



Birthdays

Nancy Knapp
March 2

Tony Roehl
March 4

Jeannie Lingerfelt
March 7

Bill Hood
March 18

Joe Goetz
March 27

Anniversaries

Cary and Kathy Holst
March 23

Who is Bringing Snacks?

March is Cake! Margret Henson and Cary Holst will be bringing the snacks in March. Thank you!



The Prez Box - March 2025



I was surprised to be at the last meeting when I had actually planned to be sitting on a beach in Hawaii. Maybe next time I won't miss my flight. It is really nice to see such competent members ready to fill in.

I will have to miss the March general meeting. I will be visiting my grandson, daughter and son-in-law and celebrating my grandson's birthday. He is in fifth grade and he

already has a great rock collection. He will probably be sending me back to polish a few of his recent finds.

I am pleased and thankful for the work of all our board members who are working on getting ready for the summer show. Tom is already doing a great job as treasurer, and it looks like all the paperwork is up to date...thank you Tom. A thank you to Wayne for helping with the school contract. We have a lot of things to take care of ahead of the show and I am glad we have experienced board members to help out. A special thank you to those who raised their hands to take on new job. We look forward to a great team effort.

I also look forward to more field trips and Dave Lambert has some great ideas. Please continue to check the bulletin (its online...omsinc.org). It has everything you need to know for field trips, workshop times, and "adopt-a-highway" times are on the website, thank you Wes.

One last reminder, please pay you dues. We want to see everyone is in our "Red Book" directory.

Hope to see you soon,
Joe Goetz, President OMS

March 2025

March 3 at 7:00 pm - Board Meeting in Wes Lingerfelt's Garden

March 8 at 8:00 am - Highway Clean-up at the Southeast corner of Highway 101 and 166E. Breakfast to follow.

March 9 at 2:00 pm - Field Trip with Dave Lambert to San Simeon

March 11 at 7:00pm - General Meeting at the Oasis Senior Center.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Program: Dave Machin presents the Petersen Rock Garden in Oregon

Display: Volcanic Rocks such as scoria or obsidian. The Petersen Rock Garden was constructed entirely from local Oregon rocks.

April 2025

April 7 at 7:00 pm - Board Meeting in Wes Lingerfelt's Garden

April 8 at 7:00pm - General Meeting at the Oasis Senior Center.

Program: Wes Lingerfelt - Geology - Tentative

Display:

April - Field Trip TBD

Geology Outreach to Elementary School Students

In December the Orcutt Mineral Society donated \$250 to the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center to be used for education in natural science. The Dunes Center is so grateful for this donation and they have already started producing lesson plans for the children.

Tara and Joey spent a few hours at our club workshop cutting porcelain tiles to be used as streak plates. The students who are participating in the afterschool program in Guadalupe will all get a travel rock identification kit which will include a small white streak tile, a piece of black sandpaper, a pre 1982 copper penny, a piece of glass, a steel nail, a quartz point, and a handy Mohs hardness reference sheet. Making 80 of these kits has been quite the process. It took a year to save up all the medicine bottles to put everything in. Future classes will include a similar DIY hardness kit to be used for rock and mineral identifications in class.

The lesson that has been developed goes over all the physical ways that geologists can use to identify rocks and minerals. The lesson covers color, luster, crystal shape, cleavage and fracture, density, the acid test, magnetism, phosphorescence, streak, and hardness. The students will use streak testing and hardness to identify some mystery rocks and minerals as the companion activity to the lesson.

In other news, Joey has been using the OMS workshop to cut and prepare 360 rocks for the students to use for an art and nature project. We are following Joe Geotz's lead on making paintings around beautiful rocks.

The first rock identification classes will be the week of March 10th so look for updates in the OMS April Newsletter.

Continued on Page 3

Make your own DIY hardness kit:

Fingernail - Hardness 2.5
 Copper Penny - Hardness 3.5
 Glass Plate - Hardness 5.5
 Steel Nail - Hardness 6.5
 Quartz Point - Hardness 7.0

Mohs Hardness Cheat Sheet from the [National Park Service](#)

Continued from Page 2



Cutting Tiles



Small 1 inch by 2 inch porcelain tiles for streak test kits



Polishing and cutting 360 rocks for art and nature.



Numbering mystery mineral samples to help instructors teach the students.

**RENEWAL
REMINDER**

Membership Dues - Pay by March General Meeting

This is a reminder for you to pay your OMS membership dues. Membership is \$24.00 for Individual, \$34.00 per couple, \$5.00 Each Additional Family Member, \$5 for Juniors under age of 18. One time initiation fee for new

members is \$10.00. We will be printing the Red Book in March. If you would like your information to be included, please pay your dues ASAP. Thank you very much!

Displays from the February General Meeting



Opals - Wet vs Dry - What is the Difference?

By Tara Machin

I must admit that opals are a bit of a mystery to me. Every rock hunter I know has a glass jar full of water and iridescence minerals. How on earth can anyone make jewelry out of opals that need to be kept in water? I had a long talk with an Ethiopian opal dealer at our last rock show about opals and came away with even more questions. Apparently there are two types of opals, wet and dry. They both can be made into jewelry, but they both have special considerations.

Wet opals are called hydrophane opals. They temporarily show brilliant color changes when they are submerged in water. I was under the impression that wet opals needed to stay wet.

Continued on Page 5

Continued from Page 4

However, this is not necessarily the case. Sometime “wet” refers to the presentation method of putting the opals into water so that buyers can see how the finished, polished opals will look once set into jewelry. Australian opals have a very low water content and a tight structure. They don’t need to be stored in water and are usually not affected when they get wet. If an opal is truly a hydrophane opal, removing the opal from water can cause it to dry out and crack. This makes the opal less suited for jewelry and more suited for looking pretty in a glass storage jar.

According to Geoscience Australia, 95% of the precious opals are mined in Australia. They were discovered in the late 1800s, but were not a popular gemstone until 1915 when an opal rush started when gold prospectors found some opals near their prospecting site. Australian opals are considered non-porous or “dry” opals. They have very tight structures that are impermeable to water. It doesn’t seem to matter if you submerge them in water or not, their structures are not affected and will make very beautiful jewelry.

www.opalsdownunder.com.au

www.ga.gov.au



Photos from ausopalstore.com

What is a Saruca?

By Tara Machin



Photo from amazon.com

What the heck is a saruca? I ran into the word while I was doing research on the Crater of Diamonds in Arkansas. There was no description about what it was, but apparently you can rent one at the State Park if you want to look for diamonds. I just had to know what a saruca was, how to use one, and why you would ever need one.

In basic terms, a saruca is a gem sieve. It is a round, flat screen that you use to separate gems like diamonds from the dirt they sit in. It is similar to a gold pan, but instead of looking for heavy gold at the bottom of a gold pan, you use water and a circular motion to force the diamonds to the center of the sieve. I highly recommend watching this YouTube video on how to use one. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmYO-vdSP6o>.

“The Most Boring Experiment Ever”

The sailing stones are mysterious stones that seem to slide across the Racetrack Playa in Death Valley National Park leaving tracks behind them.

There have been many theories to explain the moving rocks. Some think that high winds, pranksters, or aliens are responsible for the movement. However, researchers wanted to figure out the answer once and for all. In 2011 they attached GPS units to 15 rocks and proceeded with the, “most boring experiment ever.” It wasn’t until 2014 that the mystery was solved.

In 2014 geologists, James and Richard Norris, didn’t actually get data from the GPS units, they happened to witness the rocks moving. They filmed 60 rocks sliding over a thin layer of ice that had formed after a rain storm and a cold night in the desert. The sun started to shine and it melted the top layer of ice. That allowed the rocks to “float” over the ice sheet. A small breeze was enough to push the rocks along the ground.

The researchers thought that this experiment would take decades to yield some useful data since the rocks so seldom move. However, they ended up getting some pretty amazing information. After over 99 years, the mystery was solved.



Photo from www.geologyin.com

The Most Entertaining Rocks Ever

Have you ever heard of the Ringing Rocks? These are rocks that resonate like a bell when you strike them. These type of rocks exist all over the world, but you can find a field of them in Pennsylvania at the Ringing Rocks Park.

Ringing rocks are also known as sonorous rocks or lithophonic rocks. In Pennsylvania, they are formed from diabase rock, an intrusive igneous rock that is made of feldspar and a high aluminum and iron content. The metal content makes a clear tone like a hammer hitting an anvil.

If you visit the Ringing Rock Park, you will find a field of gray colored rocks. Visitors are encouraged to hit the rocks with hammers. Rocks that ring are called “live” rocks while those rocks that do not ring are called “dead” rocks.

If you are looking for singing rocks closer to home you can visit a singing stone in Riverside, California. The ancient Native American tribes were thought to use this stone in sacred rituals because of its sound. It is not recommended to try and ring the rock by hitting it. The boulder is protected by the local tribes. So if you would like to strike a harmonious rock, please go to Pennsylvania.



Photo from trailsthatrock.com

Upcoming Rock and Mineral Shows

March 1-2, 2025 - Ventura, CA
 Ventura Gem and Mineral Society
 Contact: (805) 312-8467, info@vgms.org
 Website: <http://www.vgms.org>

March 8-9, 2025 - Turlock, CA
 Mother Lode Mineral Society
 Website: www.turlockgemshow.com

March 7-9, 2025 - Stoddard Wells, CA
 Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club
 Website: <http://vvgmc.org>

March 15-16, 2025 - San Jose, CA
 Santa Clara Valley Gem & Mineral Society
 Website: <http://www.scvgms.org>,
[facebook.com/santaclaravalleygem&mineralsociety/](https://www.facebook.com/santaclaravalleygem&mineralsociety/)

March 22-23, 2025 - Angels Camp, CA
 Calaveras Gem and Mineral Society
 Website: <https://calaverasgemandmineral.net/show.html>

March 22-23, 2025 - Torrance, CA
 South Bay Lapidary & Mineral Society
 Website: <http://southbaylapidaryandmineralsociety.com>

March 21-23, 2025 - Fresno, CA
 Fresno Gem and Mineral Society
 Website: <https://www.fgms.rocks>

April 5, 2025 - Roseville, CA
 Roseville Rock Rollers
 Website: <https://rockrollers.com>

April 12-13, 2025 - Placerville, CA
 El Dorado County Mineral and Gem Society
 Contact: mvgmc@sti.net
 Website: <http://mariposagemclub.org>

April 12-13, 2025 - Thousand Oaks, CA
 Canejo Gem and Mineral Club
 Contact: Karen Abrahams (805) 908-1428
 Website: <http://www.CGAMC.org>

April 26-27, 2025 - Anaheim, CA
 Searchers Gem and Mineral Society
 Contact: anaheimsearchers@gmail.com
 Website: <http://www.searchersrocks.org>

More information can be found on the CFMS website at cfmsinc.org

OMS Membership

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

The ORE-CUTTS (named after William Orcutt) was first published in 1966. Member Helen Azevedo was the first editor. The Orcutt Mineral Society was founded in 1958, and was also named after Orcutt who was a geologist and civil engineer who worked in the Santa Maria Valley as a District Manager for Union Oil Company in 1888. In 1889, William Orcutt discovered the mineral and fossil wealth of the La Brea Tar Pits on the property of Captain Alan Hancock in Los Angeles. The La Brea Tar Pits are one of the most significant fossil finds in paleontological history.

OMS is a non-profit organization dedicated to stimulating an interest in the earth sciences. The club offers educational programs, field trips, scholarships, and other opportunities for families and individuals to pursue an interest in the collecting and treatment of lapidary materials, fossils, gems, minerals, and other facets of the Earth Sciences. In addition, another goal of this Society is to promote good fellowship and proper ethics in pursuit of the Society's endeavors. Operating Rules have been set forth to guide the officers and members of the Society in accomplishing these aims. Affiliations of the OMS include American Federation of Mineral Societies, and California Federation of Mineral Societies.

