

THE STONE CHIPPER

THE 639TH MEETING OF THE AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, **AUGUST 27TH, 2009, 7:30 P.M.**, AT THE AGMS CLUBHOUSE, 6719 BURNET LANE, AUSTIN, TX. PHONE: (512) 458-9546.



The August program will be the annual club auction. See inside for details.

AGMS Annual Show
Gem Capers 2009
Palmer Events Center
October 23rd - 25th.
www.GemCapers.com

THE AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.



All American Club Awards
AFMS Gold & Trophy 2002
AFMS Gold 2003, 2004
SCFMS Gold 2002, 2003, 2004

The AGMS is a member in good standing of the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies and the American Federation of Mineral Societies. Its editors are also members of SCRIBE. The club address is 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, Texas 78757, and phone (512)458-9546. **The AGMS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.** Visit our website at www.AustinGemAndMineral.org. Contact our webmaster for website updates at DiannH@austingemandmineral.org.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the AGMS is to promote interest and education in the various Earth Sciences and other related subjects.

MEETINGS

The Society meets the fourth Thursday of every month except October which is show set up day. There will be a meeting on the THIRD Thursday in November. December is the Invocation of Officers meeting held on a date and at a place determined by the officers. Board meetings are called as needed. All members are welcome to attend. Society Officers are listed on the back page of this publication. Please feel free to contact any of them for information.

DUES FOR 2009

Membership dues are:

\$15.00 annually for an adult \$20.00 annually for a couple \$4.00 annually for juniors

THE STONE CHIPPER

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President's Message - Josie Middleton, President

There is no President's message this month.

Library News - Diann Hill, Co-librarian



Hope everyone is having a wonderful summer reading all those great AGMS library books. In the fall we will be adding some new titles to the shelves. Make sure that you visit monthly to check for new and updated books. As always please remember you must turn in your read books to be able to check out new ones. As inventory is on the near horizon, please double check around your homes, office, vehicles and make sure that there are no outstanding books, tapes, or C.D's hanging around which need to be returned. Currently there are some items that need to find their way back home. I'm glad to be back as one of your co-librarians.

AGMS Email List and Change of Address

NOTE: Please send notices of changes of address or to report errors on the mailing list to: **Pauline Denson**, treasurer.

If you wish to be kept notified of "breaking news" and impromptu events within the club, you need to be on the **AGMS email list**. Information on things such as field trip details and member rock sales may be disseminated this way in real time. You can also ask to get the newsletter delivered via email notification rather than through snail mail. It comes sooner and in color that way. To get invited to the list, and/or to receive the newsletter via email, please send a note to the editors at StoneChipper@austingemandmineral.org.

Needed - New Editor

We're down to **three** more newsletters! Unless someone else volunteers soon, the November Stone Chipper will be the last newsletter. Ack!! I'm sure you won't let that happen. If you think this sounds like the job for you, then please contact us at StoneChipper@austingemandmineral.org. It would be nice if someone could volunteer sooner rather than later so we can take some time to teach the new person(s) all the ins and outs of the rules and expectations of the job, as well as how to work with the software.

Do you have ideas about what kinds of articles you'd like to see? News items? Recurring columns? Now is your chance to remake the club newsletter to look like you want to see it. You could even change the layout, the fonts, and the graphics. It is not set in "stone," so to speak. If you have some creative ideas and would like to volunteer for the club but work at home, then this is your opportunity. This is an especially good job for someone who is new to the hobby and may know a lot about computers, but not much about rocks yet. Reading all the articles from exchange bulletins is a great way to start.

July 23, 2009 Meeting Minutes - Linda Northcote, Secretary

No meeting minutes were received.

Board Minutes

No board minutes were received.

A.G.M.S. Calendar

August 11 - Beginning Cabbing Class 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
August 18 - Beginning Cabbing Class 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
August 18 - Paleo Society Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
August 20 - Show Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.
August 25 - Beginning Cabbing Class 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
August 27 - AGMS Club Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
September 01 - Board Meeting 7:00 p.m

**Refreshments**

Volunteers for **August** to bring in refreshments are Alan Cherepon, Betty Lee, and Marilyn Gilbreath. For September, Barabara Evans and Josie Middleton have signed up. We need a couple more volunteers.

Annual AGMS Auction This Month!

It's time once again for the ever popular AGMS club auction! This month's meeting will be brief so we can spend time on the auction. As usual, get a bidding card before the meeting time if you want to participate. If you have donations, you can bring them to the club house any Wednesday evening - 6-9 when Jeff is there and leave them on the kitchen counter where Kathleen will process them as she can. If you are willing to volunteer to help, you may also contact Kathleen.

Local Show Announcements

*August 15-16,
Bossier City, LA
Ark-La-Tex Gem & Mineral Society*

*August 22-23
Jasper, TX
Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society*

*September 5-6
Arlington, TX
Arlington Gem & Mineral Club
www.agemclub.org*

Years ago Lester W. informed the club about a new festival that was starting up, **Texas Metal Arts**, a Festival in Gruene. Since then, Les P and I have been going every year, except the one year they cancelled due to rain, YES rain! This year the dates are Saturday, September 12th and Sunday, September 13th. There will be about 32 artists, and yes I mean artists, nothing made outside of Texas! Along with all these wonderful artists, there will be demonstrations both days, approximately 12 each day. Visit the website, www.texasmetalarts.com for more information, schedule and pictures. Les and I usually spend most of both days there as the demos are wonderful as well as the surroundings! We will see you there!

~Respectfully submitted, Susan Postlethwait

Incredible Shrinking Places to Rock Hunt

By Jan Woodward

We've all noticed it...fewer and fewer places to follow our passion of rock hunting. Family ranches/farms selling out to developers, more and more public lands being usurped by governmental entities, and privately owned rock hunting grounds being forced to close their doors. From a family owned rock hunting ranch of five generations, here are a few tips that may help keep your favorite rock hunting place from closing their doors.

1. Stay in touch REGULARLY with your elected officials and voice your concerns.
2. ALWAYS abide by the Rock hunters' Code of Ethics.
3. SHARE your rock knowledge with the younger generation...inspire their wonderment.
4. PARTICIPATE in your nearest rock club.
5. FOLLOW private landowners' rules.

Rock hunting locations that are privately owned depend on the fees they charge in order to "keep their doors open." Even remote and isolated places have to pay taxes! Help the owners keep their lands open for all rock hunters. Always know whose land you are on, and contact the owner before going onto the land. Don't depend on information from a rock & gem book for total accuracy. Many times rates are given that are so out of date as to be laughable. Sometimes, you find rock hunting places that are no longer open to the public. Check the date of publication for the book you are using. If it is older than a couple of years, you can be sure the information is not totally accurate.

One more word of caution. The American Southwest is one of the best places in the world to hunt for rocks. But the southern border in our great southwest is changing and has some definite drawbacks. If you are hunting in some of these remote and rugged areas without the landowners' knowledge, you may be incurring more risk than you are aware of. Usually there is no cell phone service in such areas. If you are hurt and no one knows you're there, you're on your own. As we all know, some areas of our isolated southern border are attractive as illegal ports of entry. You may very well encounter Border Patrol officers, DEA officers, and U.S. military units, as well as the people they're looking for! We're not in Kansas anymore, Toto!

Following a few simple rules, and treating landowners the way you would like to be treated, insures a good hunt, and, hopefully, for a good long time.

~From SCFMS Newsletter 3-4/08, via Fredericksburg Rockhounds Newsletter, 7/09

Are You Sure It's Jade?



- If a chip is knocked off the freshly broken surface should not sparkle in the sun. If it does, it's not jade.
 - If you can scratch it with a knifepoint, it isn't jade.
 - It will be much heavier than a common rock of similar size.
 - Tap the specimen with a hammer. If a moon shaped fracture appears, it is agate or jasper, but not jade.
 - If it is jade, it will have a smooth, waxy, almost greasy look
-
-

Still Think its Jade?

Lapidaries and jewelers should constantly attempt to call gemstones and rough materials by their correct names. The term jade is applied to many non jade stones, such as:

- Korean Jade is bowenite, a hard variety of serpentine;
- Transvaal Jade is a massive variety of green, grossular garnet;
- "Amazon jade" and "Colorado Jade" is really Amazonite (green feldspar)
- American Jade is a rock - a mixture of idocrase and grossular called Californite (green variety of idocrase)
- Australian Jade is chrysoprase;
- Jasper Jade is green jasper;
- Flukien, Manchurian and Honan Jades are all soapstone;
- Mexican Jade is green-dyed marble or calcite;
- Oregon Jade is dark green jasper;
- Silver Peak Jade is malachite.
- Indian jade is really aventurine.



It would be clearer to beginners if jade were called jade, malachite called malachite, aventurine called aventurine.

~From The RockCollector 6/09 via Carmel Valley Prospector, Calgary Lapidary Journal 6/09, Stoney Statements 6/09

Gem Capers 2009 Show Committee Minutes

By Dee Fly - Show Secretary

July 16, 2009

Attendees: 15 members

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes: Corrections to the minutes of the prior meeting on the ACC wording of the scholarships and the booth available were made. Also the booth is a 6 table in lieu of 4 table booth. Diann motioned for minutes to be passed with corrections and Josie seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer: All but one dealer has paid in full.

Dealers: Susan to get information for dealer that needs to use fire. Robert M. proposed a joint committee between AGMS and ACC to pick students. Money will be due about a month before the show because school won't start until around September 1st. Diann will meet with Robert Folsom to get the flyers sent out to the dealers. Susan advised that she needs 500 stamps for the school letter.

Floor plan: Robert M. had floor plans with dealer names. He will put amperage on floor plan for Brian to submit to Palmer.

Show Pin: There were five examples submitted. Diann's sample won, was the shape of TX with crossed American flags and mining tools. It was suggested that one or both flags be changed to TX flags. Susan will order pins.

Advertising: A new club member wants to advertise in the bulletin, they do silver and glass work.

Demonstrators: Ann with U.T. will be at the show. Paleo Society will be there and needs electricity. Patty Barnes with the polymer clay will need the correct amount of electricity.

Motion to adjourn, seconded, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Chinese Ivory

By J.W. Downs

Member Austin Paleontological Society (and AGMS)

I have always wondered how China became famous for its carved ivory since that country appears completely devoid of elephants. The answer was found in an old Historical Geology book written just before World War II.

Woolly mammoths (*mammonteus primigenius*) ranged widely over glaciated areas during the last ice ages, extending northward into Alaska and across Siberia where their skeletons and tusks are still incredibly numerous in the frozen soil. Half of the ivory of commerce was derived from this source at the time this book was printed.

Siberian ivory was imported into China as early as the fourth century B.C., and began to be extensively transported into Europe early in the nineteenth century. Between 1800 and 1850, the annual sale of tusks at the trading center of Yakutsk averaged about eighteen tons, and up to 1940, no fewer than 46,750 pairs of tusks have been recovered. The tusks of woolly mammoths were huge – much larger than modern elephants. It is possible that the ivory used on early pianos and late harpsichords made in England and Europe came from this source. (Victor Borga said that his piano had black and yellow keys – his elephant smoked.)

The remains of some Alaskan and Siberian mammoths are remarkably well preserved in the permafrost. Part of a baby mammoth recovered from Alaska has been on display in a freezer at the American Museum of Natural History, and an entire adult mammoth has been recently recovered from the permafrost of Siberia. This leads to the interesting possibility that there may be enough viable DNA that at some time in the future, scientists will be able to clone mammoths. Exactly what they will do with them is another matter, but they would be an interesting attraction at zoos. Duplicating the Pleistocene environment could also be tricky.

Woolly mammoths became extinct in Alaska and Siberia shortly after the last ice age, approximately ten thousand years ago and there is strong suspicion that humans contributed to their demise. The last hold-outs were on Wrangell Island between Alaska and Siberia where they lived until seven thousand years ago (according to a recent NOVA program on PBS.) In the severe environment and the accompanying shortage of food, the mammoths shrank in size until they were only about four feet high, much like the horses of the Shetland Islands that evolved into Shetland Ponies.

~From Paleo Newsletter, 5/05

A geology student asked the farmer if it would be o.k. to hunt fossils on the farm. Said the farmer, “I guess it will be o.k. so long as you don’t shoot towards the house.”

~From Petrified Digest 6/05, via The Roadrunner 4/09



SHOP TIPS

Ripple Marks on Your Slabs?

There are several reasons for this problem: the carriage or arbor may be out of alignment; the blade may be dished, the bearing may be faulty; the blade may not fit the shaft properly; the feed speed may be too fast.

To find a remedy, slow the feed speed. At the same time, make sure the blade is sharp. If it is not sharp, dress by running a piece of brick or grinding stone through several times. If this doesn't help, check the alignment. Check the bearings by trying to wiggle the shaft. If it wobbles, the bearings are faulty. Be sure there isn't any dirt under the shaft collars. If your check indicates misalignment, and you don't have the experience to re-align the carriage, contact your supplier or manufacturer.

Don't let the blade slow down during cutting. Variations in rpm destroy accuracy, reduce cutting efficiency, and dulls the cutting edges of the blade. Use ample motor power. When running the piece through by hand, use only light, firm pressure.

Tighten vise clamps after every few cuts for a smoother cut when successive slabs are sawed from one piece of rough. To cushion rocks in a vise, use rubber composition such as stair treads, boot soles, etc. If blocks must be used, line with the composition for a snug fit.

~From Breccia 1999, others, via Pineywoods Rooter 2/09, The Roadrunner 3/09

FROM THE ROCKHOUND DICTIONARY:

Findings: Stuff you find.

Faceting: A complex way to ruin a good mineral.

Friend: One who can see the star in your sapphire.

Geode: A poem to G. (often written in hollow verse)

Grinding Wheel: A bearing going out on your old truck.

Fortification: Two twentyfications; a large gulp of good whiskey.

Gentleman: A man who holds the door open for his wife to carry the rocks in.

Diamond: The hardest stone known to man to get back from his old girlfriend.

~From Strata Gem 7-8/05. via Rockhounder 7/07, The Shin-Skinners News 11/07

"One of the chief charms of collecting is its uncertainty; never knowing whether you will come back empty handed or with half a dozen of the most priceless specimens you could wish for." - Gerald Durrell, "The Overloaded Ark"

~From "Good Quotes for Editors" by Diane Dare, via The Shin-Skinners News 6-7/07

Fools Gold

By Fredricksburg Rockhounds member (and AGMS member)
Ed Gage

The story that the old man told,
was filled with hope as he looked for gold.
He'd braved the heat of the desert sun,
and spread his bed when the day was done.
Crawling and climbing he would not stop,
on to the gold fields he'd harvest his crop.
He waded water under the trees,
into rushing currents up to his knees.
When he fell he started to freeze,
into water so cold nearly thirty degrees.
He sprang from the water dripping wet and cold,
forgetting the water and his age of old.
Everything he knew and what he was told,
he knew he'd found the mother lode.
He frigidly sank to scoop up the sand,
knowing he'd soon be a rich man.
The glitter of gold mixed in the sand,
sinfully laid in his desperate hand.
The flakes were gold or so it seemed,
but in the shade it would not gleam.
The old man's curses filled the air,
as he ranted and raved in despair.
It was iron pyrite he'd been told,
he didn't have a bit of gold.

~From Fredericksburg Rockhounds Newsletter 11/07



SCFMS MEMBERS HONORED IN MEMORIAM

AFMS Annual Meeting
Billings, Montana, 29 July 2009

PAUL ABLE
Fredericksburg Rockhounds,
Southwest GMS.

LLOYD MORGAN ADAMS
Rollin' Rock Club.

TOM BANTA
Southwest GMS.

JIM BELCHER
past Wichita Falls club.

ANNE BURLESON
Oak Cliff GMS.

DON BUELL
Austin GMS,
past Highland Lakes GMS,
Williamson Co. GMS.

HARRY W. ELLIOTT, JR.
Central Texas GMS.

PHYLLIS FISSEL
Victoria GMS.

DORIS GILPATRICK
Victoria GMS.

ROY IMMEL
past AFMS President,
past Highland Lakes GMS,
Fredericksburg Rockhounds,
Rollin' Rock Club.

LANCE LATHAM
Fredericksburg Rockhounds.

BILL METCALF
Rollin' Rock Club.

GRADY SHULTS
Arlington GMS.

CAROL SPILLMAN
Southwest GMS.

JOHN F. WOODWARD, JR.
Rollin' Rock Club

FRANCES GRIFFIN
Waco GM Club

Respectfully submitted,
Virginia Adian
Executive Vice-President,
SCFMS

The South Central Federation Show this year will be hosted by the Tri-City Gem and Mineral Society in Temple, Texas from **October 10-11, 2009**. The host hotel is the Quality Inn at 254-770-1100. For more information on this show, you can go the SCFMS website at www.scfms.net.

The annual silent auction will be held during the SCFMS Show and Convention, October 10-11, 2009. Rocks, fossils, minerals, jewelry and hobby related items are among the items needed. Bring or send these items to the show. Proceeds from the silent auction go into the South Central Federation Endowment Fund. Only the interest can be used to help support the activities of the Federation. Donations are greatly welcomed and needed.



AFMS Land Use Policy

1. Adherence to the AFMS Code of Ethics assures compliance with most statutes and regulations governing collecting on public lands and encourages respect for private property rights and the environment. Clubs are urged to read the AFMS Code of Ethics in at least one meeting every year, to publish the Code frequently in the club newsletter, and to compel compliance on club field trips.
 2. Individuals and clubs are urged to write their elected representatives and land use management agency supervisors regarding issues of rule making, legislation and enforcement affecting field collecting of minerals and fossils.
 3. Individuals and clubs are urged to join and support activities of the American Lands Access Association (ALAA), a sister organization with responsibility for advancing the interests of earth science amateurs with legislatures and land use management agencies.
 4. The AFMS will receive a report from ALAA at its annual meeting.
 5. The AFMS endorses the principle of multiple use of public lands as a guarantee of continuing recreational opportunities.
 6. Wilderness and monument designations are inconsistent with the principle of multiple use. In view of the vast amount of public land already designated as wilderness and monuments, future such designations should be minimal, taking into account the increased demand for recreational opportunities, including rockhounding, created by a growing population.
 7. In furtherance of the principle of multiple use, the AFMS believes that laws, regulations and rules established by relevant governmental authorities should be designed to allow freest possible access to all public lands, coupled with minimal restrictions on the recreational collection of minerals, fossils, gem-stone materials and other naturally occurring materials.
 8. A right to collect minerals and fossils on public lands should be protected by statute.
 9. The AFMS urges its members to work with any or all government authorities to achieve a good working relationship in order to improve the "Public Image" of recreational collectors.
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THE STONE CHIPPER

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Address Correction Requested

Austin Gem and Mineral Society

For membership information write: AGMS, 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX 78757

2008 Officers

President: Josie Middleton
First V.P.: Jackie Fisher
Second V.P.: Kathleen Howard
Secretary: Linda Northcote
Treasurer: Pauline Denson

Board of Directors

Ron Carman (1)
Robert Morriss (1)
David Wenger (1)
Tom Bowers (2)
Joyce Hrapsky (2)
Louis Lee (2)



August 2009

Editor Awards

2003-1st AFMS New Editors, 1st SCFMS

2004-4th AFMS

2005-2nd AFMS, 1st SCFMS

2006-6th AFMS, 2nd SCFMS

2007-6th AFMS, 1st SCFMS

2008-4th AFMS, 1st SCFMS

2008 AFMS Editor Hall of Fame

Committee Chairpersons

Annual Show	Brian Wetzig
Building Chair	Bob Greenway
Mineral Display Cases	Betsy Gager
Education/Classes	Joyce Hrapsky
Federation/Conservation	Paul Good
Field Trip Committee	Ron Carman
Field Trip Committee	Chip Burnette
Historian	Ed Gage
Hospitality	Marilyn Bowers
Junior Advisor/Programs	Vacant
Library Co-Chair	Diann Hill
Library Co-Chair	Andrea Miller
Membership	Marilyn Bowers
Newsletter Editors	David & Laura Dow
Program	Kathleen Howard
Scholarship	Jeff "Stretch" Young
School Programs	Wing Evans
Sunshine	Ron Guzman
Workshop	Gef Fisher