

Rock the new year at Flagg Gem and Mineral Show in Mesa

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By Stephanie Perrault, Tribune |

Some people like to rock the new year with noise makers, late night parties and dancing. Others are more interested in rocks themselves and there will be lots of them to see this weekend at the 43rd annual Flagg Gem and Mineral Show in Mesa.

Boasting more than 100 dealers of fossil, mineral, gem and lapidary materials, this is the largest gem and mineral show in the Valley. Hosted outdoors in the parking lot at Mesa Community College, it seeks to introduce the public — particularly children — to the earth sciences, said Phil Richardson, chairman of the Flagg Mineral Foundation, which sponsors the show.

Because the show is geared toward kids, there are lots of free samples and hands-on activities.

“There will be a big wooden sandbox with fossils planted in it so kids can dig for them and there’s a build your own mineral collection egg carton booth. For a nominal fee kids can pick 12 mineral samples to fill the slots in the carton,” said Richardson.

There will also be a gold panning booth, a geode cracking booth and tents with exhibits from the junior members of the Flagg Foundation and the Mineralogical Society of Arizona, he said. Other organizations, ranging from the Apache Junction Gem and Mineral Club to the Superstition Mountain Lost Dutchman Museum, will also be on site.

“It’s kid friendly and very fun,” said Sue Kern-Fleischer, a volunteer for the event.

DETAILS >> 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 4 through Sunday, Jan. 6. Mesa Community College, 1833 W. Southern Ave., Mesa. Free; various booths may charge an activity fee. (480) 814-9086 or www.flagshow.info.

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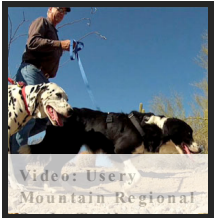
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