past, as she will have occasion to require this information as President. Amy stated that there were two online forms, one that lists the member that any club member can access and another just for board members that lists the addresses. Kathy Clark will send the information to Lisa King.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



P.O. Box 1672  
Paso Robles, CA 93447

## GRAPE AMETHYST

*Amethyst is the world's most popular purple gemstone. It is the purple color variety of quartz and has been used in personal adornment for over 2000 years. It is the birthstone of February and an important New Age gem. Amethyst is used to produce faceted stones, cabochons, beads, tumbled stones, and many other items for jewelry and ornamental use. Enormous deposits of amethyst in South America and Africa provide enough material to keep amethyst's price low enough that most people can easily afford it. While the word "amethyst" makes most people think of a dark purple gem, amethyst actually occurs in many purple colors. The purple color can be so light that it is barely perceptible or so dark that it is nearly opaque. It can be reddish purple, purple, or violetish purple. Amethyst exists in this wide range of colors.*

*Learn more at: <https://geology.com/gemstones/amethyst/>*