



The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE



The Newsletter of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

Volume XLIX—No. 8

August 2018



President's Message

by Paul Brandes

Good Evening!

Well, as I stated last month, I am on the road again. This time, I'm on my way to the Keweenaw Peninsula of Upper Michigan for a project I'm working on, as well as attending a couple rockhound gatherings. This evening (July 16), I am in Grayling after a long two-day drive from Houston.



Tomorrow night, I will be attending the monthly meeting of the Mikenauk Gem & Mineral Club in Roscommon. This Club is special to me because I was part of the small group that formed it back in 1988, making me essentially a charter member. While the Club has struggled over the years, it perseveres because of a dedicated group of individuals who refuse to let it die. Lately, the Club has seen a resurgence—younger members have joined who share the same interests of some of the older, founding members.

Even though HGMS is by far a larger Club, I see many of the same things as Mikenauk; younger members joining who share a passion for the hobby. To those new members, young and old, I say, Thank you!

Unfortunately, I have to keep this Message short since I just completed a long drive. So, see you next month, likely from the road again.

Upcoming Program

by Sigrid Stewart, 1st Vice President

August 28, 2018 General Meeting Program:- Fieldwork at the United States Earth Science Olympiad and International Earth Science Olympiad presented by Andy Xu and Ryan Anselm.

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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.

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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 and 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://hgms.org>.

Page 13 has an article entitled "Using Quotation Marks." But before we get there, I thought you might like a warmup by introducing you to Grammarman. I offer you a fun and educational comic strip. Brain Boyd writes of a superhero called Grammarman, and his efforts to rid the world of—you guessed it—bad grammar! Brain was kind enough to allow me to share his comics with you. Want more Grammarman? Brian's website is

<http://grammarmancomic.com/>



Karen Burns—In Memoriam*By Nancy English*

It is always hard for us to lose our HGMS friends. Clyde McMeans checked on Karen Burns last Wednesday, July 25, after noticing she had not been at the club in her usual pattern. He spoke to her neighbors who called the police the day before. They asked for a Welfare Check, because she had not picked up her newspapers since Wednesday, July 18. Sadly, she had passed in her home.

I know Karen has contributed her time, patience, expertise, and smiling encouragement to many of us. She graciously took over the Day Light Section when the previous Section Chairperson resigned. Many of us wear or display the clever projects she put together for the two-hour classes. She enthusiastically promoted HGMS membership at our Trade Shows and at the Clear Lake Shows where she demonstrated her talents with chainmaille jewelry. For years, she volunteered to sign in dealers at the HGMS Annual Show, then she manned the demonstration tables in the front of the building. She taught classes in chainmaille and wire wrapping for years. As recently as Monday, July 16, she was teaching the Lapidary attendees how to twist wire with the Fordham drills in the metal shop. I could always count on her for a motion to approve the minutes at the General Meetings. I, personally, will miss her deeply.

After Jeanne Barna passed away, I asked Karen for family contact information. She was happy to share it. I have spoken to her grandson, Alex. He and his mom, Valerie, are in Houston settling her estate. The family is not planning a service for her in Houston. At Karen's request, daughter Valerie is donating all of Karen's HGMS-related items to HGMS. A small delegation of members will go to her home to pick it up.

I joined the club in January of 2013. Karen Burns was teaching us wire wrapping at an evening meeting later that year. I had taken a class from Charlie already, but I was still struggling with the bundling. Karen started to show me again with pliers in both hands, swiftly wrapping and tightening, wrapping and tightening. I looked at her trying to guess her age, assuming she had been doing it since her youth. I asked, "how long have you been doing this"? "Oh," she said, "I started when I was 66." Thrilled to know it, I squealed, "I'm 66! I can learn this"! She laughed and assured me I could. She coached me on many occasions after that—always patient, always smiling, teaching, and encouraging. She shared much of her life with me. And I shared mine with her. She even tried to change my politics. Ha! Never at a loss for conversation, still willing to listen. I am proud to call her friend. I miss her, and I know that will become more apparent in the coming months.

Results of the HGMS 2018 Scholarship Recipient Search

by Michael Sommers

The 2018 Houston Gem and Mineral Society Earth Science and Jewelry Arts Scholarship award winner is Loren Walker of Texas A&M, Corpus Christi. Loren's interest in Earth Science lies in hydrology, which she wishes to turn into a career working as an environmental scientist. Loren's reaction to the news of her award was, "Thank you all so much! Knowing there are people out there who believe I can achieve my goals gives me all the courage needed to do so. I appreciate this opportunity." She would also like to give us a presentation at a General Meeting at some point, highlighting her internship work and undergraduate research results.



For 2018, the Society was also gifted an additional \$500 to be used as a supplement to the scholarship, by long-time member Douglas Dodds. This award was given to Matthew Tsegaye, who is attending Texas Tech University. Matthew is focusing on meteorology, and he aspires to become a TV weatherman. Upon receiving the news, Matthew replied "Thank you! This is great news! This made my day."



We wish these deserving students the best of luck in their educational endeavors, and we hope these awards help them ease the burden on their way to academic and professional success!

As always, if you know of any Earth Science or Jewelry Arts student from Harris or one of the adjacent surrounding counties, please encourage them to apply for our scholarship. Any questions can be directed to scholarships@hgms.org.

Sincerely,
Michael Sommers
2018 Scholarship Chair



Besieged at Bellaire *Libraries Rock—and so does HGMS!*

by Neal Immega

This picture shows our July program at the Bellaire City Library. Their summer theme is "Libraries Rock," and naturally they thought of me to put on a program. Our advertised title was "Economic minerals." Actually, no matter what the annual theme is, mine always ends up being rocks, and I always give away shark teeth because I like giving sharp objects to small children. © What, shark teeth aren't economic minerals, you say? Go talk to some phosphate miners.

Inda and I had the younger group of participants, and we chose to do a show-and-tell rather than a lecture on this incredibly hot day. While the older children were learning about ions and density, we hefted, scratched, streaked, and stuck magnets to our rocks. The super Children's Librarian said afterwards that all she could see most of the time was my head sticking up above the swarm of children.

I leave it up to you to decide who is being besieged—the children or me.



**By Ernston Barnhart...Rock Buster News 2/00
via Golden Spike News 3/00**

General Meeting Minutes

June 26, 2018

by Nancy English, HGMS Secretary

President Paul Brandes called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. He thanked everyone for coming to the June General Meeting. Thirty-three members attended. Two of those members joined tonight: Dawit Habtegiorgis and Bizuathu Dana. Visitors present were Austin Havican, Andre DeJean, Jade Young, and Leah Wilcox.

Minutes: President Brandes asked for a motion to approve the **May 22, 2018**, General Meeting minutes, as published in the July 2018 BBG and posted on the June 24 e-blast. Karen Burns moved to approve the minutes of the May 22, 2018 General Meeting. Gary Tober seconded the motion, and it passed.

President's Announcements

President Brandes said his presentation at the Mineralogical Association of Dallas (MAD) went well. He was flattered to be invited to speak.

On June 8 through June 10, 2018, Maggie Manley represented HGMS at the annual **Bead Market Show** at the Stafford Centre. She was able to sell a lot of jewelry and beads donated to the HGMS Beading Section. She promoted HGMS, a wire wrapping class to be held on June 16, The HGMS Annual Show, and the monthly Beading Section meetings. The eight-foot table was donated by Rebekah Wills, who organizes this show.

Show Committee Education Chairperson: Scott Singleton reported via email that he is visiting with a prospective Education Chair. He will know more in a couple of weeks. Nancy English reminded attendees that it is time to mark their calendars to volunteer for the Annual Show being held Friday, November 9, through Sunday November 11, 2018.

President Brandes reported that sadly, HGMS member Jeanne Barna has passed away. During her membership at HGMS, she was active in a number of Sections including the Lapidary Section and more recently, the Gemstones and Faceting Section. She represented that Section on the Board of Directors for the last two years. Jeanne "B" will be missed by many.

Section/Committee Reports

In the interest of time, President Brandes asked members to look for reports of Section news in the BBG, on the Web site <http://hgms.org>, or by reading the weekly e-blast from Jim Kendall for future Section meetings and presentations. If you are not on Jim Kendall's e-mail list, please contact him at kendallja@att.net. Jim also includes weekly shop status updates from Neal Immega.

President Brandes invited Section Chairs and Standing Committee Chairs to make any additional announcements.

Karen Burns announced that the Day Light Section meeting will be held on July 11, 2018 from 1:00 to 3:00, because the first Wednesday of this month is the Fourth of July holiday. Attendees will make copper bird nest pendants and earrings. Supplies will be provided.

Mary Ann Mitscherling reminded members that the Shop is open from 5:00 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. before the General Meeting and before the Lapidary Section meeting.

Old Business

Texas Minerals Project for Lone Star College: President Brandes thanked everyone who provided specimens.

Scholarship Committee: Mike Sommers said the committee is evaluating the applications. They hope to complete the process by mid-July and to announce winners.

Additional Old Business can be followed in the BBG and on the Web Site.

New Business

The Mineral Section is hosting a **Basic Mineral and Rock Identification workshop on Saturday, June 30, 2018 from 1:00–4:00 p.m.** The introductory speaker will be Dr. Nathalie Brandes, Professor of Geology at Lone Star College. She will give an overview of rock identification and how basic minerals are related to the rocks where they are found. Following her talk, there will be a hands-on session, so participants can practice using several diagnostic techniques (color, hardness, crystal form, streak color, etc.) to identify minerals. Attendees can also bring in rocks and minerals for identification.

If you plan to come to the workshop, please email Steve Blyskal at steve.blyskal@gmail.com or Paul Brandes at eclogite@pasty.com to reserve your spot.

Steve Blyskal added that mineral dealer John Veevaert recently passed away in an accident. He was one of the first mineral dealers to establish a presence on the Internet. He is well known throughout the US and the international mineral community.

Thursday tours of the Natural History Museum: Neal Immega explained that he and Inda Immega will be offering tours of Egypt, Gem and Minerals, Faberge, Weiss energy, and the Paleo Hall over the summer on Free Thursdays beginning at 6:00 p.m. Just let Neal know you are coming. nealimmega@gmail.com

Will Heierman announced that there is a 90% chance that a new mineral show will return next spring during the last week in April 2019. Sandra Gonzales, new Chairman of the September Denver Show, is working on a plan to promote a show in the Conroe area. Will Heierman will be assisting her with arrangements.

The next Board meeting is Tuesday, July 3, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

The next **General Meeting is July 24, 2018, 7:30 p.m.** Neal Immega will present information on Thundereggs. A thunderegg sale will follow.

Show 'n Tell: **Steve Blyskal** brought a flat of minerals—all quartz from many different locations and many different forms, all from his private collection.

Drawing: Will Heierman won the 5"x5" pyrite.

Refreshments: Foster Kneeland provided the refreshments. Members were reminded to **FEED THE KITTY!** Susan Burch volunteered to bring refreshments to the July General Meeting.

Adjourn: Karen Burns moved to adjourn the business meeting, and Sharon Halton seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the business portion of the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

As an addendum to the meeting, Susan Burch distributed the Certificates and Awards from the 2018 SCFMS and AFMS Bulletin Editors' Contest won by HGMS members. The HGMS winners were all listed in the June BBG.

1st Vice President Stewart presented a travelogue and metallurgical talk on Viking-age hoards of gold and silver found in Scandinavia.

Board of Directors' Minutes

July 3, 2018

by Nancy English

X	President—Paul Brandes	X	Beading Rep—Kim Fuselier
X	1st Vice President—Sigrid Stewart	X	Day Light Rep—Fred Brueckner
X	2nd Vice President—Beverly Mace		Faceting Rep—
X	Treasurer—Liane Linehan	X	Lapidary Rep—Phyllis George
X	Secretary—Nancy English		Mineral Rep—Mike Sommers
	Archeology Rep—Garth Clark	X	Paleontology Rep—Mike Dawkins

President Paul Brandes called the meeting to order at 7:32p.m. A quorum was present. Non-voting member and Education Chairperson, Quentin Boyer, attended.

President's Comments:

Busy Summer: Paul will not be here for the July General Meeting or the August Board Meeting. He will be in Michigan completing research, visiting several mineral shows, and attending a couple of collecting workshops, including Keweenaw Week in Houghton. Nathalie Brandes is keynote speaker at two of those functions.

MAD group presentation: On Saturday June 9, President Brandes was invited to give a presentation to the Mineral Association of Dallas on the history of mining in Upper Michigan. The presentation went very well (fifty-four attended).

Lone Star College Mineral collection: Paul thanks everyone for the donations. He still needs a few more fossils. Donations that could not be used were given to the Youth Section.

President Brandes asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2018 Board Meeting. Phyllis George moved to approve the June 5 minutes. Sigrid Stewart seconded the motion, and it passed.

July BOD Minutes continue on page 11



The Board of Directors is sponsoring a contest to officially name The Backbender's Scruffy Dude. HGMS Member Kim Fuselier created him, but the name "Scruffy Dude" doesn't do him justice.

After the August Board meeting, the rules of the contest will be announced. The winning name will be announced at the December Holiday Party December 15.

Treasurer's Report: Liane Linehan emailed the June 30, 2018 financials to all Board members in advance of the meeting.

Office, Committee, and Section Reports

Archaeology Section: No programs this summer. Look for future program announcements in the fall.

Beading Section: Saturday July 24, 2018 1:30 p.m. The July Beading Section Meeting will be making a Succulent Garden Bracelet. At the June 16 Beading Meeting, Paul Robles taught a basic wire wrapping class to seventeen attendees. Students donated money for his generous contributions of stones, wire, equipment, expertise, and patience. He thanked everyone. But instead of accepting the funds, he donated the money to the Youth Section.

Maggie Manley attended The Beading Show in Sugar Land. By selling some overstock and items donated to the Beading Section, she was able to earn \$304.00 for the Beading Section. Three people completed membership applications.

Day Light Section: The July meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 11 because July 4 is a Holiday. The July activity will be designing bird nest earrings and a necklace. As always, HGMS will have some tools available. The Day Light Section Chair position is still open. Members of the Section are fortunate that Karen Burns continues to plan meeting activities.

Education: Susan Burch will be teaching a new class on wire wrapping Thursday, July 12 and Saturday, July 14 from 10:00 to 2:00.

Gemstones and Faceting Section: Wednesday, July 11, 2018, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. John Lee will demonstrate how to use a polariscope in the identification of gemstones. John is new to faceting, yet he entered the U. S. Faceters Guild single-stone competition last year and took second place in the Pre-Master class! Along with Pat Cockrell, John and Pat are proven expert faceters in their class! The rest of the meeting is open to discuss anything related to gemstones or faceting.

Lastly, we all were saddened to hear about the untimely passing of Jeanne Barna. She was an active member of our Section and represented us at the Executive Board meetings. She recently had acquired her first faceting machine and was working on a tourmaline for our November show. She was a sweet lady and will be missed."

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section: Monday, July 16, 2018, 7:30 Program: Karen Burns and John Mitscherling will be demonstrating how to twist wire for later use. Hammered braided copper bracelets will be made as well. The Shop will be open at 5:00 until 7:15 for anyone interested in using it.

Library: Quentin Boyer reported that the lack of support for the Library is making it difficult to continue. He also needs to have library keys made for the Shop Foremen.

Mineral Section: The Mineral Section will not have regularly scheduled meetings during the summer hiatus. Meetings resume in September. The Section hosted a beginner Mineral Identification Workshop on June 30 that was attended by twenty-seven members.

Paleo Section: Tuesday, July 17, 2018. 7:30 p.m. Neal Immega will give a presentation on Thundereggs—how they are formed and why they are so different. Attendees to the talk can also BUY the thundereggs donated to HGMS. Neal will put out 100s of eggs priced from \$5 to \$100 starting at 6 PM. All proceeds go to HGMS.

He also will have some small wonderstone pieces suitable for JEWELRY to give away from his

Utah trip. At a wonderstone quarry, Inda and Neal picked up small pieces with a complete pattern. A finished piece will be on display.

Shop Report: No report.

Show Committee—Scott Singleton: Steve Blyskal has reported that all dealers have returned contracts. We have a few tables left, some of which will likely go to booth expansion requests by a few dealers.

Volunteer Sign-Up Program: Nancy English and Charlie Holden are planning to meet for the second time in late July to work on the volunteer charts. Nancy has received two online applications.

Youth Section: The next meetings will be July 7 and July 21 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. The August meetings will be held August 4 and August 18.

BBG Editor: The deadline to send in articles and other pertinent information for inclusion in the August 2018 BBG is Thursday, July 15, 2018. The BBG "Mascot" for the Back Bender's Gazette is finished: Kim Fusilier is working on two other sketches of young rock hound caricatures. After the August Board meeting, The Board will announce the details of an HGMS Mascot-naming contest to be held in September.

Phyllis George announced that all entries (articles) that will be submitted to the 2019 SCFMS Bulletin Editors' Contest need to be written and submitted for publication in the BBG no later than the September issue (August 15 to Phyllis). This year the cutoff date to submit HGMS entries to the 2019 SCFMS contest is the end of October. Articles published in October, November, and December, 2018, will be entered in the 2020 SCFMS Contest.

Old Business

Building Safety: President Brandes has been reviewing the International Fire Code document. Club members will be asked to implement some of the changes that may be necessary.

Web Site: No new information

Scholarship Program: Mike Sommers said the committee is evaluating the multiple applications they have received. They hope to complete the process by the August Board meeting and to announce winners.

Security System: No report.

Creating "How-To" videos: Sigrid Stewart reported that some research has been done. Another member has shown interest in joining the committee.

Handheld Vacuum: Jim Paras purchased a Black and Decker hand-held vacuum for the shop as authorized earlier this year. You can find it in the classroom.

New Business

Holiday Party: The Holiday Party date for 2018 has changed to **December 15, 2018**. It will be held at the **Unitarian church on Wirt Road, the same location as last year.**

Dunn Southwest: Dr. Gary Tober will represent HGMS at the DSWBPA Annual Meeting on Wednesday July 18, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. at PPSI, 10905 Brooklet. Gary will ensure that the interests and concerns of HGMS are addressed. A letter designating Gary as our representative to Dunn

Southwest will be completed and sent to Dunn prior to their meeting. Nancy English will become the HGMS Registered Agent with the State of Texas to replace Michele Marsel who has held the position for four years. President Brandes signed the application and letters to that effect.

Nancy and Tom English will be in Rapid City, South Dakota, for the 38th Annual Gem and Mineral Show of the Western Dakota Gem and Mineral Society July 20–22, 2018. Their vacation begins July 21, 2018. They return July 26, 2018.

Next Board of Directors meeting: Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

The next General Meeting is July 24, 2018, 7:30 p.m. Neal Immega will present information on Thundereggs. A sale of thundereggs will follow.

Adjourn: Nancy English moved, and Mike Dawkins seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Using Quotation Marks

by Joy Bourne

via SCRIBE 04–06/2003, via SCRIBE 07-08/2018

Quotation marks are probably the most frequently misused punctuation characters in the English language. This is especially true since they often come next to a comma or an end punctuation mark, and the question becomes "where to place what." The rules for correct usage may be found in any text on grammar. We all knew them once, but often memory dims when we're facing a newsletter publication deadline, and we don't always take time to look them up. Following is a quick summary of these rules, together with examples of their use in sentences. All rules apply to single quotation marks as well. Perhaps this will be of help to our newsletter editors.

1. Use a comma to set off a direct quotation from words like *he said*. "You were going 80 miles an hour," the State Policeman said. According to the AFMS Code of Ethics, "I will leave all gates as found." "Come to the workshop session," he told her, "and I will teach you to wire-wrap."
2. If a quoted question or exclamation comes at the beginning of a sentence, use a question mark (?) or an exclamation point (!) to set it off—not a comma. "Do you want a gad pry or a crack hammer?" Bill asked. "Unbelievable!" Charlie shouted.
3. Commas and periods always go inside the quotation marks at the end of a quotation. "You can't move that alone," said the safety officer. The miner admitted, "Unless we get more help out here, we'll never get this rock back to the truck."
4. Question marks and exclamation points go inside the quotation marks if the quotation itself is a question or exclamation. The reporter wrote, "The Jets Won!" Tom responded, "Are you glad?" *Are you glad?* is a question. Therefore, the question mark is part of the quotation, and it goes inside the quotation marks. Similarly for the exclamation point.
5. Question marks and exclamation points go outside the quotation marks if the sentence as a whole is a question or exclamation. Did she say, "I am going fossiling"? The quotation "I am going fossiling" is a statement. The sentence as a whole is a question. Thus, the question mark goes outside the quotation marks.
6. Single marks surround a quotation within a quotation. "'I want to go,' I said quite clearly. "But she said, 'Not with me. You can never travel to Paris with me.'"

7. When two or more paragraphs are quoted, place quotation marks at the beginning of each paragraph and at the end of the last paragraph. The closing mark tells the reader that he has reached the end of the quotation.

Sources:

Lein, Andrea and Robert Chodos, Write All About It, New Readers Press, Syracuse, NY. 1986.

Wooley, Edwin C., et al., Handbook of Writing & Speaking, D.C. Heath and Co., New York. 1944

Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

*For more tips or to learn new jewelry skills see
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)
www.BradSmithJewelry.com*

SAWING SMALL TUBING

When making a hinged bracelet, I needed to cut 16 pieces of small-diameter silver tubing. These were to be just approximate lengths and trimmed to final size after soldering. Not having a tube cutter, I had trouble holding the tubing on the bench pin while trying to saw through it.

So here's what I did. I drilled a hole in the side of the bench pin just large enough for the tubing to slide into and almost as deep as the length of cut tubing I wanted. Sawing became quick and easy. With my free hand, I inserted the tubing and held it from rotating while sawing off each length.



SECRET INGREDIENT

Those of us who use paste solders sometimes find an old tube has dried out. There should be some way to recondition it, but what to use? Calling tech support at the suppliers didn't work for me. Either they don't know what the ingredient is, or they won't divulge the secret.

None of us likes to waste an expensive material, especially at \$16–20 a tube, so I've often experimented with ways to rejuvenate it. Mixing in a liquid flux doesn't work. When the liquid starts to boil off, it spatters the solder in all directions.



But after several failed experiments, I finally found a way that does work. My secret ingredient is Vaseline petroleum jelly. Mix in just enough to restore the consistency to something that's usable. If you use too much, the lump of solder will flow over a wide area as soon as the torch starts heating it.

If your solder is in a syringe, it can be a little difficult to get the plunger out. I find the easiest way is

to poke a hole through the solder from the tip to the rubber plunger (a bur shaft was the right size for my tube). The hole allows air to enter between the solder and the plunger, allowing the plunger to be slowly withdrawn. Once the solder is out of the tube, you can easily add the Vaseline, mix it up, and spoon it back into the syringe.

Pick Up a Few New Jewelry Skills With Brad's "How To Do It" Books

<http://amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith>



Email Scam Alert *from Breccia 08/2018*

Dear Societies,

Unfortunately, but no surprise these days, there is a new email **scam** targeting CFMS societies. Don't be fooled. This one they probably thought was pretty slick, except for the fact they don't know our societies as well as we all do.

I got an email from a society president I know, only I noticed that although it had their first and last name in the email address, the rest of the address was not the same one they use. I had just gotten an email earlier in the day that used their usual address.

Then tonight I got an email from the same president using this 2nd odd address. The email was forwarding an email from another CFMS society who wanted to sell their show attendee and vendor contact information, you name it, email addresses, phone numbers, etc. Our societies are like family to each other, and we do not try to sell information like this to each other. That was the first clue something was fishy, but the crooks don't know that about us. Both societies have been contacted. I can confirm that it is a scam. So heads up, and be aware!

Jennifer Haley, CFMS President

Note from the HGMS Editor: ALL the federations would be wise to keep an eye out for such sly (and dangerous) scams—not just the CFMS.

Thank you to Jennifer Haley for sounding the alarm!

Coast Highway Closures during 2017–2018 in Monterey County, CA

*by Steve Mulqueen
from Rockhound Rambling 07/2018*

The winter season of 2016–2017 released 28" of rain along the California Coast of southern Monterey County. This influx of precipitation resulted in the loading of moisture that weakened unstable soils and moved incompetent rock along the steep slopes of the Santa Lucia Mountain Range. Large landslides were reactivated by water saturation from the heavy rainfall during the first half of 2017.

A 35-mile stretch of Highway 1 became blocked by three significant landslide events, all within Monterey County. Residents living in this remote region of the California Coast became isolated from the rest of the State, making it difficult to buy groceries and other essential supplies. Nacimiento—Fergusson Road became a lifeline, allowing for a link from the isolated coastal areas to inland localities. This article highlights the struggle that lasted a year and a half, preventing access to a wonderful scenic area and a region famous for great rockhounding opportunities.

Pfeiffer Canyon Bridge Failure, February 2017 – The Pfeiffer Canyon Bridge is located near Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. During February 2017, the bridge began collapsing due to movement along a landslide beneath a major bridge pylon. The structure was determined to be a total loss by engineers with Caltrans and by engineers employed by private contractors. The bridge was demolished, new concrete bridge abutments were constructed, and a 310' steel structure was built in its place. The demolition and replacement costs exceeded \$24-million. The new bridge was opened in October 2017.

Paul's Landslide, April 2017 – Another landslide named "Paul's" slide, located several miles north of the community of Gorda, failed on April 4, 2017 causing Highway 1 to be blocked at a second point. Caltrans crews and heavy equipment contractors worked long hours to clear the landslide and to repair the damaged highway. Highway 1 at the site of Paul's Slide was reopened on July 25, 2017.

Mud Creek Landslide, May 2017 – On May 20, 2017, Highway 1 was blocked by the massive



Mud Creek Landslide along the California Coast, located immediately south of the community of Gorda. The slide is in Monterey County, approximately 9 miles north of the San Luis Obispo county line. The slope-failure released rock and soil from as high as 650' above the highway—from the steep slope of the western edge of the Santa Lucia Range. The slide originally added 15 acres of land to the State of California. Continuous erosion from wave action has reduced the new landmass to 13 acres, with a toe that extends 250' into the ocean.

Caltrans continues to monitor the Mud Creek Landslide, with State engineers supervising heavy equipment operations by John Madonna Construction Company, Inc. (JMC). Estimates of the volume of displaced rock and soil exceeded 6-million cubic yards. The cost of over 14 months of almost continuous heavy equipment operations with associated monitoring efforts has reached \$54-million dollars. Thirty-five employees from JMC have been working seven days a week from dawn to dusk during this period.

Work has involved excavating a new path for the highway, constructing barricades to prevent further slide encroachment, placing riprap boulders to stop wave erosion at the toe, grading the highway, and paving the replacement roadbed. Crews continue with the construction of embankments, berms, rock (for erosion control), steel netting, culverts, drainage pipes, and other stabilizing structures. Excavation and construction operations continue to the present day at the Mud Creek Landslide. The seven-mile stretch of Highway 1 through the Mud Creek slide is expected to finally open at the end of the month (July 2018).

Conclusion - For an extended period lasting 18 months, California's State Highway 1 has been blocked within a 35-mile stretch from the community of Gorda and continuing northwest into Big Sur. The coastal highway through northern San Luis Obispo County and southern Monterey County is a favorite area for tourists and rockhounds. The region is known for its beautiful coastal scenic views.

Rockhounding activities in the area have produced nephrite jade, serpentine, red chert, moonstone, rhodonite, placer gold, and glaucophane schist. The completion of highway excavations, repairs, and construction along the Mud Creek Landslide—expected by the end of July 2018—is the final step in opening Highway 1 to unobstructed access along California's scenic coast through Monterey County.

References: Research key words and titles on the Internet under the headings of: Pfeiffer Canyon Bridge, California Highway 1, Mud Creek Landslide, and Paul's Landslide.

Written by Steve Mulqueen for the VGMS July 2018. The "Definition of the Month" features words related to geology, paleontology, mining, and desert history. Refer to other definitions featured in past VGMS bulletins under the heading of Educational Corner dating back to June 2001 available on the VGMS Web site at www.vgms.org.



By Ernston Barnhart - via Rock Buster News 3/01
via Golden Spike News 8/01

Rockhounding on the Big Island of Hawaii

from Breccia 07/2018

Do I see a Field Trip to Hawaii in the Future?" These were the words that were emailed to me to inform me of the richness of Olivine being spewed, along with the lava, onto the island of Hawaii. All of the Hawaiian Islands were built through volcanic eruptions of lava piling higher and higher from the ocean floor until they were tall enough to be higher than the ocean waters. The older islands are gradually shrinking in size, but the island of Hawaii is still forming—very actively through the lava flowing from the Kilauea Volcano.

I had not thought of the Hawaiian Islands as being a source of many minerals, but in looking at various Web sites, I find that it has quartz, epistilbite, manganese, nickel, cobalt, black coral, and gem-quality olivine, known as peridot. Residents are finding lovely green crystals of peridot, sometimes in great abundance. Someone said that it was literally raining gemstones. And so, maybe it is time to consider organizing a field trip to Hawaii!

Ancient Bird with Beak and Teeth

Excerpted from May 2, 2018 Reuters news article by Will Dunham.

Submitted by Allan Gossman.

via Pick & Shovel 07/2018

A primitive seabird that prospered about 85 million years ago along the warm, shallow inland sea once splitting North America, boasted what scientists are calling a surprising blend of traits from its dinosaur ancestors and modern avian characteristics. Four new fossils of Ichthyornis, which had both a beak and teeth and lived a lifestyle like modern gulls, offer striking evidence of this Cretaceous Period bird's important position in avian evolutionary history.

Ichthyornis fossils were first unearthed in the 1870s, but the new finds from Kansas and Alabama chalk deposits reveal far more than was previously known. Ichthyornis was the size of a tern, with a two-foot (60-cm) wingspan, and it probably ate fish and shellfish.

Birds evolved from small, feathered dinosaurs. It appears Ichthyornis was a strong flier, its body streamlined, simplified, and adapted for flight like modern birds. Despite its birdlike body and wings, it had almost a full set of dinosaurian teeth and strong jaw muscles. Its sharp teeth probably would have assisted in holding onto slippery marine prey, while the incipient beak at the tips of its jaws probably would have allowed it to manipulate objects with fine dexterity and to preen its feathers.

**Artist's impression
of Ichthyornis.**

**Drawing signed by
Michael Hanson**



Elephant Hall in Lincoln, Nebraska

by Jim Brace-Thompson

from Rockhound Ramblings 07/2018

During a hot, humid week surrounding the Fourth of July holiday, I found myself shuttling between Nebraska and Illinois for family reunions. Given that my elderly mother, my sister, and I were sweeping across the width of Iowa in Mom's yellow VW Beetle with a "Rockhounding Iowa" guidebook in my hands, I had been hoping to step outside into the humidity for a little rockhound rambling and collecting. However, a web-based update to the guidebook showed that 90% of the sites within reasonable distance of I-80 were no longer accessible for collecting due to urban development, liability concerns, flooding of once productive quarries, or dangerous conditions around road cuts that have seen increased traffic.

On the plus side, while at Mom's home in Utica, Nebraska, I was a mere 45 minutes from the University of Nebraska, home to the State Museum in Morrill Hall. I first visited Morrill Hall in the late 1970s when it seemed like a dusty, musty has-been in a little-trafficked part of America.

Their claim-to-fame was a "Hall of Elephants" with mounted skeletons of contemporary elephants and elephant ancestors, but that seemed to be about it. It was a far cry from the vision of early museum founders and supporters Charles Morrill and Erwin Barbour. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, they had expressed hope for a world-class museum in the heart of America revealing the paleontological wonders found in Nebraska and surrounding states. There was little evidence of this vision back in the 1970s. During a subsequent visit, Nancy and I encountered whole sections of the building blocked off for "further development."

I'm happy to report that such "further development" has indeed realized Morrill and Barbour's wildest dreams. Not only did I see a revitalized "Elephant Hall," I saw all sorts of wonders including fossils found in Nebraska from 1 billion years ago to the present, evidence of an ocean stretching across the middle of America during the Age of Dinosaurs, an interactive Kids Room, wonderfully



educational displays on rocks and minerals, and more. Morrill Hall includes three floors (with the bottom floor doubling as a tornado shelter), but a new fourth floor addition is in the works, indicating that the museum Board of Directors is far from finished in seeking to achieve the vision of Morrill and Barbour.

The central focus remains fossil elephants. Ever since 1796 when a Scottish explorer discovered the first vertebrate fossil in territory that would later become Nebraska, some 10,000 extinct fossil elephants have been unearthed in Nebraska, with remains of mammoths, mastodons, stegomastodons, long-jawed tuskers and more having been unearthed in 90 of Nebraska's 93 counties. And it's speculated that a mere 1% of the state has been thoroughly explored for fossils! **Some paleontologists estimate that as many as 3,000 elephant fossils are buried per square mile of Nebraska countryside. This provides odds of one in ten that average Nebraskans have an extinct elephant ancestor under their homes or garages...**

The displays in "Elephant Hall" include what's described as a "mammoth Mammoth"—the largest mounted mammoth skeleton anywhere. This Imperial Mammoth was discovered in



Nebraska in 1922 thanks to chickens! Farmer H.S. Karriger noticed his chickens gravitating to limy material in a small canyon, limy material that turned out to be bones of the world's largest mammoth. Finds like this have resulted in the mammoth being declared the Nebraska State Fossil.

Many people driving across America find Nebraska to be overly long, flat, and monotonous, but should you ever find yourself on this stretch of Interstate 80, take the time for a rockhound ramble to Morrill Hall. You'll be glad you did!

Joshua Tree National Park

by Jim Brace-Thompson
from Rockhound Ramblings 07/2018

The weekend of June 23/24, Nancy and I met up with my East Coast brother and sister-in-law (Gary and Mary from Pennsylvania) for a relaxing 105-degree sauna at Palm Springs. Despite the heat, we headed out for a one-day rockhound ramble to explore the geological playground called Joshua Tree National Park. Given that Nancy and I were supposedly the rock experts, we were hit with all manner of questions, especially from Mary, whose expertise is city planning: How did the weird boulder formations come to be? What are those straight lines running smack through the middle of otherwise smooth granite? What are those rounded nook-like bowls in the edges of certain boulders and outcrops? To most of her questions, Nancy and I shrugged our shoulders and replied, "Um...ugg...unhhlmm?!"

Fortunately, a couple of terrific little books are sold at the Visitor Center that provided answers to these questions and more: Margaret R. Eggers' *"Mining History and Geology of Joshua Tree National Park"* and D. D. Trent and Richard W. Hazlett's *"Joshua Tree National Park Geology."* If I had to suggest one, it would be Trent and Hazlett's book, which is the shorter of the two and is especially well illustrated with colorful photos and diagrams. However, both provide good, simplified, and well-illustrated introductions that will aid amateur rockhounds seeking to decipher the geology they will view at Joshua Tree.

For instance, that little nook-like bowl in the edge of a granite boulder? It's called a "tafoni." Originally thought to be the product of abrasion by wind and sand, folks now think they reflect a time when the California desert was much more temperate and moist and filled with soils supporting dense vegetation enjoyed by Ice Age animals like giant bison, ground sloths, and camels. Such soils abutted granite boulders and outcrops, and the roots of plants reached within and weakened the mineral grains of the granite. In addition, acids associated with plant decay and periodic wetting and drying dug into the rock face. Eventually, plants—both living and decaying—crafted the hollows and pits we see today now that surface soils have dried and blown away long ago. If you venture out to Joshua Tree, we urge you to grab one or both of these books to read up and inform your desert adventure so that you, too, can answer Mary!



Show Time—2018

- Aug 11-12 Gonzales, LA Baton Rouge Gem & Mineral Society
Lamar Dixon Expo Center-Trademart Building
9039 S St Landry Ave;
mercyom3@gmail.com; www.brgemandmineral.org
- Aug 18-19 Bossier City, LA Arklatex Gem & mineral Society
Bossier City Civic center; 620 Benton Rd, 2009 Chelsy Dr
larockclub@gmail.com; larockclub.com
- Aug. 25-26 Jasper, TX Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society—24th Annual Show
The Event Center, 6258 Hwy 190 West, Jasper, Texas 75951
earthscache3@yahoo.com; jonetta.nash@yahoo.com
- Oct. 6-7 Springfield, IL Midwest Federation hosted by Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Soc.
Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, 801 Sangamon Ave.
<http://www.loess.org/>
- Oct 12–13 Mount Ida, AR Mount Ida Area Chamber of Commerce
31st Annual Amateur World Championship Quartz Crystal
Digging Contest against other miners—maybe win cash & a trophy
director@mountidachamber.com; mountidachamber.com
- Oct 13-14 Amarillo, TX Golden Spread Gem, Mineral & Treasure Society
Amarillo Civic Center Complex, 401 S. Buchanan St.
patfoster2@hotmail.com; amarillotreasure.com
- Oct 13-14 Temple, TX Tri-City Gem & Mineral Society
Mayborn Civic and Convention Center, 3303 N. Third St.
lrolston@hotmail.com
- Oct. 19-21 Austin, TX Austin Gem & Mineral Society;
Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd
showchariman@austingemandmineral.org;
www.agms-tx.org
- Oct. 20-21 Sedona, AZ Sedona Gem & Mineral Club
Sedona Gem and Mineral Club
Sedona Red Rock High School; 995 Upper Red Rock Loop Rd
webstuff1954@hotmail.com; www.sedonagemandmineral.org
- Oct. 26-28, Glen Rose, TX Dallas Paleontological Society; Somervell County Expo Center
202 Bo Biggs Blvd., Apt. 10208
markrandall00@sbcglobal.net; dallaspaleo.org
- Nov. 9-11 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
hgms.org; showchair@hgms.org
- Nov. 17-18 Mesquite, TX Dallas Gem & Mineral Society
Rodeo Center Exhibition Hall, 1800 Rodeo Dr.
dgmscontracts@yahoo.com; www.dallasgemandmineral.org

2018		August				2018	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
			1 10-3 Shop Open 1-3 p.m. Day Light	2 NO Archaeology Section Meetings until fall	3	4 10-4 Shop Open 10-Noon Youth Section	
5 10-4 Shop Open	6	7 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 Board Meeting	8 10-3 Shop Open 6:30 p.m. Gemstone & Faceting Section	9	10	11 10-4 Shop Open	
12 10-4 Shop Open	13	14 11-3 Shop Open	15 10-3 Shop Open	16	17	18 10-4 Shop Open 10-Noon Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section	
19 10-4 Shop Open	20 7:30 Lapidary Section	21 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 Paleo Section	22 10-3 Shop Open	23	24	25 10-4 Shop Open	
26 10-4 Shop Open	27	28 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 General Meeting	29 10-3 Shop Open	30	31		

2018		September				2018	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
						1 10-4 Shop Open 10-Noon Youth Section	
2 10-4 Shop Open	3 Labor Day	4 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 Board Meeting	5 10-3 Shop Open 1-3 p.m. Day Light 7:30 Mineral Section	6 NO Archae- ology Section Meetings until further notice	7	8 10-4 Shop Open	
9 10-4 Shop Open Rosh Hashanah begins	10	11 11-3 Shop Open Rosh Hashanah ends	12 10-3 Shop Open 6:30 p.m. Gemstone & Faceting Section	13	14	15 10-4 Shop Open 10-Noon Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section	
16 10-4 Shop Open	17 7:30 Lapidary Section	18 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 Paleo Section	19 10-3 Shop Open 7:30 Mineral Section	20	21 POW/MIA Recognition Day	22 10-4 Shop Open 1st Day of Autumn	
23 10-4 Shop Open	24	25 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 General Meeting	26 10-3 Shop Open	27	28	29 10-4 Shop Open	
30 10-4 Shop Open							

The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the
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2018 - 1st Large



AFMS

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2004 - 3rd (Large)
2007 - 1st (Large)
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2012 - 3rd (Large)
2013 - 3rd (Large)
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2017 - 3rd (Large)

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