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# Arkansas Rockhound News

November 2011

Official Newsletter of the  
Central Arkansas Gem, Mineral and Geology Society

**CAGMAGS**

The Arkansas Rockhound News is published monthly by the **Central Arkansas Gem, Mineral, and Geology Society**

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**Website:** [www.centralarrockhound.org](http://www.centralarrockhound.org)

**Member of:** American Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies

Next meeting is January 24, 2012 at 6:30pm at the Terry Library. There is no meeting in December. Instead, we'll have our Christmas party December 10<sup>th</sup>. See details elsewhere in this newsletter!

Call James (501-568-0315), Dave (870-255-3679) or Obie (501-804-2331) to find out about the field trip plans.

2012 Officers:

**President: Mike Austen**  
[steelpony@aol.com](mailto:steelpony@aol.com)  
Phone 868-4553

**Vice President: Tom Sharp**  
[thom61847@yahoo.com](mailto:thom61847@yahoo.com)

**Past President: Jim Schenebeck**  
[jsjimstone@yahoo.com](mailto:jsjimstone@yahoo.com)

**Secretary/Treasurer: Lenora Murray**  
218 Old Hwy 11 South  
Hazen, AR 72064  
(870) 255-3679

Committees / Chairs:

Programs: Pearl Roth

Library: Ann Austen

Membership: Mike Austen

Field Trips: James Burns

Show Chair: Dave Murray

Editor: Bill Alcott

Club Contact: Ann Austen

Sunshine Chairman: Angelee Peeler

Junior Programs: Obe Willix

Webmaster: Bill Alcott

Time and Location of Meetings:  
4th Tuesday of the month (January-November)  
6:30 PM Terry Library, 2015 Napa Valley  
Drive, Little Rock, AR 7221  
(Non-smoking) Visitors are always welcome

**Membership Dues** \$15 Individual \$25 Family  
(Yearly)

**Mission Statement:** The Central Arkansas Gem, Mineral and Geology Society is dedicated to promoting interest in mineralogy and the related sciences, interest in lapidary and the related arts; to encourage field trips and the enjoyment of collecting and preserving minerals as they occur in nature, and the study of geological formations, especially those of our Natural State of Arkansas. We are a small group of people that enjoy getting together to share our common interests.

**2011 Meeting Schedule**

(Tentative dates pending availability of our meeting room)

Jan 24	Feb 28	Mar 27	Apr 24
May 22	Jun 26	Jul 24	Aug 28
Sep 25	Oct 23	Nov 27	

There is no meeting in December

**President's Message**



Another year is just about over except for the holidays, and the gifts, and the parties, and the gifts, and the traveling, and the gifts, and the cold weather, and the gifts, and the family reunions, and the gifts-----you get the idea. The club just had the last meeting for this year, another great one. We had a new member join the club, Patricia Dodson. I am not sure but that just might be a new member every month this year. I do know that the club has had a wealth of new faces this year.

The program by Cathy Riley on fossils was great. The best comment I heard was "you mean the cookie lady is giving the program." I said "yes she can bake, and has a masters degree." I would like to see more of our members give programs. We have a lot of smart people in the club that could share their knowledge. It is not that hard to do, just ask the cookie lady.

The election of club officers for 2012 was held. There were so many people wanting to run for office, and the campaign speeches were going on

and on. So in the interest of speeding things along, the old officers were voted in for another year. That brings us to the last and most important item, the Christmas party. The party will be Dec. 10TH at the home of the Peelers. Angelee asks that those who are planning to attend call her as soon as possible so she can plan on the amount of food needed. We would not want to see anyone go hungry. She is asking that you bring a side dish or desert. Also there will be a gift exchange, bring a rock related item not over \$5 if you wish to participate in the exchange. Guests can start arriving anytime after 4 PM. Their home is at 4801 North Cedar in North Little Rock. For more details or questions please contact Angelee Peeler at 501-758-1352.

Mike

## **MINUTES for the November 2011 Meeting**

The November meeting was called to order by President Mike Austen on Nov 22 at the Terry Library. There were 26 adults present. We had one new member: Paticia Dodson. Mike handed out many birthday rocks to November and December birthday folks. Two upcoming show dates are; Dec 2-4 in Indianapolis, and Dec. 10-11 in Franklin, Tennessee. Our next meeting will not be until Jan. 24, 2012. But our Holiday Party will be December 10.

**REPORTS:** The secretary-treasurer report for OCTOBER was approved as posted. It was also moved & seconded, and passed to pay all the end-of-year bills: to the Midwest Federation dues, the American Lands Association, our Website hosts, and North Little Rock for the spring swap at Burns Park. Our Librarian, Anne Austen, brought part of the library books available, and mentioned that we had many new books donated by Carl Hill, Tom Sharp and Jim Schenebeck. Thank you gentlemen! So the library has many items members can check out if you contact Anne. The field trip for Razor Rock Nov. 10 had to be cancelled due to the opening day of gun hunting season, but the trip will be rescheduled for early in 2012—hopefully February. Field trip chair James Burns will give details at the January meeting. Our next programs will be: January: Jerry Roth on

fluorite, February: the club auction, and March: Map Reading for Rockhounds by Bill Riley.

**Old Business:** The nominating committee: James Burns, George Gray-Major and Dave Murray presented the current slate of officers to serve for another term. It was moved and seconded to elect the current slate by acclamation: Officers for 2012 are: Mike Austen; President, Tom Sharp; Vice-President and Lenora Murray; Secretary-treasurer. The Christmas party will be Dec. 10 at Angelee and John Peeler's: 4801 N. Cedar, North Little Rock. Time is from about 4 to 8 PM. Angelee had maps to the house and a list to sign up for a dish to pass. The meal will be potluck so please contact her if you didn't sign up but plan to attend. Her cell phone is 501-944-5612, or leave a message at the house 501-758-1352. Members are encouraged to bring a small (\$5.00 or less) gift for a gift exchange if they wish.

**New Business:** No new business

**Show and Tell:** No one volunteered.

**Raffle:** The two best of showpieces went to Mike Austen, a Conichalcite from Mexico and George Gray-Major an Amethyst from China.

**Program:** Cathy Clegg-Riley gave a report on Conodonts, microfossils that are found in North Central Arkansas. She explained the steps she needed to complete her Masters degree: research, field work, laboratory work, and finally her conclusions. She explained each step so even us novice geology folks would understand. Her slide presentation showed collecting sites, and detailed the steps she took to collect, label, then analyze the material collected. She explained her hypothesis, what she found, and how she analyzed her results. The whole process took over 4 years. Her slides detailed the steps of getting the samples, breaking them up, soaking, dissolving, running things through a sieve, then a centrifuge. She mentioned the last steps that involved a magnetic separator and a binocular microscope that she couldn't really demonstrate to us. The different things she found were all microscopic (under 6 mm) so her slides had sketches as well as a blow up of actual parts of these extinct animals. But she had the bottles with

the conodonts (fishy teeth) she found. And the book she wrote detailing the whole process was quite impressive. It was really neat to see all the work that goes into what a geologist does! Thank you Cathy for a very fine program.

The meeting was adjourned for visiting and socializing after.

Respectfully submitted, Lenora Murray, secretary

### Members' Birthdays coming up

**December**  
Pearl Roth  
Mike Casey

**January**  
Carl Hill  
John Thaden

**Happy Birthday!**

## From the Editor's Desk

With one holiday behind us and another on the horizon, it's been fairly busy this month. At least I'm able to report that the club's webpage now has the newsletters posted at least as far back as I've been doing them, and some further back than that. I also wrote a step by step guide for accessing the website for future webmasters. Hopefully, whoever takes this job next can get on track a bit more quickly than I did. I'm planning to get some of the photos I've acquired during the past year posted on the website. For those of you who may not know where our website is, visit it at

[www.centralrockhound.org](http://www.centralrockhound.org)

For those of you who have mentioned problems accessing the website through AOL, my wife suggested this: Connect to the internet using AOL, but then minimize AOL and open one of the other web browsers such as Internet Explorer, Firefox or any of the others available. She hasn't used AOL for

a long time, so this hint may or may not be useful. If you try it and it clears up your problem, please let me know!

As a group, we don't seem to have a lot of communications amongst ourselves in between meetings. In an attempt to open these lines of communications, I set up a Yahoo group for the club. It's at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cagmags/>

Unless there's some objection, it's going to be open to CAGMAGS members only. To use it, just go to the page and hit the "Join this group" button. In the comments, please give me your real name so I know you're a member. Unlike the webpage, you'll each be able to chat with other members, post your pictures, brag about your latest adventure, and in short, just interact with the other folks! I don't know if there'll be any interest in such a venture, but I figured it was worth a shot!

I didn't hear back from anyone on the hardcopy list about the new mailing method, but I'm going to continue sending the newsletter out in an envelope.

As always, I need your stories, articles, photos and anything you think needs to go into this newsletter. Send them to me at [mister.bill@starband.net](mailto:mister.bill@starband.net).

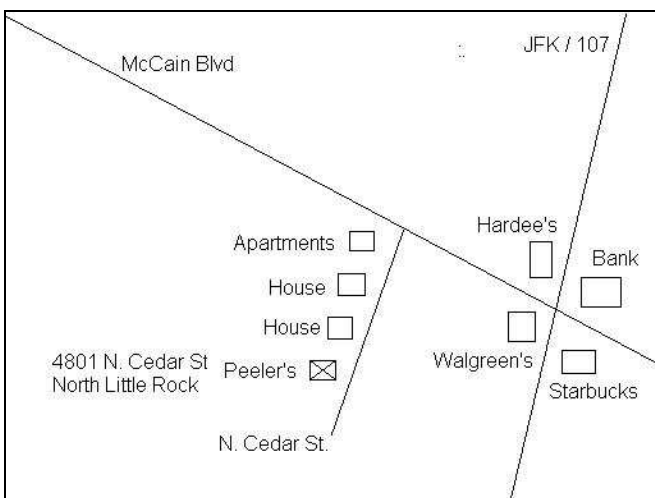
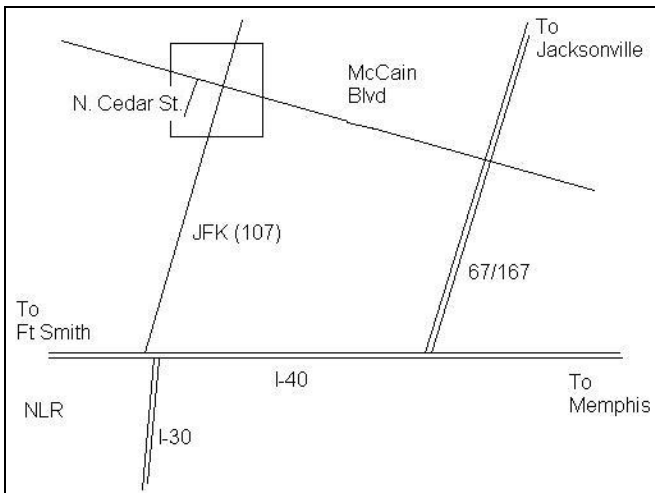
Thanks, and have a safe and Happy Holiday!  
Bill Alcott / Editor



**2012 DUES ARE NOW DUE!**  
**15\$ Individual / 25\$ Family**

# CHRISTMAS PARTY!

As mentioned several times in this newsletter already, there will be no meeting in December. Instead, we're having a Christmas party at the home of John and Angelee Peeler on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December. The maps below should get you there, but if you can find your way to the intersection of JFK and McCain, just go west on McCain, up the hill and take the first left onto N. Cedar St. The Peeler's house is the third on the right, and has a brick driveway. The address is 4801 N. Cedar St, and the phone is (home) 501-758-1352 or (cell) 501-944-5612. The party is from 4pm 'til 8pm and is potluck, but please contact Angelee if you're coming and haven't already let her know.



## Polishing Jade from LapDigest #285 MSG2

I started researching jade polishing several years ago when I took over our club shop. I could get a polish on jade but trying to tell someone else how to do it didn't thrill me much. What I found, when I started reading, was that most authors had the same problem I had, they could do it, but telling someone else how was hard. The problem, it seems to me, is that most of the directions are "technique sensitive", and telling someone that "this piece of jade needs more pressure than that one", or some other such description, isn't easy to explain in print. What I wanted was some way of polishing jade that I could tell someone and not have to worry about their being able to do it, regardless of the quality of their jade.

I had better luck talking to cutters about their methods than reading about it. Al Youngquist of "Jade and More" pointed me at Rapid Polish on wood. I found it worked better than anything else I had ever used.

At this point I set up a series of experiments to see what the other things affected the polish. The most common thread in the books seems to be: "sand it dry on a worn 600 grit belt." I didn't have a used one so I used a new one. Using the belt wet produced essentially the same results as the diamond belt. But dry, the surface started to look like it was almost ready to polish. I also tried a new 400 grit belt. The difference between the 400 and 600 was visible but small.

My next step was to find a finer grit silicon carbide. Rio Grande carries 3M 15 and 9 micron belts and is the only source of finer grit belts I have found. Use their "micron graded," not the "Trizact" belts. The "Trizact" belt is designed not to load and won't work. If you are using a Diamond Pacific "Genie" or similar machine, sanding disks on a rubber backed disk work fine. I found a supply of 1200 grit PSA backed 6 inch disks at Red Hill Corporation. I have also used 1200 grit paper and glued it to a Crystalite "Flexodisc." Dry sanding isn't speed sensitive but you may want to keep a pan of water handy to keep the jade cool enough to stay on the dop stick.

What I did find, however, is that the differences are small and a "worn" 600 grit belt is about the

same as a 1200 grit belt new. I was able to follow a dry 400, 600, or 1200 grit belt with the Rapid Polish and get a good polish with little or no orange peel. It was just a case of being able to improve the finish with the added steps.

I think the sanding surface is being loaded by jade particles whose size is determined by the grit size. This jade surface then "burnishes" the jade cab's surface. I think that the surface of the "burnished" cab is harder than the "un-burnished" jade. This harder surface is then less subject to orange peel. This difference in hardness, if real, is small. I believe that this surface change is what has led to some of the different jade polishing methods. If the time you spend on the polishing buff is short enough after the dry sanding the jade is less sensitive to how it is polished. But if you leave the jade on the buff long enough you may go through the "hard" surface and get orange peel. The Rapid Polish never seemed to go through the "hard" surface.

I have tried different polishing pads and found the differences to be visible but small. There is an area where different jades seem to respond differently. Bill Myers, from the company that produces Rapid Polish, suggested using the paper side of a sanding disk. I tried that and found the results about the same as wood disks, although perhaps easier to acquire. I don't think the pad life would be as good either. The harder leathers helps keep the surface smoother but the softer ones seem to give a brighter polish. I think the answer is: don't worry about it.

I tried other polishes after the initial Rapid Polish and found that Reynolds POLY-AL F improved the polish. This is a .2 micron alumina available from Diamond Pacific. Other polishes in the .1 to .2 micron range would probably work as well.

Rapid Polish also isn't rapid. It takes about three or four times as long for me to polish a jade cab as other polishes on other stones, it just does a better job. Many cutters are now recommending adding some vinegar to the polish. I have tried adding some to the polish and have a small spray bottle to spray the polishing disk. Sometimes I think it helps, sometimes I think it doesn't. At least it doesn't seem to hurt anything, give it a try. It does seem to deteriorate the leather pads faster. Ken Fitzgerald of Fitzcorp, Inc. recommends mixing any alumina one-to-one by weight with liquid dish-washing soap and

use as though it were diamond paste. Fitzcorp has done extensive laboratory testing of polishing compounds and plans to publish a book soon on tumbling and polishing -- watch for it.

So, after all this, what do I recommend?

Diamond: Don't sand past 1200 or 1800 grit. Silicon carbide: Sand through 600 wet. Dry sand on 600 grit until the jade burnishes. Polish with Rapid Polish on whatever pad you have. If you are happy, stop. If you want to try for a better polish, start by getting some 1200 grit silicon carbide disks or belts. If that isn't good enough, try the different types of wood and/or leather polishing disks. Try other polishes after the Rapid Polish, sometimes you can improve the finish.

I know there are other ways of polishing jade but most are sensitive to the type of jade being polished and technique being used. This method has proved to be the least sensitive of any I have yet found.

The companies mentioned can be reached at:

Crystalite Corp. 8400 Green Meadows Dr.  
Westerville OH 43081 (800)777-2894

Diamond Pacific Tool Corp., 2620 W. Main St.,  
Barstow, CA 92311 (800)253-2954

Fitzcorp, Inc. P. O. Box 565 Point Blank, TX 77364  
(409)377-2409

Jade and More, P.O. Box 2381 Castro Valley, CA  
94546 (510)538-7136

Myers Rapid Polish, P.O. Box 646, Keller, Texas  
76244 (817)379-5662

Red Hill Corporation, P.O. Box 4234 Gettysburg,  
PA 17325 (717)337-1419

Rio Grande, 7500 Bluewater Rd. NW, Albuquerque,  
NM 87121 (800)545-6566

Dick Friesen  
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## Earth's Disturbances

(What causes earthquakes & volcanic activity?)

By C. E. Johnson

The conventional answer about earthquakes is that they are sudden movements of adjustments in the earth's crust or ocean's crust, in response to strain or tension, but this raises a few questions, such as what causes the strain or tension?

Of course, there are always natural strains and tensions among mountainous rock formations in the earth's crusts and oceanic crusts which are assumed to be the cause of more or less "local" quakes, but these can't account for our major "fault-lines" quakes, especially those near the boundaries of our continental crusts.

Believe it or not, our continents are moving—slowly to be sure—and have moved persistently since they were formed many millions of years ago, and probably will continue to do so for many more ages; and it is believed that this movement is the cause of our major quakes.

The earth's continents are thick crusts of rock formations believed to be on a "floating" semi-plastic base about 60 miles thick (lithosphere), which are being moved about by "sea-floor-spreading" in volcanically active areas in the oceans' crusts.

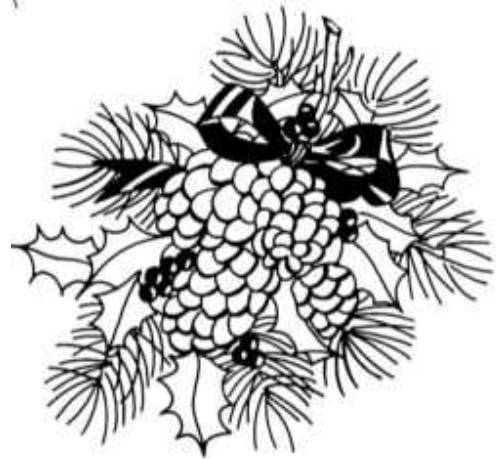
The "sea-floor-spreading" is caused by the upheaval mountain-building volcanic action in the thinner oceans' crusts, which spreads apart the ocean floor, which pushes against the continental plates and displaces them. This is very persistent around the world. The boundaries of the moving sections mark what earth scientists call "plates", and the processes involved are called "plate tectonics". The United States is part of the North American Plate.

What causes our volcanic activity? This activity originated when the earth was "born" in its initial fiery-molten state. As the earth cooled off, a "crust" developed which eventually sealed up much of the molten material underground, but this "magma" material obviously is still active deep underground and obviously some of it reaches the continents' surfaces and ocean floors occasionally, as volcanoes and lava flows.

More "magma" is regenerated within the inner zones of our planet under the crusts by heat and movement applied by "convective-currents" in our earth's "mantle" zone, and this convective-current action also contributes to the continents movements.

Much of the earth's inner heat is believed to originate by radioactive "decay" in deeper zones around the earth's core, and heat in the upper zones of the earth is also generated by internal compression & friction.

In addition to the above generally accepted theories, it can be logically assumed that even the earth's rotation and revolution may also be a significant enhancement to our continental movements (or "drift") and volcanic activities.



## Wonders Of A Crystal

A crystal is one of the strangest objects of nature. It is not alive, yet it grows. A crystal attracts the same kind of materials of which it is composed, arranges them with great accuracy in geometrical forms, cements the parts together and holds them. Place a crystal in a liquid, or vapor composed of the same ingredients as the crystal and the process of accumulation immediately begins. If a crystal was broke in two parts and placed in a bath of liquefied crystal, the broken surface will be repaired and each part will grow into another crystal, providing the other conditions favorable for crystal growth are present.

Even after a crystal has been worn until it is but a rounded grain of sand, it will speedily become a



crystal again if placed in a solution containing the ingredients of which it is composed. There is no known limit to the ability of a crystal thus to repair itself and resume its growth.

Under a microscope a crystalline solution can be seen forming into crystals, and it is a wonderful sight. First, innumerable dark spots form in the fluid; they stand still and then begin to move. It is soon seen that the movement arranges the spots in straight lines, like beads. The beads speedily coalesce into rods, and the rods arrange themselves into layers until a crystal is created. The process proceeds so rapidly that it is almost impossible to follow closely.

Rock Scoop 2\01 via Dusty Rocks 7/01  
via Golden Spike News 8/01

## Snow Place Like Home –

America's new research station at the South Pole officially opened on January 12, 2008. It took almost 20 years to design and build, and cost \$174 million. It will house researchers from fields as diverse as neutrino astronomy, cosmology, seismology, and atmospheric physics. The 1st polar base was established in 1957. Eventually, it succumbed to the elements and was buried under years of snowdrift. It was followed by a geodesic dome, an unheated structure filled with small shipping containers that served as buildings. That, too, is now partially buried and is scheduled for demolition. The latest building is designed to stave off fate of its predecessors by using the very elements against themselves. The building rests on 36 steel columns, elevating it four meters above surface of the ice. Using detailed computer simulations, its designers have arranged its orientation and aerodynamic exterior to accelerate galeforce winds that blow over the pole and channel them underneath the station. The resulting gusts scour the ice surface, depositing snow on the other side instead of letting it build up against the station itself. When snowdrifts build up in about 15 years, hydraulic jacks will raise the building and add 30 years to the base's life. Many comforts of home are here: a full-sized gym for volleyball and basketball,

an exercise room, music room, arts & crafts room, and library. Lounges with tv's, pool table and supply of beer and Scotch whiskey. A hydroponic greenhouse will grow fresh vegetables all year. 750 people will pass through the base, and each will have luxury of a private room with phone and internet connection. One drawback: they will be allowed to shower only twice a week.

*-From the Economist, January 19-25, 2008*

## A Rock By Any Other Name...

*[From Rock Chip Reporter, FarWest Lapidary & Gem Society, Coos Bay, OR (Feb. 2004); via Gems from the Redwoods and Gem Time.]*

**Leaverite:** Also known as Dropite, Junkite and Crudite. This type of rock should be discarded immediately. It constitutes 90% of most rocks. This includes Sourgrape Agate and Mutilated Quartz.

**Sack Rock:** This is material that is stuffed into a sack but falls from the top as the bearer struggles back to the car. If taken home, it will be tossed into a corner and be forgotten.

**Wonder Rock:** You always wonder why you brought it home, and where you found it.

**Braggin' Rock:** Also called Pocket or Eating Rock. This material is licked, rubbed, spit upon, or fondled until it assumes a near polish and is frequently passed around for admiration.

**%\*^&# Rock:** A large, heavy, possibly angular rock that falls on your foot as soon as you have removed your hiking boots.



**Happy Holidays!**