

Place: Arden  
Community Club  
Hall Rd  
Arden, WA



Time: 7:00 PM  
Third Tuesday  
Each Month  
(Jan.-Dec.)

## The Panorama Prospector

### March 2012

#### Minutes February 2012

*By Ginger Pitman*

Our regular meeting, following our show meeting was attended by 43 members and 3 visitors. Refreshment for next meeting will be provided by Matt Harbin, Jan Hurley, and Ann Sebright. Thank you guys.

A report was given on some of the upcoming shows including Spokane (May 4-6), our Federation show (May 18-20) and some coming field trip opportunities.

If you are not getting your Northwest Federation Newsletter let us know. Maybe your dues are not current or a mailing list mistake was made.

Sylvia gave our treasurer's report.

Johnie announced the club now has insurance from Feb, 2012 – Feb 2013.

Bill Allen gave our show report, the theme being: "Treasures Far & Wide" The club voted on the jasper to order for our grand prize at the show. We need cases filled, so be planning your case!

The shop committee is looking for more usage of the shop, maybe a class on cabbing. The new blade is on the 18 inch saw. Everything is working well.

Johnie has the scholarship applications ready to go and they will be delivered to the 3 schools. They will be picked up the first of May to be reviewed and awarded by our Trustees.

Mike Furmen, aka the "Opal Man", gave our program on opal from all over the world and his display was impressive. We enjoyed the information and viewing his many opals. They are very beautiful, but you must know how to handle and work with opal.

*end*

#### Oceanview Mine

*By Johnie Pitman*



While Ginger and I were in the warm south this winter, one of the places we went was a "pay to dig" for tourmaline in Pala, CA called The Oceanview Mine (formerly the Pala Chief). Reservations are required and it is \$60 for 5 hours of washing gravel, just like you would for garnets or sapphires. The gravel is in a large pile and the buckets, shovels, washing screens and water are provided. It was just a gorgeous day. The mine is on the side of a hill overlooking Pala and the orange, lemon, grapefruit and avocado groves below. The mine advertises tourmaline, garnet, mica, kunzite, Cleavelandite, morganite, goshenite (clear beryl), purple lepidolite and aquamarine.

There were 40 -50 people doing the dig so it was difficult to get the attention of the owner/operators to find out what some of these minerals look like. My first bucket of material produced a large specimen of kunzite and the owner seemed to think it was worth mounting. He told me that if I would mount it and label it as having come from the "Pala Chief Mine" that it would be worth something, but he didn't say how much. Kunzite is a form of spodumene which is lithium aluminum silicate and has a hardness of 6.5-7.

Rocks with tourmaline crystals were common but most were the black variety called

schorl. There was also some green and pink and some watermelon tourmaline. Mostly they were fractured and about the diameter of a pencil or less. There were a lot of rocks with mica and enough lepidolite to give them a very nice lavender color especially when they are wet. There were also some dark red rocks that they told us were pink beryl, so even if they are not gem quality they should take a good polish. The lepidolite is more grainy than most but if you keep a chunk in your pocket and rub it frequently it still should calm your nerves because some of the lithium will be absorbed through the skin.



[The large piece was in the 1<sup>st</sup> bucket]

We did find a couple of small quartz crystals and another piece or two of something clear but I don't know if they are quartz or maybe goshenite.

I found a large piece of aquamarine on the pile when I went to fill my bucket. It's not gem quality either but should make a nice cab.

It was a beautiful shirt sleeve day and great to do some rockhounding on the last Saturday of January. We've been there and done that now so we can mark it off of the bucket list.

## Box Feat



[Bruce Hurley put these rocks on display at the Spokane Library with a rockshow poster!]

## Bridges to the Past

### Skills

### Workshop:

### Primitive Arrows

With Patrick Farneman

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10-4

Learn to make functional arrows from local wild materials.

**This is a hands-on, learn-as-you-go workshop for people of all skill levels.**

10 spaces available – Call

or email to reserve your space! (509)936-1599, email: [patrickf@bridgestothepast.org](mailto:patrickf@bridgestothepast.org)

**Class Location: Camo'D Arrow Archery Center, 1965 C Hwy 395 S., Chewelah, WA**



Patrick has been practicing ancestral skills for many years and has been teaching at workshops and symposiums since 1997. He loves teaching the old skills that are common to all peoples of the globe.

### Johnie's Jabber

By Johnie Pitman

Our show is fast approaching and my driveway is still muddy with piles of snow keeping it that way. It needs to dry up so I can get the trailer up there to get the show supplies! I still need some of you to fill a display case or two with your treasures, it's pretty easy; just follow Joe's suggestions that were in the last newsletter. It only takes 8-10 items with labels.

Ginger and I did get to spend two days rock hounding in California while in the sunshine this winter, one was to the tourmaline dig at Pala, CA (see lead article) and the other was a day in the Willey's Well area. Lamar and Marlina Tilgner were great guides to an area to collect agate, and another to get porcelain jasper.

Both areas were large with lots of good cutting material, thanks Lamar. We also spent part

of one afternoon looking for agate near Farmington, NM and found a couple of fist size pieces that are similar to Montana agate.

The club has received a very generous scholarship donation, it is to be kept separate from our other scholarship fund and be awarded to junior college and trade school applicants. These scholarships will be processed through our regular system, that is, the trustees will do the evaluation process and select the best qualified student.

The next meeting program will be on field trip safety, I think it needs to be presented before the field trip season gets started.

### **HB 2600**

*By Brian Waters*

As most of you know HB 2600 was given a hearing in the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Despite the low number of rock hounds that showed up and the even smaller number of us that testified this hearing actually went well. I don't remember everyone that showed up at the hearing to support the bill, but thanks to all that did. The rock hounds that testified in favor of the bill were myself, Brian Waters, representing the WSMC, James Keffer, representing the Puget Sound Knappers, and Christina Morrisey, representing the Marysville Rock and Gem Club.

That hearing was on January 27th. On January 31st the bill was passed out of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, but before it was it was amended so that the only state agency that would be effected was the DNR. The WDFW and the State Parks were taken out of the bill, and the limits for collecting rocks was lowered to 25 lbs per day and 250 lbs per year. At this point the WSMC and PSK no longer supported the bill because the collecting limits were too low and the state agency that we really wanted to target with these bills, the WDFW, was taken out of the bill.

HB 2600 actually made it out of another committee after it had been amended, but it was amended one more time during that process so that if it did not have a funding source by June 30th of this year the bill would be null and void. Since we no longer supported the bill that was fine with us. The WSMC and PSK have met with people in the DNR and are working on a non-legislative solution to the situation.

### **Bin There – Done That**

*By Joseph Barreca*



[This is the mandatory “Before Picture”]

Okay, let's admit it. We all have them, piles of rocks somewhere with buckets, bags and boxes full of rocks collected on field trips and left to work their way back into the earth and lose any information about what they are, where and when you found them that might have once been associated with them. I present this picture as proof that my pile was among the worst.

Back in February last year, when writing about Sherry Bamberger's eBay enterprise, I concluded that storage bins were the way to go. Today at Wal\*Mart, I see that they have some for sale at around \$8 each for a size similar to the ones I used. The Wal\*Mart ones have a bigger opening in front than the ones I bought from Uline, so the rocks inside may be more likely to roll out. But at the Wal\*Mart price I could have purchased more of them.

So why bins and not buckets, bags and boxes? They stack. They take up much less space. You don't have to move them to get into them, but you can move them easily if you need to. You can label them. They are waterproof.



[This is the “After Picture”]

The end product looks very organized but there are some downsides. The biggest one is that you have to actually go through all of your rocks and organize them into the bins. I used your basic rock specimen triage:

1. Leaverite = ones I should have left right there but now will end up in a big pile.
2. Needs Work = rocks that should be trimmed down or just made into slabs.
3. Collectable = rocks that are just fine the way they are and need to be grouped.



[The sorting stage]

Going through the forensic evidence from years' worth of collecting rocks, I made a few notes on what works and what does not. In the field it is handy to put rocks in a Ziploc bag, stuff a note in there as to what they are and when and where you collected them and add them to your "collection" when you get back. The two biggest problems are that 1) those bags break down, especially if they are exposed to sunlight and 2) the writing from almost any pen fades, and even if it does not, the paper often turns back into pulp if it gets wet. Buckets don't stack, don't hold much when they are on their side and do hold water if they are not. Cardboard boxes are not terrible but fall apart when wet. Even my wooden apple boxes warped under the weight.

What did work were those clear plastic cases that pastry and berries come in. They are square on the sides and flat on top so you can stack them inside the bins. They did not seem affected by sunlight. Other hard plastic containers work too or small bins. Labels on the outside were questionable. Always use a permanent marker if you can and put the label inside the box. Most ballpoint pen ink faded. One last bonus, during the move, you can find lost treasures. I tested everything with the UV light and now have a big collection of fluorescent samples. I also have several boxes to take to the club rock shop for more work.

## Fourth Annual World Rock Tumbling Championship

### Here's how to participate in the contest....

- Send in a completed application from the website with a \$40.00 entry fee postmarked no later than May 7, 2012.
- The material for the 2012 contest is Petrified Wood from Arizona. Contestants receive over 3 pounds of raw material.
- Contestants will have over three months to tumble the rock in a rotary or vibratory tumbler and mail a half-pound (1/2 lb) of the best pieces for judging. The entries must be received no later than September 23, 2012.
- A committee of judges from FRLMS will evaluate each entry on the basis of smoothness, shape, shine and overall appeal. They will select the top five winning entries to be displayed at the FRLMS Rock and Gem Show held in Oroville, California the first week-end of October.
- The top three winners will be determined by popular vote at the annual Rock and Gem Show



[Arizona Petrified Wood] [Last year's winner]

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: \$250.00**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \$100**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: \$50**

**Feather River Lapidary and Mineral Society,  
 Oroville, CA, [www.oroillerocks.com](http://www.oroillerocks.com)**

Congratulations to last year's winners:  
 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Susan Oglebay of Ephrata WA  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Edwin Overmeyer – Oregon Coast agate club.  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Tom Kusia – Bacon Falls, CT

## About Those Field Trips

*With the regrettable departure of our fearless field trip leader, Steve Fox, for warmer climes, we are turning to another famous rockhound in the club, Bob Bristow, for some informed guidance while out in the field. Luckily, (as you will see in a minute) we now have group insurance.*

*While reflecting on his experience in this kind of position, Bob recalled the following tale from his youth:*

In high school, in Redmond, Oregon, I



was asked to be the Assistant Scoutmaster for an Explorer Troop. I agreed, and purchased an Explorer's Handbook to see what I should do. It said, "Explorer Scouts are older than Boy Scouts and they are up to strenuous outings." I picked a place that was not too hard for the first outing. The spot was called "Smith Rocks" and is now a State Park. The Crooked River is 300 feet below the rims and snakes around the rocks. The rocks are interesting in that like most exposed tuff, they have many caves. I decided to take an easy way down and across the river and only part way up the rocks.

(I had previously done some things that were a little more daring. An irrigation canal crossed the river just upstream from the rocks. It went through a 20-foot diameter pipe 300 feet above the river. I noticed that the "ditch rider" had been driving his pickup across the pipe rather than going around by road. I thought, "If he can do it, I can do it." Now, driving across a round tube 300 feet above the river is a real thrill!)

I took the boys down a well-used trail to the river and then along the river to place we could wade across. (It only came up to our crotches. Since I didn't want to climb in wet clothes, when we got ready to wade, I said, "OK. Everyone take off your shoes and pants!" While wading across, I saw a pool behind a rock with

some large whitefish. I told everyone to wait while I tried to catch us some lunch. I had some fishing gear in my pack and immediately caught a 20-inch whitefish (good eating, but very bony). I let everyone who wanted to try catching another fish, but they soon gave up. I tied the fish underwater and told the boys we would eat it on the way out if we had time.

I climbed to the easiest place to get up on the rocks. There was only a 20-foot shear face at that point. In addition, there was a chimney that would allow you to get to the top without any serious rock climbing. I didn't want anyone slipping and falling 20 feet, so I went up first, tied myself off, and dropped a rope down and belayed each boy on the way up.

We had a great time, but it was too late to cook the fish going out. I gave it to one of the younger boys to take home. On the way back to town, the boys were all planning the next outing. However, the next day I was fired. It turned out the parents were horrified. They said, "He took you **where**?" "You waded the **river**?" "You climbed **where**?"

Now, do you really think the rock club people would like to go where I would probably take them?

*Now that is a fair question. Another fair question would be: "Is there anyone else in the club who is willing to lead field trips to fruitful and hopefully safe destinations?"*

## Brian Martell in Quartzite



We won't have to go to Quartzite Arizona to see Brian's rock collection. He'll be at the Rock Show March 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

