Minutes of the 08/07/04 Conbined Board Meeting

Meeting was called to order by Pres. Stu Earnst at about 9:35 AM

Kathy Earnst gave the treasurer's report.

Wagonmaster's:
Ed Lehman was not present at the meeting so there was no Wagonmaster report.

Stu announced the Lake Wenatchee trip on Aug. 28th. Be sure to call to see if the trip is still on due to the FIRE SEASON. The trip is Sat. only. Bill Williams has extended an offer for people to camp at his place. He will lead a trip on Sunday to find porphyry near his place.

Old business:
Walker Valley Lease
The Walker Valley lease still needs to be reviewed and signed. DNR has issued a standard lease that contains many sections that do not apply to WSMC. In particular the clause stating the amount of insurance each car entering Walker Valley must carry does not apply.

It was recommended that a lease committee be formed to review the lease. Preferably with someone who has a legal background. Not signing the lease at this time does not preclude the use of Walker Valley by members.

Walker Valley Locks
The locks are being taken from the gate at Walker Valley. It was discussed whether to keep the combination locks or change to keyed locks. The questions is whether someone is intentionally cutting and discarding the locks, or if the locks are just not being put back on.

It was recommended that the combination locks be replaced for now with a chain permanently attached to the lock. This will help determine the nature of the lock disappearances and what action needs to be taken. It was recognized that keeping the combination locks makes it easier for members to have access to Walker Valley.

Printing Newsletters and Maps
Bob Pattie needs to order more color Wagonmaster maps. He has found a place that can do it for $2.00 less per map than WSMC was previously using. It would cost $4.00 per map. It was motioned, 2nd and passed that more maps be printed.

Bob Pattie also reported that it is less costly to have The Council Reporter printed by an outside vendor than to maintain a copier. All recipients of the Reporter are encouraged to receive their copy by email.

Miscellaneous News:
Vi Jones of the Skagit Rock club brought up the issue of the White Cloud Wilderness proposal and requested help from rockhounders.

About 3 million acres between the Sawtooth Wilderness and the Frank Church Wilderness are being considered to be designated as Wilderness area. The upper end of the Salmon River near Challis, which is a good rock hounding areas, would be included.

Everyone is encouraged to write letters to keep the area open for public use. You can contact the following for information or to send letters:

Challis Ranger District
HC-63 Box 1669
Challis, ID 83226
208-879-4100

BLM
Challis Field Office
HC-63 Box 1670
Challis, ID 83226-9304
208-879-6200
Email: Gail_O'Neill@blm.gov

Stu mentioned that the BLM is making new maps of rockhounding sites in Oregon. The Prineville office will be issuing it. The maps should be ready sometime in August. It will also include new sites in the local area.

Meeting adjourned,
submitted by Judy Ayres

A Little Bit of Mars on Earth

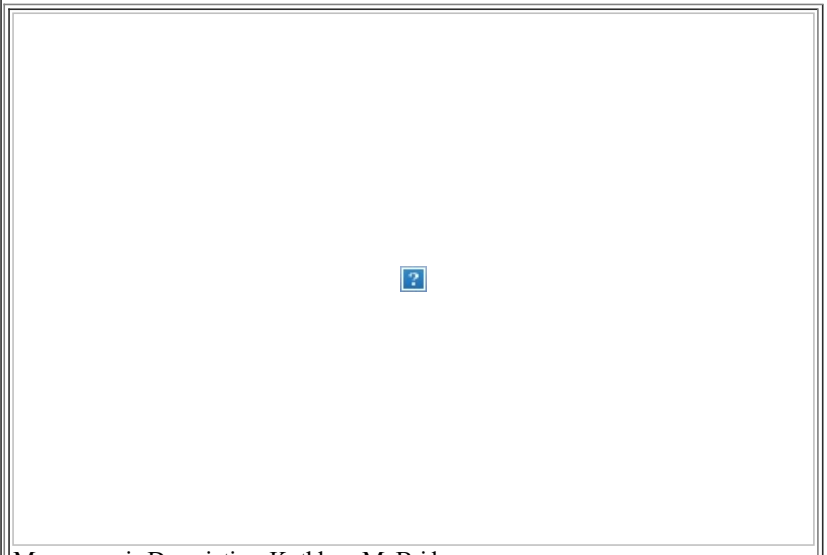
Ron Cowen

Sending rovers on a 500-million-kilometer journey to explore the Martian landscape isn't the only way to uncover the history of the Red Planet. Chunks of rock that have been chipped from Mars by ancient impacts and then pulled to Earth by our planet's gravity provide planetary scientists with rare and inexpensive opportunities to investigate the Red Planet's past. To date, researchers have studied about 24 Martian meteorites.

The latest addition to this exclusive club was uncovered on Dec. 15, 2003, on an ice field in the Transantarctic Mountains, about 750 kilometers from the South Pole. Designated MIL03346, the 715.2-gram black rock has the mineral composition, texture, and isotope content of rocks from Mars, say scientists at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C. Details of the find have been posted on a special online edition of the Antarctic Meteorite Newsletter (http://curator.jsc.nasa.gov/curator/antmet/amn/amn.htm).

The new specimen is the seventh known member of a group of Martian meteorites called the nakhlites, which scientists propose originated within thick lava flows that solidified on Mars some 1.3 billion years ago.

from August 7, 2004 Science News



Macroscopic Description: Kathleen McBride

60% of the exterior is covered with black "wrinkled" appearing fusion crust. The areas without fusion crust are a black crystalline material with vugs.

The binocular microscopic view of the exterior surface appears melted or fused together. The interior reveals a coarse grained, dark green to blackish crystalline matrix with a granular texture.

This nakhlite is unbrecciated and homogeneous with interlocking grains and minor rust.

Image and text from http://curator.jsc.nasa.gov/curator/antmet/amn/amn.htm

Teen T-Rex had Monster Growth Spurt

Towering Tyrannosaurus rex reached its colossal proportions due to a monster growth spurt in its teenage years, reveals a new study.

Once the world was stalked by giants, from the six-ton flesh-eating T. rex to Brachiosaurus, a lumbering vegetarian sauropod that weighed in at an impressive 88 tons. But 65 million years after the dinosaurs disappeared, relatively little is known about how they became so big.

Now, Gregory Erickson, a paleontologist at Florida State University in Tallahassee, US, has collected a large number of small, discarded T. rex bones sitting in museum drawers, and found the bones contain a treasure trove of well preserved growth rings inside. These cast-offs have allowed Erickson and his colleagues to chart out the first growth curve for T. rex.

The team shows that T. rex became a giant only in its teenage years, undergoing an exponential growth spurt for around four years during adolescence.

It therefore achieved its gigantic size not by growing for longer, as do modern mammals and lizards, but by growing dramatically faster. An adolescent T. rex would have gained about 2 kilograms a day between the ages of 14 and 18, before slowing down and settling into adulthood.

Live fast, die young
By using polarizing light microscopes to examine bone growth rings, the team was also able to age the skeletons of 20 different specimens, including the famous Sue, on display at the Field Museum in Chicago, US.

Sue it emerges, is not only the largest T. rex known, but also the oldest. But even she died at just 28. "T. rex lived fast and died young," says Erickson. "They were like the James Dean of dinosaurs." The youngest specimen " which had previously been labeled as a dwarf Tyrannosaurus " was only two years old.

"We really have a new quantitative tool that will open up new avenues of research, because now we can start asking questions about the biology of extinct creatures like we can for living ones," says Peter Makovicky, one of the team.

One such question is how did such dinosaurs move their gigantic bodies? Some answers were presented at the International Congress of Vertebrate Morphology, held in Florida, US, in August. For instance, John Hutchinson at the Royal Veterinary College in Hatfield, UK described how interactive software, which models a creature's mass, center of mass and inertia based on skeletal evidence, is revealing more about how T. rex walked.

Biologically impossible
Hutchinson has previously shown that T. rex's size would limit it to running at no more than 25 miles per hour. To run any faster, the dinosaur's skeleton would have to support a biologically impossible amount of muscle (New Scientist print edition, March 2002).

However, the weight limit on running fast only kicks in for animals over about one ton, which corresponds to a juvenile T. rex around 12 years old.

His new models, which have been validated using ostrich skeletons, which move in a similar way to T. rex, show that the dinosaur's posture was rather unsteady, hampered by a strong tendency for the head to pitch forward. However, inertia was a strong stabilizing force for large dinosaurs like T. rex.

from 11 August 04 NewScientist online edition

Fiver Optic Gems:
What are they?

by Bill Grimes

Fiber optics were developed as a result of someone studying a piece of the mineral ulexite. Also known as TV stone. It is a hard, brittle, fibrous stone which - when writing is placed underneath - will allow the image to appear on the surface of the stone. This led to the theory that if this type of fibrous material could be manufactured, it could be used in many different ways where image transmission is needed. Fiber optic cables were at first very slender and flexible, used in surgeries and in household decorations.

The manufacturing technology improved and soon manufacturers were spinning out miles of cable for a new application, data transmission lines. These lines can be up to two inches across. The cable consists of thousands of pairs of optic fibers. Each pair carries data for phone, computer, fax, etc. Since the sides of the cable are reflective, there is no need for insulation or shielding around each fiber, as in old phone lines. This translates to more pairs in a smaller space. For us in the hobby, this created one of the newest gem treasures - fiber optic cabs.

In order to make a fiber optic cabochon, the cable scraps are first cut into small lengths. The cable is then either cut into spheres, or it is sectioned parallel to the length of the fiber, once the slices are made, it is cut much like any other gem. Care must be taken, however, to protect the ends of the cable from splintering, or catching dirt, abrasives, etc.

There is an interesting thing about fiber optic gems. If you look at them from a 90° angle from the eye of the gem, the gem will be transparent to light, maintaining its properties for light transmission.

via BEMS 07/04, from Rockhound Roundup, 3/99

Bob and Ed's
Oregon Colelcting Trip
07/27/04 - 08/01/04

Greetings fellow rockhounds...

This is Bob O'Brien. Last week the Army finally let me be released after returning from active duty in Iraq. To celebrate Ed L. (wsmced@hotmail.com) and I made a quick trip to Oregon to collect at Maury Mt. And Plush.

We left Washington's Puget Sound around 9 am and arrived at Maury Mt. About 7 PM. We looked around and cleaned out a hole someone else had left. By dusk, we had approximately 200 pounds of high grade green moss agate. We then camped at the hole, ate dinner, and retired for the night. The next morning Ed went back to the hole and I cleaned out another one finding about 350 pounds of red and gold moss agate. We then broke the camp down and left for Plush to dig Sunstones at about noon.

We arrived there about 6 PM. We set up our camp at the Spectrum Mine after talking with Chris Rose. He had a sign up that said "Welcome Rockhounds, free digging for 2 days for any rockhound" that wanted to dig on his claim.

The next morning we met Chris, and he showed us this huge pile of dirt and rock he had just excavated from a new hole he had dug. He told us to please screen the dirt away from the main pile, so that it would not get mixed with the unscreened material. We had one screen we brought with us, and he loaned us a second one. H e then checked on us periodically to see how we were doing and to offer pointers. He also provided a hose with a spray nozzle to wash ourselves and the screenings off. In approximately 6 hours we each had about 4 pounds of facet grade Sunstones. The largest stone was about 70 carets. We then went over to his mine office, to see what he had in his shop for sale. Chris had some really nice Tourmaline from the Pala Mines in California. Both Ed and I bough a couple of rough stones to cut when we get home. Chris asked us if we were going to dig the next day, and we said yes. He then said we could work in one of the pits if we wanted, or we could work the pile again. We chose the pit (* see footnote).

The next morning we showed up with pick, shovel, and screens and went to work. After about 8 hours we both had about 5 pounds of stones with about 50% plus having red or green color, and about 30% having schiller effect.

We were amazed at Chris's generosity in allowing us to dig at his site and allowing us to keep ANYTHING we found. We were steered to this dig by several others we had meet on a fieldtrip to First Creek in Washington the previous week. They had pretty much the same story and were also quite happy with their finds... Others wanting more information on this site are welcome to contact me...

Bob O'Brien - bobrock10@juno.com
(* footnote - Others may not be offered this privilege, but if you are courteous and polite, who knows)

To contact Spectrum Mine - Chris Rose :
Oregon Sunstone Free Dig
Ph: (775) 772-7724
Email: tourmalineminer@aol.com

Spectrum Oregon Sunstone Mine. Dig for free, keep what you find for first 2 days (mine personnel must be present). Guaranteed to find reds, greens, dichroic, schiller, clubs welcome. Bring screens and hand tools. Dry camping available. Chris Rose, High Desert Gems and Minerals.

Recently, Spectrum was given a scathing report from Tim Fisher (Oregon Rock On). Tim has not personally visited the mine, and I don't know where he got his info, but his facts were incorrect. You are the 1st one screening the material, you keep all you find FREE (no color charge), and the hospitality is fantastic.

Ed Lehman- wsmced@hotmail.com