



The **BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE**

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

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July 2015



President's Message

by Raymond Kizer

I have met a few of our new members around the clubhouse recently, and there seems to be a recurring theme in our conversations, "So I joined the HGMS after talking with one of your members, and what do I do next"? It's not enough to just say "Hi" to our new members at the General Meeting or a Section meeting. I suggest that our members need to make them feel like part of the family. Learn what interests them about our hobby and why they chose to become a member. Explain the many things that HGMS has to offer. Give them a grand tour of our club, if they haven't seen everything already.



Someone new to our hobby can find it difficult to know where—or how—to jump in. Everyone seems to know 'way more than the new member about this or that. To me, the best thing HGMS has going for it is our openness to sharing:

- Sharing the skills that we have taken years to perfect.
- Sharing tips on how to start and complete a jewelry project.
- Sharing those little details that you can't find in a book.

Information that has been passed along from member to member is invaluable to a beginner. Let's get them excited about coming to the club, show

Continued on page 4

Upcoming General Meeting Programs

by Paul Brandes

July 28, 2015: To be announced

August 25, 2015: To be announced

2015 HGMS Gem & Jewelry Show—This Year ONLY
September 25–27, 2015
Y'all come!

(In 2016 our show will be held in November—As Usual.)

Contents

President's Message	1
Upcoming General Meeting Programs	1
Purpose of HGMS	3
2015 HGMS Officers	3
HGMS Scholarship Award	4
Show Committee Happenings, Etc.	5
Archaeology Section	7
Beading Section	8
Mineral Section Summer Workshops	8
Board of Director's Meeting	9
AFMS Safety Matters - Limiting Factors	14
Bench Tips	15
Safety in the Field: Hypothermia	18
Flaked Out	20
Show Time 2015	22
Calendars	23

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

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Purpose of HGMS

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

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

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

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

President's Message continued from page 1

them how much fun it can be to make something unique that no one else has taken the time to make. I keep telling the new people to pick the brains of those around them—we are happy to share.

If you are a new member, the first thing you should do is to get on our email list so you receive the most current news, any schedule changes, and information on upcoming events, classes, and field trips. Send an email to Neal Immega at n_immega@swbell.net asking to get on the list. Visit meetings of each of our various Sections at least once to see if they have some facet of information that interests you. Come by the Lapidary Shop some Wednesday or Saturday and ask the shop foreman how you can get started. They are here to help. And don't forget to pick the brains of those around you. We all have something to offer.

HGMS Scholarship Award

The Houston Gem and Mineral Society awarded its annual \$2500 Earth Science/Jewelry Arts Scholarship to Ms. Uma Lad. Ms. Lad is currently working on her BS in Environmental Science at Southern Methodist University Dallas. The scholarship is awarded annually by the Society to the most qualified competitor. Qualifications can be found at www.hgms.org. and then clicking on the green Current Info button.

HGMS seeks to raise awareness of Earth Science and Lapidary Art education in the Greater Houston area. Each year the scholarship is awarded to a student majoring in an Earth Science or Lapidary Art curriculum who is also a Texas resident whose home is located in Harris County or in a county adjacent to it.

The applicant must have completed his or her sophomore year in a four-year college or university or be transferring into such college or university after successfully completing the course of study offered by a two-year Texas college. The scholarship is awarded based upon need and merit.



Show Committee Happenings, Etc.

by Scott Singleton

HGMS 2015 Show Chair

By the time you read this, the Show Committee will have set dates for our summer events, namely the postcard labeling party, show dinner/auction, and the pre-show party. I will send those dates out to everyone when I have them. Also by the time you read this, we will have our postcard and full-page flier designed and in the queue to be printed in late June or early July. I fully expect them to be stunning, similar to the quarter page flier.

On a related note, our thoughts and prayers go out to Nancy English for a speedy recovery. We miss you, Nancy, and want to see you back soon!



Figure 1



Figure 2

And on a completely unrelated note, the Singleton family grew in late May. Figure 1 shows the proud papa making sure his newborn was comfortable on the front lawn. The doctor estimates the weight to be somewhere around 400–500 lbs., dimensions about 1.5 feet high and 2.5 feet in diameter. And believe it or not, it actually has a smaller brother (Figure 2), probably only about 200 lbs. The silicified knob sticking up out of the center of the tree is interesting, as are the dark smoky quartz crystals lining some of the cavities (Figure 3).



Figure 3

These specimens are Taxodioxylen from the Calvert Bluff Fm. of the early Eocene Wilcox Gp. I'm sure their grey and black exteriors give them away as being from one of the lignite mines. This is correct – they are from the Big Brown mine. Many years ago I did a trade with a collector in Dallas who had access to the mine and could pull out anything I wanted from their refuse pile (silicified stumps and logs are considered contaminants to the compa-

nies mining lignite). I traded him some finished wood slabs, and he pulled these out for me. I can assure you the back of my Jeep Grand Cherokee was scraping the pavement coming down I-45.

Since I didn't have any place for these, I dropped them off at Bill Moore's. They have been sitting on one of his shelves since then, and he finally got tired of seeing them. (I had originally intended for him to slab and polish them for me, with a fee to him for doing it of course, but they turned out to be too black to see any of the tree rings, which was a huge bummer). So Bill loaded them onto his trailer, drove over to my house and pulled up onto my front lawn, allowing us to roll them off and onto the grass where they will likely stay forever (I hope I don't move any time in the near future...).

So now if anyone comes over to my house, you will be greeted by my own version of the Gates of Argonath (the Pillars of the Kings in *The Fellowship of the Ring*).

**In preparation for the
Jewelry and Fossil Show coming up September 25–27, 2015,
YOU ARE INVITED
to JOIN US for the**

POSTCARD LAUNCH PARTY and POT LUCK LUNCH

Saturday, July 11, 2015 beginning at 10:00 a.m.
(the more volunteers we have, the faster it will get done)

**at
Houston Gem and Mineral Society
10805 Brooklet Dr.
Houston, TX 77099**

Please bring a dish to share, and we will provide drinks and everything else!

**We expect a great turnout for the show...
THANK YOU FOR HELPING US GET THE POSTCARDS OUT!**

**Food coordination by
rhondaburrage@hotmail.com
(please let her know what you will be bringing)**

Archaeology Section

by Nancy Engelhardt-Moore

June 6, 2015: No meeting was held on Thursday, June 4. Instead, the Section had a field trip to the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS). The May 7, 2015 minutes published in the June issue of the BBG will be approved at the next scheduled meeting on Thursday, August 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the HGMS Club House.

Program: Dr. Dirk Van Tuerenhout, the HMNS Curator of Anthropology, led a special tour for the Section of two exhibits: "*Samurai: the Way of the Warrior*" and "*China's Lost Civilization: The Mystery of the Sanxingdui*." A group of 19 people participated. The tour lasted almost three hours, and everyone enjoyed it very much! These are excellent exhibits, and they will be ending in September. So if you missed the tour, go see these exhibits before they leave. You will be amazed!

July 2, 2015: No meeting scheduled due to the holiday.

August 6, 2015: Garth Clark, the Section Chair, will give a talk on Paleolithic Pre-Clovis findings dating back at least 30,000 years from a cave in Texas. Mark your calendar to hear about this exciting new discovery that moves the time for human migration into The Americas much earlier than was thought—over 15,000 years! Learn the details of dating charcoal samples that are consistently confirming the much earlier age of migration. Watch for more information on this event!



Beading Section

by Nancy Fischer

May 16 Beading Section project: The three completed spiral bracelets were done by Diane Sisson who led the meeting and was the instructor. The other bracelets still being worked on are being done by Jillynn Hailes, Jill Cooper, Pat Hildbold, Lee Billings, and Nancy Fischer.



June 20 Beading Section project: Tila and Pico Bracelet. Instructions are on the Web site.

Mineral Section Summer Workshops

by Paul Brandes

June 27, 2015—Saturday at 2 p.m.—Introduction to Basic Rock & Mineral Identification: For this summer presentation, the Mineral Section will be hosting a basic rock and mineral identification workshop for all Society Members to attend. Whether you are an experienced mineral collector or just getting your feet wet in the world of minerals, this workshop will give you the tools to identify rocks and minerals in the field as well as in a show environment. Members of the Mineral Section will be on hand to provide information you can use on your next collecting trip. This will also be a great time for members to bring in that unknown rock or mineral that has been sitting around in your house and have it looked at by experienced Mineral Section members. This workshop will begin at 2:00 p.m. in the Clubhouse. Please plan to attend!

July 15, 2015—Fluorescent Minerals Prep for Show: For this gathering, the Mineral Section will be working on our fluorescent mineral display that we set up and display at the Annual Show. Come help with this important activity and learn a little more about fluorescent minerals in the process. This is also a great time to meet some of the Section members. This session will begin at 7:30 p.m.

August 19, 2015—Final Prep for Show: The Mineral Section will meet to finalize those last-hour preparations for the Annual Show. Come on out and help with these important items. This is also a great time to meet some of the Section members. We will meet at 7:30 p.m.

Board of Director's Meeting*June 2, 2015**by Ray Kizer*

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

Call to Order: President Ray Kizer called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. A quorum was present. One non-voting member also was present at the meeting—Chase Jennings, Show Information Booth Chair.

Approval of Previous Month Board Minutes: Garth Clark moved and Paul Brandes seconded that the minutes of the May 2015 Board Meetings be accepted as published in the June 2015 BBG. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Rodney Linehan e-mailed financials to all Board members in advance of the meeting. Rodney was not able to attend. Deposits and expenses were reviewed, and the Board was satisfied with the status of the club accounts.

Office, Committee, and Section Reports

Archeology Section: The May 7 program was on Avebury Britain's Neolithic Henge Monument and surrounding sites in southwest England, and presented by Bob Moore. Instead of the regular meeting on Thursday June 4, Dr. Dirk Van Tuerenhout, the HMNS Curator of Anthropology, will be leading the Section on a special tour of two exhibits: *"Samurai: the Way of the Warrior"* and *"China's Lost Civilization: The Mystery of the Sanxingdui"* on Saturday, June 6 at 2 p.m. For the first 20 members who sign up, the Section will provide free tickets for this event. Space is limited! So, please contact Bob Moore at rmpmoore@yahoo.com or call him at 281-531-0793 if you would like to attend this special event. **No meeting on July 2, 2015 due to the 4th of July Holiday.**

Beading Section: Diane Sisson reported that the Beading Section will meet on June 20, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. The project will be a Tila Bracelet. Notice for the project is posted to the Web site and includes a photo, instructions, and a list of materials required to complete the project. Jillynn Hailes will be teaching the class and demonstrating how to make the bracelet. During the May

meeting, Section members constructed a spiral bracelet.

Day Light Section: At the May Section meeting, members present inventoried the supplies, equipment, and tools left to the Section by Frances Arrighi. In addition, a review of the current year's schedule of program topics was discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 3, 2015, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. The program is on the trimming and polishing of sterling silver lost wax castings that have been tumbled. Members interested in learning certain techniques or in practicing particular skills should come to the June 3 Section meeting at 1:00 p.m. Shop fees DO NOT apply for Day Light members during Day Light meeting hours.

Education Committee: Carrie Hart reported that she is looking for an instructor to teach a dichroic glass class. Please contact Carrie Hart at classes@hgms.org if you are interested in teaching—or taking—this or any other HGMS class. Carrie will add students to her list and email them when a class is forming.

Gemstones & Faceting Section: The next meeting is on Wednesday, June 10, 2015. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. The topics for the session will be Dopping, Alignment, and Re-Dopping and led by James Cockrell, as well as a show and tell period. We will have a hands-on session using black dop wax. For at least the next two meetings, James and Randy will try to have hands-on sessions. For the July meeting, the subject will be cutting a simple gemstone. Then in August, it will be polishing one.

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section: The next regular meeting is Monday, June 15, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The program will be on Metal Texturing. Imagine a smooth surface of metal (silver or gold), then being able to press into the surface a set of parallel lines, or small dimples (depressions), or a set of fine scratches. All this and lots more fall into the category of Texturing. Open Shop will be held 5:00-7:15 p.m. prior to the meeting.

Mineral Section: The next regular meeting is Wednesday, June 3, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The program will be a Swap Night where excess material from our collections can be bought/sold/swapped. This will be an informal event and will be held inside. All Sections are invited to participate and swap. Setup begins at 7:00 p.m., and the formal business meeting will be kept to a minimum to allow ample time for specimen exchange and socializing. Refreshments will be provided. This is also our last regularly scheduled meeting before the summer hiatus. However, summer workshops will be scheduled during the hiatus.

Paleo Section: The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The program will be by Neal Immega who will thrill the attendees with his recent road trip exploits.

Publicity Committee: The committee met on May 28 and initiated discussions on Facebook Ads, the HGMS Facebook Page, Print Publicity, and Media Kits to spread the word about the September Show. Several action items under each topic currently are underway. The next Publicity Committee meeting will be Tuesday, June 30, 7:00 p.m., at the clubhouse.

Tamara Ritchie reported that she has set up new Pinterest and Facebook pages to help promote the HGMS show and club activities. Please view these pages and "LIKE" HGMS.

New Pinterest page: www.pinterest.com/hgmsorg

New Facebook page (public): www.facebook.com/HGMS.org

Existing Facebook group (members only):

www.facebook.com/groups/261418120558910/

All HGMSmembers: Please send pictures you'd like to have posted to publicity@hgms.org and specify whether you want them on Pinterest, Facebook public, new HGMS Web site (coming this summer/fall) or all three. Please watermark your images. If you don't know how, ask a friend or fellow HGMS member who is computer/smartphone savvy.

Tentative upcoming events: Info Booth tables at Intergem (June 19–21). We have been given access to the show and are seeking club members to staff the table during the show. Please contact Ray Kizer to volunteer for a slot.

Show Committee: The Show Committee held their first regular monthly meeting on Tuesday May 12, 2015. Committee members present discussed:

1. Upcoming Events: Intergem (June 19–21)
2. Setting preliminary dates for summer events:
 - a. Postcard labeling party
 - b. Show dinner / auction
 - c. Show Committee pre-show party
3. Dealer Committee Report
4. Publicity Committee Report
5. Info Booth organizational meeting and inventory on Saturday, June 13, 10:00 a.m., clubhouse
6. Ticket design and printing (end of June)

Youth Section: The next meetings are on Saturday, June 6, 2015 and June 20, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

BBG Editor and Webmaster: Phyllis George reported that the deadline to receive articles is June 10, 2015. This month she cannot accept articles later than this due to personal plans. Phyllis is still waiting for some of the Sections to complete and return their updated Web pages as part of the Web site update. Place photographs in the text where they belong. Send the updates to her as a Word file. Send an additional separate copy of the picture.

Old Business

1. **Club House Repairs / upgrades:** Next improvement is a doorbell that rings in the meeting room.
2. **Security System:** Garth Clark—Eight of the ten cameras of the new security system have been installed. There are sixteen channels, enough channels to add smoke detectors. Garth will look into additional items such as a cage, cable lock, and additional wire for the last two cameras and smoke alarms.
3. **Member Badges:** Beverly Mace has received the first badge order, and they are available in the meeting room for pickup by the membership. If you want a new badge, please let her know. She will place another order in time to be received before the September Show.

New Business

1. **General Meeting Presentation: Tuesday June 23, 2015 at 7:30: Nathalie Brandes—The Famous Silver Mines of Kongsberg, Norway.** They are perhaps the most aesthetic and exquisite silvers in the world. Our speaker, Dr. Nathalie Brandes, will take us on a tour that features such places as the King's Mine, The Norwegian Mining Museum, and the "Silver Vault," and walking around the town taking in the sights. As always, there will be a description of the geology, mining history, and plenty of pretty photos from around the Kongsberg area—and of course, lots of photos of wire silver specimens! Anyone who has seen Nathalie talk in the past knows this promises to be a very lively and entertaining presentation.
2. **1st Vice President Paul Brandes advises that we currently have no presentations booked for July 2015 and beyond. He is requesting help from the BOD and from the General Membership to secure outside speakers or volunteers from the membership to fill the open slots for the summer months. Please contact Paul if you would like to volunteer or if you have solid suggestions.**
3. **2015 HGMS Earth Science/Jewelry Arts Scholarship:** HGMS received three completed applications for Board member consideration. They are:
 - a. Ms. Presly Carr, who is currently working on her BS in Geology at the University of Houston.
 - b. Ms. Uma Lad, who is currently working on BS in Environmental Science at Southern Methodist University Dallas.
 - c. Mr. Daniel Morales, who has been accepted and will transfer to Texas A&M University to work on his BS in Geology.

The BOD has reviewed the three candidates' credentials, and the winner of the 2015 scholarship is Ms. Uma Lad by majority vote. The winner, Ms.

Lad, will be notified and a check sent on her behalf to the office of financial aid at Southern Methodist University Dallas. The Board agreed that the “need” component and the geological sciences/earth sciences focus in the application form both need clarification.

4. **Proposal for new shop equipment:** Michele Marsel moved to replenish materials and replace worn out equipment used for lost wax casting. Her motion included the replacement of the non-functioning Wall Mount kiln controller (\$435.00), reordering 50 lbs. of lost wax casting investment (\$47.65), and replacing six broken crucibles for centrifugal caster at \$17.05 each from Rio Grande. *Controller, investment, and 6 crucibles total cost: \$621.93.* To be paid for by the Club (shop expense). The motion was seconded by Ray Kizer and approved by the Board.
5. **Proposal for quarterly Club Swap Function:** Chase Jennings laid a proposal before the HGMS Board to host a *Fossil, Mineral, Gemstone, Lapidary, and Native American Artifact Trade Show* which will allow HGMS Sections, HGMS members, and outside dealers (who want to become new members) to hold a one-day sale at the HGMS clubhouse. Mary Ann Mitscherling moved to allow the sale, provided Sections have the first opportunity to reserve and pay for their tables.

Reserving a table will cost \$30.00 each, and they will be reserved in the following manner: Club Sections will have until June 16 to reserve and pay for a table. After that, the remaining tables will be first-come-first-served until they are all reserved. Mary Ann’s motion was seconded by Garth Clark, voted on, and approved by the Board. Details of the Trade Show will follow in an email blast from Chase Jennings who will coordinate the effort. Tables will be set up inside the HGMS clubhouse and outside under table tents if there are enough dealers.

6. **Online Memberships / Square Store:** Chase Jennings proposed that the Board set up a Square Store for the purpose of taking electronic payments for show tickets, online memberships, info booth, and dealer fees in the future. This account will allow HGMS to take credit cards and debit cards for our sales. The Board confirmed that we already have a Square Account and that a system must be established to separate and identify various types of purchases for proper accounting purposes. Diane Sisson moved to allow Chase Jennings to set up and identify electronic sales using the existing Square Store account. The motion was seconded by Gary Tober, and it passed by majority vote.

Adjourn: Paul Brandes moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mike Dawkins seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

AFMS Safety Matters - Limiting Factors*by Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair**from AFMS Newsletter, via Gem Cutters News 3/2015*

Speaking of safety matters—this time of year, and any time of year, it is wise to mind one's limits. Safety has a great deal to do with one's personal limits. I know, people are pretty much going to do what they want to do and often simply ignore limits, but limits often are related to safety concerns.

From time to time, one hears of a fellow out shoveling snow and having a heart attack. A heart attack can happen any time, but when one ignores their own personal limits, it tends to, at times, tempt fate. If one is in a high-risk group—say, males of middle age working out in the cold where the blood vessels are constricted in order to keep blood flow and warmth where it is most needed—in the core of the body—well, that is a limitation factor folks should well mind.

There are numerous additional limitation factors to mind in our hobby. Sure, one can walk a 1/4 mile into a quarry, but one should be mindful that one will be walking out another 1/4 mile, and this time, hopefully, carrying a pack or bucket of great, yet heavy, minerals. What is your limit—walking 200 feet, 1,000 feet, 1/2 mile, two miles—and back? It is wise to know and to mind one's own personal limits.

How does one know their limits? Truly, one would not want to set a personal limit too low since that needlessly restricts doing things that one could indeed do. Then again, one would not want to set limits too lofty, possibly putting oneself into a difficult situation.

If there are doctor-imposed limits of walking distance, those indeed should be respected. However, if limits are self-imposed, such limits could be more difficult to respect. Care and common sense should be the watchword of the day.

We work with numerous personal limits every day. How good is one's eyesight for a person faceting a stone? One would not want to make eyesight-related mistakes. How tired is one feeling? One would not want to experience a driving accident from being tired. How achy is one feeling? One would not want to be breaking a lot of rock—and due to one's feeling achy—keep missing the chisel with their hammer strikes, etc.

So, in this challenging time of year, and really every time of year, please pay attention and mind one's limits—minding the small thing of a limit could be your healthy choice.

'Nuff said for now. Please be safe—within limits.

Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

Get all 101 of Brad's bench tips in
"Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" on Amazon
www.BradSmithJewelry.com

Small Parts Containers: I'm always on the lookout for small containers to use for holding all those little parts and tools we deal with in making jewelry, especially since I'm always traveling 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 the doctor's office to draw blood samples. They cannot be used after their expiration date, and are thrown out. On my last doctor's visit, I asked the nurse if they had any expired vials. She replied, "How many do you want?" and tried to give me 400 of them. (We settled on 200).

The ones I have are called "Vacutainers," but there probably are many other names. They are 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 & bolts, faceted stones, and precious metal filings.

Try a Toothpick: The round, stronger toothpicks have a multitude of uses on the jewelry bench. I use them for mixing epoxy resin, for applying paste solder, and with Zam for polishing in tight spots. Toothpicks are also handy for holding the stone while stone setting. Just break off the sharp tip, mold a little beeswax over it, and press it onto the table of your stone.

Soldering Prongs: I often use prongs to hold an irregular cab or other object on rings and pendants. But prongs can be a little tricky to solder. You must find some way to hold them all upright while soldering, and the simple butt joint that looks strong sometimes breaks when you start to bend the prong over the stone. There's nothing worse than having a prong break off when you're setting the stone *#~*!

I solved both problems with one little trick. It holds the prongs in position

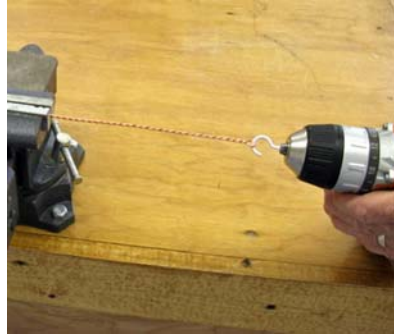
Get last-minute news about club events by sending a note
to Jim Kendall at kendal_ja@yahoo.com

while soldering, and it gives you a stronger joint at the same time.

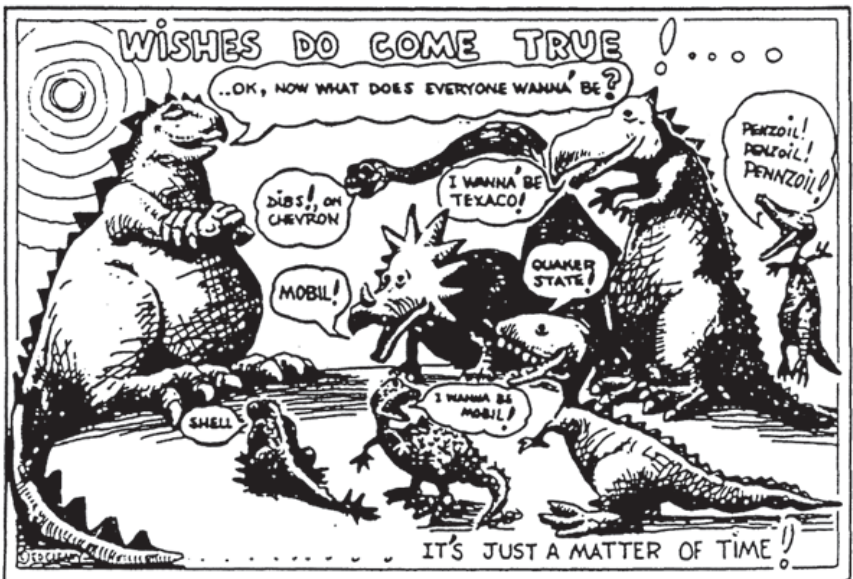
Locate and center punch the position for each prong. Then drill holes a little smaller than your prong wire. Sand a small taper on the ends of your prong wires, and stand them up in the holes. The wires support themselves, soldering is easy, and the joint is stronger because of the increased soldering area.

Twisting Wire: Twisting wire can be done with an old hand drill, but it goes much faster with a power tool. My preference is to use a screw gun, although a Foredom should do well.

Just make a little hook out of coat hanger wire (or use a screw-in cup hook) and chuck it up in your screw gun. Grip the free ends of the wire in a vice and slip the looped end onto your hook. Keep a little tension on the wires as you twist.



Note that a power drill is too fast a tool for this unless you have one with variable speed.



From The Boondocker 5&6/92
via T-Town Rockhound 6/98



The Austin Gem and Mineral Society, Austin, TX
Will host the American and South Central Federations Annual Show
Make plans now to attend this Show
You don't want to miss this one.



AUSTIN GEM AND MINERALS SOCIETY 53rd Annual Gemstone, Jewelry, Mineral & Fossil Show.

GEM CAPERS



This year's theme:
PEGMATITES

October 23, 24 & 25, 2015
Fri. & Sat. 9am -6pm
Sun. 10am - 5pm



Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road

FREE Mineral Specimen

While supplies last

www.GemCapers.com

Youth Education SPONSORED BY SILICON LABS

Grand Prize Giveaway Gem Mine Quest for Knowledge Prizes Raffles
Wheel of Fortune Fluorescent Cave Special Exhibits Fluorescent Cave

MORE INFORMATION WILL BE PRINTED IN THE SCFMS NEWSLETTER IN FUTURE ISSUES

Safety in the Field: Hypothermia

by Timothy Foard

from Rock Talk 11/2014

Many years ago, during my time with the Army National Guard, I participated in a compass navigation exercise. My platoon was split up in pairs, and each assigned a course with two destination points so that each person has the opportunity for hands on navigation. One person used the compass to send the other person in the direction of the destination point. The terrain was wooded and very hilly, and the activity occurred during mid-June in one of the southern states. The first part of the course went fairly quickly; my partner reached his destination despite the challenging terrain. It was now his turn to send me off on a transit. Shortly after starting this second leg of the course, a heavy, but brief thunderstorm drenched us. Since it was hot, it was quite welcome. Long after the storm passed, it was still overcast, our clothes not yet dried, and it was taking much longer to finish this second leg, although the terrain type remained the same. It took so much longer in fact, that the navigation instructors went out looking for us. When they found us, one of the officers immediately grabbed the sleeve of my uniform. He shouted to the other officer, "his uniform is still damp," and they abruptly terminated the field exercise for the day. Their concern was that the conditions were present to trigger the onset of hypothermia.

Hypothermia is a life-threatening condition resulting from the body's core temperature being lower than the minimum needed for normal metabolism. In humans, this minimum temperature can vary from 97°F to 95°F. When the body's core temperature reaches about 95°F, a mild form of hypothermia occurs. Symptoms of mild hypothermia include involuntary (but controllable) shivering and numbness of the fingers, toes, nose—the more distal areas of the body. At first, the body restricts blood flow to the extremities to conserve heat in the vital organs.

If the body continues to lose heat, this mild form of hypothermia morphs into a moderate and then severe form of hypothermia. Moderate hypothermia, which occurs when the core temperature ranges from 92–95°F, is characterized by a lack of coordinated motor skills, such as fumbling hands and slurred speech, along with fits of uncontrollable shivering. Mental confusion, which can result in poor decisions in the face of crisis (such as the shedding of clothes), is also a sign of worsening conditions.

When the body core temperature reaches 86–92°F, it becomes difficult to move because of reduced blood flow. The pupils become dilated, the pulse slows and become very weak, the person's skin is pale or chalky, and there is a tendency for the person to curl up into a ball in an effort to conserve heat. This is hypothermia in its severe form. If not treated, shallow breathing and unconsciousness ensues, resulting to death from cardiac arrest. Often in the

final stages, the person becomes semi-conscious and feels the returning warmth. The warm feeling is the result of the body organ system shutting down, including the nervous system and thus the loss of the cold feeling.

The danger in hypothermia lies in the fact that it can occur in warm or even hot regions that rarely receive freezing temperatures. In northern regions, hypothermia often occurs when either people were caught off-guard by unexpected extreme weather patterns or they were prepared, but the precautions were not adequate.

The most recent data in the CDC Mortality Database from 1999 to 2005 yields some obvious results, such as Wyoming and Montana: two states with the most cold-related deaths. New Mexico and the District of Columbia were also high on the list of regions with incidents. In western regions, conditions leading to hypothermia often occur after sunset, when nighttime temperatures drop rapidly, whereas in the southern and mid-Atlantic regions, rapidly changing weather patterns will trigger these conditions. In urban settings, emergency workers sometimes missed the signs of severe hypothermia because victims are often intoxicated or otherwise psychologically impaired. Many of the fatalities occurred at detoxification centers before their hypothermia was recognized.

Hypothermia likely occurs in men more than in women, and increases with age, although infants are also a high-risk group. People who spend long periods of time outdoors (sounds familiar?) are also at risk. There is at least one reason why the cold kills people regardless of locality: alcohol. Heavy drinkers are especially vulnerable to severe and frequently fatal hypothermia. Alcohol, which creates a brief “warming” sensation by expanding the blood vessels, accelerates the onset of hypothermia by altering the body’s normal circulation rate. Water has excellent heat-absorbing capacity, and for that reason, wet clothing greatly accelerates the heat loss from the body core.

Mild hypothermia can be prevented by simply putting on additional clothing to stay warm. In more severe cases, however, additional measures are necessary, and if you are the victim, you may not immediately recognize the symptoms. Seek medical attention for moderate or severe hypothermia. The first thing to do when hypothermia is suspected—or even a possibility—is to stop the heat loss. If wet, remove wet clothing and get into dry ones and add extra layers if possible. If outdoors, get into shelter that will protect against wind and rain such as a car or tent. If you have to keep moving, put on clothing that will offer some protection from the elements.

In moderate and severe hypothermia, rewarming the body is necessary. Warm the center of the body—chest, groin, neck, and head—first. To re-warm the victim, have the person lay under a dry blanket, clothing, sheets, a sleeping bag, or any dry, insulating material. A second person lying next to

the victim may be needed to provide additional heat. Avoid rewarming the extremities first, especially in extreme cases, as cardiac arrest may result. If the victim is conscious, giving warm beverages helps, as long it contains no alcohol or caffeine. Keep the person warm and insulated until help arrives.

The good news is that the body is potentially more resilient to the cold than the data suggest. While the survival rate in cases where the body's core temperature has fallen below 70 degrees Fahrenheit is minute, people have survived with a core temperature as low as 59 degrees. In places like Alaska and Canada, rescue workers always act according to the following rule: "A body is not dead until it is warm and dead."

Sources:

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/staysafe/hypothermia.asp>

<http://timberlinetrails.net/ClimbingHypothermia.html>

http://www.forbes.com/2008/12/19/hypothermia-public-health-biz-healthcare-cx_wp_1219colddeaths_slide_6.html?thisSpeed=30000

Flaked Out

An introduction to flint knapping

by Bob Miller a.k.a. White Arrow

Member of the Deming (New Mexico) Gem & Mineral Society

from Rock Chips 3/2004, via The Rollin Rock 4/2004

via The Rockhouser 12/2014

Somewhere, lost in the sands of antiquity, the first flint tool lies buried and forgotten. My guess is that it sleeps somewhere east of Eden in Mesopotamia, likely fashioned by the hands of Adam. Of course, I don't really know and neither does any other living human. The bond between mankind and flint is very old and deep indeed. It likely is some vestige of this friendship that reappears today as the urge to rockhound.

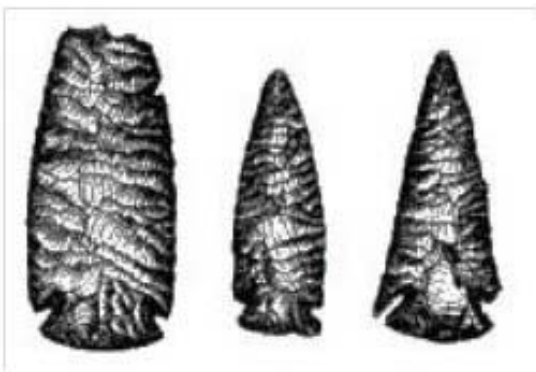
Flint knapping (from the German ("Knappen" meaning "to nibble") is doubtless one of the most basic and ancient of industries. Without the very sharp and durable edges produced by fracturing flint, even the working of wood becomes next to impossible. If you doubt this, go into the woods without knife, ax, or saw and try to fell a useable sapling. Catching a cooperative beaver is about your only option here. Along with fire, flint was survival for millennia, and many of those fires were kindled using a flint spark.

In everyone's genealogy, there were flint knappers. It may be many generations ago for some, or only a few as in this writer's own Cherokee and Choctaw ancestors. Their skills were undoubtedly adequate, or we would not be here today.

Until the recent development of fused diamond plating on a tungsten matrix blade, obsidian (as in "Apache Tears") produced the sharpest known edges—far superior even to the best surgical steel scalpels. Obsidian fractures at the molecular level producing edges that may be only a molecule or two thick. The Maya Indians of southern Mexico were in fact successfully performing brain surgery (trepanning) centuries before Columbus landed, using obsidian tools.

The knap-ability of flint is owed to its krypto-crystalline structure (its crystals are microscopic or non-existent). It is much like glass, being about 95% quartz (silicon). When struck a sharp blow with a hard object, it will fracture into a "Hertzian cone" (conchoidally). Perhaps the easiest illustration of this phenomenon is to shoot a piece of thick glass with a B-B-gun. The characteristic product of this collision is a smoothly rippled Hertzian cone. This is the basis of flint working by percussion.

Flint knapping is the art of vectoring blows from a "bill-let" to remove flakes from the core in a manner predictable enough to eventually shape a blade. This process is called "core reduction." Once a blow is struck, it cannot be recalled. For better or worse, the record of that blow is "written in stone."



Knapping is a lot like playing billiards. Due to inconsistency or defects (inclusions) in the flint, it can resemble playing pool on a wavy table with a tree limb and glass eggs. There are times I feel that I am actually matching wits with a piece of flint, as in three-dimensional chess! Many Indians believed that everything—even inanimate objects like rocks—had a spirit and were somehow "alive." Perhaps they were right.

There is, of course, a lot more to knapping, like pressure flaking, heat-treating flint to improve its "lithic" qualities, "hands on" experiencing of just how sharp flint really is, weeping over the halves of an exceptional, almost complete blade, and of course losing one's mind.

One thing is certain. If you pursue knapping with any degree of persistence, you will recognize that its ancient practitioners were not a bunch of dumb savages banging rocks together. Instead, that is what we modern hobbyists are! They did it to survive—we do it for fun!

Show Time 2015

July 10-12	Houston, TX	Luster Fair--Gems & Minerals from India George R. Brown Convention Center www.thelusterfair.com/promotional-plan.html
July 16-18	Cody, WY	Rocky Mountain Federation (RMFMS) Show
August 8-9	Baton Rouge, LA	Baton Rouge Gem & Mineral Society Fraternal Order of Police
August 15-16	Bossier City, LA	ArkLaTex Gem & Mineral Society Bossier City Civic Center, 620 Benton Rd. larockclub@gmail.com ; larockclub.com
August 22-23	Jasper, TX	Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society Events Center
September 25-27	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 ; showchair@hgms.org
October 9-11	Mount Ida, AR	Annual Quartz Crystal Digging Contest director@mtidachamber.com www.mtidachamber.com
October 10-11	Temple, TX	Tri-Cities Gem & Mineral Society Mayborn Civic Center, 3303 N. 34d St. burnette@aceweb.com
October 23-25	Austin, TX	AFMS/South Central Fed. (SCFMS) Shows Palmer Events Center Exhibit Hall 900 Barton Springs Road susanp@austingemandmineral.org http://www.austingemandmineral.org/
November 7-8	Amarillo, TX	Golden Spread Gem & Mineral Society Amarillo Civic Center, 401 S. Buchanan St. finfran@midplains.coop
November 21-22	Mesquite, TX	Dallas Gem & Mineral Society Mesquite Rodeo Center Exhibit Hall 1800 Rodeo Dr.; bravo1bravo@sbcglobal.net http://www.dallasegmentandmineral.org/
December 4-6	El Paso, TX	El Paso Mineral & Gem Society El Maida Auditorium, 6331 Alabama e-mail: gemcenter@aol.com

2015		July					2015
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
			1 10-3 Shop Open 1:00-3:00 Day Light Section NO Mineral Section	2 7:30 Archeology Section	3	4 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section Independence Day	
5 10-4 Shop Open	6	7 7:30 Board Meeting	8 10-3 Shop Open 6:30 Gemstones & Faceting Section	9	10	11 10-5 Shop Open	
12 10-4 Shop Open	13 7:30 Lapidary Section	14 7:30 Show Committee	15 10-3 Shop Open 7:30 Mineral Section Summer Workshop	16	17	18 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section	
19 10-4 Shop Open	20	21 7:30 Paleo Section	22 10-3 Shop Open	23	24	25 10-5 Shop Open	
26 10-4 Shop Open	27	28 7:30 General Meeting	29 10-3 Shop Open	30	31		

2015		August					2015
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
						1 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section	
2	3	4 7:30 Board Meeting	5 10-3 Shop Open 1:00-3:00 Day Light Section NO Mineral Section	6 7:30 Archeology Section	7	8 10-5 Shop Open	
9 10-4 Shop Open	10	11 7:30 Show Committee	12 10-3 Shop Open 6:30 Gemstones & Faceting Section	13	14	15 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section	
16 10-4 Shop Open	17 7:30 Lapidary Section	18 7:30 Paleo Section	19 10-3 Shop Open 7:30 Mineral Section Workshop	20	21	22 10-5 Shop Open	
23 10-4 Shop Open 30	24 31	25 7:30 General Meeting	26 10-3 Shop Open	27	28	29 10-5 Shop Open	

The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

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2006 - 2012 - 1st (Large)
2013 - 1st (Large)
2014 - 1st (Large)



AFMS

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



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