

# Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

## Chips and Chatter



February 2008  
Vol. 42 Issue 2

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### Workshop, Meeting, etc.

- Check out our website for a color version of the Chips and Chatter
- Open Shop: Each Monday - 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm, and each Saturday - 9:00 am – Noon
- Check the calendar for class schedule.

February issue 2008 by Anita Dresner. Unless otherwise noted, permission granted for non-commercial reproduction of articles provided they remain essentially intact and credit is given to the author and original source. Where noted, the author retains the copyright and must be contacted for permission to reproduce the article. All articles may also be used as reference provided citation is given.

### 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

Monthly Meeting: Thursday, February 7 at 7:30 pm  
 Garland Women's Activities Building  
 713 Austin, Garland, TX

### Presentation

The program will be: Agates and Wood of TEXAS, Big Bend and Mexico.

### Show & Tell

Gather up your rocks or mineral related holiday gifts or finds and bring them to show and tell. We want to see who got the bestest finds.

### Club Officers for 2008

President: Don Shurtz, (972) 509-2821  
 1st VP: Mark Carter, (972) 680-9223  
 2nd VP: Donna Mallory  
 Treasurer: Delbert Grady, (972) 235-6575  
 Secretary: Nell Black  
 Editor: Anita Dresner (972) 475-5828  
 E-mail: andresner@verizon.net

# Minutes – January, 2008 General Meeting

Minutes as compiled at large, Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club

President, Don Shurtz: opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Treasurer Report was given by Del Grady and accepted as read.

Sunshine Report: We need to acknowledge Wanda and Robert Fitzgerald with “missing you” cards.

1<sup>st</sup> VP Report: Mark requested the members to let him know what type of programs we would like to have him work on for our meetings.

2<sup>nd</sup> VP Donna; in regards to planning and seeking out Field Trips, ask for us to let her know what and where we would like to go rock hounding. Donna also will be keeping us up to date on the classes available through DGMS as they become available. She also stated anyone wanting to teach a class or take a class should contact Brenda Dowell of DGMS @ [SmileyJeep@AOL.com](mailto:SmileyJeep@AOL.com).

## Old Business

To be a club or not to be a club, is the question. We discussed this title and voted on continuing to be an active club.

Treasurer needed: Jessie Davis stepped up to become our new treasurer.

Executive Board Member at Large needed: Donette Wagner volunteered to accept this position.

## New Business

We are not registered as a non-profit organization but ask for a motion and vote to begin the process of resolving this matter at the cost of \$25.00 filing fee. Motion made and 2<sup>nd</sup> and passed unanimously.

After a unanimous decision to again be judges at the Science Fair Carolyn and Del Grady, Ling Shurtz and Anita Dresner volunteered to be judges. We also voted to select an outstanding exhibitor and to present them with our customary award of a rock tumbler.

Meeting adjourned.

## Refreshment Duties

Anita Dresner, Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club

<u>Month</u>	<u>Ice &amp; Drinks</u>	<u>Snacks</u>
<u>February</u>	<u>Mark Carter</u>	<u>Need Volunteer</u>
<u>March</u>	<u>Need Volunteer</u>	<u>Need Volunteer</u>

## President's Message

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club

The crisis of the month is the shop issue - no, that one is resolved.

The crisis of the month is the Club Treasurer issue - no, that one is resolved.

The crisis of the month is the Board Member at Large - no, that one is resolved.

The crisis of the month is the continuation of the club - no, that one is resolved.

Try as a might, I don't think we have a crisis on our hands. So, why not come to the meeting, relax, talk, and enjoy yourself. As we work our way through the next few months, let's see if we can identify what we want our club to be. It is wide open right now. Come on out and help us figure out what we are really going to be.

See you at the meeting.

Don

## Editor's Corner

Anita Dresner, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club



Hello Club,

As I was contemplating what I would like to address in this issue, it came to me like a speed racer. Yep that's right! You know the feeling I am sure. You are thinking and thinking about just what you want to write about and so very many ideas come to mind. You know you cannot talk about all of them so you start racking your brain as to which one you will use. I must admit that once I get to this point I should give it a rest and come back to the "thinking" later. Why? Well, I will tell you why; when you stop trying so hard, God just opens your pea brain up and you jump up and say, "what were you thinking so hard for, it is right here in front of you". So here goes.

As I was leaving the shop Saturday, I went there for breakfast burritos and put on a pound or so, but I diverse. I was about to get into my vehicle and this vehicle I recognized from the past pulls up along my back-side. I turn around and lo and behold there sitting behind the wheel was the rock hound of the POGM club, all smiles and both of us reaching for a big hug, she from behind that steering wheel and me hopping towards the vehicle. Big hugs are so important among friends you know. When you have not seen that special someone for a while this is especially true. Oh and you know this was someone really special, Wanda and Robert Fitzgerald. I told them how we missed them and hungry to see them at the meetings. They are anxious for the weather and daylight time to change back, so they can once again adorn our door step.

When you think about it, this is much like our club. There are so many members we have not seen for such a long time. Each one brings something special to the club and yet we have not reached out to them for a "hug or smile" or to say we miss you. Why not come to the meeting and ask for a couple of phone numbers or addresses and contact a member. Let them know they are valuable not just to the club but to you for the knowledge they carry and can share. Run to the window, run to get and give those hugs and smiles before we lose them to destiny, before we lose our club.

Anita Dresner

## 1st Vice President Message

Mark Carter, Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club

### Mark's Musings

Well, I finally completed enclosing the corner of my garage and with central heat and air I'm good to go now that the hoopla of the Holidays has abated. Trouble is, now that I've got my genie and high speed sander all set up I can't find any of the things I need to work with them. The jaws for my mechanical dop are mislaid. The stove for my dop wax is no where to be found. I've waited so long to get this completed that my vinyl apron is cracking. Repair projects of things I'll fix abound. This all goes to show you that we often put off too long those things we should do and keep a lot of junk only to force ourselves to deal with storing and moving it or worse yet we force our heirs to either junk it or dispose of it with NO clue of what it is or what it's worth. In my garage, I have so much: 4 ice boxes, two lanterns, 6 folding chairs (three bottoms in our family), a smoker not used in ten years, a timing light/dwell meter combo/(how many of you know what that is?) miscellaneous hardware and "a partridge in a pear tree".

"Pass it on" was a popular phrase from the 60's and 70's and we as responsible members of society need to either pass it on or pass it out! Time management experts tell us, we should only handle mail and papers one time to be more efficient. Collect and keep what you need (label everything), pass on extras to others, donate things that are usable to those organizations that can use them, and invest your time to appreciating rocks not just stacking them.

For those who know me this is a recurrent theme; but, I think we all realize how vital the message is.

See you soon! : < )

Mark Carter

## Aphorism

A Short, pointed sentence expressing a wise or clever observation or general truth.

A good time to stop storing and moving things is before you purchase the storage space.

## *2nd Vice President Message*

Donna Mallory, Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club

No report as of print time.

## *Class Schedules Report*

Brenda Dowell, DGMS 2<sup>nd</sup> VP

Hello, I want to let you know the classes I am working on scheduling:

1st Q-Class with Rick Ramsey

3<sup>rd</sup> "Egg" class with Ling Shurtz

**Scheduled** as of January 22, 2008;

Beginning Silversmithing with Jack Spinks; COST \$30

Classes scheduled on Wednesday, February 13, 20, 27, & March 5

If you are not contacted, you did not make the cut this time around.

Anyone interested in any class needs to contact Brenda at: [SMILEYJEEP@AOL.COM](mailto:SMILEYJEEP@AOL.COM) or her home number (972) 771-9502. If you are interested in teaching a class, you can reach Brenda at the same contacts as above.

## *Sunshine Update*

Anita Dresner, Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club

### *Warner and Cindy Ragan*

Please take time to read this Email from Cindy in regards to Warner's brother/s. I know it would be so appropriate if each of us could mail a Sympathy or Thinking of You card to Warner and Cindy. Cindy has a most warm request of each of us that we should fulfill. I have added their address at the bottom of this Email.

Your Editor, Anita Dresner

Date: Wed, 23 Jan 2008 12:04:07 -0600

From: Cindy\_Voracek@bcbstx.com.....but wanted to let you know Warner's younger brother, Chris, died on Monday 01/14/08 at 6:40 PM at Terrell State Mental Hospital. He had recently been diagnosed with 4th stage lung cancer. Many of the club members will remember him as he helped us quite often at the club shows & Intergem. He also joined Warner at one of the field trips to TXI to hunt for fossils. He had a great time and talked about it for weeks afterwards. He looked forward to going on another field trip there.

I would like to thank the club members who treated him with kindness and helped him feel like a part of the club..... this is the second brother we've lost to cancer in four months. Words cannot express our sorrow and the emptiness this has created in our lives. I would like to urge everyone to appreciate the people in their lives and tell them so, while they still can.

Cindy Voracek-Ragan Warner and Cindy Ragan

505 W. Celeste Dr

Garland, TX 75041-3011

### *Wanda and Robert Fitzgerald*

Spoke with Wanda and they are doing great. She prefers not to drive at night but still does at times. She has her hands full but is looking forward to better weather and timing to attend the meetings. She is a breath of fresh air and so misses the club, show and meeting with her rock and mineral buddies. Let us not forget to include them in our thoughts and prayers.

## *Did You Know.....*

Anita Dresner, Editor of Chips and Chatter

The trouble with bucket seats is that not everybody has the same size bucket.

## Feature Article of the Month

By Brian Bowles

### Gem and Mineral Societies of North Texas First Annual Food Review

I was a member of the Arlington, Dallas, Oak Cliff, and Texoma Rockhounds Gem and Mineral Societies as well as the Dallas Paleontological Society in 2007. I enjoyed all of the clubs and usually went to the meetings before eating dinner. So the refreshments at the meetings were my dinner. I thought it would be interesting to do a food review for all these clubs. I know that the memberships ranged widely and the way that refreshments were provided varied from club to club so in all fairness the clubs with the largest memberships usually had an advantage over clubs with smaller memberships. This review was for fun and not meant to hurt any feelings or upset anyone. However, I hoped that some clubs would see where they stood in relation to other clubs, and perhaps everyone would improve on refreshments. Also, I enjoyed and appreciated all the refreshments at all the clubs but hope some improvements might be made so I can enjoy the food even more.

The Arlington G&M Society was a large club and plenty of food was provided. Arlington G&M Society had about three members who volunteered to bring food items each month. During 2007, there was a little inconsistency in the food. Usually, it would be varied enough to make a good meal with meats, cheese, chips, and dessert. However, occasionally only dessert items were brought. Desserts were good, but more substantial food was desirable before dessert. For Arlington, sometimes the food was excellent, but sometimes it fell below standards for variety. Drinks were available for purchase. Refreshments did improve during the latter part of 2007.

Rating \*\*\*

The Dallas Paleontological Society was also a large group and the food was very good throughout the year. Members were asked to bring something to each meeting and a member of the hospitality committee brought the bulk of the food. A couple of people provided free sodas and until the DPS meetings moved to Brookhaven beer and sometimes wine were provided. The hospitality member and drink providers were reimbursed. Most of the time plenty of food was provided with a variety of dishes including cheese, meats, vegetables, fruits, nuts, chips, dips, and desserts. There was nothing to complain about except that home cooked food was not brought to all the meetings.

Rating \*\*\*\*

The Dallas G&M Society, another sizeable group, had wonderful eating breaks. Free drinks were provided and plenty of food was available. The variety was outstanding with meats, cheeses, chips, dips, nuts, vegetables, fruit, and desserts. Every member was asked to bring something. The best thing that Dallas G&M had going for it was that numerous members bring home-cooked main dishes, vegetables, and desserts. Store bought items usually included excellent barbecue and fried chicken as well as regular chips and crackers.

Rating \*\*\*\*\*

Oak Cliff G&M provided free drinks and snacks mostly. Different individuals volunteered to bring the food and drinks for each meeting. They were reimbursed. Everyone makes a donation each meeting to be used for the next meeting's food. The membership was smaller than the clubs already mentioned above, but for the smaller number of members the snacks included chips, crackers, and dip with vegetables and fruit. Some home cooked items were brought to some meetings. The variety of food was balanced well especially for the size of the club. Desserts were available too.

Rating \*\*\*

The Texoma Rockhounds was the smallest club. The food was brought by different individuals each month and was not meant to be a meal. Usually, the food was store bought but not always. Free drinks were provided. Since the club meant to provide only a small snack, the Texoma Rockhounds had a rating disadvantage. However, the ratings improved on the quality of the coffee alone. The long time hostess made great coffee.

Rating\*\*

**NOTE:** *These ratings were for the regular monthly meetings. All the clubs had special potluck meals during the holiday season or for auctions and Texoma had one at a summer meeting. All the clubs were outstanding for these kinds of meals. Ratings did not include these potluck meals.*

## Question of the Month:

### What is Coal???

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks G&MC

Coal is a rock that burns. The use of coal as a source of heat has been going on for a long time. One of the earliest reported users of coal was by stone-age men at a camp site in a coal field in Germany about 120,000 years ago. Active mining of coal as a heat source started in China about 10,000 years ago.



Coal

Picture from Wikipedia Commons

Coal is normally classified as a sedimentary rock. It forms when water and mud cover a layer of plant life preventing oxidation and biodegradation. If the coal is eventually covered by enough material to elevate the temperature and pressure, the coal can become a metamorphic rock forming harder varieties of coal. Coal is formed from carbon with trace amounts of other minerals, the most common being sulfur. Coal comes in a variety of forms, but is generally classified by the heat content, but commonly called soft or hard coals. The softest form of coal is Lignite, or brown coal due to its brownish tint. Lignite's heat content is so low that it is considered uneconomical to ship. It is most commonly used for powering electrical generating stations that are built close by the coal mine. Bituminous coal is a step up in hardness and heat content. Bituminous coal is generally black with alternating bands of bright and dull materials. As with lignite, bituminous coal is generally used as a fuel for power plants, but substantial quantities are also used for smelting iron. It is generally cheaper to move the coal to a steel plant than to move the iron ore to the plant, so considerable quantities of bituminous coal are shipped to where they are needed. The next major step

up in heat content and hardness is anthracite. It is a shiny black rock and is used primarily in home and commercial heating. Technically, graphite is also a coal; but, it is difficult to get graphite to burn, so it is not used as a fuel.

Jet is a shiny form of lignite coal. It is soft and easily shaped or carved without sophisticated tools. Jet is used in jewelry or similar purposes. The first recorded use of jet in jewelry dates back to 10,000 in Germany. Jet was also popular during the time of Queen Victoria (the mid to late 1800's). Long strands of beads formed from jet were also popular in the 1920's.

So how far from Dallas would one have to travel to find coal? The answer is "not very far". The closest coal mine is the Thermo Mine which is co-located with the Thermo Electrical Generation plant southeast of Sulphur Springs. That's less than 100 miles away! The next closest mine is the Big Brown Mine located northeast of Fairfield, TX. That's also less than 100 miles away! Did I hear someone say field trip?

Ref:

Mineral Information Institute, <http://www.mii.org/txu/texas.html>

Railroad Commission of Texas, <http://www.rrc.state.tx.us/divisions/sm/programs/regprgms/mineinfo/thermo.html>

Scorecard, [http://www.scorecard.org/env-releases/facility.tcl?tri\\_id=75840BGBRW11MIE](http://www.scorecard.org/env-releases/facility.tcl?tri_id=75840BGBRW11MIE)

TXU, [http://www.txucorp.com/power/plants/big\\_brown.aspx](http://www.txucorp.com/power/plants/big_brown.aspx)

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

Wikipedia Commons, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Coal.jpg>

## Question of the Month for March: What is ?

# February 2008

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	2 9:00am – Noon Open Shop	3
4 5:30–9:30 pm Open Shop	5	6	7 6:00-9:00 pm Open Shop 7:30 pm Pleasant Oaks Club Mtg	8	9 9:00am – Noon Open Shop	10
11 5:30–9:30 pm Open Shop	12	13 6:00-9:00 pm Silversmithing Class	14 6:00-9:00 pm Open Shop	15	16 9:00am – Noon Open Shop	17
18 5:30–9:30 pm Open Shop	19 7:00 pm Dallas Gem Club Mtg	20 6:00-9:00 pm Silversmithing Class	21 6:00-9:00 pm Open Shop	22	23 9:00am – Noon Open Shop	24
25 5:30–9:30 pm Open Shop	26	27 6:00-9:00 pm Silversmithing Class	28 6:00-9:00 pm Open Shop	29		

## Show Dates

A work in progress.

### Metroplex Gem and Mineral and Related Clubs

Texas School of Earth Science (Arlington G&M Club) meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at 1408 Gibbins, Arlington  
 Pleasant Oaks G&M Club meets the 1st Thursday of each month a 7:30 PM at Garland Women's Bldg., 713 Austin, Garland.  
 Lockheed-Martin Stone Steppers, 2nd Tuesday at 7:30 PM, 3400 Bryant-Irving Road, Fort Worth, TX  
 Dallas Paleontological Society meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 at Dallas Museum of Natural History, Fair Park.  
 Dallas G&M Society meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM at Ridgewood Rec. Cntr. 6818 Fisher Rd, Dallas.  
 Dallas Bead Society meets the 3rd Thur. of each month at 7:30 at Walnut Hill Rec. Ctr., NW corner Walnut Hill & Midway, Dallas  
 Oak Cliff G&MS meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM, Renaissance Hospital, 2929 S. Hampton Rd., Dallas, TX, 75224  
 Fort Worth G&M Club meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at 3545 Brvan Avenue. Fort Worth. TX

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



FIRST CLASS MAIL

To:

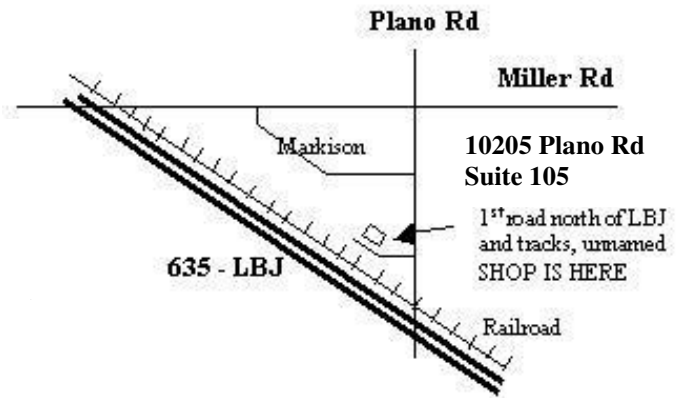
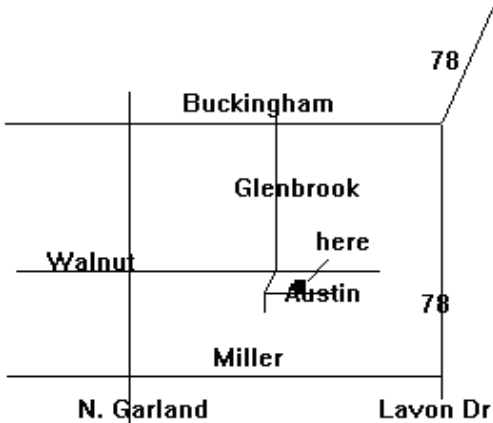
- 1<sup>st</sup> place SCFMS 2006 small bulletins
- 9<sup>th</sup> place AFMS 2006 small bulletins
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place SCMS 2005 small bulletins
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place, AFMS 2005 small bulletins
- 1<sup>st</sup> place SCFMS 2004 small bulletins
- HM AFMS 2004 small bulletins
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place SCFMS 2003 small bulletins

**Next Meeting: February 7, 2007 at Garland Women's Activity Building, 7:30 PM**

**PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB OF DALLAS**

**Meeting Map**

**Club Shop Map for Classes**



**MEETINGS**

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

**Member of**

South Central Federation of Mineral Societies

**MEMBERSHIP**

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

**Affiliated with**

American Federation of Mineral Societies