

Austin Gem & Mineral Society



THE STONE CHIPPER

Each one teach one



Presidential Message

Hello, everyone,

Thanks to Julian Turner for a fantastic crystal hunting experience at his mine in Arkansas last month. Judging by the response from club members, interest in field trips is very high. Would anyone volunteer to help Chip Burnette, our Field Trip Chair, by setting up an occasional guided day-trip? When I first joined AGMS some fifteen or sixteen years ago, there were several collecting trips in the Austin area. Chip is very active in two clubs, and I think he would appreciate the help.

Kudos to Glen Gilbreath and Gef Fisher for getting more of the lights working both in the meeting room and the workshop.

As always, if you have suggestions for better ways to do things or new activities to investigate, bring them to the Board.

Pauline Denson



AGMS member Will Berezovytch finds a prize at the Arkansas Memorial Day hunt, a green phantom with sandstone inclusions. It's a beauty, Will!

photo courtesy of Joe Perkins

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 Contact our webmaster for website updates at 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 7:00 p.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 second page of this publication. Please feel free to contact any of them for information

Dues for 2012

Annual membership dues are:

Adult-\$15.00 Couple--\$20.00 Junior--\$4.00

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Hospitality - Kathleen Howard is moving--**Volunteer?**

Membership - Tonya Barry

Scholarship - Stretch Young

School Programs - Wing Evans

Sergeant-at-Arms - Jackie Fisher

Sunshine - Fran Ellis

Other Uses for Rocks

Crocodiles swallow stones to correct an error that nature made in designing the big lizards. They're unstable in the water without artificial ballast. Every one of some 100 African crocodiles dissected by a scientist had rocks in the belly. A phenomenon never adequately explained until the scientist completed careful measurements and weighing.

The stone loads ranged from one to two pounds in juveniles, to seven pounds in 15-foot long oldsters. The weights, lying low in the forward places of the stomach, nicely counter-balance the tail heaviness and rolling, two defects seen in infant crocodiles, which have to move in the water at a slant and make limb movements to keep from turning over. Properly stoned, the maturing crocodile can glide level and steady at the surface with only nostrils, eyes, and a few back scales showing. A ballasted crocodile is perhaps the only creature except man that artificially alters its design to fit the environment.

Author unknown, source: The Mountain Gem, G&M Society of Franklin NC, April 2003





Hunts & Events

August 25-26, Jasper TX SCFMS Annual Meeting & Show sponsored by the Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society, Jasper, TX. Sign up for a petrified wood hunt at nearby Lake Sam Rayburn on August 23 or 26. Advance registration deadline, July 7. Questions? Call Dona Ducote at 409-384-5653.

AGMS General Meeting- May 24, 2012

Paul Bordovsky introduced author Brad L. Cross, who narrated his slide show, "Mexican Agate--Majestic Treasures". Brad explained that the varieties of colorful banded agate found in the Chihuahuan desert south of El Paso are generally named after nearby ranches or railroad stations--Gallego, Laguna, Moctezuma, Coyamito, Agua Nueva--to name a few. Pieces from his agate collection are featured in magazines and on calendars as well as in his own books.

Brad is working on a new book on Mexican agates that he expects to be available early next year (his out of print book, *The Agates of Northern Mexico*, is available in our library). He also released an updated version of *Gem Trails of Texas*, a well-known guide. Another book that he co-authored, *Geodes: Nature's Treasures*, was purchased at the meeting by Pauline Denson for our library.

Field Trip: At 8:35 p.m., Pauline Denson welcomed the visitors: James Mercier's brother and niece, John and Carrie Mercier, who will join James on the Memorial Day weekend field trip to Arkansas. Printed directions to the Arkansas property were available at the meeting--40 people plan to be there. Alan Cherepon asked if anyone was

interested in a side trip to geologist Mike Howard's place.

Vacancy: Pauline said that a volunteer is still needed for Club Historian--an opportunity for someone who enjoys scrapbooking.

Show: Asking that members please tumble stones for the show, Andrea Miller showed a 1-1/2" X 2" bag of small tumbled stones as an example of the size rocks they'd like to collect for Wheel of Fortune prize bags. Any larger stones can be used in the Gem Mine.

Library: Diann Hill reported that Harriet Strieber's fall necessitated surgery.

Announcements:

Andrea Miller said the second phase of her mother's estate sale would be June 9-10.

Paul Bordovsky announced that Kirk Root would be next month's speaker.

Forty-five members and two guests attended the meeting.

The following people won door prizes: Dennis Fryar, Wing Evans and Mac Ellis.

Show and Tell:

Diann Hill asked for help identifying the very hard material they are shaping into a sphere.

Julie Stiles' husband brought her a trip souvenir; she'd like to have it identified.

Jackie Fisher set gemstones in some turquoise pieces she bought from Robert Morriss.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. with refreshments following.

Marilyn Gilbreath for Secretary Joyce Hrapsky



AGMS Board Meeting Synopsis May 12, 2012

The AGMS Board of Directors held a regular meeting on May 12, 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: All officers and directors and one club member were present.

Minutes: The April 3, 2012 minutes were accepted.

Treasurer's Report: The April 2012 Income and Expense Budget was presented.

Old Business:

The Bylaws revision was tabled.

Board motions changing procedures to the SOP was tabled until next month.

New Business:

The A/C unit in the Workshop/Library area is out. Bids will be taken and repairs made in the next few weeks.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm.

Joyce Hrapsky, 2012 Secretary

Mineral SIG Meeting Synopsis May 8, 2012

The May Minerals SIG was held Tuesday, May 8th. About ten of us were there to enjoy Al Cherepon's discussion of specific gravity, and how it can be used to identify minerals. He demonstrated one method of determining specific gravity by comparing the weights of a mineral specimen and an equivalent amount of displaced water, which are determined by weighing a mineral specimen in air and then in water. The club's triple beam scale was a challenge, however, since it wouldn't give consistent weights, which threw off the

calculations somewhat. I'd like to thank Al again for his presentation. After Al's presentation, we moved on to the identification of mineral unknowns that members had brought to the meeting. Josie Middleton volunteered to discuss mineral color for the June meeting.

Roger

Show Committee Meeting Minutes May 17, 2012

The Show Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes: Minutes for March were presented for review and then submitted with one correction on the treasurer's ending balance of an additional .03.

Treasurer: Brian advised balances for March and April.

Picnic – There were over 40 people at the picnic and the auction made \$336.05.

Dealer signs run \$10.00 each to replace or issue new. September 15th is the latest date to order signs.

Dealers: Stretch advised what dealers have returned applications and he will be contacting a few others, as some will not be at our show because of their commitment to the Victoria show.

Stretch gives the food table a move in packet. Susan will give them a call.

Susan needs to get electrical information into Palmer in September.

Laura sent out the notices to the magazines.

Federation show planning will be 2nd Thursday in June.

Robert passed out a couple of versions of possible floor plans for review.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10.

Memorial Day
Crystal Hunting
in Arkansas, May 2012

AGMS members enjoyed a weekend of good crystal hunting activities in Arkansas over the Memorial Day weekend. Thanks to Julian Turner and his family for their generous hospitality.



Arkansas crystal cluster.
photo courtesy Joe Perkins



Club members doing what they love to do.
photo courtesy Joe Perkins



James and Sue in the kitchen.
photo courtesy Louis Lee



Relaxing after lunch.
Photo courtesy Louis Lee



Kudos to James
Photo courtesy Louis Lee

A New Mineral Named After ASU Professor

from May 2012 SESE Source

A recently discovered mineral has been named after Peter Buseck, a Regents' Professor in SESE and the Dept. of Chemistry and Biochemistry. The mineral, buseckite, was discovered in a meteorite found near the village of Zakłodzie, Poland.

Last month scientists from the California Institute of Technology presented their findings of the discovery of the new mineral, buseckite, at the 43rd Lunar and Planetary Science Conference. A paper by Chi Ma, John R. Beckett and George R. Rossman describing buseckite will be published in July 2012.

Although far more common than new elements, new minerals are relatively rare. The names of the minerals are chosen by the discoverers, after approval by a commission of the International Mineralogical Association. Minerals are generally named after their compositions, places where first found, or people chosen to be honored.

To quote Ma et al., "The name is in honor of Peter R. Buseck, a mineralogist at Arizona State University, for his many contributions to mineralogy, meteorite research and transmission electron microscopy."

Buseckite is an iron-rich sulfide with a wurtzite type structure. It is black, opaque, and also contains zinc, manganese, and magnesium. The mineral and its name have been approved by the Commission on New Minerals, Nomenclature and Classification of the International Mineralogical Association (IMA 2011- 070).

In 1981, Prof. Don Burt had a mineral named after him (burtite, $\text{CaSn}(\text{OH})_6$), after he had predicted in 1978 the conditions under which this phase should occur in tin-rich skarn deposits.

Burt's former Ph.D. student, David London, had a new pegmatite mineral named after him in 2001. Much of London's experimental pegmatite work was conducted in John Holloway's "Bowels of the Earth" Lab in Chemistry, although he was only a student at the time.

from SESE Source. Arizona School of Earth & Space Exploration, May, 2012

A Call for Competitive Displays

By Ed Gage

The South Central Federation will be holding the show this fall in Jasper, TX on August 25 – 26. This is a great opportunity to put together a display and enter it for competition. There are some great displays out there in the club shows that could do very well if entered for awards. A display must first be entered in the SCFMS show. If it scores high enough, it may be entered in the AFMS (National Show) for additional awards and recognition. The national show will be held in Austin in 2015 so it will be the closest and most convenient for several years before it rotates back to our region. There are numerous categories for displays to be entered for competition. Please go to the AFMS website, amfed.org and there is a link on the home page for the "Uniform Rules." Take a look at the "UniformRules" to see where your display might fit. Please take some time to read through the sections which may apply to your display. Be sure to read the General Section in the front to see rules that apply to all categories. If you have any questions you may send a message to edvgage@wildblue.net and I will try to answer it. Thanks for your help in making the regional show a great one by entering a display for competition. The displays are judged against the rulebook posted on the AFMS site and not judged against each other so being familiar with the rules will make it much easier to get a high score.

—Ed Gage, Chair SCFMS Uniform Rules
From SCFMS Newsletter, Mar-Apr 2012

2015 AGMS/SCFMS/AFMS Planning Meetings

June 14 2015 Meeting at clubhouse in general meeting room--7 pm

Sept 13 2015 Meeting at clubhouse in general meeting room--7 pm

Dec 13 2015 Meeting at clubhouse in general meeting room--7 pm

Susan Postlethwait-2012 Show Chair

The Mazama Tree

A cedar tree preserved for more than 7,000 years in volcanic rock and ash may yield clues from the ancient Pacific Northwest. The so-called "Mazama Tree" was unearthed by Klamath County road crews excavating a pit in soil containing pumice deposited when Mount Mazama erupted.

The huge mountain in the southern Cascades exploded with a force that left the surrounding landscape covered with ash and cinders as far away as northwest Canada. What remains of Mount Mazama is now known as "Crater Lake."

Klamath Parks Supervisor Keith Read said his bulldozer crews dug through about 30 feet of typical central Oregon pumice and ash before reaching a layer of much coarser pumice. It was in this layer that the workers uncovered four hollow shafts 2 to 3 feet in diameter running vertically through the soil. Only a few feet further down the bulldozer uncovered the ancient tree standing in the center of a 28 inch diameter shaft. "I was very amazed," Read said. "To me it is unbelievable that it would survive so many years in the earth without rotting away."

A portion of the tree was apparently destroyed by the heat of the entombing ashes, but it was not carbonized by the intense heat of the Mazama eruption. "I've never seen a 7,000 year old anything preserved that way," said Bill Hopkins, a U.S. Forest Service ecologist based in Bend.

He was joined by Forest Service scientist Steve Simone in an inspection of the tree. They theorized that a shroud of coarse pumice and cool ash protected the base of the tree from the hot gases and ash that followed.

A sample of the wood (that was not petrified) will be analyzed to see if carbon-dating is possible. "It could substantiate a lot that has been theorized about the pre-Mazama flora," Hopkins said. "The composition of the wood could also tell a lot about the climate at that time, nutrient conditions in the area, even the purity of the air."

via the Pegmatite, 9-02; via Fossils For Fun 10-02 via Pickin's and Diggin's 5-03

(This article dates to when the Mazama Tree was found in 1991. Newer information describes the tree as an 8 ft. section of ponderosa pine that was 300 years old when it was entombed 7,790 years ago. Many carbonized trees have been found in the region, but the Mazama Tree remains the only uncharred tree remnant discovered to date.--Fossils for Fun ed.

THANKS!

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

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.

Help Shape Your Newsletter

We appreciate your helpful suggestions on how to make this a better newsletter and are trying to shape it to suit you. My vision of a pertinent, interesting newsletter includes contributions of articles and photos from club members. The topics can be happenings within or outside the club that are related to our club focus. Email me <cmeeperk@gmail.com>

Biggs Jasper



Biggs jasper is one of the more recently discovered picture rock materials. The first piece was found about 1960 in a creek bottom south of Biggs Junction, Oregon. It is one of the more distinctive jaspers even though it lacks brilliant colors, its design is unique among siliceous rocks. It takes an excellent polish.

Biggs jasper seems to have developed from the muds of short-lived streams that evolved on the surface of a cooled basalt terrain. The raw materials (plastic colloids, silica, clay and iron) came from the weathering of recent igneous rocks and were deposited in the settling basins of stream channels. Heat and pressure from volcanic activity then served to form jasper, small creeping motions led to the marbled rosettes and picture designs.

Biggs jasper is sandwiched between two basalt lava flows that cover Oregon, Washington and parts of Idaho. That plants and animals inhabited the newly formed water courses is shown by the fossil fish found in the area.

Condensed from The Rock Licker, via THE ROCK RATTLER 1/94 Via Glacial Drifter 2 & 3/01

Bench Tips

By Brad Smith

LASER WELDING

A question came up this week about how to solder some jump rings to hold blue topaz briolettes onto a necklace. We've all heard about ways to do some

soldering close to a stone, and some of us have sized a ring without taking the stones out of their mounts. We've used wet paper towels, garnet sand, cooling gels, and my favorite of suspending the stone in a dish of water. All techniques bank on the principal of using a small, hot flame to do the job quickly before the stone gets hot enough to crack or change color.

But each job is somewhat of a gamble. Some stones are hardy and some are frail. Jades and jaspers will generally take a lot of heat, but I'd never chance it with the likes of topaz or opal. Trying to shield a stone from the torch is always a betting game, and sometimes you lose.

If you're worried about soldering something close to a stone, perhaps it's time to consider a no-heat method like laser welding. Most jewelry stores have laser welders these days, and the cost of having it done is quite affordable. They used to have problems doing silver, but now seem to do it routinely.

I've used a local shop twice in the last year, once for a piece with little emeralds a "friend" asked me to repair and for a second piece where I needed a safety catch and didn't want the torch heat to expose all the solder lines again.

A BETTER PICKLE

Most jewelers use a granular pickle called "Sparex" mixed with water. The active ingredient is sodium bisulfate. This can be purchased locally from most hardware stores as a common pool chemical used for adjusting the acidity of the water. It's sold under various names, so just look at the list of active ingredients for 95% or so sodium bisulfate.

An added benefit is that the pool chemical is more pure in form and does not cause the often found brown grime floating on the top of a Sparex pickle pot.

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)

Email-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 e-mail address? Yes _____ No _____

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

AGMS
6719 BURNET LANE
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78757

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

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 2010 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.

Austin Gem and Mineral Society
presents



Gem Capers 2012

51st Annual Gemstone, Jewelry, Mineral & Fossil Show

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

Palmer Events Center,
900 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX

For more information please visit www.GemCapers.com

The Stone Chipper

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June 2012 Newsletter

Address Correction Requested

Austin Gem and Mineral Society



Please visit us at www.Austingemandmineral.org