

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 2023

NEWSLETTER OF THE
SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION
Of Mineral Societies



Member of: American Federation of Mineral Societies

ON THE COVER

Topaz is a silicate mineral of aluminium and fluorine with the chemical formula $\text{Al}_2\text{SiO}_4(\text{F},\text{OH})_2$. It is used as a gemstone in jewelry and other adornments. Common topaz in its natural state is colorless, though trace element impurities can make it pale blue or golden brown to yellow orange. Topaz is often treated with heat or radiation to make it a deep blue, reddish-orange, pale green, pink, or purple.

Although it is often associated with golden yellow and blue, it comes in a variety of colors, including colorless. The rarest are natural pinks, reds, and delicate golden oranges, sometimes with pink hues.

Topaz is a nesosilicate mineral. It is one of the hardest naturally occurring minerals and has a relatively low index of refraction. It occurs in many places in the world. Via Wikipedia

Turquoise is an opaque, blue-to-green mineral that is hydrous phosphate of copper and aluminium, with the chemical formula $\text{CuAl}_6(\text{PO}_4)_4(\text{OH})_8 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$. It is rare and valuable in finer grades and has been prized as a gemstone for millennia due to its hue.

The finest of turquoise reaches a maximum Mohs hardness of just under 6, or slightly more than window glass. Characteristically a cryptocrystalline mineral, turquoise almost never forms single crystals, and all of its properties are highly variable. Via Wikipedia

Photos:

Golden Imperial Topaz—Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, rough crystal

Topaz—Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, faceted pear

Topaz—Trillion cut, Emerald Cut, and natural

Turquoise—Smithsonian Museum of Natural History-rough ‘nugget’

Turquoise Tiara—Smithsonian Museum of Natural History

Turquoise Bracelet—Smithsonian Museum of Natural History

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SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.

2023 SCFMS OFFICERS

President: Roger Burford

Executive V-P: Don Shurtz

Secretary: Liz Burford

Treasurer: Henry Rojas

Web Master: Don Shurtz

**Exec. Secretary:
Kimberly Brannon**

**AFMS Endowment Fund Raffle:
(temporary) Jerrold Simpson**

**SCFMS Endowment Fund Com.
Treasurer: Empty**

**Nominating Committee –
Ron Carmen**

Past President: Jerrold Simpson

For more information or to send information to the SCFMS or an officer, please email:

scfmsinformation@gmail.com



PURPOSE

*To promote popular interest and education in the various earth sciences, in particular those hobbies dealing with the art of lapidaries and the science of minerals, fossils, as well as their associated fields.

*To cooperate with educational and scientific institutions or other groups engaged in increasing knowledge in the earth sciences.

*To cooperate with or become members of similar Federations in the United States and elsewhere.

*To assist in the formation of earth sciences societies in localities where public interest justifies their formation.

E-MAIL ADDRESS CORRECTION AND CHANGES

It is each members responsibility to send your email address corrections to the SCFMS Editor:

Susan Burch,
scfmseditor@yahoo.com

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY

DUPLICATION

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

THE FINAL DEADLINE, ETC.



For each newsletter the deadline is the 20th of the month prior to scheduled publication. February-April-June-August-October-December all provide the deadline for the following bi-monthly issue. Although, the Editor may chose to adjust the deadline due to circumstances.

As a reminder! Shop hints and tips that are used in this newsletter have not been evaluated for safety or reliability by myself. Please use caution and safety when trying out any new idea. Please, if you have something urgent give me a call, but send newsletter content via email.

ANNUAL SHOW 2024

TBD

ANNUAL MEETING

TBD

SCFMS WEB-SITE:
WWW.SCFMS.NET

The SCFMS is a member of the American Federation of Mineral Societies. amfed.org

NEWSLETTER EDITOR/BEAC:

Susan Burch
scfmseditor@yahoo.com



President's Message



Roger Burford
SCFMS President

First I would like to say thank you to the membership of our federation for letting me serve as your President for the last few years, it has truly been an honor which I have not taken lightly. While this will be my last article as your President I do intend to stay as active in the Federation as possible. I was very pleased with the turnout for the convention even though we did not get to meet each other in person. Next years convention will be hosted by the Dallas Gem and Mineral Society and from what I have seen they will put on an excellent convention.

As of November the first I took over the position as President of the American Federation of Gem and Mineral Societies and I anticipate this to be a busy year for me and Liz. Liz is stepping down as Secretary and is moving into the Executive Secretary position replacing Kimberly so I expect that she will be busy too.

Now for some information I have thought of writing about for a while but just kept putting it off.

Now for a little information about the stones we have here in Louisiana that didn't come from somewhere else. Our state mineral is a banded river agate which originally formed within limestone that covered from the states further to the north down the various rivers and creeks and settling onto the sand bars in Mississippi and Louisiana. While they are pretty, they are not native to Louisiana. We also have sandstone and iron stone which I haven't seen many rockhounds striving to put in their collections.

Louisiana does have many minerals which did form here, one that you may know is salt, we also have sulfur and gypsum which support numerous industries but to me do not qualify as rocks.

Our state gem stone is a cabochon cut from the shells of *Crassostrea virginica* oyster, one

of dozens of mollusk varieties. For anyone who has eaten oysters on the half shell can now look at the shell and say to yourself, "That would make a great pendant". The idea to use oyster shells was developed as a way to help the oyster industry here and to figure out another use for the shells which were, and still are in places, used to pave roads.

Our state fossil is a petrified palm of the genus *Palmoxylon* did not produce a true "wood" composed of cellulose and lignin. Instead, it was a plant that looked similar to a modern palm tree with a trunk made up of parenchyma, a fibrous support material that surrounded hollow tubes of the plant's vascular structure known as xylem and phloem. These tubes transported water, nutrients, wastes, and other materials through the plant. Mostly found in the western part of the state about 100 miles from the current coast line. Petrified palm can be used to make some very pretty cabochons and comes in several color variations. You can also find petrified wood in the rivers streams all over the state.

But there is a stone that originally formed here but is no longer mined, the Louisiana Opal. This was mined at the Hidden Fire Mine from 1980 to 1983 when Ben Stevens obtained an exploratory lease on the area where the opal was found. Everyone would not believe that an opal could form here but Ben proved them wrong when the stone was tested and proved to be a true opal. During the years the mine was open Ben and his wife Lynn traveled around the country in their motor home to attend gem shows and try to sell their precious opal but it wasn't easy, people were leery to buy a stone they had never heard of but they continued to travel to shows until Bens passing. Now after the years have passed and the mine closed and never to be reopened people are finally recognizing it's beauty and increasing rarity.

I hope this information helps you understand why those of us from Louisiana are rock starved and how proud I am that you have given me the opportunity to act as your president.

2024 AND BEYOND WEBSITE CONTEST

By Don Shurtz, SCFMS Website Contest Chair

I am sure all the webmasters in the SCFMS were holding their breath waiting for information on the 2024 Website Contest. If we followed the traditional prescription, we would be calling for 2024 entries towards the end of January. That would give us time to find the top two SCFMS finishers to enter into the AFMS contest. Those top two SCFMS finishers would find out about their AFMS results in May at the AFMS Convention. However, the final results would not be released for the SCFMS contest until November at the SCFMS Convention. So you tell me, does this make any sense at all? The 2024 contest would be based on the results of the websites as they stood at the end of January 2024 – one month of website material to represent an entire year. If you ask me, that is just DUMB.

The issue in the SCFMS also occurs in the other Regional Federations – but NOT ANYMORE. We, along with the AFMS Website Contest, are moving to a fixed schedule. In 2024, 2025, and beyond, the entries will be due on September 30. The local judging will be completed by October 30 and the top two entries forwarded to the AFMS. The AFMS contest judging will end on November 30 or December 15 (still to be determined). The SCFMS contest results for 2024 will be published in the January-February 2025 SCFMS Newsletter and the AFMS Results will be published in the January 2025 AFMS Newsletter. The plaque and certificates for the contests will be distributed at the 2025 conventions (AFMS convention and the SCFMS convention). And for the 2025 Website contests, just advance everything by 1 year. This fixed schedule means that there will not be any awards at the 2024 AFMS or SCFMS Convention, but after that, the results and awards will be for the preceding year's contest. Year after year after year it will be the same schedule. No more results for a yearly contest based on one or two months.

In addition to the normal contest, we are also opening up a parallel, non-competitive category. This will allow clubs to get feedback from the Judges, but not have to worry about how they place in the contest. The hope is to get clubs to use this non-competitive category as a way to improve their website, and possibly in future years to feel comfortable entering the regular contest. This non-competitive category will run at the same time as the competitive category and will use the same judges.

One thing that we are trying to do to equalize the results between small and

large clubs is to judge how well the material is presented. We are trying to make it easier for smaller clubs to be competitive with the larger clubs. The small clubs may not have all the resources of a larger club, but we are going to stress how well the information is conveyed. Score Sheets and Guidelines will be available in January or February. I will let all the webmasters know as soon as the information is posted.

I hope this makes as much sense to the SCFMS Club/Society Webmasters as it does to me.

The bottom line for the SCFMS Contest for 2024 is that the deadline for entries will be September 30, 2024.



*Don Shurtz,
SCFMS Website
Contest Chair /
Executive
Vice-President*



EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT'S MEANDERINGS

By Don Shurtz

I want to thank all the SCFMS Officers and Directors (Club President or their Representative) for making this year's SCFMS Convention Meeting one of the most successful in the last several years. We had a quorum so we were able to pass the Budget and elect new officers. You had to be careful if you glanced away from your screen during the election – it all happened so fast. I will be taking on the duties of the SCFMS President on January 1, 2024. Sigrid Stewart from the Houston Gem and Mineral Society will be the Executive Vice President. Henry Rojas will continue as the Treasurer. Kimberly Brannon is stepping down as the Executive Secretary (an appointed position) and Liz Burford will be the new Executive Secretary. However, we still need a Secretary for 2024-2025. The Secretary is a very responsible position and is one of the busier positions. I estimate that most officers and Committee positions take up about 20 minutes per month (average). For most positions, the primary output is a written report for the next Convention (the weekend before Thanksgiving in November 2025). However, the Secretary, in addition to his/her own report, gathers all the Officer and Committee reports and sends them out before the Convention. She/He must also take the minutes of the meeting. I would estimate that the Secretary position will take probably 20 hours of work, most of it starting about 120 days before the convention. If there is someone out there who can help out, please contact me, Roger Burford, or Liz Burford. We need this position filled ASAP.

One of the responsibilities of the Executive VP is to name a SCFMS Scholarship Honoree. The Honoree names two graduate students to receive \$4,000 Scholarships from the AFMS Scholarship Fund. The scholarships are actually awarded in August 2024. Unfortunately, the Honoree must be named before December 31, 2023, so it is again my task to name that Honoree. I am working with someone from here in Dallas to be the Honoree (Yes, another from the north Texas area), but he is working with Educators from the University of Texas to name the scholarship winners. By the January-February SCFMS Newsletter, I will be able to announce the Honoree. This will give Sigrid almost a full year to get nominations for the Scholarship Honorees and to pick the Honorees for 2025 and 2026.

Wearing a different hat than the Executive VP, I also hold the position of Scholarship Fund Chair. I track SCFMS donations to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation. That position is mainly been tracking donations of the Rollin'Rock Club from its auctions of the Treasure Chest at unofficial Rollin' Rock Club meetings held at most SCFMS club shows. This year I have also forwarded donations from Pleasant Oaks

Gem and Mineral Club for the sale of items donated to the club. Shortly, I am also going to receive a Memorial Donation" from the ARK-LA-TEX Gem and Mineral Society to recognize a member who passed. This is a fitting gift to recognize a deceased member. Also, I am unfortunately going to receive a donation from the Victoria Gem and Mineral Society which has folded. They voted to donate their remaining treasury to the AFMS Scholarship Fund. I believe that a Memorial donation by a club is a worthy gesture that needs to be recognized. I also hate to see a club fold, but if it has to be, donating the remaining treasury funds to the AFMS Scholarship Fund is a choice that will help many.

**SUBSCRIBE &
SUPPORT BOTH
R&G & AFMS—&
GET A DISCOUNT
FOR
YOURSELF!
By Jim Brace-
Thompson, AFMS
4th VP & Public Re-
lations Chair**



Rock & Gem has long been recognized as the officially endorsed hobby magazine of AFMS and, by extension, the seven regional federations and their member clubs. The editor there, Pam Freeman, is offering a special deal to members of local gem and mineral societies affiliated with AFMS. It's a win-win-win deal in that *Rock & Gem* gets subscribers, we subscribers get a 61% discount, and AFMS gets a 15% commission on each subscription that will go into the Endowment Fund. This deal applies to both new and renewing subscriptions and has been approved and endorsed by the AFMS Executive Board, who designated me to serve as the liaison between AFMS and *Rock & Gem*.

Rock & Gem has produced a "Rock & Gem/AFMS Subscription" flyer/order form we hope to post to the websites of AFMS and the regional federations to ensure that a portion of your payment goes to AFMS. Those preferring to order online can use the QR code included on the flyer that can be scanned with your cell phone. By the way, the same deal applies to any subscriptions you might sell to members of the general public by having copies of the flyer/order form at, say, a take-one table at your annual club show. I can also send this form in pdf format as an attachment; email me at jbraceth@roadrunner.com.

Here's to supporting our official hobby magazine as it, in turn, supports us as individuals and as a Federation! See the flyer on Page 12.



**South Central Federation of Mineral Societies
Minutes of the 79th Annual Meeting October 14, 2023
Held via Zoom Meeting**



Meeting was called to order by Roger Burford, President, at 10:20 am. Roger welcomed all directors, delegates, and non-delegates to our annual meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Roger Burford

Invocation was led by Walt Beneze.

Roger apologized for having to hold this meeting via Zoom and on such short notice. Time constraints prevented us from having the physical meeting. This should be the last time we have to do this, barring any unforeseen pandemic or other tragic event. Next year's show will be held in Dallas and is already being planned.

Roger introduced Ron Carman as Parliamentarian for this meeting.

Roll Call of Member Societies in Attendance – Liz Burford

Ark-La-Tex GMS – Laura MacWilliams

Arlington GMS –

Austin GMS – Doretta Conrad

Baton Rouge GMS – Tony Rouchon

Big Spring Prospector club –

Central Texas GMS –

Chihuahuan Desert GMS – Sue Franklin/Judy Brueske (President)

Clear Lake GMS – represented by Annabel Brownfield

Cowtown Gem, Mineral, & Glass Society –

Dallas Gem & Mineral Society –

DeRidder GMS –

East Texas GMS – represented by non-delegate Julia Toombs

Fort Worth GMS – Janice Bowden

Fredericksburg GMS –

Gem, Mineral and Lapidary Society of Central Louisiana – Nathaniel Haley

GMS of Louisiana –

Geological Society of San Antonio –

Golden Spread GMS –

Gulf Coast GMS – represented by Henry Rojas

Hi-Plains GMS –

Hot Springs Geology Club – represented by Ray Lynch

Houston GMS – Nancy English

Lubbock GMS – represented by Walt Beneze

Midland GMS –

Northeast Louisiana GMS – Jennifer Norris

Paleontological Society of Austin – represented by Heather Aziz

Pine Country GMS - disbanded

Pleasant Oaks GMC of Dallas – represented by Carolyn Grady

Rolling Rock Club – Walter Beneze

Southwest GMS –

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Spring River Gem & Mineral Club – represented by David Thomas – NEW SOCIETY to us!

Texoma Rockhounds Inc. – suspended meetings until early 2024

Tri-City GMS – Susan Lovelace

Victoria GMS – disbanded

Waco GMS –

Williamson County GMS –

Wise County Fossil, Rock, and Mineral Society - disbanded

President – Roger Burford

Executive Vice President, Budget Committee, Scholarship, AFMS Scholarship, Webmaster, Web Site Competition – Don Shurtz

Secretary, Audit Committee Member, Constitution and By-Laws Member, Directory Chair– Liz Burford

Executive Secretary – Kimberly Brannon-Saia

Treasurer – Henry Rojas

District I –

District II – Sigrid Stewart

District III –

District IV – District V –

District VI – represented by Walt Beneze

District VII – Ray Lynch

District VIII – Del Glasner

Endowment Fund & Treasurer – Walt Beneze

Newsletter Editor, BEAC –

Uniform Rules, Nominating Committee – Ron Carman

Past President, Long Range Planning – vacant



BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes from 2022 meeting – Liz Burford present. Report is in the packet. Motion was made by Walt Beneze to accept the minutes. Tony Rouchon seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and carried.

President's Report – Roger Burford present. Report is in the packet. Laura MacWilliams made the motion to accept the report. Tony Rouchon seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and carried.

Executive Vice President – Don Shurtz present. Report is in the packet. Liz Burford made the motion to accept the report. Susan Lovelace seconded it. The motion was voted on and carried.

Treasurer's Report – Henry Rojas present. Report is in the packet. Tony Rouchon made the motion that the Treasurer's report be accepted and was seconded by Laura MacWilliams. Motion was voted on and carried.

Past President's Report – No report due to this position being vacant.

Executive Secretary's Report – Kimberly Brannon-Saia present. Need to correct the report to remove Bulletin Aids/Club Publications from list of reports done by her. This belongs to the Editor. So noted. Laura MacWilliams motion to accept. Walt Beneze seconded the motion.

DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

District I – Eddie Harmon was absent. Report is in the packet.

***Walt Beneze made a motion that the **entire report** be accepted in addition to all the corrections mentioned with Kimberly. Laura MacWilliams seconded the motion and it was carried.

Roger wanted to make a comment regarding the District Vice Presidents.

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They need to contact all the clubs within their region on a regular basis to see if they have any questions, concerns or needs, and are they struggling? We made a disturbing discovery when we were contacting each club for directory information. There are **FOUR** clubs that have disbanded and no one knew about it. When we reached out to the District Vice President over those particular regions, they did not know about it either. There are certain things that have to be done when a club disbands. They cannot just shut the doors and walk away.



- 1.) If they have equipment, it needs to be donated to another club or another non-profit; it does not have to be within SCFMS.
- 2.) Funds in their bank account need to be forwarded to South Central Federation.

Judy Brueske of Chihuahuan Desert Gem and Mineral Society said that their By-Laws state that the funds in their account are to be distributed among members in the event of disbanding.

If there is something a Society needs, or need help with, perhaps they need help with boosting membership up, we have resources that we can go to for help with these things. Our big push has to be with the kids and getting them involved.

One club in the process of disbanding now has generously donated their projector and screen to the Federation. Now SCFMS has its own projector and screen. We are very appreciative of that. Both are currently being used for this meeting.

We need to have an **addition made to the Sexual Harassment Policy to include Retaliation**. Harassment and or Retaliation can go both ways and we need to have something in our documents stating it will not be tolerated and that it can be prosecuted. This is not just for Sexual Harassment but harassment of any kind. Kimberly reminded us that it is already against the law to retaliate against anyone based on race, gender, religion, and so on, pretty much for any reason at all. The reason this is even an issue is that should something occur and it goes to court, it affects our liability insurance. There needs to be a protocol in place for this. The insurance rates can be affected for **FIVE YEARS**. It would, in all probability, affect the national insurance as well.

The **Proposed Budget** needs to be voted on. Don stated it was based on estimated income and necessary expenses. The biggest change in the proposed budget is the travel advancement for those people going to the conferences. Plan to increase from \$150 to \$200. Kimberly is the only person that is paid a “salary” and she is not a voting member. Susan Lovelace moved that we pass the budget and Laura MacWilliams seconded it. The Proposed Budget for 2024 was passed.

Liz had some things to discuss:

- 1) **Bids for future shows** – we have posted guidelines on the SCFMS website. As long as you follow the guidelines and the schedule, you will be fine. The hosting society does not have to come out of pocket for anything. 120 days is the first deadline to be met with the Secretary to send out information to the members. Meetings are more fun in person. Everyone is able to feed off of each other. **We need host societies for 2025, 2026, and so on.**
- 2) Kimberly has multiple copies of **several old documents** that are no longer necessary or are outdated. We would like to make a motion that they be destroyed.

They are:

- AFMS Uniform Rules 2013 – 11 copies
- AFMS Uniform Rules 2013, Updated Pages, 15 copies
- AFMS Guidelines for Exhibitors 2002, 9 copies
- AFMS Mineral Competition List 2009, 29 copies
- AFMS Approved Reference List of Lapidary Material Names August 1996, 40 copies
- AFMS Mineral Classification List Updated for 2003, 8 copies
- AFMS Approved Reference List of Classifications and Common Names for Fossils Updated 2002, 21 copies
- AFMS Guidelines for Bulletin Editors, James F. Hurlbut 2002, 4 copies

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Kimberly stated all are online so there is no need to keep hard copies. Nancy English made a motion for Destruction of these documents. Walt Beneze seconded it. Destruction of these documents has been approved.



- 3) Next topic is again on the **communication with the clubs**. How this all came about was when Liz was updating the Directory. An email was sent to each and every club individually. Just the simple gesture of reaching out to them created responses from many. This is how we started hearing about things going on in the clubs such as the disbanding. Just the past week, Liz received a lengthy email regarding things going on within a club that is causing member fallout. This is a situation where Executive Officers need to get involved so we will be looking into this very soon. We will not tolerate one or two people running off a whole club. Please, please reach out to someone if there are issues within a club to see if someone has a possible solution. We have GOT to come up with a better way of communicating with each other. If anyone has any solutions for doing that, we are taking suggestions!

Nominating Committee Report – Ron Carman presented the following slate of officers for 2024

Proposed Officers for 2024

President – Don Shurtz
Vice President – Sigrid Stewart
Treasurer – Henry Rojas
Secretary – *(need someone for this office)*
Executive Secretary – Liz Burford
District I – Eddie Harmon
District II – *(need someone for this office)*
District III – Wendy Clark Able
District IV – Ron Carman
District V – *(need someone for this office)*
District VI – Betty Gosewehr
District VII – Ray Lynch
District VIII – Del Glasner

Ron wanted to give thanks to all those he sent numerous emails to and they didn't respond.

We really need to have all of the District Vice President positions filled. These positions involve contacting the clubs within your district regularly. There are a lot of different positions open in committees. Though there are some who may disagree, typically these various positions take 15-20 minutes a month to do. There are a few that take more time, one for example is the Secretary, but that busier time occurs just prior to and during Convention time.

Roger brought up we had 20 Delegates at the meeting and we should have had 33. All club **presidents are required** to attend the annual meeting. There is no excuse. Kimberly suggested that going forward we should also provide an option for joining via ZOOM for those who don't like to or can't travel. Roger stated we would be doing that and that was the reason for getting the projector and screen – to make it easier to view everyone. Roger also encouraged the clubs to provide funds to the President and preferably Vice President or delegate to attend the conferences.

Kimberly mentioned she is retiring. Roger said that was what he was getting to next. Kimberly is in fact, retiring and Liz Burford will be stepping into Executive Secretary. Those of you not familiar with Liz will become familiar with Liz!

Roger is finished with Executive Offices at the end of this term. However, he has gotten his hands on half of the long sought after Federation library and will be working on digitizing it. Much of it is on slides and VCR tapes. He will be going through all of this to determine what can still be used and converting it. Continued on Page 11

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Kimberly has a lot of the historical data.

Bridget Joubert, former District Vice President for Louisiana and the former president of the Gem and Mineral Society for Central Louisiana, dropped in to Kimberly's to help us recognize Kimberly for all of her hard work. Kimberly has done a **TREMENDOUS** amount of work for the Federation and has played a major role in getting us where we needed to be. It has always been "Call Kimberly" if there was ever a question about anything. Many of us know there has been a long standing joke about Kimberly and cheesecake.

One year at a convention in Lubbock, cheesecake was dropped on the floor and she got quite upset about it. The Cheesecake Award was then born. She explained the Award as something presented to someone that acts ridiculous at the convention. It's been given out about nine times. It's something silly. We presented Kimberly with a large cheesecake to thank her for EVERYTHING she has done. She felt it worth mentioning she is the first person to receive this award TWICE!

Motion to pass this slate of officers for 2024 was passed by all. No opposing votes

Doretta Conrad from Austin Gem and Mineral Society inquired about the dates for the next meeting. It is the weekend before Thanksgiving next year. She also requested the password for the Directory. Liz is going to email the password out to all who are in attendance.

Janice Bowen from Fort Worth Gem and Mineral Society asked if there was anything we could send out to new presidents with information on what they are to be doing, etc. Kimberly said that there is an outdated one she has been working on for two years off and on but will complete this in the next year as she is transitioning out. She would like to have some help. Janice said she would help.

Roger mentioned he had been in office for 7 years. A big part of the reason for the change in the terms for the officers to two year terms is so the 1st year can be your learning curve. The Executive Vice President has the same term. The Treasurer, Secretary, and Executive Secretary all have unlimited terms so the Federation can maintain some sort of continuity. Kimberly explained there are things that need to be done to maintain the Societies (and the Federation) that often get dropped when there is a frequent turnover in positions.

Heather Aziz from Paleontological Society of Austin made the suggestion that emails go out to more than just one person in each society. She suggested perhaps the President and Vice President should receive them. Liz said she typically sends them to the President and Secretary but she can certainly include the Vice Presidents instead of Secretaries.

Don Shurtz presented Roger with his plaque for Appreciation of Service to the Federation.

Nancy English from Houston Gem and Mineral Society inquired about anyone else requiring an EMT to be present for the show. After discussion, it was decided it is the Society's responsibility as part of the Facility Cost. However, it is probably a good idea to have an EMT, Paramedic, or even a Retired Nurse on site during a show. Nathaniel Haley from Gem and Mineral Society of Central Louisiana knows someone who owns a business providing this type of service. She is a retired nurse. He will have her get in contact with Nancy. In regards to this, Roger and Kimberly both agreed it would probably not be a bad idea to have this with each show held. However, this would be considered a Facility Cost and should be covered by the vendors when they pay for tables.







Meeting adjourned 11 a.m.



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SCFMS

Newsletter Editors and Authors

Contest Results

	CATEGORY:	LARGE BULLETINS		
PLACE	EDITOR	NAME OF BULLETIN	CLUB AFFILIATION	MONTH
	Sarah Hawthorne & Julia Toombs	Rock-N-Rose	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	2022
	Raymond Lynch	The Hot Springs Bulletin	The Hot Springs Geology Club	2022
	Sigrid Stewart	Backbender's Gazette	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	2022
	CATEGORY:	ADULT POETRY		
PLACE	AUTHOR	NAME OF POEM	CLUB AFFILIATION	MONTH
1	Edward Clay	Seeking	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	22-Feb
2	Richard Braun	The Purpose	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Dec
	CATEGORY:	WRITTEN FEATURES		
PLACE		NAME OF FEATURE	CLUB AFFILIATION	MONTH
1	Terry Roberts	Shop Time	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Aug
2	Julia Toombs	ETGMS Annual Show	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Nov
3	Lynn Metcalf	You Might Be A Rockhound If...	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Oct
4	Colleen Hayes	Field Trip to the Ron Coleman Mine	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Jun
5	Easton Simpson	My Rock Collection	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Mar
6	Sigrid Stewart	Featured Member: Sigrid Stewart- Becoming a Rockhound	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	22-Feb
7	Richard Armstrong	Gem Facets	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Sep
8	Barbara Braun	Our Field and Camping Trip to Mineral Wells, Texas	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Dec
9	Steve Blyskal	Texas Mineral and Fossil Show in Conroe	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	22-May
	CATEGORY:	DRAWN FEATURES		
PLACE		NAME OF FEATURE	CLUB AFFILIATION	MONTH
1	Sarah Hawthorne	Trilobite Fossil Drawing	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Dec
	CATEGORY:	ORIGINAL ADULT ARTICLE		
PLACE		NAME OF ARTICLE	CLUB AFFILIATION	MONTH
1	David Metzner	My Adventures Making a Chess Set	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Jan
2	Colleen Hayes	Managing Your Rock Collection	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Jun

Continued on Page

Continued from Page

	CATEGORY:	ORIGINAL ADULT ARTICLE		
PLACE		NAME OF ARTICLE	CLUB AFFILIATION	MONTH
1	David Metzner	My Adventures Making a Chess Set	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Jan
2	Colleen Hayes	Managing Your Rock Collection	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Jun
3	Kerry Cartier	Finding a Treasure in the Nevada Desert	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	22-Mar
4	Raymond Lynch	Phosphate Minerals of Arkansas	The Hot Springs Geology Club	22-Feb
5	Burton Dworsky	Deming, New Mexico Rockhound	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	22-Apr
	CATEGORY:	ORIGINAL ADULT ARTICLE-ADVANCED		
PLACE		NAME OF ARTICLE	CLUB AFFILIATION	MONTH
1	Sigrid Stewart	Minecraft Teaches Children About	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	Des 22

AFMS Editor and Authors Contest Results

Category	Society	Winning Publication	Editor	Place
Large Bulletins	The Hot Springs Geology Club	The Hot Springs Bulletin 10/2022	Raymond Lynch	2nd Place
Large Bulletins	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	Rock N Rose 11/2022	Sarah Hawthorne & Julia Toombs	8th Place
Large Bulletins	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	Backbender's Gazette 5/2022	Sigrid Stewart	Honorable Mention
Adult Poetry	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	The Purpose	Richard Braun	1st Place
Adult Poetry	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	Seeking	Edward Clay	3rd Place
Written Features	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	Shop Time	Terry Roberts	4th Place
Written Features	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	You Might Be A Rockhound If...	Lynn Metcalf	6th Place
Written Features	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	ETGMS Annual Show, January 27-29, 2023	Julia Toombs	7th Place
Drawn Features	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	Trilobite Fossil Drawing	Sarah Hawthorne	1st Place
Adult Articles	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	My Adventures Making a Chess Set	David Metzner	6th Place
Adult Articles	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	Managing Your Rock Collection	Colleen Hayes	10th Place
Adult Articles	East Texas Gem & Mineral Society	Finding Treasure in the Nevada Desert	Kerry Cartier	Honorable Mention
Adult Article Advanced	Houston Gem & Mineral Society	Minecraft Teaches Children about Minerals and Rocks	Sigrid Stewart	Honorable Mention



Congratulations!

FROM THE DESK OF THE SCFMS BEAC

By Susan Burch

The 2023 newsletter contests just seem to be finished when the next year's contest comes around. The upcoming 2024 contest will be for newsletter content published in 2023. There are several changes this next year to the AFMS contest including an earlier deadline and new contest entry forms.

The SCFMS uses the AFMS forms in our regional contest. It is my suggestion to not only start putting your entries together ASAP but to read over the AFMS contest entry forms very carefully. This is not only for the upcoming contest but also so that you can start putting their really good stuff from the beginning of the year, and you'll have a head start for when the next contest comes around.

The most prevalent errors in past contest entries have to do with grammar and punctuation. The article may be interesting and or funny, but if the grammar or punctuation changes the meaning of what is written it can cause embarrassment if not problems. Case in point, I was asked several years ago for permission to reprint an article I had written. I was the editor not only of my article but also of the newsletter in which it was originally published. The editor who republished did not catch the mistake I had made and so reprinted it in their newsletter. I was very embarrassed that I had made the mistake in the first place but also that I had published the error and that it had been perpetuated.

Please, make sure to edit all content in your newsletters, even that written by other contributors. Ultimately, you are responsible for your content whatever the source. And, there is no reason to perpetuate mistakes.

All new guidelines and fillable forms are in a different typeface, so it is obvious that you are using the new materials. Here are the AFMS categories:

New Editors

Mini Bulletins

Small Bulletins

Large Bulletins

Original Junior Articles for under 12

Original Junior Articles for 12-17

Original Adult Articles

Original Adult Articles Advanced

Original Adult Poetry

Original Junior poetry

Written Features (all ages)

Drawn Features (all ages)

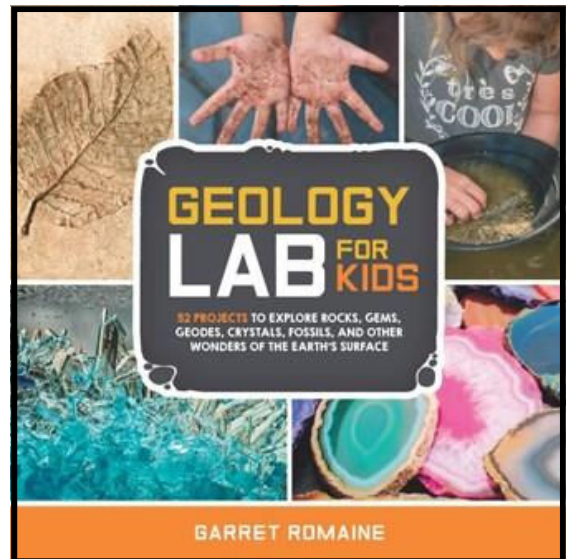
Special Publications (all ages)

Wild Card for BEACs only

You can find the forms here:

<https://www.amfed.org/editor/BEAC/contest.htm>

As mentioned, the AFMS contest deadline is earlier this next year than it was for 2023. The 2024 SCFMS Editor and Authors Contest deadline is: **Friday, January 12, 2024**. I look forward to receiving your entries!



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<https://www.amazon.com/Garret-Romaine/e/B0037187T8>



MAKE YOUR DRILLING SAMPLE OUT OF A PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH.

MATERIALS

- Creamy peanut butter or some other nut butter if you're allergic to peanuts, such as almond butter
- Strawberry jam
- Marmalade jam
- Grape jelly
- 4 slices of white sandwich bread
- 4 slices of whole wheat sandwich bread
- Kitchen knife
- Lab notebook and pen or pencil
- Large, clear straws with a big diameter
- Chopstick

Continued on Page 16



Continued from Page



Safety Tips - Be careful when using a knife!

PROTOCOL

STEP 1: Make four peanut butter sandwiches, and use plenty of jam for three of them, leaving the fourth sandwich plain, with only peanut butter. Mom or dad may complain that you're using too much jam or jelly, but it's okay—it's for science!

STEP 2: Cut the crusts off the sandwiches. If you've always been told to eat your crusts, it's OK to cut them off this time.

STEP 3: Stack the squares up on top of each other neatly. Record the order in your book.

STEP 4: Use your giant straw and "drill" a hole through the layers, turning it like a driller would to reach all the way through. You may have to grind it against a plate to get the "core" as clean as you can. If you have a big straw, you can do this more than once, but don't fill the straw, as it may be hard to get your core sample out.

STEP 5: Use a chopstick to gently push the core sample out and lay it sideways on a plate or chopping board so you can see the layers on their side.



Creative Enrichment

1. If your straw isn't giving you good core samples, try straws of different sizes and materials, like a paper straw.
2. Try different types of bread or try toasting the bread. Does it help?



THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE FUN

To search for oil and gas in the Earth's crust, geologists rely on drilling to poke holes and recover the rocks in the correct order. These drills work best in sedimentary rocks, which are usually easier to drill through, but the drill heads are so powerful that they can also cut through igneous or metamorphic rocks. The best rocks for trapping oil and gas are usually sedimentary rocks, which are sometimes porous and can hold petroleum between their grains.

In other areas, geologists are looking for structures like domes that trap oil and gas. If they find a hard layer of rock that won't allow liquids to pass through softer rocks, they try to build a map to show the size of the dome and where they can tap it.

Sometimes the geologists find layers that aren't flat. We already know that when rocks settle out to make mudstones, they are laid down flat to begin with. When the drill core reveals that the rocks are tilted, they know that there might be a fault beneath them. Faults are another helpful structure for trapping oil and gas, because the softer rocks might suddenly find themselves lying next to harder rocks, which traps the movement of liquids.

Geologists learn a lot about the structure of the rocks beneath them by drilling. In the 1970s, Russian scientists started to drill the deepest hole in the Earth—the Kola Superdeep Borehole—which reaches more than 7.5 miles (12 km) down. It took them twenty-four years.

Now — Let's Write Some Sparkle!
Linda Jaeger, AFMS Editor
(excerpted from my "Quick Tips" article in the AFMS Newsletter, January 2010)

There is really no formula for writing great articles, but when we let our personalities shine through our writing, we get readable articles that will sparkle. Here are some suggestions for adding pizzazz.

1. **Remember your audience.** Are you writing for kids? For all club members? For a specialized group? Adjust sentence length and vocabulary just for them.
2. **Vary the length of your sentences,** making some short and some compound. Ask a question to introduce a topic.
3. **Keep paragraphs fairly short.** Reading is easier on the eyes if there is a nice amount of "white space" within and around an article.
4. **Make your reader laugh** by using humor or irony. It's okay to poke some fun at yourself!
5. **Use the "active voice"** by turning "being verbs" into "doing verbs." Instead of writing, "Metamorphic rocks were **formed** from the pressure of our hands on colored pieces of playdough," write: "We '**made**' metamorphic rocks by pressing colored pieces of playdough into a 'rock' with our hands."
6. **Write as if you were talking to a friend about the subject.** This makes your article "friendly" and easier to read.
7. **Use positives instead of negatives.** Instead of saying I did not remember, say I forgot. Many times, the positive is shorter and easier to understand than the negative.
8. **Be specific.** This gives your reader a "mind" picture of what you said.
9. **Leave out repetitions** of the same idea and unnecessary words (i.e.: in fact, in other words). A good sentence will get your idea across to the reader in one try. Leaving out unnecessary words keeps the reader from having to hunt for the idea.
10. **Use a short, attention-getting title.** This grabs the reader's attention by making him curious about your subject. You can start with the title or come up with it after you have written your article.

References: Strunk, William Jr. and White, E.B. The Elements of Style (illustrated), New York. Penguin Books. 147 p.

"Passive Voice." The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. 25 Nov.2009.

Wagner, Dr. MaryJo. "Write with Pizzazz or How to Keep Your Readers Reading." 2009. 1 Jan. 2010.

Culbertson, Howard. "Writing with pizzazz – How you can communicate clearly and persuasively." 20 Nov. 2007. 1 Jan. 2010.

Via AFMS Newsletter 12/23

DERIDDER GEM AND MINERAL SHOW 2023

Vernon Parish Fairgrounds, Leesville, LA

Saturday, December 9th 9:00-5:00
Sunday, December 10th 10:00-4:00

Our vendors will have handmade jewelry and one of a kind gifts for all your Christmas shopping.

The Louisiana Knappers will be there making special order gifts.

Chefs Cuisines will be serving up lots of great food.

\$2.00 admission ages 12 and up

Come join us and learn about our club. We look forward to seeing you there.

You could win this amethyst!



SHOP TIP-DOPPING STONES

Cindy Oldring



Materials:

Misc. Stone/ Cabochon
Soda bottle
Dop stick or nail
Nail
Glue
Scissors or knife
Source to hold, then heat your nail

Procedure:

Cut your soda bottle to have about 2.5 to 3" from top to bottom including the bottle top. Heat your nail and melt a hole in the lid of the bottle just large enough for your dop stick/nail to go through. Glue your stone to the dop stick/nail. Place the back end of the dop stick through the bottle top resting the stone on a firm surface. This tip allows your dop stick/nail to remain upright while the glue dries. With the stone connection perpendicular, you can have a better hold on your stone while polishing.

Cindy Oldring, of Lillooet British Columbia, is in the Thompson valley rock club, whose home base is Kamloops and is also a member in the British Columbia Lapidary Society.

CONTRIBUTIONS

WELCOME!

SCFMS exists for the benefit of our member clubs and we are all volunteers. Please consider enriching our club by making a photo, drawing, or written contribution to the newsletter about a geology or earth science related topic.

Pick a topic that interests you and give it a go. Please send it me at scfm-seditor@yahoo.com by the 20th of the month prior to the expected publication date and I would be glad to work with you to finalize your item for this newsletter.

Please, be sure to send me your show flyer at least several months in advance so, I can share it in our newsletter.

Susan Burch, Editor

**DEADLINE
FOR THE
JANUARY-
FEBRUARY, 2024
NEWSLETTER IS
DECEMBER 20, 2023**

BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH



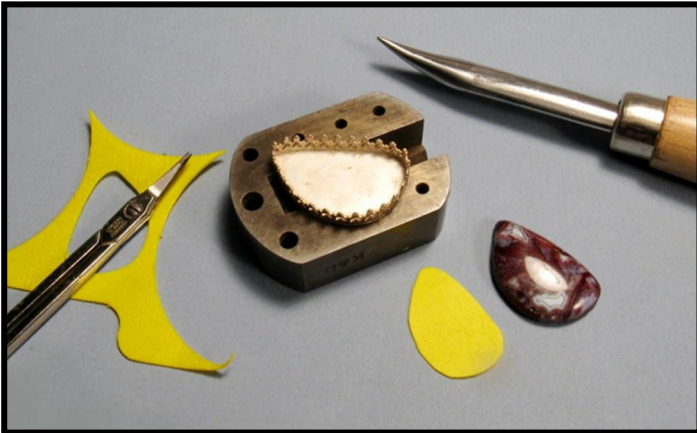
I'd like to apologize to those of you who use my Jewelry Bench Tips in your newsletters each month. The wife and I are getting older and decided it was time to move closer to the family. So our lives over the summer were a turmoil of packing and shipping about 11,000 pounds across country to the shores of Chesapeake Bay.

But the new shop is pretty well set up now, and I'm happy to be able to send you a couple

items for use in next month's newsletter.

As usual, I'd appreciate an attribution and live link as shown below whenever my work is used in your newsletter.

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.



Making jewelry involves a multitude of skills, intricate hand work, and a lot of problem solving. In this book series find help to:

- Broaden your metalworking skills
- Improve productivity at the bench
- Save money on tools and supplies

See Other Tips in my Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making Problems

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

Happy hammering,
- Brad Smith

BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com

Please, check out more Smart Solutions for Your Jewelry Making Problems

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



UPCOMING SHOWS 2023/2024

2023

December 9-10—Leesville, LA, Deridder G&MS, West La Forestry Auditorium Bldg. www.rockngemswla.com

2024

January 20 – 21—Fredericksburg, TX, Fredericksburg Rockhounds, Ladybird Johnson Park, <https://fredericksburgrockhounds.wordpress.com/>

January 26 – 28—Tyler, TX, East Texas G&MS, Tyler Rose Garden Center, www.ETGMS.org

February 17 – 18—Georgetown, TX, Williamson County G&MS, San Gabriel Park Community Center, <https://wcgms.org/>

Thank You!
Spongy Horri

To those who helped make this issue possible...

Roger Burford
Don Shurtz
Jim Brace-Thompson
Liz Burford
Garret Romaine
Brad Smith