



Member: South Central Federation of Mineral Societies



Affiliated: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies



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

Watch that Doorstop

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas
Article Idea from The Cowtown Cutter newsletter, October 2024 edition

Over the years I have heard of many large chunks of rock being used as a doorstop. Doorstops used to be a lot more common than today. Many older houses used a big rock as a doorstop. I have heard of a large piece of

Arizona Petrified wood being used as a doorstop. Similar stories have included large pieces of other petrified woods, quartz, calcite, quartz with gold, and others being used. A recent story surfaced from Romania of a woman who found a 7.7-pound rock in a nearby stream and used it as a doorstop for decades. After she passed, the stone was inherited by a family member who decided to check if the stone had any value. It turns out that the 7.7 “rock” was amber – one of the largest amber specimens ever found! It has been classified as the largest Rumanit black amber specimen ever found. The Rumanit black amber has some unique properties, including a black-to-red color, and is found in the Colti area of Romania. The relative who inherited the stone sold it to the Romanian state, but probably for a lot less than the estimated value of 1.1 million dollars.



Because of its organic origins, amber is not classified as a mineral or a rock. Amber is fossilized tree resin. It is noted for its golden color, but other colors of amber exist including blue, orange, yellow, red, brown, and black. Amber sometimes has insects and plant material encapsulated by the resin before it begins its fossilization process.

References:

- Amber, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amber>
- The Cowtown Cutter, the newsletter of the Fort Worth Gem and Mineral Club, October 2024 edition
- Rock used as Doorstop, <https://www.sciencealert.com/>
- World Record Rumanit, <https://www.worldrecordacademy.org/>

Picture: from Buzău County Museum, used by Fair Use

FEDERATION NEWS

From the Desk of the [AFMS] President-Elect

JC Moore, AFMS President-Elect 2023-24, From the October 2024 AFMS Newsletter

It is with a heavy heart, I am sorry to report that Liz Burford passed away August 13th. Please keep Roger and the family in your prayers during this time.



Another month has passed, and that means another convention has been attended. Since it was the Midwest Convention we did not have to travel very far to attend - 44 miles. The meetings were well attended, and a quorum was established with only five people attending through Zoom. Bylaws were updated to reflect current technology and practices. The Peoria Academy of Science Geology Section had a great show with many vendors and good attendance. Bruce Steinmetz entered the only Competitive Exhibit and received a score of 97.6. With the many comments about the quality of his exhibit, it is hoped that others will consider entering in the future. In the coming months, Donna and I will be attending the Southeast Federation, the Rocky Mountain Federation and the South-Central Federation conventions. One of the best perks of being an officer in the AFMS is attending the seven regional conventions.

Living in Illinois has its limitations as to access to collecting; however, Donna and I were able to collect Keokuk geodes in a stream one Saturday in August with 14 club members. This stream usually has 3 to 4 inches of water this time of the year, but this year it was knee-deep most of the time. When it became waist-deep, I decided that it was time to turn around. We were able to collect almost two five-gallon buckets of geodes, and a great time was had by all!

I hope all of you had a great summer and are preparing for a wonderful fall and winter.

SCFMS News

Don Shurtz,

Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club

It is a busy time of the year for the SCFMS. Dues and Insurance payments from the clubs were recently due. Most clubs are electing new officers for the 2024-2025 year. This means the clubs must submit a new Officer and Club Information Form. Additionally, this year the SCFMS is preparing for the 2024 SCFMS Convention. The Convention is scheduled for November 23 and is being hosted by the Dallas Gem and Mineral Society (DGMS) at their annual show. The DGMS show runs for two days, Saturday and Sunday, November 23 – 24. The show is at the Mesquite Convention Center, 1700 Rodeo Dr, Mesquite, TX 75149. The Convention Activities are next door in the Riata Room of the Hampton Inn. The Convention Activities include the Editor and Webmaster Breakfast, the SCFMS General (Delegate) Annual Meeting, and the Awards Banquet, all on Saturday, November 23. There was a Field Trip to the Perot Museum on Sunday, November 24 for those who were interested, but the only person to sign up for the field trip was the leader. The Field Trip has been canceled.

I hope you can take some time out of your schedule to visit the DGMS Show. There will be lots of vendors (including Warner and Julie's booth), a Silent Auction which is always great for finding those hidden treasures, and activities for the kids.

For the Record, POGMC submitted its Dues and Insurance form and payment. As requested, we also submitted an Officer and Club Information Form. However, we will install new officers at our November meeting, so a new Officer and Information form will be required and submitted.

FEDERATION NEWS (continued)

Safety Matters, Safety in Numbers

Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair, From the October AFMS Newsletter

Safety is not just a list of incidents, reports to write, mathematical statistics, or numbers. Safety is not just a list of skill sets we encourage people to learn.

While there are many skill sets in our shared hobby, such as first aid attention, show safety, field trip care, lapidary shop guidelines, safety with driving to our many activities, as well as a myriad of associated safety concerns, one big concern is rarely mentioned, that of our overall health and well-being. Where would we be in our hobby without our overall health and well-being?

A growing body of evidence indicates that just by participating in our hobby we generally experience various combinations of the following:

- Lower levels of stress
- Increased amounts of healthy physical activity
- Improved memory
- Motor skill and eye/hand coordination improvements
- Improvements to our emotional health

All that sounds like a pretty good return just for participating in our hobby.

Other healthful aspects of our hobby include meetings, field trips, picnics, swaps, and shows. Why are such activities healthy? Glad you asked. Our in-person activities are vital to the social needs of our being human. We may broaden our horizons and improve our knowledge and understanding of our hobby with great programs, and we may fill our bellies with fine feasts at a great club picnic, but we very much improve our health and well-being when we participate with the social aspects of in-person activity, with our friendships in the hobby.

Far be it for this report to merely be a plea to increase the number of members attending a meeting. It is a plea however, for those who are able, to attend meetings, picnics, shows, and field trips in order that they may benefit from the most human things of sharing smiles, handshakes, warm greetings, and hugs. In the process of that in-person time, one experiences the benefit of released feel-good endorphins in the brain, lower cortisol levels (stress-associated chemistry), lower blood pressure, and a healthier cardio/vascular system.

Studies indicate our enjoyable hobby time helps with our cognitive abilities, improves our memory, keeps us exercised (with improvement to bone density), and likely improves the quality and longevity of our lives. And, on top of all that, it is likely we also experience better sleep, less depression, lower stress levels, less loneliness (another serious and underappreciated issue), increased problem-solving skills, greater feelings of well-being, and have better opportunities to tell bad jokes. What is not to like about all that?

Attending meetings can be good for one's health.

On the flip side, there are those who say that virtual attendance (such as via Zoom) at club events will be the future of the hobby. Understandably, there are times and places where Zoom meetings are advantageous, although Zoom will not replace a hug, or improve one's bone density.

In-person club activity is no health cure-all, but the evidence of in-person health aspects is clear. Hope you can attend an in-person club event soon, for your health safety, because your health safety matters.

Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

Check with the show contact to verify the show status

November 2024

- November 2-3. Amarillo, TX, Golden Spread GM&TS, Amarillo Civic Center, website: www.goldenspreadgemmineraltreasuresociety.com
- **November 23-24, Mesquite, TX, Dallas G&MS, Mesquite Convention Center, www.dallasgemandmineral.org. THIS SHOW WILL BE HOSTING THE SCFMS CONVENTION**

Ref: Rock & Gem Show Dates, <https://www.rockngem.com/ShowDatesFiles/ShowDatesDisplayAll.php?ShowState=ALL>

Ref: September-October 2024 SCFMS Newsletter

Bench Tips from Brad Smith

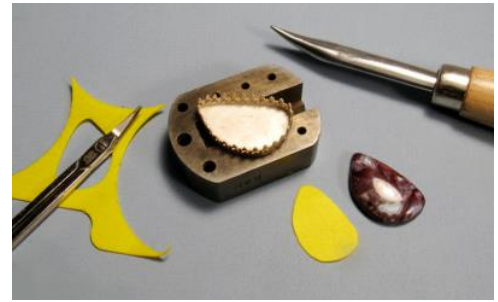
Received by Email from BradSmith.Jewelry@gmail.com

RAISING A CABOCHON

When a cabochon sits too low in a bezel, the bezel hides a lot of the stone. The solution is to either sand down the bezel height or boost up the stone. But if you choose to raise it up, the question is what is the best material to use?

I was taught to use fine sawdust but now think that might be a problem when used in rings. I reason that rings will frequently get wet, which would cause the sawdust to swell in size and push the stone against the bezel. Then when the sawdust dries out, the stone would be a little loose.

In any case, I now prefer to insert a flat sheet to boost up my stones. It can be a scrap of metal or some plastic from product packaging or old credit cards. In either case, just cut a piece to loosely fit into the bezel and drop in the stone (with some dental floss) to check its height.



TRANSPARENT CABS

When bezel setting a transparent cabochon in silver, I usually cut out the back of the bezel to allow background light to show off the colors and patterns in the stone. If this is not possible or appropriate, I worry that the silver bezel will tarnish under the stone and will ruin its brilliance. What to do?

My solution is one extra step before setting the stone. I place a piece of thin silver Mylar plastic under the stone to act as a mirror that will never tarnish. Mylar is readily available in craft and gift wrap stores, or in a pinch from a party balloon supplier. You may even want to experiment with using colored or patterned Mylar (i.e. diffraction pattern) under some stones.



See More Tips in Brad's Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making Series

<http://amazon.com/dp/B0BQ8YVLTJ>



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

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

Minutes of the October 7 Meeting

Call to order:

POGMC First VP President Carolyn called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

We recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Quorum: We have a quorum.

Minutes: We reviewed the minutes of the September meeting as printed in the September 2024 Chips and Chatter. Carolyn made a motion to accept the minutes. Hatt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Ling read the Treasurer's Report for September. Carolyn made a motion to accept the minutes. Ling seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

By vote of members present, all officers will remain in their current positions except as follows:

- Amy - 1st VP Programs Director
- Johnny Rhodes - Secretary.

We discussed the upcoming IGEM Show.

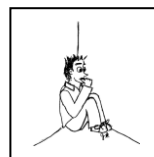
Presentation: We watched a video presentation about the geology of Grand Teton National Park

Snacks: Hatt provided tea. Carolyn and Don & Ling brought snacks.

Raffle: We had our club raffle.

Dues: Dues were collected

Adjourn: the meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.



Editor's Corner

Joe and Brenda have been on a well-deserved vacation trip. I volunteered to give him a break by writing up something. I have some good POGMC News to pass along:

1. Around the middle of October, I got a message from Susan and Dean (who have made many donations to POGMC) wondered if the club wanted a sphere-making machine. It was a homemade machine made by a machinist. It looks really good. I do not believe it has ever been used, but Dean used an identical machine and turned out some really nice rock spheres. I will get the machine out of the box and assemble it to make sure everything is there. Club members will have priority for buying it.
2. The DGMS Rock Swap was held on October 26. I set up a table – half with my items and half with POGMC items. POGMC sales got off with a BANG. All of the geodes that I brought (half a five-gallon bucket) were purchased by the first visitor. The next visitor purchased the entire flat of amethyst specimens that I brought. By the end of the day, POGMC sales reached 223 dollars. That money has been deposited and a check for 111.50 to the AFMS Scholarship fund has been prepared. It will be on its way in the same mailing as the Chips and Chatter.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Monday, November 4, 2024. Our meeting will start at 7:00 PM and should end by 9:00 PM. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland, TX. We will be installing our new officers. For new business, we need to talk about our December meeting – Christmas Party or ??? We also need to talk about meeting locations. December is our last paid month. I hope we can continue to meet at the Knights of Columbus, but we need to get busy to make that happen. For the presentation (time permitting), we will be watching a video 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, 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, October 4, 2024, starting at 7:00 PM.

We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Council 6402 Hall located at 3722 Cavalier Drive in Garland.

New officers will be installed! The activity for the meeting will be a hobby-related video.

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Chips and Chatter

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