

Monthly Newsletter of the *Kern County Mineral Society (KCMS)***President's Message**  
**James May - KCMS**  
**President For 2024**

The Bakersfield summer is in full glory, and we are probably tired of being sequestered in our homes dreaming of those glorious collecting expeditions in the cooler fall and winter months? That being said, we all are anticipating the coming of the Kern County Fair. The dates for the fair are from Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, September 29<sup>th</sup>. We also have setup time the prior weekend and tear down time on Monday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. As you are all aware this is one of the most important functions, we as a Club partake in. It is part of our mission statement, and a good portion of the profit supports students in their pursuit of Earth science degrees. We take a great degree of pride in this endeavor. Please realize we need to participate in each of the 12 days the Kern County Fair is scheduled and we need the help of all members of the KCMS to be part of the display table. Even if it is only one or two brief shifts, every minute helps us in achieving our overall goals. We will be constructing a schedule that you can fill out and select a few shifts. This spreadsheet will be brought to our two general meetings prior to the Kern County Fair and will also be available online. Please sign up for a couple of shifts if you can!

As you are also aware we had on July General Meeting at the East Bakersfield Church of Christ. I would like to extend a thanks to Jack Stewart for making this meeting possible. We were not able to utilize the Veterans Hall in July, and it is a great alternative location to host our monthly General Meetings.

For our August General meeting we will be back at our usual location at the Veterans Hall. We are beginning to discuss what needs to be finalized for the Kern County Fair including scheduling needs and how to complete and register a Display Case. If you had a chance to view the August Newsletter from Marcia G. at the CFMS, you would have noticed that Steve Collett is honored as the KCMS Rockhound of the Year for 2024. Steve has done a lot over the years for the Club and has also been influential in keeping the equipment running smoothly at the Rock and Lapidary Workshop. We also will have a silent auction and delicious food and good company of fellow rockhounds.

I also want to thank Monica Hinson, who is about to start her graduate studies at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, for an excellent article on microfossils including foraminifera.

Two other events we have scheduled for the month include our field trip and visit to the Tehachapi Mountain Festival on Saturday, August 17<sup>th</sup>. We will meet early on Saturday morning at Love's in Tehachapi and head to a nearby collecting location called Brown Butte. When the temperatures get higher, we will head to the Mountain Festival for the Show.

Lastly, we have our Rock and Lapidary Workshop on the last Saturday of the month. We will also be assisting those that would like to enter a Display Cases into the Kern County Fair. Again, thank you for all your continued support in making the Kern County Mineral Society a successful club. - James.

**Next General Meeting**

**Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM  
East Bakersfield Veterans Hall  
2101 Ridge Road, Bakersfield, CA**

**GENERAL  
MEETING**



**NEXT FIELD TRIP**

**August 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Brown Butte, Mojave Desert**

**Meet at Love's in Tehachapi at 7:00 AM**



**UPCOMING ROCK, MINERAL, AND GEM SHOWS****UPCOMING ROCK AND MINERAL SHOWS – Summer 2024****August 17-18, 2024 – Tehachapi, CA**

Tehachapi Valley Gem and Mineral Society

Tehachapi Senior Center, 500 East “F” St., Tehachapi, CA 93561

Hours: 9 AM – 5 PM Both Days

Tehachapi Valley 18th Annual Gem, Mineral &amp; Jewelry Show. Mountain Festival weekend – Fun for the whole family, activities for the kids, raffles, and more.

Contact: (661) 972-1117, [travis462@outlook.com](mailto:travis462@outlook.com)Website: <http://tvgms.rocks>**August 24-25, 2024 – Arcadia, CA**

Pasadena Lapidary Society

Arcadia Masonic Lodge, 50 W. Duarte Rd., Arcadia, CA 91007

Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM

Now in our 75th year, Pasadena Lapidary Society celebrates our 64th Annual Tournament of Gems.

Contact: (626) 260-7239, [marcia.pls.emails@gmail.com](mailto:marcia.pls.emails@gmail.com)Website: <https://pasadenalapidary.org>**September 14-15, 2024 – Reno , NV**

Reno Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.

Grand Sierra Resort and Casino, 2500 E. 2nd St., Reno NV

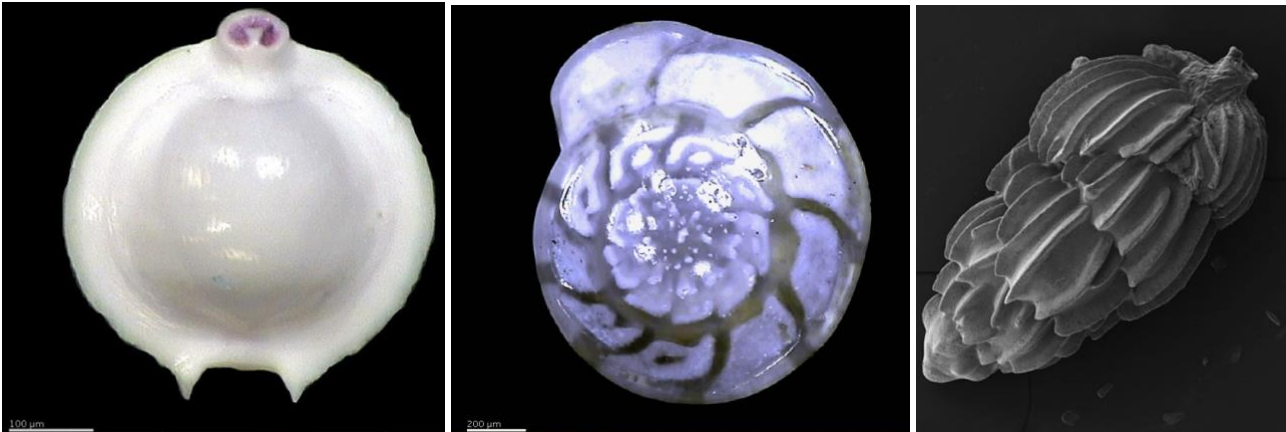
Hours: Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM

The Jackpot of Gems is an annual gem and mineral show that has been held in the Reno area for over 50 years! Our show offers the following: Vendors offering minerals, gems and jewelry; Display cases created by RGMS members displaying rocks, gems, and minerals; Demonstrations showing how to create some of the beautiful pieces shown in the display cases and at classes offered at RGMS; Florescent rock booth with minerals that have been called ‘nature’s light show’; Silent Auction every 30 minutes.

Website: <https://renogms.org/>

*Microfossils: Spotlight Foraminifera*

Graduate Student Monica Hinson



As rockhounds we look for the biggest and shiniest rocks and minerals to add to our collections, but it is what we cannot see that hides some of the most unique and intricate structures in the world. Not only do microfossils look amazing, they hold tiny bits of information about the earth's geological past. Micropaleontologists investigate past climate, oxygen levels and species diversity based on these microscopic critters that have lived on our planet throughout millions of years.

Microfossils are the preserved remains or traces of microscopic organisms such as plankton, pollen grains, spores, and even bacteria. Microfossils can be found in sedimentary rocks – the same place you would find macrofossils like trilobites and ammonites. There are four predominantly studied microfossils in micropaleontology: foraminifera, coccolithophores, diatoms, and radiolarians. Foraminifera and coccolithophores are made out of calcium carbonate ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ), while diatoms and radiolarians are made out of silica ( $\text{SiO}_2$ ).

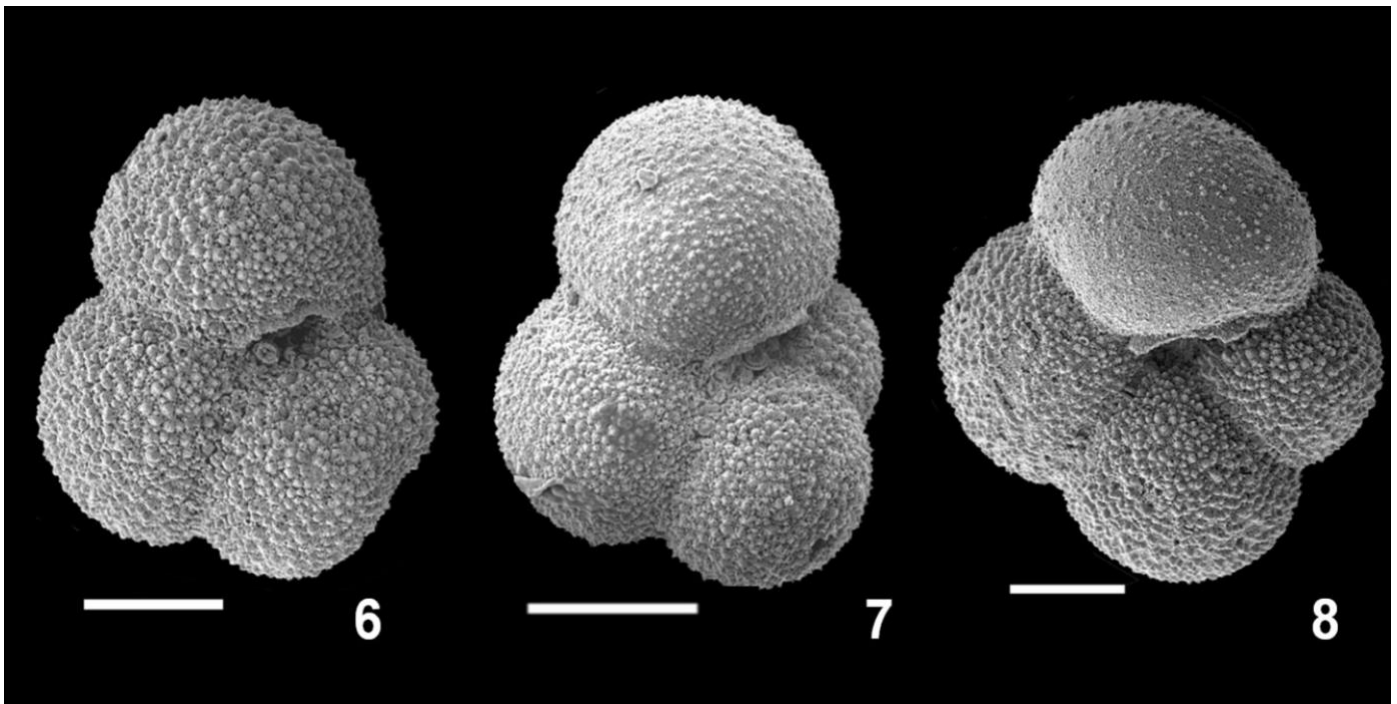
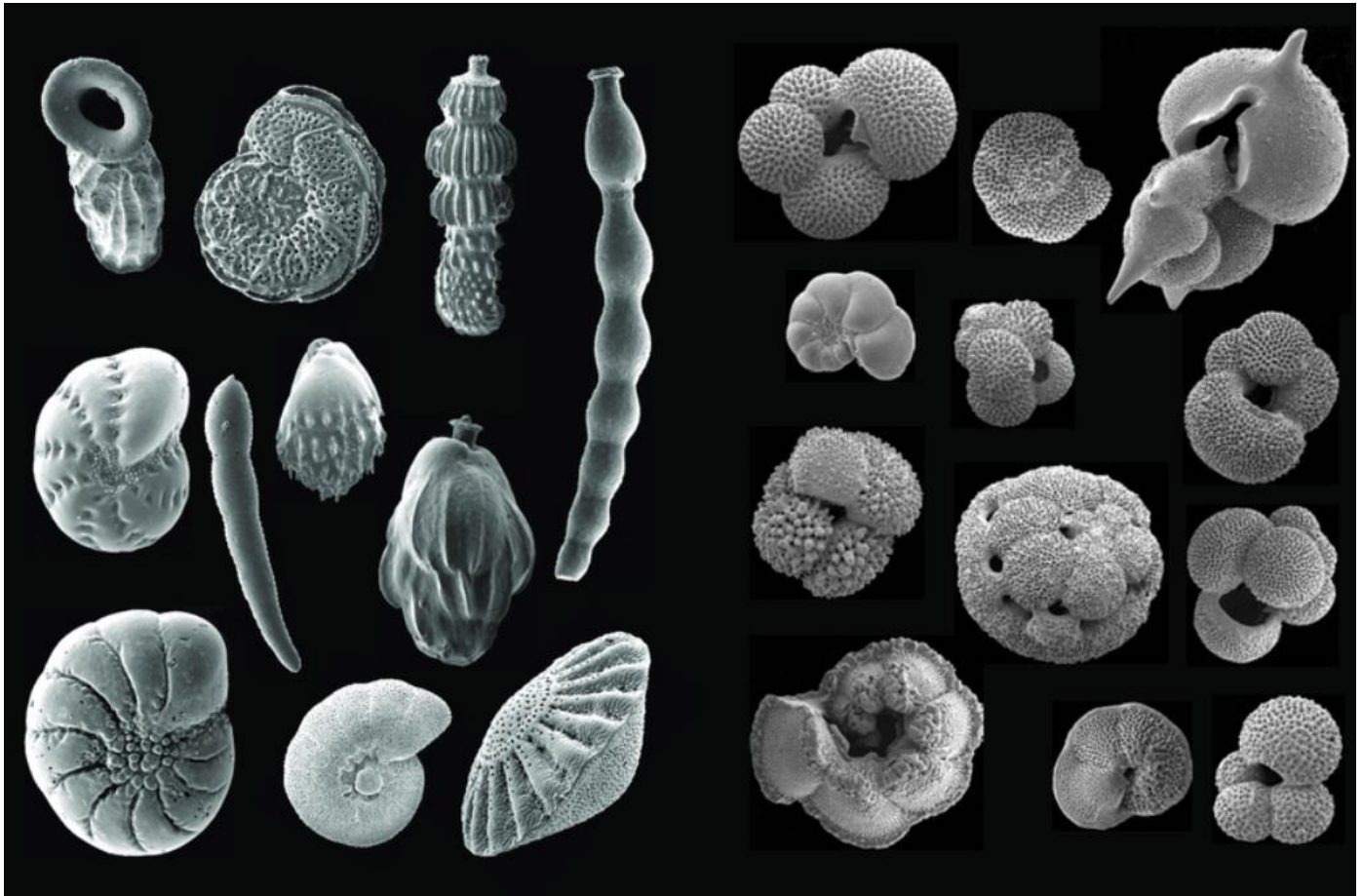
**Foraminifera**

Foraminifera (usually shortened to "*forams*") are single celled organisms that can make their shells (called tests) out of calcium carbonate, or by "gluing" together sediment particles to form a protective cover. The term "foraminifera" is derived from Latin, meaning "hole bearers," which refers to the numerous pores or openings in their shells through which they extend pseudopodia (false feet) for feeding and locomotion. They range in size from less than a millimeter to several centimeters in diameter, although the majority are microscopic.

*Forams* are found in abundance in marine environments and sparsely in freshwater settings. They play a crucial ecological role as primary consumers in marine food webs. They feed on organic matter and bacteria, and their abundance and diversity make them important indicators of environmental conditions. *Forams* reproduce both sexually and asexually, depending on environmental conditions and species.

*Forams* can be further broken down into two groups based on living conditions and shell type: planktonic and benthic. Planktonic *forams* float in the water column in the open ocean and tend to have a globular shape (think of a piece of popcorn). Benthic *forams* live on the ocean floor and can live attached to vegetation or within the first few centimeters of the ocean floor. These shells are chambered and provide a diverse range of intricate shapes. Both types of foraminifera are significant in paleoclimatology, biostratigraphy, and paleoecology due to their extensive fossil record and sensitivity to environmental changes.

Next time you are at the beach and pick up a handful of sand, you may just be holding on to some million-year-old fossils and you don't even know it! Next microfossil spotlight will be on coccolithophores. --- M.H.



**2024 Rockhound of the Year – Steve Collett**

The Kern County Mineral Society's (KCMS) nomination for the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS) Rockhound of the Year is Steve Collett.

Steve Collett has been an active member of the KCMS since the early 2000s and has served on the Board of Directors for many years. He was editor of the monthly KCMS Newsletter – *The Pseudomorph*. He has also served as historian for the KCMS and CFMS. Steve loves to research the history of the KCMS and he is familiar with many of the previous Presidents.

When you come to the KCMS' *Rock and Lapidary Workshop*, you assume all things will be working properly and ready for a productive day. Yes, many members are familiar with the lapidary equipment, but we all need to know that Steve makes the journey across town to work on the lapidary equipment to keep it operating smoothly. He comes early or even on an off day and works on the saws and polishing equipment so the Club can come and enjoy themselves. We all, at times, take for granted that the lapidary equipment operates flawlessly, but Steve is one of the reasons that things run smoothly. He has also rebuilt and donating several saws and polishing wheels for the *Rock and Lapidary Workshop*.

Steve has come to help set up for the special dinners, rock auctions, and BINGO night. He has knowledge of the various rocks that members collect and assists with their identification. Steve is and continues to be an integral part of the KCMS and is adored by all.

Steve has been known to sew many rock bags and polish rocks for the annual Kern County Fair. Steve works tirelessly at the Fair and even does his own specialty booth polishing thundereggs for the smiling-faced customers. Steve also is very active in making beautiful spheres for display at the Kern County Fair. Not only can you expect to see Steve Collett at the Kern County Fair, but you can always enjoy the display cases he prepares. He also is very generous in giving newer members assistance with their display cases.

Steve has allowed the KCMS to use his self-made *Rock and Fossil Identification Display* that we use at the Kern County Fair and other educational events as a learning resource. Steve also is instrumental in awarding scholarships to students in the local community and has a good relationship with the *Geology Department at California State University – Bakersfield*.

Steve recently held a rock sale at his home and he and his wife Cathy donated all the proceeds to the KCMS. He has always been very generous and has helped the Club greatly.

Thank you, Steve Collett for your generosity and hard work. The KCMS would have a difficult time prospering without your selfless dedication. The Kern County Mineral Society take great pride in honoring you for the 2024 Rockhound of the Year.



## A Bit of History

Former KCMS Members Murel and Edna Nicks

*The Pseudomorph – December 1992*

President: Ron Millard

Vice President: Ken Kruschke

Pseudomorph Staff: Cal and Dee Clason



Throughout the series of articles titled “*A Bit of History*” there has been one common theme, in nearly all the interviews, Murel Nicks would be mentioned and without fail, bring to light, the high regards shown for him by his contemporaries. I did have the pleasure of meeting him in the early 1970’s, but work, moving, life, etc. prevented forming a close friendship. With this thought in mind Dee Clason arranged a visit with his wife Edna and if this appears to be a tribute to Murel, then so be it.

Should you visit Edna (who passed away in 2010 and pictured above), your first impression is tempered by the twenty-inch round of petrified wood, beautifully polished, displayed outside the front door, many other pieces of lapidary excellence are prominently displayed. Edna, with her usual graciousness, made us both feel at home and so began two hours of reminiscing, some of which I hope will be correct, and add to this *A Bit of History*.

Edna professes to be a world traveler, born in Bakersfield, moved to Shafter at age one and one half. She moved back to Bakersfield and lived in the same place for thirty years, finally got adventurous and moved to her present address eleven years ago.

Murel, born in Illinois, spent some time in Iowa and arrived in Wasco in 1936. They would have celebrated their forty-eighth wedding anniversary this month, but his death in 1986 precluded this. Only one of their three children, two sons and one daughter, has shown an interest in rockhounding since childhood. Our arrival coincided with the beginning of the Roseanne Barr show on T.V.

The Murel’s introduction to rockhounding was exhibits at the Kern County Fair and Murel’s amazement that plain looking rocks could exhibit such beauty when cut and polished. With some encouragement from Em Saunders they joined the KCMS in the early 1950s and there was no turning back. Murel’s first fieldtrip to some local area made a confirmed rockhound of him, and the fascination and support of KCMS members continued for the remainder of his life. Although they were collectors of all types of material both became enthralled with petrified wood and spent many memorable times in pursuit of specimens. The early years on field trips were done with three children, many friends, KCMS members, and a tent. One casual comment was that she didn’t think she had been on vacation without a stop at McDermott, Colorado. Traveling with the

Masters, Taylors, Saunders, Sewells and other club members their travels took them throughout the Western United States always collecting. This was emphasized when after 30 years they began to move and discovered treasurers long forgotten, but each with a memory. One gentleman became somewhat exasperated when each rock could be remembered and the circumstances under which it was collected, he only wanted to get them all moved. After some high grading, being his usual self, Murel invited the KCMS members to a field trip in his yard. In the 1960s Murel saw his first camper but was unable to find one that suited him. His conversations with his Dad led them to constructing one (still in existence) like he wanted. There seems to have been many compromises on how it should or would be constructed. It greatly improved the enjoyment of field trips, no more falling tents in rainstorms.

When asked about her favorite or most memorable field trip, Edna was hesitant to single out one, but mentioned many; early trips to Stinking Water Pass in Central Oregon when then the petrified wood was so plentiful that the decisions were hard to make as to which ones to pick up. Spending time in Washington State looking down at the spectacular views of the Columbia River, the many trips to McDermott, Colorado. Trips into the Chuckwalla Mountains on almost non-existent roads. A journey to the Pow Wow in Quartzsite with snow on the ground and being unable to get into Tehachapi for breakfast. Being led by a fellow rockhound by the name of John Kennedy to a small hill as Lavic Siding, collecting some exquisite agate and jasper, and then forever being unable to return to it.

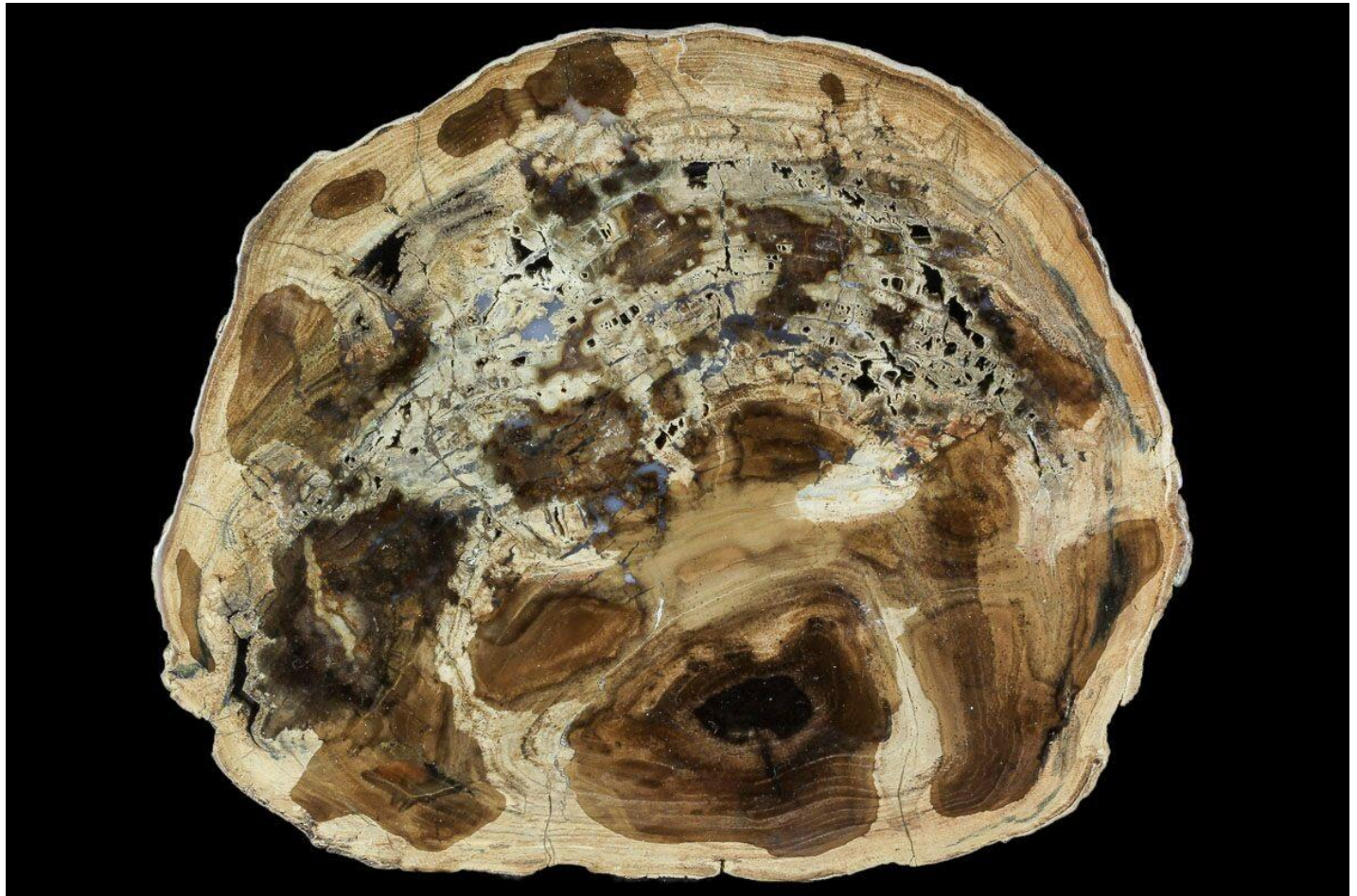
During their association with the KCMS, Murel served in most elected offices and most volunteer activities leaving us with a legacy that will be difficult to surpass, but with some of the interest shown by a grandson perhaps the next generation will continue the inheritance. Each time he visits Edna he is allowed to select one specimen and is given the facts about it. These he has displayed and has the ability to recognize and give the pertinent information on each of them. A chip off the old block?



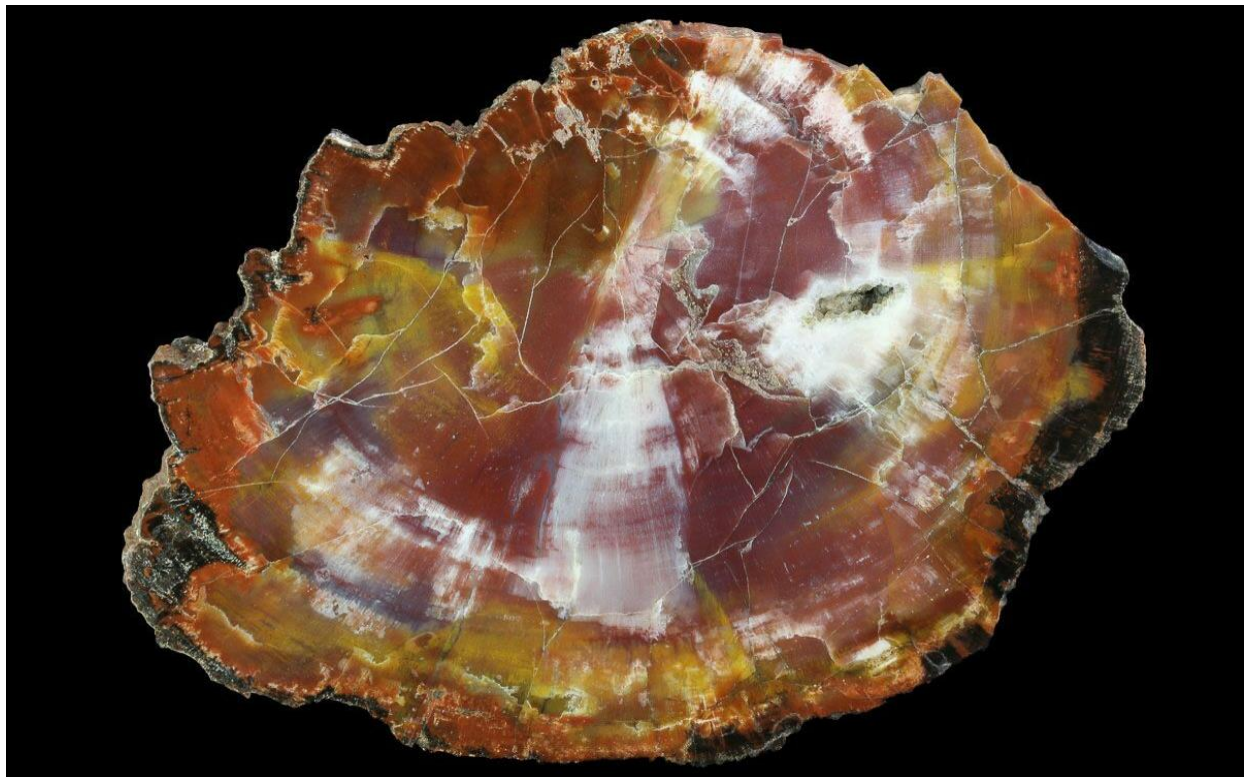
Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

A specimen of Petrified Wood from Stinking Water Pass in Central Oregon. Picture taken from Google.





Above: Beautiful picture from the Columbia River deposits looking across the Columbia River into Washington State.  
Below: Petrified Wood specimen from McDermott, Colorado. Pictures taken from Google.



Above: A specialized 1950s special Winnebago made especially for long road trips by Rockhounds like Murel and Edna Nicks.

Below: A beautiful specimen of Petrified Wood purchased from Holbrook, Arizona by author.

# KCMS CLASSIFIEDS

## KCMS is proud to announce the addition of a Classified Ads Section to the Pseudomorph Newsletter!!

Calling on all members who have any items that they want to sell or those looking to buy.

**Rocks, Minerals, Rock Saws, but that's not all!! We will also accept Lawn Equipment, Electronics, Homemade Crafts, etc.**

**The Pseudomorph Classifieds will not be limited to only rock & mineral related items, but to any items members are looking to sale.**

When making a classified ad for the newsletter be sure to include:

- Description of Item
- Asking Price
- Contact Information
- Picture(s)

Pictures are not necessary but will be added if provided. Please send photographs in JPEG (.jpg) format if possible.

Classified Ads for the Pseudomorph are due to the editor no later than the first Thursday of each month, via Email or by U.S. Mail.

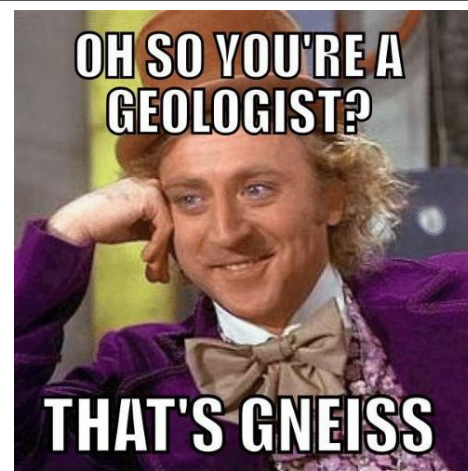
*James May, Editor*  
Email [geojim9@hotmail.com](mailto:geojim9@hotmail.com)

If you have any ads, you want added to the next Pseudomorph, please email me the details and I will post.

## Don't Forget the BREAKFAST CLUB

The first Wednesday of each month, year-round, KCMS Members and occasional guests meet at 8:30 AM at Lorene's Coffee shop at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Eye streets in downtown Bakersfield. Everybody is welcome to attend!

*-- Dalia Hernandez*



~Stu

# KCMS Monthly Meeting

Please join the KCMS at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at the East Bakersfield Veterans Hall at 2101 Ridge Road in Northeast Bakersfield. We hope you can attend, and visitors are always welcome.



## Kern County Mineral Society

is a Charter Member of the  
**California Federation of Mineralogical Societies**  
and is affiliated with the  
**American Federation of Mineralogical Societies**



The Kern County Mineral Society, Inc. was organized in 1935 to promote the study of mineralogy and allied earth sciences, to collect and study minerals and rocks, to study and practice the techniques of jewelry making, to promote good fellowship and good citizenship and to promote education in the earth sciences. Membership dues are \$20 for singles, \$30 for couples, and \$10 for students.

KCMS WEBSITE: <http://www.kerncountymineralsociety.org/>

## Pseudomorph Subscriptions

*The Pseudomorph* is published 10 times a year (September through June) by Kern County Mineral Society, P.O. Box 12305, Bakersfield, CA, 93389-2305. Subscription included with Membership. Non-members \$5.50 per year, Jan. thru Dec., not prorated.

**KCMS will email a free .pdf subscription to any high school, college, or university student who wishes to receive it.** Just email a request to [geojim9@hotmail.com](mailto:geojim9@hotmail.com)

Articles for *The Pseudomorph* are due to the Editor no later than the first Thursday of each month, via Email, via Facebook, or by US Mail. Please send photographs in JPEG (.jpg) format if possible, and text as Notepad, Word, or other simple text for me to paste and edit.

James May, Editor  
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Facebook: Kern County Mineral Society

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## KCMS Officers 2024

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### Vice President

Renee Real

### Secretary

Maggie Izumi

### Treasurer

Anita Andersen

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Monica Hinson  
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## Committee Chairs 2024

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Karen Engleman

### Scholarship

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### Door Hostess

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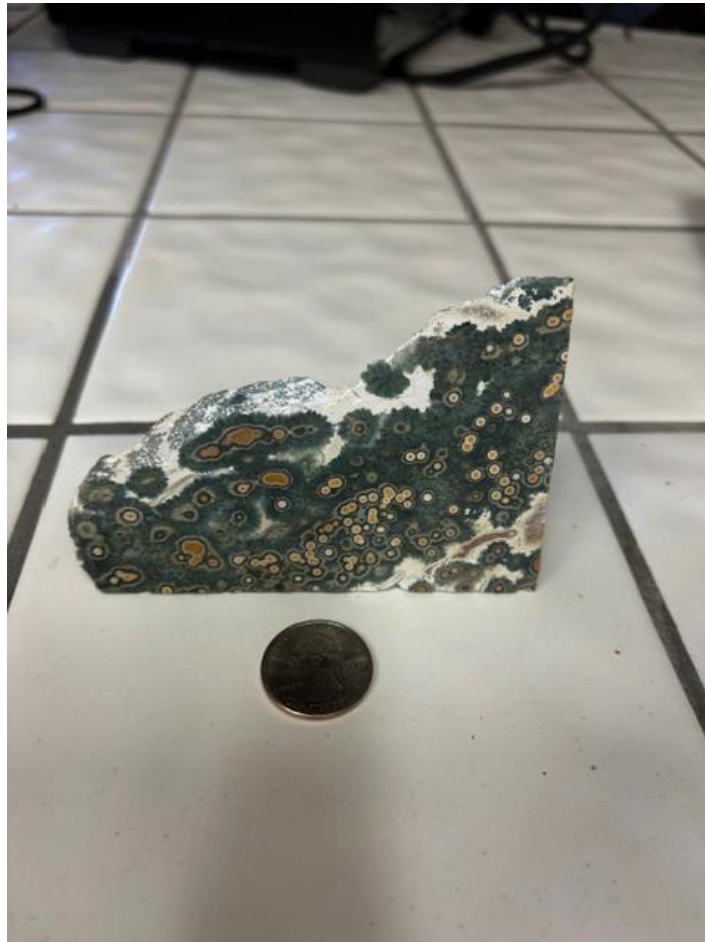


## FUN, GAMES, & FIELD EXCURSIONS



### AUGUST MYSTERY SLAB

Here is this month's mystery slab. Please submit your answer to [kerncountymineralsociety@gmail.com](mailto:kerncountymineralsociety@gmail.com) and [geojim9@hotmail.com](mailto:geojim9@hotmail.com). Each month's winner will be placed in a drawing at the end of the year for a special prize. We did not have a winner in July. The mystery sphere was chromite with uvarovite, and the winner was Paula Scheideman. Nice work Paula!



- *Mystery Lab Hint:* a former great rock collecting location to the north of us which is difficult to get to now. There are some float deposits in the County Park in The Bay Area in which it was collected. Please provide the specific name.

To make sure you are credited with the correct answer, please email the Kern County Mineral Society and James (see email addresses above). We would like to keep track of those who get the correct identity of the mystery slab each month.



Thanks for continues support of the Kern County Mineral Society.





Some pictures from Brown Butte located in the Western Mojave Desert. Above: the location on a bright summer day. Lower picture is some float collected off the dirt road of some chert.