

MID-WINTER SWAP

by Sharon Marburger, Board Member & Editor

Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.'s Mid-Winter Swap was held the afternoon of Saturday, January 23, 2016, at the Bethany Park Shelter House. Fourteen swappers brought a variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, slabs, faceting material, finished cabochons and faceted gems, finished jewelry, and other items of interest to rockhounds and collectors.

I sat at the entry table with Vera Lyman. We greeted visitors, answered questions, sold swapper bucks, collected silent auction funds, and handed out membership applications to those who requested them. As the day wore on, we also collected membership dues and pizza supper donations. I think there was only about 20 minutes that we weren't busy with things.

Paul & Carolyn Ashmore and Sharon Schleiger ran the Silent Auction, with some identification help from Jim Marburger, Andrew Tiedje, and me. Usually there is an excited crowd hovering around the Silent Auction tables, but this year there were so many swapper deals that few had interest in the auction. It was really too bad because there were some beautiful items donated. Nate gave a bunch of what he calls "dog rocks" to be auctioned off. They are cabochons that don't meet his perfectionistic expectations. I can tell you, though, that his worst stone is better than my best!! I'm hoping to see these leftover items at the Show Silent Auction. As always, we thank Nate for his donations.

Immediately following the Swap, the Mineral Monkeys met for a lesson on gold. Vera and I intended to sit in on the lesson, but cashing in the Swapper Bucks and making sure the accounting books were accurate, kept us away from it.

I believe everyone was fairly happy at the end of the day. Good swapper sales followed by good food and good fellowship - what more could one ask for?



by Fred McVay, Board Member

Thanks to Sharon for the little nudge to become more involved and share one's thoughts and experiences. I'm a fairly new member, as this past rock swap was only my second. Last year was a bit of a letdown for me, as I brought what I felt were my prettiest agates that I had face polished on the Genie and I sold only a few. I expressed my disappointment to Corey Beer and he told me that rough rocks work better at the swap, and to save the really nice ones for the show in April. Sure enough, this year I cleaned out my closets and brought all the stuff I really didn't see a future for, and it worked. I sold enough for another couple of cutting blades or a wheel for my Genie. Thanks for the tip, Corey. I felt that the crowd was fairly steady and, overall, I think it was a great swap.

Swap Day From the Eyes of Jayne Beer

by Jayne Beer, Swap Chairman & 1st Vice President

It seemed like everything went smoothly and I heard virtually NO complaining. I must say that I attribute that to all the people that work so hard to make this event a success. Vera and Sharon are at the top of that list. They both work so hard to run the front table. I noticed that there was almost not a moment's break for them with all the buying and selling of Swapper bucks. Then there was the silent auction that Carolyn and Paul worked non-stop to keep going, and they did a great job. I appreciate Fred McVay for getting there early to help set up the tables. Eddie Ridge was so helpful as always, helping to put out the signs and help with setup.



Jayne and Judith packing up their booth

Thanks to Jim Marburger for bringing those signs; I don't know if they are new signs or what, but they were very nice and great to let people know where we were. A great addition.

Thanks to those who were so generous in supplying treats for all to snack on. It was

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quite a spread this year. As for the sellers, as far as I know, everyone got along well, had fun and were happy with sales this year.

Now, as far as our open hours of the swap, from my point of view, it looked like the customer numbers were way up this year. It started right at 1:00 and we stayed busy until about 4:30. Then I finally got to do a little shopping. The time goes by in a flash! We had so many students come in and talk to us and we absolutely love seeing so many that we know stop in. I had the pleasure of meeting a lady I have speaking to online in one of the Facebook rock groups that I am in. She and her husband came all the way here from Iowa (about 3 hours away). It's so great to get acquainted with new rock addicts. They had good things to say about our swap and the club members that they met. We did better than last year as far as sales go, I hope

everyone else did also.

At 5:00, the Swap closed and everyone tore down and packed their stuff back into their vehicles; then it was time for the pizza party and meeting and program.

Thank you also to Brian and Corey for being willing to help with all the LGMC events. Let's just say that I can be a little obsessive about preparing, and one way or another they put up with me expecting them to help.

At the time of writing this, I have not heard how well the swap did for the club. I am hoping to hear that we made a good profit this year.

Thanks, everyone, for working together and coming out and enjoying the day.

YOUR SLAB SAW IS YOUR FRIEND

by Martin Dougherty, LGMC member (Arizona)

This short tutorial on how to operate a slab saw is directed toward the new user and can be a refresher for the seasoned slab-meister.

Generally, slab saws are heavy, so find a covered stable area indoors, or outside if you have to. You probably won't be moving it unless it has wheels, and because your saw uses oil as a coolant/lubricant and may spill, take that into consideration, because the area around the saw will be messy no matter what you do. A nearby source of electricity, good overhead lighting, and a workbench next to the saw is essential to obtain the best results.

Safety is number one when working with any type saw. Your electric cord should be a grounded three prong plug with no bare wires showing. Your electric motor size will vary according to blade size - 12", 14", 16", 18", on up to 36" - ½ hp to 1¾ hp. If you need to use a drop cord, the bare minimum to use is a SJTW 16awg cord. The older saw motors, unless they were upgraded, will use a lot of amps just turning them on. Sometimes a saw-cut can take an hour or better to complete, so using a cord that is too small for the amperage will overheat the motor and wear it out prematurely.

Never leave a running saw unattended, even if it has an automatic shut-off. The moment you walk away, bad things tend to happen. Maybe you didn't secure that large rock in the saw vice very well and it moves, binding that \$400.00 blade in a running motor. It is best to stay within 10 feet or so of your saw to prevent expensive mishaps.

So now you want to cut one of those prize rocks you found last weekend; gotta know what's inside, right?!

Your saw uses oil as a lubricant, or it should; using water is insufficient to lubricate and keep the blade cool during cutting. I recommend NOT using water. What I do recommend is an appropriate oil, available through slab saw dealers, and you have many options to choose from. I use a ShellOil product, Amber Neutral Oil 100, available in 5-gallon containers. So how much oil will I need? Just enough to cover the diamonds on the rim of the blade. On my 18" saw, that's 3/8 of an inch. Adding more than what covers the rim will cause unnecessary drag, making the motor work harder. (Overfilling will also spew excess oil into the air, thus covering everything in sight.)

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