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A.F.M.S. Newsletter

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT <www.amfed.org>

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March, 2009

THE EXCITEMENT IS BUILDING!

by Dee Holland, Endowment Fund Chair



We have a new twist to the way prizes for the Endowment Fund Drawing will be awarded. In the past, all the tickets were dumped into a single hopper and all tickets were drawn from there. Doing this sometimes produced a large number of winners for ticket holders in one federation and perhaps none for another. This year, we're going to ensure that at least one prize is awarded to someone in each of our seven federations!

Here's our plan. Tickets sold by each of the regional federation representatives will be held apart from all the others until we make the drawings on Saturday, August 1 during the AFMS/NFMS Convention in Billings, MT. We'll start the drawing by randomly pulling one ticket from each of the regional federation submissions. That way, each federation will have at least one prize winner.

After the first seven prizes are drawn, we'll dump all the remaining tickets together in a huge hopper, mix them thoroughly and proceed to draw tickets for the remaining prizes.

Another new twist.... We're going to number each of the prizes as we've always done., but this time, after all the winning tickets have been drawn, we'll put them in a small container and select them again....the first ticket drawn

would receive prize #1, second ticket, #2 etc.

In order to be sure that you have a better chance of winning, don't send money to me for tickets. Instead, send for tickets from your regional committee member so you can get in on the regional drawing. This new idea has been suggested by a number of former and present regional committee people and we'll see how it works this year.

As in previous years, you will be able to purchase tickets at the show itself through Saturday morning. We'll hold the drawings on Saturday afternoon, possibly right after the Single Stone Auction. We'll announce the winners during the Awards Banquet on Saturday evening and of course via the AFMS Newsletter.



that's been added to the engraved vase we featured last month.

Prize #2 is an opal pendant featuring 7 Mexican opals and 6 diamonds. It's set in 14 carat gold and is on a 20 inch gold chain. The donation is from Joyce & Delbert Speed of the South Central Federation and has a value of \$150.



Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20 and can be purchased from your regional federation representative. See last month's AFMS Newsletter (or <www.amfed.org>) for their addresses and emails.

If you have a question, or wish to donate a prize, contact me at: <beauholland@centurytel.net> or <shirleyleeson@cox.net> or write me at PO Box 23, Tendoy, ID 83468.

You can view color photos of the prizes on the AFMS Website <www.amfed.org>. Just click on "Endowment Fund" on the homepage.

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

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JOY BOURNE

<csprings@epix.net>



PRESIDENT-ELECT
EMERSON TUCKER

<emerson.t@suddenlink.net>



1ST VICE PRESIDENT
BOB MILLER

<KanBrock@aol.com>



2ND VICE PRESIDENT
LAUREN WILLIAMS

<slharuir@yahoo.com>



3RD VICE PRESIDENT
ANN MONROE

<acmonroe@windstream.net>



4TH VICE PRESIDENT
RICHARD JAEGER

<Rjgrsci@aol.com>



5TH VICE PRESIDENT
COLLEEN MCGANN

<Colleen.mcgann@hds.com>

SECRETARY
ANNE COOK

<secretary@amfed.org>

TREASURER
PAT LARUE

<bplarue@earthlink.net>

IT'S SHOWTIME!

by Joy Bourne, AFMS President



After our horrendous Winter this year with altogether too much ice and snow, I am not sure if we should follow the admonition given to Julius Caesar to "Beware the Ides of March," or not - but I do know for sure that March marks the opening of the Rock & Mineral Club Show Season in the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania and Southern Tier of New York. And we are all looking forward to our own Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club Show which traditionally is the first in our area. The dealers are all signed up; geodes have been obtained for the Che-Hanna Cut-ups to set up their saws, and the members of our workshop classes are already at work making cab preforms and dopping them up for the Juniors' hands-on booth at the show.

Shows have always been an important part of Rock & Mineral clubs' activities. Rockhounds like to show off their finds, and before long, rather than just bringing their finds to the meetings to show off, someone had the great idea of having a special "Show" to which the public could be invited just for the purpose. (I think they really wanted to have time for the club business meetings and program). Of course, the swapping of rocks was soon augmented by the dealer trade, and before we knew it we were in the era of draped tables, wholesale sections in the sales floor, and Uniform Rules judging of competitive exhibits.

We met so many interesting rockhounds at shows in those early days, and everyone had a bigger and better place to hunt for rocks - all locations were freely shared. I recall we were directed to the fabulous green apatite in orange calcite location at Otter Lake, Quebec by a rockhound we met tailgating outside a show in the Auto Auction barn in Nedrow, NY in about 1969. His specimens were absolutely beautiful, and we decided to find the place for ourselves. So we got the directions, packed up the camper and our five kids plus one nephew, and started out. What wonderful week we had! Years later, we learned that we had been collecting in the now-infamous Yates Uranium Mine. We still have several magnificent specimens on our shelves and boxes of specimens in the cabin on the hill.

We still meet warm, friendly and sharing people at shows, and it does not matter whether we meet them on a dig, at a club meeting, a local, regional or Federation show - If they are rockhounds, they are a special breed!

Hope to see you at one or more of the Regional AFMS Shows this summer- Announced as of this date are CFMS- San Jose, CA, in April; MWF- Parma OH in May; NFMS/AFMS -Billings, MT in July-August and EFMLS -Bristol CT in October, Watch the AFMS Newsletter for RMFMS and SCFMS dates and locations.

I'll be looking forward to meeting you!

Joy

WORDS OF CAUTION

by John Wright, RPG. AFMS Conservation and Legislation Chair

As expected, Senator Reid wasted no time in introducing the 2009 Omnibus Lands Act (S-22) in the new session, for a vote that approved one of the largest package of legislation dealing with land use in the history of the United States. It now goes to the House of Representatives where quick approval is expected. By the time you read this it may even be a done deal.

Well what in the world happened? Not very much on our side of the issue and a tremendous amount of organized effort for way more than a decade by advocates that wanted this legislation passed. If it has not yet been passed by the house, we may still have an opportunity to voice our opposition.

If unencumbered and enacted into law, the Omnibus Lands Act is going to cause a lot of heartburn for our members over many years to come. I'm afraid that the ease with which this legislation was orchestrated by the pork barrel oriented crew in Washington, a flood gate has been open that will ultimately lead to us being restricted from access to all public and most private owned lands.

The one good thing about this is win, loose, or draw, I can get off this extremely uninteresting subject for most of you and hopefully redirect attention to other issues of more concern that are also being considered by our illustrious leaders who are on a mission to save the world. In the meantime, hang on to your precious metals and gem stones because some of the elite have decided that conditions under which these commodities are obtained are reprehensible and they seem to have tremendous influence in Washington. Some ideas are already being discussed to see if there is enough support to have them considered.

BIG SKY COUNTRY – MONTANA ON MY MIND

by Doug True, AFMS/NFMS Convention Chair

The Billings Gem and Mineral Club invites you to attend the AFMS/NFMS Show and Convention. Come spend some time with us and see the wonders of the Big Sky country and experience a time of your life.

We hope you plan on spending some time in our state, visiting the many sights or hunting for Montana agate, Bear Canyon fortification agate, petrified wood, or fossils from the Hell Creek, Pierre and Bear paw formations. Join us for the many field trips scheduled for after this show. We will spend some time on the next issue talking about each field trip and what you may expect to find.

Many special exhibits are scheduled for this show. We're excited about....

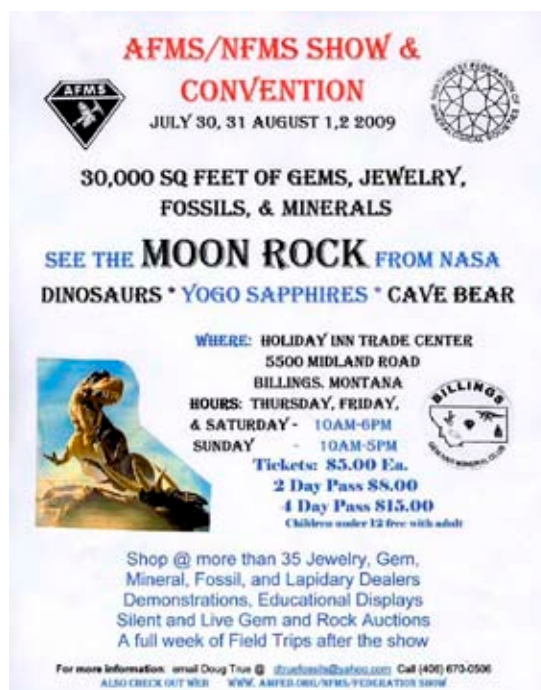
- A Moon rock from NASA, which has never been to Montana and should be a great draw for the area.
- An Ice age exhibit including a cave bear.
- Outstanding ruby and corundum, Yogo and Montana sapphires, and Gold exhibits
- The Rock Food Table from Texas.
- And...world class collections of Montana Agate, Dryhead, Fairburn and Tepee Canyon agates.

We also look forward to seeing your special exhibits, so please take some time and think about what showcases you would like to enter, and also a collection or your craftsmanship that would make a great competition exhibit. Let's pull together and show the world what you have to offer. We expect a large number of our neighbors from Canada to

attend the show also

We hope you plan your vacation around this show and visit Yellowstone National Park, Glacier National Park, the Dinosaur Trail including Makoshika State Park, Little Big Horn Battle Field, where General Custer fought.

Besides collecting rocks, you should try out some fishing, camping and hiking. (Montana has some of the best fishing in the U.S.) Watch for more information in the next several newsletters. For registration information and exhibit forms go to <www.amfed.org>.



SORRY, I GOOFED

*by Bob Jones, International Relations Chair
Senior Consulting Editor, Rock & Gem Magazine*

In the March issue of *Rock and Gem* I inadvertently reported the National Show in Billings as being sponsored by the American Federation and the Rocky Mountain Federation. My apologies to the Northwest Federation who are actually the co-sponsors!

Rock & Gem is the official magazine of the American Federation. You can read Bob's column, "On the Rocks" in the magazine each month. In it, he often promotes AFMS and club activities.

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
ANY COMMUNICATION CONCERNING THE CONTENT OR FORMAT OF THE NEWSLETTER SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR:
CAROLYN WEINBERGER
PO Box 302
GLYNDON, MD 21071-0302
410-833-7926
<editor@amfed.org>

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AFMS SCHOLARSHIP HONOREES FOR 2009

by Dee Holland, AFMS Scholarship Foundation President



This year getting each regional AFMS Scholarship Committee to select an Honoree was "a piece of cake". This is the first year since I took over that we've had all the honorees chosen by the deadline, January 15th. Thank you to the committees involved.

Here are the Honorees by region:

California Federation:

Jeane & Bob Stultz

Both are CFMS Past Presidents and active in their clubs and also the CFMS for many, many years. They have each held many offices over the years and have been supportive in helping students. Their children grew up in the hobby. They were the "glue" that supported the Ventura Fair's Mineral Section and introduced many people to our hobby.

Eastern Federation:

Dr. Michael Brown

Transplanted from England, Dr. Brown is now at the University of Maryland, Department of Geology. His resume is impressive, it's 57 pages long! Currently in his own words, "my main teaching responsibility is in the initiation, organization and delivery of undergraduate and graduate petrology, and have taught tectonics and coordinated the Honors seminar."

Midwest Federation:

Dr. Raymond R. Anderson

Iowa Geological Survey. Nominated by the Cedar Valley Rocks & Minerals Society, Ray has interacted with their club since at least the 1980s and

has been an outstanding supporter of their activities. Ray's presentations are not only informative but also exciting and at a level the general public can easily understand.

Northwest Federation:

Dr. David A. Lopez

Senior Research Geologist at the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology. He comes with 10 years of petroleum exploration and 24 years in regional geologic research. Research included work in the overthrust belt of Montana and Idaho. David has a Ph.D. from the Colorado School of Mines.

Rocky Mountain Federation:

Professor Steven Wade Veatch

Nominated by the Colorado Spring Mineralogical Society, Professor Veatch has focused on Colorado Geology, paleontology and mining history and is the current President of The Friends of the Florissant Fossils Beds, Inc. Steven began his interest as a young Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society Pebble Pup over 45 years ago.

South Central Federation:

Jean Wallace

SCFMS Historian. Jean has been selected because of her many years of service to the South Central Federation. Her love of our hobby is well known and she has been extremely supportive of paleontology interests by the South Central over the years.

Each of the recipients will choose a school with a graduate program in Earth Sciences, and will select two students who will receive \$2000 each year for two years. When the students and schools are selected we will announce them.

AFMS CLUB ROCKHOUNDS

from Loretta Ogden, AFMS Chair



California Federation

The YVG&MS unhesitating, and with great pleasure, nominates **Frank Fitch** for the AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year program. Frank was elected president in his third membership year and has been re-elected for 2009. He led the Society into a period of major growth by creating a very friendly, helping atmosphere at the meetings and at the shop. This positive atmosphere further encouraged other members into greater participation. Under his leadership, the Society's membership grew 50 percent. Frank has been an active field collector and volunteered to be the field trip chairman for the last two years. Frank also shared his experiences in the field by presenting two programs on collecting sites at our regular meetings.

In addition to all of his duties as President, Frank volunteered to be a silver fabrication instructor to help relieve the load on another shop instructor. He has conducted 8 classes in 2008 and many more planned for 2009.

submitted by Janice Torres, Vice President



Eastern Federation

The Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse wishes to nominate our Youth Group Leader **Carol Hamilton-Gibbs** for Rockhound of the year. Since her now college-aged daughter was a youngster interested in collecting rocks Carol was active in the club. Under her leadership our youth group area at our annual show grew from a small mini mine to a large, well attended sluice area, soapstone carving section, beading area and craft section staffed with many volunteers to cover the repeat visitors each year.

continued on page 5

AFMS REGIONAL FEDERATION CONVENTIONS

from Bob Livingston, AFMS Show Coordinator

For more information about these conventions, go to the web page for the regional federation you are interested in. For AFMS /NFMS information, visit <www.amfed.org>.

	California Federation	Eastern Federation	Midwest Federation	Northwest Federation	Rocky Mountain Federation	South Central Federation	Southeast Federation
2009	April 17-19 San Jose, CA	Oct. 17-18 Bristol, CT	May 16-17 Berea, OH	AFMS July 30 - Aug. 2 Billings MT	Oct. 2 - 3 Roswell, NM	Oct. 10-11 Temple, TX	
2010	AFMS Aug. 5 - 10 Riverside, CA					Nov. 13 - 14 DeRidder, LA	
2011							

QUICK TIPS FOR EDITORS

by Linda Jaeger, AFMS Bulletin Editors Advisory 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: <LjgrAlf@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.



TELLING THE STORY OF A ROCK

(Excerpted from Susan M. Frack's article on the NESEN web site, Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln. Used by permission))

Telling the story of a rock can be very informational as well as entertaining, but sometimes writers need a little nudge or a framework to follow just to get started. Whether your writer is an adult or a junior, he should do some research first! The library and the Internet are good starting places, especially the kids' areas. In particular, telling the story of a rock calls for a look at the "rock cycle."

Important words to understand are igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic (the types of rocks). In writing the story of a rock, tell what happens to the rock as it changes from one type to another, how the rock feels as it changes, what happens to its temperature, how close together its atoms and molecules are, etc. Be creative!

The story can be in one of many different forms:

- narrative with flashbacks
- mystery
- autobiography
- radio or television interview
- song
- poem
- cartoon
- TV show
- illustrated story
- comedy
- recipe
- directions for recycling
- vacationing or taking a trip

After researching and deciding what type of story to write on which rock (or gemstone), a writer can use the following outline to help compose his story:

I. Igneous Rocks

You start as magma. Are you on the surface (lava), near the surface, or deep beneath it?

- a. Cooling – fast or slow?
- b. Large or small crystal size or no crystals?
- c. Any gases trapped inside you?
- d. What is your overall appearance?

II. Sedimentary Rocks

You are being beaten into smaller pieces and carried away.

- a. What are these pieces called?

- b. What is causing the breakdown?
- c. What is carrying you away?
- d. Where are you going?
- e. Where do you end up?
- f. You are surrounded by other rock fragments.
Are all of you the same size and type?
- g. Are more rock fragments piling above you?
- h. You are now sedimentary rocks.
What changed you into a sedimentary rock? What is your overall appearance now? How are you different from an igneous rock?

III. Metamorphic Rocks

What must occur to change you into a metamorphic rock?

- a. What factors are involved?
- b. Where will this change occur?
- c. How do you get there?
- d. What do you look like now?
- e. Foliated or non-foliated?
- f. Crystalline or non-crystalline?
- g. Describe how you are different from igneous and sedimentary rocks.

IV. What might happen next?

When the writer has finished his story, he needs to come up with a great title – something that grabs a reader's attention and makes him want to read the whole story. To create a title, it helps to read the story. How does it "speak" to you? Of course, a writer can always come up with the title first and build the story around the title!

Most ideas and all of the outline above come from Susan M. Frack. Following her outline and suggestions will help prevent plagiarism (copying word for word without giving credit is a BIG no-no!). Her outline also gives an author something to "hang his words on."

Susan M. Frack's original article, "Tell the Story of a Rock," is on the Nebraska Earth Systems Education Network through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Information from Susan's article is used by permission. The complete article is at: <nesen.unl.edu/Lessons/Geosphere/tellthestoryofarock.asp>.

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CLUB ROCKHOUNDS

continued from page 4

Carol organizes field trips for the youth and their families to Herkimer and the Museum of the Earth in nearby Ithaca, NY keeping in mind the needs, safety and abilities of children of all ages. She works hard collecting and soliciting material for these activities. She has a full time job and is also involved in her daughters speed skating club. We thank Carol for her efforts and appreciate her!

submitted by Cathy Patterson



Midwest Federation

The Ozark Earth Science Gem, Mineral and Fossil Club honored Dorothy Hess with the 2009 Rockhound of the Year award.

When Dorothy moved from California to Arkansas, she knew very little about minerals. However, she decided she wanted to learn and became a member. When the time came that the club needed a new treasurer, she volunteered, since she was a retired banker and could keep the books. Again, when the club needed a new place to meet, she volunteered to scout out a new building and found that we could meet in the Van Meter Senior Citizens Center. Now, she is actively pursuing projects to work with our junior members so that we have programs on their level. It is people like Dorothy that keep our hobby alive.

submitted by Brenda Jonson, Editor

Junior honorees

The Ozark Earth Science Gem, Mineral & Fossil Club of Mountain Home, AR, was proud to honor three of their junior members this past December.

Audrey, Forrest and Hunter Bebout are triplets who are being home schooled by their father, James "Buddy" Bebout. Mr. Bebout is always looking for ways to keep the triplets actively pursuing science. They joined our club and began going on field trips, and as luck would have it, out hunting all the older members.

Hunter is our rockhound of the year. He seems to be the one who is always coming up with the prettiest and best of the mineral specimens, or winning the prettiest and largest of the specimens in our club raffle. He is also learning the proper care and handling of minerals.

Has your club honored someone this year? The process is quite easy. Just tell, in about 50 -75 words, why the person you select is a valuable member of your club. You may select one individual or couple per year. In addition, you may honor junior members as the Ozark club did above.

Send your submission to your regional federation Club Rockhound of the Year chairperson. You can find their information on the AFMS website <www.amfed.org> or through your own federations website.

FEDERATION BOX SWAP

by Michael Kessler, EFMLS

Even though the cold of winter puts a damper on collecting, you don't have to go without finding new material. The members of our swapping program have been actively enriching their collections by trading through the mail...and you can too.

Since its inception in 2004 at the request of then EFMLS president Matt Charsky, the Federation box Swap has continued to grow. Currently we have clubs participating from New York, New Jersey, California, Washington state, Oregon, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Virginia, Wyoming, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio, Wisconsin, Missouri, Nevada, and British Columbia, Canada. Our latest club joined us from Colville, Washington this January.

The offerings cover just about everything possible. There are fossils, crystals and many kinds of lapidary materials offered at this very moment. Why not liven up your club activities and place a member in charge of your club swaps? Have them monitor the latest offerings through my email alerts. The post office has been offering flat rate boxes that suit our needs quite well. Everyone who has traded has been satisfied.

The proof is that they continue to trade again and again. Check our program out especially if you need something to liven up your meetings. Think how many miles you can save driving to a collecting site across the country.

The program is easy to participate in. Just email me at <quartz7228@aol.com> and say you're interested in a Box Swap. That's how easy it is to get started.

NORMAN W. HANSCHU

Norm Hanschu, Midwest Federation and American Lands Access Association Treasurer passed away on January 26, 2009 of cancer.

During his working years, Norm was employed in the photographic department at Ford Motor Co.. he, and wife Joyce became interested in our hobby many years ago and became involved with local clubs and ultimately with the Midwest Federation. It was not unusual to find Norm, camera in hand, photographing gems, minerals or people at the shows and places they visited.

Norm is survived by Joyce, the current MWF Uniform Rules Chair, his sons David and Charles, four grandchildren and a brother.

Contributions in Norm's memory may be made to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation, % of your regional federation coordinator.

Carolyn Weinberger

SAVE MONEY!!!!

by Carolyn Weinberger, AFMS Editor

Everyone is feeling the current economic pinch. The cost of almost everything has risen, investment returns are low, and there doesn't seem to be any quick fix in sight. The result? Many people are tightening their belts and re-evaluating their spending.

Clubs are feeling the pinch too. so here's a suggestion from the AFMS to help your club save a few dollars each year.

E-mail!

That's right - e-mail. Why not send copies of your club bulletin to the various AFMS officers (and perhaps your regional federation officers) via e-mail? I know that I read all the club bulletins that come to my house either by snail mail or via e-mail and enjoy reading them all each month. Printing extra copies to send out for exchanges is costly...and rumor has it that postage will increase again this spring. (It already has for some services like priority and express mail). With most club editors having e-mail or having access to it, why not take advantage of the convenience?



If you're not already doing so, you should be sending a copy of your bulletin each month to the AFMS President (Joy Bourne), the President-elect (Emerson Tucker), and to me your AFMS Editor. You should also be sending copies to your regional federation president, vice president and editor. Sending via e-mail costs you nothing and you can also add other federation officers to your distribution list. Many of our long-time editors also send out a number of bulletins to other editors; again, at no charge via e-mail.

Basically there are two formats that many editors are now using. If you can, convert your document to "pdf" format. If you're using a Macintosh and MS Word, just go to the print menu and select "pdf" in the window and your document will automatically be converted. Other programs, such as InDesign, an Adobe product, allow you to export the document as a pdf file as well. If you're using a PC, you'll need to have the full version of Adobe Acrobat to make the conversion. Sorry about that.

The second format is to send your bulletin out as a "Word" document. Be careful however because the newest version of "Word", both Mac and PC, save the document as "docx". This newer version cannot be opened by people operating older versions of "Word". You can get around this by saving your document as the older version of "Word".

I'm looking forward to reading your club bulletins in the months to come.

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.

2009 AFMS COMMITTEES

Here is the listing of the people who have agreed to serve as Committee Chairs for 2008-09. Please feel free to contact these people if you need information, have questions or would like to share ideas with them.

All American Club
John Washburn
<jrwashburn2@msn.com>

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
<osjw@datasync.com>

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

Bulletin Editors Advisory
Linda Jaeger
<ljalrg@aol.com>

Bylaws Revisory
Steve Weinberger
P.O. Box 302, Glyndon, MD 21071-0302
410-833-7926
<central_office@amfed.org>

Central Office Administrator
Steve Weinberger (see Bylaws Revisory)

Commemorative Stamps
Wendell Mohr
<wmohr@erols.com>

Conservation and Legislation
John Wright (see Boundaries)

Endowment Fund
Dee Holland
<beauholland@centurytel.net>

Financial Investment
Lauren Williams
<slhaaruir@msn.com>

Historian
Shirley Leeson
<shirleyleeson@msn.com>

International Relations
Bob Jones
<jonesb52@gmail.com>

Judges Training Seminar
Dee Holland (See Endowment)

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

Long Range Planning
Shirley Leeson (See Historian)

Name Badges
Frank Mullaney
<rockyfiv@aol.com>

Nominating
Shirley Leeson (see Historian)

Parliamentarian
Dee Holland (See Endowment)

Past President's Advisory
Shirley Leeson (see Historian)

Photography
To be appointed

Program Competition
Marge Collins
<margaret@qtm.net>

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

Public Relations
Fran Sick
<ednfran@epix.net>

Safety

Ted Rieth
<tjrieth@epix.net>

Show Consultant
Bob Livingston
<gemguy@verizon.net>

Uniform Rules
Barbara Jacobsen
<barbjake@embarqmail.com>

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

Ways and Means
Marve Starbuck
<greenstone@iserv.net>

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

Ad Hoc Webmaster Contest
Phyllis George
<pgeorge4@houston.rr.com>

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
(see Endowment Fund)
Joy Bourne, Vice President
Ruth Bailey, Secretary
Arlene Burkhalter, Treasurer

KITCHEN SAFETY

by Chuck McKie, CFMS Safety Chair from CFMS Newsletter, January 2008

Kitchen Safety

The kitchen is one of the most dangerous rooms in the house. It contains many hazards that can cause burns and unintentional fires. Every year in Phoenix, more than 300 residential fires start in the kitchen, the largest category for causes of residential fires. It's important to recognize proper heating and cooking equipment functions, and to know how to extinguish a grease fire. Taking steps to protect young children from these heating and cooking appliances can prevent damaging fires, injuries and loss of life.

Ovens and Ranges

Always make sure the oven and stove top is clean. If not, clean them thoroughly and safely. Residue grease and food can catch fire. Keep pot handles turned inward, away from the edge of the stove. Don't wear long, loose sleeves that can hang over the stove



while cooking. An electric burner coil can reach a temperature of more than 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit. This can ignite flammable fabrics, such as towels, dish rags or curtains can be ignited merely by being used or stored near a gas or electric range. Vapors from contact cement, gasoline, cleaning fluids or other flammable liquids can be ignited by the pilot of the kitchen range.

Children in the Kitchen

Children and kitchens aren't a good mix. Continuous and adequate supervision of children in the kitchen is of prime importance.

As a child's mobility and curiosity increases, appropriate supervision becomes essential. Keep all hot items at a safe distance from a child. Keep the child at a safe distance from all hot items by using highchairs, child safety gates, playpens, etc. Create a safe zone for children. Keep them out of the household traffic path and check for their location before moving any hot or heavy item. Remove tablecloths and placemats when toddlers are present. They can tug and pull on everything within their reach. Hot or heavy items can be easily pulled on top of them.

Never give children pots and pans to play with. Children may reach for this "toy" when it contains hot liquid or food. An oven door can get hot enough to burn a youngster who might fall or lean against it. It can be particularly dangerous for a child just learning to walk who may use the door for support; the child is often unable to let go before suffering a burn. Keep small children out of the kitchen when the oven is in use.



Grease Fires

If a grease fire erupts in a pan on top of the stove, quickly and carefully cover the pan with a lid or a larger pan. Never use water. If the fire is in the oven, turn the controls off and close the door tightly. This will smother the flames. Better yet, have a portable fire extinguisher handy and know how to use it. The Phoenix Fire Department recommends having a 2A10BC fire extinguisher in the kitchen; make sure it is charged at all times. If you suspect there may be fire still smoldering somewhere in the cabinets or the woodwork after such an experience, don't hesitate to call the fire department.

Appliances

Use only appliances that have received an Underwriters' Laboratory or Factory Mutual testing label. Do not allow appliance cords to dangle over the edge of counter tops or tables. Children may pull at them and injure themselves. Or you may catch them unintentionally and pull them off the counter.



Do not overload electrical circuits. Unplug appliances when not in use. If an appliance smells funny, doesn't function correctly, or has frayed or broken wiring, have it repaired or replaced.

Microwave Ovens

Burns associated with the use or misuse of microwave ovens are increasing. The scald burn is the most common type of burn and most involve the hands. The age distribution is rather broad, but there continues to be a large number of young children who sustain the more serious burns.



The single most common cause of burn injury is simply the fact that people do not expect items heated in the microwave oven to present the same risk as items heated by other more conventional means. Many people do not fully appreciate or understand how the microwave oven heats food. The fact that a food container may not be hot may mislead an individual to assume that the food itself is not really hot - thus a burn injury occurs.

Behavior

The single most important prevention measure is to read and follow the directions. The directions associated with the operation of the microwave oven and the specific directions associated with heating prepared or packaged foods are equally important.

Use a pot holder or appropriate utensil to remove lids and coverings from heated containers to prevent steam or contact burns. This also is necessary when removing items that may have been heated or extended periods of time - the container may be hot.

Be sure children are old enough to understand the safe use of the microwave oven before allowing them to heat foods. Children under the age of seven may not be able to read and follow directions and are at a higher risk potential than older children. Their height is also an important factor.

Some manufacturers do not recommend that their products be heated in a microwave oven. Be sure you follow their recommendations. (For example, some baby foods are not to be heated in a microwave. And jelly-filled donuts can be a major source of mouth burns.) Use caution when handling and cutting thick pieces of meat after heating, especially meats with considerable fat. Spattering of hot fat and meat juices may occur.

Environmental Control

Puncture plastic pouches and plastic wrap covering before heating. This will reduce the risk of a vapor pressure build up and prevent steam burns. Put a cut in potato skins or other vegetables to reduce the risk of "bursting" when you cut into it after it is heated. Eggs should be removed from the shell before being cooked in the microwave oven. The egg in a shell may explode causing both mechanical and thermal injuries. Identify containers, dishes and utensils that are safe for use in the microwave oven.

Some items are not "microwave safe" and may become very hot or even burst when heated in the microwave oven. When using smooth vessels for heating liquids, place a plastic spoon in the vessel during the heating process. This will prevent the "super heated" phenomenon that may result in liquid spattering and scald burns.

Check for the presence of metal when reheating some "fast food" items. Aluminum foil, staples in bags, twist-ties, etc. may become very hot and ignite combustible containers.

Children who are permitted to operate the microwave oven should be tall enough to be able to safely remove items from the oven. One major risk is facial burns, which occur among children whose height puts their face at the level of the heating chamber of the microwave oven.

DEADLINE
FOR THE NEXT
ISSUE IS
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