



ROCK-N-ROSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

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TYLER, TEXAS

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MARCH 2011

Coming Shows, 2011

APRIL 9-10

ABILENE, TX

Central Texas G & M Soc.
Abilene Civic Center
www.txol.net/rockclub

APRIL 15-17

ALPINE, TX

SCFMS ANNUAL SHOW
Chihuahuan Desert Gem &
Mineral Club
Alpine Civic Center
www.cdgmc.org

APRIL 16-17

WACO, TX

Waco Gem & Min. Club
Texas State Technical College
Industrial Tech. Bldg.
www.wacogemandmineral.org

APRIL 30-MAY 1

LUBBOCK, TX

Lubbock Gem & Min. Soc.
Lubbock Mem. Civic Center

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WHERE ARE WE?

At the March club meeting I sat next to two lovely ladies, Martha Blackwell and Betty Benner, and we had a nice chat before the meeting began. They were telling me what a struggle they had in finding our club. They had called the Tyler Chamber of Commerce, the Tyler Library and kept checking the newspaper for any mention of our club. No luck. They had gone on a recent trip to North Carolina and went to one of the “mines” where folks can search for precious stones in buckets of gravel. That got them interested in rocks and they came back home to try and find a local club where they could learn more.

That got me to thinking – how do people find us? We get a lot of interest from folks at our annual show but how else are we visible? I met Becky Whisenant through business and the necklace I was wearing and she invited me to a club meeting with her. Not living in Tyler or reading the Tyler paper, I had never heard of the East Texas Gem and Mineral Society or the club’s yearly show. How many more people would love to join us, to learn more about something they are interested in or perhaps share a wealth of knowledge with us? What can we do to let folks know we are here?

Oh, how did Martha and Betty find out where and when to come to the meeting? Seems a friend of theirs – who was also involved in the “hunt for the elusive rock club”- was at her dentist and got to chatting with someone who worked there, who knew someone.....

Penny

President’s message not available at time of printing.

March 2011 Meeting Minutes

The East Texas Gem and Mineral Society monthly meeting was called to order by Club President, Rip Criss, at 7:00 p.m., March 7, 2011 at the Discovery Science Place in Tyler, TX. Motion to accept minutes of the February 2011 meeting as published in the Rock-N-Rose newsletter was made, seconded and motion carried. Members present were 31 and there were 2 visitors.

Jeri Kitchens, Club Treasurer, gave the financial report.

Jack Shull had a large selenite crystal “flower” that he found on the recent club field trip to Mac Creek near Elkhart. He noted that there were flyers on the table with details about the March 19 field trip to Broken Bow, Oklahoma. Also under consideration is a field trip to Mt. Ida, Arkansas.

Don Campbell asked if there was any new business to be brought before the members; there being none the issue was closed. Don announced that Richard Armstrong, club member and registered gemologist will present the April program. The May club highlight will be the annual “show and tell” with members bringing in unusual, interesting or just plain strange things pertaining to our hobby.

Door prizes were awarded and members took a short break for refreshments. The silent auction item of the evening was a stunning Labradorite.

Don Campbell presented the program on his company’s participation in the rescue of the miners in Chile, which captured worldwide interest in the fall of 2010. Don has worked for Layne for many years and had a slide presentation detailing how the three rescue groups, each from different countries and various companies set about trying to reach the trapped men. Each group used a different method of drilling a rescue shaft in the hard and unstable rock. The Layne - Christenson crew spent 33 days drilling, non-stop, with personnel flown in from as far away as Afghanistan and completed the ultimate rescue hole. A diagram of the copper and silver mine, which was begun more than a century ago and went in a spiral, showed just how the mine collapsed and why conventional rescue operations could not be used. There were many questions from the floor and considerable discussion after the presentation as the audience grasped the enormity of the task the Layne drillers faced, and won.

The official meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Penny Hawkins, Club Secretary



May Meeting Program

Show and tell—bring something you’ve collected, bought or found that is rock hobby related to discuss at the next meeting.



April Meeting Program

The program for the April 4th club meeting will be presented by club member Richard Armstrong who recently became a Registered Gemologist Appraiser. He will present a program on Gemology basics. What is gemology? How does one become a gemologist? What does a gemologist do? How does a gemologist identify gemstones, what instruments does he use in order to evaluate and appraise gemstones?



Anyone Live Near Big Sandy?

Members' Gene and Sherry Breedlove are looking for anyone else in the Big Sandy area that might want to carpool to the meetings. Please, contact Sherry via phone (903) 636-9026 or e-mail bgenefish1@netzero.net.



“Rocks are records of events that took place at the time they formed. They are books. They have a different vocabulary, a different alphabet, but you learn how to read them.”

~John McPhee

Via Stoney Statements 01/10



Texas Highways Article

The February 2010 issue of Texas Highways has an article that rockhounds will be interested in. The article, titled "No Stone Unturned," is written by Dale Weisman, a rockhound who is especially interested in hunting agates. The article emphasizes the Big Bend area and the area along the Llano River. Among those Weisman interviewed for the article are Trey Woodward, agate expert who owns a ranch near Alpine, Richard Kyle, Professor of Geology at the University of Texas at Austin, and Mike Seaquist, owner of Seaquist Ranch near Mason. The article goes on to list contact information for rock-hunting sites, what to expect in a Texas rock shop, and common rules of rock-hunting etiquette.

To subscribe to the magazine or to obtain a single digital issue, go to www.texashighways.com. For further information about Mike Seaquist's ranch as a topaz-hunting site, go to texas-topaz.com. via Gritty Greetings 02/10

ARTIFICIAL WEATHERING

It is always a thrill to find a cracked concretion that separates cleanly in the field with the light tap of a rock hammer to reveal a beautiful fossil. More often, however a promising looking concretion is not already cracked and resists being broken. When it finally breaks under blows of a rock hammer, there is some shattering or uneven breaking which can damage the enclosed fossil, and even then, there is a chance that the enclosed fossil is not exposed. With a little patience, there is another way to expose the fossil. Artificial weathering is a simple alternative that may lead to collection of fine undamaged fossils, if the matrix material is suitable.

Freezing and thawing causes accelerated mechanical weathering of a rock. If water can seep into pores or micro cracks in the rock, the rock will become saturated. When the water expands during the freezing cycle, pressure is exerted on the rock, leading to cracking or exfoliation. If the fossil is a carbon film, then the fossil is a natural weak spot in the concretion, and with luck, the subtle pressure of freezing will open the concretion so that the fossil is perfectly exposed and undamaged.

The process is very simple for any rock that will take up water. A container (other than glass, which might break during the freezing process) suitable for the specimen's size is selected, and the concretion is covered with water and allowed to soak for several days. Then a series of freezing and thawing cycles are achieved by using the freezer in the summer or the back porch in the winter. By achieving a freeze thaw cycle every day, the process is accelerated. It is important that loosened residue from each cycle be removed and examined because if there are any fossils revealed, the next freeze cycle could destroy them.

If you live in a northern climate, and there is no hurry, the suitable rocks could be placed in a container of water and simply left outdoors all winter where the daily temperature swings would do all the work. It has been reported that thousands of Mazon Creek, Illinois fossils have been exposed using accelerated artificial weathering this way.

In Iowa, fossil collectors are on the lookout for blade shaped nodules of limey shale in Pennsylvanian exposures and streambeds. With any luck and some artificial weathering, a well preserved, beautiful fern frond is likely to join your fossil collection.

Source: "Freezing and Thawing of Fossils;" J. Pojeta and Balanc, U.S. Geological Survey, Reston, Virginia, undated. By Chuck Safris, Central Iowa Mineral Society, via Roanoke Valley Mineral & Gem Society Newsletter, 02/99, via THE STONE CHIPPER, 02/99; via Stoney Statements 02/10



51st Annual Gem & Mineral Show Waco Gem & Mineral Club

TSTC
Industrial Technology Center
101 Campus Dr.
Waco, TX
342A Crest Drive Exit off of I-35

Saturday, April 16, 2011
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday, April 17, 2011
11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Auctions
Working demonstrations
Children's arts & crafts
Hourly door prizes

Dealers
Jewelry
Mountings
Rocks
Slabs
Minerals
Fossils
Jewelry repair
Lapidary equipment



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Admission

\$5.00 Adults (both days)

\$1.00 Students

Children under 12 free with paying
adult

For more information:

Sandi Horton

Horton_mail@yahoo.com



Neptune's Gem – Aquamarine [from the internet]

If you can picture the cerulean blue waters of the Mediterranean, you will understand why the birthstone for March is named Aquamarine. Its first documented use was by the Greeks between 480-300 BC. They wore aquamarine amulets engraved with the god Poseidon on a chariot. Poseidon was the god of the sea and, as "Earth-Shaker," of earthquakes in Greek mythology. Derived from the Roman word "Aqua," meaning water, and "mare," meaning sea, this pale blue gem does indeed resemble the color of seawater. The ancient Romans believed that the Aquamarine was sacred to Neptune, the god of the sea, having fallen from the jewel boxes of sirens and washed onto shore. Early sailors wore aquamarine talismans, engraved with the likeness of Neptune, as protection against dangers at sea and prevent seasickness. The association with water led to the belief that the Aquamarine was particularly powerful when immersed. Water in which this gemstone had been submerged was used in ancient times to heal a variety of illnesses of the heart, liver, stomach, mouth and throat. Aquamarines were also used to reverse poisoning and to aid in fortune telling.

Aquamarines were thought to be the source of power for soothsayers, who called it the "magic mirror", and used it for telling fortunes and answering questions about the future. It is said that Emperor Nero used it as an eyeglass 2,000 years ago, and much later, aquamarines were used as glasses in Germany to correct shortsightedness. In fact, the German name for eyeglasses today is "brille", derived from the mineral beryl.

Aquamarine is a member of the beryl family and ranges in color from an almost colorless pale blue to blue-green or teal. The most prized color is a deep-blue aqua color. It is 7.5-8 on the Mohs scale of hardness. Aquamarines vary in color from deep blue to blue-green of different intensities, caused by traces of iron. Naturally occurring deep blue stones are the most prized because they are rare and expensive. However, yellow beryl stones can be heated to change them to blue aquamarines.

The bright blue of this noble beryl is making more and more friends. The various color nuances of aquamarine have melodious names: the rare, intense blue aquamarines from the Santa Maria de Itabira mine in Brazil, which make every gemstone lover's heart beat faster, are called 'Santa Maria'. Similar nuances come from a few gemstone mines in Africa, particularly Mozambique. To help distinguish them from the Brazilian ones, these aquamarines have been given the name 'Santa Maria Africana'. The 'Espirito Santo' colour of aquamarines from the Brazilian state of that name is of a blue that is not quite so intense. Yet other qualities are embodied in the stones from Fortaleza and Marambaia. One beautiful aquamarine color was named after the Brazilian beauty queen of 1954, and has the name 'Martha Rocha'.

The leading producer of aquamarines is the country of Brazil, which has many mines. Pakistan, as well as many U.S. localities, produce wonderful specimens as well. Recently, a new mine in China has produced large numbers of excellent flat (stubby) hexagonal crystals, for a fraction of the price of those beautiful Pakistan specimens. Via Stoney Statements 3/11



Bench Tips by Brad Smith

Burnishing Bezels

A dapping ball can sometimes be used to burnish a bezel. I noticed this when setting some 8 x 10 cabs on a piece of filigree. It was difficult to get enough pressure with a regular burnisher, so I tried a dapping ball and found it much easier. Make sure the ball is well polished (hit it with the Zam wheel) and let it ride along the base of your piece. Select a ball big enough to hit the top of the bezel at the right angle to burnish it down onto the stone.

Super Pickle

We've all made the mistake of putting some steel in the pickle pot. This can cause all your pieces to be coated with copper. Easiest way I've found to clean it off is to fill half a coffee cup with the pickle and put in an ounce or two of hydrogen peroxide from the drug store. Throw your pieces in and the coating is gone in about 10 minutes. When finished, pour the solution back into your pickle pot.

MODIFY TOOLS FOR PRONG SETTING

When setting stones in a prong mount, avoid slipping by grinding a groove in the face of your prong pusher, or one jaw of your flat-nose pliers. Easiest way to cut the slot on the pusher is with a file, and the easiest way to cut the slot on your pliers is with a cutoff wheel in the Foredom or Dremel. <http://facebook.com/BenchTips>

[Brad Smith's Bench Tips published with his permission] Via Stoney Statements 3/11



An End of Dreams

The rock that holds the essence of my whole life's
Rockhound dreams lies out there now among the rubble
of primeval holocaust, mandated out of reach in
government wilderness designate nor ever dreamed
about again by future generations. The jewel within of
course will fade, out there, by metamorphic law, then
disappear forever in that eroding march of nature's time.

[Jack Terwilliger, via SCRIBE v35-1] Via Stoney Statements 3/11

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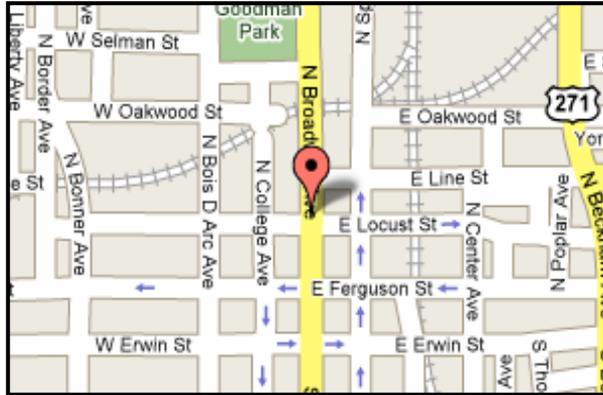
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FIELD TRIP CHAIRMAN: Your name could be HERE!!!
Volunteer Today!

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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.

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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