



# The **BACKBENDER'S** **GAZETTE**

The Newsletter of the  
Houston Gem & Mineral Society

Volume XLVI - No. 9

September 2015

## President's Message

Raymond Kizer is out of town attending the Keweenaw Mineral Days in upper Michigan and visiting other locations of interest. There is no President's Message this month.

## Upcoming Programs

*by Paul Brandes, HGMS 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*

**August 25, 2015: Rose Cleveland**--She will be sharing the highlights of her trip to Australia to hunt for Opals.

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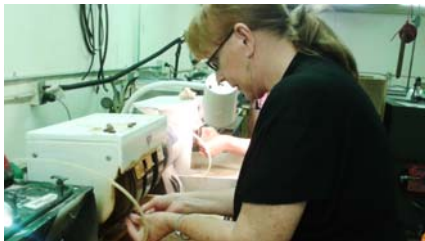
## Christmas in July—Paleo Holiday Party—Just 7 Months Late

*by Neal Immega*

**T**he Paleo Section is, by the nature of its interests, always a little behind the times. Therefore, It should be no surprise that we held our annual holiday party in July this year instead of in December. In addition, because Santa Claus cannot be expected to keep up with our revised calendar, we made presents for OURSELVES. That way, you know what you are getting and do not have to deal with wrapping paper and tape! There is always too much going on in December for another holiday party.



In a fit of madness, I cleaned up the Air Tools Room (where the Paleo Section cleans fossils). It seems no one can just throw away a good fossil—they just dump it in the air tools room. One box was labeled 1978 field trip! I found all sorts of stuff—from eurypterids and trilobite parts to little Moroccan ammonites among the air tools and supplies.



Grind Ammonites until they are  
**BETTER.**

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*Continued on page 4*

**2015 HGMS Gem & Jewelry Show—This Year ONLY  
September 25–27, 2015  
Y'all come!**

**(In 2016 our show will be held in November—As Usual.)**

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*Every article published in the BBG is edited for grammar and content. No flaming is allowed.*

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## Purpose of HGMS

The objectives of this Society are to promote the advancement of the knowledge and practice of the arts and sciences associated with the collecting of rocks, minerals, fossils, artifacts, and their identification and classification; the general lapidary art; the collecting and identification of gemstones; the designing and execution of jewelry or metalcraft; and to provide the opportunity to obtain, exchange, and exhibit specimens and rough or finished materials.

Membership dues are \$40 for an adult membership, \$60 for a couple, \$75 for a family (including all children aged 5-18), \$25 for a youth membership (ages 5-18), and \$500 for an adult life membership. Advertising rates: \$70 for 2 months, ¼ page; \$150 for 6 months, ¼ page.

MEMBER: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies & South Central Federation of Mineral Societies.

All meetings are held at the Clubhouse which is located at 10805 Brooklet near the intersection of Highway 59 (Southwest Freeway) and Sam Houston Parkway (Beltway 8). See the calendar inside the back page for when the different Sections meet. The General Meeting is the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30. The HGMS Web site address is <http://www.hgms.org>.

*Christmas in July continued from page 1*



Super collector Diane Sisson with her creations.

That decided it! It had to be a day for making ammonite jewelry. Since I am the Shop Foreman AND Paleo Section head, we can do all sorts of stuff in the shops, and we did. Get your hands dirty! We ground the nickel-sized ammonites to reveal the calcite-filled chambers, shined them up, and attached them to wooden disks. A few people drilled the fossils to mount them. A few folks just cleaned them off and left them alone as specimens. This is what they look like.



An ammonite jewel!



For all our members who did not have a 'bite--An improved trilobite

Paleo Section member Jim Paras is super-crafty. He guided folks through the process of making the most realistic fake trilobite specimens. Of course, no one will notice that the limestone under the ancient 'bite is Eocene Green River Shale, will they?

All of this work was capped off by the enjoyment of a wonderful cooperative feast. A most congenial and festive evening!



## Show Committee Happenings

by Scott Singleton

HGMS 2015 Show Chair

**B**y the time you read this, the Pre-Show Pizza Party and Auction will have happened (and I'm sure it will have been successful). That event kicks off the 2015 show preparations including volunteer sign-up. I hope everyone in the club gives freely of their time to help staff the various activities and functions that we have at our show—which, by the way is the largest show in Texas. So it is a reasonable assumption that we have a lot going on and need lots of people to help staff our booths and activities. The volunteer coordinator is Nancy English (one of the several hats that she wears for the club), so when she contacts you, please offer to help out or go to the online sign-up Web site. Nancy has a list of the various categories where you can help out, such as info booth, ticket booth, ticket taker, School Daze Earth Science program (Friday), Scout Geology Merit Badge program (Saturday), hospitality, Swap Area swap dollar table, and Dino Dig. The Section booths also will need help. Please check with your Section for their volunteer needs.

Counting down from the beginning of September, the first event is **Dino Dig flat pouring**, a much-heralded fun day at the clubhouse when people of all ages get to pretend they're kids playing in the mud. The flat pouring will be held on **Saturday, September 12**. For that event we will need two people with pickup trucks who are willing to haul bags of concrete or bulk sand. And we will need others to show up with wheel barrows, shovels, hoes, and a willingness to do some physical work. We usually don't have a shortage of people, so come join in the fun.

The following weekend (September 19) another important but lower-key event happens—Sargent Major Beverly Mace rides herd over the clubhouse attic and all the Sections and Show Committees that have material up there. It ALL MUST BE PROPERLY TAGGED with the appropriately colored sticker AND HAULED DOWNSTAIRS to the garage area in preparation for loading on the show truck. If you or your Section has material up there that needs to go to the show, DO NOT expect someone else to take care of it for you. Beverly stands behind her word that it will be left behind if YOU do not get it downstairs.

Then we start the actual show process. Wednesday afternoon (September 23) the moving company we hired will pack everything with our help. The truck goes to the Humble Civic Center (HCC) on Thursday morning (September 24), and they unload it by 9:00. We need volunteers out at the HCC to help out with this. PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP SET UP ON THURSDAY IF YOU CAN. We are usually done with most of the setup by mid-day, so it's an easy task, and you can go back to work if needed (I will).

The show begins on Friday, September 24, with hordes of kids ransacking

the HCC and taking no prisoners. We do this (happily) because we are a 501(c)3 tax-exempt educational organization that provides an educational service to the public. So we need to be ready, and that means we need volunteers to staff our show functions on Friday (not just the weekend). We continue our educational outreach on Saturday with our Scout Geology Merit Badge Program.

So get ready, folks! The show is coming, and it will be here before you know it. We're going to have lots of fun doing rock-related hobby stuff at the show and hope that everyone in the club feels likewise. See you there!

### **NEWS FLASH: Raptor Sighted in Houston Area Is Identified**

*Turns out to be owned by member of HGMS and is tame*

**H**ouston (AP) - Reports circulated last month that a Velociraptor had been seen in the area. However, positive ID was not ascertained, and rumor was that it was an escapee from the Jurassic Park movie set. Fear was rising as citizens started blocking their doors and windows with steel rebar and building defensive positions in their houses. Kids were kept off the street. Police patrols were doubled. But despite these efforts, no subsequent sighting was made.



Then at the end of August, HGMS member Clay Keiffer came forward with a startling admission. "He's mine," Clay said, "I've been trying to house-break him for the past month or so, and it's been tough, so he occasionally gets outside. But no need to worry, he was born in captivity and has been raised by humans ever since." Clay continued with a matter-of-fact tone, "He does eat meat but views humans as family so wouldn't harm anyone. We have had some reports of missing dogs and cats in the neighborhood since he's been around, but that's about it." When asked if he had a city animal control license for his pet, he said "I checked with animal control, and it turns out that there is no law saying Velociraptors need a license within city limits."

Then this intrepid reporter asked what Clay had in mind for his pet. "Well, my plan is to have him fully house-broken by late September, and I was going to bring him to the





HGMS Annual Show in Humble. I thought people would get a kick out of seeing a Velociraptor,” When asked if this might in fact cause a stampede for the nearest exit, Clay dead-pans “I don’t see why that would happen. He wouldn’t hurt anyone. I think he’s a great pet, and he’s very devoted. Just think of him as a really large dog but much smarter. When I throw a ball for him to retrieve, instead of just running off and fetching it, he strategizes on the best route to take, if there are any competitors nearby, and if he can go get his buddies to encircle the ball for a quick kill.”

I wished Clay the best of luck with his new pet and backed cautiously out of his house. If you’d like to see Clay and his pet Velociraptor, you can do it at the HGMS Annual Show at the Humble Civic Center on September 25–27. If you go, please do not bring any pet dogs, cats, or small children.

### Did You Know?

from Fossick Gossip 12/13, via Rockhounder 5/2015

- A bicycle can’t stand on its own because it is two-tired.
- What’s the definition of a will? (It’s a dead giveaway).
- She had a boyfriend with a wooden leg, but broke it off.
- A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
- With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.
- Show me a piano falling down a mineshaft, and I’ll show you A-flat minor.
- Marathon runners with bad footwear suffer the agony of defeat.
- When a clock is hungry, it goes back four seconds.
- The man who fell into an upholstery factory is now fully recovered.
- You feel stuck with your debt if you can’t budge it.
- He often broke into song because he couldn’t find the key.
- Every calendar’s days are numbered.
- A lot of money is tainted. ‘Taint yours, and ‘taint mine.
- Santa’s helpers are subordinate clauses.
- Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.

## Archaeology Section Minutes

by Nancy Engelhardt-Moore

**A**ugust 6, 2015: Garth Clark, the Section Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. Attendance was taken, and visitors introduced themselves. Garth moved to approve the May 7 minutes published in the June issue of the BBG. The minutes were approved. In June, the Section had a field trip to the HMNS, and there was no meeting in July.

Bob Moore, the Section Vice-Chair, presented the financial report. The Section's balance is \$153.39 after \$210.00 was spent on tickets for the June field trip. Next, upcoming programs were discussed, and it was decided that the October 1 meeting will be a Show & Tell. Attendees were thrilled that archaeologist Gail Larsen Peterkin will present a talk on "*French Upper Paleolithic Hunting Technology*" on November 5.

**September 3, 2015:** Bob Moore will speak on "*The Imperial Villa of Casale in Sicily*" that was built around 325 AD at the height of the Roman Empire. This amazing villa contains the richest, largest, and most complex collection of Roman mosaics in the world! Life in the Roman Empire is portrayed in the mosaics from racing at the Circus Maximus, trapping and importing exotic animals from around the world, to children at play, and successful female Olympian athletes. The villa was the home of a very powerful Roman family as shown by both their wealth, love of family, and their children. Bob's talk will show both how much we have in common with the Romans and our differences through a series of beautiful personal photos. You will learn about the real origin of the bikini and other amazing facts. Don't miss this entertaining talk!

**Program:** Garth Clark gave an excellent talk on "*New Findings in Texas Upper Paleolithic or Pre Pre-Clovis Archaeology.*" His talk focused on the UTEP Circle Ranch cave site in the Sierra Diablo Mts. The protected cave entrance found in 1940 was initially thought to contain remnants of Indian occupation about 2000 years ago. During the 1960s–1980s, looters rummaged the cave. Then, three visits for surface analysis were made in 2007–2008 and an amazing discovery was made. Items collected in the first layer, "Strata A," date back to ~3000 years ago! This age was much older than first thought. Now, charcoal found 6 layers lower in "Strata F" dates back to ~35,000 years ago, definitely Pre-Clovis. If this date holds up, this would support that migration to the Americas was much earlier than imagined!

Next, Marshall Bird showed items he collected on his ranch near San Angelo, TX to learn more about them. The group studied the various rocks and artifacts that were similar. It appeared that chert concretions were the source of the material used to make the artifacts. The initial consensus was that the artifacts were Early Archaic about 6000 to 8000 years old. Marshall was amazed to learn that his unusual items were such a treasure!





Beautiful Point from Marshall's ranch



Marshall's rare find; leather scraper!



Left to right: Bob Moore and Marshall Bird,  
Far right: Garth Clark

After the talk, Marshall showed artifacts from his ranch. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.



Cartoon by Erston Barnhart  
From Rockbuster News 2/99  
via T-Town Rockhound 6/99

## Mineral Section Programs

by Paul Brandes

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

**September 2, 2015—Welcome back!** Typically, our first regularly scheduled meeting after the summer hiatus, this evening's presentation will be a synopsis of each member's summer mineral collecting adventures. Plenty of time will be available for short presentations, show and tell, and socializing with other members. Attendees are encouraged to bring in their summer field finds (clean or not) as well as summer purchases to display. Also, Section Members who attended the Dallas Mineral Symposium in August are encouraged to discuss the event and show any minerals they may have obtained. Refreshments will be available.

**September 16, 2015—Last Minute Show Prep:** This meeting will focus on any of those last-minute items the Section needs to complete before the Annual Show. Even though this technically will be a "work night," the meeting likely will turn into a "tall tale" discussion of past mineral collecting trips and field stories. While there will not be a formal presentation for this meeting, this will be a great opportunity for new and potential members alike to join us for an evening of fun and lively discussion. Refreshments will be provided.

**October 7, 2015—Gem and Mineral Show Wrap-up:** This is our opportunity as a Section to review the show while it is still somewhat fresh in our minds. Bring your comments on what we did right and where we can improve. Also, bring in your show purchases and be prepared to discuss why you purchased what you did. Section members who attended the Denver Mineral Show in September also are encouraged to discuss that event and show off any minerals they brought back. Refreshments will be provided.

**October 21, 2015—Locality Presentation (Location to be announced)**

## General Meeting Minutes

July 28, 2015

by Nancy English / Ray Kizer

President Raymond Kizer called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. He thanked everyone for coming to the General meeting. The meeting was attended by 28 regular members, one new member—Marshall Byrd—and one visitor. President Kizer asked the new member and the visitor to stand and be recognized.

**Drawing:** We drew two door prize winners this month: Tom Legg and Bill Bedford who respectively won a picture jasper slab and a piece of quartz.

**Minutes:** The minutes of June's General Meeting were published. Jill Moffitt moved to approve the June General Meeting minutes as published in the

August BBG, and Phyllis George seconded the motion. A vote was called, and the membership approved the minutes as written.

**President's Comments:** The President publicly thanked the organizers of our first **Trade Fair** event held Saturday, July 25, 2015. Chase Jennings and Mary Ann Mitscherling stood for applause and to receive our thanks. The President thanked all the people who volunteered time and muscle to help set up and tear down the event. Because of Chase's advertising prowess in reaching out on Facebook and to his microfossil collector sites, we more than adequately achieved our three primary goals:

1. Reach a new and larger audience of non-members interested in attending the Trade Fair
2. Inform these visitors about our upcoming September Gem & Mineral Show
3. Sign up new members.

The outcome of our first attempt at this type of sale was rewarding. Most of the 25 vendors who signed up were already club members. A couple of new outside dealers became members in order to buy a table. We had an unprecedented attendance. It was estimated that over 400 people visited during the event. The dealers reported very good sales during the day. HGMS made \$750 on table rental and \$251 on equipment sales for a total of \$1001.

We signed up 14 single memberships, 7 couple memberships (14 people also), 1 family membership (mom, dad, 2 kids), and 1 other youth membership. That's 33 new members, all of these directly from the Trade Show. Thanks again, Chase and Mary Ann.

**The Texas Homeschool Coalition Conference** was held this past Thursday through Sunday at the Marriott in The Woodlands. The HGMS had a booth, and our purpose was to not only introduce the Society to the homeschool crowd, but to let them know about an Earth Science resource that we can offer. We passed out numerous postcards for the annual show, signed up quite a few for more information on the School Daze portion of the Show, and talked about the Youth Section that the HGMS offers our next generation of rockhounds. We also talked to a few about our scouting merit badges and patches.

Helping at the booth were Nancy Fischer, Lexy Bieniek, Elsa Kapitan-White, and Barbara Hill.

**Show-N-Tell:** Mary Ann Mitscherling showed Texas agate and red aventurine slabs she was cabbing. She encouraged members to come early—at 5:00 p.m.—for the Lapidary Section meetings and the General Meetings in order to use the shop before the meeting began. John Mitscherling showed a polished heart made from California serpentine. Jill Moffitt announced an ad hoc casting class costing \$10.00 per flask that she will be teaching. The class

starts on Saturday, August 22, 2015, where members will set the sprue, then burn the flasks overnight. Students will cast on Sunday, August 23, 2015.

### Section Reports

**Archaeology Section:** The next meeting is **Thursday, August 6 at 7:30 p.m.** Garth Clark, the Section Chair, will give a talk on Paleolithic Pre-Clovis findings dating back at least 30,000 years from a cave in Texas. Attend and hear about this exciting new discovery that human migration into The Americas occurred 15,000 years earlier than was thought! Learn the details of dating charcoal samples that are consistently confirming the much earlier age of migration. **September 3, 2015:** Bob Moore will be the speaker; the program will be announced.

**Beading Section: August 15, 2015:** The project for the meeting will be the **Elizabethan Petals Bracelet**. The project for July was completion of the Tila and Pico Bracelet worked on during previous meetings. The next regular meeting is **Saturday, September 19, 2015, 1:30 p.m.**

**Day Light Section: Wednesday August 5, 2015 at 1:00–3:00 p.m.** Neal Immega will start a 2-session class on soldering a bezel on a base for a cabochon. The first six students to arrive will receive hands-on training and must also commit to attending the second class to be held on August 12, 2015, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. **September 2, 2015,** Debbie Kirkpatrick will teach stone setting with hand gravers.

**Gemstones and Faceting Section:** The next regular meeting will be **Wednesday, August 12, 2015, at 6:30 p.m.** The August program will focus on how to polish a simple faceted gemstone. The **September 9, 2015** program will be announced.

**Lapidary and Silversmithing Section:** The next regular meeting is **Monday, August 17, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.** Edward Clay will explain how to connect a textured piece of jewelry to existing jewelry—without using solder or flame. Open Shop will be held 5:00–7:15 p.m. prior to the meeting.

**Mineral Section Summer Workshops: Wednesday August 19, 2015—Final Prep for the Show:** The Mineral Section will meet to finalize those last-hour preparations for the Annual Show. Come on out and help with these important items. This is also a great time to meet some of the Section members. We will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Clubhouse.

**Mineral Section: September 2, 2015** will be our first regularly scheduled meeting following the summer hiatus. This evening's presentation will be a synopsis of each member's summer mineral collecting adventures. Plenty of time will be available for short presentations, show and tell, and socializing with other members. Attendees are encouraged to bring in their summer field finds (clean or not) as well as summer purchases to display. Section

Members that attended the Dallas Mineral Symposium in August are encouraged to discuss the event and to show any minerals they may have obtained. Also, those that went on the Doug Wallace field trip should share information on it. Refreshments will be available.

**Paleo Section:** The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. Neal Immega will thrill attendees with his recent road trip exploits of the Dinosaurs of the Morrison Formation. Thirty people attended the Paleo Section's **Christmas in July** party on July 21, 2015.

**Youth Section:** The next meetings are scheduled for **August 1 and August 15, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon**. The Youth Section is preparing their cabochons for the Show cabochon displays this month.

### Old Business

In the interest of time, President Kizer asked members to follow the progress of Old Business items in the **July 7, 2015**, Board meeting and General meeting minutes as published in the **August 2015** edition of the BBG.

### New Business

The next Board of Directors meeting is Tuesday, August 4, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

**The next General Meeting is Tuesday August 25, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.** Rose Cleveland will be sharing the highlights of her trip to Australia to hunt for Opals.

**Ray Kizer** leaves on Wednesday, August 4, 2015, for **Keweenaw Mineral Days in upper Michigan**. He will be collecting rocks like Mowhawkite. He may be able to do a General Meeting presentation about his experiences.

**Richard Goode** announced that the Lapidary Section is looking for demonstrators for the Show. Please contact him if you are qualified to demonstrate silversmithing, cabochon polishing, casting, or carving—or any other related skills you would like to share.

**Adjourn:** Phyllis George moved to adjourn the business meeting, and Mary Ann Mitscherling seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

### 5-minute break

Vice President Paul Brandes introduced our speaker and program for the night. Bob and Nancy Fischer talking about **Iceland – Land of Fire and Ice!**

Iceland is a land of great contrasts—majestic glaciers and ice-sculptured landscapes on one hand, and on the other are volcanoes, hot springs, and geothermal areas because of its location on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. These two differences create a landscape that is both majestic yet strange to the casual

visitor. Society members Bob and Nancy Fischer traveled to this land looking for the Aurora Borealis; what they found was a land of geology—lava fields, geothermal pools, a rift, etc., and a unique culture that included a visit to the Bobby Fischer Center. Please join us for what will be an exciting and very informative presentation!

**Refreshments:** Provided by Nancy English

**Board of Directors Meeting**  
*August 4, 2015*  
*by Nancy English*

X	President - Ray Kizer		Archeology Rep - Garth Clark
	1st Vice President - Paul Brandes	X	Beading Rep – Diane Sisson
X	2nd Vice President - Beverly Mace	X	Daylight Rep - Mary Ann Mitscherling
X	Treasurer - Rodney Linehan	X	Faceting Rep - Gary Tober
X	Secretary - Nancy English	X	Lapidary Rep - Phyllis George
		X	Mineral Rep - Mike Sommers
		X	Paleontology Rep - Mike Dawkins

**Call to Order:** President Ray Kizer called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. A quorum was present. There was one non-voting member at the meeting: Chase Jennings, Show Information Booth Chair.

**President’s Comments:** I want to publicly thank the organizers of our first Trade Fair event held Saturday, July 25, 2015. See **Old Business** for details of results.

**Approval of Previous Month’s Board Minutes:** Phyllis George moved and Gary Tober seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the July 2015 Board Meeting as published in the August 2015 BBG. A vote was called, and the Board approved the minutes as written.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Rodney Linehan emailed financials to all Board members in advance of the meeting.

**Office, Committee, and Section Reports**

**Archeology Section: Thursday, August 6 at 7:30 p.m.** Garth Clark will present the program **New Findings In Texas Upper Paleolithic or Pre Pre-Clovis Archeology**. Just a decade ago, textbooks taught that the first peoples in the Americas traveled over the Bering Land Bridge around 12,000 years ago and spread throughout the Western Hemisphere. However, literally hundreds of sites have shown a new picture of the successive waves of migration, including some by sea that populated the Americas much earlier. Several important sites confirm Pre-Clovis man in Texas. But is there a Pre Pre-Clovis human presence? Several sites suggest that humans have lived in Texas for as long as 40,000 years.



**September 3, 2015:** Bob Moore will be the speaker; the program will be announced.

**Beading Section: August 15, 2015—Elizabethan Petals Bracelet.** July's project was completion of the Tila and Pico Bracelet worked on in previous meetings. The next regular meeting will be on **Saturday, September 19, 2015, 1:30 p.m.**

**Day Light Section:** The next regular meeting is **Wednesday, August 5, 2015 at 1:00–3:00 p.m.** Neal Immega will start a 2-session class on soldering a bezel on a base for a cabochon. The first six students to arrive will receive hands-on training and must also commit to attending the second class to be held on August 12, 2015, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. **On September 2, 2015,** Debbie Kirkpatrick will teach stone setting with hand gravers.

**Education: Carrie Hart** sent word that she could not attend the BOD meeting. She has nothing new to report. She is still looking for instructors. Mary Ann Mitscherling will encourage Ed Clay to contact Carrie Hart about his willingness to teach a silversmithing class or carving class.

**Gemstones and Faceting Section:** The next regular meeting is **Wednesday, August 12, 2015, at 6:30 p.m.** The August program will focus on how to polish a simple faceted gemstone. The **September 9, 2015** program will be announced.

**Lapidary and Silversmithing Section—Monday, August 17, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.** Edward Clay will explain how to connect a textured piece of jewelry to existing jewelry—without using solder or flame. Open Shop will be held 5:00-7:15 p.m. prior to the meeting.

**Mineral Section:** The August meetings will be held on Wednesdays August 5 and August 19 at 7:30 p.m. The **August 19** meeting is the **Summer Workshop-Work Night for the Show.** The Mineral Section will begin making preparations for the Annual Show. Come on out and help with these important items. This is also a great time to meet some of the Section members in a laid-back atmosphere.

**September 16, 2015** the meeting will be **Last Minute Show Prep** focusing on any last-minute items the Section needs to complete before the Annual Show. Even though this technically will be a “work night,” the meeting likely will turn into a “tall tale” discussion of past mineral collecting trips and field stories. While there will not be a formal presentation for this meeting, this will be a great opportunity for new and potential members alike to join us for an evening of fun and lively discussion. Refreshments will be provided.

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improve. Also, bring in your show purchases and be prepared to discuss why you purchased what you did. Section members who attended the Denver Mineral Show in September also are encouraged to discuss that event and to show off any minerals they brought back. Refreshments will be provided.

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**Show Committee:** The next meeting is **Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at 7:30.**

**Youth Section:** The next meetings are scheduled for **August 1 and August 15, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon.** The Youth Section is preparing their cabochons for the cabochon Show displays this month.

**BBG Editor and Webmaster:** Phyllis George reported that the deadline to receive articles is Wednesday, August 5, 2015.

### Old Business

1. **Security System:** Garth Clark was not at the meeting. Ray Kizer reported that more cameras have been installed.
2. **Trade Show:** Thanks to Chase Jennings and Mary Ann Mitscherling for their leadership and planning. Thanks to all the people who volunteered their time and muscle to help set up and tear down the event. Because of Chase's advertising prowess in reaching out on Facebook and his microfossil collector sites, we more than adequately achieved our three primary goals—to reach a new and larger audience of non-members who were interested in attending the Trade Fair, to inform these visitors about our upcoming September Gem & Mineral Show, and to sign up new members.

On our first attempt at this type of thing, we signed up 24–25 vendors. Most were already club members, but we did get a couple of new outside dealers who became members to buy a table. We had an unprecedented attendance. An estimated 400 people visited the event. We signed up 14 single memberships, 7 couple memberships (14 people also), 1 family membership (mom, dad, 2 kids), and 1 other youth membership. That's 33 new members, all of these resulted directly from the trade show. Some dealers reported sales of \$1,000.00. All dealers had good sales during the day.

### New Business

1. The next **Board of Directors** meeting is Tuesday, September 1, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.
2. **The next General Meeting is Tuesday August 25, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.** Rose Cleveland will be sharing the highlights of her trip to Australia to hunt for Opals.
3. **Donation Form:** Nancy English moved to put the donation form on the HGMS Web site. Mike Sommers seconded the motion. A vote was called, and the motion passed.
4. **Ray Kizer** leaves on Wednesday, August 4, 2015, for **Keweenaw Mineral Days in upper Michigan**. He will be collecting Mowhawkite. He may be able to do a General Meeting presentation about his experiences.
5. **Chase Jennings** gave a brief presentation on a few things he has been working on for the club—the email server/bulk mailing service, digital tickets, and some statistics on advertising efforts.
  - a. **Bulk Emailing System:** Gary Tober moved to purchase the bulk emailing service called Mail Chimp. This system will be able to fully utilize our ever-growing 2850-entry long email list. The annual fee will not exceed \$300 a year. Fees will be calculated monthly based on usage, so the cost may be less. It will be used to advertise the main show and our smaller shows and to notify members of meetings and notices. Nancy English seconded the motion. A vote was called, and the motion passed.
  - b. **Enlarging the scope of our Advertising:** Nancy English moved to extend an invitation to the Dallas Paleo Society to combine advertising efforts for events. Houston GMS and Dallas GMS will send their advertising to a designated person at each club. Our person will send the Dallas announcement to the HGMS email list, and Dallas GMS will email the Houston advertising to the Dallas email list. At no time will HGMS share its email list with Dallas or vice versa. Gary Tober seconded the motion. A vote was called, and the motion passed.
  - c. Gary Tober moved to table discussion and any motion regarding the number and timing of future Trade Shows. Diane Sisson seconded. A vote was called, and the motion passed. Rodney Linehan will research IRS rules on the number of events a non-profit is allowed to have in a year.

**Adjourn:** Gary Tober moved to adjourn the meeting. Mike Sommers seconded. A vote was called, and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

**SAFETY IN THE SHOP**

*by Owen Martin, SCFMS Safety*

**Slips, Tips, and Falls Awareness and Prevention**

*by Jacob Agbor, Safety Professional, Houston, TX*

*from SCFMS Newsletter 7-8/2015*

**A**lmost anyone who watches television can instantly recognize the slip hazard presented when they see the image of a banana peel lying on the floor. Typically, an unsuspecting person comes around the corner, slips, flips, and falls in a heap on the floor. Laughs!! As funny as this may seem when portrayed on TV, falls are one of the leading causes of unintentional injuries in the United States, accounting for approximately 8.9 million visits to the emergency room annually (2011 NSC Injury facts).

Slip, trip, and fall (STF) hazards can be found lurking around the workplace, our homes, and in everyday life, but they go unnoticed to many unsuspecting eyes. These hazards present themselves in the forms of a minor water spill on the hallway floor, a PlayStation power cord lying harmlessly across the living room floor, a carpet end which is sticking up and is out of place by the doorway, the uneven surface of a sidewalk, or a questionably competent person using a bar stool as a ladder. All of these hazards and situations occur in our everyday life, and as such, they frequently get overlooked and accepted as the norm—all the while escaping the reality of the grave potential for injury that could occur in an instant.

Slips, trips and falls can happen anywhere, and the resulting injuries can include sprains and strains, bruises and contusions, fractures, abrasions and lacerations, concussions—even up to disability or death. The immediate and hidden cost of such injuries includes lost wages and out-of-pocket expenses, pain, temporary or permanent disability, reduced quality of life, depression, and death. Slips, trips, and falls make up the majority of general industry accidents and account for 15% of all accidental deaths. They are also the second leading cause of disabling injuries—only behind motor vehicle accidents—and annually account for over 17% of all disabling occupational injuries (USDOL).

From the work place, to the streets, to your own home, the same holds true. Only YOU can be truly responsible for YOUR OWN SAFETY, and one of the 1<sup>st</sup> steps in the right direction is learning to always be aware of your surroundings. Some other measures to take include:

- \* Know where STF hazards are common in your daily life (shoes by the door, backpacks on the floor, chairs out of place, the dishwasher's open door, puddles of water, slippery soap in the bath, etc.)

**Get last-minute news about club events by sending a note to Jim Kendall at [kendal\\_ja@yahoo.com](mailto:kendal_ja@yahoo.com)**

- \* Practice good housekeeping, both at home and at work
- \* Keep areas tidy and free of clutter
- \* Utilize safe walking practices by following designated walking paths,
- \* Wear proper footwear with good fit and traction
- \* Learn techniques on how to “fall properly,” something that could reduce the effect of a “landing” after an STF.

After all is said and done, a good “slip, trip, tumble. and fall” is great for laughs on TV, but in real life an STF is a very serious matter which can permanently and negatively affect our lives. As such, it’s good to know that there’s still hope out there for preventing slips, trips, and falls and their resulting injuries. As such we should all take personal responsibility for our own safety, then spread the word and influence those around us—family, friends, and coworkers—to do the same. Only by doing so can we raise awareness to the “reality” of this issue, and thus minimize potential impacts to our everyday lives.

### **Being Sued by the IRS Scam!**

*by Linda Nelson, CPA*

*Pasadena (CA) Lapidary Society*

*Sources for this article include the IRS Web site and the Better Business Bureaus of Fort Wayne, IN, Eastern MA, ME, RI & VT.  
from Rockhound Ramblings 8/2015*

**S**everal of my clients and even my mother-in-law have received calls from someone claiming to be from the IRS. In the most recent version of this scam, the “IRS agent” informs you that you are being sued for unpaid taxes. She/he may give you a badge number and name.

The reason stated for their call is that they’re collecting taxes owed since 2012, and the “agent” tries to pressure you into paying by using a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. If you don’t pay up immediately, the “IRS agent” will sign a warrant for your arrest. They may also say the police or sheriff are on their way to your home.

**THIS IS A SCAM!** The caller is trying to steal your hard-earned money! No matter how convincing the caller might be, don’t fall for it - don’t be intimidated by these crooks!

The IRS will NEVER call you about payment or overdue taxes. The IRS doesn’t call, text or email unless you have already set up a conversation with an agent. The IRS would NEVER ask you to act immediately. Scammers typically try to push you into action before you have had time to think. The IRS says it will NEVER demand immediate payment, require a specific form of payment, or ask for credit card or debt card numbers over the phone.

Treat all calls or emails demanding immediate payment as if they were robbers in your home! No matter who calls you about any matter of urgency, don't wire money or use a prepaid debit card. Scammers often pressure people into wiring money or using a prepaid debit card. It's like sending cash: once it's gone, you can't trace it.

Report the incident to the Department of the Treasury at 800-366-4484 or to The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) at [www.tigta.gov](http://www.tigta.gov).

If you owe taxes, or you think you might, you have two easy ways to resolve it. You can call the IRS directly at 800.829.1040. IRS employees at that line can check to see if there is an issue, and if there is, help you set up a payment schedule. You can also contact a CPA or other tax professional who can confirm any owed taxes and review any reasons why the IRS might think that you owe them.

For more information, check out the IRS.gov Web site to learn more about scams and to report suspicious activity.

### **Treating Cuts at the Workshops and Field Trips**

*by Mark Nelson, EMT*

*from CFMS Newsletter, 8/2014, via Golden Spike News, 8/2014;  
via The Tumbler 2/2015*

**G**uess what? We don't live in a bubble! In our lapidary shops, we have sharp edges and tools that can slip and cut or puncture. On field trips, we slip and slide on our hands, elbows, and knees. Our hands and fingers seek out rocks with sharp edges that once were made into cutting tools for primitive cultures. The results can be lacerations and abrasions (cuts and scrapes) and punctures. The danger in these injuries is *infection*. The way we treat these injuries to prevent infection can make the difference between a minor mishap and a major event.

#### **You Should:**

For minor cuts, punctures, and scrapes where the bleeding is minimal, wash the wound with soap and water. Use tweezers if necessary to remove all particles of dirt or vegetation. Keep it clean and dry. Apply a Band-Aid to an open cut to keep the edges of the wound closed. This is all that is required to care for most wounds.

For more serious wounds, the first step is to stop the bleeding. Most wounds respond to direct pressure with a clean cloth or bandage. Hold the pressure continuously for approximately 10 to 20 minutes (the affected person can help). If the bandage gets saturated with blood, put an additional bandage on top of the first. Do not remove the initial bandage. If this fails to stop the bleeding, seek medical assistance. After about two hours, soak the bandage



in clean water and gently remove it. Clean the wound gently with soap and water, and apply a Band-Aid or bandage to close the wound and to keep it clean.

## DO NOT DO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING!!:

- Clean the wound with hydrogen peroxide or iodine. While this is acceptable initially, it can delay healing and should be avoided long-term.
- Apply antibiotic ointment or any other topical treatment, except to prevent further immediate contamination.
- Attempt to apply any stitches or sutures unless you are a medical professional so trained.



### Rare Earths

*by Mark Nelson, Pasadena (CA) Lapidary Society  
from Rockhound Ramblings 8/2015*

**W**hen I first toured Molycorp's Mountain Pass Mine, (photo above) I had no idea what a rare earth was. The mine staff explained that the materials they mined are used for making portable phones so small, and for the color in televisions, and for really good magnets. This was an understatement considering today's uses!

A rare earth element, or rare earth metal, is one of a set of seventeen chemical elements in the periodic table—specifically scandium (Sc), yttrium (Y) and the fifteen lanthanides. Scandium and yttrium are considered rare earth elements because they tend to occur in the same ore deposits as the lan-

thanides and exhibit similar chemical properties. Rare earth elements of the lanthanide group are lanthanum (La), cerium (Ce), praseodymium (Pr), neodymium (Nd), promethium (Pm), samarium (Sm), europium (Eu), gadolinium (Gd), terbium (Tb), dysprosium (Dy), holmium (Ho), erbium (Er), thulium (Tm), ytterbium (Yb) and lutetium (Lu). A mnemonic for the names of the sixth-row elements in order is "Lately college parties never produce sexy European girls that drink heavily even though you look."



Linda Nelson examines crystal-covered rock in Molycorp's overburden pile 2007

Saying these names brings to mind the television series "The Big Bang Theory." In The Big Bang Theory episode "The Pants Alternative," a drunk Sheldon Cooper starts to sing *The Elements* song during his acceptance of an award from his university. "The Elements" is a 1959 song by musical humorist and lecturer Tom Lehrer, which recites the names of all the chemical elements known at the time of writing, up to number 102, nobelium.

Why are they called Rare Earth Elements? They are not especially rare, but they tend to occur together in nature and are difficult to separate from one another due to their property of "hiding" behind each other and other minerals.

In our modern society, we have become dependent upon these elements without realizing it. Rare earth metals are used in devices ranging from wind turbines and electric vehicles to missile guidance systems and compact fluorescent light bulbs.

Take, for example, the rare earths used in certain components of the Toyota Prius hybrid automobile—Glass and mirrors: Cerium; Component sensors: Yttrium; Generator: Neodymium, Praseodymium, Dysprosium, Terbium; Headlight glass: Neodymium; Electric motors: Neodymium; Catalytic converter: Cerium, Lanthanum; Hybrid NiMH battery: Cerium, Lanthanum; LCD screen: Europium, Yttrium, and Cerium.



Just a few of the other areas we depend upon rare earth minerals are:

**Yttrium**—aluminum garnet laser, the red in televisions, high-temperature superconductors, microwave filters, energy-efficient light bulbs and automobile spark plugs

**Lanthanum**—alkali-resistant glass, flint, hydrogen storage, battery-electrodes, camera lenses, and as an efficient fluid catalytic cracking catalyst for oil refineries

**Thulium**—portable X-ray machines, metal-halide lamps and lasers

**Lutetium**—Positron emission tomography (PET) scan detectors

**Ytterbium**—infra-red lasers, chemical reducing agents, decoy flares, stainless steel, stress gauges, and nuclear medicine.

These minerals are mostly found in Communist China, the United States, Brazil, India, Sri Lanka, and Australia. Molycorp is the only U.S. company that produces rare earth metals. At one point, the majority of the world's rare earths were mined at the Mountain Pass facility. Then, in 1998, Molycorp halted chemical processing at the mine due to a San Bernardino County environmental order following a leak in a wastewater drain pipe. While the company filed endless reams of compliance paperwork, China was dramatically increasing its rare earth production. The United States "lost expertise" when the mine closed, and magnet manufacturing relocated to Asia to be near operating mines and less expensive labor, says George Hadji-panayis, chair of physics and astronomy at the University of Delaware.



Excavator at Molycorp. Site photos in this article are by Mark Nelson - 2007

Has China taken advantage of the situation? It is certainly looking like it. China accounts for about 97 percent of the world's total production of rare earth elements, about half of which are exported to Japan. China dominates rare earth mineral production to such a degree that its export practices were recently challenged by the U.S., the European Union, and Japan. One incident involving a dispute between China and Japan over fishing rights near an uninhabited island resulted in China's halting shipments of rare earth minerals to Japan. The Chinese move was followed by a round of deals among other nations and much media speculation about a possible Chinese stranglehold on other nations' economies and even national security.

Molycorp was granted a permit to resume operations, and while it rebuilds its mining infrastructure, China continues to stockpile these vital minerals and is expected to continue to be the world's largest holder of rare earths well into the future!

**AFMS/SCFMS Annual Show—in Austin, Texas!***from AFMS Newsletter 6–7/2015*

This year, the Austin Gem and Mineral Society's annual show, Gem Capers 2015 will proudly be hosting the American Federation and the South Central Federation conventions and show. Included in the weekend are meetings, judging, talks, and field trips as well as the annual meeting of A.L.A.A. and S.C.R.I.B.E. (Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors). These organizations' activities will begin on Wednesday, October 21. The talks will be open to the public for the price of admission and will include topics such as Central Texas pegmatites, mineral preparation, and North American diamond mining by Charles Kirkpatrick. Please see the Gem Capers Web site for a detailed schedule at <[www.gemcapers.com](http://www.gemcapers.com)>.

The dates for the mineral show are October 23 through October 25, 2015 at the Palmer Events Center in Austin, TX. This year's theme is pegmatites. Photos from prior Gem Capers can be found at <[www.austingemandmineral.org/Album/Past\\_Shows/index.html](http://www.austingemandmineral.org/Album/Past_Shows/index.html)>. The show itself will include over 30 vendors selling jewelry, beads, gemstones, mineral specimens, fossils, spheres, meteorites, and lapidary equipment. There will also be a cabochon-cutting contest and an SCFMS and AFMS display case competition. The show and many events will be held at the Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX 78704. Hours for the show are Friday, October 23—9 am–6 p.m.; Saturday, October 24—9 am–6 p.m.; Sunday, October 25—10 a.m.–5 p.m. Admission is \$8 per adult (seniors 60+: \$7). Children 13–18 are \$2 each, and those 12 and under are free. Multiple-day tickets are available when registering in advance. In addition to competitive and non-competitive exhibits, special exhibits will include the popular "touch table" of rocks and fossils and an "illumination station" containing fluorescent minerals. There will be a silent auction Saturday and Sunday as well as demonstrations such as stone faceting, wire wrapping, cabbing, fossil cleaning, and polymer clay. There will also be numerous activities for children. Friday, October 23 is Youth Education Day with field trips to the show from various schools sponsored by Silicon Labs.

Hourly door prizes will be awarded to visitors on Saturday and Sunday (must be present to win) plus a grand prize will be awarded on Sunday to one lucky paying show visitor (the winner need not be present). This year's Grand Prize is a floor-sized globe with semi-precious stone inlay. The Austin Gem and Mineral Society is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. Proceeds of the show support the society as well as provide scholarships for students in the Earth Sciences. For more information about the AGMS, please visit our club website at <[www.austingemandmineral.org](http://www.austingemandmineral.org)>.

To download a registration packet, competitive and non-competitive exhibit forms, show schedule and hotel information, go to

<[www.amfed.org/show2015.htm](http://www.amfed.org/show2015.htm)>. The advanced registration deadline is September 1, 2015.

**AFMS/SCFMS/AGMS ANNUAL SHOW**



**The Austin Gem and Mineral Society, Austin, TX**  
Will host the American and South Central Federations Annual Show  
Make plans now to attend this Show  
You don't want to miss this one.



**AUSTIN GEM AND MINERALS SOCIETY 53rd Annual  
Gemstone, Jewelry, Mineral & Fossil Show.**

**GEM CAPERS**



This year's theme:  
**PEGMATITES**

October 23, 24 & 25, 2015  
Fri. & Sat. 9am -6pm  
Sun. 10am - 5pm



Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road

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**Grand Prize Giveaway Gem Mine Quest for Knowledge Prizes Raffles**

**Wheel of Fortune Fluorescent Cave Special Exhibits Fluorescent Cave**

**MORE INFORMATION WILL BE PRINTED IN THE SCFMS NEWSLETTER IN FUTURE ISSUES**



**Show Time 2015**

- September 12-20 Denver, CO Annual Show-Eons Expos  
Denver Coliseum; 4600 Humboldt Street  
250 dealers inside, 100 tent spaces outside  
Heather@EonsExpos.com  
<http://ColiseumShow.com>
- September 13-20 Denver, CO Martin Zinn Expositions  
Ramada Plaza Denver Central  
4849 Bannock St.  
[www.mzexpos.com/colorado\\_fall.html](http://www.mzexpos.com/colorado_fall.html)
- September 25-27 Humble, TX Houston Gem & Mineral Society  
Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy.  
5 miles east of Bush Intercontinental Airport  
1 mile east of Hwy. 59  
[www.hgms.org](http://www.hgms.org); [showchair@hgms.org](mailto:showchair@hgms.org)
- October 9-11 Mount Ida, AR Annual Quartz Crystal Digging Contest  
[director@mtidachamber.com](mailto:director@mtidachamber.com)  
[www.mtidachamber.com](http://www.mtidachamber.com)
- October 10-11 Temple, TX Tri-Cities Gem & Mineral Society  
Mayborn Civic Center, 3303 N. 34rd St.  
[burnette@aceweb.com](mailto:burnette@aceweb.com)
- October 16-18 Metairie, LA Gem & Mineral Society of LA  
Best Western Plus Landmark Hotel  
2601 Severn Avenue  
[gemshow2015@gmail.com](mailto:gemshow2015@gmail.com)
- October 23-25 Austin, TX AFMS/South Central Fed. (SCFMS) Shows  
Palmer Events Center Exhibit Hall  
900 Barton Springs Road  
[susanp@austingemandmineral.org](mailto:susanp@austingemandmineral.org)  
<http://www.austingemandmineral.org/>
- November 7-8 Amarillo, TX Golden Spread Gem & Mineral Society  
Amarillo Civic Center, 401 S. Buchanan St.  
[finfran@midplains.coop](mailto:finfran@midplains.coop)
- November 21-22 Mesquite, TX Dallas Gem & Mineral Society  
Mesquite Rodeo Center Exhibit Hall  
1800 Rodeo Dr.; [bravo1bravo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bravo1bravo@sbcglobal.net)  
<http://www.dallasgemandmineral.org/>
- December 4-6 El Paso, TX El Paso Mineral & Gem Society  
El Maida Auditorium, 6331 Alabama  
e-mail: [gemcenter@aol.com](mailto:gemcenter@aol.com)



2015		September					2015
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		1 7:30 Board Meeting	2 10-3 Shop Open 1:00-3:00 Day Light Section 7:30 Mineral Section	3 7:30 Archeology Section	4	5 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section	
6 10-4 Shop Open	7 <b>Labor Day</b>	8 7:30 Show Committee	9 10-3 Shop Open 6:30 Gemstones & Faceting Section	10	11	12 10-5 Shop Open	
13 10-4 Shop Open	14	15 7:30 Paleo Section	16 10-3 Shop Open 7:30 Mineral Section	17	18	19 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section 1:30 Beading Section	
20 10-4 Shop Open	21 7:30 Lapidary Section	22 7:30 General Meeting	23 10-3 Shop Open First Day of Autumn	24 <b>Show Setup Day</b>	25 <b>Show Day 1 School Daze</b>	26 <b>Show Day 2 Shop CLOSED</b>	
27 <b>Show-Last Day Shop CLOSED</b>	28	29	30 10-3 Shop Open				

2015		October					2015
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
				1 7:30 Archeology Section	2	3 10-5 Shop Open 10-12 Youth Section	
4 10-4 Shop Open	5	6 7:30 Board Meeting	7 10-3 Shop Open 1:00-3:00 Day Light Section 7:30 Mineral Section	8	9	10 10-5 Shop Open	
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25 10-4 Shop Open	26	27 7:30 General Meeting	28 10-3 Shop Open	29	30	31 10-5 Shop Open	

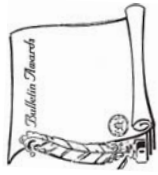
**The BACKBENDER'S  
GAZETTE**  
*The Newsletter of the  
Houston Gem & Mineral Society*

10805 BROOKLET  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77099  
(281) 530-0942



**SCFMS**

- 1998 - 1st (Large)
- 2000 - 1st (Large)
- 2003 - 1st (Large)
- 2005 - 1st (Large)
- 2006 — 2012 - 1st (Large)
- 2013 - 1st (Large)
- 2014 - 1st (Large)



**AFMS**

- 1998 - 2nd (Large)
- 2004 - 3rd (Large)
- 2007 - 1st (Large)
- 2010 - 2nd (Large)
- 2012 - 3rd (Large)
- 2013 - 3rd (Large)
- 2014 - 2nd (Large)



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