



A monthly publication of the Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society

VOLUME 36 OCTOBER 2010 NUMBER 10



HAPPY Halloween


NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 18, 2010
TIME: 7:30 PM
LOCATION: CLEAR LAKE PARK BUILDING
 5001 NASA ROAD ONE
 SEABROOK, TEXAS

The PROGRAM FOR October...

The program will be given by “Al Pennington”. Okay really will be this month. 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.

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A leader in the Democratic Party is a boss, in the Republican Party he is a leader.
 Harry S. Truman

Minutes of the Clear Lake Gem and Mineral

September 20, 2010

The meeting was opened by President, Robert Brock, at 7:30 pm. After the pledge of allegiance Loyce Pennington, Treasurer, presented the monthly financial report. The report was unanimously accepted by the members present. A motion was then made to approve the minutes of the August meeting which were published in the September issue of Stoney Statements. This motion was unanimously accepted.

The President then called for **Committee reports** with the following results:

Historian: no activity to report

Library: no activity to report

Community Service: Nancy Duggar showed the members a sample display box with a selection of rocks which it has been proposed be given to each school receiving a grant in 2010 for purchase of earth science books. Suggestions were made concerning the selection of rocks and how to label/identify each. Members were urged to contribute interesting samples for inclusion in the display boxes. Ms. Duggar indicated that it was her plan to finish the displays and deliver them to the schools in the month of October.

Education: No activity to report

Publicity: A plan for publicizing the Feb. 2011 show will be presented at the October meeting. There was no activity reported for ongoing publicity for CLGMS meetings.

Show Committee: Al Pennington reported that the dealer contracts were coming in on schedule and that all arrangements were progressing. There was some discussion of the tables and chairs provided by the Pasadena Convention Center and it was agreed that, for the safety and security of the dealers and visitors, we must take efforts to insure that faulty furniture would be screened out before being moved to the dealer sites.

Refreshments: David Tjiok was thanked for his provisioning of the refreshment table.

Field Trips: Ed Tindell provided an update on opportunities to join other clubs for upcoming trips. He mentioned the Swap and Dig trip to Graves Mountain, Georgia, for Oct. 1-3, and an invitation he has received to return to Alpine and Marfa areas. Ed will be going to some mine sites in Maine at the end of October and invited any who wished to accompany him. He also mentioned an opportunity to go to New Mexico to look for meteorites, and a possible trip to Orange, TX, to visit the old Winkaum mine to find fluorescent minerals and rutile tailings.

New Business

Loyce Pennington brought to the membership's attention that the University of Houston geology department has a need for improvements in the specimens provided to students for identification exercises. Discussion followed as to how the club might help the University with this matter. It was decided that we would first get the list from the Geology Dept. of what the instructors would like to have, then see if the club can economically provide specimens, or whether a small grant of funds for the University to make purchases might be a better way to go.

Ed Tindell reported that there had been a break-in at the storage lockers where we keep our supplies and equipment. Our locker was one of many for which the intruders had cut off the padlocks, but he did not notice that anything had been taken from inside. A police report was made, and new and better locks for our storage unit have been purchased.

It was called to the attention of the membership that we must always be alert to the potential health hazards of working with rocks and with cutting or grinding equipment. The August 2010 issue of Rocks and Gems magazine has a good article on biological effects of breathing dusts from rocks that you may be cutting or polishing. In particular, dusts from the siliceous rocks, such as granite, can produce silicosis, those containing asbestos may lead to asbestosis and mesothelioma, those with heavy metals may lead to a variety of maladies, etc. The article goes on to discuss the

different types of masks and respirators which may be needed, depending on what materials you are working on.

Old Business

Ed Tindell discussed his findings regarding suitable plastic boxes to replace the aging and crumbling boxes which we use to store and transport supplies for the annual show. It was voted to buy 30 large and 30 small tote boxes as recommended by Ed.

Presentations

Shannon Oliver then gave a presentation on Indian artifacts which can be found in various locations within Texas. He discussed the conventional wisdom concerning when and from where the earliest Indians traveled from Asia to the Americas and pointed out that, although the dates of about 10,000 to 11,000 BC are often cited for migrations across the Bearing Sea, radio carbon dating of some South American Indian artifacts show habitation from as early as 33,000 BC. Because of the prevalence of old playa lakes, the Lubbock area where Shannon's family lived was used by Indians and abounds in artifacts and in bones of ancient animals. There is a quarry near Amarillo which Indians used as a source of flint. Cliff paintings, mortar rocks and camp fire sites have been identified in a number of locations in northern and western Texas.

Al Pennington then gave a presentation on common mineral identification. He showed us several excellent educational videos which prompted much discussion among the members. The videos illustrated use of several simple tests which can be used to categorize materials. These videos could be useful for the educational programs at the 2011 show.

Conclusion

Door prizes were awarded, the presenters thanked, and the meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Ben Duggar - Substituting for the Secretary



Selected Resources for Your Youth Group

Our Future Rockhounds of America Badge Program provides a special award for kids who earn at least 6 of the 15 badges we offer. To mark that accomplishment, they earn a "Rockhound" badge and thus symbolically graduate from a "future" rockhound to a true-blue, full-blown rockhound by having mastered several areas of our hobby. Their names also get posted to an "Honor Roll" on the Kids Corner of the AFMS web site. To date, we've given out FRA membership patches to over 1,900 kids. Of these, a select group of just six percent—or about 125 kids—have achieved Rockhound status. But there exists an even more select group: a small band of super-motivated achievers who have gone on to earn all 15 badges! Folks have asked me what we might do to further recognize these kids. I think this is an excellent idea, but I also had to mull over budget implications, particularly since I didn't account for adding a new badge in the latest AFMS budget for next year that was approved in June. Well, Steve and Carolyn Weinberger have come to the rescue! Steve has pointed out that we have an existing supply of small AFMS cloisonné pins, and we can easily apply a suitable number of them against the existing juniors' activities budget.

Thus, I'm pleased to announce that any kids who have earned all 15 FRA badges will now earn an FRA pin to mark their achievement. I'll be sending out an alert to clubs actively using the FRA program. In addition to the "Honor Roll" list on the AFMS web site, I'll also work with Marty Hart to add a new "Rock Stars" list to highlight our super achievers, who have been working hard at earning badges—and having fun!

~Jim Brace-Thompson, Junior Activities Chair - Article reprinted from the AFMS October 2010 Newsletter

An October HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Michael Vanderbles	5
Ruth Hansen	6
Steve McCaleb	7
Loyce Pennington	24

Opal (hope). Sudden changes in temperature can cause this fragile stone to shatter, which may have led to the superstition that it can bring the wearer bad luck unless it is one's birthstone

October Anniversary includes:

None

Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience. Ralph Waldo Emerson

GOODIE GETTERS...For October



Main Goodies provided by club.

Lapidary Corner ((Rerun from last year by request))**TUMBLING** By Bob Hicks

This article was printed first in Shawnee Slate in 1994, then in the Rockhound Gazette, Feb 03, 97. Reprinted May 2000 in the Shawnee Slate (Rearranged and shortened by Ruby Lingelbach with the author's permission in 1997)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Two methods of tumbling being discussed will be with the rotating tumbler, and the vibrating tumbler. For both methods the grinding medium is silicon carbide.

The grits: Rough grit (anything under 100) is used for the first stage. Medium grit (120 to 300) is used in the 2nd stage. Fine grit (400 to 600) is used for the third stage.

Estimating cost: As a rule of thumb, silicon carbide, 220 to 400 grit weighs approximately 0.8 ounce per tablespoon. Fine grits 400-600 and polishing powders weigh approximately 0.5 ounce per tablespoon.

Weigh your stones when you get your tumbler 2/3 to 3/4 full. A six pound tumbler does not always hold six pounds of rocks. As a rule of thumb, use one tablespoon of grit per pound of stones, or one tablespoon per two pounds of the manufacturer's weight rating of the tumbler. Most tumbling books suggest more grit and polish than is really necessary.

Volume shrinkage: Roughly 25 percent of the beginning volume tumbled in step one will turn to mud, so run two loads of step one. This will provide the filler material to replace those that were ground away or thrown away from the first step.

Sizes and hardness of stones: A superior polish requires a variety of sizes, with the emphasis on lots of small chips that help polish the larger stones. All stones in a load should be of the same approximate hardness. Softer stones will not polish and may be gouged by harder stones.

A handy hint: Have a note pad next to the tumbler to record the date, time and condition of the stones during the various steps and grit changes. **Polishes:** There are many different polishes for the final stage. The best one for you will be determined by experimenting. Some of them are: Rapid 61, Aluminum Oxide, Cerium Oxide, Tin Oxide, Chrome Oxide, and Tripoli. Suggestion: Rapid 61, Cerium, or Tin Oxide.

Burnishing: Use a soap rinse between the 3rd cycle and polish, then after the final polish. Bar Ivory soap is the only pure soap we know of. Chemical additives in other soap and detergents seem to have a residue on the stones. The dark color when this soap rinse is poured off shows how much grit was still on what you thought was a clean stone. Shave the bar with a knife or whatever method you wish. The water-soap combination reaches a balance when little bubbles appear on the surface of the moving material and should remain this way throughout the soap cycles. The soap bubbles provide a cushion for the stones. Excess water slows down the process.

Any suggestions for Lapidary information you want to know? Write up your ideas and forward to the Editor for printing here in this area each month

Field Trips (2010) by Ed Tindell**Hi All -**

Hi y'all! The cooler weather is just about here, and with it will come the start of the 2010-2011 rockhunting season. We have had much more than our usual amount of rainfall throughout the area this summer, so the hunting should be spectacular, if we can find the rocks through the high grass!

1. A wonderful 10-section ranch south of Marfa which is, in places, just littered with agate. There's the famous Marfa Bouquet agate, black plume, a bright green agate that I haven't seen anywhere else in the Big Bend, and probably a bunch of things I haven't found yet! There have been very few rock hunters on this ranch, and it's very scenic and rough, so be sure to bring a camera!

2. East Needle Peak, near Terlingua and Big Bend National Park, is open again for the same \$35 per day fee as last year. The owner will accept cash or check. There's a little pompom agate there, but mostly there's patterned and moss agate, fortification agate, petrified wood, calcite, selenite, goethite after pyrite, and lots of fossils! The access to this ranch is extremely rough and a 4wd vehicle is required. If you don't have one, you can drive fairly close to the area and then hitch a ride with someone who does have the 4wd.

3. The Ritchie Ranch will again be open. This ranch is close to Alpine and has very gentle, rolling terrain. There's moss agate and jasper in a number of colors, but no plume agate to speak of. There are geodes and some fairly large (up to 3") quartz crystals, too. It's a great ranch for people with kids or physical disabilities, or those who are just beginning rock hunting and don't want to stay out all day. The cost is \$5 per person entrance fee, and 75¢ per lb. for the good agate you take. The owner will accept cash or check. The Ritchie Ranch is accessible by most vehicles, although high ground clearance is still a plus!

I hope to see y'all out here this fall!

More later,



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

Mineral of the Month

By Steve Weinberger

October is again an auction month, so we will not be able to bring in minerals for the Mineral of the Month Table. Instead, I thought I would share some information about one of the lesser-used divisions of the mineral hobby, namely micromounting. People look strangely at those of us huddled over our microscopes working on those tiny minerals that easily fit into the 1" boxes, but do they know why we do it?

There are many reasons to work with microminerals, and listed here are some of these:

Storage space—Whereas most minerals take up quite some space on shelves, micromounts require only a small cube of 1" or less. This means that you can keep over 100 specimens in a thin paper box of 8 ½" X 11". These boxes can then be stacked to form a cube 12" high, that can contain over 1,300 minerals. Can you do this with larger minerals?

Variety—most of the rarer minerals exist only in micro form, so if you are a species collector (trying to have at least one of every mineral) you must go for the micros to complete your collection. It is quite a feat to have every mineral, and most people give up within a short time (after all collecting 4,500+ minerals is a daunting task.)

Expense—as we all know, minerals can be quite expensive—many costing well into the thousands of dollars. Micros are relatively inexpensive, most costing less than \$5 or \$10.

Friendship—the micromounting hobby is comprised of selfless individuals quite willing to share with others. At conferences, we all trade with other attendees, collect from the give-away tables and buy from the dealers at reasonable prices.

Perfection—micromounts have usually been protected within the host rock until the rock is opened, thus revealing for the first time the perfect specimens. Perfection of larger crystals is rare.

True, there is a downside—a good stereomicroscope and light source are really necessary, but once you have these they should last a lifetime. Tools such as trimmers, picks, tweezers, mounting stands and boxes are inexpensive. The friendships that develop within the community are, as they say, priceless. Fm The RockCollector 10/2010



Stringhamite
Christmas Mine
Gila Co. AZ

Opal By John Zentz for Star-O-Lite



*October's child is born for woe, And life's vicissitudes must know,
But lay an opal on her breast, And hope will lull those woes to rest.
[Author unknown]*

The traditional birthstones for October are tourmaline and aquamarine. The modern birthstones are tourmaline and opal.

Since our unknown author chose opal for October's child, I will start there.

Technically, there are many forms or types of opal. Some categories are boulder, black, light, precious, common, potch, resin, synthetic, transparent, peacock, harlequin, flame, fire, and even opalized fossils. It is a usually transparent or translucent mineral consisting of hydrous silica. It can occur in almost any color but is most often pinkish white. While chemically similar to quartz, opal is softer and less dense and usually contains from 3% to 10% water. It forms at low temperatures from silica-bearing water in fissures and cavities of any rock type. Unlike many minerals, it is not found in dense concentrations, but instead is found in small quantities dispersed over large areas.

Sometimes an opal will have regularly packed tiny spheres of amorphous silica arranged in a way that causes light to reflect and refract into beautiful colors resulting in what we term —precious opal. These spheres are only a few tenths of a micron in diameter. For comparison, a human hair is about 100 microns wide, and a red blood cell is about eight microns in diameter. The tiny spheres are small enough to interfere with the wavelengths of light which is how they produce the remarkable play of colors we love so much.

While some types of opal are found in many places around the world, the vast majority of precious opal is found in only a few places, primarily the Coober Pedy and Andamooka fields in southern Australia. Australian opal did not reach the world's markets until the very late 1800's. Prior to that, precious opal was very rare indeed.

Throughout history opal has been regarded as a lucky stone. Some believed it enhanced psychic abilities, held magical powers, improved eyesight, amplified desires, protected against disease, and even bestowed the gift of prophecy. But, everyone believed it was a lucky stone, at least until the late 18th and 19th centuries when it fell out of favor as it became associated with famine and disease.

Walter Scott's novel *Ann of Geirstein* and a few other fiction works of the time caused some people to think of opal as an unlucky stone. Fortunately, this is no longer the case. Opal has regained its rightful place.



An opal requires special care by its owner. It should never be placed in an ultrasonic cleaner, or exposed to acids or solvents. Clean an opal with mild soapy lukewarm water and a very soft toothbrush. It should also never be exposed to very cold or dry conditions. Prolonged exposure to strong light can even cause the water to dry out and the stone to crack or craze. Crazeing is the formation of tiny surface cracks in a pattern similar to that seen in dried mud. Many people believe opals should be worn frequently so they can absorb moisture and oils from the body to help keep them hydrated and prevent crazeing. However, wear them carefully. Most references classify opals with a hardness of 5 ½ to 6 ½ Mohs, but some can be as soft as 4 ½.

More so than most gemstones, precious opal is unforgiving of its cutter. To get the most intense fire the cutter must remove intervening translucent material without removing the source of the fire. Once cut, the fire is lost forever. Knowing when to stop comes only from experience for which the cutter must pay dearly. It takes a practiced, bold and steady hand to unveil one of nature's most beautiful displays so the world can appreciate it. October's child owes her wondrous treasure to both nature and a talented craftsman. Fm Star-O-Lite 10/2010

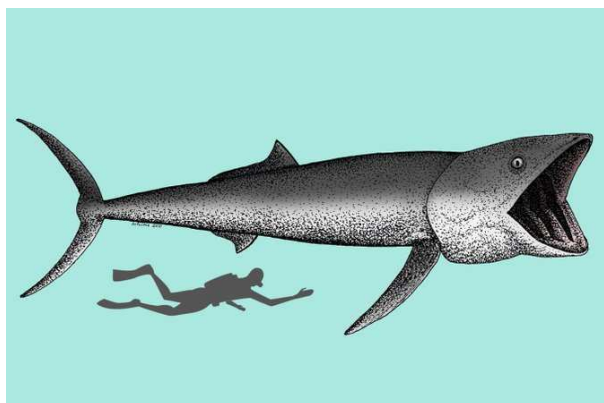
Unusual and Curious Oddities

Earth News

from Kevin Dermody, CPRMC

Paleo

Last year a professional explosives team from Rocky Mountain National Park went to Dinosaur National Monument to separate sandstone, that was too tough for usual preparation, from fossils that were discovered in 2005. After three days of blasting, the process was complete and rock that was excavated in the 1990s from quarry DNM16, discovered in 1977, was removed, revealing its treasures. Among them were the remains of four juvenile sauropods around 25 feet long, including two complete skulls. The skulls are extremely important. outof approximately 1210 sauropod specimens, only eight had complete skulls. These new skulls show a step in sauropod evolution. Their teeth seem midway between the broad ones of early brachiosaurs and the pencilshaped teeth of later species. The new brachiosaurs were named Abydosaurus McIntosh and lived 105 million years ago.



Whales, whale sharks, basking sharks, and manta rays are the top large plankton filter feeders today, formerly thought to be a recent innovation. Now it is known that large bony fish occupied the same niche during Jurassic and Cretaceous times, dying off at the end of the Cretaceous. One fish, Bonnerichthys, was 27 feet long

and previously known for its skeleton and large forefins. But, its skull was recently found in Kansas with its fins. The skull has long toothless jaws, a gaping mouth, and huge gill arches for filtering. Other fish have been reexamined and similar finds have been discovered in Japan and in Kent and Dorset counties in England.

Skulls are usually not found because the bones are reduced for weight, making them easier to scatter than the rest of the skeleton after the fish dies.

Sources: Verizon Central Newsroom, sciencedaily.com

From The Rockcollector 10/10 viaRock Buster News, Vol 50, Nr 3 via Chippers' Chatter, 10/10

[Photographs from Internet]



SCFMS and MEMBER CLUB GEM SHOWS			
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.
 October 18, 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
	Program Director	Trina Willoughby	
	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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