



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

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

Volume XLII - No. 12

December 2011



## **President's Letter – December, 2011**

*by Steve Blyskal*

**A**fter a year of planning and work, the 58<sup>th</sup> annual HGMS show is finally history as I write this letter. I was there for all of it, and did my share of the planning and actual work at the show, but I want to tell you about those whose work really made the show the special event it turned out to be.

First on that list has to be the dynamic couple who not only took on the mantle of Show Chairman, but also agreed to head the publicity and ticket committees, two of the most important roles in putting on the show. Chris and Theresa Peek put in many hours keeping all parts of the show preparations moving forward, and put forth new ideas that helped bring in the 10 percent increase in paying customers we saw this year. They pushed last year for billboards to advertise the show, and this year got twice as many for twice as long for less than we paid in 2010. That's a real accomplishment. I hope you saw at least one of the billboards, like the one on 59 North just south of Will Clayton Blvd. They were bold, bright and a perfect advertisement for our show and our club. They found the Grand Door Prize for this year, and the one for the 2012 show while they were at it! They handled all the problems that came up this year, like losing our Hospitality hosts 6 weeks before the show, with great aplomb. I could go on about them for the rest of the letter, but instead



---

*Continued on page 4*

## **Upcoming Programs**

**D**ecember 10: **Christmas Party--6 p.m.**--The Club will furnish the meat, plates, plasticware, and cups. Members should bring side dishes--veggies, desserts, bread, salads, etc. Sodas from the refrigerator will cost 50 cents. The auction will follow the dinner. Bring items for the auction either before the day or at least no later than 5:30 p.m. on the day of the party.

**December 27: No General Meeting**

Contents

President’s Letter – December, 2011 ..... 1

Upcoming Programs ..... 1

Purpose of HGMS ..... 3

Wednesday Shop—New Hours ..... 5

Ugly Rocks ..... 6

Bench Tips ..... 6

BenchTips ..... 7

Happy Holiday! ..... 8

Old Geezer—In Bad Accident at age 21 ..... 10

Old Geezer - Bobbie and John Emerson's “Love Theme” ..... 12

In Memoriam—Sunday Marie Bennett ..... 14

HGMS Archeology Section October Minutes ..... 16

Archeology Section November Minutes ..... 18

General Meeting Minutes ..... 19

Board of Director’s Meeting Minutes ..... 20

Where Do Minerals Come From? ..... 22

A Rockhound’s Suggestion ..... 23

October General Meeting Photos ..... 24

Show Time 2011 - 2012 ..... **26**

Calendars ..... 27

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

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

*Editor: Phyllis B. George  
22407 Park Point Drive  
Katy, TX 77450-5852  
Phone: (281) 395-3087  
Copy is due for the January 2012 issue  
by Wednesday, December 7, 2011.*

*E-mail the Editor and Webmaster at  
pgeorge4@comcast.net*

## Purpose of HGMS

The objectives of this Society are to promote the advancement of the knowledge and practice of the arts and sciences associated with the collecting of rocks, minerals, fossils, artifacts, and their identification and classification; the general lapidary art; the collecting and identification of gemstones; the designing and execution of jewelry or metalcraft; and to provide the opportunity to obtain, exchange, and exhibit specimens and rough or finished materials.

Membership dues are \$40 for an adult membership, \$60 for a couple, \$75 for a family (including all children aged 5-18), \$25 for a youth membership (ages 5-18), and \$500 for an adult life membership. Advertising rates: \$70 for 2 months, ¼ page; \$150 for 6 months, ¼ page.

MEMBER: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies & South Central Federation of Mineral Societies.

All meetings are held at the Clubhouse which is located at 10805 Brooklet near the intersection of Highway 59 (Southwest Freeway) and Sam Houston Parkway (Beltway 8). See the calendar inside the back page for when the different Sections meet. The General Meeting is the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30. The HGMS Web site address is <http://www.hgms.org>.

### *President's Message continued from page 1*

I urge you to seek them out and thank them personally for the job they did. Of course it's still not quite over, since there is the accounting work to balance all the expenses against income and eventually figure out how much money the club made from the show that we can use for the entire clubhouse and for other expenses in the HGMS.

There were other people who contributed greatly to the success of the show. Rick Rexroad is now an experienced dealer chairman, and he deftly handled all the dealer changes between 2010 and this year, giving extra tables to those who wanted them and finding new dealers to fill the remaining holes in our stellar lineup. We had more choices in cutting rough and slabs, and cutting and polishing equipment was added to our available choices. There were great decorative items from many dealers, good fossils of all sizes, and lots of minerals to choose from.

In the Hospitality room Pat Hildbold stepped into the breach and with the help of her two hard working sons Gary and Cliff and their friend Richard, did a great job keeping the food and drinks flowing to all the hungry and thirsty dealers and volunteers who came through the door over the three days.

Nancy Fischer and Shiara Trumble organized and ran the Info Booth, always the nerve center of the show. In addition to passing out information and organizing the volunteers who come in over three days, they supervised the silent auction, sale of the T-shirts and the posters and making announcements. And of course the volunteers were recruited by Maryann Mitscherling.

I can't forget our stellar duo of shark experts, George Wolf and his lovely red-headed assistant, who were instantly recognizable from the shark hats they wore for most of the show. If you wanted to find out about sharks, they had LOTS of information and examples. Tony Lucci handled the important job of security and hired local policemen to help out the volunteers who wandered among the crowded aisles. To their credit no thefts were reported, and one potential thief was spotted, watched, and escorted from the building. Terry Proctor in his pith helmet did a great version of a dinosaur hunter, talking about the giant leg bone he found in West Texas and the dino tracks on the wall behind him.

Members of the Sections manned their booths and demonstration stations with enthusiasm, talking to kids and adults about minerals, fossils, beading, faceting, lapidary, and even silver casting. As I wandered around with my camera in my few moments outside the swap area, I saw lots of dazzled parents and kids. Who knows what seeing these things will touch off in a young person, or even an older one?

I can't forget the Education Committee. Scott Singleton organized the Scout instructors who taught the Scouts about geology and minerals, and did numerous other things behind the scenes. His committee put together the flats for the Dino Dig, which again was a huge hit with kids, and even their parents. Lexy Bieniek volunteered her place for making the flats, and told me the mixture was just right this year, allowing the kids to break it up more easily without being crumbly. We had lots of excited kids come

through on Friday and the teachers got to take home a special set of rocks or minerals.

Even though the rock village took a rest this year (“due to the drought” was on the sign), the Youth Section was humming with activity for the entire show, entertaining and educating school kids about all things rock or fossil related. Libby Guynn was amazing to watch and photograph as she entranced kids with rock tales. Beverly Mace is the heart of the Youth Section (and also brings cookies for her people and those in the know) and as always was everywhere she was needed. Beverly was justifiably proud of the great cabochons and pendants created this year by the Youth Section members, displayed in two cases outside the door to their section. Many came away with Blue ribbons from the judging of their work by Wayne Barnett. Beverly also supervises the display case assignments and organizes the labeling party for the post-cards we send out. She is busy all year, not just the three show days.

Of course I can't forget the Swap Area. It ran flawlessly this year, and returned a sizeable sum to the dealers, with little if any lost funds. People even understood my explanation of why we needed to use the Swap Dollars, or Funny Money, as people insisted on calling it. Whatever, they came and swapped lots of Swap Dollars for minerals, fossils, and cutting rough.

Wasn't it fun? Admit it, now that your feet have quit hurting! It was a great show. We served up exactly what our repeat customers were looking for while providing some new thrills for some new folks and lots of kids! And once again, dealers made a point of telling us how much they appreciated us as a club, for all we do, for them as well as our hobby.

### Wednesday Shop—New Hours

*by John Zanders*

I have volunteered to open and close our workshop on Wednesdays from now on. While consulting with fellow members, it has been suggested that the hours on Wednesdays be from 10:00 a.m. till 3:00 p.m. Therefore, beginning now the Wednesday Workshop hours are revised as follows: opening at 10:00 a.m. and closing promptly at 3:00 p.m.



Graphic from SCRIBE  
2010 DVD

## Ugly Rocks

by Kemp Maer

*Member of the Houston Gem and Mineral Society*

“Ugly rocks”, that’s what I hear,  
But I hold these cobbles dear.  
Granite, chert, metamorphics,  
This is where I get my kicks.

Walking the gully, bending the back,  
Finding treasures for my sack.  
What a story these rocks do tell!  
Mountain chains that rose and fell.

Plate tectonics and subduction,  
Uplift, erosion, and reduction  
To simple cobbles, smooth and round.  
I see beauty in what I’ve found.

Even if they aren’t sellable,  
They have stories that are tellable.  
A billion years of geology  
Now on my desk for all to see.

## Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

*Depth Gauge for Drilling*

Sometimes you need to drill a number of holes all to the same depth. One quick and easy way to do this is to wind some tape around the drill bit so that the tape just touches the part surface when the hole is deep enough.

You can do this either by measuring from the tip of the drill to the tape or by drilling one hole correctly, leaving the bit in the hole, and wrapping tape around the bit at the surface level.

### Cutting a Bolt

Whenever you have to cut a threaded bolt shorter, it’s always difficult to get the nut to thread back onto it. And the smaller the bolt, the more difficult this is. The problem is easily solved by screwing a nut onto the bolt before cutting it.

So here’s how I do it. Screw a nut onto the bolt, grip the bolt by the piece to be sawed off, saw the bolt to the desired length, taper the end with sandpaper or file, and unscrew the nut from the bolt.

Unscrewing the nut over the freshly cut end of the bolt straightens out any damage to the threads.

Gripping the bolt by the piece to be sawed off localizes any crushing damage to the piece you're throwing away.

## BenchTips

by Brad Smith

### *Homemade Wax Tools*

**S**ave your used X-Acto or scalpel blades for utility work on the bench. They're wonderful for delicate wax work. Use a cutoff blade or a grinding wheel to shape the blades to what you need. For instance, you can carve away excess metal on the spine to make yourself some narrow carving knives that do a great job of detailing small areas of your waxes.



### Ring Size Variations

The numerical sizes marked on ring gauges and ring mandrels are often not the same across different manufacturers. If you're using a ring gauge to measure a customer, be sure to compare the markings on the gauge with the markings on the mandrel you use to make the ring. They may not be the same.

Also, you may have to adjust a little for the width of the ring shank. If you're making a wide shank ring, the ring generally has to be a little bit larger in diameter than the ring gauge size in order to get a comfortable fit.

Also, some of your members who do jewelry might be interested in a video tutorial I came across about how to make a tube setting. It's at

<http://design.kcjewelbox.com/2011/10/12/tool-time-tuesday—tube-setting-tutorial.aspx>

More BenchTips by Brad Smith are at [groups.yahoo.com/group/BenchTips/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BenchTips/) or [facebook.com/BenchTips](https://www.facebook.com/BenchTips)

Enjoying pizza at  
pre-show auction  
Photo by Mary  
Ann Mitscherling





### Happy Holiday!

*Wishing you and your family a safe and happy holiday season!*  
(author unknown)

*Sent by Toledo Gem & Rockhound Club to the BBG*

**T**was the night before Christmas and all through the shop  
Everything was in order, the cabs waiting on dop  
And Ma in her bathrobe and I dressed in mine  
Had just settled down for some fruit of the vine  
Then we heard a loud noise, the dog gave a yowl

I knocked over my glass and ran for a towel  
Ma said "what the H - - -", well I wondered too  
We ran to the back door to get a better view  
Of the shop out back all bathed in moonlight  
And we thought we saw something that didn't look right

A shadowy figure but we then saw quite clear  
And the whole roof of the shop was cluttered with deer  
The deer weren't so strange, we live in Minnesota you see  
But that person prowlin' round was as strange as could be  
He was dressed sort of strange, like a prospector I guess  
Had a sack on his back and his clothes were a mess

All covered in dirt and in quite some disarray  
A dirty old guy I would sure have to say  
As I opened the door I said with a shout  
What the H - - - are you doing, you dirty old lout  
He said not a word but opened the shop door

Turned on the lights and strode 'cross the floor  
As in the whirlwind the dry leaves do scatter  
Ma and me in a flurry went to see 'bout the matter  
Away to the shop we ran in a rush

The dog barking at our heels, raising a fuss



The deer on the roof took off with somethin' draggin'  
It looked to us like some sort of old wagon  
As we looked through the door we saw the old jerk  
He was goin' round the shop, intent on his work  
Reachin' in a big bag and bringing out things  
Like agates and minerals and mountings for rings  
A new rock pick or two he left on a shelf  
And I laughed with glee in spite of myself  
Crystals that sparkled and rough cutting stuff  
He went on and on 'till he thought it enough  
Then turning and winking he said with a grin  
As tobacco juice slowly ran down his chin  
"Well I ain't too mannered and I must be a sight  
But you folks should be happy with what I left you tonight  
I'm the rockhounds Santie, old Chris is the name  
I know you'll be happy and glad that I came."  
Then he ran past us and whistled to the deer  
And pullin' an old wagon, they all came near  
To the seat he leaped, took the reins in his hand  
And flew out of sight far over the land  
Ma and me couldn't believe it but he'd been there all right  
And we looked through the gifts most of the night  
So this Christmas season don't be too amazed  
If old Chris comes a callin' around Christmas day  
He's a nice old fella and really quite a sight  
From one rockhound to another,  
Merry Christmas to all and to all a Goodnight.



## Old Geezer—In Bad Accident at age 21

*from The Alice Echo newspaper*

*J. H. Emerson Jr., of Alice, Hurt In Car Mishap*

*(From The Alice Echo newspaper, November 9, 1949)*

**J**ohn Hardy Emerson Jr. 21, of Alice, was seriously injured yesterday in a head-on collision near Three Rivers, in which the driver of the other car, Robert S. Lotepeich, of Mathis, was killed.

Emerson, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Emerson of 1112 Third Street, was enroute to Alice from Austin on Highway 281, traveling alone, at the time of the accident, which, according to Mrs. Emerson, happened during a heavy fog.

The youth, together with the occupants of the other car who were injured, was carried to Gipson hospital at Three Rivers for treatment.

Mrs. Emerson, who returned from Three Rivers last night, said that stitches were taken in his tongue and left jaw, and that her husband, who is in Three rivers now, told her in a telephone conversation this morning that X-ray pictures were to be made today to determine the extent of their son's injuries. She added that he would be brought to P&S hospital today if doctors think it advisable.

Emerson, who completed his junior year at Texas A. & M. last June, is employed as rigman with Lane-Wells. He is a graduate of William Adams high school.

Others injured in the collision were Mrs. Lotepeich, Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Carter of Mathis, and Mr. and Mrs. David Kleen, Sr., of George West, all passengers in the Lotepeich car.

### **Emerson Undergoes Operation on Skull (From the Alice Echo, November 11, 1945)**

John Hardy Emerson, Jr. is resting as well as can be expected following an operation of the skull performed yesterday at P&S Hospital, according to his mother, Mrs. J. H. Emerson.

The youth suffered a broken neck, among other injuries, when his car collided with one driven by Robert S. Lotepeich, of Mathis Tuesday morning during a heavy fog. The accident happened on Highway 281, near Three Rivers. Lotepeich was killed in the accident, and several passengers riding in his car were injured.

Emerson, who was returning to Alice from Austin and traveling alone at the time of the accident, was first carried to Gipson hospital in Three Rivers along with the others who were injured. He was brought to P&S hospital Wednesday morning.

### **\$25,000 in Damages Asked in Suit Here**

A damage suit seeking \$25,000 was filed in the district clerk's office here yesterday by a Jim Wells county man as a result of an auto collision last November.

John Hardy Emerson, plaintiff in the case, alleges that a car driven by himself and another auto driven by B. S. Lotspeich, an agent of the defendant, the Cage Implement

Company of Taft, collided on Nov. 8, 1949, on Highway 281 between George West and Three rivers.

The suit alleges further that through the negligence of the defendant's agent, in the accident, physical injuries, mental and physical suffering, diminished earning power, and medical bills were sustained by the plaintiff to the extent of \$25,000. Attorneys for the plaintiff are Perkins, Floyd and Davis.

The lawsuit for \$25,000 was settled out of court for \$15,000. \$5,000 for my attorney, \$5,000 for Dad's costs for my hospital bills, and \$5,000 for me. A small fortune in 1949.

A general note re small towns: The law firm of Perkins, Floyd, and Davis that filed the lawsuit for me, was made up of Mr. Floyd, father of one of my high school class mates (Edith Maude Floyd) and Mr. Davis, husband done of my high school Teachers (she taught Business) and next door neighbor of my parents! As I recall, Mr. Perkins was also president of the only bank in town.

The Alice Texas, newspaper (The Echo) made two mistakes about my name—my middle name is spelled Hardie, not Hardy, and I am John Hardie Emerson III, not Jr. The Hardie was the middle name of my grandfather who was named for the Civil War Confederate General Hardie, commanding the unit from Alabama in which my great-grandfather (John Emerson) and his four brothers served. The four brothers were killed, and great-grandfather lost an arm in combat.

Save your Confederate money! THE SOUTH SHALL RISE AGAIN!

An interesting genealogical fact about my family: Great grandfather had four brothers, no sisters. Grandfather had three brothers, no sisters. My father had one brother, no sisters. I was an only child. I have two boys, no daughters. Younger son has no children. Older has one son, no girls. My grandson has a GIRL born in January of this year!!!! The first girl in seven generations! You think she will be "spoiled"?

#### **Another family oddity: Bobbie's family names:**

Her grandfather: Claude *Lee* Priest - his family emigrated from England.

Her father: Robert *Lee* Priest

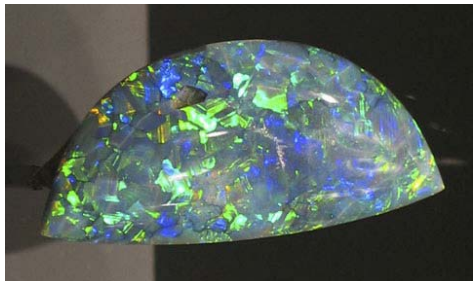
Her Mother: Ora *Lee* Blatherwick - her family emigrated from Blatherwick, England.

Her brother: Claude *Lee* Priest

Her Maiden Name: Barbara *Lee* Priest

Our Younger Son: John *Lee* Emerson

**Black Opal from Smithsonian  
from SCRIBE 2011 DVD**



## Old Geezer - Bobbie and John Emerson's "Love Theme"

*The play and movie Camelot came out while we lived in San Antonio in the 1960s. Bobbie and I immediately adopted it as our "love theme." Especially the song "If Ever I Would Leave You."*

### Camelot

It's true! It's true! The crown has made it clear.  
The climate must be perfect all the year.

A law was made a distant moon ago here:  
July and August cannot be too hot.  
And there's a legal limit to the snow here  
In Camelot.

The winter is forbidden till December  
And exits March the second on the dot.  
By order, summer lingers through September  
In Camelot.

Camelot! Camelot!  
I know it sounds a bit bizarre,  
But in Camelot, Camelot  
That's how conditions are.  
The rain may never fall till after sundown.  
By eight, the morning fog must disappear.  
In short, there's simply not  
A more congenial spot  
For happily-ever-aftering than here  
In Camelot.

Camelot! Camelot!  
I know it gives a person pause,  
But in Camelot, Camelot  
Those are the legal laws.  
The snow may never slush upon the hillside.  
By nine p.m. the moonlight must appear.  
In short, there's simply not  
A more congenial spot  
For happily-ever-aftering than here  
In Camelot.

If ever I would leave you  
If ever I would leave you  
It wouldn't be in summer.  
Seeing you in summer I never would go.  
Your hair streaked with sun-light,

Your lips red as flame,  
Your face with a luster  
that puts gold to shame!

But if I'd ever leave you,  
It couldn't be in autumn.  
How I'd leave in autumn I never will know.  
I've seen how you sparkle  
When fall nips the air.  
I know you in autumn  
And I must be there.

And could I leave you  
running merrily through the snow?  
Or on a wintry evening  
when you catch the fire's glow?

If ever I would leave you,  
How could it be in spring-time?  
Knowing how in spring I'm bewitched by you so?  
Oh, no! not in spring-time!  
Summer, winter or fall!  
No, never could I leave you at all!

We had told our Egyptian friends, (whose home was in Alexandria, but who worked for Bechtel in Algiers), Ashraf Ghonima and his Dutch wife Hennie, of our love for the play Camelot. They had this copper front door plaque made for us in Cairo:



**In Memoriam—Sunday Marie Bennett***September 27, 1961 – October 13, 2011**by Diane Sisson*

**W**e recently lost a fellow rock-hound who was also a dear friend to many. Sunday Marie Bennett, 50, of Rosenberg, Texas, passed away on October 13, 2011 in Helena, Montana. She was born in Americus, Georgia on September 27, 1961.

Sunday joined the Houston Gem & Mineral Society in 2003. She was an active member and was on the Board of Directors as a representative at various times of the Day Light Section and the Faceting Section over the years. She was instrumental in starting the Beading Section, a group which formed five years ago. She assisted in developing beading guidelines that were later adopted by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. She was also a Docent at the Houston Museum of Natural Science for many years. She was an accomplished beader, poet, cartoonist, artist, and author. In the 2007 Bulletin Editors' Contest, Sunday's adult article "The Need to Bead" won first place at the national (AFMS) level—no small feat!

Hard work was never too hard for her, and she was always willing to help where needed. For many years, Rusty Bennett and wife Sunday were a great help at the annual HGMS show.

I have known her since I joined HGMS in 2003. We found many things in common and soon became fast friends. I loved to go with her on fossil field trips or beading weekends. I have fond memories of trips to Brownwood at Lexy Bieniek's house, camp outs at Mr. Tessman's ranch, freezing at Toledo Bend lake, and going to Georgia at her family farm. I will never forget the week we camped in Oklahoma, and in the middle of the night a raccoon stole our chocolate bars then later came back for a bottle of water. Oh, the laughs we had.

She never met a stranger and could talk to anyone about most anything. She kept us entertained with her stories and jokes.

She loved nature whether it was the tiger she met in Thai Land, the snakes and 8" spiders she found on field trips, or the kittens she adopted and treated like her children.

I could never thank her enough for her encouragement, support, and friendship. If you did not know her you missed a great experience. She touched many lives and she passed too soon. I will miss her always.

My condolences go to her family and friends. She will be greatly missed.

The two photos below were taken at the  
HGMS 2006 Christmas Party by John Mitcherling



Preshow Pizza Party and Auction -- Photo by Mary Ann Mitscherling



## HGMS Archeology Section Minutes

*October 6, 2011*

*by Burton Dworsky*

*Archeology Section Secretary*

The Archeology Section held its monthly meeting on October 6, 2011 meeting at the HGMS clubhouse with 14 members present, including new attendee Jim Wines. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dr. Garth Clark at 7:40. Vice-Chairman Terry Proctor moved that the Minutes for the August 4, 2011 meeting be approved as printed in the September Backbender's Gazette. It was seconded by Bob Moore, and the vote of approval was unanimous.

Terry Proctor moved that a position of Treasurer be added to the officers of the Section. Bob Moore seconded, and the motion passed.

Current Vice-Chairman Terry Proctor gave an overview of the positions, and the meeting was started with the election of the Section officers for 2012. For each position there was only one candidate nominated, and there were no dissenting votes cast for any of the nominees.

**Chairman** - Dr. Garth Clark, nominated by Terry Brawner seconded by Bob Moore

**Vice-Chairman** - Terry Proctor, nominated by Terry Proctor seconded by Bob Moore

**Secretary** - Burton Dworsky, nominated by Terry Proctor seconded by Bob Moore

**Treasurer** - Bob Moore, nominated by Deidre Prince seconded by Terry Proctor

**Board Representative** - Terry Proctor, nominated by Bob Moore seconded by Jon Hart

In other business, preparations for the show, November 12–13, were discussed. Terry Proctor offered to let the Section use some of the space on his table, and the Section will also get two cases for displaying Section-related material. It was decided that the details of what to include would be handled through e-mail and phone.

Also there was some discussion of future field trips, to possibly the Whisky Bridge site and the King Tut exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts.

For our presentation, Terry Proctor brought some articles he collected since last meeting and they were discussed. One was on ancient sites associated with the Zoroaster religious movement in Afghanistan and the other was on what is possibly the oldest hand axe ever found.

Garth Clark mentioned that there is renewed interest in geoglyphs in the middle eastern country of Jordan. Geoglyphs are large markings on the face of the earth that can only be seen from the air, the most famous of which are the Nazca Lines.

It was also brought up that people were getting arrested, put on probation, and "fined thousands of dollars" for disturbing Native American artifacts and fossils at Lake Whitney, Texas. It is against federal law to remove any Native American artifact from government property, and in Texas, doing that also violates the state Antiquities Code. With the drought the lake is low, thus uncovering sites and caverns that haven't been



exposed in many years. This stands as a good reminder that one needs to determine if it is legal to hunt the site they wish, whether it be for archeological remains, fossils, or rocks and minerals.

The evening ended up with show and tell. Once again Jon Hart brought more cases of arrowheads and another fine Caddo Indian pot he pieced back together, but this one he left in two pieces so one could see and feel the marks left by the maker. Bob Moore brought us out of the Stone Age with a Sassanian metal lance head from the Middle East that was about 1000 years old. Bob's wife Nancy brought a large, possibly ornamental ocarina data with the image of a parrot on it. Jim Wines brought a modern representation of the alter fire from the Zoroaster religion.

Lastly, a great big thanks to Rod Underwood for donating a bag with tow rope and other stuff to help extradite a stuck car. This could come in quite useful on Section outings to places like McFaddin beach, where we have had members get stuck.

At 9:05 Dr. Garth Clark closed the meeting.

In attendance at the meeting were Terry Brawner, Billie Clark + 3 children, Garth Clark, Douglas Dodds, Burton Dworsky, Jon Hart, Steve Jackey, Bill Moore, Bob Moore, Nancy Engelhardt-Moore, Deidre Prince, Terry Proctor, Rod Underwood, and Jim Wines.

A reminder the Archeology Section meets the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 in the HGMS Clubhouse and the next meeting will be November 4, 2011. So, if you have an interest in archeology or some artifacts to show, please come out, join us, and have some fun.



**Left:** Display of the artifacts brought to the meeting. (photo by Terry Proctor)



**Below:** From left to right, front row future archeologist (Garth & Billie Clark's daughter), future archeologist (Garth & Billie Clark's son). Second row future archeologist (Garth & Billie Clark's son), Burton Dworsky, Garth Clark, Nancy Engelhardt-Moore. Third row Terry Proctor, Douglas

Dodds, Bob Moore, Terry Brawner, Jon Hart. Fourth row Deidre Prince, Rod Underwood. Fifth row Jim Wines and Bill Moore (photo by Terry Proctor)

## Archeology Section Minutes

November 6, 2011

by Burton Dworsky

The Archeology Section held its monthly meeting on November 3, 2011 meeting at the HGMS clubhouse with 11 members present. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dr. Garth Clark at 7:40.

Business was started off with a discussion of a field trip to the Houston Museum of Arts to see the King Tut exhibit. It was decided that January or February would be the best time frame. Jon Hart brought a case of arrowheads for inclusion in the Archeology Section case at the show.

Dr. Clark brought several articles for presentation too, and there were short discussions by the group.

The presentation for the evening was give by Terry Proctor on Ötzi the Ice Man who was found on the border between Austria and Italy in 1991. The 5,300 year old mummified remains are the oldest natural human remains found in Europe. He was found with most if not all of his possessions, including a copper ax, arrows, fungi to be used for medicinal purposes, back pack, and knives to name a few. The group discussed the items he was carrying and their possible purposes. Ötzi died from an apparent arrow shot in the back which led to several theories being raised on how and why he was killed this way and why the killers did not take his possessions.



Ötzi the Ice Man. (photo source  
South Tyrol Museum of Archeology)

For show and tell, Mike Dawkins brought pictures of some arrowhead finds that people have been making around Texas. He was followed by John Hart who in addition to the case he brought for the show also brought two cases of Neolithic arrowheads, Neolithic beads, and a Caddoan seed pot he pieced back together. He explained how he glues them back together using regular Elmer's Glue and masking tape.

A reminder that when purchasing from an online purchase or auction site such as EBay, one needs to be extra careful. Not only do you need to be knowledgeable about WHAT

you are purchasing, but also you need to be careful about WHO you are purchasing from. Often unscrupulous dealers will sell under one name until they get too much negative feedback, then change their name and start their scam all over.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.

In attendance at the meeting were Terry Brawner, Garth Clark, Mike Dawkins, Burton Dworsky, Jon Hart, Steve Jackey, Deidre Prince, Terry Proctor, Peter Ragusa, Lisa Schwartz, Tom Schwirtz.

Lastly a reminder, the Archeology Section meets the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 in the HGMS Clubhouse and the next meeting will be December 1, 2011. So, if you have an interest in archeology or some artifacts to show please come out join us and have some fun.

### General Meeting Minutes

*October 25, 2011*

*by Sarah Metsa*

*HGMS Secretary*

**T**he meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m.

**Prior Month General Meeting Minutes:** Terry Proctor moved that the September General Meeting minutes be accepted as published. It was seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**Program:** Farrar Stockton presented a wonderful program about his trip to New Zealand in December 2009. A country consisting of two main islands, New Zealand has many stories to tell. It has different landscapes, environments, and ecosystems which give visitors unique opportunities for photography. Farrar showed us his route from Auckland on the North Island to Wellington and Christchurch on the South Island. The program was bittersweet for Farrar as some of the places he visited and shared with us have been damaged or destroyed by the recent earthquakes in New Zealand.



**Photo of Farrar Stockton  
by Terry Proctor**

**Officer Nominations:** The Nominating Committee, consisting of Margo Bedman, Matt Dillon, Charlie Fredregill, Phyllis George, and Terry Proctor, presented the Nominating Committee's Slate of nominees for next year's Board of Directors. The nominee for President is Charlie Fredregill. Nominee for First Vice President is Bill Moore. Nominee for Second Vice President is Beverly Mace. Nominee for Secretary is Sarah Metsa.

Nominee for Treasurer is Rodney Linehan. There were no further nominations made from the floor. Terry Proctor moved to close nominations. This was seconded by Mike Dawkins, and the motion passed unanimously. Voting on these positions will be held during the November General Meeting.

**Show Committee:** This is the last general meeting before the show. We need volunteers! If you have not signed up for a time slot, expect Mary Ann Mitscherling to contact you soon. We particularly need help in the information booth. Also the coloring book is in and will be available for selling at the show. It will be at the Mineral Section's area of the show, at the Information Booth, and Terry Proctor advised he will make some signs to advertise the coloring books. The billboards have been up for awhile now, and everyone who has seen them says that they look great.

**Drawing:** Pete Stassi won two agates and an unidentified slab.

**Show and Tell:** John Cooper brought a giant block of oyster reef embedded with tons of devil's toenails. He found it laying out in the open at the Eagle's Canyon Raceway in Slidell, Texas. Beverly Mace and Diane Sisson went out to the Brazos to do some fossil hunting since the water levels are low, and Beverly was fortunate—and happy—to find a whole bison tooth. Steve Blyskal had many items to share from the recent Show Committee field trip to George West: petrified wood and agates, some great finds.

**Adjourn:** Terry Proctor moved and John Mitscherling seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

## Board of Director's Meeting Minutes

*November 1, 2011*

*by Sarah Metsa*

*HGMS Secretary*

|   |   |   |                                  |
|---|---|---|----------------------------------|
| X | President – Steve Blyskal                     |   | Beading Rep – Jillynn Hailes     |
| X | 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President – Ray Kizer    |   | Faceting Rep – Gary Tober        |
| X | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Beverly Mace |   | Lapidary Rep – Phyllis George    |
| X | Treasurer – Rodney Linehan                    |   | Mineral Rep – Sigrid Stewart     |
| X | Secretary – Sarah Metsa                       | X | Paleontology Rep – Terry Brawner |
| X | Past President – Terry Proctor                | X | Day Light Rep – Nancy Fischer    |

**The meeting was called to order** at 7:36 p.m. with a quorum of seven members present.

**Previous Month Board of Directors Meeting Minutes:** The minutes of the October 4, 2011 Board Meeting were published in the November 2011 BBG. Terry Proctor moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as published. Terry Brawner seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Rodney Linehan was present. The check to pay for the Humble Civic Center has been cut and will be mailed today. Rodney provided an update on each bank account, and he reported that HGMS is in good financial condition.

## Officer, Committees and Section Reports

**Show Committee:** Coloring books are printed and ready for sale. Terry Proctor moved and Sarah Metsa seconded that they be sold for \$3 each, the motion passed unanimously. Steve Blyskal and Terry Proctor will work on making posters to be put up in show sections advertising the sale of the coloring books. Also the one page posters are available for distributing to community businesses. A new hospitality company has been located and booked for the show.

There were no Section reports because much of the meeting was concerned with the Show and reviewing the final preparations with the Show Chairs who were in attendance.

## New Business

**Meet-Up.com site:** Theresa Peek mentioned that our membership in meet-up.com is not highly utilized. Terry Proctor moved to discontinue our membership. Ray Kizer seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**Clubhouse Bylaws:** It has recently been determined that the bylaws on the HGMS.org site are in need of updating. Terry Proctor generously offered to spearhead a group to go through the Board of Director meeting minutes and the General Meeting minutes of the past 5 years in order to determine the changes and get the Bylaws updated.

**New Member Welcome Committee:** The Second Vice President, Beverly Mace, is the chairperson of the Membership Committee, and she has a wealth of knowledge about our current membership base and our new members. With that framework in place, Sarah Metsa offered the idea of adding a subcommittee under Membership that would be responsible for providing a personalized welcome to new members. This would be supplementary to the New Member Orientations we have had in the past and will have in the future. Steve Blyskal will be working to institute the new member subcommittee as his past-president initiative.

**Christmas party:** Steve Blyskal will begin planning the Christmas party as soon as the Show is completed. The Christmas party will be Saturday December 10. Please contact Steve if you are interested in assisting with the planning, cooking, decorating, auctioning, and all-around merry making.

**New Section Board Reps:** The Mineral, Paleo, Beading, and Daylight sections will be electing new board representatives in their November meetings if they didn't already do so in their October meetings. This information should be provided to Steve Blyskal as current president or Charlie Fredregill as upcoming president.

**Adjourn:** Terry Brawner moved and Terry Proctor seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

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

## Where Do Minerals Come From?

by C. E. Johnson

from *SCRIBE 2010 DVD*

**T**he question “Where do minerals come from?” may seem juvenile, yet I have been asked that by many adult rock-hounds. Of course, when people ask that question, what they really mean is how did the minerals get where they are, and how did they get the way they are, and many other relevant questions.

My usual reply is “They come from rocks”—which I always say with a smile just in case, and their response tells me what I should say next. From that point on, we both usually have a very interesting conversation if that person really cares and is inquisitive enough, and in the process, we typically learn from each other’s experiences and knowledge.

Obviously, rocks are composed of minerals, and all our minerals are found in rocks, except of course, those that have been freed from rocks by erosion and deposited elsewhere, such as on slopes and creeks, etc. Our earth’s surface, to a very great depth, is composed of various kinds of rock formations with quite a variety of minerals.

The surface of our earth originally was in a molten condition. Eventually as the earth developed a crust, some molten masses were retained underground and began to cool down there; others poured out onto the earth’s surface as lava flows or erupted as volcanoes. We can safely say that minerals actually grow (crystallize) in masses of molten rocks as they slowly cool down. The bulk of these masses are composed of common “rock-making” and “rock-accessory” minerals of which all of our igneous rock formations are normally composed, and many of the “rock-accessory” minerals in the coarser-grained ones are the more valuable ones such as garnets, sapphire, spinel, etc.; but more importantly, many other minerals also grow in the gasses and solutions that are emitted by the molten rock masses and deposited in the overlying and adjacent rock formations.

These molten rock masses form what are known as “Intrusive” igneous rock formations like the Granite-family and a few others, and are our best mineral producers. They are called “Intrusive” because they intrude into the pre-existing rock formations overhead, where they remain underground until erosion exposes them for us.

Volcanic eruptions and lava flows are not good mineral producers, because they are ‘extrusive’ igneous rock masses, which extrude onto the surface relatively quickly and cool off quickly, so they lack the slow developing processes necessary to produce mineral deposits, and they typically have no mineral grains visible to the naked eye, so they lack any desirable “rock making” and “rock-accessory” minerals.

There are a few exceptions, such as some lava flows which are known for their cavities with agate-material, or zeolite crystals, etc., formed by later trapped gasses and solutions in “gas-bubble” holes and other crevices within the solidified lava flows. All those aforementioned processes are the producers of all our minerals both past and present, and no doubt they will continue to do so very far into the future.



## A Rockhound's Suggestion

by C.E. Johnson

from *SCRIBE 2010 DVD*

**H**ave you ever wondered whether you could find for yourself those same types of minerals you are paying to dig for at those various sites? I'll bet you did, and if you were curious enough, you probably asked the site owners/operators questions such as where did those minerals come from, what kind of rock formations are they in, and how did they get there, how were they formed?

If you couldn't get the real answers there, try doing a little research online or in libraries, etc. about the origins and natures of those types of minerals you're digging for, and others. A better alternative to that or in addition to that is why not take a short course on mineral geology somewhere like a local community college or extracurricular class at a high school? There are other sources out there, but you need to make inquiries to seek them out.

When you find the answers to such questions, of course you will have learned what kind of places are most favorable for those types of minerals, and others, right? But what now? Where do you go from there? How do you find out where those places are—to find them on your own without having to pay to dig for the minerals, of course, and to experience the thrill of making your own discoveries in new places. Actually this is fairly easy.

In a few words, you can find those favorable places with the help of GEOLOGIC maps, and those favorable places may be closer than you think.

In serious rockhounding and prospecting, rocks are the key; we wouldn't have mineral deposits without them. Certain igneous rocks "breed" certain minerals, and the other two basic types provide many other minerals of their own; and geologic maps show rock formations, along with whatever other information is relative and helpful, such as any minerals "occurrences" reported by U.S. Geologic Survey teams or by someone else in the areas shown, or "prospect" diggings and/or mining activity, etc. It's simply a matter of finding areas on the maps that show *the same geological conditions as the collecting sites you are visiting*. In the meantime, learn enough about minerals-geology to know which minerals occur in which rocks (and vice-versa, which rocks contain which minerals).

These geologic maps are available at places such as the U.S.G.S. offices and their STATE affiliates, some office and stationary suppliers, some state geology departments, bureaus of land management offices, etc. If they don't have them, they probably will direct you to the most likely sources that have them on hand.

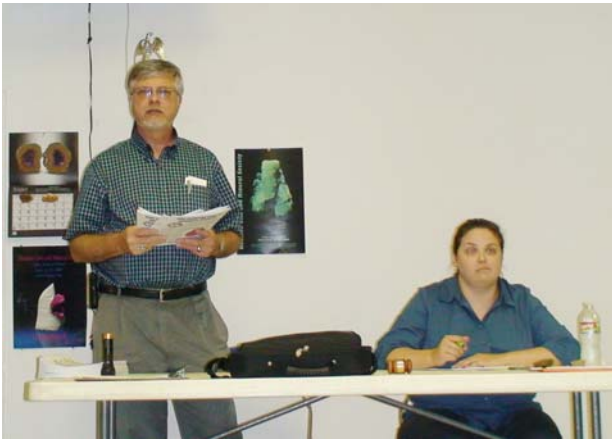
I recommend that those who are computer-wise log in on <usgs.gov> and follow the links to what you need. It's easy if you do it right. If that's not an option, you can call 1-888-ASK-USGS to get the necessary information, or write to USGS Information Services, Box 25286, Denver, CO 80225

Exploring on your own does of course require an able, healthy person with a free-spirit and a sense of adventure and independence.

I strongly recommend that anyone doing this, even with a friend, inform family or friends of your plans and destinations and be well-prepared and cautious at all times. And as an extra precaution, inform any local authorities such as national forest rangers of your presence.

I have done this sort of thing for many years and have not regretted a day of it, including the unproductive ones. *Happy-hunting*, however you do it.

### October General Meeting Photos Photos by Terry Proctor



**Left: President Steve Blyskal and Secretary Sarah Metsa**

**Below: HGMS members are looking forward to Farrah Stockton's presentation.**







Septarian nodules  
broken open to show  
contents.

New Zealand  
"Nestor" parrot.  
Nestor is very  
mischievous with a  
powerful curved  
sharp bill.

Below: Members  
entranced by  
images of New  
Zealand being  
shown by Farrah  
Stockton.



**Show Time 2011 - 2012**

|                |                |  |
|----------------|----------------|--|
| December 2-4   | El Paso, TX    | El Paso Mineral & Gem Society<br>El Maida Auditorium, 6331 Alabama<br>Jeannette Carrillo, gemcenter@aol.com<br>Web site: epmgs.com |
| December 3-4   | Round Rock, TX | Paleo Society of Austin<br>Old Settlers Park<br>Next to Dell Diamond   |
| December 10-11 | De Ridder, LA  | De Ridder Gem & Mineral Society<br>Beauregard Parish Fairgrounds   |

**Show Time 2012**

|                |                |   |
|----------------|----------------|---|
| January 1-31   | Quartzsite, AZ | Major show, many sites. Two are listed.<br>Desert Gardens RV Park; 1055 Kuehn St.,<br>I-10 Exit 17; <a href="http://www.desertgardensrvpark.net">www.desertgardensrvpark.net</a><br>Tyson Wells Enterprises Inc.; Tyson Wells<br>Show Grounds; <a href="http://www.tysonwells.com">www.tysonwells.com</a> |
| January 27-29  | Tyler, TX      | East Texas Gem & Mineral Society<br>Rose Garden Center, 420 Rose Park Dr.<br>Keith Harmon, <a href="mailto:keithharmon19@yahoo.com">keithharmon19@yahoo.com</a>   |
| February 25-26 | Pasadena, TX   | Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society<br>Pasadena Convention Center<br>7902 Fairmont Parkway<br>Ben Duggar, <a href="mailto:sailduggar@verizon.net">sailduggar@verizon.net</a><br><a href="http://www.clgms.org">www.clgms.org</a>   |
| February 1-29  | Quartzsite, AZ | Desert Gardens RV Park; 1064 Kuehn St.,<br>I-10 Exit 17; <a href="mailto:info@desertgardensrvpark.net">info@desertgardensrvpark.net</a><br><a href="http://www.desertgardensrvpark.net">www.desertgardensrvpark.net</a>   |
| March 3-4      | Robstown, TX   | Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society<br>Richard Borchard Regional Fairgrounds<br>1213 Terry Shamsie Blvd., US 77 and Hwy. 44<br>Jerrold Simpson: <a href="mailto:jsimpson1@stx.rr.com">jsimpson1@stx.rr.com</a><br><a href="http://www.gcgms.org">www.gcgms.org</a>   |
| April 20-22    | Alpine, TX     | Chihuahuah Desert Gem & Mineral Club<br>Alpine Civic Center, Hwy. 90 West<br>Mary Brogan: (432) 386-2340<br><a href="mailto:marybrogan@rocketmail.com">marybrogan@rocketmail.com</a>  |

| 2011 December 2011     |                               |   |  |                                  |     |   |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|-----|---|
| Sun                    | Mon                           | Tue   | Wed  | Thu                              | Fri | Sat   |
|                        |                               |   |  | 1 7:30<br>Archaeology<br>Section | 2   | 3 10-5<br>Shop Open<br>10-12 Youth Section                  |
| 4                      | 5                             | 6 7:30<br>Board<br>Meeting                                    | 7 7:30<br>Mineral Section<br>10-3 Shop Open            | 8                                | 9   | 10 10-5<br>Shop Open<br>Holiday Party                       |
| 11                     | 12 No<br>Day Light<br>Section | 13 7:30<br>Show<br>Committee                                  | 14 6:30<br>Faceting<br>Section Party<br>10-3 Shop Open | 15                               | 16  | 17 10-5 Shop Open<br>No Youth Section<br>No Beading Section |
| 18                     | 19 No<br>Lapidary<br>Section  | 20 No<br>Paleo<br>Section<br>Hanukkah<br>begins at<br>sundown | 21 No<br>Mineral Section<br>10-3 Shop Open             | 22                               | 23  | 24 10-5<br>Shop Open<br>Christmas Eve                       |
| 25<br>Christmas<br>Day | 26                            | 27 No<br>General<br>Meeting                                   | 28 10-3<br>Shop Open                                   | 29                               | 30  | 31 10-5<br>Shop Open<br>New Year's Eve                      |

| 2012 January 2012      |                                 |                               |  |                                |     |  |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----|--|
| Sun                    | Mon                             | Tue                           | Wed  | Thu                            | Fri | Sat  |
| 1 New<br>Year's<br>Day | 2                               | 3 7:30<br>Board<br>Meeting    | 4 7:30<br>Mineral Section<br>10-3 Shop Open      | 5 7:30<br>Archaeology<br>Group | 6   | 7 10-5<br>Shop Open<br>10-12 Youth Section                       |
| 8                      | 9                               | 10 7:30<br>Show<br>Committee  | 11 6:30<br>Faceting<br>Section<br>10-3 Shop Open | 12                             | 13  | 14 10-5<br>Shop Open   |
| 15                     | 16 1:00<br>Day Light<br>Section | 17 7:30<br>Paleo<br>Section   | 18 7:30<br>Mineral Section<br>10-3 Shop Open     | 19                             | 20  | 21 10-5 Shop Open<br>10-12 Youth Section<br>1:30 Beading Section |
| 22                     | 23 7:30<br>Lapidary<br>Section  | 24 7:30<br>General<br>Meeting | 25 10-3<br>Shop Open                             | 26                             | 27  | 28 10-5<br>Shop Open   |
| 29                     | 30                              | 31                            |  |                                |     |  |

**The BACKBENDER'S  
GAZETTE**  
*The Newsletter of the  
Houston Gem & Mineral Society*

10805 BROOKLET

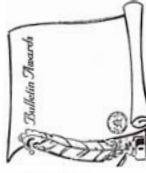
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77099

(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)  
2010 - 1st (Large)



**AFMS**

1998 - 2nd (Large)  
2004 - 3rd (Large)  
2007 - 1st (Large)  
2010 - 2nd (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 !**