

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

Volume 69 Issue 3

March 2023

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What A Show!

Our 2023 Show rocked! The dealers sold, the demonstrators educated, and exhibitors showed off their collections. VGMS members stepped up and ran booths, helped where help was needed, and proudly represented our club to the public. And boy, did the public show up! The San Miguel Hall was busy, with people often filling the wide aisles. Way to go, VGMS. It was a fantastic show!



Every year our Show Volunteer photo celebrates the best of the best, the dedicated volunteers who helped out all the way until break down of the fair building. This photo, pizza, and the feeling of a job well done is there reward. Thank you, volunteers!

Join us for our March Meeting!

Our member meeting on March 22nd, 2023 promises to be a good one! We have our rescheduled talk by Dr. Marcus Eriksen, who is opening a science museum in Santa Paula. Dr. Eriksen will discuss his plans, curiosities like the *Triceratops* skull he keeps in a hangar on his property, and his Wyoming property where he offers dinosaur dig opportunities. We hope to see you at 7:30 p.m. at the Poinsettia Pavilion!

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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](https://www.google.com/maps/place/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](https://www.google.com/maps/place/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](https://www.google.com/maps/place/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 2023 directories will be mailed to members along with membership cards. If you would prefer an emailed version of the directory please email me at abaris2007@gmail.com and I will note your preference. –*Krishna Juarez*

Welcome, new VGMS members!

Please welcome the following new members: Abigail Landeros, Deveric Cardona and Erica Taylor, Stephanie Young, and Andrew Janzen and Pebble Pup Leon.

LETTERS

President's Message

John Cook



Our February club meeting was all about our upcoming show March 4th and 5th. Our show chair Diane Cook discussed what to expect and had each of the respective booth chairs share an update. She also asked for volunteers to help with the booths. The meeting also had raffle. We all had a good turnout and a great time.

On March 4th and 5th, we held our 60th diamond anniversary Gem and Mineral show in the San Miguel

Hall at the Ventura County Fairgrounds. The show was a huge success and we had lots of our club members show up to help. The public was very responsive and showed up in huge numbers. The kids' booth, Country Store, Raffle, Silent Auction and Plants all had record sales in the two days. Hospitality booth sold lots of T-shirts and miscellaneous items. We also had the Teachers' Booth and Kids' Scavenger Hunt. This was the first year we used a slide projector on the venue wall to show in real time the drawn winners of the raffle. Based on the results of the show it was the best shows we have ever had. Those

of us who worked the show had great time. It was great to see our new and existing club members dedicated to make the show a success. I would also personally like to thank those who helped set up the show, exhibit at the show, tear down all the equipment and deliver it back to the clubhouse in Ojai. It was a monumental task and hats off to all who participated!

I would also like to thank those who showed up at the clubhouse on February 11th to help clean up after the heavy rains we had in January and help organize and ready the equipment and cases for the March show. Additionally, clubhouse maintenance and upgrades are still being scheduled. Several items are on the list, so again we would love to get to know you and could use your help. Please contact me or when you see an email come on up to the clubhouse and help. Dues are PAST due! If your dues have not been paid, you will no longer receive the bulletin or access to website members area.

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



As I mentioned in my note last month and at our February meeting, this is the year to enter your work in the bulletin. The CFMS/AFMS show will be held in Ventura in 2024, so if you win a bulletin contest award, you'll receive it right here in Ventura!

Last month I reviewed the most popular entry, the article. This month, I'd like to focus on the **feature**. In general, a feature communicates a smaller amount of information than an article. There

are two types of features: written and drawn. All features must have a title and be of interest or meeting the needs and/or purpose of the club. There are also extra points for originality and "grabbing the reader's interest".

A **written feature** is basically a short article. It could be a message, historical commentary, travelogue, humorous piece, or non-rock-related poetry. Jim Brace-Thompson's series of short articles, "Picturing the Past" about our club's history, is a great example of the written feature.

A **drawn feature** is something I would personally love to see this year in our bulletin! I have never submitted one for our club. They can be cartoons, puzzles or quizzes, or drawings. I know we have some great artists in our club and it would be very exciting to see your work compete with clubs from all over the country.

One important thing I neglected to say in my last update is that editors are only permitted to submit one piece per author, per category. So for example, if a member submits three great articles, I can only send one on to the CFMS competition. So if you've written a great article already this year, consider submitting a feature!

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 February we had our annual Pre-Show planning meeting. Diane Cook gave an informative presentation about what happens at our Show, the chairs gave updates, and requests for volunteers were made.

This Month - Marcus Eriksen

This month we will have an exciting presentation by Marcus Eriksen. 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.

The meeting will take place in person at Poinsettia Pavilion on Wednesday, March 22, 2023. Social time begins at 7 p.m. and the meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. Hope to see you there!

April - Silent Auction

We have shuffled the April and May meetings a bit. April will be our silent auction, and May will see our own John Cook

speaking of the Petrified Forest in Calistoga. Hope to see you there!



At our February meeting, Diane prepped us all for our big 60th annual show.

Logan Cattanach Wins 2023 VGMS Scholarship

Shirley Layton



On behalf of the Scholarship Committee, I'm happy to announce that we have chosen Logan Cattanach, from Ventura, as our scholarship recipient for the year 2023. We awarded Logan his certificate and check at our March 2nd Board Meeting at the fairgrounds while setting up the show. He was able to see what was involved in so doing and came to the show Saturday and Sunday and helped wherever needed! Logan joined VGMS in

2022, and he receives an honorary membership for 2023 as part of the scholarship award.

We were fortunate to have four good submissions this year, so competition and the decision-making were tough. Following is his introduction that he submitted with his application:

"I am a graduate of Buena High school. I graduated in 2022 with a 4.3 GPA and am now currently attending Santa Barbara City College. I have just finished my first semester of college ending with a 4.0 GPA. I am majoring in geology with a minor in mineralogy. My educational goals are to complete all of my general education at SBCC and take some of the higher-class earth science courses. From there I plan on directly transferring to UCSB where I will continue my geology education. I would

like to finish with a bachelor's degree in geology and then start working in the field while doing night school to get my master's. I have always had an interest in earth science since I was a little kid. I started collecting rocks and minerals at a young age and classifying and labeling them. I would go to the beach or on hikes and try and find local material that strikes my interest. Now that I am actually studying in the field and learning about the formations and history of our local area, it is just piquing my interest more and more. My educational goal leads to my career goal. I would like to become a damage mitigation geologist for the national park service. I want to work in a job where I am outdoors and working with the environment. I want to be doing something that benefits people and doesn't hurt the environment. I have a long road ahead of me with lots of work to do. However, I am determined and confident that I will achieve my goals."

Logan is a great asset to VGMS, he is energetic and enthusiastic regarding his Geology goals. With school and working he won't be able to join our activities as much as he would like, but definitely will when he can. He has been certified for our workshop and is shown with his first cabochon! Congratulations to him and we look forward to working with him.



Congratulations to our 2023 Scholarship Winner!



VGMS President John Cook and Scholarship Chair Shirley Layton presented Logan's award at the March board meeting.

VGMS Show

Our 2023 Show Rocked!

VGMS Show Committee Chairs

The 60th diamond anniversary Ventura Gem and Mineral Show took place at the Ventura County Fairgrounds on March 4th and 5th, 2023. From the first show planning meeting in 2022, to the round of applause ending the post-show meeting, VGMS members took part on every level to create a memorable show. Thanks goes out to our 2023 Show Chair and 3rd VP, Diane Cook, for overseeing it all. It was clearly a great success. Most of the show Committee Chairs wrote something about their part of the event so we can all appreciate how it came together.

2023 VGMS Gem and Mineral Show Exhibits, Richard Slyker: Forty-five exhibits were enjoyed by the visitors to the 2023 60th Annual Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Show. Members displayed their lapidary skills, beautiful collections and geological and paleontology knowledge. The exhibitors provided collections and education in all areas of the show's genre. Mineral crystal specimens with the active fluorescent displays were exhibitor highlights. Fossil exhibits were popular, including excellent cases by Pebble Pups. Beautiful agate exhibits depicted spheres opened to crystal centers, polished specimens and jewelry. Educational displays provided geological and paleontology information. Members displayed talents with carved, polished and lapidary skills. Who did not enjoy the native Gold display? The exhibitors did an outstanding job of displaying the interests of the Ventura Gem and Mineral Society.



Leslie Cox's Pac-Rock Men made a popular exhibit.

Big Wins at the Raffle, David Springer: A big shout out to all who participated in the Raffle for our 60th Diamond Jubilee Annual rock show, as it truly takes a village to run. For starters, I wanted to echo some previous praise given to the publicity chair, without whom we could have had potentially dismal attendance. So, let us all not forget who helped us get the word out to get the people inside to then participate in our various activities...thanks Jim and all who helped get the word out! Thanks also to the ticket sellers over the two days and to

those that assisted with running the auction including Richard, Sherri, Janelle, and Riley as well as some other named ticket pickers. I was a “newb” to this raffle role, having taken over for Richard who has run the raffle for many years now. Under his wise guidance, and using his well-conceived and designed cases and boxes, things went pretty smoothly. A few changes this year I applied were the all digital format using our laptop and projector, which I believe sped things up a bit, and the introduction of Yoda holding the bowl for the winning ticket to be picked from. Well, at least the projector worked well.

Thanks to all those who donated items to the raffle. Without compelling items to draw interest, a raffle can flame out. In keeping with trends, since we always seem to break records nearly every year, I want to ask those members who have the talent to plan on contributing something for next year’s raffle. The parameters to consider for submitting an item for the raffle are: something that will show well in a lit display case (jewelry and mineral specimens tick this box quite nicely!); something small enough to mail out if the winning ticket is not present; and something with a value of at least \$25. Thanks all for your assistance and for your consideration for assisting next year as well.



We had a lot of appealing items to win this year in our raffle.

Silent Auction Sold Well, Ron Wise: First we had a huge booth, we almost needed roller skates. The auction booth worked on a one hour time frame, 15 minute set up and 45 minute sales. This time frame kept everyone working continuously. This left little time to shop or eat lunch. Someone left us a pair of reading glasses, so please contact us if they’re yours. Thank you from me and my co-Chair John Cook to our wonderful workers: Jake Bailey, Martha Moran, Cindy Treutelaar, Lowell Foster, Debbie Sander, Tyrone LaFay, Lonnie Sutton, and Terral Matsumoto.



The Silent Auction offered a nice variety of items for sale.

Two Busy Days at the Teacher Station and Scavenger Hunt, Jim Brace-Thompson: During our Diamond Jubilee Show, we had a fun busy time at the Welcome Booth with our Teacher Station and Scavenger Hunt. The Teacher Station had free educational packets and rocks. To increase their educational value, I packaged all rocks with labels providing background info, such as whether the rocks were igneous, sedimentary, or metamorphic, if they were an economic mineral, etc. Most teachers tentatively selected one rock from the bin but jumped right in when they learned they got five specimens each. We distributed 70 Teacher Packets and gave out 350 fist-sized specimens.

Kids turned in 211 “Rock Out!” Scavenger Hunt questionnaires and kept us busy throughout the weekend passing out questionnaires and pencils then directing kids to the “Treasure Basket” to pick free prizes. The questionnaire had four questions designed to give us a little survey as to what were the most popular displays, demos, etc. Following are stats from this year’s hunt with the top five responses (and the percentage of kids responding) for each question.

What were your favorite activities at the Kids’ Booth? Spinning wheel – 22%, Sand Sifting – 21%, Dino Dig – 16%, Coloring Corner – 15%, Cinderella Rocks and Touch Stones – 8%. Here are a few of the more interesting responses. “I liked the ugly rocks because they are ugly and not ugly.” “Wheel was my favorite because the suspense made it even more exciting and it was cheap!” “The sand sifting because you could find rocks you don’t even know!” “The kids booth because I’m a kid.” “The whole booth because it brings joy to my day.”

What was your favorite display case? Answers were all over the map on this one, and I think each display earned at least one vote. In fact, one kid wrote, “I love them all!” Those receiving the most votes, though, were: Chris and Bob’s Volcano – 9%, The saber-tooth cat in the California State Symbols display (“I like tigers.”) – 7%, a tie at 6% each: Fluorescent Minerals and Fossils, a four-way tie at 4% each: Marine Fossils, Lake Superior Agates, Boulder Opal, Attack of the Pac-Man Rocks, Dinosaurs – 3%. We enjoyed at least one

unusual answer here. Can you spot it? “The rock.” “The Pac-Man rocks because they looked funny and made me laugh.” “Chickens.” “The Ventura Gem & Mineral Society case – it had a blade from Apex Legends. They’re sooo cool!”

Check out our dealers. If you could be a dealer, what would you sell? Rocks. (Just rocks). – 13%, Fossils – 8%, Geodes and Jewelry – 6% each, Dino Fossils and Gems – 5% each, Diamonds, Opals, and Amethyst – 4% each. Some of the things kids said they would sell were, well, interesting. For instance... “Chickens.” (Again?? What’s with the chicken kid?) “I’m gonna sell money.” “Amethyst or emeralds at \$20 each.” (Hey! I’m buying from that kid!) “Mermaid rocks.” “Surf boards.” (If you had seen this kid and his dad, you would understand.) “Cookies.” “Gelato.” “Toys.” “Rock unicorns.”

Who was your favorite demonstrator? Gold Panning – 26%, Rock Carvers (Go, Rylee and Dick!) – 11%, Chris Ward’s Matching Games – 10%, Bob Knox’s Volcano – 9%, Tony and Sandie Fender’s Beading and Jewelry Making – 7%. Here are a few individual responses about our demonstrators. “I like volcano guy best because he explains the insides of a volcano and it has cool rocks and pretend fire and lights and he was very nice.” “There was a lady making glass jewelry and she had a heat thingy which was cool.” “The different egg demonstrator because you played a fun game and learn new eggs and we need to give the animals the eggs.”

Remember this for next year: it pays to be nice! Several kids rated various individuals as their favorite demonstrator, including Jenifer, Elyssa, Bob Knox, and Joe-the-Gold-Panner. Why? “Because s/he is nice!” No grumps allowed!



Kids completed a “Rock Out!” quiz to earn a prize in our scavenger hunt.



Per usual, kids rated gold panning as their favorite demonstration.



Teachers enjoyed picking from our tub of free educational rocks.

The Food Chair Stops the Hunger!, Erin Valenzuela: This was my first year as a chair for the Gem show and I had a wonderful time. We fed lunch to volunteers, exhibitors and dealers over four days—close to 200 sandwiches were made and eaten! Thank you to Nancy Brace-Thompson for all her help restocking food, inventorying club supplies, washing dishes and assembling sandwiches! Also a big thank you to volunteers who donated or made goodies to share, helped in the kitchen or carried food and supplies from the kitchen to our eating area in the Show Pavilion—most of whom were recruited at a moment’s notice. We couldn’t have done it without you. Can’t wait to feed everyone again next year!!

Notes from the Show Photographer, Jim Brace-Thompson: Even though the VGMS Show Chair refused to give me a budget for film, your show photographer was busy clicking away on a cell phone during our 60th Annual “Diamond Jubilee” VGMS Show. I’ve forwarded all files to newsletter editor Celia, so I

hope you'll enjoy a few memories in this issue of *Rockhound Rambling*. If you would like the full unedited "Director's Cut" of all 360 photos, drop me a flash drive and I'll load them up (if there's room). As Show Photographer, I was explicitly told, "No butt shots." I tried to comply, butt...I'm sure Celia will select photos judiciously. (*Editor's note: That's right, this is a family publication! Thank you, Jim.*)

Sue Slyker, my hard working co-chair and I would also like to thank the members who helped us to get the store set up at the beginning, helped our customers on Saturday and Sunday and packed up at closing. The much appreciated troopers were Adrian Ruiz, Debbie Sander, Jessica Lynton, Lisa Rittenberg, Gary Leberknight, Julie Cox, Janelle Thompson and another Jessica (new member) whose last name I don't know! Thanks to you all and to any others I may have missed. We couldn't do it without you all!



No butts about it, the show photographer caught folks flocking to our show!



The Country Store enjoyed another successful year.



Country Store, Shirley Layton: This year was one of the best shows our club has ever had, you could see why our show is one of the vendors' favorites. Our members are so friendly and accommodating to make their stay fun and prosperous. The Country Store enjoyed this year's venue as we got to be in the same building and experience the visitors' awe at all the wonderful things the vendors had to offer.

We were sort of low on items for sale due to storage capacity, but as usual when we put the word out to the members they came through with lots of great donations. They amaze me every year! Thank you to all who contributed.



The Plants Booth is a relaxing and beautiful spot to spend time (and money!) during the show.

Plant Sales Report, Terry Wilson: We had strong plant sales this year, with good donations from a variety of members. We love having our section in the same building as the the rest of the show. Along with the assortment of leftover and newly-propagated plants from my own backyard, thanks to Rich Pisor for his generous donations, including ever popular *Tillandsia* and plumeria; Susan Marquez for rose bushes and other plants that came with the condo she recently purchased; and Ron Wise for his assortment of plants. In addition to Rich and

Susan who worked the whole show, Leslie Cox also tended our booth. Thanks to those of you who took home leftover plants at the pizza party. This helps tremendously by freeing up my tiny yard.

Publicizing our “Diamond Jubilee” Show, *Jim Brace-Thompson:* Ever wonder what goes into publicizing our annual show? No? Well, I’ll tell you anyway. Each year, I start with a checklist and work my way down. That checklist includes 26 “action items” spaced out over the course of a year. As you can surmise, we’ve hit the bottom of the list. Here’s a brief summary of just some of the items, along with a few statistics.

Show flyers were distributed at local club shows, the 2023 CFMS Show, the Ventura County Fair, the Fall CFMS Directors’ Meeting, and sent to all our dealers. A supply was placed in the E.P. Foster Library downtown and given to members to distribute locally, along with a sweep of Main Street, Ventura. Plus, some teachers requested supplies to distribute within their schools.

I mailed show postcards to the 800 names we’ve built up on a direct-mail list based on folks who have attended our past shows and have asked to be kept posted about future shows.

I sent out an email blast to nearly 600 teachers who have voluntarily given us their email addresses at our Show Teacher Station over the years.

Letters, along with show flyers and a press release went to 116 geology professors from UCLA to UC-Santa Barbara and all colleges in between.

A press release was sent to the CFMS newsletter and website, 22 local and national publications, and all local newspapers and TV/radio stations. An ad and article appeared in the *Ventura Breeze*, plus we made the calendar listing in *Westways* magazine! (One family attending our show from San Luis Obispo said that’s where they heard about it.)

Invitations went to 25 local youth groups and to 43 rock clubs within convenient driving distance.

We had displays promoting our club and our show at both the Ventura County Fair and in our downtown library, along with club and show flyers, which were also distributed to local hotels and the Ventura Visitor’s Center.

Diane Cook and Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick took charge of blanketing social media, which has become ever more important.

Finally, YOU, our local members, helped immeasurably with good old fashioned word-of-mouth to tempt friends, family, neighbors and work colleagues to come on down. Thank you!

As you can see, there’s a lot more to publicizing a show than meets the eye. By the way, publicity has already begun toward our 2024 Show! Watch for our “rough-and-ready” informal show flyers at the Conejo club show next month in Newbury Park. See you there?



Displays like this at E.P. Foster Library helped publicize our show.

Workshop

Clubhouse Adventures: Lapidary Fun, Stuffing Grab Bags and a U-Haul, and More!

Jim Brace-Thompson

Our February 18th workshop morning was active with folks arriving both to work on projects and to prep for our show. Ron Wise, John Cook, and David Springer served as Shop Stewards while Shirley Layton, Robert Seaton, Rich Pisor, Bella Welch, Andrea Welch, Lonnie Sutton, Debbie Sander, and Alena Rieger made progress on varied lapidary projects. Meanwhile, Heather Seaton staked out a place in the library room to continue sorting through our collection. That morning also saw a Pebble Pup class in the front yard. A busy morning,

indeed, but we weren’t done yet!

After saws, flat laps, and Genies ceased humming, in the afternoon an assembly line of many members (including youth members) managed to stuff 665 grab bags with 12 items each plus a handful of tumbled stones. Let’s see...12 times 665 equals 7,980 individual specimens, in addition to 7 gallons of tumbled stones. In other words, a lot of rocks! Based on the sign-up list from our website and photos of the event, the following folks helped: Jenifer Russell, Diane Cook, David Springer, Dan Jones, Renée Frisk-Jones, Dick and Phyllis

White, Richard Slyker, Celia Churchill, Jake Bailey, Shirley Layton, Kathryn Davis, myself, and junior members Lucia, Elyssa, and Rylee. Some folks jumped in and out of the assembly line between completing other show tasks, such as sorting silent auction rocks, checking display cases and signage, etc. If we're going to do it again next year, we all need to start saving little stones and fossils while tumbling shiny pebbles for the effort. Remember: we'll need at least 7,980 specimens, plus tumbled stones. A lot of rocks! Can you help?

Per the logbook, on March 1st a crew of at least eight (John Cook, David Springer, Adrian Ruiz, Krishna Juarez, Rich Pisor, Richard Slyker, Ron Wise, and I) arrived to load a U-Haul truck with supplies for our annual show. Then, on March 6th, a crew of 10 (Adrian Ruiz, John Cook, Shirley Layton, Lonnie Sutton, Jake Bailey, Rich Pisor, Ron Wise, David Springer Richard Slyker, and me), arrived to bring it all back and unload. Our first-Sunday-of-the-month workshop was cancelled due to the show, but watch for it to return (rain permitting) the third Saturday of March!



Folks were flat-lapping and cutting in our saw room on February 18th



Our Genie rooms were crowded on February 18th with inspired lapidary artists.



A great assembly line stuffed 665 grab bags on February 18th





Club librarian Heather Seaton sorts through our books.



It ain't over till it's over! A big crew unloaded the show U-Haul at the clubhouse on March 6th.

Federation News

The 2023 CFMS Show & Convention in Lodi: Visit, But Don't Get Stuck!

Jim Brace-Thompson, Federation Director



I know. I know. Lodi is a long, long way to go for a gem show. And as John Fogerty sang, "Oh, Lord. Stuck in Lodi again!" Still, Lodi is where you'll find this year's statewide California Federation of Mineralogical Societies' Show & Convention come June 23-25 at the Lodi Grape Festival Grounds. And you don't need to get stuck. Just

come up for a three-day adventure!

CFMS is the umbrella organization to which some 98 clubs like our own VGMS belong. Every year, they host an annual statewide show and convention. It's usually sponsored by a local club, but this year, no club stepped forward. Thus, we're having a "no-host show", meaning the show is being run by CFMS officers and volunteers. For instance, both Diane Cook and I have been drafted into service, and we're in dire need of volunteers. Already, several 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 any other VGMS members who might be getting stuck in Lodi again. I'm running the kids' booth which will have several stations, each needing someone to monitor it. 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. In fact, I believe Robert Seaton may be entering not one but two exhibits into competition. 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 is 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, and let's get stuck together in Lodi!

Kids Enter and Win Federation Honors!

Jim Brace-Thompson, Federation Director

As I've noted in the past, kids can earn awards at the upcoming CFMS Show & Convention June 23-25 in Lodi. But deadlines fast approach!

Applications are now closed for the CFMS Junior Achievement Award that acknowledges kids who have done outstanding work within our hobby, schools, and community. I'm pleased to note three VGMS Pebble Pups and Junior members have entered applications. These are in the process of being judged, and here's wishing each good luck!

While applications may be closed for the Junior Achievement Award, you can still go for the Show Chair's Award for Outstanding Junior Exhibit, which I'm personally sponsoring. This award goes 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 out of my own pocket, a certificate of achievement, and a mineral specimen donated by Susan Chaisson-Walblom. 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 my wallet—and a smile of satisfaction on your face! The deadline for sending exhibitor forms is June 1; see <https://cfmsinc.org/2020-cfms-show-forms/>.

In addition, you can earn trophies if you enter winning exhibits into competition. We also look forward to hearing

results of this year's Bulletin Contest, so some VGMS kids may be earning a plaque or certificate for articles and poems they had published in our 2022 issues of *Rockhound Rambling*. Be the first to learn about all VGMS winners by coming to Lodi and the annual CFMS Awards Banquet.



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

Camp Paradise Now Accepting Applications for Lapidary Classes

Jim Brace-Thompson, Federation Director

Starting March 15th, CFMS began accepting applications to attend "Camp Paradise". You can sign up for one or two weeks at \$500 per week to attend classes in a variety of lapidary and metal-working arts: basic and advanced silversmithing, enameling, wire wrap, faceting, casting, dichroic glass, hard- and soft-stone carving, basic lapidary, and intarsia. Sessions take place August 20-26 and August 27-September 2. The \$500 weekly fee includes room and meals as well as classes. Camp Paradise is in a rustic setting in the Plumas National Forest near Clipper Mills, California, and these classes have been a long-standing Federation tradition. VGMS members who have attended in the past had great fun and great results. To register, go to <http://cfmsinc.org>, click on "Camp Paradise"

in the menu on the right side of the screen, then click on "registration". The website also includes more info about the camp itself, including a detailed document describing the whole experience. Check it out!



Learn new skills like silver casting at Camp Paradise.



Want to learn faceting? Sign up for classes at Camp Paradise!

Searchers Society
 62nd Annual
 Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show

Free  Gratis

Brookhurst Community Center
 2271 W. Crescent Ave, Anaheim, CA

Saturday, April 29th, 2023 / hours 10am - 5pm
 Sunday, April 30th, 2023 / hours 10am - 4:30pm
www.searchersrocks.org

Searchers Gem and Mineral Society
 Free Admission & Parking! ¡Entrada Libre y Aparcamiento!

Door Prizes
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 Brookhurst Community Center
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Premios
 Piedras Preciosas
 Subasta Silenciosa
 Demostraciones
 Exposiciones
 Lavado de Oro
 Vendedores
 Actividades para Niños

Meeting Minutes

VGMS General Meeting, February 22nd, 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.

Member's Workshop

No workshop first Sunday due to the show.

General Workshop

March 18, along with a pebble pups class.

Announcements

No Presentation Tonight

In lieu of a presentation, Diane Cook will hold a show planning session. The next time we will be together is at the gem show, March 2-5!

Minutes Update

There is a slight change to the minutes presented in the January Bulletin. The show dates were printed incorrectly as March 5-6; it should be March 4-5. Kathryn Davis made the motion to change, David Springer seconded.

Old Business

Future Meetings

CFMS/AFMS 2024 show and new clubhouse meetings will be scheduled after the VGMS show.

Sister Society

The Scottish Lapidary Society, the oldest society in the UK, is interested in being a sister society. The details will be discussed at the board meeting. Jim will check to see if we have any other sister clubs.

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.

Show MeetingSetup

Show setup is Thursday. Come in work clothes and be ready to work out and sweat! The truck is getting loaded Wednesday, March 1 at 3:30-4pm. The route to the clubhouse is via Hwy 33/Hermosa due to the rains. The truck will spend the night at someone's house and will arrive at the show in the morning. We will need to skirt tables, assemble cases, and set up all booths. We will feed you! Signup sheets are online; please sign up so that we can notify you if there's a change of plans.

Teardown

Sunday night, after the show ends, we have to take down everything and load the UHaul. Monday morning 8:30-9am at the clubhouse it will arrive for unloading. Chairs need to contact Ron to make sure items they need get to the fairgrounds

Exhibits

Cases are down and need to be put up and screwed together. Please check exhibitor list to verify you name and case. Please remember that the tablecloths go on the table before anything else goes on a table. Tablecloths will be washed this year.

Country Store

Skirt on Thursday, then unpack boxes and put stuff out. People will be bringing items to the fairgrounds to put in store. Pricing on Thursday and Friday. Need volunteers to help sell on Saturday/Sunday

Venue

This year will be in the first quonset hut, San Miguel. On Thursday and Friday, you'll be allowed to park in Lot C. When you come in, go straight, dog-leg around the fences, and park. You don't need parking passes on Thursday or Friday but do need them on Saturday and Sunday. People will be coming in at the front of the building so you'll not be able to park in lot C or enter on Saturday and Sunday.

Food, Drink, and Hospitality

No Friday night dinner this year, the main reason is there's no kitchen. If there are volunteers there at dinner hour, food will be provided. Within reason, drinks are ok at the fair. Be aware of people with open containers. Sunday night is pizza followed by the group photo. There will be a teacher station and scavenger hunt. Celia will provide a printer. Girl Scouts will sell cookies.

Raffle (David)

Ask local people to hand deliver. You can buy tickets in advance. They're \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Raffle drawing happens on Sunday at 3. Members should consider providing a donation

for the raffle, minimum \$25 value. Flashy is good, needs to fit on a 6 inch space, like 6x4in. Bigger specimens should talk to silent auction. Can buy tickets right away. Got volunteers to drop off prizes.

Kid's Booth (Jen)

Various items for sale, our usual kids activities. Coloring contest led by Jared. In the future, looking for volunteers to tumble rocks for the kids program.

Publicity (Jim)

This Saturday 2-25, rain or shine, we need a crew at 11am that can meet at the parking structure on Santa Clara St downtown to paper downtown Ventura businesses with show items. Forward mass email with basic details about the show. Like our Facebook page.

Plants (Terry)

Accepting volunteers and donations.

Silent Auction (Ron)

Can always use help and donations. If donating something, it really helps to know what it is and how much it's worth. We're going to sell some equipment, buffer and trim saw and tumblers. You can check out the equipment on Thursday-Friday and members can buy it.

Dealers (Kathryn)

People will ask how to get in our show. Please direct them to Diane, the Show Chair. There is a set email process to get into the show, including sending booth photo, what they sell, and which shows they've done to get in. There is already a waiting list.

Officer - Committee Reports1st VP – Programs: Terry Wilson

Last month was show and tell. Speaker Marcus Eriksen was ill but will be here in March. Dinosaurs, dinosaur material, etc. In April John will present about petrified forest in Calistoga. May will be Silent Auction.

2nd VP – Field Trips: David Springer

Field trip this month, March 25th is Cady Mountains Ludlow. This is a world class location for jaspers, agates, petrified wood, botryoidal chalcedony. Meet at Chevron Station at 9am. No limit on number of people. Sign up on <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/>. April trying to get Hornitos poppy jasper. David will scout location.

3rd VP – Show: Diane Cook

Show planning meeting was held.

Treasurer: Lauren Wideman

The bank is being difficult about adding, need bills give to Diane.

Secretary: Nancy Brace-Thompson

Nancy is absent, Celia is taking minutes

Web Master: Troy Schmidt

Not present.

Membership: Krishna Juarez

Not present. Pay dues by March 1.

Federation Director: Jim Brace-Thompson

CFMS Show is big news. Coming up in June 23-25. No-Host show, in dire need of volunteers. Enter Junior Achievement Award by March 1. Camp Paradise is being held, please go.

Bulletin Editor: Celia Churchill

Please contribute to the bulletin this year. Entries this year will be awarded during CFMS-AFMS show right here in Ventura. Descriptions of every type of entry will be in the editor's notes of the newsletter this year.

Parliamentarian/Scholarship: Shirley Layton

Have chosen a scholarship winner, will notify them soon

Committee Reports

Educational Outreach: Jim Brace-Thompson

Display at E.P. Foster library, science night at flory academy in Moorpark. Recently gave presentation to 4H about crystal formation and cracked geodes. Pierpont all of 2nd and 3rd graders April 19.

Pebble Pups: Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick/Erin Valenzuela

No Updates.

Ways and Means: Adrian Ruiz and Jenifer Russell
\$102, thank you for donations to ways and means

Museum: Troy Schmidt/Jim Brace-Thompson
No updates

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
No Updates

Librarian: Heather Seaton
Started inventory of library

Stewards: John, Ron and David
Nothing to Report

Next Meeting

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

With no further business, President John Cook adjourned the meeting

Respectfully submitted on February 25th, 2023.

Celia Churchill, Bulletin Editor

Meeting Minutes

VGMS Board Meeting, March 2nd, 2023, in person at the Fairgrounds

Called to order at 6pm., John Cook presiding.

Attendees

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

Announcements

Meeting Minutes

The February board meeting minutes were approved by David Springer, seconded by Shirley Layton.

Members Meeting

Next Members meeting will be held on Wednesday March 22, 2023, in person at the Poinsettia Pavilion starting at 7:30pm.

Members Workshop

Cancelled Sunday March 5. Next workshop is Saturday March 18, 2023 from 9am-noon.

New Business

None.

Old Business

Board Member Duty Adhoc Committee: Celia Churchill
Postponed until next board meeting.

2024 CFMS/AFMS Show: Diane Cook
Postponed until next board meeting.

By-laws and Operating Regulations: Laura Wideman
Postponed until the next board meeting.

Clubhouse Search: Diane Cook
Postponed until the next board meeting.

Officer - Committee Reports

1st VP – Programs: Terry Wilson

March will be Dr. Markus Erickson, Dino Man, regarding his Wyoming ranch. April will be a silent auction and May will be John Cook.

2nd VP – Field Trips: David Springer

March 25-26, 2023 will be a trip to Cady Mountains. Pending in April either a trip to Hornitos in the central valley for Hornitos Jasper or Chuck Borchard will lead a trip to Castle Butte and Aerial Acres.

3rd VP – Show: Diane Cook

Show is happening!

Treasurer: Lauren Wideman

Lauren Wideman will be added to all the VGMS checking and savings accounts and Greg Davis will be taken off all accounts. Diane Cook and Nancy Brace-Thompson will stay on all accounts. Jim Brace-Thompson made a motion to authorize the change on accounts, seconded by David Springer and approved. Diane bought VGMS t-shirts and selling them for \$25.

Secretary: Nancy Brace-Thompson

Minutes were taken.

Web Master: Troy Schmidt

Not present.

Membership: Krishna Juarez

5 new adult members and 1 pebble pup. Shirley Layton made a motion to accept the new members, Celia Churchill seconded and were approved. 117 adult members, 23 Pebble Pups and 4 Juniors for a total of 144 members.

Federation Director: Jim Brace-Thompson

There are 5 entries for the Jr. Achievement Award. Three from VGMS.

Bulletin Editor: Celia Churchill

Articles are due March 10th.

Parliamentarian/Scholarship: Shirley Layton

Introduced Logan Cattana as the 2023 scholarship awardee. He is studying geology at Santa Barbara City College and is hoping to transfer to UCSB.

Committee ReportsPebble Pups: Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick/Erin Valenzuela

Next pebble pup meeting (Sat. 3-18-23) will be a silent auction where pups can use their 'pup bucks' or cash

Ways and Means: Adrian Ruiz and Jenifer Russell

Made \$107 at last members meeting.

Museum: Troy Schmidt/Jim Brace-Thompson

Nothing to report.

Educational Outreach: Jim Brace-Thompson

Weds. 4-19-23 Pierpont elementary has asked if VGMS could do a presentation for their 2nd and 3rd graders. Celia Churchill, Erin Valenzuela volunteered and David Springer and Robert Seaton are maybes. Fri. 4-21-23 Dos Caminos elementary in Camarillo is having a science night and asked if VGMS could do a table. Erin Valenzuela has volunteered to be the lead since other club members will be setting up at the Conejo show.

Archivist/Historian: Jim Brace-Thompson

Nothing to report.

Librarian: Heather Seaton

Not Present.

Stewards: John, Ron and David

Nothing to report

Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be on April 6th, 2023, beginning at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Next Membership Meeting:

Wednesday, March 22, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. in person at the Poinsettia Pavilion.

With no further business, President John Cook adjourned the meeting at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted on March 7th, 2023.

Nancy Brace-Thompson, Recording Secretary

Pygmy Mammoth Fossils

ERIN VALENZUELA

On March 5th 1980, our local Channel Islands National Park was established. To celebrate the 43rd anniversary, I thought it would interesting to discuss its most famous fossil. The Channel Islands Pygmy Mammoth, or *Mammuthus exilis*, was a dwarf mammoth that lived only on the Channel Islands of California. Between 40,000-20,000 years ago, a small herd of Columbian Mammoths left the Ventura shores and swam to the super-island of Santarosae, which later became the four northern Channel Islands. Like their living cousins the elephants, mammoths were exceptional swimmers and the

distance between the coast and the island was less than five miles.

Over a few thousand years, these Columbian Mammoths evolved into a smaller Mammoth. Pygmy Mammoths were about half the size, four to seven feet tall and weighing 2,000 pounds versus the 20,000 pounds of their mainland ancestor. Towards the end of the Ice Age, ice caps melted, the sea levels rose, and the super-island started to separate. This caused the Pygmy Mammoths to be stranded on the islands. These smaller mammoths required less food to survive and

there were no mainland predators to drive selection for larger body size, so the small mammoths flourished on the islands compared to the larger mammoths. Pygmy Mammoths became extinct around 10,000 years ago along with most of the other mammoth species. The exact reason is unknown, but scientists believe it could have been due to climate or environmental changes, human over-hunting, or a combination of the three. Of the hundred Native American fire pit sites excavated on the Channel Islands, over one third contained mammoth bone fossils.



This display shows how small the Pygmy Mammoth was compared to mainland species.

Fossils of the Pygmy Mammoths were found as early

as 1856 on Santa Rosa Island, but at the time they were thought to be elephant fossils. Excavations of the 1920s led paleontologists to classify the remains as a new species, the Pygmy Mammoth. Pygmy Mammoth fossils have been found on all four of the northern islands, but the majority have been collected from Santa Rosa Island. In 1994, an almost-complete skeleton was found on Santa Rosa Island. It was a 50-year-old male Pygmy Mammoth fossil who lived about 13,000 years ago. You can see replicas of the 1994 fossil at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and the Channel Islands National Park Visitor Center.



A replica of an almost-complete Pygmy Mammoth skeleton at the Channel Islands Visitor Center.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Showing 4H Members How Ventura Rocks!

Jim Brace-Thompson, Educational Outreach Chair

At the invitation of teen program officer Rachel Lipscomb, I found myself on the night of Valentine's Day giving a presentation to 37 kids (along with many parents) of the Loma Vista 4H Club. To show that I was 'one of them', in addition to my VGMS badge, I proudly wore my 4H pin from when I was a member over 50 years ago. My, how time does fly...

We started with a 35,000-foot overview of the rocks and fossils of Ventura County. Because much of our area is covered in sedimentary rocks, I began with the fossil treasures contained within them that 4Hers and their families can find under their own feet: giant sand dollars, sandstone slabs bearing starfish, petrified whale bone, and even Ice Age mammoths! While on the topic of fossils, I introduced their state fossil with a skull cast of *Smilodon*, the ever-popular saber-tooth cat.

Moving from fossils to rocks and minerals, I had to break bad news: Ventura is not an especially gemstone-rich region. Nonetheless, there are treasures to be found: gold panning opportunities around Lake Piru (with a legend of a lost bag of

Spanish gold under an old oak tree), agate nodules and quartz crystals along Kanan Road, and my own hoard of brecciated jasper and jasp-agate cobbles along our home beaches. I showed rough material and what wonders can be crafted from them, and in keeping with tales of their state symbols, I pointed out gold as their state mineral then shared a chunk of blue schist containing large blue specimens of the state gemstone, benitoite, before giving a quick and simplified explanation of crystal growth as a lead-in to their activity for the night: smashing geodes with hammers.

As kids gathered in the back of the room with geodes, each left with a Goodie Bag containing a flyer about their State Rockhound Symbols and a pamphlet explaining how to grow your own crystals using everyday household ingredients. Each also received info on our club, our Pebble Pups program, and our March Show, along with several minerals and fossils. My thanks to the 4H club for the invitation and to VGMS member Cindy Martin, who also sat in on the presentation.



37 kids of the Loma Vista 4H Club gathered on the night of Valentine's Day.

Upcoming Educational Events

Pierpont Elementary School Assembly Stacy Mikkelson has invited us to address all 100 second and third graders in

their school cafeteria starting 8:30 a.m. on April 19th. Details still TBD, but we'll likely start with a general presentation to the whole group on some basics regarding rocks, minerals, fossils, collecting, and lapidary arts. Then kids will visit four stations scattered around the cafeteria. Current thoughts are a table on local rocks, a fossil table, jewelry table, 'magic minerals' table with hands-on magnet fun, and/or a State Symbols table. And maybe even a mini field trip to the beach immediately behind the school afterwards? Several members have already volunteered help (Celia Churchill, Erin Valenzuela, David Springer, Robert Seaton), but with 100 kids we could always use more hands!

Dos Caminos Elementary School Family Science Night

Robert Waggoner has invited us to set up a table at Dos Caminos Elementary School's "Family Science Night" in Camarillo, 6:00-8:00 p.m., with set-up available starting as early as 4:00 p.m. Erin Valenzuela has volunteered to oversee our table, and we'll likely do the "Magic Minerals" again with magnet fun. Perhaps as many as 200 kids? Says Robert, "It's the first year of this event, so it's tough to gauge what overall attendance might be."

PEBBLE PUPS

The Pebble Pups and Junior Members ROCKED the VGMS Show!

Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick, Pebble Pups Chair

In case you were wondering where all the cool kids were during the first weekend of March, the answer is..."They were all at the VGMS Gem and Mineral Show!" And some of the coolest were our own Pebble Pup and Junior Members.

their knowledge and enthusiasm for all things rock, gems, minerals, and fossils.

The Pebble Pups and Junior Members were involved in every part of the show. At their February meeting the kids brought items they wanted to showcase in the group display. After class several helped at the Bag Stuffing Party to help fill hundreds of grab bags with samples of rocks and fossils.



Junior Members Rylee J., Elyssa J., and Lucia H. helped stuff grab bags for the show.

Our youth members were a shining example of our hobby and what it means to give back to our community by sharing



Henry and Beecher I.'s Bone Voyage case contained aquatic fossils.

On Friday, March 3rd, they enjoyed helping set up at the event. Junior member Elyssa J. organized the Pebble Pup case and along with Lucia H., they installed it together on Friday afternoon. Also, on Friday, several other Pebble Pups were setting up their displays including Osiris P., Rylee J., Henry and Beecher I., and Lucia H. Their displays were creative and very informative of their recent adventures and interests.

Then when the show began it was time to get to work. We had many Pebble Pups and Junior Members volunteer in the kids' booth at various stations. They deserve a huge thank you for their time and enthusiasm for our program. They are Lucia H., Valerie C., Elyssa J., Rylee J., Annabelle W., Beatrice B., Osiris P., Henry I., Beecher I., Caelan F., Ferris L., Milo L., Collin P., Violetta L., and Solana L. And kudos to their parents for joining them in the booth to help throughout the weekend. Along with Booth support, Rylee J. was a special demonstrator showing how to make a soapstone carving of a bear.

It's official...this was our best show ever! The kids all seemed to have a great time working at the show and the community was very impressed with our youth program. Thank you to one and all who helped make it a huge success!



Our club has amazing youth volunteers!



The kids had fun sharing their hobby with the public.



Rylee J. was also a demonstrator of soft stone carving.

Earning My Leadership Badge

Elyssa J., Junior Member

I had a lot of fun getting to arrange the Pebble Pup case! I started off by cleaning off the base boards with the help of my mom, we had to get all of the sticky tack off. Then we got all of the pictures that were going to need and I arranged them where I felt they looked best. After that my mom and I put up the walls and got all of the specimens out along with some stands to display them. I put the biggest specimen, the trilobite, in the middle as the center piece. Then I placed the two next biggest specimens next to it. The specimens that were found on field trips I put near the field trip picture, and the specimens from the weekly challenge next to the picture of the weekly challenge. I also put all of the crystals and shiny specimens on one side with all of the fossils in the front center. Then my mom took pictures of it so we could easily set it up. Then when it was finally time to put the case together I waited for another junior member, Lucia, to show up so we could set

it up as a team. Soon all the specimens were in place and it was done.



Putting together our Youth Society case helped me earn my FRA Leadership Badge.

“The Challenge” Continues to Challenge!

Jim Brace-Thompson

As has become a time-honored VGMS tradition, we continue emailing a puzzler for Pebble Pups and Junior Members to solve every other week. Solve the puzzle and add a free specimen to your collection! Here are the most recent puzzlers and those who successfully solved them:

Amethyst rough and polished drop: Beatrice, Colin, Grayson, Lucia, Osiris, Izzy, Gabby, Violetta, Solana, Chloé, and Bianca.

Goniatite fossil: Lucia, Violetta, Osiris, Joey, Grayson, Colin, Solana, Chloé, and Bianca.

Congratulations to all winners! The fossil proved difficult to pin down, and we had answers ranging from ammonite, to chambered nautilus, to *Orthoceras*. None of these were exactly right, but they are all related to *Goniatite*, so each of those answers earned a fossil. However, one member did indeed nail it. Congrats, Violetta! She earned extra Pebble Pup Bucks, as did Osiris who came close and included a lot of additional info in his answer.

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 amethyst and the ammonoid fossil Goniatite.

Pups Answer the Challenge

VGMS Pebble Pups

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

“We guess amethyst! My (Grayson’s) birthday is this month, so I knew right away and am excited I knew it so fast. Thanks!”
–Colin and Grayson

“*Orthoceras* are an extinct nautiloid cephalopod that lived from the Ordovician Period to the Triassic Period (500-200 million years ago.)” –Osiris

“Ok. So I’m feeling like it might be called a *Goniatite* but I’m not sure.” (Editor’s note: Score!!) –Violetta

Great job, Pups!

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

Thank you!

Everyone who has helped make VGMS sparkle

VGMS Show Chair and Committee

On behalf of my Girl Scout troop, I would like to thank Show Chair Diane Cook and the Show Committee for inviting us to run a cookie booth at the show. My scouts had a lot of fun, and we sold 514 boxes of cookies! –Celia Churchill

Diane Cook and David Springer

Thanks to Diane Cook and David Springer for new specimens for our Pebble Pup and Juniors Challenge! –Jim Brace-

Thompson

Cindy Martin

Thank you, Cindy Martin, for joining me on an educational outreach program for a local 4H chapter. *–Jim Brace-Thompson*

Grab Bag Team

Thanks to all who assembled 665 grab bags on February 18th for our Show Kids' Booth! *–Jim Brace-Thompson*

Wendy Davis

Thank you, Wendy Davis, for helping me with the Teacher Station and Scavenger Hunt at the Show. *–Jim Brace-Thompson*

VGMS Friends

Thank you to all for condolences at the sudden and unexpected loss of our dog, Symon. It made for one hard show, and your words were appreciated. *–Jim Brace-Thompson*

Fun Show Photos



A rare, in-person board meeting before our March show!



Hosting a Girl Scout Cookie Booth at the show was a sweet opportunity for Celia Churchill's troop.



Lunch time is always fun in the staff area. It was our Raffle Chair and 2nd VP David Springer's birthday. Happy Birthday, David!



Did we mention it was crowded? And this was on Sunday!

CALENDAR

March-April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12 March	13	14	15	16	17	18 Clubhouse: Open Workshop 9 a.m. - noon Pebble Pups Class 10 a.m. Happy Birthday, Rainy Dyer!
19	20	21	22 Member Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at Poinsettia Pavilion	23	24 Happy Birthday, Richard Petropulos!	25 Field Trip: Cady Mountains
26	27 Happy Birthday, Cyndy Treutelaar!	28	29	30	31	1 April
2 Certified Members' Workshop, 12-3 p.m.	3	4 Happy Birthday, Osiris P.!	5 Happy Birthday, Natalie Irie!	6 Board Meeting, 7 p.m. Happy Birthday, Xanti and Sahari J. and Ferris L.!	7	8
9	10 Happy Birthday, Richard Bromser and Alena Rieger!	11	12	13	14	15

Celia Churchill
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