



# ROCK-N-ROSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

PAGE 1 VOLUME 36 TYLER, TEXAS ISSUE 1 JANUARY 2010

## Coming Shows 2010

January 22-24  
Tyler, TX  
East Texas G&MS  
Rose Garden Center

February 20-21  
Georgetown, TX  
Williamson Co. G&MS  
San Gabriel Park

February 20-21  
Plainview, TX  
Hi-Plains G&MS  
Ollie Liner Center

February 27-28  
Pasadena, TX  
Clear Lake G&MS  
Pasadena Convention Center

March 6-7  
Big Spring, TX  
Big Spring Prospectors Club  
Howard Co. Fair Barn

March 6-7  
Robstown, TX  
Gulf Coast G&MS  
Regional Fairground

March 20-21  
Live Oak, TX (San Antonio)  
Southwest G&MS  
Live Oak Civic Center

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## In Lue of the PM This Month...A Vent

Well as you will read in the 'Letter From The Editor' note this month, I really tried to get this out to those of you who get the Rock-N-Rose via snail mail before the show. Due to e-mail problems, a holiday and other issues, not all the info was available, so this will see you after the fact. For that I must apologize. It has gotten to a point where sometimes I'm finding myself frustrated. Don't get me wrong, I really enjoy most parts of being the newsletter editor for the ETGMS. However, there are still quite a few parts that are causing this frustration. Sometimes it's hard to get the info in a timely manner, without feeling like a nag, lol. There is still the 'grunt' work, that several had volunteered to help me with, but it never seemed like I could coordinate schedules to get that help. (perhaps I need a permanent Editor's assistant) The printers are not open on the weekends, so that's another issue that has to be worked around. Forgive me again, I just needed to vent...I'll try to do better in the future. SB

**DUES ARE NOW DUE!!!**



## January Meeting Minutes

The East Texas Gem and Mineral Society monthly meeting was called to order by President Rip Criss at 7:06 p.m. January 4, 2010 in the meeting room of the Museum/Activity Center of the Discovery Science Place on Broadway Street in Tyler, TX. The meeting was moved to the alternate location due to another event scheduled in the larger conference room.

Motion to accept minutes of the December 2009 meeting was made by Becky Whisenant, seconded by Tom Stringfellow and passed unanimously.

Keith Harmon spoke concerning the first Kid's Day planned in conjunction with the annual club show and the need for volunteers to sign up to help on that day and the other days of the show, including Thursday, Jan. 21 to work with the vendors setting up for the show. Tyler ISD has estimated they will bring 600, fifth grade students, 80 per hour to the event. Admission to the show remains at \$3 for adults, \$1 for kids and free admission for Scouts in uniform. Keith reviewed other information about the show and stressed the need for volunteers to sign up for different events and to bring food to the Dealer's Dinner the club hosts on Friday night for the vendors. Work day for the show was set for Saturday Jan. 9th. Please, bring glue guns, glue and any supplies you think might be needed. Material for the 'Wheel of Fortune' and silent auction tables are in short supply, so please bring donations to help with this year's show.

Keith and Don spoke about the permanent exhibit the Discovery Science Place wants to set up in their museum featuring fluorescent rocks and has asked our input and help.

Gene Goar announced that Pat Nixon of Hot Springs, AR, will be holding wire wrapping classes on March 5th and 6th for any members interested. Cost will be \$100 per person and that will include wire and tools that the attendees will get to keep.

Susan Burch said that she is currently emailing newsletters to 20 members at a significant saving to the club for postage and printing.

Jeri Kitchens gave the treasurer's report and said that a donation had been made to honor Laura Wilson's father who recently passed away.

Following the awarding of door prizes and a short break, Don Campbell had the program on the upcoming show in Tucson but the projector refused to work in the unfamiliar surroundings so Don gave the information extemporaneously. He had brought flats of fossils to show and explain the steps to getting them ready to sell. A lively question and answer session followed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Penny Hawkins, Club Secretary



## A Time For Good Wishes

Dear friends, several of our members have been dealing with family illnesses that have kept them from taking as active a part in the club as they had done in the past. Gene Goars' wife has been recovering from a serious surgery for the last 7 months, Laura Wilson has been dealing with the illness and now loss of her father, and Becky Whisenant with ongoing health issues concerning her father. Although, we are all under extra stress in these times, whether it be economic, health or whatever. Now is the time to lend a little prayerful support to our friends. And know that we wish those feeling this extra strain good wishes and sustaining hope.

SB



## SHOP TIPS

### WARNING ABOUT SOYBEAN OIL FOR CUTTING...

A year and a half or so ago, someone in one of the Midwestern states wrote an article about using soybean oil for cutting rocks as it was clean and odorless and no environmental effects. So I decided to give it a try.

It worked very well at first when the weather was warm in summer, but when cooler weather came in the fall, I noticed it started to thicken up. I figured this was only natural, but as time went on, I found the carriage was getting harder to move back and forth and the cross feed difficult to operate. During last winter I didn't do any sawing and when I was ready to resume last spring, I found I could not move anything in the saw. Everything was coated with a very tough film about 2 mm thick and semi-hardened.

When I proceeded to clean it up, I found nothing would touch it. After trying various solvents, cleaners, and even gasoline, I finally tried paint and varnish remover and that worked. After a lot of hard work and expletives, I got the box and lid fairly well cleaned up but had no way to get the threads of the cross feed underneath. So I loaded the whole thing up and took it to a steam cleaner. They worked on it for an hour or more, using different agents and finally got enough so the cross feed could be cranked again.

So the bottom line is, **DO NOT USE SOYBEAN OIL IN YOUR ROCK SAWS.**

I hope none of you have tried it as I did.

From Rock Roller Club 6/96 via Southwest Gems 7/97 via The Stone Chipper 7/97 via The RoadRunner 8/97. Via Stoney Statements 01/10

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Well my fellow rockhounds, it's that time of year again...our annual Gem and Mineral show! As you've read in both the President's Message and Minutes this month, this subject has us all preoccupied with what parts we will play in assisting OUR club. This event is one of two main fund raisers each year that further our goal of a club house of our own. Yes, YOU are integral in accomplishing this goal. Please, come out and volunteer, this year we have our first ever 'Kids' day', so will need even more help than usual.

On the newsletter front, I've finally succeeded in being able to e-mail the newsletter in a PDF format. Signing up for the newsletter via e-mail is simple and has many benefits. It saves the club (and me, lol) money and time, it comes sooner and is in color that way, among other things. To get the newsletter delivered via e-mail notification rather than through snail mail, please e-mail a request to [rocknroseeditor@hotmail.com](mailto:rocknroseeditor@hotmail.com). The reason I ask this is two fold, one is so that I have a record until the time of the month that I put the newsletter together, secondly is to help this forgetful person to remember to actually save your option in the two places I keep that info. Thank you all for being patient in my striving to accomplish this, and I hope more will support this effort. You will also notice a few small changes to this year's version. Such things as a members news section...(I would appreciate someone to help amass this info), less fossil articles and more on gemstones, and a few other ideas, have also been suggested. If you wish to see anything in particular as part of the newsletter, please, let me know your feedback, and I will try my best. This is one of the main outlets of information for the club, OUR club...so please help me make it as interesting and enjoyable to you and the other members as possible. In the almost three years I've been editor there have been a few faithful contributors to the newsletter, hopefully more of you will aid me over the next year to make the newsletter even better.

It's also important that you keep your e-mail address, mailing address and phone number up to date so as to receive the information in a timely manner and not waste the resources of the club. As I printed on the front page, dues for 2010 are NOW DUE! If you have not paid your dues by the time the February newsletter goes out, this will be your last copy until that is taken care of. I've included a renewal form on page 7.

Thank you again for requesting that I stay on another year as the newsletter editor for the Rock-N-Rose. Your compliments and encouragement really mean a lot to me and bolster my confidence when I'm feeling bogged down.

BTW...I am looking for anyone who has a copy to loan me of the January 07', March 07', and September 08', newsletters. In trying to make a digital archive, those are the only three issues I'm missing in the last three years.

Hope to see all of you at the show...

Susan Burch, Editor



**GARNETS** were used as ammunition in 1892 by the Hanza tribe against the British in Kashmir. The tribesmen thought a bullet made of garnet would attack the bloodstream. Unfortunately, the garnets were probably shattered by the black powder. In effect they were shooting blanks at the British, who replied with volleys of lead bullets. It was a tradition that died hard. -- *Herbert's Jewelers Online*,

<http://www.herbertsjewelers.com/birth.htm> via Rollin Rock 01/09



## Down All The Days by Jay Bates

The mist hung on the hills, wafting in a cold wind blowing down the Diablo Range. We four huddled around our screens and kept moving to hold the in-creeching cold at abeyance. We were screening for that mythical gemstone, benitoite. We were washing the dirt off tailings at the Gem Mine in hopes of a facetable stone.



### *Benitoite in matrix*

Some weeks before we had been there on a warm and sunny day, basking in the warmth and the aroma of the surrounding incense cedars. It seemed much easier then to find those little electric blue crystals. Now it seemed they had all disappeared. Still, we soldiered on, for we knew not when we may be able to return to this remote location or whether we could even return to the land of Happy Meals over the sodden dozed tracks laughingly called roads on the maps.

The wash water ran out, so Dave and I put his hitch on the back of my Jeep and

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trailed the water tank trailer down to the creek bottom to pump it full from an underground tank placed there to collect water during the oncoming threatening winter rains. Now in four wheel, I crept back up the pit tracks to the top pulling a ton and half of wash water. All for a tiny blue speck that resembled a bit of blue glass, you would not think twice about picking up on the street.



*Benitoite crystal*

But we had a bit of good luck! While busy getting the wash water, Bob had done a little sniping around a tailings pile and found some undamaged included crystals of pinky nail size. Not gem quality, but what awesome specimens they are! Maybe Big Ernie was going to be kind after all as a glint of sunlight pierced the mist. No, it wasn't going to happen, as the mist again closed in and we returned to our dreary screens. Slowly moving with buckets from the coyote hole to the screens on the slippery slopes. Dump, wash, swirl with numb fingers, and now squint with a hopeful eye for that electric blue vision. No, none there. Keep moving. Maybe the next bucketful will reward us for our efforts. Harry and Mary had given up on their singular efforts of moving large amounts of material looking for larger gems and had joined us manning the washing screens looking for anyå stone justifying our insane efforts. Mary, with an eye of an eagle, was having no more luck than the rest of us. All for naught, on a cold misty drizzly slope. These hills, wrought from the earth on sliding tectonic plates, have always been realm of the desperado and wild beast; and a man there is always alone. Once it was where bears the size of Kodiaks roamed. It is still the home of giant condors, wild boar, and lion; and a man there is always alone. The wild-land firefighters hate the hot burning impenetrable chaparral. The EPA has banned man from the



largest asbestos areas known to exist. But there still are those that find solitude in the Elfin Forest and Serpentine Barrens and the hot dry slopes of pines and cedars. Maybe, with a little luck, a glint of electric blue, on some future warm summers day. Not today, anyway, you miserable fool!

**Coda:**

*Since writing the above bit of prose, I have been back to the Benitoite Gem Mine and had better luck including a couple stones that cut at about a quarter carat each. The mine is now open for business and you can go there and screen the tailings for \$100 per person per day. It requires a high clearance four wheel drive vehicle and a couple hours of hard rough driving on miserable roads, sometimes in four wheel, after you leave the pavement.*

*There are a couple of articles slated for publishing soon in the Rock and Gem magazine, one on mining there and most importantly on how to get there, and the other article provides information on a large stone found there and recently cut. Detailed directions are needed to get to the mine.*

*The mine was bought in the last year or so by Dave Schreiner, who I talked to recently and he is eager to get some information out there to potential miners. His phone number is: 559-935-5909.*

<http://www.sfgms.org/articles/downalldays.html>



EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Adult: \_\_\_\_\_ Jr. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter via e-mail? Y \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interest in the hobby: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Joined: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone or Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Dues Paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## CLUB OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT:** Robert (Rip) Criss 903-922-2856  
P.O. Box 340  
Oakwood, TX 75855

**VICE PRESIDENT** Becky Whisenant 903-795-3652  
3786 CR. 2107  
Rusk, Texas 75785

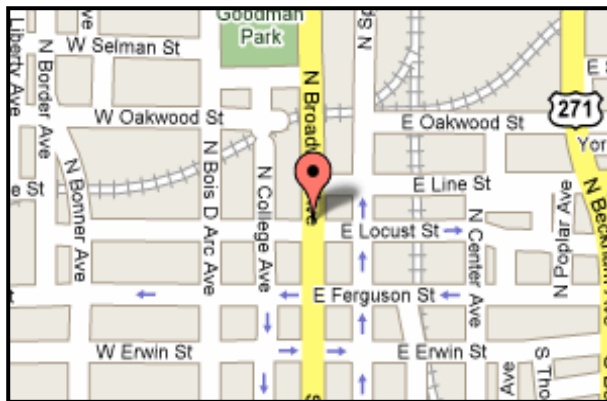
**TREASURER:** Jeri Kitchens 903-245-8822  
2533 Chelsea Dr.  
Tyler, TX 75701

**SECRETARY:** Penny Hawkins 903-586-4463  
134 CR 3151  
Jacksonville, Texas 75766

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

**SHOW CHAIRMAN:** Keith Harmon 903-581-4068  
8316 Oxford ST.  
Tyler, TX 75703

**CLUB ADDRESS:** 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.**

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



**EDITOR:** Susan Burch  
20427 US. Hwy 69 S.  
Alto, TX 75925

**E-Mail:** rockroseeditor@hotmail.com  
**Phone:** 936-615-5397