



President: Steve Fox, Mike Lapite, Johnie Pitman  
Vice President: Bob Bristow, Larry Engle, Brian Martell, Gloria Squires  
Secretary: Luci Bristow, Diane Lentz, Ginger Pitman  
Treasurer: Sylvia and Bill Allen  
Trustee: Bruce Hurley, Mike Clay

We will need a short meeting to vote at our Christmas Dinner.

After the break was our rock auction for the scholarship fund. Thank each of you for donating what turned out to be very impressive sales items. A huge thank you to all who bid, bought, and donated in a wonderful spirit of fun, to the tune of around \$900. WOW and WOW!! Thanks to Bill and Daniel, his trusty helper, for a lively sale.

One last reminder that dues are due by Jan 1, Sylvia has to have time to compile the names to send to the Northwest Federation. The NWF show will be May 18-20 in Kennewick, WA, they are always great shows to go to, and this one is close.

### **December Minutes 2011**

It seemed to snow the hardest right on our Christmas party, but we had a large turn out. A short business meeting was held with Sylvia giving the treasurer's report. Johnie presented an insurance quote that we will discuss at the Jan meeting. Drinks will be furnished by Becky with Bill and Mike doing snacks for the Jan. meeting.

Our elections were held by written ballot the results are as follows: President Johnie Pitman; Vice President Bob Bristow; Secretary Ginger Pitman; Trustee Bruce Hurley.

Our Christmas potluck was enjoyed, followed by the gift exchange and some entertainment. As the snow was falling we dismissed early. *End*

properties between Republic and the Canadian Border.

The milling facility is of a classical design, using jaw crushing followed by rotating rod mill and ball mill crushing to reduce ore particles to the very fine size needed to separate out the metal-bearing minerals from waste materials.



Further separation is done through the use of a series of flotation tanks and processing solutions. This type of processing is designed for medium-to high-grade ores, with gold content of about 0.25 troy ounces per ton or greater. The milling process used at Kettle River is especially good for ores bearing sulfides such as pyrite, chalcopyrite, galena and sphalerite. Cyanide solutions are used late in the processing to further separate the precious metals (gold and silver) from such base metals as copper, lead and zinc, in large flotation and settling tanks. Because Washington allows the use of cyanide in gold recovery, Kettle River Operations also custom processes ore from mines in other states, including Colorado and Montana, which do not allow cyanide use. Kinross is able to successfully use cyanide because the spent cyanide solutions are chemically destroyed after use, and no cyanide is released into the environment.



**Ball mill (left) and rod mills**

Touring the mill was very interesting, but clearly the high point of the trip was watching the results of all of the processing efforts come to fruition. Carefully monitored by mine security, we all

entered the secure facility where the fine powder that is the recovered metal is melted in a crucible within a very hot melting furnace. As the building is unheated and it was late fall in Northeastern Washington, any residual heat from the furnace was truly appreciated, as it was a very large, very cold room.

**“Cannon balls” used for ball mill crushing**



**A slurry vat early in the ore processing**



**Pouring a doré precious metal bar**

Soon the molten material within the crucible was glowing incandescently, and it was time to pour up the contents. In a surprisingly short time, the glowing liquid in the mold on wheels began to form a crust as it cooled to become a semi-pure or doré (pronounced “door-aye”) precious metal bar. The doré bar weighed about 65 pounds and contained roughly 75% gold and 25% silver, with some base metal impurities. Upon further processing at a precious metal refinery, the bar would eventually yield 99.9% pure gold and

silver. Depending upon the exact proportions of these metals, the refined contents of the bar were worth from about \$900,000 to \$1,200,000 dollars!



We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Kinross Gold Corporation for allowing us to come along on this unique experience of seeing rock turned into gold.

### **Washington Takes the Lead on Rockhounding Legislation**

The Washington Mineral Council, working through State Senators Honeyford, Hatfield, Becker and Schoesler has introduced “SB 6057 Permitting recreation rock collecting, subject to certain restrictions.”

Shirley Leeson, ALAA VP says “What the Washington Mineral Council has done is nothing less than spectacular. For those of you outside Washington State, please watch this carefully....YOU may have to go through the same thing. For those of you in Washington, I support you whole heartedly and hope you prevail. Call or email your state representative, don’t let up, they must realize you are serious, otherwise they won’t bother. If they know there are “voters” out there who are concerned, then hopefully they will act. We’re watching and praying.”

This link <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/> has information on this Bill. You can use this link <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/Default.aspx> find contact information regarding our State Legislators. The text of the bill is very reasonable and straight forward. Please call or write Senator Bob Morton to voice your support.

## Johnie's Jabber

By President Johnie Pitman

What a great Christmas party!!! Sorry about the snow#@&6\*!

Remember the Jan. show planning meeting will start at 6:00, an hour before the regular meeting, so come and get involved, there are areas that will need help.

We will be considering an insurance policy for the coming year.

The program will be on "Thundereggs", bring some to show if you have some that you want to show.



### Our Newest Member

Say hello to Tyler Holden in Colorado, our newest member. Sherry Bamberger and several others got his Christmas off to a rocky start with some minerals that were not coal in his stocking. Bill and Sylvia Allen paid an

honorary membership for him, so Helloooo Tyler! Welcome to the club.

### The Rock Auction

By Joseph Barreca

This year's scholarship rock auction was huge. People bring really nice things to this event and even though they get good deals back, we pulled in \$900 for the scholarship fund. Bill Allen and Daniel Lundy did a great job

as usual. The bookkeeping crew worked smoothly. Thanks everyone.



### The Christmas Party

By Joseph Barreca

The Christmas Party brought out lots of people, presents and food. It also brought out the biggest snow dump of the month. About now that

looks like it was a good thing. We could use some snow. But back then it was building up pretty fast while we were picking out gifts and I was trying to read a Christmas Poem. So the meeting broke up early. I'm pretty sure that the poem didn't have anything to do with it. (Some might argue otherwise.) We did manage to elect officers in a somewhat orderly fashion. So let the New Year begin!

Bruce Hurley's daughter found a good friend in Bill Seabright's granddaughter.->



<-Bev Bockman was in the holiday spirit.

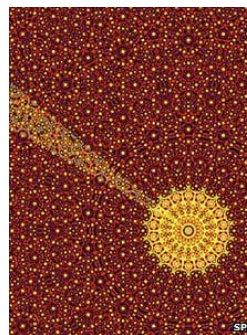
### Impossible Crystals are from Space



Examples of a crystal previously thought to be impossible in nature may have come from space, a study shows.

Quasicrystals have an unusual structure - in between those of crystals and glasses.

Until two years ago, quasicrystals had only been created in the lab - then geologists found them in rocks from Russia's Koryak mountains.



The pattern of oxygen isotopes in them is unlike any known minerals that originated on Earth. It was instead closer to that sometimes found in a type of meteorite known as a carbonaceous chondrite. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk>)

## WANTED: OPAL MINE HOSTS

By Joseph Barreca



It sounds like a dream job, and in some ways it is. You volunteer as a opal mine host – somewhat like a campground host- for two or four week assignments.

Hosts are

encouraged to sign up in pairs, usually a man and a woman. They need to bring their own RV to the mill site, which is 5 miles from the mine site, but has power, water, WIFI and other facilities. Each morning, both of them will commute to the mine site and stay on site until all the fee diggers are working. Then one is free to dig for opals or explore some of the many other recreation opportunities in the Virgin Valley.

Be aware though that overseeing the mine site is not a trivial job. Although the host can stay under the shelter of a canopy, diggers (rakers really) will be in weather that can range from 100° heat to 40°. If a serious rain shower comes up, the site needs to be abandoned because travel in the sticky mud that ensues is nearly impossible. In emergencies, the nearest phone is up to 20

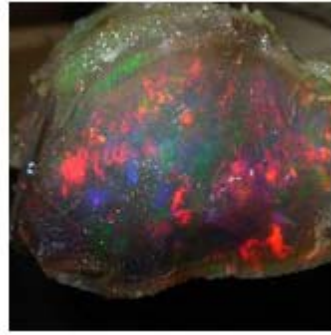


minutes away and the nearest ambulance is 2 to 3 hours away but an airlift is possible if necessary. You are basically a lifeguard. One of your main jobs would be to make sure

diggers drink enough water because dehydration in this high desert is a real hazard. The hours are 8AM to 4PM. At 4PM you would need to shut down the mine site and bring the money back to the mill site. The mine is open May 26 to September 30<sup>th</sup>

The nearest store is 30 miles away and for real shopping, you would need to go to Lakeside OR, 95 miles away. There is refrigeration at the

mill site as well as laundry and showers. But you would need to pack in enough food. The site is open Tuesday through Sunday. As a host, you can look for opals on Monday while the mine is otherwise closed. There is usually a potluck at the mill site on Friday night. All shareholders and mine hosts contribute half of their finds to the organization of almost 100 people who own this

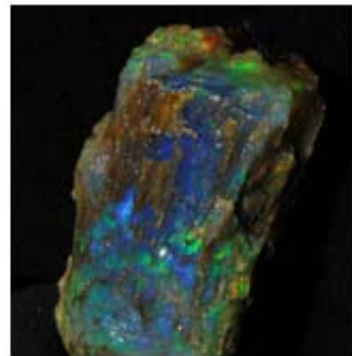


mine. The mine's share is sold to support the expenses. So, adding up the food, gas and opals contributed, it will not be totally free.

You will want to visit

<http://www.bonanzaopals.com> and go to the page about hosting. Then download the online host manual. It is not dry reading. Besides all the duties discussed above, it has a lot about the geology of the area and this mine in particular as well as very interesting history. The fee dig material was left from a period when shareholders went wild digging in a 7 foot seam for big finds. After all, the Bonanza produced a huge opal, now in the Smithsonian, that is valued at 6 million dollars. The good news about the waste piles is that they have dried out slowly over many years. Opals found in them will be dry and workable. The layer of opal is under a hillside layer of overburden 100 feet thick. For an open pit mine, removing the overburden is a major expense.

The mine was once owned by Flora Loughead- one of whose sons founded Lockheed the aerospace giant. She promoted the mines in the area as a reporter for a San Francisco newspaper in 1915 and quit her newspaper job to spend all her time finding mines and opals in the



Virgin Valley. It was originally called the Virgin Mine. So if you catch the opal bug like Flora did, we may have visit you down there four months out of the year.

**Membership Dues:**

\$15.00 per household per year is due to the club Treasurer Sylvia Allen (see below) on the third Tuesday of November for regular members.

Webpage: [www.panoramagem.com](http://www.panoramagem.com)

Contact: Johnie Pitman, President, 509 684 8887.

We, **The Panorama Gem and Mineral Club**, are a multi-faceted group of mineral-minded people. Our proud members include some real gems, a few fossils, and even some diamonds in the rough. A few have lost some of their marbles, but they know where to get more! A few need to polish their coordination because they are always tumbling! And some are miners who use the "silver pick" as their tool of choice! It should be crystal clear, that we all enjoy this unique conglomeration and above all else we strive to **HAVE FUN**. And we never throw stones (away).

**News and Notes**

**It's that awkward time of year again when the club needs to collect dues. Members on the list that we submit to the Northwest Federation of Mineral Societies get copies of the Northwest Newsletter with schedules for all the rock shows and news on legislation etc. We have to do that this month. So we ask for the next year's dues at the end of the previous year, even if they were paid in April or later. If it says "dues" on your mailing label, we are not showing you as paid up. If there is a dot, your are fine.**

**Martell's Rock Shop**

2 Baxter Lane  
Kettle Falls, WA 99141  
509-738-3041  
509-675-0390  
[bkmartell@hotmail.com](mailto:bkmartell@hotmail.com)



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**Mineral Identification  
Mineral/Mine Locations**

**Bristow Enterprises**  
PO Box 1165  
Chewelah, WA 99109  
[Bristow@theofficenet.com](mailto:Bristow@theofficenet.com)

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This newsletter is published by the Panorama Gem and Mineral Club. Editor: Joe Barreca, 509-738-6255, [joe.barreca@gmail.com](mailto:joe.barreca@gmail.com).

**Panorama Gem and Mineral Club: Organizational Chart**

<b>Officers:</b>			
President:	Johnie Pitman	701 B Williams Lake Rd, Colville, WA 99114	684-8887
Vice-President:	Bob Bristow	PO Box 1165; 2567 Mudd Lake Rd. Chewelah WA 99109	935-4375
Secretary:	Ginger Pitman	701 B Williams Lake Rd, Colville, WA 99114	684-8887
Treasurer:	Sylvia Allen	2633 Highline Rd, Chewelah, WA 99109	935-8779
Trustee 1:	Scott Jackson	1028 Old Hwy 12 Mile Rd, Colville, WA 99114	684-6371
Trustee 2:	Bruce Hurley	10617 W. Lakeside Lane, Nine Mile Falls, WA 99026	509-413-2768
Trustee 3:	Daniel Lundy	1035 Haller Creek Rd. Addy, WA	685-5870
<b>Committee Chairs</b>			
Program Coordinator:	Bev Bockman	1750 N Havichur Loop, Post Falls, ID 83854	208-773-5384
Hospitality:	Dianne Lenz	556 Douglas Falls Rd, Colville, WA 99114	509-684-4925
Field Trips:	Fox, Jackson, Ingram	PO Box 595, Marcus WA, 99151	684-2136
Librarian:	Ruth Ross	750 N Lincoln, # 6, Colville, WA 99114	684-4925
Historian:	Carol Price	PO Box 77, Laurier, WA 99146	684-2857
Newsletter:	Joseph Barreca	2109 Hwy 25 South, Kettle Falls, WA 99141	738-6155
Show Chair	Bill Allen	2633 Highline Rd, Chewelah, WA 99109	935-8779, 936-2446