



# Arkansas Rockhound News

November 2012

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**

Colors: Blue and White

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

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

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Programs: George Gray-Major

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!

*See the schedule on the next page for the date of the  
next meeting.*

Call James (501-568-0315) or Jerry Johnson (479-  
876-1646) to find out about the field trip plans.

**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.

## 2013 Meeting Schedule

(Tentative dates pending availability of our meeting room)

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

There is no meeting in December

## President's Message



This year is almost gone, so I thought it was time for a 'State of the Club' report. I declare that CAGMAGS is not only alive and well, but it is growing bigger and better every day. The club had a successful show, great programs, neat field trips, lots of new members, and more people volunteering than ever before. Thank you to everyone for a job well done.

The November meeting was the last for this year, the next one will be January 22, 2013. An election was held and new officers chosen for next year.

<p><b>Mike Austen; President</b> <b>Stephanie Blandin; Vice President</b> <b>Sarah Dodson; Secretary / Treasurer</b></p>
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will serve you next year. A big round of applause goes to out going officers Lenora Murray and Tom Sharp for their efforts the past few years.

David Hodge will be hosting the Christmas party this year at his condo's club house. The party will be Saturday, December 8 from 1 PM till 5 PM, with the dinner starting at 3 PM. It will be at Round

River Condos, 2504 River Front Drive, in Little Rock. David can be contacted at 501-837-6713. It will be a pot luck meal and you are asked to bring a side dish or desert. Any questions about what food to bring should go to Stephanie at 501-590-5760 or Ann at 501-868-4553. There will also be a gift exchange, if you want to take part, please bring a gift in the \$5 to \$10 range. The gift can be rock related or not.

I hope to see everyone at the party, if not I will see you next year. Club dues are now due so pay up and do not get on the naughty list. Happy holidays to all of you, and may Santa put some neat rocks in your socks.

Mike

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## Minutes of Central Arkansas Gem Mineral and Geology Society October 23, 2012 (Last month's)

The regular October meeting was called to order by Mike Austen, with 28 people in attendance. This secretary lost her notes, and her printer. So this is a short summary of what I thought was important: There were very few shows coming up. There were three birthdays. The Secretary-treasurer report was approved as posted. Lit librarian had new books and DVD's for us to check out. James Burns reported on the great field trip to Razor Rock, with 41 people, counting our members and those from the Memphis club. Some members brought their neatest rocks from Razor Rock for show and tell. A motion was passed to send \$50.00 to the Razor Rock manager to show our appreciation for the many great field trips he provided. James Burns will get Lenora the name & address of where to send the check.

The nominating committee gave a report, and then a nomination from the floor gave us the slate of three officers for 2013 to be voted on in November: President Mike Austen, Vice President Stephanie Blandin and Secretary-treasurer Sarah Dodson. A discussion was held regarding splitting the duties of Secretary and Treasurer, but no action was taken.

The Show Chair Dave Murray gave a wrap-up of our 40th Annual Show. He and Mike Austen both thanked all the many volunteers who made the show a success. Most of the vendors have already paid at least a deposit for next year. Lenora provided statements regarding show income and expense, and attendance, participation, volunteers and so on for the past 4 years .

David Hodge is organizing the Christmas party , which will be held at Round River Condos. Stephanie again agreed to organize the food information. A motion that the club provide meat and soft drinks for the party was passed. More information will be provided in November.

Show and tell had many folks showing off finds. The raffle was held—and I lost the names of the two best of show winners. Sorry folks.

Our program was a very informative talk and slide presentation about the Crater of Diamonds by Mike Howard. As usual, his presentation was quite interesting. My notes are lost, but I know he talked about the history and the geology of this unique area, as well as the attempts to mine the diamonds commercially. He explained why they won't be mined for commercial use, and showed how they've been 'worn' by nature –so the diamonds found are usually quite small. But, that's good for Arkansas, as the Diamond Mine is a major state attraction. Thanks

again Mike for another great talk!

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned, and folks had time to visit before heading home.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lenora Murray Secretary

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**Minutes of Central Arkansas Gem  
Mineral and Geology Society  
NOVEMBER 27, 2012 (This month's)**

The November meeting was called to order by President Mike, with 30 members, including 2 student members, present. There was one birthday rock handed out. No new upcoming events were on the schedule. Our next meeting will be Jan 22, 2013. Mike showed an article about Thomas Nogin, from Hot Springs, who is recording a set of TV shows that will involve his travels all over the world in search of gems and minerals. No one had any upcoming shows or other rock-related activities to report on.

As this secretary's printer just quit, the secretary and treasurer reports were not available. A motion was passed to pay all the end of year bills: Midwest Federation, Insurance, website, Mineralogical Record, ALAA dues, and any other customary end-of-year expenses. Our librarian, Ann, mentioned books and magazines still available for check out. The Field trip to the Martin-Marietta Quarry in Magnet Cove this month was discussed. We had 18 members in the caravan, including some who joined at the restaurant just before the trip. We all found many really interesting specimens and had a great time with perfect weather! (I personally hope we get to go back sometime soon.) Due to unknown weather conditions no club field trip is planned for December or

January .Our January program details are still not complete.

**Old business:** The nominating committee's slate of officers is: Mike Austen President. Stephaine Blandin Vice President, and Sarah Dodson secretary-treasurer. There were no other nominations from the floor. The three were elected by acclamation.

In other old Business: David Hodge gave us details for the Christmas party:  
**WHEN:** Saturday December 8 --- arrive whenever you choose, eat around 3 PM.  
**WHERE:** Round Rover Condos: 2501 Riverfront Drive, (past the Verizon headquarters on the way to the Big Dam Bridge.) Stephanie had a list so members could sign up for the potluck. There will be a "Dirty Santa" exchange—so bring your wrapped "rock related" item -- around \$10 value—for some fun. The secretary had copies of the club's Constitution and By-Laws available so we could discuss the split of secretary and treasurer positions. (As per last month's request) But the topic was tabled until further notice. Dues for 2013 are now due if you haven't paid at the show or at the last 3 meetings.

**New Business:** Mike appointed a committee to audit the books after Dec 31, but before Sarah takes over as treasurer. The members will be Ann Austen, Pat Kissire and Sharon Watson. The raffle was held with the best of shows going to Barry Findley – a great opal in matrix and Anita Gray-Major: a phrenite on druzy from India.

**Show and Tell:** Some member brought some of our prizes from the field trip. I hope the many minerals got identified for some of us. (over 88 minerals have been documented from this site). The most unique were the cabochons made by Bill

Alcott—they are 'pseudolucite' with ruby jack, I think. QUITE interesting!

Our program was on "Fossils of Arkansas" by Angela Chandler. Her talk and slide show illustrated the many fossils found, and where one is more likely to find them. The fossils are a direct contact with the past, and give us a glimpse of what life was like in this area millions of years ago. She divided the state into areas based on the age of the rocks on the surface. Each area had its unique fossils: the far north had the oldest fossils, but the stromatolites and gastropods, and the microscopic conodonts there are hard to find.

The most fossils are in the Springfield soil area, from the Mississippian era, including the famous crinoids, brachiopods, and nautiloids. Trilobites can be found, but are rare, as are the shark's teeth in this area. The third area around the Boston Mountains are in the 'Fayetteville shale'. Not as many fossils are in this area, but the types include Archimedes, coral, brachiopods, and traces of fossils—the evidence something lived there, but decayed when it died. The Arkansas River valley doesn't have many fossils, as this area was under really deep water. But the far southwest corner of the state has part of the Gulf Coastal Plain, which is the only place in Arkansas where dinosaur remains and 'tracks' have been found. Near Malvern, there is some amber, but quite a dark red or brown, not the light translucent color usually found elsewhere. The last stop was the Mississippi River Plain, where someone found some ice age mammoth tusks, and mastodon remains, which are on display at AUS Beebe. There's some petrified wood, and fossils there as well. Thank you ANGELA for a very interesting and educational presentation!!

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned, with plenty of time for people to socialize .

Respectfully submitted,  
Lenora Murray, Secretary

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I got through a month with no complaints on the newsletter, so maybe I'm getting the hang of this. Stephanie Blandin provided another article for our newsletter, hopefully her new duties as VP won't slow her down on these! George Gray Major sent in an article on his trip to The Columbia Gem and Mineral Society's 45th Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show. Lenora sent me both the October and November Minutes. In case y'all want to help out with articles and/or pictures for future issues, you can send them to me at:

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(501) 882-2526 (home)  
[Mister.bill@starband.net](mailto:Mister.bill@starband.net)

If you have an item you'd like photographed, or an article you want scanned and don't have the equipment, just let me know before the next meeting and I'll do it right there at the meeting.

I got my act together earlier this month and actually went on a field trip! On November 10<sup>th</sup>, about 20 of us met up at the Malvern McDonald's sporting hard hats and steel toe

boots. A short drive across the highway brought us to the check-in station of Jones Mill Quarry.

We were met by a company representative whose name I didn't catch who got us signed in, then took us on a tour of the



quarry. He pointed out areas to stay away from, hazards to avoid, and barriers to obey. He gave us a short but to the point safety brief, then turned us loose to explore the quarry. That's one big hole in the ground, folks! We all started out in one central location, but



then gradually spread out. Seems like every few feet the variety of rocks changed.



Fluorite and pyrite were available all over the place. As folks explored, the word went out as to what they were finding.



One area had hundreds of rocks with little cavities lined with tiny crystals.

Other places had black garnets. David Hodge found an interesting piece that he gave me



that Mike Howard later identified for me as garnet pseudo leucite syenite. What a mouthful! It slabbed and cabbed nicely, though! I'm sure other treasures were found by folks, but I was having too much fun collecting to keep track. Hopefully we didn't haul out too much rock that we won't be invited back. I'd like to go again!

I'd sure like someone with a lot more smarts than me to fill in the details and maybe a few pictures of their finds.

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## **Travels with the Gray Major's**

On the morning of Friday, Nov. 16th while visiting in the home of the Rev. Dr. Ernie Pollock, my dear friend from Boy Scouting days, we drove over to the Shriner's Jamil Temple in Columbia, S.C. The Columbia Gem and Mineral Society's 45th Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show was the object of our outing. Man, what an impressive show! I guess we spent probably a good three hours looking over the 26 dealer's booths of everything from finished exquisite jewelry to beautiful Mineral specimens to fantastic Fossil specimens that any collector would be proud to show off in their collection. They had club members demonstrating wire wrapping, faceting gems, cabbing, cracking geodes and even a flint knapper making arrow points continually while we were there. Their show ran through Sunday afternoon.

The show dealers set up their booths on Thursday assisted by club members followed by a potluck dinner for the dealers put on by the club members! ( Nice idea!)

The Columbia Gem and Mineral Society has 160 members; 139 adults and 21 children. They hold their monthly meetings

at the McKissick Museum Auditorium at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. I was interested to learn that their club even has a workshop with the club library, rock saws, faceting and cabochon machines for the club members use. Their club was formed in 1965 as an amateur hobby club with eight charter members.

Two days later, while visiting with friends in Marietta, GA, we drove up to Cartersville, GA, a short 41 mile drive away to the Tellus Science Museum. From the time you walk in the front door, in front of you in the Great Hall is a huge Dinosaur Skeleton. I might add that you walk right by the fantastic Gift Shop on the way into the Great Hall. To your Left you first encounter the Planetarium. Next you will enter the Weinman Mineral Gallery with the nicest collection of Gems and Minerals I've seen outside of the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. You will go next into the Fossil Gallery containing complete skeletons of quite a number of prehistoric creatures and with a huge collection of fossil specimens including an extensive exhibit of fossils from Georgia. Off of the Fossil Gallery you will find the Gem Panning area and the Fossil Dig areas set up for kids! Following those exhibits you will go into the Science In Motion Gallery, the Special Exhibits Gallery and the Collins Family "My Big Backyard". They also have a very nice Theater and Banquet Hall with an attached Café. I can't say enough about the quality and the quantity of fossil material in the Gift Shop. I heartily recommend anyone going in this part of the country put this Museum of your list of sights "not to miss"!

George & Anita Gray Major

## IS THERE A FIRE OR TREE IN MY AGATE?

An agate is a common semi-precious type of chalcedony and is the compact, microcrystalline variety of quartz. It has a hardness of 7. Fire agate has inclusions of reddish to brown hematite that give an internal iridescence (the reflection of light from internal elements of a stone, yielding a rainbow-like play of colors) to polished stones.



Moss agate is white or gray with brown, black or green dendrites (moss or tree-like inclusions) suggestive of vegetable growth. These dendrites are not organic but inclusions of other minerals, most often iron, manganese oxides or chlorite. Moss agate with brown inclusions is sometimes called "Mocha Stone". Indian moss agate often has green, mosslike dendrites.



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Sweetwater river area of Wyoming is characterized by fine, black dendrites. Dendrites in the moss agate can be included during or after the agates' formation.



From: *Rock & Gem* (Smithsonian)

Stephanie Blandin (2012)

## "Bench Tips" by Brad Smith OCHRE APPLICATOR

Yellow ochre is used when you want to be sure the solder will not flow onto an area of your piece while you're soldering on another area. The only problem with ochre is coming up with a good way to store and apply it. I like recycled nail polish bottles. They seal well and have a built-in brush. Just clean them out with a little acetone or nail polish remover, and they're ready to go.

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*"Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" is now available as an e-book for Kindle and Nook readers. Free apps allow it to be read on most phones, tablets, and home computers.*

*The book can be found at several locations:*

*Kindle edition -*

*www.amazon.com/dp/B00A5ELDRU*

*Nook edition -*

*www.bn.com/w/?ean=2940015848915*

*Print edition - www.createspace.com/3976439*

*Makes a good holiday present for friends who do jewelry.*

## SANDING/POLISHING IN TIGHT PLACES

Often you'll need to sand or polish an area that's impossible to reach with even a small wheel on a flexshaft. Other times it might be the bottom of a pocket or inside bottom corner of a box that needs to be finished. One trick for these nit-picky jobs may be left over from your last Chinese dinner - a chopstick.

I've found quite a few uses for these in the shop. Prepare the tip by simply sawing it off at a 45 degree angle. Then apply whatever abrasive grit you will need for the job or hold a strip of sandpaper around the end. Loose grit can be held onto the tip with a bit of vaseline or oil. Tripoli or rouge can be just rubbed onto the end of the chopstick.

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*More Bench Tips by Brad Smith are at  
facebook.com/BenchTips/ or  
yahoogroups.com/group/BenchTips/*

## 2012 CAGMAGS CHRISTMAS PARTY!



The club potluck party will be held Saturday, December 8, from 1 PM until 5 PM in the Round River Condominium clubhouse. The location is 2504 Riverfront Drive in Little Rock. If you need directions you may call David Hodge at 501-837-6713. You should receive all of this information next week in the newsletter.

We have a great start on the menu - the following have been signed up for already -

Ham, drinks and ice (provided by the club)

Roasted turkey  
Cranberry sauce  
Cranberry / Koolwhip salad  
Mashed potatoes & gravy  
Deviled eggs  
Stuffing  
Sweet potatoes  
Corn salad  
Green beans  
Mac & cheese  
Rolls  
Potato salad  
Pumpkin pie  
Other pies and/or cake (unspecified)

The club will also provide plates, forks, cups, napkins etc.

You are welcome to bring anything omitted from this list or surprise us with a favorite dish.

It would be nice to know how many people might show up for the party so let us know if you plan to attend by next Thursday so we can pass along a head count to those

preparing dishes and providing supplies.

See you at the party!!!

Mike & Ann Austen

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