

The Sooner Rockologist

Vol. 63 Number 7

November 2008

Oklahoma Mineral & Gem Society Purpose

- *The purpose shall be an educational relationship among the members for the study of rocks, gems, minerals, fossils, and lapidary techniques, and for the exchange of the results of such studies and classifications with similar societies and the public. (We have fun, too!)*

Membership & Meetings

General Membership meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (with the exception of June and December when we celebrate with an anniversary picnic in June and a December Christmas party in lieu of regular meetings). Guests are welcome!

On the first Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. (except on holidays), we meet for a Demonstration & Work Night to give members an opportunity to share information and teach each other and assist each other with various personal projects.

Meetings and work nights are held at the Will Rogers Garden Exhibition Building, 3400 N.W. 36th Street in Oklahoma City. Annual dues are \$10.00 for a single membership and \$15.00 for husband and wife (children also). A \$1.00 per person initiation fee applies to new members, subject to application and approval.

If This Is Fall Break, Then This Must Be A Diamond Mine

By Tom Manners

For the last four years my wife and I have gone to Southwest Arkansas during fall school break. Last year we went to the Mt. Ida area to search for quartz crystals. The other three years we went to Murfreesboro to the Crater of Diamonds State Park.

The trip to Murfreesboro started on Monday when I got the RV out of storage and begin to prep it for the 300 mile drive. We actually left Yukon on Wednesday night in somewhat dismal weather and drove as far as Checotah, OK. Thursday morning we stayed on Interstate 40 to Sallisaw where we turned south onto more scenic roads. Translation, we were now on 2 lane highways. The fall colors and the mist made for some beautiful views.

Murfreesboro is a small town on Arkansas State Highway 301 in Pike County, Arkansas. As of the 2000 census, the city had a total population of 1,764. The city is the county seat of Pike County.

The Crater of Diamonds State Park is located just to the south. The "crater" is an eroded lamproite pipe where diamonds were discovered in 1906. 100,000 were found by 1933, and visitors to the park may still take away whatever they can find. Hillary Clinton wore a 4.25 carat (850 mg) yellow diamond, found in 1977 at the park, to the inaugural balls in 1993 and 1997.

There are a couple of motels in Murfreesboro but Jeannie and I chose to stay at the campground located inside the park. The campground has 59 campsites, all with water and electric hookups. A dump station is located at the entrance to the campground area. Two bathhouses with showers and restrooms, as well as a laundry facility are also available in the campground.

The other facilities located in the park are Diamond Springs Water-Park, Information Center / Gift Shop, Kimberlite Cafe' Restaurant, Pavilion and the Wildlife Observation Blind.

After checking-in, finding our campsite and then setting up our site, we took a stroll to the visitor's center to stretch and look around. Just outside of the visitor's center we happened on Donald Mayes. Mr. Mayes is one of the veteran diamond hunters that were featured on the The Travel

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Audio/Video: Mark Brickmann

Christmas Party OPEN

Property Custodians John Bodie

Paul Cinnamon

Education: Mark Brickmann

Federation Activities Max &

Arlene Burkhalter

Field Trips

Paul Cinnamon

Larry Shearer

Historian Joann Carroll

Hospitality Ambrosia Geffre

Librarian: Norma Cinnamon

Meeting Display Doyle McCown

Billie Marie Nedd

MmbershipWanda Manderscheid

Channel's series "Cash and Treasure". Jeannie and I stood and talked with Mr. Mayes for some time. During our conversation he showed us one of the diamonds he had found, a 0,0,1 diamond valued at \$10,000.

They say that one of the best times to look for diamonds at the Crater of Diamonds is just after a rain. It had rained on Wednesday and some early Thursday. The rain must have helped some people because four Diamonds were found on Friday and one of them was a .95 carat or 95 point diamond. The average is two diamonds per day found at the park.

On Friday Jeannie and I left our campsite with high hopes. We carried a shovel, bucket and screens. After doing some surface searching, we dug a bucket of dirt and went to the sluice, washed the dirt away and checked the small gravel for something shiny. No Luck. Repeat the process. No Luck. Do it all again several times. The rain did not help us, it only left us muddy and tired.

Saturday morning brought a new day of diamond hunting. Repeat the process, no luck. Because diamonds are not the only minerals to be found at the Crater of Diamonds State Park, Jeannie and I began to pick up "pretty rocks" about noon on Saturday. We did not find "our" diamond but did come back with rough to cut and polish. In the rough I have some Jasper and Quartz and some rocks I'm not sure of.

Sunday the sun was out and the skies were a beautiful blue. We packed our gear and headed back to Yukon. Jeannie made the comment as we drove that the trip back was as beautiful as the trip to Murfreesboro but the sunshine gave the fall colors a different look than the rain had on Thursday. We found no diamonds but had a great relaxing trip.

SW Federation and American Federation Show Humble, Texas

sponsored by

the Houston Gem and Mineral Club

The show was really nice—the Houston Club members were gracious and a fantastic host. The American Federation meetings were all cancelled so there weren't many officers from that level in attendance—plus the schools had been closed due to outages caused by Hurricane Ike so there weren't near as many school kids there as they normally have. I helped judge some of the mineral cases. In all two SW Federation trophies were awarded, both also received American Federation trophies so in all, eight American Federation trophies were awarded. I received a trophy for my Cabinet minerals. Paul Otto from Siloam Springs put in a case, as did Bruce Stinemetz from Missouri. Bruce also won an American trophy. All the entries were very good.

I counted 43 dealers. There was also a swap area in the back. Found some very nice specimens both in the swap area and at the dealers. A couple from California put in a special exhibit—the Rock Food Table which was just awesome. You could almost "smell" the food even though you knew they were rocks.

Sunday several of us took a field trip to the Houston Museum of Natural Science. They had a hall of dinosaurs, a hall of superb mineral specimens and a hall of gems and jewelry. The mineral specimens and jewels were just awesome—not only huge but perfect. I think you would have to go several times to get the full impact of the museum.

Sure glad I made the trip. Dottie Smith

Omniplex Chet Hazelwood
Arlene Burkhalter
Programs OPEN
Parliamentarian Joyce McBryde
Publicity OPEN
Newsletter Editor Tom Manners
Scholarship Max & Arlene
Burkhalter
Show 2009 Vernon Dorton
Sunshine Donna Davis
Telephone Oveta Vermillion
Ways & Means Dean & Wanda
Manderscheid
Doyle McCown
Workshop Mark Brickmann

All December meetings, including the Monday Work Night, will be replaced by our annual Holiday Party the first Friday in December

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If you have articles of interest that you would like to see printed in *The Sooner Rockologist*, please be sure to contact the editor

Please submit your contributions no later than the first of each month. Your submissions may be edited for punctuation, clarity and space. If you have an announcement or a trip report to share, please e-mail me or give it to me at the monthly meetings. E-mail attachments in MS Word are appreciated so as to prevent retyping the information. Unless otherwise noted, articles are written and/or contributed by the Editor.

OMGS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 9, 2008

Members present: John Bode, Joann Carroll, Paul Cinnamon, Vernon Dorton, Tom Manners, Joyce McBryde, Doyle McCown, Wanda Manderscheid, Dottie Smith, and Bob Welch.

Guests: Oscar Carroll, Norma Cinnamon, Lou Dorton, Jeannie Manners, and Dean Manderscheid.

Paul, vice-president, called the meeting to order. We have a quorum. Vernon made a motion to approve the minutes as printed, Doyle 2nd, motion carried. Joyce gave the treasurer's report. The rent for our meeting room and the storage shed has been paid for 2009. The treasurer's report was accepted until audit. Tom has accepted the position of editor.

Correspondence: Several newsletters from other clubs were received and given to our editor. A letter and flyer from The Oceanview Gem Mining Co., San Diego County, California, about their mine and minerals that can be found there was received.

New Member Application: One application was received—Beth Andrade. John made a motion to accept her application, Joann 2nd; motion passed.

Old Business: There was a field trip to the Elsing Museum on September 27 with eleven members participating. Thanks to John for arranging the field trip. Paul called the General Material Gravel Pit. They had obtained all new equipment but it has been breaking down, so have not been able to fill their orders. Perhaps we will be able to have the field trip in February or March. Tom reported that the Rockologist is being printed. Election of officers will be at the October general meeting.

New Business: The 2009 dues are now due. A suggestion was made that the amount of dues be put on the new member application, (\$10.00 for a single person, \$15.00 for a couple with \$1.00 per person new member fee).

Committee Reports: **Education:** Our youth merit badge program hasn't got off the ground. David Read came very well prepared at our last work night and there were no youth to share the information about fossils and petrified wood. It is very discouraging that no one showed up. There was discussion on how we can make this work.

Library Displays: Dottie Smith put a display in the The Village library for October. The Cinnamon's were going to put one in the Yukon library, but somehow the library lost the schedule and some other organization filled the space.

Show: Vernon reported they had an organization meeting in September, and the next meeting is the first Thursday in November. Publicity will be from the same firm as last year. Norma received an E-mail from Arlene Burkhalter and she was able to get a listing in Rock & Gem magazine. The title of our show is "River of Gems". Arlene has heard back from a couple of dealers.

Our next board of directors meeting will be November 13. The meeting adjourned.

Dottie Smith, Secretary

If you owe membership dues, please mail your check to:
Dottie Smith
612 Mark Drive
Del City, OK 73115

NOTE: We would like to receive input from each and every one of our members on what you would like to see happening during our work night the first Monday of each month, so we can determine who will give instruction in those particular areas of interest. Thank you

A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER.

Regarding health issues, Donna Davis is on our sunshine committee. She said she hasn't been receiving any notifications lately of folks being ill or having difficulties. In that regard, no news is good news!

But if you don't know who to contact to tell about these things, she is the person. She asked that I be sure to remind everyone.

Her phone number is 760-6566, and her e-mail is

robertdavis3@cox.net.

Please be sure to keep her abreast of these issues so our club can help out if needed. Thanks!

OMGS GENERAL MEETING

October 16, 2008

Vernon Dorton, president, called the meeting to order. The minutes of the previous meeting were read. Ed Vermillion made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected (election is October, not November), Joyce McBryde 2nd, motion carried. The board meeting is the second Thursday at Jim's restaurant, 39th & Council, and everyone is welcome to come. Joyce McBryde, treasurer, gave the treasurer's report which will be filed for future audit. The rent for our meeting room and the storage building has been paid in full for 2009. **DUES FOR 2009 ARE DUE.**

Correspondence: A letter and flyer was received from The Oceanview Gem Mining Co., San Diego county, California, telling about their mine and opportunity for hunting for minerals. Also, received several club newsletters which will be given to the editor; and a flyer for a commercial show in Kansas City the end of this month. Also, have flyers for the Tulsa Show which is also the Rocky Mountain Federation Show, November 7-9.

New Business: John Bode, chairman of nominating committee, presented the slate of officers for 2009. President—Paul Cinnamon; Vice-president—Donna Davis; Secretary—Jeannie Manners; Treasurer—David Read; Board of Directors—Elaine Welch, Darla Wood, and John Bode. Ovetta Vermillion made a motion to accept these candidates by acclimation; Donnie Heffley 2nd; motion passed.

New Member Packets: The new members were not present to pick up their packets.

Field Trips: Paul reported that he contacted General Materials and that they were having problems with their new equipment so consequently are behind in their orders. It has been decided to postpone the field trip until February or March.

Paul received seven DVD's as a gift from the Dodrill Museum to our club which will be available for our members to check out through our library: "Getting to Know Gemstones", "Exotic & Phenomenal Gemstones", "The Gemstone Journey", "The Diamond Story", "The Pearl Story", "The Tanzanite Story", and "Three Precious Gems—Rubies, Emeralds, Sapphires".

An auction sale for Al Wallraven's material will be October 25, starting at 10:00 a.m., 2920 Shannon St., Bethany, with Vernon as auctioneer.

Announcements: The Show Committee will have its next meeting November 6, at Jim's Restaurant, 39th & Council. All members are invited to the meeting and to volunteer to help with the show. Ovetta announced that if possible when someone donates material for the silent auction to identify it and where it is from.

There is a sign-up sheet for the Christmas party which will be the first Friday of December. Need vegetables, salads and dessert dishes.

Wanda introduced our guest, Craig Thompson.

Displays: Connie Heffley brought pictures that were taken at the Elsing Museum field trip; Billie Marie Nedd brought amethyst specimens, antique pens and a rose rock picture.

Cookie volunteers for the November meeting are Bonnie Schiff, Lou Dorton; and kitchen help are Darla Wood and Ovetta Vermillion.

After the break for refreshments the rest of the DVD on Precious Metal Clay will be presented. The meeting adjourned.

Dottie Smith, Secretary

November Birthstone

Topaz

Topaz is a silicate mineral of aluminium and fluorine with the chemical formula $\text{Al}_2\text{SiO}_4(\text{F}, \text{OH})_2$. It is the birthstone of the month November. It crystallizes in the orthorhombic group and its crystals are mostly prismatic terminated by pyramidal and other faces, the basal pinacoid often being present. It has an easy and perfect basal cleavage, meaning that gemstones or other fine specimens have to be handled with care to avoid developing cleavage flaws. The fracture is conchoidal to uneven. Topaz has a hardness of 8, a specific gravity of 3.4–3.6, and a vitreous luster. Pure topaz is transparent but is usually tinted by impurities; typical topaz is wine or straw-yellow. They may be made white, gray, green, blue, pink or reddish-yellow and transparent or translucent.

Localities and occurrence

Topaz is commonly associated with silicic igneous rocks of the granite and rhyolite type. It typically crystallizes in granitic pegmatites or in vapor cavities in rhyolite lava flows like those at Topaz Mountain in western Utah. It may be found with fluorite and cassiterite. It can be found in the Ural and Ilmen mountains, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Czech Republic, Germany, Norway, Pakistan, Italy, Sweden, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, Flinders Island and the United States. Some clear topaz crystals from Brazilian pegmatites can reach boulder size and weigh hundreds of pounds. Crystals of this size may be seen in museum collections. The famous Braganza diamond is in most likelihood a topaz. The Topaz of Aurungzebe, observed by Jean Baptiste Tavernier measured 157.75 carats.

Etymology and historical and mythical usage

The name "topaz" is derived from the Greek (τῶν πάσις), the author of one of the first systematic treatises on minerals and gemstones dedicated two chapters on the topic in 1652.[5] In the Middle Ages the name topaz was used to refer to any yellow gemstone, but now the name is only properly applied to the silicate described above.

Many modern English translations of the Bible, including the King James Version mention *topaz* in Exodus 28:17 in reference to a stone in the Hoshen: "And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row." However, since these translations as *topaz* all derive from the Septuagint translation *topazi [os]*, which as mentioned above referred to a yellow stone that wasn't topaz, probably chrysolite, it should be borne in mind that topaz is not meant here.[6] The masoretic text (the Hebrew on which

most modern protestant bible translations of the Old Testament are based) has *pitdah* as the gem the stone is made from; *pitdah* is of unknown meaning, though scholars think it is related to an Assyrian word meaning *flashed*. There is a wide range of views among traditional sources about which tribe of the Israelites the stone refers to.

Yellow topaz is the traditional November birthstone, the symbol of friendship, and the state gemstone for the US State of Utah.

Blue topaz is the Texas state gemstone, often cut with the Lone Star cut - the Texas state gemstone cut showing a star in the heart of the gem.

Trip Report: North Carolina

We recently went on a trip for our 50th wedding anniversary. We spent the better part of a week in North Carolina visiting the gem mines around Ashville N.C.

The first mine we visited was a Sapphire mine just north of Canton N.C. where we meet some very nice people that owned the mine. We had a lot of fun digging through the dirt and washing our treasures in the slew. When we were leaving after our finds were safely tucked away the owner called down to his wife and said to tell the guy from Oklahoma not to leave until he could get down to where we were.

He brought down a 5 Gallon bucket full of rock that he said should have some nice stones in it. He had just broken up some large rocks at the mine and wanted to let us have them to see what we could find. The best part of that was that he gave them to us free of charge.

We also visited two ruby mines and an emerald mine. These mines also brought the dirt down to slew location and you bought bucket of the material and washed it out to find the stones in the matrix from the mine. We did not find any mines that would let you go inside to dig, due to people getting hurt in the past not to mention the cost of insurance.

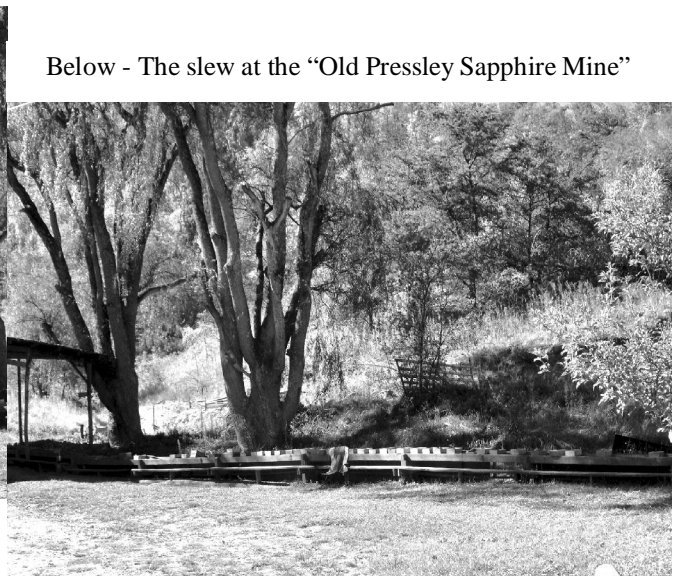
We had a wonderful time and plan to go again next year about the same time. The countryside was in full fall colors and it was a sight to see.

I'll let you know more about the gems when I start to work on them.

Vernon and Lou Dorton
Blanchard, OK



Above - The mine office at the "Old Pressley Sapphire Mine"



Below - The slew at the "Old Pressley Sapphire Mine"

The Digital Rockhound

by Tom Manners

I remember some years ago, while stationed in Washington, D.C., going to the Heathkit store and looking at a four bit computer. It was a marvelous looking piece of equipment with rows of shiny lights and flip switches on the front. There were two problems with this machine. First you had to build it from a kit and second if you couldn't write code to make it function, it was just a marvelous looking machine. That marvelous looking box has changed tremendously in the last 30 years.

I am now sitting at my desk working on this month's newsletter on a computer I put together from "off-the-shelf" parts. My wife has her computer on the desk in her office. We both have laptop computers so we can take our work with us where ever we go. We even took a laptop with us to Murfreesboro, AR on fall break. No, we could not get on line at the Crater of Diamonds State Park but we did take a few movies with us to watch in the evening on my computer.

Before we left Yukon, OK I checked the route I wanted to take on www.mapquest.com. This is only one of several route planning web sites that you can visit. I then went to www.kfor.com and www.weatherunderground.com to check the weather forecast. Next I went to www.craterofdiamondsstatepark.com to make our campground reservation. While at the Crater of Diamonds web site I was able to check what other minerals might be found at the park.

This is not the first time that I have used the World Wide Web (www.) to fill in the gap in my knowledge of our hobby. A year and a half ago I was introduced to Wire Wrapping. One of the demonstrators was Jim Meier of the Tulsa Rock & Mineral Society who showed me some of his work and I watched, fascinated by what he did. When I got back to Yukon I tried to find information on wire wrapping at the library and book stores. There was very little information to be had. That is when I turned to my trusty computer. I went on the internet and did a google search for wire wrapping. I was rewarded with more information than I could ever read and dozens of videos.

Just recently I received an e-mail from David Read, OMGS, passing on a web address. If you are going to go out on a rock hunt in Oklahoma, you might want to check out this web site, www.brightok.net/~rockman/Images/okindexd-n.htm. I had seen this site before, but had not thought about it for some time.

If you want to see what a particular mineral looks like and you don't have a specimen to compare it to, try looking at the International Gem Society Reference Library at <http://www.gemsociety.org/info/info.htm>. This site has some of the most beautiful photographs of rocks I have seen.

If you are in the market for some rough to work with, there are several places you can on the internet to order whatever kind of stone or supplies you wish to buy. There is of course the old standby, Ebay, but it is not the only place to make a purchase on line. For my wire I go to www.monsterslayer.com. because I can buy as much or as little bulk wire as I need. I also buy from www.firemountaingems.com and <https://www.riogrande.com>. This does not mean that these are the only places to buy supplies on line. For more suppliers addresses, pickup a copy of Rock and Gem Magazine and browse the pages. Almost every ad will list a web address.

A couple of other useful addresses for rockhounds are:

AFMS: <http://www.amfed.org>

RMFMS: <http://www.rmfmms.org>

There are numerous web sites that are of interest to the rock hound. I have only scratched the surface. Time and space will not allow me to list all of the sites I have saved in my favorites. I hope that if you have a computer sitting around the house, you will turn it on and become a "Digital Rock Hound" also.

OMGS Calendar

November 13 - OMGS Board of Directors Meeting

*November 20 – General Meeting, Program - Wire Wrapping Demonstration
by Craig Kime*

December 5 - OMGS Christmas Party

January 5 - Work night

January 8 - OMGS Board of Directors Meeting

January 15 - General Meeting, Program - TBA

If you have changes, corrections or additions to the OMGS Calendar, please e-mail me at trmanners@sbcglobal.net or call me at (405) 577-2029.

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