



# ROCK-N-ROSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

PAGE 1

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TYLER, TEXAS

ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2010

## Coming Shows, 2010

SEPTEMBER 28-OCTOBER 3  
IDABEL, OK  
McCurtain G&M Club  
Museum of the Red River

OCTOBER 2-3  
JACKSONVILLE, AR  
Central Arkansas Gem Mineral &  
Geology Society  
Jacksonville Community Center

OCTOBER 22-24  
AUSTIN, TX  
Gem Capers 2010  
Austin G&MS  
Palmer Events Center

NOVEMBER 12-14  
HUMBLE, TX  
Houston G&MS  
Humble Civic Center

DECEMBER 11-12  
DERIDDER, LA  
Deridder G&MS  
SCFMS Convention  
Exhibit Hall Beauregard Parish  
Fair Grounds

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Had a good program on glaciers and got to show off some of our finds from the field trip to Oklahoma last weekend. Only saw one rattlesnake and it was headed away from us as fast as it could go. No scorpions, no ticks, but several lizards with delusions of grandeur. Found several trilobites, lots of "trilobutts" and an assortment of horn corals, sponges, brachiopods and crinoids. All around good experience. Stopped by the Amish Auction and some goat ranches on the way back. If you get the opportunity to go on a field trip to Black Cat Mountain in the future, I would definitely recommend it. Bob was a great host and gave us a tour of his workshop, demonstrated his collecting technique and showed us a project he is cleaning. Really appreciate Don Campbell setting this all up. Please try to get to the meeting in October because we have two important items to take care of. The first is the election of officers for the next year. This is your opportunity to help determine the course of the society. Please e-mail me at [pawpawrip@yahoo.com](mailto:pawpawrip@yahoo.com) with your nominations (after you discuss it with your nominee). Secondly, it's time for the auction. Good opportunity to get some nice items at a reasonable price and help out the society too. So, bring something to be auctioned and bring money to buy items with (checks are acceptable). See you all at the meeting ! Until then good luck collecting and stay safe.

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### OCTOBER MEETING PROGRAM

The October 4th club meeting program will be our annual club auction. All members are asked to donate and bring to the meeting rocks, minerals, fossil specimens, jewelry, hobby related books, tools, and equipment to auction. Also please bring plenty of money for bidding on the donated items. This is an important fund raiser for our club each year.



### SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

The East Texas Gem and Mineral Society monthly meeting was called to order by President Rip Criss at 7:10 p.m., September 13, 2010 at the Discovery Science Place in Tyler, TX with 17 members and 2 visitors present.

Motion to accept minutes of the August 2010 meeting as published in the Rock –N-Rose newsletter was made, seconded and motion carried.

Jerri Kitchens, club treasurer, gave the monthly financial report. There was no old or unfinished business brought before the members.

Don Campbell reminded members that the October meeting will be the annual club auction of items donated to the club and the proceeds will be used for club activities. Don also led a discussion about the club field trip Sept. 11 to Black Cat Mountain in Oklahoma in search of fossils. He said that 9 members went and that 4 of them were new to the club. Jeri and Rip recounted adventures on the trip which also included a trip to Bob Carroll's Rock shop.

Keith Harmon had called Don and asked that an announcement be made that he and Charlotte will be having another yard sale, of rocks, in October. Date of the sale will be announced at the October club meeting.

Don introduced Michael Shanklin with the Discovery Science Place who wished to express their thanks for the club's participation in learning activities and partnership in museum programs for children.

New business included the announcement that it is time for dues to be paid to the South Central Federation, based on membership and submitted by treasurer Jeri. Motion was made to pay the dues, seconded and carried. It is also time for club dues to be paid by members, remaining at \$10 per year for individual and \$20 for a family. The silent auction item of the evening was a large specimen of native copper.

Door prizes were awarded, followed by a short break for refreshments. Visitors Cindy Hayward and her son Bryan had brought a box of rocks and members crowded around to examine the contents.

The program for the evening was video #22 "Ice Sculpts the Final Scene" in the series by Dr. John Renton describing how glaciers shaped the world as we know it.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

*Respectfully Submitted:*

Penny Hawkins, Club Secretary



## Jet

by Mary Sue Bucher

In the year 1861, Prince Albert, husband to Her Royal Majesty Queen Victoria of England, died of typhoid fever. For the remainder of her life, which numbered forty years, she remained in mourning and dressed only in black. Back then, mourning attire included beads fashioned from jet – a strange but beautiful gemstone which is a form of Lignite coal. Jet is a fossil mineraloid, sometimes called Black Amber, Agstein, Scorpion Stone, and Witch's Amber. Most jet originated in the Jurassic period, approximately 182 million years ago from the remains of Araucaria conifer trees whose living relatives we call Monkey Puzzle trees. It's lightweight, has a distinctive "coal" smell to it, is

known to be flammable, and like amber, it takes on a static charge when rubbed. It is soft, with a Mohs hardness of 2-4 and is known to polish to a luster resembling black velvet.

Victorian mourning jewelry has a distinct "look" to it; the beads are, of course, black and are usually faceted. Long ropes of these faceted jet beads were common, and they remained popular well into the 1920s when they were adopted by young "Flappers" to wear with their short, straight dresses. After jet beads became popular, there were, of course, imitators such as Ebonite, also called Vulcanite (hardened rubber). Unlike jet, Vulcanite was molded rather than cut and if heated, smelled like rubber instead of coal. It also bleached out with age to an olive-brown color.

"French Jet, Paris Jet, or Faux Jet," is glass, and is the most common imitator of jet; it's easy to distinguish from real jet as it's heavy and has a cold feel to it. Bakelite is a type of vintage plastic that was sometimes tinted black to resemble jet. Bakelite, in its own right, has become valuable. About ten years ago, a friend asked me to pick up a Bakelite bracelet for her at an antique show. Turns out most of the good ones that I saw were being offered for around five hundred dollars and needless to say, she didn't get her bracelet. Jet has been imitated by Bog Oak, a type of black wood found in Irish peat bogs, and jewelry makers have also used Cannel Coal, Shale, Horn, and a few things that aren't around anymore. Then, of course, there's onyx, or black chalcedony, obsidian, schorl, (a type of tourmaline), coral, and any stone that's been dyed or enhanced with dye. Naturally, Queen Victoria could afford the real thing, and the only jewelry that was allowed at court during the mourning period was real jet - preferably, mined from Whitby England, a town on the Yorkshire coast that was and still is known to have the finest jet in the world. Interestingly enough, Whitby is also a source of Ammonite fossils. An old legend tells of St. Hilda of Whitby who hundreds of years ago was credited with turning a plague of snakes into stone. They do some beautiful jet carvings in Whitby and that's not all they've carved. As proof of St. Hilda's miracle, local artisans would carve snake's heads on the ammonite fossils and sell them as a cottage industry. The coat of arms of Whitby is adorned with three of these "Snake Stones."

from SFGMS Mineralog, 8/10 via Gem Cutter News 9/10; via Stoney Statements 09/10

## Lapidary Corner

### HINT & TIPS FROM ALL OVER

All reprinted in May, 2010 Carny Hound via 11/62 Carny Hound; via Australian Lapidary Magazine via Stoney Statements 09/10

*Editors Note:* I thought this was an interesting collection of hints that are almost 50 years old. I've added notes to a few updating the info.

**Floor Sanding Paper:** Floor sanding paper will give amazing results in removing saw marks from slabs or specimens. Even if the sandpaper has been used it will still do a good job.

*Editor's note:* This was actually the basis for one of the best dry lap polishers I've seen, Rockhounder's Paradise. It used an 18 inch steel disk with a floor sanding disk glued on with white glue that only cost a few dollars at rental stores last I knew. As the disk wore down, it did the polishing step too and produced a dead flat surface with a mirror finish. The polisher is no longer available new and tends to be expensive used, since it is an excellent polisher. It should be possible to make a home version. The hard part would be in making the counter-rotating chambers the stones sit in.

**Rock Bags:** To make a good rock bag, take a pair of old jeans. Cut off one of the legs (about 24" is a good length) and sew one end closed. Of course, you can cut off more or less, depending on how much you think you can carry. Put in a draw string.

**Cutting the Last Slab:** To cut that last slab from your favorite piece, use waterglass. Apply a thin coating to a board small enough to fit your vise. Then put the rock on the board, moving it around until it has a firm seating. Let dry for at least 24 hours. To remove the piece remaining on the board, soak in hot water until it slips off.

*Editor's Note:* Waterglass used to be available at pretty much any drug store. Not so anymore. In fact, I haven't seen a source in quite a few years. It was used to fill cracks in stones more than about any other lapidary purpose. Current replacements would be Opticon for filling cracks and regular white glue to glue the slab to a block of wood that can go in the vise on your saw. As with waterglass, just soak the block of wood for a few days after cutting to soften the glue and remove the slab. Another option is a special rock grabber vise. These have the advantage of being much quicker than glue but are frequently hard to get softer materials to lock in without chipping out the edge. They come in multiple sizes.

**Capping Stones:** When capping stones, set them in a shallow dish of salt while the cement is drying. Salt packs better than sand and is easier to wash off.



# Sapphire

By John Zentz for Star-O-Lite

*A maiden born when autumn leaves  
Are rustling in September's breeze,  
A sapphire on her brow should  
bind; To bring her joy and peace of mind.. [Author unknown]*

The traditional birthstones for September are sapphire and peridot. The modern birthstone is sapphire. Last month's article was dedicated to peridot so I will touch mainly on sapphire this month. Much has already appeared in this series about sapphires. In April we had a short article on sapphires in general, and in July we had a longer article on rubies, which are beautiful red sapphires. Rather than cover the same ground again, I will try to concentrate on some of the more unusual types of sapphires.

Most people are aware of the star phenomenon that sometimes occurs in sapphires. This unusual condition, called asterism, can occur in most sapphire colors. However, blue, red (star rubies) or black star sapphires are the most common. Sapphire asterism most often occurs in black sapphires, and in only about 3% of the blue crystals mined.

The star actually becomes visible when needles of rutile called silk 'contaminate' the sapphire and the crystal is cut in a high dome cabochon. The base of the cabochon must also be cut perpendicular to the caxis of the corundum crystal as shown in the diagram.

As we know, a ruby has basically the same composition as other sapphires but has a distinguishing name because of its color. I only recently learned that ruby is not alone in this distinction. Rare pink-orange corundum with low to medium saturation has the name padparadscha which means *lotus blossom* in Singhalese, one of the official languages of Sri Lanka. This beautiful stone is found in Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Africa. An untreated natural padparadscha may sell for as much as \$5,000 per carat, if you can find one. Much more common are pink or orange sapphires treated to look like padparadschas.

Another rare variety of sapphire is known as color change sapphire. Some are blue outdoors and purple under incandescent light. Some are pink in sunlight and greenish under fluorescent light. Tanzania is the main source of these interesting stones. While these rare varieties are very expensive, even more expensive are the finest blue sapphires. Some of these large sapphires have never been auctioned but one 22.66 carat blue Kashmir sapphire was sold in 2007 at auction for \$3,064,000, or \$135,216 per carat. Another 62.02 carat blue sapphire was sold in 2001 for \$3,031,000.

Perhaps the most expensive of all sapphires, the Black Star of Queensland has an interesting history. In 1938 a young Australian boy found a black crystal at his father's claim which he immediately took home to his father. His father studied the stone and was not impressed, so the family used the stone as a doorstop for the next 10 years or so. By then the boy's father realized sapphires could be black and decided to test the stone which weighed 1,156 carats. The stone was sold, cut into a star sapphire, and changed hands several times. In 2002 it sold for an undisclosed amount, but the estimated value was \$100 million dollars. While sapphires come in many colors, most people desire the rich blues from Ceylon. Perhaps this has something to do with the old belief that the firmament was a large blue sapphire in which the earth was embedded. What better stone could have been chosen to symbolize our universe and our beautiful blue earth, and what better stone to grace September's child?



Pictures courtesy of the Internet



## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND PEBBLE PUPS

### Future Rockhounds of America Badge Program

Sponsored by AFMS, this is free to clubs affiliated with our 7 regional federations. Kids can earn 15 badges (Rocks & Minerals, Earth Resources, Fossils, Lapidary Arts, Collecting, Showmanship, Communication, Field Trips, Leadership, Earth Processes, Earth in Space, Gold Panning, Gemstone Lore, Stone Age Tools, Rocking on the Computer). Kids earning 6 badges receive a "Rockhound" badge as a mark of accomplishment and their names get posted to an "Honor Roll" on the AFMS web site. The manual, with 85 activities, may be accessed at [www.amfed.org/fra/fra\\_badge.htm](http://www.amfed.org/fra/fra_badge.htm). For more info, contact: **Jim Brace-Thompson, AFMS Jr. Program Chair, 7319 Eisenhower St, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 659-3577, [jbraceth@roadrunner.com](mailto:jbraceth@roadrunner.com)**.

### Diamond Dan Publications

Darryl Powell is creator of Diamond Dan Publications and author of fun, educational materials for young mineralogists, from coloring and activity books to "Earth Digger Clubs" activities and patches, mineral note cards and place mats, and more. Go to [www.diamonddanpublications.net](http://www.diamonddanpublications.net). Diamond Dan also publishes "Mini Miner Monthly," the only periodical about minerals written for young collectors. It brings kids articles about minerals and mineral collecting, with crossword puzzles, word searches, cut-and-fold crystal models, and coloring pages. For more info, contact: **Darryl Powell, Diamond Dan Publications, P.O. Box 143, Manchester, NY 14504, (585) 288-4936, [diamonddan@rochester.rr.com](mailto:diamonddan@rochester.rr.com)**.

### Regional Federation Resources

The Eastern Federation publishes *Working With Young People*, by Mabel Kingdon Gross, a guide to starting youth programs and activity tips. For pricing and to get a copy, contact: **Suzie Milligan, EFMLS Supplies Chair, 931 Carmichael Rd, Owego, NY 13827, [smilligan@stny.rr.com](mailto:smilligan@stny.rr.com)**.

In the 1970's, the Midwest Federation published *MWF Basic Guide for Junior Activities*. Michele Yamanaka has updated this manual. To check on pricing, contact: **Dennis Westman, MWF Supplies, 15547 Bluebird Street NW, Andover, MN 55304, (763) 413-8767**.

In the California Federation, June Harris (Santa Clara Valley Gem & Mineral Society) has assembled resources to create educational stations at their club show. Stations are tied to Girl and Boy Scout badges and to California earth science teaching standards. 2,000 children pass through those stations during a single show! June has assembled a CD clubs can get at the cost of a CD and postage. To check availability, contact: **June Harris, 107 Dell Way, Scotts Valley, CA 95066, [junconeyharris@yahoo.com](mailto:junconeyharris@yahoo.com)**. June requests clubs ordering the CD make a \$25.00 donation to the CFMS Endowment Fund.

### Mineral Information Institute (Mii)

Mii is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating youth about the science of natural resources and their importance in everyday life. They develop hands-on educational materials in earth science subjects at all grade levels. You can download teaching packets for free (see, for instance, all the minerals that make a light bulb), as well as posters, kits, and more. Much of it is free; some (such as a gold panning kit) are available at minimal cost. Check their web site, [www.mii.org](http://www.mii.org), or contact: **Mineral Information Institute, 8307 Shaffer Pkwy, Littleton, CO 80127, (303) 277-9190, [mii@mii.org](mailto:mii@mii.org)**.

### Mineral of the Month Club

Richard and Cheryl Sittinger started this club to offer choice minerals at low prices. Kids can build a collection in a fun way that gives them something to look forward to each month; or you can do this as a club project to build a reference collection for all the kids to enjoy. Along with each mineral comes a write-up and club newsletter. Each new member receives a free copy of a mineral guidebook. Three levels of membership are available, the difference being price and size of specimens. Pricing starts at \$88.00 for a 1-year Silver Membership (half- to 2-inch, study-size minerals), or a Trial Membership is \$48.00 for 6 months, and specimens may be returned for refunds. For further information, go to [www.mineralofthemonthclub.org](http://www.mineralofthemonthclub.org).



Continued from page 6.

### ROCK & GEM KIDS

*Rock & Gem* magazine features a 2-page “Rock & Gem Kids” spread. Each month it highlights a selected mineral along with other occasional features, including articles on state rocks, famous people in mineral collecting, activities, and a quiz open to kids 17 and younger for neat prizes. Articles are written by Jim Brace-Thompson of the AFMS Jr. Programs and Darryl Powell of Diamond Dan Publications. Subscriptions start at \$27.95 for one year. Write or call: **Miller Magazines, Inc., 290 Maple Ct, Suite 232, Ventura, CA 93003-3517, (805) 644-3824, [www.rockngem.com](http://www.rockngem.com).**

### U.S. Geological Survey

The USGS web site is a wonderful, if somewhat overwhelming, treasure trove of teaching resources that may be freely downloaded and used for educational purposes. So take advantage of your tax dollars! They also have a page directing you to 200 other web sites on all things geological (gemstones, fossils, thunder eggs, minerals, meteorites, earthquakes, state rocks, et cetera). To start, go to <http://education.usgs.gov>. Via Stone Chipper 09/10



## Lockheed Martin Recreation Association Annual Rockfest in Fort Worth

October 9th & 10th, 2010 10AM TO 5PM both days

It's time again for our LMRA Annual Rockfest (Rock, Flint, Gem, Mineral, and Jewelry Sale). This sale is being held in conjunction with the LMRA annual Model Railroader's Show and Pottery in the Park show & sale which attracts thousands of visitors.

We invite you to join us on the scenic banks of the Trinity River for this event.

We are located at 3400 Bryant Irvin Road, Fort Worth, TX 76109

The park is open to visitors 10am – 5pm both days. Attendance is FREE!

Rocks, gems, fossils, mineral specimens Rough material, cabochons, spheres, more

Hand knapped flint art pieces Beads and beading supplies — Metal detectors and treasure hunting supplies — Gold prospecting equipment & information — Turned wood bowls and art — Pottery - Functional & Sculptural Art — Stained Glass, Fused Glass Jewelry — Metal Sculptures & Jewelry

For further information or to join us as a vendor please contact:

[steve.l.shearin@lmco.com](mailto:steve.l.shearin@lmco.com)

Via Stone Chipper 09/10

**CLUB OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT:** Robert (Rip) Criss 903-922-2856  
P.O. Box 340  
Oakwood, TX 75855

**VICE PRESIDENT** Becky Whisenant 903-795-3652  
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Rusk, Texas 75785

**TREASURER:** Jeri Kitchens 903-245-8822  
2533 Chelsea Dr.  
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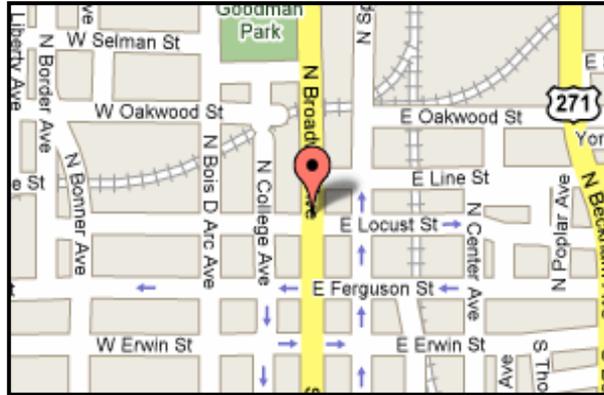
**SECRETARY:** Penny Hawkins 903-586-4463  
134 CR 3151  
Jacksonville, Texas 75766

**MEETING PROGRAM CHAIRMAN:** Don Campbell 903-566-6061  
3319 Omega Dr.  
Tyler, TX, 75701

**FIELD TRIP CHAIRMAN:** Your name could be HERE!!!  
Volunteer Today!

**SHOW CHAIRMAN:** Keith Harmon 903-581-4068  
8316 Oxford St.  
Tyler, TX 75703

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



**THE EAST TEXAS GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY MEETS ON THE FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH, UNLESS THAT DAY IS A HOLIDAY, THEN THE MEETING IS MOVED TO THE SECOND MONDAY. WE MEET AT THE DISCOVERY SCIENCE PLACE, 308 NORTH BROADWAY, JUST NORTH OF DOWNTOWN TYLER, TEXAS. MEETINGS BEGIN AT 6:45 P.M.**

**NOTE TO EDITORS**

Feel free to use contents and graphics for non-profit newsletters. Give credit when and where due.

**Purpose of the East Texas Gem & Mineral Society**

Is to promote the study of geology, mineralogy, fossils and the lapidary arts. The public is always invited to attend all club meetings.

Annual dues are \$10.00 for adults and \$2.50 for juniors.

Please send any info or articles to be included in the newsletter to the Editor by the 15th of the month. Please keep your address, phone and email information up-to-date, so that we can get the newsletter to you in a timely manner. Out-of-date information costs the club time and money in returned newsletters.

Thank you... SB



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