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1st Place, 2025 AFMS Mini-Bulletin

A Mineral for October: Andalusite

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

Andalusite is a mineral that exhibits Pleochroism. Depending on which axis you are looking along, it can be green, amber, or brown. How does that represent October? What colors are the leaves of trees at the beginning of October? Green! In mid-October, the leaves are changing color, often orange, yellow, and amber. As you approach November, the leaves are turning brown and falling. Andalusite has them all covered. Yes, I know some leaves are red, and some are even purple, so let's just be satisfied with a rock that covers most of the leaves' colors.



If you want spooky for October, let's consider that Andalusite could also become Kyanite or Sillimanite. They have identical chemical configurations; they depend on pressure and temperature at the time of formation. In other words, they are trimorphic. Andalusite forms and is stable at low to moderate temperatures. Kyanite is stable and forms at high pressures and temperatures ranging from low to high. Sillimanite forms and is stable at lower pressures and high temperatures. All three forms (Kyanite, Sillimanite, and Andalusite) can exist simultaneously at the triple point of their phase diagram, which is 500 degrees Centigrade and 3.8 kilobars of pressure. Andalusite was named by Jean Claude Delametherie, as he thought the specimen was from Andalusia, Spain. However, he later found that it was from El Cardoso de la Sierra, Spain. However, the originally published name was retained. The two largest deposits of Andalusite are in France and South Africa. Most Andalusite is used as a refractory in kilns and furnaces.



If that is not yet enough, Andalusite also comes in various varieties. Of course, the green, amber, and brown variety is known by the family name Andalusite. The named varieties, alphabetically listed, are Chialstolite, Viridine, Kanonaite, and a clear unnamed variety. Chialstolite fits right in with October's Halloween as it looks like it is wearing a mask. Chialstolite is typically light brown with a dark cross. The cross can range from a thin pair of intersecting lines to the spread-out version shown in the picture. The dark cross is caused by graphite inclusions. Chialstolite was originally found in Spain and sold to visitors as an amulet or souvenir in Santiago de Compostela (St. James of Compostela). Chialstolite is found worldwide, including North and South America, Europe,

Asia, Africa, and Australia. The green variety of Andalusite is named Viridine. It is found in many of the same localities as Andalusite. Viridine gets its green color from Manganese. The chemical formula for Andalusite is Al_2SiO_5 , while Viridine's formula is $(\text{Al}, \text{Mn}^{3+})_2\text{SiO}_4\text{O}$. Viridine is also called Mangnoan Andalusite, Manganandalusite, and Mangandalusite. Kanonaite is the final variety of Andalusite. The chemical formula for Kanonaite is identical to Viridine. Like Viridine, it is green and derives its color from Manganese. The difference between Viridine and Kanonaite is the amount of Manganese in the crystal. When you see the part of the chemical formula " $(\text{Al}, \text{Mn}^{3+})$ ", it means Aluminum and Manganese must be present. However, if over 50% of the available sites are occupied by Manganese, the mineral is classified as Kanonaite. If less than 50% of the available sites are occupied by Manganese, the mineral is classified as Viridine.



References:

- Wikipedia, various topics related to Andalusite and its varieties, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>
- Mindat, various topics related to Andalusite and its varieties, <https://www.mindat.org/>
- Google AI for topics related to Andalusite and its varieties

Pictures:

- Andalusite: Photo by [Ivar Leidus](#), used by CC-SA-4.0-International
- Chistolite: Photo by [James St. John](#), used by CC-SA-2.0 Generic
- Viridine: Photo by Rob Lavinsky, [iRocks.com](#) – CC-SA-3.0

Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

Check with show contact to verify show status

October 2-4, Westwego (New Orleans), LA, G&MS of Louisiana, Alario Center, <https://www.gmsfla.org/>
 October 2-4, Albuquerque, NM, Jay Penn Albuquerque Show, NM Expo State Fairgrounds,
 October 2-4, Austin, TX, Austin INTERGEM, Palmer Events Center, <https://www.intergem.com/all-upcoming-shows>
 October 3-4, Cabot, AR, Central Arkansas GMGS, Veterans Park Event Center, www.cagmags.org
 October 9-11, Grapevine, TX, Dallas INTERGEM, Gaylord Texan Resort, <https://www.intergem.com/all-upcoming-shows>
 October 16-18, Houston, TX, Houston INTERGEM, Reliant Center, <https://www.intergem.com/all-upcoming-shows>
 Oct 30-Nov 1, Oklahoma City, OK MGS, State Fair Park (Modern Living Bldg), OMGS-minerals.org
 Oct 31-Nov 1, Amarillo, TX, Golden Spread GMTS, Amarillo Civic Center, email Kassidy.gsgmts@outlook.com
 November 7-8, Austin, TX, Fossil Fest, Paleo Society of Austin, Old Settlers Heritage Association,
<https://www.austinpaleo.org/fest.php>
 November 13-15, Houston, TX, Houston G&MS, Humble Civic Center. Note: Also see the November 14 entry below.
<https://www.austinpaleo.org/fest.php>
 November 14, Houston, TX, SCFMS Convention hosted by the Houston GEMS.
 January 16-17, 2027, Fredericksburg, TX, Fredericksburg Rockhounds, Pioneer Pavillion, fredericksburgrockhounds.org

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 6:00 pm, Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Dr., Garland
[Wild West Bead Society](#), meets 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm, Wild Beads, 1124 S. Bowen Road, Arlington, TX

The Federation Page

{SCFMS} PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Sigrid Stewert, SCFMS President
From the September-October SCFMS Newsletter

The 2026 Convention of the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies is coming up on November 14th this fall! This year the Convention will be held in conjunction with the **HGMS Annual Gem, Mineral, Jewelry & Fossil Show**, which runs 3 days from Friday, November 13th (9 AM-6 PM), Saturday, November 14th (9 AM-6 PM), and Sunday, November 15th (10 AM-5 PM). It is HGMS' 73rd Annual Show, with over 45 vendors and many activities.



The Annual Show and the SCFMS Convention will be held at the **Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy in Humble, Texas**, north of Houston proper. All Convention activities will take place on the 14th, with the Editors/Webmasters meeting at 8 AM, the Annual Meeting at 2 PM, and the Awards dinner at 7 PM. A block of rooms has been reserved at a nearby hotel, and the Civic Center may have RV spaces available. Registration forms are ready. Let's get together and talk about what we can do to further our hobby!

Activities:

All activities for the SCFMS Annual Convention will take place on Saturday, November 14th at the Humble Civic Center in Humble, Texas, in the Hospitality area of the setup for the HGMS Annual Show.

- Editors/Webmasters Contest will be held from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM.
- SCFMS Annual Convention will be held from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM.
- The Award Dinner will take place at 7:00 PM.
- Rollin Rock Club will, as usual, be at 9:00 AM on Sunday morning, before the Show opens.

Clubhouse

If anyone is interested in visiting the HGMS clubhouse, that will have to take place on Monday, as club members will be busy with Show activities.

Why Staybridge Suites?

The Staybridge Suites is the suggested hotel for convention attendees. It is one of the closest hotels to the Humble Civic Center; it has good ratings, and they can provide a gathering place and a shuttle. We thought that might reassure people who are uncertain about navigating Houston traffic.

The QR code at right is the reservation link to the reserved block of rooms.



There are, of course, other hotels:

- Regency Inn & Suites
- WoodSpring Suites Houston IAH Airport
- Ramada by Wyndham Houston Intercontinental Airport
- East La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham
- Holiday Inn Houston NE
- Palace Inn IAH Houston
- TownePlace Suites by Marriott
- Comfort Suites Humble Houston IAH

Houston Area Attractions:

- Houston Museum of Natural Science
- Katy Rock Shop
- The Focal Crystal
- Downtown Aquarium
- Houston Botanic Gardens
- Mercer Gardens
- Space Center Houston
- The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
- Bayou Bend Collection

Mineral Safety

By Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair
From the September 2026 AFMS Newsletter



When comparing home safety and mineral safety, we in the mineral hobby have a pretty good record of safety. Statistics for home safety show quite a few incidents with cuts by sharp kitchen knives; falls in the bathroom on slippery floors, wet bath tubs, and loose bath mats; as well as home yard work with lawn mowers, chain saws, and gardening tools. We in the mineral hobby should be proud of our effort to be and stay safe.

There is one notable difference in our hobby when compared with activity in the home. Unlike the home, where most every product with which we come in contact is tested, certified, and regulated, in the mineral collecting hobby we handle all kinds of untested rocks, minerals, and interesting situations. For example, in Maine it is very interesting and rare to collect a piece of near-water-clear quartz with a small dark grain of a sand-size spec in it. That tiny spec may sometimes have a halo-like area of darker quartz around it. What we have there is likely to be a tiny grain of some unknown radioactive mineral that caused the dark halo effect in the quartz. Compare that with obscure, less distinct, and rare micro-crystals of cuprosklodowskite found in Utah, New Mexico, Canada, and Zaire, or larger crystals of betafite found in Colorado, California, New Mexico, Canada, and Madagascar. These minerals contain uranium.

Arsenopyrite and cinnabar contain arsenic and mercury (respectively); they should be more familiar to most mineral collectors as these are highly desirable in personal collections because of their interesting and often attractive appearances. There are many other aspects of minerals which we treat respectfully – the razor-sharp edges of conchoidal fractures (quartz), the splintery nature of certain mineral formations (wollastonite), the water solubility of certain minerals (halite and hanksite), the oxidation of others (pyrite), the silica dust formed when we grind certain materials (agate), the toxicity of others (certain seashells and malachite) and so on. Because we are mineral collectors, we research and learn about minerals. We learn what minerals we may find and collect in certain locations. We know when to protect ourselves from dust. We know how to protect our eyes from sharp and flying rock chips. We know certain minerals should be handled with care and wearing gloves. We know to wash our hands after handling certain minerals. We know not to overheat some stones while working them. In other words, we are informed, we are curious, we are careful, we are respectful of the hobby we enjoy. And, perhaps most important of all, when we don't have the answers, we ask questions, we share our knowledge, we share our passions, and we share our enthusiasm. Hooray for us, and thank you.

Yes, there are indeed all too many accidents in our homes. So, please be careful there as well. Please be safe in all you do. Your home and mineral hobby safety both matter.

OFFICERS FOR 2025 – 2026

President:	Joe Vulk
1st VP, Programs:	Amy Vulk
2nd VP, Field Trips:	Julie Wilson
Secretary:	Johnny Rhodes
Treasurer	Ling Shurtz
Editor	Don Shurtz

Contact us by email: don.shurtz@gmail.com

Minutes of the September Meeting

Call to Order:

President Joe Vulk called the 9/7/2026 POGMC meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance:

We recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Quorum:

A quorum was present.

Visitors:

There were no visitors.

Minutes:

Minutes of the August meeting were published in the September Chips and Chatter. Cheryl moved to accept the Minutes as published. Brenda seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

Julie presented the Treasurer's Report. Julie made a motion to accept the report. Amy seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Old Business:

Reports on Rock Swaps and Shows -Nothing new to report.

New Business:

Julie and Warner will be in the Hall of State again this year at the Texas State Fair.

Presentation:

The members decided to forgo the presentation due to the time.

Raffle:

Julie and Joe conducted the raffle.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Our Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be Monday, October 5, 2026, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland, TX. We will start at 6:00 PM. The business meeting will start at 6:30, and the presentation will start at 7:00

Did you Notice It?

Did you notice any change in the common information on Page 1? Take a close look and see if you can spot it. The common information is all within the top 2–2.5 inches of the page. If you got down to the title of the lead article, you need to start over. If you can't spot it, see the note below.

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About a year ago, the bulletins and articles were submitted to the SCFMS for the 2026 Editor and Author Contest. The results of the contest will be announced at the 2026 SCFMS Convention in November in Houston. However, winning SCFMS Newsletters and Articles were submitted to the AFMS Editor and Author Contest. The AFMS winners were announced at the 2026 AFMS Convention in May. Some of the other contests (Webmaster, All American Club, etc. were announced in the May AFMS newsletter. I thought that the May AFMS issue was the last one before the AFMS Newsletter summer break. When I didn't see anything in the September AFMS newsletter, I decided they would withhold the winner announcements until after the last Federation show in 2026 (the SCFMS show). While preparing this issue of the Chips and Chatter, I noticed that the Hot Springs Bulletin had won First Place in the Large Bulletin category in the AFMS contest. Then I wondered how the editor there (Ray Lynch) had found out. So I went back to the AFMS webpage to look at the May issue again, but instead found a June issue. I looked inside, and there were the results. I am pleased to announce that the Chips and Chatter finished in First Place in the Small Bulletin category. What a pleasant surprise! The change in the common information was the 2026 date.

PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of DALLAS



Meetings

We meet the first Monday of each month at 6:00 PM. We meet at the Knights of Columbus Council 6401 Hall, 3722 Cavalier Drive, Garland, TX 75402

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 5, starting at 6:00. We will meet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3712 Cavalier Drive, Garland, TX

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