



# ROCKHOUND RAMBLINGS

MAY 2019 • PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY® • PASADENA, CA

## My First College Geology Field Trip

by Sylvia Cliffe



people. That means you take care of them. You don't tell them what to do. Two words I want you to remember and use: respect and consideration. Use them, and they will come back to you."

*Edwin Van Amringe (1899–1955) stands in front in this 1948 yearbook photo. He joined the PCC faculty in 1924. A chemistry teacher at first, he later became interested in geology and set up the field trip program that Sylvia describes for us.*

In my geology class at Pasadena City College, we had the kind of professor you went to after class just to talk. Professor Van Amringe really cared for his students and wanted them to succeed. He planned geology trips for his students to learn firsthand. So this was my first overnight geology trip – in 1948. I was just out of high school, just 17, with a love of rocks and geology.

The trip was to Calico and the mines there. We met at the college on Saturday morning, 6:30 a.m., with a sleeping bag and the teacher's list of necessary items inside:

- Lunch
- Canteen of water
- Hammer or screwdriver
- Enthusiasm

He planned for six drivers, each with three passengers. There were two boys and two girls per car. One person per car had some experience camping, and that was me.

As we met, he called all the boys to come to him, with the drivers closer to listen. "You are in charge of your car and your

I was assigned to Mathew's car, a Crosley convertible. The other riders in the car were Richard and Carmen (names changed to protect ME!), with me in the front seat, Richard behind me, and Carmen behind the driver to balance the car. The Crosley was small and lightweight, and would only go 50 miles per hour.

We lined up caravan-style behind Professor Van Amringe in his car and trailer, and drove 50 miles per hour to the Calico Mountains on a two-lane highway (one lane each way).

Arriving at our campsite, our teacher called us all together for more instructions. He said, "Girls to the right, boys to the left!" "What does he mean?" Richard asked me.

I answered, "To use the facilities we don't have, bathrooms."

Professor Van Amringe continued: "Stay together. No walking off. Do only what is comfortable for you to be safe."

Then we were off to our first collecting destination. Arriving there, our teacher asked us to park and walk the remaining half-mile to the mine. But Mathew said, "Stay in the car," and he proceeded to drive down the wash to the mine.

We were told we could go down into the mine or work the dump pile. Carmen didn't want to go down. Some of the students did, including the three of us. Going down into the mine, we discovered four levels of offshoots. We chose the top one. Collecting there, we picked up borax minerals (ulexite, colemanite, and others). I found a colemanite crystal about 1.5 inches long – quite rare for that area. I put it in my pocket.

When we were up and out of the mine, walking back to the car, Professor Van Amringe said to Mathew, "Now you are going to have to back up all that way." Instead, Mathew asked a couple of other boys to help, and six of us picked up the Crosley and turned it around.

*Continued on page 4*



*The 1948 Crosley convertible was a "Typical California car," according to advertising. The Crosley weighed 1,100 pounds, compared to 3,200 for a Chevrolet Aero sedan.*

## President's Message



Dear Fellow Members,

Life goes on after you've hosted a CFMS annual show. It may take a little while for everything to get back to normal, after the excitement and the million details to keep track of, but I'm happy to report that the Pasadena Lapidary Society is getting back to our regular routines. Members are collecting on field trips, getting together for educational program meetings, and polishing rocks at the workshop.

The wrap-up meeting of the CFMS Show Committee was April 13, and we learned PLS came through with a modest profit. Phil Lahr did an outstanding job for us as treasurer, keeping a hailstorm of receipts well-organized. Final reports from other committee members showed how our volunteers made the Show a success in every area – the Raffle, Silent Auction, Kids Area, Information, Hospitality, and more. I was particularly impressed with the fun people were having this year in the Demonstrations area. Joan Harrison's crew shared their enthusiasm with Show visitors, and did a great job representing our club.

We owe a real debt of gratitude to our greeters at the Show. They made everyone feel welcome. Thank you to all who stepped up; it is an important part of a great show.

We sorely missed Mona Ross during the Show. She had to take time off for medical reasons, but her dedication and energy in preparations made it possible for others to step in. Nancy Robb and Nadine Ishizu were amazing in the Kids Area. Marcia Goetz is organizing programs for monthly meetings while Mona is out. We are all looking forward to her return.

Looking ahead, we'll take a field trip to Kramer Junction in May. PLS has gone to this site for many years. It's a central point for side trips to Opal Mountain, Castle Butte, and other collecting areas. And then in June, we'll have the PLS Annual Picnic at Arcadia Park under "our" oak tree. I hope to see you there. We have many good times ahead for our club in 2019.

— Ellen Ferrell, President

## Pasadena Lapidary Society®

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## Membership

Membership per calendar year is \$25; for additional adults at the same address, \$15. Junior members are \$10. There is an initiation fee of \$10 per person (non-refundable) to cover costs of name badges, etc.

Renewals are due in October and delinquent after December 31. Mail checks to PO Box 5025, Pasadena, CA 91117-0025.

## Meetings

### Board Meetings – 1st Thursday of the month

7 p.m. at Matt Denny's Ale House  
145 E Huntington Dr, Arcadia  
PLS members are welcome.

### Workshop – 2nd Sunday of the month

Fees are \$3 for half-day, \$5 for a full day. Equipment instruction is required; also liability waivers, eye protection, and closed-toe shoes. For directions, please call **(909) 455-4360** (cell) or **(909) 593-2781**, or email [gem.quest@verizon.net](mailto:gem.quest@verizon.net). Bring lunch!

Junior members 9 and older are welcome with adult supervision.

### Program Meetings – 3rd Tuesday of the month

Doors open at 6 p.m. Meeting is 6:30–8:45 p.m.  
Pasadena Central Library, 285 E Walnut St.

## Contact Us

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Send articles by the 15th for publication in next month's issue. Very short items can get in as late as the 22nd but are not guaranteed to make the next issue.



## What's the Buzz – Zzyzx 2019

by Martha Wilson and Cathi Considine

What is Zzyzx – an adult summer camp, a place to relax and commune with nature, an opportunity to learn new skills and make new friends... Or is it just a week of really good food? It is all of the above and then some.

Take the last exit off the 15 freeway before Baker to Zzyzx. Follow the road down and around to the right to the California State University Desert Studies Center – known as Zzyzx for short. It is perched on the shore of a vast dry soda lake, where all kinds of research is done on all things “desert,” including flora and fauna, geology, and weather. The facility is also rented out to groups that are interested in related subjects.

The California Federation of Mineralogical Societies sponsors one week every year for gem and mineral clubs to teach and learn new skills, have fun, be energized, and share with fellow rockhounds. They offer a variety of classes, such as alternative casting, beading, faceting, metal clay, soapstone carving, metalsmithing, chain mail, and wire art, plus field trips. There is something for everybody.

While the accommodations are a bit rustic (only a central bathhouse, no private toilets), the food is amazing and there is a lot of it. RVs can camp on-site if that is more to your liking. The people are friendly, the classes are fun, and the instructors are highly skilled. There is nighttime activity as well. Events include a sell-O-rama, where people bring things they want to sell; a silent auction, where donated items are auctioned off as a fundraiser; a “show and tell” for presenting your creations; and a graduation ceremony. Walking and hiking around the property are a nice way to spend the afternoon after classes. The desert is breathtakingly beautiful.

Martha did some soapstone carving, made a bunch of metal-clay pieces, cut three stones, and had a really great time. Cathi did silversmithing mostly and also had a terrific time. We made new friends, got inspired to set up a studio, and learned a lot. On a walk with Jason (who runs the place), we learned its history.

Zzyzx's modern history begins with salt mining from the dry lake. Then it was abandoned until Curtis Springer came along in 1944 and filed a mining claim. He appropriated the land and



Photos by Martha Wilson

built a “health farm.” The history gets very colorful from there on until 1974 when Springer had to leave. In 1976, a desert studies center was created and has been running ever since. There are plaques on the outside wall of the bathhouse that go into the details of Zzyzx's history.

If you get a chance, go to Zzyzx just to see it on your own or when the classes are being offered. If you want to attend the week-long session sponsored by CFMS, be sure to get your registration in by November 1. It's very popular and hard to get in unless you sign up early. ♦



### My First College Geology Field Trip *Continued from page 1*

Back to camp for lunch. In the afternoon, we went to another mine and walked straight in. We came to a vertical shaft that went way down. It was deep. The boys jumped across it and said, "Come on, Sylvia, we will catch you."

### one car families

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"No, I have short legs! This time I'll go back and work the dump pile with Carmen."

Back at camp, we had a dinner of spaghetti and fixings made by Mrs. Van Amringe. Later, we had a campfire (a first for many). At bedtime, we laid our sleeping bags on the ground beside our cars. Our teacher said, "Girls sleep on the passenger side, all the boys on the driver's side."

Sunday morning, we had a breakfast of pancakes, eggs, and fruit, again courtesy of the Van Amringes. Again, we headed out caravan-style, up and through Odessa Canyon, with a stop at the top to collect. Then we went to Phillips Drive and had a lovely trip around it, working our way back to the two-lane highway.

We returned to PCC to meet our rides home. It had been an interesting trip, full of adventure and new experiences. I would go do it again anytime.

An assignment later in the semester was to make a collection. After I turned mine in, Professor Van Amringe called me into his office and asked if I would donate the colemanite crystal to the college. He said I would get an A for the collection. ♦

## Field Trips: What to Bring

So You Can Return Safely with Lots of Material

by Chris Kyte

Some people bring buckets for collecting, and some will also use a walking stick for balance. Carrying a bucketful of rocks — with your arm outward to avoid tripping — may be good for body builders. I prefer a backpack. Make sure it's comfortable when loaded. I bring one or two extra backpacks for different sites along the way. Thrift shops are a good place to look for packs and tools and keep costs down.

As for equipment, I carry a rock hammer, trowel, spray bottle, toilet paper, and small first aid kit. If the minerals are embedded in rock, it's good to have a 4 lb sledgehammer and a variety of chisels (e.g., short, long, wide, padded, skinny), and a small crowbar. A folding pickaxe and a small axe can prove useful. In the car, I keep a 6 ft gad chisel, an 8 lb sledge, a large crowbar, a large pickaxe, and a large shovel.

Collecting sites can get extremely hot, but they also get cold unexpectedly. Wear a sturdy, wide-brim hat and waterproof leather boots. Bring dark glasses, sunscreen, leather gloves, and a bandana (large enough to serve as a sling). Consider bringing a waterproof coat or poncho, an umbrella, wind pants, and a warm jacket as well as extra socks and a pair of comfortable shoes for the ride home.

In the car, have plenty of water, a Swiss army or IronMan knife, a big first aid kit, and dry snacks. If you wear glasses, bring an extra pair. Have a cell phone (911 works in some areas with No Service). Consider an FRS radio (used on some CFMS trips) or GPS equipment.

I adjust what is in my backpack at each stop, depending on distance, elevation gain, size of expected pieces, and how long we will stay. Do not collect more than you can safely carry back to the car, and remember to hydrate before and after collecting.

One more thing. Don't buy cheap tools, and sharpen chisels before you go. Okay, that was two things. ♦



## First Aid Kit – Must Have

### by Karl Stull

The two most important items in a first aid kit are in your head, not in the box.

- Location of the nearest ER
- Most likely emergencies and how to treat them

On a desert rockhounding trip, the most likely emergencies are: heat exhaustion or heat stroke; cuts, scrapes, sprains, or broken bones from a fall; eye injury from flying rock chips; and snake bite. All are preventable.

- Have a plan for drinking water (e.g., every half-hour).
- Have a plan for footing *before* every step on uneven terrain.
- Wear eye protection.
- Don't put your hand or foot where you cannot see.

Accidents happen, even when we are careful, so a first aid kit should contain supplies for the first steps in treating an injury:

1. Stop the bleeding.
2. Clean and disinfect the wound.
3. Stabilize/protect the injury site.

Use mild foamy soap to disinfect a wound and rinse with a stream of water for 5 minutes.

Bandages: have small and large sizes in your kit. Injuries to the hands, arms, or head may require custom bandaging: 4-inch squares or roll bandaging can be cut to shape.

Hardware: Thermometer, ice/cold pack, scissors, tweezers, tape, mini-size paper cup (eye cup), wood strip that can be cut to size for a splint, blanket.

*This article gives general information from reputable websites. It is not a substitute for medical advice in treating any specific case. Contact a doctor.*

### Rattlesnake bite

The treatment is antivenom. Go to an ER immediately; it takes two or more hours before symptoms become acute. En route:

- Keep everyone calm. Death from snake bite is rare.
- Wash or disinfect the site, but do not try to extract venom.
- Remove clothing from areas of swelling.
- Keep the wound below the patient's heart.

A description of the snake can help determine which antivenom to give (markings such as white blotches, diamond pattern, rings near tail), but is not essential. Don't chase the snake.

### Heat exhaustion vs. heat stroke

Symptoms are similar (headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting), but heat stroke is a medical emergency. If symptoms change or get worse suddenly, or if you are in doubt, go to the ER.

- Heat exhaustion: Weak pulse, clammy skin, temp < 104°
- Heat stroke: Rapid pulse, hot dry skin, temp > 104°

Read about how to treat heat exhaustion before the field trip.



*I found this great rock, but how do I know which way to cut it? Don't tell me "experience." – SAWED OFF IN SAUGUS*

Dear Sawed Off,

Get a grip! No, seriously. Find the least interesting part of the rock, clamp it in the vise, and make a trial cut at the other end. It can be a tiny slice, enough to peek inside. Or cut more toward the middle. With this strategy, you get a better view inside, plus two rocks which you may decide to cut in different ways.

If you don't have a lot of experience, borrow some at the PLS Workshop. That's where the **Hole in the Saw Gang** hangs out. They've got an epoch of experience to share, and at least four of the five will not bite your head off for asking a rookie question.

### Hospitals

Find the facility on a map before going on a field trip.

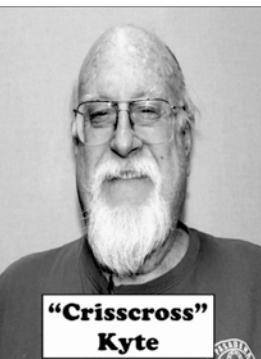
- Barstow Community Hospital (I-15, Barstow Rd exit).
- Antelope Valley Hospital, Lancaster (Ave J exit, southbound)



**Phil Lahr**  
**"The Sawman"**



**Carolyn "Cutter" Duncan**



**"Diamond Joe" Goetz**



**"Crisscross" Kyte**

**Ben "Buzzsaw" Shutman**

## Field Trip to Kramer Junction

**Sign up:** [karlestull@gmail.com](mailto:karlestull@gmail.com)

**When:** 8:30 Saturday morning, May 25

**Where to meet:** See map to base camp.

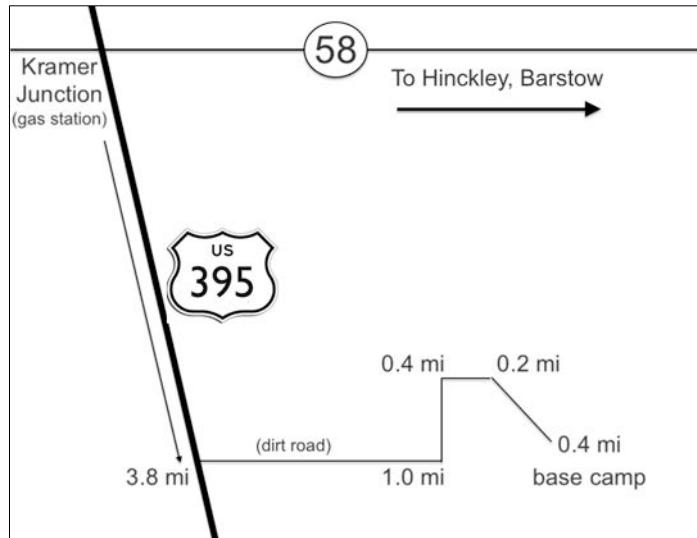
**Driving directions:** I-15 to Hwy 395, then N toward Kramer Junction. If you miss the small yellow sign marking our dirt road (as you come out of the hills), go to Kramer Junction and use odometer. Distance is about 105 miles from Pasadena.

**Vehicle:** High-clearance 4-wheel drive needed for some side trips.

**Equipment:** [PasadenaLapidary.org](http://PasadenaLapidary.org) > Events > Field Trips

**Things to collect:** Agate, jasper, chalcedony, bloodstone

**Notes:** Check [PasadenaLapidary.org](http://PasadenaLapidary.org) for updates.



## Welcome, New Members



**Ron Diaz** has always loved the outdoors, and after retiring from the security staff of Temple City School District, he discovered he tolerates desert heat very well. He likes exploring Afton Canyon and observing signs of wildlife (once a fox tried to follow him home). He met Janie Duncan one day in Monrovia, and she recommended PLS. Behold the power of Janie's bright yellow rockhound-mobile!



**Judi Romine:** I became interested in rock collecting on the beach at San Simeon way back in 1970. I also collected floating lava at Lake Pyramid ("feather rock"). I enjoyed geology classes in college and especially the field trips. My daughter learned to love minerals too and is now an expert on mineral identification for LA County

Department of Public Works. I myself continue to collect more and more specimens!

## Workshop – May 5



### Workshop Comes Early in May

Workshop will be on the *first* Sunday in May, in deference to Mothers Day. As always, our hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Half day is \$3, all day \$5. We sometimes close early. If you plan to come late, please call ahead.

For directions, call **(909) 455-4360** (cell) or **(909) 593-2781**, or email [gem.quest@verizon.net](mailto:gem.quest@verizon.net). Entrance is on the *west* side of the building, down the walkway between buildings. Do not enter by the ramp in the parking lot. – Carolyn Duncan

## 2019 CFMS Annual Show & Convention

Hosted by The Pasadena Lapidary Society

### PLS, You Put on a Great Show

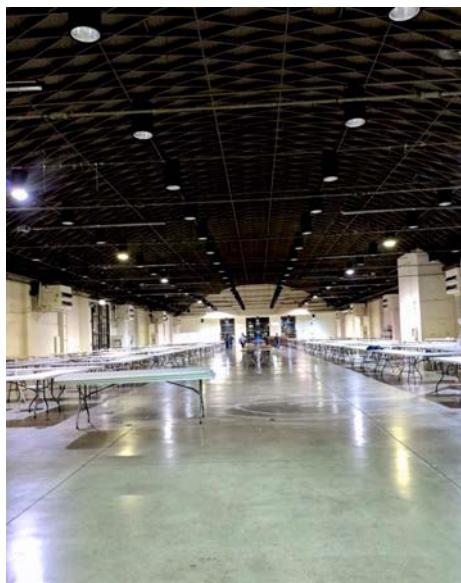


We could feel the vastness of Building 6 at the Fairplex on that Thursday morning: a sea of empty tables inviting us to start setting up the Show. Our team was soon unrolling table covers, laying out electrical connections, setting up the kids games – making the big building our own and adding warm touches.

We had many visitors who had never been to a gem and mineral show before. Many stopped at the Information table to thank us, saying they didn't know there were so many kinds of rocks, and their kids had so much fun. Some asked when the next show would be. Now that's a successful show!

Thank you, everyone, for all your wonderful help and work. From the beginning to the end, there could not be a better team.

– Marcia Goetz, Show Co-Chairman



*The air was cold and the valley wide in Building 6 at the Fairplex – ideal for yodeling practice – as PLS volunteers sprang into action. Soon the tables were dressed up in fireproof taffeta, bright banners, and lapidary displays. Ninety-six hours later, the hall once again looked just like this, minus the tables. Photo by Marcia Goetz*

## You're Invited

### Searchers Annual Show, Anaheim, May 4–5

I'm super excited about our 60th annual show. The raffle prizes this year include a sphere from popular Jim Peterson, a 10x12 inch fish fossil, a to-be-announced lapidary machine, a small Campo del Cielo meteorite, a beautiful specimen of botryoidal hematite, a cross necklace with diamonds, an over-the-shoulder-boulder holder (used by 1 to 4 people to carry a heavy rock), and other surprises. Join us! – Margaret Hogarth, Show Chair, *Searchers Gem and Mineral Society*

## Rock and Gem Shows

**May 3–5 YUCAIPA** Yucaipa Valley Gem & Mineral Society, Yucaipa Music & Arts Festival, Yucaipa Blvd and Adams St. Hours: Fri 6pm–10pm; Sat and Sun noon–6pm. [vgms.org](http://vgms.org)

**May 4–5 ANAHEIM** Searchers Gem & Mineral Society, Brookhurst Community Center, 2271 W. Crescent Ave. Hours: Sat 10–5; Sun 10–4:30. [searchersrocks.org](http://searchersrocks.org)



Where's Waldo in this busy workshop? In the foreground, you see Mona Ross, Michelle Vandenbroeck, Aria Easter, Ed Imlay, Akira Atobe, Elizabeth Weston, Jim Graffius, and Joe Goetz. In the background, Nancy Robb, Ellen Limeres, Sue Carter, Martin Lindsay, John Doyle, Phil Lahr, Armando Pedroza, and Ellen Ferrell. The white-sweatered figure in front of Armando remains a mystery.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>May 2019</b>			1	2 <b>Board mtg</b> PLS members always welcome	3  Gem show	4  Gem shows
5 <b>Workshop</b>	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 <b>Mother's Day</b>	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 PLS organized as a nonprofit, 1949	20	21 <b>Program mtg</b>	22	23	24	25 <b>Field trip</b> Kramer Junction
26	27	28	29	30	31	



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*Tight spirals of wire hold "grapes" in bunches in this necklace of Picasso jasper by Cathi Considine.*

## A birch log and a slab of onyx...



*In the background is a European white birch log with fungi flowers, known as turkey tails. This log and a few others lie under a large pine tree in my back yard along with large rocks I have collected.*

*After the rain we have been blessed with this season, the fungi flowers bloomed on a few logs. When I got my first glimpse of them, I spent some time observing and enjoying their colors and patterns.*

*Along the side of my house I have crates of rocks, and when I walk by I can't resist taking a couple that catch my eye. I dip them in a tub of water that is always nearby and enjoy the colors and patterns.*

*A few weeks ago, I happened to pick up a piece of flowering tube onyx, the one in my hand in the photo.*

*Mother Nature does repeat herself when things work well, as these colors and patterns do. – Armando Pedroza*