How to Get a Kid Addicted

by Jayne Beer

How do you get a kid to be hooked on rocks for life? Give him his own rock grinding machine for his 10th birthday!
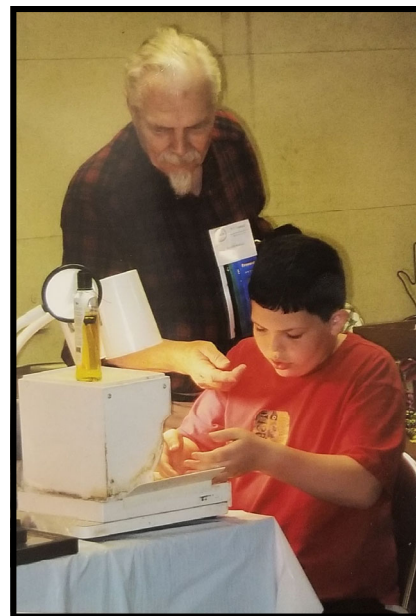
Here is the story of the blue "GEMSTONE" machine in our family. When Corey was about to turn 10, Roger Pabian and I started planning to give him a particular "blue machine" with all new wheels. Since the wheels were kind of pricey, several family members went in together to buy the wheels, and Roger put the machine together. When the wheels were on the machine, I "borrowed" several rocks from Corey's collection, thinking to just wrap up the rocks and then bring in the machine as a surprise. Well! The funny thing about it was that as Corey was opening the boxes of rocks, he was getting more and more confused and a little upset. He kept saying, "THESE ARE MY ROCKS. WHY IS EVERYONE GIVING ME MY OWN ROCKS!?" Then we brought in the "blue machine". He was so excited to have his first very own diamond rock machine. He has been hooked ever since.

Corey working on one of his first rocks with Roger Pabian instructing him at a gem show at Pershing Auditorium. We bought this machine at Roger's estate auction and now Corey works on this machine. I often imagine Roger standing over him, inspiring his work on this machine.

So, when our grandson, Ja-zeil, turned 10 in February, it was Corey's idea to pass the machine on to the next generation. So we cleaned it up and put a couple new wheels on it and proceeded to wrap up several of Ja-zeil's rocks from his collection. We began by giving him the gift of all of his rocks along with a few new ones. He was not nearly as emotional about opening his rocks, but he was confused.

And then Corey brought in the "blue machine" and gave it to Jazz.

We couldn't find a good table to put it on that first night, so we set it up on a plastic box and he cut his first cabochon at his house. We look forward to watching his interest grow with the help of Brett in the Juniors club, and many more shows and field trips to come.