



THE CONGLOMERATE

APRIL, 2020

THE NEWSLETTER OF
THE RENO GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dean Sizemore

Happy April to all, I hope as you are reading the Conglomerate that this is finding you in good health. As we head into Spring, we are facing allergies, the last of cold and flu season and of course the Coronavirus. If at any time you need help with anything please reach out to me, **Denise Sizemore**, Social Director and most importantly **Lori Connel**, our Sunshine Director. We have unfortunately seen people panicking and emptying stores of needed general items so you may find normal things like toilet paper, wipes and hand sanitizer unavailable. If you have a need, reach out and we can combine resources to help each other. The best advice I can give is to use your common sense and don't let panic from news stories guide you. If you're a high-risk group avoid large groups, when walking in a store, grab a wipe and wipe the cart and your hands, and be aware of touching your face, nose and eyes. Learn the symptoms through reliable sources, WedMD <https://www.webmd.com/lung/coronavirus#1> and the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html> etc. You can go to the first part of the addresses, www.webmd.com or www.cdc.gov and find the information that way if you don't want to type the whole address.

If you're not feeling well, before you go to your Doctor, call his or her office or the Washoe County Health District help line at 775-328-2427 to make sure what you should do. If you have the flu or just allergies, going to the doctor's office or the ER may actually expose you to the virus. Last to put this in perspective during the 2009 – 2010 season the H1N1 virus killed hundreds of thousands worldwide based on revised numbers from the CDC and we survived without panic and emptying stores, as of March 14th 5,795 have died, with 150,393 cases and 73,731 recovered worldwide. We haven't even had as many cases worldwide as there were deaths from H1N1. This is more aggressive and needs more care.

I know you've been wondering about our Jackpot of Gems. **Dan Ellis**, our Jackpot of Gems Director, and I met with the Convention Center on the 18th and they asked us to cancel the show. It will not be rescheduled this year, but they've given us an additional year on our reduced rate to compensate.

We completed our Audit of last year's finances and found everything to be as it should. We are in sound financial shape as an organization, as the Jackpot of Gems is our largest fundraiser of the year it will hurt that we won't have it. **Linda Johnston** reported on the financials

Wednesday, April 1, 2020 7:00 pm
General Meeting
Baldini's Casino, Second Floor

Cancelled

“WEDNESDAY, April 8, 2020 7:00 p.m.
RGMS Board Meeting
480 S. Rock Blvd. Sparks, NV
Open to members
Cancelled

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***Email addresses contain the word *at* rather than the @ symbol to foil efforts of scammers' bots to glean email addresses from online sources.**

RGMS, INC. MISSION STATEMENT

The **mission** of the **Reno Gem and Mineral Society** is to create, develop, and encourage interest in the Earth Sciences and to locate and identify various material through field trips. As a **501C₃** corporation RGMS qualifies for donation write offs of cash and materials. Donation receipts are available at the society's headquarters.

A General Meeting, open to the public, is held usually the first Wednesday of each month at 7 PM at Baldini's Casino, Second Floor, 865 S. Rock Blvd, Sparks, NV. Board meetings are open to all members and are held the second Wednesday of each month at 7 PM at headquarters. Annual membership dues: student: \$25, Individual: \$35, and Family: \$50. Digital editions of the newsletter are free to members. A full copy is available by USPS for \$21 annually. A shortened version is also available via USPS for \$12.

Pres. Message, Cont. from p. 1

from the Rock Building at our March Board Meeting and she and her Board have done an amazing job with it. We are working on getting a new Accountant and an Attorney to make sure we are in good shape and performing as we should.

All remaining classes in March were cancelled and April is yet to be determined. Please monitor Facebook and your email for updates. The Rock Building was cleaned on the 21st of March and everyone was asked to stay out of it until the 4th of April to allow time for anything on the surfaces to die off.

I wish you all a healthy April and prayers that we will meet on May 6th finding the virus cases are dropping and people are getting better. It will most likely take a few months to get through this and at least a year for a vaccine, but researchers may have found some treatments. I have found we are a strong, resourceful, diverse group and can deal with any challenges ahead if we allow ourselves to ask for help from family, friends and each other. Ask for help, be smart and take care.

SUNSHINE

Lori Connel, Sunshine Director

Hello fellow rockhounds. This has been a shocking few weeks for all of us dealing with the worldwide outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) So many of us are concerned for our health and well-being. As we go through the required social distancing and changes to our normal routines, please keep in mind to stay connected with your family and friends. Just because we have to be physically separated, doesn't mean we have to be alone. However, those members who may be alone could use our help. We are also going to be dealing with things like doctor visits and grocery store visits differently now, not to mention numerous other changes in practices that impact us. Change is very hard for all of us. Now is the time to reach out to your family and friends, co-workers and medical professionals. Try to do the best you can when you're in your home. If you are able, take a walk or sit on the porch and get some fresh air. Keep in touch with your family and friends. Remember our lives are filled with ups and downs. It's not forever; we will come through it.

During this challenging time I would also ask that we keep our prayers and hugs going for **Tamela Germano, Sam Macaluso, Bobby White, Pete Rivera, and John Boyne.** Dealing with the impact of Covid19 will be more difficult for those members undergoing medical challenges.

I have another quote for you., this one from Albert Schweitzer. I hope it will mean something to you.

Giving Time

You must give time to your fellow men. Even if it's a little thing, do something for others-something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it".

If you wish to reach me, my phone number is 775-233-5693 and my email is Lori.connel@yahoo.com

RGMS LIBRARY REPORT

Kathy Boyne, Library Director

I am the new Librarian, **Kathy Boyne**, and I was appointed by President **Dean Sizemore**. We, RGMS, have a library and I am becoming acquainted with it. When RGMS is up and running, the Library will again be up and running. Kathy Boyne : 775-747-5658 with answering machine .or..[kathyboyne at gmail.com!](mailto:kathyboyne@gmail.com)

Ed: We bid a fond farewell to exiting librarian, **Juliet Hitchcock**. We thank her for all the work she did to organize our library and wish both Juliet and **Will** well on the next stage of their journey.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Donna Durham, Membership Director

The March winds blew in a great group of new members! I would like to extend my warmest welcome to **Neal and Mary Cobb, Heidi and Erik Dormody, Angela Flora, Kris Hara, Debbi Hergert, Mary Hicks, Clifford and Robin Ligons, Michele Montoya, Cameron Piette, Ronald and Janet Piette, Charles Oberg, Schuyler Schaff, Benjamin Tang and Douglas Widmark.**

A great big Reno Welcome to you all!

It has been a busy membership season and I have experienced a stellar response from members. Thank you RGMS Members! If you have not had the chance to renew yet, it is really easy! Just fill out the membership application attached and mail it with a check to the rock shop or make it easier still and save the postage by coming by to see me at the meeting where we now accept Cash, Checks and Charge cards.

Thanks to our outstanding group of members for your friendship and continued support for the Reno Gem and Mineral Society!

CONGLOMERATE SUBSCRIPTIONS 2020

Digital edition: no charge to members

Shortened edition by USPS: \$1 per copy or \$12 annually, in advance

Full edition by USPS: \$1.75/ copy or \$21 annually, in advance

Full edition copies at the meeting: \$2 except to guests. Free to guests.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

The Board minutes are posted on the bulletin board at headquarters monthly. Treasurer's reports are available to any member on request. **Steve Norman** , Secretary; **Robyn Howard**, Treasurer

APRIL 4TH 2020 GENERAL MEETING:
Steve Smith, V.P.

CANCELLED.
2020 JPOG POTLUCK
Denise Sizemore, Social Director
CANCELLED

VOLUNTEERS
Renée Samuels

Greetings, fellow rockhounds! Spring is almost upon us. Unfortunately, our Jackpot of Gems Show has had to be cancelled. I want to thank all those who signed up to help and please make a resolution to sign up again for the 2021 show. We are also still in need of a **Historian**, and a **Dealer Director** for next year’s show. Thank you to all of the members who give their time and energy to our society! We couldn’t do it without you!

Contact Julie Hilsabeck to schedule **ALL USES** of the Rock Building. She manages the schedule to avoid scheduling conflicts such as we had in January. Julie can be reached at jchilsa@yahoo.com or 775-848-0569.

EDUCATION OUTREACH
Feb/Mar 2020
Submitted by Steve Norman

Sven Sander, Rachel Carroll and I traveled to Van Gorder Elementary and later on Sven and I went to Donner Sprigs Elementary Schools. At Van Gorder we saw 129 students from 4 classrooms and at Donner Spring we did an after-school Science Night where we saw 115 students with their parents. Here is why we do this outreach: because there is a need, and teachers and students appreciate it. Here is a sample of a letter we received:

Dear Steve, Sven and Rachel,

We thoroughly loved your presentation. It was a great introduction to our Earth unit. You had mentioned a mine/area that we could find those beautiful rocks. Could you tell me what it was called? Many of the children would like to go out with their families and find some of them.

Thank you,
Donna _____
____ Grade Teacher
____ Elementary School

APRIL FIELD TRIP REPORT
Rob Kendrick Field Trip Director.

As spring approaches, so does our anticipation of field-trip season build. I would like to announce our first overnight trip for 2020 is to Gabbs. This trip is planned for May 15-17. More information and directions to the campsite will be available in the May *Conglomerate* if the Coronavirus constraints are over.

As with any of our field trips, weather can play a big part in them. Trips have been cancelled in the past due to weather; therefore, if the weather looks bad and the trip needs to be cancelled, we will post on Facebook and send an email blast, and hopefully be able to post on our new, upcoming website!

Trips scheduled to date:

- May 15-17 Gabbs
- June 6 Lovelock (day trip)
- August 14-16 Black Rock
- September ?? Wonderstone Mountain
(rescheduled from April), date TBD)

I have also been in contact with the Otteson turquoise mine in Tonopah NV about a group tour to the mine and I am still working on a date for this trip. The cost is \$150 per person or \$250 per couple for a 1/2 day.

Look for information for all field trips in later *Conglomerates*. If you have any questions or trips you would like to see (or lead) you can reach me at our new Field Trip gmail account: rgms.fieldtrips@gmail.com. That’s all for now. Happy hounding.

JACKPOT OF GEMS 2020
Daniel Ellis, Show Director
CANCELLED



Source: Creative Commons

MARCH BOARD REPORT

Steve Norman, Secretary

Board meeting report: March 11, 2020

Steve Norman, Secretary. This is a brief summary, my full report can be viewed on the bulletin board at the Society's facility or contact me for information. [ed: Note that the meeting was held before show, school, and meeting cancellations occurred. Plan accordingly.]

President Dean Sizemore asked for the report from Audit Committee that reviewed financial records and transactions from last year. The Audit Committee headed up by **Renée Samuels** reported that six auditors went through all the transactions and that the books are in good order.

The Rock Building: **Linda Johnston** reports income from the tenants is adding \$3,500 net profits per month to allow for painting the building and building up some resources for moving the Society to the larger room for improved meeting room and shop. Linda will work with tenant who has automotive projects parked along the limited parking on the block.

Membership: **Donna Durham** announced 18 new memberships: **Neal & Mary Cobb, Heidi & Erik Dormody, Kris Hara, Mary Hicks, Clifford & Robin Ligons, Michele Montoya, Charles Oberg, Schuyler G. Schaff, and Douglas Widmark of Reno, NV. Angela Flora, Cameron Piette, Ronald & Janet Piette, and Dennis & Wendy Kazas from Sparks, NV. Debbi Hergert from Lee Vining, CA and Benjamin Tang of San Mateo, CA.** Memberships were approved. Welcome to the Reno Gem and Mineral Society!

Volunteer Director Renée Samuels requests reporting volunteer hours to her. The Society has positions open. **Display Case** organizer for the Show in April, **Dealer Chairman** for next year 2021, **Historian**, and **Facebook facilitator**.

Education Outreach: **Steve Norman** reports presentations at two schools last month and two presentations scheduled.

Social Director Denise Sizemore reports potluck for the Jackpot of Gems Show will be Friday, April 3 starting at about 6 PM.

Shop Director Chuck Jackson reports two new lapidary machines have arrived and will be operational soon.

School Director Julie Hilsabeck, announced full classes of lapidary and silver fabrication. See Conglomerate calendar for details.

Dan Ellis Show Director, has volunteer sign-up sheets with many ways to help out. There is a free t-shirt to thank you for your help. Truck will load April 1 at 5 PM before the General Meeting. Show set-up is Friday, April 3 starting at 7 AM. Society received a nice amethyst crystal donation from Stone Age Quarry, thanks to **Laura Jackson**. The board decided to place the donation into the Silent Auction as a Show stopper. Dan and Board discussed the coronavirus issues and how the problem may close off large crowds which could cancel the Jackpot of Gems Show. No word yet, so plans progressing to hold the show as scheduled for April 4 and 5.

Past President Nichols discussed the website which is scheduled to launch in April with a solid start. **Logan Alexander** has accepted the role as the new Webmaster for the new site.

The next General Meeting will be Wednesday April 1, 2020 at **Baldini's Sport Casino** on the second floor in the **Sierra Room** at 7 PM. The program will be **Jim Bonar** discussing the Lincoln Highway a historian, explaining the early days of transportation in the West.

MINERAL OF THE MONTHMOONSTONED. W. Webb Varnum

Wikipedia.org

as moonstones; other moonstones are orthoclase, sanidine, albite and oligoclase. The

iridescence, called 'schiller' results from the minute interlayering of a different feldspar that develops by internal chemical separation during the process of crystallization," (p. 238)

Moonstones are transparent or translucent and have a vitreous luster. Their fracture is uneven or conchoidal, their cleavage, perfect. With a hardness of 6 to 6.5, moonstones streak white,

and have a Specific Gravity of 2.6. A semi-precious gemstone, moonstone is most often found in gravels below a pegmatite. Other semi-precious feldspar gems are amazonite (microcline), and the orthoclase varieties labradorite and sunstone.

Sources: personal knowledge, *Wikipedia*, Mindat.org, and R. L. Bonewitz, *Smithsonian Rock and Gem*, NY: DK Publishing, 2005.



Mindat.org

SCHOOL REPORT*Julie Hilsabeck, Director*

If a class must be cancelled, each Instructor or Host will post a cancellation notice to the RGMS Facebook page. If you do not see a cancellation post, the class will be held as scheduled.

Want to take or teach a new class? Have any ideas or suggestions? E-mail **Julie Hilsabeck** jchilsa@yahoo.com or talk to her at the general meeting! All official information regarding scheduling and class details is published in *The Conglomerate*. Register and pay for classes at the general meeting. We accept cash or check made out to RGMS!

Children may register for classes only at the discretion of the teacher. Wear protective shoes or boots to work in the shop—NO open toe shoes, sandals or slippers. **Please Note: To register for classes you must either be a member or have \$1 million of liability insurance naming RGMS as the certificate holder. If you are not a member, unless you present a valid insurance certificate at registration, you must wait until the next general meeting after you join to register for classes. Your insurance is included in the membership fee.**

BE NICE! Each class using headquarters is responsible for leaving the premises clean and tidy. Any tools belonging to RGMS should be put away securely and headquarters locked.

MONDAY OPEN HOUSE

Make your own projects! You must take at least 2 months of lapidary classes before you will be cleared to attend open house and must have your name on file as approved to work on your own in the shop. Speak to the lapidary instructors to be added to the list. Please be sure to follow shop safety rules. **At 8:45 please start clean-up so chaperones can go home.** Supervised by **Daniel Ellis**. 6-9 PM Shop fee \$5/hour.

BEADING AND BEAD WEAVING

Must sign up. Beading in 2020 may be offered quarterly on a **Saturday** from 10-2. Next class will be offered in May, a double Tila bracelet. May also bring beaded bezel project to finish. Class is taught by **Sue Webb**. \$2.50/hour payable at class or the meeting.

CASTING

Casting is currently on hiatus until an experienced instructor is found. When offered and weather permitting, casting is taught in two classes held on Friday evenings. Classes enroll a maximum of 4-6 students. Sign ups will be taken at the general meeting when classes resume.

KNOTTING AND STRINGING

Learn to string natural stones and beads beading wire, use silk for knotting pearls and craft wire for wire linking as well as stretchy for bracelets. The different tools involved in each project as well as different gauges of craft wire will be explained. You will be supplied with all you need to make bracelets. \$20.00 material fee. First and third Mondays, 7-9 PM. \$5 course fee. Taught by **Laura Jackson**

LAPIDARY

Must sign up. Lapidary is limited to 4 new students, but a **daytime class** is now available. **For shop safety, an absolute limit of eight people may work in the shop at one time.** First time students **must** attend a one-time **shop safety seminar (11/12) on the Tuesday following the general meeting at 10:30 am or 6:30 pm.** Drop-ins are welcome on a first come, first served basis. Registered and pre-paid students always take precedence over drop-ins. Materials for your first two projects are included in your class fee. Evening class taught by **Lloyd Raymond & Barbara Hartman, 7-9 pm**; daytime class taught by **Barbara Hartman and Julie Hilsabeck. 11am-1pm**, Tuesdays, \$5/hr.

SILVER FABRICATION

Must sign up. Beginning classes are structured classes. The first two projects are specifically designed to teach you the fundamentals of silver fabrication (making jewelry). Therefore, you will not be able to do other projects until you complete the two projects. RGMS provides tools to use on your first two projects. There is a \$20-\$25 fee for the silver which we provide for the first project. Stones are not included; however, we do have some for sale. For these two projects, **only oval stones** will be used. Suggested size for the first project is 18 x 13mm, and 30 x 32 mm for the second project. The stone size does not have to be the exact size but should be very close. You can purchase silver from the instructors for the second project, or you can use our own. Upon completion of the two projects, if you wish to continue, you will need your own basic set of tools. **The tools that RGMS provides are for new students only.** Before purchasing any tools, talk with your instructors. Instructors: **Jay Logue, Jill Atkins and Al Bolshazy.**

WIRE ART

Drop in to work with wire the second and fourth Monday. Classes vary by the month, so check at the general meeting to see what will be offered for April. Brass wire only and tools available to lend in class to new students. Taught by **Jennifer Rhodes and Sami Ellis**. 2nd and 4th Monday, .6-8 PM \$2.50/hour (\$5/class), payable in class.

May. Standard Cab Technique incorporating wire weaving in decoration

June Basket weave Technique

Continued, page 6

APRIL 2020

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

All April classes and meetings (including the Wonderstone Field Trip) are cancelled unless you are notified otherwise. Whether activities will resume in May will be evaluated toward the end of April. Stay tuned via Facebook, the Website, and email.

- July. Incorporating two Freeform cabs in a Standard Cab Variation
- August. Floating Stone Technique (can be cabochon or faceted gem)
- September Overlapping Wraps
- October Standard Cab Variation using Beads
- November Christmas Ornament

MINERAL IDENTIFICATION

Must sign up. See Julie at the meeting. 3rd and 4th Wed. in October. For a small fee, identification kits are available for purchase ahead of the class. Taught by Webb Varnum

LOST WAX CARVING

Cost is \$50/month **Please note this class is on Saturdays and Sundays!** Bring your lunch and beverages.

OTHER

Potential for **faceting** classes, **enameling**, and **precious metal clay** if there is enough interest. Speak to Julie at the General Meeting if you are interested.



New Cab Machine and Julie Hilsabeck, School Director Photo: Virginia Keeley

UPCOMING CFMS SHOWS

See additional information at cfmsinc.org/shows-2/

MARCH

All California March shows are cancelled, due to Corona Virus.

APRIL**April 3, 4, 5; VISTA, CA**

Vista Gem & Mineral Society
2040 N Santa Fe Ave

Contact: (760) 659-6545, vistarocksgms@gmail.com

April 4-5; CHICO, CA

Paradise Gem & Mineral Club
Silver Dollar Fair Grounds
2357 Fair Street

Contact: Trish Haggerty, (530) 966-5112

April 4-5; RENO, NV CANCELLED!!!

The Reno Gem & Mineral Society, Inc
Reno Convention Center
4390 S Virginia St.

Contact: Daniel Ellis, (775) 229-2442

April 11 - 12; MARIPOSA, CA

Mariposa Gem & Mineral Club
Mariposa County Fairgrounds
5007 Fairgrounds Road

Contact: Meredith Meehan, (559) 868-3535

April 18-19; PASO ROBLES, CA

Santa Lucia Rockhounds
Paso Robles Event Center
2198 Riverside Ave.

Contact: (805) 610-0603, slockhounds@gmail.com

April 18 - 19, THOUSAND OAKS, CA CANCELLED!!!

Canejo Gem & Mineral Club
Borchard Community Park, 190 N. Reino Rd., Thousand Oaks
Contact: (818) 889-1798,

rich_phil@msn.com, lkofagoura@gmail.com

April 25-26; ARCADIA, CA

Pasadena Lapidary Society
Arcadia Masonic Center
50 W Duarte Rd

Contact: (727) 512-0381, info@pasadenalapidary.org

April 25-26; LANCASTER, CA

Antelope Valley Gem & Mineral Club
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds
2551 West Avenue H

Contact: Susan Chaisson-Walblom, (661) 406-0143

MAY**May 1-3; YUCAIPA, CA**

Yucaipa Valley Gem and Mineral Society
Yucaipa Blvd and Adams Street

Contact: grandpasgems@gmail.com

May 2-3; JACKSON, CA

Amador County Gem & Mineral Society
Kennedy Mine
Off Hwy 49-88, 12594 Kennedy Mine Rd

Contact: mountaingirl@volcano.net

JUNE**June 1-2: CAMBRIA, CA**

San Luis Obispo Gem & Mineral Club
Cambria Veterans Hall
1000 Main Street, Cambria

Contact: Kim Noyes, (805) 610-0603

Email: kim@gmail.com

June 23-28; LODI, CA**81 st CFMS Show & Convention**

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies
Grape Festival Fairgrounds
413 E Lockeford Street

June 27-28; CULVER CITY, CA

Culver City Rock & Mineral Club
Veterans Memorial Auditorium
4117 Overland Ave

Website: <http://culvercityrocks.org/fiesta.htm>

AUGUST TO NOVEMBER**August 15-16; Tehachapi, CA**

Tehachapi Valley Gem and Mineral Society
500 East "F" Street

September 12-13; Arroyo Grande, CA

San Luis Obispo Gem and Mineral Club
South County Regional Center
800 West Branch Street

September 26-27; Lancaster, CA

Palmdale Gem & Mineral Club
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds
2551 West Ave H

September 26-27 th ; Lodi, CA

Stockton Lapidary And Mineral Club
Earth Treasures Gems Minerals, & Jewelry Show
Lodi Grape Festival Grounds
413 E Lockeford St

October 10-11; Trona, CA

Searles Lake Gem and Mineral Society
13337 Main Street

October 11; Fallbrook, CA

Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society
123 W Alvarado St

October 16-18; Knoxville TN**AFMS and SFMS Show & Convention**

Knoxville Gem and Mineral Society
TBA

October 31-Nov 1; Sacramento, CA

Sacramento Mineral Society
6151 H Street

November 14-15; Yuba City, CA

Sutter Buttes Gem and Mineral Society
442 Franklin Hall

Note: Corona Virus concerns have dictated cancellation of a number of shows. When possible, those have been identified by a red **Cancelled**. However, **more shows may have to be cancelled. If the listing does not show a cancellation, it is best to check with the show chairs to be sure it is still being held. See the CFMS Website for additional information.**—<https://www.cfmsinc.org/shows-2/>

BIG CHANGES AT DAVIS CREEK

Dick Pankey
ALAA Ambassador
dick.pankey@amlands.org

Not only at Davis Creek but the entire obsidian area in the Warner Mtn. of the Modoc National Forest. Shirley Leeson sent me an e-mail link from the Forest Service that said "this was found on Facebook, you might want to check it out." So yesterday I checked out the post and learned some things I didn't know about the Forest Service and their procedures and vocabulary, the changes at Davis Creek that have happened and why they happened, and changes to come and when they will happen.

It all started with the FB post: "***No obsidian mining for 2020 season***" for both commercial and **recreational purposes**. The post listed the District Ranger, Lisa Spahr as the contact for more information. I called the Modoc National Forest office in Alturas, CA and got Ranger Spahr's voice mail. I left my contact information, reason for my call and requested that she call me when she could. After leaving the voice mail I was given the option to return to the switch board so I took it. As luck would have it, Ken Sandusky, Public Affairs Officer, answered the call. He recognized my name and the CFMS because he participated with the Special Use Permit for the CFMS Field Trip in August, 2018. He also was knowledgeable with the issues surrounding suspension of obsidian collecting for 2020. He told me that a permit system needed to be developed for commercial and recreational collecting. This is when my introduction to the "Forest Service double talk" began. I informed Ken that I have 15 to 20 Free Use Permits starting in 1994 issued by the FS. Ken informed me that they were "***Free Use Authorizations***" not permits to collect obsidian. But I said, on the FS web site they are called Permits, on the Free Use Authorization they are called a permit so I was always had the understanding they were permits because FS personnel always had referred to them as "*Obsidian Collecting Permits*". Ken's final words to me were "*no they are not permits; they are Authorizations.*"

Since Ranger Spahr was the person in authority that I needed to talk to I soon recognized that this was a discussion that I would not and did not need to prevail [in]. I requested that Ken pass on my contact information and have Ranger Spahr call me. And waited for her call which came fairly soon. Even though Ranger Spahr was away from her office, my request had been conveyed to her and she called me post haste. What I learned from Ranger Spahr: There is high demand for commercial quantities of Davis Creek obsidian, especially by overseas customers; commercial mining has created an unsustainable demand for such large quantities; impact has increased due to overseas purchasers; theft and illegal mining activities have increased substantially. In addition the FS is in contact with a judge that has deemed the current "Free Use Authorization" (for recreational collecting) and the "Obsidian Mgmt. Plan - May 2015 (for commercial collecting) to not be adequate for the FS to control and manage the obsidian resources at Davis Creek in a sustainable manner. Ranger Spahr went on to say that FS personnel will be working with stakeholders to identify the concerns and effects. "This will allow the forest, Warner Mountain Ranger District, partners and communities to assess the situation and put plans into place for a more-sustainable program." I requested Ranger Spahr add me to her list of interested and involved people and as a stakeholder.

My take away from all of this is: there has been theft and abuse of recreational and commercial obsidian collecting at Davis Creek; There will be no recreational and commercial obsidian collecting at Davis Creek in 2020. A new plan for recreational and commercial collecting will be developed and implemented; we as ALAA, as rockhounds and frequent collectors of Davis Creek obsidian need to closely monitor and participate in this planning process. The final thing that I learned is that the FS is heavily relying on social media - Face Book and Twitter--to alert and communicate with the public. ALAA, the federation PLAC Committees and all interested and concerned users of our public land need to solicit people to monitor Forest Service FB and Twitter sites and alert the appropriate people in their respective groups of announcements and activity.

Source: ALAA newsletter, Jan. to Mar., 2020. p. 13

VARISCITE

by Bill Walther

from the Independence, MO Gemrock

One fine day in 1830, a distinctive green mineral caught the eye of a German geologist, J. A. Streng. He decided to name



Variscite in matrix Photo: Freelmages.com

it variscite because it was found in a place called Variscia by the Romans. After the initial discovery, more deposits were found in Austria and the Congo, but as the specimens were not of gem quality, no one got excited about it.

Much later, in Clay Canyon, Fairfield, Utah, beautiful nodules of lovely green variscite were found. They came in various shades of yellow-

green and with spider web veins of a dark mineral running through them. This gave the Fairfield variscite a distinctive beauty and resulted in much demand for cabochons and polished specimens.

The Fairfield nodules occur in a zone of crushed and brecciated limestone which became the channel through which phosphate-charged waters leaked down from the surface and combined with aluminum in the rocks to produce that gemmy aluminum phosphate mineral.

Later, variscite of a lower grade was found near Lucin Utah and in Utah's Stansbury Mountains. Some high grade variscite is now being produced from several locations in Esmeralda and Mineral counties in Nevada.

Variscite, usually found in massive nodules, does occur in crystal form, but such crystals are rare, and the micro-mounters jump for joy when they acquire one.

Variscite makes a good substitute for turquoise, but its use as such doesn't make much sense economically as it is scarcer and more expensive in the better grades than turquoise. Variquoise, which is a mixture of variscite and black veining material, is also used in jewelry as a turquoise substitute.



Broken Arrow Mine Variscite-Esmeralda Co. Photo: Browns Trading.com

Variscite, with a hardness of 4.5-5 is fairly easy to work with although the inclusions in it sometimes undercut. When sawing variscite, try to avoid using oil as a saw coolant as the oil may affect the color. If you must use oil, wash the slabs well with a good detergent as soon as possible after sawing.

Variscite is heat sensitive. Don't get it too hot when dopping it and avoid overheating when polishing.. Use plenty of water when grinding to shape on a 220 grit wheel. Sand wet through 600 grit, and very carefully pre-polish on a well worn 600 grit cloth running dry. Polish on leather with Linde A or on felt using cerium or tin oxide or Linde A. Then stand back and admire that lovely green gem you have polished.

Sources: Puget Sounder, The Agatizer, Osage Hills Gems, The Glacial Drifter.

Editor's Note: Broken Arrow Mine is located in the Candelaria Mining district near Tonopah, and is owned by **David Otteson**. Field Trip Director **Rob Kendrick** is trying to negotiate a field trip to Otteson's holdings for later this season. .

GEOLOGY ROCKS BUT PHYSICS RULES!

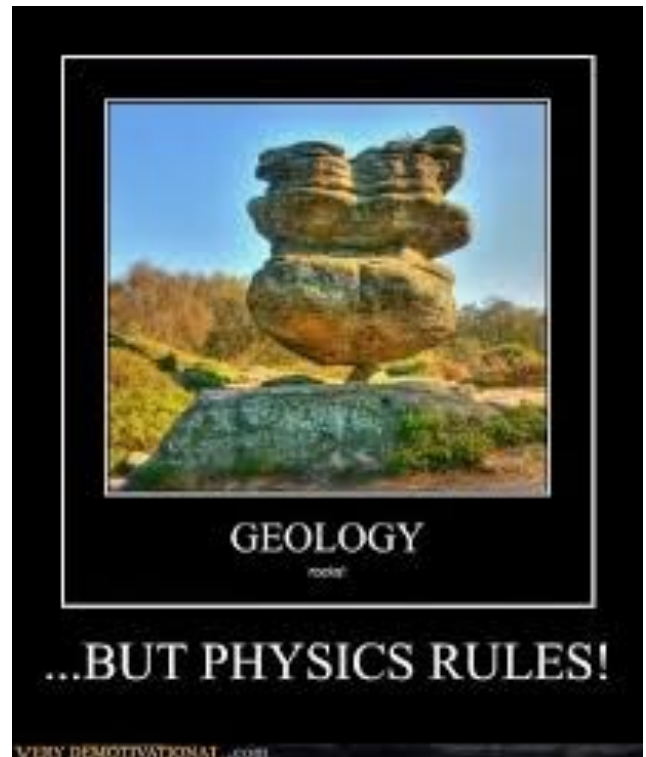


Image: cheezburger.com

Contact **Julie Hilsabeck** to schedule **ALL USES** of the Rock Building. She manages the schedule to avoid scheduling conflicts such as we had in January. Julie can be reached at jchilsa@yahoo.com or 775-848-0569.