

DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



IN THIS ISSUE

Backyard Buzz	6
California Corner (State Song).	4
Field Features (Opal Mtn)	2
Monthly Minutes	9
Notebook Nook (New Technology).	5
Show and Tell	4
Show Scoop.	8
Trip Talk (Butler Onyx II).	4
Workshop Wrap	7

2008 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

The 2008 Officers and Board Members were installed at our February 1, 2008 general meeting. Left to right are Kemp Root, Rob Stapp, Wayne Mallon, John Bird, Gene Haines (Vice-President), Janet Wentz (Treasurer), and Nicolette Grill (President).



When we change our clocks Spring forward... Fall back...



1 hour on March 9th

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

March 7th Meeting

Program: Trivets (Demo)
 Hostess: Nicolette Grill
 Hostess: Peggy Haines
 Door Prizes: Beth Pinnell

Annual Membership Dues

Dues are PAYABLE IN JANUARY

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



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DESERT DIGGINS

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FIELD FEATURES

story by Gene Haines

photos by Nicolette Grill



Opal Mountain (February 16, 2008)

Once again, our Cairn Country Caravan began its early morning hunt for Soap Bubble Agate near the famous Opal Mountain north of Metropolitan Hinkley. We followed our guide **Nicolette Grill** and her father **Nick** in their modern Big Red Prairie Schooner! The day began clear and sunny with a mild 37 degrees temperature. We picked up three more vehicles at the Hinkley corner and took off in earnest for the new find(s) of the day.

The following dauntless explorers attended: **Nicolette** and **Nick**, their friend **Floyd Burns**, **Jeanne Laymance**, **Norm** and **Tricia Sheppard**, **Gene Haines**, **Danny** and **Vivian Watts** (and their rock pointer "**Shadow**"!), **Kent Berryman** - ace explorer (P.S. ask him about his new Hammer! ©), **Steve** and **Therese Carlson**, **Gloria Moore**, and once again testing the limits of her four wheel drive, **Janet Wentz**.



Following the cloud of dust before us, our 10-car caravan arrived upon the flat hilltop at approx. 9:00 a.m. **Nicolette** tried to give the hunters a small sample to look at but many began hunting right away. With everyone going their own way it looked to me (from a vantage point far up on the western slope of another foothill) like the spokes of a wagon wheel with everyone going a different direction spreading out around the parking area.

There was plenty of material to choose from: Purple bubbled Rhyolite, white and creamy colored Opal in the form of fractured crystals, surface coatings as well as nice 'chunky bits' as the Brits would say! We later searched for the red agate around the base of another hill north of us but didn't find too many.

Both **Jeanne** and **Gloria** were engaged in calibrating their eyeballs in searching for the choicest specimens and of course would ask advice as to keep or leaverite! **Gloria** later learned why you stay with the caravan when it moves ©. **Steve** and **Therese** found a few choice pieces of the green opalized material and **Gene** and **Nicolette** found the source of some of this on the northern hillside via a vein. **Tricia** set **Norm** to digging in a likely spot as she trekked around and found a bagful of the lovely Purple Rhyolite with banding and others with the 'soap bubble' spots in it. **Kent** came up with several nice 'chunks' of beautiful and workable Opal material so I know who to follow next time! **Danny** and **Vivian** both acquired many nice pieces and **Vivian** of course found one piece - you know where - right next to the truck where we parked! **Shadow** naturally kept **Danny** moving and on course during his traverse up the mountainside. **Janet** took the strain



out of the hunt by sitting in one spot and gleaning quite a few lovely pieces from a 360-degree radius from her chair!



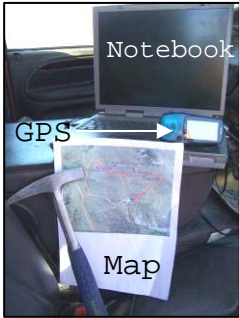
Continued on page 3

DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter

Opal Mountain (February 16, 2008)

Continued from page 2



Nicolette and **Nick** showed me the downloaded Topo maps on her laptop that she can link (interface) with her GPS to verify where they are no matter in what part of the desert. Known roads do show up and if they don't you can always navigate via normal geographical features that you can easily identify via the Topo map. What a way to go!

This was my first time even near Opal Mountain in all the years I have lived in Barstow. We passed by it on the way to the backside to get near our hunting site. Next time it may be a good stopping point to see what has held interest to folks through all these years.



LITTLE KNOWN HISTORY ABOUT MDGMS

by *Tricia Sheppard*

A year or so ago I wrote that one of the club's early presidents, **Glen Lawrence**, came up with the idea for a June BBQ/potluck. Club bought the meat, as a "Thank You" for the club members' service and the members brought the Potluck food.

Another early president, **Bill Butler**, introduced our first Silent Auction. He said he felt so bad that some of the material didn't sell at the end of that auction that he bought the remaining materials himself so the club could make the money. **Bill Butler** recently donated those very same materials to the **SHEPPEARDS**. **Bill** had discovered them under one of their beds when they were sorting through long unopened boxes a few weeks ago.

Another past president, **Gary Grant**, has honed the Silent Auction for the club show, into a **spectacular event**, with his fabulous, beautifully polished petrified wood spheres and flats.

March Birthdays

01 Mar - Dorothy Oberg
08 Mar - Beth Pinnell
12 Mar - Katie Boyd
13 Mar - Bob Wheeler
14 Mar - Rachel Chico-Ramos
14 Mar - Johnny Rout
19 Mar - Peggy Haines
26 Mar - Diane Hale

Birthstone: Aquamarine
Flower: Daffodils



The 2008 sign-up sheet for **hostess** and **door prizes** is posted on the bulletin board.

We still need volunteers for most months.

Welcome new members

- Jeanne Laymance
- Carl Atkinson

Happy Birthday to our Club Members who are celebrating a birthday!

DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



CALIFORNIA CORNER



STATE SONG

"I LOVE YOU, CALIFORNIA"

by Peggy Haines

On April 26, 1951, California legislature declared "I Love You, California" the official state song.

Written in 1913 by Francis Bernard Silverwood (1863-1924), a Los Angeles clothier, merchant and businessman. The music was composed by Abraham Franklin Frankenstein (1873-1934), a former conductor for the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra. The song was introduced by Opera Star Mary Garden of the Chicago Grand Opera.

It was the official song of expositions held in San Francisco and San Diego in 1915, and was played aboard the first ship to go through the Panama Canal.

Over the years, some legislators tried to replace it with other songs, to include "California, Here I Come". In 1988, "I Love You, California" was passed into law.



TRIP TALK

March Field Trip

Place: Butler Onyx II
Date: March 22, 2008 (Saturday)
Time: 8:00 a.m. at Diamond Pacific
Leader: Rob Stapp (760) 252-1450

Tools: Rock hammer, gloves, safety goggles, collecting bags

Four wheel drive is required. Bring plenty of water to hydrate with as it may be mild, sunny and warm. Also, bring some healthy snacks, energy food, or lunch.



SHOW AND TELL THEMES

by Gene and Peggy Haines

Club members showed off a variety of rough, faceted, and finished items for our February "Gemstones" theme. There was much to see and touch with Amethyst, Carnelian, Smokey Quartz, and even a Garnet bracelet.

Themes for 2008:

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

No show and tell for:

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

How it works:

Club members bring monthly themed specimens that they have acquired through trade, purchase, or personal finds. They then describe their items to the group.

DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter

NOTEBOOK NOOK

NEW TECHNOLOGY

by Gene Haines



Since we are in the 21st Century I think we should begin seriously considering utilizing more of the marvelous technologies at our disposal. From Satellites, Notebook computers, GPS units, iPods, Internet, cell phones, and Blackberries, etc. These are nothing more than **tools for Rockhounds to adapt to their hunting prowess**. We need to at least attempt to become less phobic of learning new things. You can show your courage and daring by **experiencing** a new chapter in your lives and embrace change rather than rebel from it. Otherwise, when did you decide to stop learning? A future general monthly meeting program will consist on how we can interface all the new technologies. This will **aid all Rockhounds** in finding out about what you are finding, who has found new specimens, where you can find it (including better quality, quantity and specific locals), what others have done with their finds and many other things.

If you forward your questions about any of these related topics to your President (via telephone, eMail, snail-mail, etc.) she will be more than happy to accommodate you with not only answers but also live demonstrations and examples! Yippee!, when do you have such an **opportunity** to learn what's new in your world and what's been going on around you? So satisfy your **curiosity** (it's a good thing!) and lets all begin rising on a new incoming tide because we're all in the same ship - remember?

The following is provided for those with GPS capabilities:

Afton Canyon Campground	35 ⁰	02.28'	116 ⁰	23.00'
Alvord Mine	35 ⁰	04.17'	116 ⁰	37.62'
Amboy Minerals	34 ⁰	29.21'	115 ⁰	44.60'
(Bristol Lake)				
Bagdad Obsidians	34 ⁰	37.17'	115 ⁰	50.10'
Baker Turquoise	35 ⁰	25.81'	115 ⁰	57.48'
(Toltec Mine)				
Ballarat Onyx Area	36 ⁰	04.27'	117 ⁰	09.20'
Brown Butte	34 ⁰	58.85'	118 ⁰	02.34'
Calico Tin Can Alley	34 ⁰	57.35'	116 ⁰	48.58'
Cadiz Fossils & Marble	34 ⁰	32.17'	115 ⁰	28.57'
Castle Butte	35 ⁰	06.68'	117 ⁰	52.46'
Cerro Gordo Mines	36 ⁰	32.27'	117 ⁰	47.18'
Copper World Mine	35 ⁰	30.23'	115 ⁰	36.08'
Coyote Lake Onyx	35 ⁰	02.25'	116 ⁰	49.04'
Jasper Hill	34 ⁰	48.98'	116 ⁰	29.95'
Field Siding	35 ⁰	00.33'	116 ⁰	31.04'
Gem Hill	34 ⁰	55.38'	118 ⁰	13.53'
Green Ash Hills	34 ⁰	56.80'	116 ⁰	46.66'
Hector Hills	34 ⁰	46.83'	116 ⁰	27.41'
Jade Cove	35 ⁰	54.82'	121 ⁰	28.10'
Jalama Beach	34 ⁰	30.66'	120 ⁰	30.06'
Kelbaker Road Specimens	34 ⁰	35.15'	115 ⁰	38.22'
Lavic Siding	34 ⁰	43.13'	116 ⁰	19.39'
Ludlow Obsidians	34 ⁰	43.29'	116 ⁰	07.88'
Newberry Springs Nodules	34 ⁰	48.20'	116 ⁰	40.25'
Opal Mountain Specimens	35 ⁰	09.67'	117 ⁰	11.28'
Randsburg Rhodonite	35 ⁰	19.37'	117 ⁰	40.14'

SAVE this page, PUNCH and FILE in your 3-ring binder

DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter

BACKYARD BUZZ

by *Tricia Sheppeard*



Sure sorry some of the rock hunting members missed the Soap Bubble Rhyolite on our last trip. Thanks go out to **Nicolette** and her father **Nick** for locating the site and **Gene's** suggestion for looking for it. I polished a piece of the material and the light hint of purple mixed with brown and some greenish agate and perhaps some opal takes an incredible shine. The polish is stunning and when you rub the polished surface you can't believe the smoothness—you can hardly feel the surface. We will bring it to show and tell at the March meeting.

We must keep **Gary Grant** in our hearts and prayers. He is recovering well from recent surgery after breaking his back. He says the surgery went well last week, his back is doing extremely well and he is nearly pain free in his back. He said his legs have lost a lot of their strength because he has been on his back recovering from the back injury and surgery. His spirits are great.

Hurrah! **Therese Carlson** has been bringing in sewn grab bags of beautiful colors and patterns to each meeting since the show. Twenty-two this past meeting and they so far have added up to 103. THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH! (This is a call to each and everyone -- please help us fill the grab bags with creative rocks - remember our figures from the 2007 show--we used 16,750 rocks to fill 670 grab bags.) There were 942 items won from the Wheel of Fortune - each item may have had multiple rocks on them but at least one rock was involved in each of the 942 items - it would sure be nice to get some donated materials -- Contact the **Sheppeards** if you have something to donate.

Johnny Rout put in two displays in the Indio Fair, knives and buckles and his extraordinary Silver Lace Onyx rock hammer. His daughter, **Susan**, put a display of her howlite colored pencil drawings of animals and birds and won first prize in her category and the prize was \$80. **Fred White** who displays in our club show also displayed at the Indio Fair and one of his cases won first prize and \$80.

Tricia and Norm were looking over the materials at the dealers' booths at the Indio Show and found a good deal on bags of 20 fluorites each. As **Tricia** was explaining to **Norm** that they were so reasonably priced, it would be a good buy for the club grab bags the dealer recognized us. The dealer, **Crystal Monster**, was our new dealer for the Barstow show this past year. **Miao Yang**, graciously donated four bags of fluorites to our club. The crystals are octahedrons (double pyramids) in pale green and some purple (85 pieces in total). An enormously generous gift, thanks!

A big thank you also to **Diamond Pacific**, who has generously replaced one of our well-worn 600 Grit Genie wheels and four of our 14,000 grit Genie wheels with 3,000 grit wheels. The new configuration of 3,000 grit Genie wheels helps establish a better polish transition because now we do not jump from 1,200 to 14,000 grit. Now you will move from 1,200 to 3,000 grit and achieve a much better finish on your cabs. **Diamond Pacific** also provided several new end pads for an even higher polish.

Dian Hare and Leslie Walker will be selling their wares (jewelry - stones by **Leslie** and silver by **Dian** ((The Two Sisters)) at the Lancaster show in April. Their work is so creative, light, lacy and beautiful!!!!

Thanks go to **Janet Wentz** for donating a coffee container of tumble polished stones for the 2008 grab bags.

DESERT DIGGINS

Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



WORKSHOP WRAP

by Gene and Peggy Haines

Workshop - February 15, 2008

First off we need to all thank *Diamond Pacific* (by way of *Beth* and *Bill*) for providing all members with **four brand new Genie wheels of 3,000 grit!** They have '**Donated**' these to the club to use. *Gene Haines* and *Norm Sheppard* put these on and conditioned them for use prior to the members showing up to use the Genies. *Peggy Haines* vacuumed the clubhouse because the dust storm blew in sand at both doors.

New **Genie Instructions** have been officially posted on the wall in front of the Genies. **All Members - please Read and Heed these Instructions.** Also note the change of dumping the Genie water trays into a 5-gal Bucket and then emptying this in the toilet and **NOT** washing rocks in the Porcelain Sink (cracking and chipping can occur).

Guests *Floyd Burns* began cabbing an agate. *David, Greg and Louis Sais* received lessons on Rock identification, observed Genie usage, and oil saw cutting.

Danny and Vivian Watts brought in their newest creation of multicolored marble Trivet specimens cut into squares. *Dian Hare* brought hand made creations, put on *Leslie Walker's* trees to show off the 'Two Girls' Rock Shop' output! *Gene* gave tours to two different groups of guests.

Jeanne Laymance polished her first agate specimen. *Carl Atkinson* observed the cutting, shaping, and polishing and kibitzed with *Norm*. *Bill Earnest* polished an Onyx when he had an opportunity to get on the Genie. *Gloria Moore* polished several different types of specimens while getting used to the small circle technique. *Janet Wentz* was fine tuning her *Shirley Grant* carved green Soapstone Otter to bring it back to life! *John Bird* (our resident 'Creature Creator') was also polishing a few specimens of his choice! Go John Go!

Katie Boyd came in for a brief visit and checked out the latest happenings. *Leslie* brought in two Jewelry Trees with a Silver Lace Onyx base. *Matthew Earnest* cut multiple cabs of silver lace and began polishing to finish some of his first cabs! *Nicolette Grill* gabbed and cabbed! She's learning the ropes of being President (networking) and is doing great!

Norm was 'taking numbers' with a line of saw users. I hope everyone thanked him! *Peggy* took notes/photos for the newsletter. *Sam Mades* polished Jaspers he found near his workshop on the Fort. Nice finds *Sam*! *Sandy Wagner* polished a beautiful Rutilated Quartz. *Therese Carlson* polished agate specimens. *Timothy Moore* polished a variety of materials and took *Tricia Sheppard's* advice as to the small sized specimens. *Tricia* gave a mini-class on Genie Wheel use and the importance of using them correctly since wrong use can result in expensive repair/replacement of diamond wheels.

A new '**Poster**' diagram was mounted by the Genie that shows the Grit of the Wheels and \$ Cost. The other issues are; how to not gouge the wheel, use of small specimens, sharing the Genies, and do not leave unattended.

We only have five machines; we must be courteous and allow other members to take a turn. Two people can work on a Genie, one on the left - shaping their specimen while the second person can be final polishing on the right side! **Buddy-up** and share the wealth!

DESERT DIGGINS

Mojava Desert Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



SHOW SCOOP - MARCH 2008



1-2 - ARCADIA, CALIFORNIA: Show; Monrovia Rockhounds; Los Angeles Arboretum, Ayers Hall, 301 N. Baldwin Ave.; Sat. 9-4:30, Sun. 9-4:30; adults \$7, students and seniors \$5, children \$2.50; access to all facilities included; contact Jo Anna Ritchey, 224 Oaks Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016, (626) 359-1624; e-mail: j.ritchey@verizon.net; Web site: www.moroks.com

1-2 - ESCONDIDO, CALIFORNIA: Annual show; Palomar Gem & Mineral Club; Escondido National Guard Armory, 304 Park Ave.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; contact Van Lynch, (760) 749-4164; e-mail: michelleandvan@hotmail.com

1-2 - VENTURA, CALIFORNIA: Show; The Ventura Gem & Mineral Society is holding its 46th annual show at the Ventura County Fairgrounds (10 W. Harbor Blvd); Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4. The show is free. Kids will enjoy making fossils, grab bags, and a variety of other kids' activities. There will also be demonstrations of lapidary arts and exhibits from wonderful private collections of rocks, minerals, fossils, and lapidary work. Raffle prizes will be drawn at the end of the show, and a silent rock auction will be held continuously throughout the show. Fifteen dealers in fossils, minerals, lapidary equipment, slabs, etc., will be on hand, along with a country store featuring flea market items, used books and magazines, and plants. Contact Jim Brace-Thompson, (805) 659-3577; jbraceth@roadrunner.com; Web site: www.gvgms.org

7-9 - DEL MAR, CALIFORNIA: Show; Gem Faire; Del Mar Fairgrounds/Exhibit Hall, 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd.; Fri. 12-7, Sat. 10-7, Sun. 10-5; \$5 weekend pass; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com

7-9 - VICTORVILLE, CALIFORNIA: Tailgate; Victor Valley Gem & Mineral Club; Stoddard Wells; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; contact JoAnn Beall, (760) 217-2628.

8-9 - SAN MARINO, CALIFORNIA: Show, "50 Golden Years of Rockhounding"; Pasadena Lapidary Society; San Marino Masonic Center, 3130 Huntington Dr.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; displays, dealers, gem materials, beads, tools, lapidary demonstrations, kids' "sand scoop" game, raffle; contact Kevin Birnbaum, 121 S Chester Ave., Apt. #11; Pasadena, CA 91106, (626) 564-0935; e-mail: birnbaum@gmail.com

14-16 - SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA: Orange Belt Mineralogical Society, Western Regional League Ball Park, 6707 Little League Drive, Hours: Fri, Sat. 9 a.m. to dusk; Sun. 9 - 4, Emma Couveau (951) 288-6182



"The brook would lose its song if we removed the **rocks**"

Unknown



MINUTES - FEBRUARY 1, 2008

Meeting called to order by **Gene Haines** at 7:10 p.m. Salute to the flag. Happy Birthday to our February members.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS: **Katie Boyd** swore in the 2008 officers and board members. Officers are **Nicolette Grill** (President), **Gene Haines** (Vice-President), and **Janet Wentz** (Treasurer). Board members are **John Bird**, **Wayne Mallon**, **Kemp Root**, and **Rob Stapp**.

PROGRAM: Treasures of the Earth - Diamonds (V-56 Video). Describes how diamonds are formed, mined and made into gems.

MINUTES: January 2008 minutes approved as written.

TREASURY REPORT: **Janet Wentz** reported an increase in 2007 show costs due to receipt of a bill from Desert Dispatch. She also reported on costs for dues on 74 members, insurance and 4 CFMS newsletters.

OLD BUSINESS: The March 7th program will be on Trivets by **Tricia Sheppard**. The April 4th program will be the Miocene Wetlands of the Southwest by **Walt Wright**. **Donna Patterson** will be moving a little later than anticipated. The **Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club** is hosting a co-op field trip to Kramer Junction on Saturday February 9, 2008.

NEW BUSINESS: The television program Dirty Jobs will be airing a show on the Searles Lake Crystal Dig on February 5th and will re-air it on February 12th. The San Joaquin Valley Lapidary Society annual show is April 4-9 at the Kern County Fair Grounds Bakersfield. The CFMS newsletter has competition forms for the June 27-29 Federation show held in Ventura. The Zzyzx Symposium is March 23-30 for 1 week, cost is \$300 per person, deadline is March 1st. We received a renewal to the Cal State Mining and Minerals Association at a cost of \$1.00 per member. **Tricia Sheppard** made a motion that we should renew and **Janet Wentz** seconded the motion. None opposed, motion carried. The Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club tailgate is March 7-9.

FIELD TRIP: The **Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club** is hosting a field trip to Kramer Junction on Saturday February 9, 2008. **Wagon Master:** **Janet Flecher**, (760) 949-0796. **Place:** Burger King Parking Lot in Kramer Junction off Rt 395 at 9:00 a.m. **Material:** Agate, Jasper, Palm Root, and Wood. Our regularly scheduled field trip for February 16, 2008 will be announced at the next workshop.

DOOR PRIZES: Door prizes were provided by **Dian Hare** and **Leslie Walker**. Winners were **Nick Beall**, **Kent Berryman**, **JoAnn Beall**, **Gene Haines**, and **Joan Bird**.

HOSTESS: Provided by **Ruth Mallon** and **Janet Wentz** were delicious refreshments of crackers, cookies, vegetables and dip, apple dessert, soda, pie, coffee and punch.

CAB OF THE MONTH: **Leslie Walker** won with a Green Moss Agate.

SHOW AND TELL: **Janet Wentz** brought Hector tumbled, Carnelian, and Smokey Quartz. **Gene Haines** shared Amethyst, faceted stones, and Rutilated Quartz. **Donna Patterson** had lovely Amethyst crystals. **Vivian Watts** shared her collection of blue and black Diamonds, Mystic Topaz, Ametrine, and Tanzanite. **Danny Watts** had many faceted stones and a wonderful Gem Tree. **Tricia Sheppard** shared Malachite and Rutilated Quartz and a Garnet bracelet among other items.

The next board meeting will be February 8th at 6:30. Anyone who hasn't paid their dues need to see **Janet Wentz**. **Janet** donated Citrine for the grab bags. **Janet** said the Flint Knapper has volunteered to come back to our show. **Nick Beall** asked why the club doesn't take over the food concession. **Tricia Sheppard** commented that we are helping out the community through the Jobs Daughters and that we don't have enough manpower to run it. President **Nicolette Grill** said it would be discussed at the next board meeting.

ATTENDANCE: There were 22 members and 10 guests in attendance. Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectively submitted,



Peggy Haines
Acting Secretary