



A monthly publication of the Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society

VOLUME 36 AUGUST 2010 NUMBER 08



Enjoy a rocking vacation

**NEXT MEETING:** August 16, 2010  
**TIME:** 7:30 PM  
**LOCATION:** CLEAR LAKE PARK BUILDING  
 5001 NASA ROAD ONE  
 SEABROOK, TEXAS

**The PROGRAM FOR August...**

**The program will be given by “Al Pennington”.** Rocks and Minerals – third in the Eyewitness series for geology narrated by Martin Scheen. This program examines the characteristics of common rocks and minerals and teaches identification procedures. You’ll learn about the physical properties of minerals including hardness, luster and color as well as the chemical compositions of important rock-forming minerals.

**SHOW and TELL**

Share a report of our latest field trip or your own special dig. Bring in your prize specimens and educate us. Bring us your rockhounding finds and let us see how you did.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE		Stoney Statements Spotlight	Editorial
July Minutes	2	 <p>Our great Demonstration table guys. Pictured from R to L are Bill Robinett, Mike Reves and the late Les Bailey.</p>	<p><b>Members should help on Programs</b>            I have had several inputs from members for presentations on jewelry making and faceting. Now I need some volunteers for assembling a presentation for future club meetings. Volunteers? See Trina!</p> <p>I am still looking for a dealer chairman for the Club Show. Mike Burns has sent out the dealer forms and returns will go through the club PO Box initially but we need someone to take the reins of the final work.</p>
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“Patriotism is supporting your country all the time, and your government only when it deserves it.” Mark Twain

## Minutes of the Clear Lake Gem and Mineral

July 19, 2010

President Bob Brock called the meeting to order and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Treasurer's Report was postponed until next month. There were no changes to the June Meeting Minutes. We welcomed visitor Sean Crook.

### **Committee Reports:**

Historian – Nothing to report.

Librarian – The library is still in storage.

Education – Chairperson Ed Tindell requested volunteers to speak on some newspaper articles he had.

Anna Williams made a presentation on the Mineral Wells Fossil Park, a free fossil park in Mineral Wells, TX. The site is open Fridays through Mondays from 8:00 a.m. until dusk.

Shannon Oliver volunteered to make the education presentation next month.

Membership – One new member.

Publicity – Anna Williams will contact the newspapers to add our meeting to their calendar of events.

Show Committee – Pads, which are sent to dealers announcing our annual show, will be printed this month.

### **Program** – Conduct of Geology Field Work during Planetary Exploration

The program was presented by Dean Eppler, geologist at Johnson Space Center for 20 years with a background in volcanoes.

Dean tested astronaut suits to see if geologic work could be done in them. Field work is the basic method of obtaining geologic data and will continue to be so as manned missions move out into the solar system. He reviewed some misconceptions regarding what geologists do. Geologists try to understand the spatial distribution, how did it get there; fault, meteor, etc. Geology is covered by rocks, dirt and vegetation. To make a field map, you have to get into the terrain. You have to get up and personal with the rocks. You have to look at the rocks at 10X or 15X so you can see much more. You must take notes describing in detail what you are seeing. Sample collections are important, but you must know where they are from. You need the geological context. Apollo 15 was the first mission with the rover. The crew underwent extensive geologic training. The crew had 1,037 hours of training, and they spent 500 hours doing field work. They had checklists on their cuffs to remember what they needed to do. Geologic notes were verbal and recorded. The Apollo Program landed six missions on the lunar surface. There are many books on the Apollo missions. Questions were answered.

There was a short break and refreshments were served.

**Field Trips** - Chairperson Ed Tindell made a report on the recent field trip to the TXI Quarry in Midlothian, TX, and to the quarries in Burnet, TX.

**New Business** – None

**Old Business** – Storage boxes were discussed.

Door prizes were awarded and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted  
Annabell Williams  
Secretary

## Tote That Rock ----- Lift That Toolbag

Mel Albright, AFMS Safety Chair

One thing that we rockhounds do a whole bunch - pick up rocks - little rocks, bigger rocks, and big rocks. Rocks by themselves, rocks in boxes, rocks in buckets, rocks in sacks - all are ways we collect and move rocks. And heavy tool bags are lifted all too often.

The classic joke picture of rockhounds is a bunch of people standing with straight legs, bent over at the waist, and touching the ground with their hands. It is too often true, unfortunately. Another thing we rockhounds do is put those heavy tools and rocks into a vehicle - or take them out. - often by swinging things. And - the result is a lot of bad backs, sore backs, back strains, sometimes even permanently damaged backs. So, we need to learn - AND PRACTICE - the proper way to lift and lower heavy stuff (actually - light stuff, too) without hurting ourselves. To lift and move something, several steps should be followed. We'll pretend we're picking up a rock, but the rules are the same for ANYTHING we pick up - even our dirty socks.



1. Stand with your feet apart about shoulder width, the rock between your feet, and one foot slightly in front of the other (for balance).
  2. Lower yourself by bending your knees until you can grab the rock. The rock should be close to your body. Keep your back straight and your chin tucked in.
  3. SLOWLY lift the rock by straightening up your knees pushing with your leg muscles. Keep the rock in close to your body. Do NOT twist sideways.
  4. Once standing, DO NOT TWIST your back. To move the rock sideways, turn with your feet. Keep the rock in close to your body.
  5. Once you get where you are going with the rock, reverse the steps you used to lift the rock. Remember - KEEP YOUR BACK STRAIGHT!!
  6. If the rock must go into a trunk or car or whatever, set it down on the edge keeping a straight back. Then slide it into the vehicle. Most of us will bend over at the waist and swing it in - a sure way to get a bad back!
  7. You aren't SUPERMAN OR WOMAN! If the rock or bucket or bag is too heavy for you to carry easily, do it another way! Get help. Use a skid made from a heavy cloth or a wood slat with a rope tied to the end. Roll the rock using a long handled tool to pry with. Use your ingenuity!
- From the RockCollector 6/09 via April, 1998 AFMS Newsletter via Calgary Lapidary Journal, June 2009

**An August HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

Bill Robinett	23
Mike Burns	28
Michael Reves	28

**Peridot, also Sardonyx**

(Marital happiness).  
Peridot was called the  
"gem of the sun." Its  
black-and-white  
alternate, sardonyx,  
symbolizes both the sun  
and the moon

**August Anniversary includes:**

Mike Burns	20
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"Energy and persistence conquer all things." Benjamin Franklin

**GOODIE GETTERS...For August**

Main Goodies provided by club.

**Lapidary Corner** ((Rerun from last year by request))**HINT & TIPS FROM ALL OVER**

**DON'T PUT IVORY IN THE DARK** where it tends to turn yellow. If it has started to yellow, you can retard this by taking 1/2 lemon, rubbing it in some salt and then rub it over the ivory. After the ivory is dry, take a soft cloth that has been dampened with lukewarm water and rub the ivory to give it a bright new finish.

**TOXIC WASTE:** To dispose of acids used for cleaning, place the acid in a plastic or earthenware container, add a few pieces of limestone until the bubbling stops. The acid has been neutralized and can be safely poured out almost anywhere.

**TO CLEAN GALENA OR CERUSSITE,** use dental plate cleaner.

**TO STABILIZE CRUMBLY MATRIX,** use a solution of 1/2 Elmer's glue and 1/2 water in the back side.

**PUT VASELINE** around the rim of your tumbler before bolting on the lid. It makes a tighter seal and it is easier to remove.

**NEVER USE AMMONIA** or detergent on turquoise. Ammonia will turn turquoise white. This is a good way to test for genuineness.

**WHEN WORKING WITH A SOFT STONE** such as onyx or marble, soak it in water for a couple of days before cutting. This will keep oil from soaking in to discolor the stone and will result in a higher polish.  
*Above from Rock Chips 11/88*

**Need another idea for those extra slabs?** Why not try your hand at making switch plates? Wouldn't some nice agate or marble plates look better under those wall switches than those old, ivory-colored plastic things?

Via Rock and Gem 3/99 via The Cowtown Cutter 2/99

**Eliminating Flats by Ted Robles**

. A while back, someone was saying that he was having problems with getting 'flats' on his cabs; that there was insufficient "Give" in his wheels and it didn't seem to make any difference no matter how much pressure he applied. That was his first mistake.

Diamond and Carborundum are two different animals. Relatively speaking, about the same difference as between quartz and chalk. If you "Lean Into" a diamond wheel, you will get lousy results (flats, etc.) on your stone, and your wheels will wear out long before their time. (I just replaced the first two wheels on my wife's Pixie - and she's been Using it for seven years!) On diamond, you try to do your cutting (and everything else) by almost not touching the wheel. You use essentially no force. Don't "Grind" the stone - let the diamond wear it away, but keep spinning it. The technique is simply to use the whole face of the wheel, and keep your cab moving. Any time you stop, you just bought a 'flat!' Can't help it! It's the same principle as sharpening a knife on an emery wheel. If you don't want notches in your blade, you keep it moving. You do almost ALL of your cutting on the coarsest wheel you have. If you leave ANY flats on the preform, you're going to have them on the final piece - can't help it. And, finally, practice - practice - practice.

Use some agate that you don't care too much about, and go through the procedures until out of ten agate cabs, you get ten you like. Then go to Quartz crystal, and do the same thing. Once you can cut and polish Quartz Crystal, you're proficient enough to go on; but do not expect to walk up to a nice new machine and start turning out flawless work the first thing. Machines, like people, take some acquaintanceship before you really know what you can get out of them *Lapidary Digest Mar 98*

**Field Trips (2010)** by Ed Tindell

**Hi All -**

Next Field Trip

I have spoken with both Ashgrove and Holcim Quarries.

Ashgrove will announce their next field trip in 2-3 weeks.

It will most likely be on 9/25 or 10/2 or thereabouts so mark your calendars.

The CLGMS is going to be a part of it. We are preapproved to attend along with several other groups.

Collecting time will be from 8AM-Noon. No hard hat or safety glasses required. Closed toed shoes will be required - no bare feet or open toed sandals or flip flops.

If it is hot you may wear shorts. **NO CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 15.** (Sorry this is one of their rules.) No pets.

Holcim has hired a new plant manager. Once he is settled in he will be able to take us on a field trip there as well. I have asked if 9/25 or 10/2 would be a good day for an afternoon field trip from 1-5PM.

So we may get to collect at two quarries for a full eight (8) hours in about two months! Let's hope the weather cools off by then. If you would like to go please let me know.

More later,



Thanks,  
Ed Tindell 2010 CLGMS Field Trip Coordinator  
a.k.a. "The Official Cat Herder"

### How to Cut Obsidian

**Author unknown**

**GOLD SHEEN:** To get the most out of mahogany gold sheen obsidian, saw with the bands, as if they were a stack of plates, and you wish to unstuck them. Watch for "fire spots" in gold sheen. It is not plentiful, but opallike colors do sometimes occur in mahogany gold sheen.

**IRIDESCENT:** There are two types of iridescent obsidian. In cutting both correctly, the orientation of the color is most important. One type of obsidian is banded and the color lies in the bands. On the unbanded types of obsidian the surface has to be chipped to find the color. The banded type will have several colors or shades, while the unbanded types will have only one color. Cut the banded material parallel to the bands to get effect. To get a rainbow effect, cut the stone at an approximately 15-degree angle across the bands.

**MIDNIGHT LACE:** Lace-patterned obsidian should be cut across the surface pattern that you desire to reproduce. Although obsidian is comparatively soft, it is still very important to sand away all scratches before going to polish. Some advise that wet sanding be done, since obsidian is heat sensitive and very brittle. For final polish, felt with cerium oxide is the choice. Should you be faceting some particularly gemmy obsidian try cerium oxide on Lucite®, but keep it wet.

**RAINBOW OBSIDIAN:** Cut parallel to flow layers. These can be seen by examining fractured surfaces using an overhead single lamp bulb. As [the layers] are not always straight, it may be necessary to turn the stone slightly in the saw. Examine each slab set with either water or saw oil to see if the correct angle has been obtained.

**SAFETY TIP:** After obsidian is sawed, be sure to bevel the edges all around on your fine grinding wheel to keep them from flaking and chipping. Wear goggles or glasses at all times. If a small chip of glass (obsidian) got into your eye, it would be hard to remove as it is transparent and hard to see even with a powerful magnifying glass, and the edges may cut your eye to a great extent before it could be removed.

### *Peridot By John Zentz for Star-O-Lite*

*Wear a peridot or for thee, No conjugal fidelity, The August born without this stone, 'Tis said, must live unloved; alone. [Author unknown]*

The traditional birthstones for August are sardonyx and carnelian. The modern birthstone is peridot. Last month's newsletter touched on sardonyx and contained a brief article on carnelian, so I will focus on peridot this month.

No matter how you pronounce the word peridot, it stands out as an affordable, yet striking, gemstone. There will always be people ready to \_correct' you when you pronounce it, but you can easily find authorities for either —pear-a-doe□ or —pear-a-dot□. My advice? Pick your preference and defend it like an authority. □

Besides its attractiveness as a yellowish-green gemstone, the physical composition of peridot is interesting to many rockhounds. While not technically classified as a mineral, olivine is a series between two end members, fayalite and forsterite. The whole series contains  $\text{SiO}_4$  with pure fayalite being  $\text{Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$  and pure forsterite being  $\text{Mg}_2\text{SiO}_4$ . These pure end members seldom occur in nature. The iron and magnesium can occur in varying percentages through the series with iron rich specimens being much darker than magnesium rich specimens. Though some iron is required for the color, gem peridot is usually olivine with less than 15% iron, and includes trace amounts of nickel and chromium for what is considered the very best color.



Another interesting fact about olivine in general, and peridot specifically, is its presence in many iron-nickel meteorites. These crystals from outer space can sometimes make up over 50% of the volume of the meteorite.

A thin meteor-ite slice from the Fukang meteor-ite held up to the sun.

Peridot has been mined for well over 3,000 years but has only become known in the United States in the past century. Until recently its primary source was a tiny Red Sea island off the southeast coast of Egypt currently named Zabargad. Today, substantially sized gem quality peridot is found in Myanmar (aka Burma), Pakistan, Southwest USA, and China. Small crystals of peridot are found all over the world, with the green sand beaches of Hawaii being a notable example.

With a hardness just under seven, peridot wears well and is used in all types of jewelry. Its color is foremost when evaluating quality and is sometimes compared against emeralds. This is unfortunate because even the most desirable peridot cannot compare favorably against the much costlier emerald. Compare peridot colors against each other and enjoy one of the few green gemstones in its own right.

Another interesting physical characteristic of peridot is its double refraction, or birefringence. As light enters the gem it splits in two and results in double images of anything seen inside or through the gem. As the gem gets larger, so does the effect. This results in what is termed a —sleepy□ appearance. This characteristic is usually demonstrated with the more common mineral calcite.



The terms chrysolite and evening emerald have been associated with peridot but are somewhat vague in their exact meaning. Chrysolite was used before we could accurately identify stones and was also used to describe some colors of topaz. The long used term evening emerald probably

stems from peridot’s brilliant green glow under some artificial light, but is also used by some sellers in an attempt to enhance a stone’s value.

Peridot is thought to bring good luck, peace, health, protection, sleep and success. Some believe it attracts love and calms anger as well as other negative emotions. Legend says that if set in gold, it will develop its full protective potential. Further, according to the first century authority Pliny the Elder, peridot must be worn on the right arm to work its strongest magic. Pliny’s advice stands in contradiction to another commonly held belief that peridot must be strung onto donkey’s hair and worn on the left arm to fully realize its potential.

Some believe peridot to be an excellent healing stone, strengthening and regenerating the body. It is also said to strengthen eyesight and provide relief from stomach disorders. Even the stone’s color is associated with healing.



As a gemstone, peridot has something in common with diamond. Most inorganic gemstones form in the earth’s crust. However, diamond and peridot are exceptions and form much deeper in the region known as the mantle. While diamond forms significantly deeper, both require transfer to the earth’s surface by tectonic or volcanic activity where they can then be found in extrusive igneous rock.

While relatively inexpensive, I believe the processes and circumstances required to make a peridot gem available to us make it a very desirable adornment. Whether transported upward by volcanic activity, folded or pushed miles upward tectonically, or fallen from some unknown celestial origin, the sleepy green stone that seems to glow in manmade light commands respect and admiration as it adorns a child of August.

*[Photographs from Internet]*

### *More Obsidian*

**GRINDING OBSIDIAN CABS:** Approach your grinding wheel with the material at a slight horizontal angle. If brought straight in, it may be a “shattering” experience, as obsidian fractures conchoidally and this is a sure way to do it.

**POLISH ON OBSIDIAN:** Keep the polishing wheel wet. A dry polishing will result in blisters and scratches. Obsidian is relatively inexpensive, easy to obtain and soft. With proper understanding of its glassy properties you can obtain some great polish.

*Article reprinted from the AFMS March 2010 Newsletter*

SCFMS and MEMBER CLUB GEM SHOWS			
AUGUST 14-15 BATON ROUGE, LA Baton Rouge G&MS Fraternal Order of Police	AUGUST 21-22 BOSSIER CITY, LA Ark-La-Tex G&MS Bossier City Civic Center	AUGUST 28-29 JASPER, TX Pine Country G&MS Events Center	SEPTEMBER 4-5 ARLINGTON, TX Arlington G&MS Arlington Convention Center
SEPTEMBER 25-26 DENISON, TX Texoma Rockhounds Denison Senior Center	OCTOBER 9-10 TEMPLE, TX Tri-City G&MS Mayborn Civic Center	OCTOBER 15-17 VICTORIA, TX Victoria G&MS Community Center 2905 East North St.	OCTOBER 22-24 AUSTIN, TX Austin G&MS Palmer Event Center

STONEY STATEMENTS  
 Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society, Inc  
 PO BOX 891533  
 Houston, Texas 77289

(Postage)

Meeting 3rd Monday of the Month – 7:30 P.M.  
 August 16, 2010, Clear Lake Park Building  
 5001 NASA Road One, Seabrook, Texas



Member of:

**Next Annual Show**  
 February Feb 26-27, 2011  
 Pasadena Convention Center



CLGMS is on the Web: (new location)  
<http://www.clgms.org>

**Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society, Inc**

MEMBER: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and South Central Federation of Mineral Societies

PURPOSE: To promote education and popular interest in the various earth sciences; in particular in those hobbies dealing with the art of lapidaries and the earth sciences of minerals, fossils and their associated fields

2010 OFFICERS:	President	Bob Brock	281-338-2252
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	Secretary	Annabel Williams	
	Treasurer	Loyce Pennington	281 481-1591
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	Board of Directors:	Trina Willoughby	Lester Gary
		Cheryl Tindell	David Tjiok
	Newsletter Editor	Al Pennington	281 481-1591

Annual Show 2011.....	Al Pennington	Library.....	Lester Gary
Const & bylaws.....	Dick Rathjen	Membership.....	Mike Flannigan
Community Benefits.....	Nancy Dugger	Publisher.....	Mike Flannigan
Historian.....	David Tjiok	Refreshments.....	David Tjiok

Membership Dues Jan. to Dec. 2010: Adult \$10:00, \$5.00 per additional adult at same address, Junior \$5.00, \$2.50 per member with adult at same address, Family Dues \$20.00 (4+) at same address. Send Dues to CLGMS, PO BOX 891533, Houston, TX, 77289

**Granvil A. "Al" Pennington, Editor 2010 – 11326 Sagetrail Houston, TX 77089-4418**  
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**Deadline for September Issue is August 28, 2010**