

ROCKHOUND RAMBLINGS

DECEMBER 1, 2010

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY



**POT LUCK
DINNER AND GIFT
EXCHANGE AT
THE DECEMBER
MEETING !!**

**FEATURE ARTICLE
JEWELRY
POLISHING TIPS**

**DECEMBER
MEETING
STARTS AT 7PM.**

DETAILS ON PAGE 2

December's birthstone, Blue Topaz, is the hardest of the silicate minerals. While pure Topaz is colorless, minor changes of elements within the stone result in a variety of other colors, such as blue, pale green, red, yellow and pink. Called the gemstone of all colors, topaz's most valuable color is a golden orange-yellow, called "imperial topaz".

Topaz is commonly thought of as a sky-blue gem, but it was not until this century that blue topaz became widespread on the gem market. Natural blue topaz with a deep hue is very uncommon in nature; colorless to light hue stones are heat-treated to achieve the blue color. Likewise, topaz rarely occurs naturally in pink; virtually all pink topaz is heat treated from yellow or brownish material. The color shade called London Blue is the deepest blue and is often used as a less expensive substitute for Sapphire.

Some topaz from Russian locations are notorious for fading upon prolonged exposure to light. Stones from these localities are undesirable as gems. One should always inquire about the origin of the topaz before buying it to make sure it will not fade. Care and caution must be exercised with topaz gems, for its perfect cleavage may cause it to chip or form internal flaws if hit too hard. Topaz cutting also requires special practice for this reason.

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President's Message



I can't believe that it's been another year of rockhounding. It seems like only 6 months!

Here we are in the holiday season trying to be thankful for what we have received or what we hope to receive and trying not to remember what we have lost or

gone without. We, as rockhounds, have the enviable task of deciding whether to visit all our loving friends and relatives for the special times or to visit all our special places with our rockhound friends.

By the time you get this message we will have visited the Jewel Tunnel and I know everyone will have found something fascinating to buy. We always have a good time with

Mr. Rock Currier and his crew.

Please also remember that dues are delinquent after the December club meeting and that you will have to pay a penalty if they are received after that.

The board and I wish you all the happiest and most productive holiday season possible and we'll see you at the potluck!

... Chris Kyte, President

Meeting and General Information

Officers

Chris Kyte, President
(626) 794-0519
ckyte60@att.net

Cheryl Lopez, Secretary
(626) 351-6283
rclopez002@verizon.net

Mark Nelson, Treasurer
(909) 996-1784
mnelsonair@aol.com

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Newsletter Articles or corrections should be sent to the editor: **Mark Nelson**, 1475 Paseo Maravilla, San Dimas, CA, 91773. (909) 996-1784 or to mnelsonair@aol.com

November Meeting

WOW! What a variety of interesting auction items at the November meeting! Joe and Marcia Goetz received their CFMS "Rockhound Of The Year" certificates, following which we got down to the business of bidding at the silent auction. Thanks to the generosity of the members and guests the club earned over \$360 that night.

December Meeting

This month's club meeting will be our annual potluck dinner and optional gift exchange. Please bring enough of a food item to feed 10 or so people. We will also have our annual "blind" gift exchange. Bring an inexpensive wrapped gift and marked for a man, woman, child, or anyone. Keep the cost around \$10. Items can be something rock related, like a

book, a specimen you picked up and polished, or an item of general attractive interest. When you arrive, place your gift in the gift pile. If you bring a gift then you get to pick another gift from the pile. If you don't bring a gift then you don't swap. Let's have fun!

MEETING STARTS AT 7:00 PM

Membership Information and Meeting Locations

Membership per calendar year is \$20, \$15 for a second adult member in the same house. Junior members and third or more members at the same house are \$10. Initiation fee is \$2.50 per person and membership badges are \$7.50. Renewals are due by the December General Meeting. Mail membership checks to P.O. Box 5025, Pasadena CA 91117-0025.

Board Meetings are held at 7:00pm on the first Wednesday of the month at the One West Bank at the northeast corner of Santa

Anita and Foothill in Arcadia. All PLS members are welcome to attend.

General Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm at the Sierra Madre Masonic Lodge, 33 E. Sierra Madre Blvd, Sierra Madre. Guests are welcome!

Field Trips are scheduled each month. Refer to the newsletter for weekend and location.

Workshops are offered to all members for a nominal

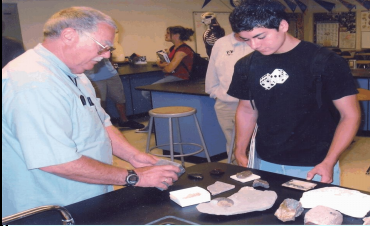
fee - normally on the first Sunday of each month at Drew Wilson's home. Refer to the newsletter for hours and the calendar for date. Location is 252 Bella Vista in Pasadena.

Workshops and field trips are for adult members and children with direct parental supervision. Eye protection and closed-toe shoes are mandatory for all participants.

The Annual Club Show is held the second weekend of March at the Masonic Hall, 3130 Huntington Drive, San Marino.



Ed's Corner



Ed Imlay at local schools

**EDUCATIONAL
OUTREACH**

The Pasadena Lapidary Society is a California Non-Profit organization that is dedicated to educating youth and adults in lapidary and earth sciences. Ed Imlay has developed an acclaimed presentation for elementary school students. Take advantage of his expertise by introducing him to your local school teacher. He has references and will give them a great introduction to rocks, fossils and the earth sciences. For more information, contact him at (626) 286-8215 or at edimlay@hotmail.com.

**WORKSHOP
By Drew Wilson**

Our monthly workshop will be on December 5th from 1:30 pm until 5:00 pm (no early birds, please).

Workshop afternoons are Southern California pleasant. For the December workshop all machines, stock rocks and expert help are available for members to work on their preferred projects. Perhaps on items for the annual show. Eye protection and closed-toe shoes are mandatory for all participants.

**ANNUAL CLUB SHOW
By Chris Kyte**

The annual PLS club show is coming up March 13th and 14th. This is a very important event for us - for funds to continue our member services and our community outreach. We still need lots of volunteer helpers and prize donations. Some ideas from Vern and Sylvia Cliffe are:

- Pendant with stone
- Necklace, silver beads, silver chain
- Ring, silver w/ cab or gem
- Earrings with silver or stone
- Carving
- Polished slab or chunk
- Sphere
- Lapidary tools
- Polished stone tray
- Book ends
- Bolo tie
- Pen stand
- Coasters
- Trivet (hot plate stand)
- Painting on stone
- Candle holder
- Paper weight
- Polished geode
- Small useful item
- Kit to make jewelry
- Specimen
- quality crystal or mineral
- Stone letter opener
- Stone knife handle
- Stone box
- Stone clock
- Stone photo frame
- Nice natural picture stone well cut and polished for display

Members - Please patronize or advertisers !

OCTOBER ROCKHOUND TRIVIA - We all had fun at Dave Kelty's **Rockhound Trivia** following the October Meeting Learning what we know (or don't know) about our hobby was both fun and frustrating. It helped to know the Mohs Scale, field trip locations and basic first aid to win points. Joe Goetz won the prize - a camping first aid kit!



Free Classes Available

Lapidary and jewelry enthusiasts are invited to enroll in Mt. San Antonio College's Jewelry and Lapidary class. These non-credit classes meet at Hillcrest in LaVerne on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9am to noon. Students learn at their own pace and projects are assigned in accordance with the student's abilities. Tuition is free, but there is a small materials fee. Call the instructor, Margaret Velarde, for details at (909) 435-5957.

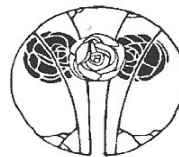
FULL COLOR

Would you like to view this bulletin in full color? Would you like to receive timely notifications of field trips, open houses or schedule changes? Each month the bulletin in full color is emailed to all members in addition to the partial color version via U.S. Mail.

If you received notice of the Jewel Tunnel Open House last month then we have your email (the notice was sent in the first week of the month as soon as we were notified of the event). If you did not it is probably because we don't have your email.

Send your email to the editor at the email listed on the previous page. You will receive a reply and will be on our list for timely information. Also, check your spam file and if you find emails with "PLS" in the subject matter, mark the emails as "Not Spam".
... Editor

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... Continued from page 1

Topaz is found primarily in Brazil, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Pakistan, China, and the United States.



An alternate birthstone for December is turquoise. So named because it was initially brought to Europe by way of Turkey, this stone was one of the first gems to be used in jewelry. Turquoise was considered by the ancients to be a sacred stone, protective against all manners of evil and ill health. This beautiful gemstone is mined in Iran and the southwestern United States.

Your editor found information about these birthstones at www.birtstones.com and www.minerals.net. Learn about other minerals and their properties at these websites.

Celadon Eyes

Wonder about the description of “celadon eyes”? Celadon is a term for ceramics denoting both a type of glaze and a ware of a specific color, also called celadon. This type of ware was invented in ancient China, primarily in Zhejiang Province. The items shown here were made in China during the 13th Century Song Dynasty.



... Editor

MOON TRIVIA The December full moon is called the Long Night Moon, since the longest night of the year at the winter solstice occurs in this month - on December 21 this year. On that same night moon trivia lovers are in for a rare treat - **a total lunar eclipse of a full moon!** The total eclipse, visible throughout North America will start at 11:40pm Pacific Time, with the greatest point at 12:17am and end at 12:53am. For more information Google “2010 December eclipse”. *From the Moon Watcher, Celestial Products, Inc.*



Topaz In The Ancient World

By Mark Nelson

From as warm as a summer day to as cool and inviting as a blue lake on a blistering summer day, December's birthstone is derived from the Sanskrit word "tapas," meaning fire. In the ancient world topaz came from Topazion, an Island in the Red Sea now called Zabargad. Typically yellow, topaz in the ancient world was held as a talisman to protect against evil and was used to treat many different ailments including asthma. The ancient Greeks believed topaz would give great strength to whomsoever wore the stone, which was also worn as an amulet to ward off enchantment. In ancient Egypt the golden glow of yellow topaz symbolized "Ra", the sun god.

There are also many references to "topaz" in ancient texts, including numerous references in the Bible. It is now believed that the topaz of modern mineralogists was unknown to the ancients. Rather, that the stone called topazios was the mineral chrysolite or peridot. Likewise, the "topaz" referred to in the Old Testament was most likely chrysolite.

Blue topaz was considered by ancient civilizations to have cooling properties. Not only was it believed to cool boiling water when thrown into the pot, but to calm hot tempers as well! This gemstone was credited with many other healing powers, among them the ability to cure insanity, asthma, weak vision and insomnia. Blue topaz was even thought to have magical properties in its ability to make its wearer invisible in a threatening situation. A gift of blue topaz is symbolic of love and fidelity.



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Wendy Ansel

A Pasadena Lapidary Society Member



POLISHING TIPS

By Margaret Velarde, Instructor
Mount San Antonio College
Walnut, California

Polishing silver jewelry involves removing scratches left during the process of cutting and shaping your piece of jewelry. Lexi Erickson, President of the Pennsylvania Society of Goldsmiths, has several recommendations that I like to pass along to my students.

One is to cover our silver sheet inventory in white contact paper. It's easy to draw and design on, keeps it from getting scratched or gouged, and because it's white, we'll remember to remove it before soldering. She also recommends placing your silver in a zip-lock bag and stacking them in a rigid plastic frame such as the letter filing racks available at office supply stores.

Fine sanding paper or crocus cloth (available from auto supply stores) can be torn into strips and inserted in a saw frame (just like a saw blade) to get into hard-to-reach areas of your design. After fine sanding, clean the piece with a mixture of pumice powder (such as Barkeepers Friend) and water - rubbing your piece with your fingers. Rinse well and check that all scratches and fire scale are gone.

One common mistake made by beginning lapidary and jewelry students is using polishing compounds which are more aggressive than the piece warrants. This can actually put more scratches on the stone or silver mounting than the piece had before. Remember that polishing can remove metal. Many beginners like to polish frequently because they like the look, but this eats away the metal. If you polish too often your metal will get thin. Save the polishing until the end.

Polish first with tripoli, but be careful. Tripoli is a cutting compound and will remove metal, round off sharp edges and can remove printed textures. In my class I like to use a yellow, treated, wheel for tripoli. If polishing a large area, use a large (4" - 6") buffing wheel. A small buffing wheel on a flex shaft is better for small pieces. Never mix polishes on the same wheel!

Pay close attention to what's happening on the wheel. Use the lower front quadrant and edges of the wheel and don't apply a lot of pressure - let the speed of the wheel do the work. Be sure you have all of the scratches out in the tripoli step before proceeding to a high polish. A small bowl of cool water will take the heat off of your piece and fingers.

Clean the piece in water with a solution of ammonia and liquid Dawn (or other de-greasing dishwashing soap) and an old, soft toothbrush. Take extra care to clean difficult hard-to-reach areas. To leave any compound on your piece means it will transfer to and contaminate the next wheel and not

remove the tripoli marks. Since the polish will build up on the wheel and will pick up tiny pieces of metal it is necessary to remove it periodically. I use a flat cheese grater to scrape it off while the wheel is moving.

One next step is to use a pink crocus wheel. This is not essential for all projects - but, as Erickson says, if you want to have a truly high mirror finish, crocus is advisable. Again, polish the piece evenly, clean in the solution with the toothbrush.

Use a rouge polish to finish your piece on an untreated felt or muslin buff (Erickson also uses Zam polish for this process). Wash again with Dawn and ammonia - but no toothbrush. Use your fingers, a toothpick or cotton swab to remove any stubborn rouge. If you have a high polish on a piece of silver, do not dry the piece with a paper towel or commercial polishing cloth. At this point rubbing a polished piece with a toothbrush, paper towel or rough cloth can introduce unwanted scratches on your piece. Air dry or use a hair dryer to dry the piece.

A final piece of advice is to remember your personal safety. The high speed turning wheels of a buffing machine are a great tool, but carry special risks of injury. The turning wheels of a buffing machine fling pieces of polish grit as they turn. ALWAYS wear safety glasses and a paper mask. NEVER polish or buff a chain on the wheel. High speeds and loose chains are a dangerous combination and can cause serious bodily injury. Polish chains in a tumbler or by hand. Don't short-cut safety at the risk of injury!

Margaret Velarde is the instructor of Mt. San Antonio College's Jewelry and Lapidary class. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts and a Masters Degree in Metalsmithing. She has taught jewelry and lapidary for over 20 years. All of the items mentioned in the article are available at A&A Supply in Los Angeles.



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FIELD TRIPS

By Joe Goetz



Because of the extensive December holidays there will be no field trip. Jewel Tunnel may have open houses and if we have your email we will get you the information. See you next year!

MULTI-CLUB FIELD TRIP REPORT

By Jay Valle

Whittier Gem & Mineral Society
North Orange County Gem & Mineral Society

The Whittier Gem & Mineral Society hosted their annual field trip to the club's honey onyx claim over the weekend of November 6 - 7. As always, the outing was well attended, with 15 members from the Whittier, Pasadena & La Habra Clubs represented and 2 guest 'hounders' from the Victorville Club. Most of the participants stayed at the Oak Tree Inn and we held our Saturday night potluck at Peggy Sue's 50's Diner.

The weekend began with a group of "early birds" going out on Friday to scout a nearby dry lake bed for meteorites. Though no space debris was collected, the metal detector crowd each found something to show including bullet fragments and a pop top from an old soda can. The "dry" lake bed was a little soggy in places, due to recent rains in the area, so we had to pay attention to where we drove our small convoy of vehicles while on the playa. Returning to base (hotel) we enjoyed dinner and then a campfire with the rockhounds who camped. It was the only campfire enjoyed during the entire weekend due to high winds in the early evenings. Not to imply that winds were a problem during our day field trip (they were not). The weather was rockhound ideal - cool but not uncomfortably so.

Saturday morning found our rock seekers in search of agate east of the Calico Mountains. Specimens were collected by all. The highlight of the day was watching Chris Kyte reduce a large agate boulder to more manageable and slab-able chunks. Our potluck that night was at Peggy Sue's 50's Diner and it was GOOD.

Sunday began with a visit to a local, previously unexplored, area found by one of the Whittier club members. Though the location had obviously been collected on, by other persons unknown, nice red moss agate and multicolored jasper were found. Most of the field trippers left after lunch and a small group consisting of 4 vehicles and occupants made a foray into the Calico Mountains in search of the elusive Calico Sagenite. Some of this special inclusional gemstone was collected and we returned to camp for a traditional final-night potluck dinner and it was GOOD.

The weekend was highlighted by beautiful, comfortable, days and star filled nights with a slight wind (my tent trailer survived so it must have been slight). There was more than the usual wild life sightings, including tarantulas and a baby speckled rattlesnake. It was GOOD (always is). ... *Jay Valle*

Members will be pleased to know that Field Trip Leader Joe Goetz continues to recover from recent treatment for a blood clot in his leg. He is back to work and leading field trips! Welcome back "Somewhere in California Going The Wrong Way" Joe!



FEDERATION NEWS

CFMS - California Federation of Mineralogical Societies

CFMS has announced that Robert Sankovich has been named as field trip co-leader of CFMS Field Trips South. Robert replaces Shep Koss who will be taking some time off. His first field trip was the CFMS Wiley Wells trip - in which the Pasadena Lapidary Society participated. Rob is a member of the Conejo Gem & Mineral Club and the Ventura Gem & Mineral Society.

The 2011 CFMS Field Trips South will be led by Adam Dean and Rob Sankovich. In 2011 the planned field trips will be on the CFMS website - <http://www.cfmsinc.org>.

AFMS - American Federation of Mineralogical Societies

Jim Brace-Thompson is seeking ideas for merit badge projects for the Future Rockhounds of America. Comments can be made through <http://www.amfed.org>.

Next year the AFMS Convention will be held in Syracuse, NY from June 7th - 10th in conjunction with the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies.



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**ROCK & MINERAL TERMINOLOGY -
"Definitions that you can use" - Part Eight**
from Inland Lapidary.com

mother rock - the rock a mineral or minerals is found implanted in.

mudstone - a detrital sedimentary rock composed of clay-sized particles

nodule - aggregate consisting of a spherical lump, usually from groups of small crystals.

opalescence - effect seen in a few minerals, chiefly opal (hence its name) which cause it to exhibit a glimmer of different colors when rotated or seen in different angles. Opalescent describes minerals exhibiting this effect.

oxidize - property exhibited in certain minerals that causes them to tarnish, or discolor upon contact with air.

pegmatite - a coarse-grained igneous rock with exceptionally large crystals, formed from a magma that contains a high proportion of water. The Pala, California tourmalines are found in pegmatite.

peridot - an igneous rock composed primarily of the iron-magnesium silicate olivine and having a silica content of less than 40%.



Peridot ▼

pocket - cavity in igneous rock in which crystals are usually found



Pocket

pseudomorph - one mineral that chemically replaces another mineral without changing the external form of the original mineral. Refer to the article in the October bulletin! The photo shows a goethite (pronounced gertite) cube, found by your editor near Blythe CA, that was originally a pyrite which has morphed into another mineral but kept the pyrite cube shape.



LOCAL ROCK AND GEM SHOWS:

December

2 — ARCADIA, CA "Holiday Boutique"; Arcadia Creative Minds Art Group and Jewelry Club. Arcadia Mental Health Center, 330 E. Live Oak. Handmade gift and jewelry items, baked goods, lunch. 10 AM - 2 PM.

10 - 12 — COSTA MESA, CA "Gem Faire"; Gem Faire Inc.; OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr. Bldg. #10; Fri. 12-7, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; weekend pass \$5

January

1 - 31 — QUARTZSITE, AZ Rocks, fossils, gems, beads, collectibles and miscellaneous all over town—all month long. Wholesale prices to the public. 9-5 daily; free admission. Camping in BLM areas or at motels 20 minutes away in Blythe, CA. Desert Winds Motel is about \$50. For event dates call the Quartzsite Business Chamber – 928-927-9321 or see the Web site: <http://www.ci.quartzsite.az.us/shows>

6 - 23 — LAUGHLIN, NV "Cloud's Jamboree". Rock, Gem, Arts-Crafts & Mineral Show at the Avi Resort & Casino, Laughlin, Nevada. Outdoor show January 1-31 9am to dusk at Avi Resort RV Park. Indoor show January 7-16 10am - 6pm at Avi Convention Center.

15 & 16 — LAUGHLIN, NV "Cloud's Jamboree". The Mt. San Antonio College Jewelry and Lapidary class will host an overnight bus trip to Clouds Jamboree at the Avi Casino in Laughlin, NV. Leaving early Saturday and returning late the Sunday before the MLK holiday. Fare, including room is \$99 per person (double occupancy in 2 queen bed room) and \$129 (single room). Seats are limited. Contact Mark Nelson to reserve a spot. Email: mnelsonair@aol.com or Phone: (909) 592-1322.



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**December
2010**

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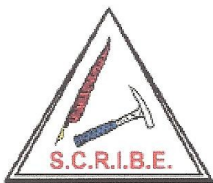
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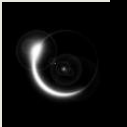



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The Pasadena Lapidary Society is affiliated with the California and American Federations of Mineralogical Societies. Our editor is a member of the Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors.

DECEMBER 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Board Meeting 	2 Hanukkah Begins 	3	4
5 Workshop 	6	7 Pearl Harbor - 1941 Islamic New Year 	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 Potluck Dinner Meeting 	16 Boston Tea Party 1773 	17 First Flight 1903 	18
19	20	21 Lunar Eclipse 	22 See times on page 4	23	24	25 CHRISTMAS 
26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve 