



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

Alaska Pebble Patter
Chugach Gem & Mineral Society
P.O. Box 92027
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ELECTED POSITIONS

PRESIDENT

Greg Durocher 337-2553

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Phillip Elrod 349-5457

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Sheila Macias 274-2204

TREASURER

Anita Williams 345-2541

RECORDING SECRETARY

Chris Teutsch 694-6586

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Nancy Danford 694-3288

APPOINTED POSITIONS

PROGRAMS

Andre Macias 274-2204

MEMBERSHIP

Bea Allen 696-4047

FIELD TRIPS

Bonnie Hepburn 274-0941

SUNSHINE

Dorothy Arnold 279-3876

PARLIAMENTARIAN

Norval Kane 243-4648

FEDERATION LIAISON

Tom Cooper 262-9759

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Sue Hilton 694-1934

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CLUB GREETER

Melvin C. Bennett 770-2732

CHUGACH GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY maintains memberships in:
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES
NORTHWEST FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES

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, south of 8th Avenue between G & H Streets.)

BUSINESS MEETING – 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM.
POTLUCK MEETING – 4th Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM.
Bring an entrée, side dish, salad, or dessert (plus serving utensil) to serve at least 5 people.
Also bring your own plate, silverware and drink.
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

Greetings, Rockhounds-

"The best winter I've ever seen was the summer of 2008!" I can't remember who I heard this from, but it doesn't seem far from the truth. We're having the coolest, cloudiest summer in recent memory, but our hobby is alive and well regardless! Our trip to Eagle led 19 rockhounds into the 70+ degree sunshine of Interior Alaska. I actually used sunscreen for 4 days straight! As usual, the campfire camaraderie was the best part of the trip. With promises of similar weather next year, some of us are already talking about an Independence Day weekend trip to Chicken...

As the season hurtles headlong towards August, I'd encourage you to get out and rockhound whenever there's a break in the weather. The shoreline around Point Woronzof makes a good place to marvel at the eclectic mixture of igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks comprising much of the beach. It's easy to get to, and if there is only going to be a couple hours of sun, you can't beat the location. You might even find an interesting yard rock or two. For a lengthier weather break, Wishbone Hill gets you out of town. Don't forget to check the remaining club trips - it's always more fun to go as a group!

Best wishes and rock on!

Greg Durocher



May Business Meeting

The meeting was called to order May 8th, 2008 at 7:30 pm. 29 members and 3 guests were present.

The treasurer's report showed a total balance of \$64,479.46 in club accounts.

Membership: Bea Allen reported 158 members.

Federation Liaison: Tom Cooper told of a Tri-Federation field trip to be held in Nevada in late May.

Sunshine: Dorothy Arnold stated that former member Ruth Allen was in the hospital and a card was handed around for everyone to sign.

Pebble Patter: Sue Hilton said that the May - June edition was available on the website.

Field Trips: Sheila Macias detailed field trips through the end of the year, and Tom Cooper described a planned trip to Quartzsite for January 2009.

Programs: Andre Macias said that the May Potluck program would be "Rock Bingo".

Scholarships: Andre Macias noted that all of the scholarship information for 2008 was updated and could be reviewed on the website.

There was no old or new business discussed.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Teutsch, Recording Secretary

June Business Meeting

The meeting was called to order June 12th, 2008 at 7:30 pm. 25 members and one guest were present.

There were no May business meeting minutes available for review by members.

Treasurer: Anita Williams reported a total of \$65,920.47 in club accounts.

Field Trips: A part of the list of upcoming field trips was read, and Tom Cooper, Mary Wester, and Phillip Elrod spoke briefly about their recent trips.

Federation Liaison: Tom Cooper reported that the Federation had received 60 pounds of postage stamps

to date, and he polled members concerning sending a representative to the annual Federation meeting.

Old Business: Volunteers were needed to cover display case liners with new fabric. Members would be reimbursed for the fabric.

Dimensions for a fluorescent minerals display case had not yet been received from the Alaska Museum of Natural History.

Andre handed out a list of suggested changes to the scholarship and science fair programs and a lengthy discussion ensued, but no decisions were made.

New Business: Bea Allen asked if members would prefer a new design when the dwindling supply of membership cards runs out.

The supply of club tee shirts is also dwindling and there was discussion about having new ones made.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Teutsch, Recording Secretary

July Business Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm on July 10th, 2008. 23 members were present.

Copies of the complete May and June minutes were handed out for review. A motion was made and passed to accept them with one correction to the June minutes.

Treasurer Anita Williams reported \$11,136.42 in checking and \$54,560.32 in the Edward Jones account.

Membership: Bea Allen reported 184 members.

Field Trips: Upcoming trips included the Little Nelchina, Rainbow Mountain, and Fossil Creek, and the Eagle/Calico Bluff/Taylor Highway trip was reported on.

Old Business: Andre's suggestions for the scholarship and science fair programs were discussed, and it was decided to have the board make decisions to be voted on at a business meeting.

New Business: New member Michelle Seybert volunteered to fill in as Sunshine Committee Chair when Dorothy Arnold was traveling.

Plans were made to collect school supplies and Earth science-related materials for the Eagle Community School.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Teutsch, Recording Secretary

Castle Mountain Trip **June 8th, 2008** **By Andre Macias**

The group going on the trip met at King Mountain Lodge around 10:00 am on June 8th. There was a little chill in the air but everyone seemed in good spirits. Sheila was sporting her new truck and proud of it. We had a good turnout with lucky 13 being the tally, consisting of Anita and Linda, Tim and Kate, Doug, Chris, Sue, Greg and Shari and of course Sheila, Merlin, Molly and me.

After scoping out Sheila's new ride the crew headed to the mountain. About two miles up the trail, we stopped to take pictures of an old coal chute/loader. I think I told Anita earlier that the road got rough ahead. Anita parked the Volvo, found a nice rock nearby, and jumped in with us while Linda got in with Chris and Sue.

The road dead-ended about two and a half miles up from Chickaloon at an old coalpit that went out of production sometime in the past (that was a no-brainer). The weekend before the trip Sheila and I had gone up to the pit and planted a "rock-in-a-box" cache to help club members with their GPS skills. GPS stands for global positioning ... global positioning... I don't know what GPS stands for so you can bet we need to practice using it. Sheila says it stands for global positioning system. If that's the case why isn't it GPSU? Doesn't that make more sense? Oh, well, I will contemplate on it...

So getting back to the trip, we planted the cache in a strategic spot after walking miles around the pit to the secret location. We then backtracked to the spot where we started leaving clues along the way. These efforts would have made for a great treasure hunt if it hadn't been for Sheila putting the coordinates for the cache on the first clue instead of putting the coordinates for the first clue location on the first clue. Do you know how long it took me to come up with my clever rhymes for the clues? Man, that was tough and she just threw them away!

After handing out the page with what we thought were the coordinates to the first clue we watched Doug head up the hill straight towards the cache and find it in the first few minutes of playing the game. Good going Sheila! About this time Tim and Kate arrived, and our group got busy looking at the fantastic formations of coal and petrified wood stumps. Everyone found nice pieces for their collections and we all learned something more about our GPS units even if it was that we still don't understand our GPS units.

The day was cloudy but it didn't rain on us. I believe that a good time was had by all.

The Yukon River, Taylor Highway Trip **July 2nd - 7th, 2008** **By Sheila Macias**

This was destined to be a great trip. We all knew it; there were 19 of us in all headed to Eagle. Sue, Joe and Andre had made a preliminary trip to scout for collection sites, camping spots and whatever else we needed to know about as we set out on our journey.

The group leaving on Wednesday, July 2nd was Sue, Sheila, Bobbie, Kurt, Mike, Phillip, Doc, Greg, Shari, Rick, Jane, Ray, Pat, Gordon, Anita, Linda, Diana and Bonnie, with Andre, Merlin and Molly to join us on the Fourth.

Once everything was packed, we were on the road by evening with clear skies and warm temperatures. We

should skip the part about the \$500 in gas we filled up with before hitting the road.

Already on the road were several others of the group, with Sue's truck and my truck bringing up the rear. Riding with Sue were Bobbie, Phillip and Doc. In my truck were Kurt and Mike.

We caravanned until a pit stop about 20 miles out of Mentasta where I decided to go ahead as the guys riding with me were going to camp for the night and needed to get to Tok to find a campsite.

We arrived in Tok about 12:30 AM and found a spot at the Sourdough Campground for Kurt and Mike to set up their tent. I went on about another two or three miles and found the Snowshoe Motel where Sue, Bobbie and I were staying for the night.

The next morning there was a little confusion on the exact meeting time at the Visitors Center but we all arrived, handed out walkie talkies and headed for the Taylor Highway.

Once on the Taylor we began to stop at some of the collection sites. Sue had a clever way of calling everyone back to the vehicles with a boat horn. We moved on to several other sites collecting a few pieces on the way, some at their own pace.

We finally made it to Chicken where we dared not blink or we might have missed it. The sign said population 30 in the winter, soars to 80 in the summer. Here we stopped for a cool drink and to meet up with one of the locals whom Joe knew named Dick Hammond. After we located his home and he showed us some fine examples of Chicken agate, we went off to find our own treasures.

Once everyone had done their best and gathered back at Dick's place, Greg started asking questions of Dick and realized he was one of the guys that Greg used to go climbing with. Small world. (I will let Greg tell this part).

We were invited to the 4th of July festivities in Chicken, one of which meant the ladies would end up without their unmentionables as the locals shoot them out of a cannon then gather them up to hang in the local tavern, but we decided to stay true to the plan and go on to Eagle for the Fourth.

There was still plenty of winding dirt road ahead of us so we gathered the group and headed out again. As it got later we started looking for an Alaskan campground (a gravel pit) for the night. We found a good-sized spot for those of us who opted not to continue on to Eagle.

We--Greg, Shari, Sue, Bobbie, Phillip, Doc, Mike, Kurt and I--camped at the gravel pit for the night. We ate, drank, and learned about "Kenai Kabobs", which were roasted marshmallows dipped in Baileys. Greg got smart with Shari at one point and she gave him a wedgie; I believe Phillip got a photo of this event. Thus, we dubbed our spot "The Wedgie Pit".

The next morning we packed up and headed out at our leisure. Greg and Shari left first; I think they were

looking for a Starbucks. (Just kidding). My truck-full left next, with Sue's group still packing up.

We stopped several places along the road just looking at rocks, eventually got to American Summit where there was not much more than a liquor store, and stopped in to visit and buy some libations for the upcoming festivities. Then onward we went, next stop Eagle.

We finally made it to town, found the campground where Rick and Jane, Anita, Linda and Diana, and Ray, Pat and Gordon already had sites picked out and set up as they had arrived the night before. I helped Mike, Kurt, Doc and Phillip find a nice spot nearby where they were all going to stay for a night or two. At least until they decided to stay at the B&B.

On to the Falcon Inn B&B in the center of town where the parade was just ending. We met Marlys, the owner, who set us up with nice arrangements. We had the entire third floor for the night, though some of us were going to be playing musical beds throughout our stay as other guests left and more rooms became available.

After finding our sleeping arrangements, everyone dispersed around town (population 140) to see the sights and festivities. At 2:00 pm the shooting competition was going to take place and Sue had brought her rifle for the event, so Sue, Bobbie and I went to the café for a burger. Sue lost track of time, and after eating we bumped into Rick who told her that the shooting had started but she still had time to make it. She went and got her gun and we headed for the shooting range.

At the foot of the grass runway at the north end of town, some of the locals were gathered around a pickup truck. The judges had propped themselves on milk crates with binoculars to watch the shooters as they lay on their bellies on a tarp and shot at a target across the Yukon River. The target was 350 yards away with a crosswind. There were two categories, with open sights or with a scope. The open sights shoot-off was almost finished by the time we arrived. Phillip came over to us and said that at that point he was in the lead in the with-a-scope category. He approached the judges and asked if Sue could still join the event and they told him that he was in the lead and if he didn't mind they didn't mind.

Meanwhile one of the local kids came over near us and asked Sue several questions about her rifle. She stepped away to talk to the judges, and the kid came up next to me. He had an inquiring mind, as he felt free to fire off the questions like a professional. I answered until he said, "How old are you?"...I answered with "Where are you from?" *The village*. "How old are you?" 11 "Do you go to school here?" Yes. "What grade?" 5th. "Do you have brothers and sisters?" No. He had met his match, turned and left.

Sue proceeded to set up her rifle, fired three shots and hit the target all three times. Now she and Phil were tied for first and we were gonna have an old fashioned shoot-off. I wanted to know what they were going to

shoot off, but no one would answer me. Phil shot again and hit two out of three, then it was Sue's turn and she got two out of three. This was exciting.

For the final round Phil hit all three, then it was Sue's turn and she hit the first one, the second one and missed the third--although I think they are short one cliff swallow. So the CGMS came into town and took first and second place from the locals.

Phil did his shooting with a gun he borrowed from one of the locals. The guy was nice enough and it turned out that he was fond of rocks, too. He invited us over to his place the next day to see what rocks he had found.

Everyone dispersed again with plans to meet in the evening at the campground for a potluck/picnic/campfire Fourth of July-style.

That evening in the campground everyone gathered around to share in the fun; it was an honest to goodness Fourth of July with watermelon and fireworks, great friends and plenty of spirits. Rick set off bottle rockets that screamed into the air at unexpected intervals, Jane shared her sparklers with everyone, Sue brought decorations to put up around the site, and the camp host brought us firewood. There were plenty of good stories and good food... oh, what a night.

The next day about half of us were going downriver to Calico Bluff as soon as Andre made it to town and got some rest. He couldn't leave Anchorage until after work on the Fourth of July and had to drive all night to get to Eagle. He arrived about 8:00 am after having two flat tires along the way. Poor guy was tired and beat.

We got him unwound and unpacked, and found a nice shady spot at the side of the B&B for Merlin and Molly to rest. Marlys offered Andre some of her famously wonderful breakfast and he took her up on it. Then he decided he would be okay to go down the river, so after everyone roused and found the appropriate gear, the first group headed downriver.

Anita, Linda and Diana had left in their canoe just before 10:00 am, and the rest got ready and left around noon. In Sue's boat were Ray, Pat and Gordon, along with Bobbie, and Kurt went in Andre's boat. Rick and Jane took their own boat down to Calico Bluff. The plan was to have the canoe crew ride in Sue's boat on the way back and have Andre's boat (Sue's other boat) tow the canoe back.

The rest of us went our own way around town. After a walk around town Greg and Shari came back to the B&B to relax on the porch for a while. This gave me an opportunity to ask if they would doggie-sit while I ran up to the service station to pick up the tire that Andre had left for repair. The man at the station, Bo, was a nice guy; he only charged \$31 for a replacement tire mounted onto my rim. He sure did like to talk, as do I, so we had quite a conversation until he got some customers and I headed back.

I ran into Mike in the early afternoon and we loaded up the dogs to go explore American Creek. Once there we looked around for a bit then headed off to see the

native village of Eagle, along the way bumping into Greg and Shari with Doc and Phillip in their car. They had been sightseeing and had found a gravel pit to explore but just then, it had started raining. They said that with the rain they were going to head back into town.

Mike and I went on down the road to the end, stopping to take a few pictures. The rain ended after a few minutes so when we got back up to the gravel pit we went exploring. Mike found a nice agate and I picked up a few rocks.

As evening approached, around 6:00 pm, we could see a couple of boats headed our way. There were several of us keeping an eye out for them, and soon we realized that there were just two boats. Andre and Rick arrived at the shore and both were concerned that Sue had left right after they did, but they hadn't seen her for quite some time. Andre and Rick unloaded passengers and headed back to see where the others were. Apparently, there were a few too many in Sue's boat for her to keep up with the others so some of her passengers were offloaded to the other boats to get everyone back quicker.

With everyone home safely we went our own ways to eat, with plans to meet back at the campground for one last night. Andre and I headed into the B&B and on our way in we were offered spaghetti dinner made by other folks staying there. It sure was good.

Back at the campground we shared stories of the day and that's where we found out that Rick had accidentally run over Jane with his boat (I will let Rick or Jane tell that one).

Ray, Pat and Gordon were leaving the next morning; Anita, Linda and Diana were going to leave a little later in the day.

Once again a good time was had by all around the fire. The party broke up a little early for some of us because Andre was exhausted and I wanted to call it a night too.

The next day the rest of us were going downriver. Sue took Doc and Phillip, Rick took Bonnie and me, and Mike took Sue's other boat. Greg and Shari had taken the canoe downriver a few hours earlier.

Once on the river Rick stopped at a rocky shore for us to explore, and Bonnie and Rick both found big agates. I found some nice pieces too. We put our rocks in our buckets and went on. Soon the rest caught up with us.

The scenery was amazing, the river was smooth, and we were there before you knew it. Greg and Shari arrived just before we did, saying that they had stopped several times along the shore to look for rocks.

Greg and Shari got in with Sue and we all boated up and down in front of the bluff looking over the layering. Calico Bluff is a beautiful sight; we found spots to collect fossils and other amazing rocks. None of us found any trilobites, they remained elusive, but we found other great specimens, had wonderful weather and an

enjoyable ride. I know this will be on another of the trip lists in the near future.

On the way back, Greg took the big boat and Sue the smaller one towing the canoe. Once back, we headed for the boat launch to get the boats out of the water.

That evening Rick and Jane headed towards home. The rest of us, happy and tired, grabbed a bite to eat and settled down on the second floor deck at the B&B. We shared stories and libations, then all headed for bed.

The next morning once again we were fed a delicious breakfast. We settled up with Marlys and threw in a little extra as she and her daughter were saving for a horse.

While talking with Marlys, who is also a teacher in Eagle, she mentioned that her school budget was cut from \$6,000 to \$1,000 and it was going to make for a difficult year for her students. We have since brought that to the attention of the club and I believe there will be several care packages on the way to Eagle.

After breakfast everyone cleaned up and packed up to be on their way. Bonnie was planning to continue her adventure; the rest of us were going to head back to Anchorage. Greg and Shari got an early start while the rest of us were still packing up.

Once ready, the rest of us headed over to the Park Service Visitor Center. On the way Sue's truck was giving off smoke and a bad smell, and it ended with a bang, literally. She thought it might be contaminated fuel and wanted a mechanic to take a look at it before starting the truck again.

There were plenty of us to help so Andre left for Anchorage with Merlin and Molly in the back, as he had to be up early the next morning and had a long drive ahead.

The rest of us got the boats moved around and unhooked, and then I towed Sue's truck to the service station. The old timer there informed us that it was noon and he was going for lunch; he would deal with the truck in the afternoon. Not much any of us could do except wait.

It was decided that the people riding with Sue were going to be fine there in Eagle as none of them had to be to work the next day. I on the other hand had to be to work in the morning, so Kurt, Mike and I said our goodbyes to the rest of the group and headed out.

On the road we met up with Andre, who had been stopping for rocks and waiting for us. He showed us several more collection sites until we decided that we

had pushed the limit of time with the road closure at mile 97, and it had started raining.

So we headed for mile 97 of the Glenn before they closed it at midnight. As we passed the Eureka area we saw fresh snow on the tops of the mountains. We made the construction area about 20 minutes before they were to close, and it was home free from there. We were all tired and ready to be home.

We arrived in Anchorage about 2:00 am and unloaded the gear that belonged to Kurt and Mike. They loaded it all into Kurt's truck and he gave Mike a ride to his hotel.

At 2:30 am I called the message machine at work letting them know I wouldn't make it. Yep, I am a wimp, but I was exhausted. Andre, on the other hand, with just a few hours of sleep got up and went to work at 7:30. What a guy.

The next morning I tried calling to see if I could find out any news about Sue and her group. Finally, early that evening we heard that they were on their way and expected to make it through the construction before midnight. The next day I was glad and relieved to hear that everyone had made it back tired but safe.

This trip was made so enjoyable by the efforts of so many of the club members, starting with Norval. After finding out we would be going on the trip, he typed out instructions to several great collection sites complete with mileposts. He also bought us a map which we referred to as the "Holy Grail" of our trip. Sue, well, where do I start, she found "Geology along the Taylor Highway" online, and she provided boats, pfd's and carpooling in her truck. She also went on the preliminary trip with Joe, who provided more knowledge of collection sites, printed out copies of the "Taylor Highway" guidebook for everyone to reference, and arranged for access to Chicken Agate. Andre made both trips, drove and located collection sites on the first trip, ran the second boat for Sue on the second trip, and helped coordinate the entire effort. We are an amazing group of people when we put our minds to it.

That's all I got to say about that.

Sunshine Report

The club lost a long-time member with the passing of Ruth Allen in May. A card was handed around for members to sign at the July potluck.

Andre Macias wasn't feeling well after his surgery in May, but thankfully has since begun to improve.

