



The **BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE**

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

Volume XLI - No. 4

April 2010



President's Message

by Terrell William "Terry" Proctor

I believe that finally the fifth coldest winter in Houston history is drifting away. That means it is time to seriously consider field trips to hunt down fabulous minerals, amazing fossils, and with probably some sea shells, sand-abraded glass, and other goodies we collect when in the field.



In this month's President's column I want to address our **New Members** and those members who belong to HGMS but just don't seem to get to the Clubhouse—or at least not often. There are some great things that have been happening in your Club. I commend a really great Board working together very harmoniously and accomplishing a lot of good things for you, our members. No longer do you have to stumble in the dark over broken concrete and rebars in our parking lot. Your Board has had great outside lighting installed so that not only can you see your feet and your car, but you can look up and see HGMS on the side of our clubhouse—and so can visitors! Inside our main library has a second light to dispel the dim lighting and also a fourplex plug for the computers and other electronic necessities in the main library. The lights in our

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Upcoming Programs for the General Meetings

*by First Vice-President James Wark—in charge of
HGMS General Meeting programs*

March 23—Norman Lenz, former President of HGMS will present a program on inclusions in gemstones. If you have seen cut or natural gemstones that appeared to have threads or straws in them, these particular inclusions are called rutile. Inclusions are one mineral found inside another. They can either add to or detract from the beauty and/or value of the gemstone. Norman will present an interesting program on these natural inclusions.

April 27—Neal Immega will present a program on Darwin's Theory of Evolution. Neal always has good programs, and as a paleontologist, you can count on what he

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

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Copy is due for the May 2010 issue by
Wednesday, April 7, 2010.

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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 \$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

kitchen, office, libraries, and restroom now turn themselves off, thereby saving you on the light bill. We are working on needed repair on the roof to stop leaking that appears to have happened.

If you drive up to a meeting, you will see some Rockhound Stickers on cars in the parking lot. They are sold at all General Membership meetings for only \$1 (at the Show you will pay \$2). More and more members like the idea of putting these stickers in the upper right corner of the rear window so that:

1. you can convey and know you are following another member;
2. let everyone know that rockhounds abound; and
3. find your car in the parking lot at shopping centers. That big yellow circle with the black rockhound hammer stands out when you leave the store and wish to find your vehicle. I'm thinking about putting one on the front passenger side also, so when I park with the nose of my Yukon toward the store door, I can still spot my vehicle.

This month, the position of Clubhouse Chairman is transferred to Neal Immega from Tom Wright. Tom has expressed his belief that his physical condition doesn't lend itself for him to continue in the position following his hospital stay, so the Board has appointed Neal to take this position over. The Board and the entire HGMS organization express their thanks to Tom for the many years he handled this job so admirably. Neal has already been handling some of the duties of that position, so his official appointment was with a unanimous vote of your Board.

In fact, Neal has spent so much time, effort, assistance, and his own financial support to HGMS (assisted ably by Inda Immega too), that the Board determined it was time to bestow Honorary Lifetime Membership on Neal Immega. His plaque is being readied, but the vote is already taken and announced.

Regardless of where you are on politics and your view of the healthcare bill which has been changed, exchanged, and for the most part is almost wholly unknown to even the Senators and Representatives who will vote on it—maybe, one fact has been made clear. The people's voice can be heard, and it can have great effect upon what our elected representatives do. The reason I mention this again and again, is that the ill-named "Paleontological Preservation Act" should have actually been called the "Paleontological Destruction Act." Furthermore everyone in Congress knows that almost no one actually knew what this part of the huge bill passed said. Those who were to vote on it had almost no chance to read it before the vote. So is the Paleontological Preservation Act something that has happened to us about which we can do nothing? Of course not!!! If nothing else, the Tea Parties have shown us that when folks are upset enough over something our elected representatives do, those elected officials can and do take notice of the hornet's nest they have stirred up. Whether you are for these groups or not, they have certainly changed the political climate and their message has been heard.

Whether you are a Democrat or a Republican (or something else), I suggest you do the same at your Senatorial Convention and at your State Convention and that this should

happen in every State Convention in the U.S. What am I talking about? I introduced at our Precinct Convention a Resolution calling on Congress to revisit this matter and to have the Federal Government issue a permit (like Florida does on State Lands and Great Britain does), allowing amateurs (Rockhounds of all types) to obtain a license, then annually report their finding of things found on Federal Lands, allow the U.S. Government something like 60 days after the Report is filed, to determine that what you found is scientifically significant and therefore the item goes to the Government. What the Government doesn't claim in say 60 days then becomes your sole property to do with as you see fit—display it in a museum, sell it on eBay, or whatever. In Florida, the State just gets it, but you get everything else. In Great Britain the government pays you for what they take.

No, I don't like Government just choosing what they want to take, but that really isn't a bad deal for getting to hunt on Federal land and KEEP everything the Government doesn't claim in their reasonably short time frame to determine what they believe is scientifically significant. Of course, as an attorney, I would also want some appeal procedure if you felt the taking was arbitrary and not reasonable.

I have a "Resolution" which I can download by e-mail to you, if you want to take the Resolution to your Senate and State and National Convention. I am sending the Resolution to HGMS member Rep. John Culberson, for him to review. John has been assisting on this matter for a number of years, and he tried to head off the passage of the Act this last year. He believes that the procedure is somewhat like what I have just outlined. I am also the Chairman of the South Central Federation Conservation and Legislation Committee with ties to the American Federation of Mineralogical Society AND the Texas Representative of the American Land Access Association. I will be sending out this proposed Resolution to every organization I can, asking their members to carry this to each of their political conventions in droves so that Congress can see something heating up over this unfortunate legislation.

I hope to hear from you with a request for the Resolution to be e-mailed (or faxed or mailed) to you.

Upcoming Programs for General Meeting *continued from page 1*

presents as being learned and correct.

Other upcoming programs planned later in the year include Charlie Fredregill doing the annual silver casting program. However, Charlie will do it outdoors to avoid noxious fumes from the closed-in room, and he will wait till the weather warms a bit. So this will be coming up June 22.

Nathalie Brandes, Professor at Lone Star College has put on such interesting programs for the past two years that many members would like to have her come back this summer and again put on an Earth Science program for us. Her topic will be on "Geological Climate Changes."

Patrick Lewis, PhD has also been a well-received speaker at our meetings for about three years. This summer he is returning to South Africa to dig again, and he is willing

to come put on a program and tell us about his finds this year. He is scheduled for November 23.

Be assured that a variety of programs are in the offing for this year, and we hope you will attend all General Meetings. Remember that the Silent Auction is active early in the evening before the meeting, and Neal Immega will announce about 7:00 p.m. that the auction is winding down so you can get in your last-minute bids before the evening's meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.

Old Geezer in Tehran

by John Emerson

Notes for Tehran:

Bobbie, the boys (Rob and Lee) and I lived in Tehran, Iran, from 1968–71. We could see the Shah's palace from our house.

I was Project Manager for Bechtel for Job 7001. This was for an offshore platform with drilling rig, producing facilities, pipeline to shore, oil storage, pumping facilities, another offshore pipeline to a tanker loading buoy. In addition I was Manager for an engineering study for the Iraqi State Oil Company in Bagdad for a pipeline from southern Iraq to Turkey.

The American School in Tehran had a Little League Baseball program. Rob (left handed) played first base and pitched. Lee played catcher. At this time Lee was two years younger but bigger than his older brother. Their team was called the "Astros," and I was the coach.

At one game, it was the last inning, Rob was playing first, Lee was catching, and the Astros were ahead by one run. The bases were loaded, no outs, and the batter hit an infield fly. Rob caught the fly for one out. He stepped on first to catch the runner returning from trying to get to second base for the second out, threw the ball to Lee who tagged the runner coming in from third. A triple play by the brothers! It was reported on the Armed Forces Radio. It was difficult living with them for awhile! It was handy that they could both practice together. Rob practicing pitching to Lee practicing catching. Took a load off of me! When Rob pitched and Lee caught in the same game, their mother (Bobbie) almost had a nervous breakdown!


Every time I arrived at the airport in Tehran from a trip, I was escorted to the head of the line for checking in, and my baggage was put by the exit door ready for me to go. I have never figured out what VIP I was supposed to be.

In those days (1968–71) I carried a Minox "spy camera"—(very small)—and a small tape recorder when I traveled. I still have them, but I don't carry them anymore! One night in Tehran I was packing for a trip to Bagdad to check on the project where we were doing the engineering for a pipeline from Iraq to Turkey. After I finished packing, I stopped and for some reason that I have never figured out, I took out the camera and tape recorder from my bags. When I arrived at Bagdad and was checking through the passport station, with no explanation, I was taken by an armed police guard to a small

room where the guard stayed with me.

An officer came into the room and asked me if I knew any one in Bagdad who could vouch for me. Bechtel (my company) had an Iraqi consultant firm working with us. One of their young engineers who knew me came to the airport to identify me. He came in and in true Arab fashion, hugged me, kissed me on my right cheek, whispered in my ear, "Did you bring your camera?" I whispered back, "No." He pulled back and said loudly, "Allah be praised." He then hugged me again, kissed my left cheek and whispered, "Your tape recorder?" I whispered, "No." Another "Allah be praised," and then he suggested to the airport police that we go to the central police headquarters in town to sort this out. We went with an armed guard. There it was discovered that, by my passport, their records and the young engineer, I was an American Project Manager, named John H. Emerson and a Christian (I also carried my Baptismal Certificate). Not the John A. Emerson, British Jew and spy wanted by just about every Arab country. I have an official letter in Arabic from the Iraqi police to that effect that I carried with me at all times after that!

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم



وزارة الداخلية
مديرية الجنسية العامة

ختم الواردة

مديرية / الاتية

العدد / ١٢٥٠٠

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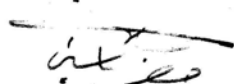
الى :-

ضابط جوازات الميناء الجوي ببغداد

م / منع دخول اجنبي

كتابكم ٢١٤٦ في ١٣ / ١١ / ١٩٦٨

لقد سبق لمكتب مقاطعة اسرائيل ببغداد ان ايد الميناء بكتابه المرقم ٤١١ في ٥ / ٣ / ١٩٦٨ ان الامريكي المبحوث عنه (جون هاردي امرسن) هوليس الشخص الممنوع من الدخول للمراق والمطعوب (جون. اى. امرسن) البريطاني الجنسية فنرجو الاطلاع وتثبيته في سجلاتكم.



مسئول الملاحة الجوية

ن . مدير الاقامة

صورة منه /

يبد الموبا اليه للاطلاع .

LETTER EXPLAINING I AM JOHN H. EMERSON, AMER. PROJECT.
NOT JOHN A. EMERSON, BRITISH JEW

To sum up, I carried camera, tape recorder, letter from Iraqi police, Baptismal Certificate and passport everywhere I went in the Muddle East. (Muddle is not misspelled.)

One of my passports has 91 pages.

An incident with the Minox camera occurred during yet another trip from Tehran to Bagdad. In a visit to the Iraqi Oil Company, I asked to see and copy with my camera some records of the wells that were to supply the pipeline to Turkey that we were designing. This information was requested by Bechtel in London. The Iraqi engineer helping me said that I could look, but not under any circumstances could I copy the records. He took me into a room where he produced the records and said, "Is there enough light for you to see the records?" When I said, "Yes," he said, "Fine. You will not be disturbed, and I will be back in about an hour." An invitation?!! I sent the film to London.

Riding in a taxi in Tehran was to defy death at every intersection. To distract me, I read the English language newspaper when going to the office from the hotel when we first arrived. I was told by the hotel manager that I became known with the hotel taxi drivers as the iron-nerved American. I think they tried to scare newcomers.

First Impressions, 1966, Algeria

by Bobbie Emerson

I was not "prepared" for a foreign culture, language, shopping, children's school, and mostly, Arabs in general. Oh, how naive I was, what lessons were to be learned in the coming years! In less than a month some French and Arabic were needed to read menus, understand signs giving directions, and to be able to shop for food and household necessities. Life was trial and lots of errors. Dealing with taxi drivers and souk merchants where money handling was needed was a nightmare. We lived "on the economy," not in a fenced compound or protected embassy compound. We were without commissary, mail from US, and medical facilities. Simple little things could "trip" you up. For instance an elevator marked number one was what I knew as second floor. Kilometers did not equal miles. Traffic circles Algerian-style were challenging, especially the one close to the central market. The policeman there patiently explained the rules to me time after time, but I never really got it. Unnoticed trivialities for the seasoned traveler, but then I was a beginner.

Scenes I remembered from school geography and history books came to life, especially on a drive from Algiers through Laghouat, Ghardaia, Ouagla, Touggourt, and Biskra. A picturesque oasis with camels in a grove of date palms attended by Bedouins. Never mind that the camels were smelly and made awful grunting noises, and their attendants were ragged and very dirty.

And the desert! Sometimes flat, sometimes with rolling sand dunes, sometimes unbearably hot, sometimes "freezing" cold, but always beautiful. Always changing and chal-

lenging. Desert roses would be found loose in the sand.

An embarrassing fact I learned is that no matter how empty the landscape appears, there is no privacy in the desert—stopping at a flat area seemingly deserted for miles in every direction for a “pit stop” immediately brought an interested crowd of observers,

I have never considered myself a “target” to be followed by a stranger. That all changed in Algiers! Walking along the street a few blocks from our house, I noticed a car was following me, keeping just behind me. I let my dignity go and ran the last block to the house. I did not fumble for the key to the gate padlock—I climbed over it. In a backward glance, I saw the would-be swain give up and drive on. Another time in downtown Algiers, another Algerian started tailing me. Fortunately I was close to the company office, walked toward it, and ducked into the lobby. The man turned away as I pushed the elevator button. From then on, while walking and/or shopping, I learned to keep my head up but never to look a strange man in the eye or to give any cursory notice. French women were frequent targets by Algerians.

One quite beautiful French lady (married to a Bechtel employee) was grabbed by her arm and pulled along, she called for police help. At the police station, the would-be abductor claimed he was solicited by her. Her husband was called and ultimately she was released. Because of incidents against foreign women, we learned it was not “safe” to use a taxi after four p.m. Why four o’clock I never learned, but heeded the warning.

Tourist Sites

Oran, Tlemcen, Skikda, Annaba, Constantine, and Ghardaia were just a few of the towns we visited. Algeria is the possessor of quite a few astounding Roman ruins. Not far from Bone was an amphitheater with tiers of bench-like seats in pristine condition and with amazing acoustics. We often took company visitors to Tipasa, a minor site just to the west of Algiers where locals produced a never-ending supply of fake clay artifacts. Outside of Annaba (Bone) was an incredibly beautiful amphitheater. Nestled on a hillside were rows of stone benches in pristine condition. Acoustics were impressive. The most awe-inspiring Roman ruins (to me) were the deep chariot ruts on a stone paved road leading through the ruins of a small village.

More from the Old Geezer

by John Emerson



Fennec - a small, pale yellowish-brown fox, *Fennecus zerda*, of northern Africa, having large, pointed ears. aka “Desert Fox”

A Bechtel man visiting our job site in Algeria got drunk one night and bought a Desert Fox in a bar in Algiers. When he sobered up, he realized that he could not take it back to San Fran-

cisco, so he gave it to me.

Our boys loved the little feller and named him “Merlin.” He was friendly and never bit any of us. If he got tired of being held and petted and wanted to be left alone, he would make a clicking noise in his throat, which meant “leave me alone.” He loved to play with a Champaign cork. He would pick it up, throw it, and then chase it. We lived in a “villa,” which means it had no screens on the windows. At night Merlin would jump out of a window and roam the neighborhood. When he got tired, he would come back and scratch on the door—no matter what time of night it was. He was as close to being a “dog pet” as any wild animal could be. We gave him to an Algerian friend when we evacuated during the “1967 war” between Israel and Egypt. All Americans living along the coast left as quickly as possible. To Algerians, American equaled Israeli.

Mineral Section

by Steve Blyskal, Chairperson & Dean Lagerwall, Assistant Chairperson

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

Upcoming Meeting Topics

April 7: “Michigan’s Keweenaw, Where Copper was King”: Paul Brandes will present a program focusing on the minerals of the Keweenaw, how they got there, and the mines they came from. Refreshments will be provided.

April 21: “Suspicious Specimens”: Jonathan Woolley will present an overview of some fakes, frauds, and funny-looking-things (both confirmed and suspected) that have recently appeared on the mineral collecting market. Refreshments will be provided.

May 5: AUCTION: Specimens from HGMS members will be auctioned with a portion of the proceeds going to the Mineral Section. This is the same auction format practiced the past few years. Please read the accompanying announcement (*Page*) for further details. Refreshments will be provided. Also, on May 5, The Houston Fine Minerals Show (April 30–May 2) will be discussed. Bring in your recent acquisitions and let us drool over them.

May 19: To be Announced.

June 2: SWAP-NIGHT: Back by popular demand, we will have a Swap Night where excess material from our collections can be bought/sold/swapped. This will be an informal event and will be held inside. All Sections are invited to participate and swap. Setup is from 7:00 to 7:30, and the formal meeting will be kept to a minimum to allow ample time for specimen exchange and socializing. Refreshments will be provided.

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

May 5 Mineral Section Auction Format

by Dean Lagerwall

On Wednesday May 5 at 7:30 p.m., the Mineral Section will be having its annual auction to help raise money for the Section. Once again, we are allowing ALL HGMS members to bring specimens to the auction and to keep a portion of the proceeds. The proceeds of at least one of the specimens (your choice) must be donated to the Section. Five additional specimens are allowed for each person, with a portion of each specimen (10%) going to the Section and the rest going to the donator.

This is a great way for ALL HGMS members to thin out their duplicate specimens and benefit both yourself and the Mineral Section. You can put a minimum bid on the more expensive pieces if you desire. Since this event will draw from all Sections, expect a variety of items to be auctioned and a very interesting and entertaining event. Setup and viewing is from 7:00 to 7:30 with bidding beginning at 7:45. If you have any questions, call Dean at (979) 480-9373.

Day Light Section—January, February 2010

by Frances Arrighi

Since the Day Light Section did not meet in December, there was no report for the January issue of the BBG.

Five members attended the 11 January, 2010 meeting of the Day Light Section. This is the lowest attendance at a meeting except for one other time when three members came—Calvin Coplin, Hank McCleary, and I think Vic Helms. We just had a gossip session.

For our January meeting, Nancy Fischer gave an excellent and interesting talk on their camping trip to Wyoming. To me, the most fascinating things were the pictures of the black bear that came to visit camp and the road Nancy and her husband had to travel to reach camp. It was filled with small boulders, some of which were four to five inches in diameter, but others were much larger—12 to 14 inches in diameter. We thank Nancy very much for the program.

This is one of the years where the second Monday comes before the second Saturday; therefore we can write the February report. *Editor's Note: Through my error, it was not included in the March BBG. Therefore, it is being included in the April issue.*

Eleven members attended the 8 February, 2010 meeting of the Day Light Section. We started by sawing out a cabochon(s) for mounting via the Dave Hawkins method (no solder). At the eighth of March meeting, we hope to have these cabochons polished and ready to begin the mounting process.

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.

Professor Link is going to give us our summer programs starting in June. One month we may have to meet on a different Monday. We will decide this later. We are going to do anaclastic forming. There will be a few things you need to purchase if you do not have them.

The April meeting will be on ring sizing and will be given by Professor Link. If anyone needs a ring sized, please bring it to the meeting. If it is karat gold, you will have to pay for the gold and gold solder. There probably will be no charge for sizing a silver ring. If anyone does have a gold ring for sizing, please call me as soon as possible. The material needed will be available.

I recently purchased a new book by Paul B. Downing, entitled, *Opal and Gemstone Jewelry, Cutting, Designing, and Setting*. I highly recommend it for persons just learning to cut cabochons.

We thank Gary Anderson and Charlie Fredregill for helping us at the February meeting.

Day Light Section—March, April 2010

by Frances Arrighi

Twelve members attended the 8 March, 2010, meeting of the Day Light Section. We worked on setting a cabochon without using a bezel or wire wrapping.

For the 12 April, 2010 meeting, Prof. Val Link will be with us, and he will demonstrate ring sizing. Several members have stated that they have rings that they would like sized.

At the moment we do not have a subject for the program in May.

Actinolite

by David M. Orchard

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

I found actinolite in serpentine
In the gravels of Putah Creek
I sent them to Africa with Phillip
to give to someone who
“dreams of being a geologist”

Phillip thought it a poor present
Abraham, delighted, held it to his breast
Phillip was happy for the rock.

Rocks are happy when we notice them
especially when we are poetic about it

What Price Is the Right Price?

by Karen M. Burns

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

The question came up again the other day—how do I figure my cost of goods sold, and how do I price my jewelry for sale?

Figuring Costs: For the hobby jewelry maker who is not selling \$100,000 or more per year, figuring costs is simple. It is what you paid for materials. If you are doing wire wrap and fabrication, you can weigh or measure the materials, and using a conversion chart such as the one in the Rio Grande catalog or one of the online conversion charts, multiply it times the per gram cost of your purchases.

If you make and use cabochons or faceted stones, use the cost of the rough as the cost of the stone. Any waste that you use later has a cost of \$0. Keep track of what you purchased and what you have at the end of the year. The difference is your cost of goods sold for tax purposes.

Figuring Costs for Tax Purposes: For tax purposes, there are also administrative costs and overhead such as postage and travel, stationery and envelopes, advertising and tools and equipment. Anything less than \$100–200 of purchases is just added into overhead. Big purchases are prorated by the number of years of expected use—usually 3–5 years. This should supply the information needed to file a schedule C for federal taxes.

Pricing Your Jewelry: Pricing your jewelry requires a few more steps. Estimate the manufacturing costs by measuring or weighing the metals you use, and count the beads and findings and multiply them times your purchase price. These are your material costs for each item. Then include a factor for overhead and administrative costs, utilities, etc. Multiply this by three, and add your hourly wage. **This is your manufacturing cost. Double your manufacturing cost for a wholesale cost,** and that is the lowest price that you should charge for your finished jewelry. If you employed someone to make your finished jewelry, there would be no profit for you at this point.

Profit and Artistic Merit: Profit is a very subjective amount and is what I call the value of “artistic merit,” which is the result of your particular choice of materials, your creativity in designing the piece, and your skill in creating the piece of jewelry. The total should be in the neighborhood of three times the manufacturing cost estimate. **Never underestimate the value of artistic merit.** Then look at the piece and adjust the price to what you might be willing to pay. That is the full retail sales price of your jewelry.

Hints on Selling Your Jewelry: Setting prices is an art, not a science, and it depends upon many subtleties, the primary one being the market in which you sell. Set your price, and don't offer discounts—EVER. Forget three for the price of two, etc.—refer to the third sentence. That is simply re-pricing your merchandise. If you want to entice sales, offer something extra such as a pair of earrings or a simple finger ring, something

with a low cost that doesn't lower the value of the more expensive piece.

“But my things aren't selling, and my prices are really low.” The answer may be, your prices are **too** low. There is a perception of value for the purchaser—if the price is too low, as in “if it's too good to be true, it probably is,” so the perception may be that the materials are cheap, the workmanship shoddy, and the design is poor. Raise your prices to be in keeping with the precious metals and handcrafted work that you are selling.

Consider these two scenarios as examples of pricing and how it can affect sales. The prospective purchaser is holding your jewelry but can't decide and finally says, “I really like it, but it's a little out of my price range. Can you lower the price? After thinking it over a minute—really wait—you lower it by saying, “For the next five minutes and just for you, I will lower it \$XX, because I can see how much you like it.” You are making a special, unadvertised deal for this one customer. Or as an alternative, you can offer a pair of earrings or a ring saying, “What if I include this pair of earrings or this ring?” You are selling one-of-a-kind and/or limited edition pieces, and one reduction won't affect your whole inventory.

This is not re-pricing your inventory. The next customer will not expect the same price or gift unless you choose to make the offer. Don't do this routinely, or you are again re-pricing your inventory.

On the other hand, suppose your purchaser is holding your jewelry and says, “I can't believe you're only asking \$X, it's so beautiful.” It is too late to increase the price when she has it in one hand and her credit card in the other. Price high. You can always lower it if it is really overpriced. How can you tell? If you have too many customers like the first and none of the second.

Sales is an art, and the most highly-paid employees in many businesses are the sales people on commission who have a good product to sell.

Articles—What Editors See

by Phyllis George
HGMS Bulletin Editor

I have just finished judging newsletter articles submitted to the Bulletin Editors' Contest for three of the seven regional federations (our federation, the SCFMS, was not one of them). About 80% (or more) of the articles showed little knowledge in how punctuation should be used. I sent an e-mail to a Bulletin Aids Chair in charge of the contest for her federation lamenting how poorly punctuated the articles were and that only eight points can be subtracted for it, so most articles have the full amount deducted. I wished that a category was dedicated to “quality of writing.” That way well written articles (in spite of their terrible punctuation) could gain a little back.

Her response: “I sympathize on the poor punctuation issue. I have noticed a “dumbing down” of Americans in recent decades. The schools no longer teach English grammar, punctuation, sentence parsing, etc., just as they don't teach basic arithmetic or the

scientific method. My sister teaches mathematics at a community college; she told me this weekend that some high school graduates don't even know the multiplication tables. They use calculators to figure "5 times." GAH! I graduated from college in 1966, and sometimes wonder if I belong to the last (or possibly next-to-last) literate generation. Too many of these young people constantly texting on their cell phones are a flock of twittering birdbrains, unable to spell or to construct a complete sentence. They delude themselves that they are communicating, but instead they generate "a lot of sound and fury, signifying nothing." No wonder the earth science hobby is declining. [End rant.]

Initially I was planning to include the name of the person who wrote the above paragraph, but I don't wish to embarrass the people whose articles I was judging. But she's 100% right. I usually write a note to the authors I'm judging suggesting that they look up the rules for punctuation (especially commas) on the Internet or in any high school grammar book. Just punctuating an article correctly enhances the perception that the article may be well written. Today's students might be well advised to self-educate themselves on things that aren't being taught—or that they aren't bothering to listen to in class.

New Clubhouse Chairman Appointed

by Terry Proctor

As many of you know, Tom Wright has served for many years as our Clubhouse Chairman and served us extremely well. However, Tom has some health problems and has notified the HGMS Board that after his recent hospitalization bout, he feels he cannot resume that capacity for HGMS. We thank Tom for his years of service to HGMS.

The Board at the March 2 meeting unanimously named Neal Immega as the new Clubhouse Chairman. Neal has been performing most of the functions of this job for some time working with Tom and others. Now, Neal will be in charge of the Clubhouse, so anything regarding maintenance and other problems in the Clubhouse should be brought to Neal's attention.

Neal Immega Named As Honorary Lifetime Member

by Terry Proctor

The HGMS Board at the March 2 Board Meeting unanimously named Neal Immega as an Honorary Lifetime Member (HLM). In the past there has been some possible misunderstanding on what the criteria is for awarding someone an HLM. There is no criteria and no automatic right to become an HLM.

HGMS is blessed with many good active hard-working members who go beyond and often far beyond the call of just being a good member. However, occasionally a member dedicates so much time, energy, leadership, and assistance in HGMS that there is a need for special recognition of that person. If you look in your HGMS 2009 Roster, you will see two lists on the inside cover. There are those in the right-hand list called "Lifetime Members." These people have paid a sizeable one-time fee in lieu of an an-

nual dues fee, so they have paid to become Lifetime Members. The left-hand list is the "Honorary Life Members." If you have been a member of HGMS very long, you will recognize most of the folks on that list as HGMS members who have given (and some still are) a great deal of their time, talents, money, leadership, and have just been outstanding members in general.

The Board felt that Neal Immega clearly belongs in this category of HGMS members who deserve to be recognized for their dedication to HGMS. Congratulations, Neal, for an honor you richly deserve.

HGMS February General Meeting

February 23, 2010

by Terry Proctor

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. upon the conclusion of the Silent Auction. Neal Immega reported later that the Silent Auction this month brought in about \$2,000. The items auctioned were mostly from the estate of HGMS former member Bob Cross.

The Minutes from the January 26, 2010 General Membership Meeting were published in the February BBG. Gary Tober moved and Karen Burn seconded that the minutes be approved as published. The motion carried unanimously.

The Treasurer was not present, but he had reported that the Club's financial condition is good. The \$4,440 cost for the exterior lighting improvements (approved by the membership in January) has been paid along with an added \$300 for a new light and plugs in the Main Library. One member commented that other buildings in our complex had also installed new lighting, apparently in response to our new and improved lighting. Terry Proctor asked if the members were happy with the lighting, and everyone assured him that they were very pleased to see the new clubhouse lighting in place.

Rick Rexroad reported on the Show Committee progress. He also brought to the membership's attention that the Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society's annual Show is this weekend, February 27 and 28, and that HGMS members are needed to work at the HGMS table at that Show. Rick passed around a sign-up Sheet for volunteers.

There was discussion that in the past, HGMS publicity was pretty well left to the Show Committee, but the Board agreed that going forward, publicity for HGMS should not be just the Show Committee's responsibility, but that it should be guided by an HGMS publicity committee. Terry pointed out that when the **Outreach Program** was set up, it had three stated goals: education, fund raising by grants etc., and publicity for HGMS and Earth Science. Therefore, by having more volunteers in the **Outreach Program**, there will be additional opportunity for HGMS publicity to be generated independently of the Show Committee.

Mary Ann Mitscherling of the Lapidary Section reported the sale of eighteen sets of templates in December—the greatest number of template sales in one month, ever.

Brian Honsinger, HGMS Education Director, reported that Wayne Barnett had just completed teaching a metal working class, and Charlie Fredregill also completed teaching a wire wrapping class. There are a number of other classes being considered if enough members are interested in each area to make a class. The HGMS educational program is booming.

As announced in the January BBG, at the February General Meeting a vote was to be taken on the Board's request that the membership approve raising from \$1,000 to \$2,500 the limit that the Board could spend without first having a general membership vote on it. The motion to authorize this was made by Karen Burns and seconded by Gary Tober. The vote was unanimous.

Terry Proctor discussed the need for more HGMS members to join in the **Outreach Program**. He stated again that the purpose was three-fold.

- #1 to meet our charter and IRS 501(c)(3) obligations to provide education;
- #2 to publicize HGMS and make the public more aware of Earth Science and Lapidary Arts; and
- #3 to show potential donors and grant providers that HGMS is providing education and therefore should be considered for donations and grants. An overlay by Zip Code of the JP/Constable Precincts is being worked up since it was brought out at a Board Meeting that many HGMS members probably don't know the number of the J.P. Precinct in which they live.

Also the Rockhound Stickers for HGMS member vehicles were sold for \$1 at this meeting (they are \$2 at the HGMS Show), and the smaller stickers are 10 for \$1. Terry also passed around an uncirculated silver coin that Greg Neubauer created from silver recovered along with gold from his gold mining in Alaska. Greg spoke to the January Paleo Section, telling of his lifetime of gold mining and showing one of the Mammoth tusks he recovered while mining gold. Terry is taking orders for those who want to order one of the silver coins, which have amazing detail of Alaska and the phrase "In Silver We Trust" on them.

Neal Immega reported on an upcoming trip in March to the Pennsylvanian Epoch fossil area of Brownwood Texas. Lexy and Mike Bieniek have invited HGMS members to stay at their Brownwood home while digging. You will need to bring a sleeping bag as this is a rustic home, not their regular residence. Check with Neal for more details.

John Emerson, a past HGMS President who writes a monthly column on his memoirs in the Backbender's Gazette as "The Old Geezer," told about his civilian passports after the Korean War in which he was involved. He presented his actual passport which has many added pages and pages on pages, like some sort of magician's trick. The HGMS members were amused as the passport became increasingly long with the added pages. This was to demonstrate visually the many places in the world John writes about in his column for the BBG.

Donna Law donated a beautiful piece of chrysocolla for the drawing, which was won by Gary Tober. Gary will provide next month's drawing prize.

The evening's program was presented by Samuel "Sam" Stubbs, J.D. and attorney with Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, on trilobites.

Sam undoubtedly has the best trilobite collection in Harris County. He has collected them for many years, and he worked with Neal Immega to photograph his outstanding specimens which he then developed into a slide show presentation. The intricacy and preparation of the specimens were outstanding. It was difficult to believe that a preparer could have extracted the small, delicate portions of a trilobite out of hard stone in such a manner that the final result was the completely revealed specimen with spines no larger than a needle. Some of the trilobite spines had spines exhibiting unbelievable detail with extreme delicacy. Sam discussed the extreme delicacy of Moroccan trilobite preparation and that for a time Russians could not extract the detail as well as the Moroccans, but now there are some Russians who duplicate the extremely fine detail work on trilobites, rivaling the Moroccan preparers. Sam said that his trilobite specimens range from 1/2" to 13".

Terry introduced Sam as another attorney who had gone astray into the area of natural science. HGMS greatly appreciated Sam Stubbs' fine presentation and Neal Immega's great photos of this now extinct, very delicate prehistoric life on Earth.

A motion was made and seconded that the meeting adjourn. It passed unanimously.

HGMS Board Meeting

March 4, 2010

by Pier Laird, HGMS Secretary & Terry Proctor, HGMS President

X	President	Terry Proctor		Beading Rep.	Diane Sisson
X	1 st Vice President	James Wark		Faceting Rep.	Sunday Bennett
X	2 nd Vice President	Beverly Mace	X	Lapidary Rep.	Phyllis George
	Treasurer	Rodney Linehan		Mineral Rep.	Sigrid Stewart
X	Secretary	Pier Laird	X	Paleontology Rep.	Terry Brawner
	Past President	N/A	X	Day Light Rep.	Nancy Fischer

The Board of Directors Meeting was called to order at 7:30.

Minutes: The February Board Minutes having been published in the BBG, Terry Brawner moved and Nancy Fischer seconded that the Minutes be approved as printed. The vote was unanimous.

Treasurer's Report: It was reported that Neal Immega stated that the Silent Auction at the February General Meeting took in \$2000. There was discussion that these Silent Auctions were doing well and had exceeded the amount spent for the Clubhouse lighting upgrade.

Group Reports: The Paleo Section is having a field trip on March 20 to Brownwood to dig for 300MYBP (million years before present for us non-Paleo Section people) marine fossils. Members can stay at Lexy and Mike Bieniek's home in Brownwood. The Beading Section will have a meeting on the fourth Saturday in March. For those

Beading Section members who still want to meet on the third Saturday, Jillynn Hailes has offered to run a meeting at that time if members will let her know they wish to come on that third Saturday. This will give the Beading Section two meetings dates in March.

Show Committee: Rick Rexroad and some HGMS members showed up to be present at the HGMS table at the Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Show at Pasadena Convention Center. Rick made connections with two people about being at the HGMS Show. The first was Sharon Jones, an artist who makes replicas of skulls from the ice age era and who works at San Jacinto College. She would lend some of her art pieces to the HGMS Show. The second is Brian Carter who will donate the Grand Prize for the HGMS show, which is to be a painting on palmwood.

Old Business:

- a) Terry Brawner reported on several Electrical Utility Company rates for the Board to consider. One which looked good was Amigo Electric. After some discussion, Phyllis George moved that Terry be authorized to sign a contract for HGMS, for up to four years, obtaining the best electrical rate for our Clubhouse. Terry Brawner is to determine the best plan using the factors discussed of \$/kwh, stability of the company, length of the contract, the penalty for early termination (Amigo is believed to be two or three months billing), and any other factors which Terry believes need to be considered. The motion was seconded by James Wark and passed unanimously. The rates change almost daily so Terry will check the rates when signing up to determine the rate which is locked in.
- b) The exterior lighting to the HGMS Clubhouse has been successfully completed in short order by HGMS member, James Burrell, d/b/a State Electric. In addition to the exterior lighting, new plugs and a second light were installed in the main library, which were badly needed.
- c) Terry Proctor reported that he had sent a letter by certified mail to the original contractor who did the roof repairs for HGMS and that the roof job is still in warranty. However, Terry suspects that the company is out of business, and we will have to consult with our insurance carrier in getting the leaks repaired.
- d) In a discussion of the **Outreach Program**, Terry acknowledged that a Zip Code overlay on the eight HGMS Districts would be helpful. Nancy Fischer is checking this and will see if she can print out a map of JP/Constable Precincts with an overlay of Zip Codes to the same scale.
- e) Terry Proctor mentioned that TANO, the group we joined last year to help us find grants, puts out daily or weekly information on various grants being announced. To determine which grants HGMS might be able to apply for, Terry asked if others on the Board would accept e-mailed copies of the offerings to help him go through them and determine which ones might benefit HGMS.
- f) The HGMS Scholarship was discussed. The Board will attempt to gain more participation by students of two-year Junior College programs who are going into a

four-year university with a degree in Earth Science. There are now two scholarships open: 1. The **Art and Elizabeth Smith Scholarship** and 2. The **Robert Cross Scholarship**. The Board will work on getting word out to more Junior Colleges in an attempt to attract good applicants for these scholarships.

- g) The Program for March 23 is by former HGMS President Norman Lenz. He will give a program on inclusions in Gemstones. Program Chairman, James Wark discussed other programs coming up. The next program up after that will be April 27, by Neal Immega with the title "Darwin's Theory of Evolution." Charlie Fredregill will have a silver casting program outdoors, and it is now planned for the June 22 General Membership meeting. Prices for silver and a sign-up sheet will be used for that meeting. HGMS members can purchase a small quantity of silver and then pour it over broom straw, pine needles, or rock salt, to make a piece of jewelry for additional preparation later. Nathalie Brandes will put on a program on September 28 on "Geological Climate Changes." Patrick Lewis, PhD from Sam Houston State University, will present our November 23 program and report on his summer field trip to Africa. Several of these programs are repeat requests because of the great interest in the past, and new topics are being presented by our program providers.
- h) The Board is still seeking a fire-resistant file cabinet. James Wark is still looking for a used file cabinet at auctions which he attends. James will also look into the cost and availability of a new cabinet. Phyllis George mentioned a location where there may be a used file cabinet available.

New Business:

- a) Tom Wright has notified the Board that he does not believe he will be physically able to continue as Club House Chairman. Terry Proctor said he had talked with Neal Immega, who had been discussed by several members of the Board, to take over this position. Terry Brawner moved and Pier Laird seconded a motion that Neal Immega be appointed as the new Club House Chairman. The motion passed unanimously.
- b) There was some discussion regarding the awarding of Honorary Lifetime Member by the Board. There apparently has been some misinformation that when a certain criteria, such as winning first place with AFMS on an article or other award, that one would then become an Honorary Lifetime Member. The entire Board agreed that this is not the case. Honorary Lifetime Membership is only awarded to a current member whose dedication, contribution to HGMS, leadership, and overall performance as an HGMS member is considerably above and beyond the normal participation of an HGMS member. In such a situation the Board can determine that person should be recognized by the awarding of Honorary Lifetime Membership. After some discussion, Neal Immega was considered by the Board for the award of Honorary Lifetime Membership. Pier Laird moved that Neal Immega be given an Honorary Lifetime Membership. Terry Brawner seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

- c) Terry Proctor had suggested during a past Board meeting that a 4' x 8' white pegboard surrounded by a nice frame be mounted above the existing inset cabinet shelves. The purpose would be so that the plaques that have been awarded to the club, currently on the wall and located in other places, could be conveniently and attractively displayed on this framed pegboard area. Plaques could be changed around as needed by just moving the hanging hooks. Phyllis George moved, seconded by James Wark, that Terry Proctor work on acquiring the white framed peg board to display HGMS plaques and other things needing to be hung. Included in the motion was that Terry should also obtain a new President's Plaque as the present one is full. He will also get new name tags for Scott Singleton and Matt Dillon as their years as President were inadvertently interchanged. The vote for all of these things was unanimous.
- d) The door leading to the parking lot needs to be replaced. Terry Proctor again urged a lock with push buttons to open and it was noted that such lock could also be opened with a key, which satisfied everyone on the Board as an improvement. The steel door also is in bad shape, so it was requested that First Vice-President James Wark look into a metal door with the locking discussed. Terry Proctor will work with James on this overall project. Terry Brawner moved that a new door and the type lock discussed be obtained, seconded by Phyllis George. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board of Directors Meeting was adjourned at 9:01 after a motion by Terry Brawner seconded by Phyllis George. It passed unanimously.

Be Safe—Be Well

by Don Monroe, Safety Committee Chairman

via the Lodestar, Newsletter of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc, 11/09 and Breccia 3/2010

Hazardous Waste

If you have not been advised about the potential dangers of hazardous waste, I can only assume that you do not read the newspapers or watch TV news. I think we will all agree that there is much “bad stuff” out there that we should all avoid. Well, I want to give you a different slant on this problem. A few days ago I walked out of a public building and noticed that there was a small test strip (used) on the ground. No, I did not pick it up with my bare hand; I used a Kleenex and carried the item to the nearest trashcan. With all of the “bad germs” that may be present in human blood, I am very cautious about other people's blood. As a matter of fact, I am a borderline diabetic and I am very cautious about how I dispose of my test strips. In addition to the obvious contamination, I also suspect that those little strips will not disintegrate for a long, long time nor will the lancets that we use to draw the little drop of blood for our testing.

At this point I realized that I had really opened a “can of worms” in my mind regarding the hazardous waste that we all may create. Let me share with you a few other waste products that we may encounter. My list includes but is not limited to the following:

- Kleenex—now who does not use Kleenex?

- Sanitary products—we men know just enough to leave them alone
- Disposable diapers—I am appalled at how many times you find used diapers thrown down on the street.
- Tobacco products (partially consumed) and spit
- Syringes—just the threat of aids should terrify us. All of our medical service providers are most careful.
- Band aids, bandages, and swabs—When your doctor takes a blood sample and puts a little bandage over the hole, what do you do with the little bandage once the bleeding stops?
- Dead things—Animals, pets, bugs, and other deceased organisms are not only unsightly, but may be dangerous. In our area we are very suspicious of dead raccoons because of the possibility of rabies.
- Paper products such as cups and paper towels.
- Pet waste—Many, many of us have pets and should be cleaning up after them.

We live in a society where everything is disposable. It has not always been that way. Way back when, we drank out of glasses and cups. We used cloth diapers, napkins, and handkerchiefs, and we laundered these items after using them. Any germs were at least kept in our dwellings. This is no longer the case. We all tend to spread our germs everywhere. Think about it.

Gems and Gem Materials —Tucson 2010

by Steve Weinberger

from Gem Cutters News 3/2010

While Baltimore was digging out from record snowfalls—my neighbors measured 56" while we were gone—Carolyn and I were enjoying the relative warmth of southern Arizona as we once again visited the Tucson Gem and Mineral shows. Many people have asked us if we “missed the snow.” To be honest, the answer is yes--and no. “Yes,” we weren’t in Baltimore for the blizzards so we missed them, but “no,” we definitely did not miss having to do all the shoveling. Thank goodness for fabulous neighbors!

As usual, our two weeks in Tucson were fun. Getting to visit with friends from all over the country is always one of the high points of our time there, but seeing all the beautiful jewelry, gems, and minerals is really fantastic, and at times, mind-boggling.

Of the 42 venues this year we visited nine, leaving all the beads, junk jewelry, and flea market shows to others. Over the years we’ve learned that you just cannot go everywhere or see everything so we’ve high-graded our visits.

Our first quest is always to find good faceting rough—especially materials that can be used for teaching—and we came away with a dozen or so very nice, clean pieces that my students can cut without being afraid of making a sizeable investment, yet they will still come away with a respectable, natural gemstone.

After visiting all the equipment dealers and seeing the latest faceting machines from Ultra-Tec including a concave machine and a “fantasy” machine that can make groves

and slices in the stones, we turned our attention to the better venues that cater to minerals. The high-end Westward Look show (the top 16 dealers in Tucson) featured an amazing array of gorgeous specimens, each with equally amazing price tags—most in the 5- to 6-figure range. Needless to say, we took many photos.

The Inn Suites show is always a must stop on our journey as well because it is there that some of the dealers featuring the more unusual yet affordable specimens set up shop. In addition, numerous fossil dealers, some jewelry folks, amber and opal dealers along with those featuring cutting rough and carvings can be found. We spent two days there, then went back for a third so we could help the Editor of *Rocks & Minerals* magazine collect items for their annual silent auction.

At the end of the two weeks of the Tucson shows is the “main event,” the show put on by the local club. Two hundred dealers, about half featuring minerals, the other half jewelry, cutting rough and fossils, fill the huge Convention Center. This is the only one of the shows that charges admission, but it’s well worth attending. Besides all the dealers, the biggest draw for us is the numerous and outstanding displays.

Each year the club selects a show theme. This year it was Gems and Gem Materials. Most of the major museums around the country and the world bring their first-class specimens to set up in showcases throughout the hall. In addition, most of the major collectors also display parts of their collections. And the displays are always awesome! The GIA case shown below showed a rainbow of faceted gems—many are hard-to-facet or are extremely rare materials. You’ll need to see this one in color via the e-mail issue to appreciate it fully.

Other displays paired gem quality crystals and faceted stones cut from similar materials. All were a tribute to the mineral collectors who found them and the gem cutters who faceted the gems or made the carvings. All we can say is “Wow!”

We also spent lots of time visiting with friends—Tucson is a wonderful place to get reacquainted and to meet new people, and we heard some excellent talks including one on mineral inclusions in gemstones that was fabulous.

Are we heading back again next year? The theme of the club show will be Minerals of California and we’ve already made our motel reservations! Why not join us?



This spectacular case of faceted stones was presented by GIA and contained highlights from the collection donated by Dr. Edward J. Gübelin

Recommended Polishes

by Ben Schmidt. Originally published in GC News, June 1975, via Gem Cutters News 2/2010

Ben Schmidt, after whom our Workshop is named, was an outstanding lapidary and teacher, as well as one of the charter members of our Guild. In 1975 he compiled this listing of recommended polishes for use in obtaining the best polishes. Of course as Ben always stressed, you cannot get a good polish on any material if it has not been sanded to an almost mirror finish first.

CMO = Cerium Oxide TO = Tin Oxide LA - Linde A DIA = Diamond CHO = Chrome Oxide

	CMO	TO	LA	DIA	CHO
Actinolite		X			
Agate	X	X			
Alabaster		X			
Amazonite		X			
Amber		X			
Amblygonite		X			
Andalusite		X			
Apatite			X		X
Aventurine		X			
Azurite		X			X
Apophyllite					X
Aragonite					X
Axinite	X				
Barite					X
Benitoite	X				
Beryl	X	X		X	
Bloodstone			X		
Brazilianite		X			
Calcite		X			X
Cassiterite		X			
Celestite					X
Cerussite					X
Chrysoberyl				X	
Coral		X			
Corundum				X	
Danburite		X			
Datolite		X			
Diopside					X
Diopase	X				
Diorite	X	X	X		X
Enstatite		X			
Epidote		X			

	CMO	TO	LA	DIA	CHO
Euclase		X			
Feldspar	X	X			
Fluorite		X			X
Garnet	X	X	X	X	X
Goldstone	X	X			
Hematite	X				
Hickoryite			X		
Howlite	X	X	X		X
Hypersthene		X			
Jadite	X	X	X		X
Jasper	X	X	X		X
Kyanite		X			
Labradorite		X			X
Lapis Lazuli		X	X		X
Limestone	X	X	X		X
Lapidolite					X
Malachite		X	X		X
Moonstone		X			
Nephrite		X	X		X
Obsidian		X			X
Onyx	X	X			X
Opal	X	X			
Peridot		X	X	X	
Petrified Wood	X	X	x		x
Phenacite		X			
Pollucite	X				
Quartz	X	X			
Rhodochrosite		X	X		X
Rhodonite	X		X		X
Ruby				X	
Rutile			X		
Sapphire				X	

My Beautiful Rock

by Vivian Stockton

Member of Northwest Arkansas Gem & Mineral Society

What a beautiful rock! It was an intense reddish color and sort of clear like a crystal. I saw it as I walked down the path to the bottomland along the Illinois River. I couldn't imagine how it could have lodged there on the hillside. It didn't fit with the limestone or flint rocks that were all over the place. It was rather heavy, but I carried it back up the hill and set it on my porch and admired my treasure each time I walked by.

Within a few days, my friend Donna came by on her way to Gentry to see club member Dean Shafer at his shop and have him identify a stone for her. She, too, admired my find, but had no idea what it was (other than some type of crystal) or why it was where it was found. She suggested that I bring the beauty along and see what Dean thought.

I was so excited. This was my first real find, other than just common ordinary rocks that I often picked up. Dean took the rock in his hands, stared at it for a minute. Then shocked us by touching it with his tongue. He said only two words: Deer Salt!

Recommended Polishes

continued

	CMO	TO	LA	DIA	CHO
Scapolite	X				
Scheelite					X
Serpentine		X	X		X
Smithsonite		X			
Sodalite	X				
Sosolite	X				
Spinel		X	X	X	
Sphalerite					X
Spodumene		X			
Sunstone		X			
Thompsonite	X				
Tiger-eye	X	X	X		
Titanite		X			
Topaz		X	X	X	
Tourmaline		X	X	X	
Turquoise	X	X	X		
Unakite	X				
Varicite	X	X	X		
Vesuvianite	X				
Williamsite			X		
Wonderstone		X	X		
Wulfenite					X
Zircon		X			
Zoisite	X				

Show Time 2010

April 10-11	Abilene, TX	Central Texas Gem & Mineral Society Abilene Civic Center; North 6th & Pine
April 17-18	Alpine, TX	Chihuahuah Gem & Mineral Society Highland Events Center; Hwy. 90 East
April 24-25	Waco, TX	Waco Gem & Mineral Society Texas State Technical College ITC Building; I-35 N
April 30-May 2	Houston, TX	Houston Fine Mineral Show Embassy Suites Hotel, near The Galleria www.finemineralshow.com
May 1-2	Lubbock, TX	Lubbock Gem & Mineral Society Lubbock Civic Center, 1501 Mac Davis Ln. archie.scott73@yahoo.com ; http://lgmstx.org
May 29-30	Fort Worth, TX	Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Society Will Rogers Memorial Center, Amon G. Carter Exhibit Bldg., 3401 W. Lancaster www.fortworthgemandmineralclub.org
June 18-20	La Habra, CA	AFMS/CFMS/NOCGMS Convention & Show So. California University of Health Sciences 16200 E. Amber Valley Rd.; Mike Beaumont (714) 510-6037; diamond.crest@yahoo.com www.networkingwave.com/afms2010/index.html
August 21-22	Bossier City, LA	Ark-La-Tex Gem & Mineral Society Bossier City Civic Center
August 28-29	Jasper, TX	Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society Events Center
November 12-14	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 Rick Rexroad, rrexroad@brwncald.com
December 3-5	El Paso, TX	El Paso Mineral & Gem Society El Maida Auditorium, 6331 Alabama gemcenter@aol.com
December 6-7	Big Spring, TX	Big Spring Prospextors Club Howard County Fair Barn, (432) 263-4662
December 11-12	DeRidder, LA	SCFMS/DGMFC Convention & Show Richard Borchard Fairgrounds

2010		April				2010
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section
4 Easter Sunday	5	6 7:30 Board Meeting	7 7:30 Mineral Section 10-5 Shop Open	8	9	10 10-5 Shop Open
11	12 1:00 Day Light Section	13 7:30 Show Committee	14 7:30 Faceting Section 10-5 Shop Open	15 Federal Income Taxes Due	16	17 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section
18	19 7:30 Lapidary Section	20 7:30 Paleo Section	21 7:30 Mineral Section 10-5 Shop Open	22	23	24 10-5 Shop Open
25	26	27 7:30 General Meeting	28 10-5 Shop Open	29	30	

2010		May				2010
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section
2 Easter Sunday	3	4 7:30 Board Meeting	5 7:30 Mineral Section 10-5 Shop Open	6	7	8 10-5 Shop Open
9	10 1:00 Day Light Section	11 7:30 Show Committee	12 7:30 Faceting Section 10-5 Shop Open	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 7:30 Mineral Section 10-5 Shop Open	20	21	22 10-5 Shop Open
23 30	24 Memorial Day 31	25 7:30 General Meeting	26 10-5 Shop Open	27	28	29

The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

*The Newsletter of the
Houston Gem & Mineral Society*

10805 BROOKLET

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77099

(281) 530-0942



SCFMS

1998 - 1st (Large)
2000 - 1st (Large)
2003 - 1st (Large)
2005 - 1st (Large)
2006 - 1st (Large)
2007 - 1st (Large)
2008 - 1st (Large)
2009 - 1st (Large)



AFMS

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



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