

**THE STONE CHIPPER**



*The Stone Chipper* is the official publication of the Austin Gem and Mineral Society. It is published monthly in Austin, Texas. Expanded minutes of Board Meetings are available upon request. **Note:** Clip art images are under Copyright 2012 by the AGMS and its licensors. All rights reserved. Unless otherwise noted, text items in *The Stone Chipper* may be reproduced in other nonprofit publications as long as proper credit is given to the author and *The Stone Chipper*. All authors who make submissions to this newsletter are presumed to agree with this policy.

2012 Society Officers:

- President - Pauline Denson - [president@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:president@austingemandmineral.org)
- 1st VP - Richard Dorsey - [vpresident1@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:vpresident1@austingemandmineral.org)
- 2nd VP - Paul Bordovsky - [vpresident2@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:vpresident2@austingemandmineral.org)
- Treasurer - Wing Evans - [treasurer@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:treasurer@austingemandmineral.org)
- Secretary - Joyce Hrapsky - [secretary@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:secretary@austingemandmineral.org)

2012 Board Members:

- Lou Pulliam - [loup@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:loup@austingemandmineral.org)
- Marilyn Gilbreath [marilyng@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:marilyng@austingemandmineral.org)
- Sian Schilhab - [sians@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:sians@austingemandmineral.org)
- Harold Von Rosenberg - [haroldv@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:haroldv@austingemandmineral.org)
- Terry Barry - [terryb@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:terryb@austingemandmineral.org)
- Stretch Young - [stretchy@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:stretchy@austingemandmineral.org)



**THE AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, INC. (AGMS)** is a member in good standing of the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies and the American Federation of Mineral Societies. Its editors are also members of SCRIBE. The club address is 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, Texas 78757, and phone (512)458-9546. **The AGMS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.** Visit our website at [www.AustinGemAndMineral.org](http://www.AustinGemAndMineral.org). Contact our webmaster for website updates at [DiannH@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:DiannH@austingemandmineral.org).

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the AGMS is to promote interest and education in the various Earth Sciences and other related subjects.

**MEETINGS**

**The Society meets at 7:00p.m. the fourth Thursday of every month except** October which is show set up day. The November meeting will be held on the THIRD Thursday. December is the Officers' Induction Banquet held on a date to be determined. Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month. Show committee meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month. All meetings are open to anyone. Society officers are listed on the front page of this publication. Please feel free to contact any of them for information.

**DUES FOR 2011**

Membership dues are:

- \$15.00 annually for an adult
- \$20.00 annually for a couple
- \$4.00 annually for juniors

# Chipper Chatter

The following members celebrate *birthdays* in January and February:

Dawn Canelones 1/9  
Tony Peregrino 2/5

Brian Wetzig 1/22  
Barbara Evans 2/17

Andrea Miller 2/20

Let us help you celebrate your birthday by listing it in *The Stone Chipper*.

Please e-mail the editor at [stonechipper@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:stonechipper@austingemandmineral.org), with your birth month and day so it can be added to the list.

Our condolences go out to Andrea Miller on the loss of her Mother in December.



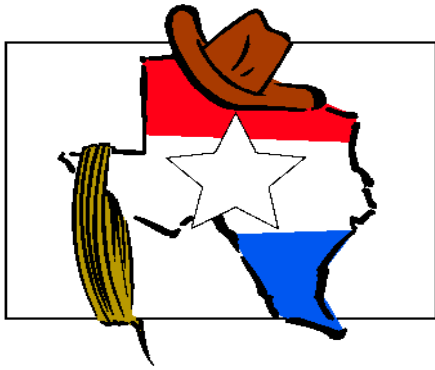
## SPECIAL NOTICE

Starting in 2013 there will be a \$10.00 yearly fee to receive *The Stone Chipper* by U.S. Postal mail. At the January 2012 board meeting, this matter was discussed and voted on. Email notices for of *The Stone Chipper* will remain fee of charge. *The Stone Chipper* will continue to be posted monthly on the AGMS website [www.AustinGemandMineral.org](http://www.AustinGemandMineral.org).



## \*\*\*\*\* Table of Contents \*\*\*\*\*

Board Meeting Minutes	Page 4
Chipper Chatter	Page2
Club Information	Front Cover
Field Trips	Page 10
Gem Capers Meeting Notice	Page 5
Membership Application	Page 8
Presidents Message	Page 3
Show Committee Minutes	Pages 7
Special Thanks	Page 6
The Agates of Northern Mexico	Page 9
Unakite	Page 11
Upcoming Shows	Page 12



## PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

Greetings, AGMS members,

Thank you for electing me your president. I am counting on your help and suggestions to make 2012 a satisfying and enjoyable year for AGMS.

If any committee chair or other volunteer does not wish to continue, please tell me right away so I can find a replacement. I am delighted that Carolyn Perkins has taken on the Historian job and Tonya Barry has agreed to take Membership.

We really need a Hospitality chairperson. This does not have to be female! The duties include reminding those who signed up to bring snacks (phone or email), making coffee and setting out ice and soft drinks at regular meetings, buying soft drinks and other supplies, and cleaning the kitchen area after the meeting. The Hospitality chairperson also orders the food for the Officer Induction Banquet. This job could be shared by co-chairs, so neither would have to be at every meeting. If you are willing to serve as chair or co-chair, please call or email me.

Some of the things I would like to promote this year are more field trips, both local and out-of state. You don't have to be the field trip chair to come up with a field trip. If you have an idea, you can ask the field trip chair to set it up, or you can tell the field trip chair, to be sure the information gets out to all club members, and go ahead and set it up yourself.

Let's make this a good rock-hounding year!

Pauline Denson



Trivia

By R.J. Harris

- ◆ Twenty-four-karat gold is not pure gold; there is a small amount of copper in it. Absolutely pure gold is so soft that it can be molded with the hands.
  - ◆ The crocodile does not chew its food but swallows it whole. It carries several pounds of small stones in its stomach to aid in grinding up and digesting what it eats.
  - ◆ Zircon crystals from the Jack Hills of Western Australia are thought to be the oldest pieces of our planet's surface at 4.4 billion years old.
  - ◆ The streets of New York City are not paved with gold, but the schist bedrock contains opal, beryl, chrysoberyl, garnet and three types of tourmaline.
- from RockBuster News, August 2011, via Snoopy Gems Jan 2012

AGMS Board Meeting Synopsis  
January 3, 2012

The AGMS Board of Directors held a regular meeting on January 3, 2012 to conduct club business. Below is a listing of the highlights of this meeting; a complete set of minutes is available upon request.

Attendees: A quorum was present consisting of five officers, four directors and five club members.

Minutes: The November 1, 2011 minutes were accepted. There was no meeting in December 2011.

Treasurer's Report: The year-end 2011 Income and Expense Budget was distributed, as well as the 2012 Budget reflecting January's Income and Expenses.

Old Business:

Report of Bylaw Committee: Tabled until next meeting.

Discussion on Charging Members Who Get Hard Copies of the Newsletter: A discussion was continued from the November 2011 Board meeting regarding distribution of the Stone Chipper. Currently some people receive hard copies by US mail and some receive it via email. Due to the cost of mailing the newsletter, and after all discussion, the following motion unanimously passed: "Moved that 2012 is the last year for the free USPS mailing of the Stone Chipper. Beginning January 1, 2013, a \$10 charge to cover mailing expenses will be added to membership dues for anyone wishing to receive the Stone Chipper by mail."

No charge will be made for the remainder of 2012; the \$10 charge will be effective January 1, 2013. There is no charge for receiving the newsletter via email.

Possible Purchase of New or Refurbished Laptop for Club Use: There is no need to purchase one at this time.

New Business:

Request for Special Funding for Library: Harriet Strieber said that the 2011 budget had an approved amount for binding of the Mineralogical Record which has been done. She stated that the same amount will need to be spent during 2012. It was agreed that this expenditure will be made when needed and Harriet will submit the bill to the Treasurer for payment.

Hospitality Chairman: Pauline Denson stated that she is taking suggestions for anyone who would be willing to serve as Hospitality Chairman.

Addition to Bylaws Review Committee: The President added Robert Morriss to the Bylaws Review Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 pm.  
Joyce Hrapsky  
2012 Secretary

The Fredericksburg Rockhounds are proud to present the  
43rd Annual Hill Country Gem Mineral & Fossil Show

Saturday, January 21, 2012: 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Sunday, January 22: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

In the Pioneer Pavilion of Lady Bird Johnson Park,  
on Highway 16 three miles south of Fredericksburg, Texas

FREE admission and parking — FREE hourly door prizes  
Raffle drawings for valuable grand prizes Minerals — Fossils — Meteorites — Gems — Jewelry  
— Exhibits -- Demonstrations — Rock Experts — Gold Panning  
Children-friendly demonstrations, displays, merchandise, and games

Food service with soft drinks, coffee, snacks, and meals

There will be a Rolling Rock Club Meeting  
Sunday, January 22, at 9:00 am in the Pioneer Pavilion  
RV rockhounds and all gem, mineral, and fossil lovers are welcome!

For more info contact Jeff Smith at [jeffbrenda@windstream.net](mailto:jeffbrenda@windstream.net) or 830-895-9630



Wow, can you believe it is January already! We had an uneventful New Years Eve, which is a wonderful thing! Bonfire and black cats with the grandkids!

We will have an active meeting this month as we are going to review inventories and pick show themes for the next 5 years.

I invite and encourage all members to attend and give us input. The show theme is a big deal to our show as it helps define special exhibits, show bulletin cover, junior resource guide, cabochon contest and even the free specimen choice!

We will also have a look see at how Fossil Fest manages their show....will prove eye opening for all!

Show Committee meeting will be January 19th (3rd Calendar Thursday).

We begin promptly at 7pm at the AGMS club house.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Postlethwait  
2012 Gem Capers Show Chair

---

---

---

---

### Upcoming Shows

Jan 1-31 Quartzite, AZ Wholesale and retail show, Desert gardens RV Park – free admission.

Jan 21-22 Fredricksburg, TX Lady Bird Johnson Park, Pioneer Pavilion 1606 S Hwy 16, Fredricksburg, TX. Free Admission

Jan 27-29 Tyler, TX East Texas Gem & Mineral Society, Rose Garden Center, 420 Rose Park Dr Adults \$3, Students \$1.

Jan 26 – Feb 12 Tucson, AZ Various dates for shows all over town!

Feb 18-19 Georgetown, TX Williamson CO Gem & Mineral Society San Gabriel Park, Adults \$2, Students \$1.

Feb 25-26 Pasadena, TX Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Show, Pasadena Convention Center, 7902 Fairmont Pkwy. Adults \$5, Students \$1.

Mar 3-4 Robstown, TX Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Show, Richard Borchard Regional Fairground, 1213 Terry Shamsie Blvd., US 77 and Hwy 44. Adults \$5, children free.

Mar 8-11 Deming, NM Deming Gem & Mineral Show, SWNM Fairgrounds, Raymond Reed Blvd. Free Admission, Field Trips available!!!

Mar 17-18 Live Oak (San Antonio), TX San Antonio Gem & Mineral Society, Live Oak Center, 8101 Pat Booker Rd. Adults \$5, Seniors & Military \$3, students \$2.

---



*Thank  
you*

### *A Special Thanks*

The Austin Gem and Mineral Society would like to thank Jim and JoAnn Wiersema @ Horizon Environmental Services, for their continued support of the club by printing *The Stone Chipper* each month.

---

---

---

---

Show Committee Meeting  
November 10, 2011

Minutes: Minutes for October were presented for review, and then submitted with one correction.

Treasurer: Brian provided information of the beginning and approximate ending balances. Motioned passed on the amount to give back to the club.

Advertising: Give a big YEAH and congratulations to Kelsey Tom, she volunteered to be the advertising chairperson. Anyone that would like to help her is welcome.

Break down staging area: The staging areas really helped with the break down and packing after the show.

Display Cases: Discussion on different aspects of the cases and need people to chair them. Someone to keep up with who signed up for cases and follow-up to be sure they do. Someone to make sure on all the signs needed for all cases. Need someone to keep up with, fix and make additions to the Crystal case. Sian and Andrea volunteered to do the signs and Andrea said she would take over the crystal case. Discussion on what wattage all the cases use.

Dealers: Motion passed to invite all dealers back for next year. Stretch brought a concern to be discussed regarding complaints from dealers about their booth size and making sure that we communicate back to the dealers formally. Stretch and Robert will discuss.

Discussions: Several items were discussed - The parking in back, cash registers, maybe going up to \$1.00 on all the .50 cent items and how well the show went.

Event Center: The caterer was really, really bad this year. Susan will get a list of approved food vendors and we can pick from the list and see if we can get a better vendor.

Floor Plans: Comments on the floor plan for this year were positive. Everyone liked the extra chairs placed in the middle.

Grand Prize Ticket: Dee brought in a sample of a new ticket based on how people were answering. To be discussed next month with updated samples.

January's agenda: Discuss the inventory of supplies on the jewelry making, wheel of fortune and gem mine. Need to know what was used at the 2011 show.

School letters: Stretch read some letters that were sent to him from the kids and parents. They were really great. He is going to frame and hang some at his office.

Show bulletin: Silicon Labs will do the show bulletin again for the 2012 show.

Show shirts: The T-Shirts was free to everyone that volunteered at the show. The black polo shirt for the show committee members are to be paid for by each member at \$27.75 each.

Barbara motioned to adjourn, Stretch seconded, the motion passed and meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m. Next meeting will be January 19th at 7:00.

---

---

It's that time again, please pay your 2012 dues using the handy coupon below.  
Simply cut out the membership application below and enclose with your dues.

AUSTIN GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.  
Membership Application  
Please Print

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Junior Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Junior Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Junior Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dues: \_\_\_\_\_ Single \$15.00, \_\_\_\_\_ Couple \$20.00, \_\_\_\_\_ Juniors \$4.00 each;  
**E-mail only newsletter:** \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to have only your name published in a membership roster please check here. \_\_\_\_\_

What telephone number may we include? \_\_\_\_\_

May we include your email address? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

You may mail your check and the above membership application to :

AGMS  
Attn: Ewing Evans  
6719 BURNET LANE AUSTIN TEXAS 78757  
(512) 458-9546

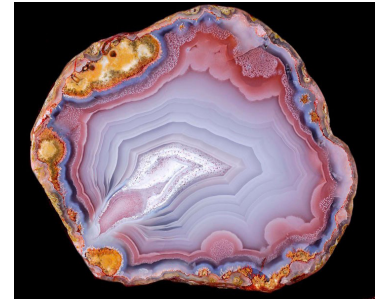
As some of you have moved during the past year, and/or changed your email address, by returning the membership application this will allow us to verify the mailing address and contact information we currently have on file for you.



Don't forget to sign up in the refreshment book for your turn to bring refreshments for 2012. Sign up now and beat the rush, make sure you get your favorite month for those wonderful snacks. Thanks to everyone who so faithfully brought snacks during this past year. It is a wonderful way to meet guests and mingle with fellow club members.



The Agates of Northern Mexico  
By Nova Wells



Did you happen to attend rock shows in the 50's and 60's and fall in love with the beautiful banded agates of Laguna and Coyamita? Did you dream of the day when you could take a trip to Mexico and hunt the agates yourself? According to author Brad Cross, your best chance is to watch for estate sales from Texas rockhounds.

The credit for discovering Mexican agates and Laguna, in particular, goes to Dr. Ralph Mueller and a reference published in Lapidary Journal in the late 1940's. Most of the agates are named for the large ranches (Spanish land grants of over 35 million acres to seven families between 1884 and 1922) in the Mexican state of Chihuahua. The state of Chihuahua includes migrating sand dunes, the Mexican portion of the Sonoran Desert (grassy plains) and igneous mountains overlaying limestone deposits. Mining and cattle ranching are the two primary businesses.

Each agate site produced distinctive banding, different from the others. Manganese compounds produced shades of violet and iron contributes reds and yellows. When you first begin researching, it sounds like the supply of beautiful agates is never ending. They are produced in the gas pockets of volcanic flows that may be as thick as 500 feet and contain as many as 20 different flows. More reading reveals that the agates occur in only the top layers, and not in all of them.

Finally you learn that in the 40's and 50's when rockhounds first began collecting, the agates lay loose on the ground, product of countless years of weathering. Once the ground surface had been cleared, local people began hand digging in the hard andesite matrix to free the agates. Most of the favorite and best known sites have been exhausted to the point only small and not particularly colorful agates are produced, if any. Geodes and crazy lace agate is still fairly plentiful.

The local people in Chihuahua are well aware of the value of the agates produced there, so don't kid yourself into thinking you can take a trip and get good agates cheaply! The mines are hand dug with picks and shovels and rarely with bulldozers. Top grade agates are rare so miners like to sell mine run. Since they deal commercially with wholesalers, (Mr. Cross says) they will probably not even show their best finds to the vacationing visitor.

via Delvings, via Moroks Newsletter Jan 2012

Club Field Trip  
Julian Turner

As many of you know, I own the Willis Green Phantom Mine in Paron, Arkansas (North of Hot Springs and due East of Little Rock). About 2 years ago I had the opportunity to spend several months full-time at the mine with a large track-hoe doing some exploratory mining (a story that at some point I will tell at one of the Club meetings). I have not been back there since that time and plan to go back for a few days over the Memorial Day break. I am opening this up to AGMS members to join me while I am there. I don't have any machinery there right now but I am positive that the tailings piles from my previous dig will have more than a few surprises. I also have several large areas still exposed if you want to bang on them. No charge for digging or keeping any of the crystals that you find (but if you want any of the football to mini-van sized pure-white yard-rock, we can discuss appropriate trades).

This is primitive: no water, no electricity, no bathrooms. However, it is extremely easy to get to. For those that have dug in Mt. Ida, this is absolutely nothing like that. On this property are 10 foot wide, 20 foot tall, 300 foot long pure quartz veins surrounded by shale (instead of the sandstone found down in Mt Ida). There is no iron so the head-quartz is pure white and to clean crystals all you have to do is run them under some water to remove the mud from the cracks. Pretty much every crystal is double-terminated and probably about 10% have green chlorite inclusions.

Just want to give folks a heads-up so that plans can be made accordingly. If folks are interested, I will work with whom-ever is responsible for field-trips and make sure they have all the details.



Out of State Digging Opportunities Available:

Rockhound Roundup (Deming, NM) 08 – 10 March 2012

Field trips (three locations each day) are available Thursday through Saturday during the Deming, NM Annual Rock & Gem Show. Trips leave at 8:00 a.m. daily from the show site, and return by mid-afternoon, so you have plenty of time to shop and enjoy the show, also. Cost is \$5 to \$10 per day, depending on location per person. Locations will include Big Dig (agate), Baker Ranch (geodes), Honey Onyx, and several others. Sign up for the field trips in person at the show – Hope to see you there!

Mountain Mustroom Festival (Irvine, KY) 24 – 26 April, 2012

Daily guided hunts for Kentucky Agate from 9:00 a.m. to late afternoon – cost is \$10 per day, and you have the choice of “easy terrain” (can drive closer to the creeks where you hunt) or “rough terrain” (more walking to the creeks). Hunts are limited to 30 people per day, so early sign-up is encouraged. (I have copies of the form available, see me at the meeting or request a copy by e-mail). The Mustroom Festival itself happens 28 – 29 April in Irvine, KY, and features a Rock & Gem show, Mushroom Cook-off, Car Show, Mushroom Market, and many other activities.

Submitted by Chip Burnette

## Unakite

By Lawrence Skelton, Wichita Kansas

During the W.G.M.S. Gem and Mineral Show this past April, I was asked the identification of a salmon-pink and pistachio-green rock among others on the silent auction table. I replied "unakite" which elicited a second question, "What's it made of?" A look and my reply, "It seems to be feldspar and probably epidote – the green stuff is epidote." That was satisfactory and the "customer" wrote down a bid and departed. I gave little thought to the exchange until a few days ago (in June), the thought returned, "Exactly what is unakite and how does it form?" Unakite or unakyte, as it originally was spelled, was identified and named in 1874 by Professor Frank H. Bradley, a geologist at East Tennessee University. He named it from its location in the Unaka Range in the Blue Ridge Physiographic Province which also contains the better known Great Smoky Mountains and described it in the American Journal of Science as "an epidotic rock...on the borders of Tennessee and North Carolina." It since has been identified in many places around the world, occurring in metamorphosed granite and in glacial outwash or stream gravel derived from granitic areas. Since it contains both feldspar and quartz, essential minerals which define granite, unakite may be classified as a type of coarse-grained granite. Quartz is a minor constituent in unakite and usually is colorless to gray or bluish-gray. In some Virginia unakite deposits, the feldspar is red to orange. Thomas L. Watson in *Granites of the Southeastern Atlantic States* (U.S.G.S. Bulletin 426) published in 1910 amplified Bradley's description, noting that "Unakite is composed of nearly equal parts of orthoclase and microcline, a little plagioclase [all feldspars], quartz, a little biotite, zircon, apatite, rutile and magnetite. Secondary minerals are a colorless and a green mica, epidote, chlorite and kaolin." Biotite, zircon, apatite and magnetite are fairly common accessory minerals in granite. Chlorite often occurs in metamorphic rocks and in igneous rocks where it is formed by the alteration of pyroxenes, amphiboles or biotite. Kaolin (a clay which principally is the mineral kaolinite) is always a secondary product formed by the hydrothermal alteration of aluminum silicates, very often feldspars. Much of the granite in the Unaka region is gneissic; that is, it has been subjected to intense folding with accompanying high pressures, temperatures and injection of super-heated water. The hot water altered any plagioclase feldspar and probably introduced or mobilized a bit of ferrous iron, converting the feldspar to epidote. The iron, a necessary part of epidote, accounts for its green color. Quartz likely was present in the original granite. John Sinkankas in *Gemstones of North America* identified unakite localities in Page, Madison and Rockbridge counties, Virginia and in Madison and Yancey counties, North Carolina and adjacent Sevier County, Tennessee. It is to be found in glacial drift around the shores of Lake Superior. The writer has found unakite pebbles in river gravel from the Ohio River and Arkansas River and in drainage from mountainous areas in eastern California. Unakite may be cut into attractive cabachons. The feldspar is 6.0 in Mohs hardness and the epidote ranges from 6.0 to 7.0. Any quartz present is 7.0 in hardness. Proper attention during cutting should be adequate to avoid any tendency of the stone to undercut. Quick and Leiper recommend polishing with cerium oxide on a felt buff. The contrasting pinks and greens make a pretty combination for spring and summer wear.

via Quarry Quips Wichita Gem and Mineral Society, Viar Moroks Newsletter Jan. 2012



Please visit us at [www.Austingemandmineral.org](http://www.Austingemandmineral.org)

Address Correction Requested



*The Stone Chipper*  
Diann Hill, Editor  
6719 BURNET LANE  
AUSTIN TEXAS 78757  
(512) 458-9546

[StoneChipper@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:StoneChipper@austingemandmineral.org)

Jan 2012  
Newsletter

Austin Gem and Mineral Society  
presents  
**GEM CAPERS 2012**

51st Annual Gemstone, Jewelry, Mineral, & Fossil Show

Friday October 19th 9a.m.-5p.m.  
Saturday October 20th 10a.m.-6p.m.  
Sunday October 21st 10a.m-5p.m.

Palmer Events Center  
900 Barton Springs Rd  
Austin Texas

For more information please visit: [www.GemCapers.com](http://www.GemCapers.com)

