

The Ventura Gem & Mineral Society presents:
RockhoundRambling
The Official Bulletin of the VGMS

Volume 69 Issue 2

February 2023

INDEX

Our Show is Almost Here!

Our 2023 Show is less than two weeks away! Hopefully you've been telling all your friends that the show is coming and you're excited to help. There are still plenty of open volunteer shifts and jobs at our sign-up page, <https://volunteersignup.org/LYWR4>. Also, please join us for our February member meeting on Wednesday, February 22nd, at 7:30 p.m. at Poinsettia Pavilion, to help final planning for the show with your fellow club members. We hope to see you there!



At our February Pups meeting, kids learned about how to display rocks for our upcoming Show and for decorating their homes. Club members young, old, and in between are working on making our Show shine!

Announcements

Membership dues are due and will be delinquent after March 1st. The Country Store is still in need of your donated items, including books (no clothes, please). You can bring them to the fairgrounds on Thursday, March 2nd before the show. Finally, the club has accumulated some equipment from donations that we are going to put up for sale at the show. We want members to have first choice of them on Thursday, March 2nd at the fairgrounds, so come check it out. Everything left will be up for sale in the Show Silent Auction.

Letters: President's Message,
Editor's Note, Clubhouse
Search p. [3](#)

Program Review & Schedule p. [4](#)

Workshop: Clubhouse Safe After
Rains p. [5](#)

Federation News: '23
CFMS Show, Junior Award
Opportunities p. [7](#)

Meeting Minutes p. [8](#)

Rockhound Rambling: Paleo
Portal p. [11](#)

Rockhound Rambling: Utah
Natural History Museum p. [11](#)

Rockhound Rambling: Garnets
Galore p. [12](#)

Outreach: Library Display,
Science Night p. [14](#)

Pebble Pups: Collection Display
Ideas p. [15](#)

The Challenge Begins a New
Year! p. [18](#)

Club Business p. [18](#)

Calendar p. [20](#)



Ventura Gem & Mineral Society (VGMS)

P.O. Box 1573, Ventura, CA 93002

Purpose of the VGMS:

In a welcoming club environment, VGMS encourages interest in the earth sciences, mineral and fossil collecting, field trips, and the lapidary arts, including jewelry making. Our monthly meetings feature interesting lectures by amateurs and experts. Via facilities in our clubhouse, we offer workshops and opportunities for crafting polished stones, in addition to maintaining a museum and library for educational use. We also sponsor an annual show for members to share their collections and jewelry with the community, during which we award a student scholarship in the Earth sciences.

Club Essentials

Contact

Email: info@vgms.org Website: www.vgms.org

Annual Membership Dues

First adult member in a household: \$20

Subsequent adult member(s) and children ages 6-18: \$10 each

Children ages 5 and under: no dues with adult member

Print subscription to *Rockhound Rambling*: \$35

Regular Meeting

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. via Zoom or at The Poinsettia Pavilion

Santa Paula Room, [3451 Foothill Rd., Ventura, CA 93003](http://3451.Foothill.Rd.,Ventura,CA.93003)

January through October: 4th Wednesday of the month

November and December: 2nd Wednesday of the month

Anyone may attend and is welcome. The December meeting is normally a holiday party.

Board Meeting

7:00 p.m. via Zoom or at The Poinsettia Pavilion

Santa Paula Room, [3451 Foothill Rd., Ventura, CA 93003](http://3451.Foothill.Rd.,Ventura,CA.93003)

First Thursday of the month

Field Trips

Announced monthly in the bulletin and the regular meeting.

Annual Show

The Club's Annual Gem Show is held the first full weekend in March at the Ventura County Fairgrounds.

Workshop/Museum

[11969 N. Creek Road, Ojai, CA 93023](http://11969.N.Creek.Road,Ojai,CA.93023)

Open Workshop Day: 3rd Saturday of the month

Certified Members' Workshop: 1st Sunday of the month

Federation Affiliation

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS)

VGMS Club Colors

Blue and gold

Permission to reprint

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Photo of the month credit

Photos provided by Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick.

2023 Elected Officers

President	John Cook
1st VP, Programs	Terry Wilson
2nd VP, Field Trips	David Springer
3rd VP, Show Chair	Diane Cook
Treasurer	Lauren Wideman
Recording Secretary	Nancy Brace-Thompson
Membership Secretary	Krishna Juarez
Federation Director	Jim Brace-Thompson
Bulletin Editor	Celia Churchill
Parliamentarian	Shirley Layton
Web Director	Troy Schmidt

2023 Committee Chairs

Ways and Means	Adrian Ruiz and Jenifer Russell
Museum	Jim Brace-Thompson and Troy Schmidt
Library	Heather Seaton
Historian/Archivist	Jim Brace-Thompson
Host/Hostess	Sue Slyker
Pebble Pup Chairs	Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick and Erin Valenzuela
Club Stewards	Ron Wise, David Springer, and John Cook

Note From the Membership Secretary

VGMS membership renewals are due for 2023. The membership roster will be finalized on March 1st. To ensure continuing membership benefits, please mail your membership dues to the VGMS P.O. Box (address above) Or pay online at <http://vgms.org/membership/> -*Krishna Juarez*

Welcome, new VGMS members!

Please welcome the following new and returning members: Christine Greco and Pebble Pups Cash and Bane, Sheri Hultman, Vonise Guadagno, Christina and Ross Harris, Kimo Zaiger, Megan Hewitson and Brian Davis, Timothy Cenicerros and Pebble Pup Nico, current member Arthur Lopez adding Pebble Pup Skyla, and Steven Schaab.

LETTERS

President's Message

John Cook



Our January club meeting was great. The club meeting was show and tell and it was great seeing what people did over 2022. Also, we were able to see what a great year 2022 was for our club members. Lots of interesting stories from club members and it was a fun night. It's great to see that club members have been busy doing field trips and lapidary projects. The March 5th and 6th show is rapidly approaching and there is a

lot to do. We will have lots to do before, during and after the show. I am so excited to see the club members step up and get things done. If you would like to help with the show

preparations and be part of the show, please feel free to contact myself or Diane Cook, our show chairman, or sign up at our volunteer link: <https://volunteersignup.org/LYWR4>.

Additionally, clubhouse maintenance and cleaning along with upgrades are scheduled. Due to the recent heavy rains and Creek Road closure, we need to get things cleaned up. We scheduled a cleanup day; please sign up if you can.

Dues are due! Remember to please mail dues to our P.O. Box or PayPal info@vgms.org

I am always available to answer questions and to listen to any new ideas or opinions by E-mail: cookjohnr@sbcglobal.net or phone: 805-320-5611.

Rock on,
John

Editor's Note

Celia Churchill



Calling all writers! As you're out there enjoying our hobby, for example, taking in the rugged terrain of a collecting trip, practicing your favorite lapidary art, or preparing that perfect case for an upcoming show, consider writing about it for our club newsletter.

"I've been receiving this bulletin in my e-mail for years. Why should I write something for it now?" you may ask. The answer is, for bragging rights and the glory of our club!

You see, every year, our California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS) hosts a contest for the best bulletin submissions, published during the previous calendar year, in a variety of categories. The top three CFMS entries in each category are forwarded to the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) to be judged at the national level. CFMS awards are presented at the CFMS Show, and AFMS awards are presented at the AFMS Show.

Articles published this year will be entered in the 2024 contest. Next year, the AFMS Show comes to CFMS. And the combined meeting will be held...right here in Ventura!

At the CFMS awards banquet last year in Lancaster, I'm not sure we went five minutes without hearing an award presented to a VGMS member. It would be doubly special to see that happen again in 2024 right here in Ventura, with lots of VGMS members cheering each other. Let's make it happen!

With that in mind, I'd like to share some information about the most popular type of entry: **the article**. Articles must fall into one of the following five categories. **Informational** articles include how-tos, identification, lapidary, historical, etc. **Scientific** articles cover mineralogy, geology, paleontology, etc. **Collecting** articles discuss old or new collecting sites and must include some technical data, e.g., the geology of the area. **Club activities and interests** articles include editorials, articles about shows, and local topics. Finally, **humorous** articles must be hobby-related.

How are articles scored? Judges look for a catchy title, readability, and whether the article addressed the topic well. They also like to see a list of Sources at the end of your article—if the source is your own experience, say so! (For example, "Source: The author has been cabbng for over 10 years.") Copyright is also important—try to use your own photos/images, or images in the public domain (and credit the photographers appropriately). Writing captions for your photos helps the reader understand what you want to show. I am happy to help with any of these steps.

If you'd like more information about the judging criteria, please see the score sheets at <https://cfmsinc.org/cfms-bulletin-contest/>. There are four categories of entrants: Adult, Adult Advanced (author has won a first place trophy in the Adult category, has professionally published writing, or has worked in the Earth sciences field), Juniors 12-17, and Juniors under 12. I hope to see lots of new bylines this year!

As always, if you have any articles, photos, or comments about the bulletin, please E-mail me at vgmseditor@gmail.com.

NEWS

Program Review and Schedule

Terry Wilson, 1st VP – Programs

Program Review - Show & Tell

In January we had a really nice meeting with a dozen or so people Showing and Telling about their finds, projects, and collections. Thanks to all who participated in sharing! This is what makes a club!

This Month - Show Planning

This month we'll go over everything related to our upcoming show. The meeting will be on Wednesday, February 22nd, at 7:30 p.m. at Poinsettia Pavilion. This year our show will be in the Quonset hut nearest the main entrance, and as last year, everything is in one building. Be sure to attend the meeting as there have been some changes from last year. Our show schedule remains the same, with setup on Thursday and Friday.

March - Marcus Eriksen

Marcus Eriksen, Ph.D. will be our special speaker, rescheduled from our January meeting. Dr. Eriksen and his partner, Anna Cummins, have recently moved to Santa Paula with the goal of opening a Science Education center in Ventura County. They're already off to a great start in terms of specimens, with a *Triceratops* skull currently housed in a hangar on their ranch. Dr. Eriksen will be speaking about dinosaur-hunting on his Wyoming property.

Hope to see you there!



Richard Slyker holds an arrowhead collection.



Members share their various acquisitions, projects, and collections from 2022 during our first meeting of 2023!



David Springer shares spheres he made.

Workshop

Clubhouse Survives Floods, Lapidary Adventures Continue

Jim Brace-Thompson

In the time since our huge winter rains and floods, the Creek Road access to our clubhouse from Route 33 has been barricaded and cut off. However, a couple alternative routes allowed clubhouse access, which I had to take advantage of on January 25th to secure materials for an educational outreach event the next night. Even along those alternative routes, flood damage was clear and intense. For instance, as I descended Hermosa Road to N. Creek Road, the pavement was still caked with fine silt from creek beds that overflowed their banks. Whole uprooted trees and debris cluttered the area, and at other spots there remained clear evidence of mudslides and rock falls along steep slopes that justified the closure of Creek Road. Camp Comfort, itself, appears to have been totally flooded. Piles of mud some four feet high had been scraped from their parking lot and piled up along the side. Fortunately, those flood waters stopped short of crossing Creek road and hitting our facilities. We clearly dodged a bullet!

Per this writing, they are still in clean-up mode, but the good news is that they've been moving at a rapid clip and have made great progress. Progress has been so good, in fact, that we've been able to re-open the clubhouse for those accessing via alternative routes such as Hermosa Road. Thus, gladly lapidary adventures continue! Per the logbook, our February 5th Workshop Day saw a full house. Names listed included Jake Bailey, Chris Churchill, Joneane Neville, Richard and Susan Slyker, Debbie Sander, Robert and Heather Seaton, David Springer, Dick and Phyllis White with Rylee Jones, John and Diane Cook, Kathryn Davis, Lonnie Sutton, Rich Pisor, Jenifer Russell, and me. Susan sorted Country Store items for our upcoming Show. Richard performed an evaluation of display cases and other Show materials. Richard and Robert went through and pulled out signage for the Show. Dick, Phyllis, and Rylee helped me with photo shoots toward a *Rock & Gem Kids* magazine article on soft-stone carving. Jake did an evaluation of clubhouse maintenance and repairs in light of our winter storms. Jenifer and I prepped material for a grab-bag stuffing party. And John and David served as Shop Stewards while a half dozen club members availed themselves of club machines to craft lapidary projects. The second Saturday of the month is not normally a Workshop Day, but on February 11th we invited members to come and enjoy our slab saws and Genies in exchange for hard labor. Per the logbook, Robert Seaton, Jake Bailey, Jessica Layton, Richard Slyker, John Cook, Ron Wise, Shirley Layton, Dick and Phyllis White, Lonnie Sutton, and I gathered at the clubhouse for a clean-up after our intense winter storms. There were leaves to be raked and mud to be scooped up, carpets to be vacuumed, rain gutters

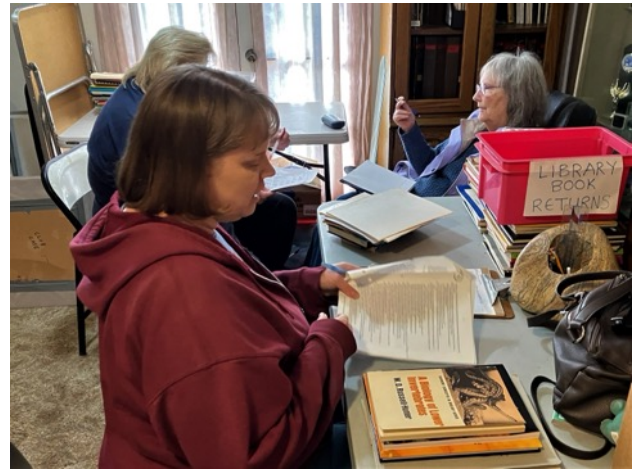
to be repaired, and more. In addition, more show work was conducted, from organizing silent auction rocks to kids' booth supplies to country store inventory. Afterwards, some folks who gathered for the clean-up from 9:30 to noon stayed on to enjoy using club machines for lapidary projects. By the way, here's a "Public Service Announcement." I know that I saw a couple more folks that morning beyond those I've listed above, but these were the names in the logbook. Here's a plea to one and all. When visiting, working at, or enjoying the clubhouse, please sign the logbook so we have a formal record that we can share with the County Parks Department to help us maintain access to our buildings by showing how they are being well and fully utilized. Our contract with the parks department depends, in part, on providing concrete evidence that we are putting the buildings to good use, and this includes showing just how many members are utilizing our facilities. So, whenever visiting, for whatever reason, please sign in! Many thanks!



Lonnie crafts a cab.



Susan sorts materials for the Country Store at our upcoming Show.



Heather updates our library collection.



Richard and Robert sort through signage for our upcoming Show.



Richard and others engaged in clubhouse clean-up on February 11th.



Rich checks his progress on a flat-lapping project.



Many members lent helping hands for clean-up of clubhouse grounds on February 11th.

Federation News

The 2023 CFMS Show & Convention in Lodi: See You There?

Jim Brace-Thompson, Federation Director



Diane Cook and I are on the Show Planning Committee for this year's statewide California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS) Show & Convention. For newer VGMS members, CFMS is the statewide umbrella organization composed of 98 clubs like our own all across California and parts of Nevada and Arizona. Each year

they host a Show & Convention. It takes place this year June 23-25th at the Lodi Grape Festival and Event Center (413 E. Lockeford St., Lodi, CA 95240).

Diane and I participated in the latest show-planning meeting on February 10th, and it looks like all is moving more-or-less smoothly forward. This year's show is considered a "no-host show" in that no local club stepped forward to host it. Thus, we're in dire need of volunteers. Already, many VGMS members have stepped up to the plate; for instance, I've heard of offers of assistance from Dick and Phyllis White, Robert Seaton, my wife Nancy, and, of course, Diane and me. In addition, my sister Janelle Thompson and our member-from-afar Barbra Meisenheimer are providing me with hand-sewn bags to use for grab bags in the Kids' Booth. We welcome help from more VGMS members—for instance, in providing kids' booth or raffle prizes, or helping run the kids' booth activities

or raffle during the show itself. If you plan on going, please contact Diane or me. We value even an hour of volunteer service! In addition to running the Kids' Booth, I'm a member of the Exhibits Committee, so I also encourage VGMS members to consider entering a display. It's a long, long way from here to Lodi, but if you can make it there, let's showcase the talents and collections of VGMS members! Even if not interested in displaying, we encourage you to attend the show. Because it's a no-host show in an area not accustomed to hosting a show, we're not sure how attendance will pan out, so the more, the merrier. If you show up (and help out), I may even give you a free spin on the Kids' Booth spinning wheel. Heck! That's a one dollar value. Go for it! See you there?



If you've got the time for the long drive, see you in Lodi!

Kids Enter and Win Federation Honors!

Jim Brace-Thompson, Federation Director

As I noted last month, kids can earn at least a couple of awards at our upcoming Show & Convention of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies taking place June 23-25th in Lodi. But deadlines fast approach! **CFMS Junior Achievement Award.** This award acknowledges kids who have done outstanding work within our hobby and clubs and beyond. Kids belonging to CFMS-affiliated clubs are encouraged to enter in 2 age groups: under 12 and 12-18. To enter, kids outline their contributions and service in 4 categories: hobby related, educational achievement, community involvement, work-related. Winners receive a certificate and \$100 and

will be honored at the 2023 CFMS Show. A copy of the application form will be at our take-one table at our February VGMS membership meeting and may be obtained on the CFMS website: <https://cfmsinc.org/juniors-achievement-award>. But hurry! The deadline for receipt of applications is March 1st! Because I'm running this contest, you can swing by my home until midnight, February 28th, and toss a rock through my window with your application wrapped around it! **Show Chair's Award for Outstanding Junior Exhibit.** VGMS kids can go for another award that I'm personally sponsoring. The CFMS Show Chair's Award for Outstanding Junior Exhibit will be given to the kids' display (competitive

or noncompetitive) that appeals most to the Show Chair in Lodi. No rules. No red tape or hoops to jump through. The winning display earns \$100, a certificate-of-achievement, and a mineral specimen. So to all VGMS Pebble Pups and Junior members: enter a display in the CFMS Show & Convention this year, and you might just walk away with a one hundred dollar bill from my own wallet—and a smile of satisfaction on your face! The deadline for sending exhibitor forms to enter a display in this year's CFMS Show is June 1st; see <https://cfmsinc.org/2020-cfms-show-forms/>.



Kids! Go for the Show Chair's Award for Outstanding Junior Exhibit!

Meeting Minutes

VGMS General Meeting, January 25th, 2023, at the Poinsettia Pavilion.

Attendees:

Called to order at 7:30pm PST, John Cook, Presiding. There were 31 participants. 3 Pebble Pups and 2 guests. 7-7:30 p.m. was Social Time. Welcome everyone in 2023!

Announcements

Presentation Rescheduled

Tonight's speaker, Marcus Eriksen, is ill. His talk has been postponed to the March 22, 2023 members meeting.

Name Badges

If you need a name badge, see Diane Cook.

Please Use whoscoming

If you are going to any workshops you MUST sign up on <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/>

Member's Workshop

Sunday, February 5th from noon to 3 p.m.

General Workshop

Saturday, February 18th from 9 a.m. to noon.

Presentation

Show & Tell by Members

Started with Valerie Churchill and a piece of Graveyard point plume agate she self-collected. Harrison Tasoff was next with a few items he found throughout 2022. Then Robert Seaton showed some fluorescent minerals. Richard Slyker showed an

arrowhead collection that belonged to Susan Slyker's father. David Springer showed field trip rocks he turned into spheres. Joneane Neville showed cabs she made. Jenifer Russell brought in a Pietersite specimen and pendant and a faceted Sweet Home mine rhodochrosite. Jake Bailey went to Alaska and bought some Chrysocolla. Erin Valenzuela showed petrified redwood. Nancy Brace-Thompson brought in a ruby and zoisite elephant. Leslie Cox showed her 'Pac-man' spheres. David Mautz showed off fossils he bought in Quartzsite and Mesa, AZ. Jim Brace-Thompson showed Oregon agates. Terry Wilson spoke about getting obsidian at Tyson Wells club show.

New Business

Steward Search

The club is looking for clubhouse stewards. If interested there is a sign-up sheet in the back of the room.

Hospitality Sign-ups

A hospitality sign-up sheet is in the back of the room for volunteers to bring in snacks at the club member meetings for the rest of the year.

Old Business

Saturday Workshop

Saturday February 18, 2022, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

2024 CFMS/AFMS Show

VGMS will host the 2024 CFMS/AFMS show at the Ventura Fairgrounds. Committee signup sheets are on the back table.

New Clubhouse Search

Our current clubhouse is aging, and it is time to find a new place. If you want to be on the committee, the signup sheet is on the back table.

Officer - Committee Reports1st VP – Programs: Terry Wilson

February program will be talking about the show. March will be Dr. Markus Eriksen.

2nd VP – Field Trips: David Springer

March will be to the Cady mountains. April is the Hornitos claim but is TBD. Signup on <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/>

3rd VP – Show: Diane Cook

There will be a show planning meeting on Thursday, February 2nd at 5:30 p.m. (before the board meeting). There will be a grab bag stuffing party on Saturday, 2/18/23 from noon to 2 p.m. at the clubhouse. Sign-up sheets are on the back table for the March show. Need a Food chairperson. We feed the volunteers lunch on Thursday and Friday, a Friday night dinner and lunches and Sat & Sun. Send show publicity to all your family and friends. Fill out an exhibitor form to exhibit your finds! Looking for volunteers to blanket downtown Ventura on Saturday 2/25 meeting a 11 a.m. Flyers and posters are on the back table to pick up and distribute. Check out the display case in the Foster Library. Taking donations for the kids booth for rough materials for the egg cartons and items for the spinning wheel. Need donations for the Country Store as well. Bring the items to the show. Raffle is also looking for donations.

Treasurer: Lauren Wideman

Not Present. All bills are paid (per Diane Cook)

Secretary: Nancy Brace-Thompson

The December meeting minutes were motioned by Krishna Juarez, seconded by Robert Seaton and approved by all.

Web Master: Troy Schmidt

Not present. Website is up to date

Membership: Krishna Juarez

New members. Total members are 179 adults, 42 pebble pups and 11 junior members = 232 total.

Federation Director: Jim Brace-Thompson

There is a CFMS no host show in Lodi in June 23 - 25th.

Everyone is welcome to attend and display. There will be an award for the best Junior exhibit. VGMS also gives out a novice award. There is a junior achievement award that will be given out as well. Camp Paradise is 8/20/23 to 9/7/23 these are 2 one-week sessions. VGMS came in first in the All-American competition in 2022.

Bulletin Editor: Celia Churchill

Thank you to everyone who wrote articles for the January bulletin. Articles are due February 10th.

Parliamentarian/Scholarship: Shirley Layton

Not Present. She does have scholarship applications.

Committee ReportsPebble Pups: Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick/Erin Valenzuela

Had a great zoom meeting on Saturday 1/21. Did show and tell and played Mineral Bingo. The next meeting is Sat 2/18 in person at the clubhouse and will be a discussion about the upcoming VGMS show. There will be a grab bag stuffing party right after the class for any pup or junior who would like to help.

Ways and Means: Adrian Ruiz and Jenifer Russell

Raffle made \$131!

Museum: Troy Schmidt/Jim Brace-Thompson

Still working on cataloging the specimens and will put in new lights the next time Troy is at the clubhouse.

Educational Outreach: Jim Brace-Thompson

Science night at Flory elementary in Moorpark on Thursday 1/26/23. The Loma Vista 4H club presentation on crystals on Tuesday 2/14/23.

Archivist/Historian: Jim Brace-Thompson

On hold.

Librarian: Heather Seaton

Not present.

Stewards: John, Ron and David

Nothing to Report

Next Meeting

The next member meeting will be on Wednesday, February 22nd, 2023, beginning at 7:30pm at the Poinsettia Pavilion.

With no further business, President John Cook adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on February 5th, 2023.

Nancy Brace-Thompson, Recording Secretary

Meeting Minutes

VGMS Board Meeting, February 2nd, 2023, via Zoom

Called to order at 7:45 pm., John Cook presiding.

Attendees

John & Diane Cook, Shirley Layton, Krishna Juarez, Celia Churchill, Dick & Phyllis White, Robert Seaton, Lauren Wideman, Erin Valenzuela, Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick, Terry Wilson, and Nancy & Jim Brace-Thompson.

The November, December, and January board meeting minutes will be approved at the February board meeting.

Announcements

Meeting Minutes

The January meeting minutes were approved by Diane Cook and seconded by Krishna Juarez and approved.

Next Member Meeting

Next Members meeting will be held on Wednesday February 22nd, 2023, in person at the Poinsettia Pavilion starting at 7:30 p.m.

Members Workshop

Sunday February 5th, 2023, from noon to 3 p.m. and Saturday February 18th, 2023, from 9 a.m. to noon..

New Business

Clubhouse Clean-Up

Saturday, February 11th at 9:30 a.m. to noon at the clubhouse. Then whoever helps, the Genies can be used from Noon to 2:00 p.m. Celia will send out an email to members with a link to <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/> for members to sign up..

Old Business

Board Member Duties ad-hoc Committee

Celia Churchill will chair it and looking for members. This will go over the duties of the board members.

2024 CFMS/AFMS Show

Diane Cook is the show chairperson, and she will send an email to set up a show meeting soon.

By-laws and Operating Regulations

Lauren Wideman will look at both and clean up overlapping areas.

Clubhouse Search

Diane will have a zoom meeting with the committee soon to go over ideas and start a to-do list.

Officer - Committee Reports

1st VP – Programs: Terry Wilson

February presentation will be Show information in person at the Poinsettia Pavilion starting at 7:30 p.m. March will be Dr. Marcus Eriksen, Dino Man, regarding his Wyoming ranch. April will be Richard Edley and son. May is a silent auction.

2nd VP – Field Trips: David Springer

Tajiguas Beach trip is on Sat 2/4/23. March 25-26/23 will be a trip to Cady Mountains. April 8, 2023, is a trip to Hornitos in the central valley for hornitos jasper. In May Chuck Borchard will lead a trip to Castle Butte and Aerial Acres, TBD and June 10, 2023 is a trip for DeeDeeite and biconoids.

3rd VP – Show: Diane Cook

Diane Cook – Show planning meeting was held on February 2nd before the board meeting starting at 6 p.m. The show is next!

Treasurer: Lauren Wideman

Diane and Lauren will Zoom soon to discuss the treasurer position.

Secretary: Nancy Brace-Thompson

Minutes were taken. Celia Churchill will take minutes at the February members meeting.

Web Master: Troy Schmidt

Not present.

Membership: Krishna Juarez

10 new adult members and 4 pebble pups. Krishna Juarez made a motion to accept the new members, Shirley Layton seconded and were approved. 189 adult members, 46 Pebble Pups and 11 Juniors for a total of 246 members.

Federation Director: Jim Brace-Thompson

2023 No Host Show will be in Lodi on June 23-25, 2023. There will be articles in the CFMS newsletter and email blasts. Need volunteers! Jim is running the kids' booth and has asked to use the VGMS Spinning Wheel, sand sifting tubs and excavating dino box. Diane Cook made a motioned and David Springer seconded and all approved.

Bulletin Editor: Celia Churchill

Thank you to everyone who wrote articles for the January bulletin. Articles are due February 10th.

Parliamentarian/Scholarship: Shirley Layton

There are four submissions, three from Santa Barbara City College and one from UCSB. Diane Cook and Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick have volunteered to help choose the winner.

Committee Reports

Pebble Pups: Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick/Erin Valenzuela

Good turnout at the last pebble pup meeting via Zoom. The

Pebble Pup planning meeting has met twice to talk about the future. Pebble Pups are using the Band App to get information out to Pebble pup families. Lisa would like to setup a pebble pup email and will discuss it with Terry Wilson. Next Pebble Pup meeting is Saturday February 18th at 10am and will design the pup case for the show. Pups are bringing their items for the case and discuss the case. there will be a Pebble Pup silent auction on March 22, 2023.

Ways and Means: Adrian Ruiz and Jenifer Russell
Made \$131 at last members meeting.

Museum: Troy Schmidt/Jim Brace-Thompson
Jim did not see any damage in the museum after the large rains. Troy is working on cataloging the last donation.

Educational Outreach: Jim Brace-Thompson

Upcoming Events: February 14th Loma Vista 4-H club on Crystal Formations. Thank you to Dick, Phyllis, Troy, Celia and Nancy for help with the display in the EP Foster Library. Thank you to Renee, Dick, Phyllis, Rylee, Alysa, Art, Susan, Leslie, Robert and Shae for helping with the Flory Science

night.

Archivist/Historian: Jim Brace-Thompson
Put together Archive binders for 2022.

Librarian: Heather Seaton
Not Present.

Stewards: John, Ron and David
Tyrone LaFay has requested to be a steward.

Next Board Meeting
The next board meeting will be on March 2nd, 2023, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the fairgrounds.

Next Membership Meeting:
Wednesday, February 22, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. in person at the Poinsettia Pavilion.

With no further business, President John Cook adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted on February 5th, 2023.
Nancy Brace-Thomson, Recording Secretary

Introducing Paleo Portal

JARED MCGOWAN

Dinosaurs, fossils, paleontology, and more! Aspiring paleontologist and dinosaur enthusiasts often have many questions about these long extinct organisms that once lived across our planet. Who better to ask than the paleontologists, paleoartists, and other researchers and dinosaur experts that excavate and study them? From the CEO of Fossil Crates (www.fossilcrates.com), the online store selling a wide assortment of museum quality fossil casts and paleoart prints, Dr. Brian Curtice presents the Paleo Portal!

Paleo Portal (www.paleoportals.com) is a once- to twice-a-month presentation and group discussion of 1 to 2 hours in length via Zoom, with a special guest (paleontologist, paleo researcher, collector, or paleoartist) who shares their experiences working in their fields, in what discoveries they have participated, work they have done, and for some still working on. Sometimes we are even treated to a tour

of their collections, labs, and workspaces. Members are encouraged to ask their burning questions as well as share their opinions. Every session is recorded, so if there were a topic or paleontologist you wanted to see and hear from, but couldn't make it live, no worries, as the conversations are uploaded and available alongside the many other paleontological resources in Paleo Portal's ever-expanding library!

Those who wish to join the live sessions as well as access the site and its resources can do so at no risk with their current 30-day Free Trial. A membership fee of only \$9.95 is charged monthly after the free trial period. Paleo Portals is available for people of all ages and backgrounds who have a love and passion for all things prehistoric, fossils, and everything else related to the fields of paleontology! To learn more and join go to www.PaleoPortals.com/join

Natural History Museum of Utah

ERIN VALENZUELA

After a few days of skiing, snowboarding and snow play in Park City, Utah, we decided to check out some local museums. The Natural History Museum of Utah is located on the University of Utah campus in Salt Lake City. The Museum was founded in 1969 but in 2011 moved to the new state of art Rio Tinto Center.

The cost is \$20.00 for adults and less for children, seniors and members. A cute cafe and gift shop can be found on the second floor. As you enter the museum and head up the stairs, you wander through Utah's natural history, starting 500 million years ago. You learn about the Great Salt Lake's beginnings as Lake Bonneville and the three different physiographic regions

that formed in the area. Past Worlds was my favorite! A great hall full of Dinosaurs. I spotted *Stegosaurus*, *Utahraptor*, *Allosaurus*, *Gryposaurus* and a wall full of the world's largest collection of horned dinosaur skulls. Utah is one of the best places in our country for dinosaur fossils and the Museum proudly displays and honors their paleontological history. A Fossil dig, build a skeleton, and solve a paleontology mystery are some of the hands-on activities. Towards the end of the hall are fossils of Ice Age mammals, birds and reptiles from Utah. Other floors are full of amazing lab classrooms, rock and mineral displays- including an awesome exhibit about Earthquakes, the stories of the prehistoric people of the area and the eight Native tribes that call Utah home. Near the top of the Museum, the Web-of-Life floor explores DNA to ecosystems- my son enjoyed the hands-on exhibits, that correlated with his Biology class! A temporary exhibit, Angkor, had some amazing photos and artifacts from Cambodia.

The Museum lives up to their mission statement, to "Illuminate the natural world and the place of humans within it". It is definitely worth a visit and one of my top five favorite Natural History Museums!



The Rock Cycle, Utah style!



Part of the world's largest collection of horned dinosaur skulls.



Just hanging out with old friends!

Garnets Galore

HARRISON TASOFF

My friends often ask my counsel on their crystals, beach finds, and jewels. I always reply that, at the end of the day, these are all just rocks that will sit on your shelves; what matters most is whether they make you happy. And that joy can derive from many sources: a specimen of exquisite quality, a sample with an amazing story, or a rock hard won after an exciting adventure. My favorite is the latter.

After Shawn Underwood visited VGMS last July, I was inspired to visit the places he so generously mentioned in his

talk. Fittingly, I left that meeting with a garnet from his Broken Spear claim. The following months would take me to garnet locations across California, as well as some premier sights the state has to offer.

Later that summer I shanghaied a friend into a weekend trip to Riverside to explore the deposits around Jurupa Valley. We set out in the 96° heat from a local park straight into the foothills of the Jurupa Mountains. Our eyes were searching for the white, calcite hilltop that Shawn said would herald the

presence of a skarn deposit.

We found it, precisely where he had described. The material was quite friable, but we scored some nice garnet, epidote, and calcite. After lunch and a bit more bushwhacking, we decided to visit the nearby Oak Quarry Golf Club, built on the remnants of Jensen Quarry. The clubhouse has a nice display on the location's mineralogical treasures right in the entryway.

Another quick drive brought us to the Old City Quarry, near Fairmount Park. Alas, circumstances conspired against us, and we had to depart before we could explore for very long. I still managed to collect some chrysocolla, which looked under the loupe like jellied sky spread over dark brown earth. The quarry is the type local for vonsenite, a peculiar black borate, so I hope to return in the near future.

Labor Day brought me to one of California's jewels: the Sierra Nevada. There, my brother, two friends and I sought out Garnet Hill, a prominence along the Mokelumne River just south of Salt Spring Reservoir. Shawn had promised us great garnets for the price of the steepest hike he'd ever done.

After four hours lost in the backroads of Calaveras County without reception, the intrepid brothers finally made it to the campground and their concerned compatriots. Temperatures soared into the mid 90s that weekend, even at 3,000 feet, so we embarked on our trek early the following day.

God bless my friends who lugged the 10-pound sledge hammer up the 900-foot gain; it proved useful once we came to the top. There, in a ravine spanning the summit of the hill, were boulders of garnet and epidote. We gathered some choice specimens (and a few to spare) and enjoyed lunch with a view of the valley. After some photos we descended the hill, notably heavier but happy that gravity would now be our ally.

No less exciting was the following day, when my brother and I bid our friends farewell and set out for Calaveras Big Tree State Park. The giant sequoias towered over the forest, as if constructed by providence to hold up the firmament. These trees are relicts from a bygone era. Their kind once spanned the northern hemisphere before slowly retreating to just 75 groves over the march of tens of millions of years.

November took me to the Owens Valley, a region I had explored at the beginning of the year and was glad to revisit. With three friends in tow, I drove through the night to a quaint motel in Bishop. Our objective was the many skarn deposits of the Tungsten Hills. Although Shawn had only mentioned the location in passing, I grabbed his remark and ran with it.

With coordinates in hand, my friend and his GPS led us toward the Tungsten Blue Mine, which promised copper minerals as well as garnet skarn. And with coordinates in hand we followed dirt roads and snowmelt creeks, scaled hills and scrambled over rocks, descended into gullies and completely missed the mine we were looking for, which had, incidentally, been not too far from where we parked.

After some relieved collecting around the old mine workings, we headed back to the car. But not before I peeked behind some dense foliage to finally discover the actual mine shaft, now flooded. A second flurry of collecting ensued until twilight gently nudged us back to our vehicle.

Although the ancient bristlecone pine forests were beyond our reach that trip—what for a heavy blanket of snow—hot springs, petroglyphs, and wildlife delighted us on the valley floor. After a misadventure in the Union Wash left us emptyhanded of ammonites, a quick trip to the Haystack afforded my friends with some lovely aquamarine on our way home.

I'm quite obliged to Shawn for inspiring these excursions. His tales and advice afforded me and seven of my friends and family some truly memorable adventures. And I've no plans to slow down this year. I have already led six friends on another expedition, this time into the Mojave, to explore caves, mines, and yes, another garnet location. May we all continue collecting memories as we search the earth for its geologic treasures.



Exploring a skarn deposit near Bishop, CA. Photo by Charlie Mountain.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Library Display and Science Night

Jim Brace-Thompson, Educational Outreach Chair

VGMS has conducted two educational outreach projects in the past month:

A New Display in the E.P. Foster Library Thank you to Dick and Phyllis White, Troy Schmidt, Robert Seaton, Celia and Valerie Churchill, and Nancy Brace-Thompson, who joined me on January 14th to install a new display at the E.P. Foster Library in downtown Ventura. The display highlights all aspects of our hobby and club, from mineral, gemstone, and fossil collecting to the lapidary and jewelry arts, field trips, our annual show, educational outreach and our scholarship program, our Pebble Pups program, and more.

The display should be in place for at least a couple more months. Check it out—then thank those who helped in providing wonderful material to share and spread our passion within our community!



Fun at Flory Science Night Many thanks to Shae Andrae, Art and Susan Lopez, Dick and Phyllis White, Renee Frisk-Jones with Rylee and Elyssa, Robert Seaton and Leslie Cox! All joined forces with me on January 26th at Flory Academy of Sciences & Technology (grades K to 5) in Moorpark for their annual “STEM Night,” which resumed this year after a two-year pandemic pause. We provided interactive displays with hands-on activities illustrating “magic minerals”—namely, magnetic and fluorescent rocks and minerals.

At the magnetic mineral station, we had “Find Fuzzy” in magnetic sand, “Dancing Magnets” swirling around a powerfully magnetic stereo speaker woofer, “Levitating Magnets” on a stick, “Fishing for Magnetite,” and a demo illustrating the differences among such iron minerals as hematite, magnetite, and lodestone magnetite.

At the fluorescence station, we demonstrated the science behind fluorescence with an expandable/collapsible Hoberman sphere, provided a glimpse of fluorescent minerals in our

traveling display case, and let kids explore for fluorescent minerals using “magic wands” (i.e., fluorescent flashlights) in the “Magic Cave of Fluorescence.”

Finally, as kids bid a fond farewell, each left with a Goodie Bag containing flyers explaining magnetism and fluorescence, info on our club and our Pebble Pups program, and several mineral and fossil specimens, including their very own pieces of magnetite to play with at home. Based on the number of Goodie Bags that Art and Susan passed out, we had at least 150 kids pass through our stations. Once again, my thanks to all club members who volunteered their dinner hour/s for an educational community event to serve kids in our county—while having fun!



Phyllis helps kids “find fuzzy” in magnetic sand.



The VGMS stations saw a full house during Flory's Science Night!



At our VGMS stations during Flory's Science Night, kids learned how magnetic minerals levitate.

PEBBLE PUPS

Collection Display Ideas

Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick, Pebble Pups Chair

Do you tend to over-collect as I do? Wouldn't it be great if all of us rockhounds started showing off all the cool things we find soon after we find it? We get all excited about the hunt and collect, collect, collect. But what are we supposed to do with all these specimens we've accumulated? If you're like a lot of us, they end up in a cardboard box and thrown into the garage or tossed somewhere in our own backyard. But that's just sad! There's a reason we collect these rocks. It's because they mean something to us. And we should take the time to display them proudly for all the world to see!

I know we are all eagerly awaiting our very own show to be able to share the special things we have collected from the past year, but I would like to share a couple of ways that allow you to show off your collection in your home so you can enjoy it every day.

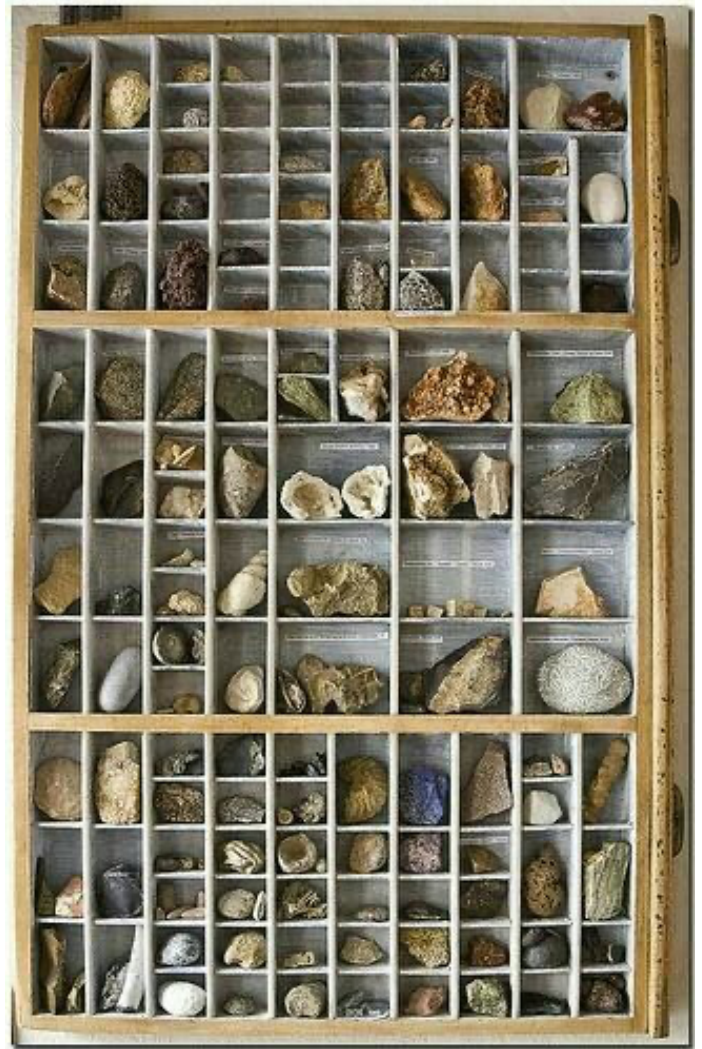
My first recommendation sounds so simple (and it is) because you are using something everyone has...a glass jar or vase. The reason I like it is that everyone has an old jar or

vase that can hold a collection of rocks or shells. Sometimes I find that they are most beautiful when they are wet and having them in a mason-style jar allows me to add water and seal the top so I can enjoy their beauty that way. I also put them into a vase that will now act as a floral frog to support flowers.



The next recommendation is inspired by a collection that

my grandfather made before I was born, I find so much joy in looking at the different pieces in the frame, and I wonder about the stories they could tell. In the frame is a collection of different cabochons he made from stones he collected over time. I really wish I knew more about the collection, but I am so glad he took the time to put it in a frame so we could enjoy it. If it had been put into a box, I may have never seen it, but because it was on the wall in my grandmother's office I have admired it since I was a child. To make your own, you will need a frame and backing material of your choice, place the items displayed in a pattern you like, and secure it with the glass of the frame.

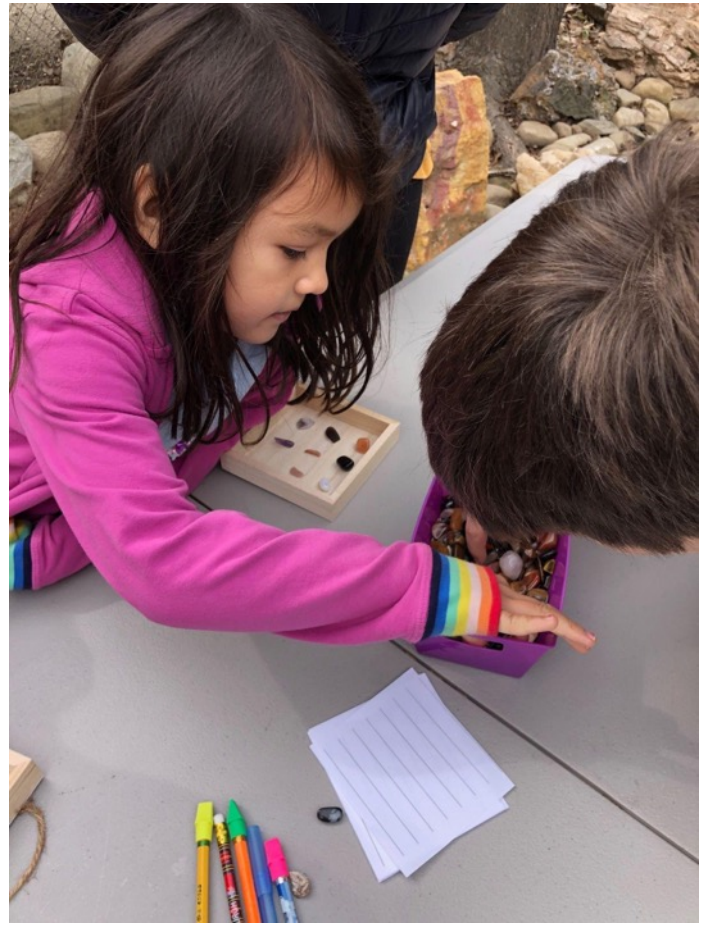


So the moral to this collector's story is don't hide, but rather highlight, your collection in unique ways to enjoy their beauty year-round for all to enjoy!

Now, if you're serious about making your rock collection or fossil collection look spectacular, then an antique, type case box is for you in my opinion. In the late 19th century, the type case box was a compartmentalized wood box used to store the "sorts" of letters used in printing newspapers. From a collector's perspective, when you hang the drawer on its side, it becomes an opportunity to display your tiny treasures on its many small shelves. I love the romance of displaying old items by using other old items.

Can't find a type case? Why not try a simple shadow box? Curate a few of your favorite items and show their beauty in a shadow box. You can label them or put a ledger on the back of the frame to remind you what they are and from where they came. Recently, the Pebble Pups enjoyed making their own curated collection to display on the wall. It is a fun and very easy project for all.





“The Challenge” Begins a Whole New Year!

Jim Brace-Thompson

With a New Year comes a new set of Challenges! Every-other week, we'll continue posting a puzzler for Pebble Pups and Junior Members to solve. Here are the most recent puzzlers and those who successfully solved them:

Hanksite: Colin, Grayson, and Joey.

Magnetic crystals: Izzy, Gabby, Sarah, Chloé, Bianca, Osiris, Joey, Colin, Grayson, Lucia, Paige, Valerie, Solana, and Violetta.

Fossil heart urchin: Joey, Osiris, Lucia, Beatrice, Colin, and Grayson.

Congratulations to all winners! To Pebble Pups and Junior Members: take The Challenge to test your knowledge while adding free specimens to your collection in a way that's fun!



Recent Challenges included hanksite, magnetite crystals, and fossil heart urchins.

Pups Answer the Challenge

VGMS Pebble Pups

Following are just a few of the responses to our latest Challenges:

“We just got back from a trip to Death Valley and got to see cool geology, including lots of halite at Badwater Basin!! We've figured out this week's Challenge. Is it hanksite??” – *Colin and Grayson*

“Magic rocks are the best! It's magnetite!” – *Izzy and Gabby*

For our Challenge involving fossil heart urchins, I promised extra Pebble Pup Bucks if providing as much detail as possible. Everyone earned extra bucks, but Lucia went the extra yard in researching. Here's her response:

“Heart urchins. They belong to the class Echinoidea, meaning they're in the same phylum as starfish and sea cucumbers.” – *Lucia*

Great job, Pups!

Thank You to Jim Brace-Thompson for hosting the Challenge!

Thank you!

Everyone who has helped make VGMS sparkle

Celia Churchill

I would sincerely like to thank and a big hats off to Celia Churchill, our bulletin editor, who has gone above and beyond the call of duty sending out notices to club members, attending board meetings, helping with field trips notices,

adding equipment to be sold in the bulletin, etc... Celia, your efforts have not gone unnoticed and thank you so much. – *John Cook*

E.P. Foster Helpers

Thank you to all who helped install a display in the E.P. Foster Library in downtown Ventura to help promote our hobby, our club, and our forthcoming show! See the full article in "Educational Outreach. –*Jim Brace-Thompson*

Science Night Helpers

A big thanks to all who helped with a very successful and fun Science Night in Moorpark on January 26th. (See the Educational Outreach article in this issue.) –*Jim Brace-Thompson*

Dick and Phyllis White

Thank you to Dick and Phyllis White for donating a box of nicely tumbled stones for use in grab bags at our forthcoming show. Like the stones they donated, Dick and Phyllis really shine! –*Jim Brace-Thompson*

Diane Cook and David Springer

Many thanks to Diane Cook and David Springer for donating specimens secured at the Quartzsite shows toward our Pebble Pup Challenge. They've provided enough material to take us through three months of Challenges! –*Jim Brace-Thompson*

Stuart Bloom

Thank you to Stuart Bloom for volunteering to distribute Show posters and flyers in his own office and around midtown Ventura and for donating egg cartons and storage crates. –*Jim Brace-Thompson*

Churchill Family

Thank you to the Churchill family for donating slabs of agate they self-collected along the Idaho/Oregon border for our Pebble Pup Challenge! (I won't name what those slabs are so as not to give away the secret during our Challenges, but I can say that they are "ghostly"!)

–*Jim Brace-Thompson*

Dick and Phyllis White and Rylee

Thank you to Dick and Phyllis White and Rylee for helping with a photo shoot up at the clubhouse toward a future article on soft stone carving in the Kids pages of *Rock & Gem* magazine. –*Jim Brace-Thompson*

VENTURA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

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See you at our Show!

CALENDAR

February-March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12 February Happy Birthday, Phil Chandler!	13	14	15	16 Happy Birthday, Richard Pisor!	17	18 Clubhouse: Open Workshop 9 a.m. - noon Pebble Pups Class 10 a.m. Grab Bag Stuffing 12 p.m.
19	20	21 Happy Birthday, Evi Orogas!	22 Member Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at Poinsettia Pavilion	23	24 Happy Birthday, Grayson P.!	25
26	27	28 Happy Birthday, Terry Wilson!	1 March	2	3	4 VGMS Show 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. VC Fairgrounds Happy Birthday, David Springer!
5 VGMS Show 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. VC Fairgrounds	6 Happy Birthday, Miriam Tetrault!!	7	8 Happy Birthday, Patrick Frye!	9	10 Happy Birthday, Logan Cattanach and Tophia J.!	11

Celia Churchill
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