



I N F O R M E R
 NEWSLETTER OF CTGMS

**APRIL 11-12 CTGMS GEM AND MINERAL SHOW
 SEE SHOW FLYER PAGE 10**

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From the Front Desk— President —Bob Patterson

A Winter trip to Arizona and New Mexico



During the last part of January Bob and Helen Patterson spent two weeks near Quartzite, Arizona at the 3 Dreamers RV Park and attended various

dealer displays in Quartzite.

Although weather conditions were not favorable we were able to go out on a couple of rock hunting trips and found some new things.

After two weeks, on February 9 we traveled to Tucson, Az and met Tony and Judy Steele and we attended several large dealer displays and saw a lot of amazing and beautiful mineral and rock displays. We also attended the large gem and mineral show downtown in the convention center.

Tony and I took a number of pictures of unusual minerals and rocks. We will try to get some of the pictures together and have some for the next In-

former in March.

We left Tucson of February 13 and moved to Bowie, AZ. We stayed there 3 days

and hunted fire agate two days without much success. This was due to the failure to have specific information about the location of the gemfields. One day was also spent in sightseeing Near old Ft. Bowie, an outpost during the Apache Indian wars.

From there we moved to Deming, NM where we stayed one night and then moved to an area north of Las Cruces that Tony was familiar with. We camped at FT. Selden State Park. This is a nice location near Radium Springs and there are several good rock locations in the vicinity.

The first of these that we visited was very near Radium Springs where we went to an old Traventine mine. Here we found a lot of large specimens of Traventine Onyx in several colors. Most of the rock here was in very large pieces. In fact most were to large for us to pickup. I managed to break one excellent specimen in two. I kept the smaller piece and Tony loaded the larger rock which was all we could pickup between us. We also collected several good specimens of Honey Onyx in several sizes.

The next day we went to a location near

DUES NOTICE
 ITS TIME TO
 PAY YOUR DUES
 DON'T GET LEFT
 OUT

Hatch where dendritic opal was supposed to be available. This proved to be very scarce and of poor quality although Tony did find some of the material.

In the afternoon, Tony led us to a location east of Hatch to an old barite mine. Barite is a very heavy mineral and crystalizes in yellow tabular shapes. It is extremely heavy and is mainly utilized for this characteristic. We all collected some of the Barite. We also found some very nice specimens of candy stripe Rhyolite which had been piled in the dump during the barite mining operation. There was a lot of material of various quality and sizes to choose from and we all collected several specimens and felt that we had a successful day.

The next day we broke camp early and began the long trek home to Abilene. We felt like we had a good trip and had seen many interesting rock and mineral specimens and also had acquired some nice additions to our personal collections.



FLINT KNAPPER AT WORK



JUDY ENJOYING A NICE COOL STROLL



SMALL PIECES OF TRAVERTINE ONYX



RED JASPER



TONY WITH A BIG ROCK

MINUTE BY MINUTE BY BEV

MINUTES OF CTGMS MEETING OF MONDAY, JAN 5 , 2009



Minutes of CTGMS meeting held Monday, February 2, 2009:

Bob and Helen Patterson were in Arizona so Vice President Carlos Talley called the meeting to order. 28 members were in attendance. After the opening prayer and pledge of allegiance, the secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting. The financial report was read and accepted.

Our new member Richard Hill introduced himself. Richard lives in Cisco. He likes hunting and flint knapping. His talents include public speaking, education and planning.

Old Business: The club will have a display at the Abilene Library downtown from April 1st through the 30th. Artwalk is Thursday, April 9th. People who are interested in displaying their rocks or projects were asked to meet with Carlos after the meeting.

Gary Hudson has talked with Ricky Johnson, the foreman of the County Precinct about installation of a tin horn for access behind the clubhouse. He'll see if we can get it done at the County's expense, but the project will need further research regarding the benefits and possible problems.

New Business: Ruth and John Sparks offered to give a riding lawnmower for the club's use. It has 12 ½ horsepower and a 38" mower. The club voted to accept the mower, with our thanks. Jim Hill volunteered to pick up the mower in Brownwood and deliver it back to the clubhouse for storage

Don Brenholz moved that a second scholarship be offered to an applicant from the Boys Ranch. After discussion the club voted to approve the offer of a second scholarship to a qualified student from the Boys Ranch.

Gary Hudson read about Senate Bill 22, a proposed bill that could affect rockhounds. It will be going before the House of Representatives soon. Club members were urged to contact their representatives to let them know how we feel about the bill.

Judy Steele brought more cabs that Bill Meyers sent. The cabs were sold at silent auction after the meeting. Bill has donated these and other cabs for the club's benefit.

Committee Reports:

Show chair: Sallie Lightfoot still needs help on some of the committees for the show. She's working on the mailing list to last year's attendees. This year she has decided to send cards because they cost only 27 cents. The notices will probably go out at the end of March.

Dealer Chair: Judy reported that 11 dealers have paid, including a wire wrapper.

Grace Hoy has volunteered to work with Joyce Talley at the registration table inside the door.

Jerry Davis has again volunteered to be in charge of the demonstration table this year. He will provide sign up sheets for people who would like to demonstrate. Demonstrators will work a few hours at a time each day and the schedule will be staggered to allow demonstrators to browse the show and help out at other tables.

Charlie Lightfoot will also have a sign up list for people who wish to check out a display case for the show. We have about 9 cases available. There is a beginners case which can accommodate more than one person's projects. Charlie also said that we need polished rocks for the children's table.

Shop Foreman Tim Walker reported that we now have oil for sale to club members. Like just about everything these days, the cost has risen. The price for members is \$13 per gallon.

Illnesses and deaths: Jo An's mother has been in the hospital for tests. Joyce Talley said that Ian Johnson had written a long letter full of technical information, but with the good news that he is doing very well. Judy Abernathy sent thanks for the support and prayers for her son, Jay. Zach Stockton has been in the hospital for a problem with his heart. His pacemaker is now regulating his heartbeat and he should be released soon. He said he'll be back in the clubhouse as soon as he feels up to it again. Ernie is about the same, but he sent his love and said he misses everyone.

Nell Gee, Betty Scarborough and Jim Owens will provide refreshments for the meeting in March.



MORE ROCKS FROM QUARTZITE AND TUCSON SHOWS



The Shop Report — Foreman - Tim Walker

The club has purchased the following items for member purchase:

60-90 carbide grit	\$10.00 for 5# bag
Ceramic pellets	\$17.50 for 5# bag
Saw Oil	\$13.00 per gallon

Good to have oil in the shop again! The price will be higher than last year because of oil prices. Two new water pumps have been installed. Some of the other equipment still needs work. I will do this as I have time and begin to feel better. At this time, I have my kitchen torn apart and need to get this finished before spending too much time doing other things. All new members need to read the rules which are posted in the shop. Tim



CRYSTAL CLEANING

Now it is time to clean those beautiful specimens of Arkansas quartz crystal you that clay removed. Do not, and I repeat, do not attempt to clean the dirt off in your sink. The clay will quickly plug up the drain and your plumber will love you.

Let The Crystals Dry

Lay the crystals out to dry on an old tarp or plastic bag. Turn them over ever so often so that they are completely dry. Crystal clusters will take more time to dry than points. You could also dry them on a ¼ inch mesh screen covered frame (they are easy to make). When the clay is dry enough to clean it will look cracked. Give your dried specimens a thorough rinsing with a garden hose (both sides). Allow them to dry again for a few more days and rinse again completely. It is very important to remove **all** of the clay.

Crystal points are the easiest to get clean, but a cluster can require some additional work. Clay settles down deep between the points on a cluster and is hard to get out. Using a dental pick or similar tool you can carefully pick out this remaining clay. Rinse the clusters again and you should be ready to start trimming.

Trimming Your Quartz Crystals

Trimming your clusters will greatly improve their appearance, but can be tricky to do. Any of the extra matrix (base) or broken crystals should be removed wherever possible. Great care must be taken to avoid causing any additional damage. You can gain some valuable experience by practicing on clusters that are already badly damaged. Many of your crystals can be trimmed with a pair of heavy-duty pliers and a hammer. Before you start, make sure that you are wearing safety glasses and leather gloves. Take a cluster in your hand and study it carefully. Using the pliers, break away any broken points or damaged areas from the edges. If the cluster has a thicker matrix (base), you will need to use a hammer to remove any damaged areas. Turn the cluster upside down and see if there is already a crack near the affected area. If there is a crack, gently tap it with your hammer until it breaks away. If there is not a crack, you might want to leave the cluster as is. With more skill and additional tools, such as chisels and specialty hammers, you will be able to trim out any damaged sections. Sandy bottoms can be scraped to remove the soft material. They will need to be rinsed off again. If you are uncomfortable trimming your specimens for any reason – don't do it. They are beautiful just as they are.

Cleaning Crystals With Oxalic Acid

Your crystals are now ready to be cleaned. Most of the crystals will be completely or partially coated with gold/brown iron oxide (rust). Others might be coated with gray/black manganese oxide. These coatings can be easily removed by soaking the crystals in a mild oxalic acid solution. Oxalic acid can be purchased from most mineral dealers in Arkansas. So pick up some while you are here. You can also purchase it over the Internet. A word of advice, make sure the oxalic acid is clearly marked and comes with a receipt. Most police officers would think it was some type of drug. While oxalic acid is mild, it is dangerous to breath. Use it outside, in a well-protected area away from children and pets. **Always** wear heavy rubber gloves and safety glasses when working with the oxalic acid solution. The oxalic acid solution is made from 3 parts water to 1 part oxalic acid.

Easy Method

Wearing your heavy rubber gloves and safety glasses; place your crystals in a plastic tub or bucket (not white) with the acid solution. Make sure the acid solution covers your crystals. Cover the containers and let the crystals soak for 3 to 5 days. The acid works better when the containers are placed in the sun. You may now remove the crystals from the containers making sure to wear your heavy rubber gloves and safety glasses. Rinse the crystals thoroughly to remove oxalic acid residue. Your crystals will look spectacular. If there is any iron oxide still showing, additional soaking is required.

Heat Method

Many serious collectors use the hot method to clean their quartz crystals. Heat speeds up the cleaning process allowing more crystals to be cleaned in a shorter period of time. You can use a crock-pot or have a custom-cleaning vat made. Place your crystals in the pot or vat; add cool water and a few ounces of oxalic acid. Add more cool water until the water is above the crystals. Cover and set the temperature control to medium. Bring the oxalic acid solution just to a simmer; this usually takes about 3 to 4 hours. Turn the pot or vat off and allow it to cool down overnight. Make sure to heat clean your crystals **outside**, the vapors are poisonous and should not be inhaled. The next morning, remove your crystals while wearing your heavy rubber gloves and safety glasses. Rinse the crystals thoroughly and gaze at

their absolute beauty. When they have dried you may need to re-rinse them if a white powder has appeared. This powder is just some additional acid residue.

Safe Disposal of Oxalic Acid Solution

Your acid solution can be reused until it turns very green. At that point, the old solution needs to be neutralized and disposed of. **Slowly** add agricultural lime to the solution to neutralize it. When the solution stops fizzing, it is completely neutralized and you can dump it on the ground.

Things to Remember

- Always wear safety glasses and leather gloves while trimming your crystal clusters.
- Make sure the oxalic acid is clearly marked and that you have a receipt for it.
- Always follow the instructions that come with the oxalic acid.
- Always wear safety glasses and heavy rubber gloves when you are working with the oxalic acid solution.
- If you splash the acid solution on yourself, rinse it off immediately.
- Do not inhale oxalic acid fumes. The fumes are very dangerous.
- Always clean your crystals outside in a well-ventilated and protected area.
- Always keep your oxalic acid solution covered to prevent pets and wild animals from getting into it.
- The crock-pot can **never** be used for cooking food again.
- Always neutralize the oxalic acid solution with lime before you dispose of it.
- Crystals can crack or fracture very easily.
- o Do not place a cool crystal in hot water.
- o Do not expose a hot crystal to cool water or air.

From Experience

As you travel throughout this great land of ours, make sure you refer to your specimens as the mineral quartz crystal. We were stopped once on our way to Illinois. The officer asked what we had in the van. I answered "crystal" and he stepped back, not sure what to do. Quickly, I changed my answer to "the mineral quartz crystal". After showing him what it was we were allowed to go. So be sure to answer carefully! *By the way, never tell anyone that you are cooking up a mess of crystal in a crock-pot. Need I say more?*

http://www.bluemooncrystals.com/Crystal_Cleaning.html

Rockhunting Field Trips

Alpine and Big Bend area

Spring 2009

Contact Teri Smith at agatehunter@sbcglobal.net, which is my preferred method, or by phone at (432) 837-2451 (Antelope Lodge); (432) 837-1026 (home); or (432) 386-3431 (cell).

Fri., March 6 7 a.m. East Needle Peak

Sat., March 7 9 a.m. Ritchie Ranch

Sun., March 8 9 a.m. Larremore Ranch

Fri., March 27 9 a.m. Larremore Ranch

Sat., March. 28 7 a.m. East Needle Peak

Sun., March. 29 9 a.m. Ritchie Ranch

Fri., April 3 9 a.m. Ritchie Ranch

Sat., April 4 9 a.m. Larremore Ranch

Sun., April 5 7 a.m. East Needle Peak

Fri., April 17 7 a.m. East Needle Peak

Sat., April 18 9 a.m. Ritchie Ranch

Sun., April 19 9 a.m. Larremore Ranch

Meet in the lobby of the Antelope Lodge, 2310 W. Highway 90, Alpine, TX.

Bring:

Wear desert-smart clothing, a hat, boots, and gloves. Long pants and long-sleeved shirts will protect you from most of the stickers and thorns. Bring your lunch, lots of drinking water, and bags to put your finds in. Bring and use sunscreen, as our elevation is high enough that you burn quickly. Make sure your vehicle is appropriate for the terrain of the field trip location, and the gas tank is full. Ensure that you have a usable spare tire or at least a couple of cans of fix-a-flat, as we can be almost 100 miles away from the nearest tire shop.

Reservations required!



Editor's Notes:

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If you have a story or a news item please email it to me at

ctgms50@clearwire.net

Send it in email or as a Microsoft Word document attachment. Remember to get it to me by the 20th of the

month.

Many thanks to Bob and Helen Patterson for having the newsletter printed each month.

As stated in the "Minutes", Ruth and John Sparks donated a riding lawn mower. Jerry Davis and Richard Hill picked it up and dropped it off in one of Charlie Lightfoots sheds until the club can come up with a storage facility. Maybe someone has a portable building they are no longer using and need to get rid of.....Hint! I was told it started right up after charging the battery. But, the battery was dead upon arrival at Charlie's place. It may also need some tire repairs.

A big THANKS to Ruth and John Sparks for the donation and also to Richard Hill and Jerry Davis for bringing it to the Club.

Please, everyone be careful out there! We are in the time of high winds in these parts and there is no moisture. Fire hazards are exceptionally high right now. As you know, there have been several brush fires around the area.

I don't know about you, but I am already getting spring fever! I feel the need to go out and beat the bushes and see if I can find any valuable gemstones.



If I have missed your birthday or anniversary, please email it to me or write it down and hand it to me. I don't want to leave anyone out.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

Don Brenholtz	March 8
Jerry Davis	March 10

ANNIVERSARIES

Tony & Judy Steele	March 20
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GET WELL SOON!



Ernie Wright
Charlie Harrison, back problems
Judy Abernathy's son, Jay, Heart/lung transplant, on dialysis
Lou David's granddaughter, Sierra
Zach Stockton, Heart trouble.



Upcoming Shows

Mar 7-8--BIG SPRING, TEXAS: 40th annual show; Big Spring Prospectors Club; Howard County Fair Barn; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-5; dealers, demonstrators; contact Jerald Wilson, 707 Tulane, Big Spring, TX 79720, (432) 263-4662

Mar 7-8--ROBSTOWN (CORPUS CHRISTI), TEXAS: 47th annual show; Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Club; Richard M. Borchard Regional Fairgrounds, U.S. 77 and Rte. 44; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$5, children under 12 free; minerals, fossils, jewelry, kids' wheel, silent auction, door prizes, dealers and demonstrations; contact Jerrold Simpson, (361) 851-8788

Mar 21-22--SAN ANTONIO, TX: 48th Fiesta of Gems show; Southwest Gem and Mineral Society; Live Oak Civic Center, 8101 Pat Booker Road; Saturday 10am-6pm, Sunday 10am-4pm; admission is \$4 Adults, \$3 seniors and military, \$2 students; www.swgemandmineral.org

Mar 12-15--DEMING, NEW MEXICO: 44th annual show, "Rockhound Roundup"; Deming Gem & Mineral Society; Southwestern New Mexico Fairgrounds; Thu. 9-5, Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-5; free admission; displays, demonstrations, jewelry, rocks, drawings, raffle, field trips, silent auction, live auction; contact Bud Daily, P.O. Box 1459, Deming, NM 88031, (575) 267-4399

Mar 20-22--ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO: 41st annual show, "Treasures of the Earth Show"; Albuquerque Gem & Mineral Club; School Arts/Flower Bldgs., New Mexico State Fair Grounds (EXPO-NM); Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$1 (Fri.) and \$3 (Sat. and Sun.), kids under 13 free; more than 35 dealers, mineral displays, demonstrations, door prizes, kids' booth, silent auctions; contact Paul Hlava, (505) 255-5478; e-mail: hpf5@qwest.net

April 17-19--ALPINE, TEXAS: 20th annual show, "Treasures of West Texas"; Chihuahuan Desert Gem & Mineral Club; Highland Events Center, Hwy. 90, across from Sul Ross State University; Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 11-5; free admission; 2nd annual Collegiate Geology "Box of Rocks" Competition, Kids' Corner, door prizes, rock food table, Rock For Life dance, Grub Run Rally, field trips (Woodward Ranch, Shafter Silver Mine, Red Rock Ranch); contact Donna Trammel, (432) 426-2924; e-mail: rocklady2002@sbcglobal.net

April 25-26--WACO, TEXAS: Show; Waco Gem & Mineral Club; Heart of Texas Fairgrounds, Bosque Ave.; Sat. 10-5:30, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4, students and children \$1; contact Kay Coleman, 118 County Road 540, Fairfield, TX 75840, (903) 389-8311; e-mail: rkcole8@peoplepc.com

Subject: Texas Topaz Day

Come to Mason, Texas to help us celebrate Texas Topaz Day. Thursday, March 26 marks the 40th anniversary of the Texas legislature designating topaz and the state gem. Gems of the Hill Country will be honoring the gem with our 2nd annual open house. We are a small jewelry store located on the historic Mason square, next to the Museum. Refreshments and live music will be available. We start the fun at 4pm.

Come see Texas topaz in all it's forms. Come see the biggest topaz in the museum, that was exhibited in the Smithsonian. If you decide to join us a little earlier in the day, a small wedding will take place on the courthouse steps, across the street. Come join the fun!

B. Diane Eames, GG
Graduate Gemologist (GIA)
Gems of the Hill Country
126 Ft. McKavitt
Mason, TX 76856

325-347-0475 cell 325-347-4316
texas-topaz.com masongemologist@verizon.net

PO Box 7343
Abilene, TX 79608-7343

Editor: Gary Hudson
Email: ctgms50@clearwire.net
Snail-Mail: 1002 Mac St.
Tuscola, TX 79562

**We are on the web:
www.txol.net/rockclub**



President	Bob Patterson	325 698-8648
Past President	Gary Hudson	325 554-7804
Vice President	Carlos Talley	325 692-0063
Secretary	Beverly Vargo	325 690-0750
Treasurer	Errol Rutledge	325 672-7505
Corresp Sec	Joyce Talley	325 692-0063
Editor	Gary Hudson	325 554-7804

Committees/Chairpersons

Show	Sallie Lightfoot
Field Trips	Tony & Judy Steele
Classes	Charlie Lightfoot
Nominating	James Grant
Programs	Dave Vargo
Shop	Tim Walker
Club House and Grounds.....	Charlie Lightfoot
Dealers for show	Tony & Judy Steele
Budget	Errol Rutledge
Scholarship	JoAn Wilks
Show Demonstrations	Jerry Davis
Silversmithing Classes	Jerry Davis

GEMSTONE OF THE MONTH



AQUAMARINE

March's Gemstone of Ocean Dreams
By Sarah Stephens

The beautiful Aquamarine is semi-precious, a light greenish blue to a vibrant blue variety of the species beryl, which makes it a relative of the Emerald. The name Aquamarine is derived from Latin, meaning seawater. "Aqua" translates to water and "marina" translates to sea. This seems especially appropriate for aquamarine's barely-there icy blue tones to intense greenish-blue tones, reminiscent of the sea. Also believed to embody the spirit of the sea, it has been regarded as a symbol of purification, ever-lasting youth, and happiness.

The sparkling tones and light blue hues are said to evoke feelings of trust, harmony and sympathy. The unique blues that the Aquamarine displays are said to represent eternity and life-giving properties, since it is, after all, the color of both the sea and the skies.

Aquamarine gemstones look best as parts of formal evening jewelry when paired with Black Onyx, black pearls or dark blue sapphire. More casual combinations include lighter, bridal colored combinations with quartz, raw diamonds or pearls. Aquamarine is typically considered a sophisticated gemstone that works well with any outfit. In earrings, it works especially well to enhance the luster of blue or green eyes.

According to legend, Aquamarine originated in a treasure chest for mer-

MISSION STATEMENT

The Central Texas Gem and Mineral Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study of rocks, minerals and fossils. We offer field trips and provide educational opportunities and instruction to members in a variety of areas related to the Lapidary Arts and Jewelry making. We also award a scholarship to a student enrolled at a local college in a field closely related to geology. We provide educational displays related to this hobby at shows of a similar interest. — Jerry

maids. Throughout history, Roman fisherman have used aquamarine as protection from the water, as the gemstone is believed to lend strength and confidence. Aquamarine's powers are said to develop best if the stone is immersed in sun-drenched water. Carrying aquamarine is also believed to guarantee a happy marriage, making the owner not only happy, but wealthy as well.

<http://ezinearticles.com/?Aquamarine---Marchs-Gemstone-of-Ocean-Dreams&id=857906>



BERYL CRYSTALS WITH RAW AQUAMARINE IN THE MIDDLE

Images from
www.wikipedia.org



proudly presents



the 2009 GEM & MINERAL JEWELRY SHOW

(PETRIFIED WOOD, LAPIS, AMETHYST, AGATE, TURQUOISE, OPAL, DINOSAUR BONE, etc)

Saturday, April 11, 2009
10 A M to 6 P M

Sunday, April 12, 2009
10 A M to 5 P M

Abilene Civic Center
Downtown Abilene, N 6th & Pine

- * Fossils
- * Jewelry
- * Gems
- * Minerals
- * Jewelry Making
- * Fluorescent Display

- * Glass Bead Making
- * Exhibits
- * Lapidary Supplies
- * Beads
- * Crafts
- * Gifts...all prices

* Demonstrations - Lapidary, Silversmithing, Wire Craft,
Carving, Faceting, Beading

‡ SILENT AUCTION ‡ WHEEL OF FORTUNE
‡ GEODES - to purchase and have opened ‡ "SAND" ART

Hourly door prizes for adult...Hourly door prizes for children

GRAND PRIZE - \$100

"Everyone is Welcome"

Profits help support the CTGMS Educational Scholarships



ADMISSION:

Adults	\$3
Children	\$1.50 (6 to 12)
Children under six	free when accompanied by an adult

Note: RRC meets Sunday at 9 am
at the Civic Center

Check us out: www.txol.net-rockclub