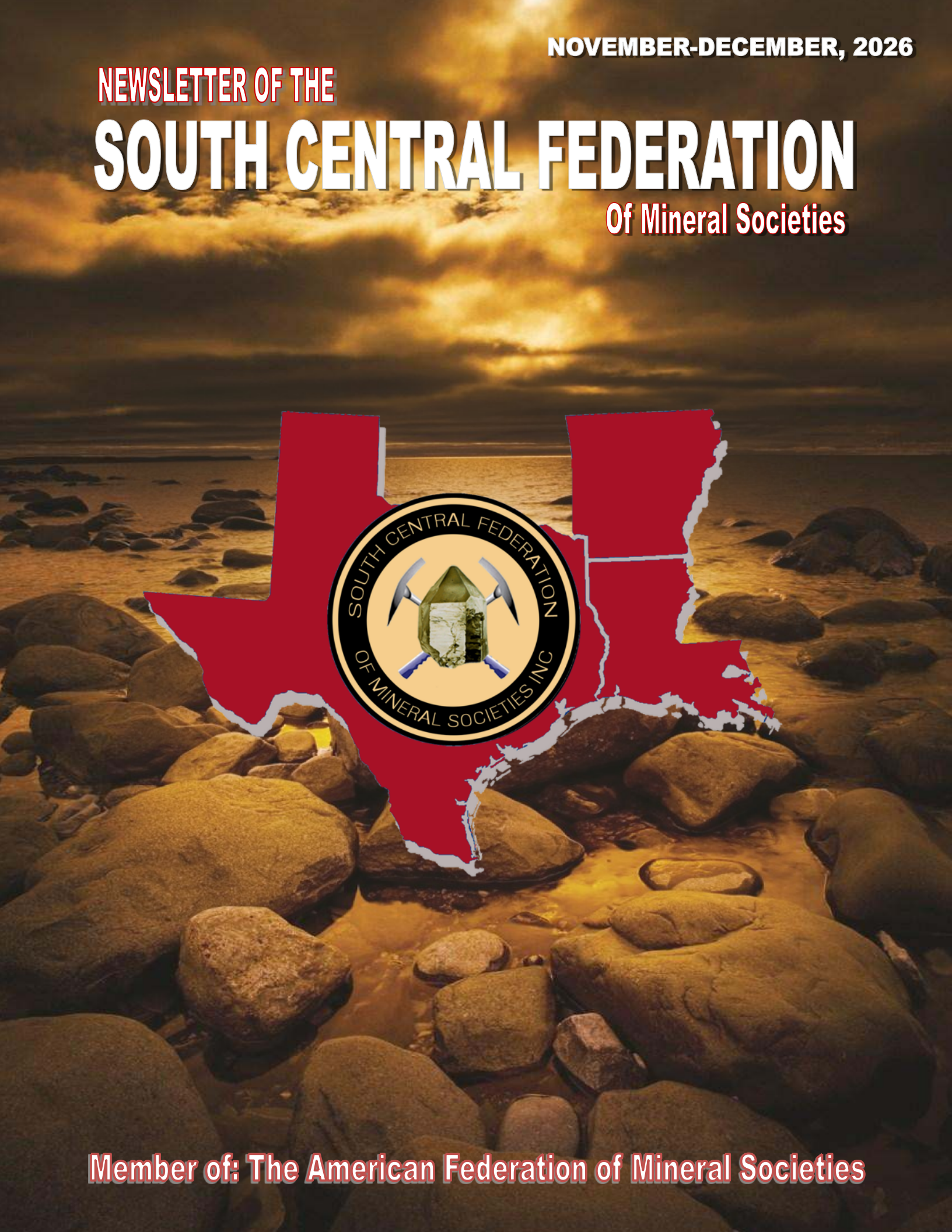
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 2026

NEWSLETTER OF THE

SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION

Of Mineral Societies



Member of: The American Federation of Mineral Societies



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SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.

2026 SCFMS OFFICERS

President: Sigrid Stewart

Executive V-P: Rick Price

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Henry Rojas

Web Master: Mike Smith

Exec. Secretary: Susan Burch

AFMS Endowment Fund Raffle for SCFMS: Walt Beneze

SCFMS Endowment Fund Treasurer: Walt Beneze

Nominating Committee – Ron Carman

Past President: Don Shurtz

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

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(s) must be contacted for their approval.

A NOTE FROM —THE EDITOR—

THE FINAL DEADLINE, 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 or the SCFMS. 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 2026 NOVEMBER 13-15

ANNUAL MEETING NOVEMBER 14TH, 2 PM

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

Sigrid Stewart, SCFMS President



Sigrid Stewart, SCFMS President

The South Central Federation of Mineral Societies Annual Convention in coming up on the 14th of November! Our Annual Meeting is being hosted in conjunction with the Houston Gem & Mineral Society's Annual Show. Come join us at the Convention and make your voices heard and take some time to enjoy our 73rd Annual Show. Show hours are Friday, 9:00am to 6:00pm, Saturday, 9:00am to 6:00pm, and Sunday,10:00am to 5:00pm.

We welcome many wonderful dealers who have been with us for years as well as a couple of new vendors. We will have Section (Special Interest Group) tables and demonstrations and a very active Information Booth with Silent Auctions, and a Swap Area, but alas, no or very few exhibits. We had over 40 exhibit cases in a trailer which was stolen from a storage unit and have not yet replaced those losses.

The Schedule on November 14th is as follows:

Editors /Webmasters Breakfast	8:00am
Annual Convention Meeting	2:00pm
Awards Dinner	7:00pm

The Show and Convention are being held at the Humble Civic Center at 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy, Humble, TX 77338. Convention activities will take place in the northwest corner of the building in the Hospitality area.

On November 15th, Rollin Rock Club will meet at 8:00am.

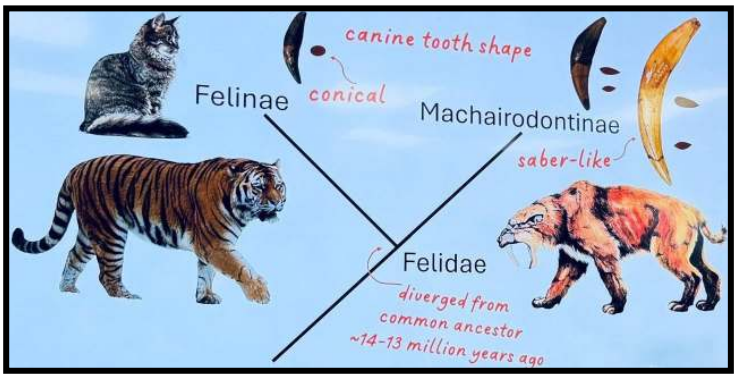


SABER-TOOTH CATS OF TEXAS
Presentation by Dr. John A Moretti, UT Austin
Summary By Laura Dow
(any errors are those of the author)



At the July meeting the Austin Gem & Mineral Club was privileged to hear another program by University of Texas Visiting Researcher and Vertebrate Paleontologist, Dr. John A Moretti. His topic of discussion was the Saber-tooth Cats of Texas.

Dr. Moretti first pointed out that despite appearances, modern day cats and extinct saber-tooth cats are members of totally different subfamilies, Felinae and Machairodontinae, respectively. They diverged from a common ancestor in the Felidae Family 13-14 million years ago (mya). The family Felidae itself arose about 20 mya. As such, all modern cats including lions, tigers, bobcats, jaguars, panthers and house cats (roughly 37 species), are much more related to each other than they are to a saber-tooth cat.



The most obvious physical distinction is the shape of the canines. Saber-tooth cat canines are much enlarged and blade-like or flattened laterally. Living cats

Continued on Page 5

Continued from Page 4



have cone shaped canines that are much smaller. Dr. Moretti took pains to point out that there is no such thing as a saber-tooth tiger!

Saber-tooth cats were very successful and widely distributed for 14 million years. They lived right alongside the Felinae such as lions and panthers and even at the same time as modern humans. All of their subfamily went extinct about 11,000 years ago at the end of the last ice age. The big question is why? What changed drastically enough that they died out while the bobcats and jaguars survived? How did they use their saber teeth? What adaptation were they centered around?

With no living examples to study, answers must be teased out of fossil and dental records, then compared to modern species. Musculature can be determined from the skeletons. High resolution microscopic images of teeth show pits and marks on the enamel and chewing surfaces that can be matched up to hard and soft foods. Were they eating bones or just flesh?

Bones and teeth also have organic materials like collagen and ancient DNA to provide clues on diet as well as genetic diversity. Isotopic analyses can be conducted to determine what their food sources were.

A factor adding difficulty to the study of saber-tooth cats is the simple fact that they were cats. Modern cats are loners with large territories for big animals. It has been observed that male jaguars can roam over 600 km2. It's likely that saber-tooths were similar. This dispersion makes finding fossil evidence even less statistically likely than it would be for a gregarious animal like a bison or mammoth.

GESTOHLENE FOSSILIEN: UNIVERSITÄT BONN BITTET UM HINWEISE (STOLEN FOSSILS: UNIVERSITY OF BONN APPEALS FOR INFORMATION)

https://www.uni-bonn.de/en/university/current-topics/stolen-fossils

Translations of parts of article are: "Fossils and other exhibits have been stolen from the University of Bonn's Goldfuß Museum during renovation work. The police are investigating. The university is asking for assistance from anyone who may have wit-



nessed suspicious activity or can provide information regarding the whereabouts of the objects. Please contact the Bonn police with any information." "These items are being sought The following images show a selection of the stolen fossils and exhibits. The images are intended to help identify the pieces. Colors and sizes in the photos may differ from the actual appearance. If you recognize any of these items or are offered a similar-looking piece, please—provided you can do so without making contact— save the link, a screenshot, the name of the platform, and the date and time of the sighting. Forward this information to the police." Pictures of stolen items are provided on their web page. https://www.uni-bonn.de/en/university/current-topics/stolen-fossils

https://www.thefossilforum.com/topic/159399-fossils-stolen-at-goldfuss-museum-bonn-germany/

Via Paul Heinrich, rock-rounds@rockhounds.drizzle.com; EFMLS NEWS, Nov. 2026.



EROSION IN ACTION
Sigrid Stewart, SCFMS President

This is an expansion on something I posted in HGMS's September 2026 Backbenders Gazette. When we are thinking about erosion, generally it's something along the lines of "The beautiful sand on this beach is the product of millions of years of erosion." It is NOT always a slow process. True, rocks are slowly being ground to sand rolling down to the sea, but just think about the recent flooding in Texas' Hill Country – for two years in a row there were floods, and only the fact that the 2025 floods were catastrophic kept people on their toes and protected them in 2026. I'm pretty sure that the creation of sand by Texas rivers has gotten a big boost the last two years.

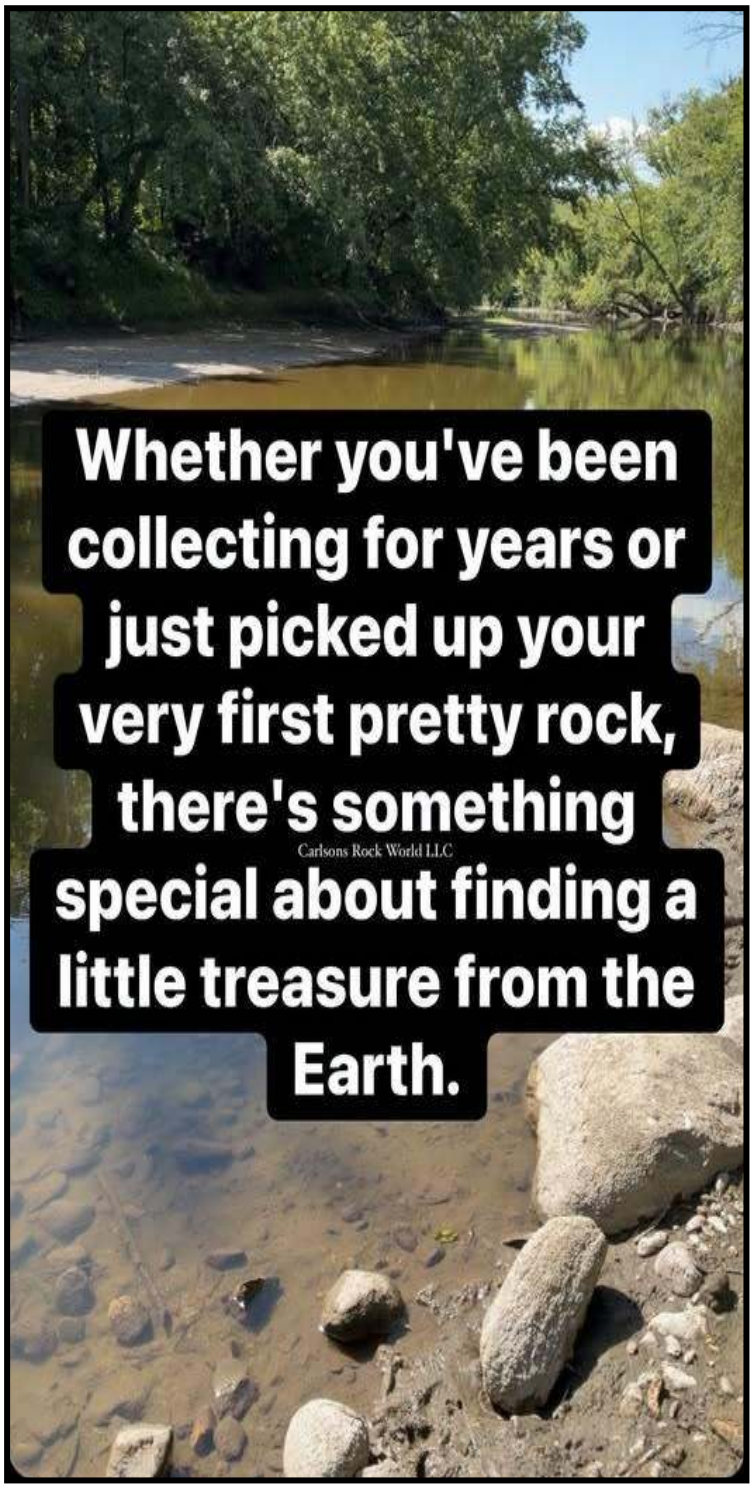
These floods can't be dismissed just by saying it is climate change. I walked along the banks of the Nueces River in Texas near Uvalde some 40 years ago, and noticed sheet metal stuck in trees, maybe 20 feet up. I remember thinking that would have been a bad day to be near the river! One piece of sheet metal was still recognizable as a children's slide.

The flooding in 2025 was truly catastrophic for Texas as homes and summer camps were swept away, but not as terrifying as what just happened in Nepal, Tibet and China, following a devasting landslide and subsequent collapse of a glacier. I just read an excellent analysis in the New York Times showing how a gigantic chunk of a mountain had moved slightly in the past few days and then broke off. That chunk of rock had a glacier behind it, which collapsed and then rock and glacier fell a mile into a mountain gorge. The impact registered as a 5 on the Richter scale. The real damage began as the whole mass liquefied and rumbled down the river at 100 miles an hour to hit unsuspecting towns.

Why did the rock fall and how did they know? The slight shift in position was recognizable on satellite data. Data like this can warn of disaster, if anyone is looking for it. Seismic monitors are placed near known faults and elevation changes on volcanic peaks are tracked by seismologists. Wave height monitors are used in some areas of the ocean Perhaps no one was watching for land movements in the area beforehand, but rocks in alpine terrains are subject to extreme freeze and thaw cycles, which weaken the rock and can lead to landslides. This process is accelerated during times of climate change. Similar landslides have occurred in Switzerland.

Climate change and geologic change have always been present. Mountains grow and wear down, or are subducted beneath other landmasses, recycling that rock into vulcanism. Volcanoes erupt. Glaciers form and melt, sea levels rise and fall over geologic time and new lands are built. It is just frightening to see it happen quick

References: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2026/09/01/world/asia/nepal-flash-floods-landslide.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share



WHY THE SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES IS IMPORTANT

Sigrid Stewart, SCFMS President

You may want to distribute this or read it in your next meeting.

We are part of the “Farm System”
In Major League Baseball, teams run a "farm system". The Minor League affiliate teams partner with Major Leagues Baseball teams through professional development contracts. Minor League players contract with the parent Major League franchise. In this way, players gain experience, improve their skills and potentially move up the ladder. The Major Leagues can promote players into the big leagues!
The Regional Federations like the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies are set up in part to facilitate reporting to the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies – the Big League. AFMS also expects that the Regional Federation will supply officers and eventually a President for the AFMS and has a rotation for officers into specific committees.
Now think about this for a minute: if we do not succeed at the regional level, how can we help the national organization succeed? We need the national organization, AFMS, to look out for the rights of rockhounds, help us with our educational objectives, and set standards for our hobby and for competition. And help us gain greater recognition for our hobby!
Please help us all succeed! Volunteer today to serve on a committee for the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies. Learn more about this organization, the other regional federations and the AFMS. And maybe attend a few more gem & mineral shows while you are doing it.

Forms for Registration, Delegates, Application to Exhibit, and the Combined Dues and Insurance Form can be found in the September/October Newsletter of the South Central Federation.

KATY ROCK SHOP AND FLUORESCENT MINERALS

We at Katy Rock Shop were challenged by the PTA for a Katy ISD school to put together a fluorescent mineral identification kit to promote STEM Education...
Welp, we took on the challenge and what do you think of the kit Joanna of Katy is holding?





GEOLOGIC CROSSWORD

By Susan Burch, SCFMS Editor





Across

5. The oldest age or the lowest stratigraphic stage of the Eocene. It spans the time between ~56 Ma and ~49 Ma (million years ago).

9. Microporous, aluminosilicate minerals commonly used as adsorbents.

10. A rock fragment which becomes enveloped in a larger rock during the latter's development and hardening. In geology, the term is almost exclusively used to describe inclusions in igneous rock during magma emplacement and eruption.

11. The branch of geology that studies the origin, composition, distribution, and structure of rocks.

12. Any type of rock consisting of individual stones that have become cemented together.

13. Bearing or being composed of fossils in rocks or strata.

Down

1. An iron manganese tungstate mineral with the chemical formula (Fe,Mn)WO4.

2. A sudden discontinuity of ground, such as a fault of great thickness, bed or lentil of unstable ground.

3. Pertaining to the actions or products of heated water.

4. A fine-grained, mafic igneous rock composed predominantly of ferromagnesian minerals and with lesser amounts of calcium-rich plagioclase feldspar.

6. A form of mass wasting that occurs when a coherent mass of loosely consolidated materials or rock layers moves a short distance down a slope.

7. The highly viscous layer of molten rock situated directly beneath the Earth's crust and above the outer core.

8. The displacement of solids (sediment, soil, rock and other particles) usually by the agents of currents such as wind, water, or ice by downward or down-slope movement in response to gravity or by living organisms (in the case of bioerosion).



Solution on Pg 12

ROCKHOUND OF THE YEAR
Austin Gem & Mineral Society

The Austin Gem and Mineral Society has chosen to honor club member, Raechel Moose as our Rock Hound for the Year for 2026.

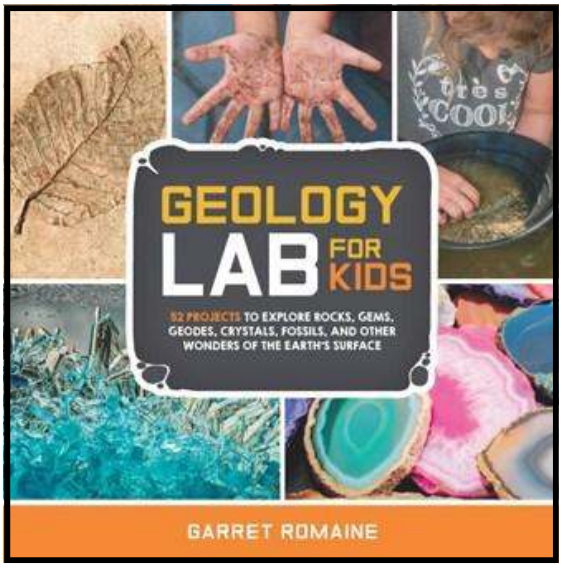
Raechel Moose



Raechel's exemplary volunteerism comes with energy, warmth, and sparkling enthusiasm. While club programs and procedures can easily become routine over time, Raechel brings new ideas to many of Austin Gem and Mineral Society's committees and activities.

Her talents in graphic arts, marketing, and her ability to synthesize disparate thoughts into actionable ideas have helped our Youth Activities Committee, Live Auction, and workshop supervision. Her current leadership roles include Membership Chair while also serving as incoming chair for our Show Committee. Most recently, she expanded her leadership roles by stepping up as Vice President of the Rollin' Rock Club of Texas.

Lorraine Chammah, ACROY committee Chair, 2026



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

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

LAB 38 DIGGING FOR GLORY

Encase a treasure in a rock and remove it, just like modern fossil hunters do.



Safety Tips-

Be careful when using hammers and chisels.

MATERIALS

· 4 cups (920 g) of plaster of Paris (or bucket of sand and screen for beginners)
· 1-quart (946 ml) plastic tub or a small ceramic plate
· 2 cups (475 ml) of warm water

Continued on Page 10

Continued from Page 9



· Teaspoon (5 g) of salt (for faster curing of the plaster)
· Sample "fossil" of your choice (e.g., plastic bugs or even a model dinosaur skeleton)
· Hammer and chisel or screwdriver
· Long nail, toothpick, or old dental tool
· Old toothbrush
· Safety glasses

PROTOCOL

STEP 1: Determine how much work you want to make for yourself. (For young kids, or if you want to make something easy, you can simply use a bucket of clean sand and a small screen).
STEP 2: Mix plaster of Paris and pour it into a 1-quart (946 ml) plastic tub or a small plate. Add the salt if you want your plaster to harden faster



STEP 3: Add your "treasure" (bugs, toys, or a model dinosaur skeleton) and stir in. Set the mix aside and let it harden for several hours. Thin plaster molds can harden in twenty minutes, but you just made a very thick rock.
STEP 4: Now the fun begins—pick at your jumble of parts and remove the plaster. A simple nail or screwdriver can help you poke and pick at the plaster, and a toothbrush will help you brush away loose plaster. It's fun to reveal pieces of your skeleton slowly and try to identify them before you get them out

Creative Enrichment

1. Imagine how hard your job would be if all your fossils were delicate and broke easily.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE FUN

If you find that you have the patience to scratch away plaster and dig out your fossil replicas slowly and patiently, you may have what it takes to become a paleontologist. You'll have to get good grades and study geology, anatomy, and biology, among other things, to become a professional, but if you like to get out into the field, this is a great way to do it.

Hunting for dinosaur bones is a very popular vacation for some families—you can look online and find all kinds of trips all over the world. You'll get to spend time at an actual dig site and do many of the same things that the scientists do.

The western U.S. saw what became known as the Bone Wars, in the late 1800s, as soon as the wagon trains stopped moving across the plains. Doctors who went to medical school back east and moved their families out west quickly heard stories about giant bones, and soon, they went on family outings by horse and buggy to learn for themselves. Later, two scientists at big museums started a race to see who could discover and name the most new fossils. In his book *The Bonehunters' Revenge* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1999), David Rains Wallace tells the story of how Dr. Edward Drinker Cope and Dr. Othniel Charles Marsh started "the greatest scientific feud of the Gilded Age." They battled each other for years, trying to find the best dinosaurs first. Many of the top museums in the U.S., including the New York Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian Museum still exhibit fossils dug up by these two men.

HELLO JUNIOR LEADERS!

Lora Hall, AFMS Junior Programs Chair

This is a quick reminder that the next edition of Crack the News is scheduled to hit the press soon. We still have room for more articles, poems, photographs, and artwork. Here are some article ideas you might want to suggest to your junior members:

Rockhound trips I took this summer.
My favorite rock, mineral, or fossil is ...
What do I like most about being a junior member?
My favorite junior meeting was...
Earning the _____ badge was the most fun because...
Photos and brief description of my rock, mineral, or fossil collection.
Did anyone enter their local fair and win a ribbon or prize?
My dream rockhound trip would be to...

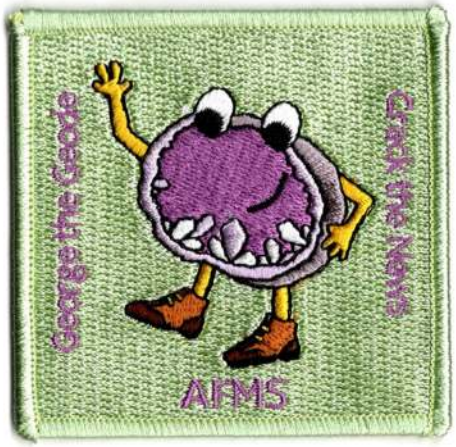
Be sure to let your juniors know that every submission, no matter how small, earns them a George the Geode patch to wear on their vest, sash, or backpack.

https://www.juniors.amfed.org/juniors-newsletter

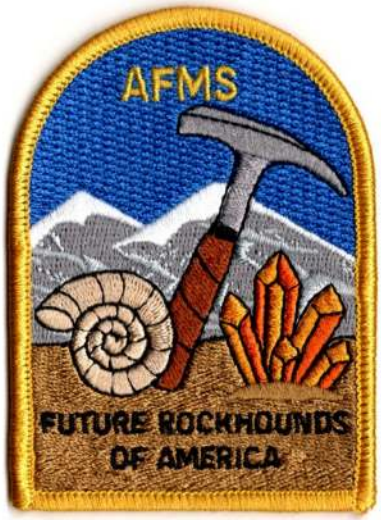
As always, if you are receiving this email and are no longer the contact for your club's juniors' program, please let me know so I can update our database. We now have over 100 Future Rockhound of America clubs across the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies with an estimated 900+ junior members.

Do not hesitate to contact me with questions, concerns, or ideas and suggestions. If your program has stalled and you need help restarting it, I am here to help. -Lora

Lora Hall
AFMS Junior Programs Chair
youth@amfed.org
www.juniors.amfed.org



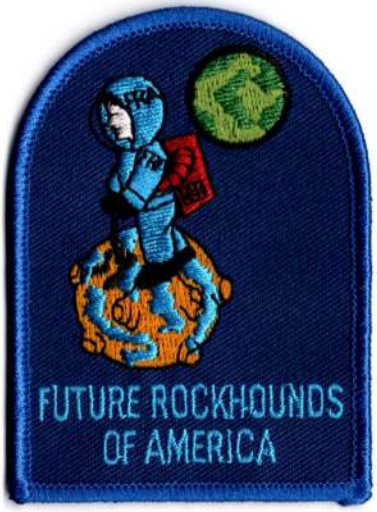
Crack the News
George the Geode



Future Rockhounds of America
Membership Patch



AFMS Club Junior Volunteer Award



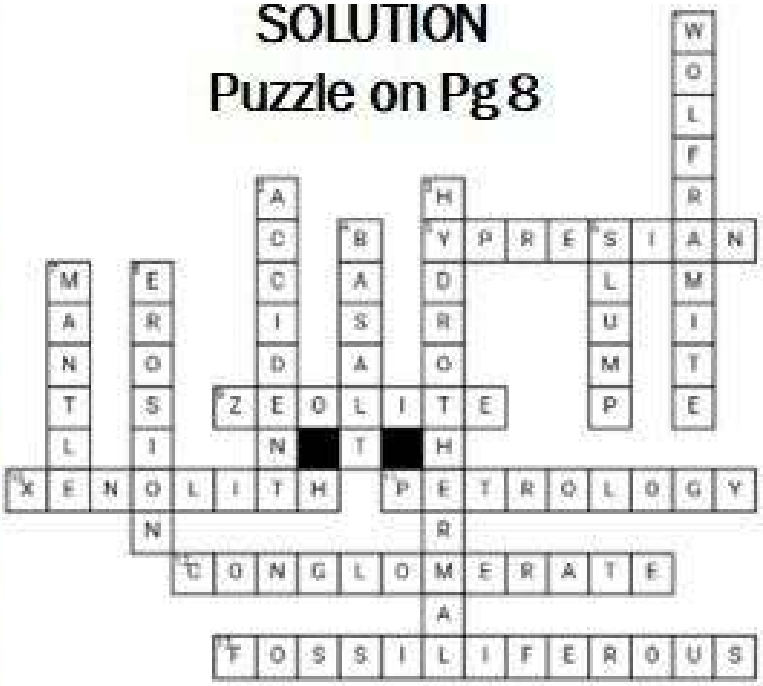
Collectible
Future Rockhounds of America
Membership Patch



GEOLOGIC CROSSWORD

SOLUTION

Puzzle on Pg 8



HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

73rd Annual Gem, Mineral, Jewelry & Fossil Show

Nov 13 - 15, 2026

HUMBLE CIVIC CENTER



Tickets $12

Good for all 3 days,
kids 10 & under get in free

(Purchase early online or in-person at the show)

Fortification Waterline Agate
Kokernot Ranch, Texas
Photo by Steve Blyskal

hgms.org • facebook.com/hgms.org • Instagram.com/hgms.org_tx

$1 off Admission with this flyer

WILLIAMSON COUNTY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY
TEXAS

55th Annual

GEMBOREE

Gems, Minerals, Fossils & Jewelry Show & Sale

February 20-21, 2027
Saturday 10am - 6pm Sunday 10am - 4pm
Georgetown Community Center at San Gabriel Park
445 East Morrow Street, Georgetown, TX

Williamson County Gem & Mineral Society

GEMBOREE SHOW & SALE

Adults $5 Kids 6-12 $3 Children under 6 free

12 ELITE VENDORS
GIFTS ◆ TREASURES
HOURLY DOOR PRIZES
SILENT AUCTION every half hour
WHEEL OF FORTUNE
ADULT & YOUTH GRAND PRIZE DRAWINGS
MINERAL IDENTIFICATION
CONCESSIONS AVAILABLE

WCGMSgemboree@gmail.com WCGMS.org
Williamson County Gem & Mineral Society on Facebook



Rolling Rock Club meeting at 9 am Sunday

In Loving Memory

Helen (Orr) Nevot

Long time rockhound friend Helen (Orr) Nevot passed away in the first week of August. It should be noted that our club may not have survived the early 1980's and 1990's when the GD rockhounds membership dropped to only a hand full of people if it were not for dedication and hard work of people like Helen and her husband. Helen's husband, Jim Orr, was our commissioner, while Helen was the VP of Education, and Newsletter editor for several years. Helen also taught Faceting and General Lapidary. She was an expert on all of the facets of our hobby and was a calm and gentle voice always available to help or offer encouraging words.

After losing her husband Jim, she remarried and moved to Utah. Years later they returned to Fort Worth, and her husband died. She tried to reintegrate with the CERA Gem, Mineral, and Glass Activity however health limited driving and made interaction difficult. Several of us may have been beneficiaries of rock material which she generously donated to the club for our auctions.

As members of an organization she cared so deeply about, we were invited to attend her celebration of life that was held at Greenwood Funeral Home in Fort Worth on Wednesday, August 26 at 10am.

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 scfmseditor@yahoo.com by the 25th 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, 2027 NEWSLETTER IS DECEMBER 27, 2026

BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH

PROBLEMS WITH SMALL DRILLS—Drilling small holes can be a problem. With drills that are less than 1 mm (18 gauge or .040 inches), some chucks will not tighten down well enough to hold the drill securely.

The problem is easily solved in either of two ways - with a chuck adapter or by buying your small drills with a 3/32 inch shank size. Either way you have a large shank to be gripped in your drill press, Foredom or Dremel, so changing bits is fast and easy.



MIXING EPOXY—When mixing epoxy, it's important to have equal amounts of each component. If the ratio is not 50/50, the mixture will not develop the necessary strength or may not harden at all.

If the amounts are small, I can generally eyeball the two components correctly. But I have trouble getting the proper mixture for larger quantities. Trying to pour it into a small measuring cup is a mess.

The easiest way I've found to get equal parts is to use a gram scale.

- Put a bottle lid or piece of scrap paper on the scale.
- Zero out the scale.
- Squeeze out the epoxy Part A.
- Note the gram weight.
- Zero out the scale again.
- Squeeze out the same amount of Part B.
- Mix thoroughly for use.

It's a trick I learned while mixing resins for mold .



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

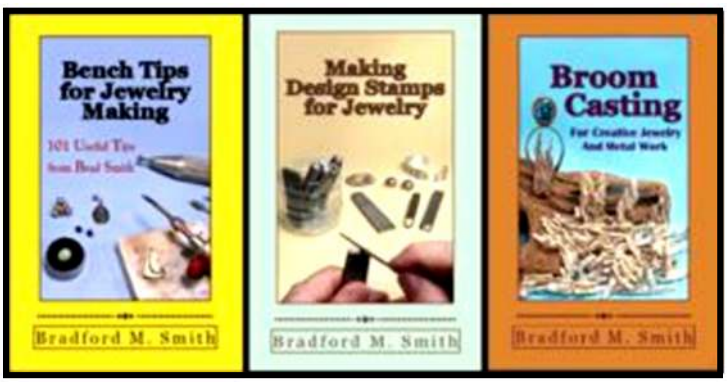
Making jewelry involves a multitude of skills, intricate hand work, and a lot of problem solving. In this book series find help to:

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- 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



UPCOMING SHOWS 2026-2027

November 14-15—SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS: Annual show; Southwest Gem & Mineral Society; San Antonio Garden Center; Website: http://www.swgms.org/

November 13-15—HUMBLE, TEXAS: Annual show; Houston Gem and Mineral Society; Combination show hosting the SCFMS; Humble Civic Center; Email: fossilwood@comcast.net; Website: https://www.hgms.org/

November 21-22—MESQUITE, TEXAS: Dallas Gem & Mineral Society; Mesquite Convention Center, Website: http://www.dallasgemandmineral.org/

January 16-17, 2027—FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS: Fredericksburg Rockhounds, Pioneer Pavilion, Website: fredericksburgrockhounds.org

2027 SCFMS Editors and Authors Contest Deadline:

JANUARY 11, 2027

Contest requirements, One (1) printed and one (1) digital copy of a list of all entries ; One (1) digital copy of all entries; One (1) digital copy of each entry's judge's control sheet; three (3) printed copies of each entry along with three (3) printed copies of the judge's control sheet. Digital copies may be sent on CD/DVD or flash drive with your printed copies, or emailed to scfmseditor@yahoo.com. Entries must be in my hand by the due date, please mail your print copies to:

Susan Burch
10911 Holly Springs Dr.
Houston, TX 77042



To those who helped make this issue possible...

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