Rock Chips

Deming Gem and Mineral Society P.O. Box 1459, Deming, NM 88031 thedgms@gmail.com
August, 2020

Message from the Prez:

Summer Shop is closed for the month of August

Board Meeting Minutes July 1, 2020

The DGMS Board Meeting was called to order by President Marilyn Page at 2:00 pm.

- 18" saw is being repaired
- 4th of July ice cream social will be held and masks are required
- The locks to the building will be changed
- Marvin is working on new bulbs for the shop
- Tumbling is proceeding as planned for the Roundup
- Need information on a handtruck at Harbor Freight for Marilyn by July 10
- Bill is working on the Geiger counter and microscopes and recommended obtaining a small unit from our vendor, Mel, in Albuquerque
- Jim Paddock will be security at the craft show
- Governor's office advised on our craft show and it looks good
- Marilyn and Carolyn need input from sawyers and shop leaders regarding cutting and shop fees for by-law updates
- 501 C(3) needs to be reviewed because technicalities are causing us problems

- Aluminum cans and tabs are continuing to be collected to be donated to McDonald House and a local activist collecting cans for kids
- Craft Show meetings are taking place, new flyers are done. We will have a club table and Bill will demonstrate casting and the homemade vibrating tumbler
- A tire tumbler is scheduled to be installed by Bill in July
- Treasurer, Donna George, reports all finances are in order and have moved to online

Meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bill

No General Meeting was conducted during July due to COVID

Clubhouse Updates:

Donna George, with the help Judy Murphy, Bill Gallagher, and Art Krasinsky, has undertaken a huge project for the club. Here are two of the finished display cabinets that have been repaired, repainted, and lights added. A fresh new look! Thanks to all of you!!!

DGMS 2020 Officers:

President: Marilyn Page

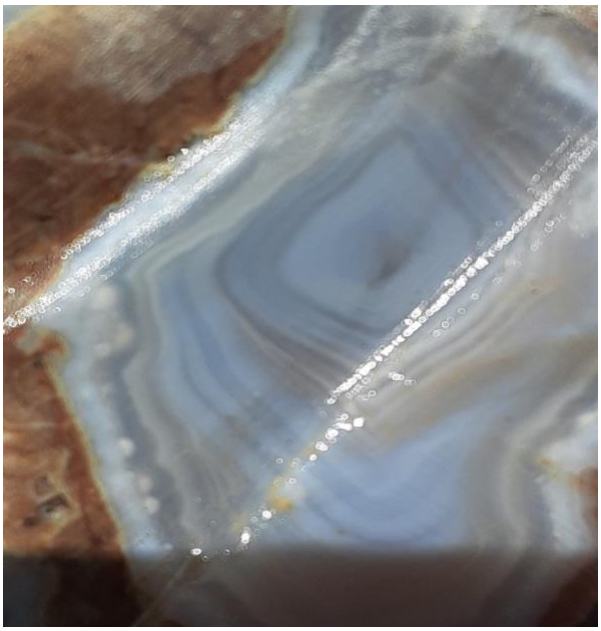
Vice President: Judy Murphy
Secretary: Bill Gallagher
Treasurer: Donna George
Board Members: Marvin Clary, Cathy Burnett, Carolyn Abbey

Big Diggins

I wanted to include some more information submitted by new members Bonnie Cotton and Becky Walden from Colorado. These specimens are more Big Diggins new stock that they found this spring at the Roundup hunt and another trip they made. Thanks to Becky Walkden from Durango who submitted these pics.

We have some beautiful rocks coming out of the claim in our new site!

Just a reminder that if you are headed out into the field in this weather be sure to hunt early, take plenty of water, watch out for snakes, don't go alone, let someone know where you are headed and take more than one vehicle if you can. Also, don't forget the Public Lands App. The rocks will be there this fall when the weather cools so use your head. If you can, use the summer as a time to pay some attention to your collections, do some lapidary, network, and do some research.



Prospect Trip:

Mule Creek

View over the valley with the haze of smoke from two fires in the Gila north of Silver City
Several members got together this month for a prospect trip to Mule Creek. Judy Murphy reports they found a lot of large obsidian pieces this time which was unusual. There were also a lot of small ones. It appeared to them that the area had not been hunted in a while. Check in with Judy for more information.

Mule Creek is located off Hwy 78, 46 miles north of Silver City.

The little post office in Mule Creek. They are trying to close it.

Spotlight on Rocks and Minerals by Bill Gallagher

Turquoise

Turquoise occurs as many different types, and that's because every location where it is found imparts a discernible and unique personality to the overall stone. That means the host rock has a lot to do with specific characteristics of hardness and color, though

turquoise forms in the same basic way, as a Hydrated Phosphate of Copper and Aluminum, in the same basic colors of blue and green, where ever it is found, and that is because of copper somewhere in the nearby vicinity. It is the degraded forms of copper which give turquoise its color. As an aside, though related, it is thought that a lot of this same degraded copper material may have also been directly responsible for the rediscovery of smelting, because the

powders of malachite, azurite, chrysocolla, and even turquoise were probably used to color early pottery. After the firing of the pottery there were surely metal droplets within the bottom of the furnaces, and this led to the Chalcolithic Period, which quickly became the Bronze Age.

Blue is the most common color of Turquoise, ranging from a very pale, almost whitish blue, to a dark sky blue, and in a general way the very word Turquoise is synonymous with the color blue, even among people far removed from understandings of this rock formation. Green turquoise occurs occasionally and goes through periods of being acceptable, or hot, or not. Right now we seem to be coming off a period where green turq was all the rage, and heading back towards deep dark blues as those types most in demand. The word Turquoise is probably rooted in the word Turk, denoting the Levantine traders who initially dealt in this rarity to Europeans. The finest grade of Turquoise to this day is known as Persian grade, another reference to the earliest known deposits which were probably in and around modern day Iran. Some white turquoise has been found, which would be Hydrated Phosphate of Aluminum, without the copper content. Although white turq is rare, it is really beyond the scope of most turquoise cutters, who do not really care about a soft white rock when things like meerschaum and howlite are readily available and very inexpensive.

Overall turquoise as a formation is fairly rare. It is considered to be a product of meteoric origin, which means rain. Rainwater washing down through host rock caused further degradation, and secondary deposition which became turquoise. I know. It sounds funny, but there you have it. No one was around to watch, so it's really still a lot of guesswork, although turquoise definitely seems to be something of an anomaly, just looking at it, and the way it forms in both nodules and veins together. Turquoise is crystalline in form, though visible crystals are extremely rare and high dollar as specimens. The stone ranges downward in hardness from 5-6 to what is called chalk. Chalk and even hard chalk are really very soft and their name tells the story there. Most turquoise today is treated in some way, whether it's to harden it, deepen the color, or both. Good hard natural turquoise commands a premium and is hard to get most of the time.

Some of the finer American Turquoise comes from Arizona and even New Mexico. Morenci can be killer stuff, Kingman, Bisbee, Sleeping Beauty, Santa Rita(RARE)....they all have their high and low grades of course, and there are literally hundreds of Turquoise mines throughout the western United States. I have seen some fine Morenci turquoise go for as little as $50.00 a pound, though the Bisbee, Sleeping Beauty,

and Kingman are quite a lot more pricey than that, running into the hundreds of dollars per pound and up. Some Arizona and New Mexican turquoise is mined from degraded feldspar deposits called Caliche (Cuh-lee-chee), a soft, corroded magmatic crystalline structure, like orthoclase. Some of this host matrix still possesses identifiable crystalline form. The amount of silica or feldspar in these host matrices dictate the hardness of the Turquoise within, along with other traits which give each locale its signature types. Also included in traits and types are the various inclusions which most turquoise will exhibit, such as the dark brown matrix common throughout the Hachita turquoise. Lander county Nevada, home of the Royston type of Turquoise, The Northern Lights, Carico Lake and many others, is all very hard turquoise and many times mined from hard rock with jack hammers. The material from Lander County usually starts around $500.00 per pound, and just gets higher and higher as the quality, size, and color improve.

Bill's blog is: fixthemoon.blogspot.com

Critter of the Month

The Wild Burro

Equus asinus

Wild Burro on the Sidewalk in Oatman, AZ

The wild burro was first introduced into the Desert Southwest by Spaniards in the 1500s. Wild burros have long ears, a short mane and reach a height of up to 5 feet at the shoulders. They vary in color from black to brown to gray.

Originally from Africa (where they were called the wild ass) these pack animals were prized for their hardiness in arid country. They are sure-footed, can locate

food in barren terrain and can carry heavy burdens for days through hot, dry environments.

Wild burros can tolerate a water loss as much as 30% of their body weight, and replenish it in only 5 minutes of drinking. (Humans require medical attention if 10% of body weight is lost to dehydration and require a full day of intermittent drinking to replenish this loss.)

Habits

Wild burros feed on a variety of of plants, including grasses, Mormon tea, Palo Verde and plantain. Although some moisture is provided by these plant materials, wild burros must have drinking water throughout the year. They can usually be seen foraging for food during daytime, except for summers, when they will forage only at night and in the early morning. Wild burros range through a wide variety of desert habitats as long as they are within 10 miles of drinking water.

Life Cycle

Female wild burros give birth to one colt each year, which grows to an average weight of about 350 pounds. Since the wild burro has no natural predator, competitor or common diseases, most young burros reach maturity and may live as long as 25 years in the wild.

Early prospectors relied heavily on burros as they trekked long distances across the deserts in search of gold and silver. Many of these burros survived, even though their owners perished under the harsh desert conditions. Many more burros escaped or were released during the settlement of the West. Because of their hardiness, Wild burros have thrived throughout the North American deserts, and their numbers have increased to perhaps 20,000.

Programs are now in place, administered by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). In New Mexico the BLM manages two wild horse and burro herds on 29,000 acres.

Although these herds are contained within in a specific area it's not unusual to run across some escapees and others evading capture. Keep your eyes open and stay clear of them. They can be very protective and defensive.

Read more: https://www.desertusa.com/animals/wild-burro.html#ixzz6TnOgIDjJ

Rock Tip

Gemologist Institute of America has an awesome program for kids called Gemkids. Check it out!!! https://gemkids.gia.edu

Upcoming Area Events:

Buena Vista Contin-tail, August 6-9, 2020, Colorado Rodeo Grounds, Buena Vista, Colorado. **This show has been cancelled** www.bvrockshow.com-

Woodland Park Rock, Gem, and Jewelry Show, August 13-16, 2020, 19250 E. US 24, Woodland Park, Colorado. www.woodlandparkrockandgemshow.com or wpgemshow@outlook.com- **CHECK STATUS BEFORE YOU GO**

Albuquerque Fall Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show 2020 , October 2-4, Expo New Mexico, State Fairgrounds. (www.abqfallshow.wixite.com/fairplay) **CHECK STATUS BEFORE YOU GO**

Communication

WEBPAGE and FACEBOOK Administrator: Pamm Reynolds: nmpamm@gmail.com.

If you have information for the webpage please email it to Pamm. If you have information for Facebook please post on our page. We need items that pertain to our club or member activities to be posted including pictures of rocks found, experiences, reminders of meetings, suggestions of where to hunt, class info., etc. It's OUR page!

Website	www.thedgmsclub.com
Facebook	Deming Gem and Mineral Society
YouTube Channel	

Help us keep in touch with you.

If your email has changed, please contact:
Carolyn Abbey at thedgms@gmail.com

If your membership information has changed you can mail changes to DGMS Membership, P.O. Box 1459, Deming, NM 88031 or email thedgms@gmail.com

If you are interested in membership, come by the clubhouse to see what's going on. Looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones!

Adios my friends!