



Newsletter of the Willamette Agate & Mineral Society Salem, Oregon

June 2009

A Fleet-Footed Mineral

~reprinted from Popular Mineralogy

In spite of the fact that textbook definitions of "mineral" call for minerals to be solids with a crystalline structure, most mineral lists include at least one non-solid mineral: mercury (Hg).

Although the mercury makes up minerals such as cinnabar (HgS), corderoite ($\text{Hg}_3\text{S}_2\text{Cl}_2$), or livingstonite (HgSb_4S_8), it also occurs in nature as a pure native metal. But with a melting point of -39°C (-38°F), it is a liquid native metal. (OK, on really cold winter days it crystallizes, but when was the last time it was forty-below in your collection?)

A rare mineral, liquid native mercury is reported from a variety of mercury-mining regions, including sites in Germany, Hungary, Sonoma County, California, and specific sites such as the Levigliani Mine, in Lucca Province, Tuscany, Italy. Mercury appears as tiny (millimeter scale) silver droplets clinging to mercury ore samples.

The chemical symbol for the element mercury is "Hg" which is derived from the Latinized Greek term hydrargyrum, meaning "watery silver." Mercury is also called "quicksilver" in reference to its silver color and its fluid or watery behavior. The name mercury is taken after the Roman god Mercury (equivalent to the Greek god Hermes, often depicted with a winged cap and winged feet). As the gods' messenger, Mercury was agile and speedy, zipping all over the sky and the Earth. Anyone watching the behavior of a mercury droplet on a plate, tabletop, or other flat surface can readily appreciate how mercury earned its name.

The mineral collector should be aware that native mercury poses some hazards. Liquid mercury has a high vapor pressure, thus mercury vapors rise up from native mercury specimens. Mercury vapors can be inhaled, leading to mercury poisoning. Admittedly, the amount of mercury vapor produced from a mineral specimen in your collection may be quite

small, but it will be present. Storing your specimens in an air-tight plastic box such as a Tupperware container is a good idea. Mercury vapor pressure will increase with temperature, so don't roast, or do any flame tests, on a specimen without the benefit of good ventilation. Do not wrap mercury specimens in aluminum foil or store them in an aluminum container. Mercury droplets will amalgamate with aluminum and progressively eat their way through a large amount of aluminum.

Significantly less mercury vapor is produced from mercury minerals such as cinnabar. (Indeed, one way to clean up a mercury spill is to dust the area with powdered sulfur. Sulfur reacts with the mercury to produce mercury sulfide – essentially cinnabar – and drastically decreases the mercury vapors produced.)

Another difficulty arises because mercury can "travel." Because the mercury droplets on a specimen are liquid, they can be dislodged, scattering the mercury throughout your collection. Care must be taken when trimming or handling a specimen with native mercury. Washing your hands after touching it is probably a good idea. Sulfur powder can be dusted over spilled mercury droplets to cut off mercury vapor production. A vacuum cleaner can then be used to suck up mercury sulfide, excess sulfur, scraps of ore, and minor stray droplets of mercury, but you will want to dispose of the vacuum cleaner bag promptly

IN THIS ISSUE

WAMS Club Information	2
Editor's and President's Messages	3
Up Coming NW Shows	3
A Fleet-Footed Mineral	1
June Field Trip	3
Junior Program & Oregon council	4
Meeting Minutes	4-5
Board Minutes	5-6



The Willamette Agate and Mineral Society, Inc. (WAMS) is a nonprofit organization and an Oregon Corporation, founded November, 1947. WAMS is affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS), the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies (NFMS), the Oregon Council of Rock and Mineral Clubs, the American Lands Access Association (ALAA), and the Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors (S.C.R.I.B.E.).

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm at the Salem Senior Center, 2615 Portland Road NE, in Salem, Oregon. Executive Board meetings are held with upcoming meetings announced at the

general meeting, and all members are invited to attend.

WAMS was organized to stimulate interest in the study and collection of agates, minerals, gems, and fossils, and support lapidary work, education, scientific study of natural earth sciences, and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section #501(C)(3) IRS.

WAMS Membership

Membership dues are due by December 31 for the following year. Anyone joining WAMS between January and June pay the full amount. Anyone joining WAMS between July and December pay half the amount. Potential new members are encouraged to attend three meetings as a guest before completing and submitting an application.

Membership Dues:

- Individual: \$15.00
- Couple: \$24.00
- Juniors: \$ 2.50

Guests are welcome and are encouraged to attend WAMS meetings!

Website: www.wamsi.org

2009 Elected Officers

- President: Rob Leedy 503-371-6421
- Vice President: Daniel Bontempo 541-497-7916
- Secretary: Lee Ann Settlemeier 503-394-4283
- Treasurer: Kathy Bennett 503-363-4974
- Federation Director: Marvin Bartel 503-364-4170
- Members at Large: Bob Manley 503-845-6482
- Larry Nasset 503-585-4390
- Ray Haslebacher 503-393-5228
- Norm De Roux 503-371-4623
- Phil Knutson 503-363-4231
- Ed Pyritz 503-585-2903
- Joe Start 503-873-6729

Board Chair: Geri Esch 503-371-1472

2009 Committee Chairs

- Show Chair: Linda Groah 503-873-6930
- Field Trips: Richard Dowty 503-633-9800
- Bulletin Editor: Kristi Edwards 541-738-6811
- Education: **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
- Juniors: Jennifer Ferrell 503-551-1554
- Cindy Waters 206-371-1810
- Ted Johnson 503-362-6186
- Nameplates: Vicki Johnson, 503-362-6186
- Oregon Council: **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
- Rules and Awards: **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
- Programs: **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
- Property Control: Theresa Byrne 503-364-7190
- Public Relations: **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
- Advertising: Susan Appleby 503-391-4221
- Publications: Bob Manley 503-845-6482
- Scrapbook/Historian: Steve Lawrence 503-585-8014
- Host/Hostess: Joe and Emily Start
- Refreshments: **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
- Coffee: **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
- Stamps: Aaron Currier 503-393-2055
- Sunshine: Karen Porter 503-371-7752

The Rockhound Rumbblings bulletin is published monthly for members of the Willamette Agate and Mineral Society (WAMS). The editor is not responsible for the authenticity of information in articles submitted for publication, nor are the opinions expressed therein necessarily those of the editor or officers of WAMS. Permission to reprint material in the bulletin is granted freely, provided proper credit is given. Exchange bulletins are welcome.

Advertising Rates

Member: Non-business - One (1) free ad per year or \$1.00/issue or \$8.00/year. (Business card size or 12 lines or 1/10 page).

Non-member and members with a business - \$4.00/issue, \$35.00/year (10 issues), or \$17.50 for 1/2 year (5 issues). Same size regulations as above.

Mailing Address

WAMS - P.O. Box 13041 - Salem, OR - 97309-1041

Editor's Message

I hope those that went to Glass Butte had a good time. The weather was good that weekend.

I am hoping that someone will want to take over this newsletter in January. I find it hard to do this newsletter in the summer when Mark and I are busy rocking and camping. So please be patient if this newsletter does not always get out in a timely fashion.

Hopefully there will be lots of field trips planned for this summer. If there is someplace you want to go email or call another member and see if they have a trip planned. It is always fun to go with friends.

Mark and I won't be able to go to the silver pick. Our niece is getting married in Bend that day. We do plan on rocking with my brother after the wedding. So those that go to the silver pick have a fun time. It is easy picking and Bruce has some really nice rocks. Have fun.

See you at the meeting.

Kristi Edwards
Bulletin Editor

kmedwards2@comcast.net

Presidents Message

Hey all you rock nut fans,
Where were all of you? You missed out on a killer field trip to Glass Butte. It was neat seeing all the different license plates on the vehicles driving around hunting volcanic glass (obsidian). I saw Washington, Idaho, Colorado, California, Montana and New York plates. After talking to a few of the out of staters, (commonly known in Oregon as tourists) I realized that we here in Oregon, are truly blessed with rock. I think rock hounds in Oregon sometimes take it for granted all the kinds and quality of rock, we have to hunt in or rock blessed state of Oregon. When you think about it, we are really spoiled rotten. I talked to rock hounds from all around the country, on the computer and all they can talk about is someday before they die, they want to come to Oregon to hunt some of our killer rock deposits. So your mission this summer is to get out and enjoy some of the best rock hunting the United States has to offer. Go out and spoil yourselves. I guarantee, it will put a cheshire cat grin on your face that you will feel all the way to your toes. Your nutty Prez, Rob Leedy

P.S. Remember our meeting has changed this month to the second Thursday on June 11th.

June Field Trip

~submitted by Joe Van Cura

Silver Pick

The silver pick is scheduled for 9:00 in the morning on Saturday, June 6th. The cost is 50 cents per pound for the material. Daniel has posted a couple of pictures at

http://i207.photobucket.com/albums/bb114/deb193/rough/j2b2_0502/IMG_2439_580.jpg

Bruce Ferguson of J2B2 Rocks will have the totes spread out so that everyone will be able to have access. He is willing to let people take the rock out and set it on the ground to facilitate getting at the bottom of the totes, but only if you stay to put it back in. If he is left with putting all the rock back in, then this will probably be the last opportunity we get to do this. And remember he is going to donate one pound of rock to our club for every pound we buy, so let's not create any hard feelings by not cooperating. My feeling is that 3 to 4 hours should be more than enough time to find those hidden treasures, so plan to start filling the totes back up in the early afternoon. The directions to Bruce's place are as follows: Take I-5 south to exit 238 toward Millersburg. After a half mile, turn right onto Old Salem RD NE. Go 1.1 miles and turn right on Alexander Lane NE. Go another .8 miles and turn right onto Woods Rd NE. Bruce's is on

UP Coming Shows

June 12-14	Bead Renaissance Show Eugene, Or
June 19-21	Oregon Coast Agate club Newport, OR
June 25-28	Prineville Rockhound Pow Wow Prineville, OR
June 26-28	Columbia Willamette Faceters Guild Clackamas, OR
July 1-5	All Rockhounds Pow Wow Madras, OR

the right .2 of a mile. The street address is 5245 Woods Rd NE. I hope to see many of you there.

Junior Program

~submitted by Cindy Waters

Hi Kids!

I'm going to try to start short messages to you all in the newsletter. So here we go, hope you all enjoy it. First we have started our badge program so if you haven't been in for a while you should come check us out and get your first rock hound badge to begin. The more kids we have, the more fun we can have. Last month a few of us talked about bringing in your collections so all of you that have a collections can show it off, and those of you that don't have collections, bring in what you do have and we will work on starting them. I hope to see you at the meeting.

Oregon Council

~submitted by Vicki Johnson

At the last Oregon Council meeting, April 24, 2009, there was a Resolution proposed by Beth Heesacker, Treasurer of Oregon Council of Rocks and Minerals. It is a resolution for a vote to disband the Oregon Council of Rocks and Minerals Clubs. There are only 13 clubs who have paid their dues and are members of the Oregon Council.

It reads: To be voted on by the representatives of each member club who attend the Annual Meeting in Madras, Oregon, on July 4, 2009.

Whereas: membership in the Oregon Council of Rocks and Minerals (OCRM) is and has been declining for many years.

Whereas: attendance at OCRM's meetings has been very poor for many years.

Whereas: recruiting volunteers to run for officer positions in the OCRM has been increasingly difficult.

Whereas: OCRM is so small and inactive that we do not have the power to make a difference in what the government or any other entity does with our public lands.

Therefore: the OCRM should be disbanded and all money in the OCRM treasury, minus expenses needed to complete the disbanding, be dispersed to those member clubs currently in good standing on April 25, 2009. The amount of the disbursement to each club will be determined according to a count of the number of members on the current OCRM membership list since this is the way that dues are assessed. Clubs may have the option of having their portion of the disbursement donated to the American Lands Access Association.

The club's decision on the option of retaining or donating their portion of the disbursement is to be decided by the individual club. The club's decision is to be reported in writing to the OCRM Treasurer, Beth Heesacker, by October 1, 2009. This written decision will be signed by the club's OCRM representative and by the President of the club. Disbursement will be completed by November 1, 2009.

This resolution will be posted on the OCRM web site as soon as possible after the April 25, 2009, meeting and mailed to all clubs in the next OCRM newsletter sent out before the July 4, 2009 meeting.

They have asked if WAMS would take over stewardship of the Oregon Council Case at the Capitol Building in Salem, and to continue to involve Rock Clubs throughout Oregon for display at the Capitol on a 6 month rotation. This was discussed at the WAMS board meeting Monday, 05-18-09. I was asked, by the WAMS board, to submit this to the Rockhound Rambling, for discussion at the June, 2009 meeting.

60 YEARS of COLLECTION

~submitted by Mary Haselbacher

Rocks slabs, rough rock by the pound or piece, thundereggs, minerals, fossils, crystals.
Lapidary equipment Plus Avon collection, dishes, clothes, tools, antiques

NO early sales: Sat. June 13, 9:00am-5:00pm

Sunday June 14, 11:00am-4pm

6992 74th Ave NE, Salem,

Thanks to Dan G. and Tom R. for helping us sort and price. We are donating 10 % of sale of the rocks to the Club. When we find out how much is made will determine where money will go.

WAMS General Meeting

May 7, 2009, 6:30 PM New Salem Senior Center

~submitted by Lee Anne Settlemeier

Rob Leedy, President, called the meeting to order at 6:38.

Show and Tell: Was the letter R. The June 11 meeting will be the letter S.

Show Report: Janice Van Cura gave a report on our 2009 show. She thanked everyone that had helped

before, during, and after the show. She gave special thanks to those who stayed late Sunday night, because it took longer than anticipated to clean-up. Cory Pyritz worked enthusiastically all day every day not only during the show, but before and after. Tom Robertson, Dan Groah, and Aaron Currier put together the florescent show that was well received. Larry Lovell stepped up at the last minute and did a great job of running the silent auction. Phil and Reyne Knutson spent long hours working not only their subcommittee jobs but where ever they were needed. Eric Beckland eminent job of running the children's area and has agreed to be subcommittee chair for it again next year. She stated this was an incomplete list, and everyone's help was appreciated. While a lot of people helped, more help was needed especially Wednesday during set-up and Sunday after the show. Janice and Linda Groah will document for a procedure book what needs to be done for the show, and have asked all of the subcommittee chairs to do the same.

The income for the show was up about \$1,300 over the last couple of years. The increase was in door receipts and the silent auction. Expenses are still being paid, so a final figure will not be available until later.

Treasurer's Report was presented by Kathy Bennett and approved.

Sunshine Report Karen Porter reported that Kit Leshk would be having surgery the following day. We are glad to have Rob Leedy back.

New Members: Leon Haight, Richard Nielson, Donald Nash, Dustin Thompson, David and Camila Lacewell, and Roger Fieldel were welcomed to the club. I think there were a couple more, but I didn't receive the names. I'll send them as soon as I receive them if there are.

Scholarship Committee: No applications were received this year for the Jon and Lucille Sams Scholarship fund, so the fund will be larger for coming years. We were reminded that the Raffle tickets at the meeting support the scholarship fund.

Field Trips: Our field trip chairman Richard Dowty was not at the meeting. We were reminded of the field trip on Memorial Day weekend to Glass Buttes, and reminded to contact Richard if you were going on this field trip. On Saturday, June 13, the club members will be able to purchase material for 50 cents a pound in the Millersburg area. The material is in about 15 4' x 4' totes. More information will be available on this at our June meeting on June 11, and directions to the Silver Pick area are in this news letter .

Approval to pay the Bills: Kathy Bennett, treasurer, presented bills for approval, and the members approved paying the bills.

Federation Report Marv Bartel reported that at the last mid-year federation meeting, attendance was down about 20%. The focus was on young members, and the All American Club. Some changes to the by-laws were also discussed. The next federation meeting will be at Billings, Montana at the Federation Show. It was voted to ask Joe and Janice Van Cura to be delegates to the Billings Federation Meeting.

At the Billings show, there will be a drawing for some very nice prizes, including some in the \$1,800 to \$3,000 range. The proceeds help support the endowment fund. Tickets may be purchased from Marv Bartel for \$5 each or five for \$20.

The **Oregon Council** has asked WAMS to have the next display case at the capitol, and Vicki Johnson asked members for materials that could be borrowed to fill the case. There are three shelves, each nine feet long that compose the case. It is filled with all Oregon material.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the April 2, 2009 general meeting and the April 20, 2009, board meeting were approved as published in the Rockhound Rumbblings.

Program: Our program was our annual Tailgate Sale of equipment, rough, slabs, and finished material by any club member who brought things for sale.

Board Meeting: The next board meeting is May 18, 2009 at 6:30 PM at the Senior Center.

Next General Meeting: Thursday, June 11, at 6:30 at the Senior Center. Note that this meeting will be on the *second*, not the first, Thursday of the month. Show and Tell letter is "R". Marv Bartel, Vicki Johnson and ? volunteered to bring refreshments.

WAMS Board Meeting

~submitted by Lee Anne Settlemeir
May 18, 2009
Salem Senior Center

The Board was called to order at 6:30 by President Rob Leedy since Board Chairman Geri Esch was out of town.

Members in Attendance: Rob Leedy, President, Kathy Bennett, Treasurer, Daniel Bontempo, Vice President, Lee Anne Settlemeir, Secretary, and members-at-large Phil Knutson, Norm De Roux, Joe

Start, and Larry Nasset. Also in attendance were Larry Lovel, Ted and Vicki Johnson, and Nadine De Roux.

Bills to be Paid: Oregon Department of Justice, \$10, and mailing of special drawing prizes, \$25.90. It was moved and approved to pay the bills.

Equipment Purchase: Larry Lovel presented a request for equipment for the lapidary lab at the senior center. The equipment requested was two arbor units at an approximate cost of \$1,245 for both, and a polishing unit from Jerry Porter for \$257. The total cost would be just over \$1,500. This would provide three additional work stations for the lab. The new lab has the room for more stations, and there are more people who want to use the lab than there are stations available. A question came up as to why there is an hourly charge for using the lab. This fee covers consumables (belts, blades, etc.) and maintenance for the equipment in the lab. The Senior Center pays the insurance. It was voted by the board to recommend to the membership that the purchase of this equipment be approved. Motors will be required for the equipment, but Larry thought we could procure them.

Membership List: Kristi Edwards has said that she doesn't mind keeping track of membership for a time. There was some discussion of on-line options for tracking our membership. The advantage of this is that our membership would be kept in a central place. Access to the membership list would be password controlled, and there could be multiple administrators. Additional information is needed before any action could be taken.

Vice President: Since Daniel will be leaving, possibly as early as June, we will need a new vice-president. Daniel will be here for the June meeting, and by that time he will know if he will be here through the July meeting.

Rockhound Rumbings Mailing: A mailing service was discussed with the goal of making the newsletter's editor's job easier, and possibly also saving us some money. No decision was made on using this service, but we will try it on a limited basis for the June newsletter to see if this is something we think will benefit the club. It would add 1 to 2 days to the mailing time, so information for the newsletter would need to be given to the editor earlier.

Life Memberships were discussed, and our by-laws state that they are to receive all benefits that club members are entitled to.

Show Demonstrators: A brief report was given on the amount of money made by the demonstrators who sold at the show. This varied: one person didn't

sell anything; one person broke even with expenses, one person made \$100, and one person made more.

Oregon Council: Vicki Johnson brought a request from a couple of Oregon Council members to disband the Oregon Council. If this were to happen, WAMS would be asked to take stewardship of the display case at the capital. Currently only 13 clubs in Oregon are participating in the Oregon Council, and those clubs who participate pay 25 cents per member per year to the council. The original vision of the Oregon Council was to inform member clubs of issues unique to Oregon that affect Rock Hounding. At one point in time, the Oregon Council had a part time lobbyist.

The board voted to recommend to the membership that we vote to continue the Oregon Council, and encourage it to fulfill its original function again.

Field Trip: There will be a field trip to Davis Creek, California. Joe Start is co-coordinating this with the Klamath Falls Club. We discussed some other suggestions for field trips.

Adjournment: The board adjourned at 7:55.

FMS News

Can be viewed at www.amfed.org/nfms/

AFMS News

Can be viewed at www.amfed.org

Cool Websites

~submitted by Chuck Hunt and Linda Groah

www.bbc.co.uk/sn/prehistoric_life/

www.gemsociety.org/info/info.htm

www.rockhounds.com

www.emporia.edu

www.chemistry.about.com

www.amlap.com

www.autodidactics.com

www.hisglassworks.com

What's Rocking?

WAMS General Meeting
Thursday
June 11 - 6:30 pm
Salem Senior Center
2615 Portland Rd NE Salem, OR
Guests Welcome!

June Program
No program at this time
June Show and Tell
Bring rocks/minerals/gems beginning with the letters
S



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