
Bay Area Mineralogists

December 2010

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USGS Menlo Park, Bldg 3, Rm 3-237
<http://www.baymin.org>



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The Bay Area Mineralogists assemble on the second Wednesday of every month during the school year, unless diverted by extenuating circumstances. We now meet at the USGS Menlo Park in Building 3. See campus map at <http://online.wr.usgs.gov/kiosk/mparea3.html>. Our room is located in Building 3, second floor where this map says "Conference Room" – note that the front doors are locked and you will have to come up the stairs on the Middlefield side of the building. Parking is free.

BAM December Program: Tim Rose, "Newly Described Minerals from California, 2009"

This month will bring a return to a program with a more formal mineralogical bent. Tim Rose, current president of the NCMA, will cover some of the new minerals you California systematic collectors have to add to your lists as of 2009.

Most hotly-contested sample up for bids at the BAM auction in September? A rich piece of timroseite.... 'nuff said.

Recommendation to Change ISP

One piece of business to be dealt with at the December meeting is a recommendation from Webmaster Chaz to change the internet service provider for the BAM website, www.baymin.org. Please review the proposal below, as we will approve the suggestion at the meeting unless sufficient concerns are raised.

Your web master recommends that we change service providers from Digital Space to Open Access for the following reasons.

1. Digital Space has been bought-out at least three times and has greatly altered its service focus and price structure. While the pricing for our site has been grandfathered in to a substantial extent, every time they change the level of service they are general providing, our cost has nevertheless gone up a little. In addition, many services they used to provide for free, they are now charging for. Most of these we did not use so it did not matter, but now they are chipping away at those that do. We are now paying \$31 quarterly (\$124 annually), which is much more than necessary. But to get a lower rate we will have to switch to a new service provider. I recommend Open Access, where we will pay \$36 per year and get better service.
2. One of the services that we have lost at Digital Space is a high-quality web traffic analyzer (it's now a paid for add-on). Open Access provides an excellent one for free.

3. If anything goes wrong at Digital Space, one deals with a service support person who usually directs you to put in a work order, so you have to sign into a secure area and fill out a form most of the information on which is not relevant and try to cram in the important bits into a field that is not large enough. Then you wait for an email reply, which usually comes back saying that the problem is fixed, which it is not when you go and check because they weren't looking for the problem in the right place; but since they have "fixed" the problem, they have also closed the work order, so you have to go around the bush again. On the other hand, a Open Access (where I currently have three sites, I can call them and get a technician that actually has direct access to their servers and knows how they work – so I have a fix before I'm off the phone.
4. I have noticed that the Open Access servers are frequently faster at delivering pages than is Digital Space. Not a big deal, but helpful.

We can change over seamlessly. Site users will experience no impact even if they are on the site as the change is being made.

November Meeting Notes

The ISP item is a continuation of a November topic, in which President Spence shared some ideas on an initial update to baymin.org. These were voted on and approved; those who've checked the site lately will notice a slight reorganization to put the front-page focus on the most relevant topics. Keep those biographies coming!

The January program will either be provided by Bill Spence, discussing the boleite locality in Santa Rosalia, Mexico, or a recent video on the Chilean mine rescue recommended by Stan Bogosian.

John Magnasco agreed to coordinate the BAM & Friends Dinner in Tucson, with a provisional date of Friday during the main show. If you're going to be in Arizona that week and are interested, ping him at magnasco@sbcglobal.net.

Thanks again to John Richardson for sharing his photographic travelogue of his trip to Madagascar – not often we get treated to

animals, vegetables, and minerals all in one presentation!

Updates on the CCMA: Notes from 11/30 BLM Mining Claimant Mtg.

President Spence and several others attended a meeting with the BLM earlier this week on the status of future mining claims within the Clear Creek Management Area. His notes are provided below to catch the group up on the latest news.

BLM Mining Claimant Meeting 11/30/10

In Attendance:

Bill Spence from BAM/SCVGMS, Stan Vance, Kris Rowe from Fresno club, Colleen McGann from CFMS, several mining claimants, Dave from Salinas club. Tim Moore, Rick Cooper, Mark Singer from BLM (Sacto).

CCMA Regional Management Plan status

- Record of Decision now expected in May-June timeframe
- Energy-related proposals like Mojave are taking priority in Washington
- Submitted proposal similar to alternative E in draft RMP with additional routes. Draft of final RMP is not publicly available. Additional routes not defined.
- No dry season closures in future
- No off road vehicles (bikes) to be allowed in CCMA

Withdrawal of CCMA from Mineral Entry

- BLM Hollister is proposing to withdraw 39,000 acres in the core of CCMA from filing of new mining claims under the Mining Law. Withdrawal procedure is defined in FLPMA sec 204.
- Area is "segregated" for 2 years pending approval of the proposal (i.e. 2-year moratorium on new claims). Upon approval, withdrawal becomes complete for 20 years.
- Upon approval, existing claims will be subject to "validity exams", i.e., must be commercially viable under "prudent man rule". Casual use claim is therefore a non sequitur.
- Does not affect "casual use" rockhounding which is governed by Surface Management

Act 43CFR3809 provided claims are not filed.

- Casual use rockhounding will be allowed subject to access permits under the RMP after it is approved. Details to be worked out for permitting process.
- Reasons for withdrawal
 - Reduce health hazards from serpentine to public and employees
 - Reduce likelihood of remediations required
 - Apparently no commercially viable mineral deposits in CCMA for foreseeable future.
- Rick Cooper assures that withdrawal under Mining Law is not a first step to banning casual use

Surface Management Issues

- Casual use = no use of mechanical equipment for drilling, excavation or earth-moving; no motorized vehicles in closed areas; and no explosives of any kind, including micro-blasters. Hand tools only.
- Large scale casual use having significant cumulative effects could require a Plan of Operations.
- Reasonable access to valid claims is guaranteed under the Mining Law. Claims located ON permitted roads are accessible w/o further action. Claims not adjacent to permitted roads require a Plan of Operations to establish access route and remediation bond.
- Patented claims are private property, not covered by Mining Law, so owner must make legal arrangements to assure access. BLM is under no obligation for this.
- Validity exams (evaluations) are required by Mining Law before a claim can be patented and must be paid for by claimant. Prudent man rule applies.

Big Emerald Makes News

Many of you may have seen this story through other venues, but it's noteworthy when a mineral specimen makes the front page of the newspaper (SF Chronicle, 29 Nov 2010, p A-1).

The Bahia Emerald, an 840-pound matrix sample studded with large opaque emeralds,

has ended up at the heart of a legal battle over its rightful owner. I won't try to summarize the Byzantine path this rock has taken, but it brings to mind the stories of famous gemstones like the Hope. (Albeit with fewer dead people in its wake.)

If you didn't see it in the paper, check out <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2010/11/29/MNS81GH3QK.DTL>

Happy Holidays!

By the time this gets to you readers, the joint Crystal Gazers / BAM Holiday party (December 4th in Albany) will be hours off, well underway, or an historical footnote. Watch for a recap next month.

Here's hoping that it's a great holiday season for you and yours... and as every BAMmie knows, when Santa leaves rocks in your stocking, it's because you've been a good boy or girl!

Upcoming Shows

December 4
Bay Area Mini-Show:
Miner's Lunchbox, Marin Mineral, Earth's Treasures, & private collector Dan Kennedy
Woodfin Suites Hotel
5800 Shellmound St, Emeryville
12pm to 6pm

Letters to the BAM Editor

Please send your comments, content, compliments, and/or complaints to Don Windeler, don.windeler@rms.com, 650-591-1644.