



# The Rockette

JANUARY 2018

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

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

<http://www.sequoiagemandmineralsociety.org>

## Happy New Year!

It's hard to believe that we are already in 2018!!! You'll have to agree that 2017 was quite a year in so many ways. Natural disasters took center stage as Mother Nature created mudslides, earthquakes, fires and more. If you've driven along the coast of Big Sur you'll find a roadblock south of Gorda where a landslide occurred over a year ago, bringing 5 million cubic yards of earth down to the sea, creating a 40 foot layer of rocks and dirt and adding 13 acres to the coastline. The bridge that fell out has now been replaced, allowing people to go in and out again.

Fires consumed much of our state. The devastation is unreal. A drive along Mark West Trail will bring you to tears. Hwy 101 near Santa Barbara was closed due to mudslides that have killed many.

Our hearts go out to all of the victims of these disasters. Hopefully there will be fewer of them this year. As usual, we rebuild. Make sure you prepare for natural disasters by creating a defensible space around your house, creating an "earthquake supply" kit, and discussing home escape routes and rendezvous points just in case.

## Meeting Schedule:

### Mark your calendars!

**Note that most meetings are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month unless a holiday takes place. See you at 7!** Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt Ave., Redwood City, CA 94062

**January 22-** Bring your favorite specimen and talk about it. A good selection of rough material will be on sale too.

**February 12.** Mary Lou Froese will be conducting a jewelry saw hands-on demonstration.

**March 19**

**April 16**

**May 21**

**June 18**

### SGMS Mission Statement

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

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

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

## **Christmas Party Recap**

A really fun evening was shared by the SGMS and PGGs clubs on Mon., Dec. 18. It was a good time to visit old friends and new. We had a nice crowd from both clubs. There was a smorgasbord of things to sell and great things to buy! Jewelry, rocks, slabs, specimens and more were there to help everyone finish their shopping.

Our resident chef, Paul Rose, made incredible lasagna—a selection to choose from! Yummy food from everyone else! There was no reason to go hungry that night!

As usual we played Rock Bingo and the prizes were plentiful!, taking over two tables! Everyone found something to love.

Thanks, everyone for your generosity. We were able to provide donations to St Anthony's and the Nine Lives Foundation for \$100 each.

## **Lapidary News**

The shop re-opened after the Holiday Break on 1/3. Thanks to Cathy Phalen and the rest of the instructors who were able to clean up!

Happy New Year everyone! Our new 11-week session began on Wednesday night, January 3. There you will find a clean shop, new wheels, new slabs and rough in the sale bin! Also, we found many rocks hiding in the shop, big ones! We have them on display for the owners to claim. There just isn't room to store them, and there are no names on them. If they aren't claimed next week we will have make them garden rocks. See you this week! Cathy Phalen, instructor

## **\*Rockhound Field Trip Announcement\***

### **The 2018 Rockhound Field Trip Fanatics!**

### **Spring Mojave Desert Odyssey, April 28th - May 6th.**

Back by popular demand, the Mojave Desert Odyssey encompasses some of the most productive rockhounding sites in the Western Mojave Desert. We'll be digging and surface collecting agate, jasper, thulite, rhyolite, fire agate, opal, petrified wood & palm root, Chapinite and much more.

The trip will start with the Antelope Valley Gem & Mineral, Rock & Bead Show, April 28-29. the field trips will begin on Monday, April 30th.

If you're planning on coming out, please message me and I'll add you to the update list.

If you have suggestions for specific sites between California City and Ludlow, message or call me.

Destinations will include the Cady Mountains, the Hector Hills, Lavic, the I-40 Thulite quarry and many more. Stay tuned for the full itinerary, coming by February 7th.

It's gonna be an EPIC trip!

Kris (559) 250-5057

## **FIELD TRIPS AND PROGRAMS!!!!!!**

**Please offer your expertise in any of these areas!**

## Annual Show

For the club we are going to have our show in September. Please think of ways you can offer to make it the best one ever!

Bill Spence is in charge and would like you to think of places we can put flyers—local restaurants, etc. Please let him know.

## *USGS January Public Lecture:*

*Thursday, 1/ 25, 7:00pm*

## [ShakeAlert: The Path to West Coast Early Warning](#)

**....How a few seconds can save lives and property**

**Presented by Douglas Given, USGS Earthquake Early Warning Coordinator**

The ShakeAlert earthquake early warning system will begin limited operations this year. Alerts could save lives and property but several challenges remain. With millions at risk, why isn't full public alerting happening yet?

If you can't make it to our evening lecture, you can join us at noon for the preview.

**[Rambo Auditorium/Bldg. 3, 345 Middlefield Rd., Menlo Park](#)**

## Obsessed With Agates?

**Try making these agate slices out of hard candies for a great cake topper. For the full recipe go here:**

**<https://www.sugarhero.com/agate-cake/>**

*This Agate Cake features gorgeous, EDIBLE candy agate slices on top of a watercolor*

*buttercream cake! All you need to make the agate candy slices is a bunch of **hard candy**. Go to the dollar store, and buy the variety bags of candy that always looks a little sketchy—you know, the ones with weird flavors or designs or whatever. Also pick up some Jolly Ranchers, and some clear hard candies if you can find them. The bigger the variety of colors and opacities, the better!*



Then get to work crushing them—a meat mallet works well, and as a bonus, you'll get out

any pent-up aggression you might have. Make sure you keep the candies divided by color. Once all of the candies are crushed, you'll arrange them in concentric circles in foil molds. Because you're making the molds yourself, you can make them whatever size you want—I did a variety of round and oval shapes, to give the top of my cake variety. I found it easiest to use non-stick heavy-duty foil for this project—the finished candy just popped right out of the molds, no sticking and no peeling required. But if you can't find that, then a little spritz of nonstick cooking spray should help you with this part of the project.

Here's the magic of this idea: after the candy is arranged in the foil molds, it's baked for just a few minutes. In the heat of the oven the candy melts together, creating a perfect agate pattern. The clear candies are beautifully translucent, the opaque candies add a stunning contrast, and the rings all blend to create a gorgeous, natural design.

A word of warning: I have NOT been able to get this to work with rock candy. Something about the way it is formed means that it doesn't melt into liquid in the oven the way most hard candies do. Once the candies are baked and cooled, they're just as firm as regular hard candy, and can be handled with ease. I wanted them to "pop" a little on top of the cake, so I painted the outside edges with a bit of silver luster dust. This step is optional, but since so many real agate slices have a thin band of gold or other metallic accents around the edge, it seemed appropriate.

Take a square of nonstick heavy-duty foil, nonstick side up. Place a small bowl or cup on top, to serve as a guide, and fold up the edges to form a circular mold with at least a 1-inch lip around the center. Repeat, making different shapes and sizes, for as many candy agate slices as you want to make. Place the foil molds on a baking sheet, and preheat the oven to 350 F.

Divide the candies by color. While they are still in their wrappers, use a meat mallet, rolling pin, or other large, heavy object to crush them into small pieces—the closer you can get to candy dust, the better! Undo the wrapper and pour the crushed candies into small bowls, divided by type of candy. The more varieties of color and opacity you can get, the better! After the candy is crushed, it will start to get sticky as it is exposed to the humidity in the air, so start to form the agate slices immediately.

Place a few spoonfuls of one color into a foil mold, and use a small food-safe paintbrush to spread it out along the outer edges of the mold in an even layer. (You can use your fingers, but the candy tends to stick to skin, so a paintbrush is faster and less messy.) Make sure that the layer is not too thin—as the candy melts, it will thin out a bit, so make the layer at least ¼-inch tall if possible. Add a second, different color, and brush that one out to the edges next to the first. Continue to make concentric rings of candy pieces in the mold, alternating colors and opacities, until you've filled the whole mold with crushed candy. I found I liked it best if I worked in one color scheme (shades of blue, for instance, or warm-toned colors) for each agate slice, but you can experiment to see what works for you.

Once all of the foil molds are filled, bake them in the oven at 350 F for 4-5 minutes. Check them after 4 minutes to see if all the candy pieces have melted. If some unmelted pieces remain, bake for another 30-60 seconds—just until it's melted but the bubbling is minimal. Let the candy cool completely, then gently peel back the foil mold.

## **MEMBERSHIP:**

Dues will not increase for 2018.

\$25 for individuals and \$40 for a family.

Please be prepared to pay your dues this month. Send them or bring to a meeting please.

Thanks.

## **Tip of the Month:**

**Sandwich  
every bit of  
CRITICISM  
between two layers of  
PRAISE**

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

If you would like to contact any of our officers, please see our website for their information.

## **OFFICERS**

**President & Web Mistress: Valerie Concello**  
**Vice President, NBFT Director & Rockette Editor: Catherine Fraser**  
**Treasurer: Doug Gottschlich**  
**Secretary: Susan Abellera**  
**CFMS- Paul Rose**  
**Show Chair: Bill Spence and Bob Simms**  
**Programs and Classes: Open**  
**Field Trips: Ben Nagler, Doug G, Chuck Trantham**  
**Membership, Sunshine and more: Cathy Phalen**  
**Library & Historian: Preston Bingham and Cathy Phalen**