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1st Place, 2022 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin  
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## Rocks and Minerals for April

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club

When we typically think of rocks or minerals associated with a month, we usually think of Birthstones. For April, that would be Diamond – the only birthstone for April. When I think of April, I think of April Fools Day, April 1<sup>st</sup>. Are there any rocks or minerals that fool us? A classic example would be red Spinel. Some of the world's most famous Rubies turned out to be Spinel.

One of the most famous Rubies is the Black Prince Ruby, the centerpiece of the British Imperial State Crown; it is actually a Spinel and has been known to be a Spinel for many (MANY!) years. Even today, it is called the Black Prince Ruby – who do they think they are fooling? Another famous Ruby in British hands is the Timur Ruby. It is in a necklace that is part of Queen Elizabeth's personal collection. It is also a large Spinel. It is still referred to as the Timur Ruby.

Not to be outdone by the British, Catherine the Great's Ruby is part of the Russian Crown Jewels. It sits



atop the Russian Great Imperial Crown. It is a 398.72 behemoth, the second-largest known Spinel. It was last worn in 1896 at the coronation of Nicholas II. It is currently on display at the Moscow Kremlin Armory State Diamond Fund. At least, it is now referred to as a Spinel.



Another series of misnomers deal with opal. Opal is often called a semi-precious mineral and sometimes a rock. It is neither a rock nor a mineral; it is a glass (no crystalline structure) or, perhaps more correctly, a mineraloid. There are three types of opals – common, precious, and fire opal. If it is not categorized as precious or fire opal, it is referred to as common opal. However, some common opals are not so common. For example, consider the Peruvian blue opal (also found in Oregon, Idaho, and Nevada). It is a pale blue color and varies from opaque to translucent. It cuts into fantastic gems. It is pretty pricy (rough or finished), yet it is classified as a common opal. Next, consider fire opal. It is called fire opal because it is the color of fire – orange and yellow. It does not exhibit the play of color. Finally, there

are precious opals. Precious opals have a play of color from the stones. The play of color can be dots, splashes,

blobs, or streaks of color, generally called fire, from the stone as the orientation of the stone is changed. So, opal that has a play of color (fire) and is commonly referred to as fire opal IS NOT fire opal; it is precious opal. The stone with a color similar to fire but does not display any play of color (fire) is fire opal. Now, that naming convention is just foolish.

Yet another example is sugar geodes from Morocco. They are nice geodes. When opened, they show a fine coating of white quartz crystals. The crystals are so tiny and tightly packed that they remind some of a sugar coating. You would think that the explanation of quartz crystals would be sufficient, but a small minority of people don't want to be fooled; they need to taste the crystals to make sure. They are disappointed when there is not a sweet, sugary taste.



These are just a sampling of rocks and minerals that try to fool us. I will leave this as a “to be continued” article for future additions.

Reference:

Five Legendary Spinel, <https://gemcal.com/five-legendary-spinels/>

Opal, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opal>.

Pictures:

Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

## Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

Check the show contact to verify the show status

### April 2025

April 5-6, Southwest G&MS, Wonderland of Americas Mall, San Antonio, TX, [www.swgms.org](http://www.swgms.org)

April 18-20, Chihuahuan Desert G&M Club, Alpine Civic Center, Alpine, TX, [www.facebook.com/chihuahuan-desert-gem-mineral-club](https://www.facebook.com/chihuahuan-desert-gem-mineral-club)

### May 2025

May 4-5, Waco G&M Club, Lee Lockwood Library and Museum, [www.facebook.com/wacogemandmineralclub](https://www.facebook.com/wacogemandmineralclub)

May 24-25, Fort Worth G&M Club, May 24 - 25, Will Rogers Memorial Center, <https://www.fortworthgemandmineralclub.org/show.html>

### October 2025

October 19-21, Austin G&MS show and SCFMF Convention (October 18). The show is at the Palmer Event Center in downtown Austin; the Convention Breakfast and General Meeting will be at their clubhouse, 6719 Burnet Lane, and the awards banquet will be at Nature's Treasures, 11055 N IH-35 Frontage Rd. Both are north of downtown Austin.

**Ref: Local Shows,** [https://www.scfms.net/local\\_shows.htm](https://www.scfms.net/local_shows.htm)

## VISIT AN AREA CLUB

[Arlington Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX

[CERA Gem, Mineral, & Glass Club](#), meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 pm, CERA 3300 Bryant Irvin Rd. Fort Worth

[Dallas Bead Society](#), meets 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](#), meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, American Legion, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas (next to their shop)

[Dallas Paleontological Society](#), meets the 2nd Wed. of each month at 7:00 pm, Brookhaven College, Building H, 3939 Valley View Lane,

[Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 3545 Bryan Avenue, Ft. Worth

[Oak Cliff Gem & Min Soc.](#), meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 3839 W. Keist Blvd, Dallas,

[Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Monday of each month at 7:00 PM, Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Dr., Garland

[Wild West Bead Society](#), meets 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm, Wild Beads, 1124 S. Bowen Road, Arlington, TX

## FEDERATION NEWS

### My Perspective of the AFMS/EFMLS Convention and Show

Don Shurtz, SCFMS President

The joint AFMS/EFMLS convention was held March 27 to 31 in Hickory, North Carolina. The West Catawba Valley Gem and Mineral Club hosted the convention in conjunction with their March 28-31 show. Hickory, NC, has a population of about 44,000, but the population living within 25 miles is about 350,000. The oldest industry in Hickory was furniture making, and Hickory is still known for producing and selling furniture. The show is about twice the size of the Dallas Gem and Mineral Society in the size of the building, with about the same number of vendors. The show devotes about 30% of one of the two halls to children's activities – they realize that the future of their club is through the youth staying active in the hobby.

My first impression was, "It was a long drive!" Google Maps varied between 14.5 and 16.5 hours, depending upon the time of day. Mind you, that is 100% driving time. Taking time out for gas, rest area stretches, and food adds 1 to 2 hours to the trip. Even making it a two-day trip still left it as a long drive. As I write this, I am not looking forward to tomorrow when I must repeat the drive back to Texas!

My first impression of the show was, "Where are the rocks?" About 10 % of the vendors dealt primarily with Fossils, and the remaining 90% dealt primarily with minerals. Many mineral dealers had a few tumbled rocks to attract children, I only found 1 vendor that focused on rocks rather than minerals, but their focus was on large, polished slabs, not the rough rocks and slabs we expected. I also found 2 dealers that had a small space for slabs. Interestingly, the first slab I picked up (at random) was a piece of llanite. With further looking, I did not find any more llanite or petrified palm.

My second impression of the show was that the club really worked with the kids. There were six activities for kids, ranging from taking rocks and minerals and placing them on a name grid to a kid's mining activity, which involved scooping rocks onto a screen and sorting out the stones from the sediment. The whole kid's mine was less than 3 ft by 4 ft – quite a bit smaller than what we see at our local shows.

My first impression of the general meeting was, "This is organized." A lot of planning went into all the activities. All of the Regional Federations were represented in person. Most of the AFMS officers were in the hall, with a couple attending by Zoom. Most of the AFMS committee chairs were in attendance, attending in person or by Zoom.

My next impression was, "Organization pays – the meeting ran very smoothly," There was no prolonged roll call; All the table spots were filled, and everyone introduced themselves and their title. There was some slowdown in reviewing all the reports, but there was no attempt to vote to accept or reject each report. Except for the budget, the reports were precisely that; a committee chair or officer's perspective. The budget was passed with only a minor correction of a typo. There was a discussion about changing the AFMS Newsletter distribution to 100% email. There were the usual concerns that some of the older people did not have internet access, and a few areas of the country did not have internet coverage. In the end, a Resolution was passed that the AFMS Newsletter distribution be moved to email. The Resolution passed. This amounts to an affirmation that the newsletter distribution should be moved to email and that a plan should be presented at the next meeting on implementing the Resolution.



## FEDERATION NEWS Continued

### From the Desk of the [AFMS] President-

JC Moore, AFMS President 2024-25, From the March 2025 AFMS Newsletter

As we begin the show season, I hope everyone has returned from Arizona fully stocked for the upcoming shows. Due to the fact that our home show is the second weekend in March, traveling to Tucson and Quartzite has not been accomplished but is still on the bucket list. March is a busy month for the Moore family with show commitments for the second and third weekends, and a week to recuperate before heading to the AFMS Convention in Hickory, North Carolina. While the convention is early this year, I hope all the Regional Federations will be able to be represented.



As the President is responsible for appointing committee chairs, there are several committees without chairmen that I am looking to fill: Conservation and Legislation, Judges Training and Media Director. The Judges Training position will be discussed during the Uniform Rules meeting and have a report at the general meeting in the afternoon. The Media Director would be responsible for ensuring that meetings are available through electronic means for those unable to attend in person. Perhaps this would be making sure that the host club/federation has this capability rather than having to bring the equipment themselves. I would like to thank all the current chairs for continuing in their positions this year.

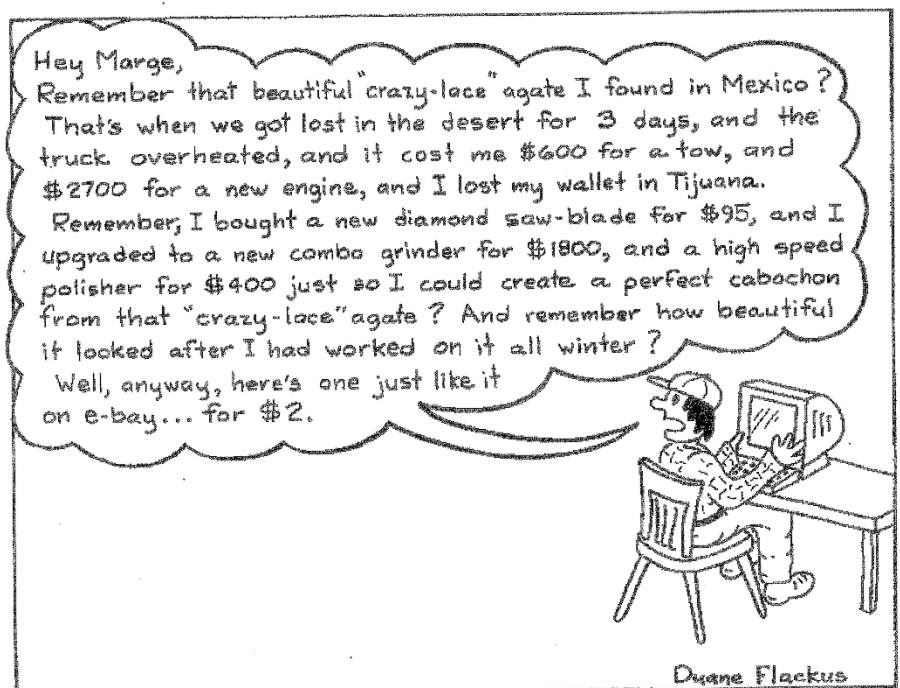
As there was considerable discussion at Ventura last year concerning the newsletter expense, the possibility of converting the newsletter to electronic format will be discussed at this year's convention including discussion about a fee if a hard copy is requested. I hope that the majority of the comments on this will pertain to the logistics of the conversion and not strictly the cost aspect.

I hope many of you will be joining us for the discussions in Hickory. This is how we can get new ideas on how to deal with these concerns. We plan to have Zoom available for the annual meetings. Contact secretary Donna Moore for the link if you cannot attend in person.

#### A Little Humor

From THE CLACKAMETTE GEM  
MAY 2024 Edition

The Clackamette Mineral and Gem  
Club is in Oregon City, OR, and is a  
member of the Northern Federation  
of Mineral Societies (NFMS)



## OFFICERS FOR 2024 – 2025

President: Joe Vulk  
1st VP, Programs: Amy Vulk  
2<sup>nd</sup> VP, Field Trips: Julie Wilson  
Secretary: Johnny Rhodes  
Treasurer: Ling Shurtz  
Editor: Don Shurtz  
Contact us by email: [don.shurtz@gmail.com](mailto:don.shurtz@gmail.com)

## Minutes of the March 3, 2025 Meeting

March was our annual St. Patrick's Day potluck dinner. We had a lot of food, but no official business was conducted. No Minutes were required or taken.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last month's get-together was our annual St. Patrick's Day social. The corned beef and cabbage, and soda bread were terrific, as well as the other food items that everyone

brought. Thanks to all for making it a very enjoyable evening.

Happy Easter. See you at the April meeting.  
Joe Vulk

## Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on April 7, 2025, at the Knights of Columbus Hall starting at 7:00 PM. The presentation for the meeting is still being worked on. It will either be a video or a Presentation by Tom Dill of the Dallas Paleo Society. Whichever option works out, I bet it will be a good presentation.

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# 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 Monday, April 7, 2025. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland, TX. The presentation will be a hobby-related Video or a talk by Tom Dill of the Dallas Paleo Society**

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