

Mineral of the Month Club Newsletter

February 2016



This is a very special month for all of us at the Mineral of the Month Club as the end of February completes 20 years of Mineral of the Month Club operation and marks the 240th consecutive mailing of mineral specimens to our members! It doesn't seem possible that 20 years have already passed since Richard and Cheryl Sittinger made the inaugural mailing to a handful of club members in March 1996, and that four years have gone by since Dimitri and Mary Spanos purchased the Club from Richard and Cheryl and moved it from Cambria, California, to New York City.

Celebrating 20 years of MOTMC:

In honor of our 20th anniversary we are making all our previous Featured Minerals and Monthly Offerings that remain in stock available to our members at a 20% discount. We encourage all members to take advantage of this opportunity to acquire specimens that they may have missed in the past. This special offer will remain in effect only until the end of February.

To see all of the Featured Mineral and Offerings Letters you can see them under the MOTMC tab on our website.

For those of you who are viewing this electronically click here for:

Features: <https://celestialearthminerals.com/featured-minerals/>

Offerings: <https://celestialearthminerals.com/offerings/>

Featured Mineral: Our featured mineral for February is the orange variety of massive calcite, or calcium carbonate, from Mexico's Ojuela Mine. Ojuela has recently become an important source of the orange, red, and multicolor varieties of massive calcite. These varieties occur as fracture and fissure fillings in the mine's upper levels. The orange color of our specimens is caused by included, microscopic particles of hematite, or iron oxide. Our specimens have been briefly immersed in acid to remove a thin surface layer of the calcite to intensify color and improve translucency. When backlighted, these orange calcite specimens have a warm, radiant glow.

A reminder that each month the featured mineral is available to purchase in larger sizes and can be found in the “Featured Mineral Platinum Letter” which has photos, sizing and pricing information. The Featured Mineral Platinum Letter can be found in the monthly email that goes out to all members. If you do not have a computer we can mail it to you, just let Christine know.

Rock Hound Tidbits: The special section of this month’s write-up celebrates our 20th anniversary with a look back at the minerals and mineral varieties that we have featured over the past two decades. We have categorized these previous Minerals of the Month by nation or by state of origin, and also by mineral class. Our statistics correspond closely with the order of leading specimen-producing nations and states, and also with the size of mineral classes.

Behind the Scenes: Club manager Christine and her assistant Lora will spend five full days in Tucson, Arizona, attending many of the 41 satellite shows that now accompany the annual Tucson Gem & Mineral Show. These shows were scheduled somewhat later than usual this year; the earliest shows opened on January 19th and most will end on February 14th. As many of our members know, the collection of shows that make up the prestigious Tucson event sets the international trends in mineral specimens and gemstones for the coming year. The Tucson shows are where specimens from new finds are introduced, and where many top, private mineral collections are displayed or sold.

NOTE: Christine and Lora will return to the office on Tuesday February 2nd and will process all of your orders that begin to come in on the 1st of the month.

This year, the theme of the main show’s special exhibit is “Shades of Blue: Minerals of the World.” This exhibit, which includes specimen displays from many outstanding private and institutional collections, will highlight such blue-colored minerals as the sapphire variety of corundum, kyanite, azurite, lazurite, smithsonite, chrysocolla, and turquoise.

Memberships: Welcome to Crystal Burgett from Indiana, Katie Luzier from Iowa, Mark R. from Hawaii and a warm thank you to all our other members who renewed for yet another year!

Coming in March: Next month we will feature blue barite from a classic barite locality in Weld County, Colorado. These tabular, bladed, transparent-to-translucent crystals were dug from pockets within shale-clay layers. The pockets range in length from only a few inches to many feet. The barite is often associated with drusy, white-and-yellow calcite. The blue color of the barite crystals is due to deformation of the crystal lattice caused by natural geophysical radiation emitted by trace amounts of radium.

We Are Here For You: We are here for you and all your collecting needs. If you have any questions please contact Christine, our Mineral of the Month Club manager, by telephone at #1-800-941-5594 or via e-mail at christine@celestialearthminerals.com.