


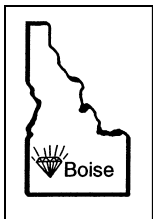
# Grindings

**Idaho Gem Club, Inc.**

P.O. Box 8443  Boise, Idaho 83707-2443

**VOL 72 NO 8**

**August 2012**



## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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863-9336

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362-3941

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283-8891

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853-6710



## **SECRETARY**

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**Kathy Griffin**  
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**CLUB WEB SITE**  
www.idahogemclub.com

## President's Message

The dog days of summer are here, along with all the fires and record-breaking heat. The garden is looking great and the chickens are getting bigger...oh yeah... I'm getting married in November!

I would like to thank all of you who helped make our July picnic a great success. I would also like to thank those of you who generously donated rocks and other items for the auction. I am already looking forward to this month's picnic and auction. I would like to remind our new members that this is a great way to build your own collections. Food was fantastic, so remember to bring your favorite dish and table service. The Club will again provide the drinks and ice cream.

The August meeting will be just like the meeting in July same location, at the Old Timer's Shelter in Ann Morrison Park at 6:30 pm. The Old Timer's Shelter is off 9th Street and Royal Blvd. See you there and hope the weather cools off some.

Our next field trip will be garnet digging at the Emerald Creek garnet area. This will be a wonderful trip and really looking forward to getting out of town. Ideas of what to bring while at the dig site:

- Rubber boots, or old tennis shoes
- Drinking water
- Snacks or lunch
- Change of clothes
- Container for garnets
- Screen box for washing gravel and shovel
- Rental tools are available
- Label all your own equipment

We will be camping in the Emerald Creek campground and we will be meeting in the parking lot at the dig location at 9:00 a.m. The dig site is closed on Wednesday and Thursday. Open 9-5; the cost is \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children.

There will also be another field trip this month to the red egg claim. You will find details inside. Happy digging!

*Brent Stewart*  
*President*



# **MINUTES OF THE IDAHO GEM CLUB GENERAL MEETING**

**July 17, 2012**

President Brent Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:36pm.

A prayer over the meal was led by Jason Madsen.

Kids door prizes---- 7 winners were drawn.

Adult door prizes--- 23 winners were drawn.

Building Fund drawing-- 2 winners were chosen.

Secretary report-- mail was received and a new Rock and Gem magazine for the Library.

There were no new members or guests present. During dinner I (Melodee Worley) made an announcement to congratulate Brent on his recent engagement. We all wish him well.

Minutes were accepted as printed in the "Grindings" by Phil Neuhoff and seconded by Ed Moser.

Treasurers report--- Kathy spoke of moneys from our recent auction and blacklight sales, she also of balances and disbursements from the club funds.

Federation report--- Charles spoke of the 2013 NFMS Annual Meeting, to be held on August 16-18, in Butte, Mt.

Field trip report---- this Saturday's trip to Reynolds Creek will be cancelled due to it being a Red Flag area for extreme fire danger. Phil suggested that we still meeting at Walter's Ferry and decide where to go at that time; the options are Graveyard Point or Queenstone.

Juniors report--- Ed spoke about encouraging juniors to keep in mind display cases for our Rock and Gem Show in February 2013. Brent added he had pictures from a recent CA show he was attending, with ideas for display cases.

Workshop report-- there will be a workshop on Thursday the 19th, at 6:30pm. Willa is needing instructors for the evening. Also donations of raw slabs

would be appreciated.

License Plate report--- our ad is in the Rock and Gem magazine and sales are still ongoing.

Don't forget we are having a "GREAT GRAB BAG SEW OFF" There will be 2 winners and 2 great prizes to be awarded at our banquet in January. The prizes will be available at our September General meeting for everyone to see.

There was no scheduled program but an auction of raw materials after our meal.

New Business--- Owyhee County collection areas are in danger of being closed to protect the "Sage Grouse". Members need to call Governor Otters office to voice their concern.

A motion was made by Sandy Blodgett, to request the Idaho Gem Club board members compose a letter to send on behalf of the Idaho Gem Club, regarding the "Sage Grouse" initiative. It was seconded by Ed Moser.

Based on the subject there was a discussion to amend this motion. It was for all members to call Governor Otter's office to voice their comments and concerns. The motion was amended by Christine Neuhoff and seconded by Clinton Chaney. Motion was accepted and passed.

After a brief cleanup of tables and leftovers, an auction began. The meeting was adjourned shortly after that.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Melodee Worley  
Secretary*

**No Workshop  
August or  
September!**



**MINUTES OF THE IDAHO GEM CLUB  
Board Meeting  
August 7, 2012**

President Brent Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:33pm.

Board Members present--- Willa Renken, Ed Moser, Phil Worley, Rick Corbett, Phil Neuhoﬀ, and Jim Clinton.

Officers present--- Melodee Worley and Charles McCreath.

Guests present-- Shirley McCreath.

Motion to accept minutes as printed in the "Grindings" was made by Willa Renken and seconded by Rick Corbett.

Treasurer's report--- Kathy was excused for the evening, but sent Willa a report about balances and disbursements.

Secretary's report--- several bills were received, bank statements, ID plate sales information and BLM information.

Federation report--- Charles spoke of the newest Northwest Newsletter.

Field trip report--- there were a few people to arrive at Walter's Ferry for the recent fieldtrip. It was decided to go to Graveyard Point and several others went elsewhere. The next fieldtrip is planned for the "Red Egg claim". Brent also discussed the trip he's leading to Emerald Creek for Star Garnets.

This next General Meeting will be a picnic and auction at the "Old Timers" shelter in Ann Morrison Park, starting at 6:30pm. Be sure to bring a main dish or dessert to share with others and bring don't forget your own place setting. Drinks and ice cream will be provided for by the club.

No program is scheduled, but an auction of raw materials will be had.

Junior's report--- Ed reminded the juniors to bring their folders to the September General meeting.

Workshop report--- Willa said for the months of August and September there won't be any workshops due to their busy schedules, workshops will resume in October.

The Board would like to ask members, who might be traveling to any of the clubs claims, to notify any board member or officer if they witness claim jumpers that could  
(continued at top of next column)

unduly effect control of our claim specimens.

Just a reminder Membership Dues are increasing in October: families \$23.00, couples \$20.00, and singles \$17.00.

New memberships-- there was one new application. A motion to accept was made by Willa Renken and seconded by Ed Moser.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21pm.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Melodee Worley-- Secretary*

## Jewelry Tips

### INTRO TO FACETING

Ron Gibbs has a nice presentation on faceting that is particularly well illustrated. It's from a seminar he gave at the Michigan Geology and Gemological Society:

<http://theimage.com/faceting/>

### FREEFORM GEM CARVING

Have you ever wondered how to carve and polish a freeform gemstone? Hans Meevis, a jeweler from Saint Martin, has a nicely done tutorial on his work with a 10 ct Aqua. It's definitely worth a read. Enjoy!

<http://www.ganoksin.com/borisat/nenam/freeform-gem-carving.htm>

### RAISING A CABOCHON

When a cabochon sits too low in a bezel, the bezel hides a lot of the stone. Solution is to either sand down the bezel height or boost up the stone. Question is what do you use to elevate your cab ?

I was taught to use fine sawdust but now think that there's a better solution, especially for use in rings. I reason that rings will frequently get wet, which would cause the sawdust to swell in size and push the stone against the bezel. Then when the sawdust dries out, the stone would be a little loose. In any case, I now prefer pieces of plastic sheet to boost up my stones. Pieces are readily available from product packaging or from old credit cards. I just cut a piece to loosely fit the bezel and drop in the stone (with some dental floss) to check it's height. (continued on page 4)

## THE "SORTED CIRCLES OF SPITSBERGEN"

Some mysterious rings of stone found in a cold Norwegian landscape have long stood as evidence that nature does not always need human architects to pick up rocks and arrange them.



When large rocks and gravel are sorted by size and placed in rough circles six feet across, there is considerable interest in what forces combined to create such structures. A number of similar regions have been found around the world. At a test site at Spitsbergen, a Norwegian island well north of the Arctic circle, a University of Washington geologist now says he believes the problem has been solved since he has been able to observe a process of soil motion that seems strong enough to create the sorted circles. The geologist, Bernard Hallet, finds that an unusual motion of soil, fast enough for his instruments to detect, comes from a *repeated freezing and thawing cycle*. When a top layer of soil freezes, it expands, pulling large rocks upward. When it thaws, the rocks do not settle all the way back. Over successive seasons, an upward and outward rolling motion takes shape that resembles convection, a churning usually driven by a difference in temperature, as in boiling water. Dr. Hallet contends that the sorted circles do result from a form of convection, driven by differences not in temperature but in moisture. The soil churns just as fluids do, he theorizes, but over centuries rather than seconds.

Over the last decade Hallet and his students have studied the dynamics of patterned ground in western Spitsbergen. Through detailed field studies, including extensive instrumentation to document year-round activity (temperature, soil displacements, moisture, pore pressure, soil pressure, etc.), they are studying the dynamics of sorted circles. They have learned a lot about the thermal regime, heave/thaw characteristics and other dynamical aspects of very active sorted circles, including long-term circulatory motion of the soil.

Ref: Science Watch; 'How Nature May Draw Stone Circles,' 1/19/88 via PGGs Petrograph 7/12; Golden Spike News, 8/12



(BenchTips—continued from page 3)

## TIP FOR A TRANSPARENT CAB

When bezel setting a transparent cabochon in silver, I worry that the silver will tarnish under the stone and will destroy the brilliance of its color & pattern. So I take one extra step before setting the stone. I place a piece of thin silver Mylar plastic under the stone to act as a mirror that will never tarnish.

This Mylar is readily available in craft and gift wrap stores, or in a pinch from a party balloon supplier. You may want to experiment with using colored or patterned Mylar (i.e. diffraction pattern) under some stones.

Acknowledgement to be included with each publication:

More BenchTips by Brad Smith can be found at

[facebook.com/BenchTips](https://facebook.com/BenchTips) or

[groups.yahoo.com/group/BenchTips/](https://groups.yahoo.com/group/BenchTips/)

## ELEVEN WAYS TO BECOME A FOSSIL

**Freezing** – This rare creature has suffered a minimum of change. His arteries may still contain dried blood, his stomach undigested food. Most common is the Ice Age mammoth of Siberia and Alaska.

**Drying or Desiccation** – If these organisms were thoroughly dried, they can be of high quality. Best know are camels and sloth found in our Southwest caves.

**Wax and Asphalt** – Natural paraffin makes an excellent preservative, as proved by specimens found in Polish mines. The most famous asphalt fossils are still embedded in the La Brea Tar Pits in California.

**Simple Burial** – English bogs are famous for their buried forest. Sand dollars, sea urchins, and mollusks have been preserved by this method for up to 75 million years.

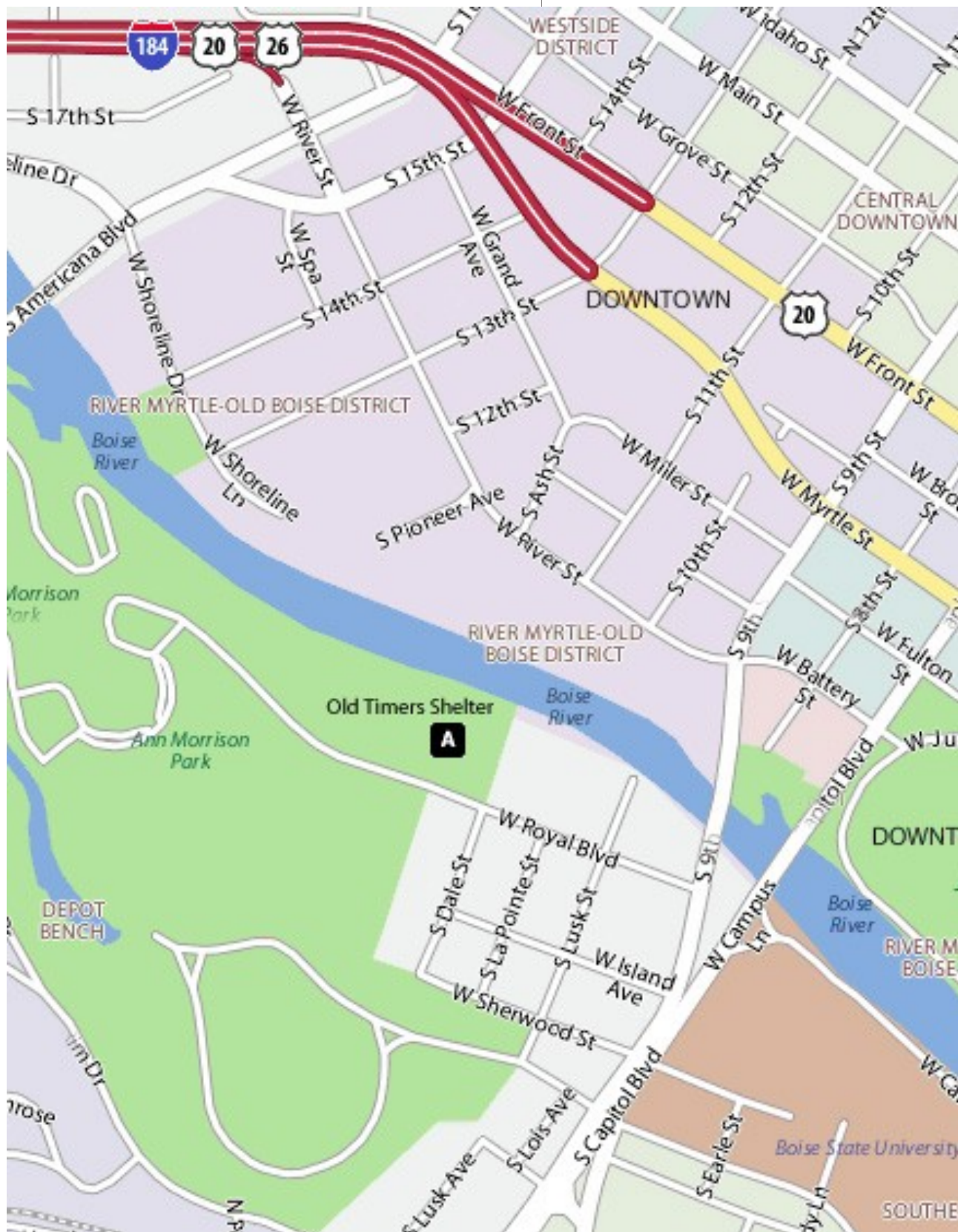
**Carbonization** – Incomplete decay of volatile substances leaves carbon behind, sometimes reducing organisms to paper thin layers of shiny black film that reveal much detail.

**Petrification** – Our common stony fossils get that way by permineralization, the replacement of the structure (continued on page 7)



## Map To Picnic

The July and August meetings are both picnics. They will be held at the Old Timers Shelter at the East end of Ann Morrison Park. If you drive from 9th Street turn right on Royal Blvd. and shortly after entering the park turn into the parking lot on your right and you will see the shelter next to the River. If driving from the south turn left on Ann Morrison drive then turn right on Lusk St then left on Royal Blvd. and go to the parking lot. The picnic begins at 6:30 p.m. and is a potluck. Bring your favorite dish, plates, and silverware. The club will provide soft drinks and ice cream.



**HAPPY****BIRTHDAY****AUGUST**

8/1 David Alley  
 8/1 Cody Jackson  
 8/6 Michael Gartman  
 8/6 Craig Kaumans  
 8/7 Gene Thompson  
 8/8 Charles Peterson  
 8/10 Dan Conley  
 8/10 Cindy Hicks  
 8/11 Daniel Asp  
 8/11 Corey Glick  
 8/16 Carla Arnold  
 8/16 David Snyder  
 8/17 Chris Mangrum  
 8/17 Gabriel Miles  
 8/19 Salma Gomm  
 8/22 Debbie Baldwin  
 8/22 Betty Hare  
 8/23 Chester Carpenter  
 8/24 Fred Hodges  
 8/24 Walt Woodall  
 8/26 Deana Ashton  
 8/26 Nora Kreitzer  
 8/27 Miers Johnson  
 8/27 Christine Neuhoff  
 8/27 Linda Phillips  
 8/28 Mettie Clay  
 8/28 Misty Parker  
 8/28 Carol Da Silva  
 8/30 Erick Davies

**August Birthstones**

Faceted – Peridot  
 Cabochon — Jade or  
 Sardonyx

**SEPTEMBER**

9/2 David Davies  
 9/3 Donald Clark  
 9/4 Roy Bethel  
 9/5 Steve Hetherington  
 9/7 Matthew Beatty  
 9/7 Gavyn Coates  
 9/7 Mike Doramus  
 9/11 Sharon Surrarrer  
 9/12 Barb Carey  
 9/12 Myrtle Trevithick  
 9/12 Sue Witschen  
 9/15 Ronald Mummey  
 9/15 Celeste Jackson  
 9/16 Dana Robinson  
 9/16 Robin Solt  
 9/16 Aaron Wanner Jr  
 9/18 John Stillinger  
 9/20 Annalies Clark  
 9/20 Ray Harshman  
 9/20 Clarence Trebilcock  
 9/22 Carrie Kinnaird  
 9/23 Terry L Dolton  
 9/24 Melodee Worley  
 9/27 Delorese Dewayne  
 9/28 Annalies Clark  
 9/30 Jessica Wilson

**September Birthstones**

Faceted - Sapphire  
 Cabochon - Lapis Lazuli

**Dates To Remember****GENERAL MEETING**

3rd. Tuesday of every month

August 21, 2012

Old Timers Shelter

Ann Morrison Park

Royal Blvd.

Picnic Starts at 6:30 pm

**BOARD MEETING:**

1st. Tuesday of every month

September 4, 2012

Church of the Brethren

2823 N. Cole Road, Boise, Idaho

Meeting Starts at 7:30 p.m.

**August****Refreshment Committee**

Chair: Mike Jones & Laura Lindsay

Penny Dudley

Dana Robinson

Valerie Lesur

**REFRESHMENT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES**

1. Have tables covered with paper obtained from Statesman and ready by 6:00 p.m.

2. Bring door prizes

3. Order ice cream and arrange for pickup.

4. Serve ice cream

When picnic is finished, clear all paper from tables and deposit all litter and debris in trash containers

**Potluck Dinner**

Ice cream and sodas provided

Bring your own plates and silverware

**September****Refreshment Committee**

Chair: Pat Hobbs

Barb Carey

Christie Clinton

NFMS—Newsletter available at:

<http://www.amfed.org/nfms/nwnews/nw0812.pdf>

AFMS—Newsletter same as last months:

<http://amfed.org/news/default.htm>

**Save Stamps For Cancer Research**

Cut at least 1/4 inch margin around the stamps. You can turn them into Chuck McCreath at our next meeting. **THANK YOU!**

(Fossils — continued from page 4)

by dissolved minerals, or secondary replacement, such as when lime fossils are dissolved and replaced by silica.

**Molds and Casts** – Natural molds in sediment remain after organisms decay. Sandstone beds reveal molds of shells and trees, and the finest molds are Northern European amber, which has perfectly preserved the forms of insects.

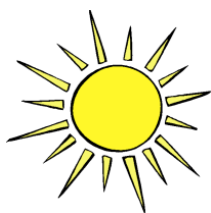
**Imprints** – Sandstone, shale and tuff reveal external molds of very thin objects such as leaves. Best know of these are the Illinois Coal Age plant imprints.

**Tracks, Trails, Burrows** – Dinosaur prints are the most famous of these, but Nebraska's "Devil's Corkscrew" once housed a beaver who dug an eight foot spiral hole.

**Castings and Coprolites** – Ancient worms swallowed sand to help digest small organisms. They regurgitated these castings. Coprolite is a polite word for petrified dung.

**Gastroliths** – Many ancient reptiles ground their food with these stones (as do our modern fowl). The stones are rounded, smooth, and even polished at times. Known as Gizzard Stones.

Deming Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.  
Rock Chips, August 2011  
Via Pick Hammer News, April 2012  
Golden Spike News 8/12



### Sunshine Lady or Gent

The Idaho Gem Club is in need of a Sunshine person!

This important position includes, but not limited to sending some cheer to club members that are ill, in the hospital, have had a death in the family, or are just need some "cheering up".

Sending cheer means sending a card or flowers whenever appropriate, letting the Club Board of Directors and editor know when someone is in need of Sunshine or has received Sunshine.

It is everyone's responsibility to help out the Sunshine Person make this position function properly. Without each of us helping we won't know who is in need of Sunshine. Please see a club officer to volunteer!

Many Thanks to Arlene Bailey for the wonderful job she has done over the years as our Sunshine Lady!

### YESTER YEAR

October 1968

It was suggested that a book of maps be made up of all the places we go to hunt rocks and sell it for \$1.00 each.

We need to have competitive displays at the show, but it would be too late to have them at this one.

We will sell coffee donuts and punch to help raise enough money for a projector.

The January Banquet will be at the Chuck Wagon, on Vista. Bring envelopes with money in them for the Kathy Bridges Fund.

There was a very poor response to the map project and another plea was given for maps to the hunting areas.

It was decided to charge .50 cents for adult tickets to the show. Children under 15 to get in free.

A couple of rock hunting maps of Oregon was shown. The cost was .75 cents for one or .50 cents for lots of 100. It was decided to purchase 125 maps.

Advertising in the media was too expensive so we would use public announcements and hand bills.

*In Loving Memory  
Patsy Bethel—Historian*

**Two links for additional newsletters we receive as members of the rock club.**

[http://www.amfed.org/afms\\_news.htm](http://www.amfed.org/afms_news.htm)

<http://www.amfed.org/nfms/>



**Dust In The Wind**  
**By Chuck Sonner**  
**Safety Chairman**

*Dust in the Wind* was a song recorded by the group **KANSAS** in 1977. *What does that have to do with rockhounding? Good question.*

The first answer will be a personal experience. In the early 1990's I volunteered for a church fundraiser to load hay onto trucks and off load into barns. The first barn we delivered to had old hay and mold on the floor. I can't believe I offered to scrap and sweep. It did not take long for something to happen. I had my first and only allergic reaction. I could not breathe. For years, my wife used inhalers for breathing problems. I did not fully understand what she was going through until that moment.

Dust in the wind can bring unintended consequences. Central California, northwest of Coalinga, has road closures due to asbestos fibers in and on some county roads. Bakersfield California has an area known for *valley fever*. I collected shark teeth there in the 1950's. Arizona also has locations known for *valley fever*.

Dick Parks sent me an article on erionite, a form of zeolite. This article said erionite causes mesothelioma. There are a number of locations in the western United States that contain this mineral.

Check [fairwarning.org](http://fairwarning.org) for the complete article. What should we do? Maybe we should carry dust masks in our rockhounding kit. At a minimum, awareness of our collecting sites is a must. Remember, *Dust in the Wind*.

THE GRINDINGS

is the monthly newsletter of the Idaho Gem Club, Inc., associated with the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Permission to copy is freely granted when proper credit is given to both the publication and the author. Articles without bylines are written by the Editor or President.

CHECK OUT THE CLUB WEBSITE!

[www.idahogemclub.com](http://www.idahogemclub.com)

**2012 Idaho Gem Club Scholarship Forms Now Available!**

The 2012 scholarship application form and instructions are now posted on the club website

(<http://www.idahogemclub.com>).

Deadline for applications is September 30, 2012. Please encourage any local earth science majors you know to apply!

**Rockhound "CODE OF ETHICS"**

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without permission from the owner.

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.

I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind such as fences, signs, buildings, etc.

I will leave all gates as found.

I will build fires only in designated or safe places and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.

I will discard no burning material - matches, cigarettes, etc.

I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.

I will not contaminate wells, creeks, or other water supplies.

I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.

I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.

I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.

I will report to my club or Federation officer, Bureau of Land Management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.

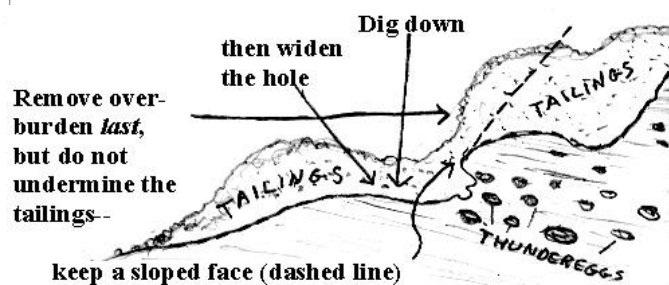
I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.

I will observe the "Golden Rule", I will use Good Outdoor Manners and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public Image of Rockhounds everywhere.



## How to Dig lithophysae: - Thundereggs

In known deposits with large, old holes, find the largest one and plan to spend a day or two dig-



ging an area about 4x6 feet wide with a shovel *straight down*. When the bottom of your hole is clean to virgin ground, the character of the deposit can be "read."

For example, the bands of strata can reveal a direction to dig. Likewise, sockets from which the last nodules were removed can also often indicate a

good direction in which to dig.

If you are serious about mining lithophysae, you will need a wheelbarrow and more

time-- so that you can dig an entrance from a low place, and make a level ramp for removing old tailings and enlarging the hole. A sheet of "flashing" sheet metal can be purchased from any building supply store. A piece about 3x4 feet, placed at the bottom of the leveled hole for tailings to fall on, makes shoveling very easy. As

you dig the eggs out, the accumulating debris can be shoveled off the tin sheet into the wheelbarrow and hauled out.

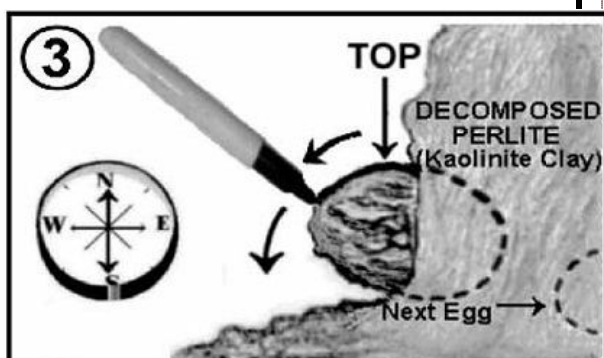
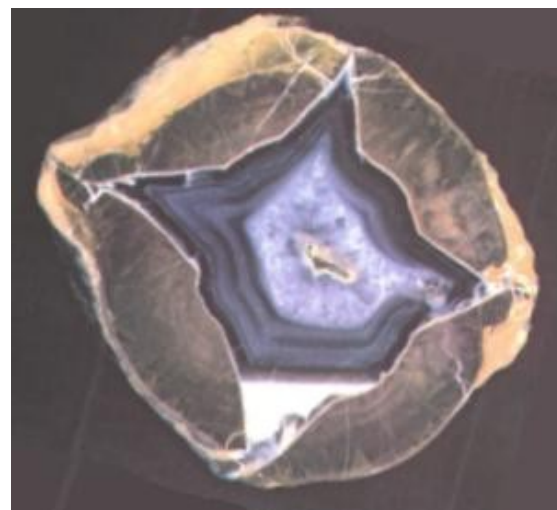
When the first lithophysae is found still embedded in the surrounding per-

lite, do not dig it all the way

out. Remove enough material from it so

as to be

able to mark it with a black felt marker from the top down the side: This will enable you to determine the best cutting orientation for sawing all the eggs you may find.

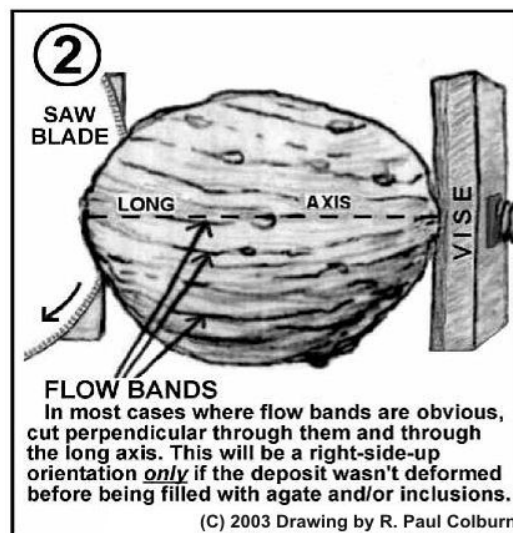


Whenever in doubt, use a felt tip marker and mark the nodule before removing it from *in-situ*. Mark it from the top down the side facing you. Use a compass and write down the direction of the mark, then use the compass to mark all other nodules in the same direction. A correct cutting orientation can then be found by making adjustments away from that mark for all the rest.

(C) 2003 Drawing by R. Paul Colburn

The most common mistake in digging lithophysae is made by those who dig the sides of their holes down and expect to have a sack-full before dinner. This is why so many deposits are rumored to be "dug out" when, for the persistent,

industrious soul, a treasure likely awaits. <http://>



(C) 2003 Drawing by R. Paul Colburn

[www.zianet.com/geodekid/howtodig.htm](http://www.zianet.com/geodekid/howtodig.htm)  
(continued on page 11)

### Idaho Gem Club Field Trip Report

Our field trip to Reynolds Creek was canceled due to fire dangers. We had five folks show up, three went to Silver City and two went to Graveyard Point. Our next trip is scheduled for Succor Creek for Red Thundereggs on August 25, 2012.

We will meet at the ION Station south of Marsing on hwy 55 at 8:00 a.m.; leave at 8:30 a.m. Brent Stewart will also be leading folks to Emerald Creek for star garnets the same weekend.

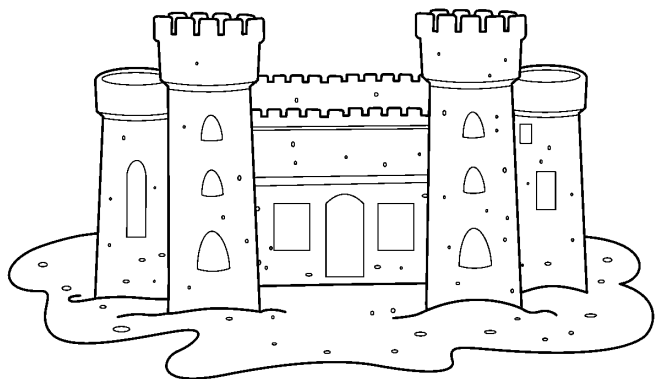
Brent will be going up on Friday August 24th and staying later than Sunday the 26th if anyone wants to collect during the week; see Brent's "Presidents Message" for more info.

*Happy Hounding*

*Phillip Worley - Field Trip Coordinator*

### THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR THE CLUB THIS YEAR

1. Call someone you haven't seen at meetings lately
2. Volunteer to present a program.
3. Send your editor some news.
4. Come to each meeting and bring a guest, and/or a member who cannot drive.
5. Come to the meeting ready to help others learn and allow others to listen.



### Federation & Other Club News More Dates to Remember

#### Other Clubs Field Trips/Shows

Owyhee Gem & Mineral Society  
Aug 18—Rome, Oregon

Magic Valley Gem Club  
Aug 25-26 Challis,  
Call DeVone Bates—837-4137

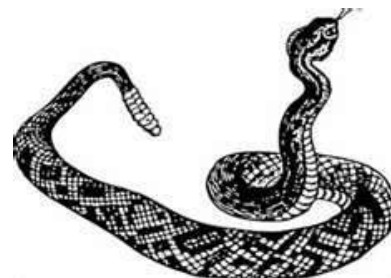
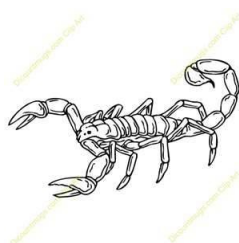
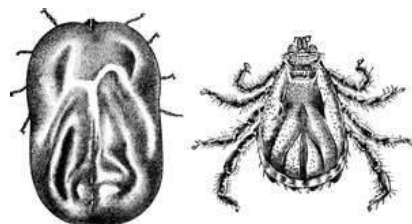
Sept 8—9 Arco-Mackay  
Call DeVone Bates—837-4137

NORTHWEST ROCKHOUND RETREAT  
September 3rd thru 9th, 2012  
<http://www.amfed.org/nfms/nwnews/May%202012.pdf>

Eureka Rock & Gem Club Annual Show  
Oct 6—9 a.m. til 4 p.m.  
Senior Citizen Center—  
1000 N 3rd E; Mountain Home, ID  
Contact: Roger Beck 208-587-9374  
[westbeck@earthlink.net](mailto:westbeck@earthlink.net)

### Watch out for these critters when you are rockhounding!

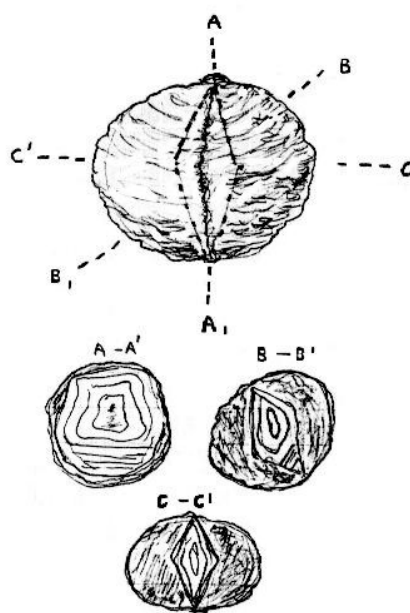
Female & male tick



## How to Determine Proper Orientation for Successful Cutting of Lithophysae:

Most nodules and geodes of any species have features on their surfaces that an experienced lapidary artisan can identify by sight for cutting so as to capture all of the best features within. For example, many thundereggs (lithophysae) have lines known as *flow bands* on their exteriors and, unless a deposit has been *deformed* prior to filling, a cut made *perpendicular to the flow banding and through the long axis* (for the widest face) will yield a cut face showing the sequences of agate, waterline "floors," and stalactite deposition "right side up."

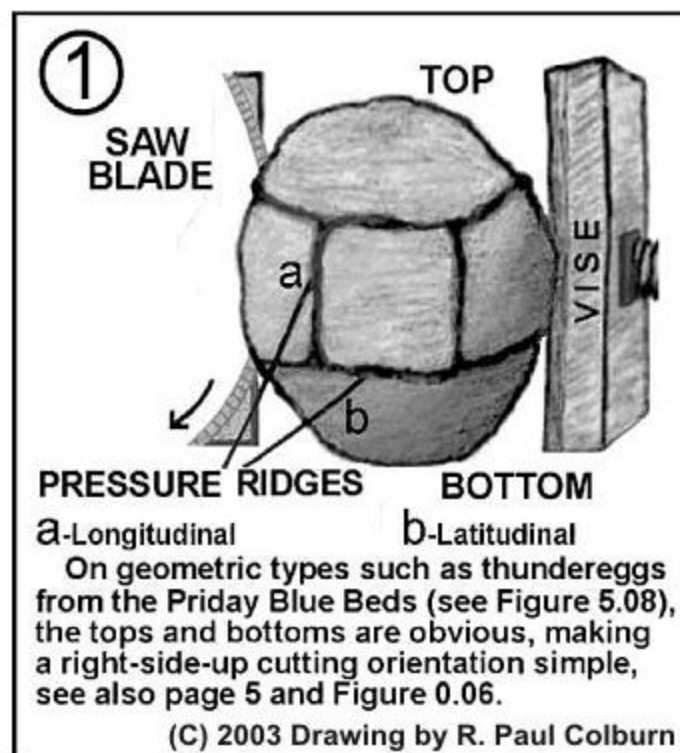
If a formation has been tilted by a *diastrophic event*, subsequent filling will be at odds with both the flow bands and the long axis-- which can make orientation difficult, but not impossible.



**Biconoid thundereggs**-- eggs with a biconic core present a special problem. Most of these eggs will yield a face with a high degree of matrix if not cut properly. However, the *pressure ridges* left behind when a spherulite degases into a lithophysa are the key. *Cut along the pressure ridge in a biconoid* to achieve a larger agate face. Pressure ridges are a key to cutting orientation in any egg in which they are found on its surface.

Many collectors speak of "lucky cuts." There are no such thing-- only a lack of knowledge about the structure of lithophysae.

In any case, a fool proof method can be used to determine a proper orientation for any eggs dug directly from the material in which they



form: While digging, when you "hit" one, carefully uncover enough of it to see the top and front, *without removing it from in situ*. Mark the top and draw a line towards you or a compass point with a broad black felt-tip marker. Record the compass point and mark every nodule the same way. After cutting just a few, an angle departing from that mark will be found which will expose the most interesting features, and with care, the value and beauty of your nodules will be increased.

More detailed information can be found in my forthcoming book, [The Formation of Thundereggs](#):

<http://www.zianet.com/geodekid/CDinfo.html>

**No Workshop  
August or  
September!**



**The purpose of the Idaho Gem Club is to promote mutual, educational and scientific interests and benefits of its members in mineralogy, geology, gemology, the art of lapidary and kindred arts and sciences.**

**Dues:**

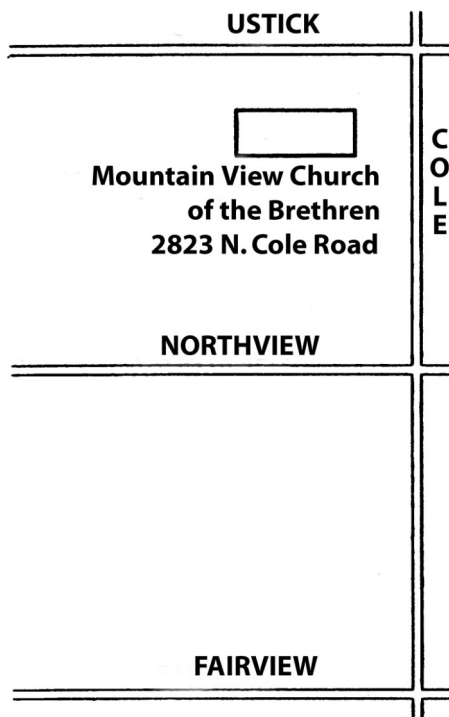
.....\$12.00 per person  
 .....\$15.00 per couple  
 .....\$17.50 per family

**Subscription:**

.....\$10.00 per year

**General Meeting:**

.....3rd. Tuesday of each  
 .....Month at 7:30 p.m.



**The Whangdoodle Bird**  
 (Often seen on field trips)



**Idaho Gem Club, Inc.**

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