

THE BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY



FEATURED MEMBER:
JILL MOFFITT

SEE MORE ON PAGE 8

VOLUME LXXI

HGMS | HOUSTON GEM &
MINERAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2021

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BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Articles are due on the 15th day of the month before the date on the BBG issue.

Copy is due for the next issue by the 15th of this month. Email content to editor@hgms.org



The BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE



The Newsletter of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Sigrid Stewart

Oh, look, someone sent me a link for signing up at Memorial Hermann! Darn, it looks like they are already full. Oh, here's a link to a map of pharmacies with vaccine supplies! One after another, I find they have used their allotment up. Hey, here's a new hub! Maybe I can sign up there... no, they are not allowing new sign-ups yet. Oh, on the radio they said they have a new allotment! Registration is open! I sign up, receive an acknowledgement, and get an appointment. Yay!

At least things are happening. At this rate, it may take until May to vaccinate all the 1B's. Perhaps by fall enough of the public will be vaccinated that we can consider opening the club again. Just to let you know, that is what it will take - most people vaccinated - before we fully reopen. And just possibly, by late fall we can think about the show.

Thank goodness the transition to a new administration is now complete, without even more violence and upheaval than the shocking events of January 6th. Let us pray for our country and the continued strength of democratic institutions.

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steve Blyskal

The presentation for the next General Meeting on February 23rd, 2021, will be on "Mineral Names", by Deidre Prince and Burton Dworsky. Previously presented to the Mineral Section, it is an excellent talk that deserves broader viewing.

If you have ever wondered where mineral names came from, this talk is for you. Deidre and Burton will give us some history and background information on where some old mineral names came from and how some newer mineral names were selected. This involves history and the development of languages as well as science and the development of geology. Don't miss this funny and educational talk.

For 2021, President Sigrid Stewart is bringing back monthly auctions. We will have 5-6 items for auction at each General Meeting. We will send out a preview of auction items in the Sunday E-Blast right before each General Meeting. And Door Prizes are back too! Hope you can join us.

SECTION REPORTS

ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION REPORT - SECTION CLOSING NO UPCOMING PROGRAMS PLANNED

by Nancy Engelhardt-Moore

January 7, 2021: The Section hosted a virtual Zoom program. At 7:35 PM Bob Moore, Section Chair, called the meeting to order. In attendance—virtually—was another large audience of 36 people. He announced that there are no planned programs, and this archaeology program will be the last one. The current officers, Jay Roussel, Secretary; Nancy Engelhardt-Moore, Vice Chair; and he are stepping down. Bob announced that he and his wife Nancy will be forming their own lecture series, and if anyone is interested in receiving program announcements, they should contact Nancy to stay on the email list. He then introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Dirk Van Tuerenhout, HMNS Curator of Anthropology, and said that the lecture will be recorded for later viewing. Following the talk and 15 minutes of Q&A, Michael Clennan, Friends of Archaeology, announced their upcoming program. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Program: Dirk Van Tuerenhout presented "A War of Words: the story of the Code Talkers". First, he spoke about how after the U.S. declared war on Germany on April 2, 1917, a draft (conscription into the military) was established for U.S. Citizens during World War I. Native Americans were required to register for the draft, although technically they could not, since they were not U.S. citizens. The Indian Citizenship Act was not even established until June 4, 1924. They did not even have the right to vote until 1957! However, about 12,000 Native Americans volunteered for the armed forces. The first were members of the Choctaw and Cherokee Nations. In 1918, there was a critical need for secure battlefield communication, since the Germans were listening and had cracked the Allied codes. The solution: use indigenous languages, since they were a code by themselves! The first Native language used was Choctaw. Native American soldiers were employed to create communication codes. They were dubbed Code Talkers by the Marine Corps. The strange new codes baffled the Germans and the Code Talkers were a huge success. Ironically, at the time most Native Americans were being relocated to Indian Boarding Schools where they were punished for speaking their native languages—while those serving were later honored for their contributions.

To learn more about the FRIENDS OF ARCHAEOLOGY, view free videos, and learn about their upcoming events, go to <http://www.friendsofarchaeology.com>.

For the time being, Archaeology will remain in the roster of sections, but dormant; if anyone is interested in working with the section, please let HGMS know and we will consider keeping it open.



*All photos courtesy of Dirk Van Tuerenhout
Congressional Medal: Navajo Code Talkers*



Left: Corporal Henry Bahe, Jr. and Private First Class George H. Kirk in Bougainville, South Pacific, circa 1943 (Image used for the Navaho Medal). Right: Honored for speaking Native languages in WWI



MINERAL SECTION

The Mineral Section held a virtual meeting on January 20, 2021. Deidre Prince and Burton Dworski presented a humorous program on mineral names. Several members presented show and tell items. The Section agreed to sponsor the Mineralogical Record subscription for the library for the next three years.

Please see the [Upcoming Programs](#) section on the HGMS website to learn more about planned future meetings. Several good programs are lined up. All mineral lovers are welcome!

BEADING SECTION

The Beading Group met on Saturday, January 16th at 1:30 PM via Zoom. Maggie Manley demonstrated creating a spiral chain and several worked on their own spiral chain projects while she spoke. It was a great get-together and the Beading Section plans to continue future programs via Zoom. All interested persons are welcome to join the call.

Materials used were:

- Seed beads in 2 colors of the same size, round size 11 or 8 seed beads
- Beading thread (Fireline or Nylon)
- Beading needle - size 10 or 11
- Scissors and pliers

RSVP: Maggiem2@windstream.net and I will send you the Zoom link and project photos.

SCHOOL COLLECTIONS

by Steve Blyskal, HGMS Mineral Section Chair

When you enter the clubhouse through the garage door, one of the first things you see is the large metal rack to your left, covered with a green tarp and holding numerous flats labeled with the names of different rocks. On the other side of the rack, near the garage door are lots more flats with mineral names on them. Many of you have probably wondered why these flats are there and what they are for. This is the story of how those flats came to be where you see them. Our club has been built over the last 60+ years by people who saw a need, came up with an idea to fill that need, and worked to make it a reality.

Many years ago, there were members, mostly retired, who regularly made trips to elementary and middle schools in the Houston area to talk about minerals, rocks and what could be done with them. They often took their own specimens with them to illustrate their talks. Teachers often asked if there was any way they could get supplies of minerals and rocks to use in their classroom. One of our members, Art Smith, Jr., heard their pleas and determined to do something about it. As a practicing petroleum geologist Art had many connections in the oil industry. After inquiries he approached Conoco, a major oil company (now ConocoPhillips), which had an interest in educating young people in the earth sciences. They reached an agreement wherein Conoco would provide a yearly grant of \$3000 to HGMS for the purchase of minerals and rocks and supplies to create rock and mineral sets that could be left with teachers after HGMS members had talked to their classes. In return Art documented his expenditures and provided statistics on how many sets were distributed. With these funds secured he needed a place to store the specimens he was acquiring. After receiving permission from the HGMS Board he purchased heavy duty industrial shelving and got it erected in an unused portion of the garage area. He then began to purchase wholesale flats of minerals and solicited donations from members and friends from his mineral trading contacts. Gradually these acquisitions built up a sufficient supply to start creating sets in white mineral flats. These sets were a labor of love for Art. Each involved folding 30-40 small boxes and gluing numbers onto each specimen so the teachers could keep track of them when kids inevitably mixed them up in the box. He often worked on these in his mineral room while watching the Astros play baseball on the weekends. Hundreds of these sets, complete with documentation, were passed out to Houston area teachers over the years. Art did this completely on his own and never asked for help. He had strict rules (no sets to Boy Scouts), so he would not be overwhelmed by the number of requests.

Eventually, as he grew older, he got tired of dealing with the constant demand for sets and said he would not do it anymore. At that point I stepped in and said I would take over the manufacture of the sets. That was about 15 years ago. Since then, the program has continued and expanded and changed dramatically. Conoco declined to participate in giving HGMS money after their merger with Phillips Petroleum, and our contacts there retired or were re-assigned. Without a source of funds, the acquisition of new specimens was mostly by donation. The efforts of Art Smith left us well supplied to produce sets for the next 20 years at least, so donations for the most part have been enough to get by.

Several years ago, the Republican Party took over the State of Texas School Board organization, and since many of the new members were Creationists, they were very much against the teaching of geology in schools. Any mention of Earth Science was pushed down to the 3rd and 4th grade elementary levels. As a result of this a group of us decided to redo the basic school sets to reflect these changes. Under the guidance of members Neal Immega and Lexy Bieniek new sets were organized and documentation was updated and improved. These new sets, which contain a hardness set of minerals (1 through 9), some common minerals, common rock types, a few fossils, a topographic map and a streak plate, have been our new standard.

How has School Collections changed over the last few years?

1. The Education Committee requested mineral and rock sets to give to teachers who bring classes to the Show and take them through several stations. School Collections created 3 mineral and rock sets and a fossil set for teachers to choose from. These sets, housed in 17-space plastic craft boxes, consist of individually numbered specimens and

include paper keys and information for teachers.

2. The School Collections expanded who can receive donations of rocks and minerals. To date we have created sets of both for two universities in Africa who were starting from scratch. Also, since Geology has been approved as a high school science class, we have donated appropriate specimens to teachers who needed them. Science Olympiad, a high school program for future scientists, focuses on earth sciences every few years and school collections has donated specimens to sets used to help prepare these students for the competition. We have also added some Home School groups to the ones able to get sets, depending on the number of students reached.

3. I don't do all the work myself. I have reached out to members to fold and create small boxes (30+ per set) and to put numbers on the 1500 specimens that make up the 50 sets we put together each time.



The Quartz Set, containing different examples of crystalline and massive quartz and rocks that are mostly quartz.

So where is School Collections going in the future? With the pandemic and the closing of the clubhouse in 2020 and 2021 not much has been happening, but that will change as life begins to return to normal by 2022. The number of sets on the shelves has declined to the point where new ones need to be created. These are done 50 at a time to maximize the benefits of scale. Throughout 2021 I will be putting out requests for volunteers to fold boxes and glue numbers on specimens.

What does the future hold? I am going to be 73 this year and while I am able to organize and manage School Collections, there is no one behind me to take over if I can't do it anymore. Who is going to step up and lead here? Don't let School Collections become a failed program, shut own for lack of membership participation! Make it count!

FEATURED MEMBER: JILL MOFFITT

SHARING THE LOVE OF GEMS

by Jill Rowlands Moffitt

Although my doodlebugger father taught us geology and collected fish fossils, I was always more attracted to colorful sparkly stones. In 1996 I turned a 20-year love of collecting gems into a gem cutting hobby, and then a business. A dealer motivated me to consider cutting my own gems. The Houston Public Library's books on gem cutting and previous experience in operating a variety of industrial machines, inspired me to learn how to cut gems.

The International Gem and Jewelry Show Is where I met Beverly Mace, who motivated me to visit the HGMS club house. The next day, I went to get a tour and signed up immediately and walked out with a quartz cabochon cut under the tutelage of Gary Anderson. At the time, HGMS didn't offer faceting lessons because the club machine wasn't operational. I met many professional and hobby faceters at the Gemstone and Faceting Section meetings, including Paul Koons who invited me to cut two gemstones at his shop.



A pink ice Yttrium Aluminum Garnet in a scissor cut

I bought a used Imperial faceting machine from Ed Katz and nearly had to learn from scratch again. My first solo stone looked more like a Picasso design than an SRB (Standard Round Brilliant) but it still sparkled. Two more stones later I was able to cut SRBs that looked much better. I spent the next six months practicing SRBs on clear quartz.

Around that time I was invited to join the Texas Faceter's Guild and started participating in gem cutting contests where I honed my skills quickly with unique, sparkly cuts. Later I was also invited to become the USA Coordinator for the Australian International Faceting Challenge, the World Championship of Faceting for 12 years. The USA Team regularly placed in team and Individual competition with many first place winners during that time. In 2006 I flew to Australia and actually helped judge that year's competition.

I served as President of TFG for several years and traveled to clubs all over Texas sharing my skills in gem cutting and building membership in TFG. Meanwhile, I continued to be active in HGMS as Education chair, then Vice President and President. It was a delight to work with incredible board members including Beverly Mace, Norman Lenz and Paul McGarry. I fondly call that era Camelot because we had great meetings without any squabbling.

The year I was President and John Moffitt (my husband) was Show Chair, the HGMS board agreed to move the annual show from the George R. Brown Convention Center to the Humble Civic Center. We had a talented team that helped make the transition

successful. After serving in a variety of HGMS club office positions, I was elected to the position of South Central Federation of Mineralogical Societies Regional Director for two terms and became a Certified Judge through the American Federation.



A modified Itone star cut in white topaz with a lasso mounting

I became active with the Houston Museum of Natural Science when Inda Immega asked me to help her build a Toastmaster Club there. Then I fell in love with Geopalooza and became a docent for this special exhibit that had fossils, minerals and a whole area devoted to colorful agates

and cabochons. I trained many docents on a capping machine on loan from HGMS until a substantial donation allowed us to get a new Genie and the HMNS Guild bought a new faceting machine.

That was the start of the HMNS Rock Stars. It began by the Paleo freight elevator under Dipsey's tail then moved into the Harold Van Pelt carving exhibit. Later, the Rock Stars followed the Faberge exhibit to several locations and now has a permanent location in the current exhibit.



Rainbow-colored dino bone bracelet with different colors of dino bone

The COVID pandemic has everyone on hiatus. A friend formed a non-profit group who makes masks and shields for first responders, clinics and anyone who needs a free mask or a shield. HGMS came to the rescue when I needed space to make face shields with the assistance of Al Mowery and John Moffitt. I continue to make masks and am organizing my rock collection. Soon, I hope to get back to sharing my love of gems in my gemstone print fabric masks!

Cover Photo: Jill is holding a a carved quartz Faberge cigarette case.

Urban Dictionary: A Doodlebugger is someone who works on an oil exploration crew.

BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH

BEZEL CLOSER

A bezel closer is a steel punch that makes quick work out of pushing the metal down over

a round stone and burnishing it. It works with regular bezels, with tube settings, and with prong settings. Stones can easily be set in as little as 30 seconds. But you must prepare your bezel closers.



Capturing the stone

The working end is a concave cavity that fits over the bezel or prong setting and is pushed and twisted to capture the stone. Sets can be purchased, but they are expensive and contain many sizes you probably will never use. If all you need is one or two sizes, here is how you can make them yourself.

Find a round steel rod or bolt a little larger in diameter than your bezel cup or prong setting. Cut a 5-inch length. File both ends flat. Locate the center of one

end, center punch a divot, and drill a small pilot hole about 5 mm deep. Remember to use a little oil as lubricant when cutting steel.

Select a ball bur a bit larger than the bezel. Enlarge the pilot hole to a full hemispherical cavity. Test for proper fit with your bezel. Bezel should first contact the cavity about a third of the way in. When the size is correct, polish the cavity using Zam on a length of chopstick in your flexshaft. If the tool is not polished, it will leave scratches on your bezel or prongs.

When using the tool, the first step is to capture the stone correctly. I usually work by hand and push the punch straight down over the bezel or prongs. This causes the metal to start bending over the stone. Next, if it is a small stone, I inspect with a lens to be sure the stone is staying level. This is repeated until the stone is seated on its bearing, and it cannot move anymore.

Next you want to force the metal down onto the stone uniformly all the way around. While this can be done by hand, I often gently tap the punch with a hammer. Finally, I burnish the bezel by twisting the punch around.



*Bezel Closer, above
Bench Shears, below*



BENCH SHEARS

When cutting sheet metal, it is quicker and easier to use a set of shop shears as compared with using a handsaw. The cut is not as precise, but often you do not need that. Shears will easily cut up to 24-gauge sheet, and some will cut 22- or even 20-gauge.

Current prices for shears run from \$13 - \$36 in jewelry catalogs, and the Joyce Chen scissors recommended on some jewelry blogs run more than \$20. However, we found a cheaper alternative at the 99 Cent Store—some gardening utility scissors that were only \$1.07

I buy a half dozen of them at a time for use in my jewelry classes. They are great for cutting bezels, trimming around a bezel cup, and cutting a piece off a larger sheet.



Learn New Skills with Brad's "How To Do It" Books
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith) BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com
Happy hammering, Brad Smith

SHOWS

Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society is having their in-person 45th Annual Show on the weekend of Saturday, February 20 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, February 21, 2021 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Conroe Show: The Texas Mineral and Fossil Spring Show will be held April 23-25, 2021 at the Lone Star Convention Center and Expo in Conroe, TX. 9055 Airport Road, Conroe, Texas 77303.

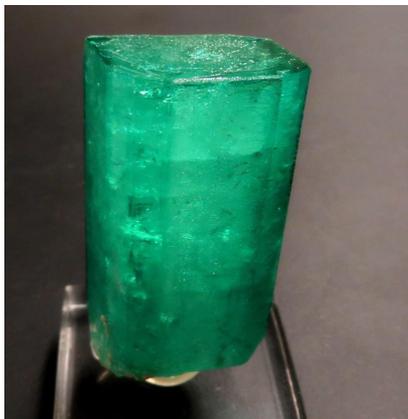
ANDREA BRUNEAU

Sadly, Andrea Bruneau lost her battle with cancer on January 6, 2021. She passed peacefully at home in hospice care with her husband Ken by her side. Ken Bruneau donated her beading and lapidary tools and supplies to the Club. Her friends at HGMS will miss her.

RECENT MINERALOGICAL ACQUISITIONS: SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

PRESENTED BY DR. JEFFERY POST, CURATOR-IN-CHARGE
MINEROLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

On December 2, MSDC was honored to have Dr. Jeffery Post, curator of the National Gem and Mineral Collection of the Smithsonian Institution, make a presentation



Emerald, Hiddenite, NC

Three inches high, this extraordinary domestic emerald was discovered in 2004, held for a few years in a private collection, and judged "best" in its class for its beautiful color. Jeff noted that its top, flat surface shows variations in color zones that reflect slight differences in mineral composition.

discussing some of the most interesting minerals and gemstones acquired this year for the Smithsonian collection.

The Department of Mineral Sciences within the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History takes responsibility for systematizing, maintaining, displaying, researching and expanding the nation's mineral and gem collection. The Department's geologists serve as the collective intelligence and memory for the collection's inventory of minerals and what additional specimens are needed to make it more comprehensive.

Each year, the Department's staff shares with the public news of its research and acquisitions through scholarly publications, provides displays at national and international mineral shows, and gives presentations to mineral clubs. Their search for new acquisitions is guided by the goals of developing a more complete collection, obtaining specimens representative of specific geological locations, and making minerals available for research purposes.



Fluorite balls, Deccan Plateau, Pune, India.

*This 3-inch diameter circle of fluorite raises the perplexing and unresolved question:
How did this specimen's shape come about?*

Below are a few of the more than 70 images from Dr. Post's interesting and enjoyable December virtual presentation to the MSDC club. Many specimens were acquired at the February 2020 Tucson Gem & Mineral Show, with others acquired at the Denver Gem & Mineral Show.

During this time of Covid-19 and beginning in March, the Smithsonian museums necessarily were closed to the public. As a result, most of the staff had to telework and initially could come into the offices and labs only every two or three weeks to maintain the mineral collection and continue the research. More recently,

each department has been allowed to have only one person at a time working on-site. Despite these restrictions, the work of the Mineral Sciences Department has continued. The photos that follow represent highlights of the wonderful images and comments that Dr. Post shared with MSDC members and guests.

Go online to see these beautiful colors!



*Chalcopyrite “blueberries,”
Hubei Province, China*

*This specimen is unusual in
its shape and provides hints
that some of the spheres
may be hollow.*

Rutile, Tormiq Valley, Pakistan

*This 4-inch wide specimen from
the Haramosh Mountains is an
excellent example of mineral twin-
ning, the symmetrical intergrowth
of two or more crystals of the
same mineral.*





Wild Rose Flower and Yogo Sapphire Brooch

One of the attendees of Jeff's Zoom presentation asked about the striking similarity between the five-petal format of the brooch and the flower known as the Wild Rose. Jeff confirmed that the questioner was correct, noting that the flower was, indeed, the inspiration for the design of the brooch. After the meeting, Jeff provided these side-by-side images, leaving no doubt about the designer's intention.

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, 1/4 page; \$150 for 6 months, 1/4 page.

MEMBER: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and 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) at 10805 Brooklet, Houston TX 77099.

See the calendar inside the back page for when the different Sections meet. The General Meeting is the fourth Tuesday of each month (except December) at 7:30PM. Currently most meetings are virtual. Visit our web site, <https://hgms.org>

HGMS GENERAL MEETING MINUTES AND HOLIDAY PARTY

DECEMBER 12, 2020

by Nancy English

President Sigrid Stewart called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. She thanked twenty-two members for attending the HGMS Zoom Holiday Party. The regular General Meeting format was suspended to facilitate the party activities.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

President Stewart expressed her regrets that we could not meet for our dinner in person. She offered good wishes to all for the Holiday Season and sympathy for those who are ill or isolated.

She explained how to bid on auction items and vote on contest winners using the "Chat" function. Prizes and purchases can be picked up Sunday December 13, between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Club. Nancy English kept track of the awards and purchases.

First Contest: Ugliest Christmas Sweater. Beverly Mace won, not for an ugly sweater but because she was the only one wearing a Christmas Sweater. She won a stainless steel necklace designed as a T-Rex outline.

Door Prize # 1: Precambrian Kartchner Granite with Garnets. Mary Ann Mitscherling won the prize.

President Stewart acknowledged the many people who support the club by volunteering consistently. She listed the new officers for 2021: President—Sigrid Stewart; 1st Vice-President—Michele Marsel; 2nd Vice President— Beverly Mace; Secretary— Nancy English; Treasurer— Tatyana Kuhne; Show Chairman— Scott Singleton. She read the list of 2020 accomplishments as posted in the Dec 1, 2020 BOD minutes and the Jan 3, 2021 E-blast.

SECTION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

President Stewart invited Section Chairs and Standing Committee Chairs to make any announcements.

Neal Immega, Club Chairman, said the Covid-19 virus helped keep the machines in good working order.

Steve Blyskal, Mineral Section Chairman, announced that he will continue as Dealer Chair for the 2021 HGMS Annual Show. The Mineral Section will continue to have zoom meetings in 2021. Steve said the Club needs to make 50 more mineral school sets for 2021. Contact Steve if you are interested in helping.

Randy Carlson, Gemstone and Faceting Section Chairman, said his section received a huge donation that resulted in \$1,000 for the Section. He praised John Lee for winning First Place Overall Champion in the 2020 Australia Faceting Contest. John entered five stones. He won 1st Place for three of them and 3rd Place for the other two. Randy showed a 3-D printed saber tooth tiger skull that he just acquired. The Section meeting in November dealt with Montana Sapphires & Maine tourmalines. He showed us a 4.6 carat sapphire from the El Dorado bar of the Missouri River in Montana that he bought direct

from one of the miners. The January meeting will focus on California tourmalines. Randy will add names to his virtual meeting emails as requested.

Second Contest: Bead Bling. Maggie Manley won a bag of turquoise beads for her beautiful Hombre bead bracelet.

First Round of Live Auction: Neal Immega began the auction. All the items had been featured on the Sunday E-blast the week before. Neal also displayed them to the zoom camera feature for the bidders to see. Bids were posted on the Chat line and repeated audibly by Sigrid Stewart, Nancy English, or Michele Marsel. Great bargains were snapped up by enthusiastic bidders.

Third Contest: Lapidary Superstar. Debbie Kirkpatrick entered an exquisite, enameled beetle on a leaf. She won a carved moose pendant made of bone.
Door Prize #2! Montana Agate slabs were won by Inda Immega.

Fourth Contest: Weirdest Fossil. Sigrid Stewart entered a mammoth tooth she found in the Pecos river. Randy Carlson entered a fossilized sea fern. Scott Singleton entered a fossilized ginkgo leaf. Nancy Fischer won the Door River palmwood prize for her Sublette County, Wyoming, stromatolite.

Second Round of Live Auction: Steve Blyskal closed out the last half of the auction which included 18 donated plants. Fourteen bidders created a lively auction and \$726.00 for the Club.

Donation Committee: The auction items and prizes were all from recent donations. Thanks go to members who sorted, cleaned, and photographed the auction entries. The newly expanded Donation Committee is committed to improve the 2021 HGMS donation process of acceptance, disbursement, sale, and acknowledgement to donators.

Door Prize #3! Fred Brueckner won the Salmon Calcite from Otter Lake, Quebec.

Fifth Contest: Magnificent Mineral. Steve Blyskal entered a racy shaped piece of prehnite. He also showed Schorl tourmaline and feldspar. Mary Ann Mitscherling presented gypsum from Peru. The winners were Michael and Debbie Knight for their Malachite egg. They won a lovely piece of quartz from Arkansas.

President Stewart reminded everyone to pay for and pick-up their purchases and winnings on Sunday at the HGMS Club House between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00. p.m. In closing, she said, "The Amazing Year of 2020 is winding down and our Hopes for 2021 are emerging.

As if Covid-19 was not enough there were floods, fires, hurricanes, and a Presidential Election. Now the Election is over, treatments for Covid-19 have improved, and vaccines are coming.

Thanks, Everyone, for attending. Be kind and help your fellow man – he will need it. Have a great 2021!

The next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. January 5, 2021.
The next General Meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. January 26, 2021 Program to be announced.

HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 5, 2021

by Nancy English

X	President—Sigrid Stewart	X	Beading— Maggie Manley
X	1st Vice President—Michele Marse	X	Day Light—Fred Brueckner
X	2nd Vice President—Beverly Mace	X	Gemstones & Faceting—Randy Carlson
X	Treasurer—	X	Lapidary & Silversmithing—Phyllis George
X	Secretary—Nancy English	X	Mineral—Steve Blyskal
X	Archaeology—Nancy Engelhardt-Moore	X	Paleontology—Mike Dawkins

President Sigrid Stewart called the January 5, 2021, Board of Directors' Zoom Meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. A quorum was present. Scott Singleton—Show Chairman, attended the meeting as a non-voting member.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

The HGMS clubhouse remains closed for member use in order to minimize the danger of spreading the Coronavirus, except for shop use by appointment. The Board of Directors will determine when it is safe to reopen. Some Sections are scheduling virtual meetings. The January 2021 General Meeting program can be attended virtually. Classes will not be scheduled until the clubhouse reopens.

2020 Holiday Party: The 2020 HGMS Christmas Party for our members was held on Zoom on December 12, with a live auction (bidding via Chat). Three door prizes were awarded by random number generation, and five contests provided winners with coveted prizes. Winning items were paid for and picked up on Sunday, December 13 at the Club. The auction generated \$728.00.

Theft of Trailer Containing Display Cases: On December 22, 2020, Clyde McMeans received a call from the CubeSmart storage location reporting that an HGMS unit had been burglarized. Upon arriving, Clyde found that the large trailer and display cases were stolen. Further investigation showed that the large trailer had been towed away on November 29, 2020. The lock was also broken on the smaller trailer unit, where the frame for the Fluorescent Display is stored, but the smaller trailer had not been taken. A police report has been filed and Clyde had an initial interview with our insurance company.

CubeSmart refunded the December payment for the unit that was breached. Vice President Michele Marsel suggested that we concentrate on settling the insurance claim and then evaluate the replacement of the cases. Vice President Beverly Mace has the inventory list of the cases. President Stewart asked the Board to be prepared to share ideas about new display cases at the February 2, 2021 BOD meeting. More details will be reported then.

Approval of Minutes: Phyllis George moved to approve the December 1, 2020 Board of Directors' meeting minutes. Mike Dawkins seconded the motion, and it passed.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Tatyana Kuhne sent the Year-end Financial Report to the Board members on January 2, 2021. The email included her resignation, effective January 1, 2021. President Stewart tabled the discussion regarding a new Treasurer for New Business.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BBG/Newsletter Committee: Vice President Beverly Mace will notify members when the online version of the January BBG is available on HGMS.org. The paper copy of the BBG will be mailed as soon as the printers are finished with it. President Stewart delayed a discussion about issues related to the BBG until New Business.

Budget Committee: The new committee will begin meeting in January. Committee members are Sigrid Stewart, Michele Marsel, and Nancy English.

Donations Committee: The Donations Committee met in December to organize and will continue in January. Fred Brueckner, Randy Carlson, Libby Guynn, Neal Immega, Tatyana Kuhne and Michele Marsel are on the committee.

Education Committee: Members can find links to online projects in the Sunday E-blasts sent by Jim Kendall.

Library: Edward Clarke and Neal Immega are making amazing progress with the shelf index, particularly since Neal was not making much progress by himself. Edward will be helping through the month of January.

Scholarship Committee: Mike Sommers, Scholarship Chairman, asked the Board and the Budget Committee to notify him if there would be changes to the scholarships for 2021. Michele Marsel assured him that the Budget Committee would let him know.

Shop News: The shop is available for use by up to four members at a time when a Shop Foreman is available to supervise. If you want to use the shop, contact Neal Immega at nealimmega@gmail.com. He will schedule an appointment. Masks are required while in the building. Neal Immega reported via email: "The shop sold \$2200 worth of wheels to club members. During cleanup, I found three different caches of diamond wheels that were surplus to our needs. I am also providing Tony with a full set of diamond wheels for the Highland Park grinder he is repairing. This should help to get us a nice price." The air abrasive is working better. Let Neal know if it is working for you. Current instructions on the air abrasive are posted.

Show Committee: Scott Singleton sent an email on December 28, 2020 reviewing expenses for the Virtual Show event. There have been a lot of emails on this topic, so this issue and proposals dealing with it will be discussed in Old Business.

Website Committee: A provision for the Website Committee needs to be added to the Bylaws. The Board postponed this discussion and task until the February 2, 2021 BOD meeting. A proposal for a more effective web host will be discussed under New Business.

SECTION REPORTS

All In-Person Section Meetings are canceled until further notice.
Some Sections conduct virtual meetings.

Archaeology Section: first Thursday, 7:30 p.m., January 7, 2021.

Program: The guest lecturer will be Dr. Dirk Van Tuerenhout, Houston Museum of Natural Science Curator of Anthropology. Dirk will present "A War of Words: the story of the Code Talkers". He will speak about the role played by Native Americans who acted as Code Talkers in both WWI and WWII. He plans to talk about who served, when, and where—since this topic will be covered in sections of the renovated HMNS Hall of Americas.

After ten years of participating in and chairing the Archaeology Section, the two people most involved-- Bob Moore and Nancy Engelhardt-Moore, along with the current Secretary, Jay Roussel - are resigning. Bob and Nancy will be producing programs for Friends of Archaeology, Ft Bend Archeological Society, etc. Their Zoom programs for HGMS drew 34 plus viewers, but only a few from HGMS. Unfortunately, no one else in the Section is interested in assuming the responsibility for the monthly meetings. So, for now, the Section is dormant. Board members thanked the Moores for their dedication to the Section and the Club for all these years.

Beading Section: third Saturday, 1:30 p.m., January 16, 2021. Maggie Manley will be teaching how to make a spiral chain. All interested persons are welcome to join the call. Maggie thanked Sigrid Stewart for the Zoom links. RSVP: Maggiem2@windstream.net to get the Zoom link and project photos.

Day Light Section: first Wednesday, 1:00 p.m., January 6, 2021. No program planned.

Gemstones and Faceting Section: second Wednesday, 6:30, p.m., January 13, 2021. Randy Carlson plans to highlight gemstones found in the U.S. Using Cisco's WebEx, the January virtual meeting will focus on California tourmalines. The February 10 meeting will feature Oregon Sunstone. And for March 10, 2021, North Carolina rubies and emeralds will be in the spotlight. Randy will add names to his virtual meeting email list as requested. The U.S. Faceting Guild published the design specifications for the 2021 Contest in their December issue. Chuck Gartman's article was published in the same issue. Well done, Chuck!

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section: third Monday, 7:30 p.m., January 18, 2021. No program planned.

Mineral Section: third Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., January 20, 2021. Members of the Mineral Section will be sent a Zoom link by email on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. Others who wish to attend should contact Steve.blyskal@gmail.com to get on the list for the Zoom link. In addition to a check-in and show and tell there will be several business items to discuss concerning the future of the Section and our participation in the Annual Show. There will also be a presentation on mineral names by Deidre Prince and Burton Dworsky. All members interested in minerals and mineral collecting are welcome to attend.

Paleo Section: third Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., January 19, 2021. No program planned.

Youth Section: first and third Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to Noon, January 2 and 16, 2021. No programs planned.

OLD BUSINESS

Scott Singleton was introduced to discuss the budget and expense issues of the Virtual Show on November 14, 2020 and the outside contractor expense.

First, he opted to summarize some of the meeting discussions about Club participation, saying Sections that are active are being supported wholly by the Section Chairmen creating virtual meetings now as well as in-person meetings in the past. Other societies Scott belongs to are linked to professional organizations that support membership but are still experiencing lower numbers of dedicated volunteers. Comments and ideas for encouraging participation followed.

- President Stewart's goal is to keep HGMS relevant in the Gem and Mineral community through The Virtual Annual Show, Virtual General Meeting programs, and the BackBender's Gazette. The Virtual General Meetings are attracting more members from distances too far to easily travel to the Club for meetings.
- Besides her presidential responsibilities, Sigrid Stewart is doing much of the volunteer work on the Website Committee to complete the monthly BBG. She did crucial work on the Virtual Show and the holiday party. Sigrid is looking forward to the social aspect of our in-person General Meetings that are punctuated by good speakers and programs.
- President Stewart will encourage virtual General Meeting attendees to share projects they are working on during the pandemic for Show-n-Tell.
- The Moores were keeping the Archaeology Section in the news with relevant, entertaining, monthly programs—live before the pandemic, and virtual since.
- Randy Carlson continues to engage the Gemstone and Faceting Section with monthly examinations of gemstones and faceting patterns.
- Steve Blyskal endorsed having future Mineral Section meetings because people who live outside of Houston get the advantage of participating.
- Maggie Manley is anxious to involve the Beading Section in virtual beading projects starting this month, because a year without any interaction may make members lose interest.
- Fred Brueckner shared that William Holland School of Lapidary Arts produces an online Show-n-Tell on Fridays.

Scott Singleton said for all these reasons It will be important for HGMS to “hit the ground running” when the Club reopens in order to encourage new members to join and be active. Marketing on Facebook, Instagram, and the HGMS website will be even more important.

The meeting returned to the discussion of the Virtual Show expenses. Michele Marsel moved to affirm the Board of Directors' intent to carry forward the Approved 2020 Show Budget from the in-person 67TH Annual HGMS Gem, Mineral, Jewelry, & Fossil Show, to the replacement Virtual Show after the in-person Show was cancelled at the August 4, 2020 Board Meeting due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the ensuing discussion, Scott Singleton pointed out that this was the first time the people on the Website Committee had ever attempted anything like this. No one knew what it would cost in creative time and cost of technical expertise. During the Board meeting on August 4, 2020 the Board agreed that the virtual Show is important to keep HGMS in the community awareness.

As a comparison, the in-person Show expenses average \$50,000 whereas the virtual version cost a little over \$7, 000. Scott's goal was to create enough revenue to offset virtual show costs. Unfortunately, that did not happen, partially due to slow server response because of the large number of people attempting to bid on auction items. The Committee learned a great deal that will be useful for more online auctions, programs, and instructional videos (see website hosting business item below).

Maggie Manley seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. This motion confirms that

the web services contractor expenses for the Virtual Show were a budgeted expense. The Woo Commerce installation has allowed the Paleo books to be sold online, resulting in substantial profit for that section. As Neal Immega reported in the January 3 E-blast, “Book sales were up. We sold \$1781 of books in 2020 which is nearly DOUBLE from the previous year. Further, nearly all the sales were through PayPal on the web site.

NEW BUSINESS

Website Hosting: Scott Singleton made a Power Point presentation to demonstrate the need for a new website host. The Virtual Show was impaired by insufficient server resources from our current Web host, HostGator. Scott showed a graph of the waiting time for people trying to get into HGMS.org. In the morning complaints poured in, saying people could not sign on to the website. The Website Committee did not expect to crash the system. Scott showed a comparison of HostGator’s features versus Nexcess’ and other hosting companies.

Nexcess has the features we need for virtual events and ecommerce. Among them is “AutoScale”, which temporarily provides faster processing capacity: 24 hours free. Nexcess has a dedicated support team. We anticipate needing this capability because the HGMS website has evolved to the point that it now is hosting virtual fund-raising events. The Nexcess service can handle 500 sales per hour. Nexcess will allow HGMS to have hybrid events which show the in-person event online for those who want to watch from home. Woo Commerce interfaces with it, too.

For all this improvement, HGMS will only pay \$70.00 more per year than it pays currently. Michele Marsel moved to allow the Website Committee to change from HostGator to Nexcess. Maggie Manley seconded the motion, and it passed.

BBG: President Stewart asked for more volunteers to help with the BBG. Scott Singleton suggested providing the BBG only online. Beverly Mace surprised the Board by saying the hard copy BBG is mailed to one half of the membership. Sigrid reminded the Board that the links in the online version of the BBG have improved the newsletter. Phyllis George complimented Sigrid Stewart and Lauren Blyskal, saying that they have turned the BBG into a better periodical than she could have done. High praise from the winner of first place editors awards for years.

Sigrid Stewart requested the purchase of Adobe Creative Cloud, which includes Adobe InDesign... a desktop publishing and typesetting software application. It can be purchased through TechSoup for non-profits for 40% less than retail. Nancy English moved to purchase a copy of Adobe Creative Cloud for Sigrid Stewart from TechSoup. Michele Marsel seconded the motion, and it passed. This product will reduce the need for outside tech contractors.

New Treasurer: Michele Marsel agreed to manage day-to-day financial transactions until a new Treasurer is appointed. Phyllis George moved to install Michele Marsel as temporary Treasurer until a replacement can be found, and to authorize her to be a signer on the operating accounts at Chase Bank (referred to as The Operating Account and the PayPal account). Beverly Mace seconded the motion and it passed.

The out-going treasurer, Tatyana Kuhne, left a list of items to be resolved, including outstanding contractor invoices for 2020 web services. With Scott Singleton’s approval of the invoices, Michele will pay Lauren Blyskal and also follow-up on the other items on list. Nancy English has removed Tatyana’s access to all bank accounts. Nancy English, Sigrid Stewart, and Michele Marsel will go to Chase Bank on Friday January 8, 2021 to add

Michele as an authorized signer to the above referenced accounts.
The Board appreciates Tatyana's dedicated work as the HGMS Treasurer.
The next Board of Directors meeting will be the first Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. February 2, 2021.

The next General Meeting will be the fourth Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. January 26, 2021. Neal Immega will present a program on Thundereggs from New Mexico via Port Neches. For 2021, President Sigrid Stewart is bringing back monthly auctions. A preview of five or six items will be available on the Sunday E-blast before the General Meeting. And Door Prizes are back too! Attendees of the General Meeting need to plan to bring Show-n-Tell.

Adjourn: Phyllis George moved to adjourn. Nancy English seconded the motion and it passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:49 pm.

HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 26, 2021
by Nancy English

President Sigrid Stewart called the January 26, 2021 Zoom General Meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. She welcomed nineteen members which grew to twenty-two viewers during the meeting.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

It is that time of year! Yes, it is time to pay dues again. Clubhouse use may be limited, but many members have been working as hard as they can to provide viable, virtual experiences (and some shop availability via appointment) while safely navigating the coronavirus pandemic. The expenses for maintaining the building still apply. We will be posting reminders on the Sunday E-blast, the Website, and the monthly BBG asking members to please renew their memberships; the club needs your support!

For 2021, President Sigrid Stewart is bringing back monthly auctions featuring five or six items during each General Meeting. The Sunday, January 23, 2021 E-blast gave a preview of tonight's auction items. Door Prizes are back, too! Attendees of the General Meeting need to plan to bring Show-n-Tell items.

Great Holiday Virtual Party December 12, 2020. The Christmas Party for our members was held on Zoom on December 12, with a live auction (bidding via Chat). Three door prizes were awarded by random number generation. Five contests provided winners with coveted prizes. The auction generated \$728.00.

President Stewart announced that the Clubhouse is NOT opening for business as usual until the Coronavirus monitor is green in Harris county and surrounding counties. Appointments to use the shop for a limited number of people can be made with Neal Immega or Sharon Halton. Please, see Shop news in the weekly Sunday E-blasts. Masks are required while in the building.

Andrea Bruneau. Sadly, Andrea Bruneau lost her battle with cancer on January 6, 2021. She passed peacefully at home in hospice care with her husband Ken by her side. Ken Bruneau donated her beading and lapidary tools and supplies to the Club. Her friends at HGMS will miss her.

Approval of Minutes: Nancy Fischer moved to approve the minutes of the November 24, 2020 and December 12, 2020 General Meetings as posted in the January 24, 2021 E-blast. Fred Brueckner seconded the motion, and it passed.

Door Prize: President Stewart used the random number generator to pick a number between one and nineteen (number of members on the call at that time). Marty Rothenberg won the five inch Brazilian agate with quartz center and felt backing.

SECTION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

In the interest of time, President Stewart asked members to look for reports of future Section meetings and presentations in the BBG, on the website <https://hgms.org>, or by reading the weekly E-blast from Jim Kendall. If you are a member and not on Jim Kendall's e mail list, please contact him at kendallja@att.net to be added.

Archaeology Section: We are sorry to report that current officers of the Archaeology Section are stepping down: Bob Moore, Chairman, Nancy Engelhardt-Moore, Vice Chairman, and Jay Roussel, Secretary. Bob announced that he and his wife Nancy will be forming their own lecture series, and if anyone is interested in receiving program announcements, they should contact Nancy Engelhardt-Moore to stay on the email list. Archaeology did have one last great virtual program: Dirk Van Tuerenhout presented "A War of Words: the story of the Code Talkers", about the Native America speakers using their native languages to create communication codes. A request has been posted for a new Section Chairman. The Section will be labeled "dormant" for the time being.

President Stewart invited other Section Chairs and Standing Committee Chairs to make any additional announcements. Some sections have held virtual meetings; she invited reports about those meetings.

Mineral Section: third Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., February 17, 2021. Steve Blyskal assured everyone that the Mineral Section plans to have a speaker at each month's meeting. The February speaker will be Steve Steinke, who will talk about collecting Wulfenite in Arizona mines. Steve sends announcements to members of the Mineral Section. If anyone wants to be on that list, please, contact him.

Clear Lake Show: Steve Blyskal answered a member's inquiry about the Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society Show. Yes, CLGMS is having their in-person 45th Annual Show on the weekend of Saturday, February 20 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, February 21, 2021 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Nancy English asked if HGMS should have a booth there to advertise the HGMS Annual Show. Some of the HGMS dealers have declined to join the show. Steve Blyskal suggested that the Board discuss the risk/reward of volunteering at the CLGMS Show during the HGMS BOD meeting on February 2, 2021.

The Conroe Show: Steve also said the Texas Mineral and Fossil Spring Show will be held April 23-25, 2021 at the Lone Star Convention Center and Expo in Conroe, TX. 9055 Airport Road, Conroe, Texas 77303.

Beading Section: third Saturday, 1:30 p.m., February 20, 2021. They will be making a Two Drop Peyote bracelet in multiple complementary colors. You should have about 5 to 10 colors of size 11 seed beads (round) and a vertical Cleo Clasp with 5-rings. It can be bought at www.Beadshop.com under shop/components & findings/clasps for \$3.00. It

comes in Antique Silver, Brass, or Copper. Order early as it takes them while to fill orders. Nancy Fischer complimented Maggie Manley on the January beading project... a lovely bracelet. Eight people attended the Zoom class. Nancy Fischer encouraged interested Beaders to check the weekly E-blast for the February project information.

Gemstones and Faceting Section: second Wednesday, 6:30, p.m., February 10, 2021. Sigrid Stewart said the meeting will feature Oregon Sunstone. And for March 10, 2021, North Carolina rubies and emeralds will be in the spotlight. Randy Carlson will add names to his virtual meeting email list as requested. Contact him at faceting@hgms.org

OLD BUSINESS

President Stewart asked members to look for the progress of Old Business items in the BOD Meeting Minutes in the latest BBG.

Shop News: Neal Immega said everything is fixed in the shop. He is so bored that he is working on the library. Please contact Neal Immega for shop access. If a Shop Manager is available, he may be able to get you a spot. If you are interested in Friday Shop from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., call Sharon Halton (her number is in the most recent HGMS Roster) for one of four spots available that day. If Friday does not work, give her a call and she may be able to arrange something else. Watch for Shop News in the Sunday E-blast from Jim Kendall.

NEW BUSINESS

New Officers: Tatyana Khune resigned effective January 1, 2021. As directed by the HGMS Bylaws, the BOD voted during the January 5, 2021 board meeting to elect Michele Marsel as the interim Treasurer. Michele has been serving as acting Treasurer and is willing to assume the permanent position of Treasurer. She has put a lot of effort into understanding the position and about taking over the duties.

That leaves the position of 1st Vice-President open. Steve Blyskal is willing to serve as 1st Vice-President. For the time-being, he would be both 1st Vice-President and Mineral Section representative. He would, however, only get one vote. Steve will encourage another member of the Mineral Section to be the Board representative. He is polling the mineral community for General Meeting speakers.

The BOD will vote to elect Michele as Treasurer and Steve as 1st Vice President at the February 2, 2021 board meeting.

Theft of Trailer Containing Display Cases: On December 22, 2020, Clyde McMeans received a call from CubeSmart reporting that a lock had been broken on one of the units we rent for our trailers. Upon arriving to investigate the break-in, Clyde found that the large trailer and display cases had been stolen. Further investigation showed that the trailer had been towed away on November 29, 2020. A police report has been filed and Clyde had an initial interview with our insurance company. We have some preliminary information on potential valuation but will need to provide more. The stolen cases were built by Paul McGary. Sigrid Stewart will contact Stewart Travis, the bookkeeper for McGary. He may have financial records for the insurance company showing the cost of building the cases. We may not need to replace them with an exact replica. If attendees come up with ideas for replacing our display cases, contact Sigrid.

Website Hosting: The BOD voted to change HostGator to Nexcess. Nexcess has the features we need for virtual events and ecommerce. Michele Marsel said the Website Committee chose Nexcess because it has faster capacity for sales. It allows a certain amount of complementary capacity for high volume events. Now the Committee is comfortable that we can produce large auction events. The host should be converted by the end of the week, and then the Donation and Auction Committees can decide when to test it. We will likely not have an auction before the CLGMS Show in order to avoid competition.

Web Site Committee: The BOD voted to approve purchase of Adobe Creative Cloud to expedite creating the BBG. Phyllis George also has a copy.

Newsletter Committee: This committee is provided for in the bylaws, but its functions might better fall under those of the Website Committee. The bylaws do not recognize the digital systems we work with today. The BOD will discuss combining them or creating a new committee. Either way, a change to the bylaws is needed.

Budget Committee: The Committee met on January 21, 2021 for the preliminary look at the 2021 budget. The HGMS 2021 Show budget needs to be completed in order to finish the HGMS budget in time to present it to the BOD on February 2, 2021. Nancy English complemented Michele on putting the preliminary budget together so well.

Show-n-Tell:

Steve Blyskal showed purple Coyamito agates, Laguna agates, and Loma Pinta Agate. He also showed a powerful exterior microphone that Sigrid gave him last week. Mike Dawkins shared an echinoid—sea urchin. It was sold as a stereocidarias from France.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. February 2, 2021.

The next General Meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. February 23, 2021. Steve Blyskal is pleased to announce that Deidre Prince and Burton Dworsky are speaking on “The Origin of Mineral Names”. This is actually a funny presentation, as well as being scholarly.

Adjourn: Nancy English moved to adjourn. Steve Blyskal seconded it, and it passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Auction: Steve Blyskal conducted the auction of four items earning \$52.00 for HGMS. Items can be picked up and paid for at the Club by appointment.

1. A chunk of acid dipped green calcite from Mexico.
2. A pair of agates with matching lace patterns of barite and quartz on the faces and the outsides.
3. 179.3 grams of high quality tiger eye including two polished cabs, one preformed cab not polished, and seven small pieces.
4. Lake Superior Agate called a “Laker”, purchased in Door County Wisconsin.

Former Vice President Michele Marsel introduced the Program. Neal Immega presented a program on Thundereggs from New Mexico via Port Neches. His program included many pictures of unusual thundereggs and stories of their discovery.

2020 HGMS OFFICERS

President	Sigrid Stewart	President @HGMS.org
First Vice President	Steve Blyskal	Programs@HGMS.org
Second Vice President	Beverly Mace	Membership@HGMS.org
Secretary	Nancy English	Secretary@HGMS.org
Treasurer	Michele Marsel	Treasurer@HGMS.org
Archaeology Section Board Member		Archaeology@HGMS.org
Beading Section Board Member	Maggie Manley	Beading@HGMS.org
Daylight Section Board Member	Fred Brueckner	
Faceting Section Board Member	Randy Carlson	Faceting@HGMS.org
Lapidary Section Board Member	Phyllis George	
Mineral Section Board Member	Steve Blyskal	Mineral@HGMS.org
Paleo Section Board Member	Mike Dawkins	Field_trips@HGMS.org

HGMS SECTION CHAIRS

Archaeology Section Chair	Robert Moore	Archaeology@HGMS.org
Beading Section Chair	Kim Fuselier	Beading@HGMS.org
Day Light Section Chair	Nancy Searle	Daylight@HGMS.org
Gemstone & Faceting Section Chair	Randy Carlson	Faceting@HGMS.org
Lapidary & Silversmith Section Chair	Anthony Lucci	Lapidary@HGMS.org
Mineral Section Chair	Stephen Blyskal	Mineral@HGMS.org
Paleo Section Chair	Neal Immega	Paleo@HGMS.org
Youth Section Chair	Beverly Mace	Youth@HGMS.org

HGMS APPOINTED POSITIONS

Assistant Show Chair	Clyde McMeans	
Assistant Show Chair	Sigrid Stewart	
Backbender's Gazette Editor	Sigrid Stewart	Editor@HGMS.org
Clubhouse Chair	Neal Immega	ClubhouseChair@HGMS.org
Day Light Contact Person	Nancy Searle	Daylight@HGMS.org
Donations	Neal Immega	Donations@HGMS.org
HGMS Education Chair	Maggie Manley	Classes@HGMS.org
Lapidary Templates	Mary Ann Mitscherling	Templates@HGMS.org
Librarian for Main Library	Neal Immega	Librarian@HGMS.org
Publicity Chair	Sarah Metsa	Publicity@HGMS.org
Scholarships	Mike Sommers	Scholarship@HGMS.org
Show Chair	Scott Singleton	ShowChair@HGMS.org
Trade Show	Scott Singleton	Tradeshow@HGMS.org
Trade Show	Sigrid Stewart	Tradeshow@HGMS.org
Volunteer Coordinator	Nancy English	VolunteerCoordinator@HGMS.org
Webmaster	Lauren Blyskal	Webmaster@HGMS.org
Youth Section Assistant	Elizabeth Guynn	Youth2@HGMS.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 10am Shop by appt.	Feb 1	2 11am Shop by appt.	3 10am Shop by appt.	4	5	6 12pm Shop by appt.
7 10am Shop by appt.	8	9 11am Shop by appt.	10 10am Shop by appt. 6:30pm Faceting	11 10am Shop by appt.	12	13 10am Shop by appt.
14 10am Shop by appt.	15	16 11am Shop by appt.	17 10am Shop by appt. 7:30pm Mineral	18 10am Shop by appt.	19	20 12:15pm Shop by appt. 1:30pm Beading
21 10am Shop by appt.	22	23 11am Shop by appt. 7:30pm General Mtg.	24 10am Shop by appt.	25 10am Shop by appt.	26	27 10am Shop by appt.
28 10am Shop by appt.	Mar 1	2 11am Shop by appt.	3 10am Shop by appt.	4 10am Shop by appt.	5	6 12pm Shop by appt.

Events shown in time zone: Central Time - Chicago



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 10am Shop by appt.	Mar 1	2 11am Shop by appt.	3 10am Shop by appt.	4 10am Shop by appt.	5	6 12pm Shop by appt.
7 10am Shop by appt.	8	9 11am Shop by appt.	10 10am Shop by appt. 6:30pm Faceting	11 10am Shop by appt.	12	13 10am Shop by appt.
14 10am Shop by appt.	15	16 11am Shop by appt.	17 10am Shop by appt. 7:30pm Mineral	18 10am Shop by appt.	19	20 12:15pm Shop by appt. 1:30pm Beading
21 10am Shop by appt.	22	23 11am Shop by appt. 7:30pm General Mtg.	24 10am Shop by appt.	25 10am Shop by appt.	26	27 10am Shop by appt.
28 10am Shop by appt.	29	30 11am Shop by appt.	31 10am Shop by appt.	Apr 1 10am Shop by appt.	2	3 12pm Shop by appt.

Events shown in time zone: Central Time - Chicago



THE BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE

HGMS | 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)
- 2006-2016- 1st (Large)
- 2017 - 1st (Large)
- 2018 - 1st Large
- 2019 - 1st Large



PUBLICATION

- ## AFMS
- 1998 - 2nd (Large)
 - 2004 - 3rd (Large)
 - 2007 - 1st (Large)
 - 2010 - 2nd (Large)
 - 2012 - 3rd (Large)
 - 2013 - 3rd (Large)
 - 2014 - 2nd (Large)
 - 2017 - 3rd (Large)
 - 2019 - 2nd (Large)



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