

Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

Chips and Chatter



December 2012
Vol. 46, Issue 12

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Purpose

The Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas is organized for charitable and educational purposes to promote interest in the various earth sciences, in particular those hobbies dealing with the art of cutting and polishing gemstones, the science of gems, minerals and metal crafts, as well as their related fields.

Monthly Meeting

Next meeting will be our annual Christmas Potluck Dinner and Party, December 6th at the Garland Women's Activity Building, 713 Austin, Garland, TX. The meeting will start at 7:00 – that is 30 minutes earlier than normal. See notice on page 3.

Club Officers for 2013

President: Del Grady
 1st VP: Mark Carter, (972) 680-9223
 Secretary: Lee Elms
 Treasurer: Don Shurtz, (972) 509-2821
 Editor: Don Shurtz
 E-mail: don.shurtz@gmail.com

Reminder: 2013 dues are now due

**Check our website, www.pogmc.org
 for prior month issues of the
Chips and Chatter**

**Chips and Chatter Deadline:
The 3rd Thursday of each month**

President's Message

Del Grady, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club



For A good time, good food, good company, and surprises; I will see you at our Christmas party.

November 2012 Minutes

November 1st, 2012



The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by President Del Grady.

The pledge to the flag was led by Mark Carter.

We discussed the minutes of the October meeting printed in the Chips and Chatter and unanimously approved the minutes as printed.

The Treasurer Don Shurtz gave the Treasurers' report and we voted unanimously to accept the report as presented to us.

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business: 2013 dues are now due.

We discussed the Christmas Party which will be December 6th at 7pm. The club will provide the meat and the plates, cups and plastic ware, water and ice. We should bring a covered dish or dessert. Feel free to bring ice tea or soda if that is what you prefer to drink. Please bring a wrapped Christmas gift for the gift exchange and it is not to be over \$15. Don is going to try to get Wanda to come to the party.

Field Trips: The DGMS Rock Swap is this Saturday, Nov. 3rd at 8am at their workshop, 10205 Plano Road, Suite 105.

Check the newsletter for upcoming local shows.

Our program for the evening is a DVD provided by Mark Carter, about Ed Swoboda titled A Life of Gems and Minerals. Ed Swoboda is an American mineral collector and the first recipient of the Mineralogical Record's newly-created award, the American Mineral Heritage Award created to recognize lifetime achievements in the field of collecting. Ed began his early accomplishments from collecting Benitoite in the 30's to being the first to begin mining Brazilianite in the 40's, to finding the Tourmaline blue caps (IKONS) in the 70's and so much more. His career has spanned many decades and continents. He found quartz crystals for the World War II for Walkie-Talkies. Besides mining beautiful minerals and gems, he also made beautiful jewelry.

After we watched the DVD we had our raffle and our raffle table had some really nice specimens to choose from including two pieces of Obsidian, a piece of Dolomite, a pyrite nugget that had been mounted on a display stand and a cluster of amethyst crystals.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Elms, Secretary

December Meeting

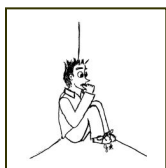
The December 6th meeting will be our annual Potluck Dinner and Christmas Party. The club will provide the meat dishes. Everyone attending the party is asked to bring a dish to share. The dish can be an appetizer, fruit, salad, vegetable, a desert, drinks, or whatever (never tried one of those). We will also have a gift exchange – please bring a hobby related gift valued from \$10.00 to no more than \$15.00. I am hoping that Wada Fitzgerald will be our hostess for the party – she always has good ideas. She has agreed to come if she is over her pneumonia attack. If you are stuck for a gift idea, try the Rock Barrel, Natures Gallery, or your nearby Half Price Books. The meeting / party will start at 7:00 PM – that is 30 minutes earlier than our normal meeting. No business, just friends, talk, and food. See you there!



The Vice President Speaks

Hope everyone is ready for the festivities of the Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Society Christmas party. I'm thinking about my covered dish and planning a gift for the exchange. Hope you are doing the same and remember to invite former and future POGMS members.

Who all is up for a field trip in January? With the new Perot Museum opening in December this would be a great opportunity to get together, see the museum and some may even want to consider a barbeque dinner afterwards. I think that sounds like a great Saturday activity for our members. Check your calendars and we will try to come up with a date!



Editor's Corner: The Perot Museum of Nature and Science

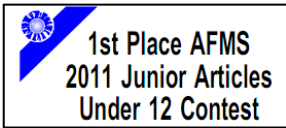
Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

Following our October presentation by Tommy Diamond about the Alomosasaurus to be displayed in the Perot Museum of Nature and Science, I started the process of becoming a volunteer at the museum. Actually, it was late October before I really started the process – I wanted to see how my new work hours were going to be (working 60% of full time – 4 day weekends every week!). After filling in the application, in mid November I went in for the volunteer interview (you are interviewed in a group to make you feel a little more at ease). Unfortunately I was not able to sign up for the orientation class until mid December, two weeks after the Museum opened. However, they had need of volunteers to take exit surveys of members and guests during the “soft opening” a week before the real Museum opening on December 1st. I signed up for that for most of a day, but afterwards had a chance for a brief tour of the Museum. I made straight for the Third Floor exhibits hall to see the Lyda Hills Gem and Mineral Hall. Was it worth it? All I can say is “You’ll have to see it for yourself”. If you are a mineral nut (hey Mark and Mark), you are going to love it. If you want to see a 12 pound piece of crystallized gold on quartz, it’s there. There are lots of calcite, elbaite, rhodochrosite, malachite, quartz, plus many other specimens (sorry, my cell phone pictures focused on the glass and were not suitable for publication). I spent about 40 minutes just doing a quick scan, but could have spent several hours if I had the time. And that is just one Hall of three on the floor, and there are three full floors of halls, children activities on another layer, and a 3-D theater. I am not sure that one day would be enough to do justice to a Museum visit. My recommendation is to consider a Charter Membership package for yourself, for a couple, or for a family. Just visit their web site at www.perotmuseum.org and look for the Membership link along the top banner of the home page. Just for the record, these are my impressions and recommendations – I have not received any monetary or other consideration for my recommendations.

Possible Field Trip – Perot Museum of Nature and Science

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club

On December 1st the Perot Museum of Nature and Science opens to the public. As a possible field trip, it should rate right up there at the very top. My best recommendation is to visit the Museum’s web site, <http://www.perotmuseum.org/>. If you explore the web site you will see that the Museum will host a number of halls (exhibits) and a 2D/3D theater. My recommendation –we (as a club) should give it a try (see the Vice President’s Remarks above).



OUR TOPAZ MINING ADVENTURE

by Noelle Skubal, 11 years old
Junior Member, Houston Gem & Mineral Society
From the October-November SCFMS Newsletter



Last summer we went on a mission to find topaz in the heart of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado, about an hour outside Colorado Springs. We were looking an adventure in the eye!

We met up with another family from Texas to dig for topaz. There were six of them altogether. My family has five in it: me, my Mama and Daddy, my little sister, and my little brother. Our group then totaled eleven rock hounds.

When we got there, Chuck Borland (the man in charge) gave us an introduction talk of how to find the topaz. He said, "You can use your rake to turn over the dirt, to bring the topaz to the surface. You want to look for the rocks that look like glass, but they are heavier. Some of these piles have already been gone through by the sifter, but most are all yours. This pile right here (and he pointed to the pile nearest to him) has quite a few topaz in it because other people have found lots of topaz in it. You can use a rake, a sifter, or just look for it on top of the ground. In all the years that I've been here, there has only been a few things found that are not topaz, quartz, or dirt. A bottle cap, some pieces of beer bottle, and a paper clip. So go out there and find some topaz!"

The dig site was a bunch of piles of red, brown, and black-grayish dirt. It was in a little valley with boulders, aspens, and a very good view of the mountains across the valley. There was a parking area (not a paved one) a little ways down from the diggings. After we parked the truck, we walked up to the mine, about 50 yards. At the diggings, the people who owned the mine had a very big sifting machine. It was a noisy machine--two men ran it. There were also a few ground bushes around. Next to the sifting machine was a port-a-potty. Throughout the day more and more diggers came; probably between twenty and thirty. One guy was eating his lunch (there were chipmunks around), and he fed a bit of his sandwich to a chipmunk! It was really cute.

When we arrived the temperature was a perfect 58 degrees, but as of the way of the sun.

Each group had to pay \$35 for a bag of tailings. We couldn't dig at the mine unless we bought the bag of dirt. We didn't have to pay to dig, but we had to buy the bag. Each bag had topaz planted in it, in case you didn't find any that day at the mine, I must admit we haven't opened the bag of dirt yet. For equipment we brought some hammers, homemade 1/4-inch sifters, a hoe, and a few rakes. And we brought a big thermos of water and lots of snacks. The other family with us also brought a large pry bar but neither of our families used it because the ground, though it had a few rocks in it, was mostly dirt.

By the end of the day, everyone in our group had found topaz or smoky quartz except for me and the little girls. We were obligated to turn everything over to the mine. Then Chuck Borland and the mine owner's son took what we found. They washed each rock with water to get the dirt off, and put it on a scale and weighed it. Chuck examined every specimen through his eye loupe to see if there were many bubbles or cracks in them. Daddy said he was estimating what each topaz would be worth as a cut gemstone. Then he estimated how much each one would cost. If we wanted to keep our rocks, we had to pay \$10 per "faceted" carat. The second-oldest girl, who was part of our group, had a topaz that Chuck thought would be worth forty dollars! Another one that she had found was only worth about five dollars because there were a lot of bubbles in it. Our family paid roughly \$80 for the bag of dirt and the topaz. Our diggerbuddies paid around \$50 for their day of rock-hounding because of a special discount I'll write about in another article. After all the fun of the mine, all eleven of us went to Woodland Park and stopped to eat an early supper at a Mexican restaurant. There we quenched our thirst with Shirley Temples and filled on chips and queso. Then Daddy brought out his own eye To start planning YOUR trip, look them up at: <http://www.pinnacle5minerals.com/GlacierPeakWeb/Visits/topazVisits.htm>.

2012 Show Dates

8-9 December, DeRidder, LA, DeRidder G&MS annual show, Beauregard Fair Grounds, 337-585-3693

8-9 December, Live Oak, TX, , “The Bead Market”, Live Oak Civic Center, email rebekah@thebeadmarket.net, web site www.thebeadmarket.net

21-23 December, Grapevine, TX, Gem Faire Inc., Grapevine Convention Center, 1209 Main St, email egi@168@hotmail.com, web site www.egishows.com

14 – 16 December, Pflugerville, TX, Exhibit Group International, Windermere Events Center, email egi@168@hotmail.com, web site www.egishows.com

1-31 January 2013, Quartzsite, AZ, email info@desertgardensrvpark.net, web site www.desergardensrvpark.net

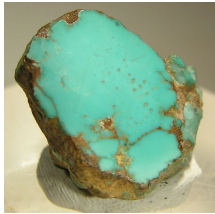
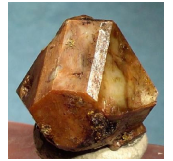
2-17 February 2013, Tucson, AZ, rockshowtucson@gmail.com

December Birthstones: Tanzanite, Zircon, and Turquoise

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

According to the American Gem Society, December has three birthstones: tanzanite, zircon, and turquoise. Over the centuries, you could also add bloodstone, ruby, lapis lazuli, and topaz to that list. Tanzanite was discovered in 1960 and over the years, only a small quantity, relatively speaking, has been mined. Originally thought to be a form of olivine, it was eventually identified as a new mineral officially known as “blue zoisite. It was Tiffany & Company, a major New York Jewelry firm, that marked the product as tanzanite for the country it came from, Tanzania. A natural crystal of tanzanite is trichroic (three colors) with colors of, purple, and burgundy depending on the crystal orientation, but after heat treating it becomes dichroic with colors of purple and blue. Virtually all tanzanite is heat treated to turn it to a darker, more desirable shade of blue. Because tanzanite is so scarce, there are a lot of fake tanzanite stones showing up on the market. The most common is a mixture of cobalt and glass. However, this “stimulant” can be easily identified as it does not exhibit the dichroic colors – it is always blue regardless of how it is oriented.

Zircon, not to be confused with manmade cubic zirconia, is a naturally occurring stone which is clear, yellow, red, brown, blue, and green. It derives its name from one of the mineral chemicals, zirconium. Zircon is found as with colors ranging from colorless, yellow, brown, red, blue, and green. Zircon is mined in Australia, Brazil, Tanzania, Korea, and Southeast Asia. Many of the zircons from Southeast Asia are brown in color, but are heat treated to become colorless and blue stones. Colorless stones are sometimes used as substitutes for diamond and are known as Matura Diamond. However, they can be readily distinguished from natural diamonds as their Moh’s hardness is only 7.5 – they can be easily scratched by a diamond or sapphire. Yellow zircons are also known as named for the hyacinthus flower.



And finally, there is turquoise. Turquoise is generally thought of as a sky-blue stone but is also found in green, yellow and white colors. Turquoise is found in many parts of the world including Iran, Egypt, China, India, Chile, and other, and is commercially mined in the United States in Arizona and Nevada with minor quantities found in California, Colorado, and New Mexico. A perfectly natural turquoise stone is a rare find. Since the 1950s most turquoise has been “stabilized” by combining the stone with epoxy, plastic, or water glass (sodium silicate). In addition to stabilization, some stones such as howlite and magnesite, of which both are white and exhibit the black webbing, are dyed and sold as turquoise. Turquoise has been used for jewelry for centuries; it

was used by the early Egyptians, Aztec, and ancient Chinese.

Ref:

American Gem Society, <http://www.americangemsociety.org/december-birthstones>

Gem Select, <http://www.gemselect.com/gem-info/zircon/zircon-info.php#deposits>

Mining Weekly, <http://www.miningweekly.com/article/now-tanzanite-faces-synthetic-threat-2004-03-19>

Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

Area Clubs

Arlington G&M Club, 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX

Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club, Garland Women's Bldg., 713 Austin, Garland, meets the 1st Thur. of each month at 7:30 pm

Lockheed-Martin Stone Steppers, 3400 Bryant-Irving Road, Fort Worth, meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:30 pm

Dallas Gem & Mineral Society, 10205 Plano Rd, off of Plano Rd, Dallas, TX, meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm

Oak Cliff Gem & Min Soc., South Hampton Community Hospital, 2929 S. Hampton Rd, Dls, TX, 4th Tuesday of each month at 7 pm

Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club, 3545 Bryan Avenue, Ft Worth, TX, meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm

Dallas Paleontological Society, EMGI (Bldg. H, Brookhaven College, 3939 Valley View Lane, 75244), 2nd Wed. of each month at 7:30 pm

CHIPS AND CHATTER
Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club
PO Box 831934
Richardson, TX 75083-1934

FIRST CLASS MAIL



To:

Coming Up

The December 6th meeting will start at 7:00 PM and will be our annual pot luck dinner and Christmas Party, see page 3 for more details

The January 3rd meeting will start at 7:30 PM

PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of Dallas

MEETINGS

First Thursday of each month, 7:30 PM
Garland Women's Activities Building
713 Austin St.
Garland, TX
(Northeast corner of Austin & Glenbrook)

MEMBERSHIP

Single Adult: \$16.50,
Junior: \$5.00; Family: \$27.50
(Plus badge fee for new members)

MEETING MAP

