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A.F.M.S. Newsletter

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES
SERVING SEVEN REGIONAL FEDERATIONS

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Volume 61, Number 8
September, 2008

LAST CHANCE TO WIN BIG FOR 2008!

by Joy Bourne, AFMS Endowment Fund Chair

I trust that you have been having a great summer, vacationing, gardening and enjoying the sunshine and summer picnics with friends and families. Isn't it a great time of year? Well, I am here to tell you that while you have been relaxing, your faithful Endowment Fund Committee folks have been out there garnering some Super prizes for us to add to our already spectacular collection for the Drawing to be held in Humble, Texas later this month! We now have a total of 15 prizes - that's five more than we had last time I wrote.

Without further ado - here is what they are, complete with pictures of the new arrivals.

Prize #11: Fossil leaf specimen.

This unusual plate of fossil leaves measures about 12" vertically to 15" horizontally (as viewed in the picture). It exhibits three distinct genera, including *Metasequoia occidentalis*; *Prunus coloradensis*, and



Platanus sp. The piece dates to the Paleocene epoch (early Cenozoic age), and was collected in the Sentinel Butte formation, McLean County, North Dakota. This excellent fossil plate was donated by Steven Holley, proprietor of Copeas Creek Fossils in Farmington, IL, who values it at \$50.00. (MWF)

Prize #12: Ceremonial Native American Knife knapped and donated by Henry Vaughn, member of the Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society.

The material is Mahogany Obsidian which

would have been used mostly in the Pacific Northwest in the region of its sources. The maple display rack which accompanies the blade was fashioned by Ken Anderson. Retail value as set by Betty James and based on materials and craftsmanship is \$350. (SFMS)



Prize #13: Two Moonstone Carvings; Cameo and Cross, carved and donated by Kenneth Neaves, a world-class carver from Lansing NC who has been carving since 1968.

His work is incredibly beautiful, and can be viewed on the internet at the website, <www.lopaci.com> in the "Other Artists." section. The moonstone came from Avery County, NC, at a site which has been closed for many years now, and the material is extremely rare. Mr. Neaves graciously offered the prize to committeeman, Ken Anderson for our special Endowment Fund project this year He values the set at \$550 (SFMS)



Prize #14: Prize #14: Burning Bush Rhyolite Beaded Necklace

The 3"x3" rhyolite centerpiece of this strikingly beautiful original necklace is an excellently polished semi-rectangular "Burning Bush" piece of rhyolite set in a delica bead bezel with pressed and faceted glass bead embellishment and delica leaves - all mounted on a leatherette back.

The centerpiece is hung from a 22" "crazy horse

canyon" bead necklace. The entire piece was created and donated by Betty James, EFMLS Region VII vice-president and SFMS First Vice President! Betty reliably reports that the necklace would sell in her market for \$425. (EFMLS/SFMS)



Prize #15: Faceted Portuguese Cut Rose Quartz

SFMS Past-President Buddy Shotts has really out-done himself with this spectacular gemstone which he has donated for the 2008 Drawing. The stone is a 24.86-

Continued on page 4

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

My Thoughts This Month.....	2	Words of Caution.....	8
AFMS Convention Time	3	Be Safe - Be Well.....	9
Show Activities	3	Exhibiting	9
Regional Federation Conventions.....	4	Public Relations.....	9
Tri-Federation Roundup Review.....	5	Gus Meister	10
Quick Tips for Editors.....	6	AFMS Committees.....	11
Having Fun - Junior Activities.....	6	Rocks in a Box Challenge.....	12
All American Yearbook, Part III.....	6	Dig Those Crazy Fossil Names	12
Club Rockhounds of the Year.....	7	AFMS Code of Ethics.....	12



AFMS Newsletter
Carolyn Weinberger, Editor
PO Box 302
Glyndon, MD 21071-0302

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OFFICERS:



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SHIRLEY LEESON

<shirleyleeson@msn.com>



PRESIDENT-ELECT
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<csprings@epix.net>



1ST VICE PRESIDENT
EMERSON TUCKER

<emerson@ suddenlink.net>



2ND VICE PRESIDENT
JOHN BLUE

<jblue@n2net.net>



3RD VICE PRESIDENT
LAUREN WILLIAMS

<slharuir@yahoo.com>



4TH VICE PRESIDENT
DON MONROE

<donmonroe@windstream.net>



5TH VICE PRESIDENT
RICHARD JAEGER

<Rjgrsci@aol.com>

SECRETARY
ANNE COOK

<secretary@amfed.org>

TREASURER
PAT LARUE

<bplarue@earthlink.net>

We've had some time to rest up from the recent Regional Federation meetings in Northwest and California. But I want to tell you about two events that may interest you.

In the Northwest, Lyle Vogelpohl, NFMS Treasurer announced that for the first time in many years the NFMS has increased it's membership instead of decreasing it. This is encouraging to say the least.

And in my home Regional Federation, the CFMS has successfully achieved a growing trend of competitive exhibits. With over thirty exhibits this year, it tops last year by ten. Last year was a banner year because the CFMS members also scored well at the AFMS show in Roswell, New Mexico taking seven AFMS trophies.

This is not due to sitting back and talking about it, it's been done by a number of prominent current and past officers and chairmen working hard to encourage participation in exhibiting at the Federation level. It's because there are articles of encouragement almost every month in the CFMS Newsletter. It has taken the CFMS Rules Committee making a pledge to help exhibitors by fielding questions regarding rules, entry forms, Group, Division and finally class in the division, to achieve this new interest in competing. In addition, the Rules Committee has offered to attend meetings to talk about "the dreaded Rules Book, and how to read it". At the show they lined up clubs who wanted members of the committee to attend their club shows and evaluate club member exhibits with an eye to competing at the Federation level in the near future. Many exhibitors are looking toward the AFMS/CFMS combined show in 2010 in Riverside, with an expectation of entering. I believe this can be duplicated in other Regional Federations..... Could this be a challenge???

I'd like to share something I think will interest many BEADERS throughout the regions. With the help of Phyllis George, and the group of beaders from Houston Gem & Mineral Society, Dee & I were given a working plan for putting a beading section in the AFMS Rules. When we arrived at the CFMS show in Ventura in June we showed the proposal to Cheri George (no relation) and she continued where Phyllis and her group had left off. After Cheri got all the suggestions in order, Dee put it in "Rules speak". We hope the Uniform Rules Committee will look favorably on it and pass it at their meeting so we can begin having a Beading Section in the AFMS Rules Book next year, 2009. Watch for developments.

If you haven't made your reservations for the Convention and show in Humble, Texas, do so otherwise you're going to miss something special, "Texas-Style." The Houston Gem & Mineral Society puts on an annual show that is something to behold. They have schools on a waiting list to attend their show on Friday and this year, even though it will be a combined AFMS/SCFMS convention and show it won't be any different. For those of you who need some encouragement in having school children at your show, this event will open your eyes! I have been there personally in the past, and it is wondrous to see.

The events planned for the AFMS/SCFMS convention and show are outstanding. You're only problem is choosing which one because some overlap. You just can't pack all the things planned into such a short period, but they have certainly tried. My hat is off to: Shira Trumble who has been a personal go-between for everyone in the AFMS who needed help. And to Scott Singleton, show chair, sincere thanks.

This year I have sent out "Alerts" from the Blue Ribbon Coalition to various regional federations and individuals and clubs, letting them know about proposed road closures. I would like to offer this service to the clubs - send me your email and I'll alert you to things happening in your area by Forestry and BLM. What I have planned is a network of emails of clubs so we can keep in contact. Your email is important and a resource. If someone would like to take on a state and build a network within that state, let me know. Here in California we already have a loose network, but I'd like to see every club in California have a representative on the network.

Till next month,

Your president

Shirley

URGENT NEWS

THE PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION ACT, HR 554

Congress is currently in recess and will reconvene shortly after Labor Day. This means that you have a very short window to contact your representative about this bill.

Take advantage of it!

Remember, although this bill is aimed at fossils, it is possible that the next piece of legislation will target the collection of minerals or cutting rough!

More details can be found on page 8 of this issue.



It's AFMS CONVENTION TIME AGAIN!

by Joy Bourne, AFMS President-elect

By the time you will be reading this message, we will have only three short weeks remaining until the 61st Annual Meeting of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc., in Humble Texas. We are looking forward to seeing all our good Rockhound friends, and to the wonderful Texas hospitality we always enjoy. Scott Singleton and his committee have been hard at work for the past year planning for the big event, and have everything ready for us to have another memorable and productive annual meeting and convention.

Special thanks from me to all the AFMS Officers and Committee Chairmen who so promptly submitted their expense reports and budget requests. You made my job of budget preparation for 2008-09 relatively easy. Now it will be up to all of us to try to live within this budget! That is not always so easy, it seems.

Looking ahead, I have already begun, and will be continuing, to contact our faithful committee chairmen/women to invite them to continue in their present positions for another year. The AFMS owes its effectiveness to all these people who make and keep our Federation going and growing, and we sincerely thank them for their dedication and effort. Without these willing workers, we could not survive for long. However, we realize that some of those who have served us may be in circumstances where they simply cannot continue to serve. If you are in this category, and would like to step down, I would appreciate your letting me know as soon as possible so that I can search for a replacement.

And if I do call you to fill a position, please accept the challenge and say "yes!"

Joy



AFMS/SCFMS SHOW ACTIVITIES

JOIN US FOR THE CONVENTION — SEPTEMBER 25 - 28

by Shiara Trumble, HGMS AFMS/SCFMS Liaison

Just a note to remind all of you out there that the 2008 HGMS show is coming up really soon, including the AFMS and SCFMS meetings and special exhibits. We appreciate all that Federation membership brings our club, and proudly host this year's national show. Here's a sneak preview of what you will be experiencing in Humble:

Fun and educational displays from the Rollin' Rock Club, ALAA, AFMS Endowment Fund, AFMS Conservation Committee, and AFMS Junior Activities including Rocks & Minerals; Earth Resources; Fossils; Lapidary Arts; Collecting; Showmanship; Communication; Field Trips; Leadership; Earth Processes; Earth in Space; Gold Panning and Prospecting; Gemstone Lore & Legend; Stone Age Tools and Art; Rocking on the Computer.

Also, the Texas Facetors' Guild will be displaying a large collection of replicas of world-famous diamonds cut by TFG members.

Be sure to stop by these displays and learn more about each of the organizations and their activities.

Additional Show Activities:

The annual Breakfast with the Editors is being held at the Humble City Café on Saturday morning, September 27 at 8:00 a.m. Join us for a wonderful breakfast buffet and see your fellow rockhounds rewarded for their writing efforts.

The Awards Banquet is a barbecue this year, and will be held Saturday night, September 27 at 7:00 p.m. in the Humble Convention Center's Hospitality Room. Scholarships, All-American Education awards, Program Competition awards, Competitive Case awards, and Endowment Fund drawing winners

will be announced, and AFMS officers will be installed. CW Smokehouse and Catering will be cooking the barbecue in our parking lot, so come to the banquet and have some of that barbecue you'll be whiffing all day!

In addition to our club's silent auction held at the Information Booth throughout the show, there will be a silent auction to benefit the South Central Federation's Endowment Fund. This fund, similar to the AFMS Endowment Fund, supports various special projects and activities as voted on at the annual SCFMS meeting. Visit their table at the front of the HCC on the west side to see all the goodies they are offering for auction.

There will be a live auction to benefit the American Federation's Scholarship Fund, held in the Scout Room at the HCC on Friday, September 27 at 2:00 pm. The auction will include items to satisfy many different audiences, so plan to be there at 2:00 to bid on some beautiful articles and support our Scholarship awards program.

The AFMS Endowment Fund representative for the SCFMS, Joyce Speed, will also be taking contributions for the AFMS Endowment Fund at the show. For each \$5 gift, Joyce will issue a ticket for the Endowment Fund Drawing for lovely donated items. The items may be viewed at the AFMS website: <www.amfed.org/endow2008.htm>.



Purpose of the AFMS:
To promote popular interest and education in the various Earth Sciences, and in particular the subjects of Geology, Mineralogy, Paleontology, Lapidary and other related subjects, and to sponsor and provide means of coordinating the work and efforts of all persons and groups interested therein; to sponsor and encourage the formation and international development of Societies and Regional Federations and by and through such means to strive toward greater international good will and fellowship.

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AFMS CENTRAL OFFICE
STEVE WEINBERGER
PO Box 302
GLYNDON, MD 21071-0302
410-833-7926
<central_office@amfed.org>

CONTENT — LETTERS

EDITORIAL COMMENTS — SUBMISSIONS

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EDITOR:

CAROLYN WEINBERGER
PO Box 302
GLYNDON, MD 21071-0302
410-833-7926
<editor@amfed.org>

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continued on page 10

ENDOWMENT

continued from page 1

carat, split-facet gem, cut from Madagascar rose quartz. The stone has a total of 193 facets - 16 more than the usual Portuguese cut, due to the split mains. Its physical dimensions are 28mm. tall with a diameter of 15mm. Unfortunately,



the photos do not do justice to the beauty of this stone. The color is a lovely pale pink, and all 192 facets appear to be in constant motion; rendering them almost impossible to capture with a camera. Buddy values the stone at \$350, and says that he hopes whoever wins it will enjoy it. Editor's note: How could anyone not

enjoy this magnificent stone?? -jb (SFMS)

Prize #16: Texas Lone Star Cut Topaz Pendant

In the true Texas spirit of generosity, Jill Rowlands Moffitt and husband, John Moffitt, of Houston, TX, have donated this beautiful 10mm (5 carat) Swiss Blue Brazilian Topaz which Jill cut in the official Texas Lone Star Pattern. Included with the prize is a modified copy of the official Texas Lone Star cutting pattern (in case the recipient wants to try to replicate it). Jill notes that "the original is a two-page legal size, and not pretty." What a perfectly appropriate prize for our 2008 Annual Meeting and Convention. Based on current web prices of others marketing this piece, the estimated value is \$525.00. (SCFMS)



me a direct request. But, do it NOW! We plan to leave for Texas on September 20th ("if the Good Lord's willing, and the creek don't rise," as Tennessee Ernie used to say) so be sure to send requests to me before September 15th! Remember to include your check for \$5.00 for a coupon or \$20.00 for 5 coupons, plus a stamped, self-addressed envelope. I will put your name and address on the drawing portion of your coupons and add them to the bucket, then mail your portions directly to you.

Of course, if you plan to be present at the Convention, you will still have one last opportunity. We will be set up at the Convention Show with a showcase full of all the prizes, and tickets will be sold up until Saturday noon. The next time you see me, I will be announcing the names of all prize winners at the conclusion of the AFMS/SCFMS Awards Banquet! I might be announcing YOU!

As a reminder, here's the listing of the first 10 prizes:

1. Selenite Pipe on Amethyst Plate
2. Kauri Gum (New Zealand Amber)
3. Vial of Virgin Valley Opal
4. Brazilian Amethyst Pipe
5. Faceted London Blue Cubic Zirconia set in 14k gold pendant mounting
6. Faceted pale blue Topaz / Texas Lone Star Pattern
7. Digital table scale
8. Engraved glass vase
9. Float copper specimen and mining certificate
10. Charoite wire-wrapped pendant



You can see all of them in "living color" on the AFMS website <www.amfed.org/endow2008.htm>

Joy Bourne
RR #1, Box 159A
Towanda PA 18848.

By the time you read this, your Regional Representatives will have returned all their tickets and checks to me, so that I can do my summaries and get checks off to AFMS Treasurer Pat LaRue, so if you would like to pick up a few more coupons to increase your chances of winning, you still have a few days to send

Questions? Phone (570) 265-6454 or e-mail csprings@epix.net.



UPCOMING REGIONAL FEDERATION CONVENTIONS

by Bob Livingston, AFMS Convention Coordinator

	California Federation	Eastern Federation	Midwest Federation	Northwest Federation	Rocky Mountain Federation	South Central Federation	Southeast Federation
2008	June 27-29 Ventura, CA	Feb. 23-24 Jackson, MS	June 20-22 Lincoln, NE	June 20-22 Ontario, OR	Nov. 7-9 Tulsa, OK	AFMS Sept. 25-28 Humble, TX	Dec. 10-14 Nashville, TN
2009	April 17-19 San Jose, CA	Oct. 17-18 Bristol, CT	May 16-17 Parma, OH	AFMS July 30 - Aug. 2 Billings MT			
2010	AFMS Aug. 5 - 10 Riverside, CA						

TRI-FEDERATION ROCKHOUND RENDEZVOUS AND FIELD TRIP MAY 21 – 26, 2008

by Richard Pankey, Chair, Ad Hoc Inter-Regional Field Trip Committee

The announcement flier said, "Be prepared for a variety of weather." And that is what we had! Over the next 6 days we found out that the Texas Springs area is a "Land of the 4 Seasons." It was a warm summer like Tuesday morning when we turned off the highway headed to the Tri-Fed. Camp by Trout Creek. When we stopped to put up the signs to mark the way to camp we were joined by the Northwest Federation co-leaders Dick Parks, and Patti Amos. Six and a half miles from the highway we turned left into "grassy" area amongst the sage brush and shooed away the cattle. This was our camp. Shortly after noon Dean Richardson and his new wife, Bernice, and his son, Rich, arrived. Dean and Rich have been collecting in this area since the 70's and helped guide our collecting trips.

Late in the afternoon the sky darkened, the wind picked up and there was an ominous, dark yellow/gray cloud coming at us from the western horizon. In less than 20 minutes we were hit with a dust storm with wind in excess of 50 mph that lasted close to an hour. By this time we had more than 8 rigs in camp and we closed everything up tight to ride out the storm. This is the last we saw of summer.

Winter revisited us with night time temperatures in the high 20's and low 30's. Spring rains returned over the next few days. They were mostly intermittent and spotty. They never effected nor stopped our collecting trips but they caused us to cancel 2 potluck dinners, a couple of happy hour get-togethers and a couple of campfires. On Friday afternoon it was beautiful, the sun was shining and it was pleasantly warm. We set up for our tailgate exchange and map exchange with high expectations for a fun activity. People started to gather and so did the storm clouds. When the rains started we quickly put away our maps and tailgate displays. As the temperature rapidly dropped the rains changed to sleet, then hail and concluded with snow, which covered the ground and our vehicles like a winter wonderland. There were 10 tents as part of our camp and they were weighted down with piles of snow-sleet-hail. Within an hour the sky had cleared, the snow-sleet-hail had melted and the sun was once again shining brightly. Our afternoon events and potluck dinner were washed away but we were able to have our first campfire.

Our Camp

Well that is enough about the weather. It was wet. It was wild. It was windy. And it gives us good stories, but it is not the total defining aspect of our Tri-Federation Rendezvous. And it never stopped us from doing what we set out to do, that is, collect pink agate limb casts and have a great time with other rockhounds. The Tri-Federation Rockhound Rendezvous was held for 6 days over the 2008 Memorial Day Weekend. Over 140 people from the NFMS, CFMS, RMFMS and MWF came to our Rendezvous. They represented over 45 clubs from 12 states. We had rockhounds of all ages from 4 to 84. Most of our group camped with us amongst the sage brush. We had trailers, motorhomes, tent trailers, tents and pickup campers; a total of 41 camping units. Some chose to take advantage of the motels and full hookup campgrounds that were only 8 miles away in Jackpot. When people arrived at camp I had them sign in on the trip register, sign an Informed Consent Waiver and I gave them a copy of the AFMS Code of Ethics. When camping on BLM land, we practice the Leave No Trace principles. That means we "pack-out-what-we-pack-in". We leave the area cleaner than we found it. This should be our practice no matter where we camp. I walked around our camp on Monday evening

after most of our group had departed and I am proud to say that there was no trash or garbage left anywhere. We did tear up some sagebrush and left some tracks in the dirt, but they will grow back and wash away with the next few rains.

Collecting Trips

Texas Springs Canyon is located approximately 25 miles southeast of Jackpot in the northeast corner of Nevada. The Texas Springs area is well known for spectacular pink agate limb casts, as well as, other agate and petrified wood. Although this area has been popular with rockhounds for many years, prized material can still be found for those who are willing to dig for it. And many were successful! On Wednesday morning Dick Parks and I took off for a scouting trip of the five planned collecting sites around Texas Springs. The sites were 15 to 22 miles from camp. We marked the roads, turns and collecting sites with fluorescent orange ribbons for easy identification and travel. The five planned collecting sites were identified as: the "Classic Pink Limb Casts", "Past the Pink", "Rich's Hill", "Snakeskin", and "Small Pink Limb Casts and Bog". The 2 most popular sites were the Classic Pink and Rich's Hill. Because of limited parking and to minimize the collecting pressure we had sign-ups for these sites, with a limit of 50 people per site. The other 3 areas were self-guided sites. Dean, Rich and I led the trips to Classic Pink and Rich's Hill.

The group assembled each morning at 8:00 for information about the sites, instructions, safety information, and announcements of the other activities for the day. We lined up our vehicles and headed down the road at 8:30. The Classic Pink site is a sparsely foliated hill of ash and dirt. There are many holes and old digs from previous rockhounds. While a rare piece can be found as float, collecting at this site is accomplished by digging and many of the holes are deep. As the name denotes, the sought after material here is pink agate limb casts that range in size from twigs to large masses over 100 pounds. Some of each was found, but most were in the ounces to a couple of pounds range. Rich's Hill is named for Dean's son who discovered the area where he found a number of fair sized logs and casts last year. Rich's Hill is about one half mile due east of the Classic Pink area. The material here ranges from twigs and small limbs as float to small logs and limbs 10 to 12 inches below the surface. The digging was easy in this loose topsoil. The material is mostly a brown jasp-agate. The most productive digging was at the bottom of the hill. On Saturday Dick Parks led a group to an agate area near Opal Springs a couple of miles north of Texas Springs. Dick also led people to some travertine/onyx sites that were only 8 miles from camp.

Of the three self-guided sites the Small Pink was the most productive, the Snakeskin had the most unusual material and the Past the Pink was more of the same and harder to dig. The Small Pink is a low-lying hill about one half mile long. There are small, finger sized pink agate limb casts all over the east side of the hill. Although this was not planned to be a dig site someone tried digging and found small logs like those on Rich's Hill. Soon everyone was digging. There was gray/brown bog agate at this site also.

There are two geode sites near by. One at Contact about 18 miles south of Jackpot and one 5 miles north, just off of the highway, at Rabbit Springs. On Sunday I led a group of over 40 to collect some geodes. The Contact geodes were found in trenches and in shallow digs on the hillside. They are hollow geodes that are

filled with calcite. The Rabbit Springs geodes are hollow and chalcedony lined. They are just off the old highway, about .3 miles in from the turnoff. Broken geodes litter the surface and whole ones can be found with easy digging in loose/ashy soil. The Rabbit Springs geodes were abundant and are fluorescent. This was the best day of geode collecting that I have ever experienced. The geodes were in the top 12 to 24 inches loose ashy soil. Everyone who dug filled their bag and buckets with baseball to softball size geodes.

Our Other Activities

Our afternoon activities were the most affected by the rain, snow and wind. We had a speaker from the BLM scheduled for Thursday's happy hour, but his talk and our potluck dinner were canceled because of rain. On Friday afternoon we were all set up for our Tailgate and Map Exchange when they were washed away by rain, hail, sleet and snow. But on Saturday the weather cooperated and we finally held our Tailgate and Map Exchange. We had 12 people participate in our Tailgate. They pulled their trucks up or set up a table to display what they brought. Several people brought rocks and specimens from their home areas to share. There were minerals and specimens from several locales including Wyoming, New Mexico, Oregon, Nevada, California, and Arizona. Several people brought buckets of specimens to give away to the group. We had good participation in the Map Exchange with 15 to 20 maps from California, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico, Nevada and Montana collecting areas. Some really good, detailed maps to some excellent collecting sites. Enough to fill our field trip schedule for a long time.

One of my favorite activities when camping is the campfire. There was a lot of wood brought for our nightly campfires but we didn't get to use it until Friday evening. We had so much wood that we had a hard time burning it all and sent a lot home for the next outing. Let's Eat - a Favorite Rockhound Activity

Our Welcome Potluck Dinner was postponed on Thursday because of the rain. When the rain returned on Friday we had to call it off again at the last minute. But the food was all ready, so we broke up into "mini-potlucks" in our trailers and motorhomes. The selection may have been smaller, but the food was still good. On Saturday the sun was shining, there was a breeze but no wind, and we were able to have our All Rendezvous potluck. It is amazing that in the midst of the desert and sagebrush, when the dinner bell rings the serving table is filled with freshly prepared food and delicious desserts. After dinner we had self introductions to find out a little about one another and where they were from. To celebrate our age diversity, Betty gave a stained glass clown to our youngest, a 4 year old, and a stained glass angel the oldest an 84 year old "youngster".

As the weekend drew to a close the big question from all was "Where will the Rendezvous be next year?" My answer to them was "Any where you want to lead it?" This Tri-Federation Rockhound Rendezvous was a great, fun, rewarding event. It was more than a fieldtrip, it was a rendezvous, a coming together of rockhounds to do and share all the things we like to do. We had a great time together. We met and got to know a lot of wonderful rockhound friends. We collected some interesting rocks. We enjoyed the beauty and majesty of this great land of ours. I hope that someone out there will pick up the ball and arrange for our next Rendezvous. Our Inter-Regional Field Trip Committee is ready to help. Call or email me with your ideas and suggestions.

QUICK TIPS FOR EDITORS

by Linda Jaeger, AFMS Publications Chair



If you have a question (or suggestion) about editing or writing or the bulletin contest or something related, send it to me by email: <LjgrAlg@aol.com> or at home address: 3515 E. 88th St., Tulsa, OK 74137. If I cannot find an answer to your question, we'll publish the question and ask the readers for their answers.

COLOR ME PINK & BLEARY-EYED!

Correction to fossil name capitalization: We've all done it - made the typo we did not catch - and so did I. Fortunately, Cecilia Duluk (MWF Paleontology Chair) DID catch it and let me know. So here's the correction: "If the species on the specimen is unknown (either by the exhibitor/owner or in general), the usage sp., which stands for 'species,' is neither italicized nor underlined, since it stands for a common noun."

My example should have read, Favosites sp. if you are underlining, or *Favosites* sp. if you are using italics. Notice that the space between the two is NOT underlined. (This is something I DO know since I have exhibited fossils competitively. I just didn't catch my typo.)

For a little more information on capitalization use with fossil names, be sure to read Cecilia Duluk's article elsewhere in this issue of the *AFMS Newsletter*.

2009 AFMS BULLETIN CONTEST CHANGES

The results are in and the Club Publications Committee has voted. **There will be a few changes to the 2009 Bulletin Editor's Contest.** Briefly, these changes include: bulletin size categories, addition of a Features category, formatting of e-bulletins, and inclusion of "white space" on the judging sheets for bulletins.

Hard copies of the changes will be available at the Breakfast with the Editors in Houston (September 27, 2008). Information has already been sent to regional BEACs and regional newsletter editors. Rules changes will also be posted on the AFMS website by show time in September.

Need show information? Check the AFMS website at <www.amfed.org/show2008.htm>. You can download a show flyer from that page, as well as all the other show-related information available. To make reservations for the breakfast, you can click on the hot link, [Advance Registration Form](#). It includes options for the meals, show admissions, and field trips. **Deadline for advance registrations is August 24, 2008.**

I'm looking forward to seeing you in Houston!

(Clip art above from Discovery Channel School Image Gallery, ©2003. Permission to use for educational, not for sale publications granted.)

HAVING FUN — JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

by Jim Brace-Thompson, Jr., Program Chair

The 50 State Challenge

Here's a quick quiz for you. What do the following states have in common? Alaska, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.



Across America, 55 clubs currently have kids enrolled in the AFMS Future Rockhounds of America program and, overall, 108 clubs have, at one time or another, written to express interest in the program and to request information about it. However, those clubs aren't evenly distributed. For instance, large numbers are concentrated in California, Texas, and Washington.

So here's the answer to my quiz question. The 22 states listed above are states where not a single club has ever written, called, or emailed to even ask about the FRA program. Thus, I issue "The 50 State Challenge." Let's see kids all across America, in each and every state, wearing an AFMS FRA Membership badge. If you reside in one of the states I've listed and have even a single child in your club, or if you have a friend in one of those states whose club has even a single child, please contact me (805-659-3577, jbraceth@roadrunner.com), and let's sign them up and send that child an FRA Membership badge. (I'm personally rooting for Illinois. It's the state where I grew up, where I collected my first fossils and rocks, and a state with no less than 20 rock clubs. Come on Illinois! Join the fun!) The program is intended to cultivate interest within the next generation of rockhounds by giving them a sense of belonging, both within their individual club and within their broader federation, with the long-term goal of sustaining our hobby well into the future. So here's to spreading the word, spreading the FRA program into each and every state, and spreading the fun!

AN ALL AMERICAN CLUB YEARBOOK - PART 3

by John Washburn, AFMS Chair

I hope you have been busy this summer getting organized! You should have a notebook or a set of file folders specifically set aside for your plans and materials for your club's All American Club Yearbook. You have last year's entry form, items and documentation to include for Sections 6 and 5 (including photos you've taken or solicited from club members), and copies of your club's bulletins or newsletters up through August of this year. If you haven't done so already, go through those bulletins and, using Post-Its, mark items that you may want to include in your yearbook. Take a field trip to the closest Staples and make copies of your bulletins that you can cut up and paste into your yearbook.

Now, we're going to take a look at **Section 4** of the application form - "**Support for Regional Federations, AFMS, and Other Clubs.**"

- You will want to go through your list of members and make note of those who are currently serving your regional federation and those serving the AFMS. You can check your federation's directory for a list of officers and committee members if you're not sure and then check the AFMS Web site for information as to who is serving there.

- Next make a list of members who attended a federation convention and show this year - regional or AFMS. You might want to have a veteran club member, one who knows most of the club's members, who you can call on to help you.

- Poll your members to see who has supported the regional or AFMS scholarship and endowment funds. Check with the club treasurer to see what donations the club has made as a group to these funds.

- Find out which members have presented programs at other clubs' meetings and which members have attended other clubs' shows or swaps. Note the ones who demonstrated or displayed at these events. (In my home club, we gather this information on a regular basis to include in our bulletin as "Rockhound News.")

- Check with your Field Trip Chair: has he/she extended an invitation to other clubs to participate in your field trips?

- Check with your Bulletin Editor: does he/she exchange bulletins with other clubs? Have your Editor give you a list.

Gather your supporting documentation (lists, photos, items from your bulletin, thank-you notes, etc.) and file it away to be assembled when you're ready to put together your yearbook. Remember, you don't want to try this on your own! Ask, entice, or even beg someone in your club to help.



AFMS CLUB ROCKHOUNDS OF THE YEAR

from Loretta Ogden, ACROY Chair

Hats off to the following individuals who have been recognized by their clubs! Won't you consider recognizing your club members as well? The process is an easy one - just write a short paragraph telling why your "hero" is so important to your club. One person (or couple) and one junior may be recognized by each AFMS affiliated club per year. Send your submission to me by October 31 for 2008. Any submissions received after that will be counted for 2009. My contact information is on page 11 of this issue.

And now, a drumroll please....



California Federation

North Orange County Gem & Mineral Society honors long time members **Al & Trini Hermosillo**.

Both have given untold hours for the club and its activities. Al is a silversmith and artist (painting). Trini is a wonder in the kitchen and with beads and glass. They have both held offices and demonstrated at shows and civic events sometimes planning the events themselves. They make a great pair and we are glad they paired up with us for so many years.

submitted by: Loretta Ogden
Federation Director

The Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society is pleased to honor **Dr. Kay Hara**. He is multi-talented, a fine podiatrist, president several times, show chairman, Program chairman, class coordinator, lapidary teacher, opal cutting, wire wrapping, and youth lapidary classes. He has been Federation Director as well as demonstrating wire wrap and entertaining at Camp Paradise. He accepted a gift from a grateful patient for the club of four Genie machines and two buffers to upgrade our shop. He is an accomplished artisan, making displaying beautiful and unusual jewelry at the fair and our show. On top of that he is also a dedicated field tripper. We are honored to have this special man as a member of OGMS.

submitted by Lois Allmen



Midwest Federation

It is with great pleasure that I nominate **Mark Wiseman** for Rockhound of the Year. He has been a valuable asset to our club, the Central Iowa Mineral Society. His contributions consist of volunteering for critical positions and duties; cleaning and photographing our mineral collection; being a delegate at the MWF conferences; scanning our old newsletters for electronic preservation; and moving, storing and dispersing our extensive collection of specimens to members. Mark exemplifies the true meaning of volunteerism and I am happy to have him as a member.

submitted by Michael Blair, President

I would like to nominate **Don Gless** for the Rockhound of the Year award. He is a member of the Loup Valley Gem & Mineral Society. He has served as a member of the Board, Vice President

and President. He has been in charge of field trips, chairman of our rock show, presented displays and talks on fossils, rocks and minerals for school classes and many other organizations. He has worked at the registration desk, assisted in the setup and tear downs at our shows (and this included assisting the dealers in doing the same). He has shared his knowledge of fossils, petrified wood and Lake Superior agates with many rockhounds. We appreciate the effort Don has made for the club and the community.



submitted by Velma Bower, Secretary / Treasurer

Northwest Federation

Hells Canyon Gem Club of Lewiston, Idaho nominates **Ralph Mathewson** as our Rockhound of the Year for 2008. Ralph's unfailing good humor, helpfulness, and patience are truly the facets of a gem of a guy. This gentleman is a Master Faceter. He competes at the shows and has won international faceting awards. You can count on Ralph display at our show. He is never too busy to teach his art at different events. He is eager to aid the children of the community whenever we give presentations at the schools. He has given generously of his time and experience and his garage, as well as having served as President and other officers. Ralph is a great asset to our club.

submitted by Rose Alene McArthur, Federation Director



Rocky Mountain Federation

For over twenty-five years **Marian and Charles (Perky) Perkins** have rendered outstanding service to and for the Chaparral Rockhounds. They faithfully participated in club activities such as the bi-annual Roswell Highway Clean-up, BLM surveys and paleontology digs, and field trips to sites like Apache Creek. Both Perky and Marian have helped set-up and tear down our shows. Perky built over twenty tables for our show exhibits and completely weatherized our storage trailer. They each have manned the admissions desk. They have helped raise thousands of dollars for the AFMS Scholarship Fund by cheerfully donating and selling items at our Silent Auction booths. Perky and Marian have donated funds to various projects of the Club such as the Smithsonian Topaz and scholarships for both mineralogists and paleontologists. Marian has served as our "Sunshine Lady" for the past several years, diligently sending out cards covering all occasions to both Club members and friends. They have a friendly smile and a hug for everyone. The Chaparral Rockhounds take great honor in nominating Charles and Marian Perkins for the AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year Award.

submitted by Diane Weir, President

Like still waters running deep, little on the surface indicates the whirl of energy expended by **Gene and Peggy Cockrell** on behalf of the Tulsa Rock and Mineral Society. Both are calm, reserved, polite and kind people.

"Crash" Cockrell is one of the few pilots over age 80 that can still be found in the air above the state of Oklahoma, piloting an open airplane

"Breezy", he built himself. His better half, efficient and elegant Peggy Stewart Cockrell, a lovely lady with a terrific sense of humor, taught corporate employees computer skills before EBay existed. When a steep rocky backyard was a challenge, the two of them transformed it into a park-like respite of winding paths, mineral and fossil niches and grottoes, plant loveliness and falling water.

A printer by trade, Gene has worked many years designing TRMS publications. Rosters, national award-winning club show programs, informational pamphlets, tickets, bulletin mailing labels, name tags, direct mail lists, club pins, club tee shirts—there is almost no end to the listing of his creative projects. He was instrumental in getting the T-Town Rockhound club newsletter computerized.

Gene has served in many capacities as an officer. President, club records, director and "the best field trip chairman the club has ever had" according to Richard Jaeger.

Peggy has served as the TRMS treasurer numerous times. She also served as publicity chair for club shows, historian, door prize chair and board director. Peggy recently co-chaired one of the most successful Tulsa Rock and Mineral shows with energy and enthusiasm. Peggy has also served as a docent at the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, giving informational tours for visitors. Her love of the arts and her classic style show in both her home and her gardens.

Tulsa Rock and Mineral Society are pleased to have selected Gene and Peggy Cockrell as TRMS Rockhounds of the Year.

submitted by Kay Atkinson

RECOGNIZE YOUR MEMBERS

by Loretta Ogden

One of the new things happening this year is the awarding of certificates to those who have been recognized by their club as "AFMS Rockhound of the Year". We had a great time at the CFMS show and it was terrific to give out the certificates honoring your members so far this year. It is my hope that we will have as many or more nominations before the end of this year. It is easy, Costs the club nothing and earns so much good will.

Just send a 50 to 100-word paragraph describing the accomplishments of your nominee and send it to me preferably by e-mail. Remember you can submit the name of one individual or couple (husband and wife) plus 1 junior per year. Send your nomination to me at <donogden@aol.com> subject /for Loretta. I will take it from there. That's all there is to it. Your members will love it and the rest of the Federations love to read about what kinds of things club members of other Federations do.

Hope to hear from you soon. I will need to have all nominations for 2008 by **October 1, 2008**.

WORDS OF CAUTION

by John Wright, AFMS Conservation & Legislation Chair and Shirley Leeson, AFMS President

HR 554 RESURRECTED AGAIN!

The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act, HR554, has once again this year been resurrected, reviewed, and approved by the Agriculture Committee. This bill is on a "fast track" for passage and will most likely be voted on by the House of Representatives shortly after their return from summer recess which means September or October unless there is some unforeseen delay. I fully expect it to be quickly passed by voice vote, or quietly tacked onto some other major piece of legislation. It appears that a compromise has also been reached for Senate approval. While you may not agree with my assessment of this bill, it is important that we let all our members know that it is back on the table so to speak and hopefully they will take appropriate action.

I want to emphatically remind you again, this is a dangerous piece of legislation that is going to hurt a lot of innocent people. The bill is so vague and open to interpretation that you can be arrested, have your vehicle impounded, and be tried for driving on a federal highway with a small rock wedged in the tread of your tires. As I said before, there is no requirement for the arresting officer to be knowledgeable regarding fossils or rocks, the burden of proof is your problem. I wonder what happened to innocent until proven guilty. Does the gravel in your driveway contain fossils? Your neighbor can turn you in for a nice reward. Secret "Area 51" type sites for paleontologist; sounds ridiculous, but unfortunately this bill authorizes it.

Who is going to benefit from this bill? A few inconsiderate paranoid college professors and museum curators that seriously lack the competence to compete in a free market society. Actually, this group is really all about money in the form of job security, grants, books, articles, TV specials, and speaking fees. The fact that more than 90% of the major fossil discoveries are made by amateurs causes symptoms suffered by these "professionals" very similar to a severe case of hemorrhoids.

"We the people" according to the Constitution own the federal lands and support them with our tax dollars, so why should a small special interest group be given exclusive rights to our lands? The justification used by paleontologist is to preserve rare fossils for future generations, but aren't these the same scholars that warn us that the catastrophic circumstances that led to the demise of the dinosaurs and many other species in the past is going to happen again. They say **"it's not a matter of if, but when."** so according to their own philosophy the prospects for any future generations are not very good.

They say that rockhounds (informed amateurs in their vernacular) destroy sites and remove critical evidence needed by the scientific community. Well, I recently spent several weeks reviewing paleontological articles and publications plus numerous other well known scientific publications covering a span of about 50 years and while I'm sure there must be many references to cleaning up excavation sites, I did not find any. However, I easily found "hundreds" of articles and references about leaving a site "as good as or bet-

ter than found" in the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies' monthly Newsletters, the seven area Federations of Mineralogical Societies' monthly newsletters, and the numerous local Gem & Mineral Societies' monthly bulletins. It sure seems to me like rockhounds (whoops - informed amateurs) are a little more concerned about conservation and protecting the environment than the scientific community.

Once the scholars and curators acquire "our" fossils from "our" lands, they will be tucked away in storage areas at universities supported by "our" tax dollars, to be studied by students who we as parents "pay" tuitions for, and taught by professors whose salaries are paid by "our" dollars and tuition fees. The museums built with "our" tax dollars and "our" donations will have experts whose salaries are paid by "our" taxes and donations prepare the fossils "owned by us" for display so "we the public" can see them for a "fee." Talk about a stacked deck!

A lot of politicians have benefited by riding on the environmental bandwagon, but with the price of gasoline skyrocketing, travel, food, utilities, building materials, and almost everything else going up astronomically, being "Green" is becoming more of a political liability than an asset. Someday, they may even come to the realization that people who spend their lives studying petrified bones and dinosaur poop don't add a lot to the economy.

Another important product of this legislation will be to further enhance the black-market trade. It's already a lucrative business and this bill will just increase the price of American fossils overseas. With people, merchandise, and tons of narcotics being smuggled freely across our porous borders, moving fossils out of the country shouldn't pose much of a problem.

It is ironic, but we spend billions of dollars helping other nations gain independence, become democracies, and their people enjoy the benefits of freedom. Unfortunately, the same politicians that appropriate our tax dollars for this noble purpose turn right around and help implement policies to accommodate special interest groups that place far more restrictions on our freedoms here at home.

Time is short to stop or change HR 554. About the only alternative we have left at this stage is to call our representatives and tell them how we feel about this bill. I know that many of you are leery when it comes to talking directly with dignitaries and that it may be difficult for you to contact your Representatives to talk with them in person. Most of the members of congress maintain offices in their districts and the staff members working for them at these offices are local people. If you call and talk with a member their staff, you will normally find them to be very friendly, courteous and easy to talk with because they want your vote and support. Most importantly, they pass information received from constituents on to their boss. If they get several calls, a red flag, so to speak, goes up indicating areas of importance. Often this is a better way to get the attention of your Representative as he or she wants and needs every vote to stay in office. Constituents usually are more influential

than anyone else when dealing with legislators.

I might add a note of interest at this point: our club sends a courtesy copy of our monthly bulletin (which includes my AFMS & SFMS articles) to both our U.S. Senators and our Representative. We have been told that it is well received and appreciated by them.

Congress is currently in recess and will reconvene on September 5. **This means you have a very short window to contact your representative. Take advantage of it!** Remember too, although this bill is aimed at fossils, it's possible that the next piece of legislation will target the collection of minerals or cutting rough!

We're not in this battle alone. At least one Congressman, John Culberson of Texas, has been working to have this bill killed or favorably amended, but he cannot do this by himself.

Here are a few things you can mention when you contact your congressman:

1. Tell them you are a rockhound/amateur collector.
2. Tell them that as the bill stands, anyone can be put in jail for picking up a rock that might look like a fossil to the "untrained eye" of a BLM or Forestry person. This would result in the confiscation of their vehicle and all equipment and the burden of proof will be on the individual in court of law! Do these representatives really like the idea of their parents, grandparents or constituents being arrested? Remind them that these people are voters!
3. Amateur collectors have been responsible for many of the finds of important fossils over the years. If the bill is enacted into law, this will stop.
4. Fossils are not renewable. Once fossils are exposed by wind and rain they will disintegrate. Professional paleontologists usually don't have the time, the money or the staff to check out paleo sites found by amateurs, but they don't want us to collect them either.
5. This bill is a disaster for rockhounds, and I urge you to stop it.

ARE YOU THE CORRECT RECIPIENT?

If you're not the correct recipient of this newsletter, please take a moment and send us the name and address of the person who should be getting each issue. Be sure to include your club name plus your own.

Thanks

Steve Weinberger
AFMS Central Office Administrator
<central_office@amfed.org>

FIRST IMPRESSIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY

by Fran Sick, AFMS Public Relations



Good first impressions and accessibility are two very important concepts that can make a big difference. Both are so easy to achieve I wonder why we sometimes overlook them.

As we all know, often the first introduction people have to our hobby is a club show. Their experience at

that event may make the difference in whether or not they decide to become club members. If they find the show exciting, the club members friendly, membership forms and information readily available, and maybe even go home with something free, one of two things will probably happen. Either they will decide the rock and mineral hobby is not something they are interested in, or they will find the experience enjoyable enough to entice them to join us as new members.

I know every available club member has a lot to do if we are to ensure a successful show. But we cannot overlook the details if we are serious about increasing membership. A couple of years ago it was brought to my attention, after the show unfortunately, that some of our guests completely missed over half the show because they did not realize everything there was to see and do. They saw one room with exhibits and missed the fluorescent show, geode cutting and dealers. Needless to say, since then we have made more signs directing folks to the different areas, and we try very hard to have one or more club members available near the entry to say hello, answer questions and try to make sure something like this does not happen again.

Equally important is how we welcome our guests at club meeting, picnics or parties, or wherever our clubs are represented. We all need to make that extra effort to be sure folks feel that we are glad to meet them and take time to really talk, and listen, to them if we want to increase our membership. It's an old cliché, but still very true, that you never get a second chance to make a good first impression.

Making sure it is easy to contact us when we do attract the attention of people interested in learning more about us is also essential. I have recently learned that some club newsletters do not include contact information for even their officers. We never know who might see a newsletter, or any other club publication, news article or meeting notice. It is a fact of life that we all have a lot going on. If we see something that attracts our interest, but then have difficulty finding out more about it, we can lose interest just as quickly. It is important to always be sure information about our organizations is easily accessible by listing at least two contact names, email addresses, phone numbers and/or mailing addresses in any written club material. If folks are looking for more information but cannot contact us easily, chances are they will not take time from their busy schedules to include us in their agendas.

We never know when attention to detail and going the extra mile might attract new members. We don't want to lose them because we were not paying attention and let them miss half the show.

EXHIBITING, COMPETITION & JUDGING

by Tom Burchard, 2008 CFMS Representative to the AFMS Judges Training Seminar

I have just recently attended an Exhibiting & Judging Seminar hosted by the Eastern Federation at Wildacres Workshop in North Carolina. The EFMLS requires that their judges be 'certified' to judge. The certification process involves taking the class at Wildacres. They are, at present, the only society that has a certification process. I think this is going to change in the near future. There were fourteen people in this class. All seven federations were represented. I went at the behest of the AFMS's program "Judges Training Seminar", and my tuition and some of the other federation representatives were paid for by the AFMS Endowment Fund. The AFMS has been doing this for about 5 years with the intent to improve the quality, and lessen the regional differences, in judging. I am now certified to judge in the Eastern Federation. It may be awhile before I have an opportunity to judge there. But, I can now take what I have learned and go the federations I belong to and pass on to those that are interested about 'exhibiting, competition & judging'.

Why Exhibit? Why Compete? Why Judge? All of these are natural extensions of being a rockhound. How so, you ask? We start with collecting. Could be rocks, minerals, fossils, whatever. After a time we need to do something more with them, other than collecting, which most of us never actually give up, though we may become interested in other facets of our hobby. We might start doing lapidary; cabochons or faceting. We might start to 'refine' our collection of minerals, or fossils. By refining I mean we might start collecting only certain types of minerals, or minerals from one location, or only rare minerals. The same with fossils. After awhile I might take my lapidary and begin to make jewelry. Soldering silver or gold pieces together, casting silver or gold into molds, or wire wrapping a piece, or baking PMC into an object d'art. I might start twisting wire into gem

trees. Making glass beads, or fusing 'lil slabs and bit of glass together. After we have all these things collected we are asked by club members to put together a display case. Why? To show the general public what it is we do. To show other club members, and other clubs, where we are in our craft, individually and as a club. We have just added another aspect to our hobby. How to best display what we have collected or created. The art of exhibiting, if you will. Anybody can throw a few, or many, objects in a display case, and voilà, an exhibit. But, is it as good an exhibit as it can be? How do we tell? How do we compare our case with another exhibitor's case? That would be in competition. Where Judges tell us how well we did. Where do the judges come from? They are us! People. People, who have exhibited, competed and then became interested in judging.

Do you see the progression I have tried to point out? From becoming involved in our hobby, to exhibiting, to competing to judging. It is a natural progression. So, why are more people not involved with exhibiting and competing? There are maybe more than a few reasons for this. Perhaps we haven't offered competition at the club level. Club members have not been encouraged to compete. People may have heard horror stories about discontinuous (not a real word, but should be) judging, and been discouraged by them. I say NO MORE! If we do not offer the best exhibits we can at our shows, we will not attract new members to the hobby. Our hobby will die. I am not willing to let this happen without trying to do something about it. Join with me and others who want to keep our hobby thriving. EXHIBIT! COMPETE!! And, oh yeah, competing and judging is a LOT OF FUN too. I am not a masochist. I enjoy exhibiting, and competing, and judging. You will too.

BE SAFE — BE WELL

by Don Monroe, AFMS Safety Chair

Oh Say Can You See?



Many, many of us do not see as well as we would like or as well as we once could. All of these vision problems are not the result of aging. In some cases, other factors play a part in creating the problem.

Pre-teens and older teenagers may have sustained eye injuries while at play due to flying objects or missiles such as a shot from an air rifle. I well remember being hit in the eye with the "ball" from a sweet-gum tree. My cousin could really throw well for a girl. Yes, it was very painful and it took several days to heal. A small amount of permanent damage resulted in what the doctor called a "floater" which is in my eye to this day.

Excessive exposure to bright sunlight has a long-term effect on our eyes. This exposure can result in cataracts and other eye damage. Sun glasses that reduce UV exposure can help.

Are we properly concerned with the lighting that we rely on when we read, write or do close work?

The latest information I received from my ophthalmologist indicates that all of us will have cataracts as we age. These will show up as yellowing in the eye and, for the most part, surgery will not be required. Good lighting will assist us minimizing this effect.

Regular eye examinations and corrective lenses must become a way of life for us if we are going to safeguard our sight. I personally do not see any pleasure in standing on a street corner with a white cane and a tin cup or having our grandchildren read for us because we can't see.

SHOW ACTIVITIES

continued from page 3

There will also be Field Trips offered for attendees:

First, a trip to Whiskey Bridge allows you to hunt for mid-Eocene invertebrate fossils. You can access a description of this field trip on our website: <www.hgms.org>, click on "2008 Show Registration" and scroll down to "Whiskey Bridge Locality Description."

On Sunday, September 28 at 10:30 a.m., we have a trip planned to the Houston Museum of Natural Science to see the world renowned gem and mineral collections and to view a special exhibit. The cost is usually around \$10 for the special exhibit, and is always a good value. More information will be placed on our website as it becomes available. Afterwards, those who wish may take a guided tour of the HGMS clubhouse, with light refreshments available. You may also return directly to HCC rather than going to the clubhouse, if you wish.

There will also be a tour of the clubhouse leaving directly from the HCC at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, without going to HMNS, for those who want to see the clubhouse and prefer a shorter trip.

We encourage you to sign up for events and field trips ahead of time by visiting our website <www.hgms.org> and clicking on '2008 Show Registration' and then on the Advance Registration Form. You can print the form and fill out the bottom part as to which meetings and field trips you plan to attend.

Our registration deadline is August 24. Signing up for these events early will be a big help for us in planning meals for the events, and the number of guides needed for field trips. Send your registration forms to me at the address shown on the form. If you have any questions, please call or email me at 281-463-7954 or <Shiara.trumble@sbcglobal.net>.

We're looking forward to seeing all of you in Humble this September!



American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, South Central Federation of Mineral Societies, and Houston Gem & Mineral Society present

2008 Houston National Gem, Jewelry, Mineral, and Fossil Show

Three days of fun for all whole family!

WHEN:
Saturday: 9 am - 4 pm (Half Day)
Sunday: 9 am - 4 pm
Monday: 10 am - 4 pm

TICKETS:
Adult: \$5
Students, Teachers, Seniors: \$2
Children under 12: FREE
Thanks you! FOR ALL THESE DAYS FREE PARKING

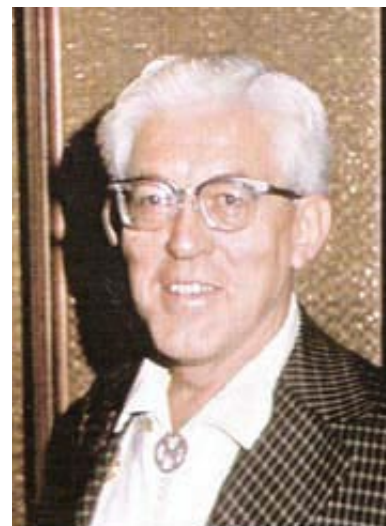
September 26-28, 2008

LOCATION:
Houston City Center #1
3000 West Loop West
Houston, TX 77027

FREE PARKING

GUS MEISTER AFMS PRESIDENT, 1976

by Dona Leicht
member of the Mineralogical Society of So. California



There was an era in mineral collecting when the "club" was the thing. It was where we all gathered together to learn, to laugh, to collect, to sponsor shows and in general be the "goodwill" ambassadors of the mineral hobby. Gus Meister spent a goodly part of his life as one of these "ambassadors."

Gus's story is actually the "American Dream" come true. With only \$20. in his pocket this young man left his homeland of Germany to come to America. For someone who had finished his apprenticeship as a machinist, washing dishes to make his way in the "big city" of New York was hardly an auspicious beginning to his new life. Several jobs followed including some time with the Waltham Watch Company in Massachusetts. In 1932 a friend suggested a trip across the country and when they landed in California there was no question in Gus's mind that this is where he would stay, although his love of "road trips" never waned.

And stay he did... To do successful work as a machinist, marry a lovely lady named Edith and raise two daughters. The family moved to his beloved home in Altadena in 1956 and remained there his entire life. He owned Meister Engineering Corporation located in Pasadena, California. He specialized in prototype and short-run machining for many industries including aerospace and specialty cameras. He is a life member of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

An announcement in the local paper about meetings of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California prompted Gus to attend and his interest in minerals became a life long hobby from that point in 1954. He studied geology and mineralogy at Pasadena City College and joined "study groups" held in various collector's houses in the area, names like, Chapman, Hill, VanAmridge, Calvert, Rodekor, Streeter, all movers and shakers of their day.

Gus loved the thumbnail size specimens and assembled quite a collection. It is Gus we can thank for new rules in competitive displays that allow for some "flair." Previously thumbnails were displayed in unflattering wooded boxes with dividers. When Gus was disqualified during a competition for his deviation from the "rules" he took it upon himself to change the rules! As President of the California Federation and finally AFMS President he nudged them into a bit more forward thinking regarding displays. Thanks, Gus.

Ever the machinist, he thought that the current crop of breakers to trim specimens were too imprecise, rough and clumsy, and especially for smaller specimens. They the "Meister Trimmer" was born in the early 1960's. Wayne and I still have ours as I'm sure many others do as well. Gus also engineered a faceting machine, originally called the Alter Faceter - renamed the Facet-Meister in its later years. I know of people who still use this machine.

Feisty, but always fair, Gus will be missed by his friends. Can you hear the faint sounds of the harmonica? I wonder if we can ever replace the camaraderie of those early mineral societies?

Gus served as President of the CFMS in 1969. He was CFMS Rules Chair in 1966 during the AFMS/CFMS show in Las Vegas. He served as AFMS Rules Chair at the National show in 1972 and was elected during this show for the AFMS Regional VP from California.

In 1976, the year Gus was AFMS President, the AFMS annual show and convention was held in Austin, Texas. It was a huge Texas-style show. The membership for the combined federations was 67,455. The Scholarship Fund has just topped \$200,000. The grand total to run the AFMS for the year 1976 was \$7,981.89. Most chairmen didn't put in their expenses. It's sad that at this time the president did not have a message each month in the AFMS Newsletter. We don't have any words of wisdom from this very special person, but the quiet things he did still linger on...

In his later years, after his beloved wife Edith passed away, Gus traveled to Germany many times getting to know his country of origin. His recent years left his with poor eyesight, it slowed him down, but didn't stop him altogether. He passed away in his beloved home in Altadena, with his daughter Annie by his side, as she has been for many years.

Shirley Leeson,, AFMS Historian

Why not remember Gus by making a contribution in his memory to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation?

AFMS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Here is the listing of the people who have agreed to serve as AFMS Chairs for 2006-7. Please feel free to contact these people or the person in your regional federation who serves on the as well- if you need information or have ideas to share with them.

AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year
Loretta Ogden
<donogden@aol.com>

AFMS Newsletter
Carolyn Weinberger
P.O. Box 302; Glyndon, MD 21071-0302
410-833-7926
<editor@amfed.org>

Boundaries
John Wright
<osjbw@datasync.com>

Bulletin Editor Hall of Fame
Kitty Starbuck
<minedump@iserv.net>

ByLaws Revisory
Steve Weinberger
<central_office@amfed.org>

Central Office
Steve Weinberger
<central_office@amfed.org>

Club Publications
Linda Jaeger
<LJGRALG@aol.com>

Commemorative Stamp
Wendell Mohr
<wmohr@erols.com>

Conservation and Legislation
John Wright
<osjbw@datasync.com>

Education-All American
John Washburn
<jrwashburn2@msn.com>

Endowment Fund
Joy Bourne
<csprings@epix.net>

Financial Investment
Lauren Williams
<slharuir@msn.com>

Historian
Shirley Leeson
<shirleyleeson@msn.com> and
<beauholland@centurytel.net >

International Relations
Bob Jones
<jonesb52@gmail.com>

Judges Training Seminar
Dee Holland
<beauholland@centurytel.net>

Junior Programs
Jim Brace-Thompson
<jbraceth@roadrunner.com>

Long Range Planning
Dr. Robert Carlson
<drobotcarlson@yahoo.com>

Name Badge
Frank Mullaney
<rockyfiv@aol.com>

Nominating
Dr. Robert Carlson
<drobotcarlson@yahoo.com>

Parliamentarian
Dee Holland
<beauholland@centurytel.net>

Past President's Advisory
Dr. Robert Carlson
<drobotcarlson@yahoo.com>

Photography
Chuck McKie
102 Mockingbird Ln; Fairfield, CA 94533
707-425-9030
<chuckmckie@aol.com>

Program Competition
Marge Collins - Chair
<margaret@qtm.net>

Publications
B. Jay Bowman
<bjb@wildblue.net>

Public Relations
Fran Sick
<ednfran@epix.net>

Safety
Don Monroe
<donmonroe@windstream.net>

Show Consultant
Bob Livingston
<gemguy@verizon.net>

Publications
B. Jay Bowman
<bjb@wildblue.net>

Ways and Means
Glenn Lee
541-276-2365

Uniform Rules
Ron Carman
<rrcarman@centurytel.net>

URC Eligibility Files
Anne Cook
<secretary@amfed.org>

Website/Webmaster
Marty Hart - Chair
<webmaster@amfed.org>

Ad Hoc Competition Study
Ron Carman
<rrcarman@centurytel.net>

Ad Hoc Inter-Regional Field Trip
Dick Pankey
<dickpankey@juno.com>

AFMS Scholarship Foundation
Dee Holland, President
<beauholland@centurytel.net>
Shirley Leeson, Vice President
Ruth Bailey, Secretary
Arlene Burkhalter, Treasurer

ROCKS IN A BOX CHALLENGE

by Joe Barreca



The Panorama Gem and Mineral Club of Kettle Falls, Washington is ready. We have our rocks together! Well alright, not all of our rocks, but a pretty good sample. Our collection includes crystals, metals, fossils, opal, real gold and more. Many of our samples are fluorescent under UV light. All of them are good examples of what you can expect to find in our area, Northeast Washington.

Our collection comes with its own guide book, a collection of stories with maps and GPS positions for the rocks in this box. The box itself is a fairly standard storage box for tied flies that we bought at Wal*Mart. It is 11" x 7" x 1.75" and has 18 compartments.

So the challenge is: "We want to trade these boxes for similar collections of sample rocks that other clubs find on their field trips." It would be ideal if other clubs could provide a guide such as ours. But we will settle for a key to what is in the collection that includes the name of the mineral, a location where it can be found, (GPS coordinates if possible), chemical formulas where important, notes about its properties, value, abundance, and kudos to those who contributed samples. We can supply boxes if helpful.

Through this exchange we hope to build a collection of collections. It will be exciting to see what other clubs are finding, and especially nice in this era of high fuel costs to not be burning too much gas in the process. Of course this kind of thing inevitably leads to field trips, visits, contests, displays at rock shows, etc. So we can't promise that this idea will stop global warming. We can promise that it will be fun.

If your club is up to the challenge, contact
Joe Barreca
Panorama Gem and Mineral Club
2109 Hwy 25 South
Kettle Falls, WA 99141
(509) 738-6155
<Joe.Barreca@gmail.com>

**DEADLINE
FOR NEXT ISSUE
IS SEPTEMBER 1**

DIG THOSE CRAZY FOSSIL NAMES

by Cecilia Duluk, MWF Paleontology Chair

It is often easier to "dig" (i.e., hunt, collect, etc.) fossils than to correctly name them! In fact, when confronted by a collector with a fossil specimen, even professional paleontologists will often evade the "name" question, because they immediately think of the **proper** name for that particular fossil, and, unless they are familiar with the specific locality and range of fossils in it, the farthest out on the limb they will go is to say the specimen **resembles** such and such.

Of course, unless that specimen is **really strange** and unfamiliar, most serious fossil collectors, amateur and professional, will be able to tell you the **phylum** and/or **class** to which it belongs, and possibly some description of its **type**. So you might have a bryozoan, or a blastoid, or a solitary coral (one nickname for which is "horn coral"). These are a few of the **common English names used**, and as such are printed in regular type without capitalization.

However, the **origin** of those names is directly or indirectly from Greek and Latin, and sometimes the **common** name is simply an English equivalent of the scientific one. Thus, the proper phylum name, which is **capitalized**, for the bryozoan, is Bryozoa (which rather loosely translates as "moss-like animal"). [In this group, class is another story!] For the blastoid, the phylum is Echinodermata [yes, all echinoderms have "spiny skins"] and the class is Blastoidea (the Greek word means "bud" or "sprout").

Now we come to the interesting one--the solitary coral. [A word of warning: all "horn" corals are solitary, but not all solitary--] Until about the 1950's, corals were called coelenterates, but the meaning (in Greek means "hollow" or "belly cavity"--don't laugh!!) did not fit them all.

Now corals are grouped with jellyfish, sea anemones, and more living invertebrates like sea pens and sea fans, under the phylum Cnidaria [the "c" is silent], whose major characteristics are that they all have stinging cells or nettles [Greek *knife* = nettle]. The **class** name for corals, however, is still Anthozoa (Greek means "flowerly").

Of course, the **particular** name for an individual will still be the genus and species. [Think of it as you being Homo (= "man"--hey, the correct Greek name for woman would be "amazon") sapiens (= "wise" and "prudent") as to the group], but as an **individual** you would be Weinberger carolyn (family group first) OR Weinberger carolyn [surname is always first]. So, when writing the proper name of a fossil both the genus and species are individually underlined, or both are in *italics*. (The underlining is not continuous between genus and species because it is just a **substitute** for the italics.) Oh yes--the species name is **NOT capitalized**, even if it was derived from a person's name. If you see it printed that way in a magazine, etc., it is **incorrect**.

Literally thousands of species have been named for someone--usually the first finder, or the paleontologist who first discovered the locality, etc. So--

A complete label for our blastoid might be:

Phylum: ECHINODERMATA
Class: Blastoidea
Common name: blastoid
Genus & species: Pentremites godoni

And for the coral could be:

Phylum: CNIDERIA
Class: Anthozoa
Common name: solitary coral
Genus & species: Heliophyllum halli

Hope this helps some. If there are enough "fossil nuts" [okey, so that is a nickname for a blastoid] still around, we can discuss further **how** or why a fossil has the name it does, and why it is sometimes changed, plus strata occurrence restrictions, and so on. Email me at: <cecilia@duluk.com> if interested.

Reference:

Brown, Roland W., U.S. Geological Survey, Composition Of Scientific Words, published by the author: printed by Reese Press, Baltimore, MD

AFMS CODE OF ETHICS

- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations of rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind - fences, signs, buildings.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material - matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and Will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule", will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public "image" of rockhounds everywhere.