



ROCK~N~ROSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

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VOLUME 41

TYLER, TEXAS

ISSUE 5

MAY 2015

Coming Shows, 2015

May 23-24

Fort Worth, TX

Fort Worth G&MS

Will Rogers Mem. Ctr.

June 13-14

Grapevine, TX

Arlington G&MS

Grapevine Convention Ctr.

July 04-05

Fort Worth, TX

Cowtown G&M Glass Soc

Brookhaven College

August 08-09

Baton Rouge, LA

Baton Rouge, LA G&MS

Baton Rouge Marriot

5500 Hilton Dr.

August 15-16

Bossier City, LA

Ark-LA-Tex G&MS

Bossier City Civic Ctr.

August 22-23

Jasper, TX

Pine Country G&MS

Events Center

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been busy the past month in the Polve's workshop. Vicky has been busy brushing up on her faceting techniques. And I have been slabbing more rock, and I've had all my tumblers running. Built a couple fluorescent display boxes. I even found some time to do a little cabbing. And of course there were some equipment repairs needed too. That's just par for the course, when you're dealing with old equipment.

I have also been spending a little more time on Facebook, joining a dozen or so groups. I was kind of surprised that there are as many groups related to our hobby as there are. Lapidary, Rockhounding, Cabs, Slabs, Mineral Cleaning, and the list goes on. There are people from all over the world in these groups, so it gives me an opportunity to see a lot on different material and different lapidary techniques. You can get help identifying material, or help others identify their material. I know it has motivated me to expand my lapidary skills. I plan to start work on a mosaic doublet cabochon in the near future. But the main thing I have learned from these groups is how important it is to see the achievements of others, and the effect they have on the group. That's why it is important for each of our members to send pictures and articles to Susan Burch, for the newsletter. By doing this other members will benefit from this information. Also it lets the members know who is involved in what areas, so if they need assistance, they know who to contact.

This past month, I ran into a problem identifying some material I was slabbing. Now that's not an uncommon problem for me, the name usually gets filed away in my mind, never to come out again. And most times I just don't worry too much about the name after a while. But this wasn't one of those times, you know, when something just keeps nagging at you. So I contacted Charles Creekmur, who is my mineral go to guy, and he had me contact a geology professor at SFA University. I met Dr. Volker Gobel at his office to drop off my samples, and he gave me a tour of the mineral identification lab. You can always tell when you meet someone that is excited about rocks. It shouldn't be too long before I get my results on the samples.

The program on Fluorescent Minerals, by Jack Shull, will be moved from the June meeting to July, due to some scheduling conflicts. If there is anybody that would be willing to help out and present a program at one of our monthly meetings, please contact me. Otherwise, I might have to present my program on Club Member Participation.

I want to thank all the members that signed up for the Tyler mini Makers Faire. I know that a good number of those that signed up couldn't make it due to unforeseen circumstances, but I appreciate all the members that try to help out.

Kinney Polve

Dr. Volker Gobel, geology professor at SFA University, explaining how minerals are analyzed using modern technology. Photo by Kinney Polve.



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MAY MEETING MINUTES

President, Kinney Polve, called the meeting order on May 4, 2015, at 6:40 p.m.

Two members were attending for the first time and one guest.

Kinney announced door prize tickets were on sale as well as a silent auction item. This is one way we contribute to our treasury each month.

Minutes were approved as printed in the newsletter. The motion was made by Carolyn Davis and seconded by Mike Howe.

Colleen Hayes gave the treasurer's report.

Lapidary Arts Group: The group will meet on Saturday, May 9th at the home of Bill Faulkner. The meeting will start at 2:00 p.m. The subject will be making a cab. Bring your project that you are working on or just finished for "show and tell".

Field Trip: The next field trip will be on May 23rd to the Monticello Mine near Mount Pleasant. Let Fred Mahaffey know if you are interested in attending the trip so he can give you updated information. Fred has some examples of fossils and petrified wood he collected on the last field trip. You can see them at the end of the meeting.

Newsletter: Susan Burch is looking for contributions to the newsletter. Send information about your projects or trips to her and also to Kinney. Kinney wants to put what you are doing on the web page to interest others in our club.

Announcements: Mike and Ernest Howe have given the club a 10 inch saw. Thank you to these members for their gift.

Terry Roberts said he has information on a rock shop in Utah. If you plan a trip in that area they would include you on their planned trips or give you information on good hunting areas.

Old Business: Thank you to those volunteers who helped with the Mini Makers Fair at the Science Discovery Museum. Many children and adults enjoyed our Critter Making and Wire Wrapping stations.

New Business: No new business was brought to our attention.

The next meeting will be June 1st. The program will be on fluorescent minerals. It will be presented by Jack Shull.

Colleen Hayes made the motion to end the business meeting. Terry Roberts seconded the motion. Refreshments and door prize drawings followed.

Eddie Harmon presented a very interesting program on fossils. He had many examples for the group to enjoy.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Davis



I HATE ROCKS

A magazine sales person came knocking at the door the other day. You know; the ones that use a lot of charm and sex appeal to get you to pay three times the going rate so they can take an exotic expense paid vacation.

Shortly after her introduction, she went into her charm offensive by mentioning how pretty some of the rocks on my deck were. Then she said: "You must really like rocks." My reply was: "No not really, in fact I despise them. So much so that I travel long distances at a great expense to go maliciously beat-on them with hammers. I even go so far as to kidnap others from their scenic comfortable resting spots to bring them to the miserable heat and humidity where I live to beat-on them some more, drown in acid and cut-up into little pieces to grind-up into even smaller pieces."

Once she figured out she wasn't going to get a vacation out of me, and was leaving, I gave her a small blue fluorite specimen to take home and abuse with UV rays.

Pete Keiser



FIELD TRIP UPDATES

Good Morning! Everyone,

Due to the weather the Sulphur River water level is too high and even if it stopped raining now it would still be too high to safely hunt/collect fossils in the riverbed. So we have an alternate plan. The Monticello Mine near Mount Pleasant has graciously agreed to let us go in and collect petrified wood on the 23rd (same day as the original field trip) I am waiting for a confirmation on a time their employee can meet us and take us in. I will send out another message as soon as I get word. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested so I can give them a tentative head count.

Thanks,
Fred Mahaffey, 903-978-0268

**APRIL FIELD TRIP REPORT
LOVELADY, TEXAS PETRIFIED WOOD
BY SUSAN BURCH**

The morning of Saturday, April 29 did not begin auspiciously. With rain coming down in a bit more than a drizzle, I felt our turnout might not be too well. However, not having had the opportunity to attend a field trip recently, I was determined to make this one and was appreciative to ride along with Fred Mahaffey, our field trip chairman.

Under overcast skies, members trickled in one by one. In all, a group of ten members of the East Texas Gem and Mineral Society met at the parking lot of the Wal-mart in Crocket, Texas. The caravan headed south on Highway 19 to Lovelady, Texas and turned onto County Road 4020 next to the Lovelady Elementary School.

After finding a strip of road that looked promising, everyone began meandering down the roadside finding bits and pieces of material. Dodging the oil field trucks traveling by, petrified wood was not all that was found as a large snake made an appearance. However, he was not as fortunate as to be missed by one of the trucks. Although everyone avoided the snake, it was impossible to miss the mosquitoes which were out in force.

As each driver got an armful, they would go back to their vehicle to unload and move it up the road to another location. One or two spun their tires in the muck but thankfully none got stuck.

Just before mid day we came across an area rich with nice wood specimens and deep with mud from the recent rains. Those who met the mud challenge were pleased with their finds as this area had not been picked over. Although, there were no huge logs found, the specimens had lovely red and tan color variations and interesting textures.



Those attending the petrified wood field trip from left to right, Pete Keiser, Kinney and Vicky Polve, Ed Nolen, Fred Mahaffey, Susan Burch and Thresia Johnson. Not pictured were Tina Watson, Colleen Hayes and Scotty Johnson. Photo by Colleen Hayes.



Around noon the group broke heading in different directions, some staying to collect more material at the sweet spot. Fred Mahaffey and I made a detour on the way back to Alto to check out the selenite deposit near Elkhart. We found the road cut about 11 miles west of town with ease. We gathered a few examples in the hopes this might be a future field trip for the club.

The sun came out to burn off the fog and mist as members of the East Texas Gem and Mineral Society collected wood along CR 4020 near Lovelady, Texas. Photo by Colleen Hayes.



At right, in braving the mid-calf mud, the adventure included Susan Burch losing both her shoes and having to dig them out of the muck. The shoe pictured on the right is after being washed off in a road side mud puddle. Photo by Susan Burch.



Above left, another photo of club members collecting petrified wood, as the day in Texas fashion turned warm and beautiful. Photo by Susan Burch.

Pictured far right are the larger pieces collected by Susan Burch, with the largest about 9X6.5" and another 8.5X3" with gorgeous red coloring. Bottom right, the mound of small pieces collected by Susan Burch. Bottom left, Fred Mahaffey's collection for the day. Inset middle, an interesting fossilized shell impression found by Fred Mahaffey. Photos by Susan Burch and Fred Mahaffey.





LAPIDARY/JEWELRY GROUP UPDATE

The Lapidary/Jewelry Group met at the home of Bill Faulkner on Saturday, May 9. Seven members and two visitors attended the meeting and enjoyed a quick lesson by Kinney Polve on how to measure and cut the girdle and back bevel on a cab. He also explained some commonly used short cuts in grinding the girdle. The two visitors brought some examples of ruby rough they had obtained from a dealer in Tanzania. They asked Terry to show them how to find and cut the rough to show a star if one existed. While Terry cut windows on three different axis on each of the two rubies, Richard Armstrong explained how the c-axis (primary location for the star) could be found. Richard also explained several additional phenomena characteristic of garnets, alexandrite, and tourmalines, as well as several other mineral crystals. Bill showed everyone the 18 inch slab saw in action that was donated to the club. The blade appears to wobble during sawing and may need to be replaced. Everyone enjoyed the topics discussed during the meeting.

Terry Roberts



**TYLER MINI MAKERS FAIRE
AT THE DISCOVERY SCIENCE CENTER**

The ETGMS booth at this year's Tyler Mini Makers Faire was once again a big hit. Applling what we had learned from last year's booth, things seem to run a lot smoother this year, even though we were shorthanded. And we raised a few dollars in the process. Thanks goes out to all of you that helped out.

Kinney Polve.

Photos submitted by Kinney and Vicky Polve.





MAY MEETING PROGRAM SYNOPSIS

Two members were kind enough to send in photos and comments about the May meeting program presented by Eddie Harmon on fossils. Enjoy:



The program for the May 4th East Texas Gem and Mineral club meeting was presented by club member Eddie Harmon. Mr. Harmon, a geologist, and his wife Carol own Eddie's Rocks and Relics, and sell quality fossil specimens at shows around the country.

Mr. Harmon graciously offered to give a presentation on Fossils. The presentation included the process fossilization and the types and methods of occurrence. It was explained how the fossils are dated based on several factors, including examination of the surrounding strata and correlating the time frame with periods of extinction throughout history. Eddie also presented samples for us to examine which represented the various types of fossils, including casts, replacement and recrystallization, and mineralized specimens. The program was very informative and we all enjoyed seeing the fantastic specimens.

Colleen Hayes



Above two photos by Colleen Hayes. Photos below by Kinney Polve.



For those members that missed the May monthly meeting, you missed a great program on fossils, given by Eddie Harmon. Eddie is an avid fossil collector and dealer, and loves fossils. Who better to give a program on fossils? He brought a portion of his collection to accompany his program. Some of which, most museums wish they had for display. The program covered a lot of information, from the different ways fossils form, time periods the creatures lived, and collecting locations near our area.

Kinney Polve



Far top right, Eddie Harmon holding a fossil specimen while Vice-president Terry Roberts looks on.

More photos by Kinney Polve of some of the fossil specimens shown by Eddie Harmon during his presentation at the May 4 club meeting.



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SUE'S DIGS

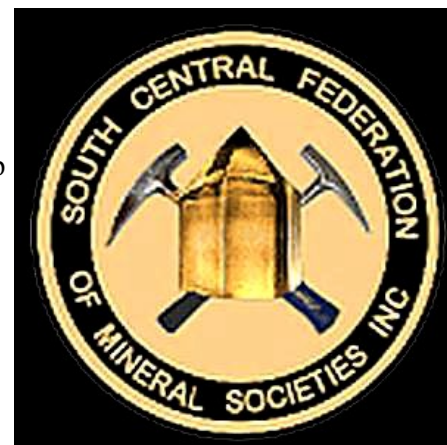
**Sue Dale Miller,
SCFMS President**

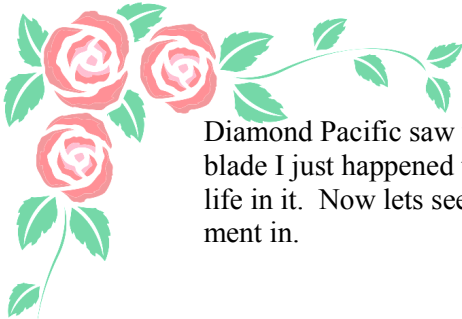
It is May and spring has sprung. So have gem shows across the areas that make up the SCFMS. I am attending as many shows as I can and hope to see more and more clubs plan field trips to club shows.

Yes finding fossils, minerals and lapidary materials with a rock hammer in your hand and the sun on your back is the best, but we can also find that great piece at a show. Dealers from other states bring new and different material to our area. A club field trip to a show can be a way to get to know our own club members as well as the members of other clubs. So go to a show with someone, stop on the way home to eat. Show everyone your treasures and see what others found at the show.

Hope to see you at a show soon. Dale Miller

Via SCFMS May/June 2015 newsletter. Check out the gem shows across the area on page 1 of this newsletter.



**MORE MEMBER HAPPENINGS**

Ernest and Mike Howe donated their 10" Diamond Pacific saw with auto feed and the stand. All it needs is a blade I just happened to have an old 10" blade that has a little more life in it. Now lets see if we can find a workshop to put all this equipment in.



I finally found time to wrap this Plume Agate cabochon, while doing wire wrapping demonstrations at the Tyler Mini Makers Faire. Vicky says it will go nicely with her other pendants.

Thanks, Kinney

**BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH**

MAGNETIC TOOL BAR — An easy way to keep all your files organized at the bench is to use a magnetic tool strip. They're not expensive and help keep a lot of small tools from cluttering the bench top. I got a couple of them from Harbor Freight for about \$5 each.

See <http://www.harborfreight.com> and search -"magnetic-holder"

My only regret was putting some of my small drills on the magnets. The drills got a little magnetized and now stick together when I carry them in a bottle in my tool box.

SILVER DISCOLORATION — Working with jewelry involves an ever increasing number of skills. Chemistry is one of them that comes into play when dealing with a discoloration on the metal caused by a chemical reaction between it and the environment.

In the case of Sterling silver there are three discolorations we typically encounter: a tarnish, a firescale, and a firestain. Each is different in its cause, in its cure, and in its prevention. All three have to do with the metals in the Sterling alloy (92.5% silver and 7.5% copper) and how they react with oxygen and the heat of soldering or with pollutants in the air over the long term.

Tarnish is a grayish coating that builds up slowly on the surface as a result of a reaction of the silver with sulfur-based compounds in the air. Typically these are pollutants from the burning of petroleum fuels, but they can come from other sources as well. I once tarnished all the silver in my display case by putting a pretty specimen of iron pyrite in with the jewelry. Turns out pyrite has sulfur in it! Sulfur combines with the silver to form a grayish silver sulfide film on the surface.

Preventing tarnish involves keeping sulfur away from the metal. Plastic bags will help, and anti-tarnish strips are available from jewelry supply companies to pack near your items. Tarnish is easily removed by hand polishing with a jeweler's cloth or with one of the products sold for cleaning the good silverware for holiday dinner.



Continued on page 9.



Bench Tips continued:

Another way is to remove it chemically. Put a piece of aluminum in the bottom of a dish large enough to contain your piece. Heat enough water to cover the silver. Mix in 2 tablespoons of sodium carbonate per cup of water and pour into the dish. Be sure the silver touches the aluminum. Sodium carbonate is the main ingredient in washing soda. Read the labels in grocery and hardware stores.

The second type of tarnish is called firescale. It is the dark gray to charcoal colored film that forms on Sterling or other copper alloys like brass or bronze when we heat it with a torch. The copper in the alloy reacts with oxygen in the air to form a dark cupric oxide coating on the surface. Luckily, the oxide is easily removed by dissolving it in a mild acid - generally called a pickle. It's important that we not let firescale form on a solder joint because it will block the flow solder over the joint.

There are two ways to prevent firescale. Most common is to use a flux, a borax-based solution applied to the metal before soldering. When melted, borax forms a thin glassy layer that keeps oxygen away from the metal. A second way is to do your soldering on a charcoal block. Together with the flame, charcoal greatly reduces the amount of oxygen in the area being soldered. In either case, oxygen is prevented from reaching the metal, so no cupric oxide firescale is formed.

A second oxide can also be formed when soldering copper or a high copper content alloy like bronze or brass. It's called cuprous oxide and is reddish in color. That's why a black looking piece you put in the pickle sometimes comes out red. Problem is that while the black cupric oxide is dissolved by a pickle, the red cuprous oxide is not. The discoloration can be sanded or polished off, but an easier way is to use a "super pickle". This is a mixture of fresh pickle with a healthy shot of hydrogen peroxide from the local store.

I've saved the worst form of discoloration, firestain, for last.

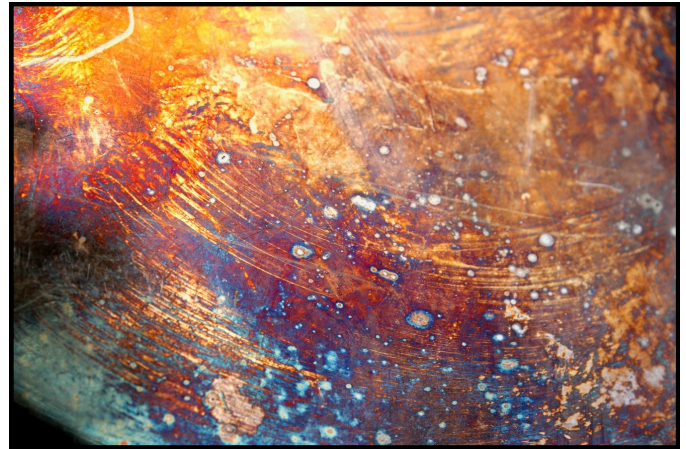
Think of firescale (above) as like getting dirt on your shirt that you have to wash off. Firestain is like getting ink on it. The discoloration is not just on the surface, it seeps down and stains the material. Firestain happens when we heat a piece of silver too hot, too long, and/or too many times.

Firestain occurs when the oxides start to build up below the surface of the metal. You generally don't notice it until after polishing. It appears as a darker area of the surface and is easy to spot when viewed under light bounced off a piece of white paper. Because firestain is below the surface, there's no easy bench tip solution. Depletion gilding may work for some pieces. Otherwise, removing it calls for sandpaper and aggressive polishing.

A much better approach for a piece that will require a large number of solderings is to protect the metal from developing firestain by applying liberal amounts of a firecoat. Regular soldering flux will provide some protection but is not as effective as preparations made specifically for the task. Jewelry supply companies offer several commercial solutions, but my favorite is the Prips mixture in alcohol. I use it every time I intend to do more than two solderings on a piece.

Please include the following attribution with each publication:

Get all 101 of Brad's bench tips in "Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" on Amazon and if you publish as a pdf, I'd appreciate 'Amazon' to be a live link to www.amazon.com/dp/0988285800/





Check us out on the web: WWW.ETGMS.COM

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 all club meetings.

MONTHLY MEETING:

First Monday of the month unless a holiday,
then the second Monday, at 6:45 p.m.

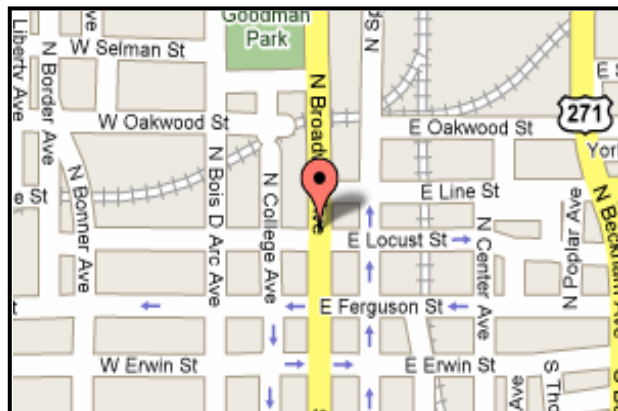
WHERE:

The Discovery Science Place
308 N. Broadway
Tyler, Texas

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Adults: \$10.00
Juniors: \$2.50 with adult membership
Family: \$20

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NEWSLETTER CONTENT: Please send any info or articles to be included in the newsletter to the Editor at the address or email listed below 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, as that is the best way to reach me. Thank you... Susan Burch

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