

# The Rock Bag

October 2009 Volume 47 Issue 10

**Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society**  
**Oxnard, California**



**M. Tetreault**

**OGMS Editor**

**1134 Sunnycrest Ave.**

**Ventura, CA 93003**

## Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society

P. O. Box 246  
Oxnard, CA 93032

**Web address: [www.oxnardgem.com](http://www.oxnardgem.com)**

The Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society is a non-profit organization formed to increase our knowledge in geology, mineralogy and other such related fields in the earth sciences. We classify, cut, grind and polish rocks and minerals for our personal collections and to display at club shows. We learn from each other through club speakers, programs and monthly fieldtrips. We co-operate with other clubs to encourage others to participate in our activity.

The Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society is a member of the State of California Federation of Mineralogical Society and the National Federation of Mineralogical Society.

**Meeting held:** 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. Potlucks: 6:30 P.M.

**Place:** Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, CA (Thousand Oaks Room)

**Dues:** \$15.00 per adult; \$2.00 per junior member (age 12 to 18 years)

### OGMS Officers for 2009

President	Kay Hara	kharaftdoc@aol.com	W 525-5415, H 525-7634
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President (Programs)	Brett Johnson	bj9709@yahoo.com	822-3836
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President (Show)	Norb Kinsler		644-6450
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President (Field trips)	Ron Wise	clintwise@hotmail.com	647-4393
Recording Secretary	Lee Leighton	ameritus@sbcglobal.net	647-4594
Treasurer	Stephanie Hagiwara	purplehawk@hotmail.com	986-2006

### Appointed Standing Committee Chairs

Corresponding Secretary	Louisa Carey	big_L76@yahoo.com	(503) 309-6147
Displays/Exhibits	Brett Johnson	bj9709@yahoo.com	822-3836
Editor	Miriam Tetreault	editor_ogms@roadrunner.com	642-5779
Education Director	Donna Knapton	dknapton@hotmail.com	647-8762
Federation Director	Jim Brace-Thompson	jbraceth@roadrunner.com	659-3577
Historian	Open		
Hospitality	Louisa Carey	big_L76@yahoo.com	(503) 309-6147
Librarian	Karen Bialobreski		(707) 648-7634
Member at Large	Miriam Tetreault	editor_ogms@roadrunner.com	642-5779
Membership Secretary	Anne Lewis		485-6356
Public Relations	Norb Tackman	ntack@sbcglobal.net	647-2538
Parliamentarian	Miriam Tetreault	editor_ogms@roadrunner.com	642-5779
Refreshments	Louisa Carey	big_L76@yahoo.com	(503) 309-6147
Sergeant at Arms	Larry Knapton	dknapton@hotmail.com	647-8762
Ways & Means	Jean Wise		647-4393

**Classes:** Silversmithing & Casting: Nancy Bogart, Albert Rubio & Jean Smith  
Lapidary, Opal & Wirewrap: Kay Hara, Dan Gealy, Brett Johnson & Don Minster  
Location: Durley Park, 950 West Hill Street, Oxnard, CA 93030

**Editor:** All members are encouraged to offer an article of interest or any suggestions as to what their interests are and what they'd like to see in the Rock Bag. Remember it is your bulletin! Articles can be submitted by an e-mail attachment or in writing by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month.

Thanks, Miriam

## The Prez sez...

As the year draws to its inevitable end, we think of the up and coming annual November show. However we must now also think of our future leaders and doers for the coming year of 2010. The head of our nominating committee is Louisa Carey who graciously and willingly took on the position. She will ask for help by selecting her committee members. We ask that those who hold positions on the board let her know if you will continue in your office or chairmanship, or want continue in a different position. If you never held an office or chair position and want to do so, please let Louisa know. Nomination and elections will be held at our November meeting and installations will take place at our December Christmas meeting,

This past year I have been blessed with outstanding board members who willingly and diligently carried out their responsibilities, allowing me to enjoy being your president in 2009. We worked well with each other and never at cross purposes. All I can say is much, much thanks to all of you, even to the end of the year.

We still have three months of 2009 left and so much to do with the show coming up so when show chair Norb Kinsler asks for help, I know he will get it. We are 80 + members strong, together we can put on the best annual gem show ever!

See you at our October meeting. ~ Kay

### Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society Presents, "The Undiscovered Gems of Baja"

Brett Johnson, of Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society, will be discussing his many trips to Central Baja. This is a wonderful and beautiful country that has been overlooked by many. The discovery to behold and treasures to find are boundless.

Brett has visited Baja several times over the past three year, and he has brought back exciting stories and gems to share with you. There will be a photo slideshow of his many adventures, several samples of the treasures to be found, and an offer to attend him on his next trip south.

This will be an exciting and informative evening of beautiful landscapes, colorful people, and priceless discoveries that you too could have.

Come join us on Oct. 7th, at 7:30pm in the Thousand Oaks room of the Oxnard Performance Art Center (800 Hobson Way, Oxnard 93030). There will be refreshment, door prizes, and too much fun. ~ Brett Johnson, Program Chair

### MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 2, 2009 General Membership Meeting

- Call to Order:** President Kay Hara called the meeting to order at 7:30P.M.
- Minutes:** The minutes were approved as written.
- Membership:** We have 77 paid members at this time.
- Hospitality:** There were 22 members and 7 guests present. The guests were: W. Younis, Cheryl Phillips, Isabel Fleig, Patricia Thompson, Connie Perez-Moreno, P & J Veronica.
- Treasurer:** We are solvent. Income and expenses were discussed. A motion passed to order 250 club pins. The pins are to be sold for \$5.00.
- Correspondence:** Show notices and ads were put out on the table.
- New Business:** On Sat. Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> between 9:30 and 2:30, there will be interactive outside displays at Wheeler Gorge. This will be a tri-club function. It was well received last year.
- Program:** Tonight's program was a silent auction. \$352.50 was taken in!
- Officer Reports:** 2<sup>nd</sup> VP- There will be a show meeting. Volunteers are needed for the show.
- Federation:** A few spaces are available for ZZYZX. The fall meeting is coming up in November.
- Editor:** Submit articles for the Rock Bag!
- Education:** Donna spoke with the County Superintendent of Schools on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Work continues on making and distributing the Rock Boxes.
- Classes:** Get well Dan! The classes are going well.

**Refreshments:** Maria and Rose.  
**Adjourned:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M. by President Kay Hara.  
 ~ Lee Leighton, Recording Secretary

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 9, 2009  
 Board of Directors Meeting**

**Call to Order:** President Kay Hara called the meeting to order at 7:40 P.M.  
**Minutes:** The minutes were approved as written.  
**Treasurer:** We are solvent. Income and expenses were discussed. A motion was passed to pay the bills.  
**Correspondence:** Badges will go up to \$9 in Jan 2010. Marjorie Fry was thanked for her generous donation of silver.  
**Membership:** A motion was passed to accept Jean Smith, Connie Perez Moreno, and Veronica Phillip as new members. We have 81 paid members at this time.  
**Old Business:** Revised scholarship qualifications will be printed soon. A nominating committee needs to be set up. Louise volunteered.  
**New Business:** The new "Lab Guidelines" sheets have been made. They will be given to the students ASAP.  
**Officer Reports:** 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: The Silent Auction went well at the Membership Meeting. The silent auction made \$353.50., mostly due to Marjorie's generous silver donation.  
**Federation:** We are still promoting the "Paradise Raffle." Birthstone P.O. stamps are being considered. Your support is necessary. American Lands access was discussed.  
**Website:** Students are coming to the Club from the website.  
**Editor:** Submit articles!  
**Education:** Bookmark cards were discussed. They are very useful and good to keep. Different formats were discussed.  
**Classes:** Classes are doing well. 17 Genie wheels are needed. The Diamond Pacific wheels, they should be less than \$1600. We need to bring a motion to the membership.  
**Adjourned:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 as there was no further business.  
 ~ Lee Leighton, Recording Secretary

**New Members !!!**

**Please welcome: Jean Smith, Connie Perez-Moreno & Veronica Phillip to our Club!**

**How Large Can A Geode Be?**

How large can a geode be? I thought geodes were generally small and could fit in your hand. According to a Q&A article in Lapidary Journal, a geode has a hard outer shell with a crystal lined cavity on the inside. The shell must be a different material than the matrix holding it. None of the reference books checked noted how large a geode could be. In 2000, a geode was discovered in Almeria, Spain, that measured 26'x 5.6'x 6.6'. It is so large that 10 people can sit in it? This super geode was formed 6,000 years ago and is full of huge beautiful gypsum crystals. Almeria also has cave houses with roofs, chimneys and regular front walls. The back of the homes are built into the caves. Inside the homes look like your house except that the back walls are carved from the stone walls. Wouldn't it be fun to live in a cave house? I guess geodes can be a lot larger than I thought.

~ By Terry McMillin, MLMS Ghost Sheet, February 2008, from a Questions, Answers & Tips article by Tom and Kay Benham, Lapidary Journal, February 2002; via 8/09 Rockhound Rambling

**Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society**

**Invites you to display at our 2009 Galaxy of Gems Show**

Our theme this year is "Ruby", and the Show will be held on Nov. 21st and 22nd, 2009 at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center (800 Hobson Way, Oxnard). Setup times for your case will be Friday, Nov. 20th between 1:00 pm and 9:30 pm and on Saturday before 9:00 am.

Camp space is available at no cost to exhibitors (Sorry, no hookups). Society guards will be on duty around the clock, and Members will be on hand to assist you in unloading or in any other way that will make you stay enjoyable. A complimentary dinner will be served to exhibitors at 6:00 pm on Friday.

We would be honored to have you take part in our show and would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible. Please return the below entry form to **407 Magnolia Ave., Oxnard, CA 93030** or e-mail me at: **lallmen@yahoo.com** if you would like to attend.

NAME: _____	TEL: _____
ADDRESS: _____	EMAIL: _____
CITY: _____	STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
I WILL EXHIBIT A TOTAL OF ___ CASES.	
I WISH TO BORROW ___ CLUB CASES. (OGMS CASES ARE 48"x24"x24")	
I HAVE ___ OF MY OWN CASES, WHICH IS ___" WIDE, ___" HIGH, & ___" DEEP	
MY OWN CASES WILL BE: UPRIGHT ___, FLAT ___	
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EXHIBITS: _____	
_____	
_____	
CAMPING? ___ FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER? ___ HOW MANY IN YOUR PARTY ___	
<b>DUE TO THE EXTREMELY HIGH INSURANCE PREMIUMS, OXNARD GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY WILL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY LOSS OR DAMAGE TO EXHIBITS.</b>	

**OGMS Scholarship Committee**  
*For membership perusal & approval*

1. The Scholarship Committee will be composed to three (3) active members of the Society, as least one (1) is a board member.
2. The chairperson of the committee will be board appointed and will select fellow committee members, subject to board approval. Membership on the committee is not open to Society members who may be applying for the scholarship themselves or whose children or relatives are applying for the scholarship.
3. The scholarship, which shall be called the Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society Ray Meisenheimer Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student at Oxnard College via the Annual Scholarship Naming Fund

administrated by the Oxnard College Foundation. If no suitable student is found at Oxnard College for the particular year, the committee will be allowed to seek a suitable candidate from other colleges in Ventura County area. This and any other exceptions will be subject to Board approval.

4. The scholarship awarded at this time will be \$500.00 per fiscal year, taken from the general fund but subject to the current financial status of the Society.
5. On or before April 2 of each year, the chairperson shall inform the Oxnard College Foundation that our scholarship is available. If no suitable candidate is found by June 15, the committee has the following options: allow Oxnard College Foundation to keep the award for a suitable candidate the following year or until a year when one is found; have the award returned to the Society treasury; seek a suitable candidate from another college to present the award in the fall of the year. This will need to be arranged with the optional college choice, especially if they have a policy for matching funds like Oxnard College Foundation has. Following Board approval, the committee may award a separate fund amount of \$500.00 or less to an optional college candidate if it allows the Oxnard College Foundation to rollover the funds given it when it finds a suitable candidate at Oxnard College.
6. Awardees must meet the following standards to qualify for the scholarship award: **a]** be a full-time student at Oxnard College, **b]** have earned a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, **c]** be a U.S. citizen or have a permanent resident status, **d]** be pursuing a certificate, degree or transfer to a baccalaureate institution, and **e]** be enrolled in Earth Sciences, Geology, or a directly related field. It shall be further specified to the Oxnard College Foundation that the Society, as donor will select the recipient of the scholarship award based on qualified candidates nominated by the Foundation.
7. Upon the selection of an awardee, the committee will present the individual to the general membership. Unless circumstances make it unfeasible, it is preferred that the individual attend a monthly meeting of the Society as soon as possible after being awarded the scholarship. At that time, the awardee will receive a certificate of acknowledgement fro the committee.
8. It is understood that the scholarship funds will be matched dollar for collar by the Oxnard College Foundation and distributed to the awardee according the Foundation's normal scholarship policies. If an optional candidate from another college is awarded, presentation of the award will be followed by that institution's policies.

### **Field trips**

#### **October 10th, 11th Sat/Sun, Trona Gem O Rama**

**Field Trip:** Trona, Sponsored by the Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society, on Oct.11-12 there will be an outstanding show with free admission. The Show starts Sat from 7:30AM to 5PM and Sun 7:30AM to 4PM. Come join us at the SLG&MS Lapidary and Show Building - 13337 Main St. on the corner of Main & Trona Road. There will be 20 Dealers, 50 exhibits, Geode cutting and sales, Demonstrations, Games, Gem dig, free parking, Snacks & drinks, Grand Prize Drawing, and Hourly door prizes. I would recommend checking out the links below, lots of information and photos. The Show will have several Field Trips put on by the SLG&MS: The Mud Trip is an early start with check-in/sign-up at 7:30 to 9AM on Saturday at \$10.00 per car and departure at 9:30AM. This trip is fun for everyone in the family. We will get to dig in the briny, black mud for the world famous Hanksite barrel crystals. Most of the crystals are fist size and larger. A cluster of large Hanksite barrels is easy to find. This is dirty fun, so wear your ragged and tattered clothes you don't care much for. Brine washing troughs will be on site to wash your crystals and fresh water trucks to wash yourself. The Blow Hole will be held at 2:30PM on Saturday at \$10.00 per car. This is a great show as the company workers' will demonstrate how they 'Blow' the crystals up from the lake bottom to the surface for you to find. Here we will find many different minerals such as: clear and clean Hanksite, halite, borax, and sulfahalite. This is a prefect opportunity to add to your mineral collection. The Pink Halite trip will be held on Sunday morning

with a cost of \$15.00 per car. We will drive out to the Brine pools, where you can 'hunt' around for the beautiful halite clusters that are pink to raspberry in color. This is a safe and fun trip for everyone in the family. The kids love to poke around in the salty crust and the adult are amazed by the size and beauty of the salt crystals.

**When:** October 10th, 11th Sat/Sunday. Saturday two field trips, Mud Trip-7:30-9:00am sign up 9:30am departure \$10per car. Blow Hole-2:30pm \$10 per car. Sunday Pink Halite-9am, \$15 per car

**Directions:** Valley Wells Recreational Area (5.3 miles north of the show) \$5/vehicle (dry camp, no resv.) Flush toilets and out side shower. Alternate accommodations TRONA RV PARK-1 mile south of show (water, sewer, hot shower, resv. 800-626-5626 ext260 Samson. <http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/valley-wells.htm>

**Tools:** Old clothes and shoes, rubber boots, rubber gloves, pry bars buckets, brush, boxes, newspaper, sunscreen. There is no shade, and it can be hot. If you are staying the night, camping gear.

**Material to Collect:** Mud Trip - hanksite cluster and barrel crystals, fist size and larger, trona, borax.

Blow Hole - clear and clean hanksite, halite, borax, and sulfohalite. Pink halite

**Links:** Main Menu: <http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/FLYER.htm>

Web site Map of links & information: <http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/GEM-O-RAMA.htm>

Motels: <http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/Motels.htm>

Collecting Information: <http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/Collecting.html>

Field Trip information:

Mudsite: <http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/Mud-Digging.htm>

Blow Hole: <http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/Pipe-Prep.htm>

Pink Halite: <http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub/Lake-Collecting.htm>

**Contact:** Searles Lake Gem & Minerals Society 13337 Main St. Trona, CA 760-372-5356

[slgms@iwvisp.com](mailto:slgms@iwvisp.com)

### **Upcoming Field Trips 2009:**

**The field trips listed below are tentative, they might change.** All are Tri Club field trip with either Conejo, Oxnard or Ventura leading. Each month there will be information in the bulletin, and a flyer/map at the club meeting.

**October-** Trona Gem O Rama, Pink Halite, Hanksite

**November-** Somis Fossils, Sand dollar, Clams, Gastropod fossils

**November-** Wiley's Well, Geodes, Nodules, Chalcedony, Petrified Iron Wood, Agate

**December-** Ant Hill, Shark Teeth Fossils

### **Upcoming Field Trips 2010:**

**January-** Quartzsite - Petrified Iron wood, geodes, malachite (we will go the same week as the Pow - Wow)

**These are upcoming without dates**

Ant Hill-shark teeth

Acton-agate, small nodules, geodes

Independence/Bishop-Ammonites fossil, garnets, other minerals

Trilobites in the Mojave desert area, I'm researching this site

Jade Cove-Nephrite Jade

Jalama Beach-Fish fossils, plant fossils, agate, petrified whale bone

Road Trip-2010 will probably be around June and heading to

Arizona, New Mexico, going to Petrified National Forest, Crater and

collecting a several sites. Turquoise is one, I'm still researching this.

~ **Robert Sankovich, VP Field Trips Conejo/Ventura Clubs** 805-494-7734 [rmsorca@adelphia.net](mailto:rmsorca@adelphia.net)


## **LITHOPHYLLOSIS?**

Do you have LITHOPHYLLOSIS? There is NO Cure! The word comes from Latin: *lithos* meaning rock: *phyl*, and attraction to: and *osis*, condition. Put them all together and you get a condition where the victim has an uncontrollable attraction to rocks. The disease can strike anyone, at any time, at any age, and . . . IS EXTREMELY CONTAGIOUS!

Sounds like common old ROCK POX to me, we have had that for years anyway! It is often caught at, and symptoms may become aggravated by, but may also for some be relieved by, attending rock shows, club meetings, and field trips. Although be sure to use caution as all these things are HIGHLY addictive!! And are usually passed on to your children, who will then be life long sufferers.  
 ~ From the Beehive Buzzer 9/09, via Golden Spike 9/09

# October 2009

## Monthly Planner

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<b>Gather up goodies for the Country Store</b>																																																																																																									

**Help Promote Our Club – and Help the Community  
At Wheeler Gorge on October 3**

From **9:30 AM to 2:30 PM on Saturday, October 3**, the Wheeler Gorge Visitor Center on Route 33 will hold an open house fundraiser to raise money for improvements to the center, and they've invited various outdoors groups to participate. This includes the three Ventura County gem and mineral societies. If you can spare even an hour that day, we invite and welcome your help during this event.

They'll have an outdoor space for us to highlight what we do and, hopefully, thereby attract new members. I'll be representing both our club and the Ventura club. To demonstrate rock grinding, shaping, and polishing, I'll be bringing a Genie, along with a framed display of steps in making a cab. I'll also have a small display case showing off our state rock, fossil, mineral, and gemstone, and Larry and Donna Knapton are providing their display of "Cinderella Stones" (ugly on the outside, but a beauty on the inside). Ahead of the event, I'll be helping Mike Havstad (the organizer) cut five geodes, which they'll be giving out as hourly raffle prizes. We'll also have a Treasure Chest of tumble-polished stones to let each child go home with a free treasure, and Rob Sankovich will be bringing his big pieces cut and polished with an angle grinder on behalf of the Conejo club. We did this last year, and it was a fun event that attracted a lot of visitors. See you there!

~ *Jim Brace-Thompson, OGMS Federation Director*

**Win a Trip to Paradise – and Help the CFMS Endowment Fund!**

As we've been noting the last couple months, Camp Paradise is sponsored by the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS). The camp is located near Marysville, CA, and each year there, the CFMS offers classes that include faceting, gem and soft stone carving, lapidary, silversmithing, wire wrapping, glass bead making, and more. The cost is normally \$350, which covers a week of classes, meals, and room. In 2010, two sessions will be offered, one May 16-21, the other May 23-28. Here's your chance for a week of Paradise for only five bucks (or \$20 for five chances to win)! The deadline for entries is October 31, and you may purchase entry tickets from Kay Hara at our October meeting. Clubs that sell \$250 worth of tickets are entered into a drawing for a second chance to win!

Proceeds from this raffle go to support the CFMS Endowment Fund that was formed to provide a stable source of income to financially assist the programs and services the CFMS provides to its members societies. (CFMS is the larger, regional umbrella organization to which clubs like our own OGMS belong.)

Beyond this individual raffle, CFMS welcomes donations at any time to the Endowment Fund. Donations of any amount are gladly accepted; donations of \$25 make you a "Booster" and a CFMS Booster pin will be sent to you; donations of \$100 or more qualify you as a "Patron" and you'll receive the Booster pin and also have your name inscribed on the CFMS Patron Honor Plaque. Checks made out to "CFMS Endowment Fund" may be sent to Pat LaRue, CFMS Executive Secretary/Treasurer, P.O. Box 1657, Rialto, CA 92377-1657. All gifts to the CFMS Endowment Fund are tax deductible as allowed by law.

~ *Jim Brace-Thompson, OGMS Federation Director*

**Birthstone Postage Stamps:  
Write a Letter to Support the AFMS Effort!**

For some time now, Wendell Mohr of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) has been encouraging rockhounds coast-to-coast to lobby the U.S. Postal Service to create a set of U.S. postage stamps around the theme of the 12 birthstones. Wendell is AFMS Commemorative Stamp Chairman, and many have supported him in his effort. For instance, AFMS Past President Shirley Leeson and President Joy Bourne have spread the word; in fact, Nancy and I spent a little time manning a booth at the 2008 Tucson show, where Shirley and other AFMS officers were diligently distributing literature to all passers-by beneath a large poster depicting the traditional birthstones. And Bob Jones devoted his entire "On the Rocks" column in the recent

July issue of *Rock & Gem* magazine to this effort. Bob's excellent article tells where each birthstone can be collected within the United States (for instance, topaz in Utah; diamonds in Arkansas), along with other fascinating tidbits about birthstones. I encourage all OGMS members to help this campaign by sending letters supporting a set of 12 birthstone postage stamps to: **Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, Stamp Development, U.S. Postal Service, 1735 N. Lynn Street – Room 5013, Arlington, VA 22209-6432**. Also, see <http://www.amfed.org/stamps.htm> for helpful info to use in this endeavor. The Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee receives 50,000 proposals for new stamps or stamp sets each year, so they need to hear from *a lot* of voices to approve any one proposal. Let's let them hear yours!

~ *Jim Brace-Thompson, AFMS Juniors Program Chair*

### **The American Lands Access Association: How You Can Get Involved in Land Access Issues**

[*Note: The following is excerpted and adapted from Dick Pankey's article "What's Happening with ALAA" that appeared in the September 2009 AFMS Newsletter.*]

The Omnibus Public Lands Bill passed the House and the Senate, was signed by the President, and is now the law. However, the exact effect on the public, on rockhounds, on our rights to access our Public Lands is still not known. And it will not be determined until each BLM District/office, each Forest Service District/office, each of the other affected governmental agencies *interprets* these laws and incorporates them into their specific Management Plan. This is where we can still have a say. This is where we can still have a voice and have affect on the final implementation. How? By becoming involved in the process. By talking with the managers of our Public Lands; by participating in the meetings called for public input; by providing our ideas and wishes with letters, e-mails and telephone calls. By being involved in the process.

How do we, how do YOU get started? All of us live less than 100 miles from a Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Forest Service or other agency office. Better yet, go to the office that manages the land where your favorite collecting site is. The first step is to get acquainted with the office and the personnel. Get signed up to receive notices of public meetings and/or get on their general mailing list. Next, get involved—attend meetings, learn how that office implements the current laws and how they propose to implement the Omnibus Laws, provide comments and get other involved with your efforts.

How else to get involved? Via the American Lands Access Association (ALAA), a group that was founded to serve as a lobbying arm of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies in order to advocate for open public access to Public Lands. If you're not already a member of ALAA, please consider joining! Membership for individuals (or husband and wife) is \$25 per year. Clubs can also join, but so many more people are covered, the society membership fee is \$50 per year. You can read more about ALAA on the web site <<http://amlands.org>> where you can also download a membership application. Become an advocate, a promoter of ALAA and our mission. Keep your society and its members informed with the news from ALAA. Encourage participation in our calls to action for response to legislation and management plans. Be involved, be an advocate and participate in the legislative and regulatory process.

~ *Dick Pankey, ALAA President and a CFMS Past President*

### **NOTES FROM JOHN**



#### **By John Martin, AFMS Conservation & Legislation Committee More Wilderness Proposals in the Wind**

You know the old saying "Keep your friends close and keep your enemies closer," well, I have just received the latest copy of the California Wilderness Coalition newsletter, and they are at it again. They are requesting donations to support their lobbying efforts to

sway our Senators to create and pass legislation to create new wilderness areas throughout the deserts of California. In addition to the massive land grab represented by the Omnibus bill that passed earlier this year, they are requesting proposed legislation for over 400,000 *more* acres to be added as wilderness areas or, worse, to be included in national parks or monuments. Some of the new wilderness areas being discussed encompass over 260,000 acres that include the Avawats Mountains north of Baker and the Soda Mountains north of I-15 between Barstow and Baker; both areas contain prime collecting grounds. They propose another 80,000 acres between Fort Irwin and Death Valley National Park (an area known as the "Bowling Alley") be added to the national park. The creation of several new national monuments and national parks in the California deserts is also on their agenda, which would eliminate all collecting in those areas. Also under consideration are the Deep Creek area of the San Bernardino Mountains and Surprise Canyon of the Panamint Mountains for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River Designations. The Castle Mountains are located along the California-Nevada border and are surrounded on three sides by the Mojave National Preserve, and over 30,000 acres are being considered for induction into that Preserve.

All these new proposals would put a real damper on our ability to drive in, collect at, camp on and enjoy our public desert lands if enacted. Please consider contacting your elected officials before it is too late, or the only displays to fill our cases at rock shows in the future will be photographs we have bought from the lobby groups, like the Sierra Club or California Wilderness Coalition. We have our own Lobby group and I encourage you to help support our effort to counter these other groups by supporting, joining or donating to the American Lands Action Association (ALAA) and help save our collecting areas and keep our Public Lands open to all public users. ~ John

## How Old Is The Grand Canyon?



New studies of mineral formations in caves along the Grand Canyon now indicate that parts of the chasm may be 17 million years old.

The canyon's walls are full of caves that contain lumps of minerals called mammillaries. These mound-shaped lumps usually form just below the surface of pools that are full of minerals. Water levels in such pools can drop when, for example, a change in climate occurs or the Earth's crust shifts. The mammillaries remain, even when the water level drops. Scientists can analyze concentrations of metals inside the mounds to figure out when their pools went dry. Carol Hill, a geologist at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and colleagues studied mammillary formations in nine caves near the Grand Canyon. Most of these caves lie within a few miles of the Colorado River, which carved the rocky gorge. All the sampled mounds were within three-quarters of a mile above the river's current level. Analyses of the mounds in the western

region of the Grand Canyon suggest that 17 million years ago the level of groundwater in the area was about 3,800 feet higher than it is today. By 7.6 million years ago, the water had dropped to 3,050 feet above the river's current level. About 2 million years ago, the water was only 390 feet higher than it is today. Over that time, water levels dropped as the river carved deeper into the canyon's floor. In the eastern region of the Grand Canyon, analyses suggest that the river's carving action started much later but took place far more quickly. In that area, the groundwater level (and probably the river level) dropped almost as far as it did on the western side, 3,000 feet, but in only one-fifth the time—just in the past 3.7 million years. ~ Via 9/09 Rockhouser Review

## How Large Can A Geode Be?

How large can a geode be? I thought geodes were generally small and could fit in your hand. According to a

Q&A article in Lapidary Journal, a geode has a hard outer shell with a crystal lined cavity on the inside. The shell must be a different material than the matrix holding it. None of the reference books checked noted how large a geode could be. In 2000, a geode was discovered in Almeria, Spain, that measured 26'x 5.6'x 6.6'. It is so large that 10 people can sit in it? This super geode was formed 6,000 years ago and is full of huge beautiful Gypsum crystals. Almeria also has cave houses with roofs, chimneys and regular front walls. The back of the homes are built into the caves. Inside the homes look like your house except that the back walls are carved from the stone walls. Wouldn't it be fun to live in a cave house? I guess geodes can be a lot larger than I thought.

~ By Terry McMillin, MLMS Ghost Sheet, February 2008, from a Questions, Answers & Tips article by Tom and Kay Benham, Lapidary Journal, February 2002; via 8/09 Rockhound Rambling

## Upcoming Shows

### October 3-4 2009, Fallbrook, CA

Fallbrook Gem & Mineral Society  
Fallbrook Gem & Mineral Museum  
123 W. Alvarado Street  
Hours: 10 - 4 both days  
Mary Fong-Walker (760) 728-1130  
Email: [ikonmiming@gmail.com](mailto:ikonmiming@gmail.com)

### October 10-11 2009, Trona, CA

Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society  
Searles Gem & Mineral Show Building  
13337 Main Street  
Hours: Sat. 7:30-5; Sun. 7:30-4  
Jim & Bonnie Fairchild (760) 372-5356  
Email: [sigms@iwvisp.com](mailto:sigms@iwvisp.com)  
Website: [www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub](http://www1.iwvisp.com/tronagemclub)

### October 17 2009, Woodland Hills, CA

Woodland Hills Rockchippers  
First United Methodist Church  
22700 Sherman Way, West Hills  
Hours: Sat. 10-5  
Email: [show@rockchippers.org](mailto:show@rockchippers.org)  
Show Flyer: [click here.](#)

### October 17-18 2009, Placerville, CA

El Dorado County Mineral & Gem Society  
El Dorado County Fairgrounds  
Hours: 10-5 daily  
Jackie Cerrato (530) 676-2472  
Email: [info@rockandgemshow.org](mailto:info@rockandgemshow.org)  
Website: <http://www.eldoradomineralandgem.org>  
Show Website: <http://www.rockandgemshow.org>  
Show Flyer: [click here.](#)

### October 17-18 2009, Santa Rosa, CA

Santa Rosa Gem & Mineral Society  
Santa Rosa Veterans Building  
1351 Maple Ave. (Opposite Fairgrounds)  
Hours: Sat. 10-6; Sun. 10-5  
Website: [www.gem-n-i.org](http://www.gem-n-i.org)  
Show Flyer: [click here.](#)

### October 17-18 2009, Whittier, CA

Whittier Gem & Mineral Society  
Whittier Community Center  
7630 Washington Avenue  
Hours: Sat. 10-5 both days  
Jay Valle: (626) 934-9764  
Email: [res19pnb@verizon.net](mailto:res19pnb@verizon.net)

### November 7-8 2009, Lancaster, CA

Palmdale Gem & Mineral Society  
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds  
2551 W. Ave. H, Hwy 14  
Hours: 9 - 5 both days  
Susan Chaissin-Walblom (661) 943-1861  
Email: [SLChaisson@yahoo.com](mailto:SLChaisson@yahoo.com)  
Website: [palmdalegems.org](http://palmdalegems.org)

### November 7-8 2009, Ridgecrest, CA

Indian Wells Gem & Mineral Society  
Desert Empire Fairgrounds  
520 S. Richmond Rd  
Hours: 9 - 5 both days  
John DeRosa (760) 375-7905  
Email: [schiller@ridgecrest.ca.us](mailto:schiller@ridgecrest.ca.us)

### November 14-15 2009, Victorville, CA

Victor Valley Gem & Mineral Society  
100 Placerville Drive  
San Bernardino Co. Fairgrounds  
17800 - 7th Street  
Hours: 9-5 daily  
Vigil Melton (760) 900-0507  
Website: [www.vvgmc.org](http://www.vvgmc.org)

### December 5-6 2009, Barstow, CA

Mojave Gem & Mineral Society  
Community Center  
841 Barstow Road  
Hours: 10-5 daily  
Gene Haines (760) 256-0595  
Email: [janetwentz@earthlink.net](mailto:janetwentz@earthlink.net)  
Website: [www.mdgms.org](http://www.mdgms.org)

