



ROCK-N-ROSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

PAGE 1

VOLUME 39

TYLER, TEXAS

ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2013

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Coming Shows, 2014

January 11

Arlington, TX
Annual Faceting Swap Meet
Arlington Gem & Mineral Club
AGMC clubhouse
1408 Gibbons Rd.
Sat. 8-4; free admission

January 18-19

Fredericksburg, TX
Fredericksburg Rockhounds
Lady Bird Johnson Park

Jan 24-26, 2014

Tyler TX
East Texas G&MS
Rose Garden Ctr.

February 15-16

Plainview, TX
Hi Plains Gem & Mineral Soc.
Ollie Liner Center
Business I-27 S

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2. Meeting Minutes
3. Flaked Out
4. Turquoise
5. Field Trip/Work Day
6. Bench Tips
7. Woodward Ranch/Members
8. Officers and Directions

I know I have said this before, but I want to remind everybody again that our Annual Gem & Mineral Show is almost here, just a short time away. If you haven't already signed up to take part in the show, and would like to, please let me know. We need members to sign up for the Dealers' Dinner, Silent Auction, Wheel of Fortune, Fluorescent Display, Front Desk, Show Setup, and Showcases. Sign up early, so you can select a time that works best for your schedule. I would like to encourage our members to set up a showcase. If you think you want to and need some help, me or one of the other members will be glad to help. There are only 5 showcases left. I will have the signup sheets at the January meeting. If you have any items you can donate for the Silent Auction or materials to make items for the January Show, you can bring them to our monthly meeting. If you need help getting these items to the club give me a call, and I will see if we can get you some help. I still need a chairman to organize the Rock Swap scheduled on April 05, 2014. This will be organized as a social event for members of our club and other area clubs that would like to join us. I can help whoever decides fill this position. Anybody that thinks they would like to be the Rock Swap Chairman give me a call. I would really like to see more members step up fill the needs of the club.

We all had a fun time at our December meeting with the Christmas Gift Exchange. I thought I was never going to get to keep my present. The program at the January meeting will be a pre-show workshop. We will need as many member as possible to attend.

Name badges, vests, and patches are ordered for members that put their names on the list. You should be able to pick them up at the January meeting.

We have the display cases at the Tyler Library for January 2nd – 31st. These are some large cases, and are a great way to show the Tyler community what the East Texas Gem & Mineral Society is all about.

Continued on page



President's message continued: Also another way to advertise the annual show. These are locked cases, so any items displayed will be locked up. Members that have items related to our club, that we can use to fill these cases please contact me. We need minerals, fossils, jewelry, other lapidary items, geological maps, pictures of field trips, and any other items you think would work well in the displays. I will need some help setting up the displays January 2nd, and I need all these items by the end of December. Please don't wait until the last minute.

Kinney Polve



DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Meeting was called or order on December 2, 2013, by President Kenny Polve. Minutes were approved as printed in the newsletter. Penny Hawkins made the motion and it was seconded.

Bill Faulkner gave the treasurer's report.

Lapidary Sub Group: At the last regular meeting Terry Roberts showed the group how to fill cracks with super glue. They discussed the process of using a rock tumbler. They moved rock that came from Don Campbell and looked for useful material to work.

Mineral Sub Group: Their regular meeting on the 3rd Thursday of the month will be on December 19th. They will discuss elements, the first category of mineralogy.

Field Trips: The November field trip that Randy Harmon planned did not cerate enough interest. Randy would like your help. Let him know what you are interested in visiting.

Newsletter: Susan would like your help. She would like for everyone to send her articles and pictures so she can continue to have an excellent newsletter.

Old Business: The annual East Texas Gem and Mineral Show will be January 24th, 25th, and 26th. A workday will take place on December 14th at the home of Bill Faulkner from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. This is the regular meeting the Lapidary Sub Group but all are asked to attend to help prepare for the show. The regular January meeting will also be a workday. Sign up sheets are waiting for your signature. Everyone is needed to help. Sign-up sheets for display cases, help for the dealer dinner, and set-up on Thursday before the show are especially in need. Also needed are materials to use in cases on both floors at the Public Library from January 2nd until the 31st. These cases are locked for security. Bring items that you can offer to any workday. The display will be taken down by 5:00 p.m. on January 31st. Becky Whisenant reported on schools and groups that she has gotten confirmation from for attending special activities on Friday at the show.

New Business: It was reported that the web site is working. Five responses have been received this month from people who found out about the group from the web page.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be January 6, 2014. It will serve as a workday to get ready for the annual show.

A motion was made by Colleen Hayes to close the business meeting. It was seconded.

We adjourned to have refreshments and a Christmas gift exchange.

Respectfully submitted, Carolyn Davis

Pictured at right, Gift Exchange start.





FLAKED OUT

An introduction to flint-knapping By Bob Miller

a.k.a. White Arrow Member of the Deming (New Mexico) Gem & Mineral Society

Somewhere, lost in the sands of antiquity, the first flint tool lies buried and forgotten. My guess is that it sleeps somewhere east of Eden in Mesopotamia, likely fashioned by the hands of Adam. Of course, I don't really know and neither does any other living human. The bond between mankind and flint are very old and deep indeed. Likely, it is some vestige of this friendship that reappears today as the urge to rock hound. Flint-knapping (from the German "Knappen" meaning "to nibble") is doubtless one of the most basic and ancient of industries. Without the very sharp and durable edges produced by fracturing flint even the working of wood becomes next to impossible. If you doubt this, go into the woods without knife, ax, or saw and try to fell a useable sapling. Catching a cooperative beaver is about your only option here.

Along with fire, flint was survival for millennia, and many of those fires were kindled using a flint spark. In everyone's genealogy there were flint-knappers. It may be many generations ago for some or only a few as in this writer's own Cherokee and Choctaw ancestors. Their skills were undoubtedly adequate or we would not be here today. Until the recent development of fused diamond plating on a tungsten matrix blade, obsidian (as in "Apache Tears") produced the sharpest known edges, far superior even to the best surgical steel scalpels. Obsidian fractures at the molecular level producing edges that may be only a molecule or two thick. The Maya Indians of southern Mexico were in fact successfully performing brain surgery (trepanning) centuries before Columbus landed, using obsidian tools. The knap-ability of flint owes to its krypto-crystalline structure (its crystals are microscopic or non-existent). It is much like glass, being about 95% quartz (silicon). When struck a sharp blow with a hard object it will fracture into a "Hertzian cone" (conchoidally). Perhaps the easiest illustration of this phenomenon is to shoot a piece of thick glass with a B-B-gun. The characteristic product of this collision is a smoothly-rippled Hertzian cone. This is the basis of flint working by percussion. Flint-knapping is the art of vectoring blows from a "billet" to remove flakes from the core in a manner predictable enough to eventually shape a blade. This process is called "core reduction." Once a blow is struck it cannot be recalled. For better or worse, the record of that blow is "written in stone."

Knapping is a lot like playing billiards. Due to inconsistency or defects (inclusions) in the flint it can more resemble playing pool on a wavy table with a tree limb and glass eggs. There are times I feel that I am actually matching wits with a piece of flint, as in three dimensional chess! Many Indians believed that everything, even inanimate objects like rocks had a spirit and were somehow "alive." Perhaps they were right. There is, of course, a lot more to knapping, like pressure flaking, heat-treating flint to improve its "lithic" qualities, "hands on" experiencing of just how sharp flint really is, weeping over the halves of an exceptional, almost complete blade, and of course losing one's mind. One thing is certain, if you pursue knapping with any degree of persistence, you will recognize that its ancient practitioners were not a bunch of dumb savages banging rocks together. Instead, that is what we modern hobbyists are! They did it to survive— we do it . . . For fun????! !





A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BIRTHSTONE

The birthstone tradition is a reflection of our human tendency to assign special healing or protective powers to gems. This tradition has been traced back to the book of Exodus, which describes the High Priest's breastplate as having twelve gemstones, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Over time, specific stones of a common color became associated with one of the twelve signs of the zodiac. This shift in reference is what put the "birth" into "birthstone." From there, it was a small step to associate particular gems with each of the twelve months of the modern calendar.

Traditional Birthstones of December —Turquoise is listed on the traditional birthstone list for the month of December, along with Zircon and Lapis Lazuli. This listing dates back to the 15th century.



Turquoise



Zircon



Lapis Lazuli

Modern Birthstones of December—Turquoise is one of the three modern birthstones for the month of December. The other two birthstones for December are blue topaz and tanzanite. Says who? The American National Association of Jewelers established the "official" birthstone list in 1912, adding tanzanite to December's list in 2002. Why the delay? Tanzanite was only recently discovered, having first been identified in Tanzania, Africa in 1967.



Blue Topaz



Tanzanite

(From "Turquoise as a Birthstone", www.turquoiseguide.com) via Gritty Greetings 12/13



TURQUOISE CABACHONS

Turquoise is the modern December Birthstone for December, and is also the accepted gem for the fifth and eleventh wedding anniversaries.

Turquoise is one of the most valuable non-transparent minerals used in the jewelry trade. It has been mined since at least 6000 BC by early Egyptians. Most specimens are cryptocrystalline, meaning that the crystals can only be seen under magnification. The finest turquoise comes from Iran, but is challenged by some southwestern United States specimens. Poorer quality turquoise is often dyed and/or stabilized with resins to improve hardness, and dyed howlite is also common on the commercial market, posing as turquoise. The name comes from a French word, which means "stone of Turkey".



A sacred stone for the North American Indians as well as the Tibetans, it is often used by shamans in rituals and ceremonies. It is said to promote mental and spiritual clarity and expansion and to enhance wisdom, trust, kindness and understanding.

Color varies from very green to light sky blue shades. Hardness of the stone ranges between 5 – 6. The color can change with exposure to skin oils if the stone has not been stabilized, and jewelry should be wiped clean to deter this.

Besides Iran, turquoise can be found in Arizona and New Mexico, USA; Australia; Afghanistan; and other localities in the Middle East.

From The Rock Prattle, Newsletter of The Tri-City Gem and Mineral Society, Inc., Temple, TX, via Stoney Statements 12/13



MULTI-FEDERATION FIELD TRIP -- Make Plans to Attend NOW!
By Doug True, Field Trip Chair, AFMS Mark Your Summer Calendar!

July 31-August 4, 2014—The town of Terry, Montana may be small, but they are planning on rolling out the red carpet for us as they host the AFMS 2014 Multi-Federation field trip gathering. The dates are July 31-August 4, 2014, so mark your calendars and get ready to register!

Terry is right in the middle of some of the best Montana rock hounding areas. We'll have numerous trips to the Gravel Bars on the Yellowstone River; productive areas that I've been hunting on annually for 40+ years. Many are accessed only through private property, but for Montana agates, jasper, petrified wood, fossil coral, stromatolites, and numerous other "oddities." We'll have numerous trips into Montana fossil country to the Pierre and Bear Paw formation areas, and we'll collect ammonites, baculites, scaphites, nautiloids and many other shells (70-95 million years old) in the ancient sea bed areas. We are also working on trips to several areas where we can collect dinosaur fossils from the Hell Creek Formation.

More information will be forthcoming as plans are solidified. In addition, we'll have an opportunity to take a guided tour through the Eastern Montana Badlands - a once in a lifetime opportunity. Start planning your collecting vacation now. Kids are welcome!!!! What could be better than four days in Eastern Montana with a chance of collecting wonderful material. But wait, there's more....The town of Terry is allowing us to use their 2 block city park for dry camping and other activities. We'll have pot luck dinners, a barbecue and much, much more. For more information contact Doug True, Field Trip Chair, (406) 670-0506, or email <dtruefolssils12@yahoo.com>. Via Stoney Statements 12/13



PRE-SHOW



WORKDAY



The turnout for the preshow workshop on December 14 was a little low, and we were lacking in some of the materials and equipment normally used to make silent auction items, but that didn't stop the dedicated members that showed up. I would like to thank all the members that took time out of their busy holiday schedules and also donated materials. And a special thanks to Bill Faulkner for making his home available to the club, right at the middle of the chaos of his kitchen remodel. About 20 ETGMS member descended on Bill's house throughout the day. Even with the obstacles of limited space, shortage of material and some supplies, we still got a lot accomplished. But we still have more to do, so we will be having another workshop on Saturday, January 11, 2014. We will send out information on the time and location via email as soon as get it. Kinney





BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH

MINI DRILL PRESS

If you find yourself drilling a number of small holes for your work, you might want to look at the small, inexpensive drill presses now available. They take up just minimal space on your bench and are always ready to give you nice straight holes. Some models even have a variable speed control. I've been very pleased with a low-priced one that's been well-used in my classes for over a year.

Because these machines are only a foot high, they're limited as to the size of work pieces that can fit into the machine and the size of the drill bits you can use. But I've had no problems with drill bits up to about 3/16" (4.5mm), even drilling steel.

The machines are sold by a number of companies. If you do get one, be sure to buy a spare belt because they are generally not available at local hardware stores.



LASER WELDING

A question came up this week about how to solder some jump rings to hold blue topaz briolettes onto a necklace. We've all heard about ways to do some soldering close to a stone, and some of us have sized a ring without taking the stones out of their mounts. We've used wet paper towels, garnet sand, cooling gels, and my favorite of suspending the stone in a dish of water. All techniques bank on the principal of using a small, hot flame to do the job quickly before the stone gets hot enough to crack or change color.

But each job is somewhat of a gamble. Some stones are hardy and some are frail. Jades and jaspers will generally take a lot of heat, but I'd never chance it with the likes of topaz or opal. Trying to shield a stone from the torch is always a betting game, and sometimes you lose.

If you're worried about soldering something close to a stone, perhaps it's time to consider a no-heat method like laser welding. Most jewelry stores have laser welders these days, and the cost of having it done is quite affordable. They used to have problems doing silver, but now seem to do it routinely.

I've used a local shop twice in the last year, once for a piece with little emeralds a "friend" asked me to repair and for a second piece where I needed a safety catch and didn't want the torch heat to expose all the solder lines again.

Like these Bench Tips? Treat yourself to the book for Christmas!

The following attribution is requested with each publication:

More Bench Tips by Brad Smith are at [facebook.com/BenchTips/](https://www.facebook.com/BenchTips/) or search for "Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" on Amazon.



THE WOODWARD RANCH

The sale in the rock shop is ongoing throughout the Christmas and New Year's holidays. As this is a very busy time, however, you will need to call and set a time you want to visit - 432/364-2271. The sale is ongoing throughout the holidays, however it will not be advertised until after the first of the year. Beginning Jan. 6, the sale will be advertised publicly with set hours.

If you'd like an early look at the rock shop sale, please call the above number and set a time you will be available to come out. I'll do my best to accommodate my schedule to your availability.

Thanks so much, Jan Woodward



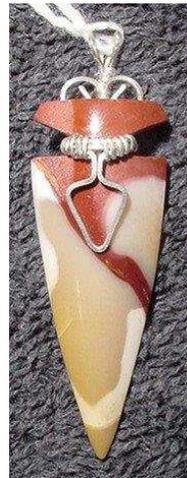
MEMBER HAPPENINGS



Susan Chapman won an umbrella when KLTN Channel 7 News drew her name this month during the "Mark said it would" contest.

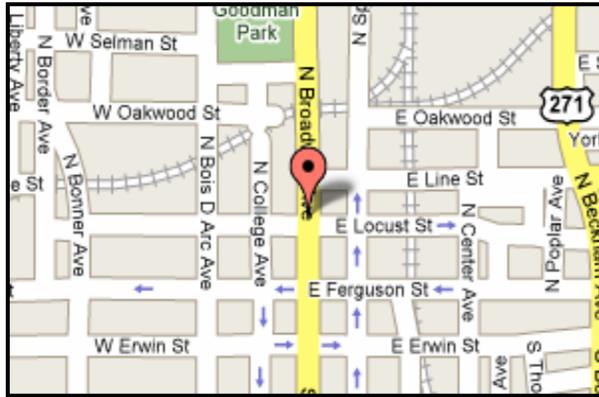


Pictures of work by a new member, Mitchell Young:



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CLUB ADDRESS FOR MEMBERSHIP DUES:	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.

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. If you need an issue dealt with quickly, don't hesitate to call me as this is the best way to reach me. Thank you... SB

NOTE TO EDITORS

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

Purpose of theEast TexasGem & 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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