



The **BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE**

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

Volume XLV - No. 11

November 2014



President's Message

by Ray Kizer

The annual HGMS show is almost upon us—and with your help, it can be one of our best yet. Much work goes into putting on the annual show, most of it behind the scenes. We get it done through the tireless efforts of many of our long-time HGMS members. But they could use your help. We would like to encourage our new members—over 128 of them since January—to step up and volunteer for one of the thousand tasks that go into putting on such a fabulous show.



We have many things yet to do, both large and small, from collecting beer flats for the Dino Dig, or showing up November 1st to help mix and pour the 100–200 slabs (with fossils) that the kids so love to smash up. We need help loading our gear at the clubhouse, and even more importantly, help with the setup once it gets to the show location. It can be a madhouse when we don't have enough people for the job. Then there are the volunteers that man the ticket booth, take tickets, and check in the scout and school groups. All are very important positions.

Continued on page 4

Upcoming Programs

by Paul Brandes

October 28, 2014: Neal Immega--The Evils of Mineralogists: (A sleight-of-hand just occurred to the previously-announced name.) All will be revealed, BUT only after Neal conducts the live auction of LOTS of high-value just-donated items at the beginning of the meeting--and it might take a while!

November 25, 2014: Adeene Denton – **A Geology Student's Adventure in Nepal.** This evening's presentation will be presented by Adeene Denton, the 2014 HGMS Earth Science/Jewelry Arts Scholarship winner. Ms. Denton's presentation will be on her summer field geology class in Nepal and will address three different areas she studied: the metamorphism, general geomorphology, and glacial impacts in the Himalaya Mountains. Over the course of the evening, Ms. Denton will give an over-

Contents

President’s Message 1

Upcoming Programs 1

Purpose of HGMS 3

Now That I’m Older..... 4

Story of High Security with Submersible and Other Stories 5

It’s Show Time!..... 10

NEWSFLASH: HGMS Creates a Geology Patch for the Girl Scouts 11

General Meeting Minutes 12

Philosophies 14

Board of Director’s Meeting 15

AFMS President's Message 19

Bench Tips 21

Rebranding Your Show 22

Thanksgiving Facts & Trivia 24

The History of Rockhounding 25

Show Time 2014 & 2015 26

Calendars 27

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

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Copy is due for the December 2014
issue by Wednesday, November 5, 2014.*

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Purpose of HGMS

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

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

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

2014 HGMS Officers

President	Raymond Kizer	(713) 203-6014
First Vice-President	Paul Brandes	(281) 543-3681
Second Vice-President	Beverly Mace	(832) 934-2633
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Lapidary Section Board Member	Phyllis George	(281) 395-3087
Mineral Section Board Member		
Paleo Section Board Member	Mike Dawkins	(281) 242-2137

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Beading Section Chair	Diane Sisson	(713) 899-1232
Day Light Section Chair	Karen Burns	(409) 737-1417
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Lapidary Section Chair	Edward Clay	(713) 529-5482
Mineral Section Chair	Dean Lagerwall	(979) 480-9373
Paleo Section Chair	Neal Immega	(713) 661-3494
Youth Section Chair	Beverly Mace	(832) 934-2633

HGMS Appointed Positions

Clubhouse Chair	Neal Immega	(713) 661-3494
Show Chair	Michele Marsel	(281) 777-0257
Education Chair	Carrie Hart	(713) 253-3804
HGMS Publicity Chair	Tamara Ritchie	(713) 581-9344
Backbender's Gazette Editor	Phyllis George	(281) 395-3087
HGMS Webmaster	Phyllis George	(281) 395-3087
Youth Section Assistant	Elizabeth Guynn	(281) 476-5325

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 continued from page 1

Have you ever helped at a Section booth? Last year I answered questions at the Mineral Section booth for the better part of three days—and you know what?? I had a blast! From the questions posed by Scouts trying to earn their earth science merit badges, to those from the 2,000 plus school kids passing through, I had fun answering them—and trying to get them excited about minerals and science at the same time. It was a learning experience for me too. They were playing “Stump the Chump,” and I was trying not to be the Chump. It made the time I spent there quite interesting. If you really want to have fun, help at the Dino Dig, Neal’s Paleo booth, or in the Swap Area. It’s where all the kids really get to enjoy the show.

So if you want to learn something new, come and help set up a booth, interact with the public. It’s a whole different experience than just walking through the show and spending money. But yes, we want you to do that too. We need to keep our high-quality dealers coming back year after year. So be a volunteer. You can sign up with your favorite Section at one of their meetings or with the Show Committee at the Info Booth before the show. Or you can send them a note online at showvolunteer@hgms.org and let them know you are willing to help out. We will all appreciate it. Let’s put our best face forward, and show the public that it’s our members who make the HGMS show great.

Upcoming Programs continued from page 1

view of the tectonics that formed the Himalayas, and then using the knowledge she gained over the summer, extrapolate that concept to the geology on a regional scale. Ms. Denton will also talk about the unique culture of Nepal and describe her experiences during her trip. Please join us for what will be an exciting and very informative presentation!

Now That I’m Older...

from Chips 4/2000, via Gem Cutters News 10/2014

I started with nothing, and I still have most of it.

My wild oats have turned into prunes and All Bran.

I finally got my head together, but now my body is falling apart.

It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.

Funny, I don’t remember being absent minded...

If G-d wanted me to touch my toes, he would have put them on my knees.

It’s not hard to meet expenses... they’re everywhere.

The only time the world beats a path to your door is when you’re in the bathroom.

The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.

If all is not lost, where is it?

It’s hard to make a comeback when you haven’t been anywhere.

Story of High Security with Submersible and Other Stories

by John A. Anderson, *The Old Salt*

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

When I entered the US Navy, I went to Boot Camp in the San Diego, California area. After Boot Camp, a few others and I were sent to the USS Calvert APA 32 which is an Amphibious Assault vessel. I was attached to this ship during most of my four-year active duty enlistment, except when they sent me to different training schools.



I was sent to Assault Boat Coxswain School and to other schools which covered everything needed in amphibious warfare. These schools were taught at Coronado Island Amphibious Base. It covered different communication forms, medical, explosives, and a raft of so many other things that I cannot remember—except how to completely waterproof a vehicle to be able to drive underwater. The only three things that would be visible on the surface were two snorkel pipes and the top of my head with my nose just barely exposed—so maybe we should say there were three snorkels. One of the pipes was for the incoming air for the engine, and the other was for the engine's exhaust. My barely-exposed nose would try to get some air, but that was questionable in getting a decent breath.

We took a plain old rusty Jeep that must have been used for this purpose before—it looked ready for the scrap dump. I waterproofed the electrical wiring on anything that might impact the Jeep's underwater performance using a special grease which I put everywhere—the plugs, distributor, coil, battery cables—and disconnected anything that had any kind of electrical current usage such as windshield wipers and headlights and heater.

I got into my waterproofed Jeep, and I attached my seat belt so I would not float away while moving through the water. One saving thing was they put the Jeep's throttle on the dash because it would be more difficult to control the Jeep's speed using the floor throttle. I tried putting the Jeep into 4-wheel drive gear with the clutch, and I have never heard so much grinding of gears. It sounded like I was really tearing the transmission apart until I finally get the Jeep into gear. I slightly accelerated my engine, started to move at about 1 mile per hour, and slowly nosed my Jeep into a little over four feet of water.

I have been blessed with being able to hold my breath for long periods, so I said, "what the xx," and I put the dash throttle to its peg (which means "as fast as it could go") which was about 4 miles per hour. The track in which I had to drive my Jeep was a circular track with high-banked outer walls, so you could not get lost. The visibility in the ocean water was about 1 foot, so you really trusted the high-banked outer wall to guide you along the circular track.

We had rescue swimmers for anyone who might need help. I made it through without any problems, but I don't see how. I must have looked like some sort of a sea monster coming through the big water wave I was making.

I was sent to the Advanced Amphibious Warfare School that had a "water school" for I don't remember how long, but one thing for sure, my feet and hands were all shriveled up like dishpan hands.

One day, and without a life jacket, they made us wear our full clothing—even our white hats—and we had to jump into a large, deep swimming pool from a high platform. But we could not rise to the surface immediately because this was now a ship with oil burning on the surface. We had to rise to just below the surface, use a sweeping motion to create an area that was free of burning oil, and then and only then—was it was safe to rise to the surface.

Another day we were told to jump again from a high platform with no life jacket, and we were instructed on how to use every piece of our clothing as a flotation device. We even used our Navy white hat as well. The whole trick is in keeping the clothing wet, restricting the air from escaping, so your clothing now becomes a flotation bladder. The best clothing items for flotation naturally were your pants and your long-sleeved shirt which you both buttoned and knotted. These both worked quite well. Needless to say, you only used either your pants or your shirt—not both at the same time.

When your clothing was completely wet, you captured air into the clothing being used for flotation by throwing it over your head—holding onto the pants legs or the shirt arms. This was the only way that would work.

We also learned a simple way that is hardly preached today. Some people, because of their body type, are either sinkers or floaters. One reason is that muscle is heavier than fat. But our bone structure is more important, and that determines whether you are a sinker or a floater.

To find out how you can survive without any flotation device, get into a deep pool without fins or mask, hold onto the side of the pool, and just breathe normally. Now remove your hand from the poolside. Do not try to float on your back but remain in an upright position and remain vertical. This tells if you are a sinker or a floater. If you are a sinker, repeat this exercise again; but this time, take in a big lung-full of air. If you were a sinker, then now you are a floater. The only difference between a sinker and a floater is related to the amount of air in your lungs. With that in mind, just adjust your air intake. That adjustment will help you, both if you are a sinker or a floater. When you are accustomed to this, you can lessen or increase your air intake slightly to bring you to a normal breathing rate, so you do not feel like you're hyperventilating which can cause dizziness. This knowledge can help you survive for long periods without any flotation device in most situations.

While I am at it, what piece of equipment do the SEALs, UDT, or any of the other branches of the military service NOT use in the water but which every recreational

diver uses all the time? Give up? It's the snorkel—because you will have your face buried in the water, and you will not be observing your surroundings.

In the military, what is the most important piece of your diving equipment, not counting a life jacket or some other flotation device? It's your mask—not your fins—and that is why military people use a lanyard connected from their mask to around their neck. That is why you won't lose your mask while jumping or falling off a fast-moving boat, because that is what normally would happen. In the movies, they show a frogman surfacing with the mask perched on his head, and it will stay there. They do this so you know who the actors are. If you lose your mask, the operation could be considered a failure. A lanyard is so important to not losing your mask. I started using a lanyard over 60 years ago, and I have never lost a mask—which many people who have been diving cannot say.

A slight deviation in my story: When I jump into the sea with all my equipment on, I don't have to hold my mask to my face. So I just leave it at my side, hooked to the lanyard around my neck. I have inflated my BC to a positive buoyancy, so I just bob to the surface. I do not want to step on anyone's toes (or should I say fins) but a good lanyard is also very important when attached to your underwater camera housing. Now when entering the water, you have two free hands. Another good reason for attaching a lanyard to your camera housing comes when you have finished your dive or are actually getting help. When you reenter the dive boat, what is the first thing a deckhand usually grabs? Your strobe lights—so I say again, a lanyard attached to the housing is most prudent.

Back to my story: One day we had some time off, and even though we had dishpan hands and feet, we did not go to town to bars but instead to the beach, right in front of the world-renown Los Coronado Hotel where some of the movie *"Some Like It Hot"* with Jack Lemon and Tony Curtis was made. I need to end this story because I have another story that I would like to tell you about.

When I had just less than one year left in my active enlistment, and my duty station is a ship going overseas, there is ruling that you must be transferred to another duty station to complete your enlistment.

I and some of the Calvert's crewmembers that had gone through Boot Camp with me were transferred to the US Naval Destroyer Base. We were told that we would be working in a high-security operation, and if anyone was convicted of a security breach, it would be the death penalty and a \$50,000 fine. This statement puzzled me because I would not care about the \$50,000 fine if I were executed—would you?

We could only talk about what we were doing while working, but we were cautioned not to talk about work among ourselves after our workday was finished in case someone could be listening.

We stayed at the naval station for about a week while they conducted a background check on each of us for a security clearance. After a week of checking our backgrounds, five of my teammates and I were transferred to Coronado Island Amphibious Base where we would be living on a "APL"—a very big floating barge that had complete

living quarters. It had a galley, a big shop, and two huge trailers. These trailers were actually electronic labs that would measure the radiation and all the stresses that this submersible would experience in the explosion.

Other people would join us later when the actual test would be done. Our submersible was not a submarine—only a very small version that monitored explosions by photos, radiation, and other items that were necessary. Our job was to provide complete security and anything else that might be needed in developing this submersible. Our crew was made up of seasoned sailors who were able to perform the tasks needed. We also assisted the scientist and others during this period. We used to joke when anyone asked why we had our own private pier with such high security—we always answered, “Oh, we just have a good thing with our own private hotel and do not want anyone to take it away from us.”

Our group had complete authority over not letting anyone—regardless of rank—into our private pier area without proper clearance and a badge. Many people were curious about what we were doing on our own private pier. I can still remember a US Naval First Lieutenant trying to find out what we were doing who would not take “No” for an answer. He kept trying to see what was going on until I had to show him that I really meant business with my 45-caliber side arm. We had to monitor its interior constantly.

We were not close to anywhere that was easy to get to, and I do not remember any TV, so I took out my frustration on food. When I say food, I mean any food that was not nailed down, I would eat.

I believed I have covered about everything concerning this activity except the actual test, but that is another story.

This story is about my travels throughout the orient where my shipmate Calvin Towler and I would play pool in almost every port our ship had liberty in. Calvin was a much better pool player than I, but he would always say just before we would start playing pool, I will let you win this game today. But what usually happened was he would not knock his pool balls into the pockets but instead around the pool pocket so, without trying, I would knock his pool balls in or even worse the 8 ball in and then the game was over.

This story is about going to a pool hall in “Hong Kong, China.” Remember, Hong Kong, China at that time was a British Crown Colony and English was somewhat spoken, usually by businessmen, but the general population had put a few English words into their vocabulary. When you get a street address or a name of businesses sometimes, they were not 100 correct.

We heard of a pool hall and its address. When we arrived, it was a large, many-storied building. We elected to take the elevator to the floor where we thought the pool tables were, but when we got off the elevator, the whole floor was a gambling area for Pachinko—which I will call a gambling machine. Hundreds of Pachinko machines were being played. The Pachinko machine’s noise is made by the steel ball bearings

being flipped around inside these machines—and then multiplied by hundreds of machines.

There were no pool tables on that floor, so we got back on the elevator and went to the next floor. Eureka! This was the floor, and no one else was there except a man and a lady who were workers. We were excited because we were the only pool players there, so the lone pool table was ours. But it was not like any pool table you have ever seen. I don't know if you are familiar with pool table sizes, but this one was a moose. This table appeared to be longer than 10 feet long. The table was so wide that your cue sticks were well over 7 feet long. The rake that is used for making long shots looked like it was over 8 feet long. I have tried to identify this table on the Internet, but I have had no success. There is a table used in some Russian pool games that is extremely large, but I feel the one here was something English. A few years ago, I saw one of these tables in Australia, but they could not help me with a name. This was not a snooker table with smaller pockets either—it had regular pool ball pocket sizes.

This pool hall was definitely unique when compared to any other pool hall because it had a "Cue Girl." The Cue Girl's primary job was to chalk-up your pool cue before you made any pool shot, or to get the pool rake stick ready for a shot. She also from time to time would put talc on our sweaty hands. Hmmm.

After leaving the pool hall, we met a few of our shipmates and went to a nice restaurant for dinner. We had eaten at this restaurant before, and the owner remembered us as skin divers because we had our swim fins with us then, and we talked to him about skin diving. The restaurant owner sat down with us and said that he knew of an "atoll" where the center body of water was like an aquarium. It had outstanding visibility, and it had every tropical fish that he had ever seen before as well as sharks and big groupers. He said that the only time new sea life could enter was when there was a flooding tide, and that did not happen often. The area seemed to have developed a balanced ecosystem. And he was willing to take us there in his big cabin cruiser. We decided that this would be a great place to dive. Oh, I am sorry because that will have to be another story from the old Salt. I am running out of space for these stories.

Remember I have never been sea sick in my entire life, and I have been at sea during one "Hurricane" and one "Tidal Wave," so please try and remember this—I have more salt in my socks than you have ever sailed over.



Corundum
from the
2013 SCRIBE CD

It's Show Time!

2014 HGMS Show November 7–9, 2014

by Michele Marsel

Our 61st Annual Show is just around the corner. If you're a new member, you won't want to miss this! We put on the biggest gem and mineral show in Texas and one of the largest in the country. Our School Daze and Scouts programs promote our educational mission. We have over 40 vendors with something for all interests for your shopping pleasure, plus daily activities for kids like our Dino Dig and Mad Science presentations. The proceeds from our Show support our Clubhouse and programs—did you realize that your dues alone don't do that?

What does it take to make the show a success? YOU!! It takes a lot of hands to staff the show and provide a great experience for our 3,000+ patrons, not to mention 3,000 schoolchildren on Friday (School Daze). Volunteers can choose the area where they want to help and pick the day and time that suits them. Give us just three hours of your time, and get free admission to enjoy the rest of the day at the Show, plus enjoy complimentary beverages and snacks in the Hospitality room. Lunch is available from the public concession in the Humble Convention Center, and a number of restaurants are close by our show venue as well.

The link for online volunteer sign up is on the Annual Show page of our HGMS Web site. Sign up now—the early birds get best choice of days and times.

Schedule of events leading up to the Show:

- 11/1 Saturday – all Section and Show items are brought downstairs and prepared for loading.
- 11/5 Wednesday – the truck arrives at 4 p.m., and we need strong hands to help load the cargo.
- 11/6 Thursday – Setup Day. The truck arrives at Humble Civic Center at 8 a.m. for unloading. Again, strong hands needed. Those with lesser muscles will help put skirting on the dealer tables, and dealers will begin checking in and setting up at 11 a.m.
- 11/7 Friday – The Show opens at 9 a.m., and we'll host 3,000 public and homeschool children throughout the day.
- 11/8 Saturday – The Show opens at 9 a.m. and is our busiest day for the general public. We also present our Scouts educational and badge programs. The Info Booth silent auctions begin.
- 11/9 Sunday – The Show opens at 10 a.m., and silent auctions continue until we close at 5 p.m. Time to break down the Show, load up the truck, and return to the HGMS clubhouse. All strong hands who return to help with unloading get to relax with a meal and swap Show stories before heading home.

Help HGMS present another successful Show—tell all your friends to come (Show Fliers available at the HGMS Clubhouse), and be one of the volunteers who make our show great.

NEWS FLASH – HGMS Creates a Geology Patch for the Girl Scouts

by Scott Singleton and Elsa Kapitan-White

Houston, TX, September 2014

The Houston Gem and Mineral Society (HGMS) announced that it has added to a new patch for Girl Scouts to its long-running Scout Geology Merit Badge Program taught at its Annual Gem and Mineral Show (Nov. 7–9). The patch is offered jointly under the auspices of the Girl Scouts San Jacinto Council (GSSJC), which serves 63,000 girls and 19,000 adult members within 26 Southeast Texas counties in the Houston area. One of the GSSJC volunteers summed up how the patch meets a long-standing program need:

“This looks amazing! It’s hard to express how happy this makes me. Last fall my daughter was so excited to go to this event with her geologist parents. However, after it was explained to us that there wasn’t a specific badge for girls, she lost her courage in the sea of boys. I will do my part to advertise this for y’all.”

News of the new patch was immediately picked up by the Association of Women Geoscientists, first on a chapter level for the Houston area and then nationally. AWG included a full-page copy of the Scout geology program flyer (on hgms.org) in its e-mail newsletter. AWG has long advocated to Girl Scouts of the USA to reintroduce a geoscience-related badge.



AWG’s publicizing of the HGMS Scout program resulted in women geoscientists asking to participate in presenting the Scout program at our annual show and also querying how they can repeat this success in their programs. The following e-mail is from a nationally known geoscience organization:

“I’m an education coordinator for the American Geophysical Union, which is the world’s largest earth and space science society. We hold our annual meeting in San Francisco every December, and more than 20,000 scientists from around the world attend. One of the things that we do at the meeting is a free public event for local kids and families called Exploration Station (<http://education.agu.org/education-activities-at-agu-meetings/exploration-station/>).



I just saw your piece in the AWG newsletter about the Girl Scout geology patch you’re offering at the Houston Gem and Mineral Show. We’ve reached out to the Girl Scouts in the past and want them to be able to earn a badge at our event. We would like to know how you run your event so we can replicate it.”

With this new additional focus, the HGMS Scout Geology Program has been completely revised and updated to match the latest requirements for the Boy Scout Geology Merit Badge. Congratulations are due to the HGMS for this outreach education program offered to both Boy and Girl Scouts in the State of Texas. The HGMS acknowledges that it may be difficult to get the word out to Girl Scouts since they are not accustomed to having earth science offered to them. HGMS hopes they can make an impact and change this perception. Stay tuned in the future to hear more about this nationally recognized education program.

General Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2014

by Nancy English

HGMS Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Ray Kizer at 7:30 p.m.

President Kizer thanked everyone for coming to the September meeting, and he offered a welcome to our new members and visitors. The meeting was attended by 27 regular members and four visitors.

He then asked the visitors and new members to stand and be recognized. The visitors were Gail Span, Anna Kirk, Kathryn Kelly, and Alice Hamilton. Alice donated raw and finished material. It will be available for sale after it has been cataloged.

Drawing: Kathryn Kelly, visiting from Northern Ohio, won the drawing for the Dolomite Crystal. Andrea Bruneau won the drawing for the Mexican Opal.

Minutes: Nancy Fischer moved to approve the minutes of the August and July General Meetings as published in the BBG. Natalie Brandes seconded, and the membership passed the motion.

The President suspended Show-n-Tell and the Committee reports so the program presenter could leave earlier for her stay in the Woodlands.

A Woman's Perspective on Mineral Collecting: When Gail Copus Spann discovered the world of minerals a number of years ago, she found herself in a hobby dominated by men and very few women collectors. She also discovered along the way that women have a very different collecting style from men—a style that she explores in this presentation. Along with her husband Jim, they are actively involved in the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas, TX, and are avid fine mineral and gemstone collectors, with a collection rivaling many museums. Their mission in the hobby is to encourage more young people to learn the importance of minerals and to want to start collecting on their own. Her presentation enlightened the audience on how best to attract women buyers as well as on how women can maximize their shopping enjoyment.

Many attendees left right after the presentation, so the expected Committee reports are printed here with updates that were provided by some members.

Section Reports

Archeology Section: The September meeting featured an excellent presentation by Robert Moore and wife Nancy Engelhardt-Moore on the Dendera Complex of Temples in Egypt. The next Archeology Section meeting is Thursday, October 4, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.

Beading Section: The Beading Section's project this month was a Lentil Spiral Neck-

Get last-minute news about club events by sending a note
to Jim Kendall at kendal_ja@yahoo.com

lace. The next regular Beading Section meeting will be Saturday, October 18 at 1:30 p.m. Saturday's project will be Halloween earrings. A material list and instructions will be posted on the HGMS Web page.

Day Light Section: In September, the group learned the techniques to use liquid silver beads to create jewelry. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 13, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. The supplies will be provided to make velvet-covered foam interiors for cigar boxes to display gem products.

Education Committee: Carrie Hart reported that instructor Ray Kizer had eight students who participated in the Cabochon-Forming Class on Sunday, September 14. The students were taught the basics of forming an oval-shaped calibrated cabochon. All of the participants were able to complete at least one project stone. Carrie is creating a waiting list for upcoming classes. Course Fees must be paid in advance. Contact Carrie Hart for availability, course schedules, and fees. Please e-mail her at classes@hgms.org or at carriehart2000@yahoo.com.

Faceting Section: The next meeting is on Wednesday, October 8 at 7:00 p.m., (*Note the time change*), the program is to be announced.

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section: The next regular meeting is Monday, October 20 at 7:30 p.m. Program to be announced.

Mineral Section: On October 17, Paul Brandes offered a presentation on the source locations for the Minerals of New Mexico. The next two Mineral Meetings will be on Wednesdays. The October 1 presentation will focus on how to make clear and useful mineral specimen labels for your collection. Then on October 15 at 7:30 p.m., the Section will gather to begin making preparations for the upcoming HGMS Gem and Mineral Show. Some of the work involved will be putting together teacher kits, organizing the fluorescent exhibit, determining who will be available to help with the Mineral Section booth, and other show activities.

Paleo Section: The September presentation was on how and where to collect from the Pierre Shale at Glendive, Montana. Neal showed samples of his concretion finds from his recent AFMS field trip to Terry Mountain. Neal provided latitudes and longitudes for the site. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 21 at 7:30. The program will be announced in an e-mail blast.

Show Committee Report: The card labeling and pizza party will be held on September 27 at 10:00 a.m. Please continue to donate items for the October 11 Show Auction and the Info Booth Auction at the HGMS Show. Place them in the large purple container.

Youth Section: The Youth Section met on August 20. The kids were busy working on their competition stones for the November Gem & Mineral Show. The Section will meet Saturday, October 6 and again on October 20 from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

BBG Editor and Webmaster: Phyllis George reported that articles and minutes for the BBG are due October 8, 2014. She left the award for Chris Peak with Ray Kizer to give to Chris.

October General Meeting: The October 28 General Meeting will feature a program by Neal Immega on **The Evils of Mineralogists**. Details to be announced.

Old Business

In the interest of time, President Kizer asked the members to follow the progress of Old Business items in the August 5 Board meeting minutes as published in the September edition of the BBG.

New Business

The Stafford Beading show is October 4–5. Tamara Ritchie was able to arrange a table to promote HGMS. Volunteers are needed for both days. Tamara is sending out an e-blast.

Terry Proctor reminded the members that there is a second plaque listing the most recent club presidents, and it has been missing for some months. Ray Kizer agreed to look into it.

Nominating Committee: Last month the BOD asked that each Section select a member to be on the Nominating Committee, so that we could announce their names during this meeting. The committee is made up of five members, but they must all be from different Sections. The Nominating Committee is responsible for talking with HGMS members to see if they would like to become an officer in the 2015 management. The club will vote on the 2015 slate of officers at the November General Meeting. Only two names were submitted so far. The President said he might put the Section Chairs on the committee if they did not provide a name by the October 7, 2014, Board Meeting. So far, the 2015 Nominating Committee is composed of Neal Immega and Steve Wilkerson.

Auction: HGMS plans on holding an auction at our next monthly meeting on October 28. We will be offering a number of items donated by Alice Hamilton. She made the journey south from Beaumont to Houston to share her mother's collection with us. Alice, along with her mother, were members of the Indiana Gem and Geology Association during the 1950s and 1960s. Her mother's collection contains fossils, minerals, and lapidary materials. All of the fossils were found by her in various areas in the Midwest. The minerals include some pieces of fluorite, collected mostly at Cave in Rock, Illinois before it was closed to rockhounds. The items will be in the case and on tables in the meeting room.

WHAT WE CAN'T
DO ALONE
WE CAN DO
TOGETHER



Board of Director's Meeting

October 7, 2014

by Nancy English

X	President - Ray Kizer	X	Archeology Rep - Garth Clark
X	1st Vice President - Paul Brandes	X	Beading Rep - Jillynn Hailes
X	2nd Vice President - Beverly Mace	X	Daylight Rep - Mary Ann Mitscherling
X	Treasurer - Rodney Linehan	X	Faceting Rep - Gary Tober
X	Secretary - Nancy English	X	Lapidary Rep - Phyllis George
	Past President - John Caldyne		Mineral Rep -
			Paleontology Rep - Mike Dawkins

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. and nine voting members were present—more than a quorum. President Ray Kizer presided over the meeting. Two other non-voting members also attended: Michele Marsel, Show Committee; and Tamara Ritchie, Publicity.

President's Comments: October has already been a great month for donations to benefit HGMS. We received donations of minerals and lapidary materials from two individuals; in addition, Nancy Bonnette and her husband also made a very generous donation of almost new jewelry-making equipment. I am working to clean and label the minerals and slabs for upcoming auctions.

Approval of Previous Month Board Minutes: Jillynn Hailes moved and Gary Tober seconded that the minutes of both the August and September 2014 Board Meetings be accepted as published in the September and October 2014 BBGs. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Rodney Linehan e-mailed financials to all Board members in advance of the meeting. Rodney mentioned that he had paid the renewal for the show trailers' licenses, and the check for the show venue lease has cleared the bank. Money in the amount of \$500 has been received from the new sponsor for the mineral kits—TESTA—the Texas Earth Science Teachers Association.

Show Committee: Michele Marsel reported that the Postcard Labeling party was held September 27, 2014 with a great turnout by our membership. The Dino Dig flats will be poured on November 1. An e-mail blast will go out this week asking people to save flats. The trailers are due to be picked up on October 18. The Show Auction and Supper is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Saturday October 11, 2014.

Officer, Committee, and Section Reports

Archeology Section: The October presentation by Garth Clark was about the new Pre-Clovis peopling of the Americas. The November meeting will be canceled for the loading of materials for the Show. The next Archeology Section meeting is Thursday,

December 4, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. The program will be on the Hidden Treasures of Rome and Naples, to be presented by Bob and Nancy Engelhardt Moore.

Beading Section: Jillynn Hailes reported that in September the members made a spiral necklace. The next regular Beading Section meeting will be on Saturday, October 18 at 1:30 p.m. The project will be Halloween earrings.

Day Light Section: Nancy English reported that at the September meeting the group made earrings from liquid silver and lapis beads for the show. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 13 at 1:00 p.m. The project will be to make velvet cushions for cigar boxes to display lapidary. If attendees do not want to work on boxes, Karen Burns has prepared the supplies to make copper pressed bracelets.

Education Committee: Jillynn Hailes reported for Carrie Hart. Another Cabochon Forming Class will be held on Sunday, October 26. The one-day class will be from noon to 4 p.m. Six places in the eight-student maximum class are already taken. The cost is \$60. Carrie is putting together a Viking Knit Class. The class is only available to six students. The cost is \$42.00.

Gemstones and Faceting Section: (Note changed name) The next meeting is on Wednesday, October 8 at 7:00 p.m. The main topic for the night will be (our favorite) – Polishing. Members are asked to bring some of their polishing laps along with their favorite compounds to show others. The September program was presented by Randy Carlson. He demonstrated preforming, cutting and polishing the pavilion, and transferring techniques to use in preparation for cutting the table.

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section: The next regular meeting is October 20 at 7:30 p.m. It will be an Open Shop night for cabochon making. (No large saws may be operated.) At the September meeting, Ed Clay displayed his award-winning cabochons and demonstrated how to choose the correct angles to cut stones for their best aspect. Ed Clay and Margaret Hardman-Muye explained the R.O.L.E. program. Lapidaries who participate in this program make cabochons in predetermined shapes out of specified rocks and minerals. The resulting cabs are judged against exact specifications. Five different levels of expertise can be achieved by going through the R.O.L.E. program—Novice, Apprentice, Professional, Master, and Artisan.

Mineral Section: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday October 15 at 7:30 p.m. Section Members will gather to begin preparing for the upcoming HGMS Gem and Mineral Show. This usually ends up being a great evening of collecting stories and “tall-tale telling” in addition to getting some much-needed work done before the Show. Some of the work involved will be putting together teacher kits, organizing the fluorescent exhibit, determining who will be available to help with the Mineral Section booth and with other show activities. At the October 1, 2014 meeting, Pete Stassi presented a label-printing program and demonstrated it. There will be no meeting November 5 due to the annual Gem and Mineral Show.

Paleo Section: At the September meeting, Neal Immega shared a slide show on the Pierre Shale formation in Montana. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Octo-

ber 21 at 7:30. The program will focus on Montana: "The Calypso Trail, a Unique Geological Wonder."

Publicity Committee: Tamara Ritchie reported that although the Bead Market show in Stafford gave HGMS a table at no charge to promote HGMS, only one volunteer came forward. Tamara cancelled the reservation of the table. She submitted information to the Houston Community Newspaper's Web site (Yourhoustonnews.com) regarding HGMS's upcoming October Section meeting times, the General Meeting, the October 11 Show Dinner Auction, and our November Show. She has been visiting local libraries to post the mini-flyers of the HGMS show, and she is still looking for and contacting October, November, and December festivals and other events in and near to Houston that will allow volunteers to promote HGMS.

Youth Section: The next meeting is on Saturday, October 18 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Youth members are still progressing on their showcase stones for the Show. They will be judged individually.

BBG Editor and Webmaster: Phyllis George reported that the deadline to receive articles is October 8, 2014. Because of the weak Internet connection at the club, Phyllis has acquired a hot spot type of connection named Mobile Beacon. It is in the process of being made available. She hopes it will make a difference.

Old Business

1. **Club House Repairs / upgrades:** Ray Kizer – Update – The next item is the installation of a pneumatic door-closing system.
2. **Security System:** Garth Clark – Garth will select a unit to his specifications from sales held during the Black Friday sales around Thanksgiving.
3. **Member Badges** – Jillynn Hailes reported for Carrie Hart that she has found a company to make our badges for \$15.00 apiece.
4. **General Meeting Presentation:** The next General Meeting is on Tuesday, October 28, 2014, at 7:30. *We will hold a live auction of recently donated items.* Following the auction, Neal Immega will give a short presentation on **The Evils of Mineralogists.**

Upcoming Program--November 25 General Meeting: We will have a presentation by **Adeene Denton – A Geology Student's Adventure in Nepal.** Adeene Denton is the 2014 HGMS Earth Science/Jewelry Arts Scholarship winner. Ms. Denton's presentation will be on her summer field geology class in Nepal and she will address three different areas she studied: the metamorphism, general geomorphology, and glacial impacts in the Himalaya Mountains. Over the course of the evening, she will give an overview of the tectonics that formed the Himalayas. Then using the knowledge she gained over the summer, she will extrapolate that concept to the geology on a regional scale. Ms. Denton will also speak about the unique culture of Nepal and describe her experiences during her trip.

New Business

1. The Show Committee: Nancy English moved that HGMS open a Square account to allow purchases made at the Information Booth during the Show to be paid by credit card. Jillynn Hailes seconded the motion, and it passed. Club memberships purchased at the Show Information Booth can also be paid by credit card. (Please note that payment by credit card is available **ONLY** for those memberships purchased at the Show Information Booth.) Categories will be set up to identify different types of charges. Receipts for sales will be texted or e-mailed to customers.

2. Names of Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee for the 2015 Board of Directors has been finalized: Archeology – Garth Clark, Beading – Diane Sisson, Lapidary – Steve Wilkerson, Mineral – Steve Blyskal, Paleontology – Neal Immega

3. Nominees for the 2015 officers: The 2015 Board of Directors nominations will be announced at the October General Meeting by the nominating committee. **Additional nominees can be added to the slate ONLY during the October General Meeting.** The club will vote on the finalized 2015 slate of officers at the November General Meeting.

4. Sign on club front door to direct people to side door: Tamara Ritchie suggested that a sign be attached to the door facing Brooklet directing people to the parking lot entry. The BOD agreed it was a good idea.

5. Auction of newly-donated materials: Three generous donations were received in October; they were from Alice Hamilton, Nancy Bonnette, and Faye Kendall. Alice and Faye donated minerals and lapidary materials which must be organized and labeled for a club auction. The Bonnette's made a superb donation of a complete shop of jewelry equipment they had purchased from Rio Grande. Most of the material is new or only minimally used. Many of the donated items will go to replace older, worn-out HGMS equipment, and many duplicate items will be organized for future auctions. It could take several auctions to work through all of the materials. **The first auction will be held at the beginning of the October General Meeting, October 28. This will be a live auction. Please bring your checkbooks, as there are many wonderful mineral and jewelry items to choose from.**

6. Change of Insurance Carriers: To reduce the cost of our insurance which is carried by Liberty Mutual through their underwriter Cadence Insurance CL, Ray Kizer proposes that we look into a new underwriter—namely **Hanover Insurance Co. or Harleysville**. This carrier is a strong underwriter for non-profits. They can *duplicate* our present policy, (with matching deductibles) but they also can provide us better loss reimbursement coverage on the building—\$726,000 (almost twice as much) and its physical contents \$292,000, all for annual premiums of \$4,062. Our current annual premiums are roughly \$8,700. This would be a savings of \$4,600. Plus, if we make the change by the end of October, we could save more money on the monthly premiums for November and December 2014. Thank you to **Scott West** for researching this information for HGMS. Mary Ann Mitscherling moved to make Hanover Underwriters the new HGMS insurance carrier starting November 1, 2014. Jillynn Hailes sec-

onded the motion, and it passed. By starting the new coverage in November, we should receive a refund from Liberty Mutual for our prepaid November and December premiums, and that can be applied to the new insurance.

7. Honorary Memberships: Beverly Mace moved that Yvonne Dobson be awarded a Lifetime Membership. Jillynn Hailes seconded the motion, and the motion passed. Beverly will notify Yvonne Dobson. Paul Brandes will notify Gail Span of her one-year free membership for being our speaker at the September General meeting.

Adjourn: Paul Brandes moved to adjourn the meeting, and Jillynn Hailes seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

AFMS President's Message
From My Desk to Yours
by Richard Jaeger, President
from AFMS Newsletter 10/2014

I really enjoyed attending the South Central Federation Show & Convention in Baton Rouge, Louisiana as well as the Northwest Federation Show & Convention in Hermiston, Oregon in August. Both federations can be proud of the work they are doing, and both have excellent incoming officers. I'm also looking forward to attending the upcoming shows of the Midwest and Southeast Federations.

One of the concerns of many in our hobby is the loss of collecting areas. Sometimes, government regulations which may be unwise, confusing, or unevenly enforced are a real problem. This has certainly been pointed out by Mike Nelson in his excellent articles in the AFMS Newsletters. However, sometimes we ourselves are our own worst enemies in regard to the loss of collecting opportunities. I want to give some examples of situations of which I am aware.

Over the years I have heard a number of rockhounds from area clubs—including my own—brag about bringing back a thousand pounds of material when, in fact, they might use only five or ten pounds over the rest of their life. After a while, those collecting sites are exhausted and there is little or nothing left for future generations of rockhounds to collect and enjoy. Please, take what you need, but leave something for the next person to have the experience of finding. Now in the Tulsa area, we frequently have fossil collecting sites uncovered in preparation for building a housing addition, shopping area, etc. In such a case, you and members of your club might as well collect all you can since the site will soon be covered up and lost. Extra material can always be used for grab bags, games for kids at your rock shows, presentations to school or scout groups, etc.

Weyerhaeuser Company has large tracts of forest land in McCurtain County in Southeastern Oklahoma which contain an abundance of quartz crystals. They permitted groups of rockhounds to use their network of logging roads and collect those crystals. However, when they were logging or replanting, they would close off access to those par-



ticular areas. Unfortunately, there was one rockhound who considered the area to be his personal collecting area, and he would ignore such closings—bypassing gates or perhaps cutting locks. His actions caused Weyerhauser to completely close their property to collecting. Fortunately, as time has passed, they are again allowing collecting.

Another case was a quarry in Southwestern Oklahoma which has abundant Permian Age amphibian and reptile fossils. Rockhound groups could schedule collecting trips on Sundays when the quarry was not in operation, and successful collecting was always assured. Their one rule was that specimens were not to be taken out for commercial purposes. Unfortunately, a couple of weeks after a group from Texas collected there, the specimens began appearing for sale on eBay. This action has caused the site to be closed to rockhound groups although university and museum groups can still arrange to collect. Our PLAC Chairman for Oklahoma is working to try to get rockhound groups back in, and hopefully he will be successful.

After the Rocky Mountain Federation Show & Convention in Bismarck, North Dakota in 1989, one of the field trip collecting sites was on private property for fossil ginkgo leaves and other plant fossils. An exceptional site, but just a short time after that, someone or group got on the property at night and took out a large amount of material and really damaged the area. So, naturally, the property owner closed this site to collecting. I don't know if it is still closed.

I've also just learned of a new site that's been closed in Montana. (*Editor's Note: Missoula, Montana and the site is the famous quartz crystal collecting area at Lolo Hot Springs, Montana.*) Read about this latest news in "A Wake-up Call" on page 4 of the October AFMS Newsletter.

Those are just a few examples of how we are sometimes our own worst enemies when it comes to loss of collecting opportunities. Unfortunately, it sometimes takes only person to ruin things for the rest of us. The AFMS has a "Code of Ethics" which tells us how to respect both private and public property on which we are permitted to collect; you will always find this "Code" printed in the AFMS Newsletters. Please read it, share it with other members of your club, and follow it. Let's not do anything to cause the loss of collecting opportunities. I would like to see the AFMS Code of Ethics reprinted in every club bulletin, and discussed at a club meeting at least once a year.

Richard



**"Remember, we agreed. I'd carry the canned goods in
if you'd carry the rocks out."**

by Ebners from Dust & Grit 2/00
via Golden Spike News 3/00

Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

Get all 101 of Brad's bench tips in "Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" on Amazon or <http://amazon.com/dp/0988285800/>

Source for Plastic

We often use plastic in our studios, such as for a single-part die or for a template. So it's handy to have a small supply along with the rest of your sheet, wire, copper, and bronze. But we seldom think to buy and stock any plastic.

The plastics store I go to has a scrap bin out back where they give away small pieces and scraps. I usually opt for the 3/8- and 1/2-inch thicknesses for use as forming dies, but there's always a variety of sizes and colors to choose from including thin sheets that are good for templates.

You can find a shop with Google or the Yellow Pages. Next time you go to your local shop, it's worth asking to see if they have a scrap bin.

Small Parts Containers

I'm always on the lookout for small containers to use for holding those various little parts and tools we deal with in making jewelry, especially since I go back and forth to classes and workshops. My latest find are some plastic vials about 15 mm in diameter and 75 mm long. Best part is—they are free.

The vials are used in hospitals and doctor's offices to draw blood samples. They must be thrown out after their expiration date. On my last doctor's visit, I asked the nurse if they had any expired vials. She tried to give me 400 of them. We settled on 200.

The ones I have are called "Vacutainers," but there are probably other brand names. They are sterile and made of clear plastic with a rubber stopper and a paper label all ready to write on. I find them really handy for small parts like jump rings, prong settings, small drills, nuts and bolts, faceted stones, and precious metal filings. Also shown in the image are some other handy containers—pill bottles, the old 35mm film cans, and metal breath mint boxes.



Rebranding Your Show

by June Harris

*Member of Santa Clara Valley G & M Society & Santa Cruz M & G Society
from CFMS Newsletter 9/2014 via Rock Writings 9/2014*

Is your annual show growing in attendance each year? Are your show dealers satisfied with your event? Do you draw in a significant amount of first-time attendees? Do children attend your annual show? If your answer to any of these questions is no, maybe you should consider “rebranding” your annual show. *Editor’s note to Show Committee: If all your answers to these questions are “YES,” pat yourselves on the back. (But keep reading anyway—you may find interesting ideas that might benefit our show AND our club.)*

What do I mean “rebranding”? Rebranding is finding a way for the average person to think of your society in a different way, or even notice it for the first time. If your show is not growing and bringing in more than rockhounds and specimen collectors, your society needs to reach a new audience. That new audience can be obtained by many methods, but all of them include “rebranding” your show.

Finding another organization with which to form an alliance is one way to grow your show. For instance, creating an area for Cub Scouts and/or Girl Scouts to earn a patch or an achievement is one way to make your turnstiles spin with attendance. The Santa Clara Valley Gem and Mineral Society (SCVGMS) has a Kids Area where Cub Scouts can earn their Geology belt loop and academic pin, Webelos can earn their Geologist pin as well as the Geology belt loop and academic pin. Also, SCVGMS Kids Area has a specialty patch that Girl Scouts can earn at their annual show. The average attendance over the weekend for the Kids Area is between 1400 and 2000 children, not including the adults they bring in. Wait you say, we don’t want that many children at our annual show. Okay, I can see your point, but you might be selling your society short. True, it is a lot of children, but it is a wonderful way to expose children to our hobby. It is also a great way to get more people through your doors.

The Mother Lode club has struck an alliance with the school district in their area. They have activities for children, as well as a speaker with a topic that is attractive to both children and adults. Rumor has it that they had over 4000 children at their last annual show. It has taken them quite a few years to grow their show, and many hours of hard work, but their success speaks for itself. It is a perfect example of “rebranding.”

If you can find a similar group or even a different type of organization to share your event, you can each draw in new people to your event. Maybe add music to your event, or invite a radio station to air from your event. A local PTA group may want to share a facility with your group, or maybe they just want to have a couple of booths at it. You can bet they will be advertising to their school families. You could also pair with a local food bank and offer a \$1 off admission when the patron brings a canned food item to donate. Use your pairing with another group to seek more attendees, more advertising, and more importantly—more exposure to reinforce your rebranding.

You could also create rock boxes for teachers to use in their classrooms to teach geology. Make a big deal about the donation. Time the donation for about a month before your show and include show fliers with your donation. Call the local television station, radio show, or newspaper with an announcement about the donation. Write your own press release and include photographs. Many times a newspaper will just drop in a well-written press release with pictures into their paper. Little work for them and great publicity for you.

What about a contest that is open to the public? The Categories could be something like “Ugliest rock,” “Most Resembles a Food,” “Best Scenic View,” or “Resembles an Animal or Creature.” Be creative. Advertise through *Rock and Gem*, Gem and Mineral Society newsletters, local university, a local natural history museum, and school newsletters. Use Facebook, Twitter, and other forms of social media. Open your contest to both adults and children. Use our hobby’s “Cool!” factor to your advantage. Post pictures of your club member’s latest creations or finds. Or, have a contest like the Feather River Lapidary and Mineral Society’s Tumbling contest. Maybe yours could be faceted stones, cabochons, or fine mineral samples. Make your society known for something fun or whimsical. Wouldn’t you like to attend an event that sounds fun—and more importantly—is fun?

Maybe you should think about what you call your annual show. Does it sound fun to attend? Could you rename it with a more inviting name? Like ...Gem and Mineral Fair, or maybe festival or jamboree. Calling it a show doesn’t really sound like it is a family fun-filled activity, but calling a fair makes it sound more inviting and less stuffy. Your new fair can include hands-on activities for adults and children, too. Make sure you have some displays or activities that will get a “Cool!” or “Look at this, its awesome!” in response to seeing it. Dazzle your new audience with your most unusual or spectacular specimens.

Rebranding is the key. Are your creative juices flowing yet? They should be. Sit down with a group of club members. Start a list of possible organizations with whom to make an alliance. What does your group have to offer those other groups? How could that alliance benefit your society? Think outside of your usual box. The sky is the limit while brainstorming. Fun activities where people leave happy with great experience is the key to success and repeat business. Children need to have activities that are hands-on, and with positive feedback from club members. Parents are more likely to bring their children back to an event when they leave with happy children.

Beware, though—all your club members need to be on the same page. One cranky member can ruin the whole experience for some people. Positive, upbeat, happy people will bring back more patrons and make the experience more fun for everyone who attends and participates. Rebranding your “Gem and Minerals show,” and finding new ways to sell it are the key to your society’s success. More importantly, the success of our hobby rests on your ability to sell the public on our hobby’s “Cool!” factor.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Thanksgiving Facts & Trivia *from Rockhound Ramblings 11/2014*

- Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be the national bird of the United States.
- Sarah Josepha Hale, an American magazine editor, persuaded Abraham Lincoln to declare Thanksgiving a national holiday. She is also the author of the popular nursery rhyme “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”
- Abraham Lincoln thought it was a good idea to unify the country after the Civil War, and he issued a “Thanksgiving Day Proclamation” on October 3, 1863.
- Hale’s contribution to Thanksgiving included the menu! She wrote numerous editorials stating that making a traditional Thanksgiving dinner should include turkey, stuffing, pumpkin pie, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, and mashed potatoes.
- 91% of Americans eat turkey on Thanksgiving.
- In the United States, about 280 million turkeys are sold for the Thanksgiving celebrations.
- Californians are the largest consumers of turkey in the United States. (*Editor’s note: This came from a California newsletter.*)
- Thanksgiving Day is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November in the United States.
- Although Thanksgiving is widely considered an American holiday, it is also celebrated on the second Monday in October in Canada.
- In the United States, the day known as Black Friday is the Friday after Thanksgiving, and it is considered the beginning of the traditional Christmas shopping season.

The History of Rockhounding

*from the Internet via Roanoke Valley Newsletter 11/1996, via others,
via Glacial Drifter 9/2000 and The Roadrunner 6/2014*

Rockhounding as a hobby dates back from earliest times. The world's first mineral collector was probably some savage whose eye was first attracted to the beauty of a colored pebble or shining piece of rock crystal.

From earliest times, men have collected attractive stones, minerals, and unusual fossils, and often have looked with superstitious gazes upon specimens whose origin they could not explain.

Today's rock hunters, armed with true understanding of nature's processes, are finding beauty hidden in the drab earth, unsuspected by their ancient forebears or by most people in modern times. Rockhounds don't just collect rocks. Despite the name of their hobby, their real interest lies in the minerals from which the rocks are composed. Born of the mighty forces of nature—sometimes deep in the earth, sometimes in or near its surface, eons ago, or even in recent times—these minerals give a broad tinge of beauty and interest to what the average person thinks of as merely rocks.

A rock is really an aggregate of minerals. Ordinary granite, for example, is a hard, compact aggregate of feldspar, quartz, amphibole, and biotite. Other rocks may be essentially one mineral. Sandstone, for example, is mostly quartz, limestone is mostly calcite.

Fossilized bones, shells, and wood are also collected by many rockhounds. Sometimes the original bone, shell, or wood gradually has been carried away bit by bit by underground water over vast stretches of time and replaced, cell by cell, with some mineral dissolved in the same water. Such fossils are unchanged in form, but have been completely transformed into opal, quartz, pyrite, or other minerals.

In the last 30 years, the number of mineral collectors has grown enormously. Today in the U.S. alone, they number at least 1,000,000. Some estimates have tripled and quadrupled that number.

Here is a hobby that has everything. It offers outdoor exercise, adventure, an introduction to a new world of beauty and color, a knowledge of geology, and a chance to make important contributions to the science of mineralogy. One may enjoy minerals as jewels of rare beauty, for diamond, ruby, sapphire, and other precious gems are minerals. Then, too, fine natural crystals of some minerals even surpass in beauty gems whose surface has been modified by cutting and polishing.

Like stamp collectors, rockhounds learn geography through their collections. Every country in the world offers minerals of special interest or rarity.

America's great master collection of minerals in the U.S. National Museum, Washington D.C., was gathered almost entirely by two amateurs who devoted many years and large fortunes to their hobby of rock collecting. No other branch of science owes more to the work of amateur hobbyists than does that of mineralogy.

Show Time 2014

November 1-2	Amarillo, TX	Golden Spread Gem & Mineral Society Amarillo Civic Center, 400 S. Buchanan St. Wanda Finley, finfran@midplains.coop
November 1-2	Midland, TX	Midland Gem & Mineral Society Midland Center, 105 N. Main St. show@midlandgemandmineral.org midlandgemandmineral.org
November 7-9	Humble, TX	Houston Gem & Mineral Society Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy. 5 miles east of Bush Intercontinental Airport 1 mile east of Hwy. 59 www.hgms.org; show@hgms.org
November 15-16	Round Rock, TX	Paleontological Society of Austin Old Settlers Association Headquarters 3300 Palm Valley Blvd. www.austinpaleo.org/fest showchair@austinpaleo.org
November 22-23	Mesquite, TX	Dallas Gem & Mineral Society Rodeo Center Exhibit Hall, 1800 Rodeo Dr. mark_a_hall@yahoo.com www.DallasGemAndMineral.org
December 5-7	El Paso, TX	El Paso Mineral & Gem Society El Maida Auditorium; 6331 Alabama gemcenter@aol.com; epmgms.com

Show Time 2015

January 23-25	Tyler, TX	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society Rose Garden Center; 420 S. Rose Park Dr. keithharmon19@yahoo.com
April 11-12	Abilene, TX	Central Texas Gem & Mineral Society Abilene Civic Center; N. 6th and Pine kmcDaniel23@suddenlink.net rockclub.txol.net
April 25-26	Waco, TX	Waco Gem & Mineral Club Extraco Events Center 4601 Bosque Blvd., Creative Arts Bldg. babydocmac@aol.com www.facebook.com/WacoGemAndMineralClub?ref=hl

2014		November					2014
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
						1 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section	
2 10-4 Shop Open Daylight Savings Time Ends	3	4 7:30 Board Meeting Election Day	5 NO Mineral Section 10-3 Shop open	6 7:30 Archeology Section Show Setup Day	7 HGMS SHOW Kids Day	8 HGMS SHOW	
9 HGMS SHOW	10 1:00 Day Light Section	11 7:30 Show Committee Veterans Day	12 7:00 Faceting Section 10-3 Shop Open	13	14	15 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section	
16 10-4 Shop Closed	17 7:30 Lapidary Section	18 7:30 Paleo Section	19 7:30 Mineral Section 10-3 Shop open	20	21	22 10-5 Shop Open	
23 10-4 Shop Open 10-4 Shop Open 30	24	25 7:30 General Meeting	26 10-3 Shop open	27 Thanksgiving Day	28	29 10-5 Shop Open	
2014		December					2014
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
	1	2 7:30 Board Meeting	3 7:30 Mineral Section 10-3 Shop open	4 7:30 Archeology Section	5	6 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section	
7 10-4 Shop Open	8 1:00 Day Light Section	9 7:30 Show Committee	10 7:00 Faceting Section 10-3 Shop Open	11	12	13 10-5 Shop Open 1:30 Beading Section Annual Holiday Party!	
14 10-4 Shop Open	15 NO Lapidary Section	16 7:30 Paleo Section Hanukkah begins	17 NO Mineral Section 10-3 Shop open	18	19	20 10-5 Shop Open NO Youth Section	
21 10-4 Shop Open First day of Winter	22	23 NO General Meeting	24 10-3 Shop open Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26	27 10-5 Shop Open	
28 10-4 Shop Open	29	30	31 Shop CLOSED! New Year's Eve				

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 - 2012 - 1st (Large)
2013 - 1st (Large)
2014 - 1st (Large)



AFMS

1998 - 2nd (Large)
2004 - 3rd (Large)
2007 - 1st (Large)
2010 - 2nd (Large)
2012 - 3rd (Large)
2013 - 3rd (Large)
2014 - 2nd (Large)



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