

Meteorite People

[An Article In Meteorite Times Magazine](#)

This feature is devoted each month to one of the personalities within the meteorite community. This month we are delighted to share an interview we had with Tim Heitz of [Midwest Meteorites](#).

I started collecting meteorites in the fall of 1996. I became interested in meteorites watching The Discovery Channel, the word meteorite was mentioned that's all it took, just say the word meteorite.

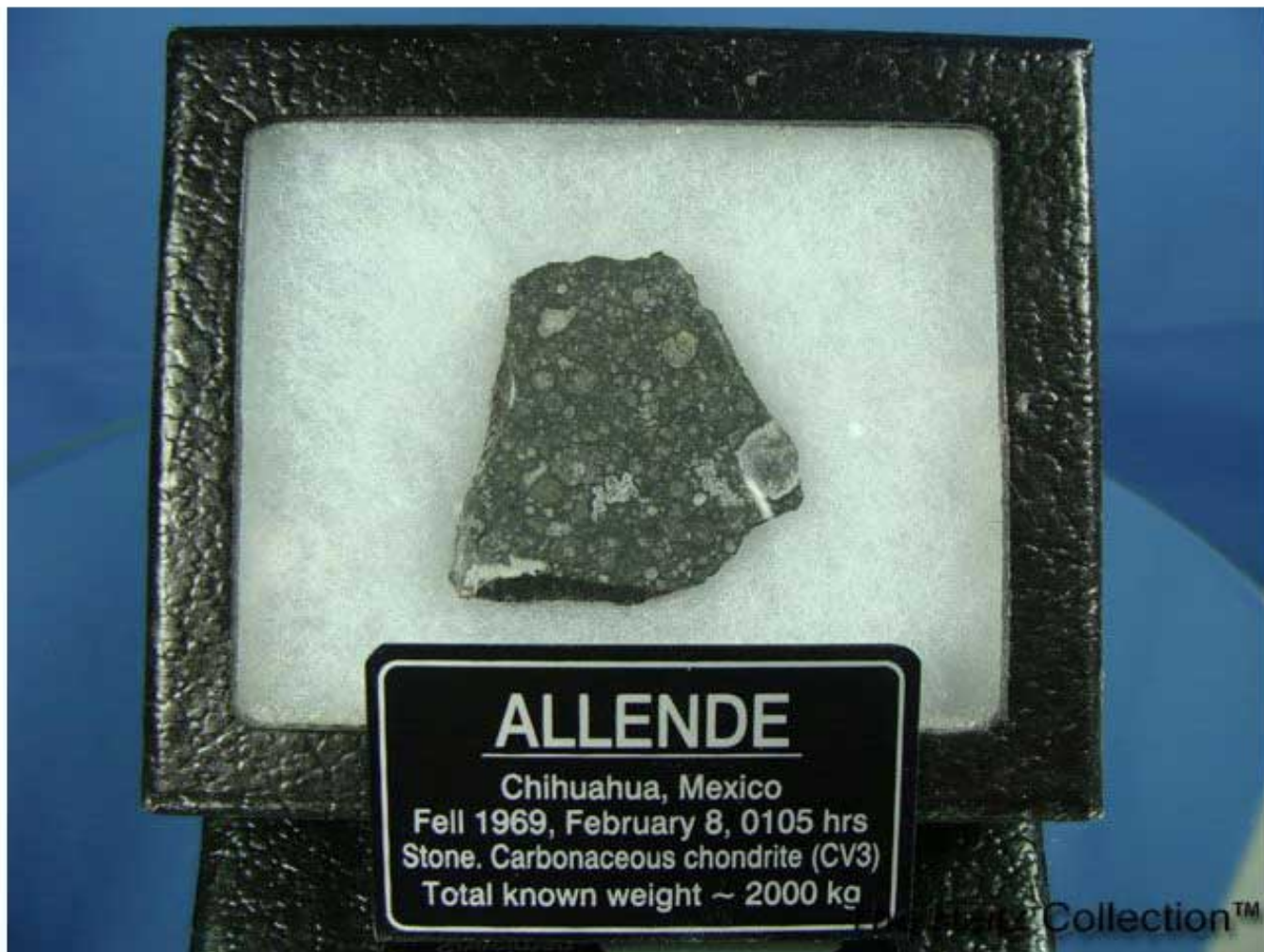
This was before Bob Haag was doing anything on The Discovery Channel about meteorites.

I was looking for a new hobby, something I could collect that would be interesting.

My first buy was a Zagami Mars crumb which I later sold. I then upgraded to a bigger crumb. At the time there were only several Martian meteorites available to collectors. My second meteorite I bought was a 10.1g slice of Allende from Russ Kempton which I still have. I knew from the very start if I really wanted to collect meteorites I would also need to sell them, this would be the only way I could support my habit of collecting, I knew this would be an expensive hobby and I would need extra funds to support it.



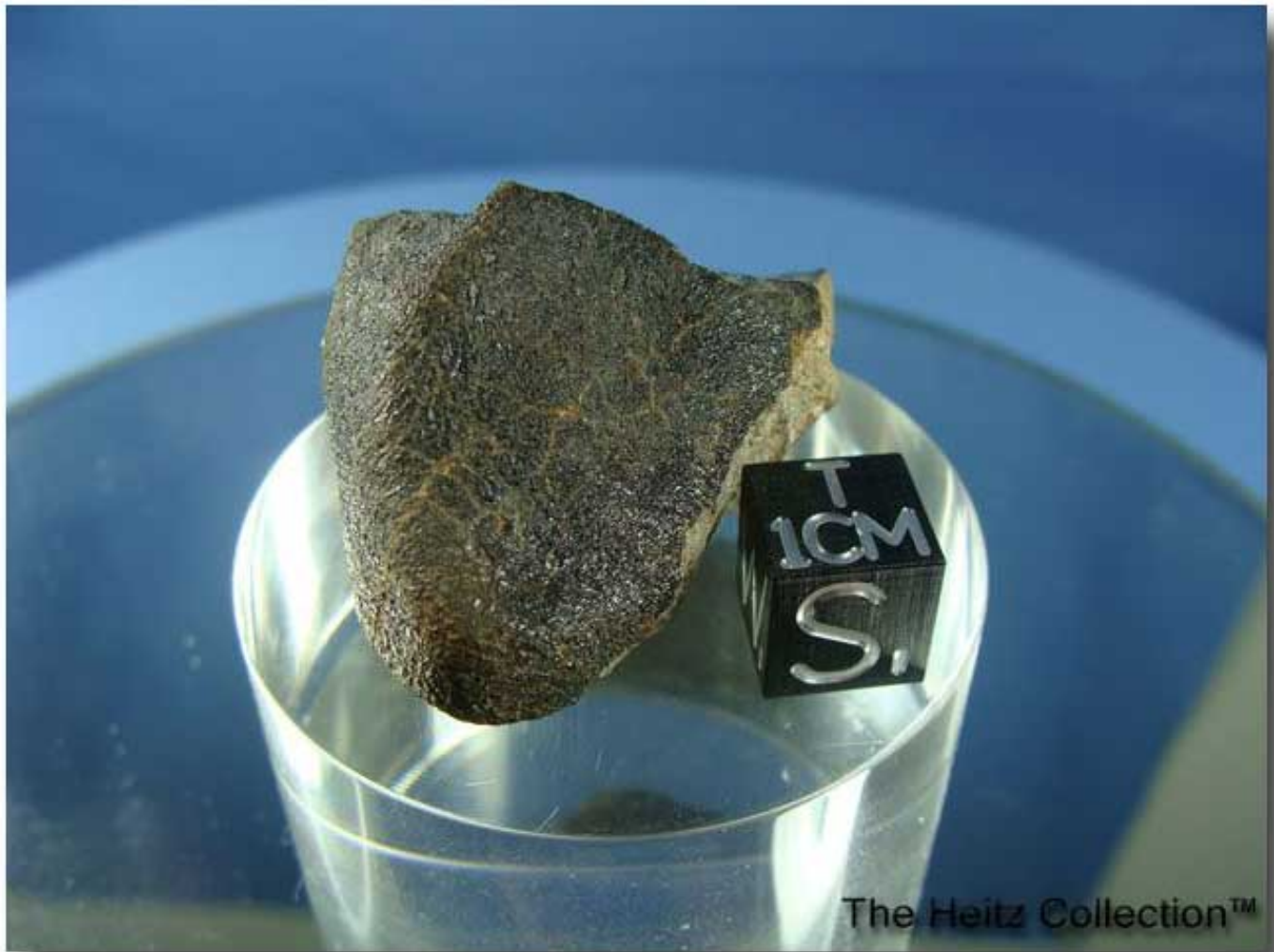
Zagami .6 gram – The bigger piece from the Blaine Reed Collection



Allende 10.1g slice 2nd buy

I borrowed \$10,000 from my 401k and jumped on a plane for Tucson in Feb. of 1997. Back then there were no birthday parties or groups of collectors.

When I was in Tucson of 1997 I bought a beautiful little meteorite collection from Blaine Reed, I still have all the pieces. My favorite piece in the collection I got from Blaine is this Oriented Camel Donga.



Oriented Camel Donga.

I also picked up a great 17lb Gibeon from a man named Charlie Snell.

17lb Gibeon \$55.00 per lb. those were the days.

As soon as I got back from Tucson I bought an old collection from collector Jim Mueller that had several oriented pieces. Tenham and La Criola were a couple of those.



Tenham oriented



La Criola oriented

I also made countless other buys from others dealers many of which are no longer around, David New, Jack Martinez.

My web site is Midwest Meteorites <http://www.meteorman.org> that I started in May of 1997 I became a part time dealer on the internet like so many others do today. I didn't know that much about meteorites back then but I knew I wanted to mingle on the internet with people who did, my web site opened the door to that. In the spring of 1997 I was the 4th meteorite dealer with a web site, being on the internet back then was one thing, but having your own web site meant even more to me. There were only about 12 total meteorite dealers known worldwide at that time, there are now 138 dealers as of July 2008 if you counted all dealers from Morocco, China, Germany and Russia I'm sure there are many many more.

The Iron meteorites to me are a piece of art I like them for their aesthetic appeal.



22lb Canyon Diablo

The pallisites are like eye candy I never get tired of looking at them. I love this eye popping crystal.



Glorieta Mountain 40 gram from Ruben Garcia
Thanks Ruben

The stone meteorites capture my imagination of what the universe is made of, Allende, Murchison and Mars along with many other.



Allende 3rd buy

Statements like this capture my imagination and the stones do it the best.

Allende contains grains of dust from stars that existed long ago before our Solar System formed. This makes this meteorite one of the only meteorites truly containing "stardust". Ancient stardust in meteorites helps explain the evolution of our galaxy. Allende is one of the most studied meteorites in the world. So far, this the oldest thing man has ever touched, which dates 4.5 billion years. Perhaps even more amazing is that scientists found tiny microdiamonds within the Allende Meteorite. Studies show that these tiny diamonds came from stars that existed before our solar system formed. This was my 3rd purchase and was bought on 11/18/1996. Actually I traded some Large Cent U.S. coins with Michael Blood for it. It has primary and secondary fusion crust. That chondrule popping out, well only a meteorite geek could love this rock.

My latest buy in 2007 was an 83 gram Mars meteorite from Mohamed Sbai to put on display at the St. Louis Planetarium. I want people to be able to actually touch a piece of the Red Planet.

This is my way of giving back to a wonderful hobby and it will hopefully be the connection needed to inspire our young people.



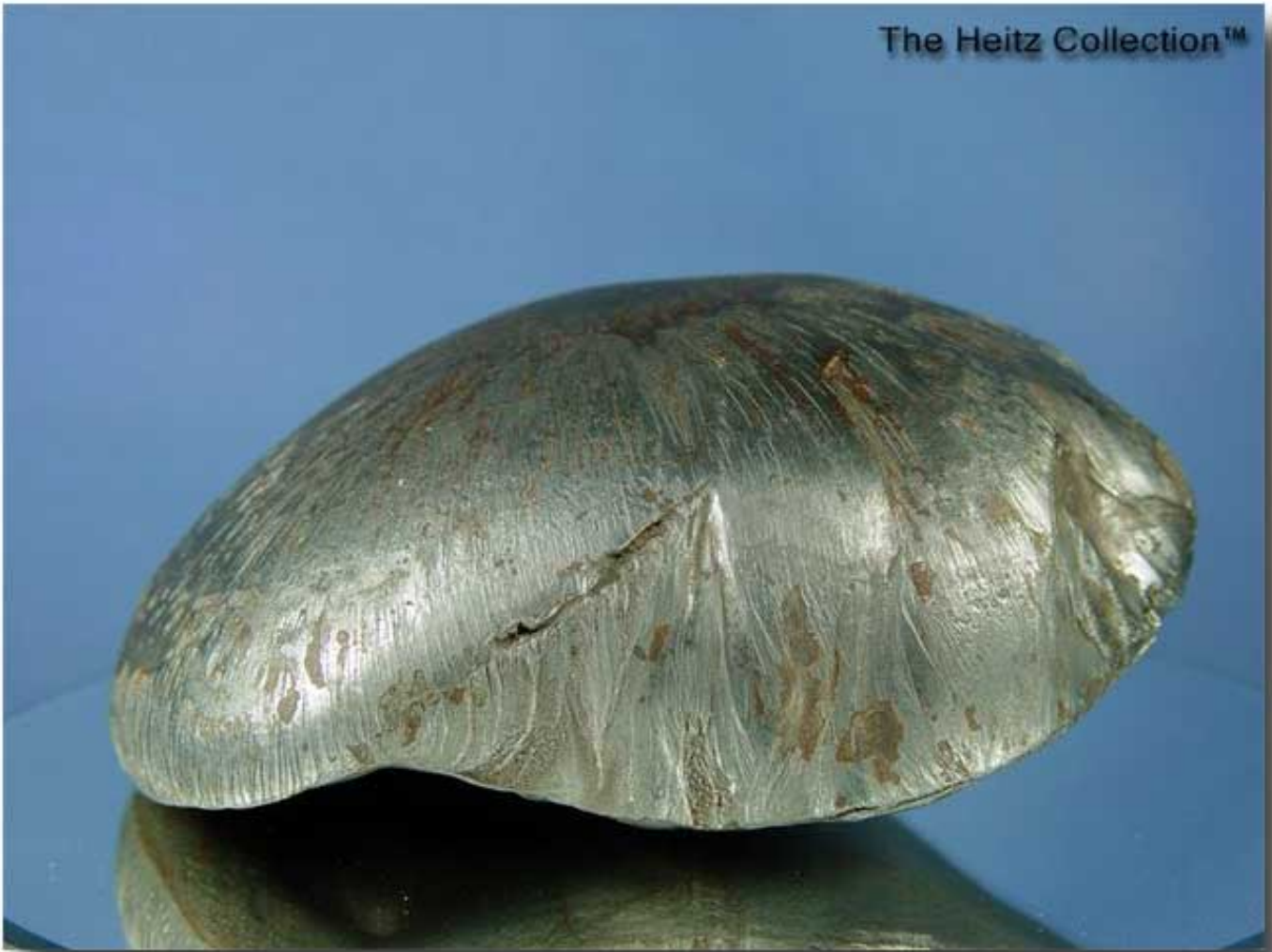
Mars NWA 83 grams

The St. Louis Planetarium will soon be a place to come and touch a piece of the Planet Mars -- another World.

My favorite piece is this 3 kilo hexahedrite iron. I call it the Perfect Oriented Meteorite.

Pictured in the Field Guide to Meteors and Meteorites by Richard Norton and Lawrence A. Chitwood on page 64

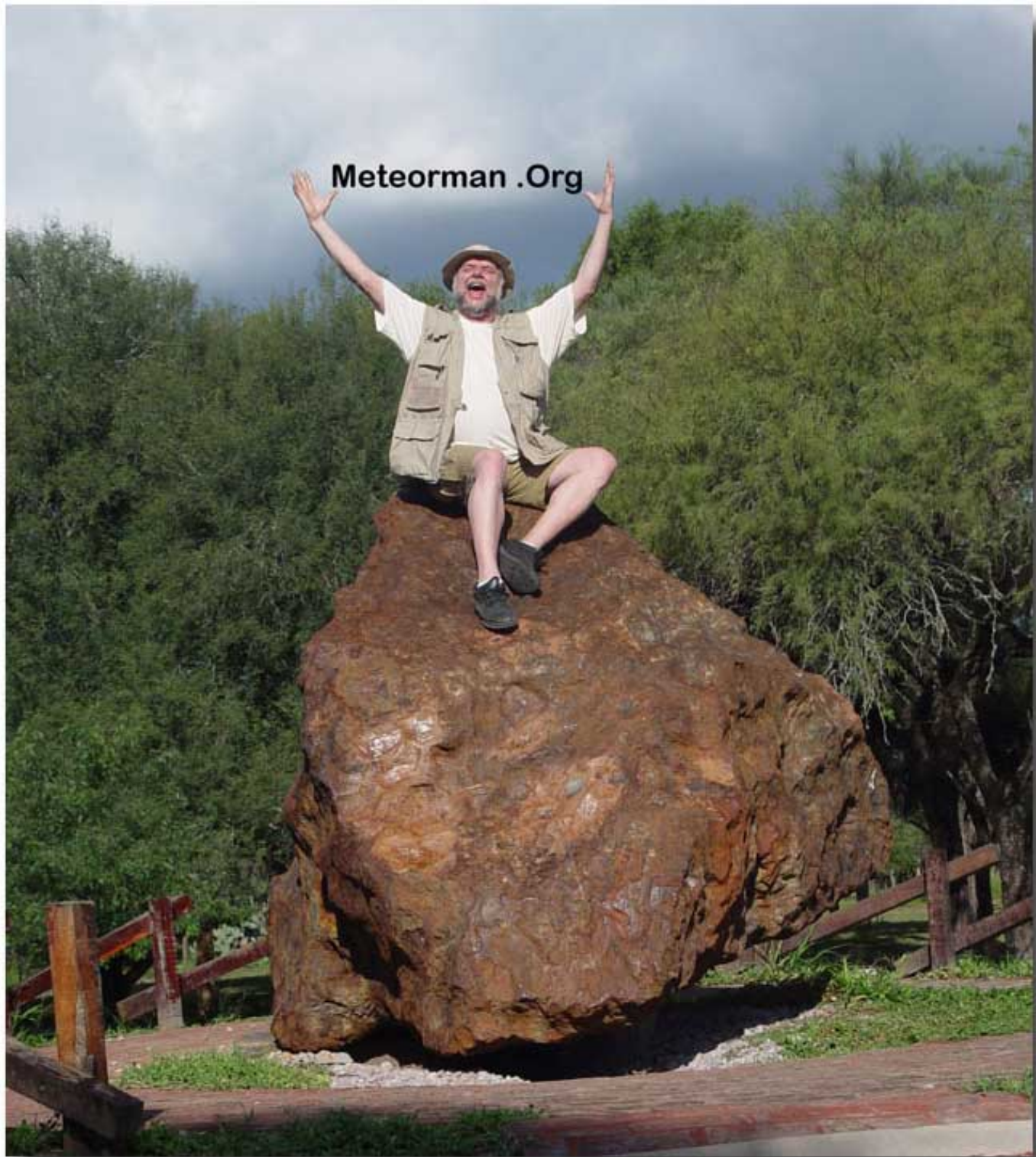
The Heitz Collection™





Campo del Cielo 15 ton found in 2005

I was part of a meteorite trip to Argentina with Jose Guggiari in 2006



My wife captured this picture of me sitting on top of a 37 ton Campo del Cielo. This picture can be found on page 67 of The Field Guide to Meteors and Meteorites

It's been fun along the way and hard for me to keep up with this hobby. I worked for Chrysler in St. Louis for 25 ½ years where they make the Minivan, I say worked because I'm laid off now. Working as an electrician in maintenance means working 6 and many times 7 days a week mandatory Just trying to maintain a home working those hours was hard and making a meteorite hobby work is even harder. I'm very thankful. My wife and daughter like meteorites, but the rest of in my family just don't get it. I'm ready to do some Meteorite Hunting, LETS GO.

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