

C.O.R.C.

Central Oregon Rock Collectors

March 2016, Newsletter

“It’s in our name... it’s what do we do... we collect rocks!!!!”

The **CENTRAL OREGON ROCK COLLECTORS** is an informal group dedicated to sharing the rock hound hobby. We meet for field trips, collecting rock, and related activities. You do not have to be a member to attend. However if you are interested in joining, yearly memberships are only \$20 for individuals, or \$25 for families. At the end of this newsletter is a form for joining the C.O.R.C.

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karecame@gmail.com

OUR WEBSITE: <http://corockcollectors.com>

Welcome: Rockhounding is best when it is shared. We welcome visitors to our meetings, anytime. If anyone has any interesting adventures or unusual materials that they would like to share, we would love to hear about them.

The Club meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month, March through October, the November meeting is a potluck holiday get-together on a Sunday. No winter meetings.

Regular meetings are held at the Redmond Senior Center, 325 NE Dogwood Avenue, Redmond, starting at 7:00 pm until 8:30 or 9:00.

March Meeting:

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 16 at the Redmond Senior Center at 7 pm. We need to discuss and approve the proposed field trip agenda. The program will be members show and tell, so please bring your recent prizes and projects for our enjoyment.

Field Trips:

No report this month. The Committee met in January and compiled a tentative field trip agenda. This will be discussed and approved during the March business meeting.

Contact: Elizabeth Prindle, Field Trip Chairperson at pointingatthemoon@bendcable.com

Don Ross donross1949@gmail.com is spear-heading the March field trip to Glass Buttes, taking place during the annual Glass Buttes Knap-in, on Spring Break week, March 20-27. He will have more information at the March meeting, Wednesday, March 16 at the Redmond Senior Center. The Knap-in is a gathering of people interested in primitive skills, primarily knapping (flaking) obsidian to create tools. It is also an opportunity to collect obsidian, although for most people there, collecting is a side-line to knapping. They generally are open to folks interested in learning that skill.

Editorial Opinion: If you are interested in learning how to knap, you might consider going singly or in a small group so as not to overwhelm anyone willing to demonstrate or instruct on their techniques. In my somewhat limited experience there, the expectation is that you will have your own knapping tools.

Glass Buttes are located on unimproved roads once you leave the highway. The spring roads are generally very rutted and muddy, the collecting also will be a muddy affair. The weather can be anything from a sunny 60 degrees to a windy, snowy mid-30's day. Come prepared.

Google Glass Buttes Knap-in 2016 for internet information on the knap-in.

Programs:

No report this month. The committee has met and is working on a full agenda. We do have Steven Douglas of Douglas Fine Jewellery in Bend scheduled in May to talk on Oregon sunstones, Julian Gray of the Rice Museum lined up for June, Elizabeth Prindle expects to show a "virtual tour of various members collections" at the July meeting and the annual picnic is scheduled for Sunday August 14.

Contact: Sue Liebetrau, Program Chairperson at liebetrauam@msn.com

Agate Hounding in Belize - A Report from the Field

Jerry Brown, CORC President emeritus

Our first exposure to rocks in Belize was via the gravel roads, which are often built and repaired with straight-run rough quarry rock, with boulders to 10 or 15 pounds. We had seen some quartz in this rock, occasionally with a few small vugs, but nothing of much interest. The major mountain range to our west is primarily limestone, so we had given up ideas of prospecting here.

By way of a chance comment on a Facebook post, we discovered some months ago that a friend of ours here in southern Belize had collected agates somewhere in the country. David is from

Vancouver BC and in following up with him we learned that he had been a rock hound before becoming an expat here. We also connected with his sister and her husband who still live in Canada, but were coming down for the winter. Angela and Grant are also avid collectors. We thought we might get to go collecting with them last fall in Oregon, but plans changed. However, once they arrived in Belize, we were able to arrange a joint trip.

20 lb. Agate Found in a Plowed Field



We met them at 7:30 AM and carpooled about 2 hours to west-central Belize near a village named Spanish Lookout. SL (as we know it here) is a farming center for an area largely settled by Mennonites. Our first stop was an open area with a small creek running through a vast expanse of gravel to cobble-sized rocks, all water worn. There was a lot of mixed quartz, but a significant fraction was agate. This area must have been an ancient river bed, possibly pre-dating

the limestone stratum which had been eroded away. We collected several pounds each, but in general, the agate here was mostly browns and grays.

Our next stop was a quarry where we found piles of boulders of a softer composition, with what appeared to be dogtooth calcite-lined vugs. After picking up a few specimens we stopped at a nearby farm to look for agates in a plowed field. Pickings were slim there. After lunch, we drove to another farm field where pickings were much better. There were low mounds in the field which at one point had been Mayan settlements before the Mennonites plowed them under. Here we found plentiful pottery shards, obsidian flakes, lots of agates in reds, blacks and browns and including one colorful 20 pounder, two pieces of petrified palm and a Mayan grinding stone.

Our last stop was at a rock and gravel processing facility which we had passed by often on our way to SL for shopping. The yard produces graded rock and crushed gravel for road work and landscaping. There was a mountain of reject cobble, too large to crush, mostly 5 to 15 pounds or so. Pastures of plenty! We were granted permission to climb around and help ourselves to selected stones. Easiest agate hunting ever! Some of it was prime moss agate. From now on we won't be passing those piles without stopping.

Our friends have been out looking for agates in the far south recently. They know there must be a source because they have found agates in area roads. They also found roadside rocks with calcite flowstone and mini-stalagmites, which must have originated from the old limestone formations. So... more adventures to come. Now we just need some lapidary equipment.

News From the Editor:

The Club was invited and plans to have a presence at the Prineville Chamber of Commerce Easter Egg hunt Saturday March 26 from 10 to 12 am. Debbie and Dale Simon will be there as well as any of us that are willing to participate. Debbie requests that members who have tumbled rocks to donate bring them to the March meeting; they will be give-aways at the egg hunt to the kids.

Members are reminded that the new year is time to renew their dues. Membership forms are included below. Please use them so we can ensure our contact info is up to date. Send the form and your dues to Marty Betsch or bring them to the March meeting.

Unfortunately Debbie Klug has resigned as Secretary. If you are interested, or know and can recruit someone, contact our President, Debby Simon.

As Del Walker has often said, clubs thrive with volunteers and die from the lack of same. Please consider where you can volunteer.

Classified Ads:

If you have a rockhound related object you wish to sell, send the announcement to Jules Wetzel jjwetzel@bendbroadband.com and we'll post it. Remember – this newsletter goes on our website. If you don't want your address, phone number or email address posted, submit your ad with only the specific contact information you do want published.

CENTRAL OREGON ROCK COLLECTORS (CORC)
2016 MEMBERSHIP FORM

DATE: _____

NAME: _____

NAMES OF ADD'L FAMILY MEMBERS (+AGES IF UNDER 18):

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Amount Paid: _____

How did you hear about CORC? (*new members only*)

NOTE: Annual dues are \$20/individuals and \$25/families. If you are paying by check:
Make your check out to **Central Oregon Rock Collectors** and mail it to:
Attn: Marty Betsch, 61561 Eastlake Drive, Bend, OR 97702.
