



# The Helena Mineral Society Newsletter



Gem, Mineral, and Geological Education and Experience

August 2009

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## From The Editor:

**Corundum, probably derived from Sanskrit “kuruvinda” or ruby. Varieties are a very impure material known as emery, which is a mixture of corundum, magnetite, hematite and spinel; ruby, when intense red and sapphire when it is other colors.**

**Crystals are hexagonal in shape. Hardness is 9 on Mohs scale and weight is**

**4.0 to 4.1. Only diamond is harder. Chemical formula is essentially pure Aluminum Oxide. The colors of sapphires are caused by trace elements replacing the Aluminum.**

**Emery and non-gem corundum are used as abrasives.**

**Sapphires are found in many countries. The most sought after color is “cornflower-blue” such as Yogo Sapphires from Montana . Other locations sapphires are found are the alluvial gravels of the Missouri River and Rock Creek in Montana, Australia, Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, India, Brazil and several countries in Africa.**

**Some cloudy sapphires and sapphires of non-distinct colors can change to a bright blue permanent color through heat treatment of 1700 to 1800 deg. C.**

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

**President: Andrew Horton**  
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**Vice-president: Kathy Bruce**  
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**Secretary: Justine Jam**

**Membership Chairman**  
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**Treasurer: Sherry Reynolds**  
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**Member-at-Large: Norm Smith**  
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**Historian: Phyllis Smith**

**Field Trip Chairman:**  
**Martin Landry**  
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**John Richardson**  
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UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

•  
August 29, 2009- Gem Mountain for Sapphires  
Depart West end Lundy Center 7:30 AM. Bring  
sunscreen, lunch and shaker with sponge. This is a  
fee dig. Gravel will be provided by Gem MTN at  
a discounted price for HMS club members.

Sept. 12, 2009- Annual Miss Beverly Sapphire dig  
Meet at York Bridge boat launch at 8:00 AM.  
Bring buckets, shovels, small whisk broom,  
tweezers, film or pill vials, lunch, water and  
sunscreen. About 1\3 mile hike each way.

\*\*\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\*\*\*

Boats needed to ferry club members to claim

\*\*\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\*\*\*

Please contact Martin Landry if you can  
bring a boat.

Pictures are being changed on the web site.  
New pictures will remain up approx. 30  
days.

I am receiving the Bozeman Newsletter via  
email. If anyone would like to see it, email  
me and I will forward it to you.

Phyllis Smith should be starting wire wrap  
classes in mid to late Sept. Contact her for  
more info.

The Montana Crystal Collectors Annual  
Rendezvous will be held in Butte on Oct. 2

through Oct. 4. More information in next month's newsletter.

Material needed for grab bags and ball toss.



Collecting at the Julia Mine, July 11



Collecting barite, Whitehouse Campground, July 18

Above photos courtesy Win Branning



One of two "Moon Rocks" at the Billings Show



The "Rock Food" table at the Billings Show

This was a great show. There were many dealers and displays not normally seen in Helena

Check out the new website [www.helenamineralsociety.org](http://www.helenamineralsociety.org)  
There should be an update on the Gem Mountain trip before we go.

Next regular meeting is Sept. 10, 2009

## 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](mailto: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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