



The Helena Mineral Society Newsletter



Gem, Mineral, and Geological Education and Experience

October 2008

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From The Editor:

Greetings! My first newsletter, hang with me. I want to start by saying thanks to Martin Landry and the great job on planning and putting together field trips for 2008. Thank you for a job well done to Bob Pesta as president last year. Also, thanks to Gene Hodge for providing interesting programs, and club officers

Andy, Jim and Sherry for all the work they do.

This month my article is about spinel, a mineral that is found in the Helena area. It can be rare, but, is common here. The name Spinel is possibly derived from Latin, spina, for “thorn”. Spinel is very abundant just south of Helena in Dry Gulch at the Crazy Sphinx Mine. Very nice crystals are still abundant but, it will take hard work with sledge hammers and chisels to extract the spinel from the garnet matrix. Some gem quality spinel can be found but crystals are about 1 millimeter.

The spinel is blue and opaque and will make a fine addition to any collection.

**Helena Mineral Society
Officers for 2007-2008**

President: Andrew Horton

Vice-president: Kathy Bruce

Secretary: James Bruce

Treasurer: Sherry Reynolds

Member-at-Large: Norm Smith

Historian: Phyllis Smith

**Field Trip Chairman: Martin
Landry**

Show Chairman: Gary Parisi

**Program Chairman: John
Richardson**

Newsletter Editor: Gary Parisi

Wire wrap class by Natalie Jordan.

Saturday, Oct. 25 1 to 4 PM at Rick and
Suzanne Bidmead's house, 2221 Chateau.

Call Natalie at 443-0348 to sign up for class.

2008 HMS Christmas party: Saturday Dec. 13
at the Hannaford Street Church, 830 N
Hannaford St. Pot luck dinner starts at 6:00
PM. HMS will provide ham, turkey, plates and
utensils. Please bring your favorite dish to
share with others. Show up early to view live
and silent auction items and place bids on
silent auction items.

2008 Crystal Collectors' meeting in Butte, MT,
Sept 26 - 28. A fine time was had by all who
attended. The reception Friday night and
meetings Saturday were held in the Mineral
Museum. Mineral specimens were for sale or
trade Sat. morning. In the afternoon, several
talks were presented on Arrow Creek barite
and pegmatites. A young collector from Butte
found a pocket in a pegmatite, and in 2 years
worth of excavating by hand, removed a

exceptional smoky quartz cluster, 9" schorl crystals and many free floating smoky
quartz crystals.



So, as you see, there are still exceptional specimens to be found. A lot of luck, hard work and a strong back are helpful.

Saturday evening, Don Bade from Bozeman gave a presentation on Yogo sapphires. For viewing pleasure there were rough Yogos and a matched pair of 1.5 carat faceted round brilliants. Sunday's event was a field trip to the Elkhorn Mine in Elkhorn, MT. Minerals found were calcite, quartz, hemimorphite, Smithsonite, sphalerite, iron pyrite, chalcopyrite and galena.

Now is the time to be thinking about field trips for 2009. If you are interested in specific areas for collection, contact Martin or Andy.

Contracts are being sent out for the 2009 HMS Mineral Show. The show dates are April 17 to 19, 2009. Set up is Friday, April 17, at 1:00 PM. Start thinking about what jobs at the show you would like to do. Most are 2 hour shifts. This years' theme is calcite.

And the winner is.... Dan Kieley. Dan won the raffle for the Covington 3 barrel tumbler. Congratulations!

As I am finishing this newsletter, it is snowing. Now is the time to make wonderful creations of jewelry and such from the treasures found this collecting season. Though, there may be a break in the weather, so, further collecting may be possible.

Wayne Waters has oxalic acid for cleaning quartz crystals. Rick Bidmead has cutting oil for rock saws.

Phyllis Smith will have a wire wrap class when enough people sign up. Contact her at 475-3127.

Donations are being accepted for silent and live auctions for the Christmas party. Contact Rick Bidmead at 442-5172.

There was no newsletter last month, sorry. Last month's minutes are enclosed in this copy.

Stay warm this winter and enjoy the wonderful seasons we have. Look forward to finding new and exciting treasures next year.

Meetings

The Helena Mineral Society meets at the Mountain West Bank located on Montana Avenue between Aspen and Poplar. Meetings are the second Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm. There is no regular meeting for the month of December. See you there! Friends, guests, and new members are always welcome

To place a classified ad, please see me in person at one of our regular meetings or you may e-mail me (Gary) with your information at gjparisi72@yahoo.com. Ad will run in the newsletter for that month only unless specifically requested to run longer.

Pictures and Articles Needed:

If you have a picture that you want to share, please send it to me, along with a short description of the activity, where it took place, and when, and I'll put it in the newsletter. If you'd like to share your field trip adventures with those members who are unable to attend, please feel free to contribute to the newsletter. Just e-mail me your experiences, and I'll make sure they're entered. Remember, this is your newsletter, and your contributions make it better.

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