



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

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

Volume XLVI - No. 11

November 2015



## **President's Message**

*by Raymond Kizer*



**F**irst, I would like to thank the Show Committee, volunteers, and club members who helped put together one of the best Gem & Mineral Shows in recent years. Thanks go out to our Show Chair Scott Singleton for pulling us all together and keeping us on schedule as we prepared for the show, and to Beverly Mace for all the organizational skills she continues to display in getting all our show materials to and from the show in an orderly and efficient manner. Beverly also does another hundred things with the Youth Section and the HGMS display cases. Special thanks go out to Rhonda Burrage, Chase Jennings, Sharia Trumble, and the Info Booth teams who create order out of Chaos, and to Nancy English who coordinated all our volunteers. To our Dealer committee, Ticket sales, Dino Dig, Youth Section, Scouts, Demonstrations, and Hospitality helpers—also a big thanks. You see where I am going with this—far too many names to mention. It is thanks to the volunteer help from all these people and others not mentioned that the Houston Gem & Mineral Society puts on the biggest and best show in Texas. Thank You.

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*Continued on page 4*

## **Upcoming Programs**

*by Paul Brandes*

*HGMS 1st VP*

**O**ctober 27, 2015: **Neal Immega--Australian Opals:** Neal will be giving a presentation on Australian opals using photos taken by Rose Cleveland during her trip to the land down under.

**November 24, 2015: American Corundum Deposits:** Despite its large land mass, the United States has relatively few gem corundum (ruby or sapphire) localities. However, there are many which produce very attractive sub-gem specimens. Montana and North Carolina are the two principal gem regions, but many states, even Texas, have produced euhedral sub-gem

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

**Articles now are due on the 15th day of the month before the date on the BBG issue.**

*Editor: Phyllis B. George  
22407 Park Point Drive  
Katy, TX 77450-5852  
Phone: (281) 395-3087*

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

### Purpose of HGMS

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

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

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

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

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*President's Message continued from page 1*

Moving on to coming events: it's finally cooler outside, and that means Field Trips. I believe the October 31 Paleo trip to Midlothian, TX is fully subscribed. But there still may be time to join the Mineral Section field trip to the Emerald Ridge Fluorite and Quartz collecting site in central Texas. It's planned via Baringer Hill Minerals. You may sign up on their Web site: <http://www.baringerhill.com/>

The annual Christmas party and Auction will be held December 12. This will be a potluck dinner, so please coordinate with Nancy English to see what to bring. The club will supply the main meat dishes. Donations for the auction can be made anytime to the shop supervisors or to any section leaders before the party.

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*Upcoming Programs continued from page 1*

corundum crystals. These historic pieces, when they can be found, can be very attractive as well. For this evening's presentation, Will Heierman will talk about the history, geography, and geology of corundum deposits, as well as mention of the latest news about opportunities for rockhounds who would like to collect their own. Will has also promised that he will have specimens from his collection that is more than thirty years in the making.

**December 12, 2015: Annual HGMS Holiday Party.** 5 p.m. view auction items; 6 p.m. Dinner; 7:00 Auction. More information later

**December 22, 2015: NO MEETING -- Happy Holidays!!**

**January 26, 2016: Possible Benefit Auction; details to follow.**



## Collecting Petrified Wood at the Lignite Mine near Jewett, Texas

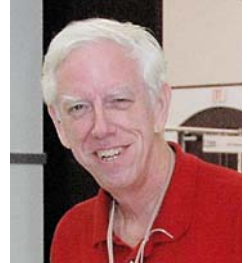
by Neal Immega

Ph.D. Paleontologist

Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

**T**hey said we could bring a big bucket for collecting petrified wood. How about this one?(Below)

Rick Rexroad put together a perfect summer trip to Jewett, Texas, to collect petrified wood. We also got a wonderful mine tour. The Westmoreland Coal Company operates a lignite mine that feeds a BIG power plant near the town of Jewett. The company welcomes visitors so that they can see firsthand how strip mining should be done. They have been mining about 35,000 acres over a period of about 30 years, and the land is being left BETTER than they found it. Ranch land in the area sells for about \$1,500/acre in its original state, but after strip-mining, it goes for about \$4,000/acre because it is suitable for row crops. The power plant that uses the lignite is extremely clean because it incorporates sulfur scrubbers.



Can we fill this up?

**Below:** Huge Dragline to remove overburden





The mine is on a really big scale—it has to be big to be profitable. They recover a puny 6–10-foot lignite seam after removing 100 feet of overburden. To give you an idea of scale, the white box on the dragline in the picture on the previous page is 100 feet long, and the reach of the boom is 300+ feet.

The lignite is found in river swamp deposits of the Wilcox Group, Calvert Bluff Formation. The sediments are mostly sand mixed with a minor amount of clay. The part that interests us is the petrified wood, and that is found in



Petrified wood in the lignite

chunks and log jams in and above the lignite. The HGMS expert, Scott Singleton, has used thin section examination to identify these logs as bald cypress. Superficially, the only thing you can tell in the field using a loupe is that the logs are from conifers.

I have seen full round logs in Wilco lignite mines that are half petrified wood and half lignite. I have been told that sometimes the dragline operators find huge log jams positioned above the lignite layer, and they treat them just like all the other non-burnable over-



Quartz crystals in cavities in Jewett wood

burden. Some of wood was partially rotten before burial, and now the rot cavities are filled with sparkling black quartz crystals.

Our tour guide, the mine engineer, would not let us collect from the cut faces for safety reasons. Instead, he took us to the bonanza of wood at the screening station and told us to PLEASE haul away all we wanted. They only want it if it will burn. This is the best piece found, a full round.

The trip was perfect with sightseeing from an air-conditioned van followed by a surfeit of petrified wood. A new member summed it up "This is one of the five best trips I have ever been on!" Thanks, Rick. Thanks, Westmoreland Coal Company.



A full round of petrified wood



Collect all you want.

## Diving and Collecting Rocks

by John Anderson

*The Miner—sometimes known as the Old Salt  
Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society*

The following story describes the love that I have of both the desert and the ocean. Some people feel the sea is just a large body of water that can't be used for irrigation, and the desert is just a dirty sandy area. My perception of each of these two great beautiful areas is that each is always in control.



As my love for those two forms of nature increased, I developed a special interest in the complex copper minerals, especially liking chrysocolla and malachite. The problem was that those minerals are found nowhere near where I prospected for minerals with mining potential. I was extremely lucky to find a "honey hole" deposit of those two minerals that were of lapidary quality, but the best part is—I found them in the ocean.

Have you ever been in a desert wilderness area where if you fell, only a buzzard would be able to find you? Have you been in a small boat with no sight of land anywhere, and you enjoyed the exhilarating feeling of adventure? To me, both the desert and the ocean are what I call the "big adventure."

My father always had a mining claim while I was growing up, but I do not remember him or my mother when they were not on a constant lookout for a good-producing mine. My mother's brother Howard also had many tales of working underground in gold mines, so we always had adventure stories in our family. My parents both liked to fish, so we would go fish on a pier in the ocean, near the Los Angeles, California area. We also had to go to the desert or to the mountains to keep up our mining assessments work.

I grew up with this basic underlying love of these two different forms of nature that I received from both of my parents. When I was about 17, I began going to night school to learn photography, and by chance I was introduced to the lapidary hobby class being held in the same building. Once I was shown how to cut and polish a cabochon, I rarely went back to the photography class because I became "hooked" on the lapidary hobby. It really was an easy transition for me and my parents to become dedicated Rockhounds because in prospecting we were always picking up rocks. During my first lapidary rockhound trip, the geology completely captivated me—along with the lore and tales of lost treasures in the desert.

I, like my parents, loved to fish in the ocean only about 25 miles from our home in Los Angeles, and we lived only about 150 miles or less from where agate and jaspers could be found, so it was easy to keep those two great



hobbies alive. Almost immediately after I discovered the Lapidary hobby, I joined the Glendale Lapidary & Gemological Society where I went on my first rockhound trip.

I met my future wife, Lee, and she too became hooked on both of these forms of nature. We shared our love of these two different forms of nature with our children. We made so many different trips to remote areas of Mexico that were both on the ocean and also in the desert that I have forgotten the number. Our children all learned to love the desert and the ocean while camping—without the normal conveniences a normal family thinks that they need.

After moving to Houston, Lee and I made many different dive trips together because by then our children were attending college. After my wife died, my son Kenneth and I made many dive trips to many different areas. My daughter Karen and her husband Jan dove in different parts of the world with two friends.

I joined the Houston Gem & Mineral Society where I met Matt Dillon, and my love of the desert was rekindled. I have made many trips into different parts of Texas to collect rocks, and into very remote areas of Mexico.

I have found rocks while diving in the ocean. The first time I found some quality lapidary rocks was nephrite jade while diving on the California coast on Highway One. The way to find the nephrite jade is either to wade out or swim out in the 55°F water temperature and try to pick up rounded, very smooth rocks. All of the rocks in those areas are rounded because they were formed in a tumbling surf. Nephrite jade has a Mohs hardness scale of 5.6. Most other rocks that look like nephrite are really serpentine, which has a Mohs hardness scale of 3 to 4. With a knife blade, you can easily scratch serpentine, but not the nephrite jade.

Nephrite is composed of  $\text{Ca}_2(\text{Mg, Fe})_5\text{Si}_8\text{O}_{22}(\text{OH})_2$  which is a very tough, compact variety of Amphiboles, Tremolite, and Actinolite. Both have about the same specific gravity of about 2.5 to 2.6, so the scratch method and the smoothness method are the best methods at hand unless you can see the rock close up to identify whether it is nephrite. On the Island of Guanahani in Country of Honduras, I was on a diving trip with Lee where I was able to collect nephrite jade at a dive site called Jade Beach. There was a lot of nephrite there at that dive site, so I was able to collect and to polish a nice specimen of nephrite. On one of our family trips to a remote area of Mexico, we would take our boat and just explore.

I was trying to spear a fish for our evening meal at a campsite that was many miles away. I was free diving, trying to find a good fish, when I passed over some green rocks. Immediately, I dropped my spear gun and went back to look at the rocks. The depth was only about 10 feet. The green rocks turned out to be a honey hole with a primary enrichment of copper minerals. The majority was the mineral chrysocolla with a very small amount of malachite

and cuprite. I purchased in town the small sledge, chisel, and a crowbar that I needed to dig the pieces out. With my SCUBA tank and about 40 pounds of extra weight, I sat on the bottom and banged away with my sledge. I dug out about 60 pounds of great material in two days—then I reburied my honey hole to return it to its normal appearance like the rest of the bottom. I needed to leave Mexico and go back to work, but I hoped that sometime I could return.

I really would like to make another trip to my hidden deposit of chrysocolla. A lapidary dealer heard about my find and said he would only buy all of it or there would be no sale. Now I have less than a handful left. I guess I made a good deal in selling my material because it paid for our month-long vacation in Mexico. I would like to make another trip there, but I don't know if I ever will be able to return. That was a great day where I combined my two loves of collecting quality lapidary rocks and diving in the ocean. I sure would like to make another trip to that spot again!

### **To All Club Officers and Club Members**

*by Virginia Adian*  
*AFMS 1st Vice President*

**I** am soon ending my term as AFMS 1st Vice-president for this past year. This message is to bring attention to what I have observed as the greatest issue we have in our clubs and federations.

I have tried to help both SCFMS and AFMS find club members who are willing to accept offices and serve as committee chairmen. One of the problems I have found is that those club members who work hard for their own clubs and have served as officers “above and beyond” are experiencing “burn out.” So many club members accept an office or job title, but don't take the responsibility to do the work, and those other dedicated club members and officers have to cover the work. It is time for all officers and club members to step up to do their share. I wish I had a solution for this! I have found that most of the names of reliable workers come from fellow club members. We do need to be in touch with the clubs, not just the officers.

You do not have to take a position as a leader, but you can accept a job which needs to be done. As you do more in your club or federation, the more comfortable you will become to take on greater responsibilities, and perhaps eventually a leadership role. Your club leaders did not begin by taking the job as president!!

Consider the word RESPONSIBILITY. It begins with RESPONSE. The ABILITY will develop. There is always someone available to help you learn.

It has been my pleasure to represent you as an AFMS officer.

Happy hunting and polishing. **Virginia Adian**

## Show Committee Report for Our 2015 Show

*by Scott Singleton*

*2015 Show Chair*

I want to thank the entire club, and particularly our Show Committee and all of the volunteers who helped staff the various booths and activities during the show. It goes without saying that this is a club-wide effort, and a show this large and complex cannot be put on without everyone's support. Nancy English, our Volunteer Chair, reports that 182 volunteer slots were filled by 100 people, which is fantastic. Of course, we had large contingents of student helpers from Lexy Bienek's class at the University of Houston-Downtown as well as from the Alvin Community College. Thank you to everyone who volunteered!



Financially, we did wonderfully as well. We increased our ticket revenue by \$6000, which is fantastic considering that we changed dates this year. We also increased our auction and info booth sales as well as our dealer revenue because we added a few dealers. Net increase in revenue was about \$7000. On the expense side, we cut many of our expenses from last year, producing a net decrease of about \$5000. What this means is that our net show profit could be as much as \$12,000 above budget (it was projected to be about \$15,000). Of course, bills will be coming in over the next month or two, so we won't have the final figure for a while.

Attendance at the show has been running around 3100 since 2012. Typically, we have been selling somewhere around 2600–2800 tickets with the remainder being kids who get in for free. Our difference in income this year could be a combination of more adult tickets sold along with the removal of coupons for cheaper tickets. The total number of people through the show this year was above 5200 due to the School Daze Earth Science Program on Friday, which brought in 1770 kids and another 400 adults who came with the kids.

These numbers are remarkable considering that we moved our show this year from our usual date in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of November to the 4<sup>th</sup> week of September. Such a change normally causes a significant drop-off in attendance because people lose track of the show date change. However, this year our Publicity Committee jumped into the social media game with both feet. This charge was led by Chase Jennings, who capitalized on the power of Facebook to get the word out about the show in addition to a number of other online event calendars. We also have been building an email list of past attendees to any of our events or who visit our table at the many shows where we demonstrate, so these people get splashy email notifications via

MailChimp (a service the club just signed with for mass mailings). We also started selling tickets in advance online with Eventbrite, which also has its own advertising, and by taking credit cards for any purchases via PayPal readers—in essence bringing us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with regards to commerce.

I also want to express my huge thanks to those on the Show Committee who worked throughout the year to make sure this show went off as smoothly as possible. To give these individuals the credit they deserve, I'll list them and the committees they were on below:

**Assistant Show Chair:** Ray Kizer

**Publicity:** Tamara Ritchie, Chase Jennings, Sigrid Stewart, Ray Kizer, Scott Singleton

**Dealers:** Rick Rexroad (Chair), Steve Blyskal, Michele Marsel, Scott Singleton

**Education:** Barbara Hill (Chair), Elsa Kapitan-White, Clay Keiffer, Lexy Bieniek, Deidre Prince, Scott Singleton

**Information Booth:** Rhonda Burrage (Chair), Chase Jennings (assistance by Shiara Trumble, Nancy Fischer, Beverly Mace)

**Volunteer Coordination:** Nancy English

**Hospitality:** Pat, Cliff, & Gary Hildbold

**Tickets:** Nancy Fischer

**Security:** Ray Kizer

**Swap Area:** Steve Blyskal

**Cases:** Beverly Mace

**Youth:** Beverly Mace

**Transportation:** Clyde McMeans

Thanks for a great year and a great show. It's wonderful to be part of a society so diverse and so willing to help with things that need to get done to ensure the club's survival.

### **New Regulations Defined for Fossil Collecting in National Forests**

*by Tom Noe*

*from American Lands Access Association Newsletter 4-5-6/2015,  
via Pick & Shovel 9/2015*

On the next page is a Web address to the ALAA Newsletter for April-June, 2015. The rules and regulations for collecting fossils on U.S. National Forest-managed lands have had significant changes, effective May 18, 2015. John Martin (of ALAA's Conservation and Legislation Committee) has done a really spectacular job of summarizing the new regulations in readable form. An excerpt would not do justice to the information he summarizes for us, so

it's better to point you to the complete article and let you read it yourself. It is several pages of very important information for those who want to do casual collecting of fossils in our national forests. The article starts on page 5. Click on the link, or copy and paste the full address below to find the issue.

[http://www.amlands.org/media//DIR\\_24612/DIR\\_402734/58269c7954016a5ffff81c3ffffe904.pdf](http://www.amlands.org/media//DIR_24612/DIR_402734/58269c7954016a5ffff81c3ffffe904.pdf)

Alternatively, you can go to [www.amlands.org](http://www.amlands.org), click on "Newsletters" on the left, then click on "April-June, 2015."

### HGMS Show's Grand Door Prize Winner

*by Scott Singleton*

*2015 Show Chair*

Our Grand Door Prize this year was a Dugway geode cut in half and polished (see picture). It was won by Pamala Lewis of Humble. She was thrilled to get such a showy piece for her mantle. Because she wasn't very familiar with Houston highways (she was from New Orleans), I coordinated delivery with her son, Gerard Lewis, who is an athletics coach at HISD's Delmar Stadium (see picture). He was quite sure that "Mom" would be quite excited by her prize!







Brian & Nell  
Honsinger at the  
2014 HGMS Show

Photo by John  
Mitscherling

### **In Memoriam—Nell Honsinger**

*December 23, 1943–September 15, 2015*

*Reproduced with permission from Unity Funeral Home*

**N**ell Honsinger passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on September 15, 2015. Nelwyn Sue Baron was born on December 23, 1943 to Nell and Garland Barton of Marlin, Texas. She graduated from Marlin High School in 1960 and Sam Houston State University in 1964. She married Brian Honsinger on August 23, 1964. After teaching 2 years in Houston ISD, Nell served as Director of Education and Pre-K teacher at Master and Missy Academy in Alief for 21 years. She volunteered as a troop leader for Girl Scouts and as a Cub Scout Den Mother. She held the office of PTO President at Chambers Elementary School and continued to be an active volunteer in Kenneth's schools. In her leisure time, she enjoyed ceramics and painting. Nell was an avid "rock hound" and enjoyed crafting jewelry from the gems that she cut and polished. She was adventurous and loved traveling with Brian. For many years, they spent their summers "on the road." One of her greatest joys was spending time with her grandchildren.

Nell is preceded in death by her parents and her brother Tommy Barton. She is survived by her husband of 51 years, Brian Honsinger; sons Kenneth and daughter-in-law, Michelle; Mark Baker and daughter-in-law DeaAnne. She enjoyed three grandchildren; Kelly and Hunter Baker and Eve Anne Honsinger.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests remembrances to be made in Nell's honor to Big Brothers of Houston:

<http://www.bbbstx.org/>

## Archaeology Section

by Nancy Engelhardt-Moore

**October 1, 2015:** Garth Clark, Archaeology Section Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. Due to low attendance, it was decided that the decision on Section officers and approval of the September minutes would be put on hold until the November 5 meeting.

Garth said that the Section had two display cases at the HGMS Annual Show (September 25–27). Terry Proctor coordinated the items for display since Garth and Bob Moore weren't able to attend. A brief discussion on upcoming talks followed.

Garth talked about the use of Gourds and how they have been modified for cooking dating back to 30,000 to 40,000 years while pottery only dates back to about 18,000 years. This discussion was followed by a **Show & Tell**. Several people brought artifacts that were admired and passed around, so everyone could get a good look at the items. Marshall Bird brought a Metate (or mealing stone) and Mano (hand-held stone) used for processing grains and seeds from Egypt. Ken Bruneau brought several fascinating items that he found in an irrigation ditch in Vermont, including a beautiful scraper for deer hides. The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

**November 5, 2015:** Archaeologist, Dr. Gail Larsen Peterkin will present a talk on ***"French Upper Paleolithic Hunting Technology."***

Her talk will examine prehistoric

hunter-gathers in France where the regional Upper Palaeolithic sequence is well documented for over a century. She will show how specific prey species were selectively exploited using carefully chosen lithic and organic weapons. Her talk will show how materials chosen were best suited for hunting targeted prey based on climate, terrain, and the type of animal being hunted. Gail received her Ph.D. in anthropology from Tulane University. Her research centers on hunting technology and animal exploitation in the French Upper



Metate and Mano



Scraper for deer hides

Palaeolithic. She has field experience at Middle Palaeolithic (Neandertal) and Upper Palaeolithic (*Homo sapiens*) sites in France, as well as at prehistoric and historic sites in North America. Gail was on the faculty of Tulane University and Delgado Community College in New Orleans from 1982–2004, offering classes in anthropology, geography, and geology. In 2004, she moved to Houston and now works in anthropology collections and as a Master Docent at the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS) specializing in the Hall of the Americas, Hall of Human Evolution, and special exhibits related to archaeology.

**December 3, 2015:** Dr. Dirk Van Tuerenhout, the HMNS Curator of Anthropology, will present an overview of the special exhibit “***Out of the Amazon: Material, Culture, Myth, and Reality in Amazonia***” that will be opening on October 23. Dirk will talk about the priceless objects in the collection that include ceremonial objects, masks, and body costumes. So, mark your calendar for these events and watch for more information.

### Mineral Section

by Paul Brandes

**October 21, 2015: Minerals of Greenland:** When one thinks of Greenland, visions of ice and cold surely come to mind. However, Greenland has so much to offer to the mineral collector and historian alike. From the story of Viking survival to colourful minerals and fascinating wildlife, Greenland is a must visit for the truly adventurous. This, the fifth in our series of yearly locality presentations, will be an opportunity for Section Members and HGMS General Members to gather for an evening of Greenland geology, minerals, and a little history thrown in; after all, it is called Greenland for a reason! All HGMS Members are encouraged to attend and bring specimens from their collection for show and tell. Members fortunate enough to have visited Greenland, let alone collect minerals, will be encouraged to share any stories they have of their adventure. Refreshments will be provided.

**November 4, 2015: To Be Announced**

**November 18, 2015: Mike Sommers – Searles Lake, CA**

**December 2, 2015: Steve Steinke – Wulfenites of the West**

**December 16, 2015: No “official” meeting:** The Mineral Section Christmas Party will take the place of this meeting. Details to follow.

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### Wise Saying

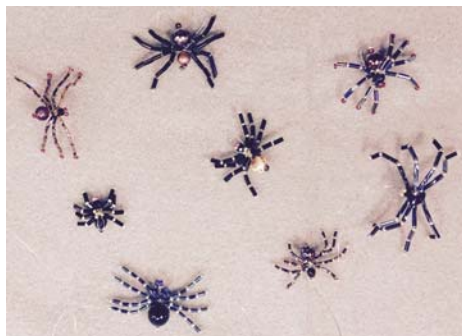
*Via The Glacial Drifter 5/1987 and 2/2013, Via The Clackamette Gem 6/2014*

**For transporting material from one part of the country to another,  
rockhounds are almost as good as glaciers.**

## Beading Section

by Nancy Fischer

**B**eading Section members made spiders in anticipation of Hallowe'en at the September 19 meeting. Some spiders will be earrings, others will be pins or pendants. Some might be Christmas spiders. Work done by Diane Sisson, Virginia Garza, Anna Reyna, Nancy Fischer, Jill Cooper, Barbara Elmore, Kathryn Kelly, Cindy Wei, and Kim Fuselier.



## General Meeting Minutes

Date September 22, 2015

by Nancy English, HGMS Secretary

**T**he meeting was called to order by President Raymond Kizer at 7:30 p.m.

President Kizer thanked everyone for coming to the September General meeting. The meeting was attended by 20 regular members, two new members, and two visitors. President Kizer asked the new members and visitors to stand and be recognized. The new members are Debbie Ann Heckerth and Draven Heckerth. The visitor was Judy Kawazoe.

**Drawing:** Andrea Bruneau won the drawing for the picture jasper. Judy Kawazoe won the second drawing for half of a geode.

**Minutes:** Steve Blyskal moved to approve the minutes of the August General Meeting as published in the October BBG. Phyllis George seconded, and the membership passed the motion.

**Announcements—Volunteer report for the Show:** Nancy English reported that the online sign up has worked well. Dora Devery of Alvin Community College sent a list of volunteers for the kid areas on Friday and Saturday. Lexy Bieniek from University of Houston set up about fifty volunteers for the Dino Dig, School Daze, and other kid areas. We still need volunteers for Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

**Ray Kizer** asked to postpone the **Show 'n Tell** and **Section Reports** until after the program. Our speaker, Frank Roberts, must drive back to Austin tonight for work tomorrow.

Ray called on 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Paul Brandes to introduce our speaker for the General Meeting. Frank Roberts from Baringer Hill Minerals gave a presenta-

tion on Hill Country Mineral collecting pegmatite and rare earth minerals.

## 5-minute break

### Section Reports

**Archeology Section:** The next Archeology Section meeting is Thursday, October 1, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The program will be Show & Tell: This is an opportunity to actually see, feel, and discuss amazing ancient artifacts brought in by members. Some items are local, but others may be from anywhere in the world.

**Beading Section:** The next regular Beading Section meeting will be on Saturday, October 17, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. Saturday's project will be the France bracelet. Instructions are on our Web site.

**Day Light Section:** The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7, 2015, at 1:00 p.m. The program will be presented by Karen Burns. She will direct the first of two programs to make a Dragon Scale jump ring bracelet. Time permitting, hands-on practice will be available. Copper jump rings will be available for practice.

On Wednesday, November 5, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. the second program will be presented by Kate Smith. She will demonstrate metal working to make the fastener ends of the Dragon Scale bracelet. Hands-on practice will be available, time permitting.

**Gemstones and Faceting Section:** The next regular meeting is Wednesday, October 14, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. The program will be announced.

**Lapidary and Silversmithing Section:** The next regular meeting is Monday, October 19, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The program: **Going from Slab to Cab** includes an open shop prior to the meeting.

**Mineral Section:** The next regular meetings are Wednesday, October 7 and October 21, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. On October 7, the program is Gem and Mineral Show Wrap-up. This is our opportunity as a Section to review the show while it is still somewhat fresh in our minds. Also, bring in your show purchases and be prepared to discuss why you made the purchase. Section members who attended the Denver Mineral Show in September also are encouraged to discuss that event and show off any minerals they brought back.

On October 21, the program will be **Minerals of Greenland**. All HGMS members are invited to attend.

Get last-minute news about club events by sending a note to Jim Kendall at [kendal\\_ja@yahoo.com](mailto:kendal_ja@yahoo.com)



**Paleo Section:** The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 20, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The program will be **Examining Thin Sections of Fossils**.

**Youth Section:** The next meetings are scheduled for October 3 and October 17, 2015, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. The awards will be presented for the cabochons made to be judged at the Show.

### Old Business

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

**The next Board of Directors meeting is Tuesday, October 6, 2015, at 7:30 p.m. The next General Meeting is October 27, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The program will be presented by Neal Immega:** He will share the highlights of Rose Cleveland's trip to Australia to hunt for opals and will show the many photos she took on her trip.

**Adjourn:** Karen Burns moved to adjourn the business meeting, and Mary Ann Mitscherling seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

**Refreshments:** Provided by Ray Kizer.

### Board of Director's Meeting

*October 6, 2015*

*by Nancy English*

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

**Call to Order:** President Raymond Kizer called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. A quorum was present. There were three non-voting members at the meeting: Scott Singleton, Show Committee Chair; Autumn Breese, new Web site designer; and Chase Jennings, Publicity.

**President's Comments:** President Ray Kizer thanked Scott Singleton, the whole Show Committee, and all the volunteers who helped organize and conduct a great show—the largest in Texas. On Saturday of the Show, Ray could not get down the aisles for all the people. Dealers told him that they

were doing well and that they like our show. This year's movers loaded and unloaded faster (than last year) on both days, which saved us money. The parking problems encountered Sunday morning tested our patience. An Auto Parts Swap Meet, scheduled to meet annually on that Sunday, created the parking problem. Since the next two HGMS shows are scheduled in November and not September, the Swap Meet will not be a problem. Beverly Mace is in the process of reviewing the Door Prize tickets. That will indicate whether (and to what extent) social media influenced the attendance.

**Approval of Previous Month Board Minutes:** Gary Tober moved and Garth Clark seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the September 2015 Board Meeting as published in the October 2015 BBG. The motion passed unanimously as corrected. There was a typo in the date of the next General Meeting.

**Treasurer's Report:** Rodney Linehan e-mailed financials to all Board members in advance of the meeting. More Show adjustments will be made as bills and income are presented.

### Office, Committee, and Section Reports

**Archeology Section:** The next Archeology Section meeting is **Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.** The program will be **French Upper Paleolithic Hunting Technology, presented by author Gail Larsen Peterkin, Professor of Archeology.**

**Beading Section:** The next regular Beading Section meeting will be on **Saturday, October 17, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.** Saturday's project will be **Beginners France Beaded Bracelet.**

On **Saturday, November 20, 2015 at 1:30.** The project will be a **December Necklace.**

The **Saturday, December 12, 2015, 1:30 p.m.,** meeting will be the **Beading Section Christmas Party.** It is also the same day as the HGMS Christmas party. The Beading Section will help set up for the Christmas party.

**Day Light Section:** The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 4, 2015 at 1:00 p.m.** Karen Burns will direct the first of two programs to make a chain mail bracelet. Hands-on practice will be available, time permitting. Copper jump rings will be available for practice.

On **Wednesday, November 5, 2015 at 1:00** the second program will be presented by Kate Smith who will demonstrate metal working to make the fastener ends of the chain mail bracelet. Hands-on practice will be available, time permitting.

**Education:** **Mary Ann Mitscherling** presented the comparison model of the current HGMS instructor plan and Carrie Hart's proposed payment plan. The model showed that the current mode of payment produces the most in-

come for the instructor and for the club.

**Gemstones and Faceting Section:** The next regular meeting is **Wednesday, October 14, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.** The program will be announced. This Section is planning a three-session class starting **Sunday, October 18** and continuing for the next two Sundays.

**Lapidary and Silversmithing Section:** The next regular meeting is Monday, October 19, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The program is **Going from Slab to Cab by Ed Clay.**

On **Monday, November 16, 2015 at 7:30** the program will be **Polishing and Selecting the Best Orientation of a Stone.** Slabs will be provided.

There will not be a December Lapidary Section meeting.

**Mineral Section:** The two regular October meetings are **Wednesday, October 7 and October 21, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.** On **October 7, the program Gem and Mineral Show Wrap-up** is scheduled. Members will review the show while it is still somewhat fresh, discussing what was done right and what improvements need to be made. They will show purchases and be prepared to discuss why purchased. Section members who attended the Denver Mineral Show in September also are encouraged to discuss that event and to show off any minerals they brought back.

On **October 21** the program will be **Minerals of Greenland.**

**November 14 and 15:** A Field Trip to **Emerald Ridge** via **Baringer Hill Minerals** is planned. You may sign up on the Web site:  
<http://www.baringerhill.com/>

**Paleo Section:** The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 20, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.** The program will be **Examining Thin Sections of Fossils.** **Mike Dawkins** announced that the **October 31, 2015 field trip to Midlothian** is full.

**Youth Section:** The next meetings are scheduled for October 3 and October 17, 2015, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. The awards will be presented for the cabs made to be judged at the Show. Beverly Mace reported that the Youth Section members enjoyed the show and presenting their work.

**BBG Editor and Webmaster:** Phyllis George reported that the deadline to receive articles is Wednesday October 7, 2015. See **New Business** for a modification of that date. She has changed the HGMS home page to remove 2015 Show information. Phyllis commented that Clay's dinosaur was a big hit at the Show. It scared the kids and impressed the adults.

### Old Business

1. **Club House Repairs / upgrades:** The doorbell still needs to be extended to ring in the meeting room.

2. **Security System:** Garth Clark is ready to set up remote viewing. He is still looking for smoke detectors. Ray Kizer is researching waterproof housings for the outdoor cameras.
3. **Nominating Committee results** are not final yet. Neal Immega reported that there are still only four members on the committee. However, via email he presented a rough draft of candidates.
4. **The number and timing of future Trade Shows.** Discussion and vote on number of new Trade Shows was tabled at August BOD. Chase Jennings will call the State Comptroller to discuss it. It has been determined that if we make more than \$20,000 in a calendar year, we must file a long form. HGMS already makes more than that. Chase hopes to schedule the first 2016 Trade Show for January 30, 2016.
5. **Show Committee: Scott Singleton** gave the preliminary Show Report: The initial information shows a significant increase in net profit over previous years. Attendance topped at 5,218. Scott will provide more details after the Show Committee wrap-up meeting, October 13.

**Credit Card use:** Chase Jennings reported that the results of the new credit sales at the Show encouraged the Show Committee to continue its use. He presented reports showing where the \$7,777.60 put on credit cards was spent. The report also showed how much was spent each day.

**Social Media Advertising:** Chase Jennings provided reports showing the social media results. HGMS Show Facebook reached 16,000 people. The HGMS Trade Show Facebook site reached 14,000 people. The BOD agreed that we will continue to make use of Social Media.

**Dealer Survey:** Chase Jennings has compiled the results of the Dealer Survey. The Dealers like our show. More details will be available after the Show Committee meeting.

### New Business

1. **Proposal to host SCFMS Show** – Scott Singleton reported that the HGMS has been offered an opportunity to host the regional SCFMS show in 2017. The last time we hosted it was 2004. In general, there are no additional costs for hosting this show. It mostly involves setting up meeting spaces for the various SCFMS committees that need to meet and conduct business, plus providing a small amount of space within our show for the SCFMS—including case displays and judging. Advertising for the 2017 HGMS Show will be included in the SCFMS advertising. Advance notice of this show should be made during the Federation show in the year prior (i.e. at the Lubbock show in 2016). Scott Singleton and Shira Trumble planned the Show the last time HGMS hosted SCFMS. They commit to do the same for the 2017 Show.

**Phyllis George** moved to host the SCFMS at the November 2017 HGMS Show. Dates for the Show are November 10, 11, and 12, 2017. Gary Tober seconded the motion. The motion passed.

2. **Proposal to change due date for BBG submissions**—The BBG has been arriving at most homes at least a week prior to the end of the month, which is too early to announce events that are to occur at the end of the following month. Because of this, it is difficult to get advance notice of any events in the BBG, which has ended up becoming only a reporting medium of past events. The existing due date (the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month) is too early to get Show Committee news submitted, since that committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month.

**Nancy English** moved that the deadline for submissions to the BBG be changed to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, effective immediately. Gary Tober seconded the motion. The motion passed.

3. **Update on new Web site** – Autumn Breese presented a live demo of the proposed new Web site. A discussion of the schedule for release and maintenance followed. She is waiting on Sections for updated information. The format is cleaner and more contemporary. The site could be put up now and older information moved to it as Sections determine the information is still relevant.
4. **January Trade Show—Chase Jennings** proposed a trade show for January 30, 2016 entitled “Fossil, Mineral, Jewelry, and Artifact Trade Show.” Further discussion was tabled until next month.
5. **Christmas party:** The party is scheduled for December 12, 2015. The Beading Section, which is meeting that afternoon, will help with the party setup following their meeting. Donations for the auction should be made in advance, but donations also will be accepted after 5:00 p.m. The Potluck Supper begins at 6:00 p.m. The Auction begins at 7:00 p.m.
6. **General Meeting Presentation: Neal Immega—Australian Opals:** Neal will be giving a presentation on Australian opals using photos taken by Rose Cleveland during her trip to the land down under.

**Adjourn:** Beverly Mace moved to adjourn the meeting, and Diane Sisson seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.





## Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

*"Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" and "Broom Casting for Creative Jewelry" are available on Amazon.*

### Homemade Wax Tools

**H**Save your used X-Acto or scalpel blades for utility work on the bench.



They're wonderful for delicate wax work. Use a cut-off wheel or other type of grinding wheel to shape the blades to what you need. For instance, you can carve away excess metal on the spine to make yourself some narrow carving knives that do a great job of detailing small pierced areas of your waxes.

### Bezel Setting Problems

When bezel setting a cab that has rather sharp corners, have you ever had problems pushing the metal down at the corners? It's a common problem often causing a wrinkle in your bezel and a grimace on your face. In order for a bezel to capture the stone, the top edge of the bezel must be compressed and become shorter to lay down onto the stone. With a round or oval stone this naturally happens as you push and burnish the bezel. But when setting a stone with corners, the tendency is to push the long sides of the bezel down first. No compression occurs along the sides, and all excess metal is left at the corners. Compressing everything there is difficult. Often the only way to remove the extra metal at the corner is to make a saw cut and fold the two sides in to touch. If you want a smooth bezel all around the corners, the simple solution is set the corners of the bezel first. Then push in and burnish the sides. In this way, the necessary compression is distributed along the length of all sides and not forced to occur at the corners. With the corners set first, the top edge of the bezel can easily be compressed along the sides.



### Removing a Stone from a Bezel Setting

If you forgot to use dental floss, and you got your stone caught in a bezel, there's one thing you can try before starting to pry.

Find some sticky wax or beeswax. Roll it into a pencil-sized cylinder, and stick the end onto the top of the stone. Mold it on well, and yank.

But if the stone is really stuck, there are two other tricks—but each has its risks and consequences. The first is to pry open the bezel with a sharp knife

blade, being very careful not to wrinkle or tear the bezel. If you try this, make sure to pry gently in several passes around the stone.

The last solution is to drill a small hole into the bezel setting from the back side, so you can push the stone out. Note that this does leave a hole, but in some cases, you can use the hole to saw out a design under the stone.

### Thanksgiving Poem

*Author unknown*

*via Chippers' Chatter 11/2014*

T'was the night of Thanksgiving,  
But I just couldn't sleep.  
I tried counting backwards,  
I tried counting sheep.

The leftovers beckoned,  
The dark meat and white.  
But I fought the temptation,  
With all of my might.

Tossing and turning,  
with anticipation.  
The thought of a snack  
became infatuation.

So I raced to the kitchen,  
Flung open the door,  
And gazed at the fridge,  
Full of goodies galore.

I gobbled up turkey,  
And buttered potatoes,  
Pickles and carrots,  
Beans and tomatoes.

I felt myself swelling,  
So plump and so round.  
'til all of a sudden,  
I rose off the ground.

I crashed through the ceiling,  
Floating into the sky,  
With a mouthful of pudding,  
And a handful of pie.

But I managed to yell  
As I soared past the trees  
Happy eating to all,  
Pass the cranberries, please!!

May your stuffing be tasty  
May your turkey be plump.  
May your potatoes and gravy  
Have nary a lump.

May your yams be delicious,  
May your pies take the prize  
And May your Thanksgiving dinner  
Stay off of your thighs!



**Show Time 2015 - 2016**

October 23-25	Austin, TX	AFMS/South Central Fed. (SCFMS) Shows Palmer Events Center Exhibit Hall 900 Barton Springs Road susanp@austingemandmineral.org <a href="http://www.austingemandmineral.org/">http://www.austingemandmineral.org/</a>
November 7-8	Amarillo, TX	Golden Spread Gem & Mineral Society Amarillo Civic Center, 401 S. Buchanan St. finfran@midplains.coop
November 7-8	Midland, TX	Midland Gem & Mineral Society Midland Center, 105 N. Main St. midlandgemandmineral.org
November 21-22	Mesquite, TX	Dallas Gem & Mineral Society Mesquite Rodeo Center Exhibit Hall 1800 Rodeo Dr.; bravo1bravo@sbcglobal.net <a href="http://www.dallasgemandmineral.org/">http://www.dallasgemandmineral.org/</a>
December 4-6	El Paso, TX	El Paso Mineral & Gem Society El Maida Auditorium, 6331 Alabama e-mail: gemcenter@aol.com

**Show Time 2016**

January 16-17	Fredericksburg, TX	Fredericksburg Rockhounds Lady Bird Johnson Park, HWY 16 So. gedeonjim1@gmail.com fredericksburgrockhounds.org
Jan. 30-Feb. 14	Tucson, AZ	Tucson AZ Gem & Mineral Shows Multiple shows occurring simultaneously at more than 40 sites across Tucson tucsongemandmineralshows.net/
February 11-14	Tucson, AZ	Tucson Gem & Mineral Society SMG-Tucson Convention Center tgms@tgms.org; <a href="http://www.tgms.org">http://www.tgms.org</a>
February 20-21	Georgetown, TX	Williamson County Gem and Mineral Society Community Center, San Gabriel Park wcgms.org
April 30-May 1	Waco, TX	Waco Gem & Mineral Club Extraco Events Center <a href="http://www.wacogemandmineral.org">www.wacogemandmineral.org</a>

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

2015		December					2015
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
10-4 Shop Open		1 7:30 Board Meeting	2 10-3 Shop Open 1:00-3:00 Day Light Section's Potluck Christmas Party 7:30--Mineral Section	3 7:30 Archeology Section	4	5 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section's Christmas Party	
6 10-4 Shop Open Hanukkah Begins	7	8 NO Show Committee	9 10-3 Shop Open 6:30 Gemstones & Faceting Section	10	11	12 10-5 Shop Open 1:30 Beading Section— Holiday Party HGMS Holiday Party	
13 10-4 Shop Open	14	15 7:30 Paleo Section	16 10-3 Shop Open NO Mineral Section	17	18	19 10-5 Shop Open NO Youth Section	
20 10-4 Shop Open	21 NO Lapidary Section	22 NO General Meeting 1 <sup>st</sup> Day of Winter	23 10-3 Shop Open	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christ- mas	26 10-5 Shop Open	
27 10-4 Shop Open	28	29	30 10-3 Shop Open	31 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**

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2003 - 1st (Large)  
2005 - 1st (Large)  
2006 — 2012 - 1st (Large)  
2013 - 1st (Large)  
2014 - 1st (Large)



## **AFMS**

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



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