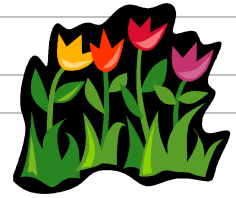


THE ROCKORDER

April 2008

Vista Gem & Mineral Society, P.O. Box 1641, Vista, CA 92085



To contribute articles and event notices, email to: Rockorder@sbcglobal.net

RHODO VIDEO FOR APRIL

The April 17 program will consist of an exquisite video about the beautiful red mineral and gemstone, rhodochrosite

The video will take us to the Sweet Home Mine located on Mt. Bloss in Alma, Colorado. We'll learn about the ancient geology of the Mt. Bloss area and the history of

the Sweet Home Mine, the claim for which was recorded in 1873 for mining silver.

We'll learn a lot about rhodochrosite mining there, including how mining techniques developed and were improved using mineral assays. Mining at the Sweet Home ended in

2004, when it was closed for the fifth or sixth time.

We will see the spectacular "Alma Queen" specimen (mined in 1966 and bought by Dr. Peter Bancroft) and the huge "Alma King" crystal (1992).

Continued...

STONE OF THE MONTH

PYRITE

Pyrite crystal usually forms as a cube with fine ridges (striations) on the crystal's faces. Less commonly, it forms as octahedrons (eight-sided shapes), nodules, or massive forms. It can also occur as coarse granules.

Pyrite is the classic "Fool's Gold". There are other shiny brassy yellow minerals, but pyrite is by far the most common and the most often mistaken for gold. Whether it is the golden look or something else, pyrite is a favorite among rock collectors. It can have a beautiful luster and interesting crystals. It is so common in the earth's crust that it is found in almost every possible

environment, hence it has a vast number of forms and varieties. Pyrite is harder, less dense, and more brittle than gold. It leaves a greenish-black streak while gold leaves a golden-yellow one. However, pyrite is often associated with the presence of gold and copper, and locating fool's gold may mean the real thing isn't far off.

Bravoite is the name



given to a nickel-rich iron sulfide. It is closely related to pyrite but contains up to 20% nickel. Some mineral books treat it as a variety of pyrite.

Pyrite is often confused with the mineral marcasite, a mineral whose name is derived from the Arabic word for pyrite, due to their similar characteristics. Marcasite is a polymorph of pyrite, which means it has the same formula as pyrite but a different structure and, therefore, different symmetry and crystal shapes. Marcasite/pyrite is probably the most famous polymorph pair next to the diamond/graphite

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**Do you remember?
The September 2005 issue of the Rockorder Stone of the Month was Rhodochrosite!**

Coming soon!

VGMS will have our own website. Come to the next meeting on April 17 to hear the announcement and the address. Back issues of the Rockorder will be available there.

Rhodochrosite continued

The most recent opening of the mine was in 1992 under the ownership of Brian Lees, George Robertson, and investors. Between 1992 and 2004 many beautiful rhodochrosite pockets were discovered.

Rhodochrosite is now the state mineral of Colorado. If you find yourself in Denver, be sure to visit the Museum of Nature and Science and see its display of a reconstructed Sweet Home Mine vug filled with

the beautiful red gemstones.

I'm sure that you will enjoy this video ... its pictures are spectacular and we are right there in the mine when beautiful specimens of rhodochrosite, fluorite, pyrite, etc, are discovered. The "Rhodochrosite: Red Treasure of the Rockies" video was put on the market in 2004 by the Silver Mountain Production Corp-

oration. It can be purchased as either a VHS or DVD at <http://www.itecoinc.com/videos.html>

For more information on the Sweet Home Mine and images of rhodochrosite mined there, go to: <http://www.minvision.com/article-6.html> - and - http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3672/is_199807/ai_n8791503/pg_1

Programs, Carolyn Jungwirth

Pyrite continued

pair. Appearance is slightly more silver.

Marcasite is metastable relative to pyrite and will slowly be changed to pyrite if heated or given enough time. Marcasite is relatively rare, but may be locally abundant in some types of ore deposits. Pyrite is often used in jewelry such as necklaces and bracelets, but although the two are similar, marcasite cannot be used in jewelry as it tends to crumble into powder. Adding to the confusion between marcasite and pyrite is the use of the word marcasite as a

jewelry trade name. The term is applied to small polished and faceted stones that are inlaid in sterling silver, but even though they are called marcasite, they actually contain pyrite.

Pyrite is the most common of the sulfide minerals and can be found worldwide. It's the most important source of sulfur after native sulfur.

Pyrite has been mined for its sulfur content though. During WWII, sulfur was in demand as a strategic chemical

and North American native sulfur mines were drying up. A sulfide deposit near Ducktown Tenn. was found to be able to mine pyrite and other sulfides such as pyrrhotite and pentlandite and produce the needed sulfur as well as iron and other metals. The sulfur was used in the production of sulfuric acid, an important chemical for industrial purposes. Now most sulfur production comes from H₂S gas recovered from natural gas wells.



Thank you to all of the club members who worked so hard and donated their time and the wonderful items that made our annual silent auction such a great success and all around great party!

The items donated for the auction were some of the finest I have seen in the last fifteen years I have run our silent auction, and the food for refreshments was truly outstanding. Again, a rousing thank you from the bottom of my heart.

If the rest of this year goes as smoothly and easily as the first quarter has, we will be in fine shape. It always makes it so much easier when everybody chips in and does their part; with our bi-annual show coming up in October, the club will need lots of chipping in to make it the same rousing success that the silent auction was. At our April meeting, I will list the different jobs that will need to be filled and be asking for volunteers to fill them, so if you can help out please let me know. The San Diego Fair will be opening on June the 14th and VGMS will need people to man the information booth on June 21st and June 27th. We would like to have eight members for each day, starting at ten in the morning and running until six in the evening. We



will be split into two hour shifts with two people assigned to each shift. If you can be available either day, please let me know at our next meeting. You will get into the fair for free and have the rest of the day to wander around and take in the sights and enjoy the wonderful food. I will go into more detail at the meeting, so see me there. Again thank you one and all!

Ray Pearce, VGMS President

COMING EVENTS

April 16 – Palomar Gem and Mineral Club Silent Auction
7 p.m. at Jocelyn Senior Center, Escondido

April 26-27 2008, Lancaster, CA
The Antelope Valley Gem & Mineral Society
Lancaster High School
44701 32nd St. W.
Hours: 9 - 5 both days
Jules Ficke (661) 943-5157
Email: av_gem@yahoo.com
Website: www.geocities.com/av.gem

May 2-4 Eastern Sierra Gem & Mineral Show, Bishop, CA
Jeff Lines 760-872-6597; www.tricountyfair.com

May 3-4--ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA: 49th annual show, "Gem Roundup"; Searchers Gem & Mineral Society; Brookhurst Community Center, 2271 W. Crescent Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4:30; family fun, kids' program, silent auctions, gold panning, grab bags, hourly door prize, dealers, tools, minerals, gemstones, jewelry, books; contact Betty Nelson, (714) 530-1365; e-mail: betty@azteche.com; Web site: www.searchersrocks.org

May 16-18--COSTA MESA, CALIFORNIA: Annual show, "West Coast Gem & Mineral Show"; Martin Zinn Expositions; Holiday Inn - Bristol Plaza, 3131 S. Bristol; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; 120 dealers, China, Brazil, Russia, India; contact Regina Aumente, P.O. Box 665, Bernalillo, NM 87004, (505) 867-0425; e-mail: mz0955@aol.com; Web site: www.mzexpos.com

May 21 - South Orange County Gems & Mineral Society, Silent Auction; 7:30 - 9:30 p.m., San Clemente Community Center
100 North Calle Seville

June 27 – 29, 2008 CFMS "The Golden Bear Gem & Mineral Show"
Hours: 10-5 all days
Ventura County Fairgrounds, just off the 101 Freeway
Contact: Bural LaRue 909-874-5664, bplarue@earthlink.net;
www.cfmsinc.org

School Presentations Update

By Carolyn Elliot



In the month of March, I gave two presentations for 100 second graders. It is always so fun to see the students learn how the rock cycle continues on earth. They are also interested in the fossils and volcanic rocks. They are so eager to touch and feel the difference in weight and shapes of the various specimens I bring to the school. They really like the

"take home" tumbled stones that the club gives to them and are always interested in finding out what type of stones they are. They always say thank you to the club for the tumbled stones that they are given. I am sure some are inspired to collect rocks after the presentations as they are

always so interested in each type of rock and mineral. Of course, I enjoy this also as it is fun to see them excited about rocks.



I also delivered some box tops for education to school when I gave my presentations in March. The school says a BIG Thank You to the club members! -- Carolyn E.

VGMS Show Dates Set ... October 11 & 12

by Sharron Smith

Heads up, VGMSers, and get out your calendars! Flip to October, and mark the weekend of October 11 and 12, because that's when our club will hold its show. This event rolls around only every other year, and you won't want to miss it.

Something's changed this year, We have a new venue ... the Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum, which is conveniently located at 2040 North Santa Fe

Avenue at Museum Way, Vista, CA. You've probably been there once or twice.

Now you know the "what" and the "where." Next, it's the "who." And, the "who" is YOU!

Yes, you! Your help will be needed. Please step up to the plate and say to either Cherie Wilson or Bob Vita ... our show co-chairs ... "How can I help?" For one thing, the Country Store needs

clerks. I know from experience how much fun one can have working in the Country Store.

Cherie's 'phone number is listed in every Rockorder issue, along with the numbers of other club officers and committee chairs.

I'm so glad that this is a "Show" year. We're going to have ever so much fun!



Silent Auction

South Orange County Gem & Mineral Society

WEDNESDAY, May 21, 2008

7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

San Clemente Community Center
100 North Calle Seville

on the corner of Avenida Del Mar - next to the San Clemente Library
park either on the street or behind the library

Ole Hansen Room

Refreshments

Visit the society's new website ... www.socgems.org/

Letters, we get letters...

Mar. 10, 2008

Dear Mrs. Elliot,

Thank you for coming to our class room to show us these gems. That fish fossil was really cool but, my favorite part was when I got to hold the sperm whale's tooth. I hope you could come again. Thank you for giving us those gems to keep forever.

Your friend,
Nate



March 10, 2008

Dear Mrs. Elliot,

Thank you for showing us the gems and fossils. Thank you for giving us the gems the gems are very pretty they are also shiny. I enjoyed it when you told us all about the gems. My favorite part was when we got to hold all the gems. I hope you come back soon.

Your friend
Sammy

**The Rockorder
Bulletin of Vista Gem & Mineral Society
P.O. Box 1641
Vista, CA 92085-1641**

Membership in this Society is open to anyone interested in mineralogy, gemology, and related educational subjects. Regular meetings are held

The **3rd Thursday** of each month except July and August at

**Gloria McClellan (Senior) Center
1400 Vale Terrace
Bregle Terrace Park
Vista, CA
7:30 P.M.**

Please send exchange Bulletins to:
Cherie Wilson
4904 Amador Dr.
Oceanside, CA 92056-4969

**Vista Gem & Mineral Society
Officers for 2007**

- PresidentRay Pearce 726-7570
- 1st Vice President Barbara Gelman
- 2nd Vice President..... Cherie Wilson 941-7073
- TreasurerMary Anne Mital 758-4599
- CFMS Rep Fred Wilson 433-8446
- County Council Rep Ray Pearce
- Secretary Debbie George

Committee Chairpeople

- Programs Carolyn Jungwirth
- PublicityLois Harr 724-0395
- Bulletin Co-editor.....Dawn Zimmer
- Bulletin Co-editorAleta Dirdo 726-4486
- Lapidary SchoolFred Wilson, Ray Pearce
- Educational SvcsCarolyn Elliott 295-6505
- SunshineCarol Pelly 630-5674
- Field Trips Ray Pearce 726-7570
- Field Trips Monte Hazen 940-0379
- Hospitality Ruby & Ernie Schmidt 724-4737
- Hospitality Sue Wilson 433-8446
- Hospitality Ellie Page
- Membership Kristie Pollard 231-7956
- Finance Director Open
- Ways & Means Laura Stearn

Application for Membership Vista Gem & Mineral Society

All information for club use only

Date _____

Last Name First Nickname

Spouse and Children

Street Address City Zip Phone

E-mail address

Are you willing to take part in Committee work? _____

Please list any special talents and abilities _____

Dues (includes bulletin):	Family (husband, wife & children under 18)	\$25.00 year
	Couple	\$22.00
	Single member	\$12.00

Please make checks payable to Vista Gem & Mineral Society
P.O. Box 1641, Vista, CA 92085-1641
For more information phone (760) 724-0395 or (760) 758-4599

VISTA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1641
VISTA, CA 92085-1641



Apr 17 – VGMS meeting

Apr 16 – Palomar Club Silent
Auction

Apr 26 – Antelope Valley
Show

