

THE BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY



FEATURED MEMBER:
MIKE DAWKINS

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BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE SUBMISSION DEADLINES

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

Copy is due for the next issue by the 15th of this month. Email content to editor@hgms.org



The

BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE



The Newsletter of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Sigrid Stewart

Well, we got the break in the weather we were looking for last month, both of them! That is, the first cool front AND a hurricane. For most of the Houston area, Hurricane Nicholas was just a brush with disaster, but my heart goes out to the Texas Coast and Louisiana for the power outages, flooding and damage they suffered, especially just after Ida. On September 22, Eric Berger of Space City Weather, my favorite weather blogger, posted "This is my second favorite post of the year to write—that fall's first real front has finally arrived in Houston. (Tomorrow, I plan to write my favorite)." And on the 23rd he did, saying "Space City Weather is saying hurricane season is probably over for Texas", at least for this season. Probably! We don't need another huge disaster in this [second] year of Covid.

What else is going on this month? It's the run-up to our Annual Show! I know many are still worried about Covid (and I am too), but Delta cases appear to be going down, and many of our volunteers will be able to get booster shots by then. Please consider volunteering if you feel you can. This will be a rather different show, with a lot of new dealers, fewer activities, and sadly, very few display cases. I am still optimistic! One of our dealers, Mark Villareal of Monarch Minerals, was at the Denver Show, and said people were eager to buy minerals. Let's hope they're glad to see us in November!

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steve Blyskal

October's talk will be given by Dr. Joan Spaw. The title of her presentation is: "Tracks and Trails and Scat, Oh My! How trace fossils add to our understanding of life in the past."

Joan has a distinguished academic and professional career. She earned her undergraduate degree from Bryn Mawr College and her master's and Ph.D. from Rice University. In her professional career, she worked for and consulted with major oil companies as well as Core Laboratories. She was considered a Subject Matter Expert in carbonate, mudstone, and siliciclastic petrology at Marathon Oil Company.

SHOWS

Tri-City Gem & Mineral Society Show

Sat. Oct 9 9-6 Sun Oct 10 10-5; \$5.00 Adults; \$3.00 13-17; Free under 12 years

Frank W Mayborn Civic & Convention Center, 3301 N Third Street, Temple, TX

Gem Capers 2021 - presented by Austin Gem & Mineral Society
Fri, Oct 22 – Sun, Oct 24 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
PRICE: Children ages 12 and under free
Ages 13-18 \$2, Adults \$8, Military ID and Seniors (60+) \$7
Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX

SECTION REPORTS

As always, please see the [Upcoming Programs](#) section under Events on the HGMS website to learn more about planned future meetings.

MINERAL SECTION

The Mineral Section will meet Wednesday October 20th via Zoom. The program, about zeolites and other minerals from the trap rocks of New Jersey, will be given by Marti Rothenberg. Last month, Steve Steinke gave a report on the new mineral museum in Tucson, Arizona.

BEADING SECTION

The Beading Group will meet on October 16th at 12:30PM to continue the beaded tassel project from last month. They will also work on a beaded spider for Halloween.

DAY LIGHT SECTION

Day Light's next meeting is on Wednesday, October 6th. Neal Immega will teach silver soldering for a double sided mounting that shows both sides of the cab to a maximum of 6 people.

LAPIDARY AND SILVERSMITHING SECTION

The Lapidary and Silversmithing section will meet in person on October 18th at 7:30. The members will be working on running their prepared petrified wood cubes through the bead mill and also on the cuff bracelet with cabochon silversmithing project. Tony will continue to introduce new projects each month and members may work on as many as they wish. More petrified wood is available for anyone else who wants to try out the bead mill.

PALEO SECTION

No Paleo meeting in October. Instead the Paleo section will be taking over the general meeting!

FACETING AND GEMSTONES

The next meeting will be October 13th at 6:30 PM. We will be looking at the beryl family of gemstones, I will also be showing how an electric meter can help improve accuracy for those cutting without digital faceting devices

FEATURED MEMBER: MIKE DAWKINS

REMINISCENCES OF A FOSSIL COLLECTOR

Mike's fascination with fossils goes way back. When he was 6 years old, he got off the school bus and found 2 brachiopods and a piece of coral beside the road. Near his hometown of Frankfort, Kentucky the terrain was mostly Ordovician limestone with lots of calcite and fossils to be found, mainly brachiopods, crinoids, bryozoans, and mysterious pieces of things that turned out to be trilobites. There are also Pennsylvanian areas nearby where fossilized Pennsylvanian trees called *Lepidodendron* can be found. He tries to hit a new spot every time he goes back to visit friends and family. The last time before he went, he found a description of a new place online and had literally 5 minutes to collect, but still found some good brachiopods and a chunk of trilobite.

After graduating from high school, he was too busy to collect for a long time. He attended the University of Kentucky and Lexington Technical Institute to prepare for the career path in electronics and the semiconductor industry that he has pursued for 40 years. Much of that has been spent in Texas, where he moved in 1980. Currently he is unemployed thanks to Covid, and not really retired yet. He has been a factory manager, surface mount assembly worker, electronics tech, parts buyer, factory planner, and design reviewer, among other challenges.

During all that time he remained interested in fossils. One weekend he went to Lake Somerville and found petrified wood on the beach and that was pretty interesting. Around 1981 he went fossil hunting with a friend from Austin, and really enjoyed that. But there was a family to raise, so there wasn't much time for rock hunting at the time. But then one day in 2006 he found a fossil and tried to identify it and find out more about it, and while researching fossils he found some information about HGMS online. He went to a meeting and joined right away.



Agaricocrinus americanus, Carboniferous,
from Wikipedia

The Fossil Forum is one of the things that contributed to Mike's rekindled interest in fossils. He considers the Forum the only thing on social media that's not a waste of time. One time he got the Fossil of the Month award for a crinoid from Kentucky.

Favorite fossils? So many kinds, so many states of preservation! He has hunted fossils in Kentucky, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Florida, and Washington state. During family vacations in Florida, he hunted for shark's teeth in Venice. In Oklahoma, he has hunted at Black Cat Mountain, a world-class trilobite location. In Arkansas near Malvern, on the river close to the interstate, he investigated a shark's teeth locality George Wolfe had told him about. He didn't find a

shark tooth, but his grandson did. Also in Arkansas, you can find good cretaceous clams and gastropods. In Tennessee, there are a lot of outcrops including one behind a hotel, where you can find fossils of Mississippian or Ordovician age. In Washington near Seattle

there is a layer of sandstone with fossils he checked out; he found the site but did not have excavation tools with him. There's another cool place in Washington, where you can split rocks at a pay site; you are allowed to keep one fossil, either plants or flowers. If you find anything significant you will have to leave it for scientific study. There is also a lot of petrified wood, obsidian, and agates up there in Washington.

Closer to home, in a secret Cretaceous locality not far from Texarkana that he got a tip about, he found some sweet gastropods. Any time he is headed to Texoma on Hwy. 75, he plans a stop at Post Oak Creek near Sherman, close to Dallas, to pick up a bucketful of fossils. Somewhere on the east side of Ft. Hood, you can find gastropod shells fossilized with calcite on the outside replacing the shells.



Petalodus shark tooth, Pennsylvanian

Linda McCall wrote a paper on this fossilization.



Urchin, Texas

Back in June Mike led a field trip to the Brownwood area; unfortunately, it was not heavily attended. Out at the clay pit the rock is Pennsylvanian, with maybe some Permian, showing lots of gastropods and pre-nautiloids, brachiopods, bryozoans, and some horn corals with great preservation – good details and good preservation on both the outside and the inside of the fossils.

A big favorite is the "Church of the Urch" in Lometa, where Hwy. 281 and 84 run together south of Lometa; near the church there are pits where someone excavated limestone, probably for road work. There are lots of urchins and urchin spines and millions of oysters, making

it a required stop on the way to Brownwood.

Lexy Bienick, a long-time member, had a place in Brownwood and often invited people to come hunt. She still does some work with the local museum and historical society. She introduced club members to Tully Hair, who has the most incredible collection of fossils from the Brownwood area. He gets ac-



Texas Ammonites found by Mike



Mike in the field

cess to a lot of private property through working for the local bank.

Mike can't tell you all the good spots because he and the other club members are sworn to secrecy. Don't want someone to just Hoover a spot and ruin it for everyone else.

The Lake Brownwood spillway is famous for sea urchins when water is not going over the spillway. It's a little bit dangerous walking over the slippery shale overlaying the limestone because it turns to mush when wet. The fossils – urchins, trilobites and brachiopods, and shark's teeth - are in the shale, and if you undercut the limestone, rock can fall.

There are some big nautiloids in the top of the limestone too. The layered limestone and shale are evidence of past climate and sea level change. The Club members also go to Lake Jacksboro and Lake Bridgeport, where there is even more variety. Maximize your fossil hunting fun!

One time Mike went to Fossil Mania with Terry Brawner. There they met Glen Kuban with whom they visited a site at Glen Rose, Texas, that is famous for dinosaurs and "human" footprints found together. Midlothian is another great place for shark's teeth and other fossils, and a good place for mineral people to find pyrite nodules. Sometimes you find both, fossils with pyrite nodules attached. The Club's air abrasive room is a great place to prep fossils like that.

Chris Flis and his father Jim Flis gave a talk at the Club one time and brought a fossilized spiral burrow. Later on a field trip to Whiskey Bridge, a site of the Brazos River, Mike found one of the same burrows. He had someone bring a bucket so he could dig it out, and it was over a foot long. See the cover of this issue for a picture of the burrow.

Everyone was amazed and thought it was one of the biggest burrows of that kind they had seen. The Club ran a field trip to the museum that Chris runs up in Seymour. The site maintains a first-class prep lab for the Dimetrodon skeletons they find up there. Of course, they went to Jacksboro on the way back.



Bringing a log out the hard way

Mike loves hunting petrified wood, the bigger the better! His back and legs complain for days after a collecting trip, but don't ask him where! You must go where nobody else goes and do your research ahead of time. There are a lot of old reports from the 20s and 30s with really good information in them. Hint: some are in the library! Another hint: Bryan/College Station is a great area for petrified wood. So is the Jasper area.

Of course, Mike is active in the Paleo Section, and is the Field Trip leader for the club. He has also been the Board representative for Paleo for at least ten years.

References:

To see the "human" footprints amongst dinosaur tracks, visit:

<https://www.texasmonthly.com/news-politics/the-dinosaur-darwin-missed/>

For information about Linda McCall's paper:

<https://www.searchanddiscovery.com/abstracts/html/2008/gcags/abstracts/mccall.htm>

ARE WORTH IT

by Edward Clay

A cracked Mirror reflects
but a broken Image of self--
bits and pieces seen
like you are the one broken.
Seeing clearly is tricky,
seeing true
takes steady looking, and might
be worth the effort.
Don't live life cracked
by hurt,
by sorrows black.
Make the effort
to see clear and true.
You are worth it.



Kunzite, Afghanistan

NEAL'S SHOP NEWS

We had a small problem in the Trim Saw Corner. Someone put a out of order sign on a trim saw made from one of our money envelopes. Next time use one of the ready made-up signs in the can on the sign in table. BTW, the problem was that a rock chip was jammed in the saw slot. Trivial to fix.

Larger Problem: two of the outlets were non-functional. The GFI had failed but I replaced it with a GFI unit I had it stock. All better now. In case you are wondering, a GFI is a ground fault interrupter and it protects you from shock even if you are standing in a puddle and touch a live wire. It is also required in the US electrical code. I suspect that they have a built-in service life.

Genie Repair: I am reinstalling the Genie on the bench after replacing the bearings

and capacitor (and doing cosmetic rust prevention.) OOPS! I apparently put the Genie together with the end bells on the wrong side. There are the rubber standoffs on the brackets on each end and they have to be right. The end bells are not interchangeable. Well, I will fix that next week. This is the final topping to the %\$&^(* Genie repair - do it over. Next time I will label the ends.

Texaco Saw Blade: we have almost worn out the blade on the Texaco saw because we use it the most. You will know when it should be replaced because it will stop cutting. Let me know and I will replace it.

BENCH TIPS FOR OCTOBER

By Brad Smith

Last month I mentioned my club's effort to start holding in-person meetings in September. These are now allowed by the city, but we worried that many of our members might not be ready to venture out just yet. So we opted to try it in hybrid mode to accommodate both, with some members from home via their computers and with other members attending in-person.

Well it was a success in every way. Our club's Zoom Coordinator, Darren, pulled off this nice technical success without a glitch. Attendance was like a typical meeting. A total of thirty people showed up - 10 in person and 20 online. And that included two in-person guests who may join as new members. Participants from home took part in the business meeting and enjoyed the speaker's talk as we've done over the last 18 months with Zoom. Participants in the meeting room watched everything via the digital projector we use for speaker presentations and could speak to the online participants using a camera and microphone. Both audiences could ask questions at our business meeting and during the speaker's presentation. The evening speaker and the Club President participated from home. We're keeping track of the numbers. Obviously, the rental cost of the meeting room is a little expensive for a small turn-out of just 10 people, but we feel it's necessary to continue experimenting to find the best way forward for the club to be able to serve all members. October and November are already booked as hybrid meetings.

Wishing you well,

*- Brad Smith
BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com*

LAYOUT TOOLS

Dimensions on some features of a design can be fluid while others must be accurate for the design to work. When precision on a piece is important, good layout techniques are essential.

These are the tools that I rely upon to get holes in the right place, to achieve correct angles, and to cut pieces the correct length. These are necessary steps for some projects. I like crisp sharp lines to follow, so I often coat surfaces with a dark marker and scribe my layout lines onto the metal. A square makes quick work of checking right angles, or for marking where to cut, and the thin center punch helps me mark a place to drill holes exactly where I want them.



*Tools to aid in
precision design:
marker
calipers
divider
scriber
square
punch
ruler*

Finally, a good set of dividers is probably my favorite layout tool. They let me quickly mark a strip for cutting, swing an arc, and divide a line or curve into as many equal segments as I need. I keep at least one set of dividers in every toolbox.

INVENTORY RECORD

In an ideal world each of us who sells their jewelry has a good record with photos of all pieces in our inventory. We use it for insurance purposes, to record the cost to produce, to note where the item was sent out on consignment, and maybe to store descriptive text for marketing.

Eventually, we note in the record when the piece was sold and for how much. It's nice to also have good pictures of each piece, but sometimes we don't have time for a full-on photo session. In situations like this it's worth doing a quick group shot with the help of a phone, a camera, a scanner, or even a color copier. The quality is at least sufficient for an accurate identification in case a piece is lost.

SMART SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR JEWELRY MAKING PROBLEMS:

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

TIPS AND TRICKS FROM BRAD'S BOOKS



AUGUST'S NEW BIRTHSTONE – SPINEL

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

The newest birthstone to the American birthstone list was added in 2016. Spinel is the newest addition and joins peridot and sardonyx as recognized birthstones for August. Spinel comes in a variety of colors ranging from clear to red, peach, pink, violet, blue, and green. Until recent times, many large, red spinels were recognized as some of the most important rubies in existence. No, that isn't a typographical error – spinel pieces, including several large spinels, were often confused with important rubies. Two such examples are the 170-carat Black Prince's Ruby in the Imperial State Crown of England and the 398-carat that is on top of the Imperial Crown of Russia commissioned by Catherine the Great in 1763. It wasn't until 1783 that spinel was recognized as a separate mineral, unique from ruby. Spinel and ruby are similar in many respects.



Spinel Crystal

Spinel has a Mohs hardness of 7.5 to 8.0 while ruby has a Mohs hardness of 9.0. The chemical composition of spinel is magnesium aluminum oxide (MgAl_2O_4) which is similar to ruby's chemical composition, aluminum oxide (Al_2O_3). The specific gravity of a typical spinel is 3.58 – 3.61, but a spinel from a zinc-rich environment (as a trace element), can have a specific gravity as high as 4.40.

Thus the specific gravity of spinel spans the specific gravity range of ruby which is 3.97 to 4.05. They are sometimes found next to each other in mines, and both derive their red color from trace amounts of chromium.

The largest known spinel is the Samarian Spinel and comes in at an amazing 500-carats. It was once in India, but is now part of the Iranian Crown Jewels. The gem has a hole through it. One story attributed to Shah Nasser al-Din Qajar was that the hole was used for a cord to hang the stone from the biblical golden calf which the Israelites made during the period that Moses was absent to receive the Ten Commandments. Although the Samarian Spinel may be the largest in existence, a 52 kg (114 lbs, 260,000 carats) red spinel crystal was found in October 2007 in a farmer's field in Mahenge, Tanzania. As word of the large crystal leaked out, many miners and others descended on the area to try to acquire the gem or at least a piece of the gem by fair or foul means. In near-riot conditions, the miner and a motorcycle driver escaped into the wilds. After hiding out for several days, they made their way to Arusha, Tanzania. It was estimated that the yield of the spinel could be as low as 3%, which is still 7,800 carats. One piece was believed to have the potential to cut a 50-carat spinel.

Spinel has been found in many places throughout the world. These include Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Myanmar. More recent finds include Tanzania (several locations), Viet Nam, and Canada. The Canadian spinels, found in 2018, are a bright blue caused by the trace element cobalt. In addition to all the places where natural spinel can be found, synthetic spinel has been available since the 18th century. Synthetic spinel is commonly formed by the flame-fusion (Verneuil) process or the flux growth process. More recently, synthetic spinel plates have been formed by the sintering process. Sintering fuses particles together using pressure and heat, but without heating the materials to liquefaction. Sintering can happen naturally in the formation of minerals.

References:

Spinel: <https://www.dalesjewelers.com/blog/2019/08/06/spinel-augusts-newest-birth-stone-has-a-confusing-colorful-history/>

Spinel: Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinel>

Giant Red Spinel Crystal Discovered in East Africa:

<https://www.prweb.com/releases/gemstones/spinel/prweb559185.htm>

An Introduction to Synthetic Gem materials: <https://www.gia.edu/gem-synthetic>

Picture from Rob Lavinsky, iRocks.com – CC-BY-SA-3.0, from Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/>

Imperial State Crown U.K.: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Princes_Ruby

EARTHWAX

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A long time ago, if you wanted a candle, you went to a beekeeper. He provided you with wax, and you added a wick to make a candle. Today, candles are mass-produced from paraffin, which is a commercially refined product of petroleum.



Ozokerite, from Mindat.org

What is not widely known is that wax can also be mined! There are very few places where wax has been mined on a commercial basis because of the low quantities available. Wax has been mined in the Ukraine and the Carpathian Mountains, but also at Soldier Summit, Utah.

The wax, related to petroleum deposits, is called Ozokerite. It is apparently a high-quality form of natural paraffin, derived from the residue of crude oil percolating through fissures in rocks.

Compared to beeswax and regular paraffin, its melting point is much greater (between 155 and 190 degrees Fahrenheit). Ozokerite is sometimes found in large veins that are almost 100% pure, but the majority is found in a brecciated form mixed with sandstone

and shale. Once mined, it must be crushed, then mixed in tanks of boiling water so that the wax can be skimmed off and poured into molds.

The “wax belt” of ozokerite covers an area of about 2 miles in Utah. Large tailing piles from the former mining operation of the American Ozokerite Company are strewn alongside U.S. Hwy 50 near Soldier Summit. The deposit has been largely mined out.



More about Ozokerite, also spelled Ozocerite: Because ozokerite lacks a definite composition and crystalline structure, it is considered a mineraloid, not a mineral. It was named from the Greek words ozo (stink) and keros (wax).

Because ozokerite has a higher melting point than regular paraffin, it is used for cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, coatings, lubricants, water-proofing, adhesives, polishes and varnishes. The spelling Ozocerite is probably the preferred modern spelling for mineral occurrences.

Ozokerite from Wasatch County, Utah

According to the Guidebook to the Geology of the Uinta Basin, Eighth Annual Field Conference of the Utah Geological Association, local bituminous shales are the probable source. Ozokerite was probably generated in the basal offshore lacustrine beds of the Green River formation and then migrated laterally into the more competent shales and sandstones of the Wasatch formation.

Editor's personal note: Did you know that paraffin is often produced along with oil and gas? One of my geology professors had a job as a mud logger in Wyoming after he first graduated, and like many other new employees in many different industries, he found himself on duty on Christmas Day. It was very cold and when he went out to make his observations, he noted that red and green paraffin was coming out of the well head.

This is not a desirable occurrence! According to Petrowiki, “Paraffins are high-molecular-weight alkanes (C₂₀+) that can build up as deposits in the wellbore, in feed lines, etc. These organic deposits can act as chokes within the wellbore, resulting in a gradual decrease in production with time as the deposits increase in thickness.”

WHAT IS IT? OR TAR TASTING

by Neal Immega. HGMS Shop Supervisor

Lots of people show up at the clubhouse with rocks that they want identified. Besides what they are, they want to know how much their finds are worth, and where can they sell them for many \$\$\$\$\$. It sometimes takes a lot of tact to respond because, when they are told that their precious rock is concrete (really), they do not believe you. One time, someone showed up with about a ton (really) of very pretty biotite-muscovite schist studded with occasional oyster shells. The visitor wanted to know “how to extract the diamonds from the kimberlite”. I told him what he had, that I had seen similar material

at Surfside Jetty Park, and that it was probably ship ballast. He kept telling me that he had researched it on Google and that the rock was kimberlite. People just do not want to believe when told that their find is very pretty but of no commercial value. The general reaction is "what makes you think that you are so smart?" One thing you never want to do is to ask "where is it from" because they will be sure that you are trying to cheat them by going there and getting some for yourself.

Sometimes, a person will come to the clubhouse with a "whatsit" that tops everything. Logan Wilcox, shop manager on duty, answered the doorbell, and a young woman came in with a BIG leather purse. I was working in the grinding shop fixing something when an exasperated Logan introduced the woman as having something she wanted identified. She poured out a double handful of black obsidian-like chips. Only, when I picked up one, it was soft. It smelled of tar. In fact, it was tar. When I told her that, she said it could not be tar and that I should taste it. I assured her that as a retired oil company geologist, I knew what tar was, but she left unhappily when I would not taste it. I wonder if it would have been more convincing if I took her to the street and showed her the tar caulking cracks in the concrete? People are rarely impressed if I do chemical testing. Oh, well...

Maybe I should work on my tact?

SIMPSON'S SAFETY STUFF: DON'T LICK THAT ROCK! FROM THE JULY/AUGUST SCFMS NEWSLETTER

I have noticed some people pick a rock up off the ground and lick it. This action is to wet the piece to help identify the mineral or rock. That is a dangerous thing to do. It could actually kill you or make you very ill. Some of the most dangerous minerals and rocks, a lot of us will never see or come into contact with. Some are very rare and are found behind glass in museums and pose no danger to the average person.

Others like Galena, Asbestos, and Torbernite, are more common and may appear in the average person's life. Besides being dangerous to lick a rock, you can get dirt on your tongue that does not taste good. This may cause you to grab for a glass or bottle of water to wash your mouth out. WATER! You have WATER? Why not use that water to wet the rock with instead of licking it? Once you have handled the rock or specimen, you should wash your hands, especially before eating. The following is a shortlist of very dangerous minerals to handle or even breathe around:

- Galena is the principal ore of lead and forms glistening silver cubes with an almost perfect shape. Contact with this mineral may lead to lead dust exposure. We all have heard of babies getting lead poisoning by biting items painted with paint containing lead. Lead is also in the battery in your car.
- Asbestos is not a manmade product. Where other minerals act as toxins, accidentally poisoning victims, Asbestos conducts mechanical sabotage on the human lung. A few years ago there was a lot of news about asbestos being in the floors and ceilings of many commercial buildings. A lot of money has been spent removing the material from those buildings.
- Arsenopyrite is fool's gold but with a huge difference. It is arsenic iron sulfide, the same type of mineral as fool's gold (Pyrite) but with a heavy addition of arsenic. Just handling the mineral brings you into contact with unstable sulfuric arsenic salts.

- Torbernite is a prism-shaped green crystal that forms as secondary deposits in granitic rocks. These crystals are composed of uranium. The crystal blooms were used by prospectors as indicators of uranium deposits. Because the crystals form in granitic rocks, torbernite may be present in your granite countertops.
- Stibnite is antimony sulfide but looks like silver. Because it looks like silver, the huge, shining crystals of this unstable compound were fashioned into eating utensils. Several people were killed before it was discovered the utensils were the cause of the deaths. Stibnite samples should be handled with care. One should wash their hands after handling samples of this dangerous mineral.
- Orpiment is made of arsenic and sulfur. These lethal crystals are found growing in mineral formations under the surface and often near hydrothermal vents. Just holding the crystals in your hand can release the neurotoxic powder. This was once used in other artist paints.
- Cinnabar (mercury sulfide) is the most toxic mineral on earth to handle. The name means dragon's blood and is the main ore of mercury. Cinnabar has been used for food dishes, carving, and even medicine. Mercury is known for building up to toxic levels in seafood, especially billfish like swordfish.

Photos of these minerals, for identification purposes, were intentionally not included. Additional information on these minerals and photos can be found by Googling "10 most deadly rocks and minerals". When you go on a field trip to collect rocks and minerals, always carry a water bottle, full of water, to dampen the stone you collect to help in identification. A spray bottle works well.

If I am going to be out for several hours, I sometimes use a camelback water pack and I always carry at least two gallons of water, in addition to drinking water, in my vehicle. The extra water is stored in clean containers and is drinkable in case of an emergency. If you go to a mine site where some of these minerals may be present, do not pick up things you do not recognize without asking the trip leader. You might want to carry rubber gloves also. Always wash your hands with soap and water prior to handling food while on a collecting trip.

There are other dangerous rocks and minerals not listed here. The best way to learn more about these is to read your favorite rock and mineral field guide and to ask an expert. Most Gem & Mineral Societies have geologists as members. The SCFMS has several geologists and other knowledgeable members that can help identify dangerous rocks and minerals.

Happy hunting and remember:
"DON'T LICK THAT ROCK OR MINERAL".

Jerrold Simpson, President, SCFMS

*At right:
Chinese carved cinnabar lacquerware,
late Qing dynasty.
Adilnor Collection, Sweden.*

*From Wikipedia
Ground cinnabar provided the pigment*



SCHOOL COLLECTIONS UPDATE

by Steve Blyskal

In August I made a visit to the Katy ISD Science Campus, where I spoke to 43 Science/Math coordinators for their elementary schools. At that time, I passed out the last ten mineral/rock/fossil sets we had in stock. All the coordinators were excited and wanted one of the sets for their school. I realized it was time to make another fifty sets! After ordering and receiving packages of 50 2" mineral flats and 2000 2"x2" folding boxes, it was time to get out the flats of minerals and rocks on the shelves in the garage and start gathering specimens together. I have a set of small boxes for each one of the minerals and rocks. On one Saturday the Moore family, Susan, Patrick, and Cole, joined me at the clubhouse and we got most of the boxes filled with the right size specimens. Afterwards they took home many boxes to glue on the numbers associated with each specimen type. I did the same, and Neal Immega joined in the work, using a hot glue gun to put numbers on rocks and minerals. Cole Moore came back one day and helped me staple together the fifty flats. Clyde McMeans and Foster Kneeland took on the task of folding and completing the 1500 2"x2" boxes and the 150 2"x3" boxes needed. Once all the boxes of numbered minerals and rocks were back in the clubhouse, and the fifty flats were loaded with thirty-three small boxes each, it was time for assembly.



HGMS members placing rocks from individual storage boxes into collections flats

First, I went to Office Max and printed out the fifty sets of the insert that we enclose that tells the teacher what each specimen is and gives information about it. Then I set a date of September 11th in the afternoon, and seven people showed up to help. Starting with number 1 (talc), we each took a box and went around the 4-table setup placing a spec-

imen in the appropriate box. In addition to Sigrid and myself, Burton Dworsky, Deidre Prince, Aurelio Diaz, Foster Kneeland, Clyde McMeans, and Neal Immega helped assemble the sets. But wait, we were not done! Neal had to find more ray teeth and get them glued to paper printed with the relevant information, and then I had to find a construction site to obtain clay to bag up for the set. Finally, I put on the labels, printed on my home printer, and we were finished! Are you exhausted yet just reading this?



Hardness, mineral and rock set

Another project for School Collections has been helping High School teachers who are teaching Earth Science classes. They generally have no examples for teaching, so I have taken it on myself to supply them with full sets of minerals and rocks from our stocks. They get ore minerals, lodestone, amethyst, rose quartz, chalcedony, agate – all the minerals in the economic and quartz minerals sets plus some.

The source for these minerals is the stacks of flats that you see when you first walk into the building from the parking lot. On September 25 I supplied a full set to Elisabeth Blush from the Cy-Fair ISD and yesterday I mailed off the first box of minerals to Lisa Nielsen in Del Rio, TX, with another box of rocks to be sent out next week. This is all part of meeting our Society goal of educational outreach.

AIN'T IT TRUE

The shortest distance between two points is always under construction.
Via Hy Grader 10/01

HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

by Nancy English

X	President—Sigrid Stewart		Beading— Maggie Manley
X	1st Vice President— Steve Blyskal	X	Day Light—Fred Brueckner
X	2nd Vice President—Beverly Mace		Gemstones & Faceting—Randy Carlson
X	Treasurer—Michele Marsel	X	Lapidary & Silversmithing—Phyllis George
X	Secretary—Nancy English	X	Mineral—Tricia Rittaler
	Archaeology—Vacant	X	Paleontology—Mike Dawkins

President Sigrid Stewart called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. A quorum was present.

PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS: “We have a lot to cover. So, let’s be brief with remarks and explanations so we can finish the Bylaws tonight.”

Approval of Minutes:

On August 22, 2021, Nancy English emailed the completed, edited minutes to the Board for a motion to approve, a second, and votes. On August 23, 2021, via email, Michele Marsel moved to approve the HGMS August 3, 2021, Board of Directors meeting minutes (version “BOD 10/3rd wave”). Phyllis George seconded the motion. By August 23 at 11:45 p.m. eight BOD members had voted to pass the motion via email. Nancy sent the approved minutes to Sigrid Stewart to publish in the BBG on August 23 at 11:48 p.m.

Treasurer’s Report: Treasurer Michele Marsel sent the Treasurer’s Report to members on September 7, 2021.

September is the month we pay our dues to the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies (SCFMS). These dues include insurance for field trips. Michele thanked Beverly for providing our membership count as of September 2, 2021, for the report: 369 Adults and 47 Youths. Michele will mail the check to SCFMS this week.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BBG Editor: Beverly Mace notified members on September 3, 2021, that the online version of the September 2021 BBG is available on the HGMS Website. No paper copy of the BBG will be mailed this month.

A review of the HGMS Bylaws was suspended for discussion after New Business.
Donations, Sales, Auction Committee (DSAC):

We sold 388 lbs. of slabs at the Members-Only Pounder Sale. We still have over 500 lbs.

of material from the original donation of 1,000 lbs.

Steve Byskal, Sigrid Stewart, and Paul Brandes picked up a donation of six shot glass display cases. Four cases are already sold.

Michele is in the process of opening a Direct Seller Charity eBay account to sell donation inventory. It will be set up as non-profit for a break on the eBay fees.

Education Committee: Maggie Manley Chairman, reported.

- Logan Wilcox's proposed 3D Printing class will be a three-part series. He will schedule it for this fall.
- Maggie is planning a Dichroic Glass class. Students will meet at the instructor's studio for that class.
- There was a discussion about whether a teacher of our classes needs to be a member. The Board agreed to table the discussion until October.

Regarding Maggie's question during the August 3 BOD meeting, Michelle Wilcox has confirmed that the Website called Artisans of HGMS that Paul Robles and Logan Wilcox wanted to create will not go forward.

Membership Committee: Beverly Mace reported new members in August: nineteen adults, two couples, one family, and eight youths.

Nominating Committee:

- Sharon Halton has volunteered to be on the nominating committee. She needs two more volunteers to join her.
- Nancy English is considering being President. That would mean we need a new Secretary and a new 1st Vice President.
- Sigrid Stewart and Steve Byskal are resigning from the HGMS Board of Directors for 2022. They both volunteer on important committees. Nancy English asked them what other commitments they will continue. Sigrid Stewart, the current President, will continue to publish the BBG and work on the Website Committee. She is uncertain about participation on the 2022 Scholarship Committee. She is not sure if she continue as Assistant Show Chair in 2022. Steve Byskal, the current 1st Vice President, will continue to be Chairman of the Mineral Section, a Shop Foreman, Chairman of the School Collections Committee, and the Dealer Chairman for the HGMS Annual Show.
- Nancy English is resigning as Secretary to be President. Nancy plans to continue as the Volunteer Coordinator, to work on the Scholarship Committee, and to answer the Club phone.

Scholarship Committee: Their next meeting is on Thursday, September 9 on Zoom.

Show Committee, 2021: The next meeting is scheduled for September 14, via Zoom.

- Nancy English is concerned about volunteers for the Annual Show due to the pandemic.
- Sigrid Stewart shared a Houston Chronicle graph of COVID surges comparing 2020 and 2021. The graphs showed the same peaks in positive COVID tests from January into August for both years. She predicted that the numbers of COVID-infected people will flatten into November as vaccinations go up and events diminish before the Holidays.
- Dealers are enthusiastic about our Show. This year we will have the largest turnover of dealers in thirty years. Steve Byskal is filling the last booth this week. The new dealers are especially eager to get into the HGMS Show.

School Collections Committee: On Friday, August 27 Steve Byskal talked to the Katy ISD science coordinators for the forty-three elementary campuses. He told them about

the HGMS School Collections program and left them with the last ten sets of mineral collections HGMS had. The science coordinators were excited to see the mineral sets and wanted to take one to each of their campuses! That means thirty-three more sets, are needed for just one school district in Houston! Steve ordered and received 1500 flat mineral boxes to be folded. He already had the fifty flats that hold the specimens. All the supplies were available at the clubhouse on Saturday, September 4. The Moore family (Patrick, Susan, and Cole), Neal Immega, Clyde McMeans, and Foster Kneeland folded 1500 boxes. They glued numbers on the mineral specimens so that everything was ready to go into the flats by the weekend of September 11. Steve appreciates all the help.

Website Committee: The next meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2021. Committee members are currently working on updates for the Show. They plan to post dealer information on the Website.

SECTION REPORTS

President Stewart asked for the Section Representatives to be brief and follow what is printed in the agenda.

Beading Section: third Saturday, 12:30 p.m., September 18, 2021. Ann Money will teach how to make a beaded tassel. Beaders can search the beading cabinet for beads to use. We welcome Ann back from her two-month road travel across the USA! Maggie thanked Ann Money and Gretchen Cockerill for helping to reorganize the beading cabinet.

Day Light Section: first Wednesday, 1:00 p.m. September 1, 2021: Maggie Manley taught us how to make darling bead people. The cost for this session was \$5.00. Nancy English posted pictures of the completed projects on the HGMS e-blast Sunday, September 5. October 6, 2021: Neal Immega will teach how to silver solder. Please bring the cabochons that you made in August. The cost for this session is \$5.00.

Gemstones and Faceting Section: second Wednesday, 6:30, p.m., September 8, 2021. The Zoom meeting will consist of an open discussion. Randy Carlson canceled the Saturday, August 28 Workshop in consideration of the rise of COVID cases.

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section: third Monday, 7:30 p.m., September 20, 2021. The Lapidary and Silversmithing Section will meet in person. The members who braved the rain on August 16 spent time in the shop preparing their petrified wood cubes to run through the bead mill. Tony demonstrated the cuff bracelet with the cabochon silversmithing project. He will continue to introduce new projects each month and members may work on whatever they wish. More petrified wood is available for anyone else who wants to try out the bead mill.

Mineral Section: third Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. September 15, 2021. Stephen Steinke's Zoom program will share information about the new mineral museum at the University of Arizona— the Alfie Norville Museum. Steinke took pictures that he will show during his presentation.

Paleo Section: third Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., September 21, 2021. Turtles— we will build a turtle from pieces collected in Florida by the great and late collector George Wolf. Everyone can take home a piece of a Pleistocene turtle shell.

Youth Section: first and third Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to Noon., September 4 and 18, 2021, next month, October 2 and October 16, 2021. Masks are required for all the children. Youth membership is steadily rising. Michele Marsel happily noted that parents are bringing their kids to the Shop on Sunday to work on the Youth Section projects.

OLD BUSINESS

Internet upgrade for the Clubhouse: Michele Marsel reported that Comcast completed our install on September 2. The HGMS Clubhouse now has Comcast 200 Mbps Internet service. Our Private Network name has changed to Rockhounds-1 and the old password remains the same. She posted the password around the Club to remind members. Michele returned on September 3 to finalize the configuration for the routers and to turn the old system off. Nancy English was notified on September 2 that the phone is transferred to Comcast with the same forwarding setup we had with AT&T. The internet contact was changed to treasurer@hgms.org.

A Main Hall display case for Lapidary and Beading needs to be moved to access the electric outlet behind it. Michele Marsel asked for the key to it. Steve Blyskal will bring it to the Club. Maggie Manley was glad to hear of the space in that cabinet to display Beading Section projects.

Display Case Replacements: Since the August 3 BOD meeting Sigrid Stewart has contacted the cabinetmaker, she chose to build a prototype display case. At the General Meeting on August 24, she reported that he had experienced an industrial accident that disabled him for the near future. Sigrid has contacted another person that she will meet with this month to request a prototype.

NEW BUSINESS

The Beading Section needs to change the signatures on the Beading Section checking account at Wells Fargo Bank. Maggie Manley is the current Beading Section Chairman. She replaced Kim Fusilier. Let these minutes serve as confirmation of Maggie Manley's authorization to conduct financial business for the Houston Gem and Mineral Society Beading Section. Maggie is authorized to sign on the above-referenced account. Kim Fusilier's name will be removed as the authorized signer. Nancy English will accompany Maggie to Wells Fargo Bank to negotiate the change of signatures.

Stock Refrigerator: Foster Kneeland has agreed to be our new "Soda Man." He is now in charge of purchasing beverages and keeping the club refrigerator stocked. YAY!!! The Board thanks Foster for volunteering.

Awards from the American Federation of Mineral Societies (AFMS) and the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies (SCFMS):

- Sigrid Stewart sent an additional award to Nancy Englehardt-Moore from the Federation Societies. Nancy Englehardt-Moore recommended that all of the HGMS awards be posted on the Website. She would be willing to compile the ones from the SCFMS newsletter.
- She believes these awards illustrate the caliber and expertise of the members. Posting these prestigious awards would elevate HGMS when people see the Website and also help draw new members. The BOD approved the idea.
- Sigrid Stewart will present this to the Website Committee.

During most of her 24 years as The Backbender's Gazette (BBG) Editor, Phyllis George

submitted two issues of the newsletter and all HGMS articles to the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies (SCFMS) for the annual contest. The SCFMS forwards all newsletters and articles that ranked in the top three in the SCFMS contest to the AFMS contest. Sigrid Stewart has committed to learning the process from Phyllis, and she will continue to submit all articles and the two best BBGs to the SCFMS

Cleaning of the Clubhouse: Nancy English received a call from a local cleaning company wanting to give us a bid on cleaning the Clubhouse regularly. Maggie Manley volunteered to manage this. She has another company in mind to bid on the cleaning, too. She will interview the companies for their bids and present her recommendation to the Board.

Review of the HGMS Bylaws, Articles VI through XI: The BOD carefully inspected the proposed HGMS Bylaws' changes and additions for Articles VI through XI. Nancy English moved to accept the HGMS Bylaws as updated. Fred Brueckner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Michele Marsel will collate the changes and prepare a final comparison document for the Board to review. Beverly Mace will email the updated HGMS Bylaws to all the members of HGMS thirty days before the October 26, 2021, General meeting. Nancy English will post a notification in the e-blast to alert members to look for the updated HGMS Bylaws in their email.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be the first Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. October 5, 2021. The next General Meeting will be the fourth Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. September 28, 2021.

Steve Blysal will present a talk, 'Now you have a Rock/Mineral/Fossil collection. What are you going to do with it?' exploring ways to display collections.

Adjourn: Nancy English moved to adjourn. Phyllis George seconded the motion and it passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2021

by Nancy English

President Sigrid Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. She welcomed twenty-four attendees. New members Amber Garner and Richard Madera introduced themselves. Melissa McGovern and Sean Piper were guests.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

President Stewart asked everyone to wear masks at our General Meetings whether or not they are vaccinated due to the surge in Covid cases. Mary Ann Mitscherling opened the Shop at 5:00 p.m. before the General Meetings to allow members to use the shop.

The Silent Auction opened at 7:00 p.m. Attendees were able to bid again during the break. Nancy English collected the final bids after the break, and winners paid for items after the program.

Approval of Minutes: Sharon Halton moved to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2021, General Meeting as published in the September 2021 BBG. James Wark seconded the motion and it passed.

COMMITTEE/SECTION REPORTS

In the interest of time, President Stewart asked members to look for reports of future Section meetings and programs in the BBG calendar, on the Website <https://hgms.org>, or by reading the weekly e-blast from Houston Gem and Mineral Society.

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

Donations, Sales, Auction Committee (DSAC): Michele Marsel announced DSAC will have an online equipment auction hosted on the HGMS Website (with items to preview in the Club) in October. Check the weekly eblast for upcoming auctions. Michele recently opened an HGMS eBay for Charity account to sell donated items online. PayPal confirmed HGMS has Charity status. That means PayPal calculates fees for sales made on the Website at a discounted rate. Tickets, memberships, auction items, and other online sales qualify for the discount. Sales made at the Show and the Club do not qualify.

Nominating Committee: President Stewart introduced members of the Nominating Committee, Sharon Halton, and Fred Brueckner (not in attendance.) Sharon gave a preview of the people who have agreed to run for the 2022 officer positions. Nancy English is the proposed candidate for President, Sarah Metsa is the proposed candidate for 1st Vice President, and Sharon will announce the candidate for Secretary at the October General Meeting. Michele Marsel will continue to be Treasurer and Beverly Mace will continue as 2nd Vice President in 2022. Senior members at the November General Meeting will vote for the 2022 officers. Sharon spoke about the importance of volunteering to participate in the management of HGMS. Too few members do all of the administrative and operational work to maintain the building and shops, to produce the Annual Show, manage donations or conduct meetings and programs. Sharon encouraged anyone interested in volunteering for an officer position to call her. Find her contact information in the 2021 Roster.

Scholarship Committee: The Committee met on September 9. The next Zoom meeting is scheduled for September 30, 2021, to continue to review the results of survey questions asked of the colleges about their scholarship programs for Earth Sciences and Jewelry Arts. The Committee divvied up the universities and colleges to contact them.

Show Committee:

- Sigrid Stewart reported that the Show Committee met on September 14, 2021. They discussed all the areas of the Show. We are on track for November 12, 13, 14. The next meeting will be on October 12. She quoted Scott Singleton, "In past years we have been worried about volunteers, but it always works out. We need to be realistic this year about our expectations. My working attitude is: We are going to have a Show! If we cannot staff certain places, we just won't have those places."
- Tom English described the Dino Dig plans for the Annual Show.
- Mary Ann Mitscherling provided a sign-up sheet for demonstrators at the Show. Three shifts per day are available for cabochon making, silversmithing, casting, wire wrapping, carving, and faceting.
- Nancy English reminded members that they can volunteer for one or more of the 125 half-day shifts over the four days of the HGMS Annual Show on the HGMS Website under Annual Show, Volunteering. Watch for volunteer job descriptions in the weekly eblast. Nancy also needs volunteers to help her before the Show. Please contact her at volunteercoordinator@hgms.org.

- Steve Blyskal said this year we have fourteen new dealers, the largest turnover in dealers in years. He just filled the last booth today. Most of the dealers in 2021 are mineral dealers.
- Grand Prizes: There will be two Grand Door Prizes this year. The second Grand prize is a very large Keokuk Quartz Geode that was donated years ago and has been hiding in a cabinet. Mark Villareal of Monarch Minerals is donating the first Grand Door Prize. Look for them pictured on the Website soon.

School Collections Committee: Chairman Steve Blyskal thanked all the volunteers and conscripts who helped put together fifty flats of mineral specimens for the elementary schools. He has already delivered ten flats to the Katy ISD science coordinators. They asked for thirty-three more for the other elementary schools.

Website Committee: Dealer profiles will be posted on hgms.org as soon as they are received.

OLD BUSINESS

President Stewart asked members to look for the progress of Old Business items in the Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes in the latest BackBenders Gazette (BBG) on the HGMS Website <https://hgms.org> under Publications.

Display Cases: Another woodworker looked at our case and gave estimates.

Internet upgrade for the Clubhouse: Michele Marsel reported that Comcast completed our install on September 2. The HGMS Clubhouse now has Comcast 200 Mbps Internet service. She posted the password around the Club to remind members. Tonight is the first time the General Meeting is a hybrid meeting – live at the Clubhouse and Zoom fed to members off-site.

Pay Sales tax: We are now charging Texas sales tax (8.25%) on all online auctions and in club sales as required by the TX Comptroller's office. (HGMS does not pay sales tax on purchases.) The state does not charge tax on membership dues. We have an exemption from sales tax collection at our Annual Show and for Show tickets. Thanks to Michele Marsel for her diligent research on the HGMS responsibility to pay sales tax.

NEW BUSINESS

James Wark noted the passing of Pat Smith, a former member, in Seattle.

Maggie Manley has agreed to interview cleaning services for the Clubhouse.

Stocking Refrigerator: Everyone, please thank Foster Kneeland for agreeing to be our new "Soda Man." He is now in charge of purchasing beverages and keeping the club refrigerator stocked. YAY!!! The Board thanks Foster for volunteering.

HGMS Bylaws: Nancy English, reported that the Board has approved updates to the HGMS Bylaws. On September 26, Houston Gem & Mineral Society sent a copy of the updated Bylaws to all members via their email addresses in the Roster. The subject line reads HGMS Bylaws - Changes for Review and Vote at October 26 General Meeting. The copy is set up with the former document beside the updated document to make it easier to see what the BOD changed. Please, take time to read them before the October 26, General Meeting. The Board will ask for a motion to approve the Bylaws. In the meantime,

members should report any comments or suggestions for future changes to Nancy English at Secretary@hgms.org.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. October 5, 2021.

The next General Meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. October 26, 2021.

Dr. Joan Spaw will present "Tracks and Trails and Scat, Oh My! How trace fossils add to our understanding of life in the past." Joan has a distinguished academic and professional career. She earned her undergraduate degree from Bryn Mawr College and her Master's Degree and Ph. D. from Rice University. In her professional career, she worked for and consulted with major oil companies as well as Core Laboratories. She was considered a subject matter expert in carbonate mudstone, and siliciclastic petrology at Marathon Oil Company. Joan will present her program via Zoom. Steve Blyskal and Neal Immega will bring trace fossil samples.

Show-n-Tell

Will Heierman brought specimens from his Montana collecting expedition near Avon, Montana and invited rockhounds to join him when he is there. He showed:

- Interesting mud concretions
- An 8.3-carat blue euhedral crystal of sapphire
- Butterscotch chert from the Louis and Clark National Forest
- A jar of tiny sapphires from the Gem Mountain Sapphire Mine, owned by Chris Cooney.

Will also volunteered to fill a display case of his own for the Show.

Mary Ann Mitscherling showed an example of the Bead People made at the Day Light meeting. She also showed a cabochon of a pisolite, and gave some to Neal for display. Nancy English showed a Tree of Life wire-wrapped jasper cabochon that she learned to wrap in Joy Lester's highly-recommended class.

Steve Blyskal brought different specimens recently added to his collection.

- A nodule of Apache or Laguna agate
- New Jersey Amethyst
- Quartz pseudomorphs after Glauberite from New Jersey
- Shattuckite with copper out of Senora, Mexico
- Prehnite with Calcite from New Jersey
- Smoky quartz from Switzerland

Beverly Mace showed a polished, cross-sectioned stromatolite slab with a happy face smile in it.

Door Prize Drawing: Sigrid Stewart won the double-sided crystal of quartz from Arkansas.

Adjourn: James Wark moved to adjourn. Sharon Halton seconded it. The motion passed and the business meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Michele Marsel provided refreshments for the break. President Stewart asked members to "Feed the Kitty" with donations toward the food. No one volunteered to bring refreshments for the next General Meeting on October 26.

President Stewart introduced the Program: Vice President Blyskal's presentation "Now you have a Rock/Mineral/Fossil collection. What are you going to do with it?" Steve Blyskal explored the full gamut of possibilities, from the pile of rocks in the backyard and garden borders and all the numerous ways one can store or display one's collection, up to and including fine mineral display cases.

2021 HGMS OFFICERS

President	Sigrid Stewart	President @HGMS.org
First Vice President	Steve Blyskal	Programs@HGMS.org
Second Vice President	Beverly Mace	Membership@HGMS.org
Secretary	Nancy English	Secretary@HGMS.org
Treasurer	Michele Marsel	Treasurer@HGMS.org
Archaeology Section Board Member	Vacant	Archaeology@HGMS.org
Beading Section Board Member	Maggie Manley	Beading@HGMS.org
Daylight Section Board Member	Fred Brueckner	Daylight@hgms.org
Faceting Section Board Member	Randy Carlson	Faceting@HGMS.org
Lapidary Section Board Member	Phyllis George	Lapidary@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	Vacant	Archaeology@HGMS.org
Beading Section Chair	Maggie Manley	Beading@HGMS.org
Day Light Section Chair	Nancy Searle	Daylight@HGMS.org
Gemstone & Faceting Section Chair	Randy Carlson	Faceting@HGMS.org
Lapidary & Silversmith Section Chair	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	
Assistant Show Chair	Sigrid Stewart	
Backbender's Gazette Editor	Sigrid Stewart	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	Michele Marsel	Templates@HGMS.org
Librarian for Main Library	Neal Immega	Librarian@HGMS.org
Publicity Chair	Sarah Metsa	Publicity@HGMS.org
Scholarships	Mike Sommers	Scholarship@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	Lauren Blyskal	Webmaster@HGMS.org
Youth Section Assistant	Elizabeth Guynn	Youth2@HGMS.org

OCTOBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 YOUTH 10-12 SHOP 10-3
3 SHOP 10-3	4	5 BOD 7:30-9:30	6 SHOP 10-3 DAY LIGHT 1:00-3:00	7 SHOP 9-3	8	9 SHOP 10-3
10 SHOP 10-3	11	12	13 SHOP 10-3 FACETING 6:30-8:30	14 SHOP 9-3	15	16 YOUTH 10-12 SHOP 10-3 BEADING 12:30-3:30
17 SHOP 10-3	18 LAPIDARY 7:30-9:30	19 PALEO 7:30-9:30	20 SHOP 10-3 MINERAL 7:30-9:30	21 SHOP 9-3	22	23 SHOP 10-3
24 SHOP 10-3	25	26 GENERAL MEETING 7:30-9:30	27 SHOP 10-3	28 SHOP 9-3	29	30
31 SHOP 10-3						

NOVEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 BOD 7:30-9:30	3 SHOP 10-3 DAY LIGHT 1:00-3:00	4 SHOP 9-3	5	6 YOUTH 10-12 SHOP 10-3
7 SHOP 10-3	8	9	10 SHOP 10-3 FACETING 6:30-8:30 SHOW LOAD	11 SHOP 9-3 SHOW SET-UP	12 ANNUAL SHOW 9-6	13 ANNUAL SHOW 9-6
14 ANNUAL SHOW 10-5	15 LAPIDARY 7:30-9:30	16 PALEO 7:30-9:30	17 SHOP 10-3 MINERAL 7:30-9:30	18 SHOP 9-3	19	20 YOUTH 10-12 SHOP 10-3 BEADING 12:30-3:30
21 SHOP 10-3	22	23 GENERAL MEETING 7:30-9:30	24 SHOP 10-3	25 SHOP 9-3	26	27 SHOP 10-3
28 SHOP 10-3	29	30				

THE BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE

HGMS | HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

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



SCFMS Bulletin Awards

1998 - 1st (Large)
2000 - 1st (Large)
2003 - 1st (Large)
2005-2019 -1st (Large)
2020 - 3rd (Large)

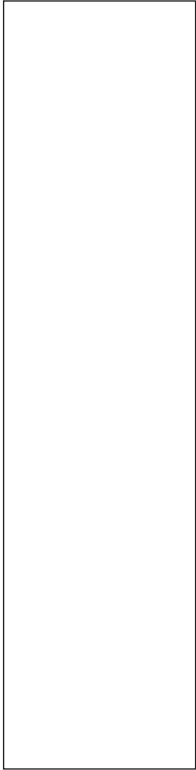
AFMS Bulletin Awards



1998 - 2nd (Large)
2004 - 3rd (Large)
2007 - 1st (Large)
2010 - 2nd (Large)
2012 - 2013 - 3rd (Large)
2014 - 2nd (Large)
2017 - 3rd (Large)
2019 - 2nd (Large)
2020 - 2nd (Large)



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