

Colorado  
Mineral  
Society



Volume 76 Issue 8

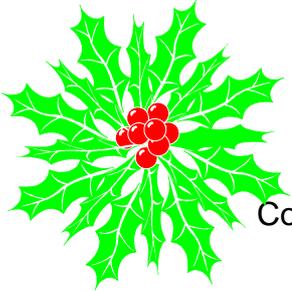
December 2012



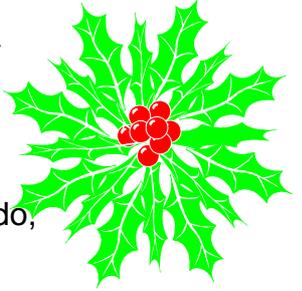
# Mineral Minutes

---

December 2012



## Christmas Holiday Pot Luck Party



Come, celebrate the season with good company, fun things to do,  
good food and contests.

We need volunteers to help us make this a successful party.

Here are some of the activities we are planning and need all to pitch in.

\* \* \* \* \*

Gift Exchange - Bring a rock related gift (approximately \$10), then you will receive a gift.

We have our own "rock tree" to place your packages under.

Cake Steal - we need cakes for our cake table. Tickets will be \$1.00 for a chance to win one.

Mineral Challenges - one challenge for the professional rock hounds and one for the amateurs.

Display cases - bring your red and green rocks, minerals or gems or a combination of both colors for the cases.

A group of young people will be there to sing holiday music for us.

Bring your favorite party Pot Luck food! We will have a plate of meats, cheeses, rolls and condiments for the making of the holiday sandwich.

We could quite possibly have a visitor from the North, farther than Point Barrow.

We always like to say "Thank You" to the Church for hosting us every year by bringing a new hat, mittens, gloves or scarf to hang on the church's mitten tree they set up in the hall. So please bring some to hang on the "tree".

With all of this activity going on, we need everyone who can, come to the church on December 7, at 6:00 PM to set up and decorate the tables, bring your cakes in, help with the food and decorate the tree. **The party will start at 7:00 PM.** Then after the party, we need to get everything back together even better than we found it when we came in.



# Mineral Minutes

December 2012

## THE UNSINKABLE ROCK HOUND

*By Ruth Wood*

Frustration, like trouble, is an inescapable part of life. It's how a man handles it that can make or break him, and that's what this story is all about.

It's a long haul from being a quarry worker, blasting huge chunks of granite out of the Colorado mountains, to being a maker of rock jewelry, making tiny heart-shaped earrings out of garnet, turquoise, or agate. For Lee Covey, the road had an almost insurmountable number of barriers and detours.

Colorado abounds in rock collectors, and many of them make rock jewelry as a hobby. I don't know of one who could match Lee for sheer courage and determination. At the age of sixty, after a lifetime of hard work, he was for a time completely helpless, a victim of a heart attack and a crippling stroke. Physically, he made only a partial recovery. Yet for the rest of his life his creations, ranging from a fragile necklace of amethysts on a silver chain to a pair of massive triangular bookends of deep gray marble, showed a workmanship that astounded his rock hound friends. Few of them could match it.

How could he do such exacting work? He did it with one hand, literally, and the left hand at that. The stroke left his right side useless, and Lee had always been right-handed. Where did he get the patience, the stamina, the persistence? For one thing, Lee learned long ago that few of life's rewards come easy.

Born in 1900, he spent his first four years near Lamar, in southeastern Colorado, where his father, Frank Covey, was raising sugar beets. Then Frank heard there was money to be made in the Oklahoma oil fields, so he loaded his family and his household goods into a covered wagon and started the trek across Kansas into Oklahoma. He built a log house a few miles south of Tulsa, and for the next four years made a living for his family by hauling and selling fresh produce. But the Oklahoma climate was not kind to Frank's health. He had a bad siege of pneumonia, and the doctors advised him to go back to the thin, dry air of Colorado.

The covered wagon was loaded again, headed west, and the next home for the Covey family was the little mining town of Whitehorn, high in the Colorado mountains. There was granite, lots of it, in those mountains, and Frank worked for a while in a granite quarry. But, since he was a good teamster, he soon found himself driving the stage that carried passengers and mail between Whitehorn and Salida. It took a skilled driver to negotiate the curves and keep the stage on the narrow road, sixteen miles of steep, twisting grade called Ute Trail. Sixteen miles, and a drop of nearly three thousand feet in altitude. The dirt road was rough and dusty in the summer, but during the long winter the snow piled high and the stage slipped along on sled runners.

When Lee was ten, the family moved down to Salida, a growing railroad town and the hub of a farming and ranching area. By this time there were three Covey children, and it was time to settle down closer to a school.

Being the oldest son, Lee was accustomed to shouldering responsibility. He was almost through high school when Frank Covey suffered a stroke. Lee quit school and stepped into his father's shoes as head of the family. What he really wanted was to be a stonecutter, but he was too young. So he did ranch work until he was eighteen, old enough to start serving his apprenticeship in the local stone shed. Then he went to work for the Salida Granite company and in three years became a journeyman stonecutter. Starting pay for a journeyman was three dollars a day, and in 1921 a family could live on that.

It was six years later that he married Margaret Wood and settled down to raise a family of his own. Things were great for a few years, then the Great Depression moved westward into Colorado. Jobs became almost impossible to find.

At first, in those dark days of the thirties, Lee worked with stone whenever he could, sometimes quarrying it up in the mountains, sometimes cutting and lettering monuments at the stone shed in Salida. When the stone sheds and quarries weren't hiring, he leased an idle quarry up Ute Trail, hired some help and got the stone out himself, selling it whenever he could. But few men were able to stick to their trades during those depression years, and it became necessary to leave the Salida area and look for work - any good, honest work that would support the family. Lee worked two years in a gold mine near Alma, Colorado. Then spent several more years managing a fish hatchery at Divide: finally, he moved the family back to Salida. The 1950's found him cutting stone at the granite shed where he had learned his trade, and he felt at home once more.

Rocks and minerals of all kinds had always fascinated him, and his enthusiasm was catching. Every weekend picnic and fishing trip turned into a rock hunting expedition, and Lee, Margaret, and their four sons scoured the Colorado hills till it was too dark to see. At Creede's ten thousand foot altitude they found pale lavender amethyst, and from a mine dump at Buckskin Gulch, near Fairplay, some small pieces of rhodocrosite. The agate beds, over in the San Luis Valley near Del Norte, were a rock hunter's paradise. And down at Wellsville, just a few miles southeast of Salida, plant and animal fossils were plentiful.

Shelves and cupboards in the Covey home were crowded with the smaller specimens that the family brought home, and the piles of granite, onyx, and marble in the back yard grew steadily.

Seeing great possibilities in these finds, Lee rigged up a rock tumbler and a saw. His sons gave him a polisher and he cleared out a place in his basement where he could polish a few rocks in his spare time. From a pair of earrings to an inlaid top for a coffee table, he found there was no limit to what he could do with polished stones. It was fascinating work, just a hobby now, but he almost looked forward to retirement when he could spend full time at it.

Retirement time came sooner than he figured. On a chilly October evening in 1960, Lee was rushed to the Salida Hospital with a severe heart attack. A few days later, while he was still in the hospital, he suffered a massive stroke. For weeks he was

*Continued on page 7*

**Colorado Mineral Society  
Treasurer Report  
10/1/11 - 9/30/12**

Submitted to the Board on October 16, 2012  
by Eva Siemonsma, Treasurer

CMS's net worth is \$17,181.90 as of 9/30/12.

The \$17,181.90 is broken down as follows:

CMS - CD = \$10,913.06  
 CMS - Checking = \$5,164.92  
 CMS - Savings = \$613.66  
 CMS - Raffle = \$490.26

Income:

Auction Sales:May	\$2,206.70
Auction Sales:Dec.	\$117.40
CMS:75th Patch	\$80.00
Mineral Bags	\$52.20
Name Badges (\$210.00 - tx \$4.24 = \$55.76)	\$60.00
Patches	\$90.00
Pins	\$4.00
Rocky Pin	\$87.00
T-shirt (\$866.48 - tx \$64.43 - pymt \$837.90 = -\$35.85 sm \$ due from members)	\$866.48
Donations:Auction Food	\$103.82
Donations:Mineral Sales	\$47.80
Donations:Misc. (cake steal, general fund)	\$96.19
Donations:Hospitality	\$245.14
Interest Income	\$110.35
Membership Dues	\$2,890.00
Raffle-Income (ticket sales, interest inc.)	\$907.11
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$7,964.19</b>

Expenses:

Administrative: Field Trip Guide, copies, fees, Checks, display cases, etc.	\$435.56
Auction:Holy Shepherd, postage, supplies, copies, hospitality, flyers, etc.	\$358.23
Christmas Party:copies, candy, paper products, decorations	\$78.33
DenverGemMineralShow:grab bags	\$142.71
Events:75th Anniversary (Dinner,pictures,stamp,specimens,cake,pin,patch)	\$5,370.40
Events:T-shirt	\$860.40
Fees: Corp. filing, Post Office Box, Sales Tax License	\$70.00
Hospitality: (donations \$245.14 - Exp. \$380.38 = -\$135.24)	\$380.38
Membership: directory printing, postage, brochures, misc. supplies	\$285.66
Name Badges (inc. \$60.00 exp. \$78.03 = -\$18.03)	\$78.03
Newsletter: Printing, postage, includes \$250 Grant	\$1,677.23
Raffle:Education (\$37.50 @10 members:final payment;50% for 3 Crystal sets)	\$825.00
Raffle:Fees - License, raffle tickets	\$120.00
Raffle:Library	\$69.00
Raffle:ScienceFairAwards, etc.	\$256.00
RMFMS Dues (267 @\$1.50 = \$400.50)	\$400.50
RMFMS Insurance fees (Ins. 306@.60 = \$183.60)	\$183.60
Rent:St. Paul's Episcopal Church & Holy Shepherd Church	\$570.00
Taxes: City/State (name badges/patches/pins/t-shirt/auction)	\$325.57
Website: website hosting fee	\$120.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$12,606.60</b>

Net Loss 2012

-\$4,642.41
-------------



# Mineral Minutes

December 2012

## Internet Shopping:



### Wanted:

One small to medium size fluorescent box , with or without a light fixture  
Contact Star Edwards 303-831-1744



**From:** "Monique Kunkel" <moniquekunkel@me.com>  
**To:** coloradomineralsociety@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Monday, November 12, 2012 11:36:33 AM  
**Subject:** Lortone Lapidary Arbor and Tumbler

To whom it may concern:

I have a Lortone Beaver Lapidary Arbor and a Lortone Double barrel tumbler. Both are totally clean and like new. The Arbor has been used for only about 4 hours and the Tumbler for about 4-8 weeks.

I am attaching a list of the parts we have. We have estimated the total value at \$1,150 not including the parts listed in second portion. We would be happy to e-mail some photos as well when we are at a faster wi-fi connection.

We are asking \$500 for the whole set.

Let me know if someone in your organization would be interested. We are located in El Jebel, between Glenwood Springs and Aspen.

You can reach me at 970 704-0809.

I plan to list it in Craig's list Western slopes but wanted first to contact your organization.

Regards,  
Monique

## Here are the items Monique is selling:

Lortone Beaver Lapidary Arbor and Lortone Double Barrel Tumbler

Lortone Beaver Motorized 8" Grinding and Polishing Arbor model # BA84 #038090.

New: \$510

2 Silicon Carbide Grinding wheels, New: \$70 each

2 Rubber Polishing/Sanding Drums, New: \$90 each

1 Face Plate Sanding/Polishing Disc, New: \$36

4 Abrasive discs with tube of lapidary cement

11 Arbor spacers

1 air pump, New \$25

Lortone Motorized Double Barrel Tumbler with 2 tumblers, model # QT66. New: \$240

Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3 abrasive powders, with 3 small bags of plastic pellets.

1 Lortone parts catalog

1 Lortone Operating/Instruction Manual for Arbor

1 Lortone Instructions and Parts List for Arbor

1 Lortone Tumbler Operating and Maintenance Instruction

1 Tumbler Charging instruction sheet

1 Lortone Gemstone Tumbling Instruction booklet

1 Gem Tumbling and Baroque Jewelry Making booklet by the Victors

1 How to Tumble Polish Gemstones...by Jerome Wexler

Various utensils and parts

Estimated Retail Value New: \$1,150



## New Members to CMS to be Listed for the First Time

Stephen & Jami DiRose

Avery & Justin DiRose

Alan & Lynn Hines

Kevins Magourik

## New Members to CMS to be Listed for the Second Time

Lee Covington

Alicia Lochary

Catherine Neie

Linda Quattrochi



# Mineral Minutes

December 2012

## What's on Display

That is the question? What is on display this month? As Display Co-Chairman, it is my pleasure to write this column.

### Red & Green Minerals

This month is the Christmas Party. Everyone is encouraged to bring their best Red and/or Green Mineral specimen. So as always, it is up to you What Is On Display....

If you have any ideas for future displays at monthly meetings or for the Denver show, please contact me at (303) 902- 5704 or at [oscar51686@yahoo.com](mailto:oscar51686@yahoo.com). Thanks for all of the volunteer help, without your help this would be a huge job.

Bruce G. Sales  
Display Co-Chairman



*Continued from page 4*

unable to move, unable to talk or think coherently. After a month, when the hospital could do no more for him, he was sent home and Margaret took over. It was well over a year before he left his bed, and if at times during that year Lee despaired and was ready to give up, Margaret wouldn't let him. When finally he was able to be up part time, she and the boys racked their brains for anything that would bring a flicker of interest to the steady blue eyes. Most of their suggestions met with stone wall resistance. But as he gained strength, Lee himself came up with the solution. Even with a totally useless right side, he wanted to work with rocks again.

It was a tough fight all the way, but with a goal again, Lee began to show how much fight he had in him. If all he had to work with was his left side, then he'd use it for all it was worth. It took a while before he was steady enough to walk with his cane, down the stairs to his workshop in the basement, but he stayed with it. Slowly he began to train his left hand. Soon the noise of the rock tumbler in the basement became a familiar sound. The family helped him by sawing the bigger rocks into small ones that he could handle. He found that a vise could serve as his other hand, holding a stone steady so that he could shape or drill it. At first he failed more times than he succeeded, and the floor was littered with his mistakes, but from somewhere he gradually found a supply of patience he didn't know he had. It was good to be alive, good to be doing something useful again. There was something soul-satisfying about the sheen on freshly polished rock, or the striped pattern that emerged as the saw sliced through a chunk of laminated agate.

After a while Lee ordered some settings and again began making earrings, necklaces, bolo ties, and belt buckles. He polished rectangles of marble and jasper and made some spectacular desk pen bases. The work was long and tedious, and it took days to complete what would have taken only hours before, but life was worth living again.

Word gets around, and one day Lee was asked if he could furnish enough polished rock to make a fireplace facing, covering a wall space eight feet high and ten feet long. This was a real challenge. From his own stockpile he selected rocks of various colors and textures, from palest marble to rose-colored quartz and black obsidian. He had to have help in sawing them into thin slabs, then he polished each slab. When finished, the pieces were carefully loaded into a truck and hauled one hundred miles to their destination, a home in Colorado Springs. There the owner had them set into place on the wall surrounding the fireplace - rocks of all colors and shapes - put together in a sort of crazy quilt pattern.

When the small, home-type glass-cutting kits came on the market a few years ago, the family bought Lee one of those. He had to modify some of the tools, and again he used a vise for his other hand. With his years of experience working with stone, he had no problem smoothing the rough edges on the cut surfaces. Friends kept him supplied with bottles and jars, and soon he was turning out sets of juice glasses from Michelob beer bottles, vases and lamp bases from wine bottles, dessert dishes from instant coffee jars. He made some beautiful green glass hurricane lamps and gave them away for Christmas presents. But glass cutting was too easy; he got bored with it.

One day last summer, shortly after his seventy-fifth birthday, I followed Lee as, with his cane, he made his way down the steep narrow stairs to his workshop.

There, on the bench sat his newest project - a magnificent mantle clock. The face, made of polished marble, was flanked by two perfect spheres of onyx and fit into a marble base. Lee showed me the gold-colored numerals he would fasten to the marble face.

"And then I'll set in a little birthstone for January right here beside the number one, for February by the number two, and on around like that," he was saying.

"But, Lee," I asked him. "Won't that be an awful lot of work?"  
The blue eyes twinkled as he grinned and said, "What ain't?"

This article was probably written in 1975.

Editor's note: Bruce Geller gave this article to me a few years ago and I am not sure what magazine it was published in. The author, Ruth Woods is our own club member, Harry Covey's aunt. Lee Covey is Harry's father. I wish I had some good pictures of his stone work, but the Xerox copy I got the story from would not do the art any justice.



# Mineral Minutes

December 2012

CMS Board meeting notes for Nov 20, 2012

Attendees: Daryl Lamb, Bruce Sales, Eva Siemonsma, Leslie Osgood, and Gary Rowe  
Old Business:

- 1) 2013 Board and Committee Chair status. Gary Rowe reported we have nominees for all Board positions. We are still looking for volunteers to step up for the following CMS Committees:

**Hospitality:** responsible for providing supplies and setting up basic refreshments at each meeting

**Alternate Greeter:** backs up primary greeters at general meetings, hands out name tags and door prize tickets

**Field Trip Co-Chair:** Assists field trip chair in setting up field trip schedule, identifying new trip locations, arranging permission for field trips and recruiting trip leaders.

The Board encourages anyone interested in volunteering for these Committee positions to contact any CMS Board member for details.

- 2) Because of formatting issues the 2012 Treasurer's report was not included in the last CMS newsletter however it is included in this newsletter. See page 5. Any members with comments regarding the report should contact CMS Treasurer Eva Siemonsma.

## New Business:

- 1) Bruce Sales reported that the wooden block crystal sets that CMS has purchased for educational use have been laser engraved with labels identifying the crystal system and crystal axes. Bruce will be completing the carrying cases and foam liners to protect the models and will deliver these to CMS for use starting in 2013.
- 2) The Board has asked Bruce Sales and his woodworking firm to submit a bid to build two carrying cases for the two display cases we use at our general meetings. The Board initially purchased two custom fitted cardboard boxes but these boxes have degraded over time, do not hold all the case panels securely (which has led to scratches on the plexiglass windows of both cases) and are difficult to transport. The Board has requested a bid for two plywood cases with foam liners to protect the

plexiglass fronts and handles for easy transport. Bruce has agreed to supply a bid at the December Board meeting. The bid will also include an estimate of the cost of replacing the scratched plexiglass windows.

- 3) The club received an anonymous donation of mineral specimens on November 14. Gary Rowe received the donation and currently has the specimens stored at his house. About a dozen flats of material of various quality was donated include smoky quartz and feldspar specimens from Devils Head, some white quartz reverse scepter specimens from an unknown locality, and miscellaneous other specimens. The quality of the material is highly variable ranging from yard rock to individual specimens that if cleaned properly, may yield nice specimens for the CMS raffle. The Board directed Gary to go through the material and categorize the specimens into material suitable for (1) the CMS raffle, (2) CMS door prizes, (3) material suitable for putting out on the CMS club table at the Denver show next September, and (4) larger specimens we can put out at the CMS auction next May. Some of the material will also be given to junior members by the Big Guy in the red suit from up north at our upcoming Christmas Party!

- 4) The Board discussed preparations for the upcoming Christmas party....entertainment, mineral quizzes, and other festive activities are lined up and we look forward to seeing everyone there!
- 5) The next CMS Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 18 at 7:30 pm.

The Board wishes to extend Leslie Osgood a special note of thanks for hosting us at her home once again.

As Leslie hands over her CMS Newsletter Editor duties to Amber Brenzikofer next year the Board will likely begin meeting at a different location but we want to thank Leslie and her husband John for graciously hosting us at their home these many years. We sincerely appreciate it!



# Mineral Minutes

December 2012

It's Time For Another  
Thrilling Chapter Of  
The Life And Times Of  
A Towtruck Driving Rockhound

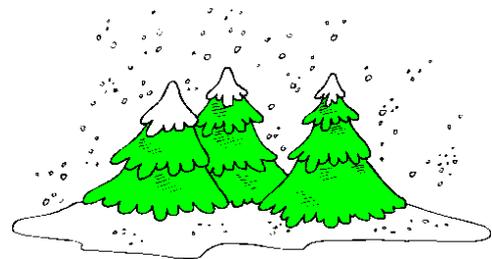
Greetings to all out there in CMS newsletter land, I hope you all had an enjoyable Thanksgiving. I can't believe it is December already, I guess time flies when you are so busy that you can't keep track of what day it is.

I just found out that this will be the last newsletter from our editor Leslie Osgood. Leslie has been our newsletter editor for as long as I can remember, and I just wanted to say what a great job she has done over the years. As I well know, holding any position like this with any club for any length of time is not all fun and games, and on top of everything else, she has had to put up with guys like me for years. We all have her to thank, or blame, however you look at it, for talking me into sitting down and spitting out this column every month. So, let me say thank you for all your hard work over the years Leslie for a job well done! As I understand, Amber Berenzikofer will be taking over the newsletter starting in January, Thanks Amber for stepping up to the plate and giving Leslie a well deserved rest.

Since last months newsletter, I have been moving my collection back up the hill from my sisters place. As I said last month, I have moved into a room at Agatehead Mikes place in Bailey and I have room for my cases and my some of my lapidary equipment. The first boxes I moved contained my Pyromorphite collection. It has been almost two and a half years since I had seen any of these specimens, and I am thrilled beyond words to have all of those little beauties in their case and on display again. I have been cutting again, I picked up some more Smithsonite rough at the Denver Show, and I have been cutting that as well as some Fire Agate that Mike had around

the house. The weather has been good enough for me to even get in a little collecting, I have been down to The Amazonite claim, over to Topaz, and out to one of Mike's Barite digs, where I did alright. The claim jumping even seems to have stopped at Topaz for the time being. Mike took off for Arizona a few weeks ago to see his folks and do some collecting and has been shipping Fire Agate back to me for cutting. We are gearing up for Tucson, where if everything works out, we will have some kind of booth somewhere, I hope. My boss just put me on for a fifth day a week at work and is not at all happy with the prospect of me taking off for a month, so we will see how it all works out. The stone work at the ranch continues, but with the colder temps. I can not set stone with mortar. I have been dry stacking the ditches and culverts, and building stairs at the house as well. So, as you can see, I have not just been sitting around watching TV.

I'm looking forward to our Holiday party extravaganza at our next meeting. It is my favorite meeting of the year, because of all that fun and food. I might even get to take home a cake if Jeff and Donna don't buy up all the tickets. And even if they do they might actually let me have a piece of one of theirs, but I'm not holding my breath. Last year, I was having a hard time just keeping it together as earlier that day I had bounced my head off the icy road. I'm going to do my best not to do that again so I can actually enjoy myself. Hope to see you all there. Until then everybody stay safe out there and keep on rocken!





# Mineral Minutes

December 2012

## Up Coming Events:

December 7, 2012 Christmas Party, see details on page 3

December 7-9, 2012 Fri.-Sat.-Sun., Flatirons Gem and Mineral Show, at the Boulder County Fairgrounds, Exhibits Building; 9595 Nelson Rd. (Nelson & Hover), Longmont, CO; 10-6 Friday, 9-5 Saturday, 10-5 Sunday.

January 4, 2013 Regular CMS meeting at St. Paul's church, 7:30 PM

<http://www.coloradomineralsociety.org/>



**Colorado Mineral Society**  
PO Box 280755  
Lakewood, CO 80228

If the Metro Denver area declares the roads on accident alert during a snowfall on meeting night, consider the CMS meeting canceled.

First Class Mail

