



**SRMGS NEWSLETTER  
AUGUST 2011**

## **Mission Statement**

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*The purpose of this non-profit society is for education, understanding and enjoyment of the sciences pertaining to minerals, gems and other similar materials; to the art of cutting, grinding and polishing those materials; to the classification of minerals and rocks; to furthering interest in mineralogy, geology, archaeology, paleontology and related subject; and to encouraging and assisting junior members in these pursuits.*

**SHOP & MEETING ROOM:** 5690 C Old Redwood Hwy, Santa Rosa

**NEXT GENERAL MEETING:** August 3, 2011 at 7:30 with Kathy Hile providing refreshments, thanks Kathy. A movie on a Tourmaline Mine will be shown.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING:** August 15, 2011 at 6:30

**WEBSITE:** [www.srmgs.org](http://www.srmgs.org)

### **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:**

Well, here we are again. Another month has flown by and still I haven't been out to search for beautiful rocks....It makes me kinda sad. I know that I am not the only one in this boat. We are all so very busy with so many different things, were will we find the time? We just have to schedule it as an appointment. Don't let yourself blow off that trip to the coast or the mountains because something else has come up. I think we should all consider our rock trips just as important as a Doctor's appointment. A trip out to look for and hopefully collect rocks can be very therapeutic, (As long as you stay away from the

poison oak). You are getting fresh air, exercise for your body and your mind, and we tend to eat a little healthier when we are out and about, well, I try to anyway. So let's schedule that very important trip to the coast, or find a creek somewhere to explore...it's good for your health.

I am planning on making the trip into the city to visit the Revere Academy on Sat. Aug. 6. It is not as healthy as a trip into the countryside, but I think it will be a very interesting trip. This is a professional jewelry school, and we get to take a tour and see the classes and learn about the learning that goes on there. We are also supposed to visit the San Francisco Mineral Society, so it should be a well rounded day.

I will not be able to attend the trip to Jim's Gold Claim on August 13, but I encourage you to go. I have a different outdoor appointment that day. Jim's claim is a lovely spot on the creek where you can dig and pan for gold, or just enjoy looking for rocks in the water. This is a poison oak spot, so be careful if you are allergic...

I have scheduled an appointment with the rock world for Labor Day weekend. This will be the Snyder Ranch Pow Wow. I went last year and just had a great time. There was a group of us from the club that went and set up camp in the pasture. This is a cold camping area, no fires allowed. But still we had a great time. We roasted marshmallows (well slightly warmed them) by the propane lantern, and spent the day perusing MANY different vendors who had rocks of every color and kind. I am looking forward to this trip. I hope that some of you will join me there for good times, frivolity and ROCKS! I guess that is all I have for you for now. I can't wait to get out there and start hiking around, for my health, my sanity and my rock collection.

Jolene

**GENERAL MEETING:** July 6, 2011 at 7:30 club meeting was held by Vice-President, Debbie Granat. New members/Guests were Sue, John and Sheila. Welcome to all and hope you will join our club.

**VP REPORT:** Jerry Hankins donated a DVD player to the club. We now can play DVD on the TV. Thank you Jerry! We currently have 107 paid members.

**TREASURE REPORT:** Gina reported that the club is still in the black, but funds are shrinking. Shop fees are down and our major fund raiser is coming in Oct. (Gem Show).

**We need all members to be involved in the Gem Show to help make it successful. This is the clubs one big fund raiser for the year that pays for the shops rent, supplies and repairs. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO THIS CLUB CONTINUING AS A CLUB, WITHOUT THIS FUND RAISER, WE MAY BE FORCED TO CLOSE DOWN OUR SHOP!! PLEASE DO NOT LET THIS HAPPEN!!!**

**CFMS REPORT:** None

**SHOP REPORT:** Since we do not have any paid employees to take care of the maintenance of the shop, we need to take an active role to help maintain the shop. We'd like to thank the following people for their help with the club:

Greg has made improvements on the trim saw.

Kendra cleaned the trim saw and replaced the mineral oil.

Debbie has fixed the water leak on the Genie along with repairs on the faceting machine, along with purchasing 10 gallons of mineral oil and ink for the printer. Thank you Debbie for all your work.

**CLASSES:** Jolene and Steve B. conducted a wire wrapping class in June. The class was great and highly recommended if you have any interests in wire wrapping. Everyone worked on wrapping one stone and was able to take several more stones home along with wire to wrap.

Debbie will continue her faceting class but due to extensive costs of repairs she'll have to raise the class fee. Class dates and new fee rate TBD.

**FIELD TRIPS:** Kevin is looking at a couple of tentative trips in August. A combo trip to the Revere Academy and SF rock club show at the Presidio on August 6<sup>th</sup>. Sign up sheet will be at the next meeting on August 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Another trip to Jim's gold claim TBD later in August.

Gina suggested a 3-4 day excursion to NE Cal, to look for various rocks, petrified wood, obsidian, maybe in September or October of next year.

The Snyder Ranch is the weekend of Sept. 2-4.

Windsor Fleas on the Green is July 24<sup>th</sup>.

#### **MEMBERSHIPS NEW:**

Welcome to new members Sue Lundergan and John Arsi

As editor of this newsletter I want to thank both Don Richardson and John Kolsrud for submitting articles to include in the August Newsletter. I always welcome anything a member wishes to share on our newsletter as long as it's related to our club & rocks!

This first article is from Don Richardson:

Attached is a photo of a trip last week to Bolinas, Agate Beach. Wanda and I made a day trip to Bolinas to hunt for those elusive beach agates. After driving around Bolinas looking for the parking lot, which I must say I never saw a sign indicating the way, we finally found it. We grabbed our day pack and dog with leash and headed out. The first noticeable event was the dead sea lion on the beach at the trail head. Quite odiferous! The dog was not sure what to think of it, a new strange smell. We hiked north along the beach, the tide was pretty high and unfortunately getting higher. Finally we arrived at the location where Kevin suggested to look. It was really the only area, at least at high tide, where there were any small beach tumbled rocks. The rest of the beach was the gray shale type rock. We spent about 1 hour looking in the area and totally getting our feet wet with the increasing tide. The dog loved it. She never tired chasing after the waves, something about running after a wave and then running from

it. The collection for the day were the tar agates, and 1 real agate (in the center) and 2 small pieces of beach glass, which Wanda found, (one green and one white). It was an easy walk along the beach, if you call walking in sand easy, and very few people (it was a weekday). The next time I go, I will try to plan around the high tide and hopefully be able to find a few more agates. It is a nice easy day trip and one I highly recommend, even if it is just for nice drive and walk on the beach on a beautiful sunny day

Don



This second article is from John Kolsrud:

## A VISIT TO A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GEM MINE

*By*

*John Kolsrud*

**Facebook** can be an amazing device. So it was when I was viewing some mineral specimens on line. I chanced to find **Erik Cordova**, a co owner of San Diego Mining Company. Cordova and his mining partner **Scott Ritchie** have had the company since 1995 and been involved with minerals and gemstones for much longer

In viewing the many photographs of pegmatite ledges and amazing finds I learned about the **Carmalita** mine, its amazing Morganite specimens, and my interest was sparked. I had really only heard of the famous Himalaya mine, a couple others and the vague region west of Anza Borrego Desert in San Diego county. So, having to be in So Cal a few weeks back, I made it a primary goal to meet Cordova in Temecula, and find out more about tourmaline mines of Southern California.

While I had a great breakfast Erik told me that his mine, **The Tourmaline King Mine**, was in the formative stages of development. He mentioned the **Stewart, The**

**Tourmaline Queen**, and others he had investigated in his 20 years of mining and mine development. (Both within ear shot of the “King”).

As I finished breakfast Erik said “would you like to take a look at the mine?” I said “Sure, if you have the time?” We were off. I had been told that the mine was a ways out but as we weaved through the south end of Temecula, then down into the canyon, my phone rang. Erik had phoned and was telling me to look up. Just a couple miles south into the canyon I saw a west facing scrap near the top of mountain that Erik was point towards. We continued to Pala, drove east, then north and cut back across the mountain crossing orchards, avacado groves, etc before we wrapped around to a huge loader.

Erik told me to leave my vehicle by his \$500,000. piece of equipment and he would drive the bumpy rest of the way. We dipped and climbed and wrapped around the mountain past the turnoff for the Tourmaline Queen mine and to the switchback face of the “King” mine. As we exited the vehicle I looked down and saw a grey quartz point in a bigger fist size chunk. I asked Erik is this of value to him and he said “keep it”. We walked to a orange colored ridge which Erik said was the area of future development. (The pegmatite!) I saw chunks of black pencil-like tourmaline pieces like rods running through the white rough rock.

We walked back to Erik’s Land Rover and took out a couple screens. Partner in the mine Scott arrived and they quietly discussed a few things. We hiked up under an oak tree and along a ledge that had a 100 foot drop. (No getting up if you missed the cut out step there!) We got to a hole on the west side of the hill. Erik said was this area was mined during the early 1900’s and this was the original mining dumps. We worked the screens for part of an hour, me not finding really much, but Erik occasionally throwing a piece my way or quietly talking to Scott about some small find. Erik dropped tiny thin pink tourmaline piece into my hand, I quickly put it in a piece of a paper napkin. I was amazed he could find something that small, but he has the eagle eye! I was worried about stepping on, damaging, or finding some rare piece I could never afford. I went slow and followed Erik’s lead when ever possible. Eric and Scott took occasional breaks during the hour to quietly discuss and show each other finds.

We went back to the vehicle and Eric showed me the good tourmaline he had for sale. I bought a couple pieces for \$40 and felt like they could be wire wrapped into nice pieces. Erik showed me a large chunk of feldspar/quartz in the pegmatite that could be flat lapped. (He told me an article he read had said a secondary byproduct of the mine was this patterned material.) The piece had little “L” shapes throughout. It looked promising! I asked if I could take a couple specimen pieces of the black tourmaline that was prevalent in the pegmatite. Erik approved and even found me other items of interest.

I was shown where the tunnel was going to be drilled in the fall and envisioned ledges and vugs of gemstones. It was a great day and Erik drove me out to my vehicle after I amassed about 5 specimens. As we parted at the highway east of Pala, I gave a couple business cards to Scott whom had followed us out. Scott said, “You need to comeback

when were doing the tunnel”. I waved goodbye and thought about how exciting that would be to witness that day.

### **LAKE HENSHAW RESORT (diggings of the Himalaya Mine)**

After about a 45 minute drive east of the previous turnoff I knew I was getting close to the Himalaya mine dumps. As I rounded a right curve at 45mph I glanced back and saw a weathered hand written 3 ft by 4 ft sign that read “Gem Dig” propped up on the side of the road. I then saw the general store for the “resort” (a term I will use loosely). Having worked 30 years for state parks maybe my standards are a bit higher than some Southern Cal’ers.

At the store I was given a number for the dumps foreperson, I phoned Denise. She said that she and the crew were just finishing up and I could meet her. As I drove to the remote part of the resort I saw Denise starting to leave the area. Though the brochure I had been given in Tucson said they would be open everyday, Denise said they were closed Tues/Wed. She was friendly and introduced me to the crew whom were sitting in the vehicle. I got to look at the dirt piles, presumably from the mine at the top of the mountain to the south. The fee was, I believe \$75. for the day, closing at 3pm. Denise seemed open to “maybe” they would open the next day and we should try to get in touch at 8am. I photographed the piles and Denise with one crew member, the others did not want to exit the vehicle or be photographed.

I had passed a few long term trailers and a couple family campsites in an area that was oak studded and barren. Old block buildings were located in two areas west of the resort entrance both (shower and toilets).

I was the only person in the waste land of vacant sites. I felt like my only company that night might be a mountain lion. I quickly set up a tent (after changing sites a few times). From broken fire rings to infestations of ants and garbage left by previous campers, it was difficult to choose a site. Then it was time to get a shower after the digging earlier in the day. I was hurrying to make the restaurant dinner closure of 7pm.

I must say I was amazed by the bleak shower/toilet facilities. First a black plastic bag lay at the cement step to the facility (I stepped over it into the room). I saw what appeared to be men’s cowboy boots in a middle toilet stall with beer bottle and broken glass on the floor adjacent to (him?). A trail of ants went roughly the length of the building to the one shower that worked. But then, after using the dirty toilet area, I found the lock and hot water knob of the shower did not work. Not having a Phillips screw driver I attempted to use my fingernail tighten the hot water knob, to no avail. Then as I attempted to undress, there was no hook to hang clothes. I would have to try and keep my clean clothes dry by putting them on my shoes, that by now, the ants had located. After the cold shower, which was shortened by a clogged drain, I was able to get dressed. The “stranger of the stall” had left the building I guess, while I was showering.

Diner at the “resort” was ok but abit on the steep price wise. I did send back the cold pork ribs, which the pleasant cowgirl waitress had recommended. I filed a complaint about the shower/toilet facilities at the general store but the girl attendant didn’t seemed

too worried. The next morning the black hefty bag was still waiting to tackle an unsuspecting camper. I beat a path out of there to explore and see the surrounding country.

I had a great breakfast at the native American casino up over looking the Henshaw Lake. I found out that this area had plenty of fire evacuations over the past few years. Santa Ysabella looked like an interesting little hamlet of small ranches and horse people. I then drove to the coast (1 hour) to visit friends north of Laguna Beach. There I enjoyed the infinity pool, view of Catalina Island, and digs that were the extreme opposite of what I had the previous night.



