

JULY-AUGUST, 2025

NEWSLETTER OF THE

# ***SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION***

Of Mineral Societies



**Member of: The American Federation of Mineral Societies**



## ON THE COVER

### Diamonds found in Arkansas



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**SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.**



**2025 SCFMS OFFICERS**

**President: Don Shurtz**

**Executive V-P: Sigrid Stewart**

**Secretary: Vacant**

**Treasurer: Henry Rojas**

**Web Master: Don Shurtz**

**Exec. Secretary: Susan Burch**

**AFMS Endowment Fund Raffle  
for SCFMS: Walt Beneze**

**SCFMS Endowment Fund  
Treasurer: Walt Beneze**

**Nominating Committee –  
Ron Carman**

**Past President: Roger Burford**

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

[scfmsinformation@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:scfmseditor@yahoo.com)

**NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED  
BIMONTHLY**

**DUPLICATION**

In most instances material in this newsletter may be duplicated for non-commercial purposes providing full credit is given. There are exceptions, please do not assume permissions. For Commercial use, the individual author must be contacted for their approval.

**A NOTE FROM  
—THE EDITOR—**

**THE FINAL DEAD-  
LINE, ETC.**

For each newsletter the deadline is the 25th 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, send me a text, but send newsletter content via email.

**ANNUAL SHOW 2025**

**Hosted by the AGMS  
OCTOBER 17-19, 2025  
AUSTIN, TX**

**ANNUAL MEETING**

**OCTOBER 18, 2025**

**SCFMS WEB-SITE:  
[WWW.SCFMS.NET](http://WWW.SCFMS.NET)**

The SCFMS is a member of the American Federation of Mineral Societies. [amfed.org](http://amfed.org)

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR/BEAC:**

**Susan Burch**  
[scfmseditor@yahoo.com](mailto:scfmseditor@yahoo.com)





## WHAT A SUMMER

What a summer! It has been crazy. How crazy, you ask? I don't even know when summer begins! I always thought that the season changed on the solstice or the equinox. The "Summer Solstice" was Friday, June 20, in the late evening. However, many will tell you that it had been summer for almost a month, as summer unofficially starts on Memorial Day, which was Monday, May 26. By Memorial Day, most of the schools are closed for their summer break. Most outdoor public swimming pools open on Memorial Day or the weekend preceding Memorial Day. The weather is definitely getting warmer by Memorial Day. So, I'm okay if you want to start your summer on Memorial Day. To be technically correct, though, the summer solstice is the official start of summer. It is the longest day of the year, and is when the sun reaches its northernmost point. By the summer solstice, the temperatures are really heating up. Have you ever wondered why July and August are the hottest months, rather than June? It is the old phenomenon of inertia – it just takes a while for the atmosphere to heat up and then to cool down.

My summer has been hectic. I have been able to continue my regular volunteering on the weekends at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science. Unfortunately, I have been having trouble keeping up with routine household chores. The late spring storms provided the grass and foliage with ample water for growth, but also kept the ground sufficiently wet, which disrupted lawn cutting efforts. Shortly after Memorial Day, cutting the grass became an issue. It was already an issue with over three acres of grass to cut – it takes too much time. I also had mower issues. My Husqvarna lawn tractor developed a carburetor issue. Keeping the choke cracked open prevented surging, but it consumed significantly more gas. The next choice was my John Deere 650 tractor with a 6-foot cutting deck. It's old, but it has been reliable. However, one of the three engine start interlocks malfunctioned over the winter; I have yet to get it started. Next in line was an old Craftsman lawn tractor. It worked fine, but one of the front tires went south on the first day of cutting. A few days later, two new

tires replaced the old front tires. On the next try at cutting, one of the rear tires went flat. It took a week to get replacement tires. I used that week to work on a fence that had suffered wind damage from a late spring storm. With the grass approaching 5 to 8 inches in height and the thistles even higher, the Craftsman was back, and now the grass is acceptably short.

During the timeframe of the lawn and fence work, I actually made it out to my rock shop three times! Two times to select some slabs for the club's monthly raffle, and once to get a large screw driver that I had been using for work on my rock saw. There was no rock cutting and polishing. Also, no field trips. My only exposure to rockhounding was when I used my time at the Perot Museum to talk to Museum guests about the dinosaurs and minerals.

Tossed in with all the angst of lawns and fences, I had to work on the Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club's newsletter and write articles for the SCFMS newsletter. Still, I am excited about the upcoming show in Austin. The Austin Gem and Mineral Club is working to keep show expenses in a reasonable cost range. They are avoiding the \$300.00 hotel fees in downtown Austin (where their show is) by holding the convention activities in North Austin at their clubhouse and a nearby club sponsor's facility for the banquet. To help with parking costs at the show (\$20.00 every time you enter the show), they are setting up a shuttle from their clubhouse. I trust that every SCFMS club will have a representative at the show. The president of each club is also a Director in the SCFMS – every director is supposed to attend the meeting. One of our ongoing issues is that each club needs to submit a delegate form. The form, unfortunately, has not been clear that it is intended to name the delegate, be it the club president or the designated representative. The new Delegate Form is in this newsletter – I hope it is more explicit about which clubs need to submit the form (EVERY CLUB!) and that it is not just to name an alternate – it is to name the delegate. Think of this as your voting registration.

I was impressed with Austin's clubhouse. The foyer has a display of minerals and gemstones. It features a large meeting room with overhead projectors, a kitchen space, a classroom, and a shop. Parking is a bit tight, but they have some options for overflow parking.

It is an excellent choice for the convention's main meeting.





## 2025 SCFMS WEBSITE CONTEST

### Don Shurtz, SCFMS Website Contest Chair



*Don Shurtz,  
SCFMS Website  
Contest Chair*

Believe it or not, it is time to start thinking about entering the 2025 SCFMS Website Contest. The contest is open to all SCFMS clubs having a website. The requirements have not changed a lot from last year's competition. The contest has two types of Entries – Competitive Entries and Non-Competitive Entries. It is up to the webmaster to decide which kind of entry to submit. The judging process is the same for all entries. The Non-Competitive entry allows the site to be judged, and the results are given to the webmaster. There is no pressure to see how your website stacks up against other entries. It is a means to have a knowledgeable individual review your website and provide you with comments on its strengths and areas that need improvement. Suppose you would like to enter the competition but feel your site is lacking. In that case, the Non-Competitive Entry will allow you to preview the competition and receive specific comments that you can use to improve your website's competitiveness. The Competitive Entry will enter you into the SCFMS Contest. The top two finishers in the SCFMS Contest will automatically be entered into the AFMS Contest. Awards will be presented at the 2026 SCFMS Convention and, if appropriate, the AFMS Convention.

Additionally, small clubs can effectively compete with larger ones. It is not how many bells and whistles your website has, but rather how effectively the website communicates information about your society/club. It is all about communication with club members and potential club members.

The deadline for entering the 2025 SCFMS Website Contest is September 30, 2025. All entries will be completed electronically. The contest information (instructions for entering, contest general information, contest guidelines, contest rules, and a score sheet with an embedded entry form) can be found on the AFMS Website at <https://www.amfed.org/contests/website-contest>. The entry process should not take more than 15 minutes to complete. Now would be the time to review the guidelines, rules, and score sheet for a self-evaluation of your website.

By the way, we need someone to volunteer to be the 2026 and beyond Website Contest Chair. This newsletter article is a sample of part of the Chair's responsibility – communication between the SCFMS and the Club

Webmasters. The Chair will also coordinate SCFMS entries, SCFMS entries into the AFMS Contest, and the ordering and presentation of plaques and certificates to the winners at the Breakfast with the Editors and Webmasters. The Chair is expected to attend the SCFMS Convention but receives the same compensation as the SCFMS Officers to offset travel expenses. Contact me or the SCFMS President if you are interested. Thanks.

### HOT LINKS-EDITOR'S PICKS

#### Linda Jaeger, RMFN Editor

Below are some hot links you might find interesting. Just click on the link — it will open the web page in your browser.

- Not your typical Texas critter: Plesiosaur from 100 million years ago discovered in Celina

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/science/zoology/not-your-typical-texas-critter-plesiosaur-from-100-million-years-ago-discovered-in-celina/AA1DYRv3>

- !!!A Splashy Meteorite Was Forged in Multiple Collisions

<https://eos.org/articles/a-splashy-meteorite-was-forged-in-multiple-collisions>

- It's Official: The Rotation of Earth's Inner Core Really Is Slowing Down

<https://www.sciencealert.com/its-official-the-rotation-of-earths-inner-core-really-is-slowing-down>

From RMFN June 2025

The Winchcombe meteorite crashed into a driveway in Gloucestershire, England, in February 2021. Scientists were able to recover fragments such as this one within hours. Credit: [Trustees of the Natural History Museum](https://www.naturalhistorymuseum.org)



## 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  
SEPTEMBER-  
OCTOBER, 2025  
NEWSLETTER IS  
AUGUST 25, 2025**



## UPCOMING ITEMS AND EVENTS

**September 30, 2025, is the deadline for the Annual Insurance and Membership dues. This is an early reminder you can send in your form and dues early to help avoid any errors or late fees.**

**The SCFMS Annual Convention and Meetings will be October 17-19, 2025, in conjunction with the Austin Gem & Mineral Society's Annual Gem and Mineral Show.**

**See the following pages for the renewal and delegate forms. More forms concerning convention attendance and participation coming in the next newsletter issue.**

# INSURANCE

&

**Membership  
Dues**



THE SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES Arkansas • Louisiana • Texas

SCFMS Combined Dues and Insurance Form

Dues and Insurance Payments MUST BE RECEIVED BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

CLUB INFORMATION:

Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON FOR CLUB:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

SCFMS MEMBERSHIP DUES & INSURANCE:

- Use club membership count as of September 1
- Yearly adult membership is **\$4.00 (\$2.25 for dues and \$1.75 for insurance)** per adult
- Yearly junior membership **\$2.25 (\$0.50 for dues and \$1.75 insurance)** per junior\*
- \*Junior members are those under 18 years of age on September 1
- There is a 10% late fee if payment is received after September 30
- You must download first, then fill/save/print and mail or email this completed form with a check payable to SCFMS or South Central Federation of Mineral Societies.

# of Adults: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$4.00 ea. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# of Juniors (under 18): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$2.25 ea. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Late fee 10% if received after September 30: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Dues and Insurance payment: = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK #: \_\_\_\_\_

SEND PAYMENT TO: THE SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES

c/o SUSAN BURCH, SCFMS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

10911 HOLLY SPRINGS DR., HOUSTON, TX 77042

\*\*To contact the Executive Secretary email: [scfmseditor@yahoo.com](mailto:scfmseditor@yahoo.com) or text 936-615-5397\*\*



Member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies





# SCFMS CLUB OFFICER, EDITOR, AND WEBMASTER SUBMISSION FORM



## CLUB INFORMATION:

CLUB NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please pay special attention to "&" or "and")

CLUB MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

CLUB PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

MEETING LOCATION ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

MEETING TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

MEETING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

OR MEETING RECURS MONTHLY ON THE:  1st  2nd  3rd  4th WEEK

ON:  Mon.  Tues.  Wed.  Thurs.  Fri.  Sat.  Sun.

EXCLUDED MONTHS:  January  February  March  April  May  June

July  August  September  October  November  December

CLUB WEBSITE: \_\_\_\_\_

CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE: \_\_\_\_\_

CLUB NEWSLETTER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

OUR CLUB IS A 501(c)(3) ORGANIZATION:  YES  NO

## ANNUAL SHOW:

SHOW TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

ANNUAL SHOW MONTH:  January  February  March  April  May  June

July  August  September  October  November  December

ANNUAL SHOW CALENDAR DATES: \_\_\_\_\_

ANNUAL SHOW OCCURS ON (select all days):  Mon.  Tues.  Wed.  Thurs.  Fri.  Sat.  Sun.

DAY 1 SHOW OPEN TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM CLOSE TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM

DAY 2 SHOW OPEN TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM CLOSE TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM

DAY 3 SHOW OPEN TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM CLOSE TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM

DAY 4 SHOW OPEN TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM CLOSE TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM

SHOW FACILITY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SHOW ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF SHOW CHAIR OR SHOW CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_

SHOW CHAIR PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

SHOW CHAIR EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

WE DO NOT HOLD AN ANNUAL SHOW

WE HOLD MORE THAN ONE SHOW PER YEAR

List additional show information: \_\_\_\_\_



SCFMS CLUB OFFICER, EDITOR, AND WEBMASTER SUBMISSION FORM

CLUB OFFICER INFORMATION: CLUB NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MONTH OF OFFICER ELECTIONS:     January February March April May June  
  July August September October November December

MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER)  
PRESIDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE: none CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER)    POSITION VACANT  
1ST VICE PRESIDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER)    POSITION VACANT  
SECRETARY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER)    POSITION VACANT  
TREASURER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER)    POSITION VACANT  
EDITOR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER)    POSITION VACANT  
WEBMASTER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

SCFMS WE WILL NO LONGER ACCEPT CLUB ADDRESSES OR CLUB PHONE NUMBERS FOR CONTACT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY MEMBER CLUBS. WE HAVE TAKEN MEASURES TO IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE USE OF THE DATA WE COLLECT AND PROTECT THE PERSONAL INFORMATION WE OBTAIN. PLEASE READ OUR [PRIVACY POLICY](#) AND CONTACT A CURRENT SCFMS OFFICER IF THERE ARE CONCERNS. OFFICER INFORMATION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY WITH DUES FOR AND AGAIN BY FEBRUARY 1, 2025. YOU MAY UPDATE AS SOON AS ELECTIONS ARE HELD, AND SHOULD UPDATE WITHIN 30 DAYS OF ANY CHANGE IN OFFICERS.

**I HAVE READ THE SCFMS PRIVACY POLICY AND CONSENT TO SCFMS USE OF THE CLUB INFORMATION I HAVE PROVIDED.**

EMAIL FILLED FORMS TO THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND DIRECTORY CHAIR:  
LSUSAN BURCH, [scfmseditor@yahoo.com](mailto:scfmseditor@yahoo.com) AND DON SHURTZ, [don.shurtz@gmail.com](mailto:don.shurtz@gmail.com). QUESTIONS? 936-615-5397  
OR YOU MAY PRINT AND MAIL TO: SUSAN BURCH, 10911 HOLLY SPRINGS DR, HOUSTON, TX 77042





**2025 SCFMS CONVENTION DELEGATE FORM**  
**SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.**  
**ARKANSAS - LOUISIANA - TEXAS**

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**2025 DIRECTOR OR DIRECTOR DELEGATE/ALTERNATE FORM**  
**SCFMS ANNUAL MEETING**  
**OCTOBER 18, 2025**  
**Austin G&MS Clubhouse**  
**1700 RODEO DRIVE**  
**Austin, TX 75149**

**NOTE: THIS FORM IS REQUIRED FOR EVERY DIRECTOR (CLUB/SOCIETY PRESIDENT) AND ANY DESIGNATED DIRECTOR'S DELEGATE AND/OR ALTERNATE**

*Please fill out the form or print it clearly and return it with the requested information provided.*

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SCFMS DIRECTOR (Your Club/Society President) with email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Attending: YES            NO**

*(The President of each Organization is a Director of the SCFMS)*

**DIRECTOR'S DELEGATE/ALTERNATE with email address and Organization/Officer Title:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**SIGNATURE OF CLUB PRESIDENT DIRECTOR:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE:**

**The information below is from the SCFMS Constitution and By-laws regarding Delegates:**

**ARTICLE VI – BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** The board of Directors of this Federation shall be the President, Executive Vice President, eight District Vice Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the current Presidents of each member society.

**BYLAWS ARTICLE III – MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Section 1. It shall be the responsibility of each member society to send its President (who is the Federation Director) to the annual meeting.
- Section 2. If the President cannot attend, a delegate shall be appointed and an alternate may be chosen if the member society desires.
- Section 3. It shall be the responsibility of each member society to notify the Federation Secretary in writing of the names of its Director, Delegate, and/or Alternate who expects to attend the annual meeting at least thirty (30) days before the convening date of the annual meeting.
- Section 4. Each member society represented at the annual meeting shall be entitled to one (1) vote.
- Section 5. No proxy or absentee vote shall be accepted at the annual meeting.

Send Director/Delegate information **no later than September 18, 2025**, to Becky Copenhagen, SCFMS Secretary, [becky.copenhagen@gmail.com](mailto:becky.copenhagen@gmail.com), or to Don Shurtz, SCFMS President, at [don.shurtz@gmail.com](mailto:don.shurtz@gmail.com), or mail to 4004 Dublin Rd, Allen, TX 75002



Member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies







**SAFETY IN NUMBERS**  
**Ellery Borow**

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

While there are many skill-sets in our shared hobby, such as first aid attention, show safety, field trip care, lapidary shop guidelines, safety with driving to our many activities, as well as a mirid of associated safety concerns, one big concern is rarely mentioned, that of our overall health and well-being.

Where would we be in our hobby without our overall health and well-being? A growing body of evidence indicates that just by participating in our hobby we generally experience various combinations of the following:

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

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

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

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



Ellery Borow

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

Attending meetings can be good for one’s health.

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

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

From EFMLS News, October 2024



**IT’S ABOUT TIME**  
**Ellery Borow**

Rocks, minerals, fossils, gemstones are all about time, a time back in the history of our planet. Well, maybe not so much gemstones. It is likely Few people want to know how many millions of years ago a diamond, ruby, emerald, or sapphire formed deep in the Earth. But for rocks, minerals, and fossils years of history are im-

Continued on Page 12

Continued from Page 11

portant in the process of their formation. For fossils, layer upon layer upon layer of history are important to know.

In more recent terms, rock clubs have a history as well. History is, after all, what happened yesterday, last week, last year, or decades ago. Does your club have a history? Most certainly it does. For many clubs their history resides in the collective memories of its club members. Other clubs have a more formal history in the form of an archive of its newsletters and bulletins.

One could question why a club's history is important. Just as it is important to know the history of when tornado season comes, or hurricane season, or when sea turtles hatch, or penguins gather so it is with a club's history. Clubs need their history of what worked at past shows, which meeting programs were well attended, which cupcakes sold best at the club's food sale fund raiser, or which club activities garnered the most new members. History is important. So how does your club keep its history?

What does your club keep and know of its history? Is the only club history kept found within the collective memory of its members? Suppose the long-time field trip committee chair departs the club. What if that person's memory was the only record the club had of its field trips for the last several years. Who else would remember all those years of trips, who were the contact persons for permission to visit the mines, what minerals were found by the club members, how well attended was each trip? What records are important for a club's use?

There are important records for a club to keep. Important records can be legal documents such as articles of incorporation, records of not-for-profit status, yearly tax records, club constitution and by-laws, and other legal documents. Records of club civic activity, show success, field trips, picnics, lists of program speakers, membership lists, list of past presidents (as well as other officers and committee persons), or any of numer-

ous other possible historically significant records all have value to a club. Simply keeping archives of newsletters and bulletins reflects only a portion of a club's history.

Some things to note are not so much of a practical history, but of a philosophical history. Why did your club form? Who were its leaders? What was on the mind of its founding members when creating your club? When did your club organize? What helped your club grow? What helped form the focus of your club to rock, minerals, fossils, lapidary, or jewelry activity? There are many such questions to ask yet answers may not be found in club newsletters. Answers to such questions may only reside in the memory of a club's founding members. If there are founding members still around a club might find it interesting to ask such members these questions. And do so before it is too late.

From EFMLS News, October 2024





# WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

## TOURMALINE

By Don Shurtz, POGMC Editor



Here is a Word Search Puzzle. It is designed to complement the Ceylonese Magnet (Tourmaline) article on page 16. The solution is on page 16. (Photos from The Smithsonian Institution Collections)

Directions: Circle the words from the Word List in the Puzzle. The Words in the puzzle may be read left to right or right or left. They may also be reads top to bottom or bottom to top. The words may run horizontally, vertically, or along a diagonal. The words may intersect or have some overlap. HAVE FUN!

### WORD LIST

BIRTHSTONE

BLACK

BLUE

BLUECAP

BRAZIL

BROWN

CEYLON

CEYLONESEMAGNET

CLEAR

COMPANY

DRAVITE

DUTCH

EAST

ELBAITE

GREEN

INDIA

OCTOBER

ORANGE

PINK

PYROELECTRIC

RED

RUBELLITE

SCHORL

SPECIES

SRI LANKA

TOURMALINE

TRADING

UVITE

WATERMELON

YELLOW



## MAN STUMBLES ACROSS GEM WORTH THOUSANDS HIDDEN IN DIRT:

'It's like nothing else'

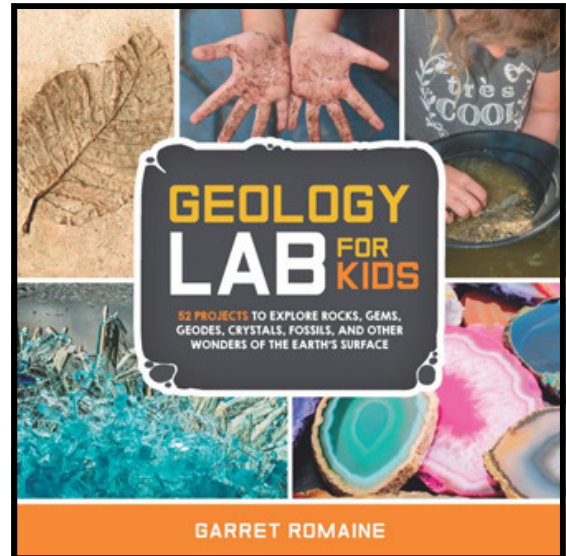


"What makes it so unique is the striking growth patterns along the sides of it," the crystal expert explained. "Then to be tipped with a perfect amethyst crystal on top is just so unique."

**Click below for complete story:**

<https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/man-stumbles-across-gem-worth-234353447.html>

Via The Cowtown Cutter, October 2024



Reprinted with permission from Author, Garret Romaine. Please, include the link below.

<https://www.amazon.com/Garret-Romaine/e/B0037I87T8>



Show how even common substances can break down a strong material, like steel.



### MATERIALS

- 3 pieces of steel wool
- 3 plastic cups or shallow dishes
- Gloves
- Water
- 1 tablespoon (18 g) of salt

Continued on Page 15



Continued from Page 14



### Safety Tips

- Avoid getting any steel wool “dust” in your eyes or on your skin.
- Don’t get salt in your eyes—use gloves.

### PROTOCOL

**STEP 1:** Place each piece of steel wool in a cup or shallow dish (wear gloves because steel wool can give splinters).

**STEP 2:** Pour equal amounts of water over two of the pieces of steel wool. Leave the third piece dry.

**STEP 3:** Sprinkle one of these wet pieces with plenty of salt.

**STEP 4:** Observe and compare the pieces every day for a week.



### Creative Enrichment

1. What happens if you use a copper scratch pad instead of steel wool?
2. What else can you use besides salt?

## THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE FUN

This lab shows you the power of chemical weathering. Even though it’s made of steel, the steel wool you used isn’t that strong up against acids and salt. By the time you finished this lab, you probably had nothing left of the steel wool but a gooey mess.

When the steel wool got wet, the water got right to work attacking anyplace it could find on the surface of the steel fibers. Any spare oxygen gas in the water began to attach to electrons given off by the steel to form iron oxide. This is called *oxidation*, and it is a very powerful force. There are many forms of iron oxide, but its most common form is red rust, with the chemical formula  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ . That means there are two iron atoms (Fe, from the Latin *ferrum*) and three oxygen atoms.

When you added salt into the mix, you sped up the oxidation process. The reason is that the electrons from the iron can move around even faster in salt water. Salt water is a very good conductor of electricity for the same reason.

During the winter, many areas use salt to melt snow and ice before it can build up and make roads dangerous. You can now imagine the damage that salt would cause on the underside of your family’s car. For that reason, some road crews use sand, cinders, or chemicals that are more environmentally friendly.

## Ceylonese Magnet – A New Birthstone?

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

The Dutch East India Company was formed in 1602. When it was formed, it was given a 20-year exclusive trading right for trading in Asia. One of their ports of call was in Ceylon. From Ceylon, they brought back a gemstone with a curious property. When warmed, the stone would attract ash. As soon as the ash touched the stone, it was repelled. The stone was known as the Ceylonese Magnet, and the property to attract or repel the ash was known as pyroelectric. The pyroelectric property is the ability of a stone to change the electric field around the stone when warmed. Think of a static electric field around the stone to attract the ash, but when the ash touches the stone, the polarity of the static field reverses causing the ash to be repelled. Today, we know Ceylon as Sri Lanka and the Ceylonese Magnet as Tourmaline. Which name would you prefer for one of the October Birthstones, Tourmaline or Ceylonese Magnet?

Tourmaline is actually a group of minerals with similar properties but different chemical compositions. The general chemical formula is  $(Ca,K,Na)(Al,Fe,Li,Mg,Mn)_3(Al,Cr,Fe,V)_6(BO_3)_3(Si,Al,B)_6O_{18}(OH,F)_4$ . You will immediately notice the names of chemicals separated by commas and enclosed by parentheses. At least one chemical within the parentheses needs to be present, but it could be that all of them could be present. That leads to a huge number of chemical configurations! Some of the more common members of the tourmaline group are Schorl (black tourmaline), Dravite (brown tourmaline), Elbaite (green, pink, red, blue, orange, yellow, and colorless tourmaline), and Uvite (also known as Fluro-Uvite), (green). Wikipedia lists 42 species of tourmaline, and that does not list the subspecies associated with some of the species. Most tourmaline gemstones are of the Elbaite species which includes rubellite (ruby-colored) and watermelon tourmaline (green and red colors that look like the fruit and the rind of a watermelon).



### References

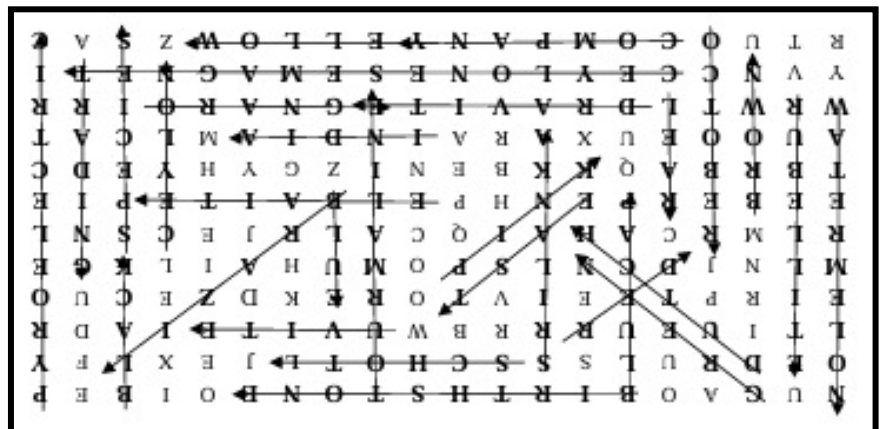
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>, various topics

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/>, both pictures by Rob Lavinsky, [iRocks.com](http://iRocks.com) – CC-BY-SA-3.0

From Chips and Chatter, October 2024

## WORD SEARCH PUZZLE TOURMALINE

~Solution~





## BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH

## DO BEZELS SHRINK

The engineer in me says there's no reason a bezel should shrink when I solder it onto a base plate, but I sometimes find that the stone won't quite fit into the bezel that was perfect just before soldering.

If that ever happens to you, here's a fix that usually works for those times when there's just a minor problem. I file or sand the stone down a little around its base. For soft cabs like Turquoise, Lapis, Jet or Howlite, you can use a sanding stick. Harder cabs like jasper or agates will require a diamond file. In a pinch, a ruby nail file from the drug store will work.

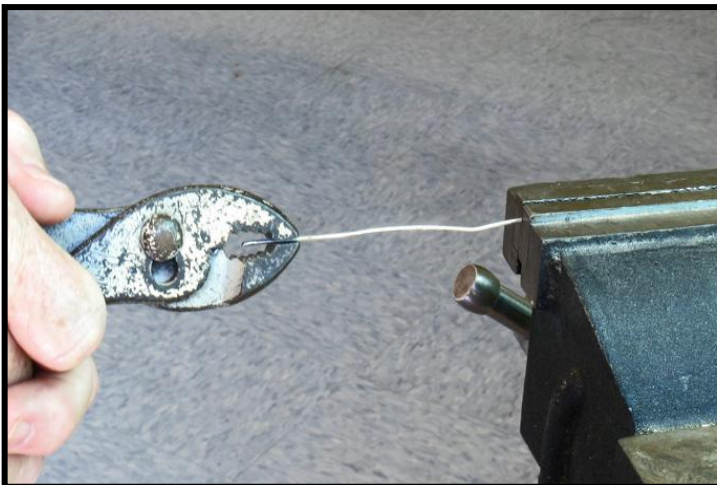
There are two important things to remember when doing this. First, you can only make a minor adjustment to the stone's size. All filing or sanding has to be hidden by the bezel because it takes the polish off the stone.

Secondly, remember to round off all sharp edges on the bottom of the stone. A sharp edge here might sit on a little extra solder at the bottom joint of your bezel. Any problem with the fit in this area might break the stone as you burnish the bezel down onto it.

## STRAIGHTENING WIRE

Have you ever reached for your silver wire only to find that it's all bent up? The easiest way I've found to straighten it out is to stretch it a bit.

Simply put one end in the bench vise and grab the other end with a pair of serrated tip pliers. Then pull just enough to feel the wire stretch like a rubber band. This works best on smaller wire diameters, up to about 16 ga.



Be careful if you are trying to pull hard on a thick wire. Brace yourself in case the wire breaks or pulls out of the pliers.

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



Brad Smith

See Other Tips in my Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making Problems

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

Happy hammering,  
- Brad Smith

[BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com](mailto:BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com)

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

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### UPCOMING SHOWS 2025

- AUGUST 9-10     Batton Rouge Gem and Mineral Society
- August 16-17     Ark-La-Tex Gem and Mineral Society
- Sept. 27-28   Lubbock Gem and Mineral Society
- October 3-5   Gem and Mineral Society of Louisiana
- October 17-19   Austin Gem and Mineral Society

**Thank you**

To those who helped make this issue possible...

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Dallas GMS  
Fort Worth GMS  
Garret Romaine  
Brad Smith**

Austin Gem & Mineral Society  
Gem, Jewelry & Mineral Show

## GEM CAPERS

**OCTOBER 17-19, 2025**

Palmer Events Center  
900 Barton Springs Rd  
Austin, TX

