

Red Cloud Mine Field Trip Report

We had a wonderful and varied group of collectors at the Red Cloud Mine on Presidents Day weekend (Feb 19-21). Club attendees included Kim and Aleah, Yvonne, Lisa, Russ, Madeline and Randy, Christian and Chloe, Sandra, Arild, Bud, and me. There were several others from around the country collecting at the locality as well, including That Camping Couple (Frank and Kyndall, a couple that travel the country collecting, then selling their finds, and sharing their experiences on Instagram (@that_camping_couple))

We all found plenty of Wulfenite specimens on the tailings and in the 'pit' area. A few of us went to dig inside the North Geronimo Mine as well for Vanadinite and found some pretty cool pieces. Then, after dinner, out came the shortwave and longwave fluorescent lights! Once the lights are turned on, the hillside bursts with vibrant red, purple, white and green. The Calcite, Fluorite, Willemite and Cerussite were easy to find. After a few seconds, the realization hit... too many to collect. It's a great problem to have as a rockhound (maybe not so great for our non-rockhound spouses). We spent a fair amount of time grading the specimens to filter out the mediocre pieces and wrap up the beauties.

Even after my presentation at the previous club meeting (during which I clearly announced that one would be wise to NOT let me drive their vehicle, based upon my first trip out where I drove through the wash so fast, I ripped a piece of the undercarriage off our Mazda CX9), Kim let me drive her Jeep to the North Geronimo Mine. As it turned out, the trip was sedate as I drove her car as though it were a classic that I wanted to preserve (say, a 1963 Studebaker Avanti, for example). But, I digress.

We enjoyed delicious meals including carne asada, St Louis style ribs, scrambled eggs, pancakes and all sorts of snacks. These Red Cloud Mine trips are what I would consider a rockhounds version of 'glamping', with the exception of the dirt road.

I'm late in writing this report, so please forgive the lack of detail as I actually can't remember many of them. Unfortunately, my motivation to author this report was just slightly greater than my ability to recall the little moments that make a good trip great. But, trust me, there were plenty. I vaguely recall solving the world's problems at breakfast but cannot remember the details... which is a shame, since the world has so many problems right now. One problem the world does not have is the ability for our members to enjoy a gloriously warm camaraderie as we share our passion, regardless of the locality!

Images below...



Chloe and Christian hangin' with Bony Bob on the way to the mine.



Sharing a laugh... Kim, Madeline and Kyndall had clearly lost focus on collecting.



Madeline and Randy. Geez, these people even look great after being underground for hours digging for Vanadinite at the North Geronimo Mine.



It's kind of a fuzzy image. But you gotta admit, it's also kind of a fuzzy animal. Big Horn Sheep protecting a Wulfenite pocket.



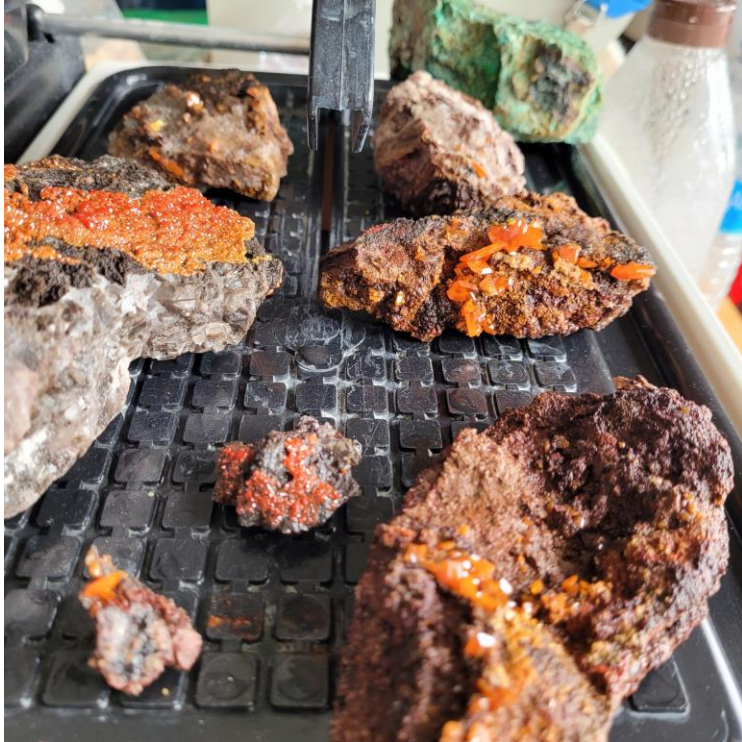
Roger, the caretaker at the Red Cloud Mine, and Frank (@that_camping_couple) in the North Geronimo Mine scoping out a vein of Vanadinite.



Kim wisely removed her watch prior to entering the mine. Had she worn it into the mine, it would have undoubtedly flown from her wrist and shattered against the wall of Vanadinite as she was swinging a sledgehammer for what seemed (to her) like days!



Collecting in the 'pit' at the Red Cloud Mine. These 'boring' rocks virtually come to life with fluorescent light collecting at night!



Several prized Wulfenite and Vanadinite specimens headed home with Bud.

Thank you to all attendees and to Randy and Bud for the cool images.

El Cajon Valley Gem & Mineral Society. We're growing and we're going!

Your Grateful Field Trip Guy,

Brian