

# ROCK-N-ROSE



THE EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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TYLER, TEXAS

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## Upcoming Events

**SEPTEMBER 21**  
**ETGMS ROCK SWAP &**  
**COOKOUT**  
**2015 DEERBROOK**  
**TYLER, TX**

**OCTOBER 5**  
**KEITH'S SALE**  
**9116 US HWY 84 WEST**  
**RUSK, TX**

**OCTOBER, 12-13**  
**TRI-CITY G&MS**  
**MAYBORN CIVIL CENTER**  
**TEMPLE, TX**

**OCTOBER 18-20**  
**AUSTIN G&MS**  
**PALMER EVENT CENTER**  
**AUSTIN, TX**

**NOVEMBER 8-10**  
**HOUSTON G&MS**  
**HUMBLE CIVIC CENTER**  
**HUMBLE, TX**

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## President's Message

Greetings Everyone!

If you missed the monthly club meeting, you missed an exciting meeting. Next time you are at the clubhouse, I hope you notice how much cleaner it is. We had a small but very hardworking group show up for our work day on the 24<sup>th</sup>. We started work on the front office/display room and the cases for displays. Others worked on the chairs; finishing the task of putting the felt on the chair legs. Another group worked on the floors and restrooms. And several even braved the heat outside to work on the landscape. Thank you to everyone who was able to help.

I hope everyone has had a chance to look at our new and improved website. Thank you, Margaret, for all you did to make it awesome. Thanks also to Kinney for helping Margaret. We still have more space at the rock swap so let me or one of the club officers know if you want to reserve a space. We are putting it in the Tyler newspaper the Sunday before in order to invite the public. Last time was a lot of fun. Thank you, Gene Goar, for the awesome presentation on Native American artifacts.

We still need a Field Trip chairperson to organize the field trips. If you would like to be in charge of a field trip to a specific place, that would be awesome. You do not have to be an official chairperson to help facilitate or organize and be the contact person for a field trip. Don't forget to check the calendar for all of the club activities. Lastly, I want to thank everyone who has been working to make the sub groups a success.

Don't forget to submit your articles for the newsletter.

Fred Mahaffey



Gene Goar presented a wonderful program on Indian Artifacts at the August meeting. He also brought plenty of arrowheads and other tools used by Native Americans.

## MEETING MINUTES

The East Texas gem & Mineral Society met for its monthly meeting on September 9<sup>th</sup> due to Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> being Labor Day. Vice-President Terry Roberts called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm. He asked the visitor to introduce himself and mention his interests. He then asked for a motion to approve the minutes as printed in the newsletter. Penny Hawkins made the motion, Cecil Waterhouse seconded, and the motion carried. Treasurer Marcia Graham gave her report. She has already received four checks from dealers for the January show.

### Announcements:

- Tickets are on sale for door prizes, but there is no silent auction item.
- Lapidary sub-group – Terry - The next meeting is Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am at Kinney Polve's workshop outside of Henderson. He will demonstrate broom straw casting with silver. Members may also participate in the casting class. Supplies will be \$5, and the silver will cost \$23/ounce. He will also do bean and salt casting. He will demonstrate growing bismuth crystals. He will send out an e-mail with directions.
- Mineral sub-group – Charles Creekmur - The next meeting is Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. It will be a power-point presentation on the Stevenson-Bennett mine in the Organ Mountains of New Mexico. There are 44 different mineral species found there.
- Fossil sub-group – David Russ - The next meeting is Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> and the discussion will be on trilobites. Some members have been ordering micro-blasters and David hopes that we can set up a lab in the lapidary room. The last field trip was in July to the Austin, Killeen, & Gatesville areas. David searched some road-cuts in the Gatesville area and plans to return on a field trip. He is also planning on the Brazos River at Whiskey Bridge for Eocene collecting.
- Gemology sub-group – Cecil and Lynn Metcalf spoke for Richard Armstrong. The next meeting is Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.
- Field trip update – Terry – The next is scheduled for Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> to Duncanville for septarian nodules and ammonites.
- There will be a Rock Swap and hot dog cook-out on Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. Get with Fred if you want to set up a table inside.
- We believe Keith Harmon will have his Rock Sale on October 5 on his property in Rusk, unless he sells everything before.
- Newsletter – articles, etc. are requested.
- ETGMS will have a booth at the Tyler Rose Festival Arts & Crafts Show October 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> at Bergfeld Park. There always needs to be a minimum of three people present there.
- Julia Toombs asked for biographies for her column.
- Rockhound of the Month for September – David Russ. Send in nominations to Fred.
- August field trip to Magnet Cove, Arkansas – Ed Nolen – Only he and Darby Spears went. Ed used a magnet to drag through the riverbed to collect magnetic material. Darby found pyrite as well.
- The next club meeting will be October 7<sup>th</sup> and we will have our annual live auction. Bring things to sell to others. It's always a lot of fun and is our second largest fund raiser. It is open to the public, so bring a friend.
- There is a basket of eggs that Keith donated that are on sale for \$10 each.

Old business: There was none.

New business: There was none.

With no further business to discuss, Terry asked for a motion to adjourn the business meeting. Kinney made the motion, Jerry Sudderth seconded, and the motion carried. Following the drawing for door prizes and a short period of refreshments, the program was given by Gene Goar on arrowheads.

Submitted by  
Julia Toombs, Secretary



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September 15	16	17 Fossil Group 6:30 pm	18	19 Gemology Group 6:30 pm	20	21 Rock Swap Cook-Out
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Duncanville Field Trip
29	30	1	October 2	3	4	5
6	7 Monthly Meeting 6:45 pm	8  Mineral Group Meeting 6:30	9	10	11	12  Critter Workshop 9:00 am-4:00 pm
13	14	15 Fossil Group 6:30 pm	16	17 Gemology Group 6:30 pm	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Mt. Ida, AR Field Trip

### 2019 Fieldtrip Schedule

September	Rock Swap - Clubhouse	September 21 <sup>st</sup>	Rock Swap, Cook Out
September	Duncanville, Texas	September 28 <sup>th</sup>	Septarian, Fossils
October	Mt. Ida, Arkansas	October 26 <sup>th</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup>	Quartz Crystals
November	TBD		
December	Christmas Party	December 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Party & Gift Exchange

Note: Schedule is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

### Fossil Group Field Trip

By David Russ

Five members of the ETGMS Fossil Group traveled to Central Texas for the weekend of July 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>. Those were, David Russ, Rick Walker, Jerry and Shelly Sudderth and Darby Spears. The group arrived in Austin, Friday morning and immediately began checking area road cuts on the west side of Austin. In spite of the heat, we were able to canvas several locations and collected numerous Cretaceous marine invertebrates. On Saturday, we covered several locations in the vicinity of Lake Travis with not a great deal of success. Our field guide material was somewhat dated and older sites were found to be overgrown and subject to urban sprawl. Shoal Creek did give up some nice oyster shells.

We were in Harker Heights early Sunday and on a good exposure of the Walnut Clay formation. At this location, there was a great variety of invertebrates. We found specimens of regular and irregular echinoids, in particular *Phymosoma Texanum*, several genus of mollusks including some partial *Pinna* clams as well as crustacean burrows. At this point, the group split up with several headed back home.

On a brief excursion to Gatesville, I travelled southeast on FM 107 and found several good road cuts for further searching. A very short survey revealed several genus of mollusks with some partial rudist bivalves.

*Continued on page 5.*



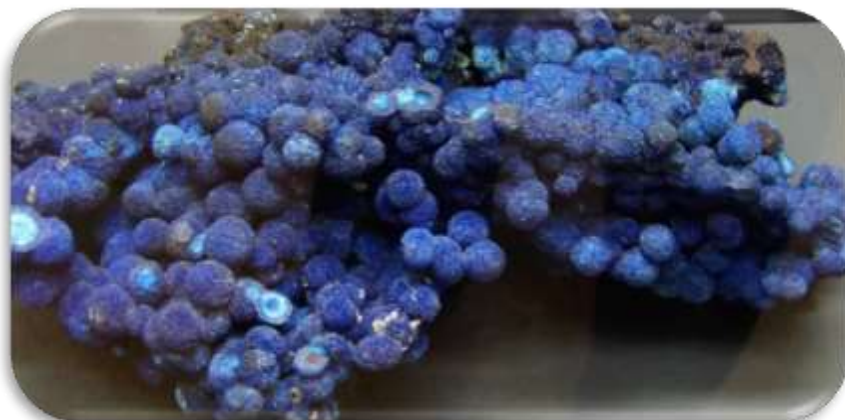
## AZURITE

by Charles Creekmur

Azurite, the hydrated carbonate of copper with the formula  $\text{Cu}_3(\text{CO}_3)_2(\text{OH})_2$ , is commonly found as a velvety crust, prismatic, or tabular azure-blue shiny crystals. It commonly alters to malachite. The southwestern United States has produced many world class specimens that grace museum collections around the world. Of the near 100 forms exhibited by the species, one that is showing up on the collectors' market recently is single or grape-like clusters of rounded balls.

The singles were common in the 1970's for a short time, and when split open displayed druzy crystals lining shrinkage surfaces. The "balls" are actually concretions, and form by the precipitation of the azurite around a nucleus in sedimentary rock or soil. Some beautiful specimens are coming from the Lost Lake Claim, Nacimiento Mine in Cuba, New Mexico, and are a big hit with collectors. They consist of scattered round balls on white sandstone matrix that make attractive specimens. The Lavrion district mine in Attica, Greece have produced some fine examples of the ball structure. The ones currently on the collector market are from La Sal County, Utah, nicknamed "blue berries", range in size from 1/4 inch to over five inches in size.

A 7.9 X 7.9-inch specimen from the Rock Currier Collection, covered in balls up to 2 cm on a limonite matrix from Bisbee, AZ went for \$60,000.00 on Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, at the Heritage Auction in Dallas. A 3.1-inch-tall stalactite of malachite with 6 or 8 rounded balls of 1.5 cm went for \$19,375.00. Having a nice azurite in your collection is better than having a condo in Maui.



*Azurite specimen in the A. E. Seaman Mineral Museum. Photo courtesy of Kinney Polve.*

## Growing Bismuth Crystals

By Kinney Polve

I am always fascinated with the lattice structure and color of bismuth crystals. Bismuth is almost as heavy as lead but not near as toxic. Bismuth is also a very interesting element. You can find out more about bismuth at:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bismuth>. I'm not going to get into all that technical stuff. I'm more interested in the fun aspect of it. Bismuth melts at about 520°F, so it doesn't take any high heat source for this project. Just always remember to keep your mind on safety. Heavy leather welding gloves and safety glasses at the minimum. I'll go through the process, and if you would like to see my video on the process, here's the link: <https://youtu.be/01QLYkL9Vk4>.

You will need several pounds of bismuth to grow crystals of substantial size. I started out with eight pounds of material. You will also want a small stainless-steel pot to melt it in; something you won't be using again for cooking. You will also need a small container to grow your crystals in.



I would recommend stainless-steel or ceramic. The container will be a determining factor on how large of crystals you can grow.

First melt your metal. I use the propane burner for my turkey fryer. At the same time heat the container that you plan to pour it into. Once your bismuth is good and fluid, pour it into the container, being very careful not to splash any on you. This would cause a third-degree burn. Now, allow the metal to cool down slowly. The crystal form as the metal cools, so if the metal cools slower, the crystals will have a longer time to grow. If you plan to incorporate the crystals into jewelry, you will most likely want smaller crystals. For display specimens, you will want the metal to cool down slower, giving the crystals more time to grow. They must have enough room to grow; that's the reason choosing the right container is so important.

While the metal is cooling, watch the top of the metal to see when it starts to harden. You can test this by lightly tapping the side of the container. If ripples go across the surface, it's still too hot. Once you see an area that doesn't ripple when you tap the container, that area is cooling sufficiently to start growing crystals. At this point, it is important to keep that area moveable. The longer it can be moved and kept from attaching to the sides of the container, the better your chance of growing larger specimens.

When you feel that you specimen has grown large enough, you can use needle nose pliers to remove it from the container. I then place them on a silicone baking sheet. The baking sheet will melt at 425°F, but bismuth cools down very quickly and will not melt the silicone. Never pour molten bismuth on silicone. An important thing to note when growing crystals is the crystals grow from every side of the container. Once you remove the specimen from the top of the container, dump the remaining liquid metal back into your melting pot. I give it a good shake to make sure that I get most of the liquid metal out of the container.

A thing to note is colors of the crystals is caused by oxides forming on the surface. This happens when the crystals are exposed to the oxygen in the air. The temperature of the specimen, when it is exposed to the air will, determine the color. The specimen that is removed from the top is usually a darker blue.

The crystals that form on the side of your container can be a little tricky to remove. The video will allow you to see how I accomplished that task. There is probably an exact science to growing better crystals, but where would the fun be in that? If your bismuth crystals don't turn out like you expected, throw them back in the melting pot and try again.

Most importantly, have fun!

### **Fossil Group Field Trip (continued)**

At this time, David Russ, Jerry Sudderth and Rick Walker are acquiring pneumatic air abrasive micro blasters and working on prepping specimens. We have located a source for student lab prep specimens and hope to have something for display very soon.





## Rockhound of the Month

David Russ was awarded Rockhound of the Month for September.



## Shop 'Til Ya Drop...with the Amazon Smile Donation Program

By Lynnette Metcalf G.G., GIA

Being a curious rockhound, always looking for ways to help ETGMS raise money to fund its education, field trips and other events, I made an *astounding* discovery!\* If you use Amazon's Smile program to order your products and services, Amazon Smile will donate 0.5% of ALL eligible purchases you make to the charity of your choice! That's right...a charity as in Non-Profit organization. The East Texas Gem and Mineral Society or ETGMS.ORG...is a 501c3, charitable organization.

There is one very important step members must take to help ETGMS benefit from this extraordinary Amazon program: LOG IN using [Smile.Amazon.com](https://Smile.Amazon.com) (that's <https://Smile.Amazon.com>) using your normal user name and password. There is no special login ID and using the site WILL NOT affect Amazon Prime members' benefits or any other Amazon special programs.

After logging in, Amazon pops a window stating what the program is and how to designate an organization. You must enter East Texas Gem & Mineral Society in the charitable organization site search line.

After entering our full name, *East Texas Gem & Mineral Society*, into the search line and pressing Enter, I was elated to read that Amazon Smile has a record of ETGMS and the club qualifies as a Non-Profit 501c3 organization to receive that 0.5% donation!! *How cool is THAT!*

Once Amazon Smile accepts our club as your choice, the screen shifts and offers you an app for your device's browser so that you'll always have a bookmark/link to the *Smile.Amazon.Com* location. Using that link, you will always login to the charity site and when you purchase a *Smile eligible item* (eligibility will be indicated) ETGMS will receive

## Missouri – Michigan Field Trip

By Kinney Polve

I went on a field trip, and this is the story.  
Headed to Missouri, to the Eminence Quarry.  
They had recently blasted, and my hopes were high,  
That Poker Chip Calcite, would catch my eye.

I climbed to the top, of the rough rock pile.  
I looked all around, for just a little while.  
It didn't take long, before I saw my prey,  
I picked up my tools, and headed that way.

It didn't take long, to fill up the truck.  
I was a little surprised, we had such good luck.  
I had to leave room, with more locations see,  
To collect more specimens, wouldn't you agree?

Now to the Keweenaw Peninsula, a two-day drive,  
So long on the highway, I was glad to arrive.  
I met with some friends, and mapped out the day,  
Learned a little of the history, then got on my way.

Went to old mine locations, saw old machinery too,  
Found out more about copper, before I was through.  
I picked up some specimens, from here and there.  
From every location, there were plenty to spare.

For the last day, Lake Superior was the plan,  
To hunt for agate, on the beach and the sand.  
I have to admit, we had pretty bad luck.  
I was really disappointed, and it really did suck.

If you fancy a journey, it was a nice trip.  
With plenty to collect, but I'll give you a tip.  
Allow plenty of time, there is a lot to see,  
And you'll have a great time, just like me.

Amazon Smile Foundation donation dollars. To be clear, *Amazon Smile does not add .05% to your purchase price*. The donations are funded by the Amazon Smile Foundation which has provided over \$145 million to 501c3 organizations to date.

When a club member purchases an eligible item and has designated ETGMS as the Amazon Smile Foundation charity recipient, Amazon will contact ETGMS to determine how our club is able to receive those donations. It's money in the bank for ETGMS for programs and services.

Remember: it is [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com). Help the East Texas Gem and Mineral Society achieve its goals. It's painless...and you still get the Amazon service you expect. It's a *WIN-WIN!*

\*With thanks to the Austin Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter *The Stone Chipper*, Aug 2019 Ed, and the *Smile.Amazon.Com website*

### Keith's Rock Sale

I want to remind everyone about Keith's Rock Sale that is coming up in October. This will be his final sale, since he will be moving, and won't have any place to store his rocks and equipment. I always say this is one sale you don't want to miss, and the prices should be fantastic. Kinney Polve

#### BACK YARD ROCK AND EQUIPMENT SALE

CONTACT: KEITH HARMON

903-316-2967/ keithharmon19@yahoo.com

WHEN: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2019

START AT 9AM

WHERE: 9116 US Hwy 84 West, Rusk, TX 75785

WHO: KEITH AND TONI HARMON

WHAT: OVER 50 TONS OF ROCK OF VARIOUS TYPES – INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO; agates, jaspers, obsidians, Jade, palm wood, Arizona wood, tumbling rough, large rock, Cutting material.

USED EQUIPMENT: SAWS, GRINDERS, POLISHING UNITS

VIBRATING LAPS, FLAT LAPS, SPHERE MACHINE, TUMBLERS

COST: ROCK: FROM \$0.50 TO \$4.00 PER POUND AVERAGE

EQUIPMENT: INEXPENSIVE FOR WHAT IT IS.

PLEASE - NO EARLY SALES.

THIS IS A MOVING SALE SO ALL PRICES WILL BE REALLY GOOD. WE WOULD LIKE TO SELL IT ALL AND THE PRICE FOR IT WILL GIVE THE BUYER A HUGH POTENTIAL TO MAKE A LOT OF MONEY BY RESELLING IT.



This is just some of what you will find at Keith's Rock & Equipment Sale.

### A Look into the Past

by Julia Toombs

Colleen Hayes said, "I was once asked, 'Do you remember when you first started collecting rocks?'" I vaguely remember picking up my first "cool" rock on a family trip through Colorado. I still have that first rock. Shortly after, I received a rock polisher as a present, and I was hooked for life. There was a rock shop on the east side of Tyler, and our Mom would take us over there to pick out rocks to polish. Those were always fun trips. As the years went by, there were crystal digging and other adventures that I sought out on my own.

"When my boys were young teens, I was trying to find something for us to do together, and after visiting the local snake club and realizing that I would have to keep dead baby mice in my freezer, I opted for the rock club instead. We joined just after the first show (April 1997), and I have been an active member ever since. I've seen the ups and downs of our club. The first meetings that I attended were on the campus of the University of Texas at Tyler. I've held most of the elected positions within the club with treasurer being the most recent.

"Through the years, I had opportunities to travel and collect from all over the United States. I still have several choice spots on my bucket list. I tend to collect minerals and fossils with equal enthusiasm. I've had some *really* great teachers within the club and am grateful for the experiences and expertise.

"I'm looking forward to being able to pursue some of the lapidary arts when we get the clubhouse up and running. Retirement is just around the corner, and I'm excited to have the time to explore all the possibilities."

In a conversation I had with Colleen concerning her bio, she has a nursing degree and is currently working at a local hospital and said retirement is still about a year and a half away. Though she doesn't mention it, she took classes in making stained glass designs and has kept it up for fun for about 15 years. She includes a thin rock slab in many of them.



### Critter Workshop

We will be holding our Annual Critter Workshop on October 12<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 am, at the clubhouse. We will be making rock critters and start getting things ready for the January Show. Lunch will be provided. We normally finish up around 4:00 pm.



## L/J Group Casting Class

I really enjoyed the meeting/class at Kinney's workshop. I was really glad that we could duck into the air-conditioned side of the workshop when we got too hot watching the demonstration outside.

Fourteen members of the Lapidary/Jewelry Group met at Kinney Polve's workshop near Henderson to watch him demonstrate silver/copper casting using broom straw, black beans, and salt as the casting media. Before Kinney began the demonstration, he showed the group examples of what each casting media can produce, and then carefully went over the procedure with particular emphasis on the potential hazards and care that must be used when employing this method. He showed the group how to use an oxygen/acetylene torch to melt the material in a crucible, and then pour the material onto the casting media. Each of the members then had a chance to use silver they brought with them or purchased from Kinney on any of the casting media. Everyone was pleased with the results of their casts and a few expressed an interest in buying the equipment needed to do the work on their own.

Kinney next demonstrated how to grow bismuth crystals by melting bismuth in a metal pan and pouring it into a metal mold (in this case a small metal bowl) heated on an electric plate before pouring the bismuth into the bowl. He allowed the melted bismuth to cool slowly while constantly skimming any cooled material away from the sides of the bowl to the middle. This allowed the bismuth crystals to form simultaneously on the bottom of the bowl and underneath the surface skimmed layer. He stopped the cooling process after about ten minutes by pouring the remaining liquid bismuth back into the pan that he used to melt the material in the beginning. While the remaining mixture in the bowl was cooling, he directed pure oxygen on the cooling crystals to help increase the oxidation of the surface of the crystals. This allowed them to show a deeper purple iridescent sheen.

Everyone left the workshop with an example of silver/copper casting that they made and the knowledge to take up another lapidary/jewelry technique.



## Some People Are Like Potatoes

by Unknown Author

Some people are very bossy and like  
To tell others what to do, but don't  
Want to soil their own hands. They  
Are called "*Dick Tators.*"

Some people never do anything to  
Help, but are gifted at finding fault  
With the way others do their work.  
They are called "*Comment Tators.*"

Some people are always looking to  
Cause problems by asking others to  
Agree with them. It is too hot or too  
Cold, too sour or too sweet. They  
Are called "*Agie Tators.*"

There are those who say they will  
Help, but somehow just never get  
Around to doing the promised  
help. They are called "*Hezzie  
Tators.*"

Some people can put up a front and  
Pretend to be someone they are not.  
They are called "*Ima Tators.*"

Then there are those who love to do  
What they say they will. They are  
Always prepared to stop whatever  
They are doing and lend a helping  
Hand. They bring real sunshine into  
The lives of others. They are called  
"*Sweet Tators.*"

*This is a reprint from the December  
2000 Rock-N-Rose Newsletter.  
Resubmitted by Julia Toombs.  
Which "Tator" are you?*

*Continued on page 10.*

In leu next L/J Group meeting on Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>, we will be holding our Critter Workshop, starting at 9:00 am at the ETGMS clubhouse.



*Above from left to right – Lulu Esparza, Jesus Contrevas, and Amy Long showing off their new castings. Below – Kinney Polve working on Bismuth Crystals. Lynda Staggs showing off her new casting.*



## WEBSITE ABOMINATIONS...SAY, WHAT?

By Lynn Metcalf, GG, GIA; M.A., Marketing

Recently, my spouse and I decided to troll the Internet. Well, not so much troll as visit American Federation of Mineral Societies websites just to see what clubs we can physically visit on our next vacation. We were curious to discover how



to join the clubs and what current membership rates are. We also wanted directions to society meetings to see if they were along our trip route. Search results were...mixed.

At least fifty percent (50%)...Across multiple sites...made how to join their clubs and their dues very difficult to discover. In fact, a number of these websites ask guests to open a PDF or Word file to access this information.

Fully ten percent (10%) of the websites we visited seem to make it clear they want no new members and actively keep their dues a society (state) secret! *Not really*. They just didn't say.

Navigation on a number of sites is like making sausage. You don't want to know how it is done or what's in it, but seems like it will be good when properly cooked (read...'organized').

The meeting location directions for some organizations read like *MAD Magazine's 'Spy vs Spy'* dead drop instructions. But, well...read on.

### FACEBOOK DOES NOT (necessarily) EQUAL WEBSITE

How many times have you asked, 'What's your website's name?' ... Only to be told: 'We are on Facebook.' A major misconception nowadays is that a Facebook presence is basically a 'free website'. Well, sort of. Facebook is a 'social media service' or a 'messaging service'. For those old enough to remember, Facebook is the expanded great, great grandchild of the 'bulletin board'. Sure, a club can put info and photos (but have limited control) on Facebook. It's a super place to put up a club's sub-group activity info since, it acts as a 'semi-blog' point for special interest conversations *between group members*. That means people can log in to a Facebook group and make comments. It usually has an individual who acts as a moderator.

Just be aware that anything put on Facebook or Twitter (or...you name it messaging services) is subject to intense data mining by big data analytics corporations who, on occasion sell (what?...*NO!*) your information to...others. There are many, many people who refuse to join Facebook and other social media services for that very reason. As a result, societies lose thousands (add three zeroes or more to that number) of potential members.

A dedicated website's sole function is to *market the owner's brand*. It's the place where the message (advertising) is always focused outward to the general public and where club members and the general public *cannot post comments*. The site's *webmaster* (in close cooperation with the club's elected Board) is responsible for the website's content and, more importantly the society's *public image*. Most importantly, the webmaster retains complete control over the website. A website is advertising...and *Advertising is one-way communication*.

### NAVIGATION

Although a number of websites do have basic navigable info about their groups, there were a couple that 'overkilled' their site by putting in way too much duplication of effort. These folks in some cases had *three* different (navigation) ways of linking to the same information pages within the website. Except in one case, although the third navigation alternative SAID it would connect to the same place as the other two links, the link actually went into the either...or a blank page, or something totally unrelated to the link (a religious organization in this case).

Lesson learned: Always check and test your link references. Check links on different computers to be absolutely sure they are working. And keep navigation streamlined. One click goes to one page. And linked pages should *always open in a new window!* That way the viewer doesn't have to back out of multiple pages to get back to your home page. Sometimes clicking on a link will take your guest right out of your website. If links are not set to open a new window when clicked, you risk losing your guest—or frustrating members, because they have to re-enter your URL to get back to the society website. Always make navigation easy for members and guests.

### WEBSITE, HUH?

Then there is the website that posts thumbnail photos that cannot be clicked on to enlarge them. It lists the 'benefits of membership' first and offers many 'volunteering opportunities' (not specified), but no dues info. The thought here is: *How much will it cost me to volunteer?* The actual membership and dues info only appear after scrolling to the bottom of the page where the small white print almost fades into the conflicting wallpaper background. Grr...where did I put my magnifiers...

*ALWAYS have membership and dues info upfront and easily readable.* It's your society's primary source of revenue. Using small fonts and hiding the info in strange places seems like your group is apologizing for setting dues to join. If a guest is interested enough to access your site, *they want to know all about it*.

A couple of websites appear to have little concept of member privacy issues.



One site consists of one page, has the name of the society, but offers no information at all EXCEPT the names and phone numbers....of all eight members. Step right up: here's your Robocaller bait!

Even better, another site DID provides really good information (on a downloadable PDF)...about their *members*, including full name, address, telephone number, email address, kids names, birth month and years a member with the group! A hacker's dream come true...no hack required. Let's sell that sucker to the highest bidder ASAP!

Even if a club has a 'Members Only', password sign-in section, it only takes one member to destroy any privacy other members of the group may have. Think about it: even a massive company like NETFLIX© has a major problem with multiple people using the same sign-in to access the company's video programming. Though it is nice to be able to contact another member using such a list, society officers and webmasters should consider the potential liability issues inherent in making such information available via their websites.

### FOR RENT?!

All websites have one thing in common. Remember, they present your group's marketing 'face' to the web. They have to unique ability to connect with anyone online *in the world*, 24-7. This magnificent, superlative technology just waits to be exploited by any entity with a domain name and a provider. It boggles the mind that one society website uses their front page not to provide information about their club, but—to advertise that their club property *is available to RENT for special events!* What? No lapidary equipment to worry about? No liability issues... an empty building?

### LOCATIONS

Most meetings noted in websites appear to take place in locations other than places owned by the club. Particular favorites are churches, event centers, community buildings (senior centers, parks & recreation, etc.) These societies have the lowest membership dues, most likely because presentations and learning opportunities (lapidary, wire wrapping, silversmithing etc.) are very limited.

Where the society has its own clubhouse, the membership rates are uniformly (when dues info could be found) higher. No doubt because of clubhouse overhead costs (mortgage, insurance, utilities, and maintenance of equipment and the building itself.)

When society meeting locations are noted, directions to these meetings sometimes verge on the arcane. One meeting location is on a major university campus actually in the Earth Sciences Department building (*how cool is that!*), BUT-- parking near the building is prohibited and is in fact two blocks away!

Another group's meetings are held at a local state park's lovely community building...in the evening-- after the park is *closed* for the day—but, the park staff will leave the gate open.... Oh, and they'll leave the lights on for the group once a month for the group's meeting.

Then there's the society who doesn't provide any info at all about joining the group, its rates, or meeting address, but does provide a long list of 'directions' and...well, go left here, travel 'til you see the bank, turn right, drive to the end of the street and follow the curve and...huh?' Left, right, left, hard body shot, followed by uppercut to the jaw and...pull in *here!*

### UPSHOT...TO THE POINT...THE FACTS

- If your society doesn't have one, buy a domain name and get a basic website provider. Do your research! Some are better than others. Some even help you build your first site.
- *Know what you want your society to say upfront.* Map your page navigation out on a piece of paper. One click, one page. Identify each page on your navigation map and write-up and prep each page for your site. 'On the fly' and 'wing & prayer' *site construction* will confuse and frustrate you (and follow-on webmasters) as the site's pages multiply, new photos arrive and updates are required.  
*AT A MINIMUM, be sure to include on your society's website:*
- Your purpose (Charter, Bylaws), Society status...501(C)3.
- Membership info, Annual Dues, Location (clear directions and a physical address). Benefits of membership with your society. *Show this info Front and Center...easily findable!*
- Contact Info (phone numbers, mailing address)
- Calendar of Events...making sure to keep the calendar up to date.
- Then you can add pages with photos, activities of *sub-groups* (e.g., Field Trips, Lapidary, Mineralogy, Gemology, Fossil...are examples)

- Check all your links...and recheck them monthly. Use different computers to be sure they work, are 'live' and connect where you want them. Include the society 'up chain'... AFMS and your regional society. Make their logos clickable links.

#### FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH...

Okay, it's a bit off the subject, but... a society newsletter (noted on their website) is called the... *Rocklicker*...? Whaa-ha!

## East Texas Gem & Mineral Society

### ROCK SWAP

Saturday September 21, 2019

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

ETGMS Clubhouse

2015 Deerbrook Drive

Tyler, Texas

ETGMS will be hosting a rock swap.

Other rock clubs are encouraged to join us, and the public is welcome. You can set up your table inside the clubhouse or just tailgate on the back lot.

We are limiting indoor space to one 6 or 8-foot table.

Come and buy, sell, or swap.

There should be a good selection of club-related items.

Bring your minerals, fossils, rough material, slabs, handmade items, equipment, etc.

It should be a great day for camaraderie.

And if that isn't enough, we will be cooking up some hot dogs for lunch. See you there.

## Shop Time

I've been working on some cabs recently and thought others would enjoy seeing them. The picture to the right shows what I believe to be Laguna Lace agate that I came across not long ago when sorting through some slabs that I had squirreled away. I had a fourth Laguna Lace cab but accidentally dropped it when I removed it from the dop stick. Of course, it broke off one corner. The next picture shows two cabs from a piece of Tiger Iron that I bought a few years ago. It differs from the Tiger Iron that I've seen before in that the black iron hematite has two different shades of black in it that also vary in hardness. Therefore, one of them tends to undercut and does not polish as well as the other mineral. Also, the red jasper is almost nonexistent in the cabs. The third picture shows a larger cab of what we call "Peanut Agate" from the Walker Ranch south of Alpine. The name is derived from the resemblance to chunky peanut butter since it has small, rough jasper nodules inside the chalcedony matrix, as well as some form of banded agate in it. The other cab is a nice chalcedony matrix with some green inclusions in it. This cab came from a nodule that I collected at the Singleton Ranch south of Marfa many years ago.

The fourth picture shows one cab on the left and one polished thin flat slab of Wendover Plume on the right that I collected from the Silver Island Mountains about one mile west of the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah. I prefer to call these flame agates rather than plume agates due to their resemblance to flames. The last two pictures are an unknown agate that I need to do some more work on to get rid of some small scratches that I didn't see until I enlarged the photo. It is such a dark agate that you cannot see the internal details until you hold it up to the light. The picture shows what it looks like with transmitted light. It really comes to life that way.

Terry Roberts





**Lapidary/Jewelry Group** – Meets on the second Saturday of each month, except December and January. The meeting time is 2:00 pm. This group's meeting is all about lapidary (anything to do with cutting and polishing rocks) and jewelry making. Terry Roberts leads this group. To have your name added to the email list contact Terry Roberts - [terry.roberts45@yahoo.com](mailto:terry.roberts45@yahoo.com)

**Mineral Group** – Meets every second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm. This group is all about minerals, how to identify them, geology and the locations they can be found. Topics are decided on by the group leader and the members. Charles Creekmur heads up the group. If you are interested in learning more about minerals, get your name on the email list for this group by contacting Charles Creekmur - [calcite65@gmail.com](mailto:calcite65@gmail.com)

**Fossil Group** – Meets every third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. If fossils are your thing, or you just want to learn a little more about fossils, this would be the group for you. Topics about fossils, locations where they can be found, and geological time periods are all discussed in this group. David Russ heads up the group, and if you would like to have your name added to the email list, contact David Russ - [dbruss50@gmail.com](mailto:dbruss50@gmail.com)

**Gemology Group** Meets every third Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm. This group is all about gemstone and the identification of gemstones. Topics are decided on by the group leaders and members. The group is led by Richard Armstrong. If you are interested in gemstones, identification, where their found, or any other related topic, this is the group for you. To have your name added to the email list, contact Richard Armstrong - [keltfire@msn.com](mailto:keltfire@msn.com)

**NEWSLETTER CONTENT:** Please send any original info or articles to be included in the newsletter to the Editor at the address or email listed below by the 10th of the month. If you need an issue dealt with quickly, don't hesitate to call. **AFMS & SCFMS Newsletters will be emailed to members, as to not duplicate that information here, unless it needs to be repeated.** Board meeting minutes are not published in the newsletter. If you would like to see a copy, contact an officer on the Board. The information in this newsletter may be reproduced for nonprofit use, as long as credit is given to the source.

Check us out on the web: [www.etgms.org](http://www.etgms.org)

### THE EAST TEXAS GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY

**Purpose of the East Texas Gem & Mineral Society: Is to promote; the study of Geology, fossils and the Lapidary Arts. The public is always invited to attend regular monthly club meetings.**

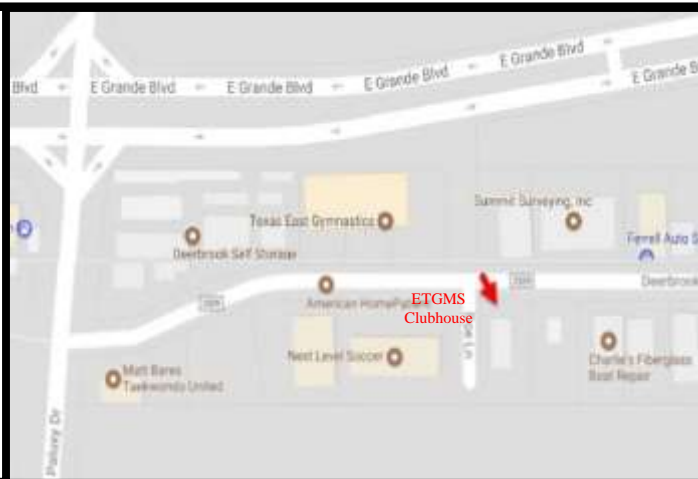
#### ANNUAL DUES:

Single: \$10.00 - Family: \$20.00

#### MONTHLY MEETING:

**WHEN:** First Monday of the month unless it's a holiday, then the second Monday, at 6:45 p.m.

**WHERE:** ETGMS Clubhouse, 2015 Deerbrook Drive, Tyler, Texas



PRESIDENT: Fred Mahaffey  
903-978-0268 [frederickmahaffey@gmail.com](mailto:frederickmahaffey@gmail.com)

WEBMASTER: Margaret Kilanski  
971-219-3362 [mlkilanski@yahoo.com](mailto:mlkilanski@yahoo.com)

VICE PRESIDENT: Terry Roberts  
903-881-5108 [terry.roberts45@yahoo.com](mailto:terry.roberts45@yahoo.com)

EDITOR: Kinney Polve  
903-646-3189 [rockrosenewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:rockrosenewsletter@gmail.com)

TREASURER: Marcia Graham  
903-312-4800 [quilteddy@gmail.com](mailto:quilteddy@gmail.com)

SHOW SCHOOL DAY  
CHAIRPERSON: **NEEDED**

SECRETARY: Julia Toombs  
903-882-5809 [jltoombs@suddenlink.net](mailto:jltoombs@suddenlink.net)

FIELD TRIP  
CHAIRMAN: **NEEDED**

CHAIRMAN SHOW: Keith Harmon  
903-795-3860 [keithharmon19@yahoo.com](mailto:keithharmon19@yahoo.com)

### CLUB ADDRESS AND TO SEND DUES

East Texas Gem & Mineral Society  
P. O. BOX 132532  
Tyler, TX 75713-2532



EDITOR: Kinney Polve  
8665 County Road 373D  
Henderson, Texas 75654  
Phone: 903-646-3189

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