

Ho Ho Ho, Merry Christmas

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The Petrified Digest

December 2023



Welcome Friends and Rockhounds

I thought it would be a good idea for everyone to get to know our new club President, Thea Stender. Her rockhounding accomplishments are many and impressive. I am not the only one who is confident that she will do a great job in her new role. Before moving on to Thea's story, I would like to thank our outgoing President, Carol Smith, on behalf of everyone, for the guidance she has provided.



Meet Your Fellow Club Members

Thea Stender

Thea grew up in Wenatchee. Her family moved there from Camano Island when she was two years old. From an early age, she enjoyed being outdoors, hiking and exploring. She soon became acquainted with many nearby trails and their beautiful surroundings.

It was as a teen that she first fell in love with rocks and minerals. She told me that when she visited some of her friend's homes, they would have pretty rocks on display. Thea was captivated by what she saw so she asked her friends what these cool rocks were and where they came from. Neither her friends nor their family members knew any details about the specimens displayed in their homes. They had been purchased as decorations.

Being an inquisitive young person with a thirst for knowledge, Thea determined that she would learn all she could about these wonderful works of nature. She searched the internet. She bought and read books. She learned a lot and then she learned some more. You might say a light bulb went off in her head when she realized that many of the rocks and minerals that captured her imagination could be found within a reasonable proximity to her home.

Armed with her newfound knowledge, Thea set off to find the objects of her heart's desire and she did. Around the age of 16, she began posting her finds on various rockhounding sites. This led to her interacting with veteran rockhounds whose input broadened her base of knowledge.

Thea told me that she not only wanted to visit known sites but she also wanted to discover new sites or sites that had been lost or forgotten. She went on to explain that by lost and forgotten she meant sites that were active during the 1930s through the 1960s but have since faded from most people's memories. Do you think that she has been successful in this endeavor? Of course, she has.

One success story happened in 2015 when she discovered an occurrence of Selenite in Wenatchee. Again, she posted her finds on rockhounding sites. The Selenite wasn't of the quality that she had hoped for but instead of being discouraged, she kept searching in the belief that there had to be better quality Selenite somewhere in the vicinity.

In 2016, on her 19th birthday, Thea made her first trip to the Seattle Mineral Market. She knew that some of her rock and mineral heroes would be there. She made up her mind that she would introduce herself to them and she did. She met Joe George, sometimes known by his eBay seller name SceptersGuy and John Lindell. Last but not least, she met Bart Cannon. When she introduced herself to him, he replied, "You're that Selenite Girl!" referring to the occurrence that she discovered the year before. The three men she met that day would become Thea's mentors.

2019 was an eventful year for our Club's new President. It began on New Year's Day when Thea's diligence paid off and she discovered a new occurrence of Selenite in Wenatchee. Unlike the one she discovered in 2015, this one was of extremely high quality. In fact, it was regarded as the highest quality Selenite ever found in Washington State. Don't bother going to look for it as it now has concrete poured over it.

Later that year, she began to date a young man named Kyle Lesmeister. Both Thea and he were working for Washington Conservation Corps at the time. They shared a lot of the same interests, but Kyle had no rockhounding

experience, Thea soon corrected that. She told me that he picked it up quickly. She went on to say, "He might know more about rockhounding than I do." She also said, "He's good at moving rocks around."

I told her that it was fortunate that he was a good rockhound, otherwise, she might've given him the boot. She laughed. Certainly, she wouldn't have actually given him the boot. Well...probably not.

Thea continued on her journey, now with Kyle. The next thing that happened in 2019 was when Bart Cannon contacted them and asked that they protect a site that he had found that contained a rare mineral. Bart was the author of *Minerals of Washington* which is Thea's favorite book. She told me that, "He shared countless amazing collecting stories and was so inspiring to me."

Together, Thea and Kyle set out to do as Bart had requested. They found the site, collected specimens and then sent them to two different Universities where a positive identification was made. It's called Magnesio-hastingsite. Thea and Kyle then filed a claim on the site that they named Black Tuesday. A scientific paper will soon be published about it. Unfortunately, Bart passed away in November of 2019 prior to the identification of this rare mineral. Thea said, "He would have been so excited to know now what it is."

In 2020, Thea was contacted by John Lindell who encouraged her to take a job at the commercial mine Purple Hope #4. She was also recruited to work at The Spruce Ridge Mine. Both of these mines are located in the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Valley. While working at these mines her duties included being suspended by a rope on vertical rock faces and setting explosive charges. In other words, just another day at the office.

John obviously had a big impact on Thea's life. She told me, "He had helped me a lot by telling me about old mineral localities to find and getting my name out there in a positive way within the mining community. He taught me a lot of organizing collections and knowing what quality specimens really are."

In addition to Bart Cannon and John Lindell, Joe George was also instrumental in Thea's education of rocks and minerals. She explained, "He has taught me how to properly extract specimens, how to be a true artisanal specimen miner and how to properly specimens using various methods. He's also a great research partner of mine."

Earlier this year, Thea quit her mining jobs to become an Apprentice Electrician. She told me that one of the reasons that she made this move was due to the fact that having a job that mirrored her favorite hobby was taking some of the fun out of her rockhounding. I can understand that. It was also this year when John Lindell gave her the rights to the Big Chief Claim, also located in the Middle Fork Valley. He also told her about a publication called *Rocks and Minerals of the Pacific Northwest* by Leslie Mocloch. A photo of Selenite that Thea found in 2019 is included in this book. You can find it on sale at Amazon.

It was also earlier this year when Thea and Kyle joined the Club. Thea has always had a strong desire to interact and exchange knowledge with others who share her passion for rocks and minerals. Most of her rockhounding friends live on the West Side so it made sense to join The Ginkgo Mineral Society here in her hometown.

Thea enjoys learning about the chemical composition of minerals and how they are formed. She has a special affinity for rare minerals with her favorites being combinations of multiple crystals of different types. Thea and Kyle often sell some of their specimens at gem shows.

Thea will be taking over the role of President of the Club in January. Following Carol, she will have big shoes to fill but I know she will be up to the task. Not just because she knows a lot about rocks and minerals but also because she genuinely wants to pass her knowledge on to others. Last month, I went on the Frenchman Coulee trip. This gave me a chance to get to know both Thea and Kyle. They were gracious and patient. They worked very hard to make the trip a good experience for everyone. If you haven't done so already, take some time to get to know them. They aren't just good rockhounds. They're also good people.

From Atop the Rockpile

The first flakes of snow are falling as I write this message. Another year almost gone and another one just over the hill. Congratulations to our new leaders for 2024. You voted in for President: Thea Stender, Vice President: Dereck Condor, Secretary: Melisha Maxey and Treasurer: David Earhart.

Our Christmas dinner will be at 6 p.m. instead of our usual meeting time of 7 p.m. Ham is furnished by the club and lots of side dishes by members. We will have a gift exchange for those who bring a gift to play our "steal" game. I am at a loss for words as this month finishes my year on the executive board of the Ginkgo Mineral Society. What great memories and friends I've had to share our lives with AND rocks! So... Old Farmer's Advice for the last time "I've traveled along way and a lot of the roads were not paved." That makes for some great adventures and stories.

Well folks, this is my last rodeo, last round-up and I was debating whether to wear a cowboy hat to our Christmas meeting. Carl Pederson suggested I should wear a pair of spurs also...?? What a hoot!! See ya at the December 15th meeting.

Carol

From the Scribe

Thea Stender gave a report on the November Field Trip to Frenchman Coulee. In addition to bringing examples of what was found, Thea explained that the Common Opal that had brought the group to this site is opalized diatoms. A diatom is any member of a large group comprising several generations of algae, specifically microalgae, found in the oceans, waterways and soils of the world.

She also said that the site had once been mined for diatomaceous earth and that the group was digging in the "Priest Rapids Member" Formation. Serravallian-Tortonian Age (12-10.5 Million years ago).

Jodi Rose brought some aventurine that she gave away and Dave Pruitt had nice wood stools for sale.

Refreshments were provided by Susan Oglebay and Liz Hemberry.

Door Prize and Raffles: The door prize was won by Ozzie Reeves. Raffle winners were Melisha Maxey, Brenda Jackson, Ozzie Reeves, Peggy Grant and Dave Earhart.

Business Meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by President Carol Smith. The minutes and treasurer's report were read and approved. A new slate of executive officers for 2024 was elected by unanimous ballot. The new officers are listed above in the President's Message.

Old Business:

Pam Lander passed a signup sheet around for the Christmas Wrapping fund raiser on December 20-24th.

New Business:

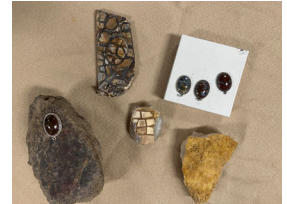
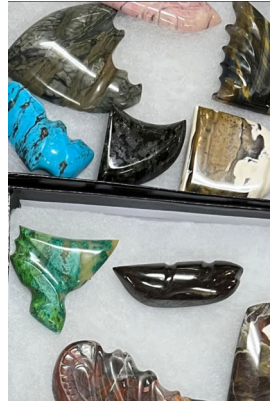
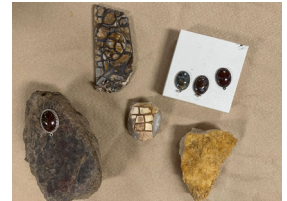
Dan Hanson explained that it probably makes sense to transition the Club's website to a different platform such as Go Daddy. A group of volunteers will meet to discuss the best way to proceed. The facebook page will be evaluated after the New Year.

The Christmas Party Pot Luck will be on December 15th at 6 p.m. The club will provide ham and members are to bring a side dish. The Optional White Elephant Gift Exchange will be a feature of the party. Those who wish to participate are to bring a gift of up to \$20. There will be a steal option but you can only steal once.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm
Melisha Maxey, Secretary

Buy, Sell, Trade

November's meeting featured an event where members brought items to sell or trade. There were slabs and cabs and all sorts of other rocks and minerals available to purchase as well as many other cool items. One thing that wasn't in short supply was fun as everyone seemed to really enjoy viewing the items, making purchases and most importantly, interacting with one another.



Where's the Equipment

Several of our members have graciously provided homes for our shop equipment. They will make the equipment available to Club members by appointment so we can still cut and polish the stones we collect. Below is a list of equipment with phone numbers to call to arrange an agreeable time:

Marcia Summers: A Genie 509-860-7556

Dave Stender: A Genie and trim saw 509-630-1176

Jodi Rose: A Genie and trim saw 509-763-9402

Carl Pederson: 18-inch slab saw (\$2.00 per cut), 10 inch slab saw, faceting machine 509-630-8239

From the Vault

As of 12/7/2023	
CD	\$10,124.48
Savings Account	\$ 1,799.91
Checking Account	\$ 6,140.59
3 deposits	\$ 367.05
4 checks written (rent payments)	\$ (340.85)
11/30/23 End Bal.	\$ 6,166.79

David's Notes

Ginkgo annual memberships can be paid now for 2024.

Individual: \$20.00

Family: \$40.00

Senior (one): \$15.00

The Christmas Party is Friday December 15th at **6:00 p.m.**

Potluck: the Club provides ham and utensils, etc. We will "Auction Off" the leftover ham and the hambones so someone can make bean soup.

Marketplace



Custom Ellensburg Blue Contact Carol Smith 509.884.3349 for some very reasonably priced items

The Ginkgo Mineral Society was formed to promote the education of mineralogy and geology; to encourage the collecting of rocks and minerals; to provide field excursions to mineral collecting areas; and to promote interest in lapidary work.

Annual Dues: Individual-\$20.00, Senior-\$15.00, Family-\$40.00, Lifetime (20 plus years)-Free. Please mail your dues to Ginkgo P.O. Box 303, Wenatchee, WA 98807.

Club information cards are available to handout to folks who show interest in our hobby. See David Earhart for cards to carry with you.

[Learn more](#)

Newsletter mailing

It is the choice of each member whether he or she receives the newsletter by mail or by email. We understand that some members either prefer or have to get the mailed version. We are happy to continue to send those out. However, the cost for an envelope, stamp, postage and printing of one newsletter is a little over \$3. We mail out over 50 each month. If there are members who could switch over to the emailed version, that would help us to add to our bank account. Thank you.



Next Meeting

December 15, 2023 at 6 pm

Email ideas, trip notes or photos
to: Lizhemberry@hotmail.com Website:

Club Officers

President..... Carol Smith..... 509-884-3349
Vice President..... Pat Russell..... 509-421-1307
Secretary..... Michelle Girard..... 509-679-4605
Secretary..... Pam Lander..... 509-884-5135
Treasurer..... David Earhart..... 509-860-0988

Coordinators

Marcia Summers..... Membership..... 509-860-7556
David Earhardt..... Nason Creek..... 509-860-0988
Pam Lander..... Christmas Wrap, Grit..... 509-884-5135
Carl Pederson..... Shop and Equipment..... 509-884-6980
Carol Smith..... Rock Auction..... 509-884-3349
Brenda Jackson..... Social Chairperson..... 509-884-5320
Susan Oglebay..... Club Website..... 509-754-2665
Thea Stender..... Chelan, Co. Fair, Museum..... 509-630-1391
Ken Hemberry..... Newsletter..... 509-699-9450



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