



May 2010

From de Ed.

The young fellow never ceases to amaze me. He's only been to a couple meetings and Sallie and I have seen him a grand total of twice, but he continues to surprise me with his knowledge. He brought a couple specimens with him this past meeting and Sallie and I took him a hound's tooth calcite from Medford Quarry for his collections. Our two onsite experts identified his other specimens. I'm talking about Andrew, again. You have to meet this extraordinary young man to really appreciate what I'm talking about. He is the ward of a young lady who encourages his participation in all types of activities and wants him to succeed in as many as possible.

We had a great time talking about previous digs and minerals we had found. If more people had attended it would have been better. We have programs from EFMLS Library that we are willing to show when attendance improves, so come on down.

Don

From the Treasurer:

This will be the last missile from this organization. A number of the members have not paid the 2010 dues, so check your check book and see if you have a cancelled check from us. If not, you will miss out on a lot of the garbage from us.

Don

Now, for some good information and articles that I have stolen from our sister clubs.

SAFETY - WHAT HAVE I JUST COLLECTED?

By Theodore J. Reith

From: Mid West Federation News, November 2008

I have been a rock and mineral collector for more than three decades now. Being a Chemical Engineer, I've typically been more interested in a specimen's chemistry than its geology. This is a most wonderful hobby, though all of us must be aware of the potential hazards that some minerals could represent.

This was most apparent to me in an acquisition made when still relatively new to the hobby. A vendor offered a very nice specimen of a rather gemmy, yellow and red crystal matrix from Utah, which I had not seen previously at several dozen shows. What a great new collection addition! The card identified the specimen as Orpiment and Realgar. As the vendor was quite busy at the time, I did not inquire as to the chemical composition of those minerals.

At home, my research quickly identified this specimen as two arsenic sulfides, chemically AsS and As₂S₃. Arsenic is an obvious hazard word for most of us. A bit more checking of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) showed it to have: A Health rating of 4 (defined specifically as "life-threatening, major or permanent damage may result from single or repeated overexposures.") To be listed by DOT as a Class B poison ("presumed to present a serious threat to health during transportation.")

To produce Hydrogen Sulfide (H₂S) when contacted with water, a known respiratory hazard with its own Health rating of 4. If a sample has a Health rating of 3 or 4 on the MSDS (or even a 2 if you're extra cautious,) then you need to do some homework on

safe handling. The lesson to learn – know what you're collecting. The first stop would be to discuss the specimen with the vendor or a knowledgeable person at the collection site. If you have internet access, there are a multitude of safety information sources if you know the chemical composition of your specimen. *Google* can certainly be your friend in this search. The MSDS, noted above, is a fine information source even though designed for industrial use of chemicals.

So, what did I do with my colorful, but hazardous specimen? It's clearly marked as to the arsenic content. Handlers, including myself, will use non-cloth gloves or wash hands thoroughly after admiring the crystals, especially prior to eating. Younger children may look, but not touch. And from this point on, this writer knows what is being added to his collection!

From the May 2009 Issue of the Rockhounder.

Collect a rock, lose your car

Ominous forfeiture provisions in new bill restricting use of federal land

WASHINGTON – A land management bill that swept through the U.S. Senate last month and is headed for a House vote this week punishes rock collectors and paleontologists with arrest and expropriation of their [cars](#) and other equipment for even unknowingly disturbing fossils on public land, say critics. In the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, a "forfeiture" provision would let the government confiscate "all vehicles and equipment of any person" who digs up or removes a rock or a [bone](#) from federal land that meets the bill's broad definition of "paleontological resource," says a [report by Jon Berlau of the Competitive Enterprise Institute](#).

"The seizures could take place even before a person and even if the person didn't know they were taking or digging up a 'paleontological resource,'" writes Berlau. "And the bill specifically allows the 'transfer of seized resources' to 'federal or non-federal' institutions, giving the government and some private actors great incentive to egg on the takings."

Tracie Bennett, president of the Association of Applied Paleontological Sciences, is protesting the bill's vague language and severe penalties.

"We can visualize now a group of students unknowingly crossing over an invisible line and ending up handcuffed and prosecuted," she wrote to members of Congress.

Subtitle D of the bill called the "Paleontological Resources Preservation Act" would make it illegal to "excavate, remove, damage, or otherwise alter or deface or attempt to excavate, remove, damage, or otherwise alter or deface any paleontological resources located on Federal land" without special permission from the government.

"Paleontological resource" is defined in the bill as "any fossilized remains, traces, or imprints of organisms, preserved in or on the earth's crust, that are of paleontological interest and that provide information about the history of life on earth." Penalties for violations include up to five years in jail.

Berlau believes picking up rocks could be interpreted as a violation of the law since most would fit the broad definition under the law.

The forfeiture provision is effective before a trial and conviction, making the defendant guilty until proven innocent, Berlau suggests.

Berlau believes the House will take up a vote on the bill this week. He is urging Americans to contact representatives before the bill, known both as S. 22 and the "Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009" is approved, as expected, and heads to the White House for President Obama's signature.

From March 09 Rock Talk

SAFETY ARE YOU READY FOR TROUBLE?

By Mel Albright, AFMS Safety Chair May 1999

Most of us cruise through life expecting no major health problems and getting none. But, fate has a way of surprising us. Accidents happen, strokes come, heart attacks come, sudden changes happen, snakes bite. And then we go or are taken to an emergency room to get help. When you get there, are you ready? Ready? How? Well, there are some things you should carry at all times. Otherwise, the emergency treatment may hurt you rather than help. What should you carry?

1. A list of all the medicines you take. This should include everything. Your regular prescriptions, of course are part. List the medicine, it's strength, and the frequency you take it. Over the counter stuff should be listed, too. What vitamins do you take? What herbals? Anything you take regularly should be listed - name, strength and frequency. Then there is the occasional stuff.

Over the counter pain killers, cold medicines, cough medicines, allergy pills, etc. should all be listed.

2. A short health summary. List whatever problem you might have. Sinus, heart, diabetes, allergies, asthma - whatever. Remember, you may not be in shape to tell the doctors.

3. A list of who to contact if you are taken ill or hurt. Some hospitals either cannot or are reluctant to treat you without your family being aware of what's going on. Names, addresses, phone numbers, and relationships should be listed.

4. Your identification. Frequently, joggers and the like go out without identification. When they are stricken, no one knows who they are or who to tell.

5. And, of course, your health insurance information. Surprise health problems are a shock to all of us. We all like to pretend they won't happen to us. But they might! Don't make them worse by not being prepared. And don't bet that you can remember all of the above information while worrying about your health.

(Ed. Note: Truer words have never been spoken. I have had to take Sallie to the Hospital a couple times this year. Being the idiot that I am, I never carried her pills list with us and was always asked for it, especially since she was not admitted to one of our Health Plan Hospitals.)

Article is from the March 2009 Rockhounder

Amethyst:

Amethyst's top grade, (monetarily) is a deep purple and has no flaws or inclusions in it. It can be mauve or violet and is a form of the mineral quartz. When heated to 550-560 degrees C. amethysts turn dark yellow or reddish-brown and are called citrines. They are more richly colored and more expensive

than natural citrines. The color will also fade if left in the sun too long. Split Personality It is possible for some specimens of quartz to be different colors in different areas.

Amethyst and citrine are varieties of quartz which can both occur in the same stone. Such stones are sometimes called ametrines, but we think they could equally well be called citrysts or citrethysts.

What's in a Name? Amethyst gets its name from a Greek word amethystos meaning "not drunken", as it was believed to protect against intoxication by alcohol. (Yet, one source says, if it is to protect one from the effects of wine, it needs to be held under the tongue while drinking. You need to hold your face just right, for it to work!)

Beautifully Colored Gemstone Amethyst is one of the most beautiful of the colored gemstones, particularly in its better qualities. The most important attribute should be an attractive color, but varies according to individual taste. The rich deep violet color is generally the favorite and most expensive, but a stone of medium color intensity, with plenty of sparkle, can also be very attractive.

Many of the amethysts for sale in stores are only in low to medium quality, being either pale or quite included, and as a result are not particularly attractive.

Synthetics It's believed the 70% of amethysts on the world market are now synthetic. This has only been discovered in the last few years. The hardness of real amethyst is 7, and appears on the Moh scale as quartz. Many of the low cost Amethysts are of high quality, and are deeply colored and can be found in inexpensive jewelry. This is often due to the cost of testing the stone being higher than the cost of even the natural stone, so it is not often performed.

Therefore, be aware of a cheap amethyst, what looks like a perfect stone.

References: Website:
<<http://www.24carat.co.uk/a2z.html>> (Gemstone Information) and Tim McCreights (1991) *The Complete Metalsmith: An Illustrated Handbook*. via The Surrey Rockhounder Via the RockVein Winnipeg Rock and Mineral Club April 2004 and February 2009 Rockhounder

Next Meeting is May 19th at the McCoart bldg.

