

Noble Witt Award Winners—2011—Lorna Goebel and Karen Hinderman

by Bob Meyer

Last year, we featured a lengthy reminiscence of Noble Witt, his relationship with PNWFM, and the award we named in his honor. Now, over a year later, we will revisit this same topic. Noble has been gone from us for 21 years now. He was a long time member of PNWFM, an avid mineral collector, and was a mentor in the day to many younger mineral collectors. Noble was a person who welcomed the addition of new collectors, and he would trade with them. He participated in PNWFM, giving very generously to the PNWFM auction, supporting our dealers with his mineral budget, and displaying some very unusual things. He put in cases full of these huge things he had collected from the South Dakota pegmatites. Big Columbites and Cassiterites, sometimes a foot across. Ugly as sin, but bigger than these things had any right to be. His real claim to fame as a collector, though, was his find of the extremely rare species Weddellite, which he found in vesicles in the Biggs jaspers.



Weddellite, $\text{Ca}(\text{C}_2\text{O}_4) \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (Calcium Oxalate), as excellent color-zoned acicular crystals of this rare hydrocarbon mineral in a jasper vesicle from near Biggs, Oregon. Collected by Noble V. Witt. The field of view is 8.0 mm high. Robert Meyer specimen and photograph, obtained in trade from Noble Witt in 1987.

When he was gone from us we created in his honor the Noble Witt Award for Outstanding Service. Since that time, the award has gone beyond Noble Witt himself, and has come represent a group of attributes belonging to the collegium of past winners of the award. The vast majority of past Noble Witt award

winner continued to contribute to PNWFM after they received their awards and continued to be active in promoting the interest and hobby of mineral collecting, especially as it is practiced in the Pacific Northwest.

The presentation of the Noble Witt award is optional, and is not necessarily an annual event. Since 1993, 16 individuals have received the Noble Witt award. In most cases, just one person received the award in a given year, but there were two occasions when the award was presented to two people at once. The same holds true for 2011. Two people, each so deserving that to wait an additional year in either case would be an injustice, were presented in 2011 with the Noble Witt Award for Outstanding Service.

Lorna Goebel—2011 Noble Witt Award Winner



I recall meeting Lorna 30 years ago at the first PNWFM symposium I attended. A bunch of us were having a micro meeting in the evening on Saturday that year, and Lorna came in to talk about minerals and do some trading. She set her eye on something I had, and we traded. I don't recall what she obtained from me now, but I got a specimen of Murdochite from the area around Bingham, New Mexico. Since then, it is hard to quantify the number of times we have talked about minerals, collected them, and had just plain fun.

Lorna was born in Texas, and she graduated from UT, Austin with a BS in Chemistry. Later, she obtained a MS in chemistry from New Mexico Tech. Her first interest in rocks was at the age of 6 picking up wet

agates and such out of the Comal River in New Braunfels, Texas. In the 1950s, she joined the Odessa Gem and Mineral club; as she moved she belonged to the Socorro (NM) Gem and Mineral club and the Houston Gem and Mineral club. She joined FM in 1976, the Northwest Micro Mineral Study Group in the 1980s, and the Everett Gem and Mineral club in 2000. Her interest in minerals is in their chemistry; therefore she is a species collector with over 1100 species represented in her collection.

Lorna has long supported PNWFM activities, especially within the realm of mineral education. She has entered at least one display for many years at the PNWFM symposium, and her displays are always with an educational theme. Lorna has attended the vast majority of PNWFM and NNMMMSG events over the years. She has long been the most active, and sometimes only, member of PNWFM's education committee. This is no small matter since the furthering of mineralogical education is a primary component of the mission of PNWFM and FM. Lorna envisioned, developed, promoted, and implemented the ABCs of Minerals program, which stands alone as our most ambitious educational project. Putting this program together required untold hours of work and correspondence, and involved numerous trips to promote the program. In addition, Lorna recently completed two consecutive terms as our chapter Vice President.

Lorna Goebel truly demonstrates the spirit exemplified by past winners of the Noble Witt Award, and is a most deserving recipient. Congratulations, Lorna!

Karen Hinderman—2011 Noble Witt Award Winner

I first got to know Karen in about 1998, when I was coming in as PNWFM President the first time, and Karen was already the continuing Secretary. That is back in the days of snail mail and not so instant funds transfer and Karen was heavily involved with sending out the newsletters. Since she had significant printing and postage expenditures, and reimbursement was more than a tad slow in those days, Karen had expressed some dissatisfaction and a possible unwillingness to continue on as Secretary if things continued as they were. I still consider one of my best accomplishments in that first term was to get a secondary bank account set up so that she could easily pay our expenses. That worked, because Karen stayed on as our Secretary, and still serves in that role, now in her 14th term!

Karen's interest in minerals began simply as a little girl who walked the beaches on the Oregon coast and picked up shells, agates and fossils. She filled her pockets and kept her treasures in bowls around her bedroom. Her favorites were always the sand dollars. She did not develop a further interest until after meeting and marrying her husband Gary. He sort of dragged Karen into the rockhound hobby, but she has no regrets. Their friends and mentors, Richard and Erma Deanne Rantz, taught them a lot about where to dig and find the "mother lode" while camping and rockhounding throughout Washington and Oregon. Karen's favorites include: agatized corals, epidote, petrified wood and limbcasts, and anything that strikes her as beautiful in the moment.

Concerning her involvement with PNWFM, she stated, "Many years ago, I came to the realization that to really get to know the people in a group or club, you have to get involved, and so I did. I have been the secretary for a long time and have enjoyed the opportunity to meet and get to know so many people along the way."



Karen is a teacher in her personal life away from FM. She teaches high school students who have mild to moderate disabilities. She also enjoys reading, almost anything water related, flowers and gardening, long walks with the dog, and spending time with family.

Karen and Gary have long coordinated PNWFM's successful live and silent auctions. The silent auctions involve a substantial investment in time during symposium activities, and the live auctions are the highlight of the symposium's Saturday evening program. Karen is an entertaining auctioneer, skilled at extolling higher bids from our membership. I would guess that about \$35,000 has been raised at these auctions since Gary and Karen became involved, and this amount has directly offset the cost of the symposium to our members. In addition to the auctions, Karen is of great support to the president and her fellow board members, and is active in helping to make decisions concerning our direction and our activities.

It is somewhat ironic that Karen nominated Lorna for the Noble Witt award in late 2010. Shortly thereafter, the board thought it would be both entertaining and appropriate to surprise Karen in addition with the presentation of a second Noble Witt award in 2011. In addition to the fact that surprises like this are just plain fun, it was necessary because Karen shows no sign of retiring from her post as Secretary, and the award was long overdue. Indeed, Karen exemplifies the spirit behind the idea of the Noble Witt Award for Outstanding Service. Congratulations, Karen!