

Place: **Union Hall**  
Meyers Street  
Next to Campus Life  
In Kettle Falls



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

## The Panorama Prospector

### April 2008

#### Minutes for the April, 2008 Meeting

*By Ginger Pitman*

There were 35 members at this meeting, 3 new members and 3 visitors, the show seems to have increased our membership and that is a good thing. Dessert for next meeting will be brought by Mabel and Ray: Thank you. The Grand Prize winner from this year's show was Duane Shoemaker from Kettle Falls.

Our treasurer was AWOL so we will find out the report from the show next meeting but remember to turn in any bills you have from the show.

Rex had to cancel the field trip to Fruitland until he can do some more research and make sure we are not trespassing. The trip to the McGraff quarry on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April is still on, meet at the Waitts Lake Resort at 9 AM. Need a hand rake, maybe a hammer and the road is good. Keep in mind the May 3, Evans, and May 10, Mt. Adams, trips.

The two trips already taken were successful; Gold Hill gave up some nice brachiopods and gastropods with 9 people on a cool day.

The second trip was to the Usk gravel pit where calcite and amethyst crystals and some agate were gathered.

Johnie gave an account of our trip to get Diatomaceous earth near Vantage and unless we can get permission it seems to be posted and closed.

Bob and Ray brought in samples of their finds from around Tooele, Utah. They headed out right after the show; the weather could have been *much* better but we enjoyed hearing of their adventure.

The club is still working on getting a first aid kit to take on field trips and we again discussed purchasing a nice size banner to display when we have functions.

Joe announced he was pleased with the response to his mineral sample kit and field trip guide; he even sold one to a person in Virginia.

After the silent auction, the program was a film about making a resin poured round table.

It did have some good ideas and covered the basics, was informative. (But thank goodness for fast forward! *Joe*)

We have some members missing because of illness and we will say "Get Well" see you soon.

#### Rock Candy Mine

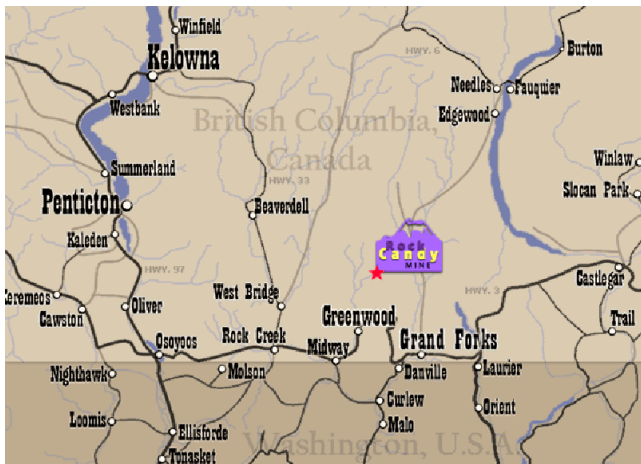


The Rock Candy Mine has been a favorite spot for many local rockhounds. It is in Canada, so you need a passport or similar ID. It is also a fee site that costs \$25 USD plus some taxes per adult. It touts barite crystals (a museum-quality example is seen to the

left) and fluorite. The barite is the main attraction for specimens, but the fluorite is so abundant that there are waste piles of it. The mine provided a huge boost to the area because it is used in smelting other minerals. Over 50,000 tons of fluorite were mined at the Rock Candy Mine, near Grand Forks, British Columbia, between 1918 and 1929.



The Rock Candy Mine was named by its first miners for the colorful crystals of fluorite and barite found there. Discovered in 1916, the mine provided flux for gold and copper smelters in southern B.C. Cominco Ltd. operated the mine until its closure in 1929. The principle mineral specimens are barite crystals as shown above, green fluorite is common and purple fluorite is also found. Of special interest are drusy quartz crystals with barite or fluorite growing on them.



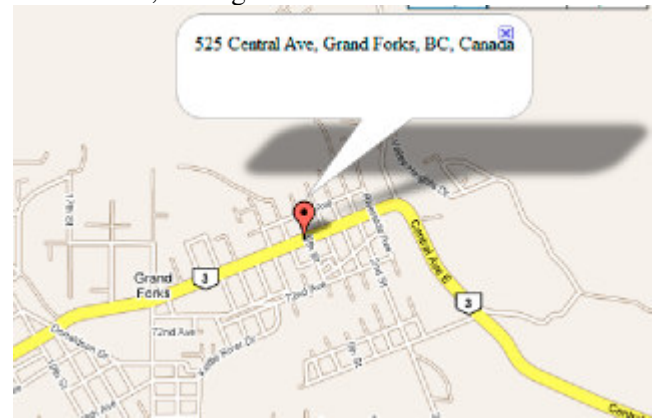
In 1986, Cominco suggested that the University of British Columbia acquire the mine for teaching purposes. The M.Y. Williams Geologic Museum at UBC arranged purchase by Bob Jackson, a geologist who specializes in collecting museum specimens. Jackson's company, Geology Adventures, Inc., ([www.geologyadventures.com](http://www.geologyadventures.com)) worked with the BC Ministry of Mines to design an ecologically-friendly, small scale mining plan. Collecting of museum specimens commenced in 1991. Teaching access and mineral collector tours started the following year.

One of the tours offered by Geology Adventures is the Moonlight Rocks Tour. "In the cool of the evening, join us for a magical exploration of rocks which glow in the dark! We start with an hour of collecting pretty fluorite specimens in daylight, then you descend to our creekside meadow campfire to roast an edible treat while waiting for darkness. Once dark, we'll take a short, easy walk to an area where the 1920's miners left behind piles of fluorescent fluorite pieces. Once illuminated with our 'black lights', its like standing on a pile of glowing blue diamonds! Fill your pockets with cool specimens!" (Geologic Adventures website).

Trips are held Wednesday and Saturday evenings in June thru September 15th . Meeting time changes with the season. Moonlight trips for 2008 start June 6. Book through Grand Forks Visitor Info: 250 442 2833. Minimum 8 persons per tour required. Bring a light jacket and/or long pants, as evenings can get cool. Bring a small flashlight, as you will be walking in the dark. Closed-toe footwear is required.

In addition to the regular day trips that start at 9:00 AM at the Chamber of Commerce Offices in Grand Forks, there are special tours for collectors that feature newly opened vugs. Although these tours offer the best specimens, the cost is \$300/person and there is a limit of 8 people per tour. The following

day there is another tour at a more affordable price of \$60/person. In all cases it is best to reserve a place early. Hammers are provided but you will want backpacks or buckets to hold your finds. Bring your own chisels, UV lights and lunch.



Here is a map to the Grand Forks chamber parking lot on Hwy 3 going through Grand Forks. Reportedly there are other places not too far distant from this mine where specimens can be found. For starters however, the tours for this mine are a safe bet.

### **#1 FREE LECTURE, WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 6:30 P.M., EWU SCIENCE BUILDING, RM 137**

The Ice Age Floods Institute, Cheney-Spokane Chapter is sponsoring a public lecture and membership meeting on Wednesday, May 7. The membership meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the lecture will follow on the Eastern Washington University campus in Cheney, Washington in Science Building, Room 137. You will discover during the lecture "Geology of the Grand Coulee: Washington's Grand Canyon," how one of Washington State's most scenic features formed. Giant floods of lava about 15 million years old were later gouged deeply by one of the largest floods of water known in the geologic record. Dr. Eugene Kiver, Geology Professor Emeritus, Eastern Washington University, will provide an illustrated talk on the topic. This will prepare you for the field trip that is scheduled for Saturday, May 10. For more information, contact Melanie Bell, [mbell4242@comcast.net](mailto:mbell4242@comcast.net), or call 509.954.4242.

## **Field Trip Schedule**

**May-Sat , 3--Evans , Cacite , maybe Dolomite crystals , easy access , any car , Hammer , Chisel . Meet at Harvest Foods in Kettle Falls parking at 9 AM**

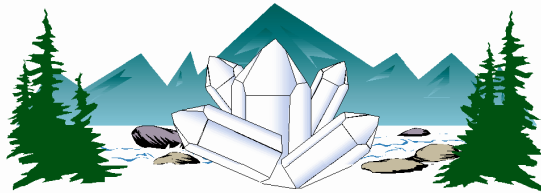
**May-Sat, 10--Mt Adams (near Fruitland), Epidote , Quartz Crsttal , Molybdenum , Garnet , maybe Malachite,**

**Difficult access, 4WD with good clearance is required, short handle shovel, small bar , small pick , rock hammer and chisel. This is two sites close together . Meet at Fruitland store parking at 9 AM.**

**May-Sat , 24--Republic , Fossils (fee), Any car, tools -hammer and thin chisels . Meet at Barney's Junction at 9 AM.**

**May-Sat , 31--Flagstaff , Barite , maybe others , any car with resonable clearance , tools- hammer chisel and maybe a small bar, Meet at Harvest Foods in Kettle Falls at 9 AM.**

**May , 23 through 26 Tri-State Meeting and Field trips at Texas Springs Nevada ( Near Jackpot ).**



## **Panorama Gem & Mineral Club**

### **New Club Banner in the Works**

We have ordered a 3 foot by 4 foot banner to be used at club functions. We can put it outside the rock show; have it in parking lots for field trips or hang it in booths at informational events such as the county fair or other rock shows.

It will be on heavy vinyl with a UV coating that should last years with our projected uses. We can hang it from grommets that will come with the banner. The original design has been altered somewhat to make the text more readable and avoid the fractured look that comes when you take text that is part of a picture and expand it greatly.

Look for it at the next meeting or field trip.

### **Lost River of Gold**

*Editor's Note: In a departure from tradition, this article originated with the Blue Agate News from the Needles Gem and Mineral Club in Needles CA, April 06. They have good stuff and back issues on line at <http://needlesgemmineralclub.blogspot.com/> Some additional material is from <http://www.goestores.com/home.aspx?Merchant=bitofhistory> This is your subscription to SCRIBE at work.*



**Ralph Lewis near one of the HEAVY set stone markers he found at Kocoweef.**

A speaker at one of the NGMC functions was Mr. Ralph Lewis who was compiling his research into "an in depth book, CD and screenplay /script about the legend with a real and revealing ending." Ralph Lewis is a V.P. of the Crystal Cave Mining Co., which owns the private property at Kokoweef Peak.

Ralph Lewis warns us. Since 1934, millions of dollars have been spent in searches for "the underground river's gold." Between 1934 and 2003, all legend-related efforts at Kokoweef Peak have been unprofitable. The legend has fueled countless imaginations with few supporting facts. Disbelief in the legend is the easiest, most affordable and comfortable

route for most uninvolved spectators not willing to endure the legend's frustrations. Still, faith and greed can be a persistent driving force in human endeavors, and as a result, this legend is quite alive in the year 2003.



**Kokoweef (or CocoWeep) Peak**

This is the story of the lost river of gold located near the California and Nevada state line just off of the 15 Interstate Highway. The mountains of this area are honeycombed with caves and it is one of these caves that three Indian brothers supposedly found the lost river of gold and one brother was killed while exploring

They were friends of a local prospector named Earl Dorr and told him the location of one of the entrances. Dorr located the entrance and explored the cave deep within the Kokoweef peak.

In 1934, Dorr tried to interest investors in the possibility of mining the caverns he said he had found. He described a cavern 3000 feet deep and of an unknown length. There was an underground river running throughout the cave. Dorr said he followed the river for approximately 8 miles walking along a shelf next to the underground river. At some point, he said he saw a shaft of light but otherwise the cavern was dark (the light that Dorr saw and the distance of approximately 8 miles are significant). On one of the shelves Dorr filled a leather pouch with black sand to have analyzed for possible minerals.

When Dorr made his way back to the top, he noticed 2 prospectors watching him. Worrying about claim jumpers, he returned to the entrance and dynamited the entrance closed. Dorr spent most of his remaining years trying to locate the "shaft of light" he had seen when he was following the underground river. He was never able to find the second entrance. The remains of the original entrance, Dorr's cabin, and smaller caverns can still be located in the area. Dorr had the pouch of black sand assayed and it ran 100 oz/ton of gold. At today's prices of

approximately \$1000/ounce this would come to \$100,000/ton. Not bad for a days work!

Since 1934, many well-intended attempts to find a "river-of-gold" have simply been self-imposed failures created by chasing wrong, over-simplified assumptions, based on poorly researched information. This legend of Kokoweef's gold is riddled throughout with contradictions, inconsistencies, and incorrect assumptions. Adding to the obfuscation of the truth is the fact that the search for gold seems to automatically "attract" deceptions, distortions, imaginations and exaggerations. This "game of whisper" adds to already inaccurate data about this legend's obvious goal which is "to find any way down to the alleged underground river-of-gold." But, even before the "game of whisper" began, earlier campaigns to intentionally inflict confusions about the legend's real gold, the truth has probably done the most damage. To this day, well-intended, faithful folks keep searching the treasure promised in the legends. For some, the treasure is gold, for others the treasure lies simply in finding the truth. In order to discover the precious metal promised in these legends, accurate guiding information must first be rediscovered. This is simply because mental attention and physical efforts should change directions of work efforts as new, more accurate information is located.

Mr. Lewis is actively and patiently attempting to filter out "old nonsense." Today, his personal quest to "find Cocoweep" has become more than story re-telling. Unlike his predecessors, he refuses to "promote excitement" solely for financial gain. He strives instead to slowly develop "probable certainties" by seeking to establish truth without disposing of logic, avoiding a greedy rush to adventure, excitement, and gold. After 20 years, Mr. Lewis is convinced there IS more to this legend than meets the eyes.



**KoKoweef is east of LA in the Mojave National Preserve where the red "X" of miner's picks are on this map.**

Deliberate obfuscation of the truth is the design of one particular prospector, Earl Dorr. Dorr's business was

not to make anyone else wealthy but himself. Conversations with one of the prospector's nephews corroborate the idea that since the prospector was unable to develop his find, he decided to also hide it from the rest of the world. The prospector then hid the only known surface entrance leading down through caverns to the hypothesized "river-of-gold."

Earl Dorr died in 1957, and one of the best sources of historical knowledge for this topic disappeared. However, the story of his mining remains in the sworn, public affidavit he signed in 1934, later published in the November 1940 article on page 37 of the California Mining Journal. Over time, the legend's complexity grows as more puzzle pieces have been introduced into this legend by various self-serving interests. Truthfully speaking, to date, all searches for the river of gold at Kokoweef Peak can be summed up as "Over 65 years of 100% inspiring, dedicated, emotionally driven, adrenaline-ridden, adventurous and successful failures." This state of affairs remains as people continued to get blinded or distracted from the truth by imagination-based "gold-talk." However, after being in print for so long, gold-blinded and faith-filled folks will probably always be searching for this alleged wealth in California's Mojave Desert.

This story got me to thinking about our own mining history and Rex Barrans' assertion that more money was put in to the ground here than has ever been taken out. We have all the makings of a "Lost River of Gold" right here. We have limestone rock that has caverns in it such as Gardner Cave. We have hundreds of old gold mines. We have a long history of prospectors and Chinese gold panners working the Columbia. The mother lode has to be out there somewhere and could well be at the bottom of a cavern with a river running through it. I went down in a cavern like that near Kootenay Lake.

So it would be a big economic boost to the county if one of you could come up with a story about this cavern. It would be particularly helpful if some cataclysm happened to obscure the location like a grizzly bear attacking the prospector, and that we had some high-grade on hand to spur the imagination. Then the Panorama Gem and Mineral Club could get some media attention ("Grizzly gold"), try to find some big corporate backers, sell secret maps to the location, a book or two, guided tours, lots of equipment and maybe even movie rights. Just an idea...

## The Rocks in a Box Challenge

By Joe Barreca



The **Panorama Gem and Mineral Club** of Kettle Falls, Washington is ready. We have our rocks together! Well alright, not all of our rocks, but a pretty good sample. Our collection includes crystals, metals, fossils, opal, real gold and more. Many of our samples are fluorescent under UV light. All of them are good examples of what you can expect to find in our area, Northeast Washington.

Our collection comes with its own guide book, a collection of stories with maps and GPS positions for the rocks in this box. The box itself is a fairly standard storage box for tied flies that we bought at Wal\*Mart. It is 11" x 7" x 1.75" and has 18 compartments.

So the challenge is: **"We want to trade these boxes for similar collections of sample rocks that other clubs find on their field trips."** It would be ideal if other clubs could provide a guide such as ours. But we will settle for a key to what is in the collection that includes the name of the mineral, a location where it can be found, (GPS coordinates if possible), chemical formulas where important, notes about its properties, value, abundance, and kudos to those who contributed samples. We can supply boxes if helpful.

Through this exchange we hope to build a collection of collections. It will be exciting to see what other clubs are finding, and especially nice in this era of high fuel costs to not be burning too much gas in the process. Of course this kind of thing inevitably leads to field trips, visits, contests, displays at rock shows, etc. So we can't promise that this idea will stop global warming. We can promise that it will be fun.

If your club is up to the challenge, contact Joe Barreca, **Panorama Gem and Mineral Club**  
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(509) 738-6155, Joe.Barreca@gmail.com