



ROCKHOUND RAMBLINGS

FEBRUARY 2023 • PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY® EDITOR: ALYSON NISHIMURA



Photo from the Pow Wow 2023 provided by Rex Nishimura

~Quartzsite: A Tale of Rocks, Rain, and Rising Angels~

Gosh, there was an awful lot of cold rain last month. My garage flooded, ruining cardboard boxes stuffed with things I probably never would have used anyway. Fortunately, rocks generally don't get ruined by water and best of all, my rocks don't float away. After cleaning up, I needed a trip to Quartzsite. The Pow Wow rock show was beckoning.

Clear skies were forecast for most of the week except for a few sprinkles passing through the area several hours before my anticipated arrival. Clear skies meant tent camping. Normally I bring my camper, but with the high cost of diesel, I opted to bring my mini pickup truck. The truck gets 22mpg while the camper gets 8mpg. I'll try to use my Tacoma for future trips. The money saved always comes in handy.

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Editor: Alyson Nishimura pasadenalapeditor@gmail.com Send articles by the 15th of the previous month for publication in next month's issue. However, no article is guaranteed to be published.

Welcome New Members!

We are delighted to have new rockhounds join our society. Welcome to Braden Baily, Greg LaFrinere, Tae-Han Lee (*JR), Angie Lister, Daniel Nishimura (*JR), and John Martin!



As a reminder: We are accepting your 2023 dues now.

You can renew in person or via US postal service to PO Box 5025 Pasadena, CA 91117-0025.

\$25.00 for adult member.

\$15 for 2nd adult member.

\$10 for additional adult or Junior member.

~Sue Pang, Membership Chairman

Meetings

Board Meetings – 1st Thursday of the month. Members welcome.

General Meetings – Every third Tuesday of the month.

Pasadena Lapidary Society®

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Quartzsite: A Tale of Rocks, Rain, and Rising Angels

4 hours later, I was in Quartzsite, but to my dismay, some of my tent poles were missing. I vaguely recalled some snapping poles the last time I used the tent many moons ago. This was confirmed when a piece of scrap paper fell out of the tent bag. "Tent is missing a 162" pole," read the note. Next time, I will tape warning labels on the outside of tent.

My fellow campers wondered what my next move would be, but I remained as cool as a postman. I set up my cot in the truck bed, spread out my sleeping bag, and covered it with an old tarp. Not wind, nor snow, nor the gloom of night, would keep me



from my appointed rounds at Quartzsite. We made a great dinner of steak and canned corn, topped with cherry pie.

While sitting around the fire that night, the first drops of rain spattered on the desert floor. The fire angrily sizzled as intruding raindrops attempted to snuff it out. Maybe I wouldn't be able to make my appointed rounds. I discovered that Rain + No tent = Misery or, if you add Cold to both sides, you get Rain + No Tent + Cold = Cold + Misery. I had no choice but to pull the tarp over my sleeping bag and weather the storm. The rain pummeled us for 3 hours, and the cacophony of it hitting the tarp made sleep difficult. Finally, around midnight, I was awakened by the sound of running floodwaters. The rain had stopped, but the truck was surrounded by 2" of running water flowing into a rushing desert wash. It would have been pretty neat if my tarp hadn't leaked.

By 1 AM, the water had subsided and the skies were clear. I crawled out of my wet accommodations and made a small campfire. The heat felt good as the dancing flames planted seeds of drowsiness in my tired head. Somehow I made it back to my bag and slept until dawn.

Morning brought light winds and lots of sunshine. Perfect drying out weather, and I would make my rounds after all. Today's target was jumbo size chalcedony roses. Bill from PA, decided not to come out of his trailer, as the cold, wet weather had put a chill in his bones. It was just myself and 2 other club members. As we drove for almost an hour, I blasted the heat all the way to the collecting zone.



Once there, I followed a route plotted several days before, picking our way through fields of spiny teddy bear cholla cactus and ironwood trees. The route took us through a small valley filled with grayish white agate and many small chalcedony roses. As we proceeded deeper into the valley, the roses grew bigger and then abruptly disappeared. Another hour of searching produced no additional keepers, so we regrouped and headed back to Quartzsite.

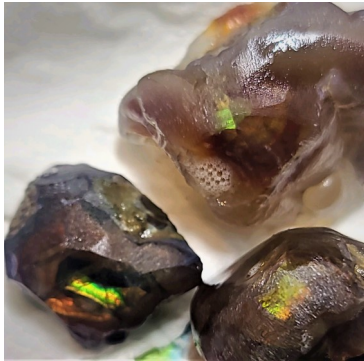


The Pow Wow rock show.

If you've gone to Quartzsite before, you know that the crowds are huge on Pow Wow weekend. We went to the Pow Wow on Wednesday, because prettiest gems are found earlier in the week. This was a good choice, because I saw many dealers re-sale shopping for their booths later in the week. Buy for \$1 and sell for \$5 is a great formula for dealers who know value and demand.

Soooo, what did we get at Quartzsite?

Our field trip netted the biggest chalcedony rose I've ever found. It was the size of a 1 gallon paint can lid and about 1 ½ thick. Most of the other roses were the size of my palm (I have a pretty small palm, so they weren't huge.) Of course, we got better stuff at the rock shows at good prices. The Mexican fire agate guys had some great deals on fire agates for \$2 apiece.



Diligent searching resulted in the purchase of some apple green Wyoming jade which I've wanted to get for years. Translucent Wyoming jade complements the silver wire wrapping perfectly, and I think the apple green color is much prettier than northern CA nephrite jade. Other club members got silver rings and carved labradorite figurines at half the price of local rock shows.



As we camped the last night, the desert air was bitter cold, but perfectly still. The camp fire felt great, as we searched for falling stars.



Suddenly, we were surrounded by what looked like small white butterflies landing everywhere. In the harsh glare of our flashlights, ashes from our fire were going straight up and then falling right back down on our camp. The "ash angels" were a remarkable sight which I'll certainly try to recreate on our next camping trip on President's weekend. We'll be searching for AZ fire agate.



I'll be returning home to a clean garage. I threw away a lot of water damaged stuff, but the reclaimed space will come in handy. In every life, rain must fall, but in my case, it resulted in a clean garage and a visitation by ash angels from the heavens.

'til next time,
Rex

February Field Trip

We will be going agate hunting in Vidal Junction CA, and Oatman, AZ on February 17-19, 2023. 4WD is recommended.

For more details, please contact Rex at rexch8@yahoo.com

Member-to-Member

Highland Park Combo Unit. Needs restoring but the motor is included. \$100, used.



If you have something to sell or are looking for something, e-mail Phil at plkslahr@att.net by the 15th of the month to have it included in the next bulletin.

General Meeting - February 21, 2023

The February general meeting will occur at 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall at The Santa Anita Church, 226 W Colorado Blvd, Arcadia, CA.

Kris Rowe will present a talk on Rockhounding in the Mojave. Kris is a lifelong rockhound and 40+ year field geologist.

Junior or adult members interested in presenting a five minute "Rock of the Month" presentation should contact Christian at christian.w.schulze@gmail.com.

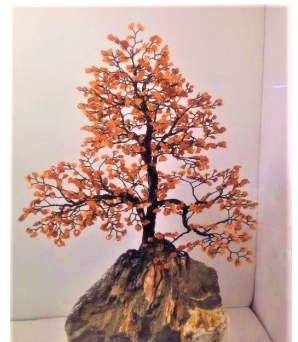
Hope to see you there!

~Christian Schulze

Workshop – February 11, 2023

The February workshop will be held on Saturday, February 11, from 9 am to 3 pm. Cost is \$5 for the full day or \$3 for a half day.

Award winning gem tree designer Ferdie Sanchez will teach a gem tree class starting about 10:00. Don't miss this great opportunity! Wire and chip beads will be available, but bring your own round nose pliers, wire cutters, and rock bases if you can.



Saws and grinding and polishing equipment will be available as usual. We are happy to help you with the equipment and improving your skills. Just ask.

First timers and anyone who needs an orientation or help with learning to make cabachons needs to rsvp a few days in advance to Marcia at (626) 260-7239 to get directions to the workshop and allow us to schedule an instructor. Orientation will start at 9:30am but please arrive shortly before then.

Access the workshop by walking up the alley on the west side of the building and use the sliding door there. Please do not use the door at the loading dock.



Pasadena Lapidary Society, Inc.
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President's Message

I am so excited to be the "Skipper" of this organization, so let's get started! Pasadena Lapidary Society has started out 2023 with 102 paid dues members, which is great! However, we want to keep growing and need as many active and enthusiastic members as we can get, so talk to your friends about becoming a PLS member and participating in the Field trips, workshops, classes and other activities. If you are willing, we would love for our members to volunteer for committees, presentations, rock talks, field trips, and demonstrations. As for other activities, we need some ideas for a Gem Show theme. The theme should tie PLS, California, Gems and minerals, and the energy/passion of our members for rockhounding/lapidary together in a few words. We also need a Gem Show Chair to direct the activities of the show and interface with other members of the Show Committee. Anyone that has any ideas for a Show theme name or a memorable Show memento for the display cases should email me or Christian Schulze (our emails are listed at the top of page 2). Hopefully we can get some ideas submitted before the next General Meeting so can vote on them then.

For all of our new and current members, Welcome to 2023 and wishing you good health in the coming year and Happy Rockhounding!

Sincerely, David Lacy, *President*

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

PASADENALAPIDARY.ORG