

Tourmaline, a Mineral for Christmas?

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

What colors do you think of for Christmas? I think of White, Red, and Green. White for snow, green for the

traditional Christmas tree, and Red for the suit Santa Claus wears. An Internet search for a stone or mineral for Christmas, much like a birthstone, yielded no results. Therefore, I nominate

Tourmaline variety Elbaite, specifically the type called Watermelon Tourmaline as the Christmas Mineral. It

is red and green like watermelon, and often sits on a base (matrix) of white albite, quartz, or Cleavelandite. If it is cut into a gemstone, you retain only the tourmaline portion of the specimen; you lose the white color, but close enough!

Tourmaline is actually a family with 33 recognized members that span the color spectrum. Elbaite is the variety of tourmaline most people encounter in gemstones. It has the chemical composition of $\text{Na}(\text{Li}_{1.5}, \text{Al}_{1.5})\text{Al}_6\text{Si}_6\text{O}_{18}(\text{BO}_3)_3(\text{OH})_3\text{OH}$; you have to wonder how all those chemicals get together in one solution to create the mineral! It has a Mohs hardness of 7.5 – slightly harder than quartz. Brazil is the world's largest producer of Tourmaline variety

Elbaite, but that title once belonged to the mines in San Diego, California.



If you would rather have a Christmas Rock rather than a Mineral, and if you are willing to give up the white color then I would nominate Bloodstone as the Christmas Rock. Bloodstone is also the birthstone for March, but then tourmaline (unspecified variety) is also the birthstone for October. Bloodstone, also known as

heliotrope, is a green chalcedony with red spots or blobs. It is a member of the Quartz family with a chemical composition of SiO_2 and a Mohs hardness of 6.5 to 7.0. The majority of the Bloodstone on the market comes from Indonesia. It is also found in many other parts of the world including here in the United States. Locations in the US include California and other states including Texas.



References:

- Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birthstones>, <https://www.americangemsociety.org>
- Mindat, <https://www.mindat.org/>

Pictures from Wikimedia Commons,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>:

Bloodstone: Picture by Ra'ike, licensed under CCA-SA 3.0

Tourmaline: Picture by Rob Lavinsky, iRocks.com – CC-BY-SA-3.0

Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

- Dec 7 – 9, El Paso, TX, El Paso M&GS, El Maida Shiners' Auditorium, L1155@yahoo.com
- Dec 13- 15, Murphy, TX, David Dobson Amethyst Rock Sale, 1409 Oak Hill Ln, rock@rocktrading.org
- **Jan 11 – 13, 2019, Dallas, TX, IGEM, Market Hall, <https://www.intergem.com/all-upcoming-shows/>, club show set-up on Wednesday, January 9, 2019**
- **Jan 19 - 20, 2019, Fredericksburg, TX, Fredericksburg Rockhounds and SCFMS Convention, Lady Bird Johnson Park**
- Jan 25 – 27, Tyler, TX, East Texas G&MS, Tyler Rose Garden Center, www.etgms.com/annual_show.html
- Feb 16-17, Georgetown, TX, Williamson County G&MS, Georgetown Comm. Cntr., sparkaustin@outlook.com

Ref:

- September - October 2018 SCFMS Newsletter
- Rock & Gem Show Calendar, <http://www.rockngem.com/show-dates-display/?ShowState=ALL>

Visit an Area Club

[Arlington Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX
[Cowtown 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 2nd Wed. of each month at 7:00 pm, Brookhaven College, Building H, 3939 Valley View Lane, 75244
[Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets 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 Thur. of each month at 7:30 pm, Garland Women's Activities Bldg., 713 Austin, Garland
[Wild West Bead Society](#), meets 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30, Wild Beads, 2833 Galleria Dr., Arlington, TX

On the 12th Day of Christmas

(author unknown)

2011 SCRIBE CD via *The Mountain Gem*-12/2010,
via *The Franklin County Rockhounder* 12/2015, via
The Backbender's Gazette 12/2017

...my true love gave to me:

Twelve tumblers tumbling,
Eleven perfect spear points,
Ten diamond saw blades,
Nine crystal clusters,
Eight agate nodules,
Seven sheets of silver,
Six sapphire star stones,
Five golden rings,
Four fluorescent lamps,
Three gem books,
Two trilobites,
And a branch from a petrified tree.



Erston Barnhart *Rock Buster News* 12/1984,
from *Backbender's Gazette*, 12/2017

Merry Christmas

A Word from the <AFMS> President

by Doug True, President, from the November 2019 AFMS Newsletter

I have been a resident of Billings Montana for 47 years having lived in southern California as a child through age 21 and then six years as a medic in the Air Force during the Viet Nam Conflict. After that we moved to Montana, what a great place for a young rock hound to live. I have always liked collecting rocks and minerals. I love to hunt Montana agate on the Yellowstone River, Bear Canyon agate from the Pryor Mountains.



I joined a local Gem club in the 1970's and that was the beginning of 50 years of promoting this great hobby. Over those years I have been president of the Billings Gem and Mineral Club for 5 years, President of the Montana Council for 2 years, President of the NFMS 2000-2001, President of the Old Timers Club, ALAA President for 2 years, President of Prinville Rock Hound Pow Wow in Oregon for 5 years. Along with this my wife Jeanette and I have been dealers, selling Gems, Minerals, Jewelry and Fossils on and off almost fifty years. I was Show chairman for a NFMS show in Billings 1998 and AFMS Show in Billings 2009 and Club dealer chairman for many years. We also have a shop in Quartzsite, Arizona that we opened 15 years ago. I am fieldtrip chair for NFMS and have organized several multi federation trips over the years and trained at Wildacres as an AFMS Judge. You can see that I am a supporter of clubs, federations and dealers. Promoting the hobby is our love and always will be.

I am honored to be able to serve you and hope to meet more of you as this year goes forward. My goal is to continue the work that Sandy has started, her goal was to strengthen our committees and try to work more on Long Range planning. We need to work together as a group to accomplish these goals - that means we need input from everyone. Shows are the life blood of every club; they are that one big fundraiser you need to continue to fund your projects.

Many clubs are struggling to make ends meet, some of the problems are the rising cost of a facility, advertising costs and finding quality vendors. We need to also remember that the show is designed to raise funds to support your club activities and you need to draw in the public to buy the vendors products. Remember the public is there to see the dealers and find that decorator item, jewelry, or that choice rock to cut, plus the many special things that dealers have for sale. They are looking for quality. That means the show is not the place for club members to dump their extras or seconds.

I cannot count the clubs that are no longer having shows because of poor attendance often due to little or no advertising. The day of printing up 1000 flyers are gone, spending money brings in money, you get what you pay for. Utilize all avenues you have, Facebook, all free notices with Radio and TV, and look for special exhibits and then advertise them.

We also need to remember that we are a Not for profit organization to promote the hobby and not to see how much money you can build up in your bank account. That money is to promote the hobby. A good show, fieldtrips and programs will bring in new members. We have spent too many years building within, reaching out is what makes our clubs grow.

Another situation that clubs need to deal with is donations. Many club boards are receiving donations of collections to be used for promoting the hobby, those items are to be sold to the public through special sales, auctions. They are not to be divided up among the members of the club first (THAT is Fraud or stealing from your own club members and their hobby) and few spoil it for everyone.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you.
Doug

Safety Matters - Personal Limits

by Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair, From the December 2018 AFMS Newsletter

No doubt all safety-aware persons are mindful of various rules, regulations, guidelines and limits imposed upon us by all manner of property owners, equipment manufacturers, various state and federal agencies.

Those rules, regulations, guidelines and limits have been thoroughly researched, reviewed, relevancy tested, and released for all of our collective safety concerns.

Where however, do one's own personal limits come into play? Our various medications, concerns about our less than satisfactory balance, our less than sharp eyesight, and our less than optimal motor skills all suggest limitations to which we should also pay attention as we engage in our rockhounding activities.

Is that a slope we could easily climb or is it something we could no longer ascend? Is a large lapidary project something we should no longer attempt, considering the weakness in our hands? Should we cut back on certain faceting designs because of eyesight issues?

While rules, regulations, guidelines and limits imposed upon us are thoughtful and well intentioned, we would be well advised to be aware of our personal limits and mind them as well. Our personal limits are, well, personal. We are the ones most suited to judging and minding our own personal limits. How far we can walk to a quarry, how heavy a pack we can carry, how far we can carry that pack, should all be a part of our thought process in being safe.

Some limitations have work-arounds. We can add wheels to their collecting bags, or support jigs and fixtures to support heavy lapidary work, or use a longer trail instead of the steep slope. Those are all work-arounds. One's own personal limits are important to mind. One might injure themselves by disregarding equipment manufacturer's recommendations, but one might also injure themselves when disregarding a personal limitation such as when taking too steep a trail.

Please be safe – your safety matters, no matter the source of a limitation.



Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner and Party



Our next meeting, **December 6, will start at 7:00** – that is **30 minutes earlier than normal**. It will be our annual **Christmas Potluck Dinner** (the Club provides the brisket and ham, everyone bring a dish to share) **and Party**. We will have a gift exchange, but be prepared to steal the gift someone else picks – or to have your gift



stolen! You can almost be guaranteed not to go home with the gift you selected. **For the gift exchange, bring a hobby related gift of \$15.00 - \$20.00 value (\$20.00 maximum!).** If you are having problems with a selection, try Half Price Books (or similar), The Rock Barrel, or Nature's Gallery. Hobby related books such as Geology, Mineral Identification, How-To books, etc. are appropriate. Slabs, Geodes, Mineral Specimens, Jewelry items, etc. are also appropriate. Let your imagination run wild. **See you there!**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ling Shurtz, POGMC President

The January IGEM is just around the corner – January 11 – 13 with set up on Wednesday, January 9, 2019. Our next meeting will be Thursday, December 6, 2018. We do not foresee any conflicts with activities in Garland, so we will hold our annual potluck dinner (the club will provide BBQ Brisket starting at 7:00. We will also have a gift exchange, hobby related items with a maximum value of \$15.00 to \$20.00. See you there.

CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2019

President: Ling Shurtz
1st VP, Programs: Carolyn Grady
2nd VP, Field Trips: Open
Secretary: Lee Elms
Treasurer: Del Grady
Editor: Don Shurtz
E-mail: don.shurtz@gmail.com,
L.SHURTZ@gmail.com

MEETING MINTUES

The November 6, 2018 club meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Ling Shurtz.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Mark Carter.

Quorum: We have a quorum.

Sunshine Report: Butch is here at the meeting, but Pattie is unable to come tonight. She is, however, out of the hospital.

Visitors: Mark Carter was able to come to tonight's meeting.

Minutes: The minutes of the October meeting as printed in the November Chips and Chatter were discussed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Carolyn and seconded by Butch. The motion passed.

Treasurer is Report: Del Grady gave the Treasurer's Report. A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by Don. The motion was seconded by Cheryl. The motion passed.

Old Business: IGEM has come and gone and everybody had a good time.

New Business:

- Officers for 2019 were installed: President-Ling Shurtz, First Vice President-Carolyn Grady, Second Vice President-Open, Secretary-Lee Elms, Treasurer-Del Grady, Editor-Don Shurtz
- December meeting: We will have a Christmas Potluck Dinner and Party on December 6th. We will start at 7pm and we will have a gift exchange (\$20.00 maximum). The club will provide a meat dish and the members can bring their favorite side dish and/or a dessert.
- Next IGEM show is January 11-13, 2019. Set up will be Wednesday, January 9th.
 - Regional shows: Nov. 17-18, Mesquite, TX, Dallas G&MS, Mesquite Rodeo Center Exhibit Hall, www.dallasgemandmineral.org

- Jan 11-13, 2019, Dallas, TX, IGEM, Market Hall, <https://www.intergem.com/all-upcoming-shows/>, club show set-up on Wednesday, January 9
- Jan 19-20, 2019, Fredericksburg, TX, Fredericksburg Rockhounds and SCFMS Convention, Lady Bird Johnson Park
- Jan 25-27, Tyler, TX, East Texas G&MS, Tyler Rose Garden Center, www.etgms.com/annual_show.html

After our refreshment break, Butch told us about he and Pattie's early days in rockhounding. They met a lot of people that had the same interests and passion about rockhounding and even prospecting for gold and silver. He and Pattie had a little store called "Sticks and Stones". Their really good friends were Buzz Lovett and his wife and they talked about buying some land in Quartzite, Arizona and mining for gold. He told us all about camping out under a tarp and sleeping on cots because you never knew if there was a rattlesnake wanting to share your bed. And you always had to check your shoes in the morning in case there was a scorpion wanting to setup house in your shoe. Out there was plenty of stuff wanting to stick you, scratch you and sting you. But in spite of all that, they just loved digging in the sand out there to see what beautiful gems could be had for a little blood and sweat. And yes, they did find gold and silver too. That was when they were young and full of vim and vigor. The years have managed to wring the vim and vigor out and replace it with arthritis and COPD, but you can't take the memories away. We really enjoyed listening to his stories about all the fun they had. Thank you Butch and Pattie.

We had our raffle, and then the meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lee Elms, Secretary

MEETING

Our next meeting will be December 6, 2018 starting at 7:00 PM. This will be our annual Christmas potluck dinner and party. The club will provide BBQ Brisket and Ham. Everyone should bring a dish (appetizer, desert, etc.) to share. We will also have a gift exchange. Bring a wrapped, hobby related gift valued at \$15.00 - \$20.00 value (\$20.00 maximum). There will be gift stealing – do not expect to leave with the first item you selected.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

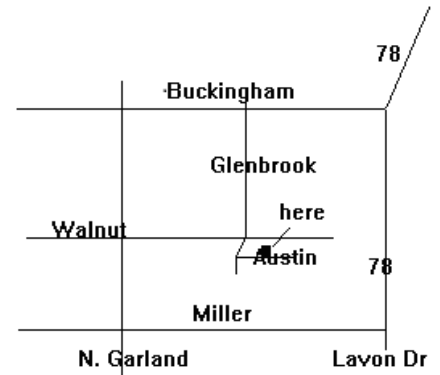
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PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of Dallas



Meetings
 First Thursday of each month, 7:30 PM
 Garland Women’s Activities Building
 713 Austin St., Garland, TX
 (Northeast corner of Austin & Glenbrook)

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 Section 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization

CHIPS AND CHATTER

Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club
 PO Box 831934
 Richardson, TX 75083-1934

To:

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Next Meeting: December 6, 2018, 7:00 PM at the Garland Activities Building
Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner and Gift Exchange

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