Your T.E.A.M.S.

WE TAUGHT — Joe taught our junior members how to identify minerals. Dave taught us about lost wax casting. Mary Lou taught us how to photograph minerals. The Eastern Federation has had their “Each One, Teach One” program in place for over forty years, showing that teaching is what brings in members.

WE ENCOURAGED — Merlin encouraged new folks as they paid their dues with a great smile and winning way.

WE ACCOMMODATED — One couple volunteered to take an elderly couple of members from their retirement home to the holiday party.

WE MENTORED — Joe is teaching other officers the steps in show chairmanship as he prepares to step away from that position.

WE SUPPORTED — Cheers and applause accompanied members when they won the raffles at the meeting. When Ways & Means asked for money to purchase door prizes, it was given.

Can you fill in the blanks for your club this past month?

This month let’s focus on another “A” word – ADMINISTRATION. Rock clubs don’t run themselves, although a well-run club seems to. That’s because a well-run club prepares for change.

Their motto? “BE READY!”

For example, most clubs wish they had more members. The future of any club lies in capturing and retaining new members. But, your club must prepare for the onslaught! If your door is open, then you must be ready to receive the troops. Prepare Plan.

First - Tighten up and streamline your membership mechanism.

1. Create a database that is easy to operate and keeps accurate records. And use it regularly.

2. Membership chairs - Keep a backup and send the electronic file to your assistant, so the information is held in at least two places!

3. All - Be careful tracking money. Make sure each financial transaction regarding membership is recorded and the member gets a receipt.

4. Pass any money to the treasurer ASAP to be put in the bank.

Second - Introduce new members to the club.

1. Wear name badges, especially in large clubs!

2. Have new members introduce themselves at the first meeting they attend.

3. Take their photo and label it.

4. Put their photo in the newsletter or on the club’s Facebook.

5. Make sure someone can recognize them by name the second time they attend an event.

6. Brand the new member with a name badge, club vest, hat, or T-shirt so they feel a part of the organization.

Third - Attend to ADMINISTRATION.

1. Make sure to follow club rules and by-laws at all times.

2. Explain age-old club traditions to new members.

3. Keep lines of communication open between members and officers. One dropped email message can determine whether people show up or not for a meeting!

4. More members mean more everything. Enlist extra helpers from that growing membership to learn the tricks of the trade.

5. Everyone wants to DIG (that’s our business), so reevaluate club field trip rules and regs. Obviously collecting sites can’t handle hordes of hundreds of hunters. One suggestion might be to have “levels” of field trips such as:

- Beginners go to the most accessible, easiest, nearby, most likely to find something sites, when they are taught safety practices. All require repeating annually.

- Second level trippers go to sites that require more time and strenuous effort and may be less likely to produce specimens. These might be sites that have limitations on numbers (e.g. mine tours) and would bear repeating annually.

- Third level would be the “ultimate” supreme trip of a lifetime to find something
**President’s Message - CONTINUED**

- Each club should examine their field trip situation and how they can please all their members, all of the time!
- One administrative area that ALL clubs need to improve on is their email list. In a recent email blast about the Bulletin Editors’ contest, of the more than 85 emails sent out, over ten were returned. Some of the emails that bounced were ones that have bounced for THREE YEARS! Changing the emails and changing the recipient often didn’t help at all – only one change of the ten was apparently successful. The consistent bouncers were from four clubs. One club’s emails bounced from four addresses!
- Help RMFMS committee folk by making sure your club’s emails (and other information) are up-to-date and accurate on the membership report, because that is the information that gets put into the directory, to be saved for posterity for yet another year!
- Fourth - Plan for what you wish. 1. For example, if you want a clubhouse, and one comes available, will you BE READY? 2. Or will your club lose the opportunity for that dream to come true because the club didn’t plan ahead for maintenance, expense, and managing the machines? 3. If you want a clubhouse, do some homework. Contact clubs that have their own place (e.g. Tulsa, Grand Junction) and ask them lots of questions. 4. Even visit clubs that have clubhouses to observe their operations! 5. Budget any potential project carefully, not only for finances, but for obligations of volunteer time. Can your club carry the project off?

Mineral clubs are unique “grass-rocks” organizations. Maintaining local organizations correctly and efficiently is obviously possible; after all, there have been rock clubs for nearly a century! But it takes effort and time and the interest to maintain a club and what it stands for. Good doesn’t just happen. It is the consequence of well-thought out organization and planning for the future.

Many thanks to Bob Johnson, RMFMS retiring Webmaster Contest chair, and Jim Garvey, RMFMS Webmaster, for setting up a Dropbox for the RMFMS Bulletin Editors’ contest. It will be much appreciated and much used! Also thanks to Jim for volunteering to serve as interim editor, should a permanent volunteer not be located.

For now, go “Kick Snowballs!” See you in Albuquerque, where I once witnessed a major snowstorm!

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**Your New Lapidary Technical Chair - By RMFMS Lapidary Chair Bill Smith**

It was an honor when our President, Beth Simmons, asked if I would be the new Lapidary Technical Chair. I thought I would give you some of my background experience. My wife ,Janet, and I, moved to the state of Washington and I was looking for some type of recreation that involved the outdoors. We were at a flea market when I noticed 4 books for a dollar. They were volumes 1 through 4 of Rock Hounding in Washington. We made a couple of field trips, joined a local Gem and Mineral Club and attended the Seattle Regional Gem and Mineral Show. My fascination for rock hounding was underway. That was 37 years ago. I noticed that competition cases were usually of outstanding workmanship and I then knew I was going to show the material I worked and it would be in competition. I won’t talk about my first case other than it gave me an even greater challenge to do better. I have shown many cab and fossil competition cases over the years and, win or lose, I have always tried to do better.

My father-in-law was killed in a car accident and Janet and I moved to Kansas to take care of her mother. We joined the Wichita Gem and Mineral Society which put us in the Rocky Mountain Federation. I am also the RMFMS state Rep for Kansas.

I will be glad to answer any of your questions. My e-mail is beetlebill@kanokla.net and cell phone is 620-840-1037. See you in Albuquerque.

Photo courtesy of Bill Smith.
Treasurer’s Report - By RMFMS Treasurer Gene Maggard

The fiscal year 2015-16 financial numbers are final. Income came in about $1,800 over budget and expenses came in about $1,900 under budget. Income exceeded expenses about $3,100. Anyone interested in seeing the detailed accounting let me know and I will email you a report. Over budget income items were dues and insurance due to the large increase in membership that we experienced. RMFMS ended fiscal year 2015-16 with 78 member clubs and a total individual membership of 9,883 members, and increase of about 500 members. There was not one a few clubs that accounted for the increase membership. Although some club lost members, the general trend continues to be increasing membership in many clubs.

Fiscal year 2015-16 was a good one for RMFMS. May the positive trend continue.

Dues are due. If your club contact for RMFMS has not received the annual report form, please contact me so that I can get you one. Many reports have come in. The due date is Dec. 15. If your club cannot report by then, please let me know.

AGMC/RMFMS Convention News and Notes - by AGMC President Bob Regner

My name is Bob Regner and I am currently President of the Albuquerque Gem and Mineral Club (AGMC) and the RMFMS Convention Chair for the 2017 convention. In 2017 the AGMC will be hosting the annual RMFMS convention here in Albuquerque. I would like to invite and welcome every club in the Rocky Mountain Federation to send delegates to this years convention. We are working hard to make this a great and memorable convention/vacation for all attendees.

We are planning several activities to go along with the convention to include some speakers and several field trips. These trips will be limited to registered guests at the convention and their immediate families. The claim owners of the Blanchard mines have graciously agreed to allow a private trip there lead by our own Ray DeMark. This trip will be held the day after the convention, Monday March 20th. If you have never been, believe me it will be worth staying the extra day. If you are interested in going on this trip, please bring your tools including hard hat and mining lamp. I am working on a Sunday trip to go to a mine known as Nacimiento. These mines dump piles are scheduled to be covered by this time next year so this may be your last chance to collect here. If you do not know what minerals come from these locations, please look them up and I believe you will want to go on both of these trips.

The convention coincides with our annual Treasures of the Earth Show. I have been told by quite a few of our vendors that this is one of the best shows that they attend every year. I am guessing it must be true since there is a 4 year waiting period and a very high retention rate on our vendors. We have a great crew that makes it great show every year.

Watch future newsletters for information on the entire convention packet. When it comes out, fill it out and return it to us right away. I am hoping that when the convention is over that you will all have great memories and will be happy that you came to it. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions and I look forward to seeing every one of you.

Mineralogical Society of Arizona (MSA) 2016 Rockhound of the Year - by MSA President Chris Whitney-Smith

The MSA awarded Dr. Nathan Scholten as Rockhound of the Year. He is recognized by his many donations and volunteerism to the MSA. His numerous hours of service as Board Governor, Chair Future Rockhounds of America and Chair MSA Arizona State Fair helped drive society initiatives. His helpful presence volunteering at MSA booth at Flagg Gem & Mineral Show and dedication leading Future Rockhounds of America Junior program represents volunteerism at its finest. Nathan’s participation in earth science education & outreach events promoting the hobby and society is truly inspiring. Thank you for helping recognize Nathan’s awesome contributions on a regional & national level.

Nathan’s participation ... is truly inspiring

Although some clubs lost members, the general trend continues to be increasing membership in many clubs.
… Rock & Gem intends to increase the number of articles devoted to the lapidary arts and jewelry making.

Seeking Lapidary & Jewelry-Making Articles for Rock & Gem Magazine - By R&G Contributing Author Jim Brace-Thompson

Lynn Varon, Managing Editor of Rock & Gem, needs your assistance! Rock & Gem is the officially endorsed hobby magazine of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. That means it’s our magazine! In order to better serve their lapidary readers, Rock & Gem intends to increase the number of articles devoted to the lapidary arts and jewelry making.

Members of AFMS-affiliated clubs may wish to share their expertise in cabochon cutting and polishing, gemstone carving, soapstone carving, rock sculpture in general, beading of all kinds, intarsia, inlay and mosaics, sphere making, bead making and drilling, flat-lapping, scrimshaw, wirewarping, chainmaille, fused glass, polymer clay and PMC, silver- and goldsmithing, lost wax casting, faceting, and other techniques that are of interest to today’s lapidary hobbyist. Lynn would value article submissions and/or recommendations of experts whom she could approach to contribute articles.

To read Rock & Gem’s writers’ guidelines, visit www.rockngem.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/2017-RG-guidelines.pdf. For further info about contributing, contact Lynn directly at editor@rockngem.com.

Obtaining Info on the 2017 AFMS-CFMS Show & Convention By 2017 Show Publicity Chair Jim Brace-Thompson

Members of the Ventura Gem & Mineral Society are honored to invite rockhounds from across America to our hometown of Ventura, California to participate in the 2017 National AFMS-CFMS Show & Convention taking place June 9-11. At the 2016 California Federation Fall Directors Meeting, we performed a “Surfin’ USA” skit to kick off show promotions, and we distributed packets filled with info about the Show and about Ventura—how to get here, hotels and RV parks, basic show info, and things to do and see beyond the Show while on the southern California coast.

Rockhounds in all seven regional federations can get this info and more! To get the Advance Registration Form, competitive and noncompetitive Exhibitor Application Forms, and everything else that was included in the packet, please direct your members to our Show Website: http://2017CFMS-AFMSShow.com. You and your members can also contact VGMS directly at (805) 312-VGMS (8467) or at info@vgms.org. We invite and encourage newsletter editors of each and every AFMS-affiliated club and society to help us spread the word with a brief article directing your club’s members to the website and inviting their participation. The National Show comes but once every seven years to California. Here’s an opportunity to compete at the national level with an exhibit, to meet fellow rockhounds from all across the USA, and—in general—to have fun in the California sun! See you in June!
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The RMFMS was organized in 1941, and held its first annual convention at the Argonaut Hotel in Denver, Colorado. There were 16 organizations in attendance. The RMFMS became one of the original four founders of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies when it was organized in 1947.

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| Denver Gem and Mineral Guild | 645 Popes Valley Dr. |
| 16520 County Rd JJ | Colorado Springs, CO 80919 |
| Las Animas, CO 81054 | 719-522-1608 |
| 303-263-0391 | csrockguy@yahoo.com |
| burns.henley@gmail.com | **Arizona:** |
| **PUBLIC LANDS ADVISORY (PLAC)** | Dr. Alex Schauss |
| **Chairman:** | Tucson Gem and Mineral Society |
| Mike Nelson | 1040 E. 4th St. |
| Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society | University of Arizona, Gould-Simpson Bldg, Room 208 |
| | Tucson, AZ 85721-0077 |
| | 520-621-6024 (c)-520-380-8772 |
| | aschauss@email.arizona.edu |
| **Kansas:** | **Colorado/Kansas:** |
| Jared Kyner | Mike Nelson |
| North Central Kansas Rock & Gem Club | Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society |
| 201 E. Kansas St. | 645 Popes Valley Dr. |
| Hanover KS 66945 | Colorado Springs, CO 80919 |
| 785-410-7297 or 785-337-2324 | 719-522-1608 |
| jskynert9@gmail.com | csrockguy@yahoo.com |
| **Nebraska:** | **New Mexico/Texas:** |
| Mike Nelson | Mel Stairs |
| Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society | Albuquerque Gem and Mineral Society |
| 645 Popes Valley Dr. | 505-203-2039 |
| Colorado Springs, CO 80919 | mels@swcp.com |
| 719-522-1608 | **North Dakota:** |
| csrockguy@yahoo.com | Mike Nelson |
| **Arizona:** | Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society |
| Dr. Alex Schauss | 645 Popes Valley Dr. |
The Rocky Mountain Federation has clubs in these states: Arizona (17), Arkansas (1), Colorado (20), Kansas (7), Nebraska (western portion of state) (1), New Mexico (7), Nevada (1), North Dakota (western portion of state) (1), Oklahoma (10), South Dakota (western portion of state) (1), Texas (1), Utah (7) and Wyoming (6).

AFMS Junior Club Rockhound of the Year - By Past RMFMS President Richard Jaeger and Julia Allande

The Tulsa Rock & Mineral Society is pleased to designate Ian Kirk, who is 11, as our AFMS Junior Club Rockhound of the Year. Ian has been a member of our club for about two years and is an active participant in our Junior Rockhounds of American TRMS Chapter. He enjoys collecting on our field trips and has displayed them in our monthly showcase and in our shows; he is entering a competitive exhibit in our upcoming show. He works hard at our shows both in set up and tear down, and has worked at the grab-bag table, wheel game, fluorescent room, and silent auction areas during the show. He also helps at our regular meetings doing such things as hand delivering door prizes, showing his specimens, and helping clean up afterwards. Ian is a hard working individual who is a valuable member of our club.

The Gemcrafters & Explorers Club Rockhound of the Year - By Maxine Wyman

Longtime member Don Saathoff has been selected as our Rockhound of the Year by the Gemcrafters & Explorers Club of Las Cruces, NM. Don is our mineral go-to expert and is the leader of our inner club Mineral Group. He is always ready to help us ID our specimens both visually and with chemical analysis. He enriches the rock hound to take their curiosity to the next level by giving them the tools and wisdom of his experience allowing the passion of the hobby to soar.

Ian is a hard working individual who is a valuable member of our club.
2016 Wyoming State Rockhound of the Year Nominees—Contributed By Stan Strike-WSMGS President/ WY RMFMS State Director

All Club and State Rockhound of the Year nominations will be eligible to be selected as the Wyoming State Rockhound of the Year.

Each Wyoming State Mineral and Gem Society member club/society may nominate individuals as their Club Rockhound of the Year as to the WSMGS by-laws (article III, section8):
- One (1) adult member OR one (1) adult couple
AND
-- one (1) junior member (Age 17 or Younger)

Individuals can also submit a nomination using the Wyoming State Rockhound of the Year form.

These WSMGS member nominees will be recognized at the Annual WSMGS Membership meeting.

In addition all nominees’ names will be submitted to the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies (RMFMS) for possible recognition in the RMFMS Newsletter.

All Club and State Rockhound of the Year nominations will be eligible to be selected as the Wyoming State Rockhound of the Year. The following individuals are eligible to be selected as the Wyoming State Rockhound of the Year:

A. Roger & Joy Lyons-Cody 59ers Rock Club

Roger and Joy Lyons have provided leadership for the Cody 59ers Rock Club. Roger served as President for two years and is presently Treasurer. Joy volunteered to serve as Secretary when the position was vacated midyear due to health issues and is currently the club’s Vice President. Roger was the Chair-

B. Jim McGarvey-Riverton Mineral and Gem Society

Jim was a member of the Natrona County Rockhounds prior to moving to Kinnear in 1994. Jim joined the Riverton Mineral and Gem Club during the fall of 1994. He has served as President and Treasurer in the Riverton club and volunteers to lead field trips and provide materials and his time for his club’s Mineral & Gem Shows. Jim has been active in the Wyoming State Mineral and Gem Society by serving on the WSMGS Board for over 20 years. During that same time interval, Jim has served as the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies’ Wyoming State Director and is presently the RMFMS webmaster. Jim McGarvey represents all Wyoming Rockhounds by being active in his local rock club, the state group (WSMGS), and the regional organization (RMFMS) for over 20 years. He is not a silent participant and has worked hard to promote the hobby of rockhounding for today as well as for the future.

C. June Rich-Shoshone Rock Club

Shoshone Rock Club was proud to vote June Rich as our club Rockhound of the Year at our March 2016 club meeting. June and her husband, S.T. Rich, joined the club in 1970 and June is still a member today. In the past she has served as an officer, presented many programs for the club meetings, been a dealer at many state sponsored rock shows, attended field trips, opened her home & shop to showcase her collections and for sales, & attends meetings regularly. Although now at 85 years of age, she always has a smile and is a lovely, friendly, & knowledgeable lady that adds enjoyment to our meetings. It is people like her that keep our club going!
THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF MINERAL COLLECTING: A COLORADO PERSPECTIVE - BY DANIEL KILE

Preamble:
Although mineral field collecting in the western U.S. is very different than that in the Midwest on account of large tracts of land that are public property (e.g., National Forests, National Grasslands, and Bureau of Land Management land), many of the issues raised in the following article are nonetheless relevant to collecting in Midwestern states as they pertain to matters of private property access.

I've been collecting throughout Colorado for more than 45 years. Over this time, increasing government involvement pertaining to land use, mining and collecting activities, as well as detrimental activities of some amateur and professional collectors, have resulted in access to collecting localities becoming increasingly restricted, with a consequent and real threat to the future of the mineral collecting hobby. Broad categories of such threats are:

1. Government regulation and oversight
2. Mine remediation and mined land reclamation
3. Land closure (state and federal)
4. Commercial collecting activities

Unfortunately, there is little voice within the mineral collecting community to counter the rising tide of regulation and land closures, especially in comparison to off-highway vehicle (OHV) organizations with hoards of area members and far greater numbers of activists willing to appear at land use hearings; they are also, as noted by a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) officer, heavily financed by Japanese manufacturers. Mineral collectors are simply far fewer in number and much less financially endowed. However, quite frankly, some of the land closures and regulations are a result of the conduct of a few of the mineral collectors themselves.

The following article addresses some of the issues noted above.

Government regulation and oversight.

One used not to hear much about state or federal regulations governing recreational collecting except as pertained to large commercial enterprises. This scrutiny has in recent years descended down to the level of the hobby collector. By contrast, in the 1960s and 1970s, if one had a backhoe and wanted to excavate in the National Forest, one simply went about collecting. The USFS pretty much ignored what was going on. Not any longer.

There were no restrictions enforced at that time, and no required or enforced prerequisite to locate a mining claim, file a Notice of Intent or a Plan of Operations, or post a reclamation bond prior to collecting. Since then the USFS has become increasingly vigilant in regulating land use of all sorts. These regulations have become increasingly stringent, and any activity, including casual collecting (i.e., for personal use) with hand tools on non-patented mining claim, now requires at a minimum filing a Notice of Intent.

Regulations for mining claims in the 1970s were limited to filing appropriate documents in the county courthouse; the papers were often piled into an uncollated basket for storage, and one needed an exhaustive search through these records to assess the status of a parcel of land one might wish to claim. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) now has all these records archived in an electronic database that is searchable via the Internet. That's certainly an improvement over earlier era of papers “stuffed into a shoebox at the courthouse”, but it comes with layers of concomitant regulations, fees, and filing deadlines.

In defense of the seemingly heavy-handed actions of the government, many of these regulations have been in response to egregious behavior by a few irresponsible collectors. I have seen numerous huge holes abandoned by weekend rockhounds, and even worse, piles of trash left behind. In one instance, the USFS has issued a Cease and Desist Order to a prominent Denver area rock club, whose mining claims had been hand dug for many years by countless numbers of club members as well as many other unauthorized collectors; the increasing numbers of unfilled holes finally led the USFS to respond by requiring remediation and a bond posted for reclamation. In the case of another Denver area rock club, illicit highgraders had left an enormous pit on a non-patented claim that attracted government attention, again resulting in a Cease and Desist Order that required the club to reclaim not only their own work, but also the massive excavation left by the highgraders.

Some years before that, a prominent California collector/dealer had operated a mine in the Crystal Peak area with power equipment under a USFS permit and bond. However, when the claimant was finished with the operation, he simply walked away from the property, which now featured a massive open pit on a hillside that was visible for miles, leaving the forest service with an extensive recla-
The Changing Landscape of Mineral Collecting: A Colorado Perspective - Continued

Moreover, the State of Colorado has recently added another layer of bureaucracy to the situation by invoking their own set of requirements for posting reclamation bonds.

Moreover, the State of Colorado has recently added another layer of bureaucracy to the situation by invoking their own set of requirements for posting reclamation bonds. This requirement was formerly limited to big mining companies, but has now trickled down to small-scale miners and weekend recreational collectors, in part on account the attention drawn by the crass commercialism shown on the Prospectors Show that has been broadcast on The Weather Channel (see below). Accordingly, although recreational collectors can still casually collect in Colorado, those selling even a small fraction of their finds may find themselves subject to additional state scrutiny, paperwork, and attendant reclamation fees.

The situation represents a “Catch-22”: If one wanted to systematically dig in an area, one would theoretically need to file a non-patented mining claim with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and also file additional paperwork with both the USFS and relevant County office. If you sold a specimen, you’d also need a state reclamation permit. Alternatively, with a recognized mining claim, if you didn’t sell anything, you’d be technically in violation of the “prudent man” theory of the 1872 mining laws, which would effectively invalidate the claim. The hobby collector, not wishing to deal with government entanglements, is caught in the middle. Inasmuch if a claim on a productive area is not filed, the collector may well be pre-empted by someone else filing a claim on that spot.

Mine remediation and reclamation.
Activity by the Bureau of Mined Land Reclamation in Colorado first came to my attention in 1988, with the filling in of the Alice mine, a large open-pit mine last operated in the 1930s that was an exceptional locality for sulfide minerals, including chalcopyrite and pyrite, with siderite and quartz, with the occasional micro-gold crystal. It took 500,000 cubic yards of earth to accomplish this feat, creating two manmade lakes in the area. This agency is funded by ‘invisible’ taxes on mined coal; the original intent was to remediate eastern coal strip mines, but the remediation was extended by the agency to encompass hardrock metal mines in the western states as well. Bureau managers (as well as environmental groups) have thus diligently gone about convincing the public that every mine is dangerous and in need of reclamation for the safety of all. My take: It’s all about job security.

There is no doubt that past activities by large profit-minded mining companies has led to environmental problems, a textbook example being the Summitville mine debacle where a Canadian company abandoned the property leaving massive contamination of waterways. However, the pendulum now seems to have swung too far the other way, with remediation and reclamation being carried out on a scale that is rapidly erasing our western mining heritage, which is sometimes troublesome considering that there are few or no data recorded that document contaminant levels prior to mining activity.

Area mines in Leadville were designated some years ago as a superfund site, which resulted in an exhaustive remediation of countless mine dumps. Remediation included removal or relocation of entire mine dumps, or capping the dumps with landfill, the latter of which in one case resulted in an idiotic terraced pyramid, locally called the “wedding cake”, in a misguided attempt to artistically render the new cap “realistic”. In addition to eradicating much of the mining heritage of the area, numerous collecting localities were completely destroyed.

The Gold King mine spill in the summer of 2015, resulting in contamination of vast stretches of the Animas River, was caused by ill-advised EPA work at the portal. The railing from various environmental organizations and lawyers created a level of adverse publici-
The Changing Landscape of Mineral Collecting: A Colorado Perspective - CONTINUED

Note that while I don’t appreciate the increasing layers of bureaucracy affecting the hobby, I recognize the necessity of regulating the excesses of a few irresponsible individuals ...

ty (fueled by newspaper editorials and articles) sufficient to induce the Silverton town board to consider applying for superfund status. If implemented, it will doubtlessly result in a massive reclamation project that will again eradicate mining history and obliterate numerous mine dumps and collecting localities in the area, much as they were in Leadville.

I recently discovered, in August of 2015, another assault on a collecting locality, this time by the USFS. The Santiago mine, located at ca. 12,000 feet above timberline above Georgetown and operated as late as the 1940s or early 1950s, contained small but collectible pyrite crystals in the dump, and though not spectacular, constituted another interesting mineral locality in the state. It is now targeted for remediation, which means the mine dump will be covered or removed, compromising the mining heritage of the area and eliminating any further opportunity for collecting minerals.

Warning signs, intended to intimidate visitors, were posted about the horrific dangers of arsenic, mercury, and lead, all of which is intended to intimidate the uninformed public by stating that these toxic compounds will be carried home in dangerous quantities on one’s shoes just by walking on the dump (see documents below; it brings to mind the Wizard of Oz ... "arsenic, mercury and lead, Oh My!"). In earlier years I risked life and limb nonetheless and searched the purportedly incredibly toxic dump anyway, with imminent death awaiting from exposure to toxic metals. Luckily, I am still alive. However, with no visible Pb-bearing minerals in the dump, one wonders from where the lead originates!

Land closure.

Aside from closure of land encompassing mineral localities due to remediation, access to many other localities (i.e., road closure) has been either eliminated or otherwise compromised for both public and private property, largely on account of reckless ATV off-road traffic, but too often due to egregious activity by commercial or hobby collectors.

Road closure has long been championed by various environmental groups, and such groups have effectively influenced government responses to issues such as cited above. As an example, the U.S. Forest Service has closed numerous roads in the Crystal Peak-Lake George areas, even those that were originally created by the Forest Service, in response to an increasing amount of ATV traffic and consequent degradation of the of the terrain; access to mineral collecting localities thereby became ‘collateral damage’. The tenacity of environmental groups is evidenced by a posting on the Internet listing the names and addresses of all non-patented claim owners of record in the Crystal Peak area as being "enemies of the South Platte watershed".

Note that while I don’t appreciate the increasing layers of bureaucracy affecting the hobby, I recognize the necessity of regulating the excesses of a few irresponsible individuals (ATV owners, large-scale mineral collectors, litterers, etc.). However, despite the government’s attempts to control reckless use of the national Forest, nothing has degraded the region to a greater extent than the massive Hayman fire of June, 2002, which burned more than 138,000 acres, and was started (some say intentionally) by a USFS employee. Almost all of the pegmatite districts in the Pikes Peak batholith were devastated. This event, on account of the considerable number of downed trees, has rendered auto and even foot travel in many areas difficult to impossible.

Recently posted warning and closure signs at the Santiago mine, August 2015

View of the Crystal Peak-Lake George area following the Hayman fire of 2002
## The Changing Landscape of Mineral Collecting: A Colorado Perspective - Continued

Road closures in the Crystal Peak area and many others affect prospecting to the extent that long hikes with heavy packs and tools are now required to reach many localities hitherto easily accessible by road. Needless to say, such closure affects more the older collectors, many of whom are no longer able to easily hike long distances over rough terrain. So much for the concept of universal access (and here I thought that Federal regulations precluded bias against the elderly and handicapped!). The net result is that all travel in the Crystal Peak area is now restricted to a few major arteries, funneling increasing numbers of people into a smaller and smaller area – not a pleasant outcome for those seeking a bit of weekend solitude. Non-system roads that formerly accessed claims can now only be used by claim owners who post a reclamation bond, even if the Forest Service originally put in the road! The road closure situation is compounded by the fact that it is now illegal to camp more than a vehicle width off the road! Thus, on a weekend one can enjoy a front-window view of all the ATV traffic.

In another part of Colorado, a collecting area for calcite and barite in the southeastern part of the state was temporarily closed some years back when a rock club sponsored a field trip to the area, which is on National Grasslands (surprisingly, despite few trees on the landscape, the USFS administers such grasslands). Local ranchers, generally used to few people in the area, were apparently alarmed to see numerous travel trailers and a dozen or more vehicles driving off road everywhere. Forest Service authorities were notified, who responded by closing the area to collecting except by permit. As far as I am aware, the dust has since settled, and some years later regulatory mandates were apparently no longer being enforced. The conclusion here is that large groups of collectors can indeed attract unwanted attention of local landowners or authorities; discretion is always recommended in uncertain areas.

Another interesting discovery is that in Colorado collecting minerals in an area designated as a State Wildlife Refuge is illegal. This affects any state refuge, but most notably those in several localities in Ouray and Montrose counties. Of special note is that while one cannot disturb any geological feature, one can hunt wildlife in a wildlife refuge!!! Go figure. A proposed road use plan, due to be implemented in the near future (if not already) will affect access to mineral collecting in some areas of the Book Cliffs north of Grand Junction – a locality long noted for world class water clear barite crystals. Some of the network of roads and trails is being left open for ATV use, but much of the area is designated for road closure, making access to these areas far more difficult. Another example of a recent land closure is the Stoneham locality, world famous for blue barite crystals, some of which are on a contrasting matrix of pale-yellow calcite. For many years collectors have been intermittently getting permission to collect from a nearby property owner. I was surprised to read in a recent rock club newsletter, however, that the locality has been closed by the State of Colorado Land Board. A long phone conversation with the regional manager revealed that much of the collecting locality was on or accessed through state school section land. Largely on account of extensive un-remediated excavations, and in order to bring more money into the state school fund, the manager has closed the property unless someone is willing to lease the mineral rights from the state, and continually monitor the area for unauthorized collecting.

As a parting comment, numerous mines, quarries and other private properties are being closed at an increasing rate, not only in Colorado but also in the Midwest, where collecting localities can be hard to come by. Although such closure is often due to government or OSHA regulations, much is our own fault: we now live in a highly litigious society, willing to blame anyone but ourselves for our own misfortunes. We have also have become a zero-risk tolerance society. The confluence of too many lawyers as well as a lack of personal responsibility has led many property owners to conclude that it is simply not worth the risk to allow collectors onto a private property.

### Commercial collecting activities.

**Disclaimer 1:** These comments pertain mostly to individual part-time collectors, not to some of the responsible full-time professional collectors operating with power equipment.

**Disclaimer 2:** I have never watched the Prospectors Show; I would probably become physically ill if I attempted to do so. But I have heard numerous accounts from a lot of collectors about this show, none of which was favorable.

In earlier years, I recall some rock club members condemning the chase for the "almighty dollar" by the hobby collector. Point well taken. However, commercial mineral collecting has been around
since before the California Gold Rush. On a large-scale commercial basis, such activity has provided the collecting community and museums with exceptional specimens that would not otherwise have been brought to light (the Sweet Home mine near Alma and the Smoky Hawk operation in the Crystal Peak area come to mind, among others worldwide). Too often, however, when a profit-only motive extends down to the ‘hobby’ level, it becomes problematic. Before about 1990, when the price of amazonite specimens skyrocketed due to the influx of wealthy collector/investors, one could freely hike many areas of the Crystal Peak-Lake George area in search of solitude and minerals without being molested. Now, especially after the airing of the Prospectors Show, with exorbitant claims of high mineral values and emphasis on the ostensible monetary rewards of collecting, legions of profit-minded and mercenary collectors have been inspired to file mine claims to unsuspecting individuals, including to a retired military person that I met, who told me that he was assured he could build a house on his new claim, and that there was even gold on the property (!) – he showed me a handful of “rich ore” that he was going to take to an assay office in Cripple Creek to have analyzed for gold. The “ore” contained distinctive flakes of weathered biotite! He had even erected an elaborate wood fence along the road to block public access to the land. The Forest Service eventually dismantled the fence, as well as a cabin built elsewhere by another individual who purchased a property from the same swindler. He also had been told that building a cabin in the National Forest was perfectly legal, and that one indeed had more property rights on a mining claim than on private property. The USFS eventually removed this cabin as well as the hovel built by the swindler.

In more recent years, wire fences and ‘Private Property/Keep Out’ signs were erected by a non-patented claim owner near the Forest Service entry gate near Crystal Creek in the Crystal Peak area. Owning mineral rights on a non-patented claim does not extend to surface property rights; the USFS had to resort to armed intervention and legal action to settle this and other issues with the claimant. Ongoing conflict in the area is evidenced by a large sign that was erected last year (2014) near the entrance gate on the USFS public access road to the Crystal Peak collecting area, implying that it was a private road. Someone apparently disputed this assertion and responded by vandalizing the sign shortly thereafter by painting two skull and crossbones over it, with the words “Bite Me.” It was certainly entertaining, but also an indication of the heightened tension in the locality. The sign was soon thereafter torn down, apparently by another disgruntled collector.

In a last example of restriction of access to formerly productive collecting areas caused by a few irresponsible mineral collectors, continued trespass by a few individuals in recent years who insisted in using a metal detector to search for gold in a re-
The decline of field collecting opportunities may in the future result in fewer active participants at the rock club level.

**The Changing Landscape of Mineral Collecting: A Colorado Perspective - continued**

The decline of field collection opportunities may result in fewer active participants at the rock club level. Accordingly, mineral collecting will increasingly evolve toward collectors whose only option will be to purchase mineral specimens.

**2016 RMFMS Bulletin Editors Contest for Bulletins, Articles, Poems, and Special Publications Published in 2016**

**RMFMS 2016 Bulletin Contest: BEAC**
Beth Simmons, 1420 S. Reed St., Lakewood, CO 80232

**DEADLINE for entries is January 1, 2017**

**INSTRUCTIONS** Put all entries (digital, of course) into the DROPBOX address supplied by the BEAC!

**Bulletins:** Select two of the best issues of your club bulletin published in 2016. Send two original issues of each of the issues you chose for the bulletin contest with the appropriate form attached unless submitting via email. The top three place winners in each class are submitted to the AFMS contest.

**Articles:** Send two copies of each original article or poem with the appropriate form unless submitting via email. Send copies of the actual pages from your bulletin for the original articles and poems categories. Do not retype these articles.

**Special Publications:** Send two originals of any special publication you are entering in the contest with the appropriate form. Depending on format used, this category may require hardcopy entries. Check with me if you have questions regarding the appropriate transmission means.

Send all of these items to the DROPBOX before January 1, 2017.

2015 RMFMS trophy winners in all classes are not eligible in the same category for the 2016 contest. 2015 RMFMS trophy winners in all classes will not be eligible in the same category for the 2016 and 2017 RMFMS contests. If your bulletin was a 1st place RMFMS Winner in 2014 or 2015 but NOT an AFMS 1st place trophy winner in the same year, you may enter your bulletin in the AFMS contest for 2016. Complete the part of the entry form for AFMS ENTRIES ONLY and attach to one original of your bulletin. Send to the address above with other items you are entering in the RMFMS contest. This also applies to original article and poetry authors.

**RMFMS CONTEST CLASSES OFFERED:**

- **Class 1 -Mini Bulletin (6 printed pages or less):**
- **Class 2 -Small Bulletin (7 to 11 printed pages):**
- **Class 3 -Large Bulletin (12 printed pages or more):**
- **Class 4 -New Editor Bulletin (any size):**
- **Class 5 -Adult Original Articles:**
- **Class 6 -Adult Original Articles -Advanced:**
- **Class 7 -Junior Original Articles a. Author under 12 years of age; b. Author 12 through 17 years of age:**
- **Class 8 -Original Poems (all ages):**
- **Class 9 - Features (Written, Drawn, Cartoon, Photograph):**
- **Class 10 - Special Publications (Anniversary booklets, field trip guides, show or workshop manuals, etc.):**

Examine the sample judging sheet for the category before sending an entry.

**AFMS CONTEST CLASSES OFFERED**

1st place winners in the RMFMS contest who were 1st Place Trophy winners in the AFMS contests for 2014 or 2015 must wait two years before being eligible for competition in the AFMS contest. All contest classes offered are the same as RMFMS, listed above, except the photograph contest.

**RULES FOR COMPETITION Bulletins**

1. A bulletin or newsletter can be entered in one class only. Submit 2 issues that fit the same page limit for a category. (Both issues classify as mini-bul-
2016 RMFMS Bulletin Editors Contest for Bulletins, Articles, Poems, and Special Publications – CONTINUED

submissions should be made via email and the chairman will print out the copies.

Articles & Poems
1. All entries into the adult, adult advanced, juniors, poems, and features categories must be written by a member of an RMFMS affiliated club.
2. Articles and poems must have been published first in a club bulletin or newsletter in 2014.
3. Subject matter must relate to some phase of earth science or the lapidary hobby.
4. Reports, letters to the editor, travelogues, are not considered true articles (Enter them in Class 9 - Written Features).
5. Articles or poems written by more than one member will be considered as an individual entry.
6. Authors of articles and poems that were 1st place trophy winners in the 2013 contest are not eligible for the 2014 contest in the same category in which they won. 1st place trophy winners in the 2013 contest are not eligible for the 2014 and 2015 contests in the same category.

General Information
1. Absolutely no copyrighted material will be accepted.
2. A sheet of paper printed front and back is considered two pages.
3. Covers and mailers for bulletins are not counted as pages or sheets in determining the class unless there are some major changes each month (i.e., inside the front cover).
4. A show flyer will not be counted as a page, but can be part of the bulletin for judging purposes.
5. If you use a separate mailer or envelope with your bulletin, be sure to attach one to your entry to prevent loss of points for “no return address.”
6. Clubs who have monthly board meetings and workshop/study classes should report them in their bulletins. If a club does not have these events the editor cannot report them, although the bulletin may have good coverage on all club news/events. Editors need to include statements that the club does not have a workshop, study classes, monthly board meetings, or field trips in extreme hot or cold months to keep points from being deducted.
7. If a club does not publish minutes or “highlights,” or other score sheet items, no credit will be given unless there is a statement as to the reason why that item is not published. (Club policy, available separately to members, etc.) or if the answer is
2016 RMFMS Bulletin Editors Contest for Bulletins, Articles, Poems, and Special Publications — CONTINUED

obvious.
8. Be sure to complete all fillable fields on the application.
9. Be sure to submit the age of a junior author so they are entered into the proper age group.
10. Use a separate entry form for each article or poem submitted.
11. The editor should choose the best article or poem to submit by each author in each class. Only one article per author is allowed in the top 5 winners in the RMFMS contest. Additionally, the AFMS contest allows only one article or poem in each class from an editor.
12. If your club bulletin was a 1st place winner in the RMFMS mini, small, or large bulletin class in 2012–2013, you may enter the AFMS Bulletin Contest in 2014 providing your bulletin was NOT a 1st place winner in the AFMS contest. Send one copy of the bulletin to the RMFMS Bulletin Contest Chair marked For AFMS Only contest. This also applies to original articles and poems.
13. If an article is continued from one month to another and even further, we will limit the entry to one month; each month should complete the segment of the series.
14. The editor or author scoring the highest number of points after reaching the minimum score in each class shall be awarded the 1st Place Trophy Plaque and 1st Place Ribbon. Those scoring the next best scores (above the minimum points listed) will win second and third place ribbons. Fourth and Fifth places must achieve the minimum points listed for Honorable Mention Ribbons. There will be no ties.
15. Minimum scores needed in all classes except juniors:
   a. 90 points for 1st place
   b. 85 points for 2nd place
   c. 80 points for 3rd place
   d. 75 points for 4th place
   e. 70 points for 5th place
16. Junior entries must receive at least 70 points for 1st place.
17. The top three entries in each class will automatically be entered in the AFMS Bulletin Contest if eligible, plus any other entries eligible for AFMS Contest but not for RMFMS Contest.
18. A Certificate of Participation will be given to each participant in the contest.
19. Ribbon awards and trophy plaques will be presented at the annual “Breakfast with the Editors & Webmasters” at the 2015 Show and Convention in Cody, WY, in July 2015. Everyone is invited to attend – you do NOT have to be an editor! Please have a representative from your club present at the breakfast to receive your awards and certificates.

These rules have been adapted to comply as much as possible with the AFMS rules.

Beth Simmons, RMFMS Club Publications 1420 S. Reed St., Lakewood, CO 80232
Phone: 303-986-9693 email: cloverknoll@comcast.net

Editor Needed Desperately!

This is Alice's last issue (BOOHOO!) and the Federation needs a replacement editor immediately. Jim McGarvey, webmaster, will take over the reins until we find someone to take Alice’s place. The task of editing requires computer and formatting skills, emailing skills, and an ability to put a bunch of disparate articles together in a way that makes sense.
There is no requirement to write articles for the newsletter, unless you want to. There are plenty of folks in the Federation who can supply the written words! Please say yes to our plea! Email Beth Simmons, President, if you are willing to take on the task!

cloverknoll@comcast.net

Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies
A Non-Profit Educational Organization
DENVER GEM & MINERAL GUILD
JEWELRY, GEM & MINERAL SHOW

FREE ADMISSION!

February 24 - February 26, 2017

JEFFERSON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
15200 W. 6th Ave – (W 6th Ave. & Indiana) Golden

Lapidary Supplies
Crystals and Fossils
Displays
Unique Jewelry
Gem and Mineral Dealers

GEM, MINERAL AND FOSSIL EXHIBITS
GEM CUTTING DEMONSTRATIONS

GRAB BAG SALES - Proceeds applied to scholarship at Colorado School of Mines
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