



Member: South Central
Federation of Mineral
Societies



Affiliated: American
Federation of
Mineralogical Societies



November 2025
Vol. 59, Issue 11

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

A Thanksgiving Rock

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club

There is no official rock for Thanksgiving —should there be one? If so, what should it be? What aspect of Thanksgiving should it represent? Maybe a turkey-shaped rock. How about a brown, gold, yellow, and orange rock to reflect the colors that leaves turn in the fall? How about a rock to signify the prayers of thanks? Even if you could find a rock that met any of these conditions, none of these would be a proper choice. It would just be ambiguous. So, what else might we examine? Historically, we associate Thanksgiving with a celebration started by the Pilgrims, one of the first groups to successfully colonize the United States of America. The pilgrims came to America on the English merchant ship Mayflower. Although they intended to land in Virginia, a storm blew them off course, and they landed in what is now Provincetown, Massachusetts. After scouting nearby locations, they relocated to Plymouth, Massachusetts, about 25 miles to the west. It is not known exactly where they landed in Plymouth Harbor in 1620, but it is possible they landed at Plymouth Rock. And now we have the answer to the question of what a Thanksgiving Rock would be. I nominate Plymouth Rock as our unofficial Thanksgiving Rock!

Plymouth Rock may or may not have been the place where the Mayflower landed in 1620. The first claim that it was the landing spot was made by a 94-year-old man, Thomas Faunce, in 1741, 121 years after the Mayflower landed. The estimated 20,000 lb. rock has also been moved several times. The first attempt to move it in 1774 resulted in the rock splitting into two sections (notice the crack running from the lower-left area of the photo to the middle of the top of the joined portions of the rock). Half of the rock was moved to the Town Square, the other half remaining at the original location. In 1834, the Town Square portion was relocated to the Pilgrim Hall Museum. In 1880, the Pilgrim Hall portion was moved back to its original location and rejoined with the other half. In 1880, "1620" was engraved into the rock. In 1920, the entire piece was excavated and relocated to its current location on the shore. A granite pavilion was built to cover the rock. During each movement of the rock, portions of the rock were broken off (some accidentally and some intentionally), leaving only about one-third of the original Plymouth Rock. (Continued on Page 2)



A Thanksgiving Rock (continued)

Plymouth Rock is a thick slab of Dedham granite. Dedham granite is not native to Plymouth, Massachusetts. It is found near Dedham, Massachusetts. Dedham granite is approximately 600 million years old and was transported to Plymouth by glaciers about 20,000 years ago. Dedham granite ranges in color from pinkish-grey to greenish-grey. Like most granites, it has a Mohs hardness of 6. As a granite, it would be easier to work than quartz and would take a nice polish. Dedham granite has been used in construction as exterior materials, including slabs for buildings and brick-shaped pieces for home exteriors. Today, Dedham granite is popular in the Massachusetts area for kitchen countertops and tabletops.

FEDERATION NEWS

SCFMS Convention 2025

Don Shurtz, SCMS President

For me and two others, the Convention Activities started on Friday, October 17, at a Chase Bank branch in the northern part of Austin. Two of our SCFMS Officers and I met with a banking official to add them to the checking account as authorized users and check signers. Then it was off to the Woodbridge Hotel to check in. Upon arrival, I found that I did not have a reservation. I was able to show the hotel my original reservation confirmation email and two additional confirmation emails, but unfortunately, it didn't make a difference. I called the hotel chain's customer service. I found that the Woodbridge Hotel had canceled my reservation (along with several others) to get rid of single-person, low-rate reservations so it could book multiple-party reservations at a much higher rate. Really nice of them to inconvenience people. The hotel chain, as part of its standard policy, booked me a room in a nearby motel using award points. That got me through the first night, and for the second night, I booked a reservation well to the north (with a motel from a different chain). The second night ended up costing me as much as the original reservation would have been for both nights. The hotel situation was the worst part of the trip.

The Editor and Webmaster's breakfast kicked off the second day's activities. Awards for winning websites, newsletters, and authors were presented. The breakfast also featured a guest speaker discussing considerations for updating our 1990-vintage websites with new technology and design. This was the first time the Editor and Webmaster breakfast guest speaker had discussed websites. The next activity of the day was the Annual Meeting. Last year's meeting lasted a bit over 2 hours, but this year's lasted only 1 hour and 10 minutes. I thank Sigrid Stewart and Susan Burch for taking notes for the Meeting Minutes. The final event of the convention was the Awards Banquet. The dinner was held at Nature's Gallery, a fine-mineral retailer in Austin. The Gallery was open for an hour before the dinner to allow shopping with a 10% discount. Many of the pieces were museum-quality mineral specimens. What a lot of eye-candy for a rockhound.

I thank the Austin Gem and Mineral Society for planning and executing the SCFMS convention. The facilities at their clubhouse were perfect for the Editor and Webmaster Breakfast and the Annual Meeting. Their connections with Natures Gallery made the Awards Banquet the best SCFMS or AFMS Awards Banquet that I have had the opportunity to attend. My only wish was that more SCFMS Clubs could have participated in all the activities.

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 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, 7
[Wild West Bead Society](#), meets 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm, Wild Beads, 1124 S. Bowen Road, Arlington, TX

FEDERATION NEWS

Safety Matters: Got a Second?

By Ellery Borrow, AFMS Safety Chair, From the October 2025 AFMS Newsletter

Perhaps to clarify, this second is not a second as a fraction of a minute, but a second person or a back-up person. The question being addressed here is whether or not one has a back-up plan, a second person to assist where needed.

We have a hobby filled with creativity, exploring collecting sites, building better gem and mineral shows, teaching others, encouraging new members, and many, many other activities. We also tend to push our limits, try new things, do our best, and reach farther than we did yesterday. If we feel we have planned sufficiently well, we are willing to take a few more risks, and this is the place to seriously consider having seconds with us or nearby.

It has long been known to go rock collecting with a second person as a just-in-case back-up person. To have a second person help us with a heavy lift. To have a second person hold the ladder as we install the club banner at a show. As we push our limits, it would be wise to also consider the wisdom of having a second person with us, or nearby, as a measure to ensure a successful outcome.

When we break or lose our glasses, it is wise to have a second person who can read the information on the bottles of our medications. A second person is helpful when we grab our chest during the too-steep hike up the

hill to the mine. A second person is helpful to look in on us when we have tripped and fallen in the lapidary shop. A second person is helpful to navigate as we drive to a confusing destination. There are countless instances where having the aid of a second person can be a life-saving, time-saving, effort-saving or a reputation-saving presence.

As we push ourselves to do more, be more, reach more, take more risks, having that second person is even more important.

Think of that person with a sudden and violent allergy reaction - having that second person can be vital in saving seconds (the time ones) to dig through the car, truck, backpack or medical kits to locate that all-important rescue medication. It is the wise thing, the safe thing, the important thing to have a second (or more) person with one to keep the hobby the great one we share together.

One more important thing to consider is that having a second person with us permits us to share our hobby with another person - and that is a substantial and enjoyable part of our grand hobby- that of sharing it with others.

Please consider that your safety matters, as does that of the seconds (the persons with us).



Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

Check with the show contact to verify the show status

NOVEMBER

November 1-2, Paleontological Society of Austin, Old Settler's Heritage Association, <https://www.austinpaleo.org/fest.html>

November 1-2, Midland Gem and Mineral Society, Bush Convention Center, <https://www.midlandgemandmineral.org/>

November 7-9, Houston Gem and Mineral Society, Humble Convention Center, <https://hgms.org/>

November 15-16, Fort Worth G&M Club, May 24 - 25, Will Rogers Memorial Center,

<https://www.fortworthgemandmineralclub.org/show.html>

November 22-23, Dallas Gem and Mineral Society, Mesquite Convention Center, <https://www.dallasgemandmineral.org/>

DECEMBER

December 6-7, DeRidder Gem and Mineral Society, West LA Forestry Fair Grounds,

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064473110778>

Ref: Local Shows, https://www.scfms.net/local_shows.htm

Chips and Chatter

Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

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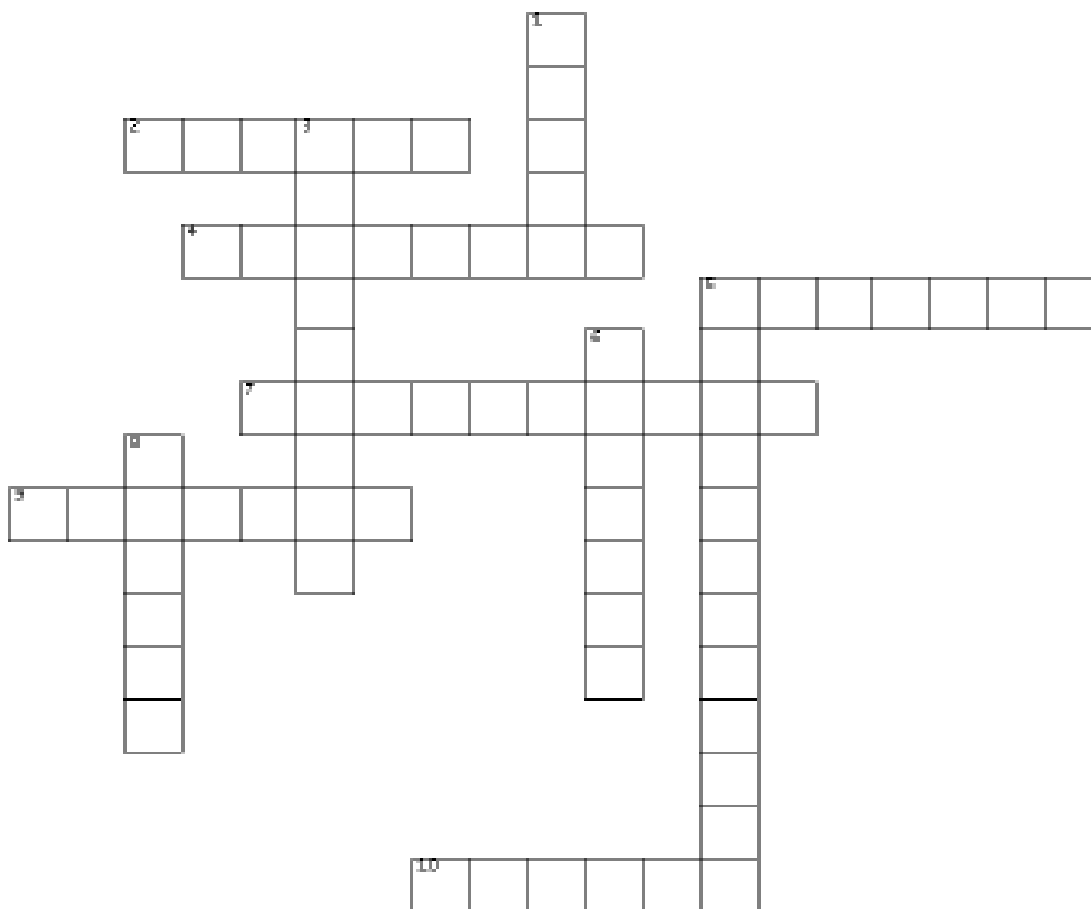
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November 2025

A Thanksgiving Rock Crossword Puzzle

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club

Note: See the lead article to help find the answers; they are all in the article



ACROSS

2. First name of the man that identified the rock where they landed
4. Name of the town that now occupies the area where they finally relocated to
5. Name of the group that moved from England to America in 1620
7. Common use today for the granite material that the rock is made from
9. Generated the natural force that moved the rock 40 miles from its quarry site
10. The specific name of the granite material that the rock is made from

DOWN

1. Occured when the rock was moved from the harbor to the town center
3. Name of the ship that transported them to America
5. Name of the town that now occupies the area where they initially landed
6. Material use for the pavillion that now covers the rock
8. Last name of the man that identified the rock where they landed

This puzzle generated using Puzzlemaker, <https://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/>

OFFICERS FOR 2025 – 2026

President: Joe Vulk
1st VP, Programs: Amy Vulk
2nd VP, Field Trips: Julie Wilson
Secretary: Johnny Rhodes
Treasurer: Ling Shurtz
Editor: Don Shurtz
Contact us by email: don.shurtz@gmail.com

Minutes of the October 6, 2025

Call to Order: POGMC President Joe Vulk called the business meeting to order at 8:15 PM.

Quorum: We have a quorum

Visitors: There were no visitors.

Minutes: The Minutes of the September meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Don to accept the minutes as published in the October Chips and Chatter, after the names of the Nominating Committee (Carolyn, Julie, and Ling) were added.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report was deferred until the November meeting.

Old Business:

- The SCFMS Annual Convention will be in Austin on October 18
- The IGEM Show will take place from 10 to 12 October at Market Hall. The setup will be on Wednesday, October 8. POGMC will not have a booth, but our help with setup will be appreciated

New Business:

- Nominating Committee Report and Elections: President – Joe Vulk, First VP – Amy Vulk, Second VP – Julie Wilson, Secretary – Johnny Rhodes, Treasurer – Ling Shurtz, Editor – Don Shurtz. There were no additional nominations from the floor. A motion to accept the nominated officers by acclamation was made by Carolyn and seconded by Brenda. The motion passed unanimously.
- Dues for 2025-2026 are payable in November. The dues are \$16.50 for adults, \$5.00 for juniors, and \$27.50 for a family.
- We discussed changing the meeting to an earlier time, as the 9:00 finish time is too late for junior members. Additionally, it will be better for winter-time driving. Johnny made a motion to revise the meeting start time to 6:00 PM and the end time to 8:00 PM. Amy seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- We discussed the possibility of forming a Kids Rock Club. Initially, the kids' activities will be held at the same time and place as the adult meeting; however, if sufficient interest is generated, a separate meeting

will be considered. Jonny will create and publish a flyer to distribute in local schools, recreation centers, and other relevant locations.

Presentation: We viewed a short video from The Great Courses series, "The World's Greatest Geological Wonders," titled "A Montage of Geological Mini-Wonders." I particularly enjoyed the "Mini-Wonder of the Death Valley Sailing Stones. The movement of the Sailing Stones had puzzled scientists for years. The lecture by Dr. Michael Wyssession was recorded in 2013, when the answer to why the stones moved was still unknown. One year later, the solution was found; the rocks were being conveyed by large sheets of floating ice and wind.

Raffle: We had the raffle

Adjourn: Joe adjourned the meeting at 9:20 PM.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I'd like to thank you for giving me yet another opportunity to serve as your president for the upcoming term. Thanks also to our board of directors —Amy, Julie, Ling, Johnny, and Don —for continuing in their positions for another year.

For our upcoming meeting on Nov. 3rd, I'll ask for reports from Don regarding the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies convention and the Austin Gem and Mineral Club show. I'll ask Julie and Warner for a report on their State Fair experience. Unfortunately, Brenda and I were unable to attend either of these events. New business will include plans for our December Christmas dinner and gift exchange. Remember that your dues are paid at the November meeting or soon thereafter.

Joe Vulk

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Monday, November 3, 2025. Our meeting will start at 6:00 PM and is expected to conclude by 8:00 PM. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland, TX. Officers for 2025 will be installed. For our presentation, be prepared for something spooky—something Halloween-related.

Presentation Review

See review in minutes'

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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, 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, November 3, 2025, starting at 6:00 PM. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Council 6402 Hall located at 3722 Cavalier Drive in Garland.
The activity for the meeting will be a video related to our hobby.**

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Chips and Chatter

See the Chips and Chatter online for color!

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