

FROM THE ARCHIVES—CONTINUED

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may lend itself to more traditional symmetrical forms. The quality of the cutting is an important factor in the pricing of stones. One of the greatest difficulties in cutting the Mexican agates is orientation of the stone so the color shows most intensely and dead directions are avoided. As noted above, this is not a problem with Deer Creek agates.

Mallory (1974) recommends a variation on the usual cutting: a baroque faceted stone of Mexican fire agate with a large table, only narrow mains, and corners cut as desired (p. 1530). He also suggests a remedy for any defect or small open space in the stone; just fill the spot with epoxy and continue when dried (p. 1530).

The popularity of the fire agate is increasing as the stone becomes better known and understood. Simultaneously, prices are rising also. Currently, Sweaney reports that prices are moving toward per carat assessments rather than per stone. Top quality agates sell for \$10-25 per carat wholesale, "good to better" quality for \$2-10 per carat, and poorer stones for \$1-10 per specimen (p. 140).

I highly recommend Sweaney's article to you, especially for its good list of references on deposits, formation, color, grading, cutting, polishing, and research on fire agates and its excellent color photographs showing brilliant green-only and red-only stones as well as outstanding specimens of multi-colored gems. It will be on display at the February Club meeting along with the beautiful fire agate specimens of you Club members.

Primary Reference:

Sweaney, James L. "Fire Agates of Deer Creek", *Gems and Gemology*, 1979 (Spring), pp. 140-141.

Secondary Reference:

Mallory, L.D. "The Fire Agate Mines of Calvillo", *Lapidary Journal*, 1974 (January), p. 1500f.

MID-WINTER SWAP

By Sharon Marburger; Photo by Paul Ashmore

The 2019 Mid-Winter Swap is now behind us. It was another spectacular and successful event. We had the pleasant worry of not having enough tables for all the Swappers, but we managed to squeeze everyone in. I think most of the Swappers were pleased with the outcome of the event.

There were 14 Swappers utilizing 17 tables. Two of the Swappers were new this year, offering beautiful specimens of petrified wood, Montana agates, eye amethyst, and other items. All of the Swappers had great specimens and the public had some wonderful purchases.

An estimated 200 to 300 visitors attended. It was quite crowded for awhile. Those in attendance appeared to be enjoying themselves, and seemed to be very happy with their purchases.

The Silent Auction was one of the best ones the Swap has had. There were some very nice specimens up for auction. I was surprised and pleased that one of the visitors brought a lovely prairie agate for the Silent Auction. That agate sold immediately.

A huge thank you to the Swappers and the club members who helped to make the Swap a success. We look forward to the next Mid-Winter Swap on January 25, 2020.



J J & L Rocks & Minerals

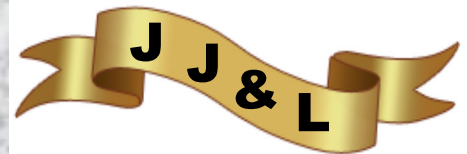
P.O. Box 68
Hickman, NE 68372

Lee Harrison
Eric Harrison
402.792.2337

330 Locust
Hickman, NE 68372

James Marburger
Sharon Marburger
402.430.6703

jimandjohn@jllrocksandminerals.com
www.jllrocksandminerals.com
jllrocksmin - Ebay Username



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