

WASHINGTON AGATE & MINERAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume XVIII ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2015

OLYMPIA WA

WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.WAMSOLYMPIA.WORDPRESS.COM](http://www.wamsolympia.wordpress.com)

REFRESHMENT LIST:

JANUARY – JAMIE GLASGOW

FEBRUARY – CHARLEY PRICE

MARCH – JIM THOMAS

APRIL - LEANN CARANCI

MAY - M J HUETTER

JUNE - DAN DEBOER

JULY – TOLBERTS

AUGUST - CLUB PICNIC

SEPTEMBER – KEITH GREETHAM

OCTOBER - MIKE TANAKA

NOVEMBER – THE HOLMQUISTS

DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS PARTY

Digging began at Davis Creek. The site is easy to get to and is loaded with material. Even the tailing piles were sheen obsidian. Digging is required for fist sized or larger material. I have been told that for those who make spheres using a core drill for pre-form, the rounded or nodular shaped pieces are the best, because they break less often than the angular pieces when core drilled.

In the afternoon we switched to the Pink Lady area, acclaimed for its pink sheen deposits, along with rainbow and silver sheen. Some of us traveled over to Lassen Creek to finish off the day. While the digging is fairly easy at Davis Creek and Pink Lady, this is not the case at Lassen Creek. If the clay had more moisture it might be easier to dig. Keep in mind, this was late June with ample time to dry out. There were still occasional small pockets of snow hidden in the shade, but the temperature was around 90 the first day and higher the next. Looser soil forms the first two to three feet of soil.

The obsidian here is solid black. An occasional piece of sheen will come out, but it has been dug previously and reburied. You must dig below these earlier pickings to get consistent sheen. The sheen starts at the interface of the **HARD** clay and continues down into it. The Eastwing hoe-pick was the most effective tool. A full sized pick has too long of a handle and penetrated poorly. A rock hammer wasn't heavy enough to make a dent. The mid-sized hoe was short. Material was mainly blue, purple, and some bright rainbow in small areas. Most pieces were smaller than fist sized, larger pieces of blue and purple required more effort.

The second day scheduled Lassen Creek in the morning and a sunstone area in the afternoon. Without a hoe-pick and no interest in sunstones, I returned to Davis Creek, specifically the glory hole that had given up larger pieces (up to volleyball size) the first day. I need to sidetrack to two extremely important safety issues:

1. Obsidian is razor sharp!
2. Undercutting in holes causes cave-ins.

The first day a boy was digging with adults watching/helping when the overhang fell on him. Fortunately, he only received a cut on one hand. It could have been life threatening.

I immediately knocked down the rest of the overhang and cleaned down to the undug dirt. In a diggers haste to find the Smithsonian specimen, much good material ends up in the tailing piles. (Always check previous diggings.) Digging down through new dirt, a large basketball face appeared. Excavation took more time than expected, being twice the size I had estimated and weighing 135 pounds. This locale has a 500 pound annual limit on obsidian, evident by a free permit from the town of Davis Creek that you must have in your possession.

Cont on page 2

BUY...SELL...TRADE

Charley reports plenty of good material is left. Call him at 360-259-3063 and set up an appt. at \$1a pound. (Email is cprice@pacifier.com.)

This column is offered free to WAMS members to buy, sell or trade equipment or material related to rocks or minerals. See below.

LOOKING FOR: We sold out all of our copolytes. Anyone have any? Willing to trade for some big rock.

TREASURY REPORT: The bank account stands at \$7860.37 In addition we have 20 tables and a lot of rock. *A special thanks to Albert Bachman. His donations netted the club \$105 at the Christmas party auction.*

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Mineral Council Obsidian Trip - June 2006
by Rob Stewart (Past member)

The Washington State Mineral Council hosted a week long field trip in late June 2006. They traveled to three areas. First stop were the Davis Creek and Lassen Creek areas in Northeast California, noted for sheen obsidian, in rainbow, gold, blue, purple, green, pink, and silver. The map sent out to get to the camp site was wrong. The trip leaders nailed up paper plates with "WSMC" to direct people to the camp. A few turns to the camp required signs for those unfamiliar with the area.

LOCAL FIELD TRIPS (PUB. WSMC)

CMS, WMSC = Cascade Mineral Society. Brian Williams (206) 290-2312 email bwaters2011@gmail.com
Ed L = Ed Lehman (425) 334-6282 wsmced@hotmail.com
WSMC = Washington State Mineral Council, use Ed above.
BC Wagon masters: Clair Belzer 604-946-8656
Kit = Kitsap Rock club: Tony Schackmann 360-372-2777
LkSd = Lakeside Gem & Mineral club. Andy Johnson 509-546-1950
Maple = Maplewood club: Don Furey 425-348-4827
Msvl = Marysville club: Ed Lehman 425-334-6282
Mt. Baker club: Kris Menger 360-927-0994
kmenter@comcast.net
East King = East King Co, Norma Kikkert, 206-612-3113
N.W.R. = NW Rockies & MT Baker clubs: Kathy Earnst 360-856-0588 or Ed Lehman 425-334-6282
Pvpm = Puyallup Rock Club.
Bellv = Bellevue, Bruce Himko, 425-957-1284
Skagit = Skagit Rock Club: Vi Jones 360-424-8340
Pebb = Whidbey Pebble Pushers: Dick Edwards 360-579-2807
Pow Wow club = Cliff Matteson (253) 475-8433
cliff.conniematteson@gmail.com
Longview = Longview club Emmett Johnson 360-636-3491
Ashwood Oregon Darrell Friend 541-489-3252, web page www.ashwoodrockstock.com
Eking = East King Norma Kikkert, kev1123@hotmail.com
WAC - Washington Agate Club
Yak = Yakima Rock Club Jerry Wichstrom 509-653-2787
jewtmew@aol.com
Whidb = Whidbey Rock Clubs Dick Edwards 360-579-2807
BELL = Bellingham Rock Club Brian Hughes 360-671-7330
EVR = Everett Rock Club Brad Johnson 206-403-3073
NID = North Idaho Diane Rose 208-667-8591
Elb = Ellensburg Rock Dave Master (509) 925-3827
WAMS = Wa Agate & Mineral Club.
Boe = Boeing Rock club.
Swms = SWest WA Mineral Society Dave Roth 360-295-3567
W Sea = West Seattle Rock Club Brian Waters 206-290-2312
Always call the club rep to confirm all trip data. Some trips have fees to non club members, so they can be a day member and be covered under club insurance. The usual fee is \$.50 a day. Pow Wow requires membership \$3 each a year. WSMC 6100 Road trip rider fee is \$8 to help offset the \$65 vehicle access permit we must purchase. Some trips have no charge.

FIELD TRIPS: Mineral Council.

None..stay home and drink hot cocoa.

UPCOMING SHOWS: 2015

Feb 7-8: Whidbey Island Gem Club. Oak Harbor Senior Center 51 SE Jerome Street, Oak Harbor WA
Feb 28-1: East KingCo Rock Club. Pickering Barn. 1730 10 Ave NW Issaquah WA

May 2-3: Everett Rock and Gem Club Everett Community College, Student Fitness Center, 2206 Tower Street, Everett WA

June 5-7: Puyallup Valley Gem and Mineral Club Swiss Park, 9205 198th Ave East Bonney Lake WA 98390

cont from page 1

All sites are off Highway 395 in the northeastern California. The Davis Creek site is the first left turn (if you are heading south) off of 395, after entering the town of Davis Creek which is marked by a small sign on your right. I recall the sign being brown, but you know how well a rockhound's memory can be when visions of sheen obsidian are on one's mind. Shortly, you come to a 4 way intersection with stop signs. Go straight and continue on as the road turns to dirt. From there the easiest way for me to remember the way is to follow the signs towards Benton Meadows. The signs will direct you to take a right onto a road that tees into the one you are on Turn on this road still following the signs to Benton Meadows. The road crosses a creek immediately after passing a sharp uphill hairpin spur to the left which goes to the digs, only a quarter mile to the site. This is a good thing because there is about a foot difference in height between the two tire ruts and the hairpin turn is not passenger car friendly. There are two pit areas here. The upper is straight up from the parking area. The lower is to the right above the parking area. People say there is a difference in the material, but both were fed by the same flow. I think what you finds depends on the hole you are lucky enough to be in.

The Pink Lady area is not hard to find. The Lassen Creek area is to the left of the road and just short of the campground. If there is anyone there, you can see the vehicles from the road. I plan to bring a topographical map when I return. Tim Fisher has directions posted on his web site (www.orerockon.com). They were helpful for getting familiar with the area before traveling there. His directions and the topographical map should get you there.

INTERNET ROCK SITES

1. www.orerockon.com - Pacific NW field trips, equip buy/sell, misc.
2. www.wrightsrockshop.com Has everything.
3. www.agateswithinclusions.com. The name sums it up.
4. www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Forest/2031/ . Terry's Oregon Rock Page has info on Oregon collecting.
5. Information on collecting in Eastern Oregon during the Madras Pow Wow: Write Eula Dillard, 145 E. 179th, Spanaway WA 98387 or call 253-847-2755.
6. www.wyodinator.org and www.thermopywy.net/bhbf for dinosaur excavation trips.
7. <http://mineral.galleries.com/minerals/byname.htm>
Part of Amethyst Galleries, Inc.'s web site, this is a listing of all the minerals in that company's (extremely extensive) database. More than a mere list, however, each entry is linked to its own page, giving info. such as the mineral's chemical composition, history, physical characteristics, and so on.
8. <http://www.goodearth.com/virtcave.html> The virtual cave site offers a directory of all caves in the US that are open to the public.
9. <http://www.luckystrikemine.com> Info from Prineville, OR rock dig site.
10. <http://www.the.gemshop.com>. The Gem Shop in Cedarburg, Wisconsin hold claims to central Oregon rock sites.
11. www.rockhounds.com This is a great site! Every aspect of rockhounding is addressed or it gives you a link.
12. www.stonetrails.com/ORlocs/ORlocs.htm Oregon rock sites Replace OR with WA...you'll get Washington sites.
13. <http://www.kinglseynorth.com>. **Buy grit in bulk.**
14. www.fs.fed.us/ - Fees and required permits for access to Federal lands.
15. General interest sites: www.rockhounds.com, www.fireagate.com, www.awesomegems.com
16. Be sure to go to our website (See top of Page 1). There are numerous links to other sites.
17. WEBSITES FOR DINO LOVERS
<http://dsc.discovery.com> Look for games and videos
<http://www.paleoportal.org>
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com> Look for technology and science.
<http://www.geo.ucalgary.ca>
<http://www.scienceschoolhouse.com>
18. <http://www.jescoproducts.com> **Buy grit in bulk**

OFFICIAL BLM REGULATIONS REGARDING COLLECTING:

You can collect a reasonable amount of rocks and minerals from BLM lands, but a permit or fee may be needed if you exceed certain amounts as described below. Note that the collecting limits for petrified wood are slightly different.

A REASONABLE DAILY COLLECTING AMOUNT

No BLM permit or fee required.

- fits in a car trunk or is a partial pickup truck load and,
- weighs less than 250 pounds

- and the material is not for commercial use.

(For petrified wood see below)

MORE THAN A REASONABLE DAILY AMOUNT

Requires a permit and fee from BLM.

- is a full pickup truck load or,
- involves more than one trip (or partial load) and,
- weighs more than 250 pounds
- or the material is for commercial use,
- or explosives or power equipment is used.

PETRIFIED WOOD:

Collecting petrified wood is free up to 25 pounds per day, plus one piece, but no more than 250 pounds per year. Pooling of quotas among two or more people to obtain pieces over 250 pounds is prohibited. A permit is needed for amounts over these limits.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES

CODE OF ETHICS

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without permission from the owner.

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations and rules governing collection on private lands and will observe them.

I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

I will use no firearms or blasting materials in collection areas.

I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind, such as fences, signs, building, etc.

I will leave all gates as found.

I will build fires only in designated or safe places. I make sure they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.

I will discard no burning materials--matches, cigarettes, etc.

I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.

I will not contaminate wells, creeks, or other water supplies.

I will cause no damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

I will support the Rockhound Project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless or how found.

I will cooperate with Field Trip Leaders and those in designated authority in all collection areas.

WASHINGTON AGATE & MINERAL SOCIETY

WAMS meets the first Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m., at the First Baptist Church of Lacey, 4702 22nd (corner of College St. and 22nd)

Officers:

PRES Charlie Price 259-3063
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The Washington Agate & Mineral Society Newsletter is printed and distributed monthly. Material may be reprinted if properly credited. Deadline is the 20th of each month.

RETURN ADDRESS:

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P O BOX 2553
OLYMPIA WA 98507**

**Minutes for December 2, 2014
None – Christmas party.**

Respectfully submitted by Secretary – M.J. Huetter

Talk about your field trips....

GIANT CRYSTAL CAVE DISCOVERED (article from BBC December 2000)

A gigantic cave of crystal has been discovered in an old silver mine in Spain. The geode, which is 26 feet long and crammed full of gypsum prisms, has been put under police protection to prevent souvenir hunters from raiding the extraordinary natural phenomenon. Javier Garcia Guines, the geologist who discovered it told BBC News that up to 10 people could sit inside the geode--an object normally small enough to hold in your hand. Javier Garcia Guines stated: "Bending your body between the huge crystals is an incredible sensation. The crystals are absolutely transparent and perfect."

The geode, essentially a rocky cave which has become lined with crystalline deposits, is 26 feet in length, 6 feet wide, and 6 feet high. The crystals of gypsum--hydrous calcium sulphate--are about a half a meter in length.

The giant geode may have formed at the same time as a geological event called the Messinian salinity crisis. At this time, about six million years ago, the Mediterranean Sea evaporated, depositing thick layers of salts. The same salt saturated fluids could have filled up the geode. The drying out of the Mediterranean was probably caused by a restriction in the Straits of Gibraltar, the sea's only connection with the rest of the Earth's oceans. The hope is to turn this magnificent object into a tourist attraction.

MAIL TO: