

Welcome Friends and Rockhounds



The Petrified Digest

April, 2024



Meet Your Fellow Club Members

Rick and Carol Lechner



Rick Lechner has spent most of his adult life living in the sparsely populated, wide open spaces of Wyoming but that wasn't always the case. He grew up in one of the largest cities in the US, on the North Side of Chicago. So, how did Rick start out in Chicago and end up in Wyoming? Read on...

After High School the time for higher education came and Rick was encouraged by an acquaintance of his father to investigate universities out west. As a result, they visited several schools in different states, before Rick chose the University of Wyoming. It was there during a square dance class that he met his future wife, Carol.

Now Carol was anything but a city girl. You see her father was a game warden as well as an avid falconer. During his career, he was assigned to various places. When they lived in Colorado, he would fly a Prairie Falcon that belonged to the Air Force Academy over the field during their home football games. His name is entered into the Archives of Falconry Wall of Remembrance located at the Peregrine Foundation World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, ID.

Growing up, Carol became experienced in the outdoors and the ways of nature. Part of those experiences were due to her somewhat unusual summer job. She explained that from time to time, well intended people would bring, what they assumed to be, the lost or abandoned offspring of various species of wildlife to her father. She went on to say that most of these youngsters probably weren't lost or abandoned at all but most likely, safely waiting for their mother to return. Unfortunately, once taken out of their environment and brought to the game warden it was too late for a mother and child reunion. If you guessed that it was Carol's job to care for these unfortunate orphans, you would be correct. Over the years from late Middle School to the end of High School, she became the surrogate mother to Pheasants, Sage Chickens, Canada Geese, Deer, Elk, Antelope, Bobcat, a couple of Prairie Dogs as well as both a Black and a Grizzly Bear.

She told me, "The Grizzly wasn't too bad. Once he figured out that I wasn't going to hurt him, he became compliant, and I could lead him on a leash like a dog." She shook her head as she went on, "The Black Bear was the worst. No matter what I did, he still saw me as his enemy. I had to fix a broomstick to his harness so I could hold him about five feet away from me. Otherwise, he would've been biting at my ankles, and he had some sharp teeth.

Carol told me that she fed this bear out of a thick aluminum pan. "My mother always told me to feed the bear and wait until he had finished eating and then bring the pan right back to me." She went on to say, "One day I didn't do that and when I went back to get it, he had chewed several holes into the half inch thick pan."

After graduating from college, Rick and Carol both took jobs teaching in Greybull, Wyoming. She taught both 4th and 5th graders. Her favorite subject was Wyoming History. Rick taught 6th, 7th and 8th grade math. In addition to his regular math class, Rick taught, what he referred to as, a Mountain Man class. He said that he was able to get a grant to purchase two tepees and that the kids learned how to make rawhide from steer, elk, deer and antelope. He said that antelope skin is very thin, and that one kid made a lamp shade out of it. The kids also learned beading, how to start a fire with flint and steel, and track casting.

Talking to them, it was obvious that both Rick and Carol loved teaching and that they are true educators. Rick chuckled when he told me, "I thought it might be time to retire when one of my students told me that I had taught his grandma."

Rick told me that Carol's parents were rockhounding fanatics. Of course, he said that as a compliment and went on to explain that they would travel from their ranch in Lander, WY to Quartzite, AZ for six months at a time. There, Carol's father would take pay-dirt from one of the three gold claims that they had and feed it into a sluice box. Carol said that she still has about 20 ounces of gold that her parents mined.

In 2008, Carol's mother was having difficulty caring for the place in Lander, so Carol and Rick sold their home in Greybull and built a new one on 9 acres that Carol's mother gifted to them. They have been tending to the ranch ever since

In addition to the original ranch house in Lander, which was built in 1918, and declared a historical building, Carol's parents also owned a house in Quartzite. Both of those homes now serve as rentals. In 2019, Rick and Carol wanted to be able to spend more time with Rick's daughter and her husband who live in Tacoma, so they toured the eastern side of Washington state and ended up buying a home in Wenatchee. They now spend about half of the year there from late fall to early spring and the rest of the year in Lander. There is a tenant in the basement of the Wenatchee house, so they have someone to take care of the place while they're in Wyoming.

When I asked Carol what her favorite rocks and minerals were, she didn't hesitate when she answered petrified wood. She also has a fondness for Stromatolites. She explained to me that they are living fossil layers of sand and slime algae. She said that the tide would bring in sand and then algae would grow on it and then be covered again by new sand layer after layer of fossilized algae. She also does some impressive bead work.

When I asked Rick what his favorite rocks and minerals were, his response was, "I like it all!" He then said that he likes working with Crazy Lace Agate, and Charoite. He then added that lately, he has been getting into Lysite Agate. He showed me some that he collected in Wyoming, and I can see why he likes it.

He has been cutting rocks for the past 3 or 4 years. Between Lander and Wenatchee, he has 24-, 18-, 12- and 10-inch saws. It took him more than a year to get them all in good operational order because they had been unused for so long. Rick told me, "Some of them are older than I am." He has just gotten into cabbing this year after some instruction from Susan Oglebay. He looks forward to doing more in the future.

The Lechner's will soon be returning to Wyoming, but they will be back in Wenatchee in the fall when the weather starts to turn.

From Atop the Rockpile

Hello fellow rock and mineral lovers! Coming up in April there will be a program about Ellensburg Blue presented by our past president, Carol Smith Since Ellensburg Blue is an agate found in the Teanaway away Basalt formation here in our wonderful state of Washington, bring your favorite agate specimens from Red Top, Mountain/First Creek or your favorite agate specimens from other localities to show and tell.

We have thought of some fun field trips for the future summer months that include: Lake Wenatchee, Red Top Mountain, and First Creek. If any of you awesome members are willing to lead one of these field trips, please contact me via the number in the newsletter. Rock on everyone!

Thea Stender

From the Scribe

March Program: Mineral Cleaning Techniques by: Thea Stender

A Textile Gun filled with distilled water that shoots a stream at high velocity is a good first step in the cleaning process. One can be purchased on Amazon for around \$60.

Iron Out (rust remover) used for moderate dirt and iron oxide stains. It comes in a powder that can be mixed in a plastic container. It can be purchased at a hardware store for around \$8. It is highly suggested to wear rubber gloves

Muriatic Acid can be used for heavily iron stained specimens. This acid can be dangerous, so it is recommended to use a respirator, chemical rated gloves and always use it outside. Use tongs to remove the specimens. It can then be neutralized with baking soda (Caution as this will create a fizz action). You'll be left with a salty solution that can be dumped out. Can be purchased at a hardware store for around \$10. Note: muriatic acid will eat Calcite and other calcium carbonates. Use Hydrogen Peroxide for those minerals.

Phosphoric Acid can be used on heavily iron stained specimens and in the final stage of the chemical cleaning process. A respirator is not needed but you should use chemically rated gloves. This will get rid of yellowing left over from the muriatic acid. It will take about a week in this solution. It can be bought at a hardware store for around \$16.

Micro Abrasion Blasters that use air pressure and an abrasive media are very effective for removing dirt, stains, etc. Thea uses a Vaniman with 50-micron glass beads. In addition to the Vaniman, she purchased a blast cabinet at Harbor Freight. The cabinet allows a person to remove material while keeping the dust contained. You will also need an air compressor to provide air and a method to remove the dust inside the cabinet such as a Shop Vac. While this method is effective but also expensive. Expect to spend several hundred dollars if you go this route.

New Members: John and Terri Reinhofer. Welcome to the Club!

Refreshments: Provided by Brenda Jackson and Kyle Lesmeister.

Door Prize and Raffle: The door prize was won by Trish Stender. Kyle Lesmeister, Roger Gill, Melisha Maxey and Trish Stender were the raffle winners. Thanks to Pam Lander for donating slabs for the raffle.

Show and Tell: Nick Witt brought Yakima River petrified wood and a mystery rock from Arizona. Ron Payne showed faceted Oregon Sunstone Gems that he is selling for \$25 per carat. Ron mined these himself. At one time he had over 400 but most have been sold.

Ken Sly displayed specimens from both Red Top and Crystal Mountain. Some he had to drill out of the matrix in order to keep them whole. He spoke about the cleaning methods that he used. He also brought miscellaneous rocks collected near Wanapum Dam and the Venita Bridge that he tumbled to a high polish with Alumina Powder A (AKA Linde A) which he referred to as "Super Grit." He said it does a great job and really makes them shine!

Dave Stender brought a dozen or so cabs. He makes one a day after work for stress relief.

Martin Sullivan brought a Horsetail plant fossil, known as living fossil, from a Boy Scout camp in Philmont, NM as well as another rock he found on the Westside while doing yardwork with a neighbor. He cut some slabs from it and brought a cab of one. Who knew that something so ordinary with some spit shine and work could become something so beautiful? (paraphrased)



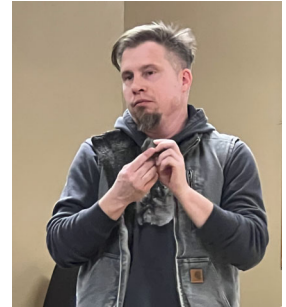
Different stages of cleaned Quartz Crystals from uncleaned to partially cleaned to fully cleaned. Presented by: Thea Stender



Ken Sly talking about specimens that he collected at Red Top and Crystal Mt.



Specimens brought by Club members. The ones on top of the lights were brought by Ken Sly.



Martin Sullivan showing specimens that he collected long ago. It was clear that they held a lot of meaning for him.

New Business: The business meeting was called to order on March 24, 2024 at 7:11 pm by President Thea Stender. The minutes of the February meeting were read and approved. The Treasurer's Report was presented and approved. A motion was made and seconded to purchase a monitor for presentations. The motion was approved. After the vote, Tony Marconi said he has a 50-inch TV that he would donate. A new motion was made to accept Tony's donation and to also purchase a cart for the TV.

The Ginkgo Mineral Society will have two tables for members to sell items at the **NCW Prospectors Gold and Treasure Show** at the Chelan County Fairgrounds in Cashmere on April 13th and 14th. Contact Dave Earhart if you want to take advantage of this opportunity.

Old Business: We are looking for a Program Director and a Field Trip Coordinator. Thea can provide info for trips but cannot lead them all because she works 55 hours a week. Carol Smith volunteered to do a presentation on Ellensburg Blue. Larry Shaw, who formerly led trips, offered to help us coordinating trips but cannot lead them. Please consider volunteering and helping the club to thrive!

Miscellaneous: Rick and Carol Lechner extended an invitation to all club members to visit them at their 90-acre ranch in Lander, Wyoming. People could camp by the river on their property. They also have an RV hook up on-site.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:45

Melisha Maxey
Secretary

Notices

The NCW Prospectors Gold and Treasure Show will be held at the Chelan County Fairgrounds in Cashmere on April 13th and 14th. Contact Dave Earhart if you want to take advantage of this opportunity. Liz and I attended this show last year and really enjoyed it.

Fossil Lovers will want to keep tuned for the Club's Trip to Murdock and Twin Beach near Port Angeles to look for marine fossils that can be found in the Pysht Formation in Clallam County from the late Oligocene to early Miocene. It is about a 5 1/2 hour drive from Wenatchee. There is a campground at Twin Beach. For those who prefer a motel, they can be found in Port Angeles and the surrounding area. Thea will be leading this trip which will take place sometime in August. Please provide input to Thea if you are interested in going. I'm sure it will be a fun trip.

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:

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

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

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

From the Vault

As of 2-29-2024	
2 CDs	\$11,577.40
Savings Account	\$1,800.14
Checking Account Beginning Balance as of 2-1-2024	\$4,790.40
3 Deposits (memberships, raffle, rock sales, books)	\$694.20
6 Checks Written (storage, saw repair, misc supplies)	-\$366.56
Ending Balance as of 2-29-2024	\$5,118.04

David's Notes

Memberships are due

Individual: \$20.00

Family: \$40.00

Senior (one): \$15.00

Upcoming Gem Shows

Rock Rollers of Spokane Gem, Jewelry and Mineral Show

March 22nd to 24th

Spokane Fairgrounds

NCW Prospectors Treasure and More Show

April 13th to 14th

Chelan County Fairgrounds, Cashmere

Yakima Rock Club Parade of Gems

April 26th to 28th

Central Washington State Fairgrounds

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.

We are a 501c7 organization and are not “charitable” in nature but are a membership organization formed to serve its own members. 501c7 organizations do not solicit charitable donations. As long as a social club is “organized for pleasure, recreation or other non-profit purposes” it can qualify as exempt from federal income tax.

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.

Next Meeting

April 19th at 7:00 pm
Presbyterian Church
200 S. Kentucky, East Wenatchee

Email ideas, trip notes or photos
to: Lizhemberry@hotmail.com Website:
www.wenatcheerockclub.org
Facebook page: Ginkgo Mineral Society

Club Officers

President..... Thea Stender..... 509-630-1391
Vice President..... Derek Corder..... 425-270-0221
Secretary..... Melisha Maxey..... 509-885-2996
Treasurer..... David Earhart..... 509-860-0988

Coordinators

Marcia Summers..... Membership..... 509-860-7556
David Earhart..... 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
Cheri McMillan.....Facebook Page Admin.....509-860-0009
Sarah Collamore.....Facebook Page Admin.....808-365-3555