

# ROCKHOUND RAMBLINGS

FEBRUARY 1, 2010

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY



## AMETHYST

Amethyst is the traditional birthstone for February.

The Greek word "amethystos" may be translated as "not drunken", from Greek *a-*, not + *methustos*, intoxicated. Amethyst was considered to be a strong antidote against drunkenness, which is why wine goblets were often carved from it!

In Greek mythology, Dionysus, the god of intoxication, and wine, was pursuing a maiden named Amethystos, who refused his affections. Amethystos prayed to the gods to remain chaste, which the goddess Artemis granted and transformed her into a white stone. Humbled by Amethystos's desire to remain chaste, Dionysus poured wine over the stone as an offering, dyeing the crystals purple.

Variations of the story include that



### SPECIAL INTEREST INSIDE:

- ◆ Rock, Gem & Jewelry Information
- ◆ Projects
- ◆ President's Message
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- ◆ Workshops , Meetings and Special Events
- ◆ Rock and Gem shows
- ◆ News concerning the hobby

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Dionysus had been insulted by a mortal and swore to slay the next mortal who crossed his path, creating fierce tigers to carry out his wrath. The mortal turned out to be a beautiful young woman (Amethystos) who was on her way to pay tribute to Artemis (the hunter goddess). Her life is spared by Artemis, who transformed the maiden into a statue of pure crystalline quartz to protect her from the brutal claws. Dionysus wept tears of wine in remorse for his action at the sight of the beautiful statue. The god's tears then stained the quartz purple.



## President's Message



This month is so important because we are getting close to our annual show! Please note the **date change on the workshop**. The workshop will be held on February 14, 2010 from 12:30pm to

4:30pm -5:00pm (we have moved it because Feb 7 will be Super Bowl Sunday).

Your Club Board needs volunteers to help with several key areas. We need to fill positions for Historian Chair, Membership Chair, and Publicity Chair. If you have any interest or would like to help us fill these key roles, please volunteer for any of these positions by calling me at (626) 298-1534

I hope you enjoyed the shows at Quartzsite. The reports were of many more vendors this year than last - a hopeful sign for us all.

Hope you can attend the exciting field trip! Happy Valentine's Day

..... *Drew Wilson*

## Club News

**FAIR USE NOTICE.** This publication may contain copyrighted material the use of which has not been specifically authorized by the copyright owner.

We are making such material available in our efforts to advance the educational understanding of the amateur jewelry fabrication and rock collecting and hobbies and the environment in which such specimens are found.

We believe this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law.

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**Newsletter Articles** or corrections should be sent to the editor: **Mark Nelson**, 1475 Paseo Maravilla, San Dimas 91773 or to [mnelsonair@aol.com](mailto:mnelsonair@aol.com)

At the Board Meeting of January 6<sup>th</sup> Sylvia Cliffe was appointed to be Door Prize chair.

The Board approved the printing of business advertising in the newsletter as a means of off-setting the cost of publishing "Rockhound Ramblings" in the format

used in January.

Cal Matthews has offered to use his contacts to provide the club with four months of printing in full color on 8 1/2 x 11 page format as a means of further off-setting the cost of publication and the board approved \$65 in monthly material costs

during this time.

If any member has a suggestion for a business to advertise in our monthly newsletter they are encouraged to let our editor, Mark Nelson, know so he can follow up on this idea.

## Membership and Meeting Locations

**Membership** is \$17 per calendar year and includes one copy per family of the monthly club newsletter. Renewals are due by the December General Meeting. Mail membership checks to the address on page 8.

**Board Meetings** are held at 7:30pm on the first Wednesday of the month at the former IndyMac Bank on 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 Center, 33 E. Sierra Madre Blvd, Sierra Madre. All are welcome!

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

**Workshops** are offered to all members on the first Sunday of each month. Refer to the announcement

in the newsletter for the hours. Location is 252 Bella Vista in Pasadena.

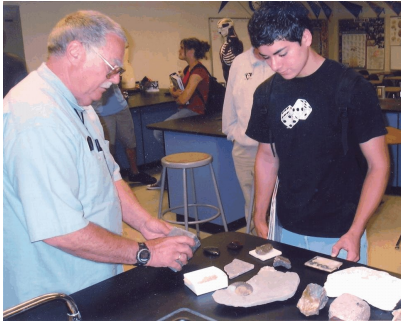
Workshops and field trips are for adult members and children with parental supervision. Eye protection and closed-toe shoes are mandatory for all participants.

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



Ed's Corner

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH



Ed Imlay at local schools

Ed Imlay visited the second grade class at St. Dorothy Elementary School in Glendora on January 8th and also visited four second grade classes at K. L. Carver School in San Marino on January 13 and 14.

If you know of a class that would like a presentation from Ed, please contact him.

DISPLAY TABLE

Each month at the general meeting there is a MEMBER'S DISPLAY TABLE. For the February meeting, please display any items of general interest, especially: workshop projects, material from locations of recent or upcoming field trips, and the birthstone of the month - Amethyst. This is also an opportunity to place an unknown rock, fossil or mineral for identification by other members. Bring lighting and a cord if you can. - Ed Imlay.

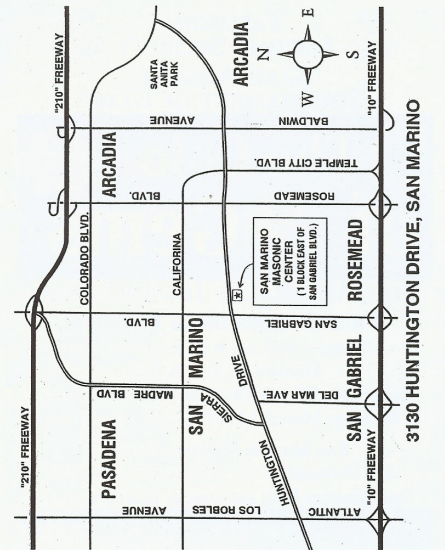
The ANNUAL SHOW IS COMING - by Joe & Marcia Goetz

PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY'S 52ND ANNUAL TOURNAMENT OF GEMS. The Color of Gems. GEM, MINERAL & JEWELRY SHOW. FREE ADMISSION & PARKING. MEMBER DISPLAYS • DEMONSTRATIONS DEALERS • SNACK BAR. Saturday, March 13, 2010 - 10 am - 6 pm. Sunday, March 14, 2010 - 10 am - 5 pm. SAN MARINO MASONIC CENTER. 3130 Huntington Drive San Marino, CA 91108. Information: (626) 355-6964 or (626) 298-1534. Bring this flyer to the show and receive One Free Ticket for the Annual Visitor Drawing.

THE ANNUAL SHOW IS ALMOST HERE!

Your help is needed and appreciated! To help distribute flyers call Vern Cliffe at (626) 355-6964

To help the club with simple but valuable assignments, call Joe or Marcia Goetz at (626) 914-5030.



FEBRUARY WORKSHOP

Please note the date of the workshop is the 14th. This month's workshop is open time to finish any work projects that you have, or to work on any prize pieces you may have for the March show.

There is a lot of room in the workshop so come on back. There will be hot coffee and hot water available for eve-

ryone, so bring your favorite tea or hot coco. There are also cold water and sodas available for a suggested donation of 50 cents. To those who are planning to come, and who are not regular workshop participants, remember that we do have free club rocks available to work with.

There is an extraordinary resource

available to all of us at our monthly workshops. This is the years of experience and knowledge of the art of lapidary, metallurgy, and beading that other members share with others. Free, just for the asking! Come to the PLS workshops and learn how to really enjoy our hobby!

HAPPY VALENTINES'... Drew Wilson



## Field Trips

### PLS MONTHLY FIELD TRIP

**The PLS February Field Trip** is a multi-day adventure to the Chuckwalla Springs area. We will be collecting agates (plume, moss, fortification, and banded), and Jaspers of many colours. Sagenite is found here too. There are also agate filed geodes and amygdules. Plan to arrive on Friday after work to camp at the Graham Pass/Chuckwalla Springs junction - between Desert Center and Blythe.

Saturday: Caravan from camp to collecting sites near the Orocopia Mtns to a fluorspar mine and bloodstone collecting area, then continuing along the old Bradshaw Train and over to Graham Pass Road from the south. A brief stop at the Graham Pass summit to collect at the sagenite area then back to camp. If we are having too much fun we may have to edit some of the Saturday activities. On Sunday we will spend the entire day in the Chuckwalla Springs area. This is an all day adventure. Some of us will return home on Sunday afternoon, others will do some further exploring and collecting Monday morning before returning and breaking camp.

The camp will be accessible by RVs and cars, although the last stretch of the road may need to be driven carefully. This will be a dry camp, so bring what you need. Don't forget sunscreen, hats and lots of water. It could be hot during the day and cold at night. Gas and simple supplies are available at Chiriaco Summit. Blythe has anything you could need, including motels (check the discount Desert Winds Motel). We will be having our traditional potluck on Sat night, so bring something good to share. Telling lies around the campfire is also on the agenda. We will leave the camp every day at 0830, a high clearance vehicle will be necessary to reach the collecting sites. We will carpool as required. You will want to take lunch. Standard rock tools

should suffice - rock pick, small shovel and spray bottle. You may also want a small sledge and gad to work the crevices.

Directions: Take I-10 east to Ford Dry Lake off ramp (exit 217) east of Desert Center. Turn right onto Chuckwalla Road (which parallels the freeway), and go back west for 2.9 miles to the junction with Graham Pass Road. This road has a sign (BLM vertical type). Turn right and go south for 5.9 miles to the junction with Chuckwalla Springs Road (there should be a sign here). Take the right fork and continue 5.1 miles to the campsite (camp 1 in the book). Chuckwalla road is paved but very torn up and rough. Graham Pass road is a good, graded, dirt road. From the Chuckwalla Springs turn off to camp is washboardy. Look for club signs to help you find your way. These directions are mostly taken from the Desert Gem Trails book. Without traffic it is about 3 hours from Pasadena to the freeway turn off. Cell phone reception is possible and we will be on FRS radio frequency 14-0.

Please confirm your attendance in case there are changes. To confirm or for questions about the trip you can contact our trip leader, Joe Goetz (626) 914-5030, or Jay Valle of WGMS at (626) 934 9764.

Here are some links to geode sites in this same area. Within each link you can link up to other sites in this same area:

<http://www.desertusa.com/mag07/aug07/raineyswell.html>  
<http://www.desertusa.com/mag07/jan/blackag.html>

### CFMS FIELD TRIP

In February the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies Region South Field Trip will be to Ant Hill. This is a favorite of your editor and a great one-day trip and even children can find a fossil. Identify yourself as a PLS member when you sign in.

**See the next page for details and directions:**



## CFMS FIELD TRIP, continued

"With last year's great turnout of nearly 100 attendees we're doing it again."

WHERE: Ant Hill, Bakersfield, CA

WHEN: Saturday, February 27, at 9am

MATERIAL: 15 million year old fossils of shark teeth, whale teeth, seal teeth, porpoise teeth, whale bone, etc from Middle Miocene Marine beds.

MEET SPOT: 9AM NE of Bakersfield on the corner of Lake Ming Rd & Alfred Harrell Hwy at the Chevron station. Alfred Harrell Hwy can be reached by heading east from Bakersfield on Rt 178 or heading east on Rt 58 to Comanche Rd then turning north. Comanche Rd becomes Alfred Harrell at Rt 178. From here go about two miles to Lake Ming Rd and meet spot. Here we will sign Liability Waivers, review specimen samples and receive digging instructions.

From the meet spot we will drive about another mile to parking area then hike about 3/4 mile on a uphill slope which gets steep the last 200 yards. The fossil trenches are near the summits of steep hills. Be advised: this is a known Valley Fever area and snakes and spiders inhabit these hills (although rarely a problem, especially in winter). Wear masks if you are concerned. To find fossils requires a combination of sifting debris or prying out chunks of the "wall". These hills will soon undergo housing development so collect while you can. Weather and roads: Roads are paved until last 300 feet to parking area. Weather is unpredictable although this soil is more rain tolerant. Dress accordingly for temperatures and conditions.

TOOLS: hammer, chisel or screwdriver, 1/4" mesh sifting screen or plastic kitchen colander, shovel, bucket, zip lock bags, water spray bottle, hiking shoes and clothes to get dirty in.

## LOCAL ROCK AND GEM SHOWS:

**Fun for the whole family! Get gems, lapidary material, beads and findings - and yard rocks. Always ask for rock club member pricing!**

**Feb 1- 28--QUARTZSITE, ARIZONA:** Wholesale and retail show, "Desert Gardens International Gem & Mineral Show"; Desert Gardens RV Park; 1064 Kuehn Rd., south side of I-10, along frontage road; 9-6 daily; free admission; crystals, minerals, rough, polished, jewelry

**Jan 30-Feb 12--TUCSON, ARIZONA:** Big gem, lapidary and fossil show. One of the largest in the world. See web sites [glwshows.com](http://glwshows.com), [www.mzexpos.com](http://www.mzexpos.com),

**12-14--SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA:** Show, "Gem Faire"; Gem Faire Inc.; Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, 1855 Main St.; Fri. 12-7, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; \$5 weekend pass. Website: [www.gemfaire.com](http://www.gemfaire.com)

**12-21--INDIO, CALIFORNIA:** Show, "Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival"; San Geronimo Mineral & Gem Society; Gem & Mineral Bldg., Bldg. #1, 46-350 Arabia St.; 10-10 daily; adults \$8, seniors \$7, children \$6

**19-21--SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA:** Show, "Gem Faire"; Gem Faire Inc.; Earl Warren Showgrounds/Exhibit Hall, 3400 Calle Real; Fri. 12-7, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; \$5 weekend pass. [www.gemfaire.com](http://www.gemfaire.com)

**26-27--NORTHRIDGE, CALIFORNIA:** Show, "GEMboree"; Del Air Rockhounds Club; United Methodist Church, 9650 Reseda Blvd.; Fri. 3-9:30, Sat. 10-5; free admission, children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult; gems, jewelry, beads, Girl and Boy Scout merit badges; contact Julia Marin(818) 886-7190; e-mail: [jomarin@dslextreme.com](mailto:jomarin@dslextreme.com); Web site: <http://delairrockhounds.blogspot.com>

**26-28--COSTA MESA, CALIFORNIA:** Show, "Gem Faire"; Gem Faire Inc.; OC Fair & Event Center/Bldg. 10, 88 Fair Dr.; Fri. 12-7, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; \$5 weekend pass. Web site: [www.gemfaire.com](http://www.gemfaire.com)

**HAPPY HUNTING !**



**Continued from cover page.**

Amethyst was used as a gemstone by the ancient Egyptians and was largely employed in antiquity for intaglio engraved gems. The Greeks believed amethyst gems could prevent intoxication, while medieval European soldiers wore amethyst amulets as protection in battle. Beads of amethyst were found in Anglo-Saxon graves in England. A huge geode, or "amethyst-grotto", from near Santa Cruz in southern Brazil was exhibited at the Düsseldorf, Germany Exhibition of 1902.



In the 20th century, the color of amethyst was attributed to the presence of manganese. However, since it is capable of being greatly altered and even discharged by heat, the color was believed by some authorities to be from an organic source. Ferric thiocyanate was suggested, and sulfur was said to have been detected in the mineral.



More recent work has shown that amethyst's coloration is due to ferric iron impurities. Further study has shown a complex interplay of iron and aluminium is responsible for the color. On exposure to heat, amethyst generally becomes yellow, and much of the citrine, cairngorm, or yellow quartz of jewelry is said to be merely "burnt amethyst". Veins of amethystine quartz are apt to lose their color on the exposed outcrop. Accordingly, they don't make very good "yard rocks".

Synthetic amethyst is made to imitate the best quality amethyst. Its chemical and physical properties are so similar to that of natural amethyst that it can not be differentiated with

absolute certainty without advanced gemological testing (which is often cost-prohibitive). There is one test based on "Brazil law twinning" (a form of quartz twinning where right and left hand quartz structures are combined in a single crystal which can be used to identify synthetic amethyst rather easily. In theory however it is possible to create this material synthetically as well, but this type is not available in large quantities in the market.

Because it has a hardness of seven on the Mohs scale, amethyst is suitable for use in jewelry. Amethyst occurs in primary hues from a light pinkish violet to a deep purple. Amethyst may exhibit one or both secondary hues, red and blue. The ideal grade is called "Deep Siberian" and has a primary purple hue of around 75–80 percent, 15–20 percent blue and (depending on the light source) red secondary hues.



Amethyst is produced in abundance from the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil where it occurs in large geodes within volcanic rocks. It is also found and mined in South Korea. The largest opencast amethyst vein in the world is in Maissau, Lower Austria. Many of the hollow agates of Brazil and Uruguay contain a crop of amethyst crystals in the interior. Much fine amethyst comes from Russia, especially from near Mursinka in the Ekaterinburg district, where it occurs in drusy cavities in granitic rocks. Many localities in India yield amethyst. One of the largest global amethyst producers is Zambia with an annual production of about 1,000 tons.

**Concluded on page 7**



**Continued from page 6.....** Amethyst occurs at many localities in the United States. Among these may be mentioned: the Mazatzal Mountain region in Gila and Maricopa Counties, Arizona; Amethyst Mountain, Texas; Yellowstone National Park; Delaware County, Pennsylvania; Haywood County, North Carolina; Deer Hill and Stow, Maine and in the Lake Superior region. Amethyst is relatively common in Ontario, and in various locations throughout Nova Scotia. The largest amethyst mine in North America is located in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Up to 18th century amethyst was included in the cardinal, or most valuable, gemstones (along with diamond, sapphire, ruby, and emerald). However since the discovery of extensive deposits in locations such as Brazil it has lost most of its value.

Collectors look for depth of color, possibly with red flashes if cut conventionally. The highest grade amethyst (called "Deep Russian") is exceptionally rare and therefore its value is dependent on the demand of collectors when one is found. It is however still orders of magnitude lower than the highest grade sapphires or rubies (Padparadscha sapphire or "pigeon's blood" ruby).



A friend visiting Las Vegas, Nevada sent us this photo of a slot machine designed to attract rock collectors!

**GOING TO THE CFMS FIELD TRIP TO ANT HILL? THIS ONE'S FOR YOU.**

There once was a collector from France,  
Who ripped open the seat of his pants.  
He sat on the dump,  
Exposing his rump,  
And developed *French pants full of ants*

Slot Machine photo courtesy of Chuck Kantrim of Covina California. Rockhound humor from a tip by PLS member Linda Elsna is copyrighted and used with the permission of Larry Rush ( larryrush@worldnet.att.net ). The reference to the bible quote courtesy of John The Apostle by way of Larry Stewart of Lexington, Kentucky.

**Lannie's Law Of Weather**  
– Any week of five consecutive clear and sunny weekdays will have rain, sleet or snow on Field Trip Saturday AND Sunday

**CRIME BLOTTER:** A chunk of Halite walks into a Police Station , and reported that he was assaulted.



JACKASS AND ROCKHOUND - CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE ?

**Amethyst In The Bible:**

“The foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.. the twelfth, an amethyst.”  
*Revelation 21: 19, 20, A.V*

# February 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Board Mtg	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 Field Trip early camp arrival	13 Field Trip Chuck-walla Springs
14 WORK-SHOP & Field Trip	15 Optional Field Trip extension	16	17 Meeting & Program	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

**February  
2010**

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 P.O. Box 5025  
 Pasadena, CA 91117-0025



Pasadena Lapidary Society is affiliated with the California and American Federations of Mineralogical Societies.