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1st Place, 2022 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin  
1st Place, 2022 AFMS Mini-Bulletin

## A HALLOWEEN ROCK

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club

Before we try to find a rock for Halloween, we need to know what characterizes Halloween. Halloween, a.k.a. All Hallows (Hallow means Saint) Eve and All Saints Eve, is a Christian holiday. It started as a celebration for remembering the dead, particularly the Saints, Martyrs, and the faithful departed. It was celebrated on November 1, but somehow the eve (October 31) was warped into a time of ghosts, devils, and supernatural beings. All the dead (not just the faithful) rise. In modern times, it has been further transformed into a children's celebration centered on Trick-or-Treating (with an emphasis on the Treats), costume parties, carving pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns (named after the flickering lights seen over a peat bog, also known as will-o'-the-wisps), pranks, bonfires, and visiting haunted houses. The orange color of pumpkins has become the dominant color of Halloween. That said, we need to find an orange rock or mineral for Halloween. And since Halloween is also an "eve" or dark time of the day, the rock should also have a dark (black) color.

For a black and orange rock, the obvious answer is Bumble Bee "Jasper". Bumble Bee Jasper is characterized by its yellow or orange color with a black background. Bumble Bee "Jasper" has as many inconsistencies as Halloween. IT IS NOT A JASPER. The rock's only relationship to quartz is the way it appears, especially when cut as a cabochon. Jasper is a microcrystalline quartz. Bumble Bee Jasper is actually a form of Calcite ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ). The dark bands are from Pyrite (iron sulfide), and the orange to yellow color is due to inclusions of Realgar (arsenic sulfide). The Calcite is fibrous making it a variety of Travertine. The only known source of Bumble Bee "Jasper" is from near the base of Mount Papandayan in western Java, Indonesia.



Photo:

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

Reference:

Bumble Bee Jasper <https://www.gia.edu/>

Wikipedia, numerous topics,

## FEDERATION NEWS

This article from the September-October 2025 SCFMS Newsletter  
The Austin Gem and Mineral Society (AGMS) is hosting the SCFMS Convention

### "DIAMOND" MEANS MORE THAN 75 YEARS TO AGMS

By Jan Ozias



Austin Gem and Mineral Society is celebrating 75 years as a strong organization with a Diamond Jubilee, but there are many relationships with diamonds.

Diamond is an amazing mineral our Mineral Special Interest Group knows well. It inspires members who facet gemstones or want to learn and practice in the faceting workshop. The topic is of great interest at general meetings including speakers such as from Diamonds Direct (2017) and Charles Kirkpatrick who presented about the industry most recently in 2024.



Diamonds can be diverse as are our members' backgrounds and interests. Near perfect Diamond is treasured as a faceted gemstone with its unique luster. But imperfect diamonds are uniquely abrasive and long valued for cutting and polishing other gems.

"Synthetic diamonds" were created in the 1950s by American workers at General Electric's "Project Superpressure" to meet industrial demands. They have had diverse industrial applications from drill bits in oil fields to speaker domes.

AGMS has long offered classes and facilities to serve members' diverse interests: the Streiber Library, a curated mineral collection, Gef Fisher "slab saw shack," lapidary workshop for making slabs for nightlights or cabs for jewelry including wire wraps, and silversmithing and faceting workroom.

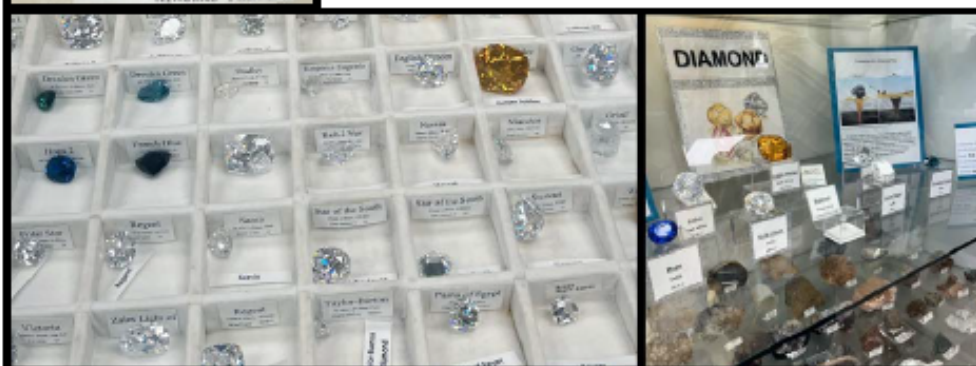
AGMS had a unique relationship with the Texas Faceters' Guild. Well-known member and instructor, Charles Covill (1920-2017) took up faceting as his "hobby" after retirement from designing bridges. Charles became an accomplished gemstone faceter, a leader and competitor in the Texas Faceters' Guild. He taught and mentored members including Ewing Evans, a retired chemist. "Wing" credits Charles for teaching and then pushing him to enter the Australian International Faceting Challenge...in which he won 1<sup>st</sup> place 4 times!



In 1988, Guild member Hubert Rackets proposed the group cut replicas of world-famous diamonds. Twelve Guild members accepted the challenge to recreate 32 famous diamonds (usually in cubic zirconia, YAG, even glass) for display. Charles cut the Nassak and Tiffany replicas. In 2002, Charles wrote *Developing a Faceting Diagram for AGMS The Stone Chipper* including how he diagramed the replica for "Star of the South."

He and wife Paddy (1920-2009) were very active in service to AGMS- often serving as Officers. They were the club's first named Patrons (1994). Their daughter Diann Hill continued as an active leader.

The Texas Faceters' Guild held meetings and symposia at the AGMS club house. When the Guild disbanded, the members placed the Great Diamond Replicas case on permanent loan to the AGMS. The case has been frequently displayed at Gem Capers and will be the center of attraction at the October 2025 Show for which Diamond is the theme.



Speaking of Gem Capers, have you noticed Rocky, the Show mascot? Rocky first appeared at the 2009 Show for the theme "History of Mining." Look at what's in his bag!



## **FEDERATION NEWS (Continued)**

### **From the Desk of the {AFMS} President**

From the September 2025 AFMS Newsletter

By J.C. Moore, AFMS President



Following a brief pause in preparing the President's messages, I will attempt to highlight how I spent my summer. The regional conventions this year have been bunched together with the AFMS/Eastern Convention March 27–31 in Hickory, North Carolina, followed by the Midwest Convention April 5-6 in Lincoln, Nebraska. Then a break before the California Convention May 10-11 in Lancaster, North Carolina. We now come to September where we have the Northwest Convention September 5-6 in Walla Walla, Washington; on September 12-13 the Southeast Federation Annual meeting in Norcross, Georgia and on September 19-21 the Rocky Mountain Federation Convention in Grand Junction, Colorado. Then in October the South Central Federation Convention will be in Austin, Texas October 17-19.

I do enjoy attending these Conventions, but we have had a problem getting tasks done at home. This may seem as if I am complaining about responsibilities of being President, but it is great to travel to the seven Federations, reconnecting with friends, making new friends, seeing the different specimens available in each Federation, and perhaps getting ideas on how to improve our own Federation and club shows and maybe collecting a few rocks, too. For those people who have never attended a Regional Convention, you are missing a great experience, and even better, people who are excited to share their knowledge and experience with everyone.

As I come to the last couple of months of my term as President, I would like to thank all the officers of the AFMS and the Regional Federations' officers who made my visits very welcome and who have assisted me during this past year.

### **Did You See It in Your Neck of the Woods?**

Jennifer Haley, AFMS Historian,

From the September 2025 AFMS Newsletter



Over this past 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, I was watching television when a commercial came on for Physicians Mutual Insurance. "Lo and behold," the whole ad was centered around the joy of being a rockhound. I just loved it because, for one it was about how fun our hobby is, secondly it had a great sense of humor about leaverities for beginners. This is the second time our hobby has received multimillion-dollar free advertising, This insurance company spends about \$100 million on their annual advertising.

The previous time our hobby received free advertising was in a Facebook ad during the 2020 Super Bowl called "I Wanna Rock, Ready to Rock?" There is a full article in the AFMS April 2020 newsletter under my historian article about it. Not only were we featured during the football game, this ad was also shown during the Oscars! So, let it in, we've hit the big times, folks, and are being noticed! Back in 2020, 101 million people watched the Super Bowl, and 23.6 million people watched the Oscars. Facebook spent 2.6 million dollars on that ad, and recreational rockhounding received a full 60 seconds of recognition. Do the math, that's a lot of money they spent on us because Facebook and this insurance company recognized our hobby is worth the money being focused in their advertising campaigns. This is great news to share with your club members, because our hobby is very alive and well in these company's eyes for them to feature us. We've been given a huge PR boost for the potential of increasing our club memberships now, as more people are becoming aware of us. The time is ripe for putting our energy into creating these new memberships.

## Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

Check with the show contact to verify the show status

### OCTOBER

October 3-5, Gem and Mineral Society of Louisiana, John A Alario Event Center, <https://www.gmsofla.org/>

October 17-19, Austin G&MS show and SCFMF Convention (October 18). The show is held at the Palmer Event Center in downtown Austin. The Convention Breakfast and General Meeting will take place at their clubhouse, located at 6719 Burnet Lane. The awards banquet will be held at Nature's Treasures, located at 11055 N. IH-35 Frontage Rd. Both are north of downtown Austin.

### NOVEMBER

November 1-2, Paleontological Society of Austin, Old Settler's Heritage Association, <https://www.austinpaleo.org/fest.html>

November 1-2, Midland Gem and Mineral Society, Bush Convention Center, <https://www.midlandgemandmineral.org/>

November 7-9, Houston Gem and Mineral Society, Humble Convention Center, <https://hgms.org/>

November 15-16, Fort Worth G&M Club, May 24 - 25, Will Rogers Memorial Center,

<https://www.fortworthgemandmineralclub.org/show.html>

November 22-23, Dallas Gem and Mineral Society, Mesquite Convention Center, <https://www.dallasgemandmineral.org/>

### DECEMBER

December 6-7, DeRidder Gem and Mineral Society, West LA Forestry Fair Grounds,

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064473110778>

Ref: Local Shows, [https://www.scfms.net/local\\_shows.htm](https://www.scfms.net/local_shows.htm)

## VISIT AN AREA CLUB

[Arlington Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX

[Cowtown Gem, Mineral, & Glass Club](#), meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 pm, CERA 3300 Bryant Irvin Rd. Fort Worth

[Dallas Bead Society](#), meets 1st Saturday of each month at 10:00 am at The Point at CC Young, 4847 W. Lawther Dr., Dallas, TX

[Dallas Gem & Mineral Society](#) meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, American Legion, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas (next to their shop)

[Dallas Paleontological Society](#), meets the 2nd Wed. of each month at 7:00 pm, Brookhaven College, Building H, 3939 Valley View Lane,

[Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 3545 Bryan Avenue, Ft. Worth

[Oak Cliff Gem & Min Soc.](#), meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 3839 W. Keist Blvd, Dallas,

[Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Monday of each month at 7:00 pm, Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Dr., Garland, 7

[Wild West Bead Society](#), meets 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm, Wild Beads, 1124 S. Bowen Road, Arlington, TX

## More Bumble Bee “Jasper”

Pictures from Wikimedia Commons,



## OFFICERS FOR 2024 – 2025

President: Joe Vulk  
1st VP, Programs: Amy Vulk  
2<sup>nd</sup> VP, Field Trips: Julie Wilson  
Secretary: Johnny Rhodes  
Treasurer: Ling Shurtz  
Editor: Don Shurtz  
Contact us by email: [don.shurtz@gmail.com](mailto:don.shurtz@gmail.com)

## Minutes of the September 2, 2025 Meeting

I apologize that I am not able to print the September Meeting minutes. The source documents for the minutes cannot be located. I would ask that we spend a few minutes at our meeting to reconstruct the minutes. From my recollection, Joe opened the business meeting at 7:20. We recited the Pledge of Allegiance, the President announced that a quorum was present, and there were no visitors. The Minutes of the August meeting were passed, but I do not recall who made and seconded the motion to accept the minutes as published. The treasurer's report was presented by Ling, but again, I do not recall who made and seconded the motion to accept the report. There was no old business to be discussed. Under new business, Joe appointed several members to a nominating committee for our 2025-2026 Officers. I do not recall all the names of individuals appointed to the committee. Finally, for the Presentation, we viewed the video "The Gem Hunter in AFGHANISTAN". We then had the door prize drawings. I believe Joe closed the meeting at 9:05 PM.

## NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Monday, October 6, 2025. Our meeting will start at 7:00 PM and is expected to conclude by 9:00 PM. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland, TX. We will be electing officers for 2025-2026 at the meeting. Our presentation will be a video related to our hobby.

## Presentation Review

Our September Presentation was the movie "The Gem Hunter in Afghanistan." The movie is a real-life documentary of Gary Bowersox, a prominent figure in the mineral world, traveling to the Hindu Kush Mountains of Afghanistan. The trip starts in neighboring Pakistan. The documentary is set in 2001 when Afghanistan was under the political control of the Taliban. Russia ended its war in Afghanistan in the late 1980s, but there were abandoned tanks and unexploded ordnance. The video documents Bowersox's group entering Afghanistan through numerous checkpoints along and near the border with Pakistan. The video shows at least one case where the party had to sneak past a checkpoint. You can believe that the filming was staged, as the cameras documented the gate opening and closing with armed troops present. However, given the political situation, you can believe evasion happened when bribery would not work. Once through the myriads of checkpoints, the party used horses for most of the rest of the trip. It was interesting to see the inside of the working Lapis Lazuli mines. After visiting the mines, they moved to lower elevations to the emerald mines. The mines were exposed by Soviet bombing and artillery attacks. These emerald mines are now some of the most productive emerald mines in the world. Another fascinating item that was filmed was the silent bartering for parcels of gems. The parcel of gems would be displayed, then the bartering parties would join hands for silent communication until a bargain was reached or the parcel was retracted. Various forms of silent bartering have existed for centuries. It was an excellent video documentary. What was missing was how Bowersox and his party departed Afghanistan.

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# PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of DALLAS



## Meetings

First Monday of each month, KofC Hall, 3722 Cavalier Dr., Garland, TX. Please check website, [www.pogmc.org](http://www.pogmc.org), for updates.

## Membership

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

## 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. Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas is a not-for-profit organization

## CHIPS AND CHATTER

Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club  
c/o 4004 Dublin Rd.  
Allen, TX 75002-6526

To

## VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

**Our next meeting will be Monday, October 6, 2025, starting at 7:00 PM. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Council 6402 Hall located at 3722 Cavalier Drive in Garland.  
The activity for the meeting will be a video related to our hobby.**

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## *Chips and Chatter*

See the Chips and Chatter online for color!

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