



Member: South Central Federation of Mineral Societies



Affiliated: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies



March 2024
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1st Place, 2022 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin
1st Place, 2022 AFMS Mini-Bulletin

BASALT

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

The name of this month is MARCH, so we need a rock that marches. My nomination for a marching rock is



Basalt! Think of a Marching Band (pick any High School or College/University band. You see all the band members lined up in straight rows and columns. The band members appear to be tall and skinny due to the tall hats that are part of their uniform. A small high school may have only a few band members. At a competition, you sometimes see a combined band of 10 or more school bands numbering more than a thousand members - that is a large band. To the left, we see “The Organ” from the Giant’s Causeway in Northern Ireland. Tall, skinny columns of basalt all lined up in orderly rows. Compare the height of the columns to the people standing

near the base – it’s very tall! The “Organ” is just one of many groups of Basalt columns that are visible along the northern border of Northern Ireland and the North Atlantic Ocean and in many other places in the world.

Of course, others may prefer the traditional March Birthstone, Aquamarine. Like Basalt, Aquamarine forms in crystals with 6 sides. Aquamarine is the blue member of the Beryl family which includes Emerald (green), Morganite (pink), and others. Like Basalt, Aquamarine crystals can grow to a large size. However, a very large Aquamarine could be 10s of pounds – a basalt column could be 10s of tons! The pictured specimen to the right, at first glance, may appear to have a series of horizontal cracks. They are actually the face of a phantom crystal where it stopped growing, then restarted growing with the disruption in growth being visible as a helical structure. This specimen is named “The Helix”. Helical structures are rare, but when they do occur they are normally about the diameter of a pencil. For this specimen, the helical structure just went crazy. Beautiful Crazy! I hope you have had the opportunity to visit the Perot Museum to see the fine mineral collection and other fascinating exhibits.



Reference:

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

Pictures:

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Aquamarine photo (The Helix) by Don Shurtz of a specimen displayed at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science



AFMS Land Use Policy

From the March 2024 AFMS Newsletter



AFMS Code of Ethics

From the March 2024 AFMS Newsletter

1. Adherence to the AFMS Code of Ethics assures compliance with most statutes and regulations governing collecting on public lands and encourages respect for private property rights and the environment. Clubs are urged to read the AFMS Code of Ethics in at least one meeting every year, to publish the Code frequently in the club newsletter, and to compel compliance on club field trips.
2. Individuals and clubs are urged to write their elected representatives and land use management agency supervisors regarding issues of rule making, legislation and enforcement affecting field collecting of minerals and fossils.
3. Individuals and clubs are urged to join and support activities of the American Lands Access Association (ALAA), a sister organization with responsibility for advancing the interests of earth science amateurs with legislatures and land use management agencies.
4. The AFMS will receive a report from ALAA at its annual meeting.
5. The AFMS endorses the principle of multiple use of public lands as a guarantee of continuing recreational opportunities.
6. Wilderness and monument designations are inconsistent with the principle of multiple use. In view of the vast amount of public land already designated as wilderness and monuments, future such designations should be minimal, taking into account the increased demand for recreational opportunities, including rockhounding, created by a growing population.
7. In furtherance of the principle of multiple use, the AFMS believes that laws, regulations and rules established by relevant governmental authorities should be designed to allow freest possible access to all public lands, coupled with minimal restrictions on the recreational collection of minerals, fossils, gemstone materials and other naturally occurring materials.
8. A right to collect minerals and fossils on public lands should be protected by statute.
9. The AFMS urges its members to work with any or all government authorities to achieve a good working relationship in order to improve the public image of recreational collectors.

- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind—fences, signs, buildings.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material—matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes, which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land Management, or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule," will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and public image of rockhounds everywhere.



Safety and the Code

Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair
From the March 2024 AFMS Newsletter

Among the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies publications is a 44-page Safety Manual. This Manual, however, is not the only safety program offered. Monthly, in the AFMS Newsletter, one may find articles discussing additional matters of safety in our shared hobby interests.

While both of those sources of safety information are important threads in the fabric of the AFMS, there is another important document related to safety. That additional document is called the [AFMS Code of Ethics](#). *Yes, the AFMS Code of Ethics is also an important safety reference.*

With respect to the AFMS Code of Ethics: I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.

- [What better way to be safe than to know where we are collecting and respecting that integrity.](#)

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

- [Keeping informed of the laws and guidelines in our hobby is indeed part of being safe in all we do.](#)

I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

- [Again, knowing exactly one's location is also a matter of being safe – and respectful with what we do.](#)

I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.

- [Certainly, this is meant to keep everyone safe.](#)

I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind – fences, signs, buildings.

- [This, too, is a matter of being safe and respectful of another's property.](#)

I will leave all gates as found.

- [Matters of safety are for all, and certainly for the critters inhabiting the property.](#)

I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.

- [There is a certain undeniable wisdom concerning this fire safety concern.](#)

I will discard no burning material – matches, cigarettes, etc.

- [Clearly a safety matter.](#)

I will fill all excavation holes, which may be dangerous to livestock.

- [Safety, safety, safety!](#)

I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.

- [Not just a matter of being respectful, but also to be safe for people, animals, and the environment.](#)

I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

- [While not specifically a matter of safety, this is a respectful and wise use of important hobby resources.](#)

I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.

- [Ditto](#)

I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.

- [Litter is indeed a matter of safety – biological, broken glass, sharp metal, and more.](#)

I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.

- [One of the most important needs of our field trip leaders is to ensure the safety of everyone on the trip.](#)

I will report to my club or federation officers, Bureau of Land Management, or other authorities any deposit of petrified wood, or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.

- [Safety, in this case, is in the preservation of resources.](#)

I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.

- [Yes, keeping resources safe is important.](#)

I will observe the “Golden Rule,” will use “Good Outdoor Manners” and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and public image of rockhounds everywhere.

- [How we conduct ourselves, how we inspire and demonstrate safety, and how we try to do the right thing in being safe is who we are and how we preserve our great hobby.](#)

Safety and staying safe are important parts of the fabric of the Federation. Please be safe because your safety is good for all



Editor's Corner – Some Meandering Thoughts

Don Shurtz, Chips and Chatter Editor

Meandering 1: I hope you were wondering and thinking about the previous two pages. It started with the latest safety article in the March 2024 AFMS Newsletter. Ellery Borow, the AFMS Safety Chair, decided to take the AFMS Code of Ethics and turn it into a safety article. I had always considered the Code of Ethics as a way to help protect the interest in rockhounding by using common sense in how we treat the property from which we extract our rocks and minerals. I still believe that is the primary purpose of the Code of Ethics, but Ellery has forced me to look at the Code of Ethics in a new light – it not only protects our ability to continue to gather rocks, but it really does help us to be safe.

Meandering 2: The AFMS encourages clubs to review the AFMS Code of Ethics yearly and, if possible, to publish it in our newsletters. It has been a few years since I have included the AFMS Code of Ethics, and during that time we have a number of new members who may not have been exposed to the AFMS Code of Ethics. Everything that I have said about the AFMS Code of Ethics also pertains to the American Lands Access Association (ALAA) AFMS Land Use Policy. The ALAA had its beginnings in the AFMS but is now a separate organization (Sister organization) that lobbies for the rights of access to public lands.

Thought 3: We will shortly hold our March meeting which has become a traditional Corned Beef and Cabbage (Irish) Potluck Dinner. So, what is it we are celebrating? It could be a celebration of St. Patrick's Day (March 17), a celebration of being Irish (if only for a day), a celebration of the Vernal (Spring) Equinox (March 19, 20, or 21 depending on the year), or a celebration of the beginning of spring (Meteorologists define Spring as March 1 to May 31 but many hold to the traditional date as the day of the Vernal Equinox), or many other things. Whatever it is we are celebrating, let's be thankful that we are free to do so and to have a good time.



Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

Check with the show contact to verify the show status

March 2024

- March 2-3, Gulf Coast G&MS, RMB Regional Fairgrounds, Robstown, TX, www.gcgms.org
- March 2-3, Big Spring Prospectors Club, Howard County Fair Barn, Big Spring, TX, www.facebook.com/bigspringprospectorsclub
- March 16-17, Central Texas G&MS, Taylor County Expo Center, Display Building, Abilene, TX, www.facebook.com/p/Central-Texas-Gem-and-Mineral-Society-100082479451581/

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
 - 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

VISIT AN AREA CLUB

- [Arlington Gem & Mineral Club](#): 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX
- [Cowntown 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, KofC Council 7402 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

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 or
L.SHURTZ@gmail.com

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be March 4, 2024, starting at 7:00 PM. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland. This will be our annual St. Patrick's Day Potluck Social. The club will provide Corned Beef and Cabbage. Everyone, please bring a dish to share with the club. See you there.

MINUTES

POGMC President Joe Vulk called the 2/5/2024 club meeting to order at 7:20 pm.

Snack time: Until late-comers arrive. Thanks to the Vulks, Shurtz, and Hatt for providing the snacks.

Pledge of Allegiance

Quorum: We have a quorum

Visitors: None.

Minutes: Minutes of the November meeting were published in the December Chips and Chatter. Ling made a motion to accept the Minutes. Julie seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of members present.

Treasurer's Report: Ling presented the Treasurer's Report: Amy made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Brenda seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of members present.

Old Business:

- A vote to pay \$550 for the first year's use of Knights of Columbus Hall. Carolyn made a motion to pay. Warner seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of members present
- Rock Swap report – In December, Don sold \$85 from donations to the club. \$42.50 went to the AFMS scholarship fund and \$42.50 went to our club.
- Show news - Julie reported the Intergem show will be at Market Hall in April. Julie and Warner will work the show.
- SCFMS activities: SCFMS president Don is still in need of a secretary.

New Business:

- VP Programs Carolyn is to contact Tom Dill soliciting his paleontology presentation.
- The club needs postage stamps for the Chips and Chatter. A motion to pay \$65 for stamps was made by

Julie and seconded by Carolyn. The motion passed by a vote of members present.

- Planned March meeting (social) with shared St. Patrick's Day meal. See the list below.

Snack for next meeting: N/A - it will be the St. Patrick's Day social. Members offered to bring:

Ling - Corned beef and cabbage
Amy - Mashed potatoes
Julie - Carrot cake and/or ice cream
Carolyn - Soda bread
Brenda - Corn casserole

Presentation: Carolyn and Don provided an exercise for learning the crystal structure of the various gems/minerals/elements in nature. Marshmallows and toothpicks were provided for the construction of the crystals. The most elaborate models were the snowflakes representing the crystal structure of H₂O.

Raffle None.

Joe adjourned the meeting at 8:04 pm

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In February, we held our first meeting at the Knights of Columbus Council 6402 activity hall located in Garland. I hope everyone is pleased with the venue. I think it will work out well as we have quite a bit of flexibility in the physical setup there, plus the kitchen, roomy amenities, etc. Remember that our meetings are scheduled for 7:00pm on the first Monday of the month until further notice.

The February meeting was productive as shown in the minutes above. And we decided to meet in the KofC lounge which is more intimate and does not require any setup. Thanks to Carolyn and Don for a fun and informative program. The documentation was outstanding and the use of the marshmallows and toothpicks to create crystal structures provided an excellent hands-on learning exercise. By the way, the marshmallows were also good for snacking.

looking forward to our next meeting on March 4th and the St. Patrick's Day meal and social.

On March 17th, I will be celebrating my 83rd birthday. It has always been such fun for me. Everything is always green - cake, decorations, etc. I still remember my mother bringing snacks to my elementary school class there in Farmers Branch. She usually brought a green sweet along with green Kool-Aid. And Brenda and her family also do everything in green.

Joe Vulk

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PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of DALLAS



Meetings

First Thursday of each month. Please check website, 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: Monday, February 5th, 2024 at 7:00 PM

We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland, 75042.

This will be our annual St. Patrick's Day Potluck Dinner – bring a dish to share

Features

Basalt 1
Editor's Corner – Some Meandering Thoughts.... 4

Federation News

ALAA / AFMS Land Use Policy 2
AFMS Code of Ethics 2
Safety and the Code 3

Monthly Columns

Club and Meeting Information 1, 5, 6
President's Message 5

Notices

Shows and Activities 4
Visit an Area Club 4
Copyright Notice 5

Chips and Chatter

See the Chips and Chatter online for color!

March 2024

Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

Page 6

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