



The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE



The Newsletter of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

Volume LI—No. 1

January 2020



President's Message *by Sigrid Stewart*

It's a brand new year—all bright and shiny! What are you going to do with it? Have you made resolutions, as many do? In years past, I have made many—and kept some.

I know I will continue as President this year, and will do my best to ensure that you have opportunities to pursue your hobby, both here at the club and out in the field. We have had some great classes this past year; we already have more lined up. We have had one field trip; we definitely need to have some more!



There are some great field trips running every weekend through the end of April in the Alpine area of West Texas for agates, jaspers, and artifacts.

President's Message continued on Page 4

*Welcome to the
New Year*

Upcoming Program

by Michael Sommers, 1st Vice President

General Meeting Program—January 28, 2020—Neal Immega presents **Copper-Banded agates**: During the past sixty years (1952–2012), copper-banded agates of exceptional beauty and rarity have been

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Permission to use material originating in this newsletter is given freely providing that credit is given to the author and the source.

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
Copy is due for the February 2020 issue by Wednesday, January 15, 2019.
E-mail the Editor 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.

2020 HGMS Officers

President	Sigrid Stewart	President@HGMS.org
First Vice-President	Mike Sommers	Programs@HGMS.org
Second Vice-President	Beverly Mace	Membership@HGMS.org
Secretary	Nancy English	Secretary@HGMS.org
Treasurer	Tatyana Kuhn	Treasurer@HGMS.org
Archaeology Section Board Member	Nancy Engelhardt-Moore	Archaeology@HGMS.org
Beading Section Board Member	Maggie Manley	Beading@HGMS.org
Day Light Section Board Member	Fred Brueckner	
Faceting Section Board Member	Matthew Phillips	Faceting@HGMS.org
Lapidary Section Board Member	Phyllis George	Editor@HGMS.org
Mineral Section Board Member	Steve Blyskal	Mineral@HGMS.org
Paleo Section Board Member	Mike Dawkins	Field_trips@HGMS.org

HGMS Section Chairs

Archaeology Section Chair	Bob Moore	Archaeology@HGMS.org
Beading Section Chair	Kim Fuselier	Beading@HGMS.org
Day Light Section Chair	Nancy Searle	DayLight@HGMS.org
Gemstone & Faceting Section Chair	Randy Carlson	Faceting@HGMS.org
Lapidary & Silversmith	Anthony Lucci	Lapidary@HGMS.org
Mineral Section Chair	Stephen Blyskal	Mineral@HGMS.org
Paleo Section Chair	Neal Immega	Paleo@HGMS.org
Youth Section Chair	Beverly Mace	Youth@HGMS.org

HGMS Appointed Positions

Assistant Show Chair	Clyde McMeans	
Backbender's Gazette Editor	Phyllis George	Editor@HGMS.org
Clubhouse Chair	Neal Immega	ClubhouseChair@HGMS.org
Day Light Contact Person	Nancy Searle	DayLight@HGMS.org
Donations	Neal Immega	Donations@HGMS.org
HGMS Education Chair	Maggie Manley	Classes@HGMS.org
Lapidary Templates	Mary Ann Mitscherling	Templates@HGMS.org
Librarian for Main Library	Neal Immega	Librarian@HGMS.org
Publicity Chair	Sara Metsa	Publicity@HGMS.org
Scholarships	Mike Sommers	Scholarships@HGMS.org
Show Chair	Scott Singleton	ShowChair@HGMS.org
Trade Show	Scott Singleton	Tradeshow@HGMS.org
Trade Show	Sigrid Stewart	Tradeshow@HGMS.org
Volunteer Coordinator	Nancy English	VolunteerCoordinator@HGMS.org
Webmaster	Sigrid Stewart	Webmaster@HGMS.org
Youth Section Assistant	Elizabeth Guynn	Youth2@HGMS.org

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 (except December) at 7:30. The HGMS Web site address is <https://hgms.org>.

President's Message continues

Some folks will be going to the Tucson Show. If you cannot go, do not despair! Some of those who are going are the dealers from whom you buy, and as always—they will seek out the newest and best to bring home for you to drool over. The 2020 Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society Show is February 22 and 23. In March, the Corpus Christi and San Antonio clubs have their shows. In May, the Texas Mineral & Fossil Show returns to Conroe.

This is a good time to commit to learning more about your hobby. If you are a mineral collector, do some research in the library or online to find out about localities or minerals you are interested in collecting. If you are a fossil collector, do a little research in your field, to learn more about the species you collect. If you enjoy lapidary work, take that faceting or silversmithing class, or come to the clubhouse on shop day to see what others are doing. Drop in on the Beading Section to see what they are doing, or visit the Archaeology Section to find out what new discoveries they are discussing. Come to the General Meeting and Section meetings—we already have some interesting programs lined up for the New Year.

And if you have expertise in some field, commit to sharing it! Think about teaching a class, or hosting a session during shop hours—**share what you know**.

Vice President's Message continues

recovered from various mine dumps along the Kearsarge copper-bearing amygdaloidal lode in Houghton County, Michigan. What makes these agates so unique and highly collectible is the native copper selectively replacing certain chalcedony bands within the agate structure. A beautiful, alternating pattern of chalcedony and copper bands is the result. To date, the agates are found mainly at three mine dumps. The agate-producing dumps are relatively intact, and they should, with heavy digging and a lot of luck, produce copper-banded agates for years to come. Collectors will end up with some of the rarest agates ever collected.

[Click here](#) to learn more on the topic. (If you read it thoroughly, Mike Sommers suggests you might “test” Neal following his presentation.)

**Pyrite Pete says,**

This January 2020 BBG is the last issue to be published by Phyllis George. Her first issue was the January 1996 issue. She enjoyed being the editor for 24 years, but she thinks 24 years are enough.

Sharon Thomas' first issue will be the February 2020 BBG.

Send BBG items to Sharon at drsharonathomas@sbcglobal.net.

Archaeology Section

by Nancy Engelhardt-Moore

December 5, 2019: The Section held its annual *Holiday Party Potluck and Show & Tell*. At 7:35 p.m., the party commenced. Fourteen guests attended, and there was plenty of delicious food! Everyone had a great time trying to pick the

“Real vs. Fake” artifacts, and there was lots of discussion. Before the winner was announced, two short videos were shown—one on how to use smell, and the other by Bob Dodge, the Founder of Artemis Gallery, on how sight can be used to authenticate ancient art. For smell, key authenticity



Items used for real or fake contest



Bob Moore and Melissa Sambrooks with her Prize
Photos: N. Engelhardt-Moore

observations include whether an item has an earthy odor or a putrid smell due to burial with a mummy. As for sight, actual manganese deposits can be distinguished from modern black paint by using a strong concentration of hydrogen peroxide to see if the deposits effervesce. Finally, Thermoluminescence (TL) Dating can be used to determine the accumulated radiation over time and age, since ceramic artifacts contain crystalline minerals

that were heated. After the videos, Bob Moore announced the winner of the game, Melissa Sambrooks, who got 11 out of 16 items correct, which is very impressive! The party ended at 9:15 p.m. A big thank you to everyone who brought food/drinks and pitched in to clean up. Your help was appreciated!

Bob Moore announced that in January there will not be a meeting. But in February there will be a field trip to see the HMNS Special Stonehenge Exhibit, which is currently on display (see below).

Upcoming Programs: No meeting **January 2, 2020** due to the Holiday, and no meeting on Thursday, February 6, 2020.

Saturday, February 8, 2020: Dr. Dirk Van Tuerenhout, HMNS Curator of Anthropology, will lead a field trip at HMNS through the Special Exhibit ***Stonehenge: Ancient Mysteries and Modern Discoveries***. You will have an opportunity to encounter 300 original artifacts with Dirk, the curator of the exhibit. This exciting program will be on Saturday instead of the usual meeting day of the first Thursday of the month. Watch for more details about this upcoming event!

General Meeting Minutes

November 26, 2019
by Nancy English

President Sigrid Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. She welcomed all 23 attendees. Former President Paul Brandes visited the meeting. It was good to see him.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

HGMS Holiday party will be on Saturday, December 14, 2019 at the Unitarian Fellowship for the third year: 1504 Wirt Rd, Houston, TX 77055. This lovely venue allows us plenty of room to visit with friends and to enjoy the sides and desserts we bring for the potluck. HGMS provides the main dish meats.

Volunteers can set up around about 4:30 p.m. Please contact Nancy English at nancyjodi@aol.com to volunteer to set up tables, move pews, and set up our buffet.

We can begin cocktails and potluck appetizers about 5:30 p.m. with BYO wine and beer.

Dinner buffet will start at 6:00 p.m. A bit of speechifying around 6:30 will wrap up the Show reports, awards, Installation of 2020 Officers, and 2019 accomplishments.

The auction begins at 7:00 p.m. Donations are welcome and needed. Bring them to the General Meeting on November 26, 2019, or bring them to the Party at 4:30 p.m. so we have time to log them into the Auction program.

Afterward, we need volunteers to wash our dishes and put everything back for the Sunday Service. Again, let Nancy English know when you can help.

The Silent Auction was cancelled for this meeting because our guest speakers have plenty of great specimens to buy.

Approval of Minutes: Richard Good moved to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2019, as printed in the e-blast on Monday, November 25, 2019. Steve Blyskal seconded, and the motion passed.

Section/Committee Reports

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

President Stewart invited other Section Chairs and Standing Committee Chairs to make any additional announcements. Our Sections are holding many parties in December.

December 5, 2019, The Archaeology Section, Thursday, 7:30 p.m. will have their Holiday Potluck Dinner.

December 4, 2019, Day Light, Wednesday, Noon to 2:00, will have their Annual Holiday Party Potluck.

December 11, 2019, Gemstones and Faceting Section Wednesday, 6:30, p.m., will have a Christmas party.

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section is NOT having a December meeting.

Mineral Section will decide on a party date at the November meeting

Paleo Section Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., December 17, 2019, will have a regular meeting. Paleo has a holiday party in July.

Youth Section will have a Holiday party **December 7, 2019,** featuring Show awards and FUN.

In other Section news, the **Chair of Gemstones and Faceting, Randy Carlson**, is temporarily relocating to Denver. Pat Cockrell and Matt Phillips will help with upcoming faceting training, and Glenn Parks will coordinate their Christmas Party. The group will discuss replacing Randy as Chair, and Matt Phillips will fill in for him as Board representative.

Education: Maggie Manley reported that there are three scheduled classes coming up in November, December, and January. Check HGMS.org for details on those classes and future plans for classes.

Beginning Wire Wrap December 8: 1:00 to 4:00 \$45.00, at the HGMS Clubhouse. Instructor: Joy Lester

Beginning Silversmithing Five Sessions: December 2, 4, 9, 11, and 16, 2019; Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. in the HGMS Silversmith Shop \$250.00. Instructor: Tony Lucci (40-years-experience in metalsmithing). **The class is full.**

Wax Carving and Casting—Six Sessions: January 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, and 23, 2020; Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. in HGMS Silversmith Shop \$250.00. Instructor: Tony Lucci (40-years-experience in metalsmithing).

Show Committee: It is all behind us now, and what a great Show!

- **Show Dinner and Auction on October 26, 2019,** competed with the Astros playing in the World Series. Twenty-two people ate great barbeque ribs, chicken, sausage, brisket, and potluck sides. Seventeen bidders spent their auction money on the best bargains EVER.
- **3700 tickets were sold. Great show.** Best attendance in years. Facebook

helped.

- **1st year to have classes being taught**, at least in a long time!
- **1st year for the Dino Dig to be indoors.**
- **1st year to use Magnetic Signs** on member cars (please return them if you have one)
- **1st year to use A-Frame signs** to direct people to the front ticket booth
- **1st year in five years to have a volunteer Security Team**
- **Nancy English thanked the Volunteers:** Volunteers are the only reason we can produce this exceptional, complicated, successful event. There is nothing better than having our loyal members step up to volunteer for key positions and jobs of all kinds. There are nearly 200 volunteer shifts to fill. Thank you to all of you.
 - **Thank you to the leaders** starting with **Scott Singleton—Show Chairman;**
 - **Dealer Chairman**, who scheduled dealers and managed their needs from sign-up in the spring to tear down on Sunday night—**Steve Blyskal;**
 - **Co-Chairmen of the Information Booth—Sigrid Stewart, Michael and Debbie Knight, Sarah Metsa**
 - **Ticket Operations Chairman—Nancy Fischer;**
 - **Dino Dig Co-chairmen—Mike Clark and Tom English;**
 - **Youth Area Co-chairmen—Beverly Mace and Libby Guynn;**
 - **Volunteer Coordinator—Nancy English;**
 - **Chairman of the New Security Team—Rick Rexroad;**
 - **Education projects Committee—Scott Singleton, Elsa Kapitan-White, Charlotte Holden, and their newest member, Maggie Manley;**
 - **Demonstration Coordinator—Mary Ann Mitscherling.** Thank you to the Volunteer Demonstrators who spent hours showing the public the joy of creating art from rocks and metal.
 - Thank you to the **volunteer expert Paleontologists, Archeologists, and Mineralogists** who gave of their time to talk to hundreds of people, explaining the details of their own earth science passions.
 - On Friday—our busiest traffic day because of the school kids—we needed 52 volunteers. Thanks to the 29 college kids from the University of Houston Downtown, Alvin College, and San Jacinto College, we filled all of those jobs. On Saturday and Sunday, they continued to fill in the blanks while people poured in the front door.
- **The Volunteer Appreciation Party was held on Saturday, November 16, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** What fun. Lots of great Mexican food, and a relaxing evening with like-minded rock lovers. The Show Committee met afterwards and filled eight pages with ways to improve an already outstanding Show.
- **Local Library advertising:** The Kingwood Library asked HGMS to prepare a display in their lobby for the month of September. Steve Blyskal and Sigrid Stewart prepared an extensive mineral arrangement for the Library's glass cabinets. Sigrid asked the Humble Library if they would like a display in October. So at the end of September, they moved the display to the Octavia Fields Library in Humble (on the same lot as the Humble Civic Center). Next year we will leave many flyers at the libraries, maybe install a poster too as well as the displays.

- Scott Singleton will have more information for the Board at the December 3, 2019 meeting and for the Club at the December 14, 2019 Holiday Party.

Old Business

President Stewart asked members to look for the progress of Old Business items in the BOD Meeting Minutes in the latest BBG.

2020 HGMS Officer Elections: The nominees were announced during the October General Meeting. There were no other nominations from the floor.

The Slate of Officers for 2020 is

- **Sigrid Stewart**—President;
- **Mike Sommers**—First Vice President;
- **Beverly Mace**—Second Vice President—she committed to one more year
- **Tatyana Kuhne**—Treasurer;
- **Nancy English**—Secretary.

Nancy Fischer moved to approve the slate of officers for 2020. Theresa Phillips seconded the motion, and it passed.

Power Outage: The power went out about 6:45 p.m. Reliant called the Club phone to tell us they were working on it, and it would be on by 7:30. In the interim, members used the flashlights built into the electrical outlets. Clever devices worth mentioning.

Building Issues:

Landscaping maintenance: Dunn Southwest said we are responsible for the maintenance of our shrubs and trees. When the weather is dry, we will need to water shrubs and trees around the clubhouse.

HVAC: Lee Thompson Air Conditioning came again to fix the heat on the new unit. The gas for it had not been turned on.

Parking Lot Lighting: As of November 19, 2019, the lights have been fixed outside. The man from YESCO says the new metal halide bulb should last a long time. He also replaced the blub and ballast on the light for the HGMS sign.

The roof repairs are proceeding. On Tuesday, November 19, 2019, cleaning the entire roof area with a detergent and removing loose gravel commenced. On Thursday afternoon, repairs of the leak sources and other problem areas began. Areas where the underlayment had bubbled up leading to additional problems also were repaired. After the entire roof area has dried, silicone sealant will be applied to the roof, possibly by November 26, 2020.

Drywall: After the roof repairs are finished, Tony Lucci will repair the drywall in the middle classroom.

Furniture in the Jewelry Fabrication Lab. Tony Lucci researched and found adjustable height chairs for the lab. Thanks, Tony.

Shop News: As seen in the e-blast Sunday, November 24, Neal Immega is on vacation this week. The shop saw is fixed.

New Business

Mail Issue: A substitute mail carrier surmised that HGMS is an empty building and there was no forwarding address. Nancy English was contacted by two members who sent their ticket money to the club. The envelopes had been returned. Nancy English reported it to the US Postal Service. The situation was corrected in 36 hours.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. December 3, 2019.

The December General Meeting will be replaced by our Annual Holiday Party on December 14, 2019

The next regular General Meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. January 28, 2020.

Show-n-Tell

- Nancy Fischer showed a Jersey Prehnite that she had turned into a cabochon.
- Steve Blyskal brought seven amethysts and one smokey quartz.

Drawing: Matt and Theresa Phillips won the double-sided, polished, agate Slab.

Refreshments tonight were brought by Nancy English. Please FEED THE KITTY.

Volunteer for January's refreshments is Maggie Manley. President Stewart explained that the refreshments will be reimbursed up to \$25.00.

Adjourn: Steve Blyskal moved to adjourn. Sigrid Stewart seconded it and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

15 minute break—

Vice President Sommers introduced the Program: Lydia and Francois van Driel presented **"From South Africa to New Zealand to Texas"**—the story of their rockhound adventures and a closer look at the areas from which the treasures come.

They will talk about the land that shaped these gems, crystals, and minerals, the people involved, their experiences along the way, and the issues facing Artisanal Miners in Africa.

They will also have some of the Southern African specimens for sale, including:

- Agates (from South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Lesotho),
- Crystals (from Boekenhouthoek, Orange River, and a very limited number from Brandberg in Namibia),
- Spheres and Eggs (about 40 different types of Southern African rocks e.g. Verdite, Lepidolite, Leopard Rock, Springstone, Amethyst, Kalahari Picture Stone, Veld agate, Tiger's eye etc.)
- Unpolished gems and minerals (such as Tigers' eye, Rose quartz, and Fluorite)
- Petrified wood from Zimbabwe



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2019

by Nancy English

X	President—Sigrid Stewart	X	Beading—Maggie Manley
	1st Vice President—Mike Sommers	X	Day Light—Fred Brueckner
X	2nd Vice President—Beverly Mace		Gemstones & Faceting—Randy Carlson
X	Treasurer—Tatyana Kuhne	X	Lapidary & Metalsmithing—Phyllis George
X	Secretary—Nancy English	X	Mineral—Steve Blyskal
X	Archaeology—Nancy Engelhardt-Moore	X	Paleontology—Mike Dawkins

President Sigrid Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:49 p.m. A quorum was present. Foster Kneeland was the only non-voting member attending.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

HGMS Holiday party will be Saturday, December 14, 2019 for the third year at the Unitarian Fellowship: 1504 Wirt Rd, Houston, TX 77055. Volunteers can set up around about 4:30 p.m., and Steve Blyskal will oversee the setup. Please contact Nancy English at nancyjodi@aol.com to volunteer to set up tables, move pews, and set up our buffet. We can begin cocktails and potluck appetizers about 5:30 p.m. with BYO wine and beer. Dinner buffet will start at 6:00. A bit of speechifying around 6:30 will wrap up the Show reports, awards, Installation of Officers, and 2019 accomplishments. The auction begins at 7:00 p.m. Donations are welcome and needed. Bring them to the Party at 4:30 p.m. so we have time to log them into the Auction program. Afterward we will need volunteers to clean up and put everything back for the Sunday Service. Again, let Nancy English know when you can help.

Approval of Minutes: November 5, 2019 BOD Meeting Minutes were sent to the BOD on December 1, 2019, without the adjournment information. President Stewart said Steve Blyskal moved to adjourn the November 5, 2019. Mike Dawkins said he seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:05.

Phyllis George moved to approve the November 5, 2019 BOD Meeting Minutes as amended. Mike Dawkins seconded the motion, and it passed.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Tatyana Kuhne emailed the November 30, 2019 financial reports to BOD members on December 1, 2019.

The Board agreed that The Show Committee Chairman should be on the financials distribution list. The Show Chair uses the financial reports to manage the Show budget, verify the Show expenses, and provide the net profit. So Scott Singleton will be added to the list.

Treasurer Kuhne said November is the Treasurer's busiest month because of the Show. She is still receiving Show expense reimbursement invoices. She requested that all invoices be received before year-end. Info Booth Co-Chair, Sigrid Stewart, provided Treasurer Kuhne with the Info Booth Silent Auction sales slips to match with the PayPal credits. Maggie Manley will meet with Treasurer Kuhne to sort out the Class payments of the Show Classes.

Treasurer Kuhne announced that Douglas Dodds donated \$500.00 to the HGMS 2020

Scholarship. The Board is grateful to Douglas for his continued generosity. Nancy English will write a Thank You letter for President Stewart's signature.

Section Treasurers should send their Section's detailed financial activity for 2019 to Treasurer Kuhne in January 2020 so she can prepare records for the 2019 Income Tax filing. We will hire a tax accountant to do the taxes. Rodney Linehan did the HGMS 2018 taxes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BBG Editor: Phyllis George reminded the BOD that Articles and Calendar information for the January 2020 BBG are due on December 15, 2019. The January 2020 BBG will be the last issue Phyllis George edits. Sharon Thomas begins the editing position in January for the February 2020 BBG.

Education Committee:

- Beginning Silversmithing started yesterday, Monday, December 2. Instructor Tony Lucci will teach five sessions on Monday and Wednesday evenings, December 2, 4, 9, 11, and 16, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- Beginning Wire Wrapping—Instructor, Joy Lester, Sunday, November 24 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
- Wax Carving & Casting—Instructor, Tony Lucci, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, January 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, and 23, 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- The HGMS Web site Class page was redone to meet Maggie's needs. Testing is in progress.
- The Board agreed that confirmation for students requires them to register and pay online. No checks or cash will be accepted at the class or preregistration without paying.
- Instructors will be paid after they submit a payment reimbursement form to the Treasurer. PayPal fees and Shop fees will be subtracted from the final payment.

Show Committee: Scott Singleton sent a preliminary report on the 66th Annual Show Report.

Over the three days, 3717 people came through the front door. Attendance has been hovering slightly above the 3,000 number for many years. These numbers do not include the School Daze attendance numbers on Friday. The Show's success is due to the fantastic group of Show Committee members, volunteers, and our growing understanding of social media. Show Chairman Scott Singleton will have more information at the Holiday Party on December 14, 2019, and at the January 7, 2020 Board meeting.

Web site Committee: The Education page on the HGMS Web site has been updated to include contact information for the students.

SECTION Reports

Archaeology Section: Thursday, 7:30 p.m., December 5, 2019, will have their Holiday Potluck Dinner.

- At their November 7, 2019 meeting, the Archaeology Section unanimously approved the 2019 slate of officers. The standing officers re-elected were:
Bob Moore, Chair/Treasurer;
Nancy Engelhardt-Moore, Vice-Chair; and
Jay Roussel, Secretary. There were no new candidates.
- **No meeting January 2, 2020.**
- Instead of the regular scheduled meeting on February 6, the Archaeology Section will

meet at the Houston Museum of Natural Science on February 8, 2020 to take a guided tour of the Stonehenge exhibit.

Beading Section: Saturday, 1:30 p.m., the December 21, 2019 meeting is rescheduled to December 14.

Beaders will be working on a project Kim Fuselier put together. Members will need to bring a beading mat, beading needle size 12, scissors, flat-nose pliers, FireLine® 6-lb, and fishhook earrings. The rest will be provided by the group fund. Afterwards, some of the Beading Section members will help set up the HGMS Holiday party at the Unitarian Fellowship. Their help is greatly appreciated.

Day Light Section: Wednesday Noon, December 4, 2019 will have their Annual Holiday Party Potluck. All are welcome—come with a side dish.

- Day Light is announcing a **new Section Chair, Nancy Searle**. Nancy English has been the interim Chair since Karen Burns' death.
- There will be **NO meeting January 1, 2020**. The next meeting will be **Wednesday, February 5, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.** Gretchen Cockerill has planned the program.

Gemstones and Faceting Section: Wednesday, 6:30, p.m., December 11, 2019 will be the Section Christmas party at HGMS clubhouse, and Glenn Parks will coordinate the Party. They recommend a \$20.00 limit for the gift exchange.

- The Chair of Gemstones and Faceting, Randy Carlson, is relocating temporarily to Denver.
- Pat Cockrell and Matt Phillips will help with upcoming training.

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section: Monday, 7:30 p.m., December 16, 2019 there will be NO meeting. Happy Holidays.

At a brief business meeting at the November 18 Lapidary meeting, Margaret Hardman-Muye announced that Tony Lucci wants to serve as Lapidary Chair for 2020. Phyllis George will continue to be the BOD representative for this Section through the December 2020 Board meeting.

Mineral Section: Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., December 18, 2019, the Section will have their Holiday Party at the HGMS Clubhouse. They will have a White Elephant gift exchange (\$15.00 limit) with a Christmas theme.

In November, Steve Blyskal notified the Mineral Section that he would continue to be the Section's Treasurer and BOD Representative in 2020, but he would not be the Section Chairman.

Paleo Section: Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., December 17, 2019, will have a regular meeting. Paleo has a holiday party in July. Neal will present Ventifacts—wind and grit-faceted stones from Grit, Texas. He will provide the location.

Youth Section: Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to Noon, December 7, 2019, will have a Holiday party featuring Show awards and FUN. There will be no meeting on December 21, 2019. The next meetings will be January 4 and January 18, 2020.

Old Business

Building Issues:

- The Roof Leaks are fixed. The final coating is in progress.

- The sagging ceiling tiles still need to be fixed.
- The parking lot lighting has been fixed. It took a hydraulic lift to reach the light fixtures. The solar light under the entrance door porch hood needs new batteries.
- The filters have not yet been changed.
- Dunn Southwest notified HGMS to keep the grounds looking good by tending to our outside plants. If it's dry, we need to water shrubs and trees around the clubhouse.
- Exhaust fans in the restrooms and Metal Smithing lab still need to be installed. Sigrid will talk to an electrician.

Shop News: Tony Lucci purchased the adjustable chairs for the Metalsmithing Shop.

New Business

Nancy English mentioned that some callers are looking for a rock store. She was told that Astrid & Jacob Proctor of Gems in the Rough are now running the Katy Rock Shop, as Carol and Bruce Huff are retiring. It was suggested that someone write an article about his store for the BBG. That led to a list of stores in the Greater Houston Area:

Spirit Quest Rock, Gem, & Unique Boutique in Old Town Spring; the Magic Cauldron; Body Mind & Soul; the HMNS Gift Shop; GEMCO; and King's booth in the Antique Mall at the Northwest Mall. We will discuss how to incorporate information about the stores into stories in the BBG at future BOD meetings.

Review of 2019 Board and Member accomplishments: Several projects were completed this year. To be reported at Annual Holiday Party:

1. The Board recruited a new Treasurer, Tatyana Kuhne. She has done a great job.
2. The Trade Show Committee produced two successful Trade Shows—one in January, and an off-site show in April.
3. Painted the Main Hall: Jack Opatrany and Tatyana Kuhne with the support of Steve Blyskal and Sigrid Stewart. They rehung the pictures on the wall and hung new prints as well.
4. Replaced Main Hall air conditioner. HVAC company research and bid comparisons done by Sigrid Stewart, Randy Carlson, and Fred Brueckner.
5. Library updated. Neal Immega sorted the many outdated, duplicated, and obsolete periodicals and books in the HGMS Library. He was helped by Debbie Kirkpatrick, Margo Bedman, Fred Brueckner, Sigrid Stewart, and Jim Kendall. Neal made them available to members who wanted to come and get them. He rearranged the Library to provide more room for a book-quality scanner and a new printer.
6. Tony Lucci updated the Metalsmithing shop. He cleaned it, refurnished it with new adjustable-height chairs, and set up six toolboxes to be used by students. Now he teaches classes.
7. HGMS Annual Show: Best results in years. Scott Singleton reported record ticket sales.
8. Roof repaired. Sigrid Stewart and Fred Brueckner researched roofing companies, and they chose the best for our needs. The roof has been repaired and is being sealed.
9. Fixed the outdoor parking lot lighting.
10. Thanks to Jim Kendall, we have a new scanner and printer in the library.
11. Our new Education Chair started a formal class program.
12. Neal Immega updated the lighting and water disposal in the Shop.
13. Scott Singleton, Clyde McMeans, Neal Immega, and Nancy English cleaned off the

- front porch.
14. Tony Lucci installed two doorbells, one to be heard in the shop, and one in the main hall.
 15. We are all feeling the loss of Paul Robles. He was a fine jeweler and craftsman. He generously taught wire wrapping to the Youth Section and to any adult who wanted to learn the process.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. January 7, 2020.

The next General Meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. January 28, 2020. Neal Immega will talk about copper-replaced agates from Michigan.

Adjourn: Nancy English moved to adjourn. Mike Dawkins seconded the motion, and it passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Jewelry Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

Solve Your Jewelry Making Problems With Brad's "How To" Books

<https://www.Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith>

DEPTH GAUGE FOR DRILLING

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



You can set the depth either by measuring from the tip of the drill to the tape or by drilling to the correct depth, leaving the bit in the hole, and wrapping tape around the bit at the surface level.

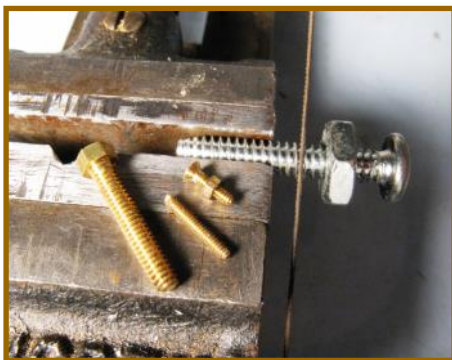
Note that if you leave a little extra tape free on the end, it will blow away debris from the drilling.

CUTTING A BOLT

Whenever you have to cut a threaded bolt shorter, often it is difficult to get the nut to thread back onto it. And the smaller the bolt, the more difficult it is to restore any distorted threads. The problem is easily solved with the use of a nut. Here's how I do it.

First, screw a nut onto the bolt before cutting it. Grip the bolt by the threaded section that is to be sawed off. Then saw the bolt to the desired length, taper the end with sandpaper or file, and unscrew the nut from the bolt.

Unscrewing the nut over the freshly cut end of the bolt will straighten out any damage that sawing and filing did to the threads. Gripping the bolt by the piece to be sawed off localizes any crushing damage to the piece that will be thrown away.



LAST MINUTE IDEAS

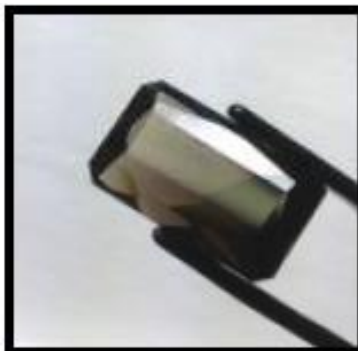
Midwest Federation of Mineral Societies

from <http://www.amfed.org/mwf/resources/lastminute.html>
via SCFMS Newsletter 09-10/2019

Every Club should have a plan for an emergency when a speaker has to cancel. Some “last minute” programs can be prepared in advance—ready for use when needed. Always set time limits before any presentation begins, so it will not run too long.

1. **Locate your Club’s copy of “So You Think You Know All the Answers”** (a booklet of puzzles and games collected from Club Newsletters over many years—2002 MWF publication) Duplicate some of the puzzles for members to work on. *** **You can purchase your own copy of this booklet. It is listed on the MWF Director of Supplies page.**
2. **“How I Became a Rockhound” or “What I Hope to Learn.”** Members (and visitors) tell how they became interested in the hobby or why they are interested in it. Perhaps a couple of Club officers could go first to “break the ice.” Be sure to set time limits—perhaps 3 minutes each—so everyone can have a turn. If time permits, have Q & A at the end.
3. **Call several members and ask if they will bring one or two of their favorite specimens, pieces of jewelry, cabs, artifacts, etc.—something they would like to tell fellow members about.** This is also a way to introduce other members to various aspects of the hobby. If possible, choose quiet members—not only the most knowledgeable. You could use this as a mini-program or as a regular feature. That way, over time, most members can present a special “Show and Tell.” *** **Always set time limits.**
4. **If you have a Club Library,** instead of a program, plan time for members to explore the collection. New books can be highlighted and old favorites remembered. Ask members to suggest books that could be added based on what they have seen elsewhere. Decide how to finance them if library does not have an approved budget. If there is no Club Library—contact several members, asking them to bring books, magazines, etc. for everyone to explore. Also, see if you can “borrow” books that may be of interest from your local library. Members can read aloud or summarize articles, topics, or techniques they find. As always, limit time carefully.

5. **“Tools of the Trade”** Ask several members to bring a tool used for jewelry, micro mounting, faceting, carving, or other technique and describe how that tool is used. This is a good springboard for discussion of “tips & tricks of the trade.”
6. **“My other Hobby”** Invite several Club members who pursue other pastimes to make a brief presentation about another hobby. Set time limits in advance. Set a similar program in future if others want to “show & tell.” Such a program helps to develop camaraderie among Club members who may find they have other interests in common.
7. **If there is a mine or quarry in your area**, inquire if someone can tell your Club about the operation and production, history, and uses of the materials. Some quarries have access to a film or video about their product.



Phenomenal Pictures of a European Cave

*by Tom Tucker
from Mineral Minutes 12/2019*

Today on a “mineral collectors” Web site that I frequent, I stumbled upon these Web pages of pictures of phenomenal formations and passages in a cave—I believe—in Spain. I have only looked at one or two pages so far, and there are many more pages to enjoy. Many of the pictures are just “snapshots,” but the cave scenes are exceptional. The captions and text are in Spanish, but are readily translated with the “button” at the top of the page. The cavers are (I think) French, but I haven’t spent a lot of time digesting the text, and there may be multiple sources of the photos.

I think that in the past, European caves suffered at the hands of specimen-hungry mineral collectors, and as a result cavers tended to be very secretive about cave identifications and localities. I think there is more respect among the diverse groups in recent times. While hiking in the Italian Alps several years ago, I was pleasantly surprised to come upon a fieldhouse belonging to a joint speleological and alpine mineral collector rescue organization, so at least some of them are getting along.

Here is a Web page to begin with—enjoy:

<https://www.foro-minerales.com/forum/viewtopic.php?p=130502#130502>

Editor’s Note: These photos truly are stunning!

AFMS President *by David Wayment*

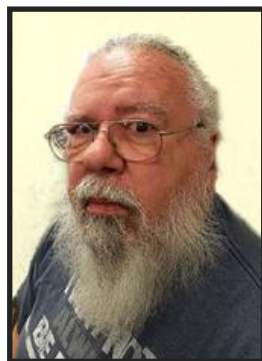
And just like that, the year is over and another one begun. The year as President-Elect was spent getting ready for my year as President. And no matter how well you think you have planned for it, you always run out of time. It is my honor to be your AFMS President for the 2019–2020 year. I am looking forward to working with everyone and meeting many new friends all over the country.

I have been involved with the hobby, but not as a rockhound or collector as so many of our friends are in the west. In Florida, we have only a few rocks/crystals to collect. I have been in my home club since 2002. In my first few years, I took a class at each of the 5 sessions SFMS offered at the William Holland and Wildacres workshops. Over the years, I progressed from learning Silversmithing to teaching Silversmithing. I am currently the Education Chair for my home club—teaching classes there and at William Holland.

Now that the winter season is finally getting to Florida and temperatures are dropping below 80, it is time to get back into the workshop for another busy season. After moving to Florida, you need a few years to turn your year around—so you hibernate in the hot summer and go out in the winter. This is the season for club shows and some field trips in our area. If you are coming down to the South, look up a local club—you might find a show or field trip in the area.

I'm just recently back from the SFMS Annual Meeting. The SFMS has been working on a big initiative to spread information to the State Directors who should present to the clubs in their state about the benefits and programs the SFMS and AFMS provide and that are made available to the local clubs. One of the most underutilized programs is the Slide/Video program. This is a wonderful benefit from the AFMS that comes to the regions who take it to the clubs. Not all clubs are lucky enough to have skilled instructors in all areas of our hobby—or speakers to provide programs at meetings. This wonderful library can lend DVDs or VHS programs for the clubs to use and return—at no cost. The topics range from a tour of the Grand Canyon, identifying gemstones, to creating a bezel for a cabochon.

As the holidays approach, I wish blessings on everyone, and I look forward to working with all of you.



*From MWFMS Bulletin Editor News 1/84
via Golden Spike News 9/00*



AFMS Past President's Message

*by Doug True
from AFMS Newsletter 12/2019*

It is hard to believe where the year has gone. It seems that our journey had just begun. As we traveled around the country, we met new friends and visited others that we have met before. What a great experience. We would like to thank everyone for welcoming us throughout the different federations and for showing us your beautiful states and sharing what is going on in your federation, or clubs. I would do it again in a minute.

It is important that we work hard to keep our hobby strong and vibrant, That means putting that extra effort into our youth; it means working to keep open our public lands for collecting; it means sharing your time and knowledge to help advance our hobby.

Thank you for a great year, Doug True

**Raising Bulletin Awareness**

*by Mark Nelson
AFMS BEAC Chair
from AFMS Newsletter 12/2019*

Societies and clubs depend upon their club's bulletin to share information about club activities, upcoming meet-ings, field trips, shows, safety, tips, articles and many more! That being said, many editors secretly wonder if the members actually read the pages that we painstakingly put together!

One way to raise your club's bulletin awareness is through the use of the Editor's Quiz. This is a process that I have used for years, and it works like this:

- The editor puts an interesting article in the bulletin.
- Among the many facts and information included in the article is one which the editor selects as an incidental fact.
- Somewhere, on one of the "informational" pages of the bulletin, the editor creates a section called "Editor's Quiz." In that section, the editor poses a question that can only be answered by giving the incidental fact.
- The editor states that the first member to correctly answer the question will win a prize at the next meeting!
- The agenda should allow a moment for the editor to read the question from the bulletin and to tell which member was the first to correctly answer it, and what the answer was!
- The prize can be a cabochon, book, or other item. The cost of the prize is not the motivator, rather the recognition that the winner gets.
- This quiz is good fun, raises awareness in the membership of something happening in the bulletin, points to an interesting article, and makes members eagerly await the next issue of your club's bulletin!

As an example, I recently ran an article about the Franciscan Complex, a geological formation prevalent in the area around San Francisco, California. In the article, it was explained that a gray sandstone (or greywacke, as the 1849er miners called it) is the most common rock of the Franciscan Complex. The Editor's Quiz asked the question: "What did California gold miners call the gray sandstone material that they encountered?" As the answer only appeared once in the article, the reader had to read every line to find the correct answer!



Fossil find: Whale with legs could stand on land and swim in water

via THE ROCKPILE 01/2020



n ancient four-legged whale with hooves has been discovered, providing new insights into how the ancestors of the Earth's largest mammals made the transition from land to sea.

Cetaceans, the group including whales and dolphins, originated in south Asia more than 50 million years ago from a small, four-legged, hoofed ancestor. Now, researchers reporting the discovery of an ancient four-legged whale—found in 42.6-million-year-old marine sediments along the coast of Peru—have new insight into whales' evolution and their dispersal to other parts of the world. The findings are reported in the journal *Current Biology*.



The presence of small hooves at the tip of the whale's fingers and toes and its hip and limbs morphology all suggest that this whale could walk on land, according to the researchers. On the other hand, they say, anatomical features of the tail and feet, including long, likely webbed appendages, similar to an otter, indicate that it was a good swimmer too.

"This is the first indisputable record of a quadrupedal whale skeleton for the whole Pacific Ocean, probably the oldest for the Americas, and the most complete outside India and Pakistan," says Olivier Lambert of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Science.

Some years ago, study co-author Mario Urbina of Museo de Historia Natural-UNMSM, Peru, discovered a promising area for digging fossils in the coastal desert of southern Peru, named Playa Media Luna. In 2011, an international team, including members from Peru, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Belgium, organized a field expedition, during which they excavated the remains of an ancient whale they have since named *Peregocetus pacificus*. It means "the traveling whale that reached the Pacific."

"When digging around the outcropping bones, we quickly realized that this was the skeleton of a quadrupedal whale, with both forelimbs and hind limbs," Lambert says.

With the help of microfossils, the sediment layers where the skeleton was positioned were precisely dated to the middle Eocene, 42.6 million years ago. Anatomical details of the skeleton allowed them to infer that the animal was capable of maneuvering its large body (up to 4 meters long, tail included), both on land and in the water. For instance, features of the caudal vertebrae (in the tail) are reminiscent of those of beavers and otters, suggesting a significant contribution of the tail during swimming.

The geological age of the new four-limbed whale and its presence along the western coast of

South America, strongly support the hypothesis that early cetaceans reached the New World across the South Atlantic—from the western coast of Africa to South America—the researchers report. The whales would have been assisted in their travel by westward surface currents and by the fact that, at the time, the distance between the two continents was half what it is today. The researchers suggest that, only after having reached South America, the amphibious whales migrated northward, finally reaching North America.

The international team continues to study the remains of other whales and dolphins from Peru. "We will keep searching in localities with layers as ancient, and even more ancient, than the ones of Playa Media Luna, so older amphibious cetaceans may be discovered in the future," Lambert says.

The above story is based on materials provided by Cell Press. Read more at <http://www.geologyin.com/2019/04/four-legged-whale-with-hooves-fossil.html#jqefSh2qUCglwgW0.99>

MARTIN MARIETTA CEMENT QUARRY TREASURE HUNT- MIDLOTHIAN, TEXAS

by Susan Burch

*Member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society
from SCFMS Newsletter 11–12/2019*

October 19, 2019, a group of about 22 from the Houston Gem and Mineral Society met at the Martin Marietta Cement Plant in Midlothian, Texas. We were outfitted with hard hats and blue safety vests before being given instruction on plant policies and safety procedures by Perry Jones of Martin Marietta and Michael Summers of the HGMS. Mr. Jones was kind enough to be our guide that day to different areas of the quarry.



Martin Marietta conveyor belts used to move material



Photo A



Photo B



Photo C

As the cavalcade of vehicles was led to the first collecting location, I could not help but feel the view was of a rockhounds' roller coaster along with the lovely sunrise. At the first area many found pieces of fossilized oysters and a few other fossils, including a mosasaur vertebrae. Both halves of a large fossilized oyster was found by Mike Clark of Houston. He also found a few pieces of calcite at this location. There were also small pyrite formations scattered around. When we arrived we were told we were not going to be able to collect in the area most known for pyrite clusters. However, when



Photo E

the enthusiasm over the pyrite finds was seen by Mr. Jones, he made special arrangements for us to collect pyrite in another part of the quarry.

The second location we visited was fairly easy pickings for small pyrite clusters. They littered the ground between the rows of boulders and across the chalk fields. As I was only

finding tiny clusters at first, Tammy Ohrmundt of Galveston generously gave me a golf ball-sized one to add to my collections. Some of the clusters were enmeshed in matrix, too hard or large to remove. That fact did not keep several of the participants from hammering away. Nancy Scott of Houston along with his brother Michael and friend Cindy Dann, freed one of the largest specimens found. The day had begun quite chilly but by the time we



Photo D



moved to the pyrite grounds, it had warmed up nicely. We were warned there would be no shade. The sun and I are not the best of friends, so I added a beach umbrella to my hunting gear. But the wind about blew me and the umbrella away.

Photos:

A. Oyster found by Mike Clark;

B. and C. Formations of calcite with interesting cleavage plains found by Mike Clark;

D. From left to right, Cindy Dann, Nancy Scott holding the large pyrite cluster he found and Michael Scott;

E. Enlargement of the large pyrite cluster found by Nancy Scott;

Above: group photo, Perry Jones of Martin Marietta shown almost center in the dark blue safety vest.

As a rockhound, I truly enjoy being able to go on a field trip with a group. That said, I don't get to go often for a multitude of reasons. However, this trip netted me more than the mineral



treasures we were after. It makes it so much more enjoyable when you make new friends along the way.

After the group was led to the front gates and we turned in our safety

Photos: F. Two pieces of calcite found at the second location;
 G. Pyrite clusters, pyrite in matrix and calcite found by Susan Burch;
 H. Pyrite encased in an iron ore nodule;
 I. Group of pyrite nodules and pyrite in matrix suggested to be pyrite-encrusted worm tubes

gear, a few group photos were taken. This is where most of the group headed their separate ways, meandering back to Houston. It was early afternoon, so four of us decided to have a late lunch at a place in town called the Branded Burger Co. Following a delicious meal and visiting, is where I had to part ways as I had a previous commitment. In spite of our fruitful morning, the Galbraiths and Mr. Clark continued on to check out a site on Highway 67 on the Brazos River. Needless to say, I'm looking forward to future field trips and perhaps next time I'll be able to trail along to the next location.

Although this is not my first time collecting pyrite, this is the first time I've considered doing anything more than displaying as-is. Other than giving my pyrites a thorough wash with water and scrub with Barkeeper's Friend, I've not used anything resembling an acid. At the suggestion of another member of the HGMS I purchased Iron Out. Before trying anything more harsh, that will be my next step.

Other chat forums I've read have suggested using a buffered dithionite solution but did not go into detail. However, the photos showed results. Here is a link to one such forum.

<https://www.mindat.org/mesg-449373.html>

Below is an article from the Pinellas Geological Society with more involved solutions. However you wish to treat them, pyrite can be a lovely addition to your collection.



CLEANING PYRITES

from The Rock Dobber, Outcroppings, Pinellas Geological Society

First, let your pyrites soak in water until the chalk is soft enough to pick off with an ice pick—assuming it has had time to harden after being collected.

After removing as much of the chalk as you can by this method, place the pyrites in a plastic bucket and cover with a known amount of water. Carefully add acid to the water.

Keep in mind the **Triple-A Rule** when working with any acid anywhere: **Always Add Acid**. This means you should always add the acid to whatever you are using to dilute the acid. **Never ever add the other material to the acid**. Also keep in mind that acids can be very dangerous. Always use caution. Wear rubber gloves. Do not breathe the fumes. Do not rinse acids in your sink. And **Always Add Acid**. We have used **muratic acid**, which can be purchased at lumber yards and swimming pool supply stores. It is a 32 percent solution of hydrochloric acid. Add enough muriatic acid to the bucket to make a solution of about two parts of water to one part of acid. This acid solution dissolves the remaining chalk on the specimen. This solution will "boil" as the acid is added, but don't be alarmed. As soon as the solution stops its action—it no longer appears to be "boiling"—flood the bucket with running water to remove the remainder of the solution. Be careful about where the runoff water goes. The runoff can damage drains, shoes, clothing, and more.

Using rubber gloves, remove the pyrites and rinse them again in running water. This will enable you to safely examine them for any remaining traces of chalk. If any chalk is found, repeat the process with a fresh solution of acid and water, always remembering to rinse the specimen thoroughly. If you wish your specimens to have a shiny, silvery color, you can then immerse them in a solution of **oxalic acid**. This acid can be purchased in crystal form by the pound at many drug stores. To mix a solution, add 1/2 pound of crystals to one gallon of water. Let the pyrites stand in this solution until they have reached the brightness you wish. This can take from 30 minutes to several hours. Remove the pyrites, again using rubber gloves, and rinse them in running water. Then neutralize them in a mixture of water and baking soda or ammonia. They will be a beautiful, shiny, silvery color.

For those who wish to prevent the specimens from turning again, a plastic spray will usually keep them silvery. However, oxalic acid will shine them up again, if you don't use the spray. Some people like the colors that develop in the specimens and do not wish to shine them up. The choice is, of course, yours.



Pyrite nodule from the collection of Susan Burch

I NEED YOUR HELP, please*Shirley Leeson, ALAA President**president@amlands.org**www.amlands.org**from ALAA newsletter Volume 11, Issue 3, July–September 2019 via
SCFMS 11–12/2019 Newsletter*

1st... If you have reached my President's Message, I hope that means you have read Dick Pankey's article on the front page/page 1. Please go back and read it again. It's important that we reach all the clubs and their members. The only way we, ALAA, can do that is for those of you who receive this Newsletter as "club representatives" to pass the information on to your members and beyond. We need you to copy the newsletter and pass it around at your meetings, and to forward the ALAA Newsletter to surrounding clubs who may not belong to ALAA. We have learned at government meetings that the first thing they ask is how large, in numbers, is your organization? how far does it extend?

THERE IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS, and right now we are lacking in those numbers.

2nd... Pages 9 and 10 have the field trip forms we are asking each club who belongs to ALAA to fill out. One form is for public lands, and one is for private property or claims. One for your club, and a copy to ALAA for our database. This information will not be shared. It will be compiled and when a government agency says they have no data on recreational rockhounds using the public lands in their area, we will have accurate data to dispute their claims. Consider this a partnership with your club and ALAA. The INFORMATION is also available on the WEBSITE www.amlands.org

3rd... ALAA will have its annual meeting in Quartzsite, Arizona. I hope you are planning on being there. Our interest is between January 15, 2020 and January 19, 2020. We will have the location, day, and time of our meeting in the 4th Quarter Newsletter and at our Web site: American Lands Access Association. <http://www.amlands.org>

Your 2019 recycled ALAA President Shirley Leeson, is now residing deep in the heart of Texas—and lovin' it.

THE BLM IS ON THE MOVE...The Bureau of Land Management is moving its Washington, DC office to Grand Junction, Colorado. The exact time frame of the move is not known at this time. Check on the BLM Website for more information. This will make contacting the main BLM Office easier for the Recreational Rockhound.

Another BLM Move is the California Desert District office is moving from its Moreno Valley, CA location to a new office in Palm Springs, CA.

Show Time 2020

Jan. 18-19 Fredericksburg, TX	Fredericksburg Rockhounds Lady Bird Johnson Park at the Pavilion, Hwy.16 South hcgms20@gmail.com ; fredericksburgrockhounds.org
Jan. 24-26 Tyler, TX	The East Texas Gem & Mineral Society Tyler Rose Garden Center, 420 South Rose Park Dr. Margaret Kilanski— mlkilanski@yahoo.com
Feb. 15-16 Georgetown, TX	Williamson County Gem and Mineral Society, Inc Georgetown Community Center at San Gabriel Park 445 East Morrow Street wcgms1@outlook.com ; www.wcgms.org
Feb. 22-23 Pasadena, TX	Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Club Pasadena Convention Center, 7902 Fairmont Parkway clgmsvendors@gmail.com ; http://www.clgms.org/page2.html
Feb. 22-23 Plainview, TX	Hi-Plains Gem & Mineral Society Ollie Liner Center, 2000 S Columbia bobcat22@suddenlink.net
Mar. 7-8 Big Spring, TX	Big Spring Prospectors "Club" Howard County Fair Barn, 2900 Old State Hwy 8
Mar. 7-8 Robstown, TX	Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society RMB Fairgrounds, 1213 Terry Shamsie Blvd, Exhibit Hall A gulfcoastgemandmineralsociety@gmail.com ; gcgms.org
Mar. 14-15 San Antonio, TX	Southwest Gem and Mineral Society San Antonio Event Center, 8111 Meadow Leaf Drive lolabellelamb@yahoo.com https://www.facebook.com/bigspringprospectorsclub krobotx@gvtc.com ; SWGMS.ORG
Apr. 11-12 Abilene, TX	Central Texas Gem & Mineral Society Abilene Convention Center, 1100 North 6th Street and Pine linewalk26@yahoo.com http://www.new.calichetimes.com/page13.html
May 30-31 Lubbock, TX	Lubbock Gem and Mineral Society Lubbock Memorial Civic Center, 1501 Mac Davis Lane walt@lubbockgemandmineral.org ; www.lubbockgemandmineral.org
Jun. 25-28 Lodi, CA	CFMS putting on its own show Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 E. Lockeford Street
Sep. 18-20 Howell, MI	MWF hosted by ??
Oct. 12-13 Temple, TX	SCFMS hosted by Tri-City Gem & Mineral Society Mayborn Civic and Convention Center, 3303 N. 3rd St. David Farhie 512-826-2754, dfarhie@gmail.com
Oct. 16-18 Knoxville, TN	SFMS hosted by ??

2020	January						2020
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
			1 NO Shop Open NO Day Light New Year's Day	2 10-3 Shop Open NO Archaeology	3	4 10-3 Shop Open 10-Noon Youth Section	
5 10-4 Shop Open	6	7 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 Board Mtg	8 10-3 Shop Open 6:30 p.m. Gemstone & Faceting Section	9 10-3 Shop Open	10	11 10-3 Shop Open 1-3 Beading Section	
12 10-4 Shop Open	13	14 11-3 Shop Open	15 10-3 Shop Open 7:30 Mineral Section	16 10-3 Shop Open	17	18 10-3 Shop Open 10-Noon Youth 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 10-3 Shop Open	24	25 10-3 Shop Open	
26 10-4 Shop Open	27	28 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 General Meeting	29 10-3 Shop Open	30 10-3 Shop Open	31		

2020	February						2020
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
						1 10-3 Shop Open 10-Noon Youth Section	
2 10-4 Shop Open	3	4 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 Board Mtg	5 10-3 Shop Open 1-3 Day Light	6 10-3 Shop Open 7:30 Archaeology	7	8 10-3 Shop Open 1-3 Beading Section	
9 10-4 Shop Open	10	11 11-3 Shop Open	12 10-3 Shop Open 6:30 p.m. Gemstone & Faceting Section	13 10-3 Shop Open	14 Valen- tines Day	15 10-3 Shop Open 10-Noon Youth Section	
16 10-4 Shop Open	17 7:30 Lapidary Section Presidents Day	18 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 Paleo Section	19 10-3 Shop Open 7:30 Mineral Section	20 10-3 Shop Open	21	22 10-3 Shop Open	
23 10-4 Shop Open	24	25 11-3 Shop Open 7:30 General Meeting	26 10-3 Shop Open Ash Wednesday	27 10-3 Shop Open	28	29 10-3 Shop Open	

The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

The Newsletter of the
Houston Gem & Mineral Society

10805 Brooklet
Houston, Texas 77099
(281) 530-0942



SCFMS

1998 - 1st (Large)
2000 - 1st (Large)
2003 - 1st (Large)
2005 - 1st (Large)
2006-2016 - 1st (Large)
2017 - 1st (Large)
2018 - 1st Large
2019 - 1st Large

AFMS

1998 - 2nd (Large)
2004 - 3rd (Large)
2007 - 1st (Large)
2010 - 2nd (Large)
2012 - 3rd (Large)
2013 - 3rd (Large)
2014 - 2nd (Large)
2017 - 3rd (Large)
2019 - 2nd (Large)



NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

BELLAIRE, TX 77401
PERMIT NO. 303

DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE DO NOT DELAY !