

# NOC GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY NEWS

Vol, 20 No. 7

September 2001

## President's Message

by Don Warthen

Well it's been a long hot summer, will a little on the hot side; I hope everyone had a fun and safe vacation this summer. It was good to see everyone at the picnic last month.

We have been planning for the next year and it looks as though we are going to have some great programs. We are trying to setup a beading class, a class on polishing fire agate, we trying to get Walt Wright to lead another bus trip through the Orange county mountains, a trip to the Boron dry lake and much more.

At this next meeting we will be appointing a nominating committee and will have nominations at the October meeting and hold the election at the November meeting. As we now have two-year terms we will be electing only half the officers.

At the November meeting we will be holding an auction and will need items to auction for a great cause (the Christmas Party).

Finally I would like to wish Oscar a speedy recovery.

## Programs

by Irene Veloz

Our speaker for the month of September will be Virginia Grafton.

## Refreshments

by Oscar Veloz

Mike and Mary Maneth are on the refreshment list to bring goodies for our September 11 meeting.

Thanks to Dana Matula and Joe Reed for bringing the refreshments to the June meeting.

## NOC Club Activities

Cab Classes at Walt Messemer's — 7-10 p.m.  
every Wednesday on

Board Meeting — To be announced

Regular Meeting — September 11, 7:30 p.m.

Field Trip — To be announced.

Deadline for NOC News — September 17.

## September Meeting

Date: September 11

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: La Habra Community Center  
101 W. La Habra Blvd.

Program: Our speaker this month will be Virginia Grafton on what she learned at the Women in Mining seminar.

## Members in the News

HAPPY BIRTHDAY and have a wonderful day all of you who were born in July (August and September birthdays are on Page 2.)

*Chuck Lortz - July 18*

*Walt Messemer - July 19*

*Norberto Elicker - July 29*

*Walt Abramson - July 31*

Your gemstone is Ruby.

Your flower is Larkspur or Water Lily.

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## Shows and Events

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via CFMS Web Page

**September 22** Escondido, CA  
Polomar Gem & Mineral Club  
Redwood Senior Center Meeting Room  
13th Ave. & Redwood Street  
Hours: 10-4 one day show  
Don Parsley (760) 745-6181

**September 22-23** Downey, CA  
Delvers Gem & Mineral Society  
Woman's Club of Downey  
9813 Paramount Blvd.  
Hours: Sat. 10-5 Sun. 10-4

**October 3-7** Joshua Tree, CA  
Sportsmans Club  
Sportsmans Hall  
6225 Sunburst Avenue  
Hours: Sat. 8-5 Sun. 8-3  
Gary Pallmer (650) 366-3430

**October 13-14** Trona, CA  
Sears Lake Gem & Mineral Society  
13337 Main Street  
Hours: Sat. 8-5 Sun. 8-4  
Bonnie Fairchild (760) 372-5356

**October 20-21** Whittier, CA  
Whittier Gem & Mineral Society  
Whittier Masonic Temple  
7604 Greenleaf Ave.  
Hours: 10-5 both days  
Jay Valle (626) 934-9764

**November 3-4** Oxnard, CA  
Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society  
800 Hobson Way, Oxnard  
Hours: Sat. 9-5 Sun. 9-4  
"Gems for the Holidays" (Jingle Bell Rock)  
e-mail webmaster@gms.net

**November 3-4** Fontana, CA  
Kaiser Rock and Gem Club  
California Steel Ind. 9400 Cherry Ave.  
Hours: 9-5 both days  
Jo Ann Watson (909) 355-7455

**November 17-18** Victorville, CA  
Victorville Gem & Mineral Club  
14800 7th Street  
Hours: 9-5 both days  
Gil Gilbert (760) 868-6900

**November 24-25** Barstow, CA  
Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Soc.  
Barstow Community Center  
841 S. Barstow Road  
Hours: 10-5 both days  
Bob Depue (760) 255-1030

**December 1-2** San Bernardino, CA  
Orange Belt Mineralogical Society  
Corner of E. Street and 31st Street  
Hours: Sat. 10-6 Sun. 10-5  
Tony Gilham (909) 820-2122

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## Members in the News

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY and have a wonderful day all of you who were born in **August**.

*Linda Parker - August 3*  
*Walton Wright - August 7*  
*Sandy Mogan - August 27*

Your gemstone is Sardonyx

Your flower is Poppy or Gladiolus

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY and have a wonderful day all of you who were born in **September**.

*Angie Harwood - September 3*  
*Mike Maneth - September 4*  
*Irene Veloz - September 6*  
*Don Ogden - September 13*  
*loretta Ogden - September 16*  
*Dolores Maggs - September 23*  
*Don Warthen - September 25*

Your gemstone is Sapphire.

Your flower is Aster or Morning Glory.

# NOC Board Meeting August 28, 2001

by Susan Hansen

The meeting was called to order at 7:14 p.m. by President Don Warthen.

The upcoming election was discussed. Some positions are for 2 years, others need to be elected this year. This year we need a 2nd VP, Treasurer, 2 Directors.

The next meeting will be September 11. We need to have a nominating committee. Ofelia was nominated and elected from the board, Don Warthen will appoint one, the membership will select 3 at the September meeting.

EDUCATION-we discussed the mini-show at the park. Also discussed one-day seminars we would like to have. Bead stringing workshop has been requested. We still want to do the Jurupa trip for the Webelos. Also looking into a Fire Agate seminar. Loretta to get more information. We also considered a lecture series at the show with speakers and sign-ups for a geology tour of Orange County. Izzie will try and contact Walt Wright. Would Ralph Clark Park put a display in at the show?

FIELDTRIP report given by Izzie Burns - October 28, either a geology walking trip about 1 mile up the canyon, about 2 hours, could also drive to the pond used for bird watching, or to the desert tortoise preserve. Alternate: Mitchell's caverns, or Boron plant museum and ore dump. BLM is having a cleanup day at Calico Mountains area again, September 29. Also suggested, 1 day trips to Palos Verdes for Barite, or Medrano Marsh for fossils, also by Ports of Call.

FEDERATION report given by Loretta Ogden - New law in effect July 1, 2001 raffles are illegal, have to file a \$20 fee and application to state, have to report on each raffle. Federation Safety seminar

at Los Gatos September 29. Federation Business meeting in Visalia November 9 through 11.

SHOW report - Jane Livezey sent a letter with copy of publicity for the show, some information in Federation Directors packet. She doesn't want to do publicity next year. The magazines need information 3 or 4 months in advance. Loretta talked to Mike Maneth about sending contracts to last years' dealers. We have to talk to the city again about charges.

CHRISTMAS PARTY report - Jane also contacted the hotel about the Christmas party. Other suggestions were made, we have to get more information. It wouldn't be a problem to cancel the hotel this early, if we find another place.

COMMITTEES - We need to appoint a nominating committee at the meeting, also a committee for the Christmas party.

AFMS - Izzie reports that they decided to do a Lewis and Clark Trail Bicentennial, want to do a pamphlet on rocks and geology along the trail, and get information from the 17 states they crossed. She is collecting pennies to support it - trying to raise a million pennies. She would like to put a "cup" out at the meeting.

Our program speaker in June mentioned that she was a former AFMS scholarship recipient. It is rare to hear what happens to them after they graduate, and was nice to know she put it to good use.

REFRESHMENTS - September: Mike Maneth, October: Izzie & Bill, November: Susan, Ginny & Jerry. Oscar will call Mike to remind him.

September PROGRAM - Ginnie Grafton on Geology Education programs.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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## Lost Arch Placer Diggings

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*From The Desert Magazine 6/01,  
Shadow mountain G & M Soc.*

Here is a tale for all you gold seekers. Is it true? Is it still there? Can you find it?

Among the many lost mine stories current in the Southwest, one of the most persistent is the tale of the Lost Arch diggings. Most versions agree that this mysterious lost placer is located in the region of the Turtle or Old Woman mountains, in the southeastern part of the Mojave desert of California. Anyway, here is the story, and you may draw your own conclusions as to its authenticity.

*by JOHN D. MITCHELL Illustration*

*by Mary Anderson*

The Lost Arch placer diggings, said to be located about 40 miles south of Goffs and 25 miles north of Rice, in or near the north end of the Turtle Mountains, in eastern San Bernardino County, California, is another of the many mystery mines of the southwest. The now famous placer was first discovered by a small party of Mexican placer miners on their way across the mountains to the Colorado River placer diggings in the vicinity of La Paz. They camped one night on the wash to the east of the Old Woman mountains and somewhere near the north end of the Turtle range. There had been heavy rain, and bunch grass grew along the edges of the wash, and small pools of clear water stood on the shallow bed rock.

The following morning while out looking for the hobbled pack mules, the attention of the miners was attracted to the large amount of hematite of iron scattered over the mesa and along the wash. The soil on the ridges and along the edges of the broad wash was red in color, and from all appearances, was good placer ground. A few pans of dirt proved it to be rich in placer gold. Some of the samples yielded as much as \$5.00 worth of gold to the pan. Members of the party carried placer machines for the purpose of establishing themselves at the mines at La Paz, so it was decided to stay and work the new find. Accordingly, some of the men were sent down to La Paz for provisions while the others found a large pool of water that had collected from the recent rains and made adobes sufficient to construct a two-room house. As was their custom, the Mexicans built the two rooms separately

and extended the roof over the open space between the two rooms. The entrance to this open space was through a large adobe arch which Mexicans call a San Juan.

The new-found diggings proved to be very rich and the Mexicans sluiced out \$30,000 worth of gold before the dry season dried up the water holes. There was a small spring a few miles away, later known as Coffin springs, but it did not furnish enough water to carry on sluicing operations. In view of the scarcity of water, it was decided to store the equipment and return the following season and continue their operations.

Reaching Los Angeles, the party split up, some going north to the Mother Lode country, and others returning to Mexico. No maps had been drawn of the placer field, and later, when separate members of the party sought to relocate the placer field, they were unsuccessful.

In time, the contents of the adobe house were carried away by Mojave Indians and the house itself fell down. The arch was still standing as late as 1900, and was seen by the late Peter Kohler, who did not know of the existence of the rich placer diggings. According to another version of the story, the placer was named after a natural arch of earth or rock standing over the upper end of a deep gulch running down from the east side of the Turtle mountains. This is very unlikely, as the terrain does not lend itself to the formation of that kind of natural arch.

The adobe arch has now been leveled by erosion and the location can only be identified by some of the broken and rusted contents of the old adobe house that are still scattered over the desert near where it once stood. An old tub found there in later years caused the diggings to be known as the Lost Tub placer.

It was later discovered that the hematite scattered over the desert below the old house carried about \$100 a ton in gold and shows free gold when broken open. The red iron stained gravel on the ridges and along the wash is still rich in placer gold and will, no doubt, return a handsome profit.

Many expeditions have set out from Los Angeles and Yuma to search for the lost diggings. No doubt many of the searchers have seen this red mesa thickly strewn with boulders of hematite of iron, but have never associated them with the "Lost Arch" placer diggings.

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# Safety - Desert Driving

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by Chuck McKie, CFMS Safety Chair 2001

You may still be heading out to the desert at this time of the year, so I think you should consider these suggestions. California's deserts are beautifully unique. They contain endless panoramas of some of nature's most exquisite creations, but hidden amongst their quiet beauty are also hostile environments that can trap the unprepared traveler.

This article will give the desert motorist suggestions that can be life saving - especially when driving off the main highways. Before traveling on any desert road, however, have your vehicle thoroughly checked, with special attention given to these items:

## Survival Checklist for Your Car

1. Cooling System. Carefully examine all belts and hoses for cracks or leaks, replacing any you may have doubts about. Be sure to carry extras and don't forget tools and water to accomplish a change if necessary. Don't overlook the radiator, which should be properly filled with coolant, and while driving keep a close eye on the temperature gauge, shutting off the air conditioner if the engine heat creeps too high.

2. Tires. Plenty of tread and properly inflated. Don't forget the spare, making sure your jack and tire tools are in good condition. The extreme heat, especially at higher sustained speeds on desert highways, can take its toll not only on worn or old tires, but new ones as well.

3. Electrical System. Check all lighting equipment, making sure it is in good operating condition. Take a close look at the battery. Are the cables tight, and is it filled to the proper level? Don't forget your windshield wipers - in case you get caught in a sudden desert storm.

Away from the main highways, the desert has become a major recreation area for rockhounds, off-road vehicle enthusiasts, and urban dwellers seeking remote areas on weekends. Any of these desert lovers could easily get into serious trouble without proper preparation for what can quickly become a hostile environment.

## Here are some of the rules to follow:

1. Touch Home Base. Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

2. Carry a Survival Kit. Extra water, extra gasoline, concentrated food, matches, collapsible shovel, blanket, work gloves, hand axe, tire chains, toe chain, flashlight, flares, sheath knife, plastic spray bottle, compass, signal mirror, sand mat, good jack, tools and basic extra parts for your car (hoses, fan belts) and maps of your area.

## If the worst happens...

1. Don't Panic. If you have a breakdown, consider the alternatives. Rig a tent for shade. Collect brush for a signal fire. Inventory your resources. Stay With Your Car. Your horn can be heard for long distances, and your lights can be seen at night. Your car provides shade and shelter. Remember, it is easier for aircraft and searchers to spot a car than a person.

2. Don't Park or Camp in Dry Washes. During sudden storms, these gullies become raging rivers of water and debris.

3. Carry a Spray Bottle. To conserve your water, spray it into your mouth. If you have plenty, spray your skin to prevent dehydration.

4. Relax and Conserve Your Strength. Watch for aircraft or others searchers, and be prepared to light your signal fire. Food and water will last much longer if you remain calm.

Source: CHP in *The Firing Line*, Aug. 2001 Pg.25

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## Fall Festival of Gems

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*from Lithoshere June 2001*

The Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society kicks off Earth Sciences Week on **Sunday, October 7, 2001**, with a Fall Festival of Gems. The Festival will be open from 10 AM to 4 PM. The Fallbrook Mineral Museum is located at 260 Rocky Crest Road, telephone 760-723-1728. Parking and admission are free.

The day's events will include gem, mineral and fossil education displays in the Museum, sale of rough cutting material, slabs and specimens from the Museum's duplicates, demonstrations of lapidary techniques, working with beads, wire wrap techniques, forming spheres, and geode sawing; and opportunity drawings for fabulous specimens.

Young people will be especially interested in panning for gold, helping to prepare a fossil whale bone for the Museum, and in selecting their own geode to be opened. They can also test their luck on the wheel of fortune.

An hourly opportunity drawing will be conducted. Several more prizes, and a grand prize, will be given away in a special drawing at the end of the day. You don't need to be present to win.

Top dealers in minerals, gems, and fossils will offer a broad range of purchase possibilities in price ranges suitable for every budget.

Inquiries may be addressed to the FGMS at P.O. Box 62, Fallbrook, CA 92088. General Chairman is Karen Dawes at 760-723-2774. Dealer inquiries may be made to Bob Lowrie at 760-728-0846 or Dick Mayer at 760-439-7462.

The Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society was founded in 1957 and is one of a very few similar societies that operates its own museum. The FGMS president is Gina Palculich.

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## NOC Demonstrations at County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation

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Walt Messemer making cabs for the kids at Venture County Park park.



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## NOC and Autonetics Summer Picnic at Ralph B. Clark Regional Park

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## Raising Money for AFMS Scholarship Fund

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by *Izzie Burns, AFMS President*

I am raising money for our Scholarship Fund; as there is so much need for funds to help those seeking higher education. We only use the interest on the money donated for the scholarship grants.

Each year each Federation receives four scholarship grants of \$2000.00 for students who are working toward a Master or Doctorate Degree, major must be in any of the Earth Sciences; men or women equally accepted; and need not be in actual want, but should be reasonably in need of assistance, and worthy of it. The CFMS OP's establish a Jury of Awards - President, Immediate Past President, and Second Vice President (chairman) whose duty it is to choose an honoree. This person should have made contributions to the study of geology. Nominees for this award can be made by any member and must be submitted to the Chairman before the fall meeting. The winner is honored for his accomplishments at the annual banquet and is given the opportunity to choose two students with the above qualifications to receive two annual grants.

With the high cost of books, supplies, etc., our Scholarships of \$2000.00 for two years needs to be increased and the drop in interest rates is not helping us maintain our program. Some books for collage classes are \$150.00. When I taught Algebra at the Community college an Algebra book was \$12.00 now a very similar book costs \$75.00. Professors at Cal State Fullerton have told me that some graduate students can not afford to buy gas at \$2.00 per gallon to drive to Zzyzx to do research for their doctorate degree.

Thus I decided to raise 1 million pennies for the fund. Bill made a Wishing Well and has carried it to Roswell, NM, Arlington, TX, Pasa Robles, CA and Syracuse, NY. By the time you read this it will be

taken to Enumclaw, WA and Rice Lake, WI. We started the project at the conventions and are about 1/4 the way to the million. If every rockhound gave \$.20, I would have \$10,000 (1 million pennies). How is your club doing? 0 - \$25.-\$100. or \$500. How is your Federation doing? CFMS \$141.71; Eastern - \$688.32; Rocky Mountain \$1306.90. I have receive a penny, 5 gold dollars, five dollar, ten dollar & twenty dollar bills, and checks.

Please make your AFMS Scholarship Fund grow. Make yourself a wishing well. Take a empty tuna can, wrap paper around it, paste rocks, pictures of flowers or such to outside, add a paper handle, and fill it with pennies. Put spare pennies in your wishing well and make a wish. I hope it comes true. When you take the pennies to your meeting and give them to your director to take to the CFMS Fall meeting, they will help make some graduate students wish come true..

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## Chuckles

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Rockhounds never die, they only petrify.

*"Petroglyphs" June 2001*

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Husband to wife, as he is leaving for a field trip: "...and honey, if the neighbors ask where I am, tell them I'm prospecting, not 'he's up a creek'."

*AFMS Newsletter June-July 01*

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The difference between a "fine watchdog" and a "ferocious beast" depends entirely on which side of the fence you're on.

Rockhound Rambling 6/01