

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

June 2009

Panorama Gem and Mineral Club May 19, 2009

Johnie greeted everyone and the meeting began on time. Sylvia gave the treasurer's report. The following new members were introduced and greeted:

Barb and Ron Twardowski - Newport
Roger Clark - Kettle Falls
Mike and Sharron Schimke - Deer Park
John and Ann Booth - Fruitland

Cookies and punch for the next meeting will be provided by:

Bill Allen - Cookies
Reba Kavran - Cookies
Luci Bristow - Punch

Steve Fox, Johnie and Ginger visited Kettle Falls 1st and 2nd graders. They had a very good time talking about the fossils that Johnie and Ginger provided. Steve Fox talked on rocks and minerals. The kids were especially taken with coprolites! There was all lot of Auugh's!

The scholarships are to be given out in June by Steve Fox, who will present at Kettle Falls, Diane Lentz at Colville and Luci Bristow at Chewelah.

The Club ordered additional hats and they have been received and will be available at our meetings for \$10.00 each.

The Club has purchased equipment so that our members can learn and practice lapidary arts. Mike Latapie has offered space for the work shop. The following equipment has been purchased and is in place:

1 - 18" saw
1 - 6" grinder and saw
1 - 8" grinder (we need to replace the wheels)
1 - 10" saw (Diane Lentz donated)

There will be an Open House on May 21, 2009 at 6:00 PM. Please come and see what is available and enjoy the company!

Continued on Page 2

Evans Quarry By Stephan Fox



[Rex Barrans and Brian Martell with a calcite cluster]

Saturday, May 9th, started out absolutely beautiful. The temperature was rising very nicely and would soon make any light jackets undesirable. There were great clouds rising all round us, making our area feel like the center of some gigantic blue iris, but they never closed and were of no concern. After all, the Panorama Gem and Mineral Club and friends were going rock hounding, and the weather is always cooperative.

We were to meet at the parking lot of Harvest Foods in Kettle Falls by 10 AM. Naturally I was there at 9 AM and had a short wait. I had brought some coffee and bought a Popular Science magazine to read while I waited. I didn't have to wait long, here was Daniel just as I sat down and started to read. Within minutes Harold was there and then Rex showed up. By 9:30 at least half of us were there in the parking lot. This was already starting to shape up as an exciting group. Most of the group from the club was there early, but we did not have to wait long for the group from Newport. They were all right on time. We were fifteen strong and raring to go after calcite and aragonite.

We left in about 7 vehicles, and headed up Highway 25 about 3 miles north of Marcus. We went up an old road that somebody still maintains once in awhile or is used quite often. Four wheel drive wasn't used by

Minutes Continued from Page 1

Mike's address is: 823 Old Highway 12 Road
Colville, WA

1st house on left on that road

If you have questions, call him on: 684-1701

The price of using the equipment was voted upon and approved by the Club.

\$2.00 per hour for members

\$5.00 per hour for non-members

Example: If you use it for an hour and 10 minutes the price increases to include that 10 minutes – another \$2.00.

A sign-in sheet will be provided. Please sign when entering and before using equipment. The sheet provides a record of use and of the cost.

There will also be a container for the money. Thanks!

The saw can handle a 7-1/2 up to 8-1/2 inch rock.

Mike incurred \$207.76 for additional equipment. He presented an itemized expense sheet to Sylvia. A motion was made and seconded to reimburse him for that expense. The motion carried.

To protect the Club and Mike, we ask that you sign a waiver for 1 year, January through December, in case of injury.

The shop will be open on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday and Thursday of each month. Please give Mike a call if you are planning on using the equipment so that someone will be there to help you. Thanks!

Field Trips – Rex Barrens

Rex reported that they had a great time at the McGraff Quarry. He will be sending a thank you note to the Hailey Family for letting us hunt there.

He said their trip to the Evans Quarry was good fun. Everyone seemed to enjoy.

A question came up about the Meadow Creek Mine on Aladdin Road. Apparently, that location has grown into a gravel pit and is no longer useful for rockhounding. The Club decided that we would cancel that trip to Meadow Creek and replace it with a trip to Solo Creek on the same week-end – August 15, 2009.

More Minutes

The trip to Adams Mt. is still on the schedule as planned.

Joe Barreca provided local visitor's maps to the Club. They are very good maps! Thanks, Joe!

If you are planning on gold panning, you can gold pan without a permit. However, if you are going to use motorized equipment you must get a permit from the State. For further information, contact:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA 98501
(360) 902-2534
<http://wdfw.wa.gov>

Johnie and Mike Latapie gave a presentation on "How to Make a Cab".

The information and demonstration were great. Thanks!

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Rock Field Trips for June-July:

Key: (+) - cars with good clearance

(++) 4wd vehicles only

(>) - hard rock tools (<) - loose rock

tools (<>) both loose and hard(#) -

digging tools (&) a long day expected

***Sat. June--13- Franson Peak -**

Quartz/Amethyst Geodes - Meet at Harvest Foods parking at 9 AM(<> &)

***Sat. June--20- Phillips Ranch Mine ,**

Selenite , Chalcopyrite , others .Meet at Harvest Foods parking at 10 AM .(+<>&)

***Sun. July--12- Solo Creek , Quartz**

Crystals. Meet at Safeway parking in Chewelah at 8 AM . We will plan on driving

over the flowery trail road to Usk, then Newport and Priest River, Then north on hi-

way 57,so any one can join our caravan along the way if more convenient, rather

than coming to Chewelah .(#&)

***Sat. July--25 Horse Shoe MT.- Quartz**

Crystal, Others -Meet at Harvest Foods parking at 9 AM (<> &)

(Evans Quarry Continued from Page 1)

many cars and most two-wheel cars would not have a hard time going up the road.

As we came to the quarry, there was a great view of the Columbia River off to our left, and the remains of an old building that was part of the original cement works. As we got out we were greeted by a flock of turkey buzzards. As they eventually decided we were in the wrong state of existence, i.e. alive, they soon moved off to find a more willing (easier?) lunch. It was time to start exploring.



[Aragonite crystal formation]

As you come into the quarry it is wide open at the west side with three walls enclosing the large flat area that was the work area of the quarry. The east wall (center wall) is the highest of the three walls. The host rock is a light to dark gray limestone which is normal for this area. This limestone does not have any fossils in it as this was not part of any ancient reef. The east wall (center) is where Rex headed and most of the group followed. Rex gave a brief history of this mine and pointed out where to go to get some good stuff. He pointed out two cavelike places in the wall above us where we could find some nice minerals if we could get up there. Rex had just finished speaking when Joe Barreca came storming by with a ladder under his arm. He set the ladder and then he was up on the ledge where the two caves were. I didn't get a good look but it was either Pat Weeks or Annie Seabright hard on his heels (*It was Pat – Joe*) and about to use him for a rung. The rest of us just stared in admiration at how fast they got up there.

It was time for me to wander around. I headed around the northern wall to see what might be on the other side. This turned out to be another part of the quarry, with a lot of loose rock on the ground. Some of this “loose” rock was the size of Volkswagen beetles. The rock was very common limestone with occasional calcite crystals. I did find a place where a calcite encrustation is forming on the rock wall. It is a muddy brown and you had to be right up on it to recognize it. Five feet was too far away to be able to really see it. I found it by stepping on a rock that decided to take my foot on its own tour which left my nose about two inches from it. I was able to stop my rapid headlong plunge by dropping my bucket full of tools and rocks on my other foot, thereby freeing up my hands to slam them on the rock wall and stop my nose from getting flattened. It was time for lunch.

I grabbed my lunch and six pound rock hammer and went over to where a group had formed just up the hill and was digging in the dirt. Lesley and Adam were doing very well finding some nice aragonite crystals at this spot. Greg Sunles was pounding a chisel into a very large rock which turned out to be an aragonite boulder. He pried out some very nice chunks before he and the rest of the Newport group headed out. They wanted to stop off at Old Gold Hill and muck around for

some fossils. I hope they found a lot and had fun.



In the mean time, Daniel Lundy decided to go to work on the aragonite boulder. I loaned him the use of my small shovel and he got out a rock about eight inches thick, sixteen inches wide, two feet long (any relation to actual size is purely accidental and

probably bears no relation to reality), and eighty pounds. Daniel amazingly got this boulder down in one piece. He brought his truck over and we picked up this hundred and thirty pound boulder (I swear gravity was getting stronger). After loading this two hundred pound monster (I know his springs were groaning) it was time to call it a day. Besides the clouds were spinning closer and a beautiful day was at an end.

Hard Work on Adams Mt.

By Joseph Barreca



[Mike Latapie handing out crystals to the kids]

Ordinary, sane non-rockhounds would be totally justified in considering us crazy for going back to Adams Mt year after year. Not only is the road up there practically impossible to find and remember, it is also practically impossible to travel in the best 4x4 you have available. Still, on May 23rd at 10 AM outside the Fruitland Store, 20 or 30 rockhounds were fired up and ready to go.

First though, Harold took a group picture of all of us, similar to the one from Waitts Lake in the May Newsletter. You are going to have to imagine what it looked like though, because almost immediately, Harold lost his \$600 camera. Maybe someone at the roadside yard sale where we met found it. A cell phone call back to the store prompted a full-scale search that yielded nothing. (Last year this trip had pretty much the same effect on my front brakes.)

So this year I accepted a ride in Jerry Novak's 4x4 pickup. Rex had put up little paper plate signs, so that was a help. Jerry wasn't taking any chances though, he hung red ribbons as we made our way up the mountain. You get the idea right away, when you pull off the county-maintained Conner Rd onto a dirt track that seems to head up the hill at a 45° angle and be made out of rocks that could be used for bowling balls. The road levels out at the top and splits in to two alternate routes, each with a mud hole that rivals the other. If you turn off the well-

used part of that road at the right place, you get to a section that does its own imitation of the Grand Canyon. The only way to get by is to cling to the upper track that slopes into the canyon and hope that none of the little side canyons bump you down into the main one. Just past that, you need to leave that road altogether and head pretty-much cross country and up a steep side hill until you crest onto another road that has a gate at the bottom. That road is just plain bad, which was a big step up from what we had already been through.

Eventually you have gained 1500 feet or so and get onto an actually decent road. Exploring that looking for other approaches led to huge ditch-berm combinations that only ATVs and motorcycles cross when I tried it last year – and oh yes - one end was still blocked by snow. If you are truly dedicated, you will find a map with actual GPS coordinates at <http://www.mapmet.com/PGMC/AdamsMap.BMP>.

So why would anyone – we won't even use “in their right mind” as a criteria here- want to get to this spot? Well, for one thing, the view is fantastic, looking back over the Fruitland Valley to the Columbia River.



It could be for the Epidote, which can be found on the other side of the road from this view, (point 211 on the aforementioned map) or for the Molybdenum Crystals that show up in the tailings of the old Deer Trail Monitor Mine, just a half-mile up the road, or for the copper minerals found just up the hill from the old mine. But actually, most of us, who had been here before didn't stray from this same spot because deep in some caved-in holes here are the clearest quartz crystals I have ever seen. Dave Paquette had a friend do a full diamond facet job on pieces that were 2 to 3 inches across without

any flaws. Or it could be for the Smokey Quartz that sometimes has crystals a foot in length. So the stakes are high.

If the road was not enough though, getting to the crystals is just as bad. The slope is steep, and the layer that has good crystals in it is thin, maybe a foot or so thick. The pockets with good crystals are packed in a clay that seems to be largely made of mica flakes. There is lots of quartz in the vein, but most is broken and heavily stained with iron.

I picked out a hole that had yielded a nice smokey with a phantom crystal inside it several years ago. I could see right off that the slope had sloughed off into the hole and I would have to move 3 feet or so of dirt just to get to minerals. Well, the 3 feet got me to some green clay with pieces of quartz in it, but there was another layer of white clay under that and as I got further down I started running out of room to work. Digging straight down in rocky clay is hard work. It was a hot day and I was running out of drinking water too. About 5 feet down, I was in back of the hole that Mike Latapie was pulling nice pieces out of most of the day. He was up there when we got there and had a hole in the cut bank that was easy to throw dirt out of. So a little crowd gathered around Mike as he came out with some very clear pieces and some smokey ones too.



To his credit, I think Mike gave away most of the good stuff to the other folks and kids. Many of them worked hard to find any crystals but were not prepared for the amount of work it was going to take. Of course some folks, like Johnie Pitman found nice clear pieces right along the side of the road. After all, almost everything

5 Panorama Gem and Mineral Club News June, 2009

that the rain and the rockhounds were loosening up ended in the waste pile that borders the road.

At this point, I think it is a good idea to promote a thought that Mike came up with, cut a slice back into the hill that exposes all of the layers without any dangerous overhang at the top or pile of waste at the bottom. The perfect tool for this, is a wheel barrow. (Actually the perfect tool would be a Bob Cat – especially if it took a crack at the road on the way up, but I think there would be legal problems). It would take an hour or so to clear the waste from a section of the cut bank and dump it on the other side of the road. Once you could drive the wheel barrow hard into the bank, you could cut a trough that would slush right into the barrow and make removing the overburden from the vein relatively simple. This would be good for the dig and good for the people trying to maintain this road.

Okay, I'll get off my soapbox. We started with Harold loosing his camera. But while at the dig, Larry Engles found pretty nice tools. Here is a picture of him with a home-made pick and a shovel he found. The pick was originally a leaf from a car spring. It had a large nut welded to it to stick a handle in.



True Confession time. I only got down to the good vein 15 minutes before I had to leave. I found some decent quartz but left in such a hurry that I forgot my handy little pick. Luckily, Larry found that too before he left.