

# Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

## Chips and Chatter

Member of  
SCFMS



Affiliated with  
AFMS



May 2016

Vol. 50, Issue 5

1st Place, 2015 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin

1st Place, 2014 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin



### 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, particularly 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.

### Emerald –May Birthstone

Carolyn Grady, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

#### Facts and Fun:

Emeralds are part of the beryl family

Formula :  $\text{Be}_3\text{Al}_2(\text{SiO}_3)_6$

The green color is from trace amounts of Chromium and sometimes vanadium.

A hardness of 7.5-8 on the Mohs scale.

Color from all green shades to colorless.

Emerald mines: the largest producer is Columbia and second is Zambia, they are also found in Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, India, Italy, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

For anyone wanting to mine closer to home in the United States, try the following states:

Connecticut  
Montana

Nevada

North Carolina

South Carolina.

You can also try the Yukon in Canada.



Emeralds are the birthstone for May, the zodiac symbol of Taurus and the twentieth and thirty fifth wedding anniversary.

It is said to be a stone of great vision and intuition, it is believed to foretell future events and reveal one's truth. A stone of wisdom, enhancing memory and mental clarity (just this fact alone makes me want one). Promotes friendship, balance between partners and is particularly known for promoting domestic bliss.

Traditionally used as a protection against enchantment and spells.

Besides being beautiful, it's a handy  
Compiled from information:  
Wikipedia and Crystal Vaults

Picture: Don Shurtz, Emerald Mineral Specimen, Trapiche Emerald, and Cut Emerald on display at Perot Museum of Nature and Science

## Lake Ralph Hall Update

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

I have received a few inquires about the Ralph Hall Lake status, so I figured it was time for a little more research and another article. By way of background, about 13 years ago the North Texas Water District and the Upper Trinity Regional Water District decided more water was needed. A study indicated a lake near Ladonia, TX in Fannin County would provide the needed water reserves. The lake was to be named after Congressman Ralph Hall. Why would Rockhounds be concerned about a lake near Ladonia? The lake will cover one of the most productive fossil sites accessible to amateur collectors – the North Sulphur River. Who amongst us does not have an ammonite, nautiloid, gastropod, or mosasaur vertebrae collected from there? The Chips and Chatter has carried articles about the Lake Ralph Hall in February 2009, November 2012, and January 2014 issues.

So what is the current status? The January 2014 issue discussed objections from Flower Mound city officials and Fannin County commissioners, but they were of no avail. Since then the approval process has basically been a rubber stamp from the officials and commissions. The Upper Trinity RWD water use permit has been approved, but then there was a glimmer of hope for those opposed to the plan. The 53<sup>rd</sup> District Court in Travis County reversed a portion of the water use permit. However, the reversal did not stop the project; it only required the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to address inadequacies in the water conservation plan. This 9 March 2016 ruling is basically a minor bump in the road to the organizations pressing forward with the plan. However, the overall approval process, a paperwork nightmare, is slowing down actual building of the Leon Hurse Dam and Lake Ralph Hall (please note, the dam now has a name). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers still needs to complete an Environmental Impact Statement. However, as I speculated in the January 2014 issue, I suspect the Corp will use this as an opportunity to correct the original issues in straightening out a slow flowing, meandering seasonal river into a straighter, swifter flowing river. The straightening out of the river did help with the flooding problems, but it also caused a lot of erosion (and exposing fossils) to the point that the 16 foot wide and 10 foot deep river is now up to 300 feet wide in a trench that goes down 60 feet below the surrounding terrain.

The location of the dam and the boundary of the lake are now well established. The dam will be between Ladonia and Pecan Gap, about 1.5 miles west of FM904 with structure and spillway extending most of the way to FM904. The lake will fill the area of the North Sulphur River north of Ladonia and to the west to near Gober, TX. The latest plans are for the reservoir to be completed and filled by 1925. Most projections are that it will take 3 years to fill the reservoir, so we still have another 6 to 7 years to hunt fossils there. Of course there will be less water flowing in the River to the east of the dam, so there will be less erosion resulting in few fossils to the east – although that area was not as well know for fossils as the area near of Ladonia.

### Reference:

- A. Rich, Allen, Visiting the Proposed Lake Ralph Hall: Part 2, North Texas e-News, [http://www.lakeralphhallinfo.com/pdf/LRHArticles/101912\\_North%20Texas%20e-News.pdf](http://www.lakeralphhallinfo.com/pdf/LRHArticles/101912_North%20Texas%20e-News.pdf)
- B. Shurtz, Don, Lake Ralph Hall Update, January 2014 Chips and Chatter, <http://www.pogmc.org/newsletter/Jan14cc.pdf>

### Visit an Area Club

[Arlington Gem & Mineral Club](#), 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX, 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm  
[Cowtown G, M, & Glass Club](#), meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 pm, Corp. Emp. Rec. Association (CERA) 3300 Bryant Irvin Rd. Fort Worth  
[Dallas Bead Society](#), meets 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month at The Point at CC Young, 4847 W. Lawther Dr., Dallas, TX  
[Dallas Gem & Mineral Society](#) meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, American Legion, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas (next to their shop)  
[Dallas Paleontological Society](#), 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. of each month at 7:30 pm, Brookhaven Geotechnology Institute, 3939 Valley View Lane, 75244  
[Oak Cliff Gem & Min Soc.](#), 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 3839 W. Keist Blvd, Dallas,  
[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,

## Show Calendar - Upcoming Show Dates

May 7 – 8, Lubbock, TX, Lubbock G&MS and the SCFMS Show and Convention,

<http://www.lubbockgemandmineral.org/57th-annual-show>

May 14, Arlington, Arlington G&MC Swap Meet, 1408 Gibbons Rd, [www.agemclub.com](http://www.agemclub.com)

May 21 – 22, DeRidder, LA, DeRidder G&MS, Beaugard Parish Fairgrounds

May 28 – 29, Fort Worth, TX, Fort Worth G&MS, Will Rogers Mem. Center, [fortworthgemandmineralclub.org](http://fortworthgemandmineralclub.org)

Jun 17 – 19, Carlsbad, NM, Carlsbad G&MS, Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park, [www.carlsbadgms.org](http://www.carlsbadgms.org)

Jul 2 – 3, Grapevine, TX, Arlington G&MC, Grapevine Convention Center, <http://www.agemclub.org/>

Jul 30 – 31, Farmers Branch, Cowtown GMGJA, Brookhaven Geotechnology Inst., [steve.l.shearin@lmco.com](mailto:steve.l.shearin@lmco.com)

Ref:

March – April 2016 SCFMS Newsletter

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

## It's Not Too Late! For What? You Ask

By Cheryl Neary, Endowment Fund Chair

From the May 2016 AFMS Newsletter

The American Federation Endowment Fund is having a drawing for some wonderful pieces. Of course, I am still seeking donations and of course I am still requesting that you purchase tickets for the event which takes place in July at the annual Federation Convention. The good news is that it is not too late to either donate an item for the drawing. Your donation could be a mineral specimen, piece of jewelry, cutting rough, fossil, important book, finished cabochons, or other related hobby items. Ideally each item should have an estimate value of \$50 or more to encourage your members (and the general public) to purchase tickets.

Just in case you are not aware, the following people are selling the tickets for this event in you Federation:

South Central Federation – Joyce Speed

*<Editor – other Federation contacts deleted, information is on AFMS website>*

Contact information for each of the above is on the AFMS website.

Tickets are only \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00. You can purchase tickets by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the representative for your Federation. You need not be present to win

So why the drawing? In case you haven't heard – the money collected is for the AFMS Endowment Fund. The interest from the monies generated is used for the AFMS special projects, such as junior badges, judges training, and digitizing slideshows to name a few. Every club in the Federation benefits from the special projects.

*<Editor: Information about recent donations deleted – you can see all the items on the AFMS Website, [www.amfed.org](http://www.amfed.org) >*

You also have the opportunity to purchase Federation pins. For \$100.00 you receive a full set of the seven Federations, which are the separate Federation each in a different color. Not interested in spending \$100.00? – You are in luck because you can purchase each Federation with the exception of South Central for \$20.00.

Do I need to remind you to notify your clubs in your Federation of the chance to help the Endowment Fund by either donating a piece – preferably with a minimum value of \$50.00 and not over 5 lbs in weight to facilitate mailing (postage on heavy items is outrageous!) OR by buying tickets!

Thanks to all who have already donated to the Fund.

## Safety Matters – Terribly Toxic Treasures

By Ellery Borow, Safety Chair

Tightly tucked toward the top of our trinket trunks are treasures too toxic to touch, tempting us though as the tease our thoughts.

Yes, 'tis true! Tossed throughout our treasurer trunks are things that are toxic to the touch and taste, even in this totally tantalizing, yet tranquil, task of teaching there are terrors taxing my task.

Well, enough of these terrible, Thesaurus taxing “t’s”. The message this month is a mention that there are dangers lurking among our mineral treasurers and what to do about that. Think for a moment, if you will, about the chemical composition of some of the minerals we collect – autunite, arsenopyrite, cinnabar, betafite, thorite, cuprosklodowskite, malachite, even beach shells for the jewelry we make have within them chemistries that, under certain conditions of working, handling, or storage, can present concerns about their part in maintaining our health. Think of the conditions in which we find our mineral treasurers – conditions that hide biting, stinging insects, or rash-causing plants, or offer precarious physical conditions which may impact ones health.

Our hobby is associated with great joys but also has within it certain dangers with which we should exercise substantial care and caution. Here are minerals that should not be touched with bare hands and fingers. There are minerals that should not be worked dry. There are minerals that produce slivers that, oh so easily, penetrate the skin. There are minerals of radioactive nature as well. Each of those situations require certain protective measures.

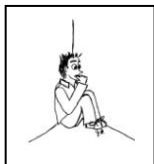
We encounter many specimens of fauna and flora along the way as we walk to our favorite collecting localities. Many of those same fauna and

flora are ones which bite, sting or scratch us. Some things just lay in waiting to dig into our delicate hides or scratch and tear us. We don't usually encounter hiding tigers or crouching dragons on our trips, but those pesky little eight and six legged things sure can mess with our enjoyment.

What is a body to do to protect oneself? Glad you asked! We have a hobby based on sharing, giving, and teaching! Most of the hobby's enthusiasts out there, ones I've met over the years, follow those practices in all ways. There are folks in our clubs who have all manner of experiences with our hobby's related dangers and hazards. What I would like to offer here is a thought for your consideration. I would like to offer a suggestion that we encourage our members with the most experience to share, give, and teach not just about their knowledge with rocks, minerals, and fossils, but, also share, give, and teach what they have learned about being safe – safe mineral handling, safe storage, safe caring and feeding of our treasures, safe traipsing on quarry roads, safe avoidance of biting insects and so on.

I'd like to broaden the sharing approach of our hobby to all things safety. Indeed, if your club does not have a safety coordinator, I would recommend your investigation of the benefits to your club with having a dedicated safety person. And, if you already have such a dedicated person in your club, I applaud your forethought! If you have a safety coordinator making safety a fun, interesting, and a learning experience, you are well ahead of the safety curve!

Please be safe, and think safety. Also, please mind those legless critters as well, after all, we all have a place on this Earth and need to be mindful about sharing it with them.



### Editor's Corner – AFMS Endowment Fund Raffle

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

On page 3, Cheryl Neary's article discussed the AFMS Endowment Fund and how to obtain tickets. Another option would be for Ling and me to purchase the raffle tickets from Joyce Speed at the SCFMS Convention. For those who would care to participate, either bring cash or a check (payable to AFMS Endowment Fund) to the next meeting, and we will bring the tickets back from Lubbock and will mail you the tickets on our return. Price is \$5.00 for one ticket or \$20.00 for five tickets.



## President's Message

Ling Shurtz, POGMC President

The IGEM show was good, but sales were not great (but better than a few years ago). At least no one was skunked. We had the opportunity to talk to many people and tell them about our hobby and rocks. There is nothing pressing for a couple of meetings, so we can have some fun and enjoy each other's company.

### Club Officers for 2016

President: Ling Shurtz  
1st VP, Programs: Carolyn Grady  
2<sup>nd</sup> VP, Field Trips: Open  
Secretary: Lee Elms  
Treasurer: Del Grady  
Editor: Don Shurtz  
E-mail: don.shurtz@gmail.com, l.shurtz@gmail.com

### Minutes of the April 2016 Meeting

The April 7th 2016 club meeting was called to order at 7:35pm by Ling Shurtz.

The Pledge to the flag was led by Don.

Sunshine report: Nothing to report.

Visitors: Arlene, an old club member, stopped by and donated a box of Pecos diamonds and assorted rocks for the club to use. We could not convince Arlene to come in so we could properly thank her.

Minutes: We discussed the minutes of the March meeting that were printed in the Chips and Chatter. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Carolyn. The motion was seconded by Hat. The motion passed.

Treasurers' Report: Del Grady gave the Treasurers' report. A motion to accept the Treasurers' report was made by Lee. The motion was seconded by Warner. The motion passed.

Old Business: We discussed the results of the Science Fair.

New Business: The IGEM show setup will be April 20th starting around noon. The IGEM show will be from Friday, April 22 thru Sunday April 24th.

*Chips and Chatter*

Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

After our refreshment break we watched our DVD "The Worlds' Greatest Geological Wonders". Tonight we watched "The Cave of Crystals- Exquisite Caves" segment. The Cave of Crystals is in Mexico. The showed us many examples of stalactites' and stalagmites. They are usually made of calcite from water percolating down through the limestone. There are many shapes and sizes of stalactites, some looking like soda straws and others look like ripples of water flowing over the stone. When a stalactite and a stalagmite join, it then becomes a column. In some caves there are rooms with ponds, and in the ponds grow formations of limestone structures that look like "lily pads". The Cave of Crystals in the Naica Mine used to be underwater. These crystals are made of selenite. This mine was established in 1910. The cave of crystals was found in 2000. The cave has crystals averaging 20 feet long. The water that fills the caves is 130 F. They have pumps running to drain the water out. This in turn will cause the crystals to start to deteriorate. The top 5 caves in the world are:

1. The Cave of Crystals in Mexico
2. Aven-Armand Cave in France
3. Baraca in Slovakia and Hungary
4. Jeita Grotto in Lebanon
5. Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico

After our presentation we had our raffle.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Elms, Secretary

### Meetings

The May 5<sup>th</sup> 2016 meeting will be at the Garland Women's Activities Building. Current plans are to continue the DVD about caves.

The June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 meeting will be at the Garland Women's Activities Building.

### VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

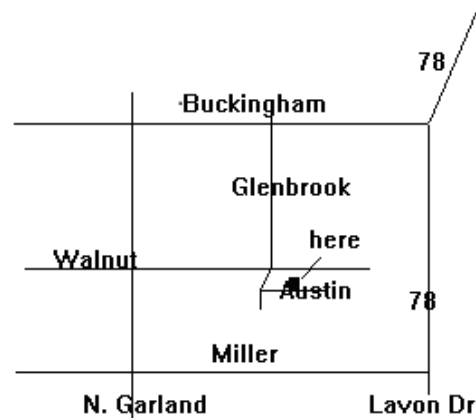
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PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of Dallas



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)



The May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting will be at the Garland Women’s Activities Building. The meeting starts at 7:30 pm. Current plans are to continue the DVD about caves.

The June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting will also be at the Garland Women’s Activities Building. The meeting starts at 7:30 pm.

**CHIPS AND CHATTER**

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

To:

**VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME**

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