



# ROCK -N- ROSE



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AUGUST 2007

## Coming Shows, 2007

### SEPTEMBER 01-02

Arlington, TX  
Arlington Gem & Mineral Club  
Combined SCFMS & AGMC  
Show. <http://tses.org>

### SEPTEMBER 21-23

Houston, TX  
Houston Gem & Min. Soc.  
Humble Civic Center  
8233 Will Clayton Pkwy

### SEPTEMBER 29-30

Denison, TX  
Texoma Rockhounds  
Denison Senior Center  
531 W. Chestnut

### OCTOBER 13-14

Temple, TX  
Tri-city Gem & Min. Soc.

## FIELD TRIP INFO

### September 14-16

Field trip to Oklahoma, more details on page 3.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

If you missed our very last meeting at the UT Tyler Library, you missed a great presentation by Keith on the minerals of the Bible. Researchers have shown that the names we use to identify minerals today were quite different in Biblical times. Keith has a chart showing the different names used in the past if you are interested.

Remember, August was the last month that we meet in the UT Tyler Library! Our new meeting location will be the Discovery Science Place located at 308 N. Broadway in Tyler. We will meet at the regular time, 6:45 PM. For September, we'll meet on the 10<sup>th</sup> since the 3<sup>rd</sup> is a holiday. Susan has a nice map elsewhere in the newsletter showing how to find the new place.

Our new location has much more room and ample parking. No more fighting for a parking spot! Please join us at our new location and learn more about how we plan to work with Discovery Science Place to educate children about our hobby.

The October meeting is one of my favorite meetings since that is the month we hold our annual Club auction. I wanted to get everyone thinking about the auction and make it a big success this year. If you are unfamiliar with this event, here is how it works. Members donate rocks, minerals, fossils, books, jewelry, gems, anything related to our hobby, to be auctioned off during the meeting. Each goodie goes to the highest bidder with the proceeds going into the Club account. You do not need to donate to attend or bid, but we always appreciate the generosity of our members for this fun event.

Finally, on behalf of our Club, I want to thank Don Campbell for agreeing to represent us at the SCFMS Annual Meeting held in Arlington, Texas on September 1<sup>st</sup>. This is where all the clubs in the South Central Federation get together to discuss business and make plans for the coming year. It seems we are always thanking Don for something. His efforts and endless support are appreciated. I guess that is why he is the Rockhound of the Year. Thanks Don.

See you at the next meeting, September 10<sup>th</sup>, at Discovery Science Place.

Jon Laverty



## August Meeting Minutes

The August meeting of the East Texas Gem and Mineral Society meeting was called to order by Club President Jon Laverty at 6:51 p.m. Monday, August 6, 2007 in room 422 of the UT-Tyler Library. In opening the meeting, Jon noted that this will be the last meeting at this location. The September meeting will be at The Discovery Science Place, 308 N. Broadway Avenue in Tyler. Guests John and Liz Tullis, Greg and Lance Sturlock and Becky McMichael were recognized. Greg is the budding rock hound and brought his father, Lance, along.

A motion to accept the minutes of the July 9, 2007 meeting as published in the Rock-N-Rose Newsletter was made by Sylvia Rainer and seconded by Pete Keiser. Gene Goar voiced a question about a proposed field trip written about in the minutes but was told that the field trips would be discussed during the meeting.

Club Treasurer, Colleen Hayes, gave a report on funds on deposit.

Proposed and planned field trips were outlined by Marilyn Austin, Field Trip Chairman. The trip to Jasper, TX to look for petrified wood has been set for Oct. 6; meet at Stump's Café in Jasper at 9:00. Pete said Jasper is about 2 ½ - 3 hour drive from Tyler. There will be maps at the September meeting for those wishing to go and Bob Jamison has agreed to lead the trip as Marilyn will be unable to go. Gene gave an overview of the proposed trip to OK to look for barite roses, Sept 14, 15 and 16. Don Campbell said he would like to lead a geology field trip on the way, especially through the Arbuckle Mountains. The trip will be designed to accommodate members who can only attend one day, 2 days or all three days of the planned trip. Gene and Don said that there will be packets of information at the September meeting on this trip also. It was mentioned that reservations might be advisable since the weekend of the trip will coincide with an OU football game in Norman. Gene had lists of motels in the area for those expressing interest in making the trip.

There was no old business except that Pete asked to make known that an article in the Rock-N-Rose about Becky Whisenant's home fire was attributed to him but the author was in fact Penny Hawkins; Pete said he was not involved nor did he act as the "Good Samaritan".

Gene referred to the July meeting program when he told of many ancient names for "sulfur" and that all of them roughly translate to mean, "rock that burns".

A highlight of the meeting was the news that someone is about to turn a half-century old and a cake was brought in, complete with "50" in candles. Members had a good time applauding Don and the chocolate cake was quickly devoured during the break.

Jon reminded club members of the silent auction items: a large quartz crystal and an amethyst with "silver" whale. Door prizes were awarded to those who had bought tickets and had lucky numbers drawn from "the hat".

Keith Harmon presented the program, "Gemstones of the Bible". He led off with showing several editions of books on the subject of the Breastplate of Aaron. Keith had a handout for his audience which was a chart showing standardized names of gemstones and many other names which may be attributed to the same ones. Many ancient peoples have left writings containing descriptions which



Cont.' from page 2.

scholars can use to identify the stones. Some names that are in common usage now actually described a totally different stone, i.e. what we call Lapis Lazuli was most likely called "sapphire" by some ancient peoples. Keith described the work done to replicate the "Breastplate of Aaron" in recent times and how painstaking the research and actual fabrication had been. That replica is on display in a museum in Wisconsin. There was audience participation in questions asked of Keith about various gemstones. Keith had brought an impressive display of many of the gems he was discussing, both to show what they are and to show how the same general description could fit several. Following his formal presentation, many from the audience examined the displayed stones and asked questions about them.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m. by the president.

Respectfully submitted by Penny Hawkins for Becky Whisenant, Secretary



#### **September 10th Club meeting program:**

"The Geology of the Arbuckle Mountains of south central Oklahoma" by Donald Campbell, A review of the rocks, geological history, and geological structures we will see on our September 14-16 field trip to Oklahoma.



#### **September 14-16 Oklahoma field trip:**

Those interested in attending the field trip to Oklahoma are encouraged to be at the September 10th club meeting to get the details. The trip will start Friday morning the 14th at 8:00am at Ponders restaurant in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Just off I35 exit #33 on the right, 2521 Veteran's Blvd. We will gather at 7:30am, and pull out at 8:00am sharp. Please arrive with a full tank of gas, food water drinks, and snacks for the day (we'll be eating lunch out in the field), and every thing you need for collecting. We will travel east of Ardmore to look at exposures of igneous and metamorphic rocks and by lunch time will be re-gathering on the north end of the Arbuckle Mountains just off I35 and Hwy 77 west of the exit #51.

There is a small store there with trees and we plan to lunch there at approx 12:00-12:30pm. After lunch we will have a short lecture and discussion on the geology of the region. We hope to pull out by 1:30-2:00pm to many other sites we have planned to see. Late arrivers can plan on meeting us at the lunch stop. We have changed the location of the lunch stop from what was discussed at the last meeting and the hand out we provided. Though out the day we will be collecting, several types of granite, amphibolite, diabase, gneiss, rhyolite, oolitic limestone, fossils, and conglomerate. Around 5:00pm we will head north to Norman Ok. where on Saturday morning we will tour two museums on the OU campus looking at mineral collections and fossil displays. Saturday afternoon we will travel to a barite rose collecting site. For more information come to the September meeting and or call Donald Campbell @ 903-520-4085.



## The Onion Creek Mosasaur

By Leighton Cave, Age 8  
AGMS Club Member



Hello my name is Leighton Cave and I am writing you about my interview with Pamela Owen, Ph.D. I had a list of 25 questions to ask and Dr. Owen was nice enough to answer them. She is the Senior Paleontology Educator at the Texas Memorial Museum in Austin. When I asked her what a Senior Paleontology Educator was, she told me that she explained dinosaurs to people from 3 to 99 years old. The museum where she works is part of the University of Texas at Austin. I was there to meet with her and find out more about the Onion Creek Mosasaur. Dr. Owen was very nice to me and let me come when the museum was under renovation. I had to ask my mom what renovation meant. Renovation means to re-do the building. They are working on different parts of the building to make it better. While I was talking to Dr. Owen, I saw a giant ground sloth at the museum. I actually saw a lot of really neat stuff. But that was not what I was there to see. I went for the mighty mosasaur.

I want you to make a picture of the Texas Memorial Museum Mosasaur in your head. This mosasaur was discovered on accident in 1935 by two University of Texas geology students, Clyde Ikins and John P. Smith. Imagine their excitement! They found the remains in Onion Creek, which is in South Austin. It took them anywhere from a few months to a year to dig it up. You see, they did not write down how long it took for them to dig the mosasaur out of Onion Creek. Almost 60% of the skeleton was found. The rest they added as best they could by doing research on mosasaurs. Now, on to the good stuff. Picture looking into the mouth of this Cretaceous giant. It had a head that was 4 feet 8 inches long! I know that I would be scared. It had two sets of teeth; one set was used to catch its prey and the second set, the inner set, was used to hold the prey so that it could not get out as it was being swallowed whole. Did you catch that, it swallowed its prey WHOLE. It was so dangerous that they called it the *Tyrannosaurus rex* of the sea. The mosasaur had large eyes and only thought about one thing, food. Where was the food? How to catch the food? Is there more food? Its brain was small and all it could think about was hunting most of the time. Mosasaurs ate everything - clams, shellfish, fish, and even its own young. The nostrils were placed on top of its head like a crocodile therefore the mosasaur could lay in the water with only its nose showing. It could come to the surface of the water and back down with out really being seen. Like a crocodile, the mosasaur was a powerful predator. This predator had very little problems finding food. The mosasaur was the biggest reptile in the sea. Growing as long as 60 feet, The mosasaur was definitely the top predator in the sea. Its body was flexible like snakes and so it swam kind of like a snake. They steered with two small hands that looked like flippers and a tail that was 12 feet long. They were stalk hunters and very aggressive. They were coldblooded like a snake and had to move all the time



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to stay warm. Paleontologists think mosasaurs were colored like a shark, lighter on the bottom and darker on the top so that it was hard to see in the water.

The other thing that I found out was about how it had its babies. When they were born, they were ready to swim away. Remember, they eat their young! Now that is weird to me. Paleontologists do not think that mosasaurs took care of their babies. They think that they would eat them if they could. That is all they know right now about how it had babies. So you can see it was dangerous, and I think, a very scary creature. I am glad it went extinct with the dinosaurs at the end of the Cretaceous Period. I would be afraid to swim at the beach! Dr Owen is very smart and she gave me an internet site that I could go to get more information. I visited the internet with my Mom and there was a lot of information! A lot! I had a great time at the museum with Dr Owen and I would do it again. My Mom said that we could go back when ever we wanted. The mosasaur is one of my favorites now and it is easy to see why. Here is the internet site: [www.oceansofkansas.com](http://www.oceansofkansas.com). I am only allowed to go on the internet with my Mom so if you are in third grade like me, you better ask your Mom or Dad. via The Stone Chipper 08/07



### **Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia**



The Houston Museum of Natural Science has scored a coup with its world premiere presentation of “**Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia.**” The famous Lucy skeleton of *Australopithecus afarensis*, discovered in the Afar region of Ethiopia by paleontologist Donald Johanson in 1974, has rarely been seen even in its native country. The museum patrons there usually view fossil casts while the very fragile and valuable skeleton itself is stored in a vault. This exhibition is not without controversy, as several noted museums and paleontologists have voiced concern over the idea that this exhibit is traveling out of the country where it could potentially be stolen or damaged. Be that as it may, it is in Houston and will be shown from **August 31, 2007 through April 20, 2008**. Included in the exhibit will be cultural artifacts from this most interesting region of the world. For more information on the exhibit, visit the museum web site at [www.hmns.org](http://www.hmns.org).

~from [www.hmns.org](http://www.hmns.org), various news accounts via The Stone Chipper 08/07



**Fossils in shale - always start out with  
the weakest method and work your  
way up. Here is what I do:**

By Ed Tindell, Clear Lake G&MS

Method #1 - the quick way:

**Time** - I let my specimens sit packed up from the trip for a few weeks in my garage so that the mud and dirt dries out and naturally detaches from the specimens. This gives the specimens time to acclimate to the more humid environment here in Houston as well. This also kills any thing living I brought back home with them.

**Heat** - Let the shale dry out in the sun or better yet, warm it in the oven for several hours. You want the shale to dry out really well. Hydrogen Peroxide - place the dry shale in a container and cover it with 3% hydrogen peroxide. The peroxide will penetrate all of the little cracks and crevices in the shale and decompose. The gases released will act like little chisels and the shale will literally fall apart.

**Screen** - Pour this mixture into a fine screen and rinse away the mud with water. Collect all that remains and let it dry out on a sheet pan. Tweezers - go thru the remains with tweezers and magnifying glass picking out the sharks teeth and other fossils. Some fossils, such as shark denticles, can be quite small.

Method #2 - the slow way:

**Water** - Place the shale in containers and keep it covered with water. Seal the containers to prevent algae from forming and leave it alone for several months to a year. The shale will slowly break down into a grey muck. Screen - pour this mixture into a fine screen and rinse away the muck with water. Collect all that remains and let it dry out on a sheet pan.

**Tweezers** - Go thru the remains with tweezers and a magnifying glass picking out the sharks' teeth and other fossils. Some fossils, such as shark denticles, can be quite small. I'll be happy to pass on any tips or tricks you may have for extracting the fossils from the shale. You will want to get a set of small bottles to collect your teeth in or a Riker Mount to mount them in for display. See how many teeth you can find. In 2003 one attendee claimed to have found 457 teeth! See how many kinds of teeth you can find. There are dozens, hundreds of different teeth, some from sharks, some from fish and some from other animals, in the shale. Which teeth although different in size/shape are from the same animal? Can you reconstruct a set of teeth for the animal? There are also a lot of other fossils including shells, gastropods, etc. There are a lot of black phosphate nodules as well. What is really neat to do is document the steps you go thru. Photograph the original sample of fossil bearing shale. Weigh it. Then use one of the methods above to take it apart and sort/separate it into all of its constituent components. When you are done you will have a small pile of shale fragments, a small pile of phosphate nodules (all the little unidentifiable black bits that you find), dozens of small piles of teeth, and other fossils. When you finally get done and have everything organized it is quite a sight to behold, even for a small piece of the shale. I brought back some shale pieces each about the size of a large grapefruit or a little larger and I intend to do this with each one for comparison and also because it's a whole lot of fun. Enjoy yourselves!

~From *Stoney Statements*, 5/07 via The Stone Chipper 08/07

**Editor's Note**

In the July 2007 issue of the Rock-N-Rose, I included an article that was forwarded to me. In it, I mistakenly attributed the information to Pete Keiser instead of Penny Hawkins. My apologies to both of you and to the other club members for the mistake.

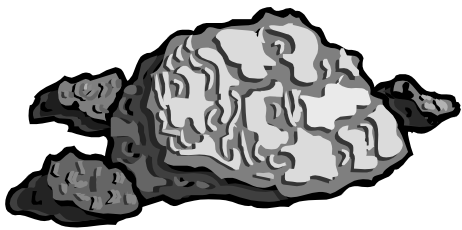




## The Geologist's Lament

By R. L. Frism

Gather 'round me, hear my story,  
 I'm a Rockhound in distress;  
 I'm a Rockhound bathed in troubles,  
 I'm an outcast more or less.  
 I have fossils in the kitchen,  
 I have crystals in the hall,  
 I have min'rals in the bathtub,  
 I have relics on the walls.  
 I have oxides on the carpet,  
 I have oil upon the floor,  
 I have black light in the parlor,  
 I have bones behind each door.  
 Attic rooms are fairly sagging;  
 Flat rocks pave the cellar floor,  
 Pockets bulge with gemmy pieces,  
 All of this and millions more.  
 Wifey thinks that I am goofy;  
 I don't know, she may be right;  
 She insists I've silicosis,  
 Or some horrid form of "ite."  
 Says my head is lined with agate  
 (Freak replacement of the bone);  
 Claims my brain is just a nodule,  
 Says my heart has turned to stone.  
 Threatens me with separation;  
 Storms about our rock-lined home;  
 Says my life is just a geode  
 Or a hunk of mammal bone.  
 Are you rated as a fossil?  
 Or obliged to live alone?  
 How can you maintain a hobby,  
 And still have a happy home?



~*The Lodestone, 1940, From Rock Chips 6/03, via Quarry Quips 3/04, via The Stone Chipper 08/07*



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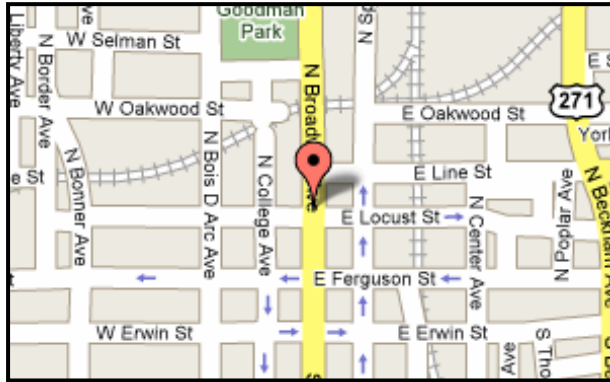
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**THE EAST TEXAS GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY MEETS ON THE FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH, UNLESS THAT DAY IS A HOLIDAY, THEN THE MEETING IS MOVED TO THE SECOND MONDAY. WE MEET AT THE DISCOVERY SCIENCE PLACE, 308 NORTH BROADWAY, JUST NORTH OF DOWNTOWN TYLER,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

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