



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

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

**Volume XLI - No. 7**

**July 2010**



## **President's Message**

*by Terry Proctor*

*FYI Column Starting This Month*

**T**he President's Message this month will be short, as I have added a new feature, the FYI column. "FYI" to those who may not know, means **for your information**. If you like this feature, I will try to provide other Web sites in upcoming issues of the BBG. Please let me know your opinion of the FYI column at my e-mail address [auraman@swbell.net](mailto:auraman@swbell.net).

Thanks, and find a really cool place to take a Field Trip and go dig something pretty, or interesting, or both to bring to Show and Tell at the next General Meeting.



## **Upcoming Programs for the General Meetings**

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

**J**une 22: Charlie Fredregill will present the annual silver broom straw casting program. However, Charlie will do it outdoors to avoid noxious fumes from the casting process. Many of you probably will want one of Charlie's castings, so you will need to let Terry Proctor know in advance so Charlie will know how much silver to have on hand. The price of each casting will be based on the cost of the silver--roughly \$8 each--and will need to be paid in advance.

Other upcoming programs planned later in the year include **September 28** when Nathalie Brandes, Professor at Lone Star College will present another very interesting program. The programs she has presented to us over the past two years were outstanding.

**November 23** Patrick J. Lewis, PhD will bring us up-to-date about his most recent dig in an early triassic lake. Last November he presented a facinating talk about the dig he had just completed at that lake. We are eager to hear what additional record-breaking finds he has uncovered.

## Contents

President's Message .....	1
Upcoming Programs for the General Meetings .....	1
Purpose of HGMS .....	3
Old Geezer - Even More Adventures .....	4
HGMS Members Finalists in AFMS Bulletin Editors' Contest .....	6
Of Depth Perception and Dangerous Situations. ....	7
What a Croc! .....	9
10 Reasons To Volunteer To Help With or Work On The Show: .....	11
My Georgia Vacation .....	13
Thank You to the Wonderful HGMS Instructors! .....	16
FYI Column .....	16
Jasper Fossil Wood Trip .....	18
Two Upcoming Shop Orientation Sessions .....	18
New Member Orientation Turns Out a Crowd .....	19
Field Trip Time .....	20
General Meeting Minutes .....	22
HGMS Board Minutes .....	25
The Collecting Cycle .....	29
Show Time 2010 .....	30
Calendars .....	31

*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 2010 issue  
by Wednesday, July 7, 2010.*

*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>.

## Old Geezer - Even More Adventures

by John Emerson

*Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society*

While on a tourist trip from Oran to Sidi bel Abbes, Algeria, (home of the French Foreign Legion), Bobbie, Rob, Lee, and I passed through the mountains near the coast. We stopped when we saw some “Barbary Apes” by the road. They immediately swarmed the car! One got on the hood and peered in at us. The only food we had was some prunes which I threw out the window. We often wondered what, if any, effect it had on their bowels! There is a lot of data on these animals in Google. They are not monkeys because they have no tails.



Because the days were so long and the nights so short, we worked in the Sahara Desert in Algeria from 4 a.m. to 11 a.m., then lunch, sleep in air-conditioned rooms until 4 p.m., and work until 10 p.m. That way we got two day's work and two sleep periods every day.

My driver/translator in Algeria was named “Chetitah.” When we evacuated from Algiers to the Bechtel office in Holland upon the start of the 1967 war between Israel and Egypt, he drove us to the airport. He put a police notice on our “villa's” door (“villa meant it had no screens) that it was protected and no one allowed in. He took our silver, dishes, car and other valuables to his father's house in the desert for safe keeping. He brought it all back when I returned to pack up and return to The Netherlands. We later found out that he was an undercover policeman whose duty was to take care of us and report on our movements and actions. He was a good friend as well.

I was in the Cairo Hilton elevator with two Dutch couples yammering away in Dutch. When we reached the Lobby I said “After you, my lady” in the few words of Dutch that I knew. I don't know what they were talking about, but they thought that I could understand them and they seemed very embarrassed. I just laughed and went on my way.

In England one of the very petite Bechtel secretaries told me that she “Let the bastards grind me down” to explain her size.

While I was in Malaysia scouting a pipeline route, in the Hilton Hotel in Kuala Lumpur I found a list of services available for Room Service. Included was a “massage in your

room by a pretty lady.” Since I did not order one, I don’t know how pretty the ladies were, or just what a “massage” meant.

**At A&M**, after Korea, one of the other veterans in one of my classes came to class with crutches and missing a foot. No one had noticed his loss since his prosthetic was so good. I asked him how he lost the foot, and he told me that he was on reconnaissance patrol in front of the 40<sup>th</sup> Division in Korea and stepped on an anti-personnel mine. He said that some men of Company L of the 224<sup>th</sup> regiment came out to rescue him! That was my old unit when I was drafted in 1950.

**In Teheran**—Training a stray cat to use the “dog door.” A feral cat decided to live with us after we fed it a couple of times. Our next two problems were how to train it to use our “dog door,” and to teach it to get along with our dog. For some unknown reason, the two just ignored each other! As we were in the kitchen where the dog door was and pondering the problem, our dog used the door to come in. That cat just walked over and went out! He then turned around and came back in!! No problem.

**In Alice** I was introduced to good Mexican food at Reyes Café “across the tracks.” The Tex-Mex railroad ran through town, and most of the Mexicans lived on the south side. When we first moved to Alice, there were about 7,000 people living there. After the oil boom and all the intervening years, there are about 70,000 there now. We lived across the tracks on the far south side of town. I built a tree house in the mesquite tree in the back yard. A Mexican family lived across the street. They had a post set up in their yard, and their “slow” son would go to the local slaughter house, gather up the discarded hooves, bring them home, and beat them against the post to extract the “jelly” from the hooves. You could clearly hear the “thump, thump” and know when he had been to the slaughter house.

**In Freer**, Christmas of 1932, Dad fought the mud and caliche road the 30 miles to pavement in San Diego, TX, to buy a push peddle car for me. I had said that I really wanted a car. When I unwrapped it, I looked it over and said, “Where is the motor?” I, of course, don’t remember that, but Dad never let me forget it over the years. It seemed to me that he told that story to everyone he met.

In about 1934 in Freer, my best friends were named Billy Becker and his younger brother “Hooty.” I don’t know why that nickname. After school I would walk to my Uncle’s and Grandmother’s house to wait for Dad to pick me up and take me home. Billy lived across the street, and we played until Dad came by. One day there were a lot of flies in Billy’s house, and his mother gave us a “Flit” gun with bug killer in it. We then went around the house spraying the flies. They were sticking to the walls (wooden - no wall paper) because of the wet spray. Billy’s family had a lot of chickens with baby chicks. We each got a chick and went around holding the chicks up to the flies and they pecked them off and ate them. We did that until his mother caught us and explained that the bug spray would kill the chicks—and it did.

In about 1941, Dad brought home a baby raccoon for a pet. It washed its food in his water bowl. It would climb up on the back of the sofa Dad was sitting on and reach into his shirt pocket to take out and play with his pen, pencil, and whatever else there was in

the pocket. Dad was very patient with him. Fortunately the “coon” was very fastidious and would ask to get out when he had to “go.”

Dad made a “rubber gun” for me when I was five. Rubber guns normally were pistol-shaped pieces of wood with a clothes pin on the handle. They were “loaded” by stretching a piece of automobile tire inner tube from the front back to the clothes pin. Dad made a “tommy gun” for me. It was shaped like a rifle from a long piece of wood. He cut several notches in the barrel at the back, attached a strong string, and loaded it by stretching the rubbers from the “muzzle” back over the string into the notches. I could pull up the string to fire one or 5 or 6 “shots.” I was the envy of my age group in Freer.

## HGMS Members Finalists in AFMS Bulletin Editors' Contest

*by Phyllis George, HGMS Editor*

**L**inda Jaeger, AFMS Chair of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) Bulletin Editors' Contest, recently notified me via postcard that we have several finalists at the AFMS level of the contest. All have ranked in the top ten of their category.

Category	Entrant
Junior Articles	Noelle Skubal
Adult Articles	Sigrid Stewart
	John Emerson
Adult Articles—Advanced	Terry Proctor
	Art Smith
Poetry	Terry Proctor
Bulletin	HGMS BBG Newsletter Phyllis George, Editor

The only way to reach the AFMS level of the contest is to have ranked in the top three in a category at the regional federation level. We are in the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies (SCFMS), and while the judging of entries to the SCFMS contest took place early this year, the results will not be announced until the annual SCFMS show being held in DeRidder, TX December 11–12. Everyone listed in the table above must have ranked in the top three of their category, and they each will have a plaque waiting for them in DeRidder (unless the rules have changed and they aren't awarding three plaques per category).

The AFMS annual show took place in La Habra, California June 17–20, and the Bulletin Editors' Contest awards were announced Sunday, June 20. At this time I have no idea how our entries fared, but I hope someone notifies me of the results. The next AFMS Newsletter won't be out until September, and that's a long time to wait to hear..

## Of Depth Perception and Dangerous Situations.

by Owen Martin

AFMS and SCFMS Safety Coordinator

from SCFMS Newsletter 5–6/2010

**W**ell the weather is warming, and I've been out hunting a lot recently. On one of these trips I re-learned the lesson about knowing where you're going, making sure that you have the gear to get there, and more importantly—to get out.

As I like to tell my kids, “the easiest thing about climbing trees is getting down. The hardest thing is doing it without getting hurt.”

So there I was, standing alone on an old country bridge looking down 40 feet to the water. The creek was about 4 feet higher than normal, but the fringe of the bank still looked accessible—which meant I would have access to the fossil layer. So I attached my tag line and lowered my bucket and gear over the side to a little ledge that looked to be just above the water. Then I walked back around to access the bank and headed in. That's when I realized I had some problems that had started with bad depth perception.

**Problem 1:** I couldn't get down the way I have always done in the past because it was under water.

**Problem 2:** My bucket wasn't on the edge of the bank. It was actually about 5 feet up, and I couldn't get to it from higher up on the bank/cliff.

**Problem 3:** Where was my buddy Chase who was supposed to bring some better ropes?

**Problem 4:** The small amount of bank that was still exposed was actually a talus slope of shale that had just been “lubricated” by the creek.

**Problem 5:** You'll have to wait for...

So for Problem 1, I found a spot, used some old vines and roots to get as far down as possible, then jumped into about 8 inches of water + a few more of mud. Good thing I didn't twist anything! Remember the depth for future reference.

Problem 2: It wasn't too hard to handle except that I didn't want to go for a swim. When balancing on a precarious slope, adjusting your center of gravity upward isn't a good idea. Moving very carefully, I maneuvered the bucket down. I stayed dry to that point and found a little dry spot for my bucket and gear. Then I started working my way downstream. I used my tag line to steady myself as I scuttled along.

Problem 3: Where was Chase? About then he called and told me he couldn't come because his girlfriend's parents had just come into town and wanted to take him out to dinner. This was bad since I really needed some better gear to haul my middle-aged butt back out of the creek!

Problem 4: “Man this footing is slick!” My tag line only helped for about 20 feet, and then it was just me, my mud boots, and my pick. I used the pick to dig out dry foot holds just above the water, and worked my way to the outcropping layer. I spent a

good three hours there digging through the matrix and came away with my first mosasaur tooth. It was small with the very tip broken off, but I was still pretty happy. So, time to call it a day, and I could even be back in time for dinner.

That's when Problem 5 reached up (literally) and threw a wrench in my preconceived plans. Although there had not been any recent rain in the creek's watershed, the Brazos River had recently received several inches a couple of hundred miles upstream. So while I was in the creek, the Brazos continued to rise and water backed into the creek. I was facing the wall and didn't notice that the water had risen about a foot behind me!

So there I am at the bottom of the cliff, the fringe of the bank is now underwater AND I'm loaded down with matrix I want to take home. Well, I did make it out. Had to cut more steps which took a lot of work. Flailed numerous times and fell in once while tossing my pick in the air. Luckily it missed me on the way down and landed where I could grab it. Otherwise, I WAS swimming back. Finally made it to the tag line and used it to haul myself about two feet up the bank. I secured it to my bucket and realized how hard it was to climb with two mud boots filled with muddy water. After partially emptying them (I must have looked like a crazed and muddy yoga master) I crawled the remaining 38 feet to the top. Yes—I was exhausted, and now all I had to do was drag that 50 lbs. of rock up from the bottom, and I could go.

The only smart thing I did in the whole process was to bring my wagon to the bridge. So I loaded it up and easily walked the quarter mile back to my Jeep. Then I headed home, very tired, but not bleeding (much) and without needing to go to an orthopedic surgeon the next day! I even used that change of clothes. All was good in the world until my hands cramped into a death grip on the steering wheel. I always take Motrin® with me, and that helped!

In retrospect, I put myself into a pretty dangerous situation and should have pulled out once I realized my hunting buddy wasn't going to show up. But since I had been to this spot several times before, I thought I could handle it. Maybe I did, just barely, or maybe since my Mom still prays for me every day I had a little help! Either way, I'm too old to do something that stupid. So I vow here and now to stop—at least until I need more fodder for my next article!





## What a Croc!

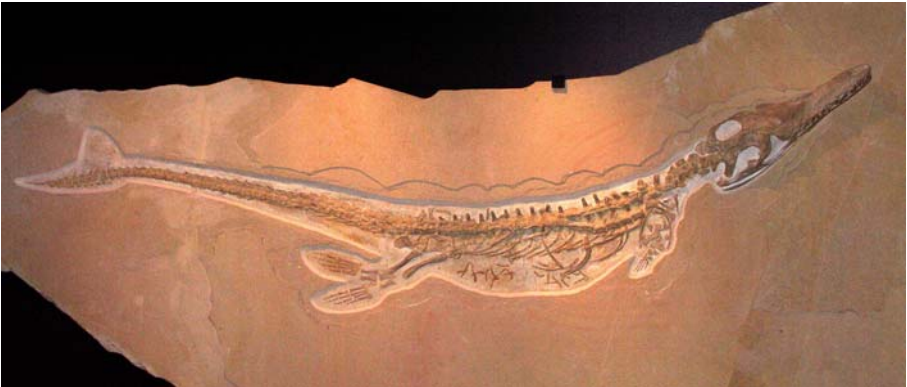
by Neal Immega, Ph. D.

Paleontologist

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

The Houston Museum of Natural Science has a new exhibit—"Archaeopteryx: Icon of Evolution"—that features the best Archy ever. Do not let that blind you though to the other critters on display. One of these is the best marine crocodile anywhere, a *Geosaurus* with an exciting evolutionary story all its own. These animals have a worldwide distribution from Brazil to Germany, but this specimen is the most complete and shows the soft parts. Ah, the preservation of fossils in the Solnhofen limestone is amazing.

Let's see what observations we can make from the skeleton and what conclusions we can draw. Look at this picture and get an overall impression of the fossil. The label says it is a croc, but is it? It does not look like any croc I have ever seen.



Complete *Geosaurus* skeleton, with skin impressions, from the Solnhofen limestone.



*Geosaurus* skull showing croc dentition

**Head:** The front end certainly looks like a modern crocodile head. The teeth are conical and striated, with the typical croc dentition: teeth are located inside and outside the jaw line, and there are large teeth half way down the jaw. Modern crocs use them for breaking turtle shells (see the YouTube video refer-

enced below).

**Tail:** Okay, so it is a croc, but it does have a very strange tail. Let's look more closely at the tail to see if there is any support for the decision the preparator made to indicate a tail like a shark's.



The faint skin impressions support interpretation as a shark-like tail.

for the fin. The fin is real!

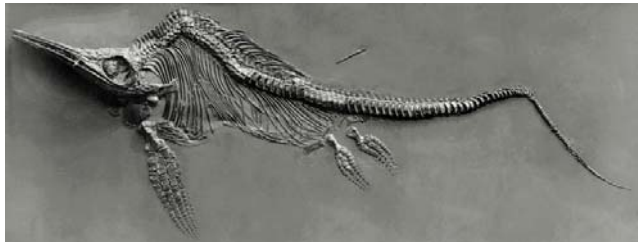
**Armor:** This croc does not have any! There are no osteoderms (bony plates inside the skin) anywhere. The osteoderms in modern crocs do not provide complete coverage and thus are not much use as armor; however, a modern croc has muscles between its osteoderms that can stiffen up the skin during rapid land movements. Apparently *Geosaurus* got along without them.

**Legs:** The arms are very short in proportion to the legs—quite unlike modern crocs.

**Salt Gland:** Many animals have glands to secrete sodium chloride because they live in or on life from the ocean and eat 'way too much salt. This animal is said to have chambers in the skull for a salt gland, but I cannot see it. I guess I will take their word\* for it. A modern croc has a salt gland in its tongue while many birds have theirs in the skull.

**Analysis:** Modern crocs are slow swimmers and thus are ambush predators. A shark-like tail suggests this was a higher speed predator. A modern croc has about 5% of its weight in osteoderms, and their absence would improve the water speed at the expense of land speed. I think we have caught this croc species in the transition stage of becoming a true marine predator. It still had clawed limbs to crawl out on the land (to mate and lay eggs), but their smaller size would certainly help reduce drag. If this evolutionary path had continued, the croc's descendants

The discolored rock strongly suggests that the tail does have a shark outline, unlike that of all known modern crocodilians. Even better, compare the caudal processes (bumps on the top of the vertebra) in the area of the fin to those farther up the spine. The processes in the tail fin area are longer and show reverse orientation: they point toward the head, possibly as support



An Ichthyosaurus is a reptile completely adapted to a marine environment.

might have ended up looking like *Ichthyosaurs*, air-breathing reptiles that gave live birth and looked remarkably like modern dolphins. Remember, a saltwater croc in Australia is called a marine crocodile, but it does not have many adaptations to live in the marine environment besides a salt gland in its tongue.

There are other crocs found in the Solnhofen limestone, including long-legged land crocs, dwarf ones, and a substantially armored one, *Steneosaurus*, featured by Dr. Bakker in this wonderful drawing.

### References:

Wikipedia: *Criosaurus* , *Dakosaurus*, *Geosaurus*

A nice discussion of aquatic crocs is at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cricosaurus>

Modern croc using those teeth on a turtle: "ahmedsadat" posting on YouTube, 2008, "Crocodile eats turtle," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSKAXOFvi6c>

\*Salt glands—it is claimed that the skulls have a chamber for salt glands. See Fernández and Gasparini, 2008, *Naturwissenschaften*. 2008, 95(1):79-84. Epub 2007 Aug 22. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17712540>

Dwarf crocs from the Solnhofen limestone, page 36 in Wellnhofer, 2009, *Archaeopteryx, Icon of Evolution*, Verlag Dr. Friedrich Pfeil.

All pictures by Neal Immega except the Dino/Croc fight which is by Dr. Bakker.



What happens when a *Steneosaurus* tries to ambush an *Allosaurus* at the water hole.

## 10 Reasons To Volunteer To Help With or Work On The Show:

by Sunday Bennett

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

**1** Your parking fee will be reimbursed to you when you volunteer to sit at the booth for the Intergem Show. Just a couple of measly hours sitting, smiling, and talking with strangers about why you like the HGMS is about all that is required. When you go to the Reliant Center and pay for parking, save your receipt. Place the receipt in an envelope with your name and address on it and place it in the mail slot on the HGMS Clubhouse office door where it says "Treasurer." Our happy, helpful Treasurer will then reimburse you with a check.

2- You will be invited and encouraged to attend one or more special, limited-by-invitation-only show field trips. If I said "Red Palm," would that perk up your interest? I can gladly report on the most recent show field trip where several people came away with

nice chunks of red palm, gold palm, and in the case of our field trip leader, snake wood.

3- Paid admission to get into places like the Intergem Show, the Fine Mineral Show, the Clear Lake Show, etc.

4- You get to see new people and make new friends. If you are like me, you will get to talk other people's ears off.

5- If you volunteer to serve on the Show Committee and help throughout the year, you will be given a free T-shirt. These are nice T-shirts that are printed for Show Committee personnel only. By wearing your special T-shirt, you can distinguish yourself from the rest of the HGMS riff-raff. *Editor's Note: Tsk, tsk. Watch your mouth, Sunday! :o)*

6- For breakdown and unpacking from the show, you get a free meal. Historically the meal has been fried chicken with biscuits and gravy, but there has also been pizza. If you are really lucky you will get a free drink with your food to wash down a couple of aspirins that Beverly Mace keeps on hand for emergencies. Take my word for it, you will probably want an aspirin after off-loading the show truck.

7- Helping at the show gets you in early to see what the dealers will be selling before they sell it. Many a good price or a great pick has been made before the selling floor is open to the general public.

8- Helping with the show earns you points which you can turn in for valuable gifts and prizes. Okay, I'm making this one up. There are no points and you can't turn them in even if there were any, but you have to admit--it sounds great, huh?

9- Volunteering at the show, especially on Friday when the children are there, will give you great fortitude for life's larger challenges. Have you ever heard of the phrase, "if it doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger?" I can guarantee if you work a Friday and don't keel over afterward, you will be a stronger, more patient (and probably less sane), individual.

And lastly, on Friday, do not miss the scene of total destruction where the dino dig once stood. Not a single plastic dinosaur encased in safety concrete will go unmauled. The destruction seemingly innocent children can unleash upon hapless fossils is a reminder that civility is a facade, and we are only a hair's breadth from anarchy.

Do you really want to miss out on this kind of fun? Really? It is one day out of your life, but it will give you stories to tell for years. It is a writer's dream come true. There is more material to be gathered by volunteering on this one day than you could get by living a lifetime in Barcelona running with the bulls. Forget having to go to exotic places and doing exotic things. Serving the Show on Friday is a blast!

This last reason is possibly the best. It ranks as the highest of motivators in many past volunteer's books.

The 10th reason to volunteer for the show is: Beverly Mace will give you one of her world-famous cookies if you ask nicely.

## My Georgia Vacation

by Stephen Wilkerson

*Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society*

If you want rose quartz for cabs, and you don't care where it comes from or care about the quality of the material, any show or rock shop can supply you with what you want. But if you want facet-grade or star rose quartz and have the time, I suggest visiting the Hogg Mine in Georgia.

I went to Georgia for the Memorial holiday week to visit with family. While I was there, I took a day to visit the Hogg Mine in LaGrange, GA. The mine is primarily a source of rose quartz, but it also has beryl, specifically aquamarine, and black tourmaline. What makes the rose quartz special here is that some of the material will produce a six-ray star when cut in a cabochon. I saw this mine on the Travel Channel's "Cash and Treasures" show a few years ago. I tried to visit two years ago, but the only Saturday I could visit was the weekend of the Atlanta Gem and Mineral Show, and the mine was closed. This year I was determined to visit the mine. Luck was with me; the mine was open on May 29. See [digforcrystals.com](http://digforcrystals.com) for dig dates and other information about the mine.

I arrived at the meeting location—a local convenience store—at ten till nine, just in time. Bill Mitcham the mine owner was just finishing his warnings and instructions. He then led a caravan of cars down the road to the mine.

The Hogg Mine was mined primarily for beryllium in the 1940s for the war effort. After clearing twenty feet of red topsoil, tremendous amounts of rock and gravel were dredged up and a processing plant was set up on site to sift for beryllium to strengthen steel used in the war. You can still see where the plant was located and a hill of tailings that is partly carved away. Bill lead us up a rock-lined road, over a hill and down into the mine. The mine is a pit mine with a small pool of water at the bottom. They have to pay to have a geological survey done each year to prove that the water goes down into the bottom of the mine pit and does not run out to the surrounding ground.

Bill pointed out the best locations for beryl hunting and offered to take anyone interested over to where the tourmaline could





be found later. He advised us not to go past the warning tape, as some areas were unstable and others were out of sight.

The rose quartz could be easily separated down to clean pieces with a few strikes of a hammer. Bill also mentioned that there was milky white quartz and smoky quartz in the pit if we were interested in other materials. I talked to him and told him I was interested in the star rose quartz. He advised me to look for pieces that had a waxy surface. He said that was a good sign of star potential. I kept my eyes focussed for that and found several pieces. I took a 3-lb sledge hammer and a chisel to break down large rocks to get material, but hardly used them. Most of the rose quartz was broken down to small pieces already and just needed to be dug up or separated from the gravel. I used my rock hammer to pry out pieces and break them down to clean material.

I spent about two hours collecting rose quartz and then took a lunch break to take pictures. While walking to the front gate, I found a great piece of rose quartz in the road bed. Cars had been driving over it for years. I pried it up and put it with my collection.

One couple I talked to had already been to the mine for rose quartz and were there today for beryl. They had an awning set up to keep the sun off, and by lunch they had a nice collection of beryl pieces—including one over three inches long and an inch thick. Before the day was over, they found a small piece of facet-grade aquamarine. Another family was also digging for beryl and found two pieces over two inches long and almost an inch thick, but nothing that could be faceted.

After lunch, I decided to look for black tourmaline. Bill's assistant pointed me over to the area where the tourmaline could be found, and I began picking up small bits of crystals immediately. Then he showed me where larger crystals and pieces could be found. I collected several crystal cross-sections and one terminated crystal. Then Bill showed me what he called "tourmaline hill." The hillside was black with tourmaline sand. He suggested digging down 6 to 8 inches to find larger crystals. I dug, but didn't find anything. I wasn't prepared for extensive digging, so I went back to a surface hunt. I found a lot of crystal pieces and more cross sections.



After an hour of looking for tourmaline, I decided to go back for more rose quartz. I put my tourmaline in the car and headed back to the pit. I collected a five-pound piece for my wife's rock garden and a piece of smoky quartz that appeared to have several areas of facetable material inside and several more pieces of rose quartz. Bill warned us that most people don't last past two o'clock due to the heat. I was one of them.



But I was extremely happy with what I collected. You can collect enough material to fill a five gallon bucket, plus one large stone. If you want a big piece for your yard, Bill will help you get it out. As long as two people can carry it, you can take it. I wound up with 38 pounds of material. I cleaned it up as much as I could and spread it out in the back of my Rodeo. Bill came and took pictures. Go to



kudzuminerals.com to see his pictures from that day; I'm there. Bill commented that they usually had about 30 people out, but today there were only about half that many. It made it easier to find what you were after without other people being in the way.

If you decide to visit the mine, I have a few suggestions. Wear work or hiking boots. The ground is very rocky and unstable on the sides of the pit. Also wear leather gloves; some of the rock pieces have sharp edges. Bring plenty of water to drink and some in spray bottles to clean off what you find. I forgot this, and some of my finds were not as good as I thought. If you are looking for beryl, bring a shovel and a sifting tray. Pack your lunch in a cooler; there is no place around to go and get something. There is a covered area with some tables where you can eat or just cool off.

I was amazed at the amount of facetable material I found loose in the gravel—some large enough to cut stones over an inch across. I look forward to cutting stones for my jewelry and hope to find a few stars among the pieces. And while I did get quite a bit of quality material, Bill told me the gravel in the pit hasn't been turned over for several years, and even better stuff will be found when they move it around. I look forward to going back in a couple of years when I run out of the rose quartz I collected on this trip.

Get last-minute news about club events by sending a note to Neal Immega at [n\\_immune@swbell.net](mailto:n_immune@swbell.net).

## Thank You to the Wonderful HGMS Instructors!

*by Brian Honsinger  
Education Chair*

**D**uring the month of May, we had a total of four classes that trained 23 students in new jewelry skills. We will pay our teachers \$2270.00 during this month alone. I want to thank them very much for working around and with one another to train that many students in so little time and space.

One extra student even got into Wayne Barnett's full class by supplying her own tools. In his spare time, Wayne also rebuilt every torch in the shop. Charlie Fredrigill taught his fifth wire wrapping class in five months, which if it is not already, should be a record. Val Link taught his first of many classes with us—we hope!

All those members newly trained in jewelry skills should keep practicing at home and in the shop, being sure to remember your safety procedures in turning things on and off. The club purchased three new see-through polishing tumblers so you can see your new jewelry pieces get shiny.

Soon as our teachers get a little rest, we will get things rolling again. Save up your money because we will start classes soon as we get some folks signed up. There are lovely things to make molds of and molten silver to pour, so the molds can be cast into wearable items for lots of friends and family. There are items to cover with enamel. Glass beads will be created in your own designs. Yes, Rikki Mittman has found us a torch that we can use safely to make beads. There are great stones out there to wire wrap.

Once you wire wrappers can show or have pictures of five pieces you have done, Charlie has promised to teach us another bracelet or wire ring class!

Me, I am just worn out so there is nothing to do but take off on another 45 days of fishing and Colorado adventures to rest up. Hang in there. It will be July before you know it, and all this will begin again! Brian H

## FYI Column

*by President Terry Proctor*

**T**his is a new column this month. It may appear periodically in the BBG to provide FYI (for your information).

These are Web sites that you may wish to visit. Listed is the Web site, the organization or individual connected with the Web site, and very briefly the purpose or type of Web site. HGMS hopes this will allow you to explore new Web sites in the Earth Science and Lapidary Arts areas along with other interesting sites related to your club.

<http://www.amfed.org> is the official Web site of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies—the national organization to which HGMS belongs. You should know



this link and the link to the SCFMS below, if no other.

<http://www.scfms.net> is the official Web site of the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies—the regional organization to which HGMS belongs. You should know this link and the link to the AFMS above.

<http://www.amlands.org> American Lands Access Association—ALAA's goal is to maintain and ensure access to existing and potential collecting sites. (Note: HGMS President, Terry Proctor, is the Texas representative of ALAA)

<http://www.midamericapaleo.org> Mid-America Paleontological Association—MAPS is one of the few strictly fossil clubs in the country. It is for the novice or beginner who wants to know more about these treasures from the past; it is for the old-timers who have so much expertise and knowledge to share with the rest of us; and it is for all those who fall in between who share our love of fossils.

<http://www.thefossilforum.com> A place for Paleo folks to join for free and exchange information on fossils.

<http://www.geology.arkansas.gov> is the **official Arkansas State Web site on geology**. This is a good starting place if you intend to dig for quartz or other minerals in Arkansas. Another site is that of the Arkansas Geological Survey, located at <http://www.geology.arkansas.gov>. You also can find **Mike Howard there**. Mike is a geology supervisor for the **Arkansas Geological Survey**. Mike is continuing a long-term project to locate every mineral commodity location accurately in Arkansas: 7500 and counting, and he has completed right at 75% of the state at this point. You can find him at [http://www.geology.arkansas.gov/about\\_us/mikehoward.htm](http://www.geology.arkansas.gov/about_us/mikehoward.htm). Mike has written a number of books, and his name pops up frequently in connection with **HGMS** members, such as *Art Smith*. He has been a friend for some years (although we have never met in person) and he is very knowledgeable on Arkansas minerals.

<http://www.usgs.gov> is the U.S. Geological Survey official Web site. It's a good resource starting place for anything on geology in the United States.

<http://www.utexas.edu/tmm> is the Texas Natural Science Center of the University of Texas at Austin. Check out the Texas Memorial Museum displays, gift shop, etc.

<http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en.html> is the official Web site for the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. It's a starting point for information on digging on Federal land.

<http://www.proctormuseum.us> is the Texas "not for profit", IRS 501c3 corporation, wholly FREE natural science museum in East Harris County for 21 years. Your HGMS President is Board Chairman, Curator, and General Counsel of this museum during its existence. The Web site has over 1,500 pages, including many HGMS/PMNS trips, locations, things found by HGMS members, and a ton of free Earth Science information. Many HGMS members are on the Board of this Museum. The PMNS has the most illustrious Board of any small museum in the nation, including folks like famed

paleontologist, Robert T. Bakker, PhD (consultant on the movie *Jurassic Park*, author, now working on the Houston Museum of Natural Science Paleontology expansion); Peter J. Larson, paleontologist who excavated and prepped "Sue" the T-Rex for which the Field Museum in Chicago paid \$8,600,000 plus many others.

<http://www.minsocam.org> is the official Web site of the Mineralogical Society of America. Their purpose online states that MSA "was founded in 1919 for the advancement of mineralogy, crystallography, geochemistry, petrology, and promotion of their uses in other sciences, industry, and the arts." It encourages fundamental research about natural materials; supports the teaching of mineralogical concepts and procedures; and attempts to raise the scientific literacy of society with respect to issues involving mineralogy in the widest sense. The Society encourages the preservation of mineral collections, displays, mineral localities, type minerals and scientific data. MSA represents the United States internationally with regard to the science of mineralogy.

These are samples of Web sites for your consideration, use, and education. Let the BBG know if you like this column by sending me an e-mail. If you find it useful, we will try to provide additional information in upcoming issues of the BBG. Thank you.

Provided by HGMS President, Terrell William "Terry" Proctor, J.D.  
[auraman@swbell.net](mailto:auraman@swbell.net).

## Two Upcoming Shop Orientation Sessions

*by Terry Proctor*

**R**emember that there will be shop orientation sessions Saturday, July 10, 2010 at 10:00 a.m., and Sunday, July 11, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. To reserve a place for one of these orientation sessions, please send an e-mail to Terry Proctor, [auraman@swbell.net](mailto:auraman@swbell.net) if you have not already done so. The sessions will be presented by HGMS clubhouse Chairman, Neal Immega. Both orientations are filling up fast. If both become full, we will schedule another later. We can handle about 12 per Shop Orientation session. Both sessions are closing in on that number.

## Jasper Fossil Wood Trip

*by Terry Proctor*

**A** Large contingent of HGMS members (I understand over 60) descended to the opposite side of our huge State to collect spectacular fossil wood near Jasper, Texas. This was shown as being the third or fourth last trip to this collection site (which tells you that there undoubtedly will be another last trip there later). Again, **a good reason to purchase a rockhound sticker for your vehicle.** I don't know who wound up in Florida following a red SUV, but someone may have, if the vehicle ahead of them didn't have the **big yellow rockhound sticker** on the right rear window. I would love to see every member of HGMS have this sticker on their vehicle window, to help in these caravans of our members to dig sites AND to let the public know there are a lot of HGMS members around.

## New Member Orientation Turns Out a Crowd

*by Terry Proctor*

There were eighteen new members who attended the June 5, 2010 new member orientation. Being summer and vacation time, there were also several new members who contacted President Terry Proctor to say that they wanted to attend, but would be out of town, and made inquiry about another session. Therefore, a fall or early winter session may be scheduled later this year.

Several HGMS leaders who normally would have been present to tell about their Section, Office, or HGMS Program were also tied up elsewhere. There was a representative from each Section who told the new members about their Section. This included Sunday Bennett on Beading; Charlie Fredregill on Daylight; Patricia Hildbold on Faceting; Karen Burns on Lapidary; Steve Blyskal on Mineral and on the HGMS School Kits; Terry Brawner on Paleo; Beverly Mace on Youth; Rick Rexroad on the Show Committee; and Charlie Fredregill conducted a tour of the Shop (Neal Immega was doing an HGMS demonstration at the Home School conference, so was unable to conduct the clubhouse tour). Phyllis George had



Seventeen New HGMS Members and one visitor at New Member Orientation during break looking at exhibits of fossils and minerals provided by HGMS members for New Members to see while taking refreshments provided.

knee surgery and was unable to discuss the Backbender's Gazette and the HGMS Web site, and Brian Honsinger was on vacation and unable to talk about our Educational programs. However these areas were covered for the new members by President Terry Proctor along with other general information about HGMS.

A nice brochure with a history of HGMS was presented to each new member, and information on Officers and HGMS Sections was handed out. Also handed out was a copy of the HGMS Code of Conduct and a set of forms which the new members might like to copy for going on field trips. At the break refreshments were furnished, and some Show 'n Tell items were provided by Terry Brawner and Terry Proctor from their recent fossil and mineral trip to Southwest Texas.

Those attending the New Member Orientation were: Ana Mercado and her two daughters, Myranda and Mariana (both of whom helped in handing out and collecting material for the new members); Janene Riley (a visitor); Karen Bell; Ayse Tobey; Pam Horton;

Bob Wilkinson; Melissa Jump; Onna Yenng; Carla Cleveland; Julia Tschappat; Deborah Smith; Dan and Jen Hunter; Angela Smith; and Bruce and Brenda Gillan.

This New Member Orientation didn't reach the number of over 40 as in the 2009 New Member Orientation. However, considering that was the first orientation in many years and considering the number of new members who for vacation and other reasons couldn't be

at this orientation session, this was a very successful turnout. With HGMS members there to help, the total attendance was between 30 and 35.



New HGMS Members and a visitor at forming a line to go through the HGMS Shop. Charlie Fredregill briefly explained the layout, procedure, safety measures and other details.

## Field Trip Time

*by Terry Proctor*

Spring has sprung, Fall has fallen, Summer in Houston is here, and it's as hot as ... well, hotter than last year already.

In the June BBG I encouraged HGMS members to get out and take a field trip. There is an old adage—don't tell me, show me. Therefore, Terry Brawner, a former Paleo Section Chair and a Vice-President of the Proctor Museum of Natural Science, and I took a joint HGMS/PMNS trip on May 14-19, 2010 to the Coal Mine Ranch near Van Horn in far Southwest Texas. An expert witness in my law office practice in-



Saurapod dinosaur femur  
with Terry Proctor



vited me to come see the 30,000 acre Ranch which he and 10 others owned.

Terry Brawner and I drove all night on May 14, arriving in time for me to help trowel a large cement slab for the Ranch, rest a bit, and then start looking. I had been told that there were dinosaur bones and geodes there. There was a spectacular dinosaur bone and the “geodes” were actually concretions, but they were very interesting and worth investigating.

I lost eight pounds in four days while in the 93–103 degree very still, unshaded sun, digging out a 58-inch long, 192-pound saurapod dinosaur femur and collecting beautiful black, white, champagne-colored and even three green calcite crystals, in the center of the concretions. Terry Brawner worked alongside me in excavating the femur. He also found a sizeable number of ammonites in the concretions and dug them out. Since returning, Terry Brawner has been at work prepping the ammonites he collected. I found one very nice ammonite and one very large one which will have to be put back together, if possible. We both found fossilized clams, oysters, and other marine life from the upper cretaceous epoch at the Ranch.



Saurapod dinosaur femur with Terry Brawner



Terry's prize Ammonite



Black calcite ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ) crystals found inside concretions



Jack Rabbit after morning bath in pond

## General Meeting Minutes

May 25, 2010

*by President Terry Proctor & Secretary Pier Laird*

The meeting was called to order by Terry Proctor at 7:30 p.m. as the monthly auction was finished. The auction netted \$354.85, half of which goes into the Building Fund and half into the General Operating Fund. The items auctioned off for the most part were the last of those donated from the Estate of Robert Cross. Funds going into the General Operating Fund will help fund the Robert Cross 2010 Scholarship.

**Visitors and New Members:** Trey and Donna Kelly were first-time visitors at this meeting. A number of new members who just joined were present for tonight's meeting. New members were Dannie and Claudia Galvan; Stan Hunter; Stanley and Patricia "Trish" Krivik; Richard and Susan Rogers; and Tim Taylor. HGMS welcomes our guests and all of these new HGMS members.

**Minutes:** The HGMS minutes for the April 27, 2010 meeting were published in the BBG for May. Rick Rexroad mentioned a correction in the minutes, but that correction actually applied to the Board Minutes so that will be addressed at the next Board meeting. Karen Burns moved that the minutes be accepted as published, seconded by Ray Kizer, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** HGMS Treasurer Rodney Linehan reported at the Board meeting that HGMS is in good financial shape, providing summaries of all accounts and transactions. The records reflected the sizeable amounts received from auctions of Art Smith's and Robert Cross's minerals and fossils.

**Show Committee:** Rick Rexroad presented a report from the Show Committee. Show Committee members took a trip to the Tessman Ranch near Karnes City, where large quantities of silicified wood was collected. It was brought out that some snakewood was also found by Committee members on this trip. Rick brought up the need for volunteers to work the HGMS table at the Intergem Show which is June 11–13, 2010 at the Reliance Center.

### Section Reports:

**Beading:** Sunday Bennett reported that the Beading Section will meet Friday, May 28 at 7:30 p.m. to plan future projects.

**Lapidary:** Karen Burns reported that the Lapidary Section purchased a jump ring maker that cuts a coil of wire into jump rings. Anyone interested in learning to use the machine should contact Karen or Mary Ann Mitscherling.

**Mineral:** Steve Blyskal reported that the Mineral Section had a successful mineral auction, raising over \$900. The Mineral Section's last meeting until fall will be June 2 at 7:00 p.m.

**Education:** Brian Honsinger is off on vacation, but the Education Committee of HGMS

has been doing splendidly on classes with some just over, some in progress, and more starting shortly.

**Old Business:** Stalwart Member Recognition. President Terry Proctor took a couple of minutes to recognize the HGMS Stalwarts. These are members who spend great amounts of time, energy, and talent over long periods of time to keep HGMS running as professionally and efficiently as it does. Terry said he was concerned about starting to name some of these stalwarts, because he would miss others. However, he specifically mentioned Second Vice-Pres. Beverly Mace, who runs the Youth Section and delivers the Backbender's Gazette to the post office each month after addressing and sealing the copies destined for our 600 to 700 members; Phyllis George who is our Webmaster and who collects articles, meeting minutes, poems, reports, and the many other things that go into each month's BBG, edits them, then creates each month's issue and sends it to the printer; Rodney Linehan, CPA, our Treasurer, who makes out the checks, makes the many deposits, prepares the financial reports for the Board and other duties; Neal Immega who is Clubhouse Chairman, lines up Paleo Section field trips, keeps the shop equipment running along with other supervisors such as Wayne Barnett and the former Clubhouse Chairman, Tom Wright who did this for many years; Steve Blyskal and Sigrid Stewart who get the cold drinks for the refrigerator, take care of the library and other duties; and many others whom Terry said belong in this recognition as being stalwarts.

**Field Trips:** Neal Immega reported that 61 people showed up for the HGMS Field Trip to the Jasper, Texas area. HGMS members were finding that while a lot of surface material was washed away, just below the surface lay huge pieces of fossil wood just waiting to be found and excavated (the term "tons" was used). This was touted as the third Last Trip, but apparently there is to be at least a fourth Last Trip at a future date.

**Outreach Program:** Terry Proctor again explained the importance of the Outreach Program to: 1. Fulfill our charter requirements on education; and 2. Provide proof that we are doing so in order to seek grants, donations, and other funds to come into HGMS, so that sooner or later we can look forward to expanding the size of the HGMS Clubhouse to almost double. Volunteers to assist in the program were asked to sign up on a sheet, and that resulted in some response.

**Roof Leak Solved:** The roof leak for the most part resulted from some child's football having been tossed onto the HGMS Clubhouse roof. Then it washed into the parking lot/front drain downspout, effectively sealing it. According to our insurance investigator, there are some places needing a little sealing too, but our roof basically is in good shape.

**Alaskan Silver Coins:** Terry Proctor still had five of the Alaskan Silver Coins tonight. Three were sold, leaving only two left. These are 1 ounce .999 pure silver coins from Greg Neubauer, who put on a program for Paleo several months back on gold mining. Terry was selling them for exactly what he paid, which is \$25.00.

**Orientation Classes:** HGMS is having a **New Member Orientation Class** on Saturday, June 5, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. and two Shop Orientation classes: Saturday, July 10 at

10:00 a.m. and Sunday, July 11 at 1:30 p.m. Members were reminded to send an e-mail RSVP to Terry Proctor to provide a headcount for each class. Last year there were over 60 people for the New Member Orientation Class though only a few signed up in advance.

**Grants, Donations and Wills:** HGMS members were asked to review the National Science Foundation Web site at <http://www.nsf.gov/funding>. Also members were asked to see if their companies made grants, practiced matching funds, or would provide other financial aid. Terry Proctor again stated that as an attorney for 47 years he would assist the attorney of any member who wished to leave something in their will to HGMS. Terry can be contacted at [auraman@swbell.net](mailto:auraman@swbell.net).

**Rockhound Stickers and Strips:** Rockhound stickers and strips of 10 small rockhound stickers were announced available for \$1.00 at the meeting, although they will sell for \$2 at the Show in the fall. Several members purchased stickers.

**Upcoming Programs:** First Vice President James Wark had to work and was unable to update the membership on future programs. However, it was announced that at the June meeting Charlie Fredregill will put on the annual silver casting program where molten silver is poured onto broom straw, pine needles, or rock salt producing very striking freeform castings. The casting will be done outdoors so the noxious fumes of burning broom straw and pine needles can disperse. Silver will be \$8.00 for 1/3 ounce. If you wish to have a piece cast for you, send an e-mail to President Terry Proctor at [auraman@swbell.net](mailto:auraman@swbell.net) and state how many you wish to buy (limit two per person), to ensure that enough silver will be ordered for you. Otherwise, you may be without silver on the night of the meeting.

Later in the year both Nathalie Brandes, professor at Lone Star College in Montgomery and Patrick Lewis, PhD of Sam Houston State College will provide programs.

**Drawing:** The prize for the main drawing was provided by Robert Stevens. It was two halves of a geode with a lovely white quartz interior. The winner was Jerry Pote, who will supply the June Door Prize. In addition Rick Scheppan donated a couple of small unopened geodes which he believed had fluorescent mineral inside. There were two more drawings for those geodes. Steve Blyskal won one, and Sunday Bennett won the other.

**Show 'n Tell:** Terry Proctor and Terry Brawner brought photos they took of a 54-inch dinosaur femur that they uncovered during a dig they went on the previous week to Van Horn, Texas. They also had striking mineral specimens of black and white calcite.

John Emerson brought in an old, very small camera that he used while in the Far East working for a major oil company. Nervous Arab officials viewed it as a spy camera. John also showed some of his passports from that time that had pages attached to pages attached to pages.

Stanley Kreik displayed agate and dinosaur bone that he had cabbled.

Refreshments for this meeting were provided by Marilou Joubert. Thank you, Marilou.



A solicitation was made for someone to provide the refreshments for the June General Membership meeting, but no one signed up. Therefore, if you will provide the refreshments for the June meeting, contact Terry Proctor at [auraman@swbell.net](mailto:auraman@swbell.net).

**Program—Mineral Fakes, Frauds, and Funny-Looking Things (both confirmed and suspected):** A very informative program was presented by HGMS member Jonathan A. Woolley, a geophysicist. Jonathan stated that he became interested in specimens he saw at shows, specimens that he thought could be fakes. As a result he compiled photos and details on various beautiful—but questionable—mineral specimens as to whether they were created naturally or had help in their appearance. Mr. Woolley had lists of pros and cons on each to show why they may or may not be natural or fake. Some of us may have purchased specimens at shows and still may not know whether they are fake. Thanks for a good program, Jonathan A. Woolley.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

### HGMS Board Minutes

*June 1, 2010*

*by President Terry Proctor and Secretary Pier Laird*

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

Meeting was called to order at 7:30.

Terry Brawner moved to approve the Minutes as published in the May BBG. The motion was seconded by James Wark, and it passed unanimously.

Treasurer Rodney Linehan was unable to attend the meeting, and since this Board Meeting was on the first day of the month, the Treasurer did not have the figures from the banks to send out by e-mail as he usually does. However, the HGMS Treasury is in good shape. It was reported that the auction at the May 25, 2010 General Membership meeting brought in only \$354.85. This was lower than the past few months, as this was the last of the specimens from the estate of Robert Cross, and not much was left to auction off.

### Reports by Officers and Section Representatives:

**Beading Section:** Sunday Bennett reported that the Beading Section has a Facebook page. The Section members are going to the Stafford Bead Show on Saturday, June 5, 2010.

**Daylight Section:** Val Link, a former professor at the University of Houston worked with the Day Light Section on **synclastic** and **anticlastic** forms.

**Faceting Section:** There is to be a Beginner's Faceting Class on Saturday, June 12, 2010, taught by Wayne Barnett.

**Lapidary Section:** No report as Board Representative Phyllis George is recovering from knee surgery and wasn't at this meeting. The Board expressed hope for her speedy recovery.

**Paleontology Section:** Terry Brawner was present and had no report except that several field trips are planned and the Paleo Scholarship is under consideration for award soon. HGMS Youth member Kristine Finnerty has applied for the Paleo Scholarship, and Lexy Bienick would like to see the application. This Scholarship is to be awarded shortly. Terry Brawner did report that while most of the Paleo Section went on the fossil wood trip to near Jasper, Texas, he and Terry Proctor went to Van Horn, Texas where they extracted a dinosaur femur, some ammonites and other marine fossils, and beautiful calcite crystals of black and white.

**Youth Section:** Beverly Mace reported that the Youth Section went on the Jasper fossilized wood trip and had a lot of fun. They were allowed in the dig area until 2 p.m. Sixty-one members went on this Jasper trip, and a quantity of very large fossilized wood was found.

**Show Committee:** Neither Rick Rexroad nor Chris Peek were able to be at this Board meeting, so there was no report from the Show Committee.

**Education Committee:** Brian Honsinger, Education Chair, is on vacation in Colorado, so there was no report on Education except that there have been many classes conducted and our education program is moving ahead very well.

**Old Business:** President Terry Proctor reported that the HGMS clubhouse roof is essentially in good shape, except for the need for a little added tar in a few places. This repair will be scheduled soon. The leak was occasioned by a small football that apparently was throw up onto the roof and washed off into the downspout at the Southwest corner of the building, causing water to pond on the roof.

**Programs:** First Vice-President, James Wark reported on upcoming programs. In June Charlie Fredregill will present an outside program on silver casting. HGMS members who want to have some silver cast into a piece of jewelry must bring \$8 for their casting silver to the June 22, 2010 meeting AND they are asked to call in an RSVP to Pres. Terry Proctor @ (713) 453-8338 so he can let Charlie know how much silver to purchase. Later in the year, Patrick Lewis, PhD from Sam Houston State University, will provide a program on his summer expedition and Nathalie Brandes will bring us another great Earth Science program. Nathalie is a professor at Lone Star College in Conroe.

Terry Proctor reported that the fire-proof file cabinet (ordered by Phyllis George and already reimbursed by HGMS) was man-handled into position in the HGMS office by Chris Peek and his son Alexander. It is now ready for HGMS to assemble its important documents for storage "on location" in our clubhouse, securely locked and fire-proof. Thanks to all who helped obtain and bring this important fixture to our clubhouse.

The new beautifully framed pegboard for HGMS plaques is hung in the clubhouse and ready for the placement of all of our plaques and awards designed to be hung. It is an impressive piece of decor for the main meeting room. Also the old President's plaque has had a couple of needed changes on the year of some past presidents' terms, and a new President's plaque, good for the second 60 years of HGMS Presidents, was purchased. The new President's plaque amazingly is exactly like the old one on which the name of the first HGMS President was placed in 1949.

Beverly Mace is actively working on the new HGMS information forms. Terry Proctor is working on the thank you forms of several types for donations to HGMS. Beverly also reported that the 2010 Roster is completed, has been sent to the printers, and it will be in the mail before long.

Sunday Bennett had sent a list of things which were discussed at this Board Meeting. Also, there was an e-mail from Kathy Konkell reporting a couple of times when the gas and oxygen were left on in the Shop. The Board discussed these matters at some length as this sort of thing has been reported previously. Sunday Bennett reported that Gary Anderson had advised her that he was having a problem with people coming in, using equipment, and leaving things in a dangerous condition. After some discussion, the Board determined that the following rules are now in effect:

1. A sign-in sheet shall be prepared so that during any meeting, class, or Shop Open time, the person who is in charge must sign in as being in charge and afterwards must sign out affirming that the Clubhouse is secured and left in order.
2. All HGMS members present must be made to understand that the person in charge "is in charge and has the right to give instructions for safety and tidiness of the clubhouse."
3. If a person doesn't follow the directions of the person in charge, that person's privilege to participate in the function may be suspended.
4. The person in charge shall see that all lights are off, all doors are closed, all safety measures are completed, and all trash, drink cans, etc. are cleaned up before leaving the clubhouse. Removing the garbage bag from the premises is appreciated as part of this.
5. If the person in charge does not assume this responsibility and fails to follow this procedure, such person's key shall be withdrawn. Another person with that Section or function shall be given the key(s) and designated as being the responsible person thereafter for that Section or function.

These measures must be followed in order to ensure that the clubhouse is not left in a dangerous condition and with trash left around. In the Shop, this includes ensuring that equipment is turned off, **the machines and area are cleaned up**, the gas and oxygen are turned off, and all flame is turned off along with every other measure necessary to secure the clubhouse from danger and from being messy.

The Board unanimously took the above stated position and will see that signs are posted to that effect (with more brevity).

Sunday Bennett brought up the matter of an awning over the side door and also suggested one over the drive-in area. After some discussion, it was the consensus that an awning over the drive in area would be too expensive, seldom used, and could be in the way, but the one over the side door was a good idea, and the Board had previously approved getting one.

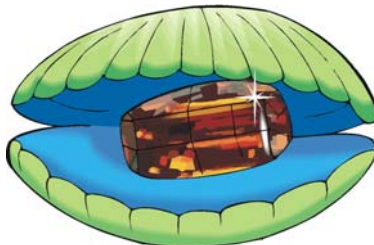
There was also a brief comment again that the front hedge needs to be trimmed back and trimmed in height so one can walk down the sidewalk without having to get out on the grass.

A matter of expressed concern was brought up at the request of Wayne Barnett regarding the use of HGMS property at other locations. He was specifically concerned about the loan of a Genie machine (which actually is a Pixie machine) to the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Since this matter was presented by e-mail prior to the meeting, some investigation was done and some of the Board members had personal knowledge regarding the matter. The matter was discussed, and the net results were this: the machine originally was not in good condition, but Neal Immega rebuilt it so that it could be used at the Houston Museum of Natural Science when HGMS was doing demonstrations at the HMNS. HGMS is the one who uses it at the HMNS so it is still an HGMS machine, but it is used there solely by HGMS personnel. In any event, it is not diminishing the number of available machines at the HGMS clubhouse for use there by HGMS members. The use of the demonstration at the HMNS is beneficial to HGMS because people watching the demonstration frequently become interested in our club—so the use of this piece of equipment often leads people to become HGMS members.

President Terry Proctor also mentioned that Neal brought out Genie machines for our **Outreach Program** to various locations, but that was done only for a couple of hours during the **Outreach Program** and then returned to the clubhouse. Again, the use of this equipment offsite is for a very short time, helps our membership grow, and does not take away from equipment available to our members.

Therefore, James Wark moved to put on the record that the Pixie machine at the Houston Museum of Natural Science is there with the approval of the Board, on loan for use as it is now being used. The motion was seconded by Diane Sisson, and it carried unanimously. It was noted however, that this was a proper question to be addressed by the Board, and that the Board should be aware of how its equipment is being used and should ensure that its equipment is being used properly.

A motion to dismiss was made by Nancy Fischer and seconded by James Wark. The motion was approved unanimously. The Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.



## The Collecting Cycle

by Betty Thompson, *Mineralogical Society of DC*  
1st Place 2009 AFMS Adult Poetry Competition  
from AFMS Newsletter 5/2010

**M**inerals come in many forms  
(like boulders, chunks, and dust)  
and, within each, we know well  
lurk beauties that we must  
search for, at both site and sale;  
pay for, with our sweat or cash;  
show off, at our various clubs; and  
take home, to display or stash.

Year on year, our treasures grow  
and still we keep collecting,  
drawn by loveliness that leads  
to learning and reflecting  
and grateful membership in clubs  
where experts generously share  
clues to the earth's unfolding  
in minerals complex and rare.

Then comes the day we look around  
and wonder what to do  
with our accreted holdings,  
our mineralogical zoos  
that far surpass our storage space  
and would really stump our heirs,  
How to pass on the joys we've found?  
What to do with our wares?

Aha! A club—a show—a table!  
That's one way that we are able  
first to display and then to sell  
minerals that we've loved well.  
And if we're past the days when we  
want to spend our own energy  
to organize and price and cart  
our collection to the mineral mart,

A lucky club could be quite grateful  
if we offer them some crates full  
of what we've reaped—so they can sow  
new seeds that help others to grow  
a love of what the earth has done  
and of deep forces that have won  
such beauty and complexity,  
which give much joy to you and me.

### Show Time 2010

August 7-8	Austin, TX	Austin Bead Society, Palmer Events Center 900 Barton Springs Rd. <a href="http://www.austinbeadsociety.org">www.austinbeadsociety.org</a>
August 14-15	Baton Rouge, LA	Baton Rouge Gem & Mineral Society Fraternal Order of Police
August 21-22	Bossier City, LA	Ark-La-Tex Gem & Mineral Society Bossier City Civic Center; Charlie Johns (318)687-4929; <a href="mailto:cwsejohns@bellsouth.net">cwsejohns@bellsouth.net</a> <a href="http://www.larockclub.com">www.larockclub.com</a>
August 28-29	Jasper, TX	Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society Events Center, 6258 Hwy. 190 W 5 miles west of Jasper; Contact Jonetta Nash (409)384-3974; <a href="mailto:jonetta.nash@yahoo.com">jonetta.nash@yahoo.com</a>
September 4-5	Arlington, TX	Arlington Gem & Mineral Society Arlington Convention Center
September 25-26	Denison, TX	Texoma Rockhounds Denison Senior Center
October 7-9	Mount Ida, AR	Annual Quartz Crystal Digging Contest Montgomery County Fairgrounds Fairgrounds Rd. <a href="http://www.mountidachamber.com">www.mountidachamber.com</a>
October 9-10	Temple, TX	Tri-City Gem & Mineral Society Mayborn Civic Center
October 15-17	Victoria, TX	Victoria Gem & Mineral Society Community Center, 2905 East North St.
October 22-24	Austin, TX	Austin Gem & Mineral Society Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd. <a href="http://www.gemcapers.com">www.gemcapers.com</a>
October 29-31	Glen Rose, TX	Paleontology Society of Austin Somervell Expo Center, Hwy. 67
November 6-7	Midland, TX	Midland Gem & Mineral Society Midland 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; <a href="http://www.hgms.org">www.hgms.org</a> Rick Rexroad, <a href="mailto:rrexroad@brwncald.com">rrexroad@brwncald.com</a>

2010		July				2010
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section
4 Independence Day	5	6 7:30 Board Meeting	7 7:30 Mineral Section 10-5 Shop Open	8	9	10 10 a.m.- New Member Shop Orientation Shop Open to 5
11 1:30 p.m. New Member Shop Orientation	12 1:00 Day Light Section	13 7:30 Show Committee	14 7:30 Faceting Section 10-5 Shop Open	15	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	31 10-5 Shop Open

2010		August				2010
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 7:30 Board Meeting	4 10-5 Shop Open	5	6	7 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section
8	9 1:00 Day Light Section	10 7:30 Show Committee	11 10-5 Shop Open	12	13	14 10 a.m.- Shop Open to 5
15	16 7:30 Lapidary Section	17 7:30 Paleo Section	18 7:30 Faceting Section 10-5 Shop Open	19	20	21 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section
22	23	24 7:30 General Meeting	25 10-5 Shop Open	26	27	28 10-5 Shop Open
29	30	31				

# 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)

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

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED<sup>2</sup>**

**DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE DO NOT DELAY !**