



# *The* **BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE**

**The Newsletter of the  
Houston Gem & Mineral Society  
Houston, TX**

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January 2005

## **President's Message**

*December, 2004*

*by Norman Lenz*

*HGMS President, 2004 - 2005*



**F**ellow HGMS Members,

By the time you read this, the Club Holiday activities will be over and we will be ready to start the New Year. I feel we have had a very successful year thanks to many of you. Our membership is steady, the Shop and Clubhouse are well utilized, we had a very good Show, and our Treasury is healthy. We had approximately 65 Members in attendance at our Holiday party. There was plenty of food, drink, and good conversation.



We netted about \$13,000 dollars on the show this year. Scott Singleton and his committee did a fine job, and Carol Thompson, Year 2005 Show Chair, already has started planning by submitting a budget that the Board approved for the show in Year 2005. If you really want to get involved with the Club, working for the Show Committee is a great place to start.

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*Continued on page 4*

## **General Meeting Programs for January and February**

*By Scott Singleton*

*1st Vice President*

**W**e have a two-part series on Gold scheduled for the January and February General Meetings. In January, Norm and Susan Lenz will give us a guided tour of Alaska with a presentation entitled "Glaciers, Gold, and Grizzlies." The Lenzes were in Alaska in early September for two weeks and have agreed to share their experience with us. You'll see glaciers from land, sea, and air, and two different gold mining operations. Some of you may recall



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*Continued on page 5*

## Contents

President's Message .....	1
General Meeting Programs for January and February .....	1
HGMS Officers and Section Chairs .....	3
Purpose of HGMS .....	3
The Madison Mine, Madison, Carroll County, New Hampshire: An Addendum .....	5
Stroke Symptoms .....	9
United States Flag Donated to HGMS .....	10
Education Through Sharing--AFMS President's Message .....	11
E-mail from AFMS Officers .....	11
Houston Geological Society at HGMS .....	12
Show Committee Field Trip to College Station .....	13
Day Light Section .....	14
Lapidary Section .....	15
Mineral Section .....	16
PaleontologySection .....	16
Paleo 2005 Officers .....	17
October General Meeting Minutes .....	18
HGMS Board of Directors Minutes .....	19
November General Meeting .....	20
In Our Library .....	21
Having Fun—Junior Activities .....	22
Loud & Clear .....	23
Electrical Safety .....	30
Carving a Simple Project .....	32
ShowTime 2005 .....	34
Calendars .....	35

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*Copy is due for the February issue by Saturday, January 8, 2005. (When the 8th falls on Saturday, I create the BBG that same weekend.)*

## Purpose of HGMS

The objectives of this Society are to promote the advancement of the knowledge and practice of the arts and sciences associated with the collecting of rocks, minerals, fossils, artifacts, and their identification and classification; the general lapidary art; the collecting and identification of gemstones; the designing and execution of jewelry or metalcraft; and to provide the opportunity to obtain, exchange, and exhibit specimens and rough or finished materials.

Membership dues are \$30 for an adult membership, \$40 for a couple, \$50 for a family (including all children aged 5-18), and \$8 for a youth membership (ages 5-18).

Advertising rates: \$70 for 2 mo, ¼ page; \$150 for 6 mo, ¼ page.

MEMBER: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies & South Central Federation of Mineral Societies.

All meetings are held at the Clubhouse located at 10805 Brooklet near the intersection of Highway 59 (Southwest Freeway) and Sam Houston Parkway (Beltway 8). See the calendar inside the back page for when the different Sections meet. The General Meeting is the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30. The HGMS Internet address is <http://www.hgms.org>.

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*President's Message continued from page 1*

We have two great libraries in the Clubhouse. If you need answers to any rock, mineral, fossil or gemstone questions, they are sure to be in one of the many reference books. Do not be afraid to ask for help with your research. If you come up with anything interesting, you may want to share by writing an article for the BBG. Original articles are always welcomed by Phyllis George, our Editor, and they are part of the reason that the BBG is an award-winning newsletter.

Bad weather and scarce materials have caused a delay in the replacement of our Clubhouse roof. The shortage in materials is apparently due to the storms that hit the Florida area this summer. However part of the materials are already on location, and we still hope to see the roofing project finished by the end of this year.

A few printing glitches have caused a delay in publishing our new Year 2004-2005 Roster. It is at the printers now and should be delivered to you by the time you read this.

You may have noticed that our old refrigerator is not cooling properly. If you haven't yet acquired a taste for warm soda, you will be pleased to learn that the Board approved the purchase of a new refrigerator. Charlie Fredregill and Tom Wright did the research and made the purchase. We are expecting delivery on Monday of next week.

Some of you have expressed interest in having the Shop open on selected week nights. This will be addressed by the Board in the near future. We need experienced and dependable Shop Supervisors. Neal and Tony Lucci are particularly good at equipment repairs and maintenance. However, Neal would like someone else to be in charge of supervising the Shop schedule and usage. Neal Immega wants to focus his efforts on being the "Shop Elf."

Scott Singleton, as Year 2005 First Vice President, will schedule the programs for the General Meetings. Scott has expressed some good ideas that should increase attendance at our meetings. Please let Scott know if you would like to present a program for one of our General Meetings.

I am anticipating and looking forward to another good year in 2005. The Houston Gem and Mineral Society is only as good and as successful as you make it. So, get involved, enjoy your hobby, and have a Happy New Year!

If you have a question, ask it! If you have a suggestion, make it! If you have a talent, share it!



*General Meeting Programs continued from page 1*

the Grand Door Prize at the HGMS show in September. It was a carved moose antler and was brought back from Alaska by Norm and Susan.

The Lenzen's entertaining presentation will be followed in February by a special presentation by the Houston Museum of Natural Science entitled "Gold!" This presentation will precede the Museum's big new exhibit on the same subject. The presentation will be given by David Temple, who last gave us a presentation on why bugs hate amber. This time we'll learn some of the facts about gold, why it's considered precious, and its history through human civilization.

After these two presentations, we will be primed and ready to see "Gold!" in March at HMNS! Be sure not to miss either of these great presentations!

## **The Madison Mine, Madison, Carroll County, New Hampshire:**

### **An Addendum**

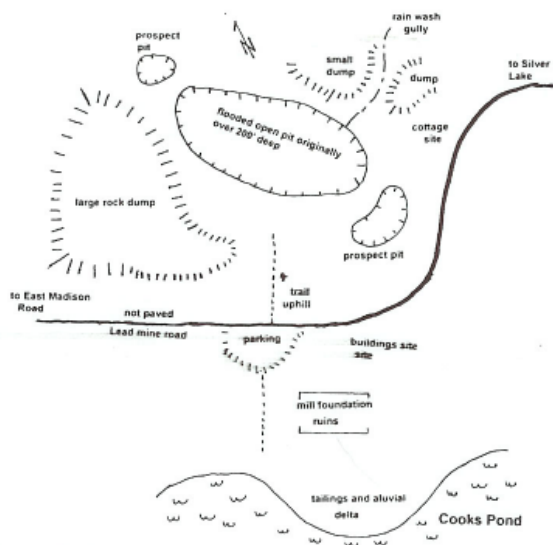
*by Art Smith*

*artsmithite@msn.com*

*Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society*

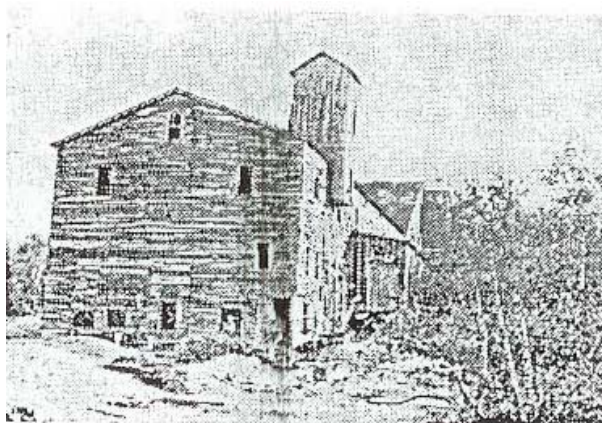
**A**n article on the Madison mine, Madison, Carroll County briefly describing the mining history and experiences collecting there was published (Smith 2001). Since that time additional information pertaining to the history has been obtained and recent collecting has expanded the known mineralogy. Both are reported here and further additions; corrections are welcome.

I made a sketch map showing the location of the mine pit in relation to the dumps, old mill site, and Cooks pond. There is no scale, but the whole area is less than several hundred feet in any direction from the open pit. The location of the former cottage (called the A.E. Reynolds cottage) and the area of the other mine buildings now completely obliterated are taken from a sketch map at the Madison Historical Society.

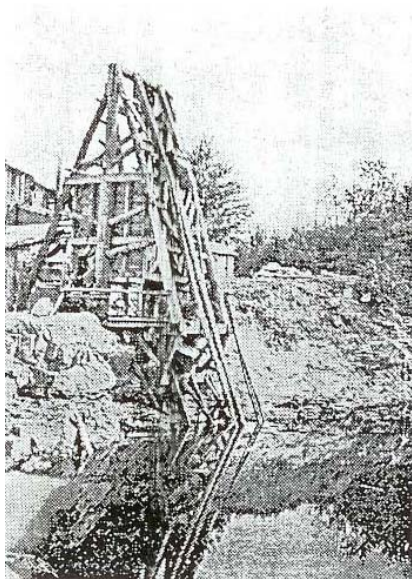


SKETCH MAP OF MADISON LEAD MINE AREA

Madison mine mill, probably showing the side that faces Cooks Pond. Note the small mill tailings piles on the left. From a photo probably taken after 1913 and before the 1920s. (Madison Historical Society files)



Lift extending into the flooded pit of the Madison mine. I cannot determine what side of the pit it is on because one of the two prints of the same photo has it reversed, and I do not know which one it is. (Madison Historical Society files, no date)



### History

Any collector who has done historical research on the mines and mineral localities in New England will find the search frustrating since there are only hints at historical data in the many sources available in libraries. The many local histories, be they old or recent, that have been written for most areas generally have little useful information. They are usually dominated by a plethora of genealogical data most generally uninteresting except possibly to people in the families mentioned. So tracking down data and substantiating the limited information you can glean from local unpublished sources is difficult or in some cases impossible.

A publication on the history of Madison, New Hampshire by Anonymous (1925) has the following about the Madison mine:

About 1912 Albert E. Reynolds came. He had diamond drills and drove several pockets. He worked over much old crushed material. He had crushers and five sets of rollers. The work was profitable during war prices, but was later abandoned.

I am not sure what driving a pocket means. Miners usually use drive when they extended or advanced a drift, tunnel, or other working. There were no pockets in the

Madison mine except the tiny cavities with microscopic crystals, and they were and still are quite sparse.

Albert E. Reynolds was a famous western mining magnate who was very active in Colorado gold and silver mining in the late 1800s. However by 1900, with Colorado mining in the doldrums, his mines were not sustaining his investments. There is no mention in his biography by Scamehorn (1995), who had access to his correspondence, that he directly participated in any mining ventures outside of the State of Colorado. All his operations in Colorado were primarily for the precious metals gold and silver.

The Madison mine was a base metal lead mine with no appreciable silver. But perhaps at this time of his life he needed a change from Colorado and Silver Lake, the Madison mine's name at that time, and its location nestled in the New Hampshire lake country. By reworking the mill tailings and adding additional material from the mine and dumps, he may have thought would be a good way to help restore his finances. By this time, both the galena (lead) and the more abundant sphalerite (zinc), particularly in the mill tailings from which it previously had not been recovered, were valuable.

How long and how often he was at the mine and how much he produced is uncertain. Hill (1921) states that the open pit was developed between 1915 and 1918. In 1917 the production was 20,000 tons of ore with a combined 10% of lead and zinc. Considering the cost of transporting the concentrated ore at that time to a smelter, the small scale of the operations, and the cost of mining, his profits probably were not great. Reynolds time at the mine during the period of 1912 to 1918 is uncertain. He still had substantial investments in Colorado that he was attending to, so he no doubt traveled back and forth.

A recent note in the Madison Historical Society Newsletter is of interest (Stineford 2004). John Smith donated an ore box or bucket that he rescued years ago from the lead mine site. It is about five feet long and two feet wide, tapers like a coffin, and is divided into three compartments. It is constructed of heavy planks and tarred. No doubt it ran on a cable from the mine site down to the mill on the lake shore. This would have been a perfect spot for a gravity tram. A full ore bucket attached to a cable moves down the hill bringing an empty ore bucket attached on the down hill side up to the mine. However, the exact nature of what type of conveyance was used has not been pictured or described.

## Minerals

After several years of collecting on the Madison mine dumps, I have not learned any keys to collecting success. Sometimes you find nothing, and at other times you take home a couple of rocks that might contain interesting minerals. Some of my recent mineral finds and others that I know of are listed:

**Albite** was found in August 2003. A white 9 by 6 by 3 cm white rock is composed of interlocking white, 0.5 cm prismatic albite crystals. It was identified visually. Such rock is not common and probably represents just a small phase of the granite bedrock in the mine area.



**Apatite** (?), possibly fluorapatite, was found as a single, sharp, colorless but cloudy prismatic microcrystal in a quartz cavity, collected by Anna Wilken in the fall of 2002. It fluoresces blue which is somewhat unusual for apatite. The crystals of pyromorphite and fluorapatite can be colorless and are very similar in habit, so without analytical data, the identification is considered questionable.

**Cancrinite** group mineral, deficient in calcium, was observed in minute white hexagonal prisms in tiny cavities in the albite-rock already described. It was identified by EDS-SEM and is possibly pitiglianoite, but further work would need to be done before the exact mineral species name can be assigned to it. There are two crystals in the albite rock I found.

**Helvite** was identified by analysis from a specimen collected in 2002 by Anna Wilken and sent to Jim Nizamof at the University of New Orleans by Bob Janules. This was thought to be the danalite mentioned in the first article. However, since no description was given nor was it mentioned how it was identified, we do not know if it was danalite or helvite or if both are present. Helvite and danalite cannot be differentiated visibly. This is the first of either to be found recently that I know of. Helvite, genthelvite, and danalite are beryllium minerals. They are closely related, forming end members in a series. Helvite has manganese dominant, genthelvite has zinc dominant, and danalite has iron dominant. Actually I am surprised that with all the sphalerite present in the mine area it is not genthelvite, but the mineral may have been formed before any zinc was present or after it was all tied up in the sphalerite. Bob describes the Madison helvites as corroded tan tetrahedrons that are less than 0.5 mm across. They occur in a quartz and dark pyroxene matrix and may be related to the borders of the dark igneous dike rocks that cut the orebody. Similar yellow helvite crystals occur on Iron Mountain in Bartlett, New Hampshire, but reddish to brown danalite of a much different appearance occurs at Moat Mountain in the Conway Granite.

**Hisingerite** is a hydrated iron silicate. It has been identified at the Madison mine by EDS-SEM. It was observed as lustrous, blackish, botryoidal surfaces and minute spheres in tiny cavities in granite and quartz. Some specimens have patches that are iridescent. One specimen has a wire-form that is on botryoidal hisingerite. Originally it was thought to possibly be native silver with a coating of acanthite or goethite. However, further visual investigation has convinced me it is not a coating but solid hisingerite. The material generally looks much like goethite but the broken surfaces and spheres showed no internal structure. Instead they had more of the appearance of a dark glassy mineral with a very subtle deep reddish-brown hue similar to the iron phosphate mineral, diadochite, in Arkansas. With no other iron phosphate minerals present this seemed unlikely so an EDS-SEM was run showing it is hisingerite. This is the first hisingerite identified here and possibly in the state.

**Hydrozincite** usually occurs as thin coatings of white powdery coatings that fluoresce blue-white under short wave ultraviolet radiation. A specimen received from Gene Bearss this year was composed of minute white acicular crystals less than 0.5 mm long with the white powder in a very thin seam. The coating was thicker than usual and very fluorescent.



**Uranosilite** occurs as bright yellow, minute hemispheres. Many seem to have a very thin coating on them, so I had the edge of a damaged sphere analyzed by SEM-EDS that identified it as uranosilite. This is a new mineral for the locality and possibly also for New Hampshire. The specimen was collected by Gene Bearss in the spring of 2004.

## References

Anonymous 1925–1926 *A Brief History of Madison*. Public Schools of Madison and Madison Men's Club. Reprinted 1979.

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Scamehorn, Lee 1995 *Albert Eugene Reynolds: Colorado's Mining King*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK. 308 p.

Smith, A., 2001. A page from a collector's note book: The wulfenite mystery of the Madison mine, Madison, Carroll County, New Hampshire. *Mineral News* 17(4): 1, 6–8 and in the Houston Gem and Mineral Society's *Backbender's Gazette*.

Stineford, Ray 2004 Lead Mine ore bucket donated. *Madison Historical Society Newsletter*, autumn.

## Stroke Symptoms

by Paula Rutledge

I am reminded that we are getting older, and the symptoms of stroke are often unknown. My college roommate added this short note when she sent me the article on “Is It A Stroke?”

“To these symptoms I would add from personal experience—slight confusion combined with sudden long-lasting loss of concentration that appears to go away after a few minutes but is followed by some memory loss.

I was sitting next to a man having coffee when he stopped in mid-sentence and just started staring vacantly as though he had lost his train of thought. He seemed to pop out of it. Later in the conversation he couldn't remember his mother's first name, and I STILL didn't get it that I should take him to the hospital. His wife took him the next morning, and he was diagnosed as having had a stroke.”

I now offer this article to all of our members and encourage them to learn the symptoms of stroke. And please, pass the knowledge on!

## Is It a Stroke?

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking the following three simple questions:

- Ask the individual to smile.
- Ask him or her to raise both arms.
- Ask the person to speak a simple sentence.

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

After discovering that a group of nonmedical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness, and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions. They presented their conclusions at the American Stroke Association's annual meeting last February. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevent brain damage.

A cardiologist says if everyone who gets this e-mail sends it to 10 people, you can bet that at least one life will be saved. Tell as many people as possible about this. It could save their lives!

### **United States Flag Donated to HGMS**

*by Scott Singleton  
2004 Show Chairman*

**A**t the 2004 HGMS show in September, we were treated to an unexpected surprise. We were paid a visit by US Representative John Culberson, Texas District 7. (District 7 includes portions of west and northwest Houston, including my neighborhood near Bellaire but not including the clubhouse or the show location). Unfortunately, I did not see or speak to Rep. Culberson, but I have been told by those who did that he was very supportive of our club and our efforts to perform voluntary outreach into the community. He had heard about our educational efforts with the kids and complimented us.

He indicated that he was familiar with our club and that's why he was at our show. And he came prepared, too. He told us that because we gave so much to the community, he wanted to show his appreciation in whatever way he could. He told us that he wanted to become a member, and that as a gesture of appreciation, he was donating a special flag to the club. He specifically wanted the flag to go into our auction to help raise money for the club.

This was no ordinary flag he donated, either. Allow me to quote from the certificate we received with the flag:

"The American flag was flown over the United States Capitol on May 29, 2004, during the dedication of the National WWII Memorial, to honor the sacrifices of the 16 million men and women who served in our armed forces during World War II, and in grateful remembrance of the more than 400,000 Americans who lost their lives in defense of the peace, prosperity, and liberty of the people of the United States of America."

The certificate is signed by John Culberson and has the emblem of the US House of Representatives affixed.

From everybody on the Show Committee, I'd like to say that we're honored to be presented with this symbol of our country. As a club, I think we should all be proud that our club and show are achieving the kind of local, regional, and even national attention that each deserves.

**Postscript:** As per Rep. Culberson's wishes, the flag was put up for auction at the information booth's silent auction. The winning bid was by our own Paul McGarry who felt it was only right to keep this flag in our own family. Thanks, Paul.

### **Education Through Sharing**

*by Bill Smith, AFMS President*

*from AFMS Newsletter 12/04-1/05*

**A**s Janet and I visit the clubs and shows throughout the Federations, we find that those clubs who are growing are sharing the hobby with and educating the public. The Houston Gem and Mineral Club is a prime example.

At their annual show they had over three thousand school children come through on Friday. Many brought their parents back to see the show. Saturday and Sunday were scout days. They even had a program where a scout could earn their Geology Badge at the show. You could learn about dinosaurs and other fossils, about volcanoes, how different rocks are formed, etc. The show was mostly directed toward educating the public. And the public did come. By Saturday evening they had nearly seven thousand people attend the show, and it was very busy on Sunday. I would have to say around ten thousand people attended for the three days. Every member I talked to was very excited about the show and the club. Is your club sharing with the public? This is a great way to get new members and to let the community know about our great hobby. Until next time, Bill

### **E-mail from AFMS Officers**

*Submitted by Scott Singleton*

*(Note: The following e-mail was received after the September HGMS show. Dee Holland is the AFMS Past President and the current President of the AFMS Scholarship Foundation. Shirley Leeson is the AFMS Endowment chair and the AFMS Historian. These two individuals travel to a great many shows and are in a position to know what they're talking about).*

HGMS:

We had a really great time at the South Central Show. You folks really know how to do things up right. Hope the Northwest and California can get their acts together and make the same commitment. Their shows this year were a little shaky. But there's always next year and a new host club.

Shirley Leeson and Dee Holland

**Houston Geological Society at HGMS**  
*by Alison Henning, Academic Liaison, HGS*  
*Photos by Steve Levine, President, HGS*

*Reprinted with permission from the  
Houston Geological Society Bulletin, December 2004*

The Houston Gem and Mineral Show was held at the Humble Civic Center on September 24–26, providing a fabulous display of minerals, fossils, gems and jewelry. One main objective of the show is to promote earth science education in the Houston area and the importance of earth science education in general. The HGS was there in force on Friday, September 24, for Kid's Day, when thousands of school children visited the show and participated in a scavenger hunt designed to expose them to the many aspects of earth science. Volunteer geologists from HGS staffed a table covered with maps, cores, and fossils. The cores came from Texas and Oklahoma and represented a variety of both clastic and carbonate facies. Students, teachers, and parents were all fascinated by the cores, especially the one that came from more than two miles below the surface! Many thanks to the Bureau of Economic Geology and Laura Zahm for providing the cores and many of the fossils for the table.

As a stop on the scavenger hunt, the HGS table was a very busy spot, continuously swamped with dozens of kids asking questions like, "What is a core?" and "What is one of the Earth's most precious natural resources?" Teachers and partners jumped right in with questions of their own. Volunteers answered questions and talked about the oil and gas industry. It was a fun but thoroughly exhausting way to share our excitement about earth science with thousands of people in a single day!

Photos show Laura Zahm and Alison Henning staffing the table.



## Show Committee Field Trip to College Station

*by Scott Singleton  
2004 Show Chairman*

**O**n November 13, the Show Committee hosted a field trip for the entire club to the Bryan/College Station area. The weather was cool but pleasant, and 27 HGMS Club members showed up to have some fun. Carol Thompson made sure they would all have as much fun as they could handle by scouting out about a half dozen sites beforehand. (Actually, we all think that Carol just wants to make sure there would be no snakewood left “unattended.”)

We started the day at one of our better sites, White Creek, which resulted in a lot of wet and muddy people but provided everyone with lots of material. We then checked out several more sites, with lunch thrown in somewhere between, and people stayed for as little or as long as they wished. As we have been known to do, two separate groups ended the day in fading light,

trying to get that last piece. One group was on a wild and untamed portion of White Creek, and another group was over on Turkey Creek. This second group decided that



Ben Clardy IV displaying his fabulous find.



Elizabeth Sheehy and Karen Burns

an earlier group had left too much material, so they decided to clean up the creek some more (quite successfully, I might add).

All in all, a great time had by all. Look for another great trip to be held in the spring to another exciting locality.



Steve Blyskal,  
Andrew Dunham, and  
Stan Perkins



### Day Light Section *by Frances Arrighi*



**T**he Day Light Section has no report since we did not meet in December. Be sure to save all your silver scraps for our February Meeting. Since we have no report, I am going to put in the recipe for the salad that Jim and Pat Johnson brought to the Day Light luncheon and that everyone liked so much. The program for the January meeting will be a travelogue on Greece.

#### **Oriental Coleslaw**

1 package broccoli coleslaw (Rainbow salad at HEB)

1 cup sunflower seeds (shelled kernels)

1 cup sliced almonds

1 package chicken ramen noodles

Optional - chives to taste

Crush noodles while in the package into small pieces and mix with the other ingredients.

#### **Dressing**

1/2 cup salad oil (Canola)

1/4 cup vinegar

1 tbs. sugar

Mix well and pour over salad.

Good if you mix it the night before.



## Coming Attractions: Lapidary Programs

January 17 .... **Jewelry Design**

February 21 .. Practice **bezel setting** a stone. Stones and settings available for under \$5.

March 21 ..... **Polish** your February piece!

April 18 ..... Demo: **Drilling holes** in stone.



### Lapidary Section *by Mary Ann Mitscherling*



Margaret Hardman-Muye chaired the November meeting. Subjects for future Lapidary Section meetings were suggested and discussed. Ideas for increasing meeting attendance were considered. The formal presentation of a comprehensive overview of the club, its activities, equipment, classes, and so forth was recommended for each beginning class. Making the Lapidary Section meetings more hands-on oriented was considered. This might provide attendees with a greater incentive to learn about equipment and techniques available in the clubhouse about which they had previously been unaware. Also, projects that might be started at the meeting could be finished by members on Saturdays. Projects could run from one Lapidary Section meeting to another with actual work being completed during the meeting session.

The new Lapidary Classes are posted on the HGMS Web site [www.hgms.org](http://www.hgms.org). The schedule runs through March, 2005.

A new class reservation policy will be used for 2005. Specifically, a \$25 nonrefundable check or money order made out to "HGMS" with the name of the class and the class start date must be sent to the Education Coordinator so that it arrives no later than seven calendar days before the class start date. On a first-come, first-served basis, we will fill the class. If the class is full, your deposit will be returned.

You should check with the instructor before the class start date to learn whether the class has the minimum number of students required and whether you have a place in the class. If you reserve a place in class but do not show up on time at the first class, your deposit is forfeited. The current Education Coordinator is M. A. Mitscherling, 5801 Lumberdale #234, Houston, TX 77092-1526. Call her at 713-957-2001 if you have a question.







## Mineral Section



*by Steve Blyskal, Chairperson and Dean Lagerwall, Assistant Chairperson*

### Upcoming Meeting Topics

**January 5: Opals—Show & Tell:** Sam Norwood will host this program dedicated to the beautiful and intriguing hydrated form of silica. Come learn about the variety and uses of this mineral. Bring in some pieces from your own collection and let us drool. Refreshments will be provided.

**January 19: Fluorite—Show & Tell:** Stan Perkins will host the continuing series targeting individual mineral species. Learn about this beautiful yet relatively plentiful mineral that allows even the casual collector to add many varieties to their collection. Bring in some pieces from your own collection and reinforce the huge variety in which this species can exist. Refreshments will be provided.

**February 2: Trimming Symposium:** Back by popular demand. Art Smith will present a “How-To” talk on trimming specimens. Removing damaged portions of a specimen can dramatically increase its value by focusing the viewer’s attention on the most aesthetic portion of the piece. Several styles of trimmers will be present.

**February 16: Tucson Review:** Hear tales from those returning from Tucson and the “Greatest Mineral Show(s) on Earth.” This is an informal meeting. Refreshments will be provided.

If you have any ideas for topics to be presented or would be willing to present at our Mineral Section meetings, please contact Dean at dean\_lagerwall@yahoo.com or call him at (979) 480-9373.



## Paleontology Section

*by Paula Rutledge, outgoing Paleo Chair*



**T**he 2004 Paleo November Christmas meeting was an outstanding success. No cases of food poisoning, no outbreaks of fisticuffs over auction items—truly a great meeting.

In a record short meeting, we voted our 2005 slate of officers into office by acclamation. Rick Rexroad will be our new Section Chair and Stan Perkins will be our new secretary. Neal Immega will continue as Vice Chair and the Field Trip Chair. Chris Peek will continue as Treasurer.

Sunday Bennett will be our Hospitality/Membership/Specialty Chair (this is an ad hoc position created to run through the end of 2005.)

Turkey, ham, and brisket, spaghetti with meat sauce—a veritable feast. Lots of deserts. Special thanks to Neal and Inda for bringing the iced tea.

We had so many people show up for the meeting, the dinner, and the auction that even though we put out every folding table we had, we still had to borrow two huge tables from the shop.

Special thanks to Wayne Barnett, our auctioneer, for being such a great auctioneer.

In closing, I want to thank everyone for helping me get through this past year as Section Chair. It was a serious challenge that I could not have met without the continuing help of so many people. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

### **Paleo 2005 Officers**

*by Paula Rutledge*

#### ***2005 Officers Elected for Paleontology Section***

**W**e are pleased to announce the new Paleontology Section officers for 2005.

Rick Rexroad ..... Section Chair

Neal Immega ..... Vice Chair and Field Trip Leader

Stan Perkins ..... Secretary

Chris Peek ..... Treasurer

John Moffitt ..... Board Rep (final year)

In an appointed ad hoc committee head, Sunday Bennett is our new Hospitality/Membership/Make it Happen Person.

Congratulations to everyone. May next year be successful.

Paula Rutledge, outgoing Paleo Chair



Cartoon by Sunday Bennett--Field Trip Lament

**October General Meeting Minutes***26 October 2004**by Charlie Fredregill, Secretary*

**R**efreshments for next meeting will be brought by Jill Rowlands and David Gardner.

**Announcements:**

The membership was saddened to learn of the death of Frances Harris, a long time member. She died on October 22.

*There were a number of SCFMS awards given. A list is appended at the end of this report.*

In the interests of brevity, Section reports were not given. The only Section news was for the Lapidary Section concerning their annual auction and lunch on October 30.

**Field trips:** Carol Thompson announced a trip on November 13 to hunt for petrified wood.

Neal Immega said that he was waiting for river conditions before scheduling a trip to find Midlothian sharks' teeth.

**Old business:**

Scott Singleton reported that the attendance at our annual show was 8,700 people, including school children.

We received a new bid for a new roof. The bid amount was \$15,100 from Gulf Coast Construction. The bid was accepted by vote and work will begin on the week of November 8.

**New Business:**

Our annual Christmas party will be held December 10. John Moffitt will take care of the meat; other items will be covered dishes supplied by members.

**Nominating Committee—Proposed slate:**

President: .....Norman Lenz  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: .....Scott Singleton  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: .....Beverly Mace  
Secretary: .....Sunday Bennett  
Treasurer: .....Paul McGarry  
Faceting Section Rep.: .....Paula Rutledge  
Lapidary Section Rep.: ....Dave Hawkins

There was a motion to close nominations and to accept the nominations by acclamation. Vote on the motion passed.

Mary Ann Mitscherling requested an assistant to help her with education. Fred Baker volunteered and was accepted.

**Program:**

Neal Immega and Tony Lucci presented a premeeting program on “white metal” casting. The regular program was a continuation by Neal. He demonstrated how he makes molds for resin casting shark teeth.

Next month’s program will be given by Wayne Barnett on stone polishing compounds.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Article Title</b>	<b>Contest Category</b>	<b>SCFMS Ranking</b>	<b>AFMS Ranking</b>
Ryan Wallace	“Discovery and Analysis of Petrified Wood in the San Jacinto River”	Junior Articles 12–17	First	Honorable Mention
Alexia Bienieck	“Status of Earth Science Education in Texas”	Original Article - Adult	Third	Honorable Mention
Gary Anderson	“Amazing Petrified Trees”	Original Article – Adult	Sixth	=====
Neal Immega	“Hadrosaurs”	Original Article – Advanced Adult	First	Third
Terry Proctor	“A Rockhound’s Greatest Asset”	Original Article – Advanced Adult	Second	Honorable Mention
Jill Rowlands	“Quick and Easy Pickings, Finding the Right Faceting Pattern”	Original Article – Advanced Adult	Third	Tenth
Scott Singleton	“Geological and Paleontological Results of Karnes County Field Trip”	Original Article – Advanced Adult	Fourth	=====
Art Smith	“Clyde Hardin: Collecting, Trading, and Buying Ouachita Mountains Minerals”	Original Article – Advanced Adult	Fifth	=====
David Temple	“Supercroc (Sarcosuchus imperator)”	Original Article – Advanced Adult	Sixth	=====
HGMS Backbender’s Gazette	=====	Large Bulletins	=====	Third

**HGMS Board of Directors Minutes**

*2 November, 2004*

*by Charlie Fredregill, Secretary*

**B**oard Members Present: Norman Lenz, President; David Hawkins, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; Beverly Mace, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; Paul McGarry, Treasurer; Charlie Fredregill, Secretary; Margaret Hardman-Muye, Lapidary Section; John Moffitt, Paleo Section; Arthur Smith, Mineral Section; Tom Wright, Day Light Section

**Non-Board members present:** Paula Rutlege, Sunday Bennett

**Reports:**

- **Paul McGarry, Treasurer:** Our financial status has not changed from last month. There was a discussion about the AFMS dues which are now due. Also, the insurance from AFMS has doubled from \$1.00 to \$2.00 per member.
- **Mary Ann Mitscherling, Education:** Requested appointment of a helper. The

Board agreed to one helper, Fred Baker. Mary Ann and Fred will get a reduction in cost of classes as a perk for keeping the classes going.

- **David Hawkins, 1<sup>st</sup> V.P. in charge of Programs:** Announced that Wayne Barnett would give November's program on polishing materials.

#### **Old Business:**

- Roof contract has been let: Work to start week of November 8.
- Payments and pledges for our new laptop computer were discussed. Lapidary has not paid. Jon and Ruth Hammet have given a donation of \$600 toward the purchase.

#### **New Business:**

- The 2004-2005 directory is overdue. Charlie Fredregill said that it would be ready for the printer in about two weeks.
- The Christmas party will be on Friday, December 10 from 7 until 10 p.m. John Moffitt will see that we get ham and turkey. Stuart Murphy will be asked for his oven roasted brisket.
- The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers:

President: ..... Norman Lenz  
 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: ..... Scott Singleton  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: ..... Beverly Mace  
 Secretary: ..... Sunday Bennett  
 Treasurer: ..... Paul McGarry  
 Faceting Section Rep.: ..... Paula Rutledge  
 Lapidary Section Rep.: ..... Dave Hawkins

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p. m.

### **November General Meeting**

*23 Nov 2004*

*by Charlie Fredregill, Secretary*



#### **Announcements:**

Our annual Christmas party will be on December 10. John Moffitt will take care of the meat; other items will be covered dishes supplied by members.

#### **Election:**

The following people were elected by acclamation:

President: ..... Norman Lenz  
 1st Vice President: ..... Scott Singleton  
 2nd Vice President: ..... Beverly Mace  
 Secretary: ..... Sunday Bennett  
 Treasurer: ..... Paul McGarry

Faceting Section Rep.: ..... Paula Rutledge

Lapidary Section Rep.: ..... Dave Hawkins

### Reports:

#### Shop and Clubhouse: Neal Immega

There was an accident with the super grinder, and it is temporarily out of action.

#### Library: Art Smith

We now have a microscope in the library for the use of our members

#### Show Committee: Stuart Murphy

Reported that Carol Thompson has held the first show committee meeting.

#### Section Chairs: No reports

**Programs for next month** will be handled by the new 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Scott Singleton

#### Standing committee reports:

- **Membership Committee—Beverly Mace:** The new roster for 2004–2005 is now being prepared for the printer.
- **Show & Tell:** Jill Rowlands showed Rose de France faceting rough from New Era Gems. She also donated a piece of rough and a mounted finished stone for the door prize.
- **Education Committee:** Mary Ann Mitscherling announced that the new class schedules are posted in the clubhouse.

**Program:** Wayne Barnett presented the program. He discussed polishing media for different stones.



### In Our Library *by Art Smith, Librarian*

I am really struggling getting the last batch of cards indexed into the computer. We are at 23,900 entries, and I have a little better than a half a flat of cards to index yet. The last bunch seems to be going extra slowly, but they should be done shortly after the first of the year if not before.

The Mineral Section program showing the new video on the mining of the Sweet Home rhodochrosite mine in Park County, Colorado was a big hit. I have ordered one for the library and hope to have it on the shelf soon. Actually I have ordered two, a VHS and a DVD. The video is professionally done and is a classic example of how to successfully use geology in a mining enterprise and using it to make it successful. Unfortunately the geology shows that all the obvious rhodochrosite is now mined out, and it would take a large and expensive exploration effort to find more—and then it might not be easily or economically recovered. So after 13 years of specimen mining, the old silver mine is again closed.

We have a couple of research projects in progress in the library. I finished up my research on the Baldy Mountain gold district in New Mexico to see if some specimens I obtained really came from the district. The results are published in the last issue of *Matrix* in the library. It truly may be the last issue because owner and editor Jay Lininger died in October, and the magazine's fate has not yet been announced.

I will start on the Illinois Mineral Locality Index in January 2005. Denise Bicknell is working on an article on the Tristate zinc-lead district of Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma. This is an ambitious project, but she is making good progress.

A new book, *Making Silver Chains* by Glen F. Waszek, has been donated to the library by Frances Arrighi. Thank you Frances, we appreciate it. It will be filed in the Lapidary section under Metals.

### **Having Fun—Junior Activities**

*by Jim Brace-Thompson  
AFMS Junior Activities Chair  
from AFMS Newsletter 12/04-1/05*

### **H**ow To Order Merit Badges for Your Club's Kids

As we set out implementing our new AFMS/FRA Merit Badge program, I've received recent queries from a couple of youth leaders about how to go about getting merit badges and the plan for distributing them. I'd like to clarify this.

Because this is a new program and we don't have a history of what potential supply-and-demand will be, I'm keeping it centralized—at least for the first year or so. For budgetary reasons, we are only able to order a limited quantity of badges to start. Thus, rather than sending bulk quantities of badges to local youth leaders and exhausting our supply right away, I'm asking that local leaders at individual clubs send me requests for badges as they are earned.

How to go about this? You should make multiple copies of the activity checklists that are included in the Merit Badge manual (you can order a hardcopy of the manual from me or download it from the AFMS Web site: <http://www.amfed.org/fra/meritbadge.htm>). For each child, check off activities as they are completed. When at least three activities are checked off for any one badge, both the child and youth leader should sign the checklist, write in the preferred mailing address of the youth leader, and then send it on to me: **Jim Brace-Thompson, AFMS Juniors Activities Chair, 7319 Eisenhower Street, Ventura, CA 93003**. I'll then record the info and send the badge.

I know this is a bit cumbersome and means a lag time in getting badges to kids, but in discussing this with others in the AFMS, I decided it's best to use this centralized approach at least for the first year or two in order to monitor how much the program is being used. It's also necessary for keeping tabs on which activities are the most popular and how many badges actually end up being awarded. This way we'll develop an accurate record for the future in estimating budgets for the number of badges to be manufactured on an annual basis. In order to keep the program free, we need to moni-



tor all costs as we start out and keep a lid on those costs by only distributing the number of badges actually being used. Also, to speed the process, I'm willing to do fulfillment via the phone (805-659-3577) or via e-mail ([jbraceth@adelphia.net](mailto:jbraceth@adelphia.net)) rather than through the mail, so long as the youth leader indicates:

- 1) The badge being requested
- 2) Which activities a child has completed to earn that badge
- 3) The child's name and the name of his/her club
- 4) The name and mailing address of the youth leader to whom the badge should be sent.

Cumbersome, yes, but in the end, I hope that maintaining such records at the outset allows us to keep the AFMS/FRA Merit Badge program on a firm financial footing that enables us to provide an educational program by which kids learn, earn rewards and—as always—have fun! (Badges not shown true to size.)



Rockhound  
Badge



Leadership Communication



Lapidary Arts



Collecting



Field Trips



Fossils



Showmanship



Rocks &  
Minerals



Earth Resources



FRA Membership Badge

## Loud & Clear

by George Loud

from AFMS Newsletter 11/04

This must be my last “Loud & Clear” column. I must resign as Chair of the Conservation and Legislation Committee. That my law practice (Patents and Trademarks) continues to grow is good news; the bad news is that the passing years have reduced the amount of energy I am able to bring to my work. If and when I retire, I would love to return to the fray. Since I started writing “Loud & Clear” more

than 10 years ago, we have lost hundreds of collecting sites due to incorporation into newly designated wilderness areas and national monuments, the latter being established in the final hours of the last administration by Presidential Decree invoking the somewhat dubious authority of the Antiquities Act. Further, those collecting sites which remain theoretically "open" became progressively more difficult to access by reason of an aggressive policy of road closure adopted by the last administration. The trend has definitely been toward exclusion of the public in general, and rockhounds in particular, from public lands. However, I now see several promising developments.

### **Consider the following macro trends.**

**Macro Trend #1** - The Judiciary - Use and Abuse of the judiciary to change land use policy while most Americans may believe that major policy changes should be effected through the legislative process. Environmental groups have shown great adeptness in furthering their objectives through use of the judiciary. However, we now see some encouraging signs that our Judicial Branch of government is moving toward limiting the ability of such groups to further their agendas through use of the judiciary. Much of the impetus toward management of public lands in a manner restricting human use and access derives from litigation brought against the federal land use agencies by activist environmental groups with seemingly limitless budgets. The Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Environmental and Natural Resources Division stated this past Summer that there were 7100 active environmental lawsuits then being litigated at that time in the United States.

However, help is on the way. This past summer the United States Supreme Court unanimously (9-0) dealt a severe setback to use of the judiciary by environmental groups in pursuit of their agenda. In *Norton, Secretary of the Interior et al v. Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance et al*, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected all three claims of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance against the U.S. Department of Interior acting through the Bureau of Land Management. Plaintiff's first claim charged the Department of Interior with violation of the Wilderness Act.

The Utah lands in question in this case have been designated as wilderness study areas pursuant to the statutory mandate that lands having "wilderness characteristics" be identified and inventoried. However, once so identified a wilderness study area (WSA) remains in limbo until if and when Congress enacts legislation establishing wilderness status. The statute commands that such lands, while in this limbo, shall be managed "in a manner so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness," the so-called "anti-impairment requirement". Unfortunately, such a WDA can remain as such indefinitely even if the Secretary of the Interior determines that the land is not in fact suitable for wilderness designation. The Plaintiffs alleged that the anti-impairment requirement of the Wilderness Act mandated total exclusion of off-road vehicle use as impairing "the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness."

The Plaintiff's claim was denied, the court holding that the nonimpairment requirement of the Wilderness Act is an objective but that the Act leaves the BLM "a great deal of discretion in deciding how to achieve" (that objective). The court noted that

the provision “only agency action that can be compelled under the APA is action legally required” is designed “to protect agencies from undue judicial interference with their lawful discretion and to avoid judicial entanglement in abstract policy.” In view of the discretion allowed the BLM in such matters, the Court found that total exclusion of ORV use cannot be judicially mandated.

The second claim asserted by the Plaintiffs was to the effect that the BLM had not complied with its own land use plan. The Court denied this claim also, finding that “a land use plan is generally a statement of priorities; it guides and constrains actions, but does not (at least in the usual case) prescribe them.” “A statement by the BLM about what it plans to do, at some point [in the future]... cannot be plucked out of context and made the basis for a suit under Section 706(1) [of the Administrative Procedure Act, “APA”].”

Plaintiff’s third claim was to the effect that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) required the BLM to prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement given evidence of increased ORV use. However, the court found that such a supplemental statement is required only in circumstances where major federal agency action is ongoing. The Court held that there was no requirement for a supplemental environmental impact statement in that adoption of the plan is an action completed when the land use plan is approved. Summarizing, the Court’s decision in *Norton, Secretary of the Interior et al v. Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance et al*, severely curtails the ability of private entities to compel land use decisions in furtherance of their objectives.

While the extent of ORV use may be the subject of legitimate debate, the Court’s decision goes well beyond that issue and curtails, in general, access to the judiciary as a route around the more democratic legislative process and rule-making process of the executive branch - a welcome development, at least in the view of this writer.

**Macro Trend #2** - The Executive Branch Roadless Management rules adopted late in the Clinton Administration ran roughshod over the interests of local governments and the statutory right of public access via preexisting roads, the so-called RS2477 roads. A case in point involved a federal initiative to close a road through the Shawnee National Forest in Southern Illinois. Probably the same road I once traveled, through a forest fire, en route to the Southern Illinois fluorite district. I received a telephone call from an Illinois state attorney inquiring about RS2477 rights and how the county and state might rely upon same in order to prevent closure of the road or roads in question.

One concern was that the proposed closure would make it exceedingly difficult to travel from one end of the county to the other. However, help is on the way. By an Executive Order issued August 26, 2004, President Bush ordered Federal Agencies to adopt a more cooperative (less confrontational) approach in implementing laws relating to the environment and natural resources, “with an emphasis on appropriate inclusion of local participation in federal decision making.” H.R. 2416 (S546) - Paleontological Resources Preservation Act The U.S. House of Representatives Web site shows no movement of this legislation subsequent to referral to several subcommittees on June 19, 2003. Accordingly, the legislation can be expected to die in committee at the end of this current Congress. It has been hard work, but enjoyable. George Loud

The following pictures were taken at the HGMS  
December 10 Christmas party by Norm & Susan Lenz







Steve Blyskal plans to try everything.

Norm Lenz presents Dave Hawkins with his Dave Rocks bag



Margaret Hardman-Muye gets her Margaret Rocks bag



Charlie Fredregill is having a blast with his bag.

John Moffitt is planning to try his on for size.



Art Smith is quite impressed with his Art Rocks bag.



Tom Wright  
has a really  
great-  
looking

Neal  
Immega  
wonders  
which he'll  
get back  
first--his  
hand or  
his Neal  
Rocks  
bag.



Scott Singleton displays his two  
prized possessions: Lorraine and  
his new Scott Rocks bag.





Tony Lucci is walking away with more than just his Tony Rocks bag. Wonder what it is.

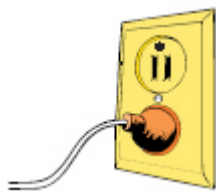
## Electrical Safety

*by Marty Hart*

*AFMS Webmaster*

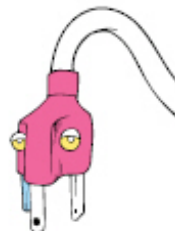
*from AFMS Newsletter 12/2004-1/2005*

**M**ost lapidary work involves the use of electric motors and usually also includes water. This can lead to some very dangerous situations. Not only does water make the human body more electrically conductive, it also manages to work itself into electrical components, thus providing additional seriously dangerous electrical current paths. Then compound all of this with some of the equipment being very old, home built, and possibly not well maintained. There are two very simple things that can be done to improve the situation—provide proper electrical grounding and use a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter).



## Electrical Grounding

Most modern electrical equipment now includes an electrical plug that has three prongs with an electrical ground. There are some limited exceptions where two-prong groundless connections are currently manufactured, but a lot of older equipment is still around that was built before grounding was a standard. Sometimes equipment may have been built with an electrical ground, but someone wrongly cut that third prong off the plug because it did not plug into the two-prong electrical outlet typically in an older house.



The electrical ground provides a safety shield around electrical components. To accomplish this task, the electrical ground is connected to a conductive surface that is

between the electrical components and the person using the equipment. This conductive surface would include such items as the motor's chassis and other electrical enclosures. If an electrical fault creates an electrical path to this grounded surface, the electrical charge is carried to ground, rather than to the operator. If the electrical fault is highly conductive, then it will probably trip the household circuit breaker, further protecting the operator from harm.

The electrical ground is a safety conductor that does not normally carry any electrical current. Just because the equipment works, it does not mean the ground is connected. The electrical ground must be continuous from the power distribution to the house and all the way to the point of use. A break in this circuit defeats the ability of the ground to protect the operator from electrocution. Just because the outlet has the third prong electrical ground does not mean that it is connected, especially in older homes that were originally wired with only two conductor outlets.

For only a few dollars a small tester can be bought that plugs into the outlet to check many common wiring errors. To use the tester, simply plug it into the outlet and see which lights light up. If you ever feel even a slight tingle from a piece of equipment, it probably means that there is an electrical fault, and the ground is not properly connected. You should immediately have the situation corrected before using it again. Don't forget to also check the electrical outlet.

### **GFCI**

A GFCI is a very sophisticated but simple-to-use inexpensive device that measures the current being sent to the device (hot wire), and the current returning from the device (neutral wire). The GFCI compares these currents, and even a very small difference trips the GFCI to disconnect the appliance from the electrical circuit. This difference in current represents a current fault through a ground path. The magnitude of this small difference is only about 0.005 amps, or about 0.5 watts. Not only does a GFCI trip with such small current faults, it does this in about 0.025 seconds. In comparison, the circuit breaker protecting the appliance circuit may likely be rated at 20 Amps. The circuit breaker would therefore require about 4,000 times more current to trip! This easily could mean the difference between life and death.

The GFCI is such an inexpensive device that it is continually saving lives. I have routinely seen GFCI outlets for about \$10, and on sale for as low as \$5. GFCIs are available in many forms. The most common is a duplex outlet that is permanently wired into the house wiring. They are also available as a combination with a circuit breaker, and as a simple plug-in device that goes between the outlet and the powered device. Many appliances now even come with a GFCI built into the device's power cord.

Even though the GFCI can protect people from many if not most household electrocutions, it cannot protect from all situations. For instance, if a person becomes connected to both the hot and neutral wires without any ground current path, the GFCI cannot detect a problem and will not trip. A GFCI can provide protection with even a two-wire connection if the fault current flows through an alternate path. This is be-

cause the GFCI measures the currents in the hot and neutral wires. GFCI protection is in addition to, not as a substitute for the grounding requirements and proper safety procedures.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends the use of a ground-fault-circuit interrupter (GFCI) with every power tool to protect against electrical shock hazards.

Be sure your shop is safe for yourself and others. Proper safety doesn't have to cost a lot, unlike the lack of proper safety.

## Carving a Simple Project

by Henry Hunt

*Article from Hale Sweeney's Lapidary Digest.*

*Noncommercial republish permission granted.*

*via Stoney Statements 12/04*

Once you know how to cut cabs, you are ready for carving. Very little machinery is needed. Let's follow through on a simple design. You have cut a large oval cab and wish to carve a zigzag line—a thunder bolt symbol—diagonally across the top. This groove will have 2 zigs and 1 zag at a 45-degree angle.

First, you need an old motor, either 1725 or 3450 rpm, plus a 1/4-inch Jacob's chuck like the one on your electric drill. An adapter is used on the 1/2-inch motor shaft, and the chuck is screwed onto it. These adapters can be obtained at jewelry supply stores. This is all you need in the way of machinery.

A V-shaped groove looks best for this design. So you will need a V-shaped diamond tool, not a tapered wheel, but a straight wheel with a V-shaped cutting edge. A 1/4 inch or 3/8 inch wheel will work best. First scribe the zigzag line with an aluminum pencil. Then lightly trace the line with the diamond tool. This will leave a shallow groove. Be careful where the long zig meets the 45-degree zags. Once you have a light groove, then you can go back and run over the line again, making it deeper each time. The outer ends of the two long lines can be made wider by rocking the tool against the sidewalls.

Make your grooves as neat as possible, but do not strain. The next step will clean up the line. Use the knife-edge Cratex wheels to sand down the walls and edges. These wheels are abrasives mixed with a rubber substance and work exceptionally well with the quartzes. Pick the medium grade if you buy only one grit. They are made in four different grit sizes. The groove will be smooth and nicely frosted when you finish. Next go to a V-shaped wood wheel the same size as your diamond tool. These are easy to make using any hardwood available—maple for instance. Saw out a 1/8-inch slab and cut 1/2-inch circles from these thin slabs. Mount these wheels on the same 1/8-inch mandrels you are using with the Cratex wheels, so drill a center hole that fits the attaching screw of the mandrel.

Then with a very sharp file, shape the wood wheel to a knife edge; keep the wheel straight and taper the cutting edge. Make several of these. You will use them.

Use diamond compound on the wood wheels. The cheapest way to go is to buy a one-carat vial of 600-grit diamond powder and mix it with two level tablespoons of Vaseline. This is your sanding compound. Apply it sparingly—you don't need much. Go back and forth over the groove with the wood wheel until you have a very delicate frosting.

Be especially careful with the edges. I like to use a second wood wheel with 1200 grit diamond powder, just to be doubly sure that I have a perfect surface. Now you are ready to polish. There are two methods for polishing. Cerium oxide on a felt buff is the preferable one for the quartzes, but it is very difficult to reach the bottom of those grooves with a felt buff. Use either a rock hard knife-edge or the sharp edge of a small straight wheel. The other method is a wood wheel with 50,000-grit diamond. If you go this route, you should use the 1200 grit diamond to complete the sanding stage. Then, after finishing with the 50,000-grit diamond, it is nice to conclude a quartz piece by working it against the felt buff wherever you can. Cerium, for some reason, puts a brighter glitter on quartz than anything else.

While you are working on this carving, especially with the Cratex wheels, you will probably slip a few times, leaving bird tracks on the surface of the cab. The only way to remove these marks is to resand with 600 grit and then repolish. For this reason, I like to process the cab through the 600 sanding stage, then carve it, and then polish everything. That way avoids any duplication. So now you have a beautiful cab with the lightening bolt symbol carved across the surface. They say such a stone gives you the speed of Mercury and the power of Zeus.

HAPPY HANUKAH  
MERRY CHRISTMAS  
JOYOUS NEW YEAR



Graphic from AFMS  
Newsletter 12/04--1/05

## ShowTime 2005

Jan. 15-16, 2005	Fredericksbg, TX	Hill Country Gem & Mineral Show Pioneer Pavilion, Lady Bird Johnson Park
January 22-23	Tyler, TX	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society Rose Garden Center
february 5-6	Panama City, FL	Panama City Gem & Mineral Society American legion Fairgrounds 15th & Sherman Ave. Al Zar, 850-763-0109, aquezpi3@aol.com
February 19-20	Georgetown, TX	Williamson County Gem & Mineral Society Community Center, San Gabriel Park Business Hwy. #81 N. 19th Donald Buell, 512-793-2740
February 19-20	Plainview, TX	Hi Plains Gem & Mineral Society Ollie Liner Center, 79072 Jim Matlock, 806-293-3476
February 26-27	Pasadena, TX	Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society Pasadena Convention Center 7902 Fairmont Parkway, 281-481-1591 <a href="http://www.ghg.net/gpenning/annual.htm">www.ghg.net/gpenning/annual.htm</a>
March 12-13	Corpus Christi, TX	Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society Bayfront Plaza Convention Center 1902 Shoreline Drive Jerrold Simpson 361-851-8788
April 1-3	San Antonio, TX	Southwest Gem & Mineral Society Morris Activity Center, Freeman Coliseum SBC Center parkway, Gate E Bobby Schultz, 210-337-8908
April 30-May 1	Lubbock, TX	Lubbock Gem & Mineral Society Lubbock Memorial Civic Center 1501 6th St. and Ave. Q
May 14-15	Waco, TX	Waco Gem & Mineral Club Fine Arts Bldg., Heart of Texas Fair Complex 4601 Bosque Blvd.
May 28-29	Fort Worth, TX	Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Society Will Rodgers Memorial Center Round-Up Inn

2005		JANUARY				2005	
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	
						1	New Year's Day
2	3	4 7:30 Board Meeting	5 7:30 Mineral Section	6	7	8	11-3 Shop Open
9	10 1:00 Day Light Section	11 7:30 Show Comm.	12 7:30 Faceting Section	13	14	15	10-12 Youth Section 11-3 Shop Open
16	17 7:30 Lapidary Section	18 7:30 Paleo Section	19 7:30 Mineral Section	20	21	22	
23	24	25 7:30 General Meeting	26	27	28	29	11-3 Shop Open
30	31						

2005		FEBRUARY				2005	
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	
		1 7:30 Board Meeting	2 7:30 Mineral Section	3	4	5	10-12 Youth Section 11-3 Shop Open
6	7	8 7:30 Show Comm.	9 7:30 Faceting Section	10	11	12	11-3 Shop Open
13	14 1:00 Day Light Section	15 7:30 Paleo Section	16 7:30 Mineral Section	17	18	19	10-12 Youth Section 11-3 Shop Open
20	21 7:30 Lapidary Section	22 7:30 General Meeting	23	24	25	26	11-3 Shop Open
27	28						



**The BACKBENDER'S  
GAZETTE**  
*The Newsletter of the Houston  
Gem & Mineral Society*

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U.S. POSTAGE  
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PERMIT NO. 303

10805 BROOKLET  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77099  
(281) 530-0942



**SCFMS**

1998 - 1st (Large)  
2000 - 1st (Large)  
2003 - 1st (Large)



**AFMS**

1998 - 2nd (Large)  
2004 - 3rd (Large)



DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE DO NOT DELAY !