

Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

Chips and Chatter

November 2014
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1st Place, 2014 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin
1st Place, 2014 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

October 2nd, 2014, 7:30 PM
Garland Women's Activities Building
713 Austin Rd, Garland

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Club Officers for 2015

President:Ling Shurtz
1st VP, Programs: Mark Carter
2nd VP, Field Trips: David Dobson
Secretary: Lee Elms
Treasurer.....Del Grady
Editor: Don Shurtz
E-mail: ...don.shurtz@gmail.com, l.shurtz@gmail.com

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www.pogmc.org

Minutes of the October 2nd 2013 Meeting

The October 2nd, 2014 club meeting was called to order at 7:35pm by President Ling Shurtz.

The Pledge to the flag was led by Lee Elms.

Sunshine Report: Our thoughts and prayers are with Connie Davis while she is mourning the passing of her sister, Jessie Davis.

Minutes: We discussed the minutes of the September meeting that were printed in the Chips and Chatter. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Don Shurtz. The motion was seconded by Butch Mitchell, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's report: Del Grady gave the Treasurer's report. A motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made by Carolyn Grady. The motion was seconded by Butch Mitchell. The motion passed unanimously.

Field trip to TXI: A good time was had by all. Pyrites and fossils and calcite were found. David Dobson, who led the group, has moved his family to Florida, but he will remain in contact with our club as the 2nd Vice President in charge of field trips.

The nominating committee asked the current officers if they wanted to serve again this year and everybody said yes. The officer's names were read at the meeting for the club members. A motion was made by Butch Mitchell to leave the officers as they are for next year. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

New business from the floor: Don Shurtz is going to talk to Melanie Gamble and Venus Bullard at Brookhaven College about our club putting on a show there next year.

Our presentation for the evening was a DVD about tourmaline and the most successful mine in North America called the Himalayan mine of San Diego County. It was producing carving grade tourmaline in 1900, and the tourmaline was bought for the Empress Dowager of China. It is estimated to have produced 90 tons over a span of 100 years. Bill Larsen talked about its history as a case study of how the synergy between gems and specimens can lead to the profitability of mining both in the same mine. Then, right in the middle of the DVD the power to our building went off, so we didn't get to see the rest of the DVD. Ling had 2 flashlights in her car, so she brought those in and we were able to have our raffle.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lee Elms, Secretary

Show Calendar - Upcoming Show Dates

Nov 1-2, Amarillo, TX, Golden Spread G&MS, Amarillo Civic Center, finfran@midplains.coop

Nov 7-9, Humble, TX, Houston G&MS, Humble Civic Center, show@hgms.org, www.hgms.org

Nov 15-16, Round Rock, TX, Paleo Society of Austin, Old Settlers Association Hdqtrs, www.austinpaleo.org/fossilShows.html

Nov 22-23, Mesquite, TX, Dallas G&MS, Rodeo Center Exhibit Hall, mark_a_hall@yahoo.com, www.DallasGemAndMineral.org

No local December shows found.

Jan 5 – 25, Quartzite, AZ – numerous rock, craft, and RV shows in and around Quartzite

29 Jan – 15 Feb. Tucson shows – numerous shows in Tucson area,

23-25 Oct 2015 – Austin G&MS show, SCFMS Convention, and AFMS Convention

Ref:

January / February 2014 SCFMS Newsletter

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



Lightning Strikes – Facts versus Myths

By: Owen Martin, SCFMS Safety Coordinator
From: SCFMS Newsletter, September – October 2014



A couple of summers ago I was enjoying a drive along the west side of Lake Semeca in New York's wine country. It is truly a beautiful area with the deep blue lake surrounded by rolling hills of farmland and vineyards. While I was driving, I encountered a fairly typical summer pop-up shower, but my leisurely drive was about to change. My rental car was struck by lightning! Luckily, the car and I were okay. And then LAST WEEK... The light pole in front of our house was struck by lightning -which also took out our phone system, a cable box, a couple of light fixtures. The bulb above my oven, and the motor in my easy chair!

So this week when I read an article on Yahoo that was written by Ryan Wallace, a Senior Editor for Yahoo Health, I thought I would share it with you. I borrowed the following excerpts from his article to share with our members. He cites information from his interview with John Jensenius, a meteorologist and lightning safety specialist for the National Weather Service. Hopefully this will help keep us safe-- especially during the summer months when lightning strikes are at their peak. Be safe out there!

Myth: Lightning never strikes the same place twice.

Fact: This one has been around so long it's been turned into a popular idiom. Too bad it's simply not true. Lightning can

strike multiple times in the same place, especially if that place is really tall and pointy. (Case in point: The Empire State Building is hit nearly 100 times a year.)

Myth: If it's not raining or there aren't clouds overhead, you're safe from lightning.

Fact: The most important thing people should know is that if they hear thunder, they are within striking distance of lightning, according to Jensenius. And most people misjudge how far they are away from a storm. "You can hear thunder from a distance of about 10 miles, and lightning can strike outward from a storm as far as 10 miles," he added. "If you hear thunder, you are likely within striking distance."

Myth: Rubber tires on a car protect you by insulating you from the ground.

Fact: You are, in fact, protected in most cars, said Jensenius, but contrary to popular belief, it's the hard metal surrounding that's keeping you safe, not the rubber tires. Tires don't protect you at all, so remember that when you are on a motorcycle, bicycle, . ATV (such as a fourwheeler), or lawnmower during a storm. Convertibles and cars with fiberglass shells offer no protection either. If in the car during a thunderstorm, don't lean on the doors as they contain parts that can draw in electricity from outside the vehicle.

Myth: If you are in a house, you are 100 percent safe from lightning.

Fact: A substantial building offers the best protections, said Jensenius, but there are still a few things to remember. The No. 1 way to avoid getting struck by lightning is to get inside as quickly as possible. But if lightning strikes a house, chances are it's going to find the wiring or plumbing and follow it to the ground, so you don't want to be touching or near anything connected to them. You shouldn't take a shower or be washing your hands or doing the dishes in a lightning storm either. And anything plugged into the wall can be electrified during a strike. Stay away from doors and windows too. Like car doors, they have metal parts that can attract electricity.

Myth: If trapped outside and lightning is about to strike, you should flat on the ground.

Fact: If you're outside and unable to get indoors. There is nothing you can really do to be 100 percent safe, said Jensenius. So what can you do to lower your risk of being struck? Avoid open areas, and do not lie down. Lying flat increases your chance of being affected by potentially deadly ground current. "Lightning doesn't strike the ground and disappear," said Jensenius. "After it hits, it spreads out along the surface. If you are lying down, you are in more danger."

November Birthstones, Topaz and Citrine

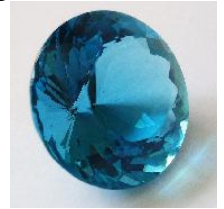
Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

There are two birthstones for November, Topaz and Citrine. Citrine is quartz that has a yellow color. Pure quartz is clear, but if there are trace amounts of iron in the crystal it takes on a purple (amethyst) or yellow (citrine) color depending on the valence state of the iron. Neglecting the trace amounts of iron, the chemical formula for all quartz varieties is SiO_2 (Silicon Dioxide). Natural citrine is extremely rare with most of the production coming from Brazil. Most commercial citrine is derived from amethyst that has been heat treated – buyer beware. With a Moh's hardness of 7 (quartz is the defining mineral for Moh's hardness rating of 7), it is suitable for jewelry. As an aside, sometimes both amethyst and citrine are found in the same stone. It is called ametrine and comes mainly from Bolivia. As with citrine, it is buyer beware as ametrine can also be made from heat treated amethyst.



Topaz is also one of the birthstones for November. Topaz comes in a variety of colors including clear, orange, yellow, red, brown, pink, and violet. The yellow and golden varieties of topaz are called Imperial Topaz. Most websites will show yellow or orange topaz gemstone in their pictures of November birthstones, but a few will show a picture of a blue topaz. I could not find a site which states what specific color of topaz is the birthstone, so until shown something definite, I believe any color topaz qualifies as the November birthstone. Like quartz, topaz has trace elements (primarily iron and chromium) that get into the crystal lattice which causes the color of the stone.

The chemical formula for topaz is $\text{Al}_2\text{SiO}_4(\text{F}, \text{OH})_2$ (Aluminum Fluoro-silicate). Topaz has a Moh's hardness of 8 (defining mineral for Moh's hardness of 8). Like citrine, topaz is suitable for all jewelry. Colored topaz is often treated by heating and / or irradiation to change or enhance the color of the stone. Some of these colors are not stable and will fade over time. The bottom line is buyer beware. Look for stones that have their treatment listed and rely on the experienced jewelers for advise on any fading. Utah is known for a sherry colored variety of topaz. I can attest that this stone will change to clear if left in the sunlight – unfortunately I know this from experience. Topaz is found in a variety of locations including Russia, Norway, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, and the United States. As an aside, the sherry colored topaz found in Thomas range in Utah's state gemstone and the blue topaz found in Mason County is the Texas state gemstone. Some contend that in order for blue topaz to qualify as the state gemstone it must be cut with the 5-pointed Lone Star cut – a fabulous example can be found in the Lyda Hill Gem and Mineral Hall of the Perot Museum.



Reference:

- Birthstones, <http://www.americangemsociety.org/november-birthstones>
- Gem Select, <http://www.gemselect.com/gem-info/topaz/topaz-info.php>
- Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

Pictures from Wikimedia, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki>. All pictures under Creative Commons Attribution – Share Alike Unported 3.0 license. Citrine by Wela49, amber topaz by Rob Lavisnky, iRocks.com, and blue topaz by Mauro Cateb

President's Message

Ling Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

We certainly had an unusual ending to our October meeting. A power failure at 8:45 brought the meeting to an abrupt end. Initially we tried to wrap things up by opening the drapes and using the lights from cars in the parking lot. However, the cars moved on about the time I located a couple of flashlights that I keep in my car for just this sort of thing. As we were finishing up the raffle by flashlight the power came back on so we were able to put the room back into its proper order before leaving. We did have our club represented for both days of the Brookhaven STEM fair on 18-19 October. Letting the kids help with the grinding and polishing of stones on the All-In One was a big hit. Our November meeting will be our first of our new fiscal year. We will install the officers and discuss plans for the Christmas Party and Pot-Luck Dinner. **A special visitor will be Denise Miller who is a volunteer for Odyssey of the Mind at Uplift North Hills Prep School.** I plan to donate some tumbled rocks, and mineral specimens. If you would also like to donate, please bring your donation to the meeting. Please plan to attend. Also, dues are once again due – renew now and avoid the rush!

American Golden Topaz

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

While researching the November birthstone issue, I stumbled across a stone named the American Golden Topaz that is on permanent display at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in Washington DC. It is the world's largest cut topaz weighing in at 22,892.5 carats. The plaque that is displayed with the stone reads "As you move around this remarkable gem, watch how light flashes off its 172 facets. At 4.6 kg (10.1 lb), it is one of the world's largest gems. Gem-cutter Leon Agee fashioned it over the course of two years in the late 1980s from an 11.8-kg (26-lb) crystal" Below this inscription, in a smaller font, the plaque reads "Gift of the Rockhound Hobbyists of America through the efforts of the six regional federations of mineralogical societies and Drs. Marie and Ed Bogatta, 1988." I wondered what the "Rockhound Hobbyists of America" was and further wondered if it were not somehow the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) since it referenced the 6 regional federations. It was almost too much of a coincidence that the AFMS is composed of six regional federations.

First I looked on the AFMS web site for a history of the federation to see if at one time (say in 1988) it was named the Rockhound Hobbyists of America. However, that search indicated the AFMS had been named the AFMS since its inception in 1948. Further searches of the internet for information about the "American Golden Topaz" and "Rockhound Hobbyists of America" did not yield any further insight into the organization (but did give a lot of information about the gem). However, I was still convinced that the Rockhound Hobbyists of America had to be tied to the AFMS. My next step was to ask the AFMS – an email to central_office@amfed.org resulted in a really great reply from Steve Weinberger – **thank you Steve**. He included an article written by Fred Schaefermeyer and published in *Rocks & Minerals*, December 1988. The article had a very complete history of the stone.

The story started in 1987 when John White, curator of the gem and mineral collection at the Smithsonian, approached the AFMS with a plan to acquire a large gem to replace the Brazilian Princess which was then the largest gem in existence at 21,327 carats. Mr. White knew of a stone that would likely cut to a larger gem than the Brazilian Princess, but needed \$40,000 to acquire the gem. Mr. White's plan was taken to the directors of the AFMS at their 1987 meeting in Oklahoma City with an added inducement that the gem could be displayed at major shows, but the plan was rejected; the directors did not feel that the AFMS could undertake another fund raising program at that time. However, after the meeting the idea was still being discussed and resulted in an ad hoc committee with members from each regional federation. The "Friends of the Smithsonian Topaz Fund" was formed and reached their goal of \$40,000 in April 1988. At the same time, the stone, owned by Drs. Maria and Edgar Bogatta of Seattle, was being cut on a special machine by Mr. Leon Agee of Walla Walla, Washington. The cut stone had a finished weight of 22,892.5 carats which exceeded the weight of the Brazilian Princess making it (at the time) the world's largest gem. On May 4th, 1988 the American Golden Topaz was officially presented to the Smithsonian museum by Mr. William Maloney, executive vice president of the AFMS. Mr. Schaefermeyer's article indicates the gem was donated "in the name of the hobbyists of the AFMS and its six regional federations." The plaque for the American Golden Topaz picked up on the "Rockhound Hobbyists of America and the six regional federations," but did not specifically name the American Federation of Mineralogical Society. As the American Golden Topaz was not on permanent display at the Smithsonian they initially made good on its "added inducement" by allowing clubs to borrow the gem for display at club shows; However, the Smithsonian opened a new hall in 1997 and the American Golden Topaz was put on permanent display, thus loaning the gem to AFMS clubs was no longer possible. I have not been able to determine if pictures of the American Golden Topaz have copyright restrictions. I would therefore encourage you to look at the following links for information and a couple of great pictures:

<http://geogallery.si.edu/index.php/en/1085499/topaz> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Golden_Topaz

Ref:

- Wikipedia, American Golden Topaz, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Golden_Topaz
- Schaefermeyer, Fred C, *The American Golden Topaz*, *Rocks and Minerals*, December 1988, Heldref Publications, Washington, D.C.
- Email from Steve Weinberger, AFMS Central Office, 18 September 2014

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Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

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PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of Dallas

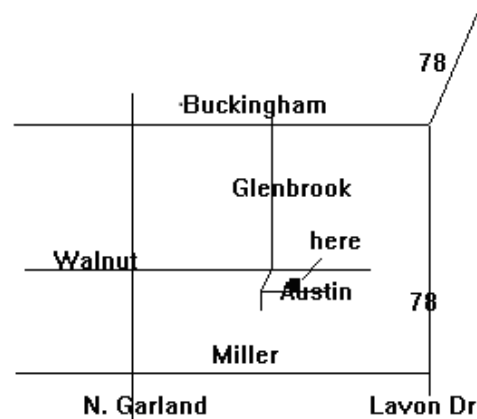


Meetings

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: \$16.00,
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:

November Meeting: November 6th, Garland Women's Activities Building, 713 Austin, Garland, TX

December Meeting: December 4th, Our Annual Pot Luck Dinner and Christmas Party starting at 7:00 PM

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 1st Saturday of each month at 10:00 am

Dallas Gem & Mineral Society meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, VFW Hall, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas TX (next to their shop)

Dallas Paleontological Society, 2nd Wed. of each month at 7:30 pm, Brookhaven Geotechnology Institute, 3939 Valley View Lane, 75244

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

CERA (Cowtown G,M, & Glass Club), meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 pm, 3024 Acme Brick Plaza, Ft. Worth (formerly LM Stone Steppers)

Oak Cliff Gem & Min Soc., 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, South Hampton Community Hospital, 2929 S. Hampton Rd, Dallas, TX

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