



Lake City Rockhound News

NORTH IDAHO MINERAL CLUB

FEBRUARY 2012

P.O. Box 1643 Hayden, ID 83835

MEETING AT LAKE CITY SENIOR CENTER 1916 LAKEWOOD DRIVE

667-4628 6:00 P.M. 3rd Thursday of month Visitors Welcome

See the NFMS web site at www.amfed.org/nfms See OUR web site for the club at www.northidahomineralclub.com

MEETING ON FEBRUARY 16– 6:00 PM

PROGRAM: CUTTING AND FACETING OF THE
AMERICAN GOLDEN TOPAZ

LEON AGEE WILL PRESENT THE SLIDE PROGRAM OF HIS MANUFACTURE OF THE EQUIPMENT TO FACET THIS ENORMOUS GEM, AND THEN HOW THE FACETING WAS DONE...AN AMAZING PROGRAM.

There will be a SILENT AUCTION and REFRESHMENTS

The American Golden Topaz has local history!

(from Wikipedia) The American Golden Topaz a 172 faceted topaz weighing 22,892.5 carats (4.5785 kg), is the largest cut yellow topaz in the world, and one of the largest faceted gems of any type in the world. Originating from Minas Gerais, Brazil, it was cut by Leon Agee over a period of two years from an 11.8 Kg (26 lb) stream rounded cobble owned by Drs. Marie and Edgar Borgatta. It was contributed jointly by the Borgattas and by Rockhound hobbyists of America to the Smithsonian Institution in 1988 and is displayed in the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

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## Minutes of the meeting on January 19, 2012

Nine faithful members of the club met in spite of rotten weather— and thank you so much for your “sacrifice”. Bill laid out a terrific silent auction which we started on right away and throughout the evening.

The meeting was called to order by newly elected President Bill Johnson at 6:20. In the absence of both Diane and Tammy, Bev took a few notes as secretary. The treasurer gave his report.

Show report: 15 vendors have paid in full or part, and those who have been contacted by phone bring that number even higher. There will be another show meeting soon.

The club members present agreed to continue our membership in ALAA. Everett gave a brief summary of recent review going on in forest plan and management. Example—it is proposed that 240 more miles of roads face closure in North Idaho. Tom Crimmins is scheduled to speak at the annual ALAA meeting during the NMFS meeting at Kennewick. The NFMS convention and annual meetings will take place at Kennewick on May 18-21. great information—everyone is welcome to attend (without voting privileges), and the Kennewick show is always great.

Be sure to read all the information provided in the Northwest Newsletter each month. **If you don't get it by snail mail, look for it on the NFMS website. ([www.amfed.org/nfms](http://www.amfed.org/nfms))** The plans for this year do not involve so much traveling and are well planned already. Oregon, here we come! Leader and trail boss-Doug True, from Billings. Warren had some proposals for three possible trips this summer.

The meeting was adjourned at 7 PM for a great program furnished by Bill Johnson (as Leon Agee was snowbound in Deer Park). We viewed one of Planet Earth series which focused on the geology of the western U.S.

The Senior Center furnished hot pots with decaf and regular coffee, which was very welcome, with additional cookies and things from Bev and Bob and Bill. BB

**HINTS AND TIPS: GEODES** Have you ever had a bunch of geodes you would like to cut on a saw but wanted to minimize the cuts to the crystals inside? Most geodes do not have the same crystal concentration all around on the inside. Try rolling the geode on a flat surface several times and mark the “up” side each time. Then cut on a plane parallel with the flat surface. Crystal growth inside the geode is probably most developed at the top and bottom of its resting position. One reader of this info says he saws his in the vertical—exposing cross sections. Dusty Roks 7/01- RR 1/02

## Rockhounding on Washington State's Public Land

AFMS Conservation and Legislation Committee

John Martin

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Within the Northwest Federation there shines a star in the Pacific Northwest, that is the star of a number of Rockhounds of Washington State. During the 1990s rules and regulations for collecting Rocks, Minerals, Fossils and petrified wood on state owned public lands by amateur collectors met with different interpretations depending on the agency and agent in the field. Then in late 2009 the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) proposed rule changes that would make it a gross misdemeanor or a felony to collect rocks of WDFW land. While it has been the case since 1990 that rock collecting on State public land has been illegal, the penalty has been a citation with a fine of around \$100. It was discovered that decisions regarding amateur rock collecting by the WDFW were arbitrary not based on research or study despite the fact they initially claimed otherwise.

It was decided by the members of several of the Washington State's Gem and Mineral Clubs not only to protest the proposed rule changes, but to seek a modification of the prohibition against recreational rock collecting through state legislative action. Several members of various clubs contacted their local state legislators and proposed making changes to Washington State laws regarding the non-commercial amateur rock collecting on state owned property. The proposed legislation will define Rockhounding as a legitimate recreational activity and define state wide rules for amateur rock collecting.

What is proposed is to align the State law with Federal law (BLM's Rock Collection Guide - Washington and Oregon), a guide that was worked out between the BLM and Washington State Mineral Council (WSMC) and Oregon Council of Rock and Mineral Clubs (OCRMC). After several months of conversations with various elected officials in the state, one was found that had an open ear and agreed to sponsor the state legislation.

SB 6057 was introduced in January 2012 and shortly there after HB 2600 was introduced and both are now going through the legislative process. Following the progress of both bills through the legislative process can be tracked through the ALAA Website <http://www.amlands.org/6652/92612.html> or [www.amlands.org](http://www.amlands.org) then to the *Active Legislation* page and *Washington State* page.

In closing, the introducing of these two bills is but the first volley in the battle to win the right to 'recreationally' collect rock of Washington public land. Flintknappers and Rockhounds of Washington are highly motivated and determined to effect a positive change. For more information from the Washington State Rockhounds contact

James C. Keffer [jckeffer@comcast.net](mailto:jckeffer@comcast.net), Ed Thomas [feather@hughes.net](mailto:feather@hughes.net) or Brian Waters [bwaters2011@gmail.com](mailto:bwaters2011@gmail.com)

These folks are to be commended for their positive action taken to ensure that Rockhounding on Washington State's Public Lands is available now and for generations to come. Kudos for this extraordinary effort goes to the Washington State Mineral Council and the Puget Sound Knappers, a flint-knapping group reaching throughout the continent. Their website is [Puget Sound Knappers http://pugetsoundknappers.com/index.html](http://pugetsoundknappers.com/index.html).

[This](#) is a shining example of what needs to be accomplished in all states where amateur rock collecting is in danger of becoming extinct or access to public lands is being limited to special interest groups. Become Pro-Active in the decisions that regulate Rockhounding in your state.

Credit to the Rock Likker of Walla Walla, Jan. 2012

#### GEMSTONES FOUND IN WYOMING

The Metals and Precious Stones Section of the Wyoming State Geological Survey has identified a handful of gemstones that were not formerly known to be in Wyoming. Not only does Wyoming have 23 known diamond deposits, it also has a number of colored gemstones including sapphires, io/ites, garnets and chromium diopside that have been identified by geologists in the past few years.

Geologists continue to add more to the list. WSGS Senior Economic Geologists W. Dan Hausel said, "It's amazing what we don't know about gemstones in this state. We're still finding new gemstones all the time."

Hausel said a recent diamond hunt in the Leucite Hills area of the Red Desert in southwest Wyoming turned up an interesting deposit of peridot, a quality gem found in olivine deposits. Peridot usually occurs in rocks intergrown with other materials. Hausel said it took about 3 million years to form the Leucite Hills, which contains extremely rare volcanic rocks. Olivine is formed in a matter of minutes or hours in cooling Lava, a very rare event.

(from Bridger Valley Pioneer 5/03, The Pegmatite 11/03]

#### PERIDOT

The name peridot is a French word derived from the Arabic *tende*; meaning "gem".

Peridot is a member of a family collectively known as olivine. The name olivine comes from the Latin *oliva*, meaning olive, because of the color. During the time of the Crusades, many peridots were sent to Europe labeled as emeralds. The peridot shows as green as an emerald under artificial light but does not reach the intensity or shade of green characteristic of emeralds in ordinary light. Rather, they show a warm, soft olive or yellowish green. The Geological Museum in London has an emerald-cut peridot of 136 carats which is almost emerald green.

The hardness of peridot is 6 to 7 on the Mohs scale, soft for a gemstone. Peridots lose their polish, scratching easily, and their very good cleavage makes them too delicate for setting in rings. Still, some of the finest known gems in museums are peridot. The Smithsonian has the world's largest peridot, and antique cut, slightly cloudy stone of 310 carats.

Olivine is associated with volcanic rocks, and small chunks of this material, ejected by volcanic activity, can be found in the desert near Baker, Ca. These "peridot bombs" are believed to be xenoliths of peridotite, formed in the mantle and brought up rapidly in eruptive blasts. Peridot has the further distinction of being the only gem crystal to come from outer space, embedded in meteorites. [Original source unknown, via Agatizer 7/03, via The Pegmatite 11/03]

Olivine must be one of the very basic building stones (minerals) that compose our planet and ???more. It comes from within the molten core of our earth and is also found in rocks from space that land on our planet. Remember Olivine in the program we had in January???

**2012 OFFICERS OF THE NORTH IDAHO MINERAL CLUB, INC.****PRESIDENT—BILL JOHNSON (771-2687 C) 7653009****VICE-PRESIDENT JAMES FINCKBONE 208 752 1838****SECRETARY DIANE ROSE, 659-6173****TREASURER MIKE BURTON (818-6317 C)****FEDERATION DIRECTOR EVERETT HEADRICK 772-7643****FEDERATION DELEGATE OPEN****WSMC DELEGATE OPEN****REFRESHMENT CHAIRMAN OPEN****HOSPITALITY BOB BOCKMAN 773 5384****FIELD TRIP OPEN****MEMBERSHIP MIKE BURTON & Bob Bockman****SHOW 2012—BILL JOHNSON 765 3099****NEWSLETTER EDITOR—BEV BOCKMAN****PROGRAMS—CLUB MEMBERS & BEV****\_WEBMASTER—MIKE BURTON 818-6317 c****MAMMOTH FINDS**

by Glenn Leitz

Mammoths were an exotic, elephant-like creature that roamed the earth over a period of hundreds of thousands of years. The huge animals dominated our area some 10,000 years ago, after the last ice age ended.

The geography of this region was basically the same then as it is today, but the temperature was colder and a strange assortment of animals lived here: primitive horses and camels, huge beavers, and giant sloths; immense wolves, bears, and saber-tooth cats; large primitive deer, elk, and bison. All trod the vast prairies and forests, making what must have been a mind-boggling menagerie.

Shortly after the first settlers arrived, and almost before they were settled into a regular routine of life, some of the more inquisitive ones began to eye the murky springs and bogs that formed part of the local geography. The strange objects in the murk seemed to deserve attention and soon men were grappling into the depths with long poles and iron hooks.

In 1876, along Hangman Creek near Latah, members of the pioneer Coplen family were the first to uncover a major find. Their site yielded a huge assortment of bones and tusks, creating a pandemonium of interest and attention. Soon all of the region's springs were being probed and searched. Traces of a variety of pre-historic animals were found, but generally in rather limited quantities.

Then a few months later, there was another important find twelve miles away on Pine Creek, just southeast of Rosalia. Here two brothers, Bill and Tom Donahoe, had begun probing their site when they hooked onto a submerged object that required a major effort to retrieve! They pulled and heaved with all their combined strength but couldn't budge what ever it was that their grapple had connected with. They rigged up a complex set of tripods and pulleys, but this also proved to be ineffectual.

As many as eight or nine neighbors were recruited to supply additional man-power. Even a drainage ditch was dug to aid the extraction. Finally, perseverance bore fruit and a huge skull was wrestled from the muck. Even though the tusks had been torn off in the struggle, the skull was an eye-popping three- plus feet in width!

A large assortment of thighs, pelvises, backbones, and other assorted skeleton remains were found at both the aforementioned locations. To some people's dismay, the huge sweeping tusks that were the trademark feature of the mammoth were soft and brittle and many feil apart on exposure to the air.

The Coplen site was the winner in sheer number and weight of bones recovered. Other sites continued to be investigated, though with far less success. Even famous paleontologists were attracted to the area, and the finds received worldwide attention in scientific circles.

Both finders of the major bone stashes loaded up an assortment of their mammoth bones and "went on tour" through much of the Northwest, with plans to even go as far as San Francisco. However, the farmers taste for show business turned cold. They sold their specimens, which ended up in the possession of scientific organizations in the East.

The bones from the Latah find were the basis for a major display at a pre-1900 Chicago Exposition [a forerunner of today's World Fairs]. At the conclusion of the Exposition, they were put into the Field Museum at Chicago, where they are still part of an important display.

The huge Pine Creek skull is at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

Our region's "Mammoth Finds" have a real claim to fame in contributing to this important story of history and science. Numerous specimens of post-ice age animal remains have continued to be uncovered in river banks, road cuts, and shallow lakes, but nothing has ever quite equaled these local events of the 1870's.

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**CLUB WEB SITE**

***www.northidahomineralclub.com***

**Save ALL your cancelled stamps for cancer re-search-bring to meeting, and give to Everett H.**

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**2012 ROCK AND GEM SHOWS IN WA., OR., ID., AND MT.**

CONSULT [www.amfed.org/nfms](http://www.amfed.org/nfms) for show details.

FEB 25-26 IDAHO GEM AND MIN. CLUB BOISE, ID

MARCH 3-4 OWYHEE GEM MIN.SOC.-CALDWELL, ID

MAR. 10-11 MAGIC VALLEY GEM CLUB—FILER, ID

MAR. 10-11 ROCK & ARROWHEAD CLUB- KLAMATH FALLS, OR

MAR. 30-31 PANORAMA GEM CLUB-COLVILLE, WA

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