



**Official Bulletin
of the
Chugach Gem & Mineral Society**

Alaska Pebble Patter
Chugach Gem and Mineral Society
P.O. Box 92027
Anchorage, AK. 99509-2027

Published by the
CHUGACH GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.
Box 92027, Anchorage AK 99509-2027

<u>OFFICERS</u>	
PRESIDENT	
Anita Williams 345-2541	
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT	RECORDING SECRETARY
Heather Jordan 345-2755	Bea Allen 696-4047
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT	CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
Bobbie Turnbow 337-6280	Nancy Danford 694-3288
TREASURER	BULLETIN EDITOR
Greg Durocher 337-2553	Sue Hilton 694-1934
	sueh@mtaonline.net

<u>COMMITTEES</u>	
PROGRAM	SUNSHINE & MEMORIAL
Greg Durocher 337-2553	Dorothy Arnold 279-3876
MEMBERSHIP	PARLIMENTARIAN
Jean Kane 243-4648	Norval Kane 243-4648
FIELD TRIP	FEDERATION LIAISON
Bea Allen 696-4047	Tom Cooper (907) 262-9759

THE CHUGACH GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY, INC. maintains memberships in:
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES
NORTHWEST FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES

THE CHUGACH GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY MEETINGS ARE HELD AT
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
725 WEST 9TH AVE., ANCHORAGE, AK
(Enter the church from the rear parking lot.)

BUSINESS MEETING – 7:30 PM — 2nd Thursday of each month.

POTLUCK MEETING – 6:30 PM — 4th Thursday of each month.

Bring a hot dish, salad, or dessert (plus serving spoon) to serve 5 people.

Also bring your own plate, silverware and drink. But most importantly, bring a rock to show!

Annual membership fees: Individuals - \$15.00; Families (2 or more) - \$20.00; Bulletin Only - \$10.00
Lifetime membership fees: Individuals - \$150.00; Families (2 adults & children under 18) - \$200.00



President's Message

August 2004

Our summer season is about two thirds over but there is no reason to slow down yet. In fact we should have at least two more months of field trips before we have to hang up the hammers for the year. Although I haven't been able to participate in very many trips this year it sounds like everyone is having fun and getting out. I know I've enjoyed what trips I have been able to do.

Even though it's still summer it is also time to start thinking about the up and coming Rock and Mineral show the first part of November. We need volunteers, helpers and participants to make it work. We've been wonderfully successful the past two years. Let's keep up the good work. See ya all at the next potluck.

Anita

Chugach Gem & Mineral Society
July Business Meeting Minutes

Second Vice President Bobbie Turnbow called the July 8, 2004 business meeting of the Chugach Gem and Mineral Society to order at 7:42 PM.

Two guests were present. They were: Vic Rolante from New York and Joyce Odums from Seattle.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer - Greg reported the following balances: Smith Barney account: \$18,749.40; Dorothy Kane Fund: \$15,662.36; checking account: \$9,121.96. Greg did not have the balance for the savings account. He also stated that lifetime membership amounts and this academic year's scholarship money needed to be transferred from the checking to the savings account.

Membership - Jean placed our total membership at 151.

Recording Secretary – Bea was not present.

Sunshine - Dorothy was not present.

Special Committee Reports:

T-shirt committee – Jane Parkhurst stated that she requested four quotes and received three responses. She would discuss options at the August business meeting.

Business card committee – Sheila Macias requested quotes by e-mail from several companies and was still waiting to hear from them.

Old Business:

Bobbie Turnbow reminded everyone about the July potluck that would take place at the Southern Russian Jack picnic area on July 22nd.

Field trips:

Joe Turnbow talked about the field trip to the Aurora Borealis claim on July 24th. The

claim is 60 miles from Palmer and 3.8 miles from the cutoff. Joe said he would provide transportation from the designated parking area with Max since parking would be limited.

Joe Turnbow discussed the field trip to Dan and May Creeks on July 30th through August 2nd. He stated that club members could fly in to May Creek for \$70 round trip and then hike the additional two miles to Dan Creek. Metal detectors and gold pans were allowed. The plane was scheduled to leave McCarthy airport at noon on the 30th.

Joe Turnbow announced the field trip to Nabesna on September 4th through the 7th. He stated that Nabesna had gold bearing skarn. The club had permission to go in to the claim and use the cabins if they were left the same way they were found.

Andres Macias talked about the Little Nelchina field trip from July 9th through the 12th. Club members were going to gather at the Mile 130.5 gravel pit on the left side of the road at noon on the 9th. The main attractions at the Little Nelchina were fossils and agates.

Bobbie Turnbow stated that the August 21st field trip would be canceled if nobody volunteered to be trip leader.

Bobbie Turnbow pointed out that the club had to start thinking about the November Rock show. Members had to decide how many cases to put on display.

Norval Kane displayed a sample of chromite from the Red Mountain area, which is where a part of the August 27th field trip was going to take place.

Field trip Reports:

Andres Macias reported on the Rainbow Mountain field trip. Plenty of horn coral, crinoids and platinum ore made it back with field trip members. The group that went met up with Steve Fairnow who was very

generous with some more rock samples for the club and the members that made it on this trip. A huge grizzly bear was spotted. After the trip was officially over, Tim and Kate LeForge went up to Donnelly Dome, and Andres and Sheila Macias went to Northway for additional adventures.

Joe Turnbow and Neil Tysver went to the Little Nelchina on the 4th of July. They were met with rain, heavy fog and mist. They found agates, ammonites and Jasper, but had to cut their trip short because the throttle cable on Max broke and Joe had to use vise grips on the cable in order to get back to the truck. The tongue on the trailer also broke.

Greg Durocher and his son went looking for claims in the Kenai Mountains on the Resurrection Trail on the 4th of July. After fighting slick grass, hoards of mosquitoes, Devil's club and alders, they first ran into moose and then into a couple of black bears – one of which decided to charge. After yelling at the bear, Greg decided to give up on the rock hunt and return to safety instead.

Craig Casner went to the lower 48 for his father's 80th birthday. He also took field trips to Western Colorado and Western Nebraska. Craig returned with dinosaur fossils and coprolites.

Door prizes were given and Bobbie called for a break. The scheduled program was the Oregon rock swap.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Adeline Geldenhuys

+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+

Thanks again to Craig Casner for the loan of gold pans for the Imaginarium's "Bones and Stones" camp. Kurt Johnson led a 40-hour camp experience for fifteen 1st through 3rd graders July 19th - 23rd. The camp highlighted the natural processes of geology

in Alaska with an emphasis on hands-on experiences. This included trips to Portage glacier, Hatcher pass for gold mining, Sutton for fossil hunting, dinosaur facts etc.

The cool rocks that Norval Kane donated last year were also put to good use. Thanks for the help in making it a fun learning experience for some of our Anchorage area youth!

-Submitted by Ellen Sales-Johnson

+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+

Dan Creek Fly-In
July 29 - Aug 01, 2004
By Greg Durocher

The Dan Creekers left town at various times on Thursday for the 300-mile drive to McCarthy. I picked up Craig around 5 p.m. and headed out into the rush hour traffic and pouring rain. We returned via the Ft. Rich overpass after realizing that his CD player was still in his yard (my truck just has radio). While we were at it, he also used the opportunity to roll up the windows on his parked truck.

Joe and Bobbie caught up with us at the Caribou Creek construction project. We met up again at Liberty Falls Campground while looking for Andres and Sheila. Joe's concern about the condition of the pending McCarthy Road convinced me that it might be best to not camp out at Chitina, but to continue until either making McCarthy, or a campsite along the way. However, once we hit the gravel, we realized that it was the best it's ever been, and the trip was a snap. Some of us were supposed to camp overnight in the "junkyard" out of McCarthy, but new roads crisscrossing the area confused everyone in the post-midnight darkness. Craig and I ended up there alone.

At oh-too-early Friday morning, Neil and Carmel drove in, with Neil rousting us into action. I dropped Craig and the gear off near the bridge, (Joe and Conrad were already there) and then parked Clueless up

the road at the \$5/day parking lot. While walking back, Andres, Sheila and the beasts stopped to give me a lift. Several in the group were non-flying spouses: Andres and dogs headed back to Anchorage right away, while Bobbie and Carmel took off together to raise Cain locally. The rest of us were picked up by Wrangell Air at the far side of the bridge, dropped off in McCarthy briefly, and then taken to the airstrip.

Just before noon we took off for Dan Creek in a 206 and a 185. Conrad was in the first group with Craig and Sheila, and by the time Joe, Neil and I landed, he was nowhere to be seen. The remaining 5 of us hiked from the strip to a nice campsite on the flood plain of the creek where we set up our tents. Then we set off with various gold-panning and metal-detecting gear, passing Conrad's lone tent along the way. We checked out some bedrock outcrops, tailings piles and hiked along the creek trail.

Intermittent showers removed any local fire danger, but didn't last long enough to ruin the day. However, it rained heavily up-valley from our camp, and we were the beneficiaries of a two-hour rainbow glowing brilliantly in the late-afternoon sun. An evening sluice/pan session was followed by a lengthy bull session around a hearty fire, under mostly-clear skies.

Saturday dawned sunny and warm. The fire was easily re-kindled for a brief run. After breakfast we set off to again forage for whatever minerals we could find. Conrad could be seen occasionally on the slopes across the stream. Later on he informed us that the pickings weren't very good up there.

On our side, Craig and Neil worked a small copper nugget repository while Sheila and I hiked all over tarnation. I managed to find a few small nuggets and one that weighed maybe 5 pounds. The metal detecting was difficult, as there were a lot of "hot" rocks. Some contained a lot of magnetite and others had tiny amounts of native copper within. Then there were the nails, wires, bolts, etc. to add to the fun.

As the day went on the heat became a bit

oppressive. Cumulus clouds kept piling up around the peaks, but the afternoon skies stayed mostly sunny. We were sitting around the campfire after supper when the wind suddenly blasted us out of our reverie.

Glancing up the valley at the blackening clouds, we scurried to secure tent flaps, cinch up backpacks and don our rain pants (leaving the jackets nearby for when the rain hit). We noticed that Conrad's tent, around 400 yards upstream, had moved perceptibly. We then saw him heading back to it from the stream where he'd been panning. We continued to feed wood into our wind-whipped campfire as the first drops struck forcefully. We expected a deluge, but the rainbow again reappeared up-valley, and we never had to put on the raincoats.

Interesting weather in these parts! A bit more conversation with harmonica accompaniment, then off to bed under once-again beautiful skies

Sunday morning: mostly sunny and fairly warm. No surprises there. After breakfast we broke camp and hauled our gear to the landing strip. Some of us then hiked over to talk to Fred, the mine caretaker. He was friendly and interesting, and seemed genuinely pleased with the company. Too soon we had to head back to the strip. Like a Swiss train, the first plane showed up right on time, followed closely by the second. The first group paid extra for a scenic tour of the Kennecott area, whereas our plane went straight in to the McCarthy strip.

The trip back to Anchorage was uneventful, other than Joe's flat tire. He had Neil and Sheila as passengers. They had dinner at the Caribou Restaurant in Glennallen, while Craig and I made my required Sheep Mt. Lodge stop. Both of our vehicles were again stopped at the same time at the construction project. Even with dinner and the delay, we were in town before 8:30 p.m.

Our gold panning efforts weren't too productive on this trip - a few small pickers and some tiny stuff - but we all got copper nuggets. Joe discovered that he hated gold panning. He wasn't finding much copper

either, so he bought a bunch of nuggets from Fred. Although the pickings were slim, the camaraderie was terrific. There is not much that can match rockhounding in the backcountry!

+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+

Little Nelchina River Club Trip
July 2004
by Greg Durocher

On Friday afternoon, July 9, a group of us on or in 5 ATV's and 3 trucks, traded highway for pathway as we set out for the Little Nelchina River valley in the Talkeetna Mountains. The weather was lousy on the Glenn en route to our starting point (just east of Eureka Lodge), but by the time the truck tires had been chained, there were little more than occasional sprinkles. The previous week of rain made the potholes deep in places. Twice I couldn't feel the bottom and it felt as though we were floating as we inched through the slop. There were enough winches in the group that we weren't too concerned about getting stuck, but none were needed. Rick and Jane slid sideways into a water-eroded trench going down Monument Hill. That would have been hairy had both tires gone in, but through a bit of back-and-forth guided by Sheila, Rick got the rear tire out and was able to straddle the trench. I quickly chose an alternate route! Once down on the flood plain of the Little Nel, most of us set up camp near the confluence of Flat Creek under rapidly clearing skies. New members Dan & Stacy Long, nephew Tristin, and Bill and Donna Welch continued up to Horsepasture Pass where they'd be closer to potential fishing.

Our main group rockhounded for a couple hours then feasted upon Andre's BBQ Ribs, twice-baked potatoes, beer, wine, etc. around the campfire. Ah, the comforts of motorized camping - Sue and Adeline had even set up a Pee-Pee Teepee! The skies stayed mostly clear and warm until the sun dropped below the Wall of China, after which the long sleeves came out in a hurry!

Somewhere around 2 a.m. Tim & Kate arrived on their ATV's, closely followed by another group passing by. Most of our camp, comfortably nested, wasn't even aware of the commotion!

Saturday dawned beautifully. After breakfast we headed 12 miles up the Lil' Nel, making countless stream crossings. There is a trail of sorts, but occasionally we'd lose it due to river changes, and just drive on until we found it again. A flat flood-plain makes great country for 4-wheeling!

Once at the end of the road, we joined up with Dan & Co. then split into two groups. Dan, Shari and I hiked extra miles above timberline in search of fossils. It was so hot that by the time we got back to the truck, I was feeling weak. Shari thought that I had a bit of heat exhaustion. Well, I WAS the one carrying the pack, the rocks, the cracking hammer and the water! En route back to camp we listened to "Prairie Home Companion" on the radio as we fell back to look for Little Nelchina agates. How that F.M. station could make it into a remote mountain valley so far removed from everything is beyond me! I found a mud-hole that I thought was going to do me in about a mile from camp, but a quick reverse then a slow pull-out got us through.

Saturday evening saw a repeat of the previous night's dinner: ribs, twice-baked spuds and beverage. I added a cigar this go-round, and it was the best danged stogy I ever smoked! I stayed up well past the others. Just couldn't tear myself from the campfire, twilight skies, laughing stream and 360 degrees of drop-dead beauty.

Shari and I headed out at about 10:45 a.m. Sunday for the hour and 40 minute drive to the highway. Most of the others were leaving much later or staying an extra day. They succeeded in making me jealous! Since we had no help with us, I was a bit pickier on my mud-hole crossings (stopping to check a few times) and had no major problems. Clueless (my truck) doesn't have A.C., so it was a bit loud driving with rolled-down windows for the 135-mile trip back to

town. Had to make the mandatory stop at Sheep Mt. Lodge for lunch. Even with all of the road construction, I still never tire of the trip. What an absolutely gorgeous weekend!

+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+

Tales From the Bush
—Keno Hills—
By Joe Turnbow

Eight years! That's how long it'd been since Bobbie and I visited Keno Hills at the end of the Silver Trail highway in the Yukon Territory. Needless to say, I was anxious to return. So when the topic of our biannual Whitehorse trip arose, I proposed a short stop in Whitehorse (mainly to visit Paul at the Yukon Rock Shop) followed by a day or two in Keno Hills.

The final role call included Neil, Heather, myself, and two of our outside members, Judy and Bill Ruddock. Neil and I were leaving Thursday at 6 PM; Heather was talking about leaving even earlier. We were all supposed to meet at the Little Chief at noon on Friday.

Neil and I arrived in Whitehorse at 7 AM Alaska time after an uneventful trip (we only saw 14 porcupines, a herd of buffalo, a herd of elk, and a herd of ponies!). Well what's a guy to do for four hours in Whitehorse? Golly! Guess I'll just have to pick up a rock or two!!!! Hmmmm... A nice thulite here, a little serpentinite there, some valeriite ...

Judy and Bill found us still on the rock pile at 11 AM. Now if Heather were here we could visit the rock shop! We waited patiently until 1:15 PM. Still no Heather. We made the logical and humane choice. After all, we needed to talk with Paul about Keno (besides his rocks are better than those left at the Little Chief!).

The first thing I saw as we pulled into Paul's drive was a huge chunk of partially polished chalcopyrite. I was already in love without ever leaving the truck! Paul greeted us

warmly from the back porch but quickly approached the truck when Neil told him we had come bearing gifts. Neil handed him some Black Rapids tourmaline and after a suitable pause, I passed over two chunks of Aurora Borealis.

There were several mutters of cutting and location but talk soon changed to Keno and possible collecting locations. The Elsa and Bellekeno mines appeared to be the two best choices. About that time we entered the rock shop and coherent conversation ceased while we drooled over beautiful specimens collected from various mines in the Yukon. Paul even opened the doors (viewing only) to his private stash! True to form we all found certain specimens leaping into hands and refusing to be removed!!!

As I was paying my bill, I commented on the beauty of a bornite specimen. Paul looked up with a peculiar glint in his eye saying, "That's from the Arctic Chief. Want to go look for some more?"

"You gotta ask?!?", I said looking around for Neil. He was already out the front door—keys in hand—with Paul right behind. Bill, Judy, and I narrowly avoided a fatal jam as we all tried to get through the door at the same time.

Paul led the way back to the highway, heading north. After turning onto a side road, we topped a hill and headed straight into a working gravel pit.

Now, I'm used to mine and quarry managers yelling and screaming about "KEEP OUT" and "PRIVATE PROPERTY" signs. Not Paul! He didn't even slow down as he moved through the pit and then up a hill. However, he did stop when a large red metal gate appeared across the road. I heard loud mutters of "Wasn't there before" as he turned around and went back down into the gravel pit.

He parked (more or less) then walked over to the pit manager. From afar, we watched as hands pointed first one way then another

as if directing traffic or perhaps offering supplication to the rock gods. A few minutes later Paul climbed back in the truck, heading for a different exit. We followed carefully since the front-end loader wouldn't even notice the bump if he went over our vehicles!!!

It took about 60 seconds of twisting roads and multiple branches before I was lost. Sixty seconds after that we were stopping just short of a large open pit.

"Welcome to the Arctic Chief! You can go in the pit if you wish but the best rocks are in the tailings over this way."

"I'm right behind you, Paul!"

With a warning of unstable tailings, Paul went over the edge like a mountain goat in a hurry for supper! Neil was right behind. I almost forgot my sore foot (garnered on the Unga trip). Fortunately, it didn't take long to remember. Unfortunately, it let Neil and Paul get to the good rocks first!!!

By 3:45 PM everyone had new rocks to add to the old ones. We needed to check camp for Heather so Paul offered to show us the back roads to the Little Chief. Not bad! Only a half dozen seemingly random turns then a straight road. We said bye to Paul and headed for camp.

We found Heather asleep in her front seat! Judy and Bill wanted to visit the core pit then call it a day so we agreed to meet at the Mayo Information Center at noon. They headed for the core pit while Neil and Heather headed for their favorite collecting spots. I, being more sensible (meaning I had foolishly promised not to add more Whitehorse rocks to our load), sat down in the nice warm truck, leaned the seat back, and began to study our limited Keno info. That's where Neil found me two hours later—still on page one and resting my eyes!

Sure made it hard to go to sleep that night. So while Neil crawled into the tent and

Heather headed for her car ('cause I forgot to bring the small tent!!), I embarked on a slow walking tour of the Chief and Little Chief. I gave it up after an hour or so, returning to the tent.

5 AM (Alaska time)!!!! Time to rise and shine and kick the frost off the tent and truck! Poor Heather is not a morning person but bravely arose in the cold dawn to prepare for our next adventure! We were out of town before 6 AM, which left time for one quick rock fix along the way.

The Whitehorse gem club has a site (Cliffside Agates) about halfway between Whitehorse and the Mayo cutoff. Their guide claims nodules up to four inches in diameter. With more than a little anticipation we pulled over at the specified location, staring with concern and dismay at the head-high "cliff." It was composed of a very hard, fine-grained basalt. On one face, we noted a 1.25" hole about a half-inch deep. They were using dynamite to mine their cliff!!! Not fair! I'd have to work Baby for an hour just to split off a small chunk!

"The heck with it, Neil! Let's go to Mayo." We zoomed up the road.

Mayo has changed! Lots of new houses and a couple of new roads. Still, we found the meeting point without trouble. It was 11:15 AM Yukon time.

"What time do they open, Neil? We need to pick up a map of the Keno area."

"Hmmm... Says here they open at 10 AM...starting 1 June!"

We only had ten minutes to grumble about such an unfair situation before Heather arrived. Judy and Bill arrived about two minutes later. Great timing!!

"Let's go! Elsa first then we'll try the Bellekeno if Elsa doesn't pan out."

I must be a prophet! The Elsa mine is in receivership and the Canadian government

hired Price Waterhouse to sell the property. Guess what? The)(*#&\$@*!&@ people ordered the mine locked down!!! They wouldn't even let us look at the tailing pile!

After a few minutes of idle conversation with the head guard, I finally wrangled unofficial permission to paw through an old tailings dump about a mile back up the road. We found a couple of minute pieces of galena, a couple of druzy quartz pieces, and little else.

"Keno, anyone?"

No one even bothered to answer! They just headed for the trucks! Soon enough we were pulling into Keno (after noting that almost all of the mine roads were still snow bound). I graciously granted "tourist" time to the crew (they were already headed for the museum) while I searched for a map.

No luck with the map but I did talk to a couple of locals that sent us up the creek (no pun intended!) after a couple of placer miners working just upstream from the Bellekeno. Once again, I was granted the honor (after Neil shoved me out of the truck and locked the doors) of approaching Clause for permission to rockhound in and around his claim. Luckily for me the miners were very friendly AND informative.

Although Bellekeno personnel had been very efficient (no neat specimen in the tailings) in recent years, they had hit a large pocket of sphalerite about 15 years ago. At that time, the only thing they were interested in was the silver. They removed most of the pocket (to follow the silver vein) and dumped it just across the creek—right beside the road!

Sure enough, there was a large pile of ugly grey rock right where they said we'd find it. At first, we thought most of the material was galena. But after some reflection, I realized the ore was much too light for galena. Plus, after 15 years of wind and rain and sun the sphalerite would've broken down into sulfuric acid and zinc. Zinc is an ugly dark

grey that weighs about half as much as lead! Problem solved! I'll just pick up 500 pounds of zinc!! HA!!

We also found what I believe is siderite (an iron ore), some small galena cubes, and some druzy material. Everyone was happy!! At least until Heather asked me to break one of her BIG rocks. I thoughtfully held it aloft to give it maximum acceleration before it hit the road. You'd have thought it was rigged to explode! The 60-pound rock was instantly transformed into several dozen pebbles (each of which Heather, of course, carefully investigated).

We did tramp around the mine buildings and settling ponds but were unsuccessful in adding to our collection. With all other possible collecting areas either snow-bound or under lock and key, Judy and Bill decided to head for Skagway while Heather, Neil, and I decided to visit a rock quarry a few miles south of Dawson.

The long days gave us plenty of time to gas up and find the quarry road. Actually getting to the quarry was a little dicey. The trail seemed solid but was under at least 15 inches of water. We left Heather's car and proceeded with the truck (meaning Neil and Heather in the cab with me guarding the rocks in the bed). Not a bad trip except for being choked by swamp gas, slapped by alders, and splattered with water and mud. OH! Let's not forget being stabbed by mosquitoes!!!

A long list of minerals followed the quarry name. What we found was a LOT of serpentinite. With at least four different varieties, I had trouble limiting myself to just one rock. What the heck, I'll take six! We finally loaded our selections on the almost overloaded Toyota and headed out.

More swamp gas and alders! I took a quick look underneath and saw such dense masses of hanging grass that for a moment I thought Neil had mounted some type of carpet to the axles. Oh well, it'll fall off soon enough!

We headed for Dawson, arriving just in time for supper. Heather decided she wanted to sleep in a room and do some shopping the next day. Neil and I looked at each other. Shopping?

"Thanks, but I think Neil and I will camp along the Top-of-the-World highway tonight and hit the border at 9 AM."

The customs agent at the border was a little confused. When she asked what we were bringing back, Neil said "Rocks."

"Huh? Why are you carrying rocks from Whitehorse back to Alaska?"

"They make nice yard rocks."

"Huh? Why are you carrying rocks from Whitehorse back to Alaska?"

The conversation (not communication) continued in this vein for over five minutes! When Heather arrived several hours later and responded to the first question with "Rocks," the agent got a funny look on her face, stepped away from the car and motioned Heather to leave!! She obviously felt it was going to be one of those days!!! HA! She should come to one of our meetings!

In the meantime, Neil and I had stopped for a visit in boundary, had lunch in Chicken (where they asked about mud flaps mounted to axles!), and climbed Mount Fairplay to look at the rocks. After the refreshing but uninspiring walk, we visited

our favorite piles of dendritic rhyolite (courtesy of the highway department!). Choices again!

At Neil's insistence, I loaded two small rocks (87 and 125 pounds) plus three or four pebbles. Our backend was now definitely lower than the front end! A short drive brought us to Tok where we fueled the truck and ourselves before continuing to Glennallen.

Heather finally caught up with us about halfway between Tok and the Junction. We both stopped in Glennallen where she told us of her strange experience with the customs agent (and asked Neil about the "mud flaps"). Then we were back on the road to Anchorage and a couple of unsurprised wives. (Neil and I always seem to overestimate how long it'll take us to fill the truck!)

As we were unloading Neil asked how much my rocks weighed.

Being careful to sound sincere I said, "No more than 600 pounds." (Would you believe 1100?) Neil wasn't fooled for a moment!

Great weekend, great rocks, great company...another great club trip!!!

P.S. Neil had to hire his nephew to cut the grass off the axles!!!

+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+==+

