



# The Rockette

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A Publication of the Sequoia Gem and Mineral Society (SGMS)

P. O. Box 1245, Redwood City, CA 94064

<http://www.sequoiagemandmineralsociety.org>

## The Corner

### THERE'S A MOVE AHEAD!

Sadly, our President, Carol Corden, will be moving to Las Vegas at the end of October! She has done so much for the club and for the community! Bob Simms, V.P. will step in as President to finish off term. A new President and Treasurer must be nominated for 2017. Please join the Nomination Committee! If you want to have an official role in the club, now is your opportunity!

We will be celebrating Carol at our October meeting. Please come and share a story about her...or make up a good one!!!

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### Birthstone for September

One of my favorite stones (as well as being the stone for my birthday month) is the Sapphire. It comes in so many colors and has so much history and mysticism about it. Coveted by royalty since the dawn of time, and still able to elicit 'oohs' and 'ahhs' from all who behold them...

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### LAPIDARY SHOP UPDATE

The shop will be closed for approximately two weeks beginning September 23 to October 9. We will most likely have a cleanup day, so stay tuned and put all of your energies into the show!

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### SGMS Mission Statement

The Sequoia Gem & Mineral Society serves the community by providing education in the Earth Sciences and training in the lapidary arts and, in doing so, promotes ethical behavior, sound resource stewardship, and good fellowship. The Society fulfills its mission through year-round offerings of field trips, lapidary workshops, outreach presentations, public mineral displays, and monthly informational meetings open to the public.

Member of:

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.  
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
North Bay Field Trip Association

Exchange bulletins are welcome. You are free to reprint if credit or citation is noted.

## Most asked question... “How do I obtain my minerals?”

There are four ways to get specimens for your collection and I get mine by all four ways.

1). Buy them. Some people call this the “Silver Pick” which means instead of digging them out of the ground with a steel pick, you go the “easy” way by using your money. Letting the dealer know you are a member of a Gem & Mineral Society often gets you a good discount. The more you know, the better chance to get the best deal and the correctly labeled stone.

2) Trade for them. After a while, you will have specimens you no longer want. You can trade them with other collectors for specimens you do want. I often trade California stones for stones in other states or countries.

3). Dig for them. You will find that the “best” specimens in your collection are the ones you found yourself. It is very exciting to pull a crystal out from its hiding place and know that you are the very first human in the history of the world to see, touch and enjoy that mineral specimen! The lure of treasure hunting is addictive. You can find other Rockhounds that will help you find stones in their area.

4). Rockhounds are kind and generous and often share their finds by giving them to friends or donating them for prizes. We love to share the passion we have for collecting, lapidary work and making jewelry. I personally love community outreach and educating children.



### Treasurer STILL needed!

We really need someone to step in and take over. It is a fairly easy job for anyone who can deal with a little money and budgets. And, as you are now aware, we also need a President!

## The World’s largest blue star sapphire has been found!

**By Melissa Hogenboom from the BBC**

The world's largest blue sapphire has been unveiled. Discovered in Sri Lanka's Ratnapura mines, it weighs an astonishing 1404.49 carats, equivalent to about 10 ounces. It is a type of gem known as a "star sapphire", due to the six-pointed star within the gem. This occurs because of the way light reflects from crystals trapped within it. The owner suggests it could sell for up to \$175 million. Mineral scientist **Simon Redfern** from the University of Cambridge in the UK, explains how such enormous gems can form.

Making sapphires is a lengthy process. This particular sapphire would have formed within the rocks of Sri Lanka's highlands.

The rocks are mostly granites, which form when molten magma cools and solidifies. But they have been subjected to intense heat and pressure.

"The granites have been dated as almost two billion years old, and were subsequently squeezed and re-worked in a massive metamorphic mountain-building episode that happened more than 500 million years ago," says Redfern. "Temperatures and pressures deep within the roots of these mountains would have reached more than 900C and over

9000 atmospheres pressure."

The sapphire could have formed within the granite itself before it was re-worked, or later when the rocks were being heated and squeezed.

"In either case, the temperatures and pressures would have changed only very slowly over millions and millions of years," says Redfern. "This is how the crystal was able to grow so big."

After the gem formed, it sat within the rocks while they were uplifted into mountains, which then eroded. "And so it was brought to the surface, picked out of the rock by the forces of rain and weathering, and transported down river to the gem sands of Ratnapura," says Redfern.

Minerals such as sapphire can only survive journeys like this because they are so hard. Other, softer rocks would have eroded into mud and sand, helped along Sri Lanka's river beds by the country's heavy rainfall.

Sapphires are so hard because they are formed from corundum, an aluminium oxide.

"Corundum is the hard gritty stuff used as an abrasive in emery paper," says Redfern.

"If you add just a trace of iron and titanium to the mixture of aluminum and oxygen from which the corundum is growing, it forms as sapphire. So sapphire is 'dirty' corundum - corundum with a trace of iron and titanium."

## Events and Items of Interest:

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USGS Evening Public Lecture September 29 @ 7:00 PM

Rambo Auditorium/Bldg. 3, 345 Middlefield Rd., Menlo Park

### **Remembering Mount Pinatubo 25 Years Ago** ***A look back at one of the largest volcanic eruptions of the 20th century***

**by John Ewert, Geologist, USGS Cascades Volcano Observatory**

Join us for a special showing of the NOVA film "In the Path of a Killer Volcano".

This 60 min. film follows USGS scientists as they work with local agencies to monitor the restless volcano and forecast its eruption.

USGS Geologist John Ewert, featured in the film, will introduce it and be on hand to answer questions afterwards.

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## **It shimmers. It shines. It's almost here!**

Starting September 30, experience the sparkle of *Gems and Minerals Unearthed*—an all-new look at the **California Academy of Science's** renowned gems and minerals collection. This fresh new display features nearly 400 dazzling geologic specimens (both raw and refined). From amethyst and azurite to silver and jade, marvel at the enormous diversity of colors, textures, and chemical properties found in pieces from all corners of the globe. Jump-start your fall in this world of color and shine.

The club is considering a field trip there. Please email me your interest in joining the group. If we have 10 or more people the discount is 15% off admission. Those prices range from \$25 to \$35 per individual ticket.

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## COUNTDOWN! THE SGMS SHOW!

### Show Prep:

Cathy, Carol, Peter, the Bingham's and Doug stuffed tumbled stones in rock bags, total of 250. Then Cathy, Carol, Peter and Paul sorted rocks for the rock sale. There are some truly unusual pieces. Come find out for yourself!

As you are aware, the show is coming up in a couple of weeks ! Saturday and Sunday, September 24 and 25<sup>th</sup>. There is also set up on Friday, September 23 and tear down immediately after the show. Please plan on helping! Contact Carol Cordon and ask what you can do to help your club!

Please pick some show cards up and distribute when you attend a show or see someone who might be interested.

As you are aware, the dates have changed for our show because the CFMS show is set during our usual time. Your assistance is needed! If you have some material we can use for tumbling to create the bags of stones for kids, please bring to the next meeting or let us know and we can pick it up.

This event is coming up next month! If you want to sell your wares, we are offering inexpensive table space to members. That is certainly something new! Look over this list and see where you might be able to participate:

- Create a Display boxes. We have 4 spaces left. People love to look at them!
- Volunteer to help during the show, before and after. There are lots of things we need your help on.
- Donate items for the raffle.
- Get the word out! We are listed on Eventbrite. Please go there and forward the invitation to anyone you know.
- Get a table space allotted to sell your own things
- Attend the event...and bring a friend...and buy stuff!!!
- Bring a batch of something to sell—like cookies or cupcakes...contact Val Concello for that.

## Dates of SGMS meetings for 2016:

Other meeting dates: Sept 19      Oct 17      Nov. 21

Don't miss the meeting for October 17! Preston Bingham will be presenting a program about copper and the Bingham Copper Mine.

**Annual Show (NEW DATE)** : Held on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of Sept. 2016  
Christmas party will be held in December in lieu of our normal meeting. Date TBD

Unless specified, the meetings will be held at the usual place, The Sequoia Gem and Mineral Society holds its General Meetings from 7-9pm on the third Monday of the month (with exceptions for holidays, or during July and December). Each meeting features a presentation, raffle drawings for specimens, a member Show & Tell, and access to the club library. **Guests are welcome to join us!**  
 Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt Ave., Redwood City, CA 94062

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If you are interested in providing material for our next newsletter, please contact your editor. If you have anything for sale that would be of interest to our club members, you can post that here too!

**ROSTER OF OFFICERS AND CHAIRS**

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Vice President	Bob Simms	650-222-0968	<a href="mailto:loomisites@netscape.net">loomisites@netscape.net</a>
Annual Show Chairs:	Carol Corden and Bob Simms		
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**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Field Trips	OPEN POSITION		
Monthly Programs -everyone!!!	Send suggestions to <a href="mailto:cordencarol@yahoo.com">cordencarol@yahoo.com</a>		
Outside Exhibits	Carol Corden, Cathy Phalen, Paul Rose	650-248-7155	<a href="mailto:cordencarol@yahoo.com">cordencarol@yahoo.com</a>
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