

Minutes of the 02/15/05 Westside Board Meeting

Stu Earnst opened the meeting at 7:33PM – Feb 15, 2005

Kathy Earnst gave the treasurer's report. She mentioned that the Mineral Council made \$276.00 on map sales and that several of the clubs have paid there dues for this year--there are a few outstanding.

Old business:

- A motion was m/s/p to pay the entire \$400.00 for the map books though we have only received half of the order because the other half of the order will be delivered in the next two weeks. A check was issued to Bob Pattie so he could pay for the maps.
- The law office of Stiles and Stiles is only charging \$47.50 for writing up the new Walker Valley Lease.
- Walker Valley Lease payment is due June 2005.

New business:

- Ed will be selling maps for the Everett show. He is asking for volunteers to give him a break during the weekend-long show.
- Stu Earnst brought a list of sites from Bob Pattie and gave it to Mike Messenger to glean information for the new rockhound website. The new website for rock hounds to exchange information, rumors, and speculation about new, old, and "lost" collecting localities is: <http://sargo.nwifc.org/prospect/forum>. The site is still under construction, but should be up and running in the next week or so.
- Anyone with pictures they want to share from recent field trips please send them to Glenn Morita for the WSMC newsletter and website.
- The March 26, 2005 WSMC meeting is in Ellensburg, WA. See 2005 meeting calendar at left for time and location. At the end of that meeting the new Administration will take over. The April 19, 2005 West Side meeting will be lead by Mike Messenger, VP.
- The Renton Library has USGS maps before 1960, which include claims listings.

Wagonmaster's:

- Ed discussed the gate lock for Walker Valley. He said some have used it incorrectly. Members wanting to use the Walker Valley site might want to contact Ed regarding the locks correct usage if they have any questions.
- Ed said the Cedar Ponds trip on February 12, 2005 went well. He did some flagging while there. Two flags mean you are leaving the main trail, then it is about 100 yards to the collecting site. Contact Ed Lehman if you are interested in understanding the flagging. Members should know there is "nothing" in the pit-- so do not waste your time there.
- The next field trip is to Cherry Creek on March 12, 2005. Meeting at 9:00 am at the Duvall Safeway. Creek wading, so it's recommended you wear tennis shoes because the creek bottom can be slippery. This site is good for Petrified Wood and Jasper. Contact info: <http://www.mineralcouncil.org/>. Be sure to bring your cameras and send the newsletter pictures of the field trip!
- Ed Lehman reported that the access to the Peek-a-Boo trail area might be getting higher priority. Apparently people have been asking when the road would be repaired and the state may be considering moving up the project.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

Submitted by Gael Guerard – Gael.Guerard@gmail.com

Walker Valley Field trip 01/29/05

There were about 12 people present for the trip. The weather was great, and collecting was good for most (Troy and I did great), and material was shared by us. The lock had been put on the wrong slot which we corrected as we left. Combination is 5-4-2-5 then depress and pull down. From below, push up bar till it can be grabbed from outside, and lift. Replace lock by scrambling # then closing.

Below are pictures of a couple we got.

From NW Rockies News 01/05



Disposable Diapers for Rockhounds?

Use disposable diapers (the cheapest kind) to protect carvings or minerals in transit. They come with their own fastening tapes, can be used over and over again, and are good cushioning for fragile materials.

from BEMS eTumbler 02/05, via The Pegmatite, 1/04; via Quarry Quips, 10/03; from Golden Spike News, 6/03

Petrified Wood: Quick and Easy

Alexandra Goho
Science News 02/05/05

Materials scientists have turned wood into stone, mimicking in a single workweek a natural petrification process that takes millions of years. In the January *Advanced Materials*, Yongsoon Shin and his colleagues at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Wash., share their recipe.

They first soak blocks of pine and poplar in an acid bath to remove lignin, a glue-like substance in the wood, and then move them into a solution containing mineral-forming silica. Next, the team heats the dried, silica-infused wood to 1,400°C in an argon-filled furnace. The process binds silica to the carbon in wood's cellulose.

The tough, heat-resistant, highly porous silicon carbide ceramic might soak up radioactive waste or remove carbon dioxide from smokestacks, says Shin.



Slumbering Vesuvius is in a Slump

VESUVIUS is sinking, according to Andrea Borgia from the European Development and Research Agency in Rome. The type of eruption that buried Pompeii in AD 79 is now less likely.

Vesuvius, which sits on a layer of sediment, last erupted in 1944. "The volcano is sinking into the sediments," says Borgia. Satellite radar measurements show that the central cone of the volcano is sinking at a rate of 1 to 2 millimeters per year, while an arc-shaped ridge is rising up at the foot of the slopes. These features, and the fissures that have appeared in the flanks, are caused by the sides of the volcano spreading out, says Borgia.

He argues that the cracked sides will allow gas from the magma beneath to escape, lessening the risk of an explosive eruption. Instead, rivers of lava may flow down the slopes. "They will be very destructive as well, but maybe people will be able to run away," Borgia says.

But Bill McGuire, a volcanologist with the Benfield Hazard Research Center in London, is not convinced that the features Borgia's team has seen affect the volcano's danger levels. "I would certainly not want to see any modification of the current assessment of volcanic risk," he says.

New Scientist online edition 02/19/05

Brazilian Agate

Brazilian agate is formed in the same manner as all agate. Agate is a quartz mineral originally formed in the bubbles within a volcanic lava bed. When lava is released from within the earth it contains dissolved gases. As the confining pressure decreases, gas bubbles form in the viscous lava. The bubbles range from marble size to several feet in diameter. Sometime later, hot hydrothermal water solutions containing dissolved quartz percolate through the lava beds filling the gas bubbles with liquid.

Changes in chemistry and temperatures precipitate the dissolved quartz out of the solution lining the bubble's cavity with extremely fine layers of crypto-crystalline quartz. Crypto-crystalline is defined as being formed of finely crystals; the crystals are so fine the agate acts as if it isn't crystalline. The needles of quartz have minute spaces between them like a sponge.

Since the quartz fills the cavity from the outside in, the oldest layer is the outside and the youngest is in the center of the agate. The age of the agate is 25 to 60 million years old. And there is no real way of knowing how long it took to form a single agate, but the time was probably lengthy. Since the layers are extremely thin, fractions of a millimeter in thickness, it must have formed slowly. Sometimes one can find a hollow agate with water on the inside; these are called "Enhydros", meaning "with water". This water is most likely millions of years old. After the agate is formed, it still has a sponge-like porosity in the finely layered structure.

The natural colorations in agates are caused primarily by different compounds of iron and manganese. These compounds get into the agate with water-borne solutions that migrate through the sponge-like porosity of the finely layered agate leaving the beautiful colors and patterns you see.

Brazilian Agate is mined from eroded lava beds in the Brazilian plateaus. This agate displays a rainbow of colors primarily derived from iron. The colors are usually reds, browns, and yellows in multi-layered bands and plumes. Agate was known and used by the ancients. They believed it had the power to drive away evil and bring good luck.

from Pebbles 08/03 via Rock Rollers 02/05