



The **BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE**

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

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March 2007



President's Message

*by Matt Dillon
2007 HGMS President*

Great things are going on at our clubhouse! The tools and equipment in our shops are being improved and added to on a fairly regular basis, thanks to those who toil on our behalf! Thank you Neal Immega, Gary Anderson, and Matt Phillips, just to mention three who have made significant efforts over the past several years.



Please come to the clubhouse and use that equipment which you know how to use properly, and ask for help with the equipment on which you've not been trained. And please, don't forget to clean up the area and pay after you are done! Our shop foremen are there to help us learn how to use the machines safely and correctly and to show us new ways—sometimes even better ones—of doing things. That is a much better use of their time than cleaning up our messes! Also, please **DO NOT** continue using any machine in our shop areas that appears to have a problem or that is not operating properly. Find the shop foreman on duty and report the problem to him immediately.

Plans are in the works to add a new room to our clubhouse where dust-causing equipment (such as an air-abrading machine, bead-blaster, etc.) will be located. Such a room allows us to separate that type of activity from other activities requiring a relatively dust-free environment.

Continued on page 4

Program for February 27 General Meeting

*by Matthew Phillips
HGMS 1st Vice-President*

James Russell, an engineer at Toshiba International Corporation, will describe and show photographs of motors manufactured here in Houston that are used in the mining industry. He will describe his personal experiences and also will display photos of equipment in operation both in the United States and Canada. I will assist to ensure that site locations and the type of material mined is described.

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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 months, ¼ page; \$150 for 6 months, 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>.

President's Message continued from page 1

Most of the new keys are handed out, and the usual problem of getting the door to unlock is still experienced by some of us. However, the keys do work, and you may want to get someone who has learned by trial and error how to get the door to unlock if you are repeatedly unsuccessful. Please contact me if you still have not received a new key and you are one whose club-responsibilities necessitates that you have a key. If you are not sure whether you should have one, please ask the person who heads up your section. A list of Section Chairs and their phone numbers is on page 3 of this newsletter.

And most important, don't hesitate to offer suggestions to those of us who are managing the club and its facilities. Without your input things will be overlooked—and some are time-sensitive items, best taken care of sooner than later.

Thanks to all our wonderful volunteers, and remember—we always need more!

January International Gem Show In Houston

by Art Smith

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

artsmithite@msn.com

The International Gem Show was smaller than usual because many of the dealers had already headed to Quartzite, Arizona or are preparing for the Tucson Shows and did not have the time to do the Houston International Gem & Jewelry Show. However, there was still much to see, and my wife and I had a nice walk around both wholesale and retail for over two hours.

Beads again were dominant, but there were not as many dealers as in the October show. Many seemed to be reducing their stock and branching out into other things. Again nonmineral beads such as glass, plastic, ceramic, bone, seeds, and you name it were more prevalent than stone or mineral beads in some booths. Particularly abundant were the transparent mineral beads in smaller sizes temporarily strung on fancy colored thread with tassels on each end and in what seemed like shorter than normal strands. I did not inquire the source or price of such material, but I would not be surprised if it was China, even though similar material has traditionally come from India—but not in such a variety of materials including glass.

The natural stone or mineral beads I saw included some interesting material but nothing startling. Typical was snake skin opal from Africa in muted and blended tones of pale grays and blues. However the patterns and colors were extremely variable, and if you wanted something more uniform, you have to buy an extra strand or two to try and get it. I did not price it, but such material is usually a bit more expensive than the traditional bead rocks or minerals. If there is an abundant supply, the price usually comes down in a fairly short time unless the demand is high.

Frances Arrighi was looking for some 4-mm rhodonite beads, so I said I would see if I could find some since she would not be going to the show. I inquired in both wholesale and retail and soon realized that I would not find any there, but the answers I got

to my questions were most interesting so I kept asking. Many dealers, particularly in wholesale, had no idea what rhodonite looked like or was. One thought they were the same thing as rhodolite garnets and tried to sell me some red garnets even though rhodolite is usually a paler purplish pink. One dealer handed me several strands of yellowish brown transparent beads with a few scattered opaque almost black beads. They were about 4 mm but even though he insisted they were rhodonite, I doubt it.

Another handed me some rhodocrosite beads, but since they had no black in them, I questioned it, and she thought they were the same thing as rhodonite. I told her they were much softer and were a manganese carbonate, and that rhodonite is harder, usually with some black manganese oxides with it. Rhodonite is a manganese silicate. The blank look on her face told me she did not understand or maybe did not care. Actually I found two rhodonite 4 mm strands in one dealer's stock, but they were unacceptable because of poor color and looked more like a jasper than rhodonite. Another dealer had some 4 mm beads, but they were faceted instead of smooth round beads. Why would you facet an opaque mineral? Beats me, but there seem to be more faceted beads than smooth round ones now. They cost more but possibly sell better. One dealer tried to sell me 6 mm beads and insisted they were good. I agreed but said I needed 4 mm, so he shrugged and put them down. So the quest was interesting but unsuccessful.

Obviously a lot of dealers are new to bead selling and do not know their materials. I suppose most of the buyers do not care what they are as long as they look good. This may change when the glass beads are found to scratch easily and to shatter if dropped, or if the buyers eventually learn that what they have is man-made plastic or acrylic when they thought it was natural. Informed buyers usually prefer natural materials for their gemstones even though they may be expensive and not as perfect as the man-made material. I expect that to continue and to also be true for beads, particularly as more people become aware that some materials are natural and some are not. I am not saying that man-made or nonmineral beads should not be used, but I think the buyer and wearer of the beads should know what it is they are wearing around their necks, particularly if there might be any toxins involved.

We bought nothing in the wholesale area and so moved back into the retail area. Some of the most conspicuous items offered for sale were what appeared to be large (baseball size) faceted pieces of blue and colorless glass. I did not price them because I doubt that they were really faceted and are probably formed in a mold and just polished. However, most of the other stuff I saw that these two dealers had was very inexpensive. They had a nicely framed, about 16 by 20 inch, mounted butterfly and moth collection for only \$38! Five years ago I bought much smaller framed butterflies to give to my grand nephews and nieces that cost close to that price.

I noticed a large, 10 by 6 inch, very pale green with hints of pale blue on the backside, carved fluorite flower. It was priced at \$68 dollars and I decided to buy it, but I waited until we saw the rest of the show in case a better one was available elsewhere. When we came back, I examined it closely and saw no apparent damage, so I asked the price again and it had gone down to \$50. So I bought it.

Wali, my Afghani dealer, was not there. He was having trouble getting his recent shipment, which was sent to the wrong port, through customs which has happened before. His assistant tried hard to sell me some junk crystals. I did not even ask the price because they were so bad and mostly worthless to a collector. I was afraid I might have had to laugh at any price he gave me and that would be impolite.

Later, I did pick up some well carved colorful serpentine turtles, the smaller on the back of the larger, from *Nature's Reflection*, owned by club members Tim and Holly Smith.

There were a lot of other less colorful serpentine carvings, some fairly nice, that are very reasonably priced, \$10 dollars for a 5-inch fairly well-carved dragon. Many are sold as serpentine-jade. Just a reminder—most prefixes in front of “jade” mean it is not jade. Others have had their colors enhanced to make them appear old. One dealer had a very lustrous black lion that I asked if it was obsidian. I was a bit horrified when the booth owner said, “No, black jade, expensive, \$180.” So figuring I was interested in cheaper things she steered me to the serpentine carvings. I was not interested in the lion carving, but I would like to have scratched the bottom. Usually jade is not that lustrous, and if it was obsidian (volcanic glass), a knife would have easily scratched the unpolished bottom. Jadeite is harder and would not be scratched, but it usually is composed of interlocking crystals and normally does not take such a brilliant polish. Also, traditionally any material in China can be called jade. The good stuff, referred to as Royal Imperial Jade, comes from Myanmar (Burma), and as far as I know is not indigenous to China. Imports directly to the U.S. from Myanmar are banned because of the political system in power there.

I did get a small frog for my collection. It is from Thailand and is carved from water buffalo horn. It is very light and is dark with very pale brown lined blotches scattered through it and quite attractive.

So with about all I could carry on the long trek back to the car, we decided to leave after more than two hours. It was an interesting afternoon spent warm and away from the cold drizzle outside.

Lexy Bieniek—SCFMS 2007 Honoree!

by Phyllis George

HGMS was recently notified by Ike House, SCFMS Vice-President, that the SCFMS selected Lexy Bieniek to be the 2007 Honoree. The “Honoree” is the person selected by the SCFMS to have the HONOR of nominating the persons who will receive the two SCFMS scholarships in 2007. Lexy will pick two graduate students in an earth science-related field to be the actual recipients. Each graduate student will receive \$2000 per year for two years. Lexy was selected from a field of names recommended for the honor, and Scott Singleton had nominated Lexy.

The information on page 7 explains just what this honor is all about. The article came from the AFMS Web site: <http://www.amfed.org/scholar/histschl.htm>

AFMS Scholarship Foundation Purpose of the Foundation

The object of the Foundation is to accumulate a Fund, and only the income from the Fund is to be used to finance Scholarships. The principal cannot be used for any purpose whatever, hence the usefulness of the Fund is perpetual.

Awards to Beneficiary Students

In 1983, each grant was increased to \$1,500 per year for two years; and the amount was increased to \$2,000 per year for each grant in 1988.

Grants are restricted to graduate students to avoid the possible waste of money on students not committed to Earth Science subjects, or who drop out before graduation. (Any student working toward an advanced degree is presumed to have definitely decided to follow that field for his/her lifetime vocation, insofar as such decision is possible). Since our joint interests lie in that field, grants are restricted to Earth Science students.

Selection of Beneficiary Students

Until 1972, one person of prominence in the Earth Science field was selected from among twelve nominees, two from each Regional Federation. That person, normally associated with a prominent University or College, selected the schools, and the students who received the grants. Since 1972, each participating Regional Federation has selected their own Honorary Award Winner who then selected the school(s) and assisted with the selection of the student, or students, who then received the scholarship grant(s).

This indirect method has served our purpose perfectly in that it benefits needy students, yet avoids the enormous task and expense of receiving, sifting through, and evaluating applications from hundreds of applicants, which would otherwise be necessary if selections were made by ourselves in the conventional manner.

The Fund

The market value of the investments of the Foundation as of October 31, 2004 stands at just over \$900,000. With the exception of a few hundred dollars received from outside organizations, the entire amount has been donated by Earth Science Clubs and Societies throughout the entire nation and by individual members of such groups

Goals for the Future

Our first goal was to establish a Fund of \$50,000 which would provide an annual scholarship in Earth Science. This goal was reached in 1968. Having attained that goal, do we stop when such attractive vistas and horizons appeared? By no means!

The Fund has now achieved over fifteen times its first goal, and we are providing two 2-year scholarship grants of \$2,000 each year in each of the six Regional Federations. What do we see ahead? Wonderful additional opportunities for service and help for more and more students.

Remember, the Fund itself is not consumed—only the income from it. Whatever is in the Fund keeps working year after year, indefinitely into the future. The larger it grows, the more good it can do—not only once, but time after time as the years go by.

First written by W.H. DeHeui President (10/69);
updated by Glenn Lee, President (10/83);
and updated (7/93) by Louellen Montgomery, President
and updated (12/04) by Dee Holland, AFMS Scholarship Foundation President
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<http://www.amfed.org/scholar/histschl.htm>

Report on the January General Meeting

by Matt Phillips

HGMS 1st Vice President

The scheduled presentation for the January General Meeting was to be about Moon Dust. Richard Sanchez expected to make the presentation, but asked for a rain check. Upon a suggestion from Matt Dillon to do a show and tell, I decided to present information about a once-popular lapidary project of using clear casting resin to make coffee tables, lamps, and serving trays. I brought in a number of such items to display during my talk.

My background with my parents as a pebble pup in the 1960s is that we traveled the western United States during a time of exploding popular interest about rock hounding. We would travel, load up hundreds of pounds of material (rocks), take it home, and figure out what to do with it. Like many of our lapidary friends, we purchased equipment, we also built from kits, and soon slab saws cutting agate ran daily. It was exciting to see what the next rock would reveal, but after some years of such activity, most of the collected items looked like stored boxes of sliced bread.

Here we had a wealth of material—we liked thin translucent items which when observed in light provided endless entertainment exploring the beauty of nature. Further work on the material would destroy much that was revealed, and that is when development of our use of clear casting resin began. We wanted to display the material just as it looked when coming out of the saw, wet and glistening in the light.

We were introduced to clear casting resin when we applied fiberglass to a plywood and frame shrimp boat built for pleasure. My father observed how clear the liquid was, and he studied its properties to see if he could use it to make thin, light-weight panels encasing agate slabs. The vision was to allow light to pass through, with no fill between the pieces, to help brighten the final presentation. The problems with the plastic—it is subject to easy scratching, becomes brittle, cracks in direct sunlight, and yellows with time—did not deter him from framing many items and backing them with florescent lighting to be displayed in home decor.

I thank you all for the warm reception you gave my presentation and the questions you asked about the process and the equipment required. If you would like more detail, I am quite willing to expand on the topic.

What's a Rockhound To Do When Snow Covers the Ground?

by Sigrid Stewart
2007 Show Chairman

I had a chance to look at some Alaskan rocks, but only in rock and gift shops! The week of January 29 I reported to my company's Anchorage office to work on software configuration, and I was able to do a little sight-seeing and shopping despite the work load. Anchorage had more snow this winter than they had in years, but some of it melted the week I was there due to a Chinook or warm spell, so I had unseasonably warm weather during my visit.

At night I checked out galleries and gift shops to see Alaskan Native art, mineral specimens, ivory, jade, and amber. I sampled some pretty good Alaskan Amber Ale, too. One day at lunch I was able to visit the gift shop in the Alaska Native Medical Center which featured crafts by Native Alaskans. Many beautiful ivory and soapstone carvings caught my eye, as did straw and baleen baskets. The prices are much better than at the art galleries, but still not low!

On Saturday I visited a rock shop I had spotted, Stars of Alaska, and bought a pretty rock with manganese oxide dendrites. I was also able to visit The Alaska Bead Company, a bead shop (yes, they have bead fanatics there too), and the Alaska Fur Exchange where I picked up a couple of Wrangell Island garnet specimens before driving south to Alyeska for a half-day's skiing. There are so many things to see in the area, I hope I can visit again.

In Our Library

by Art Smith
HGMS Librarian

I am a bit behind in shelving new books. I give the new journals some priority so most of them are on the shelves. The books these days often require some major shifting on the shelves, so they can take a lot more time.

Lithographe which publishes the English version of the German *Extra lapis* has come out with a nice new book on opal which includes all types but particularly the precious opal. It is on the shelf under Lapidary, Gemstones, Opal, Lithiographie. These books are not in the first room under Lapidary but are on the new shelves in the second room, and they are the only ones with red library labels.

Another journal which has a lot of data on new gem materials is the GIA, *Gems and Gemology*. The major articles are at times quite technical, but the items under Gem News are pretty interesting. The newest issue, Volume 42 no. 4 (Winter 2006) has a lot of new finds and interesting news. Diopside and uvite from Afghanistan, sunset quartz from Brazil, bicolored beryl from Namibia, moonstone and tourmaline from Madagascar, copper in jade from California, etc. plus an article on opal from Zimapan, Hidalgo, Mexico. So look through it and see.

We will probably have two more silent auctions of Irene Offeman's minerals and

many more of her fossils. Some nice specimens of both have been obtained by winning bidders.

I am planning another book sale in April of library duplicates and of books we do not have the shelf space for. Club members will get to pay half the marked price on them. These are good books, and they need a home. I don't want to load down the beams of the loft too much, so let's find them all good homes.



Mineral Section



by Steve Blyskal, Chairperson & Dean Lagerwall, Assistant Chairperson

The Mineral Section meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 7:30 in the HGMS Clubhouse. All are welcome.

Upcoming Meeting Topics

Wednesday, March 7: Clear Lake Show & Tell. Bring in your recent acquisitions from the Clear Lake Show (February 24-25). Let us drool over your acquisitions. Refreshments will be provided.

Wednesday, March 21: Volcanoes of the Deep Sea. This DVD presentation will allow you to venture with a team of scientists 12,000 feet beneath the ocean's surface on a search for a living fossil—an elusive creature that lived hundreds of millions of years before the dinosaurs. You will explore astounding undersea volcanic habitats filled with strange new creatures and landscapes. Take this opportunity to unravel the secrets of a dynamic habitat where life is fueled by the planet's internal fires—a place that may hold the key to finding life on other worlds. Refreshments will be provided.

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

Sir Paul Howard, an Australian Agate Expert

Sir Paul Howard was the guest speaker at the special Mineral Meeting on Wednesday February 14.

“Sir Paul Howard was made Knight of the Royal Order for his research into formations and inclusions in agate and quartz gemstones, also his contribution to the arts and crafts by HRH Prince Leonard of the Hutt River Principality (a small community on the Australian Continent) in September of 2002. He has been fossicking at Agate Creek Fossicking Area since 1984 and has always specialized in agate. He belongs to two Lapidary Clubs in Queensland and two in America. Sir Paul is the principal of the Gold Coast School of Wirecraft.” (Taken directly from Sir Paul's book, “Fossicking for Queensland Agate”).

Sir Paul Howard was born in 1934 in Sydney, New South Wales, educated at a private college, worked in the auto manufacturing business for awhile, then in the wine industry and hospitality business until he migrated to the Gold Coast in Queensland in 1970 after a broken marriage. He remarried and now lives at Elanora (a suburb of the Gold

Coast located 60 miles south of Brisbane, the Capitol of Queensland). Here he prospered in the real estate business for 17 years then went back into the restaurant business again. He retired from regular work in 1982.

Since then he joined the two Lapidary clubs, did a geology course at the Queensland TAFE College, and specialized in agate. At one time he had a part time job of driving Australian tour groups around America to the big gem shows. During 10 years of this he traveled through 43 states of America and most of Canada—even as far as the Arctic circle in Alaska. He has traveled around the world 6 times and visited 53 countries. During these travels he had many opportunities to purchase agates and learn about them.

Since 1984, Sir Paul Howard has specialized in agate from Australian and New Zealand locations. He has pioneered research into formations and inclusions in agates for over 20 years and has presented his research through slide programs at many National gem shows in Australia, New Zealand, and America as well as at many club meetings. He has written many articles on the subject for many magazines. In 2004 he had a special presentation at the American National show at Syracuse, New York. Because he has written the only book in the world on Australian agate, he was invited to display a showcase of Queensland agate at the biggest agate show ever assembled in the world (at Munich last year). He will have a special display of Queensland Agates at the 2007 Tucson Gem and Mineral Show.

Other interests over the years include wire wrapped jewelry, philately, photography, wood turning, square dancing, squash, golf, and sailing racing catamarans.

Members of the HGMS are being afforded the unique opportunity to hear a world renowned Australian Agate expert. It promises to be both entertaining and educational. Make your plans early so as not to miss Sir Paul Howard's presentation.

(Editor's Note: I hope you were present for Sir Paul's presentation at the February 14 Mineral Section meeting. It occurred while this issue of the BBG was still at the printer's shop.)



Paleo Section Minutes

January 16

by Stanley Perkins

Paleo Chair



The January meeting began with a blast—a blast of cold air. Don't you know it—the heaters in the meeting room wouldn't come on! If this happens to you, use the two ovens to warm the kitchen and open the door to the shop. I would personally like to thank all the sturdy diehards who made the meeting! *(Editor's Note: The heater is now repaired and works fine.)*

I brought the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Because of the weather, the program was first priority. Lexie Bieniek found an excellent speaker in Dr. James Westgate from Lamar University. He is a vertebrate paleontologist working on a special site in the Laredo area. He has uncovered a Nipa Palm Mangrove habitat that currently is found

only in SE Asia. He also has found a new species of primate and a new bat species. In addition, the earliest tarpon discovered was found at this site. The site has vastly expanded our knowledge of the mammal populations of this period. We hope to have him back to give talks on some of his other work.

The business meeting was short and sweet. We discussed the Texas-type fossil project of Neal Immega and the need for a secure place to store the fossils from the Offman collection. Neal also told of a 10-foot by 90-foot dino trackway that we plan on excavating and removing. It will be used in the new dino wing of the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

The field trip to Jacksboro will be rescheduled for the month of February. A field trip to Whiskey Bridge is scheduled for the April 15 weekend. A trip to Brownwood will be scheduled for spring break. Anyone interested in going to High Island in late January or early February for a short collecting trip, please let Neal know.

Terry Brawner gave a quick Board report about not parking on the north side of the building for the duration, new keys, and a new "dirty" room where machines creating dust will be isolated. The next meeting will be on micropaleontology, so come prepared to learn some new techniques. Microscopes and equipment will be available for a hands-on experience.

General Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2007

by Denise Bicknell

HGMS Secretary

Meeeting called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Matt Dillon, President.

Education Committee: David Hawkins stated that he is scheduling a Fabrication class on Saturdays and has eight students. He stated that he had taken out a series of Nickel Saver ads and hopes to get new students from the ads. If you are interested in signing up for classes, please get a \$25 check to David and identify which class you wish to take.

Show Committee: Sigrid Stewart said that committee members attended an Educators' event at HMNS last weekend and that new advertising pads are purchased.

Section Reports

- **Paleo:** Neal Immega stated that in spite of the ice, they had a meeting. The topic was Laredo vertebrates.
- **Mineral:** Steve Blyskal reported that the last meeting was a presentation on Mimetite, Pyromorphite, and Vanadinite by Sam Norwood. The next meeting will be on February 14 rather than on the regularly scheduled date of February 7. The February 21 meeting will be a report on the Tucson show. The first meeting in March will be a Clear Lake show report. A swap area will be available at the Clear Lake show for those interested; it is on a first-come first-served basis.

- **Day Light:** Sunday Bennett reported that the February and March meetings will be on fusing glass. The glass will be provided, and the materials will include dichroic glass.
- **Faceting:** Rusty Bennett stated that the Section will have a joint meeting with the Mineral Section on February 14. Sir Paul Howard from Australia will give a presentation on Queensland Agate. The Faceting Section will have a short meeting before the presentation to pick the stones to be used in faceting a Stone of the Month. A Sears All-in one unit was donated and will be auctioned off. If you want to facet in a dust-free environment, set up in the main meeting room.
- **Lapidary:** Kathy Konkel reported that the Section is experiencing large numbers at their meetings. The January meeting was a presentation by David Hawkins on no-solder bezels. The meeting on February 19 will be bead making using a bead mill, and Wayne Barnett will demonstrate. Lapidary templates are still available.

The Lapidary Section will host a huge auction on March 24. To date they have over 200 lots including lapidary rough, faceting rough, and tools. There will be a silent auction at 11 a.m. followed by a spaghetti luncheon at 1 p.m. The live auction will begin at 2 p.m. The Section will accept additional donations prior to the live auction. Please label all materials with their original locality if possible.

- **Field Trips:** Neal Immega reported that a trip to a coal mine near College Station is in the works. The date is to be announced. HMNS is trying to acquire a dinosaur trackway found near Comfort, Texas. The plan is to excavate and remove the trackway. Help will be needed for the excavation.
- **Membership:** Beverly Mace reports that it is that time of year again, and dues are due. Dues for a single member are \$30, and it's \$40 for a couple. Reminders will be mailed soon.
- **Newsletter/Web site:** Phyllis George asks that if you find a missing or broken link on the Web site to please notify her. The due date for all newsletter articles is the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month.
- **Youth:** Beverly Mace said they had 21 youth at the last meeting. They made fossil jewelry and learned about the fossil cleaning station.
- **Library/Auction:** Monthly auctions end at 7:30 p. m. sharp.

Announcements

- Sunday Bennett reported that a new Bead Section is forming. They will meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Their first meeting will be on January 31 so they do not have to wait a month to have a meeting. They will be learning a spiral stitch at the first meeting.
- Karen Burns reports that a metals purchase is being readied. The order will be made after they have accumulated 100 oz. so they are eligible to receive a price break, but they would like to make the order on January 31. If you want to order metal, please e-mail her.

- Matt Phillips reports that the February General Meeting topic will be Toshiba motors used in a mining application. He has requested lots of photos for the program.

Show 'n Tell

- Sunday Bennett showed a selection of fossils collected by Beverly Mace, Diane Sisson, and herself on a trip they made to Wimberley, Boerne, and Bandera, Texas. They reported that the Alamo Rock Shop is moving from its present location on I-10 to a location in town.
- Ron Gehringer showed a selection of dinosaur teeth.
- Matt Dillon showed a selection of agates and jaspers from the George West area.
- John Mitscherling showed some dichroic glass that he made.

Door Prize: This month's winner was Barbara Zielinska. She won a selection of fossil jewelry made by the Youth Section and a beaded bracelet donated by Diane Sisson.

Program: The scheduled program on Moon Dust had to be cancelled. It was replaced by a Show and Tell program by Matt Phillips.

HGMS Board Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2007

by Denise Bicknell

HGMS Secretary

X	President	Matt Dillon	X	Faceting Rep.	Phyllis George
X	1 st Vice President	Matt Phillips	X	Lapidary Rep.	Karen Burns
X	2 nd Vice President	Beverly Mace	X	Mineral Rep.	Art Smith
X	Past President	Scott Singleton	X	Paleontology Rep.	Terry Brawner
	Treasurer	Lowell Stouder	X	Day Light Rep.	Sunday Bennett
X	Secretary	Denise Bicknell			

Meeting Called to Order at 7:30 by Matt Dillon, President

Approval of January Minutes: Done via e-mail.

Treasurer's Report: Lowell Stouder was absent; no treasurer's report was given.

There was a discussion about the Kemp donation and distribution of proceeds from the auction. The Lapidary Section will forward to the HGMS treasury money owed Russell Kemp for his 50% of the proceeds from the Kemp collection auction. The club will purchase all metal that was part of the collection at the fair market value as of January 6. A decision needs to be made whether to retain the turquoise as specimens for display or to sell it. As soon as the Kemp donation distribution is complete, Matt Dillon will see that a check is written to Mr. Kemp.

A document was presented to the Board concerning the handling of future donations.

Scott Singleton moved to accept the document, and Terry Brawner seconded the motion. The motion was passed, but slight modifications will be made to the document's wording by Art Smith.

Committee and Section Reports

- **Lapidary:** An auction will be held on March 24. There will be a silent auction and a spaghetti lunch followed by the main auction.
- **Day Light:** The February and March meetings will be on glass fusion. This could possibly work into a class if there is enough interest.
- **Youth:** A record 32 youth were in attendance at the last meeting.
- **Faceting:** Next meeting will be a combined meeting with the Mineral Section on February 14 for a presentation on Australian agates by Sir Paul Howard. Rusty Bennett is working on a "Stone of the Month" program for the Faceting Section.
- **Programs:** James Russell will present a program on Toshiba Motors in the Mining Industry at the February General Meeting.
- **Show:** Sigrid Stewart reported that the Show Committee is still looking for a Special Exhibit for the 2007 show. The Ice Age is a possible topic. A proposed 2007 show budget was presented along with a 2006 show analysis. A discrepancy between ticket and dealer monies is due to the holdover from the 2005 show cancellation. Karen Burns moved the Board accept the proposed 2007 show budget. Art Smith seconded it, and the motion passed. A copy of the 2006 report and the 2007 budget is filed with the minutes. Sigrid received information in the mail about nominating a volunteer for recognition. Matt Dillon will look into it.
- **Shop and Clubhouse:** Tom Wright presented the Board with plans for a proposed Air Abrasives Room. The new room will relieve overcrowding, and Classroom 2 will become a dust-free environment. Only the fossil prep equipment will be moved to the new room; the rest of the equipment in Classroom 2 will remain there. The plans call for the room to be built where the stairs currently are and for the stairs to be moved over. The double doors into the shop will not be affected. The room will be load-bearing, thereby adding new storage upstairs. The room could be completed in approximately three weekends. It was moved and seconded to accept these plans. The motion was tabled until the next meeting to give Section Representatives time to present the plans to their Sections for feedback. A copy of the plans is filed with the minutes.

There was some discussion about oil saturating the air ducts and presenting a hazard. Tom Wright suggested that the solution is to switch to a different oil that doesn't mist and then replace the ducts. The oil costs about two and half times more than the oil presently being used.

- **Beading Group:** The new beading group met before the January General Meeting. There were 10 in attendance. They decided to meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. The Board will not consider making the group a

formal section until they have been up and running for several months, possibly a year.

- **Membership:** Dues are due. Beverly Mace reported that she sent the dues notices out on February 5 and that dues are starting to come in.

Old and New Business

- Matt Dillon heard from Carol Thompson about the North side parking situation. There is no mention of parking in the deed records. Matt Dillon will check with the building owner about the language used in the rental agreement to see if the renter has the right to prevent others from using the parking lot.
- The main door lock is now changed, and keys have been distributed. A list will be maintained by Matt Dillon. One new key was given out.
- Matt Phillips obtained one quote for the HGMS sign for the front of the building. The quote was too high. Matt will continue looking for quotes and will also look for other options.
- Matt Dillon presented a letter from Neal Immega requesting \$300 to purchase a cabinet and some plastic boxes in which to store a Texas fossil collection. Karen Burns moved to grant his request; Phyllis George seconded it, the motion passed. A copy of the request is filed with the minutes.
- A heating problem in the main meeting room was fixed on January 17 for slightly under \$600.00.
- The outside lights have been purchased and installed according to Tom Wright. The light on the North side is not working now.
- The report from the Committee on Abuse Prevention is not ready.
- Beverly Mace was asked to look into finding candidates to be Assistant Treasurer.
- Robert Wolf volunteered to serve as another shop foreman.

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Tips 'n Hints

via The Rockcollector 1/ 2006 and The Rockpile 2/2007

(Editor's Note: I have not verified this information. Use it at your own risk.)

Solder Flow: To prevent solder from flowing to a different joint or different metal, paint the area where you do not want the solder to flow with typist's correction fluid. Rouge, wax, or other things will also stop solder flow, but the correction fluid is cheap, easy to see, and comes with its own applicator.

Beading: When knotting a beaded necklace, take a headpin or eyepin (preferably of non-flexible metal) and tie a single knot around the pin. Move the pin and single knot to the spot next to the bead. It gets a nice knot every time.

Soapstone: There is another way of finishing soapstone that we heard the Chinese used. Heat the finished article at 200°F for an hour. Remove from the oven and apply

a coat of paste wax. A jade effect results.

Dryer Lint: Take lint from your clothes dryer's lint catcher and add it to the polishing compound for tumbling. It speeds up the polish and prevents chipping.

Liquid detergent: Add a couple tablespoons of liquid detergent to your cutting oil. If your saw has a plastic lid, this will be the first time ever that you will be able to see through the top after cutting your slab.

Algae and lichen: Remove algae and lichen from your specimen by soaking it in ammonia and water.

Travel Channel's Newest Show Is "Must See TV" For Rockhounds!

by Daniel Jones, Midland G&MS Editor

from Midland Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter 1/2007

(BBG Editor's Note: I've modified some information for the Houston area.)

Best Places to Find Cash and Treasures at first doesn't really sound like a show that should appeal to rockhounds who don't own a metal detector and a gold pan. However, here are just some of the items that host Becky Worley ventured out to find: **amethyst, aquamarines, diamonds, fish fossils, fluorescent minerals, gold, megalodon teeth, meteorites, opals, sapphires, sunstones, and thunder eggs (geodes).** And I can hear some politically incorrect MCPs out there wondering about the show's host. Well, let me tell you that the host of this show jumps right in and does the diggin' in the dirt just like the big boys do! So what's the reason to watch the show other than maybe get some hints or tips on finding some of these items? How about finding out just how much these treasures are worth. And yes, that even includes the thunder eggs (geodes) found in Deming, New Mexico! At the end of each episode host Becky Worley takes the item that was found to a certified appraiser who prices the item for her. Ready to watch it now? OK!

Best Places to Find Cash and Treasures can be found on Tuesdays at 9:00 p.m. on the Travel Channel, channel 62 on Houston's Time Warner cable television.

Tuesday, February 20 features **Amethyst** at 9 p.m. and the **Civil War** at 9:30.

Tuesday, February 27 features **Aquamarine** at 9 p.m. and **Sapphires** at 9:30.

Don't have cable or satellite TV? Missed an episode or you want more? Then just go to a computer and find their Web site at www.travelchannel.com/cashandtreasures. When you get there, click on "Treasure Hunt Toolkits." This brings you to a long list of the items (treasures) found in each of the show's episodes. Scroll down the listing and when you see anything interesting to you, click on either the name of the item or its picture. This brings up the "Treasure Hunt Toolkit" for that item (treasure). Each Toolkit gives the exact location where the show's host went to discover each episode's treasure with latitude and longitude GPS information, addresses, phone numbers, hours of operation, cost, and—when available—a Web site address. Each Toolkit also tells you what you need to bring with you when you go to search for each treasure yourself. There is a brief but informative "How-To Guide" along with blogs from the host and the producers, appraiser information, and even message boards where other viewers

of the show leave their own stories of hunts for treasures. The message boards are read by people with the show, and they encourage the public to give them ideas about where to go to film future episodes. There are also slideshows and a couple of games.

AFMS President's Message

by Dr. Robert Carlson

AFMS President

from AFMS Newsletter 2/2007

As I sit here at my desk, with the house surrounded by over a foot of snow and another foot predicted, I have a chance to reflect on the finances of the AFMS. We are in good shape.

Our last dues increase was in 1994, over a decade ago. During that decade, we increased the level of services. We went from mailing two issues of the AFMS newsletter to each club to three. We started travel reimbursement for the President or President-Elect to attend Regional Federation Shows (previously the AFMS Presidents attended as many Regional Shows as their pocketbooks would allow). We initiated travel reimbursement for key Committee Chairpersons to the AFMS Meeting. The AFMS Program Competition has expanded dramatically to provide high quality videos for each Regional Federation to enhance their Program Libraries. The Juniors Program provides a series of badges to Juniors who complete prescribed projects. We have established a Judges Training Program where the AFMS pays the tuition for one member from each Regional Federation, each year.



The cost of nearly everything has gone up in the past decade. Postal rates have increased by about one-third, which means that our communication costs have risen. Although transportation costs have nearly doubled, our payment structure limits the amount that the AFMS can reimburse; so much of that increase is borne by those who travel. Some of the other miscellaneous expenses that have increased are the audit fees, treasurer bonding fees, and even business card costs.

So, how can we expand services in the face of rising costs, while not raising dues? There are really two answers. The first is that many of the people who serve the AFMS do not submit their expenses for reimbursement. They prefer to donate both their time and their money. The second answer is the Endowment fund.

What is so significant about the Endowment fund? The Endowment fund was established to provide income for the general fund of the AFMS to help stave off a dues increase. Only the interest from the Endowment fund can be used for AFMS expenses.

The original tenets of the Endowment fund specified that no interest could be used from the fund until it reached the magical figure of \$100,000. I wasn't around when the Endowment fund was started, but I was at the announcement that the magic figure

had been reached. I can't remember when or where the announcement was made, but I believe that Henry Bonar made the announcement. Since that time, the restricted funds (read **principal**) have grown, and the unrestricted funds (read **interest**) have been used for special projects, to supplement the general fund, or to be put back into the restricted fund category.

So my message here is that, if you want to avoid a dues increase, support the Endowment fund. One of the easiest ways is to support the annual Endowment Fund Drawing which you'll hear about in future issues of this newsletter. If you can't donate something as a prize, buy a ticket. Buy several tickets.

Be Safe—Be Well

by Don Monroe, Chair

AFMS Safety Committee

from the AFMS Newsletter 10/2006

Ride Rockhounds, Ride

At the recent American Federation of Mineralogical Societies annual meeting hosted by the Southeast Federation, our safety committee activities received a lot of positive feedback and some very good suggestions for future safety articles were shared. Many of the comments dealt with travel issues, and some of them were so good that I offer the following for your consideration.



A couple of people cited situations involving the tires on large trucks. If you are alongside or directly behind the vehicle when a tire ruptures, the force of the explosion can damage your vehicle or cause you to lose control. The large rubber tire cap, which you may encounter on the road, is often referred to as an “alligator” and can be a real road hazard if you are unable to avoid contact and run over it.

When do you get out of your vehicle? We have been told that staying in the vehicle is the better course of action during an electrical storm. We are also encouraged to leave our vehicle and take refuge in a ditch or sturdy structure when a tornado is sighted or deemed eminent. If we suffer auto damage or a flat tire, we are encouraged to leave the vehicle and get behind a guardrail or in some other safe area. Many victims are hurt or killed by other vehicles passing near. I well remember stopping in the middle of a city street to retrieve a ball for some kids and only realized the danger when a passing car brushed my coat. I know—stupid move.

Do you tow a trailer or other vehicle? It has taken me awhile to believe that just a little bit of excess speed can result in a totally unstable rig. We often see trailers that sway to the point that we are really hesitant to pass them which means that we are seeing either excess speed or a poorly loaded trailer.

Are there actions we can take to improve our odds? I definitely think so and I will share a couple of my favorites.

- First, prepare for your trip with good maps, a GPS if you know how to use it, and one of the Exit Guide books. The books can be really helpful if you drive a diesel vehicle. There are some parts of the country where fuel can be hard to find.
- Select a vehicle that really suits your intended purpose. I always feel safer in large, heavier vehicles. I know it may use a bit more fuel, but it can give you the edge when you have a confrontation with another vehicle or a large animal.
- I often read articles in magazines and newspapers that recommend a refresher driving course for us older drivers. I have not done that yet, but I plan to in the near future.

Update on the National Parks Service's America the Beautiful Pass

*by John Spunaugle
from AFMS Newsletter 2/2007*

Legislation passed in the waning days of the 2005 Congressional session established a new program of passes for the National Parks Service. Here's the information on the new program that went into effect on January 1 of this year.



Dubbed "America the Beautiful," these passes will be needed to use certain facilities and access certain areas on public land. (If you're a casual user, say you only visit one or two parks once or twice per year, you will still be able to pay for park use on an individual use basis) The new program replaces the Golden Eagle, Golden Age, and the Golden Access Passports as well as the National Parks Pass. Existing passes will remain valid until expired, lost, or stolen. This means the lifetime passes will be valid unless lost or stolen at which time they will need to be replaced.

Cost of the four different passes in the new interagency program are:

1. A new annual interagency pass costing \$80: For visitors to multiple federal sites, the pass offers unlimited coverage of entrance and standard amenity recreation fees for a specific period of time, typically a year, beginning from the date of sale.
2. A \$10 lifetime senior pass for U.S. citizens 62 or over.
3. A free lifetime access pass for citizens with permanent disabilities.
4. A new, free annual volunteer pass for volunteers acquiring 500 hours of service on a cumulative basis.

Information on the new passes can be found on the Internet at <www.doi.gov/news/06_News_Releases/061205.html>

Conservation & Legislation

by Izzie Burns

AFMS Conservation Chair

from AFMS Newsletter 2/2007

Let's all give Jon Spunaugle a big thank you for his great job in keeping us informed over the past several years about legislative activities that effect our hobby. He always explained the situation and encouraged AFMS members to become involved. I hope that he will continue to share with us his knowledge of wilderness and national lands legislation.

The American Lands Access Association (ALAA) is an excellent way to follow what is happening in our collecting areas. This group was formed several years ago as an independent organization to provide an opportunity for people interested in the earth sciences to know what was happening, to become involved, and to be able to give feedback on land issues. As a 501(C)(4) organization, ALAA can be involved in lobbying our elected officials—something our local clubs, as 501(C)(3) organizations, are prohibited from doing.

In a previous article, Jon mentioned the passage of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (RAT) which approves the charging of fees to manage government lands. I served on the DAC some years ago and served on a committee to study fees for public use. Their approach was somewhat different from the National Forest experimental programs in that all fees for public land use would be returned to the area where it was collected and be used to improve the area to benefit the users of the specific area and protect the land. This makes it very important for us to have friends of rockhounding volunteering to serve on RAC. Applications are accepted by BLM, National Forest Services, and National Monuments each year. I would like to encourage more of our members to check with these groups and seek information about RAC applications, meetings, etc.

Out of 24 wilderness bill proposals introduced in the last Congress, only four passed both houses and are signed into law. I must state that one of those granted wilderness protection for 275,000 acres of federal land in Humboldt Co., CA. This was less than 15% of the acreage in the original bill that was introduced. This area consists of 26 miles of beach area which has mountains in the background. The other three bills affected areas in Idaho and Montana. Some of the bills that were defeated will be reintroduced in the next session of Congress. We must be vigilant!

The Bureau of Land Management presented awards to the Plains Exploration Co. of Los Angeles, to Chevron Corp. of Bakersfield, and to Matris Exploration Co. for their efforts to protect our environment. It is good to know that companies continue to work and also protect the lands. As rockhounds, we respect the government lands and do not destroy their beauty.

There is a need to continue the work to keep our lands open so future generations can enjoy mountains, study geology, and find new minerals, rocks, fossils, and meteorites.

Join ALAA, apply to become an RAC member, and find time to attend RAC meetings. You do not have to be a member of the committee to attend their meetings. Write to your Congressmen with your encouragement to keep public lands open.

The membership fee for ALAA is \$25 per year. For more information, watch the ALAA Web site <www.amlands.org> or contact me at <isnbil@aol.com>

George Browne—In Memoriam

*by Carolyn Weinberger
from AFMS Newsletter 2/2007*

George Browne, the AFMS and SCFMS Boundaries Chair passed away on Tuesday, January 2 at the age of 71. He had been ill for some time.

George was a familiar figure at AFMS and South Central Federation gatherings. He served as SCFMS President for two years and as District VP and Safety Chair in more recent years. George was a “doer,” not a lurker. He served in almost every office for both the Austin Gem & Mineral Club and the Williamson County Gem & Mineral Club. He also was a member of the Rollin’ Rock Club where he most recently served as Supreme Vice President and then as President. George was a character who always had a unique story to tell and a great passion for life.

In 2000 the South Central Federation awarded him with their Golden Sparkplug Award in recognition of his many services to the Federation including organization of the Federation Insurance Program.

He retired several years ago as Scientific Director for the Lab of Public Safety in Austin. While there, he was instrumental in setting up the forensic laboratory. His talents, inquisitiveness, and dedication were unique and did not go unnoticed at work or by his wide circle of friends.

George is survived by his wife JoAnn, son Harold, daughter Nancy, and grand-daughter Shelby Jo.

Contributions in his memory may be made to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation.

Let Me Whet Your Appetite for the 2007 AFMS Convention!

*by Howie Whiting
from AFMS Newsletter 2/2007*

Afew of the special activities that we’ll have at the 2007 Convention this year in Roswell include...

**New Mexico Minerals
Parade of States
Field Trips
AFMS 60th Anniversary**

Let me whet your appetite:

- New Mexico is well known for its fabulous mineral wealth. On Friday afternoon we’ll have a **seminar on the Minerals of New Mexico** moderated by Dr.

Virgil Lueth of the New Mexico Bureau of Mines. All speakers at the seminar are past recipients of the AFMS Scholarship Foundation Honorary Awards.

- In addition to the competitive and noncompetitive exhibits associated with the RMFMS and AFMS Conventions, we'll also have a **special display that we call the "Parade of States."** Rocky Mountain Federation State Directors are encouraged to enter a display of their state rocks and minerals. A cash award of \$25 will be given to the best display. Here's your chance to see the wealth of the Rocky Mountain Federation.
- **Field trips** are being planned for both during and after the show. These include **two trips during the show** to hunt for "Pecos Valley Diamonds" **and a three-day trip after the conclusion of the show** to several sites west of Roswell. We'll have more information on these trips later this spring, but if you are interested in going on any or all, please fill out the "Waiver of Liability" form included in the February AFMS Newsletter and send it in with your registration.
- **AFMS 60th Anniversary:** We're planning to have a special "Birthday Bash" for the AFMS on Thursday night at the time reserved for the Cracker Barrel. Shirley Leeson and her committee are planning several surprises for this event, and we know you won't want to miss it.

All the registration forms and information on the host motel for the convention are printed in the February 2007 AFMS newsletter starting on page 9, or you can download them from the AFMS Web site <www.amfed.org/show2007.htm>.

Mark your calendar and make your plans. The Roswell Convention (June 7–10, 2007) is one that you won't want to miss!

****Host Hotel****

Sally Port Inn
200 N. Main St., Roswell, NM
505-622-6430
\$78.30 per person (up to 4 per room)
Includes breakfast and tax

Be sure to ask for "AFMS Show" when you make your reservations.



Charoite

*from Wonder Works, Cambria, CA
Via Jax Gems 7/05, Breccia 9/05, and others*

Charoite is the most valuable of the colored stones from Russia. Since its discovery in 1976 in the Chary River basin in Siberia, Russia, charoite has been widely prized for its exquisite color which ranges from dark lavender to an intense blue violet. Inclusions of black aegirineaugite and clear and light green microcline, along with sprays of metallic orange tinaksite, give tremendous character and variety to charoite.

When first discovered, it was thought that charoite was a purple type of the rare mineral canasite. However, testing done by a team of Russian geologists led by V.P. Rogova proved that charoite was indeed a new mineral. Due to her work, it was recognized as such by the commission on New Mineral Names in 1976.

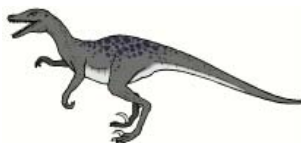
Charoite first found its way to the U.S. in 1978 and caused quite a stir. Love at first sight is not an uncommon reaction to charoite, and this was the case for many folks. Due to the difficulty in getting the highest quality charoite out of Russia, the supply was spotty during the 1980s.

Much charoite brought over from Russia in the past has had so many black inclusions that it is not suitable for cabochons and beads although it looks quite stunning when made into something larger, like a vase or box. Lately we have been getting the best quality charoite out of Russia and we hope this continues, but due to unstable conditions in Russia and the world market, we cannot count on it.

Charoite's unique beauty has resulted in its use as a gemstone and an ornamental stone for making vases, dishes, cups, and other fine pieces. Due to severe weather conditions, mining only occurs in the months of August and September, and helicopters must be used to transport it from the deposit site. To date, the deposit remains unique.

A metamorphic stone formed by complex radiation between alkalic rocks and marble, charoite occurs as large masses of interlocking crystals associated with several other rare minerals including miserite, canasite, pectolite, and others. Its hardness is about 6 on the Mohs scale.

In the years since its discovery, the Russian people have developed such a love for charoite that it is now considered their most cherished colored stone. This is another reason it is difficult to obtain best quality charoite and why it costs a bit more than some other colored stones. Aptly named, the root of the word "charoite" means "charming" or "magical" in Russian—a very fitting description of the unique and exquisite stone.



Show Cosponsorship

by John Washburn

Past President Midwest Federation

from AFMS Newsletter 2/2007

Allowing an already successful club show to grow in its offerings and stature while keeping dealers happy was a concern of mine for many years. We experienced dealers not wanting to do MWF Convention shows because in order to meet the increase in show expenses, the clubs were adding more dealers than the club and area could support.

I personally struggled with this problem when my local club bid on hosting the MWF Convention and Show in 2002. I had recently attended a North Central Section meeting of the Geological Society of America (GSA) where they had sought cosponsors to support the meeting. As I was approached by GSA for the agency in which I worked to be a cosponsor, I decided this might be the way for my local club to get additional dollars without having to expand our show with added dealers.

This proved to be very successful. We were able to raise enough funds from our cosponsors to provide the cash equivalent of 16 additional dealers, yet we maintained our normal number of dealers as supported by our annual attendees. Although using cosponsors was to be a one-time endeavor, it proved to be so successful that a cosponsor asked to participate the next year too. We have now done four shows using cosponsors, and everyone is happy!

Cosponsorship of your show has a couple of advantages. One is that it allows the club to have additional up-front capital for bringing in special displays, speakers, and possibly demonstrators, and for increasing your advertising budget. These special items are all sold to cosponsors as educational activities for a not-for-profit group, which makes their contributions tax deductible. But based on recent conversations with cosponsors, they are simply making the cost a part of their advertising budget! Second, by building your show based on the amount of additional capital that is raised, cosponsorship acts as a hedge against the club's capital risk.

When we took on the task of hosting the Midwest Federation Convention and Show, we wanted to use the same facility that we used for our annual show since our local audience was accustomed to it. Therefore we could not substantially increase the number of dealers to increase our up-front capital. Nor did we want to increase the number of dealers beyond what we felt the show could support, the rule of thumb being that you need at least 100–150 adult attendees per dealer. The practice of over-stocking dealers for Federation Shows had made many dealers shy of participation. But we wanted to be able to bring into our area several special displays and speakers, to bus school children in on Friday, and to increase our advertising budget without creating additional capital risk for the club. This approach allowed us to build the show as we gained cosponsorships. The cosponsorship requests were sent out right after we sent out our contracts for dealers, so by the time the contracts were final, we had our

cosponsors and all of our special displays and speakers. We were ready then to advertise.

Following is the invitation we used to solicit our cosponsors, and it can be adapted to any club's purposes.

Invitation to Cosponsors for the 2002 combined Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society and Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies Convention and Show

Overview

- Both the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies (MWF) and the Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society (LOESS) are not-for-profit organizations.
- The MWF includes the states of Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, and parts of Arkansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.
- More than 2,500 people are expected to attend the 2002 Rock, Mineral, & Fossil Show. Many of these attendees will be participating in field trips and group discussions beginning Wednesday prior to the opening of the Show and the convened meetings.
- Our Show's theme is "Sue and You in 2002: The Dinosaurs are Coming." Our featured attractions will include a cast of the skull of Sue, the *Tyrannosaurus rex* from the Field Museum in Chicago.
- Educational activities are open to the general public, begin on Friday and run through Sunday. Spearheading these activities will be professional geologists from industry, government agencies, colleges and universities, educators from museums and public schools, and many amateur geoscientists.
- Registration in the morning and a welcoming reception in the evening will be held on Friday, October 4, 2002.
- Formal meetings will also begin on Friday, and scientific presentations will be given on Saturday and Sunday. Featured speakers will include Dr. William Simpson of the Field Museum.

Logistics

- The headquarters motel for the Convention will be the Springfield Days Inn on Stevenson Drive.
- Most meetings and all of the educational activities will be on the Show site—the Illinois Building—on the Illinois State Fairgrounds at 9th Street and Sangamon Avenue. At this facility, we will be using the main exhibit hall, the auditorium, the balcony, and other meeting areas.

Cosponsor Levels

- Crystal Donor Level [\$100-\$199]: Each cosponsor will be recognized in the printed program given out at the Registration Table at the Show.

- Silver Donor Level [\$200-\$349]: Each cosponsor will be recognized as mentioned above—plus a 17" x 24" poster with the co-sponsor's company name and logo to be hung in the exhibit hall of the Illinois Building. (Note again—more than 2,500 attendees are expected)
- Gold Donor Level [\$350-\$499]: Each cosponsor will be recognized as mentioned at the Crystal donor Level—plus a 33" X 56" banner with the company name and logo to be hung from the balcony railing overlooking the exhibit hall of the Illinois Building.
- Diamond Donor Level [\$500-\$999]: Each cosponsor will be recognized as mentioned at the Gold Donor Level—plus Diamond Donors will be named in newspaper ads and radio advertising spots leading up to the Show. This minimally will include six newspaper ads running the week before and the week of the Show and thirty 30-second radio spots during the same time period. Preregistrants for the Convention will be given an attractive book bag containing their registration materials. The Diamond Donor's name and logo will be printed on the book bag. The Diamond Donors also will receive two 3-day passes to the Show.
- At the Platinum Donor Level [\$1000 and above]: Each cosponsor will be recognized as mentioned at the Diamond Donor Level—plus -they will be provided with a well-situated table on which a company display and hand-out literature can be placed. The table will be on the Show floor or in the balcony and will have two chairs,.

Use of Cosponsor Support

- Financial support will help with the busing of 4th-grade school children to the Show on Friday, October 4, 2002. The teachers will be provided with curriculum guides and activity sheets, in advance, that will help them to integrate the visit into their science curriculum. (Our built-in Show budget will allow us to support only a few busses at \$132.00 each. Our hope is to be able to bring in at least two busses an hour for five hours of the school day for a total of 700 school children.)
- Financial support helps increase the number of special exhibits and the number of special speakers that we can offer to the general public.
- Financial support allows us to increase our advertising efforts, thereby increasing our attendance at the Show.
- Financial support can be earmarked at the request of any cosponsor for a particular facet of our educational outreach—busing children, special speakers, special exhibits, etc.
- As host sponsor, all initial contributions come from funds generated by members of the Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society.

Payment

- Payment should be made out to: (Club).
- Funds will be held in account at the: (Bank of Club Account)
- Please send your financial support to: (Show Chair)

The year following our hosting of the Federation Show, we did not plan to seek cosponsorships for our normal annual show—until one of the former cosponsors asked if he could again be a cosponsor. Based on that inquiry, we proceeded to invite all of the major cosponsors from the previous year, a total of five, but we sought less funding in keeping with a less ambitious show offering. For our normal show we retreated back to videos in lieu of live speakers, deleted busing of school children since our normal show is only on the weekend, and deleted giving out souvenir book bags and a special printed program. Based on this reduced scope, our cosponsors still allowed us to bring in several special displays and not-for-profit demonstrators for the show.

We have risen from the five initial cosponsors for our show to our current seven cosponsors. And all are very pleased with what they get for what is just a few dollars to them! We now offer only one level at \$200 for the equivalent of what we gave initially for the Diamond Level.

The key to successfully gaining cosponsors is to develop a list of firms in your community that normally participate in such activities. Banks, construction companies, engineering firms, technology firms, lobbying associations (if you're in or close to your state capital), and manufacturing firms are a few of those we have the most success in attracting. If you watch the local newspapers and signs that are put up for special fund-raising in your community, you will soon have a working list.

The next key to successfully gaining cosponsors is to have a personal contact—either a person you or another club member knows, or at least a name to whom to properly address the cosponsorship request letter. Our experience has been that if you have a specific name of a contact, then you have a better chance of obtaining a cosponsorship.

We sent out a letter along with the invitation to potential cosponsors listing the levels that were available for the Federation Convention and Show, but for the annual show we just send out a letter of invitation.

Besides the initial letters, we also send a follow-up letter of thanks with several free passes to the show, and then a final letter supplying the cosponsors with evidence of how their company name was displayed as promised (a souvenir letter) containing a copy of the newspaper ads, the show flier, the school fliers (10,000 for K-6), the printed show program, and the banner—all with their firm's name as cosponsor.

With the investment of a little time and a few stamps, your show can gain a significant amount of up-front capital. But remember, you must follow through. You must advertise and include the cosponsors' names, and as always, "Advertising doesn't cost—it pays!"



AFMS Code of Ethics*from the AFMS Newsletter 9/2000*

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations, and rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.

I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind—fences, signs, buildings.

I will leave all gates as found.

I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.

I will discard no burning material—matches, cigarettes, etc.

I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.

I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.

I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.

I will support the rockbound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.

I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.

I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.

I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.

I will observe the "Golden Rule," will use "Good Outdoor Manners," and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public "image" of rockhounds everywhere.

ShowTime 2007

February 24-25	Pasadena, TX	Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society Pasadena Convention Center 7902 Fairmont Pkwy. Al Pennington, 281-481-1591 www.ghg.net/gpenning/annual.htm
February 24-25	Jackson, MS	Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society Trade Mart Bldg., State Fairground I-55 and High Street; Betty James (601) 914-6747; mineralid@jam.rr.com
March 3-4	Corpus Christi, TX	Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society Al Amin Shrine Center, 2001 Suntime Rd. Jerrold Simpson (361) 851-8788 jsimpson!@stx.rr.com
March 3-4	Big Spring, TX	Big Spring Prospectors Club Howard County Fairbarn Lola Lamb, 432-263-4662
March 30-April 1	Macomb, IL	Mid-America Paleontology Society (MAPS) Western Hall, Western Illinois University call Gilbert 309-786-6505; Karl 319-837-6690 gilnorris@mchsi.com karstuek@iowatelecom.net
April 7-8	Abilene, TX	Central Texas Gem, Mineral, and Jewelry Show Abilene Civic Center, N. 6th & Pine Sallie Lightfoot, 325-692-4642 slightfoot@aol.com
April 13-15	Houston, TX	International Gem & Jewelry Show Reliant Center, 301-294-1640 info@intergem.com , www.intergem.com
April 20-22	Marfa, TX	Chihuahuan Desert Gem & Mineral Club Am Vets Building Paul Graybeal (432) 729-4526 paulgraybeal@moonlightgemstones.com
April 28-29	Waco, TX	Waco Gem & Mineral Club Heart of Texas Fair Complex 4601 Bosque Blvd., Kay Langston 254-863-0206, jdodson@aenbb.net
September 21-23	Humble, TX	Houston Gem & Mineral Society Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy. 5 miles east of Bush Intercontinental Airport 1 mile east of Hwy. 59 sigrid.stewart@chevrontexaco.com

2007		MARCH				2007	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
				1	2	3	10-12 Youth Section 10-5 Shop Open
4	5	6 7:30 Board Meeting	7 7:30 Mineral Section	8	9	10	10-5 Shop Open
11	12 1:00 Day Light Section	13 7:30 Show Comm	14 7:30 Faceting Section	15	16	17	10-12 Youth Section 10-5 Shop Open
18	19 5:00-7:15 Shop Open 7:30 Lapidary Section	20 7:30 Paleo Section	21 7:30 Mineral Section	22	23	24	10-5 Shop Open
25	26	27 7:30 General Meeting	28 7:00 Beading Group	29	30	31	

2007		APRIL				2007	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
1	2	3 7:30 Board Meeting	4 7:30 Mineral Section	5	6	7	10-12 Youth Section 10-5 Shop Open
8	9 1:00 Day Light Section	10 7:30 Show Comm	11 7:30 Faceting Section	12	13	14	10-5 Shop Open
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29	30						

The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

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

10805 BROOKLET

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77099

(281) 530-0942



SCFMS

1998 - 1st (Large)
2000 - 1st (Large)
2003 - 1st (Large)
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2006 - 1st (Large)



AFMS

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

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