

Minutes of the 05/18/04 Westside Board Meeting

The Westside board did not have a quorum to conduct business. Those of us in attendance discussed the following topics:

Wagonmaster's:

- The Lake Wenatchee trip will be one day only, 8/28. Meet at the Wenatchee Ranger station at 9AM. Field trippers are welcome to camp at Bill Williams home on Hwy 97.
- The Kalispell Peak field trip has been canceled
- According to Ed Lehman, the high gas prices seem to be affecting the turn out at the field trips. The Saddle Mt trip had fewer people than the last trip. There was abundant petrified wood and plenty of common opal at the diatom pits.
- Mountain Loop highway update - Sloan Creek can only be accessed via Darrington. The road to the Gold Mountain travertine deposit now gated since it now dead ends due to the bad weather last winter.
- The Walker Valley lease will be renewed next week. The DNR has made it a requirement for all vehicles going to the site to carry \$100K liability insurance.

Old business:

None

Miscellaneous News:

None

Meeting adjourned,
Submitted by Glenn Morita

From an e-mail from Ed Lehman. Subject: STOLEN CRYSTALS

Date: Fri, 30 Jan 2004 04:36:51 GMT

Greetings all...This is Bob O'Brien... I am on leave from Iraq for the next week and a half.

The purpose of this is let you know that while I was on active duty in Iraq in the Army, someone entered my property and broke into my house and storage building and took every last rock and crystal that I have collected in the last 15 plus years. They also took identification information, 5,000 board feet of lumber, an 18 inch slab saw, sliding glass doors, Anderson windows, speakers, a Highland Park cabbing machine, a large tumbler and extra barrels, arbors and expandable drums and everything else they could load up and haul out.

Among the rock there was 70+ crates of thundereggs, jaspers and agates, pet wood , talc.

Among the crystals there was Calcite from Gallatin Gateway min. 10 boxes.

Mostly large cabinet specimens not cleaned. Quartz from Big chief, spruce, green ridge and Peterson Mtn.

There was also 5 or 6 - 5 gallon buckets of choice Holley Blue.

There was also Walker Valley and several flats of Rock Candy.

If any of you see any of this entering the market would you please notify the Island County sheriff.

Thanks
Bob O'Brien

Impact Site Identified for Biggest Extinction

US geologists claim to have identified a suspect in the Earth's largest and most mysterious mass extinction - a large impact crater off the coast of Australia. However, other geologists are not convinced that the "smoking gun" is even a gun, let alone the lethal weapon.

Luann Becker, of the University of California at Santa Barbara, and colleagues present data in the journal Science that they says reveals a crater rivaling the one blamed for killing the dinosaurs. They say the effects of the newly revealed impact would have devastated the planet 250 million years ago at the end of the Permian period.

Paleontologists have long puzzled over the Permian mass extinction, which killed over 90 per cent of marine species and 50 to 70 per cent of land animals. The discovery of the Chicxulub impact structure in Mexico indicated that a 10-kilometer asteroid wiped out the dinosaurs 65

million years ago and put impacts at the top of the suspect list for the Permian event.

But key evidence was missing, including the iridium-rich fingerprints of an asteroid in sediments and an impact crater. Many researchers came to suspect the gas and dust from massive volcanic eruptions in Siberia were to blame.

Shocked quartz

Evidence for a Permian impact has grown over the last few years, says Doug Erwin, a Smithsonian Institution paleontologist. Researchers have found "shocked" quartz, tiny meteorite fragments and fullerenes in contemporaneous sediments.

But, as with Chicxulub, the first hints of a crater have been revealed by a reexamination of sediment cores drilled by petroleum geologists years earlier. Becker flew to Australia to examine cores from a feature called the Bedout High, which lies in shallow water a couple hundred kilometers off the northwest coast.

She found they were full of shattered rocks called breccia. "It looks just like what you would expect an impact core to look like," she told a NASA press conference on Thursday. In the lab, she found the cores contain glasses that contain higher fractions of silica than volcanic glass, and other evidence that the rocks had been melted by a powerful shock.

Seismic profiles show a central uplift in the Bedout High, and Becker's group argue this is the center of a 200-km crater, filled with later sediments. Dating based on argon isotopes puts the age of the rocks at 250.2 million years, right at the time of the extinction.

Bullseye pattern

However, Christian Koeberl of the University of Vienna, Austria, is not convinced. "There is no unique and unambiguous evidence for impact," he told New Scientist. "The gravity map of Bedout does not show any circular features" like those at Chicxulub.

Although Becker says she found shock-induced flaws in quartz from the cores, Koeberl says the samples shown in the paper are not shocked quartz, and also notes the date comes from only a single sample.

"If it is an impact crater, it's one of the most peculiar things I've ever seen," Jay Melosh of the University of Arizona, US, told New Scientist. The seismic profiles appear typical of continental margins, he says, and the gravity profile lacks the "signature" bullseye pattern expected.

The evidence for a Permian impact is "muddled," says Melosh, leaving perhaps only one thing clear - that more work is needed to reveal the true cause of the biggest loss of life ever seen on Earth.

New Scientist Online Edition, 14 May 04

Alien Crystals

Alien doesn't always mean extra-terrestrial. Alien can mean just not in its native land. Quartz, one of the major rock building minerals would appear to be native everywhere. Not so. Take Bermuda, it has a volcanic base without enough silica to produce quartz. The top half of the island is made of limestone from local shells and corals.

Geologist Bruce Reuger of Colby College, Maine, had been studying Bermuda's past vegetation and climate and kept encountering quartz grains in the earth he was digging. Alien Crystals? Comparing the 'fingerprints' of the crystal, Reuger determined that the quartz likely came from beaches of northeastern America, 600 miles away, and had been being deposited for the last 3800 years!

The wind couldn't carry the grains in; colonists didn't arrive until 1610. What transported the grains? Consider. Birds carry grains in their crops to help with digestion, and Bermuda is smack in the middle of a migratory route. After checking present birds on Bermuda and finding quartz in over half of their crops, Reuger calculated it would take 16 to 60,000 birds visiting each year to account for all the quartz he found. The number fit with the actual numbers of migratory birds visiting the island.

via The BEMS Tumbler 5/04, from The Pineywoods Rooter

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OF
NORTHWEST MINERALS**

Located at

Whitman College Geology Department

Walla Walla, Washington

A group of alumni are assembling a collection of Northwest Minerals for the Richard Clem Memorial Collection at Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA. Anyone with "exhibit quality" specimens of minerals (quartz, garnet, tourmaline etc.) from the Pacific Northwest who wishes to make a donation to the collection is urged to contact:

Emery Bayley 2539 – 128th Ave. SE Bellevue, WA 98005

(425) 643-5775

or

e-mail: bayley@worldnet.att.net*

At the present time, we are seeking crystal materials only—no agate, jasper or petrified wood. Specimens should be clean and identified as to mineral name and source location (i.e. county and state). Donors whose material is accepted for the collection will be acknowledged and their donation may be tax deductible. Exceptional specimens may be purchased on a case by case basis depending upon quality and price.

*due to the volume of spam I receive, please put "Whitman collection" or "mineral donation" in the subject line, otherwise your message will be deleted without being read.