

October 26, 2020

In 1955, the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society (TGMS) put on the first Tucson Gem and Mineral Show® in a grade-school cafeteria. From such humble beginnings sprang what is now collectively called the Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase, which occupies over 50 venues around town from mid-January through mid-February. [In case you've missed it in all the hoopla surrounding the commercial shows, our Show, the *Main Show*, takes place in the Tucson Convention Center.] The Tucson Showcase is by far the world's largest gathering of gem, mineral, fossil, meteorite and related earth science collectors, dealers and museum scientists. The Arizona Department of Tourism estimates it annually brings about \$130 million dollars to the Tucson economy making it our biggest tourism-related event. TGMS takes parental pride in the economic/commercial juggernaut the Showcase has become, but we remain a local, volunteer-based, non-profit, Earth-Science education-focused group open to all comers. [Please visit [www.tgms.org](http://www.tgms.org) for more info.]

Our Show is TGMS's annual gift to Tucson...it is the only show *by and for* Tucsonans and we are extremely grateful for the support we have always received from our community. We hoped and planned for the best during these difficult days of COVID-19 but find events have conspired to force us to the painful decision to take 2021 off and focus on bringing things back at a higher level in 2022! As members of the Tucson community, we feel we should explain the reasoning behind this decision while emphasizing our full support for the remainder of the 2021 Tucson Showcase in whatever form it takes.

Most importantly, TGMS does not want to be responsible for a single COVID-19 fatality or serious illness. Our Show is run by volunteers and many of us are in high-risk demographics...as are many of our participants and attendees. Consulting closely with the Pima County Health Department, the Mayor and City Manager's offices and the good folks who run the TCC, it is clear that applying the mandated COVID-19 protocols to reduce risk would mean drastically restricted attendance and curtailment of many of our programs.

Second, our Show is much different from the rest of the Showcase. We are ***the public show*** with a unique combination of exhibits, school children visits, educational programs, scientific networking and family outreach. We annually create a world-class museum that magically disappears forever after just four days. Our equally enthralling "gift shop" includes a cadre of superb retail gem, mineral, fossil, meteorite, book and jewelry dealers, who complement the exhibits. This unique combination sets the TGMS Show apart from all the other shows in town.

Third, we expect that our Show dazzles everyone with displays of exquisite minerals, gems, jewelry and fossils brought by the worldwide Mineral and Gem Community. Restrictive COVID-19 travel policies mean many of our major domestic, and most of our international museum exhibitors and friends either won't or can't travel here. This effectively eliminates both our exhibits and educational programs.

COVID-19 related risks clearly make it impossible for TGMS to put on anything more than a shadow of our accustomed vibrant event. So, we've decided that it makes more sense to conserve our resources and apply them towards a ***Blockbuster 2022 Tucson Gem and Mineral Show®. We promise to pull out all the stops to bring you an unparalleled group of eye-popping fluorescent mineral exhibits, colorful minerals and gems from around the world, and some special surprises to shake everyone out of their post-Covid lethargy!!! See you in 2022!***

Les Presmyk: TGMS President  
Peter Megaw: TGMS Show Co-Chair  
Richard Gottfried: TGMS Show Co-Chair  
Patricia McClain: Executive Manager



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