

# Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

## Chips and Chatter

February 2014  
Vol. 48, Issue 2



1<sup>st</sup> Place, 2013 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place, 2013 AFMS Mini-Bulletin

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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

Our next meeting will be February 6<sup>th</sup> starting at 7:30 PM. Mark has arranged for a DVD presentation on the Pedernia Tourmaline Mine in Brazil.

## Club Officers for 2014

President:	} A new nominating committee is ready to present a new slate of officers at our next business meeting
1st VP:	
Secretary:	
Treasurer	
Editor (acting):.....	Don Shurtz
Asst. editor (acting): .....	Ling Shurtz
E-mail: .....	don.shurtz@gmail.com, l.shurtz@gmail.com

**Membership Dues for 2014 are now due,  
see web site for form**

**VISIT OUR WEB SITE TO VIEW THE CHIPS AND  
CHATTER IN COLOR**

## Minutes of the January 2, 2013 Meeting

The January meeting was our second attempt at our annual Christmas Part, Christmas in January. The weather cooperated and a small crowd had a really good time. Wanda Fitzgerald was able to attend and took charge of the festivities after our dinner. There was no business covered at the January meeting, thus no minutes.

### Show Calendar - 2013 Show Dates for February 2014 – March 2014

FEB 1-16, Tucson, AZ – numerous wholesale and retail rock and gem shows,

FEB 13-16, Tucson, AZ, Tucson G&MS, [tgms@tgms.org](mailto:tgms@tgms.org), [www.tgms.org](http://www.tgms.org)

FEB 15-16, Plainview, TX, Hi-Plains G&MS, Ollie Liner Center, [josefcmacha@aol.com](mailto:josefcmacha@aol.com)

FEB 15-16, Georgetown, TX, Williamson Co. G&MS, San Gabriel Park

MAR 01-02, Big Spring, TX, Big Spring Prospectors Club, Howard County Fair Barn

MAR 01-02, Robstown TX, Gulf Coast G&MS, Regional Fairgrounds, [www.gcgms.org](http://www.gcgms.org)

MAR 06-09, Deming, NM, Deming G&MS, SWNM State Fairgrounds, [nbound@gmail.com](mailto:nbound@gmail.com), [DGMS.bravehost.com](http://DGMS.bravehost.com)

MAR 07-09: Ft. Worth, TX, The Bead Market, Cendera Center, [rebekah@thebeadmarket.net](mailto:rebekah@thebeadmarket.net), [www.thebeadmarket.net](http://www.thebeadmarket.net)

MAR 08-09, Pasadena, TX, Clear Lake G&MS, Pasadena Convention Center, [sara\\_chelette@swbglobalnet.com](mailto:sara_chelette@swbglobalnet.com), [www.clgms.org](http://www.clgms.org)

MAR 14-16, Albuquerque, NM, GEM, Mineral, and Jewelry Expo, NM State Fairgrounds, [paulhlava@q.com](mailto:paulhlava@q.com), [www.agmc](http://www.agmc)

MAR 15-16, Live Oak (San Antonio), TX, Southwest G&MS, Live Oak Civic Center, [krobotx@gvtc.com](mailto:krobotx@gvtc.com), [www.swgemandmineral.org](http://www.swgemandmineral.org)

MAR 21-23, Richardson, TX, The Bead Market, Richardson Civic Center, [rebekah@thebeadmarket.net](mailto:rebekah@thebeadmarket.net), [www.beadmarket.net](http://www.beadmarket.net)

MAR 28-29, Ada, OK, Ada GM&FC, Pontotoc Cnty Agri-plex, [okieed42@windstream.net](mailto:okieed42@windstream.net), [www.gfrrweb.com/agmsfc/index.htm](http://www.gfrrweb.com/agmsfc/index.htm)

Ref:

January / February 2014 SCFMS Newsletter

Rock & Gem Show Calendar, <http://www.rockngem.com/show-dates-display/?ShowState=ALL>

### Safety Matters – Wear the Mask for the Task

By Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair, from the February AFMS Newsletter

Perhaps you have heard the expression “Wear the right mask for the task at hand.” Then again perhaps you may not have heard of it seeing’s how I just made it up. Because it rhymes, it may be more memorable as a safety message. Catch phrases are handy for making a safety guideline a rememberable guideline. What the expression “wear the right mask for the task” is meant to convey is the message that for many rockhounds, silver and goldsmiths, lapidary tasks and so on, wearing a specific for the task mask may be advisable.

Rockhound tasks often involve being in an area of dry, wind-blown dust. For such situations a simple, properly fitted, dust mask would be suitable for protecting the lungs from air-born dust.

Silver and gold smithing operations may also involve dry dust such as when using rouge or polishing powder to finish a piece of work. Smithing tasks may also involve fumes from soldering and pickling operations. A dry dust type of mask would not offer suitable protection to the lungs from the detrimental effect of soldering fumes. Masks providing protection from harmful fumes would be a more appropriate choice. Even under the best of circumstances where a suitable ventilation system is being used during soldering operations, wearing a mask for protection from vapors may be advisable.

Lapidary tasks, on the other hand, usually involve the need for lung protection from the presence of wet dust. Wet dust requires a different type of mask – one that catches the dust but does not block the flow of air to the lungs. A standard dry dust mask would rapidly clog and be rendered useless when used in a wet dust environment. Another common material used in lapidary tasks is the mixing and application of epoxy resins. Epoxies, as I’m sure you have noted from reading the safety labels, emit volatiles that are harmful if inhaled. Labels on epoxies usually stress using the product in a well-ventilated area. If the usage is in an area not all that well ventilated, a mask suitable for epoxy vapors may be used.

Were one to look in any reasonably complete safety equipment catalog, one would find a bewildering array of safety masks made by numerous vendors and suitable for every imaginable task. No brief safety article can mention all the various products available for rockhound, smithing and lapidary tasks but catalog sales representatives could easily offer mask guidance for your particular needs. Even in modestly equipped hardware and building supply stores one may be able to find masks suitable to the task at hand.

The takeaway message in all this discussion is that your lungs are important and need to be protected. There are numerous safety masks which can offer that protection. The trick is to choose the mask which fits the task. Actually, a similar statement may be made for many rockhound tasks - use the right hammer and chisel, select the right safety goggles, wear the right footwear, choose the right gloves, and so on.

Being safe involves making good choices. Please be informed, please be safe.

## Inter-Regional Field Trip News

By Doug True, Field Trip Chair, from the February AFMS Newsletter

Four Full days of fun, 3 days of fieldtrip! What could be better then collecting near Terry, Montana?

The present plans call for 3 trips per day to the Yellowstone River for 3 days, 2 trips the hunt cretaceous sea fossils and working on one per day to trip for dinosaur fossils. Because our trips are during the dry (fire season) we will be using buses for transportation to the gravel bars on the river plus several autos in case someone needs to return to the park. We will be staggering the trips with 4-5 hours collecting each day. All of our trips will be on a first come first served, sign-ups will start on Wednesday July 30 and Thursday morning the 31st. If we need to add more trips for the river or sea fossils we will, but the dino trips might be limited. You will not go back to the same location - each day is a new spot.

We are having a great response to the Terry Fieldtrip and have been getting lots of questions and sign ups. At the time of this printing all of the RV parks in Terry are full (34 spaces) The Hotel/ Motels are full (48 rooms) We have lots of RV dry camping and tent spaces. But if you want a Motel or RV space you will have to make reservations in Miles City, Mt. about 37 miles away ( 30 minutes) drive. In encourage you to do that now!

As you may have noticed our trips will run between 4-6 hours each day since temperatures in August can run between 85- 95 degrees (sometimes even higher) and we don't want anyone getting heat stroke. We want everyone to enjoy all of the fun at the park.

Collecting will be on dry river gravels, sagebrush areas and you could encounter a rattlesnake now and then and some time ticks and except for the river area, always cactus. You need to plan your clothing for the trip carefully. Be sure to include long pants, hats, good shoes, and sun block. Also plan to have lots of water.

When you get back to camp a pool and showers will be waiting for you, a beautiful park with lots of shade and then things start to happen. There will be a welcome potluck on Wednesday evening and some live music after. A time to get to know each other. Plans are to have 2 programs each evening Thursday and Friday This will be announced in future updates, as we have more speakers than we have time.

There will be a benefit barbeque on Saturday evening (money raised will go to the Cameron Gallery). Beef will be donated by local rancher. The barbeque will be held at the local park in Terry and after that a live band provided by the Terry Chamber of Commerce will play. Sunday will be a an open day, a time for a buy-sell-or trade day in the park, a good time to see if any of the locals will bring out some of their Montana Agate etc. There will be a Junior or kids hunt at the river Sunday morning. Kids will hunt the gravel for specially marked agates and they could win great prizes. The Ye old Timers Rock Club has donated two New Tumblers with kits and H&I lapidary donated a reconditioned tumbler with new barrels. More prizes are still to come On Sunday evening we will have a farewell potluck dinner at the park.

Agate hunting success will depend on three things - the amount of ice on the river this winter (ice jams open up new material and it looks good thus far), high water in the spring and summer to wash and sometimes clean the rock, and last but not least you're being able to spot them. There are also lots of petrified wood, and jaspers to be collected. I will have 8-10 fieldtrip leaders to help make your trip successful.

This will give you a taste of what will happen in these four days. Watch for future articles for more information and updates. If you decide to join in on the fun I need to know a few things, names of those attending, where you are from, club affiliated, how you are staying, RV Dry Camp, Tent Camping, RV Park, Motel. Everything is free, music, trips, potlucks, programs, bus rides, etc. We will have a donation bucket to help on our expenses.

For more information and to register, contact Doug True at <dtruefossils12@yahoo.com>

### Visit an Area Club

Arlington Gem & Mineral Club, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX, 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm  
Dallas Bead Society, The Point at CC Young, 4847 W. Lawther Dr., Dallas, TX meets 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month at 10:00 am  
Dallas Gem & Mineral Society meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, UT Dallas Research & Operation Center, room 2.209  
Dallas Paleontological Society, 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. of each month at 7:30 pm, Brookhaven Geotechnology Institute, 3939 Valley View Lane, 75244  
Ft. Worth Gem & Mineral Club, meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 3545 Bryan Ave, Ft Worth, TX  
Lockheed-Martin Stone Steppers meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:30 pm, 3400 Bryant-Irving Road, Fort Worth  
Oak Cliff Gem & Min Soc., 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, South Hampton Community Hospital, 2929 S. Hampton Rd, Dallas, TX  
Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thur. of each month at 7:30 pm, Garland Women's Activities Bldg., 713 Austin, Garland,

## Birthstone for February – Amethyst

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

Amethyst, the birthstone for February, is purple colored quartz. Amethyst derives its color primarily from iron  $Fe^{+3}$  impurities (called trace elements due to their scarcity) in the quartz crystal lattice. The purple color runs from a pinkish hue to deep purple. Amethyst, being a variety of quartz, has a suitable hardness for being formed into jewelry. It has a Mohs' hardness of 7. In addition to being formed into jewelry, amethyst geodes and cathedrals (a section of a geode) are also a popular collector's item. The most valued amethyst is the deep



purple variety from Siberia called "Deep Siberian". The main commercial use for amethyst is for jewelry and mineral specimens. However, it has found that amethyst can be heat treated and made into citrine. Much of the citrine that is available in today's markets is heat treated amethyst. Like quartz, amethyst can be synthesized. Man made amethyst is virtually impossible to differentiate from natural amethyst. However, with the abundance of amethyst available, manmade amethyst is not an economical commodity to manufacture.

The name "Amethyst" comes from the Ancient Greek language, the combination of the two words "a" meaning "not" and "methustos" meaning "intoxicated" based on a belief that amethyst prevented one from becoming intoxicated. The early Greek and Romans often served their wine in cups carved from amethyst in the belief they wine could not make them drunk. Amethyst amulets were worn by medieval soldiers in the belief that the amethyst would heal any wounds and would keep the calm and cool-headed. The Deep Siberian amethyst is also found in many of the royal (crown) jewels of Europe.



Amethyst is also found in many locations, but the major producers of amethyst include are Brazil and Zambia. Other locations where amethyst is found include Australia, Sri Lanka, Siberia, South Korea, and Uruguay. In South America, the deeper color amethysts generally are from Uruguay. Amethyst is also found in several locations in the United States including Arizona, Colorado, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. Texas is also cited as a location for amethyst, the most common reference is to Amethyst Mountain, Texas. However, when I checked the internet and my local map programs, I could not find Amethyst Mountain. There were many references to Amethyst Mountain, but no location. However, I did find a 1961 Report from the Bureau of Economic Geology (University of Texas at Austin) that referred to Amethyst Hill in

northeastern Gillespie County, and, finally, another web site (Mines and Quarries 1902) which referred to Amethyst Mountain in northern Gillespie county. I presume that Amethyst Hill and Amethyst Mountain are one in the same. Perhaps one of our readers can shed some light on where Amethyst Hill is located and if there is any collecting there. Other possible Texas locations include Blanca and Quitman Mountains near Sierra Blanca in Hudspeth county, locations near Alpine in Brewster county, near Oxford in Llano county, and amethyst geodes found in Brewster, Presidio, Culberson, and Hudspeth counties.

Ref:

- Amethyst, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amethyst>
- February Birthstone, <http://www.americangemsociety.org/february-birthstones>
- King, Elbert A; Texas Gemstones; <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/books/landscapes/publications/txu-oclc-2495458/txu-oclc-2495458.pdf>
- Rocks and Minerals found in Texas, <http://minesgm.hubpages.com/hub/Rocks-and-Mineral-found-in-Texas>
- Stueart, William, Mines and Quarries 1902 published by the US Bureau of Census

Pictures:

- Cluster and cut amethyst from <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Amethyst>, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0
- Amethyst Geode photo by Don Shurtz. Picture of the "Grape Jelly Bean" at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science

## FEDERATION NEWS BILL'S BLOTTER - EXPAND, OR NOT!!

Bill Halepeska, SCFMS Executive Vice-President, from the January / February SCFMS Newsletter

We have all heard the story about the mom and pop venture that was going great, so great that they doubled the size of the store. Then they realized that the reason for their success was the small size of the business; after going broke.

Many gem and mineral "clubs" have struggled with the idea of starting, or increasing the size of their shop or club location. Articles which have been published in Rock and Gem, Lapidary Journal, etc. in the past often bear the sad news that the "expansion" project was the ultimate undoing of the organization. Sometime it is caused by internal politics born of the project, while simply the weight of unanticipated financial obstacles was the cause. Whatever the cause, such incidents serve as a reminder that such undertakings are not to be taken lightly. The following case involving our local organization (Midland Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.) could well have (and still could) have an unfortunate outcome.

MGMS acquired a small shop-full of equipment from an estate in about 1960. Space for the "shop" was located in the basement of a mostly unoccupied hotel where it remained until 1967. Shop was moved to a quanset hut, where space was shared with a small rock shop. So far so good, but in 1973, the site sold, and we were out on the street. In 1983, we acquired an old house which was moved onto a lot owned by Midland County and renovated by club members. A long term lease was signed on the property assuring us of some stability, finally.

Come the early 2000's, and we are limited for space, the building is a disaster, and the urge sets in for a move into a building of our own which would cure our many perceived problems. We purchased a site, but building costs, city code changes, etc., outpaced our ability to acquire the necessary funds. Along came

a local group called "Heritage Midland" which was interested in preserving a 100+ year-old early Midland home in an area designated as Heritage Park. They had acquired the property from the local pioneer family who built the home in 1907. Their proposal sold our membership and we entered into a conditional ownership contract in 2008. Times were good and the heritage group helped secure some considerable funding; we were on a roll, and started the renovation project.

All good plans of mice and -----, we all know how that can be, or should, anyhow. Our start-up was followed shortly by a severe downturn in the country's economic picture. Our funds quickly ran low and contractor's work ceased. Thanks entirely to our members who jumped in to help, we managed to finish weather securing the building. We sold our purchased lot(s) for a good profit and were able to finish a super shop with limited labor costs with member volunteers.

We have weathered the downturn, and things are looking up. Blessed with members with unusual talents and dedication, work is progressing (slowly). Additional funding looks promising, and we look forward to being able to finish the project in the near future. A lovely old home will have been saved for our heritage, and MGMS will have one of the neatest society homes anywhere. Most of this is due to membership loyalty and dedicated volunteers. It's not finished yet, but with this group, anything is possible. I borrow a quote from St. Francis of Assisi who said; "Start by doing the necessary; then do what is possible --- and suddenly, you are doing the impossible." We invite anyone interested, to stop by and we will give them a tour of the home.

**Have a Good one. Bill**

*Editor: Is there a lesson in Bill's article that could be applied to our club? Maybe even more than one lesson?*

### Recipe – Ruth Shurtz' Cherry Cream Pie

#### Ingredients:

- 9" baked pie shell
- 1 can cherry pie filling
- 2 packages (3 oz each) cream cheese
- ½ pint whipping cream
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 teaspoon lemmon juice



#### Directions:

**Combine butter, lemon juice, cream cheese, sugar and vanilla in a bowl and blend until smooth and creamy. Whip the whipping cream and add to the cream cheese mixture. Pour contents into pie shell. Add cherry pie filling on top and refrigerate for several hours. Serve in small slices and be prepared for the remainder to disappear in a hurry**

# PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of Dallas

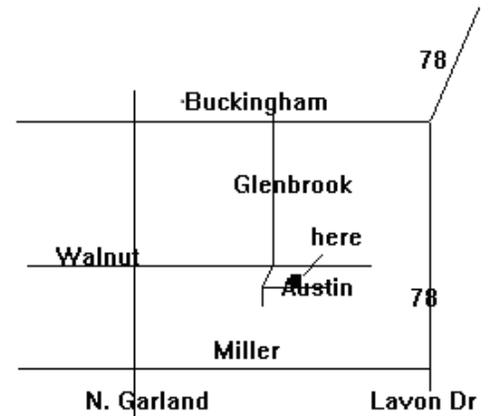


## Meetings

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: \$16.00,  
Junior: \$5.00, Family: \$27.50  
(Plus badge fee for new members)



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

To:

## Coming Up

**The February 6th meeting will start at 7:30 PM at the Garland Women's Activities Building. Mark Carter will have a DVD Presentation about the Pedernia Tourmaline Mine in Brazil.**

**The March 6th meeting will start at 7:30 PM at the Garland Women's Activities Building.**