



# The Helena Mineral Society Newsletter



Gem, Mineral, and Geological Education and Experience

January 2010

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## **From The Editor:**

**Hemimorphite is a member of the Sorosilicate family of minerals. It's name is from the Greek prefix *hemi-*, meaning “half,” and *morphe*, “form,” literally half-form.**

**Crystals are orthorhombic, hemimorphic. Usually thin and tabular and compressed along the b axis, also slightly elongated. Commonly fan shaped aggregates of platy**

**crystals. Large crystal are rare.**

**Chemistry: Zinc hydroxyl silicate with water. It is white to colorless; also pale blue, gray or greenish.**

**Hemimorphite is abundant in the Helena area, occurring at several of the lead-zinc-silver mines. It is found in the oxidized areas of zinc deposits very close to the surface. It is associated with galena, smithsonite, sphalerite, cerrusite and anglesite.**

**Fine specimens were found at the Elkhorn mine near Boulder, MT. Another location is the “Summit” or “Montana Silver Star” mine west of Radersburg, MT. Other fine specimens were found in Colorado and Durango, Mexico.**

**Much is still available to be found in the area.**

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

**President: Andrew Horton**  
227-2615 [andrew@mt.net](mailto:andrew@mt.net)

**Vice-president: Kathy Bruce**  
443-1175

**Secretary: Justine Jam**

**Membership Chairman**  
**James Bruce**  
443-1175 [JBruce4@aol.com](mailto:JBruce4@aol.com)

**Treasurer: Sherry Reynolds**  
933-8798

**Member-at-Large: Norm Smith**  
475-3127

**Historian: Phyllis Smith**

**Field Trip Chairman:**  
**Martin Landry**  
[mlandry121@yahoo.com](mailto:mlandry121@yahoo.com)  
431-8081

**Show Chairman: Gary Parisi**  
442-1226

**Program Chairman:**  
**John Richardson**  
422-0978

**Newsletter Editor: Gary Parisi**  
[gjparisi72@yahoo.com](mailto:gjparisi72@yahoo.com)

[www.helenamineralsociety.org](http://www.helenamineralsociety.org)

For sale: 18" rock saw, \$800.00 or trade for capping machine. Call Emilie Welch at 406-590-7606.

A Program Chair is still needed. If you are interested, Call Andy at 227-2615.

A beginning wire wrap class will be held February 13. Call Phyllis Smith @ 475-3127 for details.

Suggestions are needed for areas to go for field trips. If you have a "special" spot you know of, or a spot you would like to collect at, call Martin @ 431-8081.

There will be no Mineral Identification class by Phil Walsh this year.

The Helena History Fare will be held May 22, 2010. If you are interested in participating with the club, call Andy @ 227-2615.

As of Jan. 14, HMS has 19 dealers signed up for the annual show. The show sign up sheets for staffing the various tables and events will be at the upcoming meetings.

The 2010 HMS Christmas Party will be held on December 4, 2010 at the Hannaford Street Church.

Material is needed for filling grab bags. Date and place will be set at an upcoming

meeting.

Next regular meeting is February 11, 2010.

## COLLECTORS PROFILE: Dr. RAY BREUNINGER

Nearly 6 decades ago Ray happened upon some minerals sitting on a picnic table in Rocky Mountain National Park. Although those specimens of amazonite and hematite are no longer in his collection, that discovery started a life long love of minerals and a distinguished career in geology. Ray received his under graduate degree from Beloit College in Wisconsin, and a PhD from the University of Montana in Missoula where he focused on fossil reefs in the Lemhi Range of Idaho. He is now retired from Carroll college where he taught geology for almost 30 years.

While Ray has been collecting minerals for many years, he has only recently had the time to catalogue his specimens and establish more focused suites of minerals. One of his collections is of worldwide minerals representing classic crystal habits from each of the six crystallographic systems. To acquire representative specimens which display good crystal form one must either have an enormous mineral budget, collect micromounts, or choose more common species. Thus far Ray has acquired good cabinet specimens of more common minerals including monoclinic azurite, epidote and clintonite; orthorhombic stibnite, barite and aragonite; hexagonal quartz, calcite and hematite; and isometric copper, silver and garnet. He is still looking for some good representative specimens of triclinic and tetragonal minerals.

Collecting suites of minerals from the main types of deposits is yet another of Rays interests. These include pegmatite specimens from the Boulder batholith, igneous minerals from the central Montana alkalic province, local skarn minerals, carbonatites from central Montana, suites of hydrothermal/skarn/oxides/secondary minerals from Santa Eulalia, Mexico and primary hydrothermal and secondary minerals from Naica, Mexico.

While Ray has had the opportunity to personally collect or otherwise acquire specimens from Turkey, South Africa and Alaska, his favorite collecting locale is right here in Montana. Just a reminder how lucky we are to live in such a mineral rich state with such good collecting opportunities.

During the course of this interview I had the opportunity to mess around with Rays collection and it was fun! Being a father, Ray treats all of his minerals equally and seems to love them all just the same. However, I couldn't help but notice his special affinity for epidote. While he has a wonderfully lustrous, well terminated piece from Gilgit, Pakistan, he admitted that he wouldn't turn down a specimen of the fabulous blocky monoclinic epidote from Green Monster Mountain, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska...Just a note for Santa! Talking with Ray and viewing his collection was a real treat. I am most definitely looking forward to spending time in the field with such an interesting and knowledgeable collector.

The **Collectors Profile** column is aimed at sharing our members diverse interests in geology with the goal of improving communication and networking within our organization. If you would be willing to be interviewed for a future issue please contact me, Wiley, at [WileyHUDSON@gmail.com](mailto:WileyHUDSON@gmail.com).

Two fine specimens from Ray's collection. Epidote, left and calcite from Santa Eulalia, Mexico.



## 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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Helena Mineral Society, Inc.  
PO Box 736  
Helena, Montana 59624

