

Place: **Arden**
Community Club
Hall Rd
Arden, WA



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

The Panorama Prospector October 2010

Panorama Gem and Mineral Club

Minutes for September, 2010

By *Ginger Pitman*

The club celebrated its 14th anniversary with a cake brought by Marjorie Wilson. Attending were 27 members and 2 visitors. Refreshments for next time will be provided by Harold Ingram and Nena Wright.

Bob talked about some saw oil he hopes to be here soon, and if it is as good as he would like, he will share his source with us.

Mable is doing better but will need kidney dialysis. We are glad to hear she is doing better; we wish her speedy and total recovery. Rex donated his set of lights he brings for our display tables to the club, they are always used and needed we thank him "muchly".

Leslie King lost a camera about the time of our picnic she wonders if anyone found one that day. There was one large green bowl unclaimed from the picnic.

Silvia gave the treasure's report and we have now paid 2 of the scholarships. The donated rock saw we auctioned at the picnic brought \$90. Thanks to all.

We will be selling tickets \$1 per as we raffle off the found rock hammer and bracelet donated by Gloria Squires. When we reach \$50 we will draw the winners.

We will reorder the club hats, they are \$10 each. Sylvia will print some new business cards with our new meeting place and web site on them.

The booth the club had at the fair manned mostly by Steve Fox was a success and well attended. Thanks to all who helped. The last field trip was to Sherman Creek for some Diopside crystals.

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Ellensburg Blue Agate



Editor's notes: This article is transcribed from the Chief Joseph Gem and Mineral Club bulletin for May 12, 2010. Johnie Pitman provided it for just such an occasion – namely one in which there was no field trip to report on. No author is named. Picture from Blueagates.com.

Often referred to as Blues, there is much confusion about Ellensburg Blue Agates. Blues are found in only one place in the world (North-West of Ellensburg Washington USA). Blues are the rarest mineral in the world and because of their many trace minerals (including titanium), Blues are the hardest agates known. The Moh's hardness rating fluctuates between 7.0-8.3 depending on the mineral deposits. Yes, this means that Blues are harder than Topaz.

I see a lot of Blues on eBay and other places such as Seattle where there are people selling Malawi Blue agates, Blue lace agates, Blue Chalcedony and Redtop Potatoes (this is another blue agate found further north in the state of Washington). I call these Redtop Potatoes "gray wannabes". In the matrix, Redtop agate looks like a beautiful blue agate; then you try to cut and

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The shop committee will be meeting to set up the winter schedule and check for needs.

Chuck Prentice said he would like to donate some rocks to the club. A time will be arranged to pick those up. Thank you Chuck and Donna!

Johnie gave a report on the list of rocks donated by Sharon Jackson. He also gave a report on the Northwest Retreat, the lapidary camp at Fossil, OR. It starts Labor Day and runs for a week; if you can go it is very worthwhile.

Our Oct. meeting is a time for nominating new officers. Nov. meeting is our club rock auction for the scholarship fund. We have some very nice things for sale and we welcome other clubs to come and help us out.

Steve and Joe did a table on geology of the area at the Orient 100th year school celebration and the club received a thank you card for a job well done.

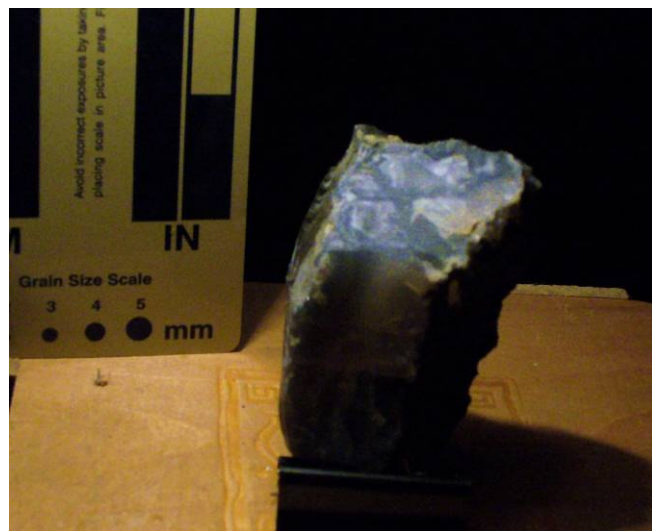
Johnie gave out a kit to grow popcorn rocks and Peggy agreed to grow them and bring it back in a month to see how it is doing.

The meeting ended with an excellent talk and useful information from Mike Latapie on how to use precious metal clay. What the clay does and some things he has made. He will be glad to teach and help anyone wanting to try making things from precious metal clay. Very interesting and Mike is very talented, thanks for sharing. *End*

polish the stone; you get a nasty surprise; the stone turns a dull gray color because the agate does not have sufficient minerals to retain that beautiful blue color after you cut it out of the matrix.

Other than Blue's uniqueness of being the hardest agate known, found in only one place in the world, the rarest form of agate; real Ellensburg Blues are unique because it is virtually impossible to find two stones that look alike (You could try to cut two or three cabochons from the same agate, and there would be variations). Blues can be found in many different shades of blue. The color varies all the way from purple color to a deep cornflower blue to a sky blue, to a light bole that is transparent.

If you see a collection of blue agates that appear to be Xerox copies of one another, you can rest assured that the agates are fake Blues.



This is a blue agate found near Usk

Because of their scarcity Blues are VERY expensive here in Ellensburg (often called E'burg) a Blue set in a silver ring can sell for \$3000 or more, and for a faceted stone be prepared for sticker shock. I have personally seen faceted 6mm Blues that are transparent sell for \$1200 (just for the rock). These are the AAA grade specimens, and I have heard of some people who make Ellensburg Blue jewelry pay as much as \$100 or more a gram for these AAA grade specimens. I saw one Ellensburg Blue cocktail ring. The stone was marquise cut and about 20x10 mm, and the price was \$3000.

Blues are scarce and as more development around Ellensburg occurs (namely people buy land in the Northwest region of the Valley), the scarcity and the price of these minerals are only going to go up! Four years ago when I moved here Kim Khap Jewelry on the main street was selling C grade or specimen grade Blues for \$20 each.

Blues are not found in veins. These are small agate nodules deposited here by glaciers during the last ice age. Ellensburg Blue Agate nodules are often 1/2 and once to 26 ounces (this is the largest genuine Blue I have heard of). *End*



Panorama Gem and Mineral Club

Minutes for August, 2010

By *Ginger Pitman*

The club had its annual picnic at the Aug. meeting and it seemed to be a big hit; we had from 77-80 people there. Even if it was a bit hot to start with it was fun and good eating. The potluck was delicious; and **Thank You** Bill Allen for cooking and use of the equipment to make the picnic easy for the rest of us.

Silvia gave us our treasure's report, we over-spent but we'll catch up again.

The Spencer Opal mine trip has been reduced to \$30 and if you want to go let Dave Paquett know or call 684-7611.

The rock hammer found and not claimed will be raffled off starting soon. Steve and Joe both did the Orient School Celebration and there was a good turn out and the club name got out to the public.

Thank you to Steve Lecture who bought the rock saw, we hope he gets lots of use out of it. Joe and Brian helped move, clean and deliver the saw.

It was good to see 5 members of the North Idaho Gem and Mineral club attend out picnic.

Mike will be doing our program next meeting introducing us to precious metals clay.

The news is as good as can be expected on Mable. It is a lost to the club not to have Rex and Mable at our meetings.

Odds and Ends

The above minutes from the August Meeting are included here to be part of the club records. Your somewhat trusty newsletter editor was on a long field trip to Sicily at the time the news would have normally been published. Yes there are rocks in Sicily. The whole place is made out of rocks: houses, churches, streets... but folks don't seem to collect them much.

It is once again be time to think about the spring rock show. For a lot of people, this is their only exposure to our club. We will need a theme and some new exhibits.

Where did the summer go?

By *Johnie Pitman*

It's Fall already and so many things to do before winter. It's time to remind everyone that officer nominations will take place at the October meeting and elections are done at the November meeting. Also, dues will be due in November.

Our program for October will be a slide presentation on Lake Superior Agates which should be interesting because the club now has a few of them to sell at the November rock auction. They were given to the club by Sharon Johnson along with the other items listed below that will also be on the auction block at the November meeting.

Donated rock collection:

1. 3 bags of tumbling Lake Superior agates; each 2 1/2#
2. 1 very good specimen
3. 2 boxes Montana agate; 4 1/2 # each for tumbling
4. 3 bags of mostly agate for tumbling 4 1/2 #
5. 3 -- 20 # Mt agates; good stuff
6. 12 miscellaneous garden rocks; 6 petrified wood, 1 concretion
7. 1 small box Indian artifact, shards
8. 5 buckets of mixed agates and jaspers about 50# each
9. 1 medium box fossils
10. 4 buckets hard petrified wood and 2 buckets soft petrified wood.

Chuck Prentice has also donated most of his rocks to the club to be sold and the proceeds are to go to the scholarship fund.

1. 27 buckets of obsidian, some silver sheen, some red, red with black stripes-- 5gal plastic buckets (approx. 50 lbs per bucket)
2. 1 bucket of petrified wood slabs
3. 8 totes of slabs, bit of everything
4. 3 buckets of thunder eggs, some whole, some cut.
5. 10 buckets of petrified wood, and one green replacement wood
6. 5 buckets of jasper
7. 2 buckets of common opal
8. 3 buckets of agate
9. 1 bucket of pink jasper--unknown

10. 1 small bucket of white jasper rock-- unknown
11. 3 buckets of unknown: 1 poor, one miscellaneous good
12. 2 cans of obsidian slivers
13. 1 tote of tumbling miscellaneous small stuff
14. ½ bucket of good pieces: tiger eye, Brazilian agate, youngite, small pieces of jade, couple pieces of wonder stone, large thunder eggs, polished thunder egg halves.

The club thanks you Chuck for this very generous donation. We will need to come up with a plan to market these rocks in order to maximize the profit for the scholarship fund.

Rex Barrens has donated his 16" rock saw in very good condition to be auctioned off for the scholarship fund. We will do this at the Nov. rock auction. Thank you Rex.

Maybe we should invite members of other rock clubs to come and participate in our auction, should be interesting and we want have to bid against each other as much.

Andy Johnson on Public lands:



Editor's Note: I inserted this article in our newsletter this month at the request of Bev Bockman. You can also find it in the September issue of The NFMS

newsletter.

Earlier this year President Obama held a conference on America's Great Outdoors and established the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to be led by the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Chair of the Council of Environmental Quality. The initiative is tasked with reconnecting Americans, especially children, to the outdoors and they have asked for public input and ideas.

It is vitally important that the Administration hear from each one of you about how you recreate

on and enjoy public lands. We can be sure as a Federation that they are hearing from those who would support limiting or ending access for motorized as well as non- motorized recreation. **WE** now have an opportunity to tell our side of the story as well. If you can access the internet please visit the following website:

www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors

Sign-up and weigh in. Now is the time to make it clear that public lands are our recreational playground. It is a family oriented activity that allows for father and son and mother and daughter to spend quality time outdoors. Too often recreational activities are defined by the renegade few who behave irresponsibly. Please take this opportunity to make it clear that millions of Americans responsibly enjoy rock hounding and a number of other multi-use recreational pursuits on public lands and while you're at it tell them to maintain what we already have established and to abandon any further thought of creating and taking additional lands for monuments, wilderness or landscape designations until the federal government becomes financially responsible.

Upcoming Events:

October 23-24 – Sat 9-5. Sunday 10-5:

Bellevue rock, Gem and Jewelry Show, Vasa Park, 3560 West Lake Sammamish Blvd SE. Bellevue, WA. BellevueRockclub@comcast.net

October 23-24 – Sat 9-6. Sunday 10-5:

Clackamette Mineral and Gem Annual Gem and Mineral Show, Clackamas County Fairgrounds, Main Pavillion Bldg. 694 NE 4th Ave. Canby, OR. tallerricardo@juno.com

November 12-14- Fri 10-5, Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4

Northwest Opal Association and the Boeing Employee Mineralogical Society – Opal show Washington State Fairgrounds, Meridian Street South and 9th Ave SW, Puyallup, WA, mechanix@comcast.net

November 13-14 – Sat 9-5, Sun 10-5

Skagit Rock and Gem Club Treasures of the Earth – A gem, Mineral, Fossil & Jewelry Show Sedro Wooley Community Center, 720 State Street, Sedro Wooley, WA rocks1x1vi.george@verizon.net

November 20 & 21 Sat 10-5, Sun 10-5

Kitsap Mineral & Gem Society Fall Festival of Gems. Kitsap County Fairgrounds, Berrerton, WA. Pogy2@centurytel.net

Barter Fair Rocks

By Joe Barreca



It's not always the most civilized event of the season (Well actually, it never is) but the annual autumn "Okanogan Family Fair" – most often called the "Barter Fair" – can be a great place to find good deals on rocks. If you are not into paying the \$60/person camping fee for all three days or the even higher \$100/person vendor space fee, then the best deal is the \$10/day visitor fee. This also eliminates some of the noise, smoke and porta-potties that go with the camping option. It is a good distance from the day parking to the fair, so if you are planning to buy rocks, think about hauling them.



Of course with the day use only fee, you miss out on some of the nighttime activities. At any rate, there are about 10,000 people at this event up in the hills off Highway 20 Northeast of Tonasket and Southwest of Aeneas Valley Road. That makes the population greater than all of Ferry County and about equal to Pend Oreille County. There are always some major vendors there with big displays and thousands of rocks. But I usually find some good deals looking through small collections of
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trinkets and other tiny treasures that just happen to be in a basket at someone's booth.



Some of you may recognize this display as the collection of the Turner Family who formerly hosted the Republic Rock Club. Some of these specimens are for sale but not all of them. The case was for sale. The bottom is glass, so light comes through the translucent rocks. They collected almost all of these on their own field trips.



Ammonites, Onyx and just about anything you could think of was available at this booth. Other collections were more random. You can check for dates and buy tickets at this website: <http://www.okanoganfamilyfaire.net/>. The Fair is usually the second weekend in October.