



## **60th Anniversary Tucson Gem and Mineral Show™**

by David F Briggs

Over the next several weeks, mineral enthusiasts from all over the world will be in Tucson, Arizona for the Tucson Gem, Mineral and Fossil Showcase. This event actually consists of more than 40 separate shows that take place annually between late January and the middle February at numerous locations around Tucson. Some of these shows are open to the public, while others are only for retail dealers. This event reaches its climax with the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society's show, which will be held at the Tucson Convention Center between February 13-16, 2014.

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Society held its first mineral show at the Helen Keeling Elementary School in 1955. Its initial success prompted organizers to make it an annual event, which was held at the Pima County Fair and Rodeo Grounds on South Sixth Avenue until 1972. The show was moved to its present location at the Tucson Convention Center in 1973, where it continues to be sponsored by the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society.

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Society was founded in 1946 by a small group of mineral collectors and lapidary enthusiasts. The stated mission of this organization is to promote the interest and study in geology, mineralogy, lapidary and related earth sciences.

Over the years, the interest generated by the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society's mineral show has resulted in a number of smaller satellite shows being held in Tucson at the same time, making the Tucson Gem, Mineral and Fossil Showcase one of the largest and most popular events of its kind in the world.



**Azurite from the Morenci Mine, Greenlee Co., Arizona (Photo taken by David Briggs)**

Each year the organizers of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show™ pick a mineral or a group of minerals it will showcase. The minerals that have been chosen to be highlighted at this year's event are diamonds, gems, silver and gold. It will feature many spectacular exhibits from museums and private collections, including the Smithsonian Institution and Gemological Institute of America. More than 250 of the best mineral, jewelry, gemstone, lapidary and fossil retail dealers are scheduled to be present at this year's show.

Whether you are interested in mineral specimens, fossils, gemstones, jewelry, beads, publications, lapidary equipment and supplies, or arts and crafts, I'm sure you will be able to find an event to attend. Although most of these events are free, the main Tucson Gem and Mineral Show™ charges a small admission fee.

A complete list of events, dates, places and types of things displayed at each of these events can be found at [Visit Tucson](#).

Located in southeastern Arizona, Tucson is situated at the center of an area that has a rich mining history. While attending this year's Tucson Gem, Mineral and Fossil Showcase, please take an opportunity to visit Bisbee, Tombstone and ASARCO's Mineral Discovery Center.

Copyright (2014) by David F. Briggs. Reprint is permitted only if the credit of authorship is provided and linked back to the source.

Originally published by Mining and You in the Tucson Citizen on January 25, 2014.