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## APPLAUSE

### Mineral display donated to Lewis Center

By KAY ARDENSKI Special to the Daily Press

"Miner Rex" Cochran was a volunteer for the Lewis Center for Educational Research Local Outreach department for six years after moving to Apple Valley in 1999 at age 77. He loved being a volunteer for the California Gold Rush program held at the Lewis Center each week for fourth graders. Rex always kept a real gold nugget in his pocket to show the students. He took the first shovel of dirt out of the ground at the ground-breaking ceremony for Mineral City, a simulated mining town at the Lewis Center's Mojave River Campus. He was a dedicated volunteer.

Cochran, age 83, passed away in 2005 leaving an extensive rock and mineral collection. After his wife, Joan, passed away in 2006, his family met with members of the Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club, who helped sort and categorize the many rocks and minerals. They decided to donate some of the minerals to the Lewis Center for display in Mineral City.

The Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club donated the display box and put together the display. Cochran loved being a volunteer and the students loved him. He has been missed and now some of his minerals will be enjoyed by students for years to come.



Virgil Melton, left, and Ed Skidmore, right, of the Victor Valley Gem and Mineral Club hold a mineral display box in Mineral City, a simulated mining town at the Lewis Center's Mojave River Campus. The club recently donated a display box and their time in putting together a mineral display to be given for local students to enjoy over the coming years. Photo courtesy of Cheryl Thompson