



The **BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE**

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

Volume XL - No. 7

July 2009



President's Message

*by Terrell William "Terry" Proctor
2009 HGMS President*

HGMs has made it through the first half of 2009 in what I consider very good condition. Our clubhouse is basically in good shape, and the minor things needing attention are fairly promptly taken care of. My hat is off to Tom Wright and the others who take care of the maintenance of the physical needs of our Rock Hound castle.

Admittedly, the U.S. Congress slipped one over on us in the Omnibus Land Bill which had failed year after year. I hope we can now undertake to get them to look at the need to have a means for rockhounds to collect vertebrate fossils on public lands in an organized manner. I would suggest that they look at what Florida did for a number of years. The State of Florida had fossil collectors apply for a license to collect on State lands. It was something like a whopping \$15/year. The license allowed you to collect on State lands with the provision that annually you reported to the State of Florida every vertebrate fossil you found. The State then had the option



Continued on page 4

General Meeting Programs

June 23, 2009: **Neal Immega on Diamonds at HMNS:** "The Nature of Diamonds" will be on display at HMNS from May 8, 2009 to September 7, 2009. The display takes visitors through the amazing transformations of these precious gems.

Neal is getting expert help from wife Inda on the mineralogy and from Jill Rowlands on the jewelry aspects. Neal says, "Since I am a paleontologist, you are going to get paleo at the same time (I bet you cannot figure out how I am going to do that). As a door prize, I am going to ask Beverly to give away a vial of 100-mesh synthetic diamond (we use it to recoat wheels in the shop). It looks like really sparkly sugar but in octahedrons.

Continued on page 4

Contents

President’s Message 1

General Meeting Programs 1

Purpose of HGMS 3

Day Light Section 5

A Bad Collecting Trip with a Lucky Break 6

Advertising Available in the BBG 7

Paper BBG? Electronic BBG? Both? No BBG? It’s Up to You 8

HGMS Receives Donation from Young HGMS Member 8

In Our Library 9

Susan Lenz Update 9

HGMS Outreach Program Picking Up Speed 11

HGMS Board Minutes 12

AFMS President’s Message 16

2009 AFMS/NFMS Show and Convention 17

SCFMS Safety Report 18

SCFMS President’s Message 19

South Central Federation Show—October 10–11, 2009 20

Yellowstone’s Super Caldera is Awake 21

How To Stabilize And Color Enhance Soft Turquoise 22

Hints & Tips 24

Hints & Tips 2 25

Show Time 2009 26

Calendars 27

Permission to use material originating in this newsletter is given freely providing that credit is given to the author and the source. Articles without a byline are considered to have been written by the editor.

Every article published in the BBG is edited for grammar and content. No flaming is allowed.

*Editor: Phyllis B. George
22407 Park Point Drive
Katy, TX 77450-5852
Phone: (281) 395-3087
Copy is due for the August 2009 issue
by Wednesday, July 5, 2009.
E-mail the Editor and Webmaster at
pgeorge4@comcast.net*

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 \$40 for an adult membership, \$60 for a couple, \$75 for a family (including all children aged 5-18), \$25 for a youth membership (ages 5-18), and \$500 for an adult life membership. 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 which is 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 Web site address is <http://www.hgms.org>.

President's Message *continued from page 1*

to declare something you found to be property of the State (if it was significant and needed to become public property), and if they failed to do so within something like 90 days, then you owned the fossil. I'm sure that failure to report or filing a false report and not listing what you found very well may have been a criminal violation and probably should be. Honesty is good in our avocation, especially if it would open up collecting on Federal lands in an organized way.

That type program at the Federal level would work well for us honest rockhounds. It would do away with the pirates who go on Federal lands and use heavy equipment and collect large quantities without doing scientific work at the site. It would force everyone to document where things are, how they relate to each other, the GPS and compass directions regarding the site, the depth at which the items are found, the matrix in which they are located, and other important details for scientific purposes. Many of us do this on private land anyhow because it is important to document for purposes of further study where and under what conditions fossils are found.

As mentioned before, I doubt that this new legislation will be known for years, if ever, to those who find things like a Pleistocene horse or bison tooth on the beach. There are so many of some "vertebrate" fossils having little significance that to make citizens criminals or to invoke harsh penalties just doesn't make sense.

If there is anything good to be said about our Senators and Representatives who voted FOR the Omnibus Land Act, it was that virtually none of them read it (not accidental as that was what the Speaker of the House and others in the House and the Majority Leader in the Senate and others there demanded—no time to read the Act—just vote for it because it has goodies in it for you and other things that folks will holler about if you vote against it.

It is a sin that we pass our laws in this manner. Just as is done in Texas, they wait until the last minute to rush through bills deliberately stalled all during a session so they can be run through in the final minutes, often with last-minute amendments that sometimes make the Bill exactly the opposite of its original intent.

However, we can start now to undo some of the mischief. Actually the Omnibus Land Act only allowed casual collecting of "invertebrate" fossils, in some instances with permission of the Federal authority at that location. As best I can tell, the Omnibus Land Act did not even address vertebrate fossils, leaving them all illegal to collect or to have in your possession on Federal land. *(Continued on page 5)*

Upcoming Programs for General Meeting *continued from page 1*

"Bring your own diamonds, and you will look at them under my excellent binocular scope and check them for fluorescence. We will also have a cleaning station with sudsy ammonia and a tooth brush. We are going to start BEFORE the meeting doing examinations and continue after it is over as needed."

July 28, 2009: Tom Wright Demonstrating Broom Straw Casting

We need to start the ball rolling—with every AFMS rock club in the nation and every other organization dedicated to the fair right of citizens to their federal lands—to get some new legislation that allows collecting and has reasonable parameters to satisfy the purported purpose of this part of the Omnibus Land Act. Yet the bill also must provide a means for casual collectors (like gem, mineral, and fossil club members) to be able to do so legally while providing an annual accounting of what is collected, thus giving the Feds access to those things of scientific worth which is what the act was supposed to be about.

Our Show is shaping up, and your Show Committee has already done a great job on the mail-out and hand-out pieces—they look great. We have put in a bid for a Mars Rock from NASA for our Show and been told that by asking early, we should be able to count on it. I was going to add that I had received an e-mail saying that Mars will be closer to Earth this year than any time in the rest of your life etc., but I checked the trustworthy site of <http://www.snopes.com>. That close approach occurred a few years ago—it's come and gone. If you don't know this site, you should. NEVER send on e-mails you receive until you check with **Snopes** first. **Snopes** will tell you what the rumor is and then whether it is true or not. Many of the things you get in e-mails that sound too good to be true are simply that—untrue. Don't pass on rumors without first checking to see if they are true or are some combination of truth and falsehood.

Back to the Show. We have many good dealers returning and some new ones. We have had only a few dealers who aren't returning. In spite of Hurricane Ike last year, the dealers were pleased with the Show and virtually all but one or two liked the idea of the move to November 13–15, 2009 to get us out of hurricane season. Great plans are being laid for this year's show to be one of the best ever. Please contact 2009 Show Chair, Sigrid Stewart at Sigrid.Stewart@gmail.com, business phone (281) 561-3793 or home phone 1-281-239-0377 (for most of the Houston area, this is long distance) or contact Asst. Show Chair, Richard "Rick" Rexroad at rrexroad@brwncauld.com or (713) 647-6533. Let our Show leaders know that you are willing to volunteer on some committee for this year's Show. Working on a Show Committee is fun and is very valuable to your Club by helping to put on a good and profitable Show each year.

Day Light Section

by Frances Arrighi

Fourteen members attended the 11 May, 2009 meeting of the Day Light Section, and twelve members attended the June 8 meeting. Both meetings were devoted to preparing the steel rods for making the stamps, which will be our summer program. The steel rods were sawn into three- or four-inch length segments depending on the hand size of the person making the stamp. One end of each segment is beveled. This is the end that will have the design, and it needs to be flat just like the hitting end (the end without the design). Val Link will be with us for our meetings in July, August, and September, and he will direct the making of the designs on the top of the steel rods.

A Bad Collecting Trip with a Lucky Break

by Arthur Smith

artsmithite@msn.com

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

In the summer of 1956 between my junior and senior years of college, I had the goal of getting enough money for a car. In New Jersey, things were bleak for summer employment, but I finally got a job with Frosty Maid selling ice cream from a truck. Despite handicaps of not being able to ring the bells, only selling between certain hours, and two competitors, I did pretty well even though I ate several hundred dollars worth of ice cream that summer. Believe it or not, a chocolate covered ice cream on a stick sold for 13 cents.



I was required to work seven days a week, but by the time August came around, I was ready for some time off. Although new at mineral collecting, I had the urge to collect.

So I did just that and decided to spend a day collecting at the Connecticut pegmatites. It was not a pretty day when I headed north and east into Connecticut, but a little rain never hurt collecting much when I was young. Since I did not collect anything, I have no record of which pegmatites I visited, but most had too much water to collect or even get to. It must have been raining for several days.

I kept moving west back toward home, but there was no luck with the flood conditions. At noon I was at the Dinosaur gift shop near Danbury, but there would be no silver picking out of the rain because it was closed.

Since I was moving west, why not try the old Tilly Foster iron mine across the border in New York State? I had dug there at least twice and found little to be happy with, but I was running out of time and opportunity to collect.

There was no letup in the rain, so I made a run past the location that is not far off the road. I noticed a small trench was dug next to the highway, probably to install an underground electric or gas line. It was about three feet deep and about one-and-a-half feet across, and it covered most of the area fronting the highway. The trench had not been completed and there was no equipment there, so the project probably was rained out. There was a small spoil pile paralleling the ditch. Most of the rocks were small, but a few of the large baseball-size could be of interest. The good thing about the hard rain, it did wash the dirt and sand off the rocks. Finally getting tired of waiting for a letup in the rain, I gave up and hit the piles with my hammer and collecting bag. There was a fair amount of mine material, and I found a couple of pieces with very small orange chondrotite crystals. But I was not yet into microminerals, so they were unceremoniously dumped in my bag, and I think they remained with my stuff left in New Jersey when my parents sold the house.

I was about to hang it up and get dried of a bit, when I saw a flat rock partly buried on one of the piles. Washing it off in a puddle was not a big deal because I was already soaked to the skin. I was pleasantly surprised to find it was a large plate of clinochlore, a member of the chlorite group. It apparently was a single crystal and not an aggregate of crystals, but none of the sides seems to be a crystal face. It averages between 1.5 and 2 cm thick, 21 cm and 15.5 cm. wide. It is a shiny pale green with shades of dark green. On close inspection, there is no doubt it is one solid crystal, and it is far more interesting than anything I had ever found at Tilly Foster. So I got some towels and dried off a bit and had a pleasant ride home even in the rain. It was my lucky day so I quit while I was ahead.

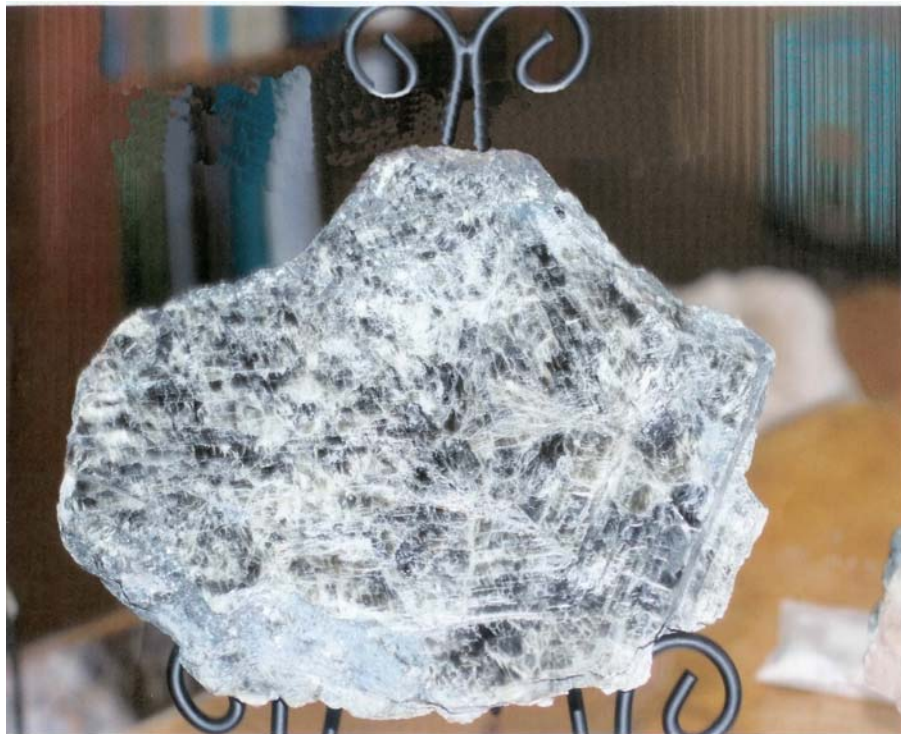


Figure 1: Large Clinochlore plate from the Tilly Foster Iron Mine
Brewster, New York.

Advertising Available in the BBG

by Terry Proctor

Several years back, the HGMS Board of Directors authorized the accepting of advertising in the BBG. However after approval, little was done to let HGMS members and others know that we accepted advertising.

If you are interested in placing an ad in the BBG , please contact BBG Editor Phyllis George at pgeorge4@comcast.net or (281) 395-3087 or HGMS President Terry Proctor at auraman@swbell.net or his law office (713) 453-8338 or FAX (713) 453-3232. They will discuss rates and ad size with you.

Paper BBG? Electronic BBG? Both? No BBG? It's Up to You

by Phyllis George

HGMS Editor and Webmaster

Section Representatives reported back to the HGMS Board during its June 2, 2009 meeting on the results of the straw votes taken by the various Sections concerning a motion presented to the Board May 5. The nonbinding straw vote was on the initial motion: to distribute the Backbender's Gazette (BBG) only in electronic (PDF) form to all members who have an e-mail address. These members would no longer receive the newsletter in printed form. Members who do not have an e-mail address would receive it in printed form as usual. Members with an e-mail address who want the printed version too would pay an extra \$25 for the service.

The results as reported by the Representatives was strongly for no change. The Board decided that there will be no change in the way the BBG is distributed. It will be mailed to all members as usual, and will also be sent out as a PDF file to any member who wishes to receive it in that form.

Any member who does not already receive the BBG as a PDF file but would like to, should contact Beverly Mace (membership@hgms.org) and let her know so she can add you to the list.

The Board also decided that the Membership Renewal Form should contain various options about receiving the BBG. There no doubt are members who never bother to look at the newsletter, and if these members let the club know that they do not want it, the club can save money by not printing or mailing unwanted copies.

A modified Membership Renewal Form (for both renewing and new members) is now available on the HGMS Web site (www.hgms.org). Click on the green Current Info button and scroll all the way down, then click on the HGMS Membership Form button. OR click on the Join HGMS button on the home page and scroll down to "Download Membership Form," and click on that. The modified form contains a line with "Send NO BBG, Mail printed BBG, and Send electronic BBG" options so you can select Your Way. Let us know how you want your BBG delivered (or not).

HGMS Receives Donation from Young HGMS Member

by Terry Proctor

At the May 26, 2009 General Membership meeting of HGMS, Jonathan Maislin, a 13-year old young man who has been a member of HGMS for five years, asked to make a presentation. Jonathan along with his father and mother, Steve and Michelle Maislin, his brother Jeremy Maislin, sister Allison Maislin, and grandfather, Sig Altman, are all members of HGMS.

At this meeting Jonathan presented a cashier's check for \$200.00 to the President of HGMS as his gift to our Club. Jonathan had recently celebrated his Bar Mitzvah (in the Jewish religion, a young man becomes of age at 13 and becomes responsible for his own actions thereafter). In making this gift, Jonathan explained that in Jewish

tradition, when gifts are given to him at his Bar Mitzvah, he is to donate ten per cent (a tithe) of what he receives to one or more charities or other good causes. Jonathan selected three, of which HGMS was one.

HGMS appreciates this gift, extends thanks to Jonathan Maislin, and congratulates him on his Bar Mitzvah. We look forward to Jonathan continuing as an HGMS member for many more five-year periods in his life. Additionally you should know that Jonathan has done work as a docent at the Houston Museum of Natural Science and been involved in the Youth Section of HGMS and other HGMS activities. HGMS has many fine members in our Youth Section which is led by Beverly Mace. We are proud to have Jonathan in HGMS along with his mother, father, brother, and grandfather.

In Our Library

by Art Smith

HGMS Librarian

A new book donated to the library by Phyllis George is much appreciated. It is called *Agates and Jaspers*, and was written and photographed by Ron Gibbs. It consists of many colorful photographs of agate slabs and some microphotographs of the detail of some. This is not just a collection of pretty photographs. The photos are grouped by locality, which in some other books may be hard to find. Aside from being a nice book to leaf through, it is also a nice reference book because of the data it contains. The book will be filed in the Gemstone section and under Agates and then Gibbs.

As you can see we are trying to squeeze as much book shelf into the library as possible, and I think we are close to that objective right now. This should give us a little more wiggle room for the next three or four years before the problem of space comes up again.

There is a new book on Fairburn Agates that I will order for the library. It covers a new area exposed by a fire in 2000. I collected Fairburns over 45 years ago, and even then it was extremely tough to find a good one.

Larry Tischler has gone through the Bureau of Economic Geology list of publications and found quite a few we need for the library. I will check the index to be sure they are not just misfiled somewhere, then I will order what we need.

Susan Lenz Update

by Norm Lenz

May 17, 2009

Fellow Rockhounds,

Susan continues to do well since my last update. Her latest MRI of two weeks ago indicates that she is still solidly in remission. She will now be going four months between MRI tests. It is hard to believe that only a year ago she was sleeping 20 hours per day, needed to be propped up with pillows, couldn't operate her laptop, and needed

help to dial a telephone. She has even regained an interest in the art of makeup application.

We just returned from a trip to Indiana where Susan and Tanya spent Mother's Day with their family. The trip went well. Sunday, we celebrated Mother's Day by eating grilled food with all the condiments at the City Park shelter house. Wednesday we went out to eat a catfish dinner with Susan's friend Carmen Slavens and her husband Ron. Friday, Susan went on a shopping extravaganza with her mother, Tanya, several sisters, a niece, and Heather.

We are so encouraged with Susan's improvement that we have resumed thinking about building our Hill Country retirement home in San Marcos, TX. We have interviewed several home builders and hired a designer to finalize the plan. We hope to distribute the plan for bid to potential builders by the end of July. I am a little apprehensive about taking on such a big project, but Susan is confident we can pull it off and that she can help make decisions.

Positives:

- Susan's latest MRI indicated that she continues to be in remission.
- Her short term memory is almost normal again. There are only occasional skips.
- Her verbal communication is back to normal.
- Susan is feeding herself with only minor assistance from us.
- The wild swings in alertness and mood that Susan was experiencing may have been partially due to one of Susan's seizure control medications. She has been less fatigued, more alert, and more content since I cut this medicine a month ago. The better news is that she has not had a seizure since the change. She has even been able to reply to some e-mail.

Negatives:

- Susan can still only walk with our assistance, and only about 30–40 feet. Her doctor will not approve her for water therapy until she has been seizure-free for six months or more. She has never gone six months between seizures since her diagnosis over three years ago.
- Susan still cannot coordinate her left arm and right arm to propel and steer her wheelchair. However, she is more aware of her surroundings and may be able to operate a power chair. I will take her for a test drive once I feel she can operate the chair without being a danger to herself or her surroundings. I think we may be getting close.
- Tremors continue to be a problem. The medications we have tried have



not helped. Her movement disorder specialist is reluctant to try another medication until her seizures are better controlled.

Photo (Opposite page): Hedgehog cactus, one of Susan's favorite spring wildflowers growing on our retirement property .

HGMS Outreach Program Picking Up Speed

by Terry Proctor

The first HGMS Outreach Program will be on June 27, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Holy Trinity United Methodist Church, 13207 Orleans Street, Houston, Texas 77015. This location is a mile North of IH 10 East and a block West of Uvalde Road. HGMS is bringing two Genie cabochon machines for the use of young people and adults to cut and polish pieces of agate provided by HGMS. Those attending will be given information on HGMS including membership forms if they want to join, and information on our November 13–15, 2009 Show .

The HGMS Outreach Program is picking up speed. This is a great way for HGMS to

1. Expand the educational purposes of HGMS as set out in our Charter;
2. Reach out to young people all over the County and encourage them to develop an interest in Earth Science as a vocation or avocation;
3. Help promote interest in our annual HGMS Show that will be held in Humble, November 13–15, 2009 and in future years;
4. Demonstrate to firms that HGMS is very active in Earth Science education and invite them to assist us in our educational endeavor with their grants or other support. We are an organization that is making a difference in science education for youth and adults.

A number of HGMS members have shown an interest in being part of this Outreach Program, but they don't know in which of the eight HGMS Districts they live. I have to tell you I am an opportunist and lazy , so I didn't reinvent the wheel. Your HGMS District is the same as your JP/Constable District. If you don't know what that is, it is hard to tell. Pull out your Voter Registration card and on the back (or the front) is a line of small squares. The fifth one from the left says JP . It will show a number of 1 through 8. That is your JP Precinct, and it is also your HGMS District number . Send me an e-mail or call me, and I will start putting together HGMS members in the same District who want to help get the Outreach program up and running.

HGMS members ask me when and where they are to meet, and what they are to do. My response is that once we have three to five HGMS Outreach Volunteers in a given District, YOU are in charge. You will jointly find a FREE location which will cooperate (library, church, civic center, business, pizza parlor, or other suitable location). I will help you with any questions and suggestions, but **your district group** will be in charge.

It is suggested that you have three or four programs a year including PBS-type FREE VCR films (that I will loan you); a cutting and polishing session, for which HGMS will loan a couple of Genie machines (according to Neal Immega) for a day for such program; and/or a live presentation on faceting, lapidary , mineral, paleontology , or such by HGMS members with some material for presentation. It is your call in your District. HGMS will support you in this. This endeavor will not charge anyone for a program nor pay anyone for providing space etc. HGMS is creating material to hand out telling about HGMS and the **Outreach Program**. We will also hand out membership forms in case attendees wish to join HGMS.

Let me know what your Board of Directors can do to help you organize your District. Terry Proctor, 2009 HGMS President. Contact me at auraman@swbell.net or call my law office phone (713) 453-8338 or send me a F AX (713) 453-3232.

HGMS Board Minutes

June 2, 2009

by Terry Proctor, filling in for Regina Gorman

X	President	Terry Proctor	X	Faceting Rep.	Wayne Barnett
X	1 st Vice President	Matt Dillon	X	Lapidary Rep.	Phyllis George
X	2 nd Vice President	Beverly Mace	X	Mineral Rep.	Denise Bicknell
	Treasurer	Rodney Linehan	X	Paleontology Rep.	Rick Rexroad
X	Secretary	Regina Gorman	X	Day Light Rep.	Nancy Fischer
X	Beading Rep.	Diane Sisson	X	2009 Show Chair	Sigrid Stewart

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by President Terry Proctor, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

The Minutes of the May Board Meeting had been published and reviewed by Board Members. It was moved by Matt Dillon that the May Board minutes be approved as printed in the June BBG, seconded by Rick Rexroad, and approved unanimously .

Treasurer's Report: HGMS Treasurer Rodney Linehan was unable to be present, but he had e-mailed his report to all Board Members prior to this meeting. Some members had not yet seen the report, but a copy was shared at the meeting by those who had. HGMS finances are in good order at this time. Several matters previously set aside for quotes and further review will be taken up at the July Board Meeting. There were no Section Reports other than a brief report on the Beading Section by Diane Sisson.

Show Committee Report: Show Chair Sigrid Stewart and Asst. Chair Rick Rexroad of the Show Committee were present and provided some information regarding the Show Committee. InterGem is having their Show , and Sigrid asked for volunteers to work at a table handing out material for HGMS at that Show . Contact Sigrid at Sigrid.Stewart@gmail.com or call her at 281-561-3793.

It was suggested that HGMS allow the Show Committee to publicize the Show and HGMS activities on Facebook, Flickr and Meetup.com. The Board voted unanimously in favor.

Terry Proctor reported that he talked with Dr. Carlton Allen, Extraterrestrial Materials Curator for NASA, and Gary Longren, Lunar Materials Curator for NASA, about having NASA be present at our Show again this year and for Gary to put on a program at the October 27, 2009 General Membership meeting. Dr. Allen had indicated that a Mars rock should be available since he was contacted early about this, and Gary Longren indicated that he would see if he could work in a presentation again to our Club. (NOTE: Since the Board meeting, Mr. Longren has confirmed that he will present the October program for us). Rick Rexroad reported that we have six new distributors and that as of now, we are about 80% complete on the dealers for the Show.

Building: Matt Dillon reported that progress has been made on getting the new stop blocks ready to be installed in the parking lot. The necessary holes have been drilled in them.

There was discussion regarding equipment missing from locked cabinets for which there are few keys. This has to do with wire-wrapping materials at least. It is important that HGMS members, even if they have a key, do not take supplies out of cabinets or toolboxes without it being known and sanctioned by the teacher or person to whom that toolbox is assigned or who is in charge of those supplies. If you have done this, please put back the items taken and/or let the person in charge of the toolbox know that you have the items so that they can be accounted for. HGMS has been around a long time, and essentially, other than for a few incidences, has always had an honor system that worked out well. We are basically a very trustworthy group of members, and we simply must be able to count on HGMS members recognizing our trust system and honoring it so we don't have to introduce additional security procedures.

One other item brought up is that HGMS does not have hired clean-up people for the Shop or elsewhere in the Clubhouse. If you use things, YOU are the one who is to clean-up after yourself. Boy Scouts are taught to leave things better than they found them. That rule should apply to HGMS. Leave things in the Shop and Clubhouse as clean and orderly as you found them or better, and Thank you for doing so. The Board determined that at Section Meetings and by Shop Supervisors regular announcements should be made that the membership is responsible to clean up after themselves.

Old Business: The Board had previously voted to purchase something made by a member for up to \$300.00 to donate to the AFMS Endowment Fund. When no member responded with an offer to make and sell to the club such an item, the Board voted to just donate \$300.00 to the AFMS Endowment Fund. President Terry Proctor talked with Bill Patillo, who is in charge of the Endowment Fund donations for 2009 about either belatedly sending in an item or making the cash donation. Bill Patillo said if HGMS wanted to purchase \$300.00 in auction tickets we could do that. Then if we

won, we could use the item won at an HGMS auction of our own. Matt Dillon moved and Wayne Barnett seconded the motion that the HGMS Board adopt this and voted unanimously to send the \$300.00 already approved for the AFMS Endowment Fund to be used to purchased auction tickets as Bill Patillo suggested. Hopefully we will win something to auction later , and if not, our donation of \$300.00 to the AFMS Endowment Fund will have been made in any event.

Wayne Barnett brought up that although the Outreach Program was discussed and the Board gave informal approval to the concept and to going forward, the Board never actually voted on the matter . Therefore, Matt Dillon moved that the HGMS Board officially sanction and approve the Outreach Program as previously outlined and again stated by Terry Proctor at this meeting. Phyllis George seconded the motion, after which there was some additional discussion. The approval and sanction was passed unanimously. During the discussion, Nancy Fischer stated that she gave Wayne Barnett some information on the eight Justice of the Peace/Constable Precincts, and Wayne said that he would print these out in large format so that they could be shown to HGMS members.

The first Outreach Program meeting will be held Saturday , June 27, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Holy Trinity United Methodist Church, off IH 10 East in HGMS District #3. Neal Immega and others will take a couple of HGMS Genie machines to the Fellowship Hall there for youth and adults to learn about cutting and polishing agate. The agate will be provided from the HGMS Shop leftovers. Information on HGMS will be distributed. Terry Proctor reported that on the first announcement at this church, two people came up and expressed interest in HGMS and wanted to know more about the club and membership. This appears to be a good way to have others learn about HGMS and what we do in addition to the education program HGMS provides for youth and adults.

While the back door was repaired by Tom Wright saving us well over \$1,000 for a new steel door and lock, we have had more complaints about the old lock still being hard to open. We appreciate Tom's work on a number of things and saving the Club money. However, sooner or later we probably are going to have to replace the door , which has already been approved by the Board. For now we will try to keep using the old door and lock.

The Board has been discussing the manner to award this year 's Scholarship. In several recent Board meetings, it was brought up that since most four year colleges have larger grants than our scholarship and many such scholarships are available for students who enrolled there for the full four years, the HGMS Scholarship should be awarded to a student graduating from a local Junior College—one who is going on to complete a degree in Earth Science or in Jewelry making at a four -year college. The Scholarship Award would be paid to the four year college for tuition only , not to the student. The Scholarship would be awarded upon a basis of grades, on past career courses in the Jr. College, and on the course program to be followed by the Awardee

in the four year college. Upon submission of a completed application for the Scholarship, the application will be reviewed by an HGMS Scholarship Committee that would determine the recipient. Terry Proctor included with the June Board Meeting Agenda a copy of the form created by the Paleontology Section for their Scholarship award for this year. The HGMS Board will review that form and then create their own application form to distribute to schools for students who may wish to apply.

BBG Distribution: Terry Proctor asked the Board to take up the matter presented for discussion at the May Board meeting by Wayne Barnett regarding distributing the BBG electronically instead of mailing it. Terry reported that the Paleo Section took a straw vote which he believed was 10 against going electronic, one for, and two who weren't sure or had comments on some other version of distribution. On the question of essentially going electronic and ceasing the mailing of copies of the BBG (except for those without an e-mail address), HGMS Sections who presented this question in some form to the members of that Section, it was reported as follows: Beading Section-8 or 9 voting, all voted against; Lapidary Section- 8 or 9 voting, all voted against (there was one suggestion that perhaps the BBG could be printed every other month); Faceting Section-about 11 voting, 8 voted for and 3 voted against; Paleo Section-11 voting (a few didn't vote), voted 10 against, 1 for with some variations discussed. Terry Proctor commended Wayne Barnett for being concerned about the financial expense of the BBG and about bringing up this concept. It was obvious that the straw vote showed most HGMS members, who voted or sent e-mails on the subject, didn't want to do away with the mailed out BBG. However, there was discussion about other ways to consider the matter of partial electronic distribution of the BBG.

After considerable discussion, it was determined that some HGMS members probably don't care whether they receive the BBG. They should be able to opt out of receiving the BBG and thereby save HGMS some money. The Board determined that there would be no alteration of dues on this matter, but that the option to not be sent a printed copy of the BBG should be added to the membership renewal form. There was a discussion about the renewal of membership form being designed so that a member could elect to receive the BBG electronically if they wished, not receive it at all, or otherwise it would be sent by mail as usual. Wayne Barnett moved to put an area on the HGMS membership form allowing a new or renewing member to select the form in which they wish to receive the BBG. It was seconded by Rick Rexroad. The motion provided for Beverly Mace and Phyllis George to determine the wording to be used on the application form, and the motion passed unanimously. ***Editor's Note:** The revised form is already available on the Web site.*

New Business: There was a report regarding Jonathan Maislin, a 13 year old, five-year member of HGMS who made a \$200.00 donation to HGMS at the General Membership Meeting on May 26, 2009. This was 25% of his donation to charities and other civic donations and came from the money he received at his Bar Mitzvah. He explained that traditionally the Bar Mitzvah honoree donates 10% of the gifts he receives as money gifts. He expressed his appreciation to HGMS for the five years he

has been a member and called HGMS his rock and gem family .

Terry Proctor announced that Terry Stiles, Administrator for the Texas A&M Veterinary School, has invited the HGMS Paleo Section and Proctor Museum members to come to his Ranch for barbecue chicken and corn again this year following their trip to the Stone City Formation at Whiskey Bridge in late September, 2009. Terry Stiles has hosted the group in this manner in the past,

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at approximately 9:18 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

AFMS President's Message

by Joy Bourne

from AFMS Newsletter 6-7/2009

And the field trip season is well underway from Maine to California., and from Washington state to Florida! I have been very pleasantly surprised to see so many lists of scheduled club field trips in the club bulletins I receive. In my opinion, this is what rockhounds should all do—get out there and find your treasure. What you find does not have to be of world class value—the real treasure is the great companionship and fun you experience in the hunting.



Most field trips are sponsored by local clubs or regional organizations, and are led by a local field trip chairman. These individuals are knowledgeable about the area in which the trip is to be held; have taken a safety course, and are prepared to enforce the rules concerning appropriate field trip behavior just in case. And that is all to the good. They can probably identify your finds for you, too. (Especially if you are looking for fossils)

My personal experience is that it was on a mandatory field trip during my undergraduate years that I found my first fossil! I was a math major and only went on the trip because it was a requirement of the University curriculum.

The professor took a bus load of students to the newly constructed US Rt. 81 in northern New York state, pulled off at an exit, and told us we were to look for fossils. When we asked him, what they looked like, he told us we were to look for rocks which did not look like the usual run of rock in the area. When I found a rock which appeared especially lumpy, I took it to the gentleman and asked him if it was a fossil, he took a look at it, and said, “My dear , you have found a hormatoma!” Wow, was I

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.

excited! That is when I became hooked, and although I did not realize it at the time, I became a Rockhound! (I still have that fossil in my collection.) I went on to take every geology course in the syllabus, and wound up with dual certification to teach Mathematics and Earth and Space Science. So, you can see how a life can be changed on a field trip.

Even if you don't plan to change your life, I highly recommend collecting to you as a super way to spend a summer. Happy Hunting! Joy

2009 AFMS/NFMS Show and Convention

Billings, Montana

July 30–August 02, 2009

from SCFMS Newsletter 5–6/2009

by Doug True, Show Chairman

e-mail dtruefossils@yahoo.com

Iwould like to take a few minutes to welcome you to the AFMS/NFMS Show and Convention. There will be a number of special exhibits designed to make this a show you won't forget for many years.

Come join us and enjoy seeing the Moon Rock from NASA, a life-sized Cave Bear , Dinosaurs, a world class Ruby Collection, a rare Yogo Sapphire Collection, a Polar Bear carving (4 ft. high, weighing 2000 lbs.) and much more, as we are adding things every day.

We also look forward to seeing your special exhibits, so please take some time and think about what showcases you would like to enter, and also your collection or your craftsmanship that would make a great competition exhibit. Let's show the country what the Northwest has to offer.

Plan on spending the entire week after the show taking advantage of our planned field trips collecting Montana Agate, Jasper, Petrified Wood, Bear Canyon fortification agate, a variety of fossils such as ammonites, nautiloids, pine cones, stromatolites, crinoids, coral, and others.

There will also be a guided tour of the Summit water mine smelter and several self-guided tours for quartz crystals, opal, and Montana sapphires. Check out the NFMS Web site OR the AFMS website for all information and forms.

As we get closer to the show, special articles will be published giving more information on all of the field trips and things to see and do in Montana. You don't want to miss this show.

Schedule of AFMS/NFMS Show Events :

Thursday 07/30/09, 10:00 a.m. Show opens

Friday 07/31/09, 7:30 p.m. AFMS Cracker Barrel

Saturday 08/01/09, 1:00 p.m. AFMS Faceted Stone Auction

7:00 p.m. Awards Banquet

Sunday 08/02/09, 8:00 a.m. Editor's Breakfast

10:00 a.m. Editor's Symposium

1:00 p.m. NFMS Live Rock Auction

SCFMS Safety Report

by Owen Martin

SCFMS Safety Coordinator

Time for a Road Trip?

Safety Considerations for Your Summer Travel.

from SCFMS Newsletter 5-6/2009

Having just come off a trip where my Garmin got me very lost, I figured I would offer some thoughts and provide some statistics on safety for our travels this summer.

First I'd like to address preparedness for road trips. Depending on where you are going, I would recommend making a checklist for things to take in case of emergency. In Texas you have to plan to take water for the car or truck, not just for you and your family or friends. In addition to "coolant," you may need to bring extra tools, oil, transmission fluid, windshield wiper fluid, flashlights, spare tires, etc.

Taking your vehicle to your local mechanic for a checkup and fluids change can also be very important if you want to minimize your risk on a trip.

As for some statistics, this first one is a big pet peeve of mine. Year to year this statistic is fairly consistent. For a recent example, in 2007 there were 31,000 children killed in automobile accidents in the United States. Of that 31,000 more than 16,000 were NOT properly restrained with seat belts or car seats. YES, more than half of the children killed were not properly buckled up, a responsibility that directly falls on the driver of the vehicle.

So that is not to say that a seat belt would have saved all of those lives, but one of those statistics was from a 2007 crash in Houston where a man didn't put his son in a car seat. When he lost control of his car and rolled it, his son was ejected and killed! The father was uninjured. Police said that the child would also likely have been uninjured if he had actually been in the car seat that was in the car.

So **Buckle Up** and make sure everyone else in the vehicle is buckled up too!

As for driving at night, here are a couple of considerations. Peak DWI/DUI accidents occur on Saturday nights between 2:00 and 3:00 a.m. Some cities have estimated that as high as 80% of the drivers on the roads between 2:00 and 4:00 a.m. are drunk or have been drinking to some degree. Perhaps that seems to make sense from a statistical standpoint; however, it might make a lot less sense for you to put yourself on the road during that time period.

Many cities and counties across the country have passed or are considering passing laws to limit the use of cell phones while driving. I think this may be a good idea,

especially in places like school zones; however, lawmakers might want to add general inattentiveness to the rule since things like eating while driving, talking to the folks in the back seat, or reading a map can all present similar risks.

A more telling statistic is that nearly half of highway accidents in any given year are caused by “sleepy” drivers. So if my cell phone keeps me awake, maybe that’s a good thing. This statistic is also greater than the percentage of accidents caused by drunk drivers.

Another statistic specific to highway travel: going with the flow, or specifically the flow of traffic can keep you safe. Roughly 80% of highway accidents are caused by individuals at a speed that’s slower or faster by 10 mph or more than the flow of traffic.

Finally, we all know that men and women drive differently. A couple of statistics to support this statement. Women are cited as the “cause” of approximately two-thirds of accidents that occur on our roads. Men on the other hand are cited as the “cause” of approximately two-thirds of accidents involving a fatality. The second statistic is primarily attributed to males between the ages of 16 and 35 who like to drive very aggressively. So read into these last two whatever you want, but YES, we do drive differently!

I will close with my pet peeve. More American children died in automobile accidents in 2007 than all the US personnel who died during the entire time that we have been in Iraq.

I hope you all can find some pearls of wisdom in this article and thus travel a little more safely this summer.

Be Safe!

BTW—the reason my Garmin got me lost was because my kids had reprogrammed it to look for the best “bicycle” route. So it kept telling me to get off the highway. It took a good hour for me to figure it out. 🤔

SCFMS President’s Message

HOUSE SPECIAL

by Ike House, President

from SCFMS Newsletter 3-4/2009

Hi everyone!

Well, it seems as though spring has finally sprung, and we know that for sure because I’m sleepier when I get up in the morning! I saw my shadow when I got up this morning, but I was late for work. I’m not sure what that means, but it sounded good so I wrote it down.

Everything’s just rocking right along for all of us in northwest Louisiana. Our club has paid a fee to have a vein dug out for us at a productive crystal mine in Mena, Arkansas, and for, I think it is \$25 per head, we get to be the first ones to go through

it. Large Arkansas crystals as long as several feet have been found in the past at this mine, so we are all anxious to get at 'em.

We also are planning a trip in a local creek bed to look for fossils and any other hard things we can find, (last time one of our members picked up a skull and horns from a bighorn sheep!) Amazing the things you can find in a drainage ditch—er creek. So get out there and start looking before the water rises!

We have a new club to add to our membership roster—Piney Woods Gem and Mineral Society in Huntsville, Texas (District 2). Welcome! Look for them at a show near you and take the time to extend a hand of fellowship.

Just like all of our members, we hope the new club members will look through that big new directory that Paul Good and his hired hand, (Margaret) have put together and will discover the great benefits that can be had by being a member. By the way, thanks, Paul, for another outstanding effort! I haven't finished reading it, but I hope to make it to the third chapter soon. I'm tempted to turn to the back to see how it ends, but that would be cheating. :o) :o)

That's all the news that is news. Tomorrow I have to work on the tractor. Some of you might recall me mentioning our rockhound of a dog, Tucker. It seems he has decided that if we won't let him chew on our rocks, a tractor seat will do as a substitute. Bad dog! Grace and peace, Ike

South Central Federation Show—October 10–11, 2009

*Hosted by the Tri-City Gem & Mineral Society (40th Annual Show)
from SCFMS Newsletter 5–6, 2009*

The Tri-City Gem & Mineral Society is excited to be hosting the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies' 2009 Convention and the 40th Annual Tri-City Show in Temple, TX. The show will be held at The Frank Mayborn Civic & Convention Center at 3303 N. Third St., Temple, TX. We hope your stay is an enjoyable one.

By the time you receive this Newsletter, an **Advance Registration Form** and an **Application to Exhibit Form** (noncompetitive or competitive) will be available on the SCFMS Web site. **Advance Registration prices per person:**

Admissions for two day—\$4.00; Editors' Breakfast (Buffet)—\$15.00; Awards Banquet (Roast Beef)—\$20.00.

NOTE: DEADLINE for all Advance Registration Forms and Applications To Exhibit Forms is: **September 10, 2009**. NO refunds for cancellation after September 10, 2009.

The Host Hotel for our show will be the **Quality Inn at 1610 W. Nugent, just off I-35, Temple, TX 76502**. Ph (254) 770-1100. Please reserve your room by September 10, 2009 for Preferred rates.

Optional hotels are listed below with their requested hold dates :

Best Western Temple: 602 N. General Bruce, 254-742-1127. Book by 10-01-09.

Red Roof Inn: N. General Bruce, 254-739-8800. Book by 08-01-09.

Eagle Inn: 1610 N. Third St. 254-788-0889. Book by 05-31-09.

Schedule of Events

Friday - October 9th: 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Registration Begins and Displays set up

Saturday - October 10th

7:30 a.m. Breakfast with the Editors

9:00 a.m. Show opens

2:00 p.m. SCFMS Annual Meeting

6:00 p.m. Show closes for the day

7:00 p.m. SCFMS Awards Banquet

Sunday - October 11th

8:00 a.m. Rollin' Rock Club meeting

10:00 a.m. Show opens

Ongoing Activities:

Silent Auction Hourly Door Prize Drawings Grab Bag Sales Treasure Wheel

Demonstrations:

Faceting Wire Wrapping Flint Knapping Cabochon Cutting

Field Trip - Pending**Yellowstone's Super Caldera is Awake**

by Judith Washburn

MWF Geology Chair

from MWF Newsletter 2/2009 via Cedar Valley Gems 4/2009

At the heart of Yellowstone's past, present, and future lies volcanism; catastrophic eruptions occurred here about 2 million years ago, then 1.2 million years ago, and then 600,000 years ago. The latest eruption spewed out nearly 240 cubic miles of debris. What is now the park's central portion then collapsed, forming a 28 by 47 mile caldera (or basin). The magmata heat powering those eruptions still powers the park's famous geysers, hot springs, fumaroles, and mud pots. The spectacular Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River provides a glimpse of Earth's interior; its waterfalls highlight the boundaries of lava flows and thermal areas. Rugged mountains flank the park's volcanic plateau.

The Earth's crust beneath Yellowstone National Park is still restless. Precise surveys have detected an area in the center of the caldera that rose by as much as 86 centimeters between 1923 and 1984 and then subsided slightly between 1985 and 1989. Scientists do not know the cause of these ups and downs, but they hypothesize that they are related to the addition or withdrawal of magma beneath the caldera, or to the changing pressure of the hot groundwater system above Yellowstone's large magma

reservoir. Also, Yellowstone National Park and the area immediately west of the Park historically are among the most seismically active areas in the Rocky Mountains. Small-magnitude earthquakes are common beneath the entire caldera, but most are located along the Hebgen Lake fault zone that extends into the northwest part of the caldera. A magnitude 7.5 earthquake occurred along this zone in 1959. Yellowstone National Park was jostled by a host of small earthquakes for a third straight day on Monday, December 29th, and scientists watch closely to see whether the more than 250 tremors are a sign of something bigger to come.

Swarms of small earthquakes happen frequently in Yellowstone, but it's very unusual for so many earthquakes to happen over several days, said Robert Smith, a professor of geophysics at the University of Utah. "They're certainly not normal," Smith said. "We haven't had earthquakes in this energy or extent in many years." Smith directs the Yellowstone Seismic Network, which operates seismic stations around the park. He said the quakes have ranged in strength from barely detectable to one of a magnitude 3.8 that happened Saturday. A magnitude 4 quake is capable of producing moderate damage, he indicated. "This is an active volcanic and tectonic area, and these are the kinds of things we have to pay attention to," Smith said. "We might be seeing something precursory. Could it develop into a bigger fault or something related to hydrothermal activity? We don't know. That's what we're there to do, to monitor it for public safety." The strongest of dozens of tremors Monday was a magnitude 3.3 quake shortly after noon. All the quakes were centered beneath the northwest end of Yellowstone Lake. A park ranger based at the north end of the lake reported feeling nine quakes over a 24-hour period over the weekend, according to park spokeswoman Stacy Vallie. No damage was reported. "There doesn't seem to be anything to be alarmed about," Vallie said.

There is a great DVD available from the History Channel on the "Mega Disaster Yellowstone Eruption." It presents the idea that one of America's best-loved parks may be the most geologically dangerous place in the nation. Mega Disasters explores the worst of what could happen. Stunning computer graphics and actual footage combine to create convincing pictures of the risks faced by U.S. cities. All of Yellowstone Park is the caldera of an ancient volcano that is likely to erupt again!

Sources: United States Geological Survey Web Site

How To Stabilize And Color Enhance Soft Turquoise

*Edited from an article by the late Ed Ashton, former DGMS member;
via Rock Chips 10/2007 and The Pineywoods Rooter 12/2008*

How many of us rockhounds (in copper -related mineral areas) have picked up chalky, soft, very light blue (or depth blue) turquoise and have thrown it back down because we did not know how to work it and end up with a piece of jewelry? I'm sure the answer will be that most of us have experienced this many times. With the use of Opticon (a material used in sealing fractures), we can stabilize and harden this material and use it to our great satisfaction. [Opticon can be purchased at most rock shops.]

Stabilizing Procedure

1. Select the clean materials and sort the sizes up to an inch thick. Place the material in a container (casserole with cover or a crockpot with a glass cover), and be sure to cover the material with Opticon 224 without the hardener . Cut lar ge pieces with Crystal Cut (not oil) so that the maximum thickness is 1/4 inch.
2. Set the casserole aside. Look at the color enhancement, as it will be seen on most materials immediately. The color that was hidden now appears because the chalky appearance is gone. In two days full enhancement should show up. Since the Opticon must soak into the material, the soaking time increases with greater thickness. When the material is 1/4 inch thick, it will take at least six weeks for the Opticon to penetrate to the center of the material. However , 3/4inch material will take at least 12 weeks for the Opticon to penetrate to the center of the material.
3. After the required amount of soaking (6–12 or even 16 weeks), place the covered casserole in the oven. Set the temperature at 250 degrees F for one hour (if using a crockpot, 1½ hours). Then turn of f the oven and leave the casserole in the oven overnight. This lets the temperature slowly return to 90 degrees F .
4. Lay a piece of waxed paper on your work bench. (Don' t use foil wrap). Drain the Opticon off the material and wipe it clean. Save the Opticon in the casserole for future use. Take a clean baby food jar and put two tablespoons of the Opticon into the jar. Then cover the casserole and remove it from your work area so that it will not become contaminated by the hardener. This Opticon can be reused again if it doesn' t accidentally get any hardener in it.
5. Check the directions on the can and add twice as much polymer (catalyst) than is called for to the Opticon in the baby food jar. Coat or dip the material in the catalyzed Opticon, and lay it out on waxed paper. Do not let the pieces touch or they will harden together .
6. Now comes the patience time. Let the material cure for at least two months, and you will have stabilized turquoise that works well. I use Dico Company plexi-glass buf fing stick compound, and it works well and easily . It takes only a few seconds to get a high polish on this stabilized material. The material will also be very tough and about 4.5 to 5.6 hardness.



If this material is properly soaked and cured, it is almost impossible to tell that it is stabilized. It takes a blow pipe and an experienced person to tell. The material heat destructs differently. I have personally taught a lot of people how to use this procedure, and they have been both successful and happy with the results, GOOD LUCK.

Hints & Tips

via Star-O-Lite 5/2009 and Gem Cutters News 6/2009

Moonstone will cleave. Be sure to grind on a smooth wheel. It polishes nicely on felt with cerium oxide. *via Rock Chip Reporter 6/1998*

• **Lapidary:** To identify and grind out pits in the cabochon, spray the rough cab with red enamel from an aerosol can, then grind the paint off with a light touch. Pits and lines will stand out as bright red spots, making it unnecessary to wipe the cab to see if the pits are out. This is especially helpful when grinding freeform cabs from fire agate. *via Burro Express 2/1999*

• **Moleskin** is handy for covering the undersides of bookends and other rock bases. It can be obtained at a drug store in sheets with a gummed surface ready to apply. It is easier than gluing felt to the bottom to protect furniture. *via Breccia 5/1998*

• **Cutting Plume Agate:** Want to try something different and beautiful? First, pick a good grade of white plume agate and slice thinner than usual, but thick enough to bevel. Then cut slabs of black jasper as thin as possible. Boil the slices to remove oil. Epoxy the jasper to the underside of the white plume agate. Press together and rub slightly to get any bubbles out, then weigh down the slices or clamp them together until dry. Mark and cut the same way as your regular cabs. These are really stunning, and you will surely want to cut more. *from Quarry Quips, 1998*

• To **repair a spread-apart link** in a small broken chain, insert a toothpick in the two adjacent links. The faulty link is thus held in place for pliers to pinch it together again. *via Gneiss Times 10/1999*

• **Tumbling** - Take lint from your clothes dryer lint catcher and add it to the polishing compound for tumbling. It will speed up the polishing and prevent chipping. *from Michigan Gem News, 1994*

• **Cleaning:** Don't use laundry detergent to clean oil from material that has just been sawed. Use dish washing detergent instead. Laundry detergents contain bleaches that may affect colors on many gemstones and slabs. Dish washing detergents do not have bleaches and are balanced to break down oils, fats and grease. *from Gem City Rock News, 1996*

• Dark household vinegar will **dissolve epoxy** glue by soaking overnight. *via Rockhound Gazette 10/1998*

• **Recycling Trim Saw Oil:** To recycle dirty oil from your trim saw, put the used oil in a disposable container such as a coffee can, add hot water, and stir. The hot water warms the oil and lowers its viscosity so that the trash can settle out more easily. The water, being denser than the oil, sinks to the bottom. The dirt that is suspended in the oil settles and sinks to the bottom of the water, leaving clean oil on top. Put the whole works in the freezer. The water will freeze. Pour off the clean oil and throw away the dirt and water. *via Clackamette Gem 10/2001*

- To remove rust from household or collecting tools, make a paste using two tablespoons of salt and one tablespoon of lemon juice. Apply the paste to the rust with a dry cloth and rub. *via Breccia 1/1998*
- **Mother-Of-Pearl** for inlay work can be softened by soaking in white vinegar. It then can be easily cut. *via Gem Time 8/2000*

Hints & Tips 2

via T-Town Rockhound 3/2009 and The Rockpile 4/2009

How solid is a slab? A good way to tell how solid a slab is, is to heat it in hot water. The surface will dry immediately. If there are holes or fractures in the slab, every one will soon be lined with water. These can then be marked with a pencil and used to orient the cab you want.

Cleaning large rocks: Manual car washes are good places to clean large rock specimens that are not fragile. The hard spray cleans all the nooks and crannies.

Nature's rockhounds—One of the least known methods of finding mineral specimens is also one of the easiest and many times one of the most productive. It consists of inspecting and testing the materials that ants, gophers, prairie dogs, moles, etc. bring to the surface. Some ants tunnel down to 15 feet and spread over more than an acre. Excellent gemstones, especially red gemstones, have been found in anthills.

Cleaning petrified wood —To remove clay and ferrous oxide from the surface of petrified wood, use Mr. Clean. Do not use oxalic acid as it darkens the specimen.

Pitting on Cabs: *from Les Connally, via the Rock Prattle 2/2009, Rock-n-Rose 2/2009, and Soney Statements 6/2009*

When small insignificant pits are present in your nearly finished cab and you go to the final polish, these insignificant pits will collect the polishing compound and show up like a sore thumb. Of course we don't want our material to have pits in the first place, but unfortunately we are not in a perfect world.

Prior to starting the final polish, take a little super glue and coat the area of the small pits. After allowing the super glue to cure, a very light sanding will remove the excess super glue, which sands quite nicely.

To complete the stone, go to your final polish. The pits, being filled with the clear super glue, will no longer trap the polishing compound.



Show Time 2009

July 30-August 2	Billings, MT	AFMS/NFMS show; Billings G&M Club Montana Trade Center, Holliday Inn Grand Montana, 5500 Midland R. Doug True, dtruefossils@yahoo.com
August 8-9	Baton Rouge, LA	Baton Rouge Gem & Mineral Society Fraternal Order of Police 10777 Greenwell Springs Rd. paul_broussard@msn.com
August 15-16	Bossier City, LA	Ark-La-Tex Gem & Mineral Society Bossier Parish Convention Center 620 Benton Road; Bossier City, LA 71111
August 22-23	Jasper, TX	Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society VFW Hall, 7 miles W of Jasper FM 2799 & 1747
September 5-6	Arlington, TX	Arlington Gem & Mineral Society Arlington Convention Center cessnak@ont.com; www.agemclub.org
September 19-20	Richardson, TX	Show Cancelled for foreseeable future! Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club
September 26-27	Denison, TX	Texoma Rockhounds Denison Senior Center
October 10-11	Temple, TX	SCFMS/Tri-City Gem & Mineral Society Mayborn Civic Center, 3303 N. 3rd St.
October 16-18	Victoria, TX	Victoria Gem & Mineral Society Community Center
October 23-25	Austin, TX	Austin Gem & Mineral Society Palmer Events Center
November 07-08	Midland, TX	Midland Gem & Mineral Society Midland Center
November 13-15	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; www.hgms.org
November 21-22	Mesquite, TX	Dallas Gem & Mineral Society Resistol Arena Exhibition Hall

2009		July				2009
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section
5	6	7 7:30 Board Meeting	8 7:30 Faceting Section	9	10	11 10-5 Shop Open
12	13 1:00 Day Light Section	14 7:30 Show Committee	15	16	17	18 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section
19	20 7:30 Lapidary Section	21 7:30 Paleo Section	22	23	24	25 10-5 Shop Open
26	27	28 7:30 General Meeting	29	30	31	

2009		August				2009
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section
2	3	4 7:30 Board Meeting	5 7:30 Faceting Section	6	7	8 10-5 Shop Open
9	10 1:00 Day Light Section	11 7:30 Show Committee	12	13	14	15 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section
16	17 7:30 Lapidary Section	18 7:30 Paleo Section	19	20	21	22 10-5 Shop Open
23 30	24 31	25 7:30 General Meeting	26	27	28	29 10-5 Shop Open

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

The Newsletter of the
Houston Gem & Mineral Society

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BELLAIRE, TX 77401
PERMIT NO. 303

10805 BROOKLET

Houston, Texas 77099
(281) 530-0942



SCFMS

1998 - 1st (Large)
2000 - 1st (Large)
2003 - 1st (Large)
2005 - 1st (Large)
2006 - 1st (Large)
2007 - 1st (Large)
2008 - 1st (Large)



AFMS

1998 - 2nd (Large)
2004 - 3rd (Large)
2007 - 1st (Large)

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED²

DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE DO NOT DELAY !