

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

Volume 69 Issue 10

October 2023

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Gold Coast Show Is Back!

The Gold Coast Gem Show is coming back to the Ventura County Fairgrounds November 4-5. The show will feature 30 dealers, kids' activities, and local Gem and Mineral Societies. Show goers will find unique and quality specimens, beads, jewelry, and lapidary supplies, including demonstrations and activities for the whole family. The show is FREE and open to the public (Fairgrounds parking is additional). The show hours are Saturday, 10-5 pm, and Sunday, 10-4 pm. Hope to see you there!



RSVP to Help Stuff Grab Bags

On Sunday, October 29th, Nancy and I invite members to our home for a potluck lunch and grab bag stuffing party. Please RSVP (805-659-3577; jbrace-th@roadrunner.com) so we know how many to expect and can warn the neighbors about parking. We'll start stuffing bags with rocks and faces with edible goodies at 11:00 a.m. For committee members and anyone else interested, the stuffing party will be followed by a show planning meeting for the national CFMS/AFMS Show & Convention that VGMS hosts next May.

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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](http://3451FoothillRd.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://3451FoothillRd.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://11969N.CreekRoad.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

Photo provided by Diane Cook.

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	Erin Valenzuela
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	Susan Slyker
Pebble Pup Chairs	Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick and Erin Valenzuela
Club Custodian	Jake Bailey
Club Stewards	Ron Wise, David Springer, Tyrone LaFay, and John Cook

LETTERS

President's Message

John Cook



October is here and finally with cooler temperatures and it looks like fall is here. Hoping you have a safe and Happy Halloween. We had our last evening workshop on September 12th and the turnout was good. Remember that you must sign up on <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/> in the members' areas of our web site for the workshop, field trips, and club get-togethers. Remember to purchase saw cards to help

facilitate getting your favorite pieces slabbed. The saw cards can be purchased at club meetings from Diane, Nancy and Lauren or at the clubhouse during workshops.

Please remember that the club meetings for November and December are on the second Wednesday of the month.

We hope you had a great time at the "Rocktoberfeast", there was a great breakfast and lots of activities, good deals at the tailgating and Silent Auction. Also, club members got some great deals on donated equipment. Please remember when you are out rockhounding, visiting estate sales and going to shows please think of VGMS for items we can sell at our club show in March and CFMS/AFMS show in May. Lots of good material will be needed soon for the two shows coming up in 2024.

In November, our program is a Silent Auction, we are going to meet in person. We are aiming to have our holiday party at Poinsettia in December—details to come.

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 we move toward the end of 2023, this volume of *Rockhound Rambling* is nearly finished. We have one more issue covering the months of November and December, and then that's a wrap for Volume 69!

At the beginning of the year, I asked members to please consider submitting articles, features, poetry, drawings, etc., to our newsletter. My main goal for this was for us all to have fun and make a strong representation at the awards banquet

for the combined CFMS/AFMS show right here in Ventura in 2024.

I'm pleased to say that we've had a lot of submissions by new authors this year, from both adults and youth. If you're still thinking about it, you haven't missed it! The deadline for the next issue is November 15th. Thank you to everyone who has contributed work to the bulletin 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 - Emerald Mining in California

Last month Richard Edley delivered an interesting talk about his search and discovery of emeralds in Southern California. Richard and his son, Bruce, own two federal mining claims in Barstow, California. The Beautiful Paige mine produces turquoise and azure malachite. They also discovered a deposit of emeralds in the Julian mining District in Southern California.



Our guest speaker for September was Richard Edley.

This Month - TGMS: Not Your Typical Rock Show!

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Society knows how to put on a great show. This society was the first to bring together the hobby enthusiast, the curator/professionals and the general public for this annual four day event. After 68 years, it is the largest, oldest and most prestigious gem and mineral show in the world. This year the theme was "Silica, Agates & Opal & Quartz, Oh My!" This month, Mary Pat Weber will provide us with a visual treat of the highlights of this recent event and why this show rocks!

Located at the Tucson Convention Center, TGMS Show attendees find approximately 250 dealers selling a variety of minerals, fossils, jewelry, and lapidary. Throughout the show there are lectures and symposiums. Jaw-dropping world class exhibits from private collections, major universities and museums are on display. Other exhibit cases, both competitive and non-competitive, round out this mix.



Mary Pat Weber will take us on a tour of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society Show.

Field Trips

Trip Report: Ralph Bishop Museum, Wes Lingerfelt's Home, and Avila Beach

David Springer, 2nd VP – Field Trips

On Sunday, October 8th, 12 souls from VGMS and one from the Conejo Club (Lawrence Killough) met up in Santa Maria, CA at the home of Ralph Bishop, a longtime Orcutt Club member and local rockhound legend. Over the course of collecting since he was six years old, he has amassed an impressive life collection to put on display in his well stocked home museum. We arrived 30 minutes early around 10:30 a.m., to break the ice with Ralph, and I had a sphere I had made for him to present to him. After several unanswered ringings of his doorbell, I checked around back and found a VGMS member already present receiving her own informal tour, as Ron Wise, Jake Bailey and Robert Seaton came up and followed me around back. I called out to Ralph and he came out along with new member Belinda Poore. We were standing in front of the garage and surrounded by an impressive array of cigar boxes he had stacked on top of each other and on table tops, and my pulse skipped a few beats, because all rockhounds know that good rock things are found in cigar boxes! In addition, Ralph had set out some large boxes of slabs, polished and unfinished, and a collection of rock spheres he had made over the years from various localities. I asked and he confirmed it was all available for sale! My pulse jumped 20 beats per minute.

Over the next 30 or so minutes, as others continued to arrive, they joined what can best be described as a low level feeding frenzy. Calm was maintained the entire time but the blood in the water was unmistakable, as we examined treasures, some of which had remained in cigar boxes for over 40 years.



Let the buying begin at Ralph Bishop's house!

As metaphorical fins protruded above our backs, we moved like sharks in a feeding frenzy, with intent focus on going through literally every little piece that was on display and for sale. Everyone brought home some prizes, and I believe nearly everyone bought at least 1 cigar box full of goodies; I was hungry that morning and brought home several. Ralph seemed pleased at our energy, and was also pleased to receive much legal tender from us eager club members in exchange for his "extra" rocks. Make no mistake, what he sold that morning is a grain of sand on his beach of stored cigar boxes. I was amazed

at his ability to clearly describe the rocks, their source, his age when collecting them, and other details from each cigar box! Fortunately, he provided way too much for us hungry sharks to completely devour so all present had a great opportunity to acquire some very unique material! After the last few folks trickled in and were able to go over what was on sale and purchase their selected materials, we started on the museum tour.



Discussing our recent acquisitions in Ralph's garage.

Ralph is very much at ease in his role of tour guide, drawing from a lifetime of clear memories (he can tell you his age at the time of collection, and had an associated story for each piece I asked about). I think the title of "rascal raconteur" might be appropriate to describe his demeanor. He has spent a great deal of his life actively prospecting and finding new mineral sources, and dealing with different property owners and government agencies with mixed and as told by him some hilarious results. As such, he regaled us with a wide variety of crazy but true stories over his career of hounding. He requested no photographs during the tour so we of course respected his request and are relegated to describing

his array of goodies. The following link will take you to an existing writeup from a member of the Orcutt Gem and Mineral Society should the reader desire to read up a bit more and see a few existing older photos: [http://www.omsinc.org/Ralph's Museum Tour web.pdf](http://www.omsinc.org/Ralph's%20Museum%20Tour%20web.pdf).

The tour was conducted in two separate "shifts" of about six people in each group. The second group remained in the garage to talk over our recent cigar box acquisitions. Some classics on display include drool worthy specimens of Biggs and Bruneau Jasper, Nipomo Sagenite, Marcasite and Beanfield agates, Deedeeite, "Swimming Pool" and Lime Kiln Creek Rhodonite, Morgan Hill Poppy Jasper, Dryhead Agates (he used to own this mine himself!), some rare Laguna Agates, nice Monterey Formation fish fossils, some beautiful petrified wood specimens including cycads, slices of Boron Lakes Petrified Wood framed in miniature art frames that looked like classic Danish landscape paintings (those were my personal favorite), etc. He had a collection of pseudomorphs including cubic limonite after halite that I have never seen before, from Central Coast locales, amongst other oddities. He has an entire wall of little polished slab collections showing the varieties within each different type of classic material displayed. He has a very impressive collection of Dino bone and a wide array of fossils from all over the western states filling multiple cabinets. Most of the fossils he has found himself remain in boxes, so Jake was clever enough to ask about whether we would be able to see more of the fossils to which Ralph replied he would be delighted to lead another tour but focusing on the fossils (thanks Jake!). And there is a lot more to be seen that I have not listed.



Looking through Wes Lingerfelt's pile.

After all participants had completed their guided tour through Ralph's museum, it was off to the home of Wes Lingerfelt in Nipomo, (about 15 minutes north of Santa Maria). Wes is an early sphere making phenom and rockhound legend unto himself, who started collecting in earnest about 30 years ago. He has a yard full of equipment, rough rock, and a shop full of polished and rough specimens, spheres, jewelry, knick knacks, etc. Large rough rock he stores in piles (Photo 3) he charges are generally \$0.25/pound! It seemed that everyone

who attended brought a few items home with them, the most impressive of which was Jim Brace-Thompson's 91 pound hunk of brecciated jasper from Cayucos. I am not sure which was more impressive, the rock itself or the way he hefted it over to the scale without breaking too much of a sweat! Ron and I were also able to pick up the rock saw arbors that Wes has sent time and sweat repairing for us and the club.



Jim showed us how it's done hefting a huge jasper onto the scale.

After the visit with Wes, a few folks peeled off for other adventures while the rest of us headed to a Von's store for some deli sandwiches and thereafter en route to Avila Beach for Deedeeite, the rare variety of brecciated rhyolite with fluorescent chalcedony filled fractures. Parking on this sunny Sunday at Avila Beach was of course challenging, but we managed to both park our individual cars at various parks about the town, and meet up at the designated collection point without incident. We are finding as a club that in such a small collecting area right off the beach, the relatively small deposit of Deedeeite present can get picked over, particularly if knowledgeable locals frequently visit the collecting site. Despite what appeared to be limited available material, we migrated to some larger boulders that looked quite promising despite their large size. Robert and Jake in particular, hereinafter referred to

as the "Boulder Brothers," seemed to take up the challenge and spent at least 30 minutes whacking away at the largest boulders rendering them into smaller and more manageable pieces. In addition, we started probing in some new areas that maybe haven't been as exploited, so there appears to be a silver lining on this locale for future collecting!



Looking through Wes Lingerfelt's pile.

As the tide continued to roll in, we were able to extricate ourselves and our bucket fulls of rocks around the promontory and get back to Front Street without getting our feet too wet. Everyone who attended brought home some nice examples of Deedeeite that day. We went our separate ways returning home, with that familiar sense of exhilaration, with a touch of fatigue after having shared some great rock hounding adventures over the course of the day.



A nice hunk of Deedeeite from Avila Beach..

Stay tuned, we will plan another visit with a focus on fossils...

Workshop

Workshop Fun

Jim Brace-Thompson

The sign-in sheet for our final summer Wednesday night workshop on September 13th showed Shop Stewards Ron Wise, Tyrone LaFay, John Cook and David Springer assisting the following members in having fun with rocks: Shirley Layton, Robert Seaton, Bella Welch, Jake Bailey, and myself. While most of us enjoyed cutting, slabbing, and cabbing, Tyrone joined Jake in receiving an obsidian knapping tutorial provided by Master Knapper Ron. With summer now over and the longer nights of fall and winter approaching, this marked our last Wednesday evening workshop for the year.

Because Nancy, Tor, and I were participating in a show up in Monterey, I missed our regular Saturday morning workshop day on September 16th. Per the sign-in sheet, though, many others found time to have fun. These included Shop Stewards Ron Wise and David Springer with club members Dick and Phyllis White, Rich Pisor, Bella Welch, Jake Bailey, Lonnie Sutton, and Alena Rieger.

Our October 1st workshop saw Shop Stewards John Cook and Tyrone LaFay overseeing members Shirley Layton, Robert Seaton, Troy Schmidt, Jake Bailey, Rich Pisor, and myself. While attendance was somewhat low, everyone got a lot accomplished. In addition to the lapidary work, Shirley sorted materials for the Country Store for our 2024 show next March and Troy continued his work upgrading our museum displays. I spent my time prepping cabochon preforms from local brecciated jaspers. If you haven't hit our Ventura beaches for cabbing rough, winter storms will be dredging up colorful cobbles.



Tyrone takes a stab at knapping obsidian.



The saw room was sawing on September 13th.



Shirley and others cabbed cabs on September 13th.



With the arrival of fall and darker nights, September 13th saw "lights out" for our Wednesday evening summer workshops.



While Shirley sorts through Country Store materials on October 1st, Rich takes a spin on the flat lap.



Jake seeks out a seat in the capping room during our October 1st workshop.

Federation News

2024 CFMS-AFMS Show & Convention: Follow the Mermaids!

Jim Brace-Thompson, Show Publicity Chair

Follow the mermaids to the 2024 CFMS-AFMS National Show & Convention here in Ventura May 24-26th. Save the date! And keep track of the mermaids that will be appearing in this and forthcoming issues of *Rockhound Rambling*. The person attending the convention who can correctly identify the specific location within Ventura of each mermaid pictured will receive a rocky reward during the show banquet. (In the event of a tie, a name will be drawn from a fish bowl.)

To keep tabs on announcements, helpful info, and forms related to the 2024 convention, stay alert at our monthly club meetings and drop in now and again to the show website: www.2024cfms-afms.com. The site, somewhat skeletal at the moment, is a work-in-progress and will be continually updated and augmented. See you at the National Show!



Keep track of each mermaid between now and May and win a prize!

FRA Badge Program: Going Beyond the Badge!

Jim Brace-Thompson, Federation Director

Our Pebble Pup and Junior Rockhound group utilizes the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies' Future Rockhounds of America Badge Program. But what to do if you've already earned all 20 badges? Indeed, we have several Rock Stars in our group who have done so! What to do?

They can return to past badges, complete activities they didn't do the first time around, and earn a lapel pin Star! See details on the website at: <https://www.juniors.amfed.org/fra-badge-program/beyond-the-badge>. The program offers still other activities and rewards. Check it out!



Star lapel pins are awarded for going "beyond the badge."
(Photo courtesy AFMS website.)

A Win-Win-Win with *Rock & Gem* Magazine

Jim Brace-Thompson, Federation Director

As noted last month, *Rock & Gem* (the officially endorsed hobby magazine of AFMS) is offering a special deal to members of local gem and mineral societies affiliated with the Federation. It's a win-win-win deal in that *Rock & Gem* gets subscribers, subscribers get a special 61% discount, and the AFMS Endowment Fund gets a 15% commission on each subscription. This deal applies to both new and renewing subscriptions.

Rock & Gem has produced a "*Rock & Gem*/AFMS Subscription" flyer/order form that I hope to get posted to the websites of AFMS and CFMS to ensure that a portion of your payment goes to AFMS. I'll have a supply of these flyers on the take-one table at our monthly meetings. If you'd like a copy right away, I'm happy to send it as an attachment. Email me at jbraceth@roadrunner.com. Here's to supporting our official hobby magazine as it, in turn, supports us as individuals and as a Federation!



Our officially sanctioned hobby magazine. Have you subscribed yet?

Meeting Minutes

VGMS General Meeting, September 20th, 2023, at the Poinsettia Pavilion.

Attendees:

Called to order at 7:30pm PST, John Cook, Presiding.
There were 33 members, with 11 guests and 1 pebble pups.
7-7:30 p.m. was Social Time.

Announcements

Minutes Approval

Erin Valenzuela motioned to approve the September general meeting minutes, approved by Robert Seaton.

Events

October 21 is Roctoberfest, the workshop is cancelled that day.
Next Members' meeting is October 25 at 7:30pm.
Members' workshop is October 1st from 12-3pm.

Nominating Committee

The committee purpose and process were explained by Diane. She asks for two additional non-board members to join the committee. Jake Bailey and Joanne Neville agreed.

Rockhound of the Year Voting

A reminder to all to vote for Rockhound of the Year and Pebble Pup/Junior Member of the Year. Forms are available at tonight's meeting and in the bulletin.

VC Fair awards

Top Fair Volunteers: Shirley Layton and Celia Churchill.
5 Year Award: Dick and Phyllis White.
20 Year Award: Jim and Nancy Brace-Thompson.

Presentations

Richard Edley gave a talk about Discovering Southern California Minerals and Gemstones..

Old Business

2024 CFMS/AFMS Show

Show held a zoom meeting and it went well. Stuffing party is being planned for both the March and May shows at Jim and Nancy's house. More details (potluck!) to come in an email blast.

Finding a NEW Clubhouse

We held our first meeting on Zoom. Working on how to present ourselves for perspective locations. Also, deciding on who to approach for a new space. Let Diane know if you would like more information or want to be invited to the next meeting. (next meeting TBD)

Officer - Committee Reports

1st VP – Programs: Terry Wilson

The parking lot near the meeting room is reserved for those who

need to carry items inside or who need the Disabled Parking. Please use the farther parking lot or the lower parking lot for all other general members. Next Month's program is being presented by Mary Pat and Dick Webber about the Tucson Gem Show. November is the Silent Auction and Pot Luck.

2nd VP – Field Trips: David Springer

Not Present. For field trips, the October trip to the Ralph Bishop Museum is on this Sunday starting at 10:45 AM; signups are on <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/>. I see 10 folks already signed up. Let me know if carpooling is desired, with gas near \$7/gallon, it is encouraged.

For the November trip Chuck Borchart is leading to Calico Mtn in Yermo for Silver Lace Onyx, and thereafter for agates and palm root in Mule Canyon. Signups are also on <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/>.

3rd VP – Show: Diane Cook

See show announcement above.

Treasurer: Lauren Wideman

Bills are paid, saw cards are available tonight.

Secretary: Nancy Brace-Thompson

Minutes are being taken.

Bulletin Editor: Celia Churchill

Thank You to all those who submitted articles. Our next deadline is October 10. Remember that we are only 2 issues away from articles to be considered for the State and National awards in 2024.

An award was presented to Troy White for his article

Federation Director: Jim Brace-Thompson

New/Renewal forms available for Rock & Gem for a special subscription deal that is discounted and gives a donation back. The next CFMS Meeting is November 11th.

Parliamentarian/Scholarship: Shirley Layton

There is one possible scholarship applicant, we are waiting for more. Request for donations for the Country Store

Web Master: Troy Schmidt

Everything is up to date. Troy asked for a digital postcard for the show to post.

Membership: Erin Valenzuela:

Renewals for membership begins January. Erin has VGMS patches available to purchase.

Committee Reports

Pebble Pups: Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick/Erin Valenzuela

We held a great class about Earthquakes and Mapping. I made an excellent contact at CalTech for a future field trip and Membership presenter. Remember to check Band for updates. Next month, class is on October 28 about Dinosaurs.

Erin is taking the lead with Jared. No class on October 21 due to Rocktoberfest but Jim will be offering a silent auction table for pups only. November's class will be lapidary, and December will be a Holiday Party for Pups

Ways and Means: Adrian Ruiz and Jenifer Russell
\$100 was made tonight.

Museum: Troy Schmidt/Jim Brace-Thompson
A light came down in a case and Troy will repair it by Rocktoberfest. Jim has some old teaching cases that either need to be updated or tossed out. We should decide what to do so we can free up space in the clubhouse.

Educational Outreach: Jim Brace-Thompson
Thank you sent from Oak View School. The Cooks went to Antelope Valley and John Cook and Jim Brace-Thompson went to Bakersfield to judge.

Hostess: Susan Slyker
Not Present. Erin shared she is hosting in October. November

is potluck.

Archivist/Historian: Jim Brace-Thompson
Nothing to report.

Librarian: Heather Seaton
Not Present. Robert shared that he has reserved the case at EB Foster Library for the club January-April.

Stewards: John, Ron and David
Nothing to report.

Next Meeting
The next member meeting will be on Wednesday, October 25th, 2023, beginning at 7:30pm at the Poinsettia Pavilion.

With no further business, President John Cook adjourned the meeting at 9:34pm.

Respectfully submitted on October 23rd, 2023.
Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick

Meeting Minutes

VGMS Board Meeting, October 5th, 2023, via Zoom

Called to order at 7:06pm., John Cook presiding.

Announcements

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

Thank you all for joining the board meeting.

Meeting Minutes
The September meeting minutes were motioned by Celia Churchill and seconded by Diane Cook, all approved.

New Business

December Holiday Party
Can it be moved to a weekend so more pebble pup families can join us? Diane will ask Poinsettia on price and availability of changing the party to a Saturday or Sunday during the day and will report back in an email to the board.

Gold Coast Show
VGMS has one free table. Shirley Layton motioned buying another table for \$50, seconded by Celia Churchill, all approved. It was suggested that we do the spinning wheel, 'Adopt a Rock' and sell 'Paint a Fossil' and 'Make a Bracelet' kits, also T-shirts. Diane will speak with Jen Russell regarding spinning wheel prizes. Renee Jones has volunteered to help.

Old Business

Saturday 10-21-23 Rocktoberfest
will be held instead of the members' workshop. Diane has requested approval to use the parking lot next to the clubhouse and is waiting for a reply. Nancy will buy the supplies (eggs, pancake mix, butter, syrup, water, plates, napkins, & utensils). OGMS and CGMC will be invited. There will be a silent auction for both adults and pebble pups, tailgating and breakfast. Clubhouse Clean-up will be either 10/19 or 10/20/23. Celia will send a full Rocktoberfest email blast out closer to the date. Dick White is bringing his large griddle to cook the food (bacon, eggs and pancakes) with backup from the Brace-Thompsons and their Coleman stove.

Complaint Letter
Was voted on and will be sent certified mailed with a membership cancellation check.

Nominating Committee
Diane Cook, Erin Valenzuela, Jake Bailey, Celia Churchill and Joneane Neville. They will have a meeting soon.

Rockhound of the Year Nominations

New VGMS home
Diane suggested looking into grants and maybe hire a grant writer. Diane will pursue how to find and write grants. Lisa and Diane showed a new intro flyer to replace the intro letter to help find a new home. Further discussion will happen at the VGMS New home committee meeting on Tuesday October 10 at 7:30pm via Zoom.

Officers' Manual

Celia is getting the last two descriptions and will email them out to the board.

Officer Reports2nd VP – Field Trips: David Springer

The October fieldtrip is to the Ralph Bishop Museum/Wes Lingerfeldt's backyard and Avila Beach (for Deedite) on Sunday 10/8/23 starting at 10:45 AM; signups are on <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/>. I see 10 folks already signed up. Let me know if carpooling is desired, with gas near \$7/gallon, it is encouraged. The November trip, being led by Chuck Borchart, is to the Mtn near Yermo for Silver Lace Onyx, and thereafter for agates and palm root in Mule Canyon. Signups are also on <http://whoscoming.com/vgms/>.

3rd VP – Show: Diane Cook

Next show meeting will be at 6:30pm before the board meeting on Thursday, November 2, 2023. There will be a Grab bag stuffing party at Jim & Nancy Brace-Thompson's house on Sunday, October 29, 2023, beginning at 11:00am. It will be a potluck, grab bag stuffing and a CFMS-AFMS show planning meeting. Diane has items that she would like to divide between pup activities, museum and silent auctions.

Treasurer: Lauren Wideman

The RRF-1 and the CT-TR-1 were mailed to the State.

Web Master: Troy Schmidt

Not present. Website: There is a whosbringing for Rocktoberfest at the top of the members page but it is easy to miss so, as David suggested, an email blast reminder should be sent out to membership. Link is <http://whosbringingwhat.com/vgms/>

Secretary: Nancy Brace-Thompson

Nancy wants to thank Celia Churchill, Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick and Diane Cook for taking minutes at the last board meeting and at the previous two members meetings while I was away. Minutes were taken for this meeting.

Membership: Erin Valenzuela

No new members in October. There are 162 adults, 8 Juniors and 42 Pebble Pups for a total of 212 members.

Federation Director: Jim Brace-Thompson

November 11 is the CFMS directors meeting in Visalia. We need 26 more packets to have 100 CFMS/AFMS Show and convention packets for Visalia. Diane will order more show stickers for the bags. We need to work on our skit ('Part Of Your World' from the Little Mermaid movie?). Pat LaRue is stepping down as AFMS treasurer soon. Rock & Gem is giving a subscription deal to rockhounds.

Bulletin Editor: Celia Churchill

Thank you to everyone who submitted articles to the September bulletin. October articles are due by October 10th.

Parliamentarian/Scholarship: Shirley Layton

Sending out letters to the professor contacts including UCLA for the 2024 scholarship. The deadline is 1-1-2024.

Committee ReportsPebble Pups: Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick/Erin Valenzuela

Need to order pebble pup brochures in the next week. The last class was on Earthquakes and Maps. Saturday, Oct 28th beginning at 10am will be a dinosaur class by Erin Valenzuela and Jared McGowan. November class (11/18) will be a lapidary class.

Ways and Means: Adrian Ruiz and Jenifer Russell

Not present.

Museum: Troy Schmidt/Jim Brace-Thompson

Troy epoxyed two metal brackets in the display case under the sign-in book. The next time he goes to the clubhouse he will hang the light on the new brackets and it should good after that. Troy is also working on archiving the museum specimens. Jim has the six traveling cases and will show them at the grab bag party to see if they are necessary or updating the ones that are still current. Junior pups might take on updating some cases

Educational Outreach: Jim Brace-Thompson

Nothing to report.

Archivist/Historian: Jim Brace-Thompson

Reviving the newsletter 'Blast from the Past' articles from the archives.

Librarian: Heather Seaton

Not present, nothing to report.

Stewards: John, Ron and David

Nothing to report

Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be on Thursday, November 2nd, 2023, at 7:30pm via Zoom with a VGMS show planning before, beginning at 6:30pm.

Next Membership Meeting:

Wednesday, October 25th, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. in person at the Poinsettia Pavilion.

With no further business, President John Cook adjourned the meeting at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted on October 9th, 2023.

Nancy Brace-Thomson, Recording Secretary

A High Noon Showdown in Bakersfield for the Three Amigos

JIM BRACE-THOMPSON

On September 19th John Cook and I once again saddled up the horses and hit the dusty trail north to Bakersfield to serve as judges for gems, minerals, fossils and lapidary arts at the Kern County Fair. Once at the fairgrounds, we corralled our horses with Wes Lingerfelt's of the Orcutt Mineral Society to round out "The Three Amigos." Clipboards and scoresheets in hand and guns drawn, for the next several hours we went case-by-case taking shots at all manner of rocky displays. Fortunately for The Amigos, the Kern County Fair only has case displays to judge (no individual items, as at the Ventura County Fair), so judging proceeds fairly quickly.



The Three Amigos, loaded with score sheets, faced down display after display.

We've judged here for many years now and saw the fair take a real hit from the pandemic. Prior to COVID, we would have 40 to 45 displays to judge. That number declined to 21 in 2021, then crept up slightly to 27 in 2022. This year, the number went back down to 21, but while the number declined, not so the quality. We saw a decided increase in eye appeal this year—unlike the one year we awarded a deserving case a goose egg. (It was a fossil case without a single fossil in it; for instance, "Monkey Skull" read a label for a concretion with holes.) Folks offered beautiful self-collected rocks and minerals and well-crafted jewelry that, for the most part, was nicely

arranged. Next year, in addition to checking out our own Ventura County Fair, consider visiting the many other county fairs to see what neighboring like-minded souls are up to. It may inspire ideas for a display of your own!



Displays at the Kern County Fair were pretty darn good this year!



Jim & Nancy's Great Adventure: Helping a Fellow CFMS Club in Monterey

JIM & NANCY BRACE-THOMPSON

On Thursday, September 14th, Nancy and I packed up the truck and, with canine companion Tornjak, headed north to the Monterey County Fairgrounds to participate in the 61st annual show of the Carmel Valley Gem & Mineral Society. CVGMS

was the first rock club we ever joined with our two preschool kids back in the last century, circa 1991. (Those preschoolers are now ages 35 and 38.) We've remained members, and even after moving to Ventura in 1998, we've returned each year to

help with the annual show. September isn't September without a trip to Monterey!



Nancy (and Tor) run the CVGMS Silent Auction.

This was their first show since 2019, and unfortunately they lost many members during the Covid years, some due to Covid itself and others to slow, inevitable aging. Thus, surviving members were on pins and needles, uncertain if they'd get it all pulled together and whether the local community would remember. Fortunately, those fears proved unfounded. Although a bit smaller than past shows, all came together nicely and a steady stream of attendees flowed all weekend long.



This year, Nancy and I helped with set-up on Friday and provided overnight security Friday and Saturday, set up two display cases (The Ventura Beach Collection; A Few of My Favorite Things), contributed Paint-a-Fossil packets to the Kids' Booth, promoted our 2024 CFMS-AFMS Show with flyers and an exhibit, and ran the Silent Auction for two solid days. We haven't yet heard how successful we were with the auction, but I know that we, personally, sank nearly \$200 in bids for rocks, unable to resist the subtle temptation involved in running a silent auction. Based on the first day's efforts, we think we earned the club well over \$2,000.

It's great fun going to other club shows and seeing local materials that can be had at bargain-basement prices, either from mom-and-pop dealers or a club's own silent auction. In this case, such materials included Monterey jade, Clear Creek jadeite, Anderson Dam magnesite, Squires Ranch "Coalinga Red" brecciated jasper, Stone Canyon jasper, Kettleman Hills fossil sand dollars, and more. Heck, they even had Tick Canyon howlite! We encourage VGMS members, one and all, to check out the many local shows sponsored by clubs up and down California.

After enjoying a seafood dinner (and a swarm of sea lions) at the tourist wharf Sunday night, we had hoped to take the Coast Highway home on Monday through Big Sur country to pick up serpentine for the grab bags and possibly a jade pebble or two at Jade Cove or Willow Creek. But a stretch of the highway, appropriately called Paul's Slide, remains closed due to a rock slide from last January that is still far from being repaired. (The same stretch slid into the Pacific in May 2017, as well. Paul, apparently, is one slippery guy.)

All-in-all, it's a trip well worth taking, and we invite you to join us when we return in 2024. Enjoy both the show and the scenic touristy venue. By then, surely, we'll be able to work in that side trip to Jade Cove?



The Carmel Valley show in Monterey boasted many great exhibits.



It had been a while since CVGMS had put on a show, but the local community did not forget them.

Dino Fest 2023

JARED MCGOWAN

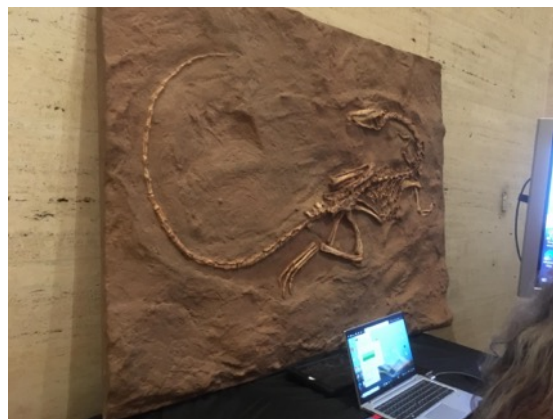
This past Sunday, September 24th, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles hosted its annual Dino Fest event. Many exhibitor booths and tables featured representatives from several of the museum's various departments, including the Dinosaur Institute (also promoting the upcoming "Gnathale Diplodocid wing and exhibit that is due to open next May), Ornithology, Mammalogy and Vertebrate and Invertebrate Paleontology departments, and representatives from several other museums and institutions, including the Dinosaur National Monument, Western Science Center, the La Brea Tar Pits, and the local chapter of the Southern California Paleontological Society. There was a special emphasis on a few special booths showcasing the research being done at Late Triassic localities in the United States, such as sites in and around Ghost Ranch, New Mexico.



In addition to the main exhibitor booths, several local artists had set up their own tables inside the museum to sell their Dino Fest themed merchandise. Outside and along the edge of the garden, the local chapter of the Jurassic Park Motorpool had their own exhibit featuring their members' Jurassic decorated jeeps. For the children, the museum turned one of their mammal halls into a coloring and paper crafting area, and several booths had souvenirs and take home activities for the kids, and stamps for those partaking in the scavenger hunt.

A main highlight for this year's Dino Fest at the NHMLA, and tying into both the Triassic themed booths and this year's Dino Fest mascot, *Coelophysis*, was the research being done by the guest lecturers, Dr. Randall Irmis and Jessica H. Whiteside, Ph.D. Their respective research has sought to shed some light into the sudden emergence of dinosaurs in the Late Triassic and what led to the beginning of their global reign in the Early Jurassic. Their research explores the contribution and abundance of Late Triassic dinosaurs in within the latitudinal climate zones, relative to Aetosaurs and

other Pseudosuchians, and Cynodonts, where dinosaurs were particularly rare (10%) of the faunal contribution, especially in the tropics of Triassic Pangaea. And how the extreme heat and climate of the tropics favored the Pseudosuchians more so than the endothermic dinosaurs, but the sudden and dramatic cold snaps resulting from the largest fissure eruptions in Earth's geologic history near the end of the Triassic may have led to the sudden extinction of most Pseudosuchians and allowed for the endothermic dinosaurs to diversify even further and led them to start their global domination in the Early Jurassic.



My Trip to Ohio

HENRY I., PEBBLE PUP

On my trip to Ohio, I went to Indian Point Park in Lake County. At the park, there is a big river (the Grand River) with lots of shale. When I flipped over rocks, there was a chance of me finding a fossil. Mostly I found trace fossils of shells. I know they are brachiopods because clam fossil lines are curved horizontally and brachiopods' lines are vertical and curved.



Fossil of brachiopod (Lake County, Ohio)

I hypothesized that Lake County used to be a warm shallow sea. I've seen dioramas at museums with shallow seas that showed lots of life in the sea like brachiopods and crinoids. I went to paleoportal.org and found out that the rocks at Indian

Point are from the Devonian Period of the Paleozoic Era. The website says that in the Devonian Period there was less oxygen in the sea so animals started dying. Then mud covered the bottom burying the animals to eventually fossilize.

I also got to see my grandfather's mineral collection when I was in Ohio. He showed me rutilated quartz. Inside of the quartz is an inclusion, crystals of titanium dioxide (TiO_2). TiO_2 is one atom of titanium and two atoms of oxygen. The rutile crystals usually form in a hole. Then quartz forms around it. The titanium looks like hair, and when you hold it up to the light, it looks like fireworks.



Rutilated quartz

Rock Shops in Northeast Maine

NANCY BRACE-THOMPSON

I took a trip to Northeast Maine to visit family and I dragged them to a couple of rock shops while there. One was the Lubec Rock & Gem shop in Lubec, Maine and the other was the Rock & Art shop in Ellsworth, Maine. Each shop has a great selection of different rocks, gems, fossils and minerals including Maine tourmaline.



Wherever you go, don't forget to look for rock shops!



JUST FOR FUN

Pop Rocks – Anne of Geierstein

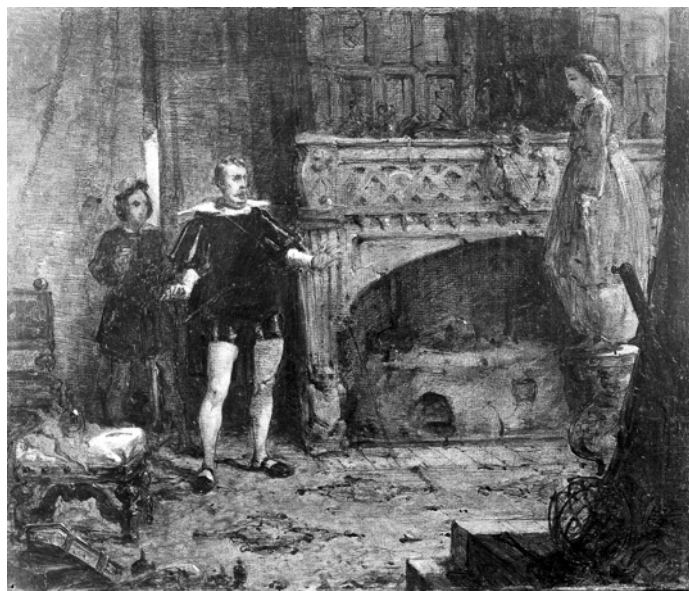
Erin Valenzuela

I was planning to write about spooky gems in honor of Halloween and I came across this story/lore about Opals, which is also fitting for October!

In 1829, Sir Walter Scott wrote *Anne of Geierstein*, which included a mysterious 19th century noblewoman named Lady Hermione. The Lady was known for always wearing an extraordinary opal in a golden hair clip. She never took it off, it was said to reflect her moods and led others to believe she might have used it for sorcery. The opal proved to be her downfall. When it was doused with a small amount of holy water; the opal lost its luster and the Lady turned into a pile of ash.

This fictional gemstone had a detrimental impact on real opal gemstones for decades. Once prized opals were deemed unlucky and linked with the occult. We still hear legends today that say the opals are only safe for those born in October (because it is their birthstone). Many gem historians believe that these rumors were fueled by jewelers who had a tough time setting opals and by the diamond cartel/industry who were threatened by the discovery of new beautiful black Opal mines in Australia. I bet that Sir Walter Scott had no idea that his spooky character would have repercussions in the opal gem

market for almost two hundred years.

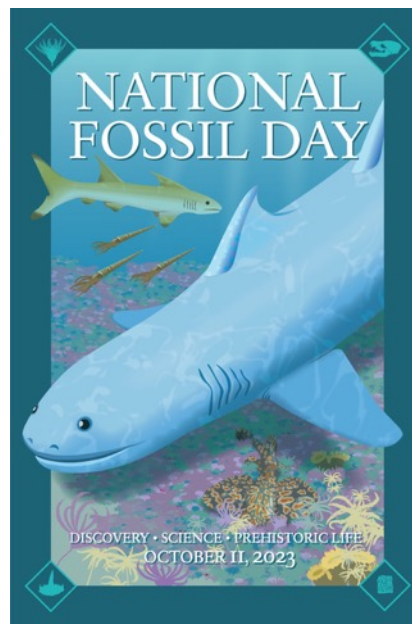


Scene from Sir Walter Scott's *Anne of Geierstein*: Hermione takes refuge in the laboratory of Sir Herman, an Austrian alchemist. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

National Fossil Day

National Fossil Day was Wednesday October 11th. Started in 2009, National Fossil Day was designated the 2nd Wednesday of October and the 3rd day of National Science week. National Fossil Day is a day that Scientists, Museums, educators, and students across the country celebrate the history, impact, and importance of fossils. Every year a National Park is picked to showcase their fossil record and that year's poster/logo is dedicated to that park.

This year, the park is Kentucky's Mammoth Cave National Park. Mammoth Cave is the longest cave system in the world, over 400 miles! Originally only fossils from the Pleistocene epoch were found in the caves—animals like bats, peccaries, saber tooth cats, tapirs, and small mastodons. Eventually many invertebrates from the Mississippian period were uncovered—crinoids, corals, brachiopods, and cephalopods. However, very recently over 100 species (and one brand new species!) of sharks have been discovered. The 2023 poster honors and highlights those new shark fossils. The three main sharks are; the Trimble's shark- named after Mammoth Caves Superintendent Barclay Trimble, *Janassa*- the small spotted skate-like fish, and *Saivodus striatus*- a shark that is as large as our great whites. I hope you got a chance to celebrate!



Happy National Fossil Day! (National Parks Service)

PEBBLE PUPS

Earthquakes in Ojai: How We Map the Data

Lisa Batchelder-Hetrick

We felt the Earth move under our feet, and so it was time to learn all about earthquakes. On August 20, 2023, Ojai experienced a significant earthquake registering a 5.1 on the Richter Scale. Did you feel it? The September class for Pebble Pups and Junior members took a deep dive to learn more.

Most earthquakes occur on the plate boundary where two plates come together. As the plates move they build up stress. When this stress is suddenly released, earthquakes can occur. In the United States, Alaska is the state with the most earthquakes and second is California, but California has a higher risk of damages and casualties due to its higher and denser population. Here in Ojai, we sit on the Pacific Plate and the North American Plate boundaries. That boundary is called the San Andreas Fault.

Here are some fun facts that we discussed in class. Did you know...California moves 2" a year. Where will LA be in 13 million years? That's right, we will be next to San Francisco. In general, California has 30-50 quakes a day. Wow!

All together, we experienced 19 (3 notable, 2.0+) foreshocks on August 19. The mainshock was recorded as a 5.1 quake. There were almost 300 in the days following. The magnitude of the quake is determined by the amount of energy released from the rupture of a fault. This is how we can continue to have aftershocks and could for months or years.

This quake was centered between the Sesar Fault (an offshoot of the San Cayetano fault) and the Arroyo Parida Fault.

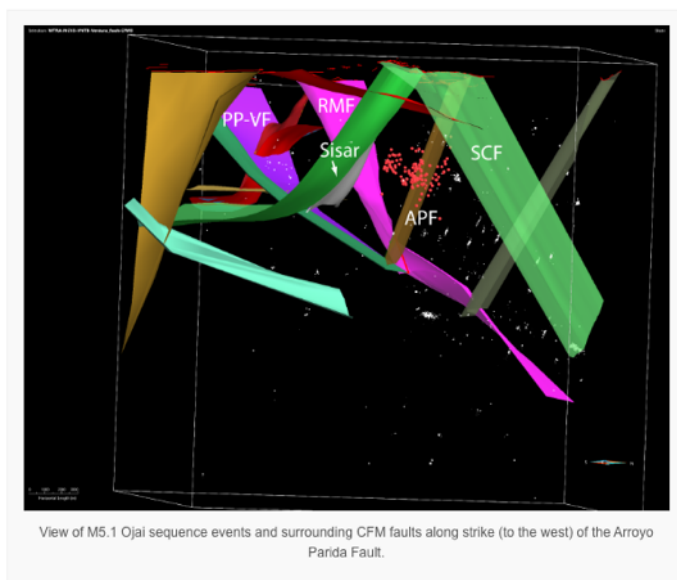


Photo Credit Margaret Vinci, Caltech, Seismological Laboratory

This quake was described as a Thrust Fault. This is when the earth pushes against itself and the result is one

layer thrusts over one side rising above where it was originally. We demonstrated this theory with a fun cracker and cheese experiment.



Next, we talked about seismology. This is the way we can study the seismic waves and how they travel through the earth. All earthquakes start small and grow over time and distance. The further the fault ruptures the more energy is created, the stronger the shaking, and the larger the magnitude. Magnitude is the size of an earthquake based on energy released and the number does not change. Intensity is measured on the Modified Mercalli Intensity scale and is how much shaking is at your location and potential damage is based on the level of shaking. Each quake has P-waves (faster and less destructive) and S-waves (slower and more destructive).

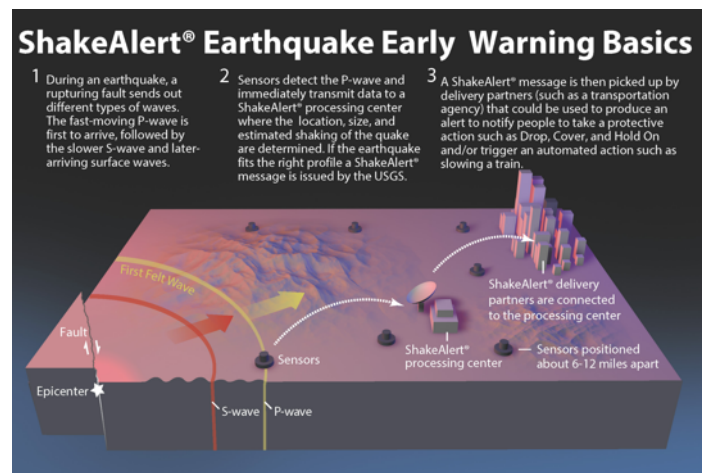


Photo Credit: USGS

Did you know that earthquake sensors are 100 years old, and originally started with three (because triangulation is necessary to pinpoint the epicenter) In the 1930's there were six. Today,

Southern California has 580 sensors that have been placed in the last 20 years. It started by placing them as faults were discovered. Today they are placed where we need them. (10 miles apart). When a quake happens the data collected by the sensor travels at the speed of light to CalTech for scientists to understand and report. Originally, the sensors were developed as early warning systems to prepare first responders. One such preparedness change came after the Northridge Quake. Our current warning system allows fire station doors to open so emergency vehicles are not trapped inside, as many were during the Northridge quake.

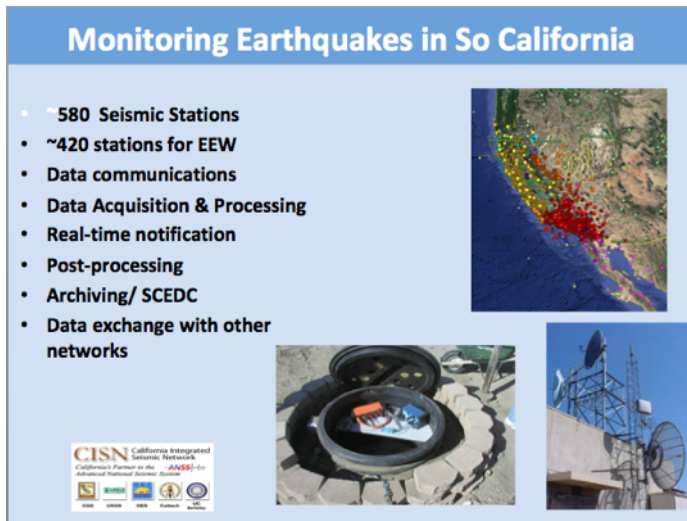


Photo Credit Margaret Vinci, Caltech, Seismological Laboratory



One of the activities we did in class was to build a structure and test it on our shake table (made by Chris Churchill). This was a very fun activity where the kids learned to work together as a team to plan and execute a structure made from graham crackers and frosting. Each team presented their building to the group explaining why they made certain building decisions and how they felt it would fare when it was on the shake table. Similarly, activities like this are performed by experts to test and

update building codes. These rules are reviewed and revised every five years or after a big quake.



This month on October 19, we celebrated "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" events all over California to help people know what to do in an earthquake and most importantly how to prepare for the next earthquake that is coming our way. To learn more please visit <https://www.shakeout.org/dropcoverholdon/>.

We all finished the day with a new sense of wonder of the power in our earth. We look forward to visiting CalTech in the new year and learning more from the scientists and students who will show us how the equipment maps the S and P waves to understand earthquakes.

Next month, we will be learning about Dinosaurs on October 28. Come join the fun!

Amethysts (An Acrostic Poem)

by Beecher I

A mineral
Magenta, lilac, purple, lavender, indigo
Extrusive and intrusive volcanic rocks and hydrothermal veins
They can be inside geodes
Hexagonal crystals
Yellowstone at Amethyst Mountain
Silica mineral quartz
Twinkling
Sparkling

PEBBLE PUPS

Pebble Pup Spotlight: Rylee J.

Phyllis White and Celia Churchill

Have you been to see the demonstrators at our club shows and the Ventura County Fair? Demonstrators volunteer their time to share an aspect of our hobby with the public. They specialize in skills that often take time and patience to practice: lapidary arts like cabbing, jewelry making like wire-wrapping, and fossil cleaning are just some of the techniques you'll see.

One of the Junior members in our club, Rylee J., has been demonstrating in our club for several years. Rylee demonstrates carving, which he learned from his grandfather, VGMS member Dick White. Rylee has demonstrated at our club show, the VC Fair, and at the CFMS show, to name a few.



Carving in his dreams?

Demonstrating can be hard work. Phyllis White, (a.k.a. "Grammy") caught her grandson Rylee asleep on the job at the first day of the VC Fair! According to sources, he hadn't gotten enough sleep the night before and needed a nap. But after that

unexpected demonstration, Rylee rallied. He worked a total of six days carving, which is a huge accomplishment and service to the public that not many adults can boast!

Thanks to Rylee for sharing your talent with our community!



Rylee and his grandpa demonstrating at the VC Fair.

It's a Challenge

Jim Brace-Thompson

Pebble Pups and Junior Members! Want to add free specimens to your collection? Then stay tuned to your emails (or those of your parents) and watch for the biweekly Challenge. Here are the most recent Challenges and those who tackled them:

Fossil sponge: Violetta, Beatrice, Colin, Grayson, Connor, Elizabeth, Osiris, and Lucia.

Howlite cabochon: Colin, Grayson, Osiris, and Connor.

To our winners, congratulations! To all Pebble Pups and Junior Members: we've seen just a handful of you participate recently, so we encourage one and all to take the next Challenge.



Recent Challenges included fossil sponge and howlite cabochon

CALENDAR

October-November 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
22 October	23 Happy Birthday, Pepper F.!	24	25 Member Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Poinsettia Pavilion Happy Birthday, Violetta L.!	26	27 Happy Birthday, Renee Frisk-Jones!	28 Pebble Pups Class, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
29	30 Happy Birthday, Ben Irie!	31 Happy Birthday, Kimarie Celse!	1 November	2 Board Meeting, 7 p.m.	3	4 Gold Coast Gem Show, 10-5 p.m.
5 Gold Coast Gem Show, 10-4 p.m. Certified Members' Workshop, 12-3 p.m.	6	7	8 Member Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Poinsettia Pavilion Happy Birthday, Jeffrey Geist and Megan Hewitson!	9	10	11
12	13	14 Happy Birthday, Tanya Reyes!	15	16	17	18 Open Workshop 9 a.m. - noon Pebble Pups Class, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Field Trip: Calico Area (CGMC) Happy Birthday, Emily Lashkari!
19	20	21	22 Happy Birthday, Rocio Melgarejo!	23 Thanksgiving	24 Happy Birthday, Elyssa J.!	25

Celia Churchill

Editor, Rockhound Rambling
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