

Minutes of the 10/21/03 West Side Board Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:40pm by Norma Kikkert.

The minutes approved as published in Newsletter.

No Treasurers report.

Old business:

Discussed content and make of the Walker Valley signs. Bruce will go over the wording with Laurie Bergall to make sure the sign wording is acceptable to the DNR.

Longview Fibre had been supplied the certificate of insurance. Glenn will add rule wording for Kalama on the Mineral Council website link for Kalama info.

Tulip Casino is on hold. Casino personnel were to come to Marysville show but no one showed up and identified themselves so it is unknown if they came. Ed will continue investigation. It looks likely that a show of some sort will be attempted. Possible Pavilion cover for booths.

New business:

Trying to find Canadian Wagonmaster contact to coordinate info and trip schedules. We have members planning on attending Canadian shows coming up and they will try to scout out contact info.

Weyerhaeuser sold off some of the tree farms in Washington. The Berma Road (White River Tree Farm) area is now owned by Hancock Timber who will issue a permit for \$165.00 per season sold at the Work & Sport in Enumclaw. Other areas are also available.

You can join the Monte Cristo Preservation Society who are working to restore the old mining town of Monte Cristo and the surrounding mineral sites. Membership is \$40.00. You then get a key to the gate blocking access to Monte Cristo and can explore old mines and help restore the buildings and facilities in that area.

Wagonmaster Report:

Money Creek was a hit this year. Wonderful weather in the midst of days of rain. Terrific ore collecting and the picture rhyolite was even plentiful in the area. About 30 people came to enjoy this trip.

Little Naches was also one of the best ones yet. Large (softball to cantaloupe and a couple basketball size) Thundereggs were collected by all participants due to a tip and hard prep work provided by Joel Jurasek. The Thundereggs were the best and biggest to come out of that area so far.

The 2004 Scout/ Field trip planning meeting is January 10, 2004 at 9:00 am at Ed Lehman's house. Bring all your scouting/ prospecting and rockhound related software you want to share. OK to bring snacks too.

Meeting Adjourned.

Next Meeting:

November 1, 2003 in Ellensburg, Palace Café.

Test for Topaz

Quartz and Topaz are not easy to separate by eye, and are sometimes impossible (to separate by eye) when the quartz is a true topaz color. There is a big difference in price in the two, and anyone describing both, no matter how innocently, may well be in trouble.

Topaz is quite a different material, which is harder than quartz. Because of this difference, a drop of water will not spread on topaz, but will on quartz. Clean the stone with a cloth to remove all trace of grease. It must be dry before the test; then place a small drop of water on it with a thin glass or metal rod.

On stones with a hardness of 7 or less on the Moh's scale, the water is dispersed. On harder stones, it will remain as a globule. The harder the stone, the more rounded will be the globule of water.

from Ore-bits via Bellevue Rockhound 10/03

"The Big Rock"

The September headlines in the Wenatchee World read "Chelan Man Finds 450 LB Geode on Red Top Mt." Dave Fache said when his pick

kept hitting something, he realized it was "BIG". The oblong geode is about 30" wide by 36" long and 18" tall. Even in the photograph, the interior agate looked blue.

Fred Fowler of Chelan found a geode weighing about 185 lbs. in 1954. Dave has submitted photos of the geode to the Guinness Book of Records and has contacted several museums. He isn't sure what he'll do with it - he would like to see it shown in certain museums.

from The Petrified Digest 10/03

Noxious Weed Invades Washington

The giant hogweed is a beautiful plant with large leaves and white flowers. It resembles Queen Anne's Lace plant, is related to the carrot family, but is a nasty weed, and is on the noxious weed list.

It was shown in a recent Wenatchee World article and is said to be in almost every county in Western Washington, and does better in the wet part of the state, although it has been reported in only Kittitas and Klickitat counties in Eastern Washington.

People are warned that it can cause 2nd degree chemical burns from the sap. It has also been reported in several states in the east.

from The Petrified Digest 10/03

The October Birthstone Opal or Tourmaline

Opal, even though it is a gem of antiquity, and tourmaline are relative newcomers to the list of birthstones. Neither gemstone was used as a birthstone until the 15th to 20th century. Only then was opal listed as an alternate to beryl for the birthstone for October.

The birthstone list given in the "Curious Lore of Precious Stones" by George Frederick Kunz shows that the Jews, Romans, Arabs, and Poles listed aquamarine as the birthstone for October while the Russians and Italians listed beryl as the birthstone for October. Then from the 15th century, opal was listed as an alternate. Even though opal is a latecomer to the list, it is a stone of considerable antiquity and has a great deal of superstitions and legend attributed to it. Tourmaline, however, does not have any of the older superstitions and legends attached to it, and is the lesser known of all the birthstones. It is highly possible that tourmaline could have been in existence and used in gems and jewelry for a long time but simply not recognized since tourmaline is very closely associated with other gemstones such as topaz and aquamarine that also occurred in the gem gravels of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).

The variety of colors associated with both the opal and tourmalines provide all the people born in the month of October with a wide selection of colors and patterns, as many of the gems contain multiple colors when exposed to bright lights, particularly sunlight.

from Pebble Trails 10/03

Coral

In ancient times, black coral was only allowed to be worn by kings and was thought to bring good luck. Black coral is usually taken from a depth of 75 to 100 feet below the surface of the sea. It is very hard and takes polishing and curing well.

Italian red coral comes from the Mediterranean. Italy has been famous worldwide for being the capitol of the finest red coral. The first factory making coral beads was established in 1805. By 1837 there were eight factories, then, around 1850, an authentic explosion took place in the industry. They produced luxury objects to sell to rich European customers. The most rare and most prized of all the coral is the beautiful pink-orange variety from off the coast of Sicily which today is completely extinct.

Coral comes from a variety of forms; branch coral, sponge coral, tiger coral, coral chips, black coral, and gold coral are a few. It ranges in price from \$12 a strand to \$500 a strand.

from Stone Age News 1/02 via Rockhound Special 6/03