

# **Bulletin of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California**



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The 839th Meeting of The Mineralogical Society  
of Southern California

**Gold Mining in Venezuela  
And  
Finding New Homes for an Old Collection**

**Saturday, January 12, 2008, at 6:30 p.m.**

**Oak Tree Room  
1150 East Colorado Blvd., Pasadena**

## **Featuring:**

- Gold mining at Venezuela
- Diamond mining in Namibia
- CFMS selected Janet Gordon as Scholarship Honoree
- Fall Symposium of the Friends of Mineralogy

## January Banquet

By Janet Gordon

Join MSSC members and friends for a special evening of fun, food, a silent auction, and a special talk by mineral dealer extraordinaire, Wayne Leicht.

**When:** Saturday evening, **January 12, 2008**. Festivities begin at the 5:30 with a Social Hour and Silent Auction. Wine and beer will be available from a no host bar. Dinner at 6:30 will be followed immediately by Wayne's talk.

**Where:** The Oak Tree Room, 1150 East Colorado Blvd., Arcadia at the SE corner of Colorado Blvd. and Michalinda Ave.

**What to eat:** The meal will be a buffet featuring prime rib, salmon, chicken dejon, mash potatoes and gravy, rice pilaf, salad bar, bread, dessert table, and dinner beverages. The cost for the complete meal including tax and tip is \$31.00.

### **Reservations are imperative!**

Make reservations **no later than Sunday, January 6th**. Payment of \$31/person may be made at the door by cash or check.

### **Auction Specimens Needed!**

Bring your money for bidding and a mineral specimen or related item to donate to our once-a-year fundraising event! Some super specimens changed hands last year, and everyone's generosity was great for the Society. Let's make this year even better. Contact Janet Gordon if you have

questions or wish to make special arrangements for a donation.

### **Featuring Wayne Leicht's two-part Presentation**

Wayne Leicht will give a two-part presentation. First he will bring us up to date on his joint mining venture for crystallized gold in Venezuela. This locality has been producing truly extraordinary specimens. Second, he will discuss the purchase and subsequent dispersal of the mineral and gem collection from the Academy of Natural Science in Philadelphia. This collection of 26,000 specimens had been in storage for a half century, and many important and historic specimens are now seeing the light.

Wayne Leicht, along with his wife Dona, is the owner of Kristalle. Since its founding in 1971, Kristalle has gained a worldwide reputation for offering the finest quality mineral and gold specimens. Wayne's mineral expertise in minerals, especially gold, is greatly respected. Wayne and Dona have been strong supporters of the MSSC since before beginning their business, and Wayne is a past president of the Society.



Gold from Zapata, Santa Elena, Venezuela, with hoppered crystals measured to 7 mm, several showing octahedral terminations.

## Minutes of the December 14, 2007 Meeting

The 838<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California was held on Friday, December 14, 2007, at Pasadena City College. President Ilia Lyles brought the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Director Jo Anna Ritchey then announced that MSSC Vice President, Janet Gordon, was honored as the CFMS scholarship honoree for her many contributions related to the earth sciences. Dr. Gordon will select a California college and contact the appropriate educators at the institution. Such individuals will, in turn, select a student majoring in a field related to geology or the lapidary arts, to receive a \$2,000 CFMS scholarship.

Dr. Gordon then introduced the speaker of the evening, Dr. Tony Kampf, who gave a presentation entitled: "Namibia: Mines, Minerals and More."



*Giant sand dunes of Kalahari desert. Photo by Tony Kampf.*

Dr. Kampf, who has a Ph.D. in mineralogy and crystallography, has been the Curator of Mineral Sciences at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County for over

30 years. He has authored more than 140 scientific publications, has traveled to many mineralogical sites throughout the world, and has made significant contributions to many organizations, including the Friends of Mineralogy.

Dr. Kampf described the geological history of Namibia, and the differences between the mineral emplacements of the northern and the southern sectors. During his recent trip to Namibia, he was able to visit, in the north, the Erongo Mountains (aquamarines, fluorite and schorl); the Goboboseb Mountains (quartz and prehnite); the Okorusu fluorite mine; the now-closed Tsumeb mine; Kleine Spitzkoppe (silver topaz); and the Hoba meteorite.

Dr. Kampf then discussed the origin of Namibia's diamonds, and the history of diamond mining in the country. He visited the mines of the Namdeb Diamond Corporation, and described the company's workings and strict security procedures. He also stated that offshore operations would be the new frontier for diamond acquisition.



*Jet rig used to recover diamond in shallow water. Photo from Namdeb Company brochure.*

Namibia's political history, game parks and animal life were also briefly discussed.

Gene Reynolds announced that minerals were still needed for the Pacific Micro-Mount auction, and for the giveaway table.

Janet Gordon stated that Wayne Leicht would be the speaker at the annual banquet in January, 2008, and that specimens were needed for the silent auction to be held at the banquet.

Shou-Lin Lee announced that Dr. George Rossman would be presenting a program on diamonds at the Bowers Museum.

The door prize was won by Gene Reynolds.

The meeting was brought to a close by President Lyles at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted Pat and Geoff Caplette

### **Congratulation to Janet Gordon**

On November business meeting, the California Federation Mineral Society (CFMS) announced that MSSC member, Janet Gordon is selected as the 2008 CFMS Scholarship Honoree.

Janet Gordon is Professor Emeritus of Geology at Pasadena City College where she taught mineralogy, petrology, and other geology classes for many years. Her degrees in geology include a B.A. from Occidental College, an M.S. from California State University, Long Beach, and a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. She is a long-time MSSC member.

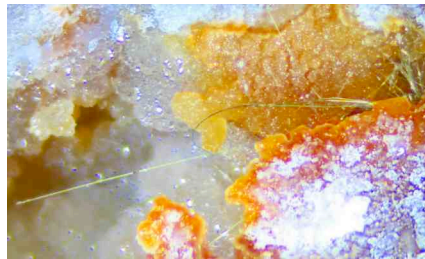
Ms. Gordon was selected for her great contributions toward furthering the purposes and goals of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies. As the Scholarship Honorees Ms. Gordon will have the opportunity to offer a \$2,000 scholarship to the college or university of her choice. The scholarship will go to a student who will be attending that school as a junior or senior in the fall term, majoring in the Earth Sciences or Jewelry Arts, and achieving a 3.0 grade point average.

## A Word from Janet Gordon

I am very pleased and honored to be chosen as a CFMS Scholarship Honoree for 2008. I have a great appreciation for the contributions to the advancement of the earth sciences that other honorees have made, and it is a privilege to be joining this group. I look forward to working with a local university to find an appropriate student to receive the scholarship. Thanks to Society members for nominating me for this honor.

## Pacific Micro-Mount Conference

Don't miss the **43<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Micro-Mount Conference** to be held **January 25-27, 2008** at the **San Bernardino County Museum, 2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands, California**. Three great speakers: Sugar White, "What's New in Minerals"; Joe Marty, "New Finds in the Southwest"; and Jack Kepper "Mining Archaeology and Ore Deposit Geology at Laurium, Greece" (the ore deposit part opens up the mineralogy). There will be a verbal, and a silent auction of great specimens, plus tables of fine specimens for purchase (see samples below), and tables of give-away specimens. Add to this the camaraderie of old and new friends, and this is an event not to be missed. Let's all make it a success! If you are an old hand, new to micros, or just want to learn about this fascinating area, this is the place to be.



**Micro's Needed** Micro's are needed for the Pacific Micro-Mount auction.

Send your specimens to: **Walt Margerum, 14892 Sutro Ave., Gardena, CA 90249.** Donations will also be accepted at the Conference on January 25 and 26.

**Fall Symposium/Field Trip of the Friends of Mineralogy, Pennsylvania Chapter**

*Text and Photos by John Moore*

On November 3 and 4, 2007, the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Friends of Mineralogy conducted their annual symposium and semiannual field trip. Since I originally lived



in Pennsylvania and have remained interested in the geology and mineralogy of that state, this was an opportunity to return to my home state.

The Symposium was held at the Delaware County Institute of Science

in Media, Pennsylvania (see photo above), approximately 15 miles west of Philadelphia. During the 1800's the Philadelphia area was a haven for amateur naturalists and mineral collectors. The symposium was an all-day event in which members presented papers on various localities in the eastern US and Canada. The presentations were accompanied by a silent auction and a give-away table for which members brought minerals and books.

The Delaware County Institute of Science was founded in 1833 has been at its current location since 1867. The museum's mineral collection was, to a large extent, endowed by donations from local natural scientists and hobbyists in the mid to late 1800's and early 1900's. The collection consists of



local, Pennsylvania and world-wide specimens donated by members throughout the years. The local specimens were most intriguing, as a large part of southeastern Pennsylvania is underlain by igneous and metamorphic rocks including pegmatites. As in Southern California, many of the old localities have been built over, and the old quarries have been backfilled. Historically, the area had produced garnet, schorl, beryl, zoisite, amethyst, andalusite, kyanite, microcline (white and amazonite), albite and actinolite. Above are two examples



of the minerals from the museum's collection for which the area is known. *(Photo to the above left is an almandine from Delaware County, Pennsylvania. Photo to the above right is several amethyst crystals from Dutton's Mill, Delaware County, Pennsylvania.)*

The field trip on Sunday was to the Cornwall Iron Mines located south of the Borough of Cornwall, approximately 85 miles west of Philadelphia. Friends of Mineralogy managed to gain access to this classic locality from the Haines & Kibblehouse Group who are currently processing dump material from the old mining operation for sale as construction aggregate. *(Photo to the right is the Haines & Kibblehouse Aggregate Processing operation)*



In an arc cutting across southeastern Pennsylvania, diabase sheets have intruded into surrounding sediments. At Cornwall the diabase has intruded Paleozoic limestones and the fluids from the intrusive have resulted in placement of magnetite with sulfides (pyrite & chalcopyrite) and replacement of the surrounding sediments. Lindgren describes the Cornwall deposit as pyrometamorphic. Ore placement dates back to the Triassic when the North American continent began to separate from Europe and Africa. The diabase sheet is an expression of the continental rift.

Between 1742 and 1972 iron ore, primarily magnetite, and some copper ore [chalcopyrite and various supergene minerals (carbonates, silicates, etc.)] were mined from the deposit by both open pit and underground methods. During the past couple hundred years the mines have passed through several different owners with the most recent being Bethlehem

Steel Corporation, which has since gone through corporate reorganization. In 1972, the open pit was flooded by Hurricane Agnes. Since that time market conditions have not warranted reopening the



mine. Until the time of closure, Cornwall was described as the oldest continuously operating mine in the Western Hemisphere. *(Photo above is the Miners Village in the Borough of Cornwall)*

Nearby Cornwall Furnace began operation as a foundry in 1742 (see photo to the right). The foundry benefited from the abundance of nearby timber, which could be converted to charcoal, as well as the iron ore about quarter mile to the south. During the American



Revolution military ordinance such as cannons and shot as well as civilian goods were produced in support of the colonial cause.

Minerals collected on this field trip included magnetite, pyrite, garnet, actinolite, calcite, chalcopyrite, chrysocolla, malachite, serpentine and assorted zeolites. Although the day provided an opportunity to collect a number of different mineral species, most of the pieces were representative or “ore-ish,” the kind of stuff that would warm the cockles of an ore geologist’s heart and not the crystallized specimens that collectors proudly display.



Collecting was available along the toe of the dump and on top (see photo to the left). Generally, magnetite and pyrite and limestone containing andradite garnet were found.

On the top of the dump (see photo below ) many of the species collectors and micromounters took a swing with a sledge hammer at a boulder of tightly interlaced fibrous material (either actinolite or serpentine) containing a vug of what appeared to be zeolites. The fibrous material was very resilient and resisted many of the blows. However, most of the collectors were able to return home with at least one piece of the unknown vug material for future study. Other minerals found on top included actinolite, calcite, chalcopyrite, chrysocolla, malachite and serpentine. I was fortunate to be handed a piece of “lodestone” picked off the dump by a fellow collector.



The collecting lasted until mid-afternoon and the general sentiment was that most of the collectors returned home with a pack or bucket filled with samples. Fortunately, for those who went on the field trip, the weather was pleasant. It had been a warm October and that trend spilled over into early November.

## Photos from Cascade Canyon Field Trip

By Walt Margerum

For those who missed the Cascade Canyon field trip on November, below are three pictures from Walt Margerum.



Photo at the left is a view of the collecting area. Photo to the right is entitled: Homeward bound. Photo below is a 7X10 centimeter specimen with crystals.



## 2008 Calendar of Events

**January 1-31, Quartzsite, Az.** Various rock and mineral shows, for more information check Web site [www.ci.quartzsite.az.us](http://www.ci.quartzsite.az.us)

**January 1-27, Laughlin, NV.** Annual show; Cloud's Jamboree; Avi Resort & Casino, 10,000 Aja Macav Pkwy.; 7-6 each day; free admission; indoor and outdoor vendors; Web site: [www.cloudsjamboree.com](http://www.cloudsjamboree.com)

**January 4-6 2008 Mesa, Az:** 36th annual show, "Flagg Gem & Mineral Show"; Arizona Mineral and Mining Museum Foundation; Mesa Community College, Dobson Rd. and U.S. Hwy. 60; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; e-mail: [dminerals@yahoo.com](mailto:dminerals@yahoo.com)

**January 18-20 Globe, Az** 51st annual show; Gila County Gem & Mineral Society; Gila County Fairgrounds, U.S. Hwy. 60; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; adults \$2, high school students with ID and children with parents free

**January 19-20 2008, Exeter, CA** Tule Gem & Mineral Society Gemshow Veteran's Memorial Bldg. On Highway 65 Hours: Sat. 10 - 5, Sun. 10-4 Marshall Havner (559) 562-4133

**January 25-27 2008, Redlands, CA** The Mineralogical Society of Southern CA 43rd. Pacific Micromount Conference San Bernardino County Museum 2024 Orange Tree Lane (exit North on California St. from I-10

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