

Rocking out: 61st Mineral and Gem Show draws hundreds

By **BONNIE HORGOS**

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DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

Michael Cox studies a piece of gypsum brought to the 61st Santa Cruz Mineral and Gem show by Charlynn Atiam on Sunday.

SANTA CRUZ — Michael Cox could tell Charlynn Atiam that she had a 10-inch piece of gypsum just by looking at the color, texture and hardness of the crystal.

"I was happy I could get some pieces identified," said Atiam, a personal assistant from Boulder Creek.

Atiam was one of hundreds

attending the 61st annual Mineral and Gem Show at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium this weekend. The event, held Saturday and Sunday, featured mineral and gem displays, as well as jewelry for sale, demonstrations and kids activities.

The show was held by the Santa Cruz Mineral and Gem Society, a local group dedicated to the study

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and collecting of gems and minerals. While the society meets monthly, the annual show is the group's crown jewel, where fellow lapidarians gather to show off their greatest acquisitions.

Dave Duncan, a Soquel resident, joined the society three years ago "to meet fellow rock hounds." While he enjoys discussing gems and minerals, his favorite part of the show is checking out the exhibits. The show featured windowed displays of jade, turquoise and other stones, showing the wide variety of hues and textures within families.

"There are a lot of beautiful rocks and finished goods," Duncan said.

And people didn't have to know the science behind a rock to appreciate the event's beads, jewels and baubles.

Carrie Gajowski, a marketing specialist from Martinez, said the show was also

IF YOU GO

SANTA CRUZ MINERAL AND GEM SOCIETY MEETINGS

WHAT: The Santa Cruz Mineral and Gem Society meets every month to discuss and study minerals and gemstones. An organized educational presentation is given after a raffle.

WHEN: 7 p.m. the second Wednesday of every month

WHERE: Live Oak Grange Hall, 1900 17th Ave., Santa Cruz

COST: Applications for membership may be made after three meetings. \$18 for single, \$25 for couple, \$2 for sponsored junior

DETAILS: www.scmgs.org

a great shopping venue.

"I like to just see what people have for sale," Gajowski said. "I'm looking at a ring right now."

Above all else, though, the show was a place to appreciate the beauty behind every mineral and gem.

Cox, the secretary of the



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

Tiger iron sparkles in the hands of an admirer at the 61st annual Santa Cruz Mineral and Gem Show at the Civic Auditorium on Sunday.

Santa Cruz Mineral and Gem Society, sat in a side room with a microscope attached to his computer. With a few clicks and glances at his reference books, he could easily tell the story behind various gems and stones. While studying Atiam's crystal, he noted how the piece had formed into a unique shape.

"Minerals can really do their own thing," Cox said.

"Like all of us, I suppose," Atiam said.

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