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1st Place, 2022 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin  
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## DIAMOND, APRIL'S BIRTHSTONE

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

April is one of the months that has only one birthstone. The traditional birthstone for April is Diamond, a mineral with many unique properties and characteristics. Diamond is the hardest-known natural mineral – its Mohs hardness is 10. It is one of only a few minerals that are formed from a single element - it is formed from carbon. It also has the highest thermal conductivity (the ability to transmit heat) of any natural substance. Diamond is formed under very high temperature and pressure conditions. To achieve the high temperature and pressure they are formed at very great depths. They are actually formed below the earth's crust at depths greater than 90 miles. To get to the surface, they need special types of volcanoes – most were transported to the earth's surface by kimberlite pipes (volcanos), and the rest were transported by lamproite volcanos. Diamonds form in the cubic crystal system. The crystal habitat is generally octahedral (8-sided) and sometimes a twinned octahedral known as a macle.

Diamonds also have optical properties that make them desirable for jewelry. They have a very high refractive index – the ability to bend light as it goes from one medium to another (for instance, from the diamond to the air as the light exits the crystal). It also has very high optical dispersion – the ability to spread out the light spectrum as it passes through a prism making it easier to see the different colors. The hardness of diamonds also helps prevent the stones from getting

scratched, although diamonds can scratch other diamonds and should be kept separated. Diamonds are also very resistant to corrosive liquids (acids and bases) making them easier to maintain. Although not a necessity for jewelry, diamonds can transmit light from far infrared frequencies to deep ultraviolet frequencies – a useful property if you need a special lens to transmit certain frequencies of light.



Natural 8-sided octahedral Diamond Crystal

Diamonds can now be lab-made either by growing them under very high pressure and temperature conditions or by chemical vapor deposition. Imitation diamonds are generally formed from cubic zirconia (Mohs hardness of 8 to 8.5 or from silicon carbide (also

known as synthetic moissanite – Mohs hardness of 9.25). Most natural diamonds are mined in South Africa, Russia, and Canada. Diamonds are also found in Arkansas at the Crater of Diamonds State Park. These diamonds are mostly small and only about 1 diamond per day is found. There has been some commercial diamond mining attempted at the location, but the quantity of diamonds produced had an insignificant impact on the world's diamond production.

### References:

- American Gem Society, <https://www.americangemsociety.org/>
- Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

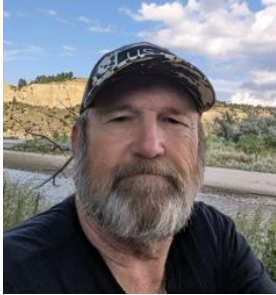
### Picture:

Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki>. Photo by Rob Lavinsky, [iRocks.com](http://iRocks.com) – CC-BY-SA-3.0

# FEDERATION NEWS

## From the Desk of the [AFMS] President

Roger Burford, from the April 2024 AFMS Newsletter



I wanted to write a little this month about National Monuments and what they mean to us as rockhounds. I'm sure there are many of you out there who know much more than I about this subject, and I invite your input so I can do what I can to get a handle on this and start a national campaign with the purpose of keeping these areas open to rockhounding.

The United Nations has come up with this plan known as 30 by 30 that proposes that 30 percent of the earth's land and water would be preserved. Essentially it ends up with the US preserving all public lands in the western states.

I spoke with Lori Colman while in Tucson about the issue in the mountains around Deming, New Mexico, which is the proposed Mimbres Peaks National Monument. This encompasses all of the mountains in Luna County surrounding Deming, the Florida Mountains, Cookes Range, Good Sight Mountains, and Trs Hermanas encompassing 245,000 acres. In this case, they are being told that there will be no grazing, hunting, mining, or flying over the monument. In Lori's case, she has some mines in the mountains that would be grandfathered in, but there would be no roads to get to the mines. The ranchers would also lose their businesses because of losing their grazing rights. The ranchers, rockhounds, and miners were all blindsided by this proposal. It is the brainchild of a small group of people who live in Deming who don't want there to be anything happening in the mountains.



District 32 State Representative Jenifer Jones, a Republican from Deming, said there has been little transparency or public involvement around the national monument effort. Proponents of the monument are expecting that the monument would increase revenue for the area due to increased visitors to the area -- but that could not happen if the mountains were off limits. This is not the only land grab going on in our country. I don't know all of them, and I invite your input so I can work on a campaign in Congress to stop what's going on and the threat it presents to our hobby. We are having a hard enough time getting young people involved in the earth sciences without our outdoor areas being taken away from us. I will write more on this next month and would like to hear from anyone who has more information.

(See <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/ranchers-are-concerned-over-245-000-acre-new-mexico-monument-proposal/ar-AA1mHqXg> )

Photos by Patrick Alexander. Above, Southeast of the Florida Mountains. CC0 1.0 DEED via Flickr. Left, Southeastern foothills of Cookes Range. CC0 1.0 DEED via Flickr

## FEDERATION NEWS - CONTINUED



### THE [SCFMS] PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Don Shurtz, SCFMS President

Suddenly it was Monday, January 1st, 2024, and I was the SCFMS President. That, quite frankly, scares the heck out of me. What am I supposed to do?



First, let me tell you a little bit about myself. I don't know when I picked up my first rock, but by the time I was 12 years old, I had quite a collection. About that time, my father also started being interested in rocks. He bought a used rock saw, built some equipment for cutting and polishing rocks, and eventually built his own faceting machine. Best of all, he let me use the rock saw and the cutting and polishing machines – I think that was when I was officially a Rockhound. I continued to cut and polish rocks until I left for college at the University of California with a Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship. Upon graduation, I was commissioned as an Officer in the U.S. Navy – my life for the next 20 years. My time at the University of California and in the U.S. Navy did not leave much time for Rockhounding, but the interest was still there in the background. My final duty station in the Navy was in Dallas, TX. I retired from the U.S. Navy in January 1989. I took 4 days off, then started my working life as a civilian on the same program I had been working on in my final Navy tour of duty. I have continued to live in the Dallas area since then. I am currently retired, but I am an active volunteer at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science where I am a docent in the Life, Then and Now (Dinosaur) Hall and the Gem and Mineral Hall. I have volunteered more than 500 hours per year for the last seven years, and plan to continue as long as I can.

While living in Dallas, my two daughters started picking up “pretty rocks” on the way to school, and that rekindled my active interest in Rockhounding. With a tumbler, we could make those “pretty rocks” into beautiful, polished rocks. It also provided an excuse to take weekend trips to look for rocks. With some other equipment, we could cut and polish the rocks into stones suitable for jewelry. I joined the Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club and almost immediately became the editor of the Chips and Chatter newsletter. That led to involvement with the SCFMS for the Editor and Author Contests and later the Website Contests. In the SCFMS, I served as a District Vice President, Bulletin Editor Advisory Chair, SCFMS Webmaster Chair, SCFMS Website Contest Chair, Scholarship Chair, Executive Vice President, and now the SCFMS President.

My goals as the SCFMS President are to grow the interest of SCFMS members into becoming active in Club and SCFMS activities. We start the year without an SCFMS Secretary – a vital position that needs to be filled. We also have District Vice President positions to fill. Some Committee Chair and Committee member positions also need to be filled. It would sure be great if all these positions could be filled. We also need to support three different monetary funds that are supported by contributions. The SCFMS Endowment Fund exists to financially support the SCFMS. Each year the SCFMS Budget can request money from the interest to the Endowment Fund to balance our budget. The AFMS Endowment Fund exists to support the AFMS if financial needs occur. It also supports the AFMS Juniors programs. Finally, the AFMS Scholarship Foundation fund exists to support two scholarships per AFMS Region (except the Southeastern Federation which has its own scholarship fund). The two \$4,000.00 scholarships are awarded to graduate students working on an advanced degree in an Earth Science Field. These funds are supported by donations from clubs and members. I am particularly unwavering about supporting the AFMS Scholarship fund. Please see the article titled Scholarships that also appears in this edition of the SCFMS Newsletter for a special program for this year's donations to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation Fund.

# Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

Check with the show contact to verify the show status

## April 2024

- April 6-7, San Antonio, TX, Southwest G&MS, Morris Center, SWMS.ORG
- April 20- 21, Alpine, TX, Chihuahuan Desert G&MC, Alpine Civic Center, Alpine, TX, [www.facebook.com/chihuahuan-desert-gem-mineral-club](http://www.facebook.com/chihuahuan-desert-gem-mineral-club).

## May 2024

- May 6-7, Waco G&M Club, Waco Convention Center, Waco, TX, [www.facebook.com/wacogemandmineralclub](http://www.facebook.com/wacogemandmineralclub)
- May 25-26, Fort Worth G&MS, Will Rogers Memorial Center, Fort Worth, TX [www.fortworthgemandmineralclub.org](http://www.fortworthgemandmineralclub.org)
- Ref: Rock & Gem Show Dates, <https://www.rockngem.com/ShowDatesFiles/ShowDatesDisplayAll.php?ShowState=ALL>
- Ref: SCFMS Website, Local Shows, [www.scfms.net/local\\_shows.htm](http://www.scfms.net/local_shows.htm)

## VISIT AN AREA CLUB

- [Arlington Gem & Mineral Club](#): 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX
- [Cowtown Gem, Mineral, & Glass Club](#): 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 pm, CERA 3300 Bryant Irvin Rd. Fort Worth
- [Dallas Bead Society](#): 1st Saturday of each month at 10:00 am at The Point at CC Young, 4847 W. Lawther Dr., Dallas, TX
- [Dallas Gem & Mineral Society](#): 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, American Legion, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas (next to their shop)
- [Dallas Paleontological Society](#): 2nd Wed. of each month at 7:00 pm, Brookhaven College, Building H, 3939 Valley View Lane,
- [Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club](#): 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 3545 Bryan Avenue, Ft. Worth
- [Oak Cliff Gem & Min Society](#): 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 3839 W. Keist Blvd, Dallas,
- [Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club](#): 1st Monday of each month at 7:00 PM, Knights of Columbus Council 6402 Hall, 3722 Cavalier Dr., Garland,
- [Wild West Bead Society](#): 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm, Wild Beads, 1124 S. Bowen Road, Arlington, TX

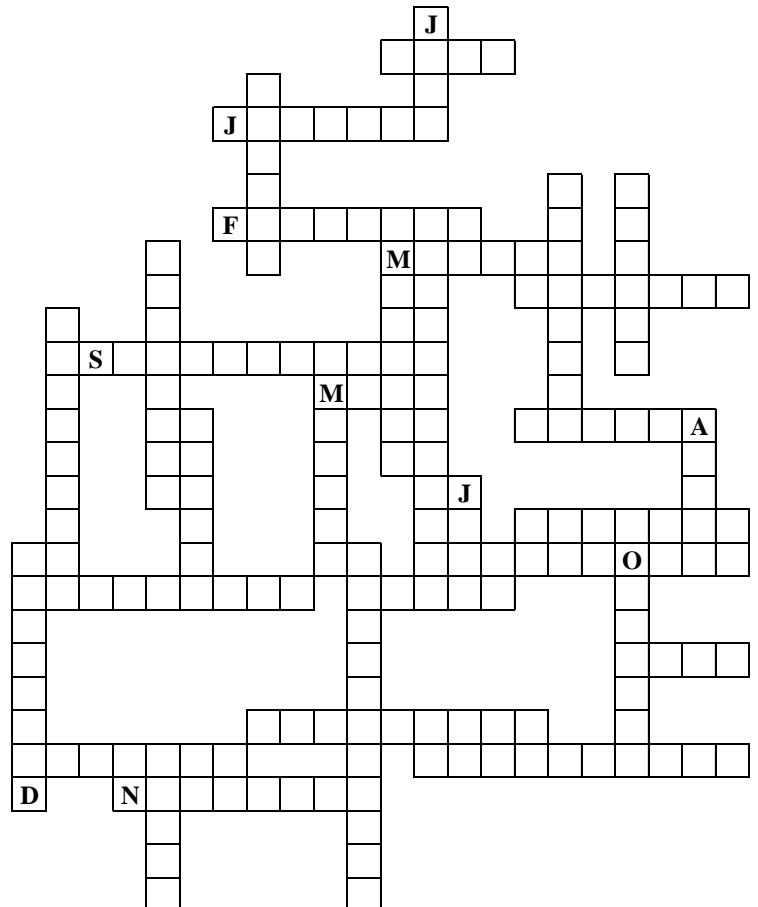
## Month and Birthstone Tangle

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

### INSTRUCTIONS

I was trying to make some sort of maze, but things got tangled up. Your task is to fill in the blank boxes so that it makes sense. The Capital Letters shown are the first letter of a month. All of the Birthstones are somehow attached to the month. They may be attached directly to a letter in the Month, or they may be attached to another birthstone from the same month. The names can go forwards or backwards and also up and down. I feel that there is only one unique solution to this tangled up mess. Enjoy

Months & Birthstones	
January	Garnet
February	Amethyst
March	Aquamarine Bloodstone
April	Diamond
May	Emerald
June	Pearl Moonstone Alexandrite
July	Ruby
August	Peridot Spinel Sardonyx
September	Sapphire
October	Opal
November	Tourmaline Topaz Citrine
December	Turquoise Tanzanite Zircon



## OFFICERS FOR 2023 - 2024

President: Joe Vulk  
 1st VP, Programs: Carolyn Grady  
 2nd VP, Field Trips: Julie Wilson  
 Secretary: Amy Vulk  
 Treasurer: Ling Shurtz  
 Editor: Don Shurtz  
 Contact us by e-mail: [don.shurtz@gmail.com](mailto:don.shurtz@gmail.com) or L.SHURTZ@gmail.com

## MINUTES

There were no minutes from the March Meeting. March was our annual St. Patrick's Day social with a traditional Irish potluck dinner.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last month's get-together was our annual St. Patrick's Day social. We had ten adult members and two kids attending. The corned beef and cabbage was terrific as well as the other food items that everyone brought. Thanks to all for making it a very enjoyable evening.

Additionally, we had Jana Houston visiting. She is DGMS secretary and field trip manager. Jana kindly invited our club to join theirs on their next field trip to Three Rivers Texas. Their plan was to hunt for petrified wood on the House Ranch. She explained the rockhounding experience on the ranch and it fired up several in our group. That included me and my family.

We, myself and five others in my family, decided to go on the trip to Three Rivers. We were all keen to find some nice artifacts there. We had the trip planned out: we did the registration with DGMS, Don provided the necessary insurance documentation, and Brenda booked accommodations at Choke Canyon Lodge which is very near the ranch. However, a major concern was the rainy weather prediction. We monitored the weather forecast with great interest as the weekend approached and sure enough, heavy rain was predicted. So, in the interest of not getting drenched on the day of the hunt, as well as navigating possible muddy conditions in our van and our snake-proof boots, we decided to postpone the adventure until another time. So, I'm hopeful to find out if anyone did go and did they find anything and did it rain a lot.

See you at the April meeting. Happy Easter.

Joe Vulk

*Chips and Chatter*

Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

See the Chips and Chatter online for color!

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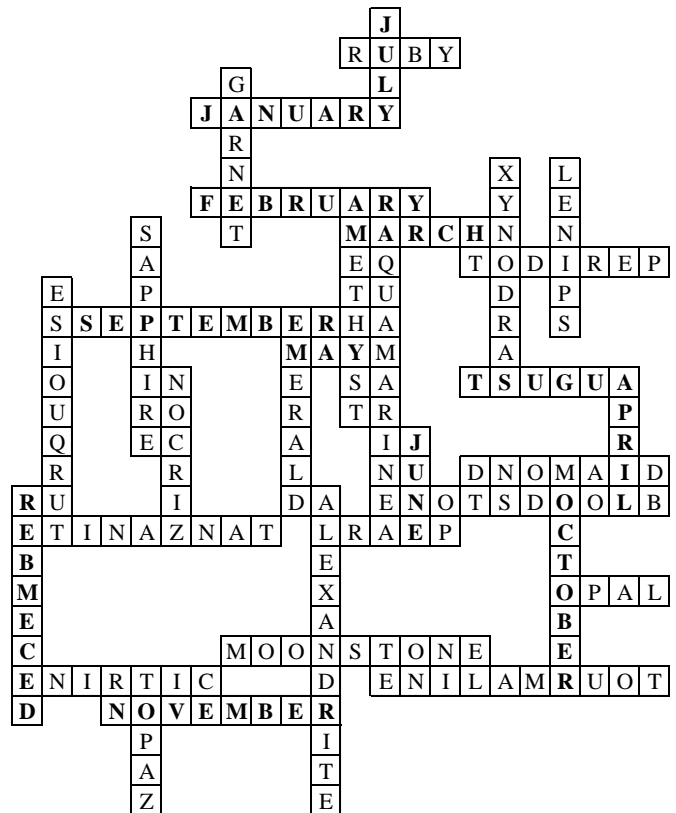
April 2024

## NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be on Monday, April 1, 2024, starting at 7:00 PM. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland. Julie and Warner went on the House Ranch Field Trip and will present a verbal report. Hopefully, they also will bring in a lot of specimens for all to see.

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## Month and Birthstone Tangle - Solution



# PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of DALLAS



## Meetings

First Monday of each month, KofC Hall, 3722 Cavalier Dr., Garland, TX. Please check website, [www.pogmc.org](http://www.pogmc.org), for updates.

## Membership

Single Adult: \$16.50,  
Junior: \$5.00, Family: \$27.50  
(Plus badge fee for new members)

## PURPOSE

The Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas is organized for charitable and educational purposes to promote interest in the various earth sciences, particularly those hobbies dealing with the art of cutting and polishing gemstones, the science of gems, minerals, and metal crafts, as well as their related fields. Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas is a not-for-profit organization

## CHIPS AND CHATTER

Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club  
c/o 4004 Dublin Rd.  
Allen, TX 75002-6526

To

## VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

**Our next meeting will be on Monday, April 1, 2024, starting at 7:00. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Council 6402 Hall located at 3722 Cavalier Drive in Garland. Julie and Warner will tell us about their experiences at the House Ranch field trip**

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### *Chips and Chatter*

Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

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