ROCK-N-ROSE

THE EAST TEXAS GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

PAGE 1 VOLUME 46 TYLER, TEXAS ISSUE 5 MAY 2020

Upcoming Events

AUGUST 1-2
LUBBOCK G&MS
LUBBOCK MEM. CIV. CTR
LUBBOCK, TX

AUGUST 8-9
BATON ROUGE G&MS
LAMAR-DIXON EXPO
GONZALES, TX

AUGUST 29-30
FORT WORTH G$MS
WILL ROGERS MEM. CTR.
FORT WORTH, TX

This information is correct at the time of printing. I will try to keep you as up to date of any changes, as possible.

Inside This Issue

Header text background is courtesy of a photo from Robert Redmond.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone is surviving the quarantine without any of the disastrous results we've heard about. My main contact with the outside world has been the internet. Interestingly enough, there has been lots of geology related posts from the various people and pages I follow, including some awesome mineral and fossil finds. You can always expand the topics with the various links you will find. It's also a good way to learn the terms that geologists seem to be particularly fond of creating. This has certainly been a time to take advantage of studying topics in our hobby that are of interest to us. I am looking forward, as you all are, to resuming our normal activities. David Russ

The motion is to suspend all club meetings through the end of May. The May field trip will be determined later in the month at the discretion of the Field Trip Chairman and Board of Directors. Margaret Kilanski

Hi everyone. It's been awhile since we've all been together. I believe we are going to see each other soon!

I'm back again reminding everyone that we need rock/mineral/fossil/gem related items for our Club's various auctions. Your donations can be natural, polished, finished, art, jewelry, etc.

Every donation is very much appreciated and helps our club meet our financial obligations and provides funds from workshops, equipment etc.

Please think about donating when you're out collecting, cleaning out your collections. Give me a call, if you would like me to pick up your donations. I'm willing to clean up pieces too, and I am planning on doing a significant quartz crystal cleaning session this summer.

A shout out of appreciation to Julia Toombs, Terry Roberts, Kinney Polve, Pete Keiser, Charles Creekmur, Zachary Weenink, and Karl Siggelow for their donations.

Thanks and take care - Margaret Kilanski

All club activities are suspended until further notice, due to the COVID-19 restrictions. This means no sub-group meetings, regular monthly meeting, field trips, etc. from now until the end of May.

What's Going on with ETGMS.Org

By Margaret Kilanski

Hi everybody. It's always great to get comments and requests on our website! Below are a couple of requests we received this month, and I wanted to share them with all of you.

"Hi. We hope you guys had a good weekend! My Girl Scout Troop and I just wanted to reach out, because you have been super helpful with our "Rocks & Minerals" fun patches! Thank you so much! Since we're no longer meeting up and social distancing ourselves due to the COVID-19, we've been doing some distance learning! We came across your page - https://www.etgms.org/links.html while compiling a list of helpful tools and have been using it as a reference ever since. To pay it forward, the girls wanted to suggest another resource we came across that they thought would complement your page. It's https://www.alansfactoryoutlet.com/hubfs/hardness-of-metals-visual-representation-mohs-scale-5.png, and it's a great visual representation of the Mohs Scale on various metallic elements and alloys. If you decided to add it to your resources, I'd love to show the girls that their suggestion was up and running to help others! It would really help them feel that they contributed positively and hopefully motivate them to keep at it. We're trying our absolute best to stay grounded and constructive during these confusing times. Stay safe! Denise Goodwin & her Junior Scouts"

Comment from ETGMS Webmaster: Added the suggested link on the Links Page on ETGMS.Org.

"Hello! I am the camp director at Texas East Kids. We offer multiple camps throughout the summer. We offer a Dinosaur camp in which the kids learn about different dinosaurs and fossils. We would love to plan something in which we can walk our kids over or have y'all join us and show the kids some of the fossils and other interesting items you may have. We would greatly appreciate it! Thanks! Marisol Knight- Camp Director at TEK."

Comment from ETGMS Webmaster: Marisol and I are discussing options given the current situation.

THE MEX-TEX MINE
BINGHAM, NEW MEXICO

By Charles Creekmur

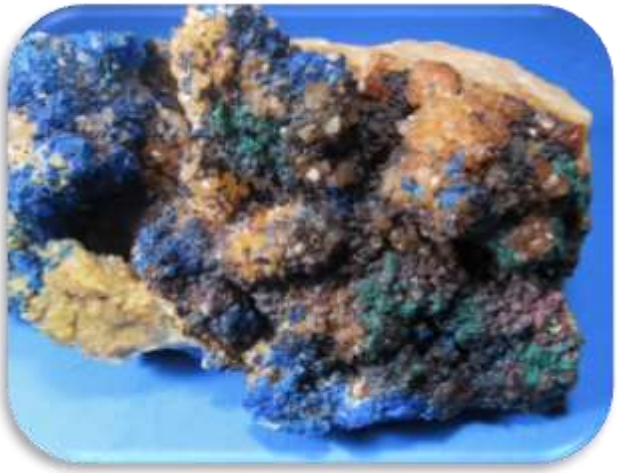
The Mex-Tex Mine is located in the Hansonburg Mining District of the Oscura Mtns in southeastern Socorro County, New Mexico. It is five miles south of the Bingham post office on U.S. 380 at an elevation of 6099 ft. The Hansonburg Mining District is one of about thirty barite-fluorite-galena deposits found throughout the Rio Grande Rift in southern New Mexico. The most common primary (hypogene) minerals in the district are fluorite, barite, galena, and quartz, with minor amounts of other sulfide minerals including galena, sphalerite, chalcopyrite, and pyrite. In all, more than fifty separate mineral species have been identified from the mine. The author visited the site regularly from 1958 to 1965 and collected a variety of specimens, many quite rare that will be presented here with a brief explanation.

Above - Pale green fluorite with galena.
Left - 27 lb. fluorite w/ galena (3 inches on face) altering to anglesite with cerussite.

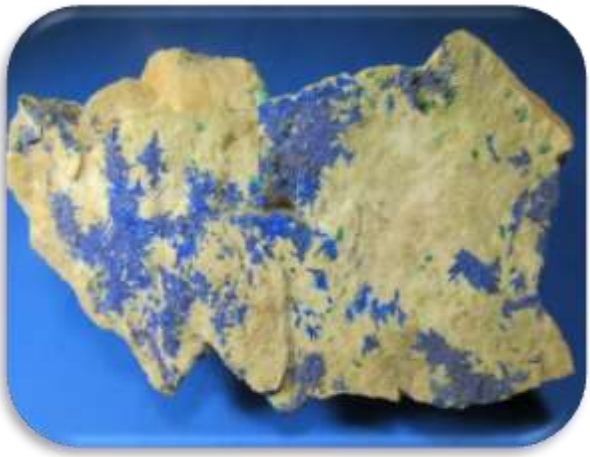
The mine was operated by the Hansonburg Mining Company, primarily for the mineral barite for its barium content. Secondary ores included galena, covellite, linarite, malachite, anglesite, argentite, and fluorite, with quartz and calcite being waste minerals. Last production was in 1962. The district is a BLM Administrative Area.

Above - A 38-pound cluster of rounded pale green fluorites partially covered in quartz with several galena crystals covered in anglesite.

Above - A 2-inch blue fluorite was hiding inside of this pale amethyst quartz "knob".

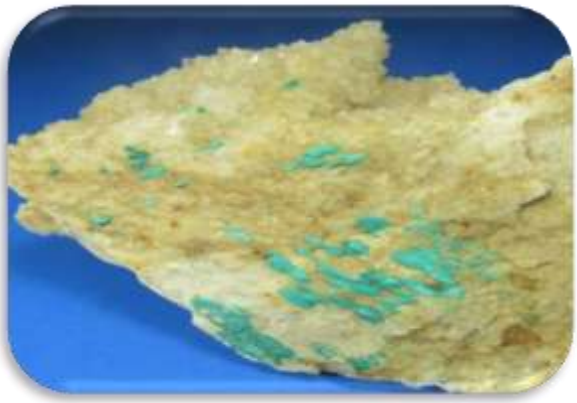


Above - Blue linarite and green malachite on a quartz matrix sprinkled with tiny black plattnerite crystals. Plattnerite is a lead dioxide.



Above - Linarite and several small patches of malachite on quartz. The Hansonburg district produces some world class linarites.

Above - 1-inch pale blue fluorite crystals with a few thin baryte blades.

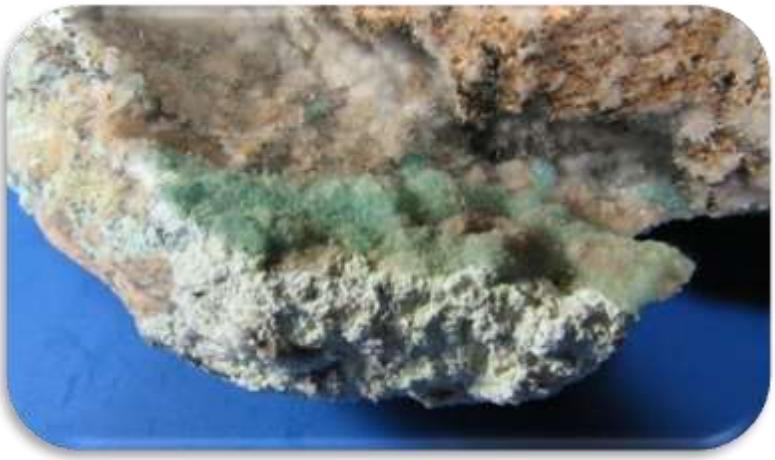


Above - Bundles of malachite on quartz matrix.

Continued page 4

Above - 4-inch specimen of baryte blades covered in tiny murdockite crystals.

Above - A fine Brochantite with a pale green unknown on quartz.

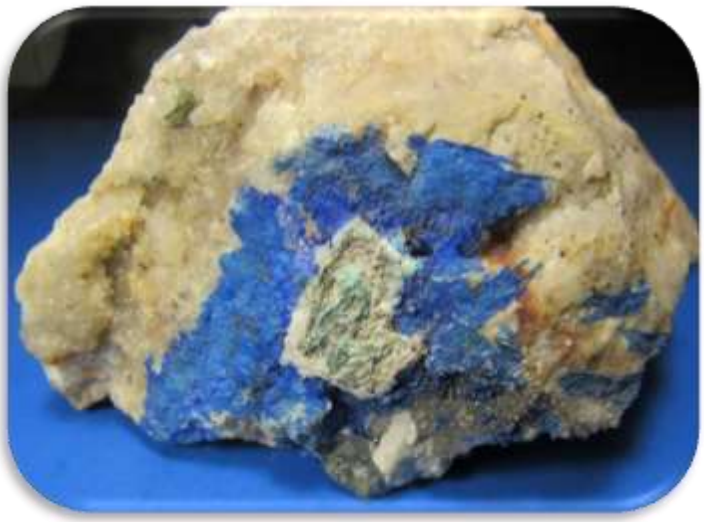


Above - Aurichalcite and Hemimorphite on quartz.

Above - Dusty coating of rare leadhillite on pale blue fluorite.

Above - Spangolite on massive quartz.

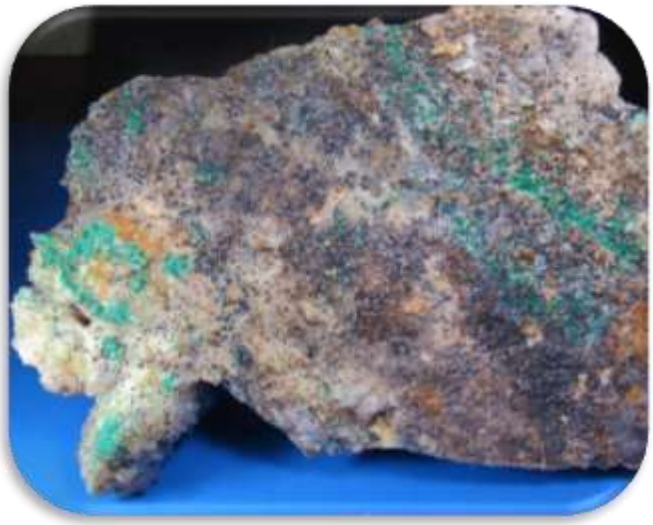
Above - 1-inch galena cubes altering to anglesite.



Above - A ¾ inch galena cube completely altered to anglesite surrounded by linarite on quartz matrix.

Above - Iron stained quartz covering baryte blades.

Above - 3-inch baryte crystals coated with quartz.

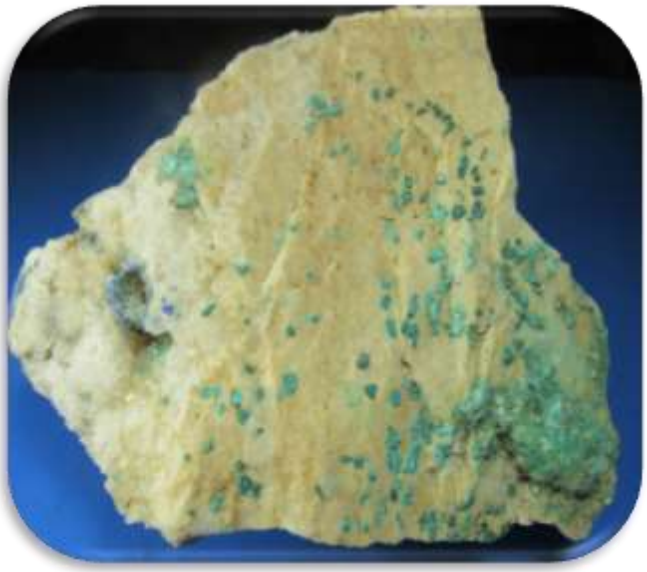


Above - A 10-inch slab of quartz matrix is host to some caledonite and the dimorph of plattnerite called scrutinyite. The Hansonburg district is the type locality for scrutinyite and specimens of this size and abundance are quite rare. Usually only a few grains are present on a specimen and require x-ray or optical means to distinguish.

Left - An 8-inch-wide specimen of Baryte blades encrusted with quartz, sprinkled with a few murdockite crystals and linarite.

Continued page 6

Above - Beautiful blue cyanotrichite "hairs" and spangolite fill a cavity in a 2-inch baryte.

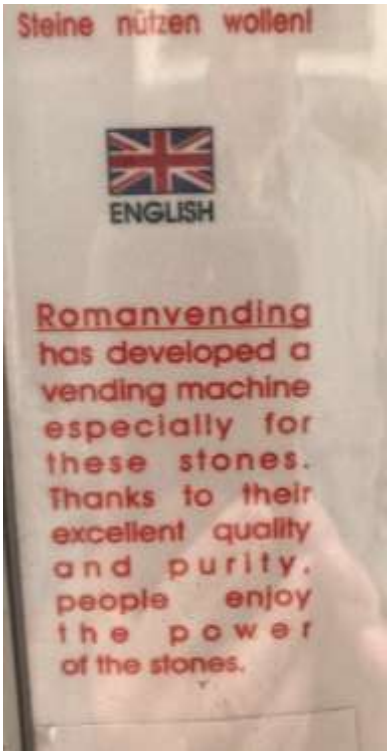


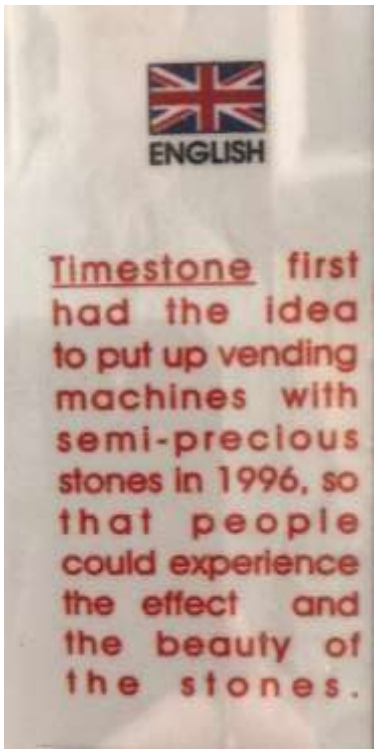
Above - Malachite on quartz.

Rock Vending Machine

By Dave Metzner

A year ago, my wife Marcia and I took a Viking European River cruise on the Danube from Budapest to Amsterdam. Along the way, we ran across a rock curiosity of sorts. In the little town of Melk, Austria we found this rock kiosk vending machine, where the vendors claimed each rock has some kind of magical power. We didn't buy any because we already had plenty of rocks but thought it was an interesting idea for folks like us, who trade in rocks and things. By the way, they were selling for one Euro, which is about $1.08 today.





How a Mineral Gets Its Name

By Margaret Kilanski

I always learn something fun when I attend sub-group meetings and sometimes something really piques my curiosity. During the February Mineral Group meeting, our great mineral information leader Charles Creekmur told us that Amazonite is the trade name for Amazonstone. This got me wondering about how minerals got their names, and since I had some spare time these last few weeks, I decided to do some research. I found a significant amount of information on this subject when I did a Google search. Some of the sites I checked out were way over this "pebble puppy's" head. I found an interesting article on http://www.geologypage.com/2018/03/minerals-rocks-get-names.html, of which I'm giving you a subset of below. Check out the full article if you want more details. It's an interesting read for us "pebble puppies" :).

What's in a Mineral Name?

In 1960, the International Mineralogical Society established the Commission on New Minerals and Mineral Names. When mineralogists believe they have found a new mineral, they send their data and proposed name to the Commission. If the Commission is convinced that the mineral has not been previously described and that the name is suitable, then the mineralogists may publish their data.

The Commission also works on problems with minerals named before 1960. For example, Sphene and Titanite refer to the same mineral. The commission found that "titanite" had been proposed first, hence "titanite" is now the approved name. Similarly, Celestine replaces Celestite, although you may still see either name on mineral labels.

Since 1960, the Commission has approved hundreds of new minerals, an average of over 43 per year. Most of these are rare and found only in tiny grains.

Origin of Names for Rocks and Minerals

The rock and mineral names can be traced quite often to Greek and to Latin. It is common practice to add an "ite" to a mineral name. The suffix "ite" is derived from the Greek word lithos (from its adjectival form -ites), meaning rock or stone. While the vast majority of mineral names end in "ite," some have the suffixes "ine" or "ide." Most original names referred to physical characteristics of the rock or mineral, and/or the location where the rock or mineral was first found. In fact, this way of naming stones is still common today, with the addition of naming the rock and mineral for a person.

Physical characteristics are actually the most consistent way to name a rock or mineral, as those characteristics rarely change. Malachite's name is from the Greek, malache, – "mallow" in reference to its green leaf color. Azurite came from azure which is derived from the Arabic word for blue. Kyanite's name is derived from the Greek word kyanos, also meaning blue. An example of how this isn't accurate-Carnelian's name is derived from the Latin word meaning flesh, in reference to the flesh color sometimes exhibited. But Carnelian's color can actually range from peach or flesh colored to light brownish red to deep transparent red.

Naming a rock or mineral after the location it is found is much more complicated. Along with physical characteristics, this is a common way to name agate and jasper stones and is a great way to individualize the agate or jasper. Such as Willow Creek Jasper, Biggs Jasper, and Brazilian Agate. But when the rock or mineral is not a member of the agate or jasper family, it gets more difficult. For instance- Labradorite is named for where it was first found near Labrador, Canada. But now most Labradorite on the market is coming from Madagascar. Shattuckite is named from where it was first found, i.e. the Shattuck mine, in Bisbee, Arizona. Until around 2003 - 2004, the Shattuckite Mine was the ONLY mine in the world producing this mineral. Now most of this material is coming from the Congo in Africa. And of course, Agate was named from where it was first found – by the River Achates (now called the river Drillo) in Sicily, but agate is found on every continent!

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Even more questionable is the practice of naming a rock or mineral after a person. Prehnite, named for Colonel Hendrik Von Prehn (1733-1785), has the distinction of being the first mineral named after a person. Covellite was named after the Italian mineralogist Niccolo Covelli (1790-1829), who first discovered this mineral on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius. Sometimes not only the discoverer is honored in such a way, but even princes, politicians, and others can be honored, who may actually have had nothing to do with the rock or mineral. Dumortierite was first discovered in 1881 and named for the French paleontologist Eugene Dumortier (1803-1873).

Also, more recently it has become common to give rocks and minerals "trade names". This is often done to make the name more romantic or more marketable (Royal Lavulite in place of Sugilite), to separate the high grade version of the material from the more common and less expensive variety (Imperial Jade is just high grade jade and Tsavorite is a green Garnet), to identify a specific variety of a mineral (Rubelite is actually a pink Tourmaline, Emerald is actually a green Beryl), or even to hide the actual rock or mineral name to avoid giving away the source to competitors. Sometimes a rock is composed of several minerals, as in the recent find of Chrysocolla, Cuprite, Chalcotricite and other copper ores from Mexico. Since one mineral name would not be accurate and using them all would be cumbersome, it was named Sonora Sunset. Unfortunately, it also is referred to as Sonora Sunrise, Crimson Cuprite, and even Sangria de Toro!

Source: http://www.geologypage.com/2018/03/minerals-rocks-get-names.html,

And that's a wrap folks – time to check the tumblers - from the Kilanski kingdom. We hope you are all happy and healthy! We're looking forward to seeing you soon!!!

AUCTIONS, ROCK SHOPS, & FOSSICKING, OH YEAH!

By Lynnette C Metcalf, G.G., GIA

Rockhounds LOVE great gem, mineral and fossil specimens. So much so, in fact, that we are in a constant state of vigilance, eagle eyes surveying the ground around us or scanning the shelves and bins of rock shops for that "special" find. And then there are those hunters among us, who scour online auction pages for that "find" not readily available using the other two methods.

For most "hounds" there is nothing more gratifying than discovering a treasure buried on (or in) hard-packed earth, hidden under basalt cap rock, shining in three feet of runoff creek water, entwined within the roots of an ancient tree, or hundreds of feet inside a narrow mine tunnel. That "Eureka" moment remains with the finder for a lifetime and spurs long term enthusiasm for the hobby.

Rock shop "fossicking" is second only to finding specimens "in the wild". Gems and minerals not found in local hunting grounds are made available from the world over in shops in both raw and polished forms. Lapidarists, collectors and jeweler-hobbyists scavenge these marketplaces for particular stones, minerals and fossils to be used in their art or displays.

In recent years, the ever-expanding convenience of the Internet resulted in rock shops making their inventories available online. Etsy, Amazon, eBay and thousands of individual websites offer their wares 24/7. Although web auctions have served many for years, in the last 15 years specialized auctions dealing specifically in gems, minerals and fossils are notable. In her book *Jewelry & Gems at Auction,* by Antoinette Matlins, P.G., she introduces the concept of truly personal Internet auctions.

Auctions, as a method of selling wares, have existed for thousands of years. Famous auction houses still use traditional methods such as on-site "hand/card raising bids" and telephone bids. Bidding by computer (in the past by email, later texting, now almost instantaneous) facilitated by on-site representatives at major auction houses have operated almost

since the World Wide Web got enough connectivity to handle the traffic. Nowadays, anyone with a valid email and a credit card or PayPal account can participate in most auctions, limited only by the extent of their available credit.

So! You have discovered a website that offers auctions consisting of gems, minerals and/or fossils. The site checks out as legitimate (something any bidder should always do). The question: Is the site operated individually (meaning one person selling their wares)? Or is the site an "aggregator"? Here is where this article focuses.

An aggregator is an auction house that combines several or many different gem & mineral sellers from around the world into one planned auction to be held on a certain day. The sellers provide information regarding their inventory items for sale (not the actual items themselves) to the aggregator who creates an online 'catalog' of all items submitted. The catalog listings contain a description, a photo (perhaps 2 or 3) and a minimum bid requirement. Auction aggregators get paid by (a) charging sellers to list, (and likely a percentage of the winning bid) (b) charging buyers a percentage of the winning bid and (c) often assessing a surcharge for "handling". Sounds something like eBay, Etsy and Amazon, etc., except these folks don't do letter (b) above. Once sold, the *seller* ships the item directly from their location to the buyer's stated address. It is not unusual to receive items from around the world.

Eyes on the ball, er, gem. Be details oriented and very aware of what you want versus what you are actually attempting to buy! Here are a few **BOLOs** ('Be-On-The-Lookout-For') when buying from gem auction aggregators.

First and foremost: Know your stone! There are plenty of books, magazines and online sources to help you gird your loins. Your Society's in-house library is a good place to start. Ask your group's gemologist, lapidarist, or geologist about the stone you are contemplating buying.

Descriptions: Don't read just the description paragraph. Many times, they are woefully under-informative! *Read the entire listing carefully.* Look for measurements (carats, ounces, centimeters, millimeters, inches). A great photograph showing what appears to be a large (over 1 carat) stone may actually depict a stone that is only 0.25carats (1/4 carat, or 25 points).

Photographs may NOT be worth a thousand words. Sometimes to save time, sellers use the same photo repeatedly to sell different stones of the same type. Be suspicious if you see this gimmick. If the seller doesn't care enough to show you the actual stone, move on.

Above photos - Pink Kunzite 31.05 Carats, Rectangle/Emerald cut, top and bottom. Note the color is not saturated, as a top-quality stone would be. The faceting is "poor" and there are many inclusions visible through a 10x loop. Still, properly mounted, this pink kunzite will catch the eye.

The listings are not truly curated by the aggregator, meaning they don't examine every stone and cross-check it. They make sure the seller is who they say they are, but they are not gemologists. Generally, 98-plus percent of the inventory is what the seller says it is. Just be aware that the glowing descriptions provided are mostly hyperbole designed to excite you into bidding. Smart bidders read the entire listing and peruse the main description with a healthy grain of salt.

As a general rule, most listings of this type do NOT offer top quality products. Most offerings will be mid-grade (sometimes lower) with a few pleasant surprises. Faceting may be botched, the best cutting angle misjudged, the polish uneven, have many inclusions or even cracks. That said, many stones are acceptable for use by craft jewelry hobbyists for resale or can be reworked by a competent lapidary or faceting artist.

True 'top of the line' items are not sold via aggregators. High quality gems, minerals, and fossils go through different wholesale/retail channels like the annual Tucson International Gem & Mineral Show and other major shows/venues. There are no "once-in-a-lifetime" finds to be unearthed in aggregate gem auctions. The dealers/sellers

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appraise their incoming inventory constantly and thoroughly, looking for that 'mistake' the *miner* may have made. They know exactly what they are looking at and have decades more experience doing so.

Watch for fraud. In truth, there is very little outright fraud to be found when buying through *well-vetted* gem, mineral and fossil auction aggregators. Sure, there may be slight over-statements of quality in the description, and/or names of stones may be miss-characterized occasionally (may be beryl, but not emerald, *per se*). Sellers often establish a "reserve price" (or minimum dollar amount they will accept to sell an item) requirement. If a bidder "bids the reserve" the item will be sold. This practice can be somewhat confusing, which is why it is important to understand the entire online auction process. Sometimes sellers establish ridiculously high reserve prices, with no intention of selling, just to ascertain an item's potential market value. It is not illegal--it is market research.

Above photos - Heliodor 12.66 Carats Oval cut, top and side. Heliodor should shine brightly like the sun. This one is more like a 'deep golden-brown dwarf' sun. But still, it is very pretty and the size alone attracts attention.

Above photos - Green Tourmaline 179.5 grams, rough. This auction as advertised as nearly one-quarter of a pound of rough. Photograph 5, without the 25-cent coin, makes the rough pieces look large and easy to polish. Photo 6 containing the 25-cent coin shows the actual size of the rough. This rough is difficult to polish and almost impossible to drill holes through for beads. This is a prime example of failing to read and understand the entire auction and what is truly being offered.

Conversely, some aggregated gem auctions are advertised as a "No Reserve" sale. When this type of auction is offered it means no matter how low the bid is, the stone *will* be sold. Often, the price of shipping the item will be more than the cost of the stone! Be aware that it is easy to go "bid crazy" if the item is popular and many bidders want the item. Read and understand clearly what is being offered before bidding. Have a "bid limit" firmly fixed in advance of the auction. There's been many a case of "buyer's remorse" resulting from over-bidding. Be advised most of the offerings at "No Reserve" gem sales are lower in quality. Most dealers in these auctions are simply "blowing out" slow-moving inventory that is taking up shelf-space they need for new arrivals.

Many auction mavens have methods or "systems" on how to bid-to-win, which are not addressed here. With online research, it is easy to add these approaches to your bidding strategy arsenal.

Bottom line: Be product & auction system knowledgeable. Use bidding savvy. Know your financial limits. Do NOT deviate. Happy hunting!

Ref: *Jewelry & Gems at Auction, Antoinette Matlins, P.G., Gemstone Press, Woodstock VT, Copyright 2002 ISBN 0-943763-29-0*

Above photos - Blue Cap Tourmaline: 19.2 Carats, rough. Top & bottom. This item is medium-low grade quality. The tourmaline is large enough to polish, but fragile. Note the crack showing through the top. There is ragged, stepped shearing on the bottom. Perhaps the best fabricating solution is to make two stones from the rough. The color and saturation are light. Still, properly polished, this stone can make a nice pendant.

Left photos - Yellow Beryl, 7.40 Carats, rectangular 'fat' and deep cushion cut. Top and bottom. Though description did not mention the word "emerald", not even in the 'cut' style, it did use the terms "Yellow Aquamarine" with the word "beryl" following in parenthesis. This is a potential misnomer. Although aquamarine can be many colors of green, blue, and blue green, yellow is unusual. "Yellow Beryl" is more accurate. The color does have a "lemony" cast. However, it was called "aquamarine" because that gemstone is readily recognized by the general public, whereas "beryl" is less so. This stone was offered in a "No Reserve" auction (as described in the article). Note there are many inclusions such as "fingerprints & rain" internally as well as pressure fractures along one side. The faceting is "fair to poor". Still, even as it is, looking through the table of this beryl, the gem will glitter in the right reflective setting.

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Welo Opal (Ethiopian Opal): 36.06 Carats Rondelle bead string, 36cm or 14 inches, 'white opal'. These 2 photos show how 'size' can be deceptive. It is so pretty and full of color and light. 36 carats sounds like a lot. Even the length of the string sounds impressive. But, as revealed in the photo on the right, the 25-cent coin shows just how small each stone actually is. The largest stones are ¼ Carat (25 points). But, these opals were *graduated in size* with the smallest being just *5 points*. Tiny.

Gardening with Rocks

By Becky Whisenant

It has been absolutely wonderful to be able to stay home lately and spend so much time outside. Since we cut some trees around our place to let in a little more sunshine, I was dying to plant a new garden. For variety, I thought a Texas-shaped garden would be cool.

We have poor soil so the garden is a combination of vermiculture, raised beds, French Intensive and compost gardening. It took a lot of prep time. The fun part was integrating the rocks. It is difficult for me to do anything in or around our home without including rocks, so naturally I found a way.

Mapping out rivers in my garden provided a path to walk on to access plants without disturbing the soil, so I used hematitic sandstone – native to these parts and commonly called iron ore – to lay out the Pecos River cutting across the Permian Basin area. I selected some slightly larger iron ore chunks to use for the Colorado River which splits Texas almost into two halves.

For the good old Neches River, I used petrified wood since so much is found in the river's drainage area. And I left some of my composting woody debris in the river's path, because there are always logs clogging up the Neches.

There were two pesky stumps left over from last summer. On the one in northeastern Texas, I placed two fossil clam shells of the sort sometimes found in that area, and I placed a nice agate chunk on the stump in west Texas to represent the beautiful specimens found in that arid part of the state.

The photo was taken a few weeks ago so the plants were small and the okra and cantaloupe seeds had not come up yet in the Valley. I have since placed a feral hog skull marking Cherokee County – appropriate, I thought. Couldn't resist it. Hopefully, in a few weeks, greenery will obscure the rivers and rocks and yellow squash and tomatoes will pile up in my kitchen.

Shop Time

I completed five Queensland agate cabs recently but decided not to show a picture of the bottom left cab because it had so many reflections that all the interior features were obliterated. The top left and right center photos are the front and back of the same cab. The slab was thicker than normal, so I decided to cab each side since they were different. Unfortunately, there were some small cracks in it. The top right and bottom right photos are different cabs but from the same nodule. I thought everyone would like to determine what the image represents in each cab. To me, it looks a little like Darth Vader. The last photo shows a typical Queensland agate from the area that Dennis Stanley goes to each year. He usually brings back over 1,000 lbs. to sell at various gem and mineral shows he attends each year. The cab shows some beautiful bands, as well as a reflection of my camera.

Terry Roberts

Lapidary/Jewelry Group – Meets on the second Saturday of each month at 2:00 pm, except December and January. Terry Roberts leads this group. Contact Terry to have your name added to the email. terry.roberts45@yahoo.com

Mineral Group – Meets every second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm. Charles Creekmur heads up the group. Contact Charles to have your name added to the email. - calcite65@gmail.com

Fossil Group – Meets every third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. David Russ heads up the group. Contact David to have your name added to the email. dbruss50@gmail.com

Gemology Group Meets every third Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm. The group is led by Richard Armstrong. Contact Richard to have your name added to the email. keltfire@msn.com

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

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 regular monthly club meetings.

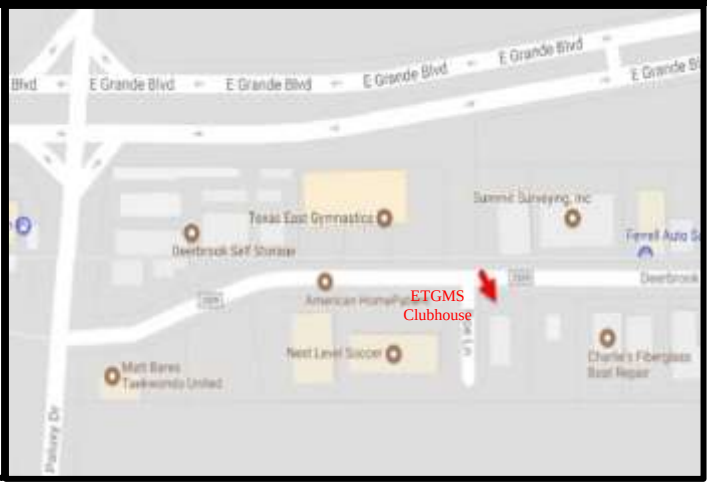
ANNUAL DUES:

Single: $10.00 - Family: $20.00

MONTHLY MEETING:

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

WHERE: ETGMS Clubhouse, 2015 Deerbrook Drive, Tyler, Texas



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CLUB ADDRESS AND TO SEND DUES

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Rock-N-Rose Newsletter
8665 County Road 373D
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