

# DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



## IN THIS ISSUE

Backyard Buzz . . . . .	5
California Corner (State Fife & Drum) . . . . .	4
Exhibitor Application . . . . .	7
Field Features (Sperry Wash). . . . .	3
Monthly Minutes . . . . .	9
Petrified Program . . . . .	2
Show Schedule (Annual). . . . .	6
Show Scoop. . . . .	8
Trip Talk . . . . .	4

The Mojave Desert Gem and Mineral Society annual show will be **December 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> 2008**. Mark your calendar and tell your friends and relatives! Show Schedule is on page 6 of this newsletter.



### CHRISTMAS PARTY TIME

The club Christmas Party will be held on the second Friday, **December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008**. The potluck will begin at **6:00 p.m.** at the MDGMS clubhouse, at 25647 W. Main Street.

**Food** - Bring your favorite main dish, vegetable, dessert, etc. The turkey will be provided by the club. *Don't forget to bring your utensils and plates.*

**Entertainment** - Decorations, games, and beverages will be provided by Dian Hare, Kemp Root, and Leslie Walker.

**Gift Exchange** - Instead of the regular monthly door prizes we will have a holiday gift exchange. Please bring an appropriate **"rock related"** gift.

- ❖ Gentlemen bring a gift for a man
- ❖ Ladies bring a gift for a woman
- ❖ If you bring a child provide their gift



The Mojave Desert Gem and Mineral Society (MDGMS) is a nonprofit organization. The objectives of this society are:

- To collect and study minerals and rocks.
- To disseminate a general knowledge of the science of mineralogy and allied subjects.
- To provide opportunity for the exhibition and exchange of specimens.

## **MDGMS Officers 2008**

<i>President</i>	Nicolette Grill
<i>Vice-President</i>	Gene Haines
<i>Secretary</i>	Vacant
<i>Treasurer</i>	Janet Wentz

### **Board of Directors**

Gene Haines (Past President), John Bird, Wayne Mallon, Kemp Root, Rob Stapp

## **Meetings/Workshops**

Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Friday (7:00 p.m.)  
 Workshops: 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday (6:30 p.m.)  
 Dark Months: July, August  
 Location: 25647 W. Main Street, Barstow, CA 92311

### **November 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

Program: Desert Wonders (Slideshow)  
 Hostess: Ruth Mallon & Sandy Wagner  
 Door Prizes: Gene Haines

## **Annual Membership**

Dues are **PAYABLE IN JANUARY**

Adults: \$20.00  
 Juniors: \$10.00 (10 to 18 years)



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## PETRIFIED PROGRAM

by Gene Haines

There were 24 attendees at the Petrified Wood Identification Seminar held at the Masonic Lodge in Barstow, sponsored by the Mojave Desert Gem and Mineral Society. **Walt Wright** had the following available to students; highlighters, magnifying loops, hardback and soft back books, a spiral bound handout of 183 pages and a truckload of samples that he passed around for 2.5 days!



Seeing the samples that were being discussed and then shown in books just made the experience more palpable as well as a feast for the eyes. We covered the basics of structure of **algae, ferns, grasses, palms, cycads and then soft and hard woods**. It is hard to condense into a small article what we covered from Fri. 6:00-9:00pm, Sat. 8:30am-9:00pm, and Sun. 8:30am-5:00pm. Just let me say that it is well worth the time to be able to read, take notes during the lecture portion, ask **Walt** questions and wait for his Encyclopedic reservoir of knowledge and experience answer, view slides (50X-200X) of specimens as well as handle the same as they are passed around to each student. The effect is to appeal to all of ones senses and thus the Socratic learning style more than reinforces the knowledge level each one of us received. We thought we knew how to pick petrified palm specimens but when we first viewed the horsetail grass tube with a living piece and compared it to a petrified piece, it was truly an eye (and mind) opening experience. The level of detail within the various specimens showed such a high level of design you were amazed at each piece viewed. I especially liked the petrified piece of *Glossopteris* stem as it showed a perfectly formed hexagonally divided root tube. The portion on Conifers was interesting as well since now we can deduce the actual seasonal growth shown on a slice by the **resin canals and rays**.

I have many more notes with drawings and specific names of specimen's passed by us (with mini-diagrams) but it was too much to put in this small article. Suffice it to say that I believe everyone enjoyed themselves as well as elevated their Petrified Wood Identification knowledge. Many thanks to **Walt** for his first Barstow Seminar. **Vivian Watts, Peggy Haines, and Barabara Bilyeu** manned the book and supplies table for all attendees. Special thanks also are due to **Tricia Sheppard** and **Peggy** for all the behind the scenes coordinating, mailing, phone calls, scheduling and set-up/clean up after the Seminar. **Danny and Vivian Watts** and **Katie Boyd** also contributed that 'extra effort' by assisting throughout the Seminar.



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS  
NOVEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup>  
SET CLOCKS BACK ONE HOUR



# DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter

## FIELD FEATURES

by Gene Haines



Sperry Wash (October 20-21, 2008)

Trip Leader: Walt Wright

There were **16** attendees of MDGMS's first **Walt Wright** Petrified Wood Identification Seminar that opted to go on the Sperry Wash fieldtrip.

We convoyed first to Baker, for a break and snack, then to the Sarasota Springs area to see the (*Chevron* - my name for them) mountains and the actual mini-lakes, which had different **grasses** and other plant life in this remote oasis. There were small samples of '**algae balls**' found in this area as well. Then we drove to and through Tacopa, past the China Ranch (I'd like to stop there some time in the future), stopping at the Western Talc mine to set up camp.

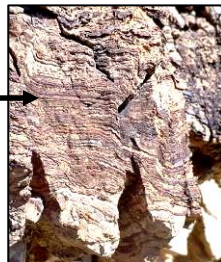


Leaving there, we took a very old and beat up road to the actual Sperry Wash area. Then we began our search for **grasses**, and **palm fiber**, **roots** and '**parts**' (ask **Tricia** to show you her Pet '**Peduncle**'). Several people found lovely specimens of the '**Pink Palm fiber**' and looking at it under our loops it is startling what you can see and it lets you know how rare it is! Others, under the tutelage of **Walt**, and with the new found knowledge of '**what to look for**' and '**what it should look like**' when you do find it - found the very grasses he showed us in class, in another area of the Wash. Other finds were; **palm roots**, **petrified grass clusters**, **petrified palm fronds** and other **palm fiber** specimens.



Back at the campsite, we also found carving sized specimens of **Soapstone** - thanks to **Danny**. There were also small specimens of the **algae layered fossils** (oldest in

California) at the Alexander Hills formation (next to our campsite - humm, imagine that coincidence)!© **Walt** gave extensive lecture here (see below). The weather was absolutely perfect for both days of hunting and everyone found something to his or her liking and the views were panoramic and spectacular!



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Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter

## CALIFORNIA CORNER



### STATE FIFE & DRUM CORPS

by Peggy Haines

The California State *Fife and Drum Corps* was adopted by legislature on June 19, 1997. Formed in 1965, it is a consolidation of the *Fort Sutter Fife and Drum Corps*, the *Field Music of the National Civil War Association*, and the *Fife and Drum Corps of the Re-enactors of the American Civil War*.

Their mission is "to perpetuate the historical significance and folk traditions of fife and drum music and to foster the spirit of fellowship among fifers and drummers everywhere."

As colorful as they are musical, their authentic performances are done in period costume using traditional wooden fifes and rope-tensioned drums.



During the American Revolution, Civil War, and other significant events in history, fife and drum music "roused and inspired" soldiers. After World War I it became a thing of the past in California.



## TRIP TALK

November Field Trip



To be announced for November 21<sup>st</sup>. If anyone would like a field trip to a specific site let your President know. We are open to any and all ideas.



## SHOW AND TELL THEMES 2008

by Gene and Peggy Haines

- ✓ January — Petrified Wood
- ✓ February — Gemstones
- ✓ March — Rock Crafts
- ✓ April — Local Rocks
- ✓ May — Carvings
- ✓ September — Jewelry Art
- ✓ October — Spheres
- ✓ November - - \*Mojave Desert

**\*Mojave Desert** can be that knurly piece of driftwood you picked up, a favorite desert photo, an outing story, a special event, desert flora, a book, etc. It can be anything that caused you to ponder or put you in awe of our beautiful desert.

### No show and tell for:

- ✓ June — Barbecue/Auction
- ✓ July — Dark No Meeting
- ✓ August — Dark No Meeting
- ✓ December - - Christmas Party

"What makes the *desert* beautiful is that somewhere it hides a well."

Antoine de Saint-Exupery



Quotable Quotes

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## BACKYARD BUZZ

by Tricia Sheppard



The **Haines** and the **Sheppards** attended the Joshua Tree show on 4 October. They saw fellow club members **Nick and JoAnn Beall**; **Ron and Dolores Millard**; **Johnny and Sally Rout**; and **Danny and Vivian Watts**. Of course, we all bought raffle tickets for the drawings. The **Sheppards'** won a gift certificate for artwork and a hot/cold massage. The **Haines'** won a Christmas themed matching sweater and vest. **Danny and Vivian** won an iron and the big prize "\$101.00" in lottery tickets! They had a scratching party that evening with **Ron, Dolores, Paul Loustau**, and **Nick and JoAnn** and won \$27.00 and an additional 12 tickets. Way to go!

**Timothy Moore** has joined the ranks of the gainfully employed. He started a new job, labeling specimens, at the Boron Rock Shop.

**Tricia** has to thank **Janet Wentz**, our treasurer, **BIG TIME** for keeping our Petrified Wood Seminar on track and out of hot water (maybe that is **Tricia** out of hot water). She had to cover us for insurance but every time we turned around we had to have another coverage and then we changed buildings and that had to be all redone, then we had to have info. for the Bureau of Land Management because of the Trip to Sperry Wash. You have no idea how much background work **Janet** has to do when we do something for/or with the club. We wiggle a toe and **Janet** has to keep us insured - Who Knew -- Thank you **Janet**!!!!!!!

**Kemp Root** is doing very well. He did give us a little scare, however, when he missed the second day of the Petrified Wood Seminar. I think it is safe to say that of all of the MDGMS members, **Kemp** was looking forward the most to the Seminar and he was only able to attend the first evening. He suffered a mild heart attack and was hospitalized. The morning of the second day of the seminar when he wasn't at the seminar **Dian Hare** called him and found out he was in the hospital. **Dian** and **Peggy Haines** immediately went to the hospital and cheered him up and then visited him on Sunday as well. He was sent to Loma Linda Hospital and is now home and visited the **Sheppards** on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October and said he is doing well.

Thanks go to **Peggy Haines** for her computer knowledge and for helping **Tricia**. Her Petrified Wood seminar flyer was gorgeous and her nametags were cleaver. She and **Gene Haines** donated enough glazed coffee cups to the club that **Alice Sommerville** was able to make souvenir cups for the participants. **Alice** put on a desert decal and had lettered each cup with the dates and name of the seminar. Many thanks go to **Alice**!

Thanks to **Dian Hare** for taking the lead in getting permission from the Bureau of Land Management to visit Sperry Wash as part of the Petrified Wood Seminar. Thanks for helping us get the permit without paying the \$95 fee and getting **Tricia's** check back.

Thanks to **Peggy Haines, Vivian Watts**, and guest **Barbara Bilyeu** for keeping track of the books, and other items that were for sale at the Seminar. **Peggy** made a wonderful control sheet that we were able to track every sale and easily know who's books sold and was able to give each book seller their appropriate money.

**Dian Hare** and **Leslie Walker** donated tumbled rocks and rough for our grab bags.

Continued on page 6

# DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter

Backyard Buzz

Continued from page 5

Special thanks to **Katie Boyd** and **Janet Wentz** for our hundred plus wire trees for the Wheel of Fortune. **Katie** is also donating 700 turquoise specimens for the grab bags. **Janet** also donates many of her tumble polished rocks for our grab bags.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:



**Terry Berg** (Barstow, CA) - He is interested in gems, jewelry, lapidary arts, minerals, rocks, and wire wrap.

**Corridan Butler** (Helendale, CA) - He is interested in gems, jewelry, lapidary arts, minerals, and rocks.

**Gene Ordelman** (Victorville, CA) - He is interested in fossils, gems, jewelry, lapidary arts, minerals, rocks, and wire wrap.

### November Birthdays

04 Nov - Nicolette Grill

**Birthstone:** Citrine

06 Nov - Danny Watts

**Flower:** Chrysanthemum

18 Nov - Clifton Lesley



## SHOW SCHEDULE

by Peggy Haines

The 33<sup>rd</sup> annual Mojave Desert Gem and Mineral show dates are December 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> 2008 this year. We still need volunteers in ALL areas for the following:

### Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

- **8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon** - Volunteer club members will meet at the Cora Harper/Barstow Community Center, 841 S. Barstow Road, for set-up (assemble cases, affix lighting, set-up and skirt tables, electrical, clean up, etc.). Bring an electric drill to assemble cases.
- **12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.** - Club members can arrange their display cases.
- **6:00 p.m.** - Potluck for show dealers, exhibitors, club members and guests (about 75). Bring your favorite dish and place settings.
- **End of potluck to 7:00 a.m.** - Two overnight volunteers will stay for show security. You need to bring your own cots and sleeping bags.

### Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>

- **10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** - Club members are needed to work the silent auction, wheel of fortune, demonstrate the Genie, serve as security, and assist as needed.
- **5:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.** - Two overnight volunteers will stay for show security. You need to bring your own cots and sleeping bags.

### Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>

- **10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** - Club members are needed to work the silent auction, wheel of fortune, demonstrate the Genie, serve as security, and assist as needed.
- **5:00 p.m. to done** - Dismantle your exhibits, assist with clean-up and show tear down (unskirt, flatten, stack, and store tables, disassemble cases, re-load club trailer). Bring an electric drill to disassemble cases.

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Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter

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## EXHIBITOR APPLICATION

MOJAVE DESERT GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY  
P.O.BOX 138, BARSTOW, CA 92312-0138

Dear Fellow Rockhound:

We invite you to enter a display at our Annual Gem and Mineral show this **December 6 and 7, 2008**. Our show will be held in the Community Center, 841 S. Barstow Road, Barstow, CA. If you can join us, please complete this application by **November 1, 2008** and return it to P.O. Box 138, Barstow, CA 92312-0138.

Display(s) may be set up from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, **December 5, 2008**. Tear down will be from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, **December 7, 2008**.

Our club will host a potluck dinner at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, **December 5, 2008** for all guest exhibitors, dealers, and our club members. We hope you will plan to attend.

I will **need** \_\_\_\_\_ display case(s), size 2' x 2' x 4' wide

I will **bring** \_\_\_\_\_ display case(s) of my own, size \_\_\_\_\_

Below is a brief description of my entry/entries:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR NAME TAB INSIDE YOUR CASES

NAME	First	Last	M.I.	
	Street			
ADDRESS	City		State	Zip
	PHONE	Home (      )	Work (      )	Cell (      )

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAMES BELOW FOR EXHIBITOR BADGES:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

For more information, call Beth Pinnell at (760) 267-7331

# DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



## SHOW SCOOP - NOVEMBER 2008



**1-2 - ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA:** 41st annual show, "Opal and Gem Show"; The American Opal Society; Clarion Hotel Anaheim Resort, 616 Convention Way; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4, seniors and students \$3; opal and gem dealers from around the USA and Australia, rough and cut opals, opal jewelry, books, tools, raffle, free seminars (opals, gemstones, mining, etc.), free demonstrations (gemstone cutting, jewelry making, etc.); contact Gene LeVan, P.O. Box 4875, Garden Grove, CA 92842, (562) 621-1805; e-mail: [fineblackopal@sprynet.com](mailto:fineblackopal@sprynet.com); Web site: <http://opalsociety.org>

**1-2 - RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA:** 53rd annual show; Indian Wells Gem & Mineral Society; Desert Empire Fairgrounds, 520 S. Richmond Rd.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; contact John DeRosa, (760) 375-7905

**8-9 - LANCASTER, CALIFORNIA:** Show, "Rock'N'Gem Roundup"; Palmdale Gem & Mineral Club; Antelope Valley Fair Grounds, 2551 W. Ave. H, Hwy. 14 and Ave. H; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; lapidary displays, kids' activities, lapidary demonstrations, more than 25 vendors; contact Susan Chaisson-Walblom, 42122 52nd St. W, Quartz Hill, CA 93536, (661) 943-1861; e-mail: [slchaisson@yahoo.com](mailto:slchaisson@yahoo.com)

**22-23 - OXNARD, CALIFORNIA:** Show, "Garnets: A Gem For Everyone"; Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society; Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; free admission; displays, demonstrations, kids' activities, door prizes, raffle, silent auction, vendors, gems, minerals, beads, fossils, opals, petrified wood, precious stones; contact Miriam Tetreault, 1134 Sunnycrest Ave., Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 642-5779; e-mail: [show@oxnardgem.com](mailto:show@oxnardgem.com); Web site: [www.oxnardgem.com](http://www.oxnardgem.com)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR  
NOVEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> WORKSHOP  
GRAB BAG STUFFING



Seeking donors for our special  
New Zealand junior rockhound  
package.

Brandon is 11 years old and is  
requesting any **rocks, minerals,  
fossils**, from our desert area.

Please bring donations  
to the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.



*Happy  
Thanksgiving*



Elections will be held at our November meeting. Nominations for 2009 are:

**Officers** - **Nicolette Grill** (President); **Jeanne Laymance** (Vice-President);  
**Sandy Wagner** (Secretary); and **Janet Wentz** (Treasurer).

**Board Members** - **Dian Hare**; **Wayne Mallon**; **Kemp Root**; **Rob Stapp**; and **Danny Watts**.

## MINUTES - OCTOBER 3, 2008

President, **Nicolette Grill** called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and followed with the flag salute. Happy birthday to all club members celebrating an October birthday. Welcome new members **Scott and Morgan Stevenson**. We had 7 guests: **Gene and Janell Ordelman; Terry and Sharon Berg; Darril Boaldin; and Bill and Corridan Butler**. There is an oversized card for **Gary Grant** in the back of the room for signing. **Gary** will be moving out of the area in a few months.

**PROGRAM**: Keeping with this month's theme, **Danny Watts** gave an excellent presentation on "sphere" making. He brought his somewhat portable sphere machine, samples of spheres in various stages of the process, grits, and even a few completed specimens. **Danny** fielded numerous questions from the audience and did a great job.

**MINUTES**: September 2008 minutes were approved as written.

**TREASURY REPORT**: Treasurer **Janet Wentz** gave a report of income and expenses which included monies to our two scholarship recipients.

**OLD BUSINESS**: Tonight is the last night to sign up for club T-shirts, cost is \$10.00 to \$15.00, and they will be received by the show. The petrified wood identification seminar has been moved to the Masonic Lodge on Ave J, cost is \$75.00 and includes 3 days of lecture by Paleobotanist **Walt Wright** and a 2 day trip to Sperry Wash, CA. Due to the seminar, the October workshop has been moved to October 24<sup>th</sup>. We have two new Genies in the workshop.

**NEW BUSINESS**: Nominations for 2009 officers are: **Nicolette Grill** (President); **Jeanne Laymance** (Vice-President); **Sandy Wagner** (Secretary); and **Janet Wentz** (Treasurer). Nominations for 2009 board members are: **Wayne Mallon; Kemp Root; Rob Stapp; Danny Watts, and Dian Hare**. Voting will be at the November meeting. **Gene Haines** asked if anyone would be interested in donating specimens to send to a young boy in New Zealand. He is 11 years old, is very interested in rock collecting, and would like to collect samples from the U.S. **Gene** will consolidate any donations at the next meeting and mail them. The next board meeting will be November 18, 2008 at 6:30. The National Geographic channel will air Giant Cave Crystals on October 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 p.m. with an encore on October 14<sup>th</sup>. The Joshua Tree show is this weekend and the Trona show is next weekend. **Nicolette** recommended the club buy a 5 DVD set on the World of Agate, cost is \$100.00, and there is a free preview at [www.thegemshop.com](http://www.thegemshop.com). **Janet** made a motion that the club purchase the set and **Peggy Haines** seconded it. Members present voted and the motion was carried. **Tricia Sheppard** explained the sign-up sheets for the potluck, set-up, tear down, guard duty and all the jobs needed for the annual show. **Janet** said she will be bringing chili for show workers.

**FIELD TRIP**: None planned.

**DOOR PRIZES**: **Danny Watts** provided door prizes of Petrified Wood and Palm Root. Winners were: **Janell Ordelman; Gene Ordelman; Timothy Moore; Ruth Mallon; Nicolette Grill; Kemp Root; Gene Haines; Danny Watts; Kent Berryman; Gloria Moore; and Corrian Butler**.

**HOSTESS**: **Leslie Walker and Dian Hare** provided the refreshments consisting of cake, candy, cheese and crackers, cookies, grapes, salami, and apple juice.

**CAB OF THE MONTH**: **Danny Watts** won cab of the month with a lovely Biggs Jasper cabochon belonging to **Vivian Watts**. **Vivian** found it but **Danny** polished it.

**SHOW AND TELL (SPHERES)**: **Gene Haines** - Shared a variety of spheres made of Fluorite, Hematite, Marcasite, Pyrite, and Silver Lace Onyx. **Tricia Sheppard** - In the spirit of the upcoming petrified wood seminar had a wonderful Araucaria with quartz cap and a Woodworthia sphere which was the 2,524<sup>th</sup> sphere made by her father, **Art Riggle**. **Danny Watts** - Brought in spheres he made of Mariposite from Randsburg, Onyx and Travertine mix from Panamint Valley, and Butler II Onyx. How apropos to have **Mr. Bill Butler** as our guest as he is the one who discovered Butler Onyx.

**ATTENDANCE**: 28 members and 7 guests were in attendance. Meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.

Respectively submitted,



Peggy Haines  
Acting Secretary