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# Arkansas Rockhound News

October 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**

Colors: Blue and White

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

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

Next meeting is November 22, 2011 at 6:30pm at the Terry Library

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

2011 Officers:

**President: Mike Austen**

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**Past President: Jim Schenebeck**

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**Secretary/Treasurer: Lenora Murray**

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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**

Jan 11	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 26
May 24	Jun 28	Jul 26	Aug 23
Sep 27	Oct 25	Nov 22	

There is no meeting in December

**President's Message**



The October meeting was awesome! There was a large crowd and six new members that signed up at the meeting. Excitement and energy filled the room, at times I did not know what to do next. I only regret that I could not spend more time talking one on one with the new members. I just hope we can keep this rush going all year long. One new member is on the UALR faculty, so our club will be in closer contact with the university and their geology club in the future. This will be great for our club, with potential for new field trips and programs. The next and last meeting for this year is November 22nd. The program will be on micro fossils of Arkansas by Cathy Riley. There will also be the election for 2012 club officers. If you are interested in an elected position, or helping out on a committee, now is the time to step up and help the club. This is your club and it will only be as great as you make it. The final plans for the club Christmas party will also be discussed so make sure you attend.

Mike

## **MINUTES for the October Meeting of Central Ark. Gem, Mineral and Geology Society**

The meeting started with Pearl Roth giving a program on caves with slides and discussion of cave formations. Some of the caves covered were Cave of the Mounds and Crystal Cave – Wisconsin; Cave of the Winds – Colorado near Williams Cannon and Garden of the Gods; Marianna Caverns – Florida; Ruby Falls – Tennessee; and Carlsbad Cavern, LuRay Caverns and Caverns of Sonora – Texas. Thanks Pearl, for driving from Hot Springs (Gerald was sick and could not come – he is better however).

The meeting was called to order. There were 28 adults and 1 junior present. Six visitors attended: Tim Gayle, David Hodges, Kristin Jones Robb, Stephanie Blandin, Michael DenAngelis, and Jim Paynor. They all became members.

Minutes and Treasurer's report were accepted as printed.

Ann had the new Mineralogical Record and the Rock and Gem magazines.

The next meeting will be Nov 22nd and our last meeting of the year. Elections for next year will be held. The program will be Cathy Riley on Arkansas Micro fossils. This will be a report on her paper for her Geology Degree.

The club Christmas Party will be December 10th at the Peeler's. More information will be coming. It will be Potluck (club will furnish the meat). We will trade gifts (under \$5).

Bill Alcott was presented a plaque for Best Exhibit Box at the 2011 show. Great Job, Bill.

The next field trip will be to RazorRock, the 2nd Saturday of November (Nov. 12). James will coordinate the trip with the students from UALR. Details can be had by calling James.

George Gray-Major has agreed to take the Program Chair for next year. Contact him if you can give a program or know of someone who will.

Doug Stone brought another box of stones from his summer trip for show and tell.

Best of Show went to Randy Worsham – Apophyllite and Doug Stone - dolphin.

Submitted by:

Pat Kissire

Acting Secretary

### **Members' Birthdays coming up**

#### **November**

David Dodson  
Angelee Peeler  
Toben Bennett  
Mary Bolin  
Roger Freeze  
Marta Limberg  
Gwen Lum  
Dale Penrod  
Kelly Roberts  
Randy Worsham

#### **December**

Pearl Roth  
Mike Casey

**Happy Birthday!**

## **From the Editor's Desk**

The upcoming November meeting is probably one of, if not THE most important meeting of the year. It's our annual elections. This is your chance to at least voice your opinion on the leadership of the club, or to REALLY make a statement and run for one of the positions. Those of you who don't vote are apparently willing to let everyone else make the choices for you.

We'll also be discussing the plans for the upcoming Christmas party. So far, we know when and where and that the club will furnish the meat (see the minutes of last meeting, found in this issue).

Last month there was a classified ad placed by a gentleman out in Conway. I wouldn't normally make any comments about a classified ad, but he sent me a letter with more info, more items and a price reduction. Enough new information that I decided a trip to Conway was in order. Folks, if you have ever thought about owning an 18" slab saw, now is the time! Mr. Abbott has reduced the price to \$399, that's less than a quarter of the price of a comparable parts kit, and about one tenth the price of a new 18" saw. Yes, it has a wooden cabinet, but from what I saw, it's held up to years of service very well. Inside, it looks very similar to my Lortone 18"

with the exception of having a separate motor for the power feed. I didn't see it cut, but I did hear and see it powered up and it sounded smooth as silk. There was a little confusion over the other item he listed last month. The Raytech 15" vibrating lap INCLUDES two 15" grooved aluminum pans, a bumper ring, a polish pad and a grit kit all for \$357.50. An additional smooth pan is available for \$64.00.

I decided it was going to be too much work to list the other items he submitted, so I bought them. If you have any interest at all in either of these two items, please contact Eli Abbott at (501) 548-6235.

I had a few comments about the last newsletter that the pictures of the show were too small. I completely agree. What do y'all want me to do about it? I can (1) select a few of the pictures from the many that were available, (2) put larger pictures and increase pages and file size of this newsletter, or (3) spread the picture from the show across the 11 issues of the year. This is YOUR newsletter, tell me what you want!

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 month!  
Bill Alcott / Editor

## **Food for thought! American Christmas gifts**

Christmas 2011 -- Birth of a New Tradition

As the holidays approach, the giant Asian factories are kicking into high gear to provide Americans with monstrous piles of cheaply produced goods -- merchandise that has been produced at the expense of American labor. This year will be different. This year Americans will give the gift of genuine concern for other Americans. There is no longer an excuse that, at gift giving time, nothing can be found that is produced by American hands. Yes there is!

It's time to think outside the box. Who says a gift needs to fit in a shirt box, wrapped in Chinese produced wrapping paper? Everyone -- yes EVERYONE gets their hair cut. How about gift

certificates from your local American hair salon or barber?

Gym membership? It's appropriate for all ages who are thinking about some health improvement.

Who wouldn't appreciate getting their car detailed? Small, American owned detail shops and car washes would love to sell you a gift certificate or a book of gift certificates.

Are you one of those extravagant givers who think nothing of plunking down the Benjamins on a Chinese made flat-screen? Perhaps that grateful gift receiver would like his driveway sealed, or lawn mowed for the summer, or driveway plowed all winter, or games at the local golf course.

There are a bazillion owner-run restaurants -- all offering gift certificates. And, if your intended isn't the fancy eatery sort, what about a half dozen breakfasts at the local breakfast joint. Remember, folks this isn't about big National chains -- this is about supporting your home town Americans with their financial lives on the line to keep their doors open.

How many people couldn't use an oil change for their car, truck or motorcycle, done at a shop run by the American working guy?

Thinking about a heartfelt gift for mom? Mom would LOVE the services of a local cleaning lady for a day.

My computer could use a tune-up, and I KNOW I can find some young guy who is struggling to get his repair business up and running.

OK, you were looking for something more personal. Local crafts people spin their own wool and knit them into scarves. They make jewelry, and pottery and beautiful wooden boxes.

Plan your holiday outings at local, owner operated restaurants and leave your server a nice tip. And, how about going out to see a play or ballet at your hometown theatre.

Musicians need love too, so find a venue showcasing local bands.

Honestly, people, do you REALLY need to buy another ten thousand Chinese lights for the house? When you buy a five dollar string of light, about fifty cents stays in the community. If you have those kinds of bucks to burn, leave the mailman, trash guy or babysitter a nice BIG tip.

You see, Christmas is no longer about draining American pockets so that China can build another

glittering city. Christmas is now about caring about US, encouraging American small businesses to keep plugging away to follow their dreams. And, when we care about other Americans, we care about our communities, and the benefits come back to us in ways we couldn't imagine. THIS is the new American Christmas tradition.

Forward this to everyone on your mailing list -- post it to discussion groups -- throw up a post on Craigslist in the Rants and Raves section in your city -- send it to the editor of your local paper and radio stations, and TV news departments. This is a revolution of caring about each other, and isn't that what Christmas is about?

**JUST DON'T FORGET THAT CHRIST IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON!**

*Received as an e-mail from Pat Kissire, original author unknown*

#### **HINT ON OBSIDIAN:**

When grinding and sanding Obsidian, always grind from the center out, otherwise the wheel and sanding belts will pick up tiny chips of glass that will scratch your stone.

(from Contact Zone via Gneiss Times 2/98)  
via News & Views 3/98

### **Staurolites**



Staurolite is a metamorphic mineral that is famous for its twinned crystals that form the shape of a cross. It is composed of iron aluminum silicate and its color ranges from yellowish brown to reddish brown to black. It can be transparent or opaque. It forms with garnet, tourmaline and kyanite in mica schists and gneisses and other aluminum-rich metamorphic rocks. They can be found in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and New Mexico. Deposits

are also located in Russia, France and Brazil. It is the official state mineral of Georgia The cross most commonly forms at a 60 degree angle (St Andrew's Crosses) but the 90 degree angle (Greek Crosses) is most sought after. They sometimes form with both types of crystals creating a specimen that looks like a 6 rayed star. Staurolite gets its name from stauros, the Greek word for cross but is also known as Fairy Stone and Fairy Cross. It has long been prized as a good luck charm and is thought to aid in healing and provide protection from evil spirits. A popular Christian legend states that tears shed by the angels at the time of Christ's crucifix-ion crystallized and fell to the earth as Staurolites. Other legends claim they were formed by the tears of fairies, shed in sorrow over the death of Christ. The Cherokee have their own legend which tells of the little people who brought to them a tale of greatness and sadness. The little people spoke of a special boy-child who had grown into a man of wisdom and taught his people the ways of the Creator and the straight white path of peace. He brought strong medicine (nuwati) to his people but had many enemies who would not hear his message of peace. On this day they would torture and kill the wise man. Because of their sorrow, the Cherokee began to cry. When their weeping had ended they looked down and saw that their tears had been changed into small stone crosses. (legend preserved by the Chiltoskey family of Cherokee North Carolina) The Cherokee also tell of an annual ceremony centered around staurolites that was held at the Spring Solstice full moon. At sunset staurolite crosses would be put into the fire and heated until they were glowing hot, then carried to a special mound with green sticks. There they glowed for hours and were reheated as necessary to keep them hot until sunrise. The ceremony assured the people of safe passage, rain during the growing season and an abundance of food in the fall. Sources: · Smithsonian via Strata Gem June 2011 via MOROKS Newsletter 11/11

### **FIELD TRIP CANCELLED**

For those of you that didn't get the word, the field trip that had been scheduled for Nov 12<sup>th</sup> was cancelled. Here's the message from Mike:

*"We have just had a last second call from Razor Rock Quarry, asking us not to come on*

*the fieldtrip tomorrow. This weekend is the opening of deer season, and there are a lot of hunters in the area around the quarry. For safety reasons we agreed to postpone the trip until later. Sorry about this last second change, but it is the smart thing to do. The quarry feels bad about this, and will work with us to get in at a later date."*

The positive side to this, other than the obvious safety factor, is that all of you who wouldn't have been able to go will get another chance! If you're interested in going on the next trip, whenever that may be, call James Burns (501-568-0315) and let him know. He wants to get a handle on who is going so unforeseen problems like this last one can be handled.

### **Tumbler Tips**

Like a lot of folks, I have yet to graduate to one of those tumblers capable of holding more rocks than Mike has in his garage. I'm running a couple of Harbor Freight's version of the Lortone 3lb tumblers. I've got no experience with the Lortone version, but the HF version is pretty bad at eating bushings and belts. I did a bit of searching on the Internet and came across an article by a lady who recommended using commonly available O-rings in place of the belts. She gave a size and other information to specify the correct ring, and a source on the web that could supply them to you. At the time she wrote the article, the rings were \$0.12 each, but a minimum order of \$5.00. I contacted them, and the price had jumped up to \$0.26, still cheaper than the belts from HF or Lortone. I've been running a couple of them for about a month and can't see any sign of stress or wear on them, and I think they run quieter than the original belts.

My source is [www.oringwarehouse.com](http://www.oringwarehouse.com), and the specs for these rings are size, **-342**, and material, **70-durometer Nitrile (Buna), Black**. You may find them available in smaller quantity elsewhere, but having a bunch of them on hand isn't a bad thing!

If anyone has a good source for those little plastic bushings, I'd like to hear about it. I turned a set on the lathe out of a short brass rod, and they're working well, but I spent a lot longer than they're probably worth.

*Bill Alcott ([mister.bill@starband.net](mailto:mister.bill@starband.net))*

## **Where Does the Color Go?**

Rubies are red, emeralds are green, but powdered rubies and emeralds are white. The color of transparent substances such as gemstones and glass is due to the fact that these substances partly transmit and partly reflect the color that you see. If you crushed a substance such as copper sulphate, it would be completely white. To display its normal color, the stone has to be in pieces that are large in comparison with the wave-lengths of light.

*Via Stoney Statements October 1998, via The Petrified Digest, May 1998, via Quarry quips May 1993.*

## **Vacation Sapphire mining in Montana**

By Doug Stone

Spokane Bar Sapphire Mine AKA 'Gold Fever Rock Shop' September, 2011

After again enjoying Yellowstone National Park, we headed to Helena, Montana, to the Spokane Bar Sapphire mine. In Helena, we found the best car wash in Montana! You need to get the car washed everyday just to be able to see your car due to the insect splats! The car wash had 4 people cleaning the car. They did such a good job, I tipped them \$20. We then went to a full service gas station...(I didn't know they still even existed! I was very impressed!!!). They had 4 more people cleaning and checking over the car. I tipped them \$10 (Should have tipped THEM \$20!).

On to the mine. It is located about 8 miles east of town. You can purchase bags of concentrate from 3 mines (\$50 Spokane bar material, \$75 Eldorado bar material, or \$100 Monster Lode material), or dig in the pit on top of the hill for \$10 per bucket. It had about 4 feet of overburden, but looked OK as the mine owners kept it 'dressed' and somewhat accessible (see photo).

I went with the concentrate and proceeded to wash and inspect my first bag. A fellow rock hound, an oil geologist from North Dakota, was looking for sapphires also. He had been to Gem Mountain the day before. He commented that at Gem Mountain there were a lot more sapphires, but smaller. He had

found a really nice flawless, blue 6 ct. sapphire there and was having it faceted.

I did not go thru most of my material at the mine, to save time. Time for that at home.



I bought a bag of each and found the most/best in the bag marked "E" (Eldorado Bar material). The bag marked ML, I was very disappointed in. It had very little! It was from the "Monster Lode". Did not live up to its name in the bag I got. I also bought a \$25 bag of extra smalls from their "riffles", It was LOADED... but VERY small sapphires.



My "take": Spokane Bar bag 1 large, 2 medium, 19 small. Eldorado and Monster Load combined bags 7 large, 11 medium and 20 small, one of which is a nice lavender! These are mostly of a lower quality than the one's at Gem Mountain. To be fair, I think my biggest came from the bag marked ML.

### Gem Mountain Sapphires

We then headed to Philipsburg to our RESERVED motel room, the Broadway Hotel. It had been restored and was very interesting, a little pricy but very comfortable.. Note: A lot of hotels everywhere in Montana are full. Wow, in September! Thru end of October! Philipsburg only has two and both were full...

At Philipsburg, we visited 2 rock shops and bought a very nice piece of Petrified Wood book ends.

On to the mine. I decided to purchase 7 buckets of concentrate, thinking they were 5 gallons. (6 with 7th free) for \$120. Upon leaving the office I saw they were 2 gallon's and decided to go back in and purchase the 12 bucket option (10 with 2 additional free for \$200) instead of the 7. They informed me that they must be purchased at the same time, owners policy. I was a little ticked (make that a lot!), as I had not started yet. But they saved me \$80, As I did not purchase any more...

The attendant outside was much more helpful than the ones in the office. He over filled my buckets for me, and did a great job of showing me how to better shake the screen while washing and how to dump correctly.



I also kept my screening to go back thru when I got home. I only managed to go thru 2 buckets as it was so near closing time (5 pm) Brought the rest home, to find what I had missed, when I have more time and can be more thorough. Yes, I missed several at the mine.

I did find many more than at the Gold Fever Rock Shop sapphire mines , but smaller, of course (about 380). Size being the deciding factor of the two places. Found: large 2, one a light blue, one a light green; medium 7; 372 small, 7 of the small are pink. YOGO'S

Back at Philipsburg, I was reading of another rock shop across the street from our hotel, that closed at 7 so we went. The owners were just returning from the Denver show (walked in behind us!). I asked if they met Arif and Aisha, of Rocksaholics. They saw their booth, but did not get to visit it. I think they might next time after I described what is carried by the Jans.

The OPAL MOUNTAIN GEMS, the name of their shop carries bagged concentrate, and they had bags of YOGO sapphire mine host material. It was a yellow, very soft rock, you can rub it loose with your hand. The attendant said it has to be soaked for

weeks and rubbed to see if it has any sapphires in it. A lot of work! Needless to say, I bought the biggest bag, 8lbs. At \$12 per lb. Dreaming, Ha ha.

The YOGO's are the most desirable color in sapphires. They are a beautiful natural, cornflower blue.

After getting home, I examined my purchase but no sapphires were visible, I was afraid I had been had, particularly after my later purchase (see below)... I then placed my YOGO weathered host rock in my tumbler and wa-la, after 24 hours it was mostly yellow water... and over 60 small to very small YOGO sapphires! And they were not damaged from the tumbling. I was one happy rock hound!

On our way to Glacier National Park, we found another rock shop selling YOGO bearing host rock. It was a VERY hard igneous host rock, totally unlike the earlier purchase. He had one with a YOGO sapphire crystal very visible in the face. Of course I bought all he had, 5 pieces at \$5 each. Quite a bargain I thought. He owns a lot in Sapphire Village so he has access to the YOGO igneous dike.

Now, how do I get them out of this hard rock???. Still pondering this dilemma. They have some visible in the rock faces. But how to get them out... Rock saw, hammer, wait a few hundred/thousand years... I don't think so. Suggestions welcome.

### Heat Treating Rocks

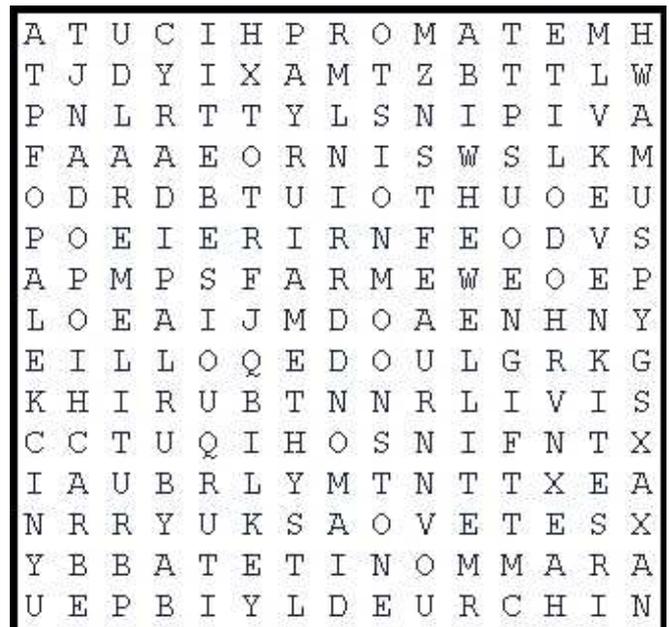
You have just removed a slab from an agate rough, and you are disappointed with the color. The overall color is a washed out white. At this point, most rockhounds would toss both the slab and the rough into their wife's rock garden and write off the investment in the piece. Well, there may be a life yet in that nondescript piece of rough. Before consigning it to the rock garden, try heat treating agate, jasper, petrified wood and many other types of rocks. Almost any sedimentary rock can benefit from the process. A recent example was a piece of dull brown agate. After heat-treating, it became a deep red. How, you ask, does one go about heat-treating a piece of rock? The process is relatively simple, but is a trial and error process. The slab should be immersed in a small pan of sand and placed in a range oven. Turn the oven temperature to warm about 200degrees for about one hour to expel any moisture trapped in the stone, then raise the temperature 25 degrees every half hour until the

temperature is up to 350 degrees. Leave it at this setting for two hours, then turn off the oven and allow the rock to come to room temperature without opening the door. Now you can check the results. If you are satisfied, you can slab the rough and heat-treat the lot. If not, return the slab to the oven and repeat the process. You can skip the time at 200 degrees since all the moisture has already been baked out by now. Raise the temperature to 400 degrees this time. Continue raising the final temperature by 50 degrees until the results you want are reached. Most ovens will go up to 500 degrees. If you need to go higher, some special oven will be required.

*Via the Texas Faceter's Guild, Oct 2004*

### WORD FIND

**Via The Cowtown Cutter via MOROKS Newsletter**



FLUORITE      OPAL  
 RHODOLITE    TOURMALINE  
 WHEWELLITE  
 ONYX          RUTILE  
 TURQUOISE  
 HALITE        GYPSUM  
 EMERALD      MOONSTONE  
 AMMONITE  
 NICKEL        DIAMOND  
 METAMORPHIC    IGNEOUS