



# The Helena Mineral Society Newsletter



Gem, Mineral, and Geological Education and Experience

June 2010

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## From The Editor:

**This month's mineral is undoubtedly the most common mineral in the world, probably the universe. It is called leaverite.**

**For those of you that don't know about this mineral, think about your last collecting trip and the treasures you brought home. Have I just made my retirement a reality? Maybe, maybe not.**

**What you just picked up could be worth a fortune or it could be worthless. Unfortunately, the latter is more likely.**

**All the rockhounds I know and rockhounds of the future will pick up something they hope will make them rich. Been there, done that. I'm not saying it's impossible, but the odds are against us.**

**Nevertheless, go forward my friends and explore. Who knows, the next great discovery may be a treasure trove of unbelievable worth. Be selective, though...**

**My wife and I have brought home countless 5 gallon buckets of "treasure" only to use them for pot hole fill or rocks in the bottom of planting buckets.**

**Leaverite: Leave 'er right right where you found it.**

**Helena Mineral Society  
Officers for 2009-2010**

**President: Andrew Horton**  
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**Vice-president: Kathy Bruce**  
443-1175

**Secretary: Vacant**

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

**Field Trip Chairman: Martin  
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**Show Chairman: Gary Parisi**  
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**Program Chairman: Vacant**

**Newsletter Editor: Gary Parisi**  
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Okay, I know this is getting repetitious, material needed for grab bag and ball toss. Contact Gary, Andy or Martin to drop off material.

Upcoming field trips:

June 19 – 20 Butte Show

June 26 Sally Ann annual potluck picnic, HMS will supply chicken, utensils and napkins. Bring your favorite dish to share with others. Early birds depart Ben Franklin's parking lot @ 8:00 AM

July 10, Pat's Gulch- depart Ben Franklin's parking lot 9:00 AM

Phyllis Smith will have wire wrapping classes for anyone interested. Contact her at 475-3127 for sale.

Tom White has small pieces of iron wood for carving and knife handles. Contact him at 262-442-5216.

HMS would like to thank all members who helped at the Helena History Fair and also with the Sally Ann trail and claim maintenance.

The Montana Crystal Collectors will be held October 9, 2010 at the Holiday Inn downtown. More details later.

Enjoy our nice weather and get out and do some collecting.

Next regular meeting is July 8, 2010

The following is from an online magazine called “The Onion”

## Geologists: 'We May Be Slowly Running Out Of Rocks'

RALEIGH, NC—A coalition of geologists are challenging the way we look at global stone reserves, claiming that, unless smarter methods of preservation are developed, mankind will eventually run out of rocks.



If we do not stop using them up at our current rate, rocks as we know them will be a thing of the past," renowned geologist Henry Kaiser said at a press conference Tuesday. "Igneous, metamorphic, even sedimentary: all of them could be gone in as little as 500,000 years." "Think about it," Kaiser added. "When was the last time you even saw a boulder?" The scientists warned that, although people have long considered the world's rock supply to be inexhaustible, it has not created a significant number of new rocks since the planet cooled some 3.5 billion years ago.

Geologists theorize that areas like this may have once been filled with rocks. years ago.

Moreover, the earth's rocks have been very slowly depleting in the last century due to growing demand for fireplace mantels, rock gardens, gravel, and paperweights.

Kaiser claims that humanity has "wreaked havoc" on the earth's stones by picking them up, carrying them around, and displacing them from their natural habitat.

"A rock can take millions of years to form, but it only takes a second for someone to skip a smooth pebble into a lake, and then it is gone." Dr. Kaiser said. "Perhaps these thoughtless rock-skippers don't care if they leave our planet completely devoid of rocks, but what about our children? Don't they deserve the chance to hold a rock and toss it up and down a few times?"

Geologist Victoria Merrill, who has been at the forefront of the rock conservation battle since 2004, said there are simple steps people can take to reduce their rock consumption.

"Only take as many rocks as you absolutely need," said Dr. Merrill, author of the book *No Stone Unturned: Methods For Modern Rock Conservation*. "And once you are finished with your rocks, do not simply huck them into the woods. Place the rock down gently where you found it so that others may look at the rock and enjoy it for years to come."

Merrill went on to point out that, even if there were some "magic hole" in the earth's crust that could miraculously spew out rocks every 10 years or so, modern society's obsession with rocks means that we would still run out of them far more quickly than they could be replenished.

"Just look at the pet rock craze: In 10 years, millions upon millions of rocks were painted, played with, and discarded like trash," Merrill said. "Looking back, mankind's arrogance and hubris is startling."

But critics of the movement have already begun to surface, claiming that Kaiser and his colleagues are simply preying on people's fears of losing rocks.

While acknowledging that we should reduce our dependence on foreign rocks, many have argued that the current rock supply could easily last for the next 2 million years, by which time technology will have advanced enough to allow for the production of endless quantities of cheap, durable basalt.

Others who oppose the rock-loss theory claim that rocks were put on the earth to be used by humans in marble statues or kitchen counter tops as they see fit.

"Take the Rocky Mountains, for example: There's plenty of rocks right there," Colorado resident Kyle Peters said. "It's our right as Americans to use as many rocks as we need for whatever purposes we decide, and no scientist is going to scare me into thinking otherwise." "This country was built on rocks," he added. "Remember that."

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## 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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