



ROCK -N- ROSE



PAGE 1

VOLUME 34

TYLER, TEXAS

ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2008

Coming Shows, 2009

JANUARY 17-18

FREDRICKSBURG, TX

Fredericksburg Rockhounds
Lady Bird Johnson Municipal
Park

JANUARY 24-25

TYLER, TX

East Texas Gem & Min. Soc.
Rose Garden Center

FEBRUARY 21-22

GEORGETOWN, TX

Williamson Co. Gem & Min.
Society
San Gabriel Park

FEBRUARY 21-22

PASADENA, TX

Clear Lake Gem & Min. Soc.
Pasadena Convention Center

FEBRUARY 21-22

PLAINVIEW, TX

High Plains Gem & Min. Soc.
Ollie Liner Center

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2. Meeting minutes/program
3. What do you do with rocks?
4. Karnes Co. fieldtrip recap
5. Safety/Purple desert glass
6. Lapidary polishing compound
7. My love of rocks-poem
8. Officers and Directions

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Great meeting ! Saw several folks we hadn't seen in awhile. Lots of good food, camaraderie and then we had the gift exchange. No tears or bloodshed. Lots of good natured fun and laughter though! Folks brought some very nice gifts. Some folks even got to keep the gift they picked !!!!

Just a reminder that we will have the sign up sheets for the dealers dinner and for the show at the January meeting. Received lots of positive comments from the dealers last year about how well they are treated at our show and how warm & friendly the club members are (no surprise to me). Received lots of positive comments from people attending the show. It's a great opportunity to introduce our club to others and let people know what we are all about. Lots of opportunities to participate (even lots of sit down jobs). This is OUR club and we all need to pitch in to make it work. Please sign up !!! Dates for work days to get ready for the show should be announced at the meeting also. Hope to see you all there.

Recently attended the funeral of a friend who passed away after a sudden illness at 87 years young. One of her granddaughters spoke about her and how thankful she was to have had her grandmother in her life. She also advised us all to treasure the moments we have with our loved ones because we never know how long they'll be with us. During this holiday season, please take the time to tell those you love how you feel about them and take the time to treasure the moment.

Also, dues are due. Make sure you renew your membership so you can continue to get the newsletter. At the same time you can update your contact information (address, telephone number, e-mail) to make it easier to keep you informed of club activities.

January and our annual show is just around the corner. Sign up sheets for various activities will be at the meeting. Lot's of "sit down" jobs and something for everyone to do. This is OUR show, we get great reviews from the public and we need to participate to make it a success.

Hope to see you all at the meeting !!!!!



DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

The East TX Gem & Mineral Society meeting was called to order by President Rip Criss at 7:00 on December 1st, 2008. There was a motion & 2nd to approve the minutes of previous meeting as published. This passed. There were no guests or new members.

Under old business, Don pointed out the signup sheets for work slots at the show January 24 & 25. Members are encouraged to sign up for at least 2 shifts and don't forget setup on Friday beginning at 9:00. There will also be the annual pre-show workday at Don's shop on a Sat early in Jan, TBA later. Watch this newsletter. Everyone is also encouraged to consider entering a display case.

Jerri gave a treasurer's report -- most memberships have been renewed but this all needs to be wrapped up in the next 30 days so no one will miss a newsletter mail out. Door prizes were next with winners Hanna (Laura's granddaughter), Lester, Zach & his brother Nate Smith, Wyatt Sinclair (with Brenda) and Lester again.

After refreshments came the annual Chinese (??) gift exchange which could inspire anyone! No one seemed to know exactly why the exchange is said to be Chinese but nobody cared since we all enjoy it so much! Rip handed out numbers, Don explained the rules, Maddie sweet-talked Don out of his #1 position and we were off! Thank God for the patient and nice people in this club because otherwise things could have gone south really fast. There were some very nice gifts given and received, lots of "stealing" and hopefully not too many bad examples set for the children present. An enjoyable ending to a good year for this club.

A note to those of you who actually read these minutes: this will be my last submission since Penny takes over next month. Its been a pleasure taking part in this club and I, for one, am very glad it exists. I always look forward to the first Monday not just because of the rocks but the opportunity to visit with friends and make new ones. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Sayonara!

Respectfully (I try!) submitted by Becky Whisenant



JANUARY MEETING PROGRAM

TBA, but issues regarding the show will also be discussed.



DUES ARE DUE!!

**This is the last month you will be receiving a newsletter until your dues are paid. To those of you whom have already taken care of this
THANK YOU!**



"What do you do with your rocks?"

Who hasn't heard that question from folks who do not understand the need - yes, need - to gather stones, pebbles, boulders, yard rocks we Rockhounds feel. The obsession to look at rocks, take them home, have them around us, just is not felt by some seemingly normal people. How do we explain the craving for more rocks, always more rocks. Fossils, gems, minerals, crystals, some just pretty rocks, oh we want them. We trade them, mine them, clean them, cut, mount, surround our houses - with rocks. Some hounds opt for micro minerals and keep their collections within the bounds of a normal hobby. But, oh, the rest of us gather, hoard, drag home massive and unmanageable amounts of stone. So, "What do you do with your rocks?"

This is my challenge to other club members to share how they display their treasures and keep them safe. While on the field trip to Elkhart we got to talking about display cases and how one creative club member made her own. Why don't we have a night when the program is audience participation? Photos could suffice for display cases too big to carry to the meeting. What do you say, fellow Rockhounds?

Where do you keep your rocks?

Penny





Karnes Co. Field Trip Recap

By Alan Cherepon, President

The AGMS field trip to the Sickenius Mine in Karnes County was held on 4/19/08. About 20 people attended, including one baby, a couple of juniors, and one pug. The trip was the culmination of weeks and months of trying to arrange for the trip through the wrong party. The mine superintendent, Herman "Pee Wee" King, was most gracious to come down from his home several miles to the north, to open the gate for our group. Everyone met at the "Busy Beaver" in Falls City, where trip leaders Alan Cherepon and Paul Bordovsky gave a brief overview of what to collect, and some safety tips on what to look out for and avoid. The weather couldn't have been better, being a sunny, yet cool day, just perfect for a good sunburn if you were not careful to cover up (I was not). There were plenty of rocks for everyone, including lots of already broken open concretions and crystals or druses just begging to be picked up (and put on the necks of swell dames-did I mention I am a "Treasure of the Sierra Madre" fan)? Chalcedony, quartz, calcites, gypsum, and barite were all found, most in abundance. Much of the material also fluoresces, with some two and three color specimens. Also, a very large piece of petrified wood was found, really the better part of a log, with some nice color. By noon about half the crews had reached mineral saturation or were too tired to swing the hammers any further. The rest didn't want to leave, but since our host was out there on his time off, we agreed to leave by about 1:30 or so. From the mine, the group traveled to the Bordovsky Ranch on the other side of Helena, some miles to the east. After a nice drive through wildflower-lined country roads, past the historical church in Panna Maria (the oldest Polish settlement in the US), the group arrived to see a growingly common site in Texas - an oil well being drilled on Paul's family ranch. Here, petrified wood was found in smaller pieces, with the shrink wood being the prize everyone sought. Shrink wood looks like cycad, having a checkerboard pattern to it, and cuts and polishes very nicely. Some other nicely petrified wood is also found there.

We again had to drag some die-hard collectors out of the area so we could get home, unload our treasures, clean up, and get some much needed nourishment and rest out of the sun. Everyone indicated they had a great time and there are indications we can do this again sometime in the not too distant future.

Via Stone Chipper 05/08





**Safety First
Dangerous Rocks
and Minerals**
By Alex Wade

Like mushrooms, rocks sometimes have substances in them that can be quite dangerous. Even though your risk of exposure to dangerous levels will be small, you should be aware of a few hazardous substances.

A number of minerals, especially the metallic's, have highly toxic substances as part of their elemental makeup. Galena, of course, is our primary source of lead and is known to have serious side effects. Realgar, orpiment, and arsenopyrite are rich in arsenic, which is a deadly poison. Iron, aluminum, and antimony dust can make you sick if inhaled. Cinnabar is a basic ore of mercury, an ancient poison if you follow Shakespeare and Greek theater. Uranium ores, such as uraninite and pitchblende, can be hazardous if you inhale its dust or if exposure is prolonged and close. You should wash your hands after handling any of these minerals. Some rocks are dangerous only because of the way they chip and fracture. Any quartz-based rock such as chert or jasper can be dangerous in this regard. A nasty gash can occur if the material is mishandled. On a recent trip to collect obsidian, I was amazed at the number of cuts and blood-letting I endured before I got smart and slipped on my gloves. The cuts, if left untended and exposed to bacteria, can become infected.

Asbestos, once a staple of any rock collection, has been identified as a dangerous substance. This is definitely not one of your scratch and sniff minerals. I keep my specimen in a drawer rather than in the open. You might be wise to keep your example in a small box with a transparent cover. Lastly, be especially wary of the most dangerous mineral of all: chuckerite (A2Z). Chuckerite has been known to cause severe injury when unintentionally tossed in the direction of a fellow collector.

~From EFMLS News 12/98, via Gem Cutters News 12/98, The Roadrunner 05/03 via Stone Chipper 08/08



Purple Desert Glass

In the old days, glass makers used quantities of beach sand in making their glass, and many impurities such as manganese were included in the final product. The reaction of this metal to the ultraviolet rays of the sun over many years turns the glass purple. The lack of humidity in the desert atmosphere allows 90% of the solar heat to reach the ground during the day. Placing old clear glass in an aluminum-lined box and exposing it to an ultraviolet light on a 24 hour basis can color the glass much faster. Some of the desert glass sold today has been produced in such a fashion.

~From Glacial Drifter, 11/03, via The Roadrunner, 05/08; via Stone Chipper, 07/08



SHOP TIPS

Lapidary Polishing Compounds

By Hale Sweeny

A complete group of polishes for lapidary applications from inexpensive tumbler to the best quality gemstone polishes that bring up a bright, high shine of gems. For economy, dedicate a buff, lap pan or barrel to a particular polish and simply recharge with fresh polish as required to maintain effectiveness.

Cerium Oxide—the best gemstone polishing compound for most uses, a mixture of rare earth oxides rich in cerium oxide. Best with opal, agate, quartz, obsidian, etc. and not as effective with very soft material or stones that tend to undercut. For lap or tumbler, mix with water and apply the paste to your buff.

Micron Alumina—a five micron polishing powder developed for computer disks. It is the best polish for sea shells, pretty good for soft stones such as malachite and onyx and excellent as a pre-polish in vibratory tumblers and laps but not rotary tumblers.

Aluminum Oxide, MAP—preferred by many to Linde A, this is a slightly faster and more economical rare earth polish that we call Miracle Atomic Polish.

Zirconium Oxide—a rare earth polish that is especially good for tumblers and laps. The most economical effective polishing media. White and will not discolor gemstones.

Linde 'A'—tremendous favorite with gem cutters whether faceting or polishing cabs. Relatively expensive, you should consider polishing the stone then giving it a quick hit with Linde A to attain a super polish.

Available as powder to mix with water or an emulsified cream with the consistency of hand lotion that does not separate in solution.

Oxalic Acid—used for polishing carbonate type onyx when mixed with another polish such as Tin Oxide. In a strong solution with water, it is used to clean iron stains from specimens, i.e. quartz. Mix with hot tap water by stirring in oxalic crystals until the water is supersaturated and will not dissolve any more. Crystals forming along the sides of the container indicate a saturated solution and should they disappear, you need to add more. Warning: while this is a relatively mild acid all precautions must be taken to keep it out of the eyes, mouth, etc.

A Few Jewelry Polishing Compounds

A general statement about compounds. Tripoli is highly suited for cutting down metals to remove scratches and get a relatively smooth surface. Bobbing compound is made of finely ground flint for cutting down, it is very greasy and particularly suited for use with brushes. Rouges are used to produce the final high luster.

Red Rouge—imparts the highest possible luster to your precious metal work when used at high speed with a muslin buff.

Yellow Rouge—a dry compound for metals such as stainless steel, nickel and platinum. Good all around polish, in regular or extra fine.

White Platinum Rouge—a superior gold and platinum rouge that gives silver a good polish too but slightly softer than red rouge. Use with a muslin buff at high speed.

Green Rouge—another hard metal polish for stainless steel, platinum and chrome.

ZAM—an exceptionally fine crocus base white compound for a high finish on silver, nickel silver and stainless.

Brown Tripoli—a mild abrasive to use with a felt or muslin buff to remove scratches. Use with a bristle wheel for satin finishes. Final finish is scratch free but dull.

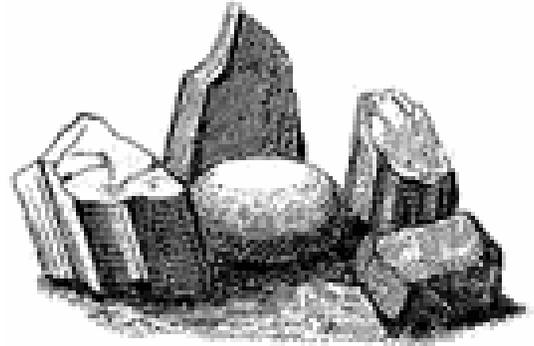
~Lapidary Digest 10/99 and Huntin' & Diggin' 1/02, via Stoney Statements 11/08; via Stone Chipper 2008



MY LOVE OF ROCKS

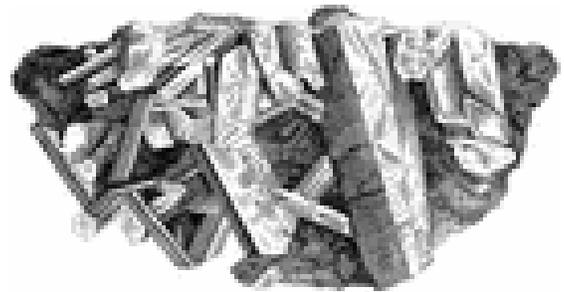
By Mary Owens

When most tots were playing with dolls, trucks, and blocks,
 I was more interested in pretty rocks.
 I started out with the little red ones.
 Then, I added yellow, blue, and black ones.
 As I grew older, I got a real kick
 Out of play doll houses made of brick.
 Soon, pieces of wood had caught my eye
 That were petrified in years gone by.
 My family joined me at this time
 To amass a collection sublime.
 When a house fire crumbled its beauty,
 Replacing our rocks was a duty
 That has taken me many a year
 To gather the best from far and near.
 I began searching on all my trips
 For the special rocks that would eclipse
 Any rock collections others had.
 It really caused me to turn quite bad,
 For the rocks I found I wanted most
 Weren't easily gotten from the host.
 I got one from a national park
 I got one from Branson in the dark.
 A New York City street supplied one.
 Arkansas crystals added much fun.
 A rare whale's tooth bigger than life,
 A gift from hubby to me, his wife,
 A fossilized vertebrae bone
 From a dinosaur left all alone,
 A Pacific coast rock grabbed on the go,
 One from a pyramid in Mexico,
 Along with a bunch from Texas Big Bend
 Were added to the pile I have to tend.
 Now there's rocks of ev'ry shape and color
 Bordering every bush and flower
 Surrounding my home and property line.
 A corner bookshelf filled with crystals fine
 And semi-precious stones of ev'ry hue,
 With rocks along my window ledges, too,
 A big flower pot full of the rose rocks,
 Rocks at my front door where my comp'ny knocks,
 Rocks piled to make a pond and waterfall,
 Flat rocks placed as a path along one wall,



Continued:

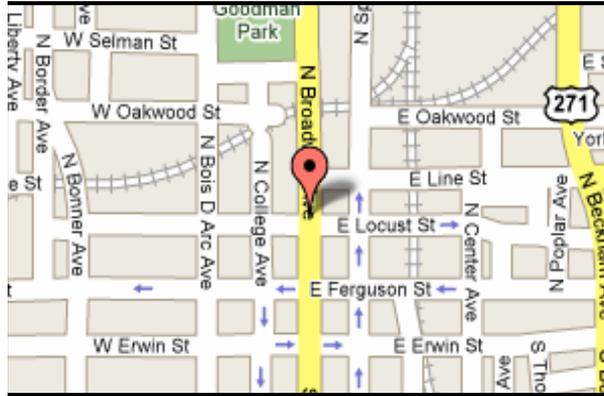
Little pots and big trash cans all filled
 With beautiful rocks that I have willed
 To my sister and daughter who've shown
 In my love of rocks I'm not alone.
 But, I must say that I top them all,
 For each time I see rocks, I do haul
 As many as I can to my home.
 My family knows that I alone
 Was told that I have rocks in my head
 For I will love rocks until I'm dead





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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.

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

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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