FEBRUARY 2018

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Palomar Gem and Mineral Club Newsletter

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Letter from the President

Programs are an important part of our club. Providing our members with educational programs that are informative and pertinent to what you are interested in or want to learn about keeps our members coming to the meeting. Michele Shepard has been doing an amazing job for several years with programs and I want to take a moment to thank her! She's always working on our next few programs and finding the right people to talk to our club.

If you have something you would like to learn about, or have someone who you think would be great to come talk to our club, I encourage you to reach out to Michele at one of the meetings or email her at programs@palomargem.org and give her some ideas. This is your club and we want everyone to take part in it and get the most out of it!

I also want to take a moment to thank all of those that bring snacks to the meetings. This helps keep our costs down and provides everyone with a little bit of refreshment and social time together. Thank you to Karla Knutson who has taken over the organizing of these volunteers from Chris Toft who has organized it for so many years. Thank you both!

Jef Wright – President 2018

Inside This Issue

March's Program

March 21, 2018 | 7:00 pm

Dittus Hall | Redwood Terrace | 710 West 13th Ave, Escondido

Happy Birthday PGMC!

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday March 21, 2018 at the Redwood Terrace location. It will be our annual birthday celebration potluck dinner. The Palomar Gem and Mineral Club will be 64 years old!

We would love to have everyone show up. Bring a potluck meal (non-dessert)for you and about 6-8 others. Also bring your own place setting as minimal place settings will be available for those who forget.

We will also have an auction of some fine lots of rocks, gems and fossils for our club members to bid on throughout the night. We look forward to seeing you there!

Workshops

The Lapidary and Silversmith Workshops are held weekly. There is a shop fee of $7 per person to attend these workshops.

Cabochon and Lapidary Class & Open Workshop

Learn to cut and polish a rock into a beautiful stone suitable for wire wrapping or fabricating in metal. A fantastic assortment of material is available for purchase on site. The workshop is also open for general use. No prior registration needed.

Tuesday: 6:30pm – 9:30pm

Wednesday: 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Thursday: 2:00pm – 5:00 pm

Silversmith Workshop

This workshop is open to all students who have had metal smithing instruction or experience and/or have instructor approval. If you have attended an introductory class, you can continue to improve your skills at this weekly workshop.

Thursday: 6:00pm – 9:00pm

Faceting Workshops

Contact Bob Johnson for registration
email: Facetguru@palomargem.org
phone: 760-809-0152

Introduction to Faceting –

An informative introduction and hands-on experience in the world of gem cutting. Learn how to create a gem out of a piece of rough, during a weekend class. No machine required. Return students welcome with or without their own machine. Each class can accommodate 3 new students without machines and 3 returning students with their own machines.

Sat., Mar. 17 & Sun., Mar. 18– 9:00am – 5:00pm

$80 for new students $70 for returning students

Faceting Continuation Class

This is a class for continuing students who have completed the Introductory Class and is held once per month, from 9 to 5 on the Saturday following the general meeting.

January Workshop: Sat., Mar. 24 9:00am – 5:00pm

$35 for all students

You must be a member of the PGMC in order to partake in any of the workshops or classes provided by Palomar Gem and Mineral Club.

Lapidary Workshop
2120 W. Mission
Suite S
Escondido, CA

Special Classes

Introduction to Silversmithing

This is a 10-hour introductory silversmith class. The students will learn to develop their designs, use a jeweler's saw to cut out a pattern, solder a bezel to a backing and add a bale or a ring shank, creating a wearable piece of jewelry. Intermediate students can work on a project of their choosing with instructor approval. At the completion of this introduction the student can continue learning in the Thursday night workshop.

Please bring a cabochon to set in silver or let us know if you need one ahead of time!

Saturday April 28 and Sunday April 29, 2018 ***Note Date Change!***

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Cost is $60 plus materials.

Register by contacting Diane Hall

phone: 760-741-0433 and leave a message

email: silversmithing@palomargem.org (preferred method)

Next class will be held June 2 & 3

San Diego County Fair

Every year our members enter the San Diego County Fair.

We're looking forward to another exceptional year at the 2018 Fair!

- Mineral of the year is Fluorite!
- Fossil of the Year: Fossil Fruits, Leaves & Cones
- Fair theme for jewelry is "How sweet it is" – candy theme!

All the information you need as well as entry form information can be found here.

https://sdfair.com/downloads/2018/exhibits/entry/Gems-Minerals-Jewelry-Info.pdf

SCHEDULE

Entry Deadline:	April 29, 2018	**Entry Delivery**	May 26 & 27,2018 9am - 6pm
First day of Fair:	Fri, June 1, 4pm	**Exhibitor Appreciation:**	Wed, June 6, 6pm to 9pm
Last day of Fair:	Wed, July 4	**Exhibit pickup:**	Fri, July 6, 9am to 8pm

Online entry: sdiego.fairmanager.com

Old Geologists Tale

By Gene Ciancanelli

INCIDENTS WITH WILDLIFE (PART 1)

One of a geologist's perks is the opportunity to work in a variety of natural habitats and observe wildlife without the disturbances and disruption of people. I usually work alone in remote areas where there is the opportunity to observe wildlife. There is a general belief that wild animals are always alert and aware of their surroundings, but on occasion, I have had encounters with animals that were not alert. Perhaps they were daydreaming or recognized I was not a threat or a meal. Whatever the answer, here are a few animal encounters.

I'm exploring for coking coal in a rugged road-less area of Colorado consisting of dense brush thickets, forest, and meadowlands. The work includes surveying and building access roads for the drilling rigs. It's lunchtime and I'm hot and exhausted from fighting through dense brush trying to find a future road route with a grade the drilling equipment can climb. There is no nice place for lunch; so I sit down in the brush to eat a roast beef sandwich. A few bites of the sandwich and an unexpected noise causes me to sit still. A black bear walks by passing so close that I could easily reach out and pet him. Then I notice I'm sitting alongside a narrow game trail. The bear doesn't smell or notice either the sandwich or a sweaty geologist. I breathe a sigh of relief as the Mr. Bear continues down the trail. A few minutes later there is another noise as Mr. Bear returns back up the mountain and again passes close enough to touch. He apparently isn't interested in potato chips either. Occasionally, animals behave differently than we suspect they should. Perhaps, like people, they have something on their mind, like a girl bear? It was that time of year.

On the same project, the drillers have left for a few days off. It's about 7 PM as I'm sitting on an overturned bucket next to the quiet rig and writing up the daily report. A noise signals a badger's approach. Badgers are intelligent, curious, and fierce animals with a wide-flat shaped appearance covered with long fur and loose skin, which causes a walking badger to appear to be wearing a hula skirt as his skin and fur shimmy and shake. Mr. Badger walks right up to look this person over and sniff his boots. He then walks around me in a circle several times and again sniffs. He wanders off and returns several times for another sniff. The badger can easily cause injury with his long claws and I can kill him with the geology pick. He doesn't seem to know what to make of this stranger, but since I'm not edible or a threat, the badger decides to go about the business of looking for his favorite food, prairie dogs, gophers, etc. In the badger's world, I'm just a stinking geologist too fat for one meal.

I'm evaluating the Klukwan ultra-mafic iron deposit, near the Tlinget Indian village of Klukwan, about 20 miles northwest of Haines, Alaska. For those of you, who are fans of the television show Gold Rush, this is close to the Big Nugget gold mine, which was owned by Parker Schnabel's late grandfather, John Schnabel. The new television show Gold Rush White Water is about 7 miles west of this area. I'm working alone surveying drill hole locations along the Chilkat River. It is early morning and I'm not paying attention strolling along, with a theodolite and stadia rod on my shoulder, through small trees and high brush along the river bottom. A moose is coming in the opposite direction and I guess he is also half asleep. Suddenly, we both walk around a large bush and almost bump into one another, such as can occur when you round the corner in a hallway and meet another person. Foul moose breath hits me in the face as I jump right and the moose jumps left to trot off. This is a lucky day, because moose kill more Alaskan people than do bears. I can testify from first hand experience that there isn't a mouthwash that can cure moose breath.

The next incident occurred on a hot summer day on a geothermal project in northern California. I'm mapping geology in steep terrain choked with impassable Manzanita brush that limits access to game trails and fire control roads. As lunchtime approaches, I'm eyeing for a place to sit and spot a large tree trunk lying across an old fire road. A fallen tree trunk is a comfortable lunch spot. Soon I notice a coyote casually walking toward me along the road. I sit still and wait until the coyote is 5 feet away and then shout BOO! The coyote jumps six feet in the air, turns around in mid-air, and is gone out of sight in two seconds. I'm the Road Runner outsmarting Wile E. Coyote in a Looney Toons cartoon.

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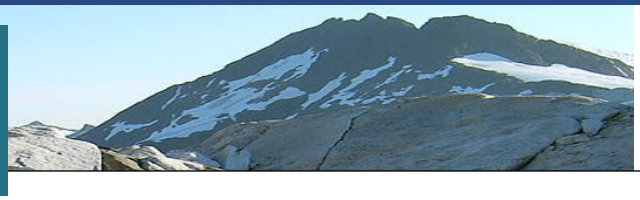
Old Geologists Tale *cont.*



Geologists get distracted too. I'm mapping the Glass Butte volcanic area in southeastern Oregon. Glass Butte is famous among rockhounds for variegated black and red obsidian. Sitting on an outcrop, I'm mulling over the morning's work and how it fit into the geology's context. Something moves between my feet; looking down, there sits a chipmunk eating crumbs falling off my sandwich. I stop eating and watch him consume every scrap. Then he looks up with an expression that conveys his thoughts. "Well are you going to just sit there or are you going to share the lunch?" I tear off some bread and he eats it. This goes on until he eats half the sandwich and walks off with his cheek pouches full. He didn't show any interest in the sardines I offered to share. I guess he wasn't a Norwegian chipmunk.

Later that day, I'm standing in a sand-covered ravine balancing a clipboard in the crook of one arm as I look through a stereoscope studying aerial photographs and sketching the geology. Completely occupied in thought, I'm oblivious to everything. Suddenly, an uneasy feeling causes the hair on the back of my neck to stand up. Looking up, I'm standing inside a herd of wild mustangs. The horses are slowly and silently walking by in the deep loose sand. Each horse, including the stallion, is keeping an eye on me. The stallion is facing directly toward me; prepared to attack as his mares pass on their way to a nearby waterhole. I snap this picture once the last mare passes.

Rattlesnakes are a concern for most people out hiking. Each day I probably walk close to numerous rattlesnakes and never notice them. Rattlesnakes have no more desire to bite people than we have to be bitten. I'm writing notes while sitting on a rock ledge just outside the entrance to an abandoned mine in southern Arizona. The miners had carefully cut this ledge to serve as a bench under a large Palo Verde tree. This was probably a pleasant shady place to eat lunch. I have an uneasy feeling as I'm writing the notes. Then, out the corner of my eye, I see a large rattlesnake coiled up on the same ledge and sitting about three feet away. That morning, a short stocky geologist broke the world's high jump record from a sitting position. Unfortunately, there was no one present to witness and confirm this remarkable feat.

On a cool morning, I'm hammering away trying to break a sample off a rock outcrop. Suddenly, I notice a rattlesnake is stretched out on the rock right where I'm hammering away. He is trying to warm up in the morning sunlight and never moves a muscle, as I'm banging on the rock, oblivious to his presence. Once I saw him, the necessity to collect that sample became unimportant.

Some places are more infested with rattlesnakes than others. Arizona's Vekol Mountain Range is one such place. I routinely run over several rattlers on a typical morning's drive into the mountains. One morning, I'm driving the Jeep without the doors on and spot a large rattler stretched across the narrow Jeep road. He's as big around as my leg with his head in the brush on the road's left side and his tail in the brush on the other side. I gun the engine with an adrenaline rush overriding common sense. I'm intent on killing and skinning a trophy rattler. Suddenly the intelligent part of my brain kicks in and I realize, "This is not a good idea, because, as the Jeep's front wheels pass over him, the snake could flip back and get me through the open door." At the last moment, I turn sharply off the road and nearly flip the Jeep. That snake almost got himself a trophy geologist.

The Tohono O'odham Indians at the Hilltop Mine Project have an ingenious rattlesnake sport. A man takes a long handle shovel and heats the metal shovel with a cigarette lighter. The warm shovel is slowly waved before a riled-up rattlesnake. The rattler strikes toward warmth and hits the metal shovel full force, breaking his fangs and knocking the snake senseless. The men then kill the snake for a mid-morning break of mescal and roasted rattlesnake. That's something you won't encounter in an office break room.

A funny rattlesnake incident occurred at an Arizona core-drilling rig. The driller is a Texan, who wears cowboy boots and Levi pants. On this project, the crew only works a day shift and the rig is shut down and deserted at night. During the night a rattlesnake crawled under the rig. The next morning, the rig is started up producing noise and banging metal, which surely stirred up the rattler. The driller is walking along the rig's side when the rattler strikes and hits his leg, just where the leather boot protects it. The rattler's fangs are stuck in the leather and Levi denim. The driller is running around the rig and screaming with the rattler caught on his pant leg wiggling back and forth buzzing his tail. As the driller begins a second circuit around the rig, he's shouting, "Get this damn thing off me!" The guys are laughing and one shouts, "Run faster Roy, he's a gaining on you!" Finally, the snake shook loose and was killed Texas style by lead poisoning.

Three of us geologists are clearing a survey line, near Bouse, Arizona, using axes and machetes to cut dense brush along a dry wash. I'm holding a machete, when suddenly a large rattlesnake buzzes alongside my right leg. Instantly, out of reflex and without thinking, I swing the machete down and cut the snake's head clean off. It is a pure Indiana Jones movie moment. Immediately, I realize this was a really dumb thing to do. I should have jumped aside. The other geologists saw this and one of them says, " It was really cool the way you cut off that snake's head instead of jumping away. It is the sort of thing you see people do in jungle movies, but not in real life." I pretend

Old Geologists Tale *cont.*

it is no big deal and I'm torn between telling them it was a stupid reaction or should I take the manly approach and act macho. I decide to play the macho role and it makes a better tale when later we are sitting at the local bar drinking beer.

I did have unnerving snake encounters. I was working in a dangerous area of remnant Huk guerrillas in the Philippines. One day, accompanied by armed local militia, we are moving through the dense jungle. The lead man is chopping a trail through the jungle and I'm right behind him. Everyone knows the second guy always gets bit. There are snakes of every stripe and color on the ground, in the brush, and above our heads in the trees. No one seems to be paying any attention to the snakes and I ask, "Are any of these snakes poisonous?" "Yup" "Which ones?" As he casually cuts one in half with a machete, he answers, "All of them."

I got one big sweat while mapping in the Aquarius Mountains in Arizona. I'm moving along the bottom of a cliff face walking through knee high grass, when suddenly a rattlesnake buzzes in front of my path. I immediately stop and another snake rattles in the grass to my left. Then a third one rattles and like a cobra lifts his head above the grass. Soon more snakes are buzzing and rearing their heads up. I've walked into a rattler nest. Carefully and slowly I retrace my steps. I wonder why I never finished mapping that canyon?

I'm to lead a fieldtrip at a geology and engineering conference in Tucson. The fieldtrip will be in the Tucson Mountains where I worked several decades earlier. Just two days before the fieldtrip, I'm laying out the route we will walk. Moving up a dry wash, rattlesnakes are buzzing in the brush and cactus on either side. I'm walking in the middle of the sandy wash with an eye on either side of the trail. Suddenly, a rattler buzzes directly in front of me and I instinctively jump backward as he strikes and his head passes between my legs missing by inches. I'm now concerned about leading 30 people on this trek, but decide to go ahead. At the beginning of the trip, I warn everyone about the snake danger and my recent close encounter. Naturally, we walk through the mountains all day and don't see or hear a single snake, which results in a lot of teasing from the participants.

There is little wildlife in Japan and many people seem to be uncomfortable, if not downright afraid of wildlife. While working for a large Japanese oil company training their younger geologists, we are driving down a rural road and encounter a very large snake in the road. Japan has no poisonous snakes and I ask the boys to stop the car so I can get a closer look. I get out of the car and the boys are hollering to get back inside then the car door's lock clicks as I'm walking away. I guess they figured Gene's a dead man. Then the snake will probably slither over to open the car door to eat them.

As many of you know, Gene Ciancanelli is a long-standing member of the PGMC. Gene had a long career as an exploration geologist searching for energy and mineral resources throughout North America and Asia. These Old Geologist's Tales are excerpts from a book Gene wrote for the Huntington Library's archive of The History and Development of the Western United States. That book documents the life of a geologist and his wife working in the west during the latter half of the 20th Century. We hope to include many of these tales in this newsletter for your entertainment and perhaps another perspective of how our hobby can become a lifetime career.

Board of Directors - 2018

Ever had an idea for the club and wanted to get it to the right people? Here is your opportunity. Here is our Board of Directors. We have given each of them their own palomargem.org email. Feel free to use it and send them your ideas!

PRESIDENT – Jef Wright – president@palomargem.org

VICE-PRESIDENT – Chris Toft – vp@palomargem.org

SECRETARY – Fred Floyd – secretary@palomargem.org

TREASURER – Toni Floyd – treasurer@palomargem.org

DIR. OF COMMUNICATIONS – Dawn Vickers – publicity@palomargem.org

SHOW CHAIRS – Archie Kuehn & Michele Shepard – PGMCshow@palomargem.org

PROGRAMS – Michele Shepard – programs@palomargem.org

MEMBERSHIP – John Raabe – membership@palomargem.org

Membership

Membership dues are now due. If you haven't already renewed your membership, now is the time! You can download the membership form from our website or from the Facebook members' page.

Website

Our new website is up and running. Please check it out at www.palomargem.org.

You will find calendar of events, past issues of newsletters as well as information regarding the club. This will updated on a timely basis as items come up and you can find the latest and greatest info at your fingertips!

PALOMAR GEM AND MINERAL CLUB

The Palomar Gem and Mineral Club, a non-profit corporation open to all adults and young people, was organized to promote the study of rocks, minerals, gems, fossils and related subjects, such purpose to be developed through regular meetings with educa-tional programs, field trips for the collection of geological specimens, and classes for teaching lapidary arts. The Palomar Gem and Mineral Club shares its knowledge of the earth sciences by sponsoring Gem and Mineral shows featuring exhibits, displays and demonstrations. The Club was founded March 20, 1954.

PGMC IS AFFILIATED WITH