



ROCK-N-ROSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

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VOLUME 36

TYLER, TEXAS

ISSUE 6

JUNE 2010

Coming Shows, 2010

JULY 17-18

Tulsa, OK

Tulsa Rock and Mineral Soc.
Central Park at Expo Square

AUGUST 14-15

Baton Rouge, LA

Baton Rouge G&M Soc.
Fraternal Order of Police

AUGUST 21-22

Bossier City, LA

Ark-La-Tex G&M Soc
Bossier Convention Center

AUGUST 28-29

Jasper, TX

Pine Country G&M Society
The Event Center

AUGUST 28-29

Mountain Home, AR

Ozark Earth Science Club
Van Matre Senior Center,
Cooper Park

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Don Campbell has reported that the fluorescent mineral display we provided to The Discovery Science Place has been installed and looks great. I urge you all to stop by there and take a look when you can. I plan on taking grandkids there the first week in July.

With daily temperatures reaching almost 100 degrees F and the humidity coming close to that, I can't stress enough the importance of heat safety. Please take it slow & easy, wear a hat, carry water and take frequent rest breaks. Also, let people know where you are going so they know where to start looking for you if you don't return. I leave a note on my porch and on the dashboard of my truck when I go collecting. Last weekend I stopped by a little creek near my house to check it out since there had been some recent rains. About 1/4 mile from the highway I came across two hikers/rock hounds that were exhausted and laying in the shade. Much of the creek is shaded but gets really hot because it's between hills and doesn't get a breeze. The man was so weak he couldn't stand, wasn't making much sense when he spoke and the woman couldn't support his weight to help him to their car. Both were exhausted, couldn't go any further and were soaked with sweat. Neither had any water on them. I did a quick check on them (both very dehydrated), gave them my water to drink and brought some water up from the creek to pour over them. I carry emergency filter straws so we were able to drink the creek water once my canteen was empty (not something you want to do unless you have a reliable way to filter/disinfect the water). After a little over an hour the man was able to stand up and his wife and I got them both back to their car. They told me that they had planned on collecting for just a few minutes under the bridge, had wandered down the creek almost a mile, let time get away from them and quickly got overheated and dehydrated. They couldn't get a cell phone signal to call for help (not unusual in these parts) and didn't know what to do. No water, no training in hot weather survival, no way to get assistance - a sure-fire recipe for an "unhappy ending" to their adventure. They ended up with no rocks and a trip to the local hospital because the man was having some chest pain after we got back to their car. Please plan ahead, take water and some way to disinfect more water, let folks know where you are going and use good sense. I've picked up some nice specimens from that creek but none were worth dying for. Needless to say, I didn't collect any rocks that day. I was too tired after helping those folks. Keep in mind that heat can kill you. Remember, safety first. You have to survive the trip to be able to show off the rocks you collect. Take care and I hope to see you all at the next meeting on July 12.

Robert (Rip) Criss



JUNE MEETING MINUTES

The East Texas Gem and Mineral Society monthly meeting called to order by President Rip Criss at 7:00 p.m. June 7, 2010 in a meeting room at the Discovery Science Place in Tyler, TX. Present were 24 members and 3 visitors. President Criss acknowledged the visitors and welcomed them.

Motion to accept minutes of the May, 2010 meeting was made, seconded and the motion carried.

There was no Treasurer's report.

Don Campbell gave a report on the new fluorescent display in the museum side of the Discovery Science Place (DSP) which the club sponsored. The display is set up with motion detectors and switches for interaction. Gene Goar asked who did all the work and Don said that he did owing to the difficulty in scheduling work times. Don said he was assisted by the leader of the woodworking club that also meets at the DSP.

There was no other old business.

Becky Whisenant had information on the field trip to Sam Rayburn Dam on June 26 to gather petrified wood. Door prizes were awarded with Shelley Taylor winning the grand prize.

Following a short discussion, it was determined that the July meeting will be held on July 12 since July 5 will be observed as a Monday holiday this year, due to the 4th of July falling on a Sunday. A church has rented the larger DSP meeting room and it is no longer available for monthly meetings but the room used for the June meeting, which is smaller but in the same building, will be available to the club. Due to the change in rooms, club members will again be allowed to bring refreshments.

A short break was followed by a presentation of the second video in the "What's Hot in Tucson" series which generated much discussion and questions to Don and Tom Stringfellow, who have been to the show.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:
Penny Hawkins, Club Secretary



JULY MEETING PROGRAM

TBA at the meeting.

Volunteers are who help keep the club running for your enjoyment. So, please step up and help out, so those who seem to do the majority of the volunteering are not overburdened.



DID YOU KNOW? Tom Stringfellow

The basic tool for metal-smithing is the torch! You are badly limited in what you can make if you have not mastered use of this fantastic tool. Joining metals, fusing, soldering, depletion gilding, annealing, reticulation, granulation, texturing, and so much more requires use of the torch.

Mastery of soldering is the first step in learning to use the torch. Jewelers use up to eight different melting point solders. From low to high melting point temperatures these are: Tix, Extra-Extra Easy, Extra Easy, Easy, Medium, Hard, Intense Temperature, and Eutectic. The most commonly used are the Easy, Medium and hard.

Silver solders (I'll leave gold out for now, due to cost) contain silver, copper, zinc, and in some cases, Germanium (for Argentium silver soldering, it is the tarnish inhibitor), and 'European Bronze' (for European Filigree work). Each manufacturer's solder is different and one brand of 'medium solder' may melt at a totally different range from another's. It's best to stay with the same source for your solder.

Solder is manufactured as sheet, wire, and paste solder. For convenience some manufacturers clip the sheet to make pallions, or small bits, which are convenient and time saving. All solders must be used with flux. It enables the solder to melt and flow, as well as inhibiting oxidation and tarnishing. The paste solders have the solder, as powder or grains, suspended in a paste-like flux. Paste solders are convenient in that one does not have the added step of applying the flux by spray, brush, or dipping.

Learn to Use the Torch and Solder!! (Plus familiarization with the Flex Shaft)

**Thursday or Saturday, July 15th or 17th
Thursday or Saturday, July 22 or 24
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM**

We will make a simple bezel set sterling silver pendant with a selected cabochon (yours or mine) *OR* a sterling ring with a bezel set cab. *This is a beginners class. Two students per class.*

See samples at our next monthly meeting. Cost—\$80.00, includes use of soldering setups, flex shafts, and cost of metals, stones and supplies. (You must be a member of the East Texas Gem & Mineral Society.)

Contact: Tom Stringfellow, TomString@aol.com or 903-839-6744.

{Special Thanks to the class booster who generously supplied two complete, new soldering setups for class use!!!}

Petrified Wood, Cont'

Hardeman, Haskel, Jones, King, Stonewall, and other West Texas counties. Most of this "petrified wood" is small pieces, and the replacement by chalcocite is complete. I have a small piece of barite from the Big Spring area of Howard County that is supposed to have replaced wood. I have yet to verify this from the literature or by my own examination of the specimen, but I have no reason to doubt it. Goethite (limonite) is a hydrous iron oxide that along with siderite is an ore for iron in East Texas. The goethite occurs as stalactites, concretions, box-work masses, and is reported as a replacement of wood in Marion County (Eckel 1938). It probably also occurs as such in surrounding counties, but the replacement may be so crude that it is not recognized as petrified wood.

Uranium minerals have an affinity for carbonitized wood and may partly or completely replace it. Some of the Gulf Coast uranium mines have much of their ore in carbonitized wood or plant remains, but almost no complete replacements like those originally mined in the Colorado Plateau have been reported.

Silicified petrified wood is the most common replacement in Texas and elsewhere in the western United States. The silica may replace and preserve the actual wood cells. Some silicified wood may show bands, lines, and feathers and be considered agatized, but the composition is the same. No matter if the wood is a white chalcedony or a black flint, the composition is basically the same. It only takes trace amounts of iron, manganese, or other minerals to color it, and they are generally not enough to change the over-all chemical composition.

Just remember that when you say "petrified wood," it is not all the same composition and perhaps you should be more specific. Why did I not take on the revision of the Texas collecting guide? Too much work required in too short a time with too little reward.

~Art Smith, member of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

Published January 2001 in the Backbender's Gazette; via Stone Chipper 06/10

References:

American Geological Institute 1957. Dictionary of Geological Terms. Doubleday, NY.

Mitchell, J.R. 1987. Gem Trails of Texas. Gem Guides Book Company, Pico River, CA.

Eckel, E. B. 1938. The brown iron ores of eastern Texas. U.S. Geological Survey bulletin 902.



DOPPING HINTS

If you follow these steps, you should not have problems with your stone adhering to the dop wax. First, the stone must be completely clean and oil free. Use soap and water or acetone or lacquer thinner to remove oil from the stone. Your cleaning method will depend on the type of cutting fluid, type of stone, and the stone's porosity. After cleaning, water should not bead up on the stone, indicating the stone is completely oil-free.

Choose a dop stick that is as large as possible to use with your stone. The dop stick diameter should be at least 50 percent of the diameter of the stone. 75 percent is better. This gives more area for adhesion and also minimizes bending forces on the dop wax. Next, the stone must be heated for wax to stick. Are you heating the stone before putting it on the hot wax? That is a critical step. Put the stone on the flat surface of the wax heater; face down, with a small bit of wax on the backside of the stone. When the small bit of wax starts to melt, the stone is hot enough to dop properly.

Gem Cutters News – May 2010 via Ore-Cutts, January 2010; via Stoney Statements 05/10

THE UNSOLVED MYSTERY OF BLUE AMBER

by Hermann Dittrich

Blue Amber is only found in one country; in the Caribbean, in the Dominican Republic. There are several theories about the origin of the color and it is not fully understood what causes the blue color in amber. We know that it is a result of fluorescence and no solid color. Ultra-violet or violet light is re-emitted as blue or green light attributed to the presence of poly-nuclear aromatic molecules. (Gemology, Cornelius S. Hurlbut, Jr., Robert C. Kammerling)



This makes a lot of sense, because the best way to test blue amber is holding it under an ultra violet lamp where even the darkest space blue amber changes its color to a radiant cobalt-blue. And, we have noticed that blue amber can be recognized by a very agreeable smell, which is different from regular amber when it is being cut and polished. One theory links the color in Dominican blue amber to the occurrence of volcanic ash or dust which was present when the resin was first pressed out from *hymenaea protera* millions of years ago. Another suggests that due to volcanic activity hot lava must have flown over these areas where regular amber was buried under ground. Due to extreme heat, the amber changed its color first to green and then to blue. Experiments have shown that a change of color occurs when normal amber is heated up. Another detail seems to fit this theory: There are virtually no animal or plant inclusions to be found in blue amber.

Dr. G. Bechly of the Naturkunde museum in Tübingen, Germany writes: —The large absence of inclusions could fit very well into the hypothesis, that the blue amber was secondarily warmed up and melted, since this way such inclusions were destroyed (cooked) (as is also in the case with Sarawak amber). G. Bechly, bechly.smns@naturkundemuseum-bw.de

While the mystery around the origin of its color has not been cleared, one thing is sure; Blue Amber is beautiful and it is extremely rare.

<http://www.ambarazul.com>. [Star-O-Lite 6/10 The Calgary Lapidary Journal 03/05 via The Golden Nugget 2/10; via Stoney Statements 06/10]



FEEL LIKE CARVING?

Try one-cup flour plus 3 cups of Plaster of Paris, and 2 cups water. Mix the flour and plaster together. Add water to thicken. Pour into an oiled container (shoebox, milk carton), and let set up over-night. Use a paring or table knife to carve.

~From News & Views & others via Quarry Quips 10/01, Stoney Statements 11/07, Stone Chipper 01/08

Too many of us are like wheelbarrows - useful only when pushed and too easily upset.

~The Calgary Lapidary Journal, 12/07; Stone Chipper 01/08



Lapidary Corner

PROTECT YOURSELF

We are learning that deafness can be attributed to the noise of our lapidary equipment, As we use facemasks and goggles to protect our lungs and eyes from dust, so we should use ear plugs to protect our ears from the noise of our grinders and saws. Ed. Note: We also need be aware of the dangers of buffing machines used in our jewelry making. If there is no fan directly connected to the buffer, be certain that the area is well ventilated and that you wear a face mask. Protect your eyes too from flying debris from the buffer and from that occasional "slip" and the metal being polished flies off. Be certain to wash your hands after using buffers, grinders and polishers so that bits of the abrasive don't get into your eyes or mouth. Remember...it's always better to err on the side of caution. from The Glacier Drifter 8/01 via The Roamin' Rams 3/97 via GEM CUTTERS NEWS 5/01; via Stoney Statement 06/10

IS "PERMANENTLY BONDED" REALLY FOREVER?

By Rita O'Neal

Recently I purchased a beautiful Brazilian agate which was glued to a bola slide. When I asked the dealer how I could remove the agate, so I could display it rather than wear it, he replied that he glued it with epoxy, and it was on to stay. Later I happened to ask another dealer if he knew of a way I could remove the agate from the tie slide. He said they do it all the time. Just put it in the freezer over night. The next morning use a knife with a thin blade and gently push or pry the blade under the edge of the fastener. The tie slide will just pop off. I followed his instructions, and sure enough, it popped right off. I cleaned off the remaining glue with nail polish remover, which was the dealers second suggestion if the freezer method didn't work. From The Post Rock 6/01; via Stoney Statements 06/10

HINTS & TIPS...

ON USING BELL CAPS

by Honer C. Whiblock

You should rough or grind where the bell caps will fit. Be sure to use a good cleanser (not rubbing alcohol). It is better to use denatured alcohol. If you pick up some children's play clay from your local store, you can successfully use it with the bell caps. Push your stone into the clay to hold it straight. Put the glue or epoxy on top of the stone and put the bell cap on it. That way it is easy to clean off and will not be so messy. By roughing the stone with emery cloth you will be able to make the epoxy hold a lot better. Be sure not to touch it with your fingers as they leave a film of fine oil on the material. GOLDEN SPIKE NEWS 2/99; from the Roadrunner March 2003 Pegmatite 11/78, via Rockytier 2/03; via Stoney Statements 06/10

SHOP HINT:

Try citric acid as a pickle instead of Sparex. Because citric acid is carbon-based instead of sulfate-based, the residues left on material being re-melted for casting are less troublesome. Sulfate residues may form sulfur dioxide, which is soluble in the re-melted metal and thus creates porosity, while the carbon residues from the citric acid burn off without causing porosity. Use several cups of citric acid powder to a crock-pot full of water. It is used hot. Obtain citric acid through bakery and food supply companies. By Phil Poirier, From Shawnee *Slate*. 10/98.; Via Stoney Statements 06/10

SHOP HINT:

To make rock saws remain friction free, clean the saw blade perfectly clean and free from all oil and residue and then spray with PAM. It also works well on guides for the vise. via Golden Spike News, 7/00; via Stoney Statements 06/10

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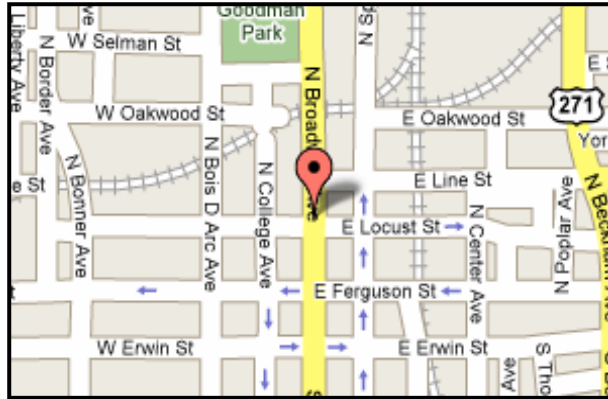
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FIELD TRIP CHAIRMAN: Your name could be HERE!!!
Volunteer Today!

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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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