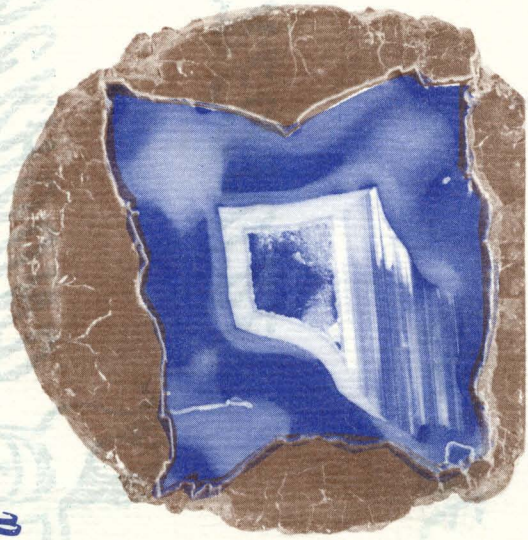


this here's
a Thunderegg



Thunderbirds lay Thundereggs, mostly in Central Oregon.



sometimes Thunder
from Thundereggs

and here's how the Thunderegg became Oregon's State Rock---

FIFTY-THIRD LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—REGULAR SESSION

Senate Joint Resolution 18

the thunderegg is described as a "remarkable and colorful agate-filled spherical mass of silicified claystone, and rhyolite found throughout the State of Oregon" ranging in size up to four feet in diameter; and

an old legend of the Warm Springs Indians tells us that these spherical masses were once hurled from the craters of Mt. Hood and Mt. Jefferson when the "spirits of the mountains" were angry and that the

Introduced by Senator STADLER, Representative DETERING, AHRENS, VERNON COOK, WARD COOK, CORBETT, HUSTON, IRELAND, MONAGHAN, POTTS, RAYMOND WILLNER, YTURRI, Representatives BESSONET, GALLAGHER, SAM JOHNSON, LANG, MCKINNIS and

the State of Oregon, being of unbounded importance as a "rockhound's paradise"; and

a number of rock and gem clubs representing Oregon and the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry a popular vote to select a state rock; and

this vote favored the thunderegg two to one; and this ancient symbol of geological significance and



the Thunderegg became Oregon's State Rock...

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—REGULAR SESSION

Joint Resolution 18

Thunderegg is described as a "remarkable and colorful mass of silicified claystone, and rhyolite found in Oregon" ranging in size up to four feet in diameter. The legend of the Warm Springs Indians tells us that these eggs were once hurled from the craters of Mt. Hood and that the "spirits of the mountains" were angry and that the people who lived in the craters hurled the nodules to the accompaniment of lightning and thunder and therefore the agate-filled nodules were known as "thundereggs"; now, therefore,



sometimes Thunderchicks hatch from Thundereggs

Introduced by Senator STADLER, Representative DETERING, Senators AHRENS, VERNON COOK, WARD COOK, CORBETT, ELFSTROM, HUSTON, IRELAND, MONAGHAN, POTTS, RAYMOND, THIEL, WILLNER, YTURRI, Representatives BESSONETTE, DAY, GALLAGHER, SAM JOHNSON, LANG, McKINNIS and read February 19, 1965

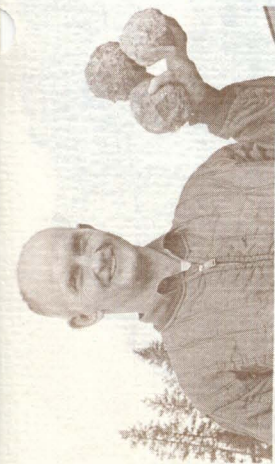
the State of Oregon, being of unbounded international importance as a "rockhound's paradise"; and

a number of rock and gem clubs representing all areas of Oregon and the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry have conducted a popular vote to select a state rock; and

this vote favored the thunderegg two to one; and

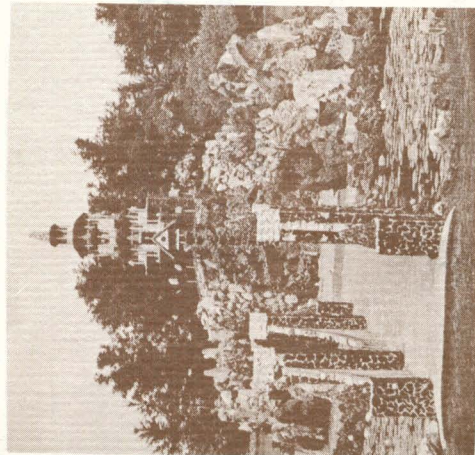
this ancient symbol of geological significance and absorbing native legend, the thunderegg, be acclaimed the Oregon state rock.

...the Thunderegg became Oregon's State Rock...
...the Thunderegg became Oregon's State Rock...
...the Thunderegg became Oregon's State Rock...



COLORFUL OCHOCO THUNDEREGGS
 ---Moss, Plume, Banded, Layered, Geodes
YOU DIG---10¢ per lb., \$3 minimum per
 car. Open June to November (weather
 permitting) 24 hrs. a day. To reach the
 diggings, drive 31 miles east from Prine-
 ville on Hwy. 26 to Marks Creek Guard
 Station. Turn left, go 7 miles to South
 Fork of Bear Creek Road, then to right
 about one mile to claim. Bring your
 cameras. **FREE CAMPING AREA, SPRING**
WATER---for additional information, in-
 quire at the Prineville Chamber of Com-
 merce or Marks Creek Lodge.

L. Kopcinski
VALLEY VIEW MINING CLAIMS
 Mitchell Star Route, Box 305
 PRINEVILLE, OREGON Ph. 462-3766



World famous **PETERSEN'S ROCK GARDEN**
 is located in almost the exact geographical
 center of Oregon, between Bend and Red-
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Open 365 days a year from 7 a.m. to
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THUNDEREGGS---PETRIFIED WOOD
AGATE---ANTIQUÉ BOTTLES
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HOBBY SUPPLIES---THUNDEREGGS
 ---FREE DIGGING INFORMATION
AGATE CLOCKS AND NOVELTIES
JEWELRY---SLABS---CABS
 TUMBLED AGATE

Collect at Oregon's Famous Priday Agate Beds

Home of the famous ---
 "Priday Thundereggs"
 "Priday Polka Dot"

**Charges: 12c a pound
 with a \$3.00 minimum**

New deposits are uncovered regularly.
 Overburden is removed by bulldozer.
 Open every day during the season from
 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Season lasts
 from the 1st weekend in April to the
 last weekend in October.

No mail orders.

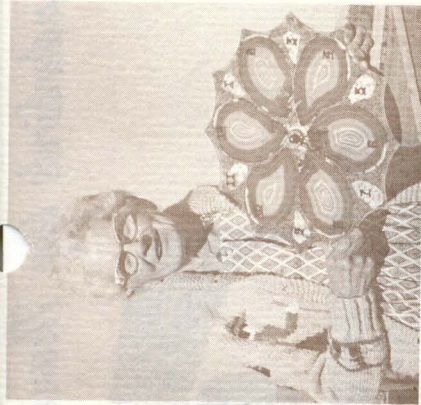
To reach diggings, go north of Madras
 on U.S. Hwy. 97 approximately 16 miles
 and follow signs to:

PRIDAY AGATE BEDS



M.M. & preform cabs---polished speci-
 mens---jewelry---findings---crushed
 agate---minerals---Brazilian agate---
 tumbling agate---polished specimens
 ---mountings---rough agate and wood
 thundereggs---crystals---Mexican agate
 ---local Stillbite crystals---tumblers---
 blades---wheels---sandpaper, etc.

Turn north on Jackson street at east
 city limits of Redmond.



**AGATE CLOCKS
 and TABLE TOPS
 FOR SALE**

See the **THUNDEREGG** exhibit.
THUNDEREGGS FOR SALE.

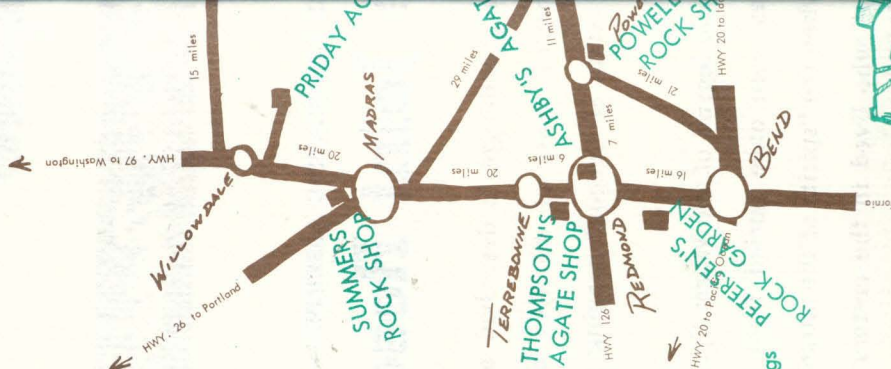
Mrs. Carl Thompson

THOMPSON'S AGATE SHOP
 3½ miles north of Redmond on
 highway 97.



NODULES, MOSS AGATE, CRYSTALS
YOU DIG or BUY OUTRIGHT. Pay 20¢
per pound for what you take out. OPEN
YEAR AROUND. Turn south on Tub Springs
 Road 14 miles east of Willowdale. Drive
 5 miles to Eagle Valley Ranch.

ROCKHOU TREASURY



Collect at Oregon's Famous Friday Agate Beds

Home of the famous —
"Friday Thundereggs"
"Friday Polka Dot"

**Charges: 12c a pound
with a \$3.00 minimum**

New deposits are uncovered regularly. Overburden is removed by bulldozer. Open every day during the season from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Season lasts from the 1st weekend in April to the last weekend in October.

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FRIDAY AGATE BEDS

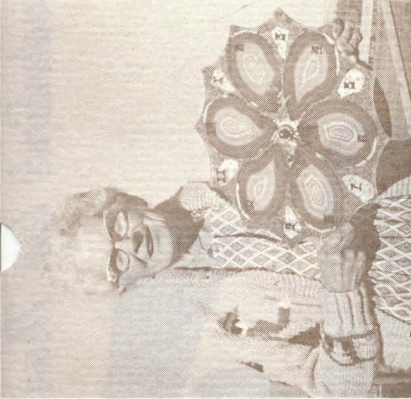


THUNDEREGGS---PETRIIFIED WOOD
AGATE---ANTIQUUE BOTTLES
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HOBBY SUPPLIES---THUNDEREGGS
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AGATE CLOCKS AND NOVELTIES
JEWELRY---SLABS---CABS
TUMBLLED AGATE



AGATE CLOCKS
and TABLE TOPS
FOR SALE

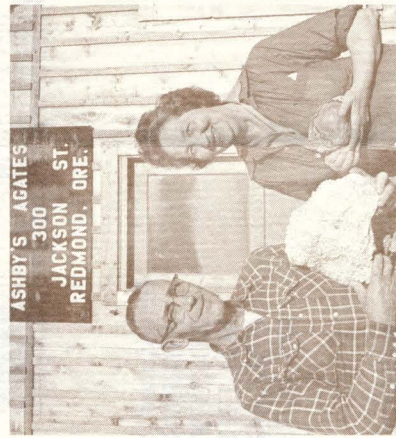
See the THUNDEREGG exhibit.
THUNDEREGGS FOR SALE.

Mrs. Carl Thompson

THOMPSON'S AGATE SHOP
3 1/2 miles north of Redmond on
highway 97.



NODULES, MOSS AGATE, CRYSTALS
YOU DIG or BUY OUTRIGHT. Pay 20¢
per pound for what you take out. OPEN
YEAR AROUND. Turn south on Tub Springs
Road 14 miles east of Willowdale. Drive
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M. M. & preform cabs---polished speci-
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---mountings---rough agate and wood
thundereggs---crystals---Mexican agate
---local Stilbite crystals---tumblers---
blades---wheels---sandpaper, etc.

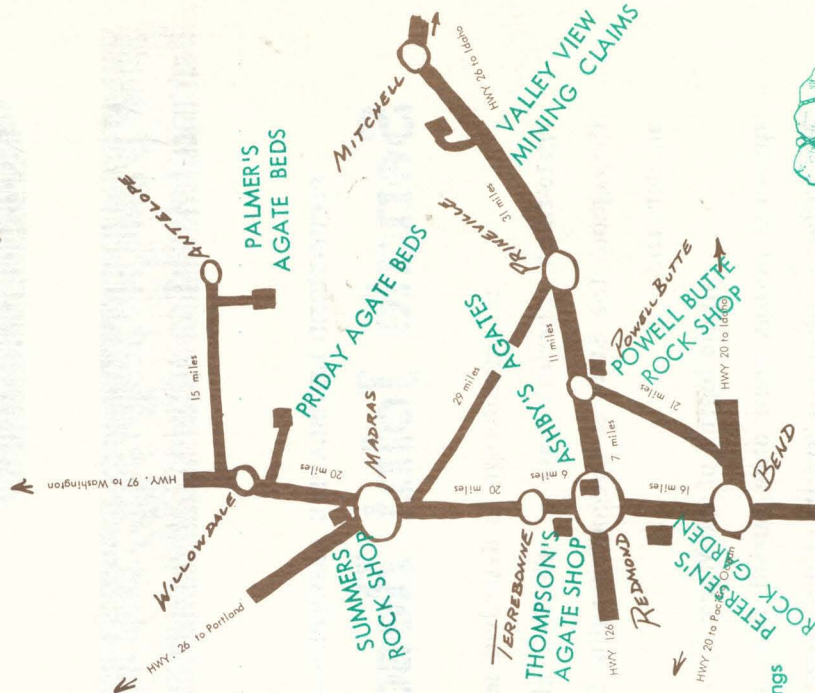
Turn north on Jackson street at east
city limits of Redmond.



ROCKHOUND

TREASURE

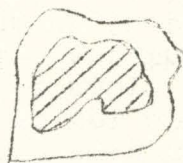
GUIDE



THUNDEREGG CAPITOL of OREGON



NYSSA, OREGON



ANNUAL THUNDEREGG DAYS

First week of August

FREE GUIDED FIELD TRIPS TO AGATE FIELDS, THUNDEREGG BEDS OR JASPER during Thunderegg Days by NYSSA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 221 Main

NYSSA-THUNDEREGG CAPITOL

An annual kind of festival for a country of rodeos and cowboys with new recognition is planned yearly for Malheur County with one of its communities - NYSSA - Thunderegg Capitol of Oregon - as its host.

Malheur County has long been a hunting ground for rockhounds. Now the county and city are spreading their fame as the THUNDEREGG CAPITOL OF OREGON.

Oregon's fifty-third legislative assembly in regular session passed Senate joint resolution 18 on March 29, 1965 proclaiming the THUNDEREGG for it's State Rock.

Nyssa is the focal hub, situated in the heart of easy access for Thundereggs. It was only natural that Grant H Rinsart, Mayor issued a proclamation on March 3, 1966 designating his city the "THUNDEREGG CAPITOL" and "THUNDEREGG DAYS" to be held the first week of August.

A THUNDEREGG is a distinct rock formation prized by many collectors. It is found in quantity in many parts of Malheur County. Judge Ellis A White, Malheur County Judge, issued a proclamation February 11, 1967 adopting Malheur County the "THUNDEREGG COUNTY OF OREGON". The county court also adopted a seal for the purpose of promoting and assisting in support of the foreign exchange student program.

For the amateur geologist, mineralogist, paleontologist or just plain "rockhound", Malheur County offers a wealth of gemstone material in its natural setting.

Agate fields, thunderegg beds, petrified wood, picture jasper of gem quality occur in many part of the intriguing and unexplored county.



FREE ROCK MAPS AND INFORMATION
HARRY'S ROCK SHOP
217 Main
Nyssa, Oregon 97913



JUNTURA

JUNTURA wood and agate - follow US 20 to Juntura turn left at the Catholic Church on road marked "Riverside". Bear to left ignoring any turns right for 7.9 miles turn right for agates with denrites. 4.2 mi will be wood on right side of road. This wood is of poor quality, but plentiful.

NIGGER ROCK

NIGER Rock - turn at Owyhee corner going straight to end of oil road turn left crossing canal ignoring all turns to right for 6.1 mi. You will come to a post unlabeled turn right for 3.5 mi. Sign post turn left for 5.2 mi, turn left 1.9 mi. Wood scarce but of high quality. You will see the diggings on hillside. Shovels and picks necessary.

JAMISON BOG

JAMISON BOG - Take highway 26 to Jamison turn at Shell service station to right go 1.5 mi. to fence line. (Sign Huntington 19 mi) follow road 4.7 miles thru three gates keeping to left cross dry creek. At top of hill turn left to bog about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Agate with limbs embedded. Material plentiful.

OBSIDIAN

OBSIDIAN - Take highway 20 west to mile post 76 turn south 3 miles. You will find silver, gold sheen, rainbow and double flow mahogany.

RED BEDS

RED BEDS - Highway 20 to Harper Junction turn left for 25 miles on Crowley road. Gravel pit on right side of road has many apache tears and many tears are found on hillside around gravel pit. Second road or trail passed gravel pit turn left for 6.1 mi old relay shack, ford dry creek up hill to dry creek again turn left you will see diggings on hillside.

GRAVEYARD POINT

GRAVEYARD POINT - Plume agate, yellow red, blue. Follow highway 95 south of Homedale $1\frac{1}{2}$ mi turn right 4 mi turn left 1 mi dirt road to diggings.

HAYSTACK BUTTE

HAYSTACK BUTTE - Agate jasper. Turn at Owyhee corner going straight to end of oil road, turn left crossing canal ignoring all turns to right for 6.1 mile you will come to a post unlabeled keep straight ahead passed corrals. Many rockhound trails lead to jasper and jasper with agate. Shovels and picks needed.

PINK PLUME

PINK PLUME - Turn at Owyhee corner going straight to end of oil road, turn left crossing canal ignoring all turns to right for 6.1 miles a post unlabeled turn right for 3.5 mi. Airstrip which you cross - straight ahead at this intersection for .0 or .4 or .5 miles turn left. Many diggings to explore. Pick and shovels needed.

SUCCOR CREEK

SUCCOR CREEK - follow highway 201 on oil south of Adrian for 9 miles, turn right (road labeled) graveled road in good condition. $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles couth on hill to left you will find calcite crystals calsidney, agate and banded agate. Succor creek canyon you will find thunderegg beds. Wood can be found on right hand side of road in washes ---- material scarce. Use map for location of thunderegg beds. Picks and shovel needed.

PLACE OF INTEREST

PLACE OF INTEREST for rockhounds is the store front at Owyhee Corners made of petrified wood.

CAMPING

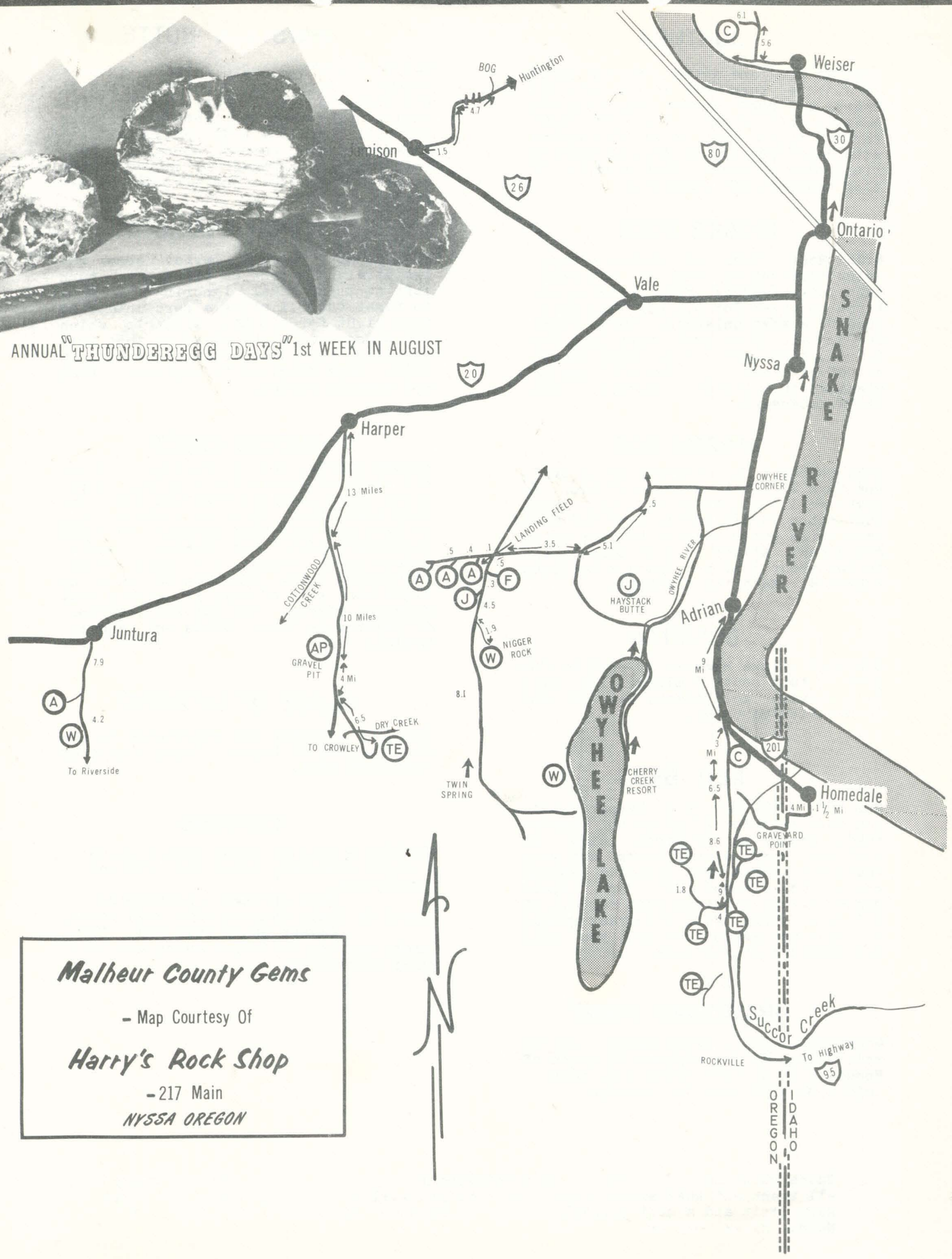
CAMPING - City of Nyssa camp grounds 1 might overstay, water and bathrood facilities.

Twin Springs - arrowheads found in flat. Camping with cold water. Owyhee State Park and Dam park, camping facilities water and bath room facilities.

These rocks are on Bureau of Land Management and public lands. Please bury all trash and keep areas clean. We hope you will have an enjoyable and pleasant visit and a most cordial welcome is extended by HARRY'S ROCK SHOP, 217 Main., Nyssa, Oregon



ANNUAL THUNDEREGG DAYS 1st WEEK IN AUGUST



Malheur County Gems
 - Map Courtesy Of
Harry's Rock Shop
 -217 Main
 NYSSA OREGON



Geology

From Page 1

silica. The volcanic ash formations in the Succor Creek area of Malheur County are perfect for this, Fletcher explained.

He said the ash is rhyolitic, so has lots of silica, and because of the exploding gas bubbles which were present when the ash was deposited, there are lots of cavities.

Groundwater circulating through the rhyolite dissolved the silica which later was precipitated (or deposited) from water in the cavities producing the thunderegg.

Impurities or trace amounts of other minerals in the silica contribute the various patterns found in thundereggs, he said.

Fletcher said the ash in Malheur County probably came from an eruption in the area which now encompasses Harney and Grant counties. The same eruption also provided the ash deposits in the central Oregon area around Bend, Redmond and Prineville, a prime source for thundereggs.

Jasper is a form of quartz with a large amount of iron oxides making it opaque. It is the impurities and trace minerals which make it very

colorful.

Agate, another form of quartz, does not have enough impurities to make it opaque, but is not completely clear.

It is the hardness of quartz which makes these rocks popular, Fletcher said. They take a good polish and are very durable.

Picture rock, or picture jasper, is not a true jasper, according to Fletcher. He said it is actually formed where groundwater has intruded into layers of clay, sandstone, shale or any type of porous material. The silica and impurities are precipitated in the soils supplying the designs which make the rock popular.

Silica also gives petrified wood its fascinating characteristics. Fletcher explained that groundwater circulating through trees buried by volcanic flows dissolves cellulose and replaces, almost molecule per molecule, the silica.

"You almost have an exact duplication of the wood structure," he said.

Opal, some of which is found in Idaho, also is a form of silica, but it is different in that it retains molecules of water which provide the sparkle, Fletcher explained.

Opals are not as hard as other silica-based rocks, he said.

Opals are found in old hardpan formations under well-developed soils making them very hard to find, he said.

Rock hunters need to be aware, he said, of the basalt formations in the area which are lower in silica content (50 percent silica compared to 70 percent for rhyolite). They are not the places for finding semi-precious rock, he said.

For rockhounds, it helps to know that rhyolitic formations, being high in silica, are generally lighter than basalt which is high in ferromagnesium minerals. However, one of the main exceptions to that rule, is obsidian which is silica. Besides being black, its other main feature is that volcanic material cooled so quickly, there are no crystals even though it has a glassy form.

Besides the geology of the area, climate makes the eastern side of the Cascades a prime area for rocks, Fletcher said. Being a relatively arid region, the rocks are not as readily decomposed as they would be in a more humid climate. Also lower precipitation means lower vegetation and rocks are well exposed.



SPOTS FOR ROCKS — This map shows some of the areas popular for rock hunting in Malheur County. The area marked thundereggs is the Succor Creek Canyon, part of which is now a state recreation area.

Toward the top of the map is Haystack Butte which is the destination of the first tour. Marked at the bottom is the road through scenic Leslie Gulch.

5018 Geologist describes area rock formation

LARRY MEYER
Daily Argus Observer

NYSSA — Nyssa's Thunderegg Days is coming up this week, a celebration recognizing Nyssa's location near many popular areas for rockhounds and the popularity of the hobby in Treasure Valley.

The Owyhee Mountains of central Malheur County and Owyhee County of Idaho are full of mining claims which produce the rock which is popular with rockhounds and which will be abundant at the rock show.

The main geological reason for the abundance is silica (or quartz). According to Carlton Fletcher, geology instructor at Treasure Valley Community College, volcanic flows in central and southeastern Oregon are rhyolitic in nature, which means they are high in silica content.

Along with the silica, source groundwater is the other important factor in making these formations.

With thundereggs, another essential need is a cavity to collect the

See **GEOLOGY**, Page 7

Dec 1, 1965

Albany Democrat-Herald

An Independent Evening Newspaper

At Last We Have A Rock

Growing interest around here in rock and gem collecting and cutting renders timely the current issue of "Orebin" from the State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, contains a detailed discussion and description of the newly designated Oregon State Rock — the thunderegg (normally two words—thunder eggs).

Back in 1963 Sen. Glen M. Stadler of Lane county and Linn County Representative Gerald Detering co-sponsored a resolution prepared and introduced in the Oregon state legislature providing Oregon with a state rock, designating the "Thunderegg."

The sponsors pointed out that Oregon had similarly adopted the Beaver as the state animal, Oregon grape as the state flower, the western meadowlark as the state bird, the Douglas fir as the state tree and the Chinook salmon as the state fish, but had never had a state rock.

In support of their resolution the two also noted that the thunderegg has been approved overwhelmingly by visitors to the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry and by some 48 Oregon rock and gem societies.

The resolution was submitted too late for action by the 1963 session, but at the 1965 session it was introduced by the same sponsors earlier in the session. It was adopted under the title Senate Joint Resolution No. 18. The Senate approved it by a vote of 23 yes and 2 no and it passed the House 48 yes and 5 no. The resolution became law March 29, 1965.

The resolution describes the thunderegg as "a remarkable and colorful agate-filled spherical mass of silicified claystone and rhyolite found throughout the State of Oregon" ranging in size up to four feet in diameter. It also cites a legend of the Warm Spring Indians which relates that these novel spheres of rock "were once hurled from the craters of Mt. Hood and Mt. Jefferson when the "spirits of the mountains" were angry and that the "thunder spirits" who lived in the craters hurled the nodules to the accompaniment of much lightning and thunder," wherefore the nodules' name.

"Orebin" however, prefers the legend

advanced by L. Lewis Renton, who gives the Warm Springs Indians credit for naming the rocks but his version is that the spirits of the two mountain got mad at each other from time to time and bombarded each other with the eggs of the Thunderbird which lived in their craters. Stray shots would miss their targets and fall here and there about the state. The Indians, Renton theorizes, accordingly named the missiles thunder eggs.

The state publication favors this theory because it accounts for the egg portion of the name, whereas the resolution version does not link the rock with an egg.

"Orebin" further notes that it is now known that the thundereggs are not related to silicified clay and that they are not really rocks, but are a structure found in rocks.

Some thundereggs are completely filled with agate, some are partially filled and in some the interiors are empty cavities.

When cut, most of these nodules reveal widely varying structures and figures. It is observed that much research remains to be done regarding the naming of the rocks and their nature and origin. They are found, it is related, mainly in the John Day area, listing two of the better localities as the Priday Ranch north east of Madras, where a nominal fee is charged for digging, and the Ochoco mountains east of Prineville, where the city of Prineville has staked out some likely spots for the benefit of rock-hounds. They are also found in the Warm Springs reservation but mineral hunters are barred from the reservation.

Thundereggs also exist in northern Malheur county, Harney and southern Lake counties, which indicate that the Mt. Jefferson and Mt. Hood gods must have had pretty hefty pitching arms.

Orebin says also that while no thundereggs have been found in Washington, they have been uncovered in the Berkeley Hills and Mojave regions in California as well as in Nevada and Idaho. Most of the surface specimens have been picked up by now, Orebin states, so rock-hounds must dig for them now.—wce.

"Thunder Eggs" 926 Collectors' Prize

The mining of thunder eggs and other gemstones is big business in Oregon, according to the Bureau of Mines Minerals Yearbook.

An estimated 75,000 people visited the Prineville area in north central Oregon last year to collect the thunder eggs and other cryptocrystalline varieties of quartz, it says. Most of their digging was on private land for a fee and on Prineville Chamber of Commerce mining claims open to free digging.

The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries devotes most of its October issue of "The Ore Bin" to thunder eggs, which became the official state rock last March.

It describes thunder eggs as spherical masses of rock, most of them about the size of a baseball, with a knobby rind of drab, siliceous rock and a cavity filled with agate in colorful designs ranging from five-pointed stars to miniature gardens.

Thunder eggs always are associated with silicic volcanic rocks, it says. They got their name from an Indian legend which said they were hurled from the craters of Mt. Hood and Mt. Jefferson by "thunder spirits."

Stalking thundereggs in Central Oregon

Family can excavate pile of fun picking rocks from earth at rockhound ranches, digging sites in Central Oregon

By JAN BEHRS

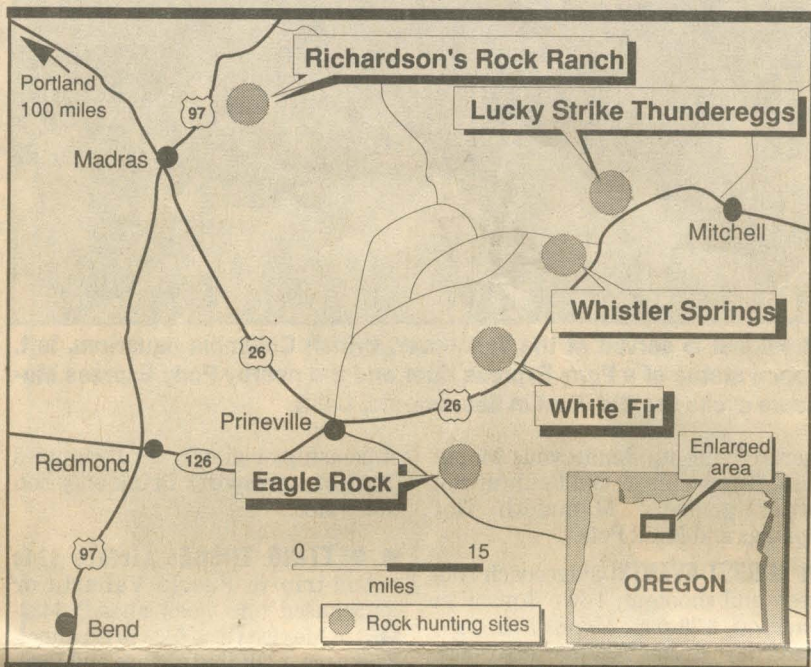
of The Oregonian staff

Rocks make economical vacation souvenirs. They're authentic reminders of the places visited; they're attractive and made in Oregon, not Taiwan; and, if one centers a family vacation on the hunt, there's fresh air and exercise in the bargain to boot.

Oregon offers numerous sites where casual pickers of all ages can stalk treasures: ocean-tumbled agates along the coast; obsidian at Glass Buttes, southeast of Bend; thundereggs in Central Oregon.

Some of these finds can be had for the bending over. Agates, for instance, show up best in early-morning or sunset

light conditions, when their often caramel color glistens





DESTINATION NORTHWEST

g l i t t e n s
enough to catch the picker's eye. Eyes also must be trained on the tide, however — and the children.

Black-and-red chips of obsidian litter the ground around Glass Buttes, although for larger chunks, hearty pick-and-shovel work is needed. Be aware: the chips have sharp edges that can cut little fingers.

Thundereggs easy to spot

Thundereggs are larger quarry, and good for beginning rockhounds. They're easily identifiable (round or oval, with a bumpy, pockmarked, brown-gray hide); they are still plentiful enough to find on rock ranches or on one's own in forest digging areas; they aren't expensive to buy if one's own efforts yield zip; and in most spots they lie relatively close to the surface of the earth, so the pick-and-shovel work is not too strenuous.

What's special about thundereggs? When cut in half and polished, they are a circus of deep, clear colors or a cornucopia of crystals, sometimes with shiny, gold-colored flecks. They're fascinating amalgams of the forces of nature in vibrant color.

The erstwhile rockhound's first step is to get a map. The Rockhound's Map of Oregon (\$2), is available sporadically at Portland-area rock shops or by mail (\$2.50) from its publisher, Lindberg's Highland Rock & Gift Shop, 1316 Hines Blvd., Burns, Ore. 97720. The map lists and provides directions to about 70 rock-

rich sites around the state, describing what can be found at each.

Maps of the counties to be visited also are helpful, because the directions to rock-hunting sites often send travelers bumping along remote Forest Service roads.

For a family of amateur rock hunters, it is useful to remember that for aficionados, rockhounding is a serious calling. Each June, Prineville is home to the Rockhound Pow Wow at the Crook County Fairgrounds (June 21-24 in 1991).

Devoted rockhounds who operate the several commercial rock ranches around the state are tickled to share their expertise and treasure tales with wide-eyed visitors — especially those small fry who have mastered the look-but-don't-touch etiquette necessary when surrounded by highly polished objects that can tumble from shelves.

It's almost like listening to fish stories to hear of encounters with bears and other wildlife by diggers after prizes deep in the forest or desert. And there's always the one that got away — the huge hunk of something wonderful that must have weighed a ton but was discovered so far away from civilization that the picker (sometimes on horseback) couldn't drag it back, and then wasn't able to find the spot again.

A family unfamiliar with the territory and methodology is best served by visiting a rock ranch, where for a small fee (45¢ a pound, based on the total weight of thundereggs the digger hauls out) the proprietors provide tools, buckets and directions to a site on the property where pickers can get down to business. It may be worthwhile to

purchase a pick and shovel beforehand (stores such as Andy & Bax Sporting Goods and GI Surplus, 324 S.E. Grand Ave., carry such things) to accommodate multiple diggers. Also wise: carry water for drinking and for washing off those family members who find playing in the dirt more entrancing than handling digging gear.

Ranches cut, polish finds

Rock ranches also have exotic rocky stuff for sale, such as pretty rose quartz, cut-and-polished thundereggs, jasper, agate and obsidian, plus all manner of objects crafted from rocks: carvings, belt buckles, night lights, bookends, and so on. They often sell cut-and-polish service for the thundereggs found on their property.

Richardson's Rock Ranch north of Madras is a good choice in the ranch department. With heavy equipment, the Richardson family regularly exposes new thunderegg digging sites for rock hunters. Those searching for agates have a 4,000-acre area graced by the Friday Agate Beds from which to choose. There is overnight camping available for the truly committed.

Visitors follow signs to the ranch shop, which is surrounded by heaps of rock in a cacophany of colors, shapes, sizes and origins. Those who believe in the New Age power of crystals will be gratified by the sizes and prices of rose quartz lying about on the dirt emitting soothing vibrations. A person can purchase a good chunk of tranquility here for less than \$25.

After taking a good look at some thundereggs, enthusiastic diggers gather up their equipment, get back

■ **BY CAR:** There are several routes to take for a Central Oregon vacation. One is to follow U.S. Highway 26 through the rocky desert scenery of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation to Prineville. Another option is Interstate 84 east through the Columbia River Gorge, joining U.S. 197 in Hood River and then hooking up with U.S. 26 in Madras.

■ **ROCK-HUNTING SITES:**

● **Richardson's Rock Ranch,** Gateway Route, Box 440, Madras, 97741. Open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. From Madras, take U.S. 97 north 11 miles to milepost 81. Turn right (east) for three miles to the ranch and shop (follow signs). From the shop, the proprietors will give directions to the digging sites, depending on what kind of rocks a visitor is hunting.

● **Lucky Strike Thundereggs,** P.O. Box 128, Mitchell, 97750. Open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, June through September. Closed the remainder of the year.

Travel east from Prineville 31 miles on U.S. 26 to the Marks Creek Guard Station (milepost 49). Turn left, cross the cattle guard, and follow Forest Service road 27 for .8 miles. Turn right on Forest Service Road 2730 for 11.2 miles to Forest Service Road 200. Follow the signs for two more miles to the mine. This is a winding, uphill drive.

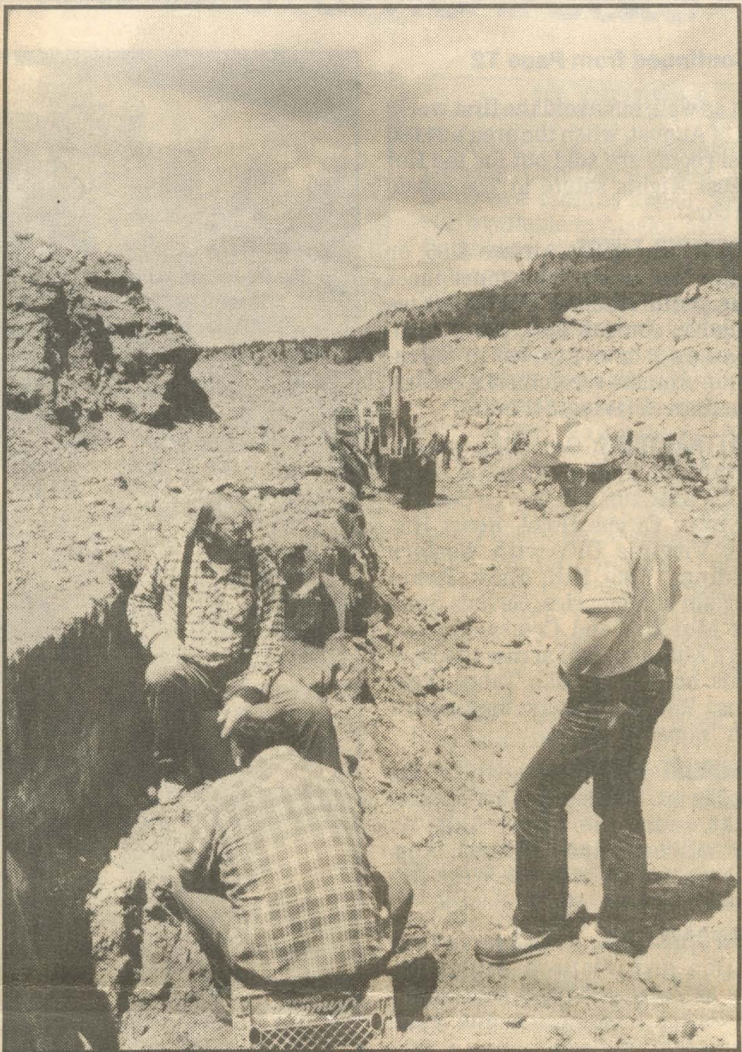
A few of the forest digging sites maintained by the Prineville-Crook County Chamber of Commerce for thunderegg hunters are:

● **Whistler Springs:** Travel east from Prineville on U.S. 26 for 31 miles to the Marks Creek Guard Station (milepost 49). Turn left on Forest Service Road 27 and go six miles to the digging area.

● **White Fir & White Rock Springs:** Follow U.S. 26 east from Prineville to milepost 41. Turn left on Forest Service Road 3350 and go about five miles to the Chamber of Commerce claim sign "White Fir." To reach White Rock Springs, continue on 3350 about 1/2 mile. Turn right on Forest Service Road 300 and go about two miles to a Forest Service camp. Go one mile beyond the camp (over a bad road) to the digging site.

● **Eagle Rock:** Eagle Rock Mountain is about 15 miles southeast of Prineville. Take Prineville-Post Highway 380 southeast of the city; the mountain is off to the right. Heavy tools and hard work are required at this site. Road is steep.

■ **ROCK RATES:** There is no charge for digging in the Chamber of Commerce sites, but there is a good deal of walking and frustration involved. By contrast, digging



BEN WOHLER

Rock hunters discuss their pickings at a thunderegg digging site on Richardson's Rock Ranch, near Prineville, Ore.

at Richardson's yielded two buckets of thundereggs in under two hours' work by two adults and 1.5 children.

■ **FOR INFORMATION:** Rockhound's Map of Oregon, published by Lindberg's Highland Rock & Gift Shop, 1316 Hines Blvd., Burns, Ore. 97720. (\$2.50).

Pittman maps of Crook and Jefferson counties are available at larger Portland bookstores.

■ **DINING:** The Cinnebar Restaurant at the Ochoco Inn in Prineville is a good choice for family dining. Prices are reasonable, families are welcome and there's probably something on the menu to suit everyone's taste. The restaurant is at 123 E. 3rd. Phone 447-3888.

■ **LODGING:** Motels in the Prineville area; both private and state park campgrounds at Ochoco Reservoir and Prineville Reservoir, where more standard hot-weather pursuits, such as swimming and boating, are available.

in the car, and bump several miles across the dust and sagebrush to the digging sites, whereupon they pick a promising-looking spot in the pit and start in. Some of the prizes are protruding from the wall of the gash in the earth — and look easy. Hah. These turn out to be solidly embedded. Better to try the pick and shovel in enlarging a hole or cavern that some other digger started. Another option is the piles of discarded thundereggs that were not up to their finders' standards. Talk about easy pickings.

Another site for diggers or dabblers is the Lucky Strike mine. It's a twisting drive uphill through the forest to this commercial claim. 45

minutes east of Prineville, and the proprietors, who spend June through September in the small mine cabin, welcome company, whether via car or horseback. The road is not recommended for RVs.

Mine yields picture jasper

Thundereggs — mined here — and other rock finds are offered for sale. The stories of life in the remote camp come free from "Kop" and Tess Kopinski, who talk of retiring but who haven't been able to bring themselves to let go of the claim, where they mine Blue Mountain picture jasper.

Kopinski will explain — as he has no doubt done hundreds of times

how to pick a good egg from those piled outside the cabin without cracking it open (heavy for its size), how he found the mine, his son's encounter with the bear in the dead of winter . . . but, hey, let him tell it.

Diggers will need to bring tools. The site is open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Rock hunters also can search for thundereggs on their own, in locations under mining claims maintained by the Prineville-Crook County Chamber of Commerce. Directions to these sites are included in the rockhound's map, but, as might be expected, since everyone knows about them, the finds can be few and far between. One may need to dig deep to be rewarded.