



The **BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE**

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

Volume XXXVIII - No. 10

October 2007



Presidents' Message

September 5, 2007

by Matt Dillon

2007 HGMS President

Hurricane season is upon us as we drift away from the hot weather, and we have new worries and new plans to concentrate on until about the first week in November. Some of our old business is still in the works, such as the new air-abrasives room. I see we are down to finishing the sheet rock, floating and taping and painting, and the new door is in place. Soon those of you wanting to clean your fossils will have that new room available, and we will have our storage and loading area returned to general use.



As show time approaches, I want to remind all of you procrastinators to contact Sigrid Stewart, Show Chairperson, or her assistant in-charge-of volunteers, Michele Marsel. Get your name on their lists—volunteer for the time slots in the many different areas where they need help to make our show the great success we have come to expect.

I have just returned from the South Central Federation of Mineralogical Societies

Continued on page 4

General Meeting Program

September 25—A World of Discovery on a Calcite Surface presented by Kevin Davis: Come see how imperfections on calcite surfaces create beautiful growth spirals that can be used to decipher the physics and chemistry of mineral formation. Movies of molecular-scale calcite growth give insight into how organisms produce calcium carbonate biominerals and demonstrate that knowledge of mineral surfaces at the smallest scales is necessary for a geochemical understanding of weathering and crystallization.

Kevin is a Ph.D. student at Rice University and Professor of Geology at San Jacinto College. He has previously received a M.S. in Earth and Atmospheric Science from Georgia Tech and a B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Virginia.

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*Every article published in the BBG is edited for grammar and content. Any flaming is removed. **NOTE NEWE-MAILADDRESS***

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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, 1/4 page; \$150 for 6 months, 1/4 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

(SCFMS) convention and the Arlington Gem & Mineral Club's annual show, and we are still members in good standing. The show was wonderful, well-attended, and there was some great stuff to be found on the tables and in the displays of the dealers who set up there. I found some really nice sagenite-type agate from Turkey and spent my crazy cash all in one place!

The Arlington club members did a very good job putting their show together. They were exemplary hosts and will be a hard act to follow. I also had the pleasure of visiting their club facilities and found them to be very well organized, clean, and full of big display cases—all with interesting specimens and some of the fine work their club-members have done over the last several years.

The convention and show afforded me the opportunity to renew old friendships and start some new ones. Ron Carman, AFMS Past President and HGMS Past President, reminded the SCFMS Federation delegates that we are hosting the AFMS/SCFMS convention at our show in Humble next year.

Ron also handed out information sheets on the "Exhibitors and Judges Seminar." This seminar is to be held March 8 and 9, 2008 and is hosted by the Austin Gem & Mineral Society (AGMS) and the SCFMS at the Austin club's facilities located at 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, Texas 78757. Anyone interested can pick up a copy from the stack I left on the counter where other information sheets and extra copies of the Backbender's Gazette are found in the HGMS meeting room. You can also contact the AGMS on their Web site www.austingemandmineral.org or at telephone number (512) 458-9546.

Badu Hill Pegmatite Microcline-Biotite Sandwiches

by Arthur E. Smith, Frank Roberts, and Denise Bicknell
artsmithite@msn.com

On a Sunday afternoon in June 2007, Frank Roberts dropped by with some pegmatite specimens to visit Denise and Art in Houston. Included in the specimens is what we call microcline-biotite sandwiches from the Badu Hill pegmatite in Llano County, Texas. Frank noted that these specimens had increased radioactivity in the biotite layers, and there were numerous tiny crystals associated with it. Now that got my interest up. It would mean something to play with indoors in the air conditioning during the hot summer months. The red-brown microcline layers are from 4- to 10-cm thick and are sandwiched between biotite layers seldom more than about 2 mm thick. The specimens usually break along the biotite layers leaving some biotite on both sides of the microcline, so the sandwiches.

To examine these minute crystals associated with the biotite, I broke specimens into one-centimeter size pieces for easier handling while viewing them under the binocular microscope. There were no minerals in the microcline, except adjacent to the biotite, so specimens with no biotite were discarded. Then they were brushed with a soft tooth brush to remove some of the biotite and expose the crystals. I also put some

pieces in the ultrasonic cleaner. It was more effective and did not break the crystals but did remove more from the biotite and microcline than the brushing. The debris from both the brushing and ultrasonic was washed and examined.

By far the most abundant mineral observed was zircon which occurs in red brown typical prismatic crystals consisting of a short prism with a pyramidal termination. The largest crystals are just over 2 mm, but most are much smaller. They are radioactive but do not appear to be as glassy (metamict?) and fragile as similar gray crystals from the pyrite-fluorite breccia zone elsewhere in the pegmatite and previously examined. These crystals, though complete, are seldom doubly terminated because both terminations are seldom embedded in the microcline. The zircons usually are only slightly embedded in the microcline, and any orientation can be found. However, the preferred orientation seems to be with the pyramidal termination embedded at such an angle that when removed, a shallow three-sided triangular cavity results. This indicates that the zircon was crystallized before the microcline was completely crystallized. The remainder of the crystal is in the biotite layer.

Adjacent to the microcline there may have been no crystal growth interference from the biotite. However, further into the biotite and closer to the other end, the zircon crystallization was definitely interfered with by the biotite. The zircon became slightly squeezed in size and distorted. The result is a round or rounded square or rectangle in the outline of a nub of zircon. This part of the crystal is grooved with many concentric grooves caused by the biotite sheets, so a well-formed crystal is not completed. If you look at the zircons faced toward the microcline, you may see what seems like a perfect crystal, but upon turning it over there is no semblance of a zircon crystal. When turned over, mats of closely spaced, well-formed crystals look like a disturbed cobblestone mosaic.

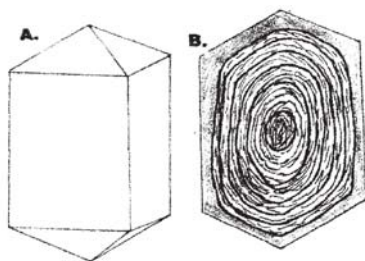


Figure 1. Rare zircon crystal, 2.3 mm long. A. showing both terminations embedded in microcline. B. Crystal portion from biotite. Badu Hill, Llano Co., TX.

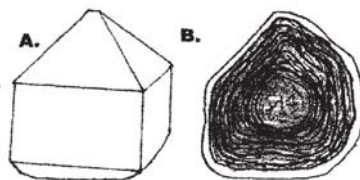


Figure 2. Typical crystal, 1 mm long. A. portion embedded in microcline. B. portion embedded in biotite. Badu Hill, Llano Co., TX.

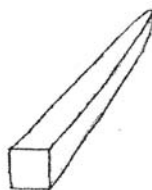


Figure 3. Crystal of Niobium based metamict mineral, 4 mm long, with broken end showing square cross section. Badu Hill, Llano County, TX.

The only other mineral observed that is uncommon and is many times less abundant than the zircons is a not-yet-described niobium base metamict mineral that occurs in 3- to 4-mm elongated tapering crystals with a square cross section. These crystals are a glassy black or brown internally and are quite fragile. They may extend entirely into the microcline and are usually black internally though they have an external, off-white coating. Those crystals lying parallel to the biotite layer and just under it are usually brown internally. This probably represents a greater degree of oxidation than the black. Larger pieces of this mineral from the pyrite-fluorite breccia zone were originally found to be brown but then were black with increased depth of the excavation. A 4 mm group of pale gray sub-parallel crystals with a few attached zircons represent crystals that grew in the biotite layers. As expected, their internal color is a glassy brown.

This is what I have found to this date from these specimens. The number of samples looked at is relatively small. However, in contrast to the specimens from the pyrite-fluorite breccia zone—which fall apart—these minerals are usually in place and indicate some idea of their positions during formation and their associations, particularly with the microcline, biotite, and zircons plus their relationships with the niobium based metamict mineral.

SCFMS Scholarship Winners for 2007

by Lexy Bieniek

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

I want to thank Scott Singleton for nominating me for the SCFMS Honorary Award for 2007. It was truly a great honor to be selected, and it was a great challenge to select two students to receive the scholarships from AFMS and SCFMS.

One of my life goals is to improve the quality of Earth Science education in our public schools. Since science is the only core subject that changes, it is almost imperative that science teachers have a connecting line between their classroom content and ongoing research. I chose two sets of researchers who have established those lines of communication and who make themselves and their research easily available to teachers and the public. The first researcher is Dr. Dale Sawyer from Rice with his unit Discovering Plate Boundaries, <http://terra.rice.edu/plateboundary/>. Dr. Sawyer's selection for the scholarship is Kevin Davis.

Kevin is a doctoral candidate at Rice. His dissertation "seeks to better understand the role of solution chemistry and microbial attachment in the growth and dissolution of carbonate minerals. Kevin is currently working on an ambitious new project that is designed to determine the role of nonstoichiometric solutions, containing differing cation/anion ratios



at constant saturation state, on calcite growth. This project is critical for understanding how organisms form calcium carbonate shells and how fossil shells may be used as indicators of past climates. Further, this work is fundamental to understanding the chemical consequences of injecting greenhouse gases into the deep ocean as a possible climate change mitigation strategy.”

Kevin received his BSc in Chemistry from University of Virginia, his MS from Georgia Tech in Aqueous Geochemistry, and he came to Rice for his PhD. Kevin received the Outstanding Graduate Student Award from the Houston Geological Society in 2004. Kevin is providing our September 25 General Meeting program (see front page).

The other set of researchers chosen were Drs. Bonnie and Lou Jacobs from Southern Methodist University. Both Lou and Bonnie have come from Dallas, and they shared their research with our Paleontology Section.

Lou was instrumental in organizing the Lone Star Dino Workshop for Teachers. This workshop gave teachers a background on the historical geology of Texas and allowed them to go to the Jones Ranch and properly "dig" up a dinosaur. The Dino Dig at our show is designed from my attending this workshop.

Bonnie is working on using the 23 million year old plant fossils found in Chilga, Ethiopia to possibly predict modern plant responses to the current global climate changes. Bonnie has a blog that allows teachers and students to communicate with her and the research team during their annual dig. Her Web site is

<http://smu.edu/smunews/ethiopia/blogs.asp>.

Dr. Bonnie Jacobs' selection is Dan Danehy. Dan is a master's candidate at SMU. He received his BS in geology from Penn State. Growing up in Pennsylvania gave Dan an endless supply of rocks and fossils to collect as a boy. His first paleontological dig came under the influence of the book *Jurassic Park*. He dug several holes in his family backyard looking for dinosaurs, upsetting his father. Dan put his paleontological interests on the back burner for several years while he built his love for outdoor sports such as hiking, rock climbing, and kayaking through the Appalachians. He entered Penn State as an engineering major and took an introductory geology class. The class rekindled his love for geology and paleontology. He went on to study Biogeology under Dr. Peter Wilf. Dr. Wilf invited Dan on a field trip to Colorado where he had the good fortune of finding a new fossil leaf morphotype causing his interest in paleobotany to explode. He went on to work with the Denver Museum and as assistant to the curator of the Earth and Science Museum at Penn State. As a senior he wrote a paper about the paleobotany of the Red Hot Truck Stop in Meridian, Mississippi. This is a fossil-rich site constrained to the Early Eocene. Dan's paper on this site has just been accepted for publication in *Paleontologia Electronica*.



At SMU Dan will be assisting Dr. Bonnie Jacobs with identifying and sorting the Ethiopian fossils she brought home over the last few years. He will be part of the crew she takes back to Ethiopia this winter.

2007 SCFMS Bulletin Contest Results--How HGMS Members Did

by Phyllis George

Editor of The Backbender's Gazette

The other shoe finally dropped. In June we learned how the HGMS newsletter and authors ranked at the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) Annual Convention and Show in Roswell, New Mexico, but we didn't know how everything was first ranked at the regional level. It's the regional level ranking that determines whether an entry is forwarded for national consideration.

2007 SCFMS Bulletin Editor and Author Awards		
Place	Author	Title
Adult Articles		
1	Sunday Bennett	For the Love of a Bead
4	Sam Norwood	Methods for Close-Up Photographs
6	Stanley Perkins	Springtime—A "Young" Man's Fancy turns to Field Trips
Advanced Articles		
1	Art Smith	Why Collect Microminerals
2	Scott Singleton	Ancient and Modern Cycads
3	Albert J. Robb III	Middle Eocene Sharks and Ray Fossils of Texas
4	Neal Immega	American Emerald!
5	Terry Proctor	Understanding the Geological Time Scale
7	Dean Lagerwall	Pseudomorphs—A Brief Overview
Features		
1	Denise Bicknell	The Mineral Gods Must Be Laughing!
2	John Culberson	My First Fieldtrip with HGMS
6	Lexy Bieniek	Brownwood Fossiling
10	Matt Dillon	Hope Springs
HM	Kathy Konkell	What I Did This Summer
HM	James Wark	The Wonderful World of Auctions
Adult Poetry		
2	Terry Proctor	This Old Hammer
4	Mary Ann Mitscherling	Patterns
10	Sunday Bennett	An Ode to 2005, Year of Hurricane Katrina
Junior Articles		
3	Jerdahn Campbell	Lignite Mine Fieldtrip
4	Samantha Roquemore	Nature Rocks!
5	Lorraine Singleton	Field Trip to Coal Mine
Large Bulletins		
1	Phyllis George	The Backbender's Gazette
Web Sites		
2	Phyllis George	www.hgms.org

The South Central Federation of Mineral Societies (SCFMS) held their annual convention and show September 1–2 in Arlington, Texas. It was hosted by the Arlington Gem & Mineral Club, and the Editors' Breakfast was held that Saturday in the AGMC clubhouse. HGMS had 22 entries in the contest, and by the end of the breakfast, 10 of our entries had received trophies. (The top three places in each category receive a trophy.) The contest results are listed in the table on page 8.

Currently the SCFMS is the only federation that has a contest category for Web sites and for something it calls "Features." The Web site category is self-explanatory. In fact, the AFMS is looking hard at it and is considering adding Web sites to the various categories it accepts and judges for the Bulletin Editors' Contest. Features is a category created for interesting articles that are inadmissible under the regular rules—articles on field trips, book reports, and articles not directly connected to the hobby.

I was quite impressed by the AGMS facilities. The building is fairly new, and the members finished out the interior about six years ago. The main meeting room is quite large and is lined with large display cases holding displays made by the members. Several additional rooms are accessible through a door, and each is dedicated to a specific stage of stone working—a saw room, a grinding room, a polishing room, etc. Multiple machines are in each room, and each room is immaculate. As I said, I was very impressed. If you have the opportunity, ask to be taken on a tour through their clubhouse. You'll be glad you did.

In Our Library

by Art Smith

HGMS Librarian

I have been doing a bit of shifting on the shelves to accommodate new books and publications. For the first time we are missing a bound volume of a magazine. *Rocks & Minerals*, 2003–2004 bound in red buckram is missing, and if it is misshelved somewhere, I cannot find it. If you have it or know where it is, I would appreciate your contacting me. It would save me some time and the library about \$100 to replace it. It needs to be replaced before any of the 12 issues go out of print.

We do have a complete set of this magazine from 1926 to the present. Recently we added missing volumes to the *American Mineralogist*, and our set now is complete up to 2006. I dropped my subscription to this magazine because since the early 1960s it is of less interest to club members, and in recent years it is of no interest because it essentially has become a journal of crystal chemistry.

We have two new books for the library. The first is *The Art of Metal Clay: Techniques for Creating Jewelry and Decorative Objects* by Haab. Frances Arrighi donated it to the library, and it is much appreciated. Thank you, Frances. It is already on the shelf under Lapidary – Metals – Haab. It is not available for checkout.

The other new book for the library is the *Russian Gemstone Encyclopedia* by V.V. Bukanov. It is in English and is quite useful though some of the translations are difficult to interpret and some old errors that should not be there are perpetuated. An

example that comes to mind is calling the goethite that is included in Amethyst from Rio Grande du Sol cacoxenite, which is not an iron oxide but an iron phosphate. Yes, they do look very similar. However, I assume it is more correct on the Russian and former Soviet Union countries for which there is often little information available.

As I mentioned before we have found a new bindery, and so far I am very pleased with his work. He is not as convenient as our former bindery, but he is a little cheaper. We do not have to have two volumes in the same series in order to get the lowest price, so I will be doing a bit of catch-up for the next few months. Fortunately, he has a much quicker turn-around time—about 1 month—than any of our past binderies.

Since the Mineral Section Space is reduced at the upcoming show, we will not be selling a lot of books and journals there, so our revenue will be somewhat reduced. However we reduced our stock of duplicate publications in the spring, so we do not have a lot to sell anyway.

Digital Microscope Imagery

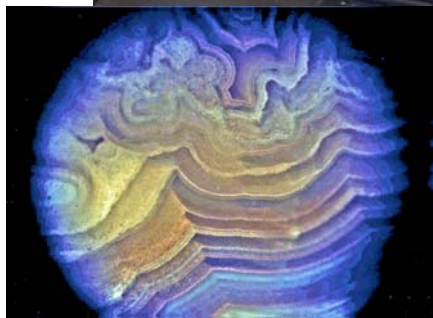
General Meeting Presentation for August 28, 2007

by Matt Phillips

Inspired by last year's presentation on taking close-up pictures of agate, I decided to explore making such images by digital means instead of by using an SLR film camera attached to a microscope.

The evening's presentation discussed the steps I took to purchase and assemble relatively inexpensive equipment that can produce images of beauty. I acquired a three mega-pixel high resolution digital microscope camera, a microscope intended for low magnification purposes, and an old laptop computer. Software included with the digital camera allows live view and auto capture of the image. I acquired all the items on e-Bay and downloaded free software from the Internet.

Light greatly affects the quality of the image, and depth of field also is a major problem. The light can be controlled by locating the setup indoors and by providing adjustable lighting both above and below the object being photographed. Free software called CombineZM is available, and it merges the best parts of multiple digital images into one image. The process captures many pictures, but each is focused at a different depth of the object. The resulting combined photograph defeats the problem of depth of field.



Hey, it's Crunch Time--Show Info

by Sigrid Stewart

HGMS SHOW Chairman

Now is the time for all good rockhounds to come to the aid of their Society and their hobby and to SHOW up at the **54th Annual Houston Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Show!** That title says it all. Whether you are interested in mineral collecting or shark's teeth or in articles of personal adornment, there is something waiting there to amaze you. And you will be amazed too, but we do need everyone's help to pull this off.

Load Up: Wednesday, September 19, 3 p.m.–6 p.m., at the clubhouse. On the Wednesday night before the SHOW, we will load the U-Haul and volunteer vehicles with items to be transported to the Humble Civic Center. Many hands make for light work.

Setup Day, Thursday: September 20, 8 a.m.–12 p.m., at the Humble Civic Center. We will need volunteers beginning at about 8 a.m. to unload the U-Haul truck and cases. Members of each Section must be prepared to set up their own booths. We also need to drape about half of the dealer tables. At 11 a.m. the dealers start arriving to do their own setup, but work on the Section booths will continue.

Volunteer and Dealer Appreciation Dinner: Thursday, September 20, 6:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. at the Humble Civic Center. We host this dinner every year to SHOW our appreciation for all our volunteers and dealers. This year our new exhibitor, the Fiendish Dr. Phil who is a paleoartist and monster modeler extraordinaire, will say a few words.

Friday, September 21, 9–6 p.m: School Daze.

Saturday, September 22, 9–6 p.m: General Public and Scouts

Sunday, September 23, 8–9 a.m: Rolling Rock Club

Sunday, September 23 10 a.m.–5 p.m: General Public attending

Sunday, September 23 After the show: Teardown and Survivor's Dinner.
Be there or be square.

The Fiendish Dr. Phil—HGMS Show Special Exhibit

by Sigrid Stewart

2007 Show Chairman

As this article reaches your hands the week of September 17, "The fiendish Dr. Phil" Nichols and his partner Melissa "Monsterella" Nichols, a brother and sister team of makeup effects artists, should be setting up **The Lost World of Pangea Garden** display at our Show.

Both Dr. Phil and Monsterella are talented photographers, designers, and studio artists with a lifetime of experience behind them in both areas. A passion they both share from childhood is natural science and geology, more specifically fossils and dinosaurs. Dr. Phil has taken his armchair passion for dinosaurs to new levels by creating life-sized three-dimensional figures of his favorite prehistoric animals. And soon they

will become your favorites! Experience the Cretaceous Era of Texas with the Pangaea Garden diorama: A Chasmosaurus is being stalked by a Deinonychus pack as a Pteranodon flies over head and a Deinosuchus swims nearby. This ought to wake up the kids as they troop in!

The Fiendish Dr. Phil founded Nichols Studios in 1985, which became Façades FX Makeup Lab in 1989. Growing up fans of Dinosaurs, Fantasy, Science Fiction, Horror, Vampires, mythology and anything Halloween, Dr. Phil and Monsterella live and work in the world they have created.



They now celebrate twenty years of excellence in Design and Fabrication. Trained by Academy Award-winning veteran makeup artist Dick Smith and 20+ years of practical experience on the set and in the design studio, they are masters of dark illusions who practice their artistry from their lab in Houston, Texas. They are members of the makeup artists and hair stylists union Local #706, and have more than 30 feature-length productions and over 100 industrial, commercial, and music videos and shorts to their credit.

A great creative force, together they have changed the face of the Halloween industry with their innovative designs and wonderful Halloween and Horror products (REEL FX at Spencers, Spirit, Halloween Express, Wal-Mart, and many others).

Swarf—and How To Tame It

from Gem Cutters News, November 1984, via AFMS Newsletter 10/2007

Swarf is that milky liquid you get when you cut cabochons or facet stones. Although it appears to be harmless, swarf can be deadly to your plumbing system and lapidary equipment if not handled properly.

When you grind rocks to make cabochons or faceted stones, you're removing tiny bits of the rock and carrying them away from your work with water. When the water evaporates, the tiny rock bits are left behind as a sort of concrete gunk. Over time, this gunk hardens like concrete.

So how do you tame the swarf? Never, never, ever, dispose of your swarf in your plumbing system. Don't pour it down a sink or toilet because eventually that gunk hardens and eventually narrows your pipes. Because it's concrete-like when hardened, it is almost impossible to remove! Instead, take your swarf outside to a non-important part of your garden and dump it there. Or if there is no garden handy, allow the swarf to settle in the bottom of a bucket for a day or two. Then carefully pour off the now-clear water, scoop out the swarf, put it in a plastic bag, and toss it in the trash.

Crew That Made the Blocks for the Show Dino Dig
Photos by Matt Dillon



Show Postcard Labeling Party and Luncheon
Photos by Mary Ann Mitscherling



Opal Again*by Mary Ann Mitscherling**August 27, 2007*

Shimmering on the shelf you call to me:
"My pinks, blues, and greens are for you to see.
Imagine all the shaping and sizing...
But be warned—stop before realizing
All the pretty cabochons you will cut.
For I am opal and abhor a rut."
You are unique among the cutting stones.
You can give excitement and morbid groans.
Only seasoned cutters can understand
How preciousness can leap out from the bland.
Those who forget to give the stone its head
Will learn undesired lessons instead.
So, enjoy the little jar on the shelf.
It's a metaphor of your future self.

On Viewing Lucy*by Mary Ann Mitscherling**August 30, 2007*

Centuries compress, time accelerates
Back to a wilder yet familiar world.
A mere three million years separate bones
Once alive now messengers from the past.
Strands of our lineages intertwine:
This beacon heralds different life to come.
Now turn, fast forward three million years hence.
Do the future eyes see or merely look?
We travel far, dig and assemble bones
To live life mindful of all history.
As different and alike as distant moans,
Messengers come forth to tell the story
That we are not and never will be clones,
That we are dispellers of mystery.

Late-Breaking Club News

Are you getting e-mails about HGMS activities? If not, contact n_immega@swbell.net and let him know that you want to be on the list.



Day Light Section

by Frances Arrighi



Twelve members attended the 13 August, 2007, meeting of the Day Light Section. This was our last meeting with Val Link for 2007. Behind the table in the group photograph below from left are John Mitscherling, Val Link, Patty Scott, and Neal Immega. We thank Val very much for meeting with us this summer. Three members who had not done a piece using the Keum Boo technique worked on this. Others textured their pieces.



The photograph on the right shows three earrings using the Keum Boo technique. These were done by Patty Scott. One was entirely covered with gold. One has a design in gold and then the piece was treated with liver of

sulfur and ammonia. The liver of sulfur affects the silver and not the gold. The silver turns black. The third earring just had gold on the edges. Mary Ann Mitscherling took the photographs.



By request we are going to do broom casting (see photo on left) at the September meeting, and in November we will have a travelogue on Russia by Nancy Fischer.



Lapidary Section

by Kathy Konkel



The Lapidary Section meeting will be held on **Monday, October 15 at 7:29 pm.** The program will be announced soon. Stay tuned. The shop will be open from 5:00-7:15 p.m. prior to the meeting. Normal shop fees apply. You can start working on your precious purchases from the HGMS annual show!

The annual **Lapidary Section Auction** will be held on **Saturday, October 27.** A spaghetti lunch will be served at 1:00 p.m. Breadsticks and homemade spaghetti sauce with—and without—meat will be available. Attendees are asked to bring salads or desserts (or both). The live auction will begin promptly at 2:00 p.m. A silent auction will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. if sufficient tools and equipment are donated for the event. Please bring your items for donation to the clubhouse prior to the auction date if at all possible so they may be numbered. For the best return on the donation, please clean and place an identifying label on the items.



Mineral Section

by Steve Blyskal, Chairperson & Dean Lagerwall, Assistant Chairperson



Well, we hope you had a good summer break and are ready to once again join the Mineral Section meetings on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month.

Upcoming Meeting Topics

October 3: Social/Show Review: Refreshments will be provided. This is our opportunity to review the show while it is still fresh in our minds. Bring your comments on what we did right and what we can improve upon. Also bring in your show purchases and let us drool. We will also discuss any specific topics that members would like to have presented.

October 17: to be announced via e-Mail

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.

Information about Ruth Hammett

from her daughter, Ruth Price

Hi,

Sorry it took so long to get this to you. Here is Ruth Hammett's address:

Oak Crest Nursing Center
Ruth Hammett
1902 FM 3036
Rockport, TX 78382

Ruth Hammett is in a nursing home in Rockport, TX. She was diagnosed with Alzheimer's this past year. I know she would like to hear from you. She remembers some things, but I think it would help her to hear from people other than just family. I know she would like to hear and maybe see some of you. Does anyone know how to get hold of the people who had the food display made from rocks? They did live in Corpus Christi, and I know she would like to see them and well as anyone else who would like to go down there. *Editor's Note: Ruth is referring to Bill and Lois Pattillo. They received a copy of this message, and they have visited her at least twice.*

If I can be of any help, please contact me at (928) 648-9397 or e-mail me at gsazmom@aol.com. Thanks for your support, Ruth Ann Price

HGMS General Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2007

by Denise Bicknell

HGMS Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Matt Dillion, President.

Announcements and Introductions: Kevin Davis from Rice University and an SCFMS Grant winner was introduced. He is studying biomineralization.

We welcomed visitor Gary Tober. His main interests are lapidary and faceting.

Matt Dillon painted the parking blocks and steps outside.

Show Committee: Sigrid Stewart thanked all who participated in the annual postcard labeling and rock kit assembly work day.

September 8 is the date of the pre-show Pizza Party and Auction. Please bring desserts and donation items for the show silent auction.

Show Bucks will be given to those who sign in at the Info Booth at the show and work a full shift.

Show Schedule:

- ◆ **Wednesday** before the show: load the truck.
- ◆ **Thursday:** Setup, Paleontology Meeting, and Dealers and Volunteers Appreciation Dinner.
- ◆ **Friday, Saturday, Sunday:** Show Time!!
- ◆ **Sunday:** Tear Down, unload truck, and survivors' dinner at the clubhouse.

See images of the production of Dino Dig fossil preparations at dardilrocks@flickr.com

The Swap Area is full. If you want a spot, you may check with Steve Blyskal to see if any spots become available at the last moment.

This year's Show Grand Prize is a 20 mm faceted citrine donated by Michele Marsel. Thank you Michele!

Education: There will be no classes in September due to the Labor Day holiday week-

end and the show.

Day Light: They have finished their work on Keum Boo.

Beading Group: They will be working on making decorative knots.

Lapidary Section: Patty Scott demonstrated the art of Keum Boo.

Mineral Section: They had a Fluorescent Display workday to ready the display for the show. They will have a special exhibit of quartz at the show, and the Mineral Section T-shirts designed by Dean Lagerwall will be on sale at the show for \$15.00.

Paleontology Section: Neal Immega gave a program on Scientific Method at the Section's last meeting. Their next meeting will be at the Humble Convention Center on Thursday evening of Setup Day at the show. Neal Immega is working to obtain a special "Lucy" tour and price break for HGMS members.

Youth Section: They are working hard to finish their stones for the show.

Membership: Memberships continue to come in. We are experiencing record numbers!

Newsletter and Web Site: Phyllis George is preparing a special subscription order to *Rock and Gem*. Members who subscribe during this special offer not only receive a reduced rate, HGMS will receive between \$6 and \$12 for each subscription from *Rock and Gem*. If you'd like to participate, please contact Phyllis.

One of Phyllis' goals when taking on the webmaster position was to make our search position better. She has reached that goal. We now are listed as number two on both Google and Yahoo! when searching the keyword Gem and Mineral Societies. Nice job Phyllis!

Library: There will be no silent auction in September.

Door Prize: Bill Bedman won a Kentucky geode donated by Mike Dawkins.

Program: The evening's program was presented by Matt Phillips. He gave a slide program entitled *Digital Microscope Imagery*. His interest is low magnification photography. To get around the common difficulty of poor depth of field, he uses CombineZ software. He recommends that you check out eBay if you are interested in obtaining equipment. Thank you Matt, we enjoyed seeing all your images.



HGMS Board Meeting Minutes
September 4, 2007
by Phyllis George
Filling in for Denise Bicknell, Secretary

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by Matt Dillon, President.

Approval of August Minutes was done via e-mail.

Treasurer's Report—Rodney Linehan: Rodney updated the 2006 financial report to clarify the questionable items he found shortly after taking over the books in his new position, and he gave copies to members of the Board. He also presented a report covering the finances of 2007 through August 31, 2007. He pointed out that he had added land and building valuations to the above-mentioned records.

Scott Singleton pointed out that the inventory valuation should be recorded too. Rodney said he would talk to the accountant preparing our taxes to see whether it should be included. There is some concern about depreciation and how that should be represented on a document that can be used to calculate our net worth.

Rodney asked for clarification of his duties regarding the show—handling the show finances and whether he should pay bills immediately when they are presented to him at the show.

Committee and Section Reports:

- ♦ **Lapidary Section—Sunday Bennett:** In the absence of Karen Burns, Sunday Bennett reported that Patty Scott presented the Keum Boo technique of permanently fusing 24k gold foil to fine silver that has been heated to 600°F. The foil is laid on the hot silver and burnished in place for maximum adherence.
- ♦ **Paleo Section—Terry Brawner:** The September meeting is changed to Thursday, September 21. It will be held at the HGMS Show in the Hospitality Room following the Dealer and Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. The "Fiendish Dr. Phil," headline exhibitor of the show, will present the program.
- ♦ **Mineral Section—Art Smith:** Art reported that the Section is making rock sets for the show and had a special meeting last month for this purpose.
- ♦ **Youth Section—Beverly Mace:** Approximately 15 youths came to the last meeting. They worked on competition cabochons for the show.
- ♦ **Programs—Matt Phillips:** The September 25 meeting program will be a presentation by Kevin James Davis, a nominee for the SCFMS/AFMS grant. He

will come with visual aids and will speak on “A World of Discovery on a Calcite Surface”

- ◆ **Membership—Beverly Mace:** The HGMS membership currently stands at 512 adults and 94 children—an all-time high.
- ◆ **Shop/Clubhouse—Matt Dillon:** The new room is nearing completion. The dry wall is taped and ready for painting, and the door is hung although the handle and lock still need to be installed. A window still needs to be cut.
- ◆ **Newsletter/Web site—Phyllis George:** She drove to the Arlington Gem & Mineral Club/SCFMS show September 1 and attended the Editors’ Breakfast and the annual SCFMS business meeting. At the Breakfast, HGMS received a total of 22 certificates and 10 trophies for the articles and other entries submitted from the BBG and the Web site. These awards will be presented to their owners at the September 25 General Meeting.

SCFMS Annual Meeting—Phyllis George:

- ◆ There are now 41 clubs in the SCFMS.
- ◆ A challenge was issued to the clubs that they all donate to the Scholarship Fund.
- ◆ A club is needed to host the 2009 SCFMS annual show. DeRidder is considering it.
- ◆ John Moffitt resigned his position as SCFMS District II Vice President. Matt Dillon was nominated and elected to the position. He will assume his duties January 1, 2008. The HGMS is located in District II.
- ◆ The AFMS is considering raising dues—probably 25 cents per member and probably in 2009. The delegates approved a motion proposing agreement with the AFMS change up to a maximum of a 50 cent increase per person.
- ◆ Ron Carman announced that an Exhibitors and Judges Seminar will be held March 8-9, 2008 at the Austin Gem & Mineral Club clubhouse. Everyone planning to exhibit competitively is urged to sign up for this seminar.

Old and New Business:

1. Matt Dillon has put one coat of white paint on the parking blocks and on an outline of the ramp leading into the storage room. He’ll add a second coat when he’s sure it’s not going to rain. The paint is to make the blocks more visible at night in hopes that people won’t trip over them. Outlining the ramp will help a driver to back up the ramp accurately without running into the sides of the door opening.
2. Sunday Bennett reported that the quotes for making large letters (around 2 feet tall) for placement on the building front are far too expensive. She suggests that club members figure out a way to make them ourselves.
3. Sunday also reported that the exterior lights do not come on at night, and it is very dark in the parking lot. Board members had not been aware of this. Matt Dillon will make sure those lights get activated.
4. The stovetop has not yet been installed in the kitchen. Matt Dillon reported that Tom Wright told him it would get done.
5. We still need to get in touch with Val Link regarding his recommendation for a worthy recipient of an HGMS scholarship.

6. The current status of Irene Offeman's fossil collection is still unknown. Matt will ask Neal Immega for a list of the locality collections still in his possession. Once armed with the list, Matt Dillon and Scott Singleton will talk to Irene to learn her wishes for disposal of the remainder of her collection.
7. Sunday Bennett suggested that a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) should be drawn up to help new members learn about our club. It was decided that each Board member would generate and answer questions concerning their own areas of expertise and that everyone should bring their list to the October Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

YOUR HELP PLEASE

The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies is attempting to attain Birthstones on U.S. stamps. We need you to actively support and promote the project by continuing letters or notes to the USPS. You do not have to be an AFMS member to write. Please mail your **PERSONAL** letter to:

The Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
Stamp Development
US Postal Service
1735 North Lynn St., Room 5013
Arlington VA 22209-6432

Competition is stiff with about 50,000 proposals to the USPS annually. We are convinced that gem stamps, would be attractive. We and the public would use them, keep them, and we would all enjoy their beauty.

Don't you agree?



Take this sheet home as a reminder to yourself.

Personalize YOUR letter to Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee:

"I support the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies' efforts to try to get gemstones on American stamps because": (Write you own reasons) Ideas:

1. Gems have never appeared on U.S. First Class stamps, and would be very attractive.
2. They would not be controversial.
3. Gems would continue the theme of "America's Mineral Heritage" stamps.
4. We and the public would all enjoy their beauty. Etc., etc.

Sign and date your letter and add your address.

Stamp your envelope and mail it off to the address above! **DO IT NOW**



AFMS President--Some Last Reflections

*by Dr. Robert Carlson
from AFMS Newsletter 10/2007*

Since this is my last Message as AFMS President, I would like first to thank all of the Committee Chair persons and the members of their Committees for an out-standing job. With your help, this past year has gone by quickly and smoothly.

Looking back over the year, I can say that it has been plagued with few problems. Any problems have been minor and were quickly solved. Rather, the past year has been blessed with fun and enjoyment. The only sad point is the loss of two persons who have been very active in the AFMS and their respective Federations: George Browne and Dixie Alf.



At this point, I have attended four Regional Shows: Eastern in West Palm Beach, Florida; California in Lancaster, California; Northwest in Butte, Montana; and Midwest in Houghton, Michigan. As this newsletter goes to press, I will be attending the South Central Show in Arlington, Texas; and when you read this, I will be attending the Eastern Show in Newark, New York. I saved the best for last, the AFMS show in Roswell, New Mexico.

Attending all of these shows has given me an insight into the differences between Regions, and I have some observations that may help you improve your shows.

The Eastern Show in West Palm Beach did not have a lot of exhibits, but they did have a lot of dealers. Some of the dealers had jewelry and gemstones that I have not seen outside of Tucson, Way above my price range. West Palm Beach is an affluent community, and those items must sell or the dealers wouldn't pay for the table space to display them.

By contrast, the AFMS show in Roswell has been characterized in print as being a small show. It had a lot of exhibits (40 in Competition) but relatively few dealers. Roswell is a relatively small community whose show caters to the public, not the few affluent in town.

In California, the exhibits and demonstrations were held in one building, and the dealers were in another. The weather was hot and the breeze was strong. Both buildings were air conditioned, and as one person said to me: "These must be new facilities, because the air conditioning works." The show was well attended. There were even tour busses in the parking lot during the show. This means that the advertising was effective.

At the Northwest Show in Butte, it was hot. The show location was large, air conditioned, and had a good number of exhibits and a fairly large number of dealers. How

were the dealers? Fran dropped a bundle.

In Houghton, the weather was somewhat cooler. The school where they held the show didn't need air-conditioning. Houghton is a small college town. During the summer, there are only the permanent residents who are not on vacation. The show was appropriately small.

A common thread runs among these observations.

First assess your potential patrons. If you expect high rollers, plan accordingly. If you do not expect high rollers, do the same.

Second, advertise as much as your budget will allow, and don't spend a lot advertising to Rockhounds—they already know.

Third, you need to provide an atmosphere that is comfortable for the public. The advertising will bring in the public; the comfortable atmosphere will induce them to stay. When the public comes and stays, they have a tendency to shop and buy. When this happens, the dealers are happy and will support your next show.

Fairgrounds that have recently had animal shows complete with flies and that have no air-conditioning are not comfortable to the public. That hasn't happen this year, but I do remember a Federation show where Louie Redfern had an eight-foot case of carvings, and he complained so bitterly about the flies that we awarded him a special trophy for having the most flies in a single case. 'Nuff said.

I have enjoyed my time in office. It has been a pleasure and privilege to serve you. My only request is that you treat the future AFMS Presidents with the same respect and affection that you have afforded me. RLC

Greetings from Your AFMS President-Elect

by Shirley Leeson

from AFMS Newsletter 10/2007

This month I'd like to mention a few words about someone who is the "glue" of the AFMS. He has made life easier for all the preceding AFMS Presidents, officers, and chairmen. This person is someone who has "been around" and is able to work miracles. If you're in a bind and need help, he's there. Unlike me, he's diplomatic.

This person has a huge background in education. He's the second member of the dynamic duo. He's been on the AFMS Bylaw Advisory Committee for a number of years.

When the AFMS had the problem with Dan McClennan, this person was there to "fix the problem." During Dan's term of office as AFMS Secretary and Central Office Administrator, he was summarily fired. Lewis



Elrod stepped in as Central Office Administrator after Dan, but he was unable to continue because of eye problems. **Steve Weinberger** stepped in and took the position of Central Office Administrator, and we've been fortunate to have him ever since.

The job isn't easy. It requires remembering dates and procedures. It means continually



reminding Officers and Chairmen of important things coming up on the calendar. If you read your AFMS Bylaws and Operating Procedures, you'll see that the job is complex and demanding. Not something for the faint of heart.

Steve has been helpful and diplomatic in doing his duty and reminding you of yours. Ask any previous AFMS President, and they'll tell you that Steve has been their backup.

Steve's background is in education, he was a teacher for many years in the Baltimore area. He's been a staunch member of the Gem Cutters Guild of Baltimore, holding most of the offices in the club. He's

been through the chairs of Eastern Federation and also through the chairs of the AFMS, culminating in President in 2002. He's involved in Eastern's Wildacres and heads the Board for that program. He also teaches faceting at Wildacres, usually in the fall.

He lives with another important person to the AFMS, Carolyn. She's the one who puts out the AFMS Newsletter each month. They live with two special "people." Their dogs, Barkley and Caesar think they are people and act accordingly. I remember once at Placerville when the Director's meeting was "going on" and all at once Barkley, who had been sleeping under Carolyn's chair, jumped up and barked. It brought the room to attention!

We've been privileged to know both Carolyn and Steve for many years, going back to the '70s when Carolyn and I were club bulletin editors and corresponded frequently. (Of course there wasn't instant messaging then; it took days to get letters back and forth across the country.) It's been a rich experience, and as I go into the AFMS Presidency in November, I can't think of anyone I'd like better at my back than Steve and Carolyn. Perhaps they can keep me in check so I won't do something unacceptable. But that's a tall order even for them.

It's been fun this past year helping you learn more about some of the people who have made the AFMS what it is today. Next month I'll be stepping up to the Presidency and doing a much different column. Till then, thanks for listening.

Shirley Leeson, AFMS President-Elect

<shirleyleeson@msn.com> and

<beauholland@salmoninternet.com>

(Please send to both e-mail addresses)

Having Fun—AFMS Junior Activities

New Activities and Badges for Our FRA Program!

by Jim Brace-Thompson

Junior Activities Chair

from AFMS Newsletter 10/2007

I'm extremely pleased to report that soon we will add six new badges to our FRA Badge Program! My sincere thanks go to the AFMS Board for approving the necessary funding in the coming year's budget to make this happen and for continuing to provide their unqualified support.

Prior to the AFMS meeting in Roswell, I had already taken the following steps:

- 1) Outlining 13 possible new badges and activity sets in my monthly AFMS newsletter column over the course of the past couple of years
- 2) Polling youth directors at local clubs that have been using the program most actively to see which of the new badges they'd prefer
- 3) Getting a cost estimate from our badge manufacturer to present to the AFMS Board.

In my poll of local youth leaders, most voted to add the following: Earth Processes, Gold Panning & Prospecting, Earth in Space, Gemstone Lore & Legend, Rocking on the Computer, and Stone Tools & Art. Their input and thoughtful suggestions are all greatly appreciated, and it's a direct result of earlier suggestions by youth leaders that activities such as gold panning and stone tools were developed.

In the time since the AFMS meetings in June, I've been working at developing and fleshing out the activities for our six new badges with about five to seven possible activities for kids to choose from for each. And I've been sketching out possible badge designs which I'll be submitting to our manufacturer for further refinement. Finally, I'm revisiting our current set of nine badges to make revisions, updates, and additions to the activities we already offer. I've been slowed by a little oral surgery (ouch!), but I hope to have everything pulled together and finalized this fall with a goal of having a totally revised badge manual posted to the AFMS Web site with the arrival of 2008, when I hope youth leaders can begin utilizing our new offerings on a total of 15 topics.

In addition to my thanks to the AFMS for approving funding, I offer continuing thanks to local youth leaders who have taken up the badge program with their kids. I view my role as a facilitator, trying to come up with activities that may be of value. But their real value isn't realized until a local leader at a local club gathers together a group of kids, rolls up his or her sleeves, and makes something happen in ways that are always unexpected, interesting, and, hopefully, fun! That's where the real work begins and ends, so let's all give thanks and support to our local youth leaders for inspiring and developing the next generation of rockhounds.

Please help the effort by spreading the word about our expanding FRA badge program throughout each regional federation. To everyone reading this column, please have

folks contact me directly to get info (phone 805-659-3577; e-mail jbraceth@roadrunner.com). If you haven't done so already, please write an article in your regional federation and local club newsletters conveying info about the FRA program. With these new badges, we'll now be offering units on Rocks & Minerals, Earth Resources, Fossils, Lapidary Arts, Collecting, Showmanship, Communication, Field Trips, Leadership, Earth Processes, Earth in Space, Gold Panning & Prospecting, Gemstone Lore & Legend, Stone Tools & Art, and Rocking on the Computer. I ask everyone's good will and help in spreading the word to get these activities into the hands of as many kids as possible within our local clubs and societies to help kids learn the science and craft of our hobby while, as always, having fun!



Earth in Space



Earth Processes

Gemstone Lore
and LegendsGold Panning
and ProspectingRocking on the
ComputerStone Tools
and Art

Oil Mist Hazards

by Bob Keller

Permission to reprint granted by Bob Keller

Originator of Bob's Rock Shop, <www.rockhounds.com>

via Gritty Greetings 9/2007

If you have never used a rock saw before, you are about to become acquainted with the phenomena of oil mist. Some people are pennywise and pound foolish and not very smart about the mist they expose themselves to. **If you bought a used saw, be safe and throw away whatever cutting fluid still remains in it. Clean it out thoroughly, and fill with fresh fluid.**

Breathing in petroleum oil mist is a health hazard. So is breathing in kerosene or transmission fluid mist. They should not be used, new or recycled, to lubricate a rock saw.

I could hardly believe it, but (true story) a friend of mine bought a used saw that had been operated with and was filled with *paint thinner*. Nothing like sniffing paint thinner vapor and mist to kill off all those pesky unnecessary brain and liver cells and also to give yourself third-degree burns and burn your house down when the spark from the motor switch ignites the vapor.

It is a bad thing for your lungs to breathe any lubricating oil mist. So ventilate the area where you are operating the saw as well as you can, and seriously consider wearing a protective mask to help circumvent the inhalation of mist. To further minimize the health risk from breathing in the mist, you should use **a mineral oil** for lubrication in your rock saw. Mineral oil is not cheap up front, but it is cheaper in the long run than medical bills and replacing your house and worldly possessions that were in it before it burned down.

You can **recycle mineral oil indefinitely by filtering it**, so you will only need to periodically replace what is lost as mist and what comes out on the surface of the rocks you cut. An old rockhound trick for doing this that works very slick is to filter the oil through paper grocery sacks. You can do this with a 5-gallon plastic pail and a smaller pail that sits inside the larger to set the sack on and hold it up off the bottom of the 5-gallon pail. Perforate the smaller pail so air can escape from it, and set it in the 5-gallon pail upside down so a **doubled** sack can rest on the bottom of the smaller pail. Pour your dirty oil, sludge and all, into the doubled paper sack filter. Then hurry up and wait. Depending on how much oil you are filtering and how thoroughly you want to extract the oil from the sludge, this process may take a week or more to complete. When it is finished, you will have a sack full of more-or-less dry sludge—and oil so clean in the bottom of the pail it looks new. Lift the sack out and dispose of the old sludge, and pour the clean oil back into your saw or into storage containers for future use.

I have used this oil recovery technique in a production environment where we were running half a dozen saws up to 24" in size and making a lot of dirty oil and sludge. We had four or five of these 5-gallon sack filters running all the time and stored the recovered oil in 1-gallon plastic jugs until it was needed.

Keep on Rock'n!

Bees and Bee Safety

from Rocky Trail, 5/2000; via Breccia 8/2007 and others

Afro "killer" bees are widespread throughout the southwestern states. Fact: Afro or killer bees are indistinguishable from European bees except by their actions and/or DNA test. From now on identified as "A" bees or "E" bees.

"A" bees swarm up to two times per year as compared to "E" bees who swarm two or three times. When they swarm, they multiply.

There are 20 different kinds of identifiable honey bees. However, only when they cross breed with the "A" bee do they take on the aggressive attitude. In Arizona, there have been five horses, seven dogs, and five human deaths attributed to attacks of Afro bees. (*Editor's note: keep in mind, these statistics are from October 2000.) A much higher count is expected in the following years.

The "A" bee swarm is usually much smaller: softball size as compared to basketball size for the "E" bee. "A" bees usually swarm in bushes or close to the ground while

“E” bees prefer tree limbs or areas higher up. Both classes need three things to survive: food, water, and a suitable place to swarm.

All bees are attracted to dark clothing and larger sized “bulk.” Bees are especially attracted to breath—“good” or “bad.”

If You are Attacked: Try to cover all bare areas, especially face and neck areas. Get inside—building, house, car, etc. Some will follow you, but they can be dealt with after you are under cover. Try to resist running. Bees fly at 15 mph; you can’t run that fast. Try to resist fighting them as it will only make them more aggressive.

Don’t jump into water over your head. They will wait you out. They have good vision, and they will smell your exhaled “bubbles.” Don’t jump out of the boat. If stung, try to get the stinger out or off as soon as possible as it will continue to pump the venom for up to five minutes. In case of multiple stings, use a knife blade or credit card edge, etc. to scrape off the stingers ASAP.

The average “healthy” human body can withstand six stings per pound of body weight. If many stings are accounted for in a short period of time, you should call 911. If the medical people are required, you should probably be detoxified on a dialysis machine. The poison causes kidney or liver failure and death.

Things To Look For While You’re “Out and About”

All bees patrol a radius of up to half a mile of their hive or swarm. They post 12 guards on lookout. If they feel you are a threat to their swarm or hive, they will gather or follow you. As you get closer to the hive, they will bump you aggressively (but not sting you). If you don’t change direction, they will call in reinforcements. If two or three bees sort of pester you, change directions 180 degrees.

If You Discover a Swarm:

Call 911 if applicable. Dishwashing detergent mixed with 1 cup to a gallon of water and sprayed on the swarm in a fine mist will suffocate them. Stay as far away as possible. Bees and most insects breathe through their skins. They accept the spray as rain, and the detergent seals the air ducts and kills them. The best response is to leave them alone if possible. AND DON’T PANIC!!!!



Rock Riddles*by Larry Rush**(larryrush@att.net), <http://www.connroxminerals.com/>**Permission to reprint granted by Larry Rush (larryrush@worldnet.att.net)**Copyright material—do not reproduce this in any way**without the author's permission.**from SCRIBE 7-9/2007*

Here are a number of riddles related to geology and minerals. The basic idea is to guess the two- or three-word rhyme that best expresses the meaning of the riddle in a humorous way. For example, the puzzle “Men’s running shorts made out of SiO_2 ” can be expressed as “Quartz Shorts.” See how many you can solve before looking at the answers on page 32. Have fun!

1. Bovine eats feldspar
2. Lawyers sue silica miner
3. Dr. Suess’ miner in Death Valley
4. Strong sun in the Arctic
5. Turner finds rosy sandstone deposits
6. The San Andreas stops moving
7. Very sudden loss of soil
8. Helicopter to transport Cu
9. Geometrically formed mineral in the shape of a handgun
10. Idiot who loves isometric minerals
11. Shakespeare’s petroleum comedy
12. Casino on a geologic fault
13. Person who doesn’t believe in volcanoes
14. Very, very hot coffee
15. Geologist who can’t stop talking shop
16. Group of shiny crystals
17. Vivacious agate
18. Volcanic tax form entry
19. Rutilated quartz that really isn’t
20. Climber after fossil resin
21. Senor finds ore in meadow
22. Blind, underground anthracite miner
23. Rock-hammer marks on actor Tom’s fingers
24. A well behaved reef inhabitant
25. Over-dressed dame who likes small quartz crystal masses
26. The effect of Darwin’s theories
27. The only eruption in town
28. Silica army posts
29. Tie up your Aussie gems
30. Be lonely for a rock fracture
31. Spy some dense gray silica
32. Hollow General Motors ball

33. Hot spring at a pharmaceutical company
34. Marker for the Sweet Home mine adit
35. We got rid of the nugget
36. Mixed up metamorphic limestone
37. Salt observed in the day-time
38. Argentina gemstone
39. Mica deposit nears surface
40. Cartoon ghost likes semi-precious gem
41. Rona's diamond
42. Machine used to shape limestone
43. Volcanic glass disappears
44. Courthouse date for claim jumping
45. Muffin makers claim gives indigestion
46. Deer runs into open pit mine
47. Annual celebration for brick makers
48. Strike-slip fault moves a bit
49. A pebble in my argyles
50. Tyson's igneous intrusions
51. Wind which blows fissile rock around
52. Chamberlain's deposit
53. Dish made of sedimentary rock
54. Area around the top of a volcano
55. Rocks identical images
56. Unforgettable dinosaur
57. Cost of banded metamorphic rock
58. It's hard to find sapphires in Montana
59. A slight rock skin disease
60. A cave-in in a emerald mine
61. Collector's lust for $\text{Ca}_5\text{FPO}_4(3)$
62. Low class diamond substitute
63. A dropped quartz crystal with inclusions
64. *I'm sorry about some of these "groaners"*



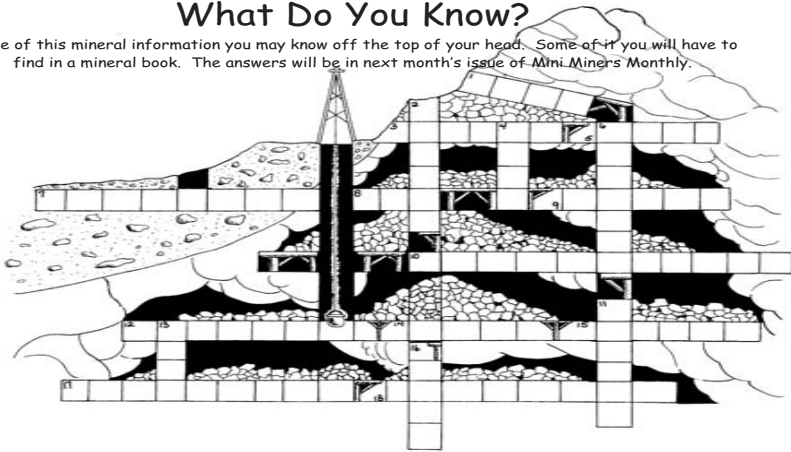
Rock Riddles Answers

1. cow bites albites
2. quartz torts
3. a borax lorax
4. glacier erasure
5. Ted's red beds
6. fault's halt
7. an erosion explosion
8. copper chopper
9. crystal pistol
10. cube boob
11. oil's well that ends well
12. a dip-joint clip-joint
13. igneous ignoramous
14. lava java
15. an ore bore
16. cluster luster
17. chert flirt
18. an eruption deduction
19. inclusion illusion
20. amber clamber
21. Spain plain vein
22. coal mole
23. Cruise's bruises
24. moral coral
25. a drusy floozy
26. evolution revolution
27. an exclusive extrusive
28. quartz forts
29. rope all opal
30. miss your fissure
31. flint glint
32. Geo geode
33. Pfizer geyser
34. fine mine sign
35. sold gold
36. garbled marble
37. daylight halite
38. La Paz topaz
39. a rising mass of isinglass
40. Casper's jasper
41. Barrett's carats
42. a limestone grindstone
43. obsidian oblivion

44. rock pocket docket
45. Thomas's pumices
46. quarry quarry
47. clay day
48. rift shift
49. sock rock
50. Mike's dike
51. shale gale
52. Wilt the Stilt's silt
53. slate plate
54. cone zone
55. stones clones
56. Jurassic classic
57. gneiss price
58. corundum conundrum
59. quartz warts
60. beryl peril
61. apatite appetite
62. sleazy CZ
63. mutilated rutilated
64. *a geolgy apology*

What Do You Know?

Some of this mineral information you may know off the top of your head. Some of it you will have to find in a mineral book. The answers will be in next month's issue of *Mini Miners Monthly*.



1. _____ will not rust. 2. _____ is always some shade of red. 3. _____ is important in preserving food. 4. _____ #1 on the hardness scale.
5. March's birthstone is a variety of this mineral. 6. This is May's birthstone. 7. _____ can be broken into very fine fibers. 8. This mineral will melt if the temperature goes above freezing.
9. _____ is the source of three rare elements.
10. _____ is named after Labrador, Newfoundland. 11. _____ is used to make glass. 12. _____ is the purple gem variety of quartz.
13. Phlogopite and biotite are varieties of _____. 14. Copper is mixed with other metals to create _____. 15. Pyrite contains iron and _____. 16. _____ is a colorful, banded mineral used to make jewelry. 17. Two important copper minerals are azurite and _____. 18. The name of this mineral means "shaft stone."



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Editor's Note: I subscribe to the *Mini Miners Monthly* magazine and have received permission to include a few pages each month in the *BBG* and also on our Web site at www.hgms.org. This page is from the July 2007 issue.

ShowTime 2007

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
September 21-23	Jacksonville, FL	Jacksonville Gem & Mineral Society Morocco Temple, 3800 St. Johns Bluff Rd. Mary Chambliss, (904) 269-4046 IvoryTowers@msn.com
October 6-7	Austin, TX	Texas Faceters' Guild Symposium 6719 Burnet Lane, Bob Lucas 210-558-4547 blucas@world-net.neto
October 6	Texas City, TX	Gem & Rock Show Mall of the Mainland 10000 E.F. Lowry Expwy; Kelly Parker, kparkermallofthemainland@yahoo.com (409) 986-7000 Ext 114
October 11-13	Mt. Ida, AR	World Champ. Quartz Crystals Digging Con- test; Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Fair- grounds Rd.; Thu. 9-3, Fri. 9-3, Sat. 9-3 Maureen Walther, Mount Ida Area Chamber of Commerce (870)867-2723 director@mtidachamber.com www.mtidachamber.com.
October 13-14	Dallas, TX	North Texas Earth Science Association Brookhaven College, EMGI Center 3939 Valley View Ln.; Nick Theis (972) 242-2634; n2theis@gmail.com.
October 13-14	Temple, TX	Tri-City Gem & Mineral Society Mayborn Civic & Convention Center 3303 N. 3rd St.; Les Connally (254) 939-7015
October 20-21	Amarillo, TX	Golden Spread Gem & Mineral Society Amarillo Civic Center, downtown Dee Hawking=s 806-372-3949
November 17-18	Mesquite, TX	Dallas Gem & Mineral Society Resistol Arena Exhibition Hall I-635 & Military Pkwy (Exit 4) www.dallasgemandmineral.org/index.html

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

2007		NOVEMBER				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 Committee	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 Party & Auction	21 7:30 Mineral Section	22	23	24 10-5 Shop Open
25	26	27 5:00-7:15 Shop Open 7:30 General Meeting	28 7:00 Beading Group	29	30	

The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the Houston
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