

# THE BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY



FEATURED MEMBER:  
CLYDE MCMEANS

see more on page 5

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	3
Vice President's Message	4
Shows	4
Section Reports - Mineral	4
Section Reports - Beading	4
Featured Member: Clyde McMeans	5
History of Birthstones	7
Bench Tips by Brad Smith	11
HGMS Shop Rules - Safety First!	12
More than One Way to Rockhound	14
The Joys of Mineral Mining at Home	15
Board of Director Meeting Minutes – MAY 4, 2021	18
General Meeting Minutes - MAY 25, 2021	23
Officers List	26
Calendar	27

*Permission to use material originating in this newsletter is given freely providing that credit is given to the author and the source. Every article published in the BBG is edited for grammar and content. No flaming is allowed.*

### **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](mailto:editor@hgms.org)*



# *The* BACKBENDER'S GAZETTE



*The Newsletter of the Houston Gem & Mineral Society*

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*by Sigrid Stewart*

CHANGE IS IN THE WIND! THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER!

AND The clubhouse is reopening! Yes, after a lot of debate and trying very hard to consider all the angles, the Board has approved opening for in-person activities, including Shop use, General meetings, Section meetings and classes. There are exceptions: some Sections may continue virtual meetings; some may conduct in-person or hybrid meetings. Some instructors may request that all students be vaccinated. Please remember to check the status of meetings and classes online at hgms.org. We are establishing some rules to be observed until the general Covid-19 threat level goes to green:

- Masks are still required for activities inside the Club.
- Seating for meetings must maintain a 6-foot distance between parties from different households.
- HGMS class instructors may require proof of vaccination to participate in classes.
- Members should use their own discretion and attend activities in accordance with their own comfort levels as they may be near individuals who have not been vaccinated.

Everyone is so tired of Covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns and we are all ready to resume more normal lives. We need to get everyone fired up about participating in club activities again, so call up your friends and meet them down at the club. Use the Library! Many more books have been cataloged. Come to meetings! Come look at rocks! Come use the Shop and see your friends.

Oh, and you can forget about your old clubhouse keys; we have rekeyed the building and installed a keypad access system. Club officers, Section heads, and Shop managers have been given access codes and instructions as needed. Access codes will tell us who is accessing the building.

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.

## **VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*by Steve Blyskal*

Thanks to the faithful who heard my talk for the May General on the Kokernot 06 Ranch, the new agate collecting location near Alpine. If you missed it, you can hear part 2 later this summer and see some of the agates.

For June, the presentation will be given by Neal Immega, and will be a reprise of his talk on "Life on Earth", or how we went from a ball of molten rock to the present day. He will be showing the geochemistry of how photosynthesis went from the primitive form we predict was on the early earth (and exists today in the pools at Yellowstone) to the improved form that drives a corn plant.

## **SHOWS**

International Gem and Jewelry Show June 11-13 10-6. NRG Center, 1 NRG Park, Houston, TX

Sublette County Rock Hounds Annual Show June 18-20. Big Piney, Wyoming, Sublette County Fairgrounds, 10937 Highway 189; Friday 9-5, Saturday 9-5, Sunday 9-4. Hosting the 2021 conventions for the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Show Sat, Aug 7 – 8 10-6, Pasadena Convention Center and Municipal Fairgrounds, 7902 Fairmont Pkwy Pasadena, TX

## **SECTION REPORTS**

### **MINERAL SECTION**

Mineral Section held a Zoom meeting on May 19, 2021. The talk, given by Steve Blyskal, was on Fluorite localities in France. Next month Dean Lagerwall will give a talk on "Striations on Crystals", also via Zoom.

As always, 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, May 15th. Ann Money demonstrated how to make a Beaded Tassel. All interested persons are welcome to join future meetings, which will be held at the clubhouse.

RSVP: [Maggiem2@windstream.net](mailto:Maggiem2@windstream.net) and she will send you information

## FEATURED MEMBER: CLYDE MCMEANS

It all began a long time ago in a distant land on Crowley's Ridge in Jonesboro, Arkansas, not far from the epicenter of the New Madrid Quakes of 1811-1812, and not long after the great depression ended. Mom and dad were musicians...Dad the vocal music instructor in a local college and mom with a local Baptist college. Pretty soon there were three of us...two brothers and a little sister. Then came the end of the Pacific and European conflicts.

We moved to central Arkansas to a beautiful valley acreage (the middle of a dished out anticline) in the Kellogg Acres community outside of North Little Rock (formerly Argenta, Arkansas) and only about ½ mile from the old Kellogg Silver Mines. There were quartz veined pumpkin sized rocks on one side of the yard. Hours were spent chipping away at them. We visited the mines one time. The folks demonstrated a shaker table used to separate ore from gangue. It looked like a pool table tilted down to one corner with a gasoline motor running an eccentric to vibrate the table. The table was interesting, but the owner's big black dogs were terrifying to a little kid.



*Ted and Mina*



We (mostly my dad) raised just about everything... sweet potatoes, chickens, Kentucky Wonder pole beans, Lima beans, squash, rhubarb, etc. I think we once had baked sweet potato, mashed sweet potato, and potato pie, with chicken for one meal. The old Gravely walk behind tractor enabled dad to work a large garden. That was a wonderful carefree time for the kids, but tough on the adults. After five years in the country, we moved into town.

Towards the end of grade school and into Junior High, we spent weeks upon weeks camping at various parks and lakes around Arkansas.

Our favorite was Buffalo River State Park, just south of Yellville, Arkansas and not far from Rush, Arkansas. Dad was a school teacher and church choir director. In summertime, we would set up

camp at Buffalo River State Park. Then dad would commute down to his church choir on Saturday & return late in the day on Sunday. My brother and I spent hours in the old lead and zinc mines at Rush. The whole family became friends with Lee Medley, caretaker of the Morning Star Mining Company store in Rush. Lee had been JP of the community at one time. He would read stories from the JP book and do stomp dances on the porch of

the store. At that time Fred Dirst ran the canoe landing at Rush. Eventually, the National Park Service nationalized the Buffalo River Basin. The Buffalo National River is now a huge canoeing destination.

Rockhounding was interesting in those days, but transportation was scarce. Dad once took us to Hot Springs with a side trip to the Magnet Cove Magobar Barite Mine. We picked up some novaculite there with black and white streaks.

School, church, orchestra, etc. took up my remaining years in North Little Rock. Dad continued keeping a big garden during all those years, even though we were in the city. Brother and I were the Arkansas Rototillers. We prepared the garden for planting each spring.

The next big move came just after I finished high school. We moved to Amarillo, Texas. Dad took on a church choir there. It was a nice community with a good junior college. All three of us completed our first two years there, before going on to finish. Then we all found Texas spouses. The New Mexico mountains were only one half day away and Palo Duro Canyon was at our doorstep. Our favorite New Mexico place was Pecos and Holy Ghost Canyon. There was an old abandoned lead/zinc sulfide deposit just north of Terrero in the Pecos valley where we collected



After college the family split. Mom & Dad moved to Dallas. Carol & I stayed in Amarillo for a year before moving to Houston. I joined Shell and stayed with them for 36 years, first at BRC in Recent Sediments with H. A. Bernard, Frank Lozo, Rufus LeBlanc, source rocks with Marlin Downey, to Shell Pipeline, and finally to West Hollow Research Center. We raised two girls and have four grandchildren. I joined HGMS shortly after Carol passed in 2003.

My first encounter at HGMS was rough. I had recently visited the Crater of Diamonds, so I brought some of the material to a meeting to be identified...thinking that the clear stones might be of some importance (maybe even diamonds!). Unfortunately, showing the stuff to Dr. Neal Immega was a mistake. He did not let me down easy. It took a while to get over that. Geology was my major for the first year of college, before switching to chemistry. Mineralogy and geochemistry are now my favorite topics.

The next time you get some Jeffrey Quarry quartz with leathery cookieite, leave it be. And leave some of the nice red clay on your Arkansas quartz. All those associated minerals add to the story of the "primary" mineral.

---

*from the Web site of the McPherson Gem and Mineral Club (McPherson, Kansas)*

**OLD ROCKHOUNDS NEVER DIE, THEY JUST SLOWLY PETRIFY!**

# HISTORY OF BIRTHSTONES

by Don Shurtz

*Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas*

To understand the history of Birthstones, one must first understand what a birthstone is. Wikipedia defines a birthstone as “a gemstone that represents a person’s period of birth that is usually the month or zodiac sign.” That is relatively easy to understand, but who is it that determines what stones are to be birthstones and to what period they should be applied? The answer is that anyone can generate a list and defined the period of application. If I wanted to generate such a list for this article, it would become a Birthstone list, but I doubt that anyone would recognize it or abide by it.

In the United States, the National Association of Jewelers met in 1912 to establish a standardized list of Birthstones. This list became the standard, but different Jewelry groups have made changes and additions that have gained popular approval. The following table shows the 1912 Birthstone List and the currently accepted list.

## AMERICAN BIRTHSTONES OF 1912 VERSUS CURRENT BIRTHSTONES

MONTH	U.S. (1912)	U.S. (TODAY)
January	Garnet	Garnet
February	Amethyst	Amethyst
March	Bloodstone, Aquamarine	Bloodstone, Aquamarine
April	Diamond	Diamond
May	Emerald	Emerald
June	Pearl, Moonstone	Pearl, Moonstone, Alexandrite
July	Ruby	Ruby
August	Sardonyx, Peridot	Peridot, Spinel
September	Sapphire	Sapphire
October	Opal, Tourmaline	Opal, Tourmaline
November	Topaz	Topaz, Citrine
December	Turquoise, Lapis Lazuli	Turquoise, Zircon, Tanzanite

The different groups that have contributed to this list by way of suggested additions, subtractions, or changes to the classification of traditional and modern stones include, in alphabetical order, the American Gem Trade Association, Gemological Institute of America, Jewelers of America, and the National Association of Jewelers. As can be seen, the table is relatively stable. When stones are added, the association claims that it is to provide an alternative to expensive or hard to get stones. I guess that is why they added alternatives for April, May, and July – NOT.

Most of these groups are jewelers, and they do want to make money. It is interesting that even though the list is seemingly straightforward, in many cases it is ambiguous.

Take, for example, October and opal. Almost every picture you will see of an opal birthstone will be a picture of precious opal. However, fire opal and even common opal are still opal and would qualify.

A faceted Mexican Fire Opal can be beautiful, as can a cabochon of blue opal. Which one should you select? Another example is September and sapphire. Most pictures of September Birthstones will be of blue sapphire, but occasionally you will see a golden yellow Sapphire pictured. Sapphire comes in every color except red. A red sapphire, by definition, would be a ruby. So which color of sapphire is the “true” birthstone?

Birthstones can trace their heritage back to Biblical days to the Breastplate of the High Priest and the Breastplate of Aaron. There is, however, considerable argument by experts as to the true stones of either breastplate based on translation issues and whether certain stones were even known. Here is a table showing the stones of the Breastplate of the High Priest from different translations.

### NAMES OF THE BREASTPLATE STONES BY BIBLE VERSION (WITH ALTERNATES)

Masoretic (Hebrew) 7000 B.C	Septuagint (Greek) 1200 B.C.	Josephus (Greek) 90 A.D.	Vulgate (Latin) 400 A.D.	Authorized Version 1611 A.D.	Revised Version 1884 A.D.
Odem	Sardion	Sardonyx	Sardius	Sardius	Sardius (Ruby)
Pitdah	Topazion	Topazos	Topazius	Topaz	Topaz
Bareketh	Smaragdus	Smaragdus	Smaragdus	Carbuncle	Carbuncle (Emerald)
Nophak	Anthrax	Anthrax	Carbunculus	Emerald	Emerald (Carbuncle)
Sappir	Sappheiros	Laspis	Sapphirius	Sapphire	Sapphire
Yaholom	Laspis	Sappheiros	Jaspis	Diamond	Diamond (Sardonyx)
Leshem	Ligurion	Liguros	Ligurius	Ligure	Jacinth (or Amber)
Shebo	Achates	Amethystos	Achates	Agate	Agate
Ahlahamah	Amethystos	Achates	Amethystus	Amethyst	Amethyst
Tarshis	Chrysolithos	Chrysolithos	Chrysolithos	Beryl	Beryl (Chalcedony)
Shoham	Beryllion	Onyx	Onychinus	Onyx	Onyx (Beryl)
Yashpneh	Onychion	Beryllus	Beryllus	Jasper	Jasper

As can be seen from the table, the stones vary from translation to translation. The names in the 1884 version of the Bible are sometimes based on Greek names, sometimes on Hebrew names, and sometimes it is impossible to determine the origin or the type of stone based on the name. George Frederick Kunz, an early American gemologist, undertook a study to identify the Breaststones using not only translation issues but also whether the stones were known in the Biblical Lands at the time of the Breastplates existed.

The efforts of Mr. Kunz help bring some sense to the Biblical stones. Similarities to current Birthstones can be seen for the names but not for the ordering.

The following table shows the results of his study:



## GEORGE FREDERICK KUNZ STUDY OF BREASTPLATE STONES

Breastplate of Aaron	Breastplate of the second temple
Red Jasper	Carnelian
LIGHT-GREEN SERPENTINE	PERIDOT
GREEN FELDSPAR	EMERALD
Almandine Garnet	Ruby
Lapis lazuli	Lapis lazuli
Onyx	Onyx
Brown agate	Sapphire or Jacinth
Banded agate	Banded agate
Amethyst	Amethyst
Yellow Jasper	Topaz
Malachite	Beryl
Green jasper or jade	Green jasper or jade

The current fashion of wearing a birthstone dates back to the 18th Century. The trend started in Poland and spread from there. The Polish list has a lot of similarities to the current American Birthstone list. The first published list of Gemstones in America was by Tiffany and Company in 1870. That list was based on the Polish Birthstone list. The Tiffany list also included a short poem about the metaphysical properties of each stone. The following table shows the Tiffany and Company list, and the current List.

### TIFFANY AND COMPANY BIRTHSTONE LIST

MONTH	TIFFANY AND COMPANY	CURRENT AMERICAN GEM SOCIETY
January	Garnet	Garnet
February	Amethyst	Amethyst
March	Bloodstone	aquamarine, Bloodstone
April	Diamond	Diamond
May	Emerald	Emerald
June	Agate	Pearl, Moonstone, Alexandrite
July	Ruby	Ruby
August	Sardonyx	Peridot, Sardonyx
September	Sapphire	Sapphire
October	opal	Opal, Tourmaline
November	Topaz	Topaz, Citrine
December	Turquoise	Zircon, Turquoise, Tanzanite

Shortly after the Tiffany and Company list was published, George Frederick Kunz, a Vice-President at Tiffany's, generated a Birthstone List using stones found in America. The list has several birthstones that are common to the current Birthstone List, and many that are unique. Note that he picked Kunzite, a pink variety of Spodumene that he identified and named after himself, as the September Birthstone. Not surprisingly, Mr. Kunz was born in September 1856 – perhaps a little vanity showing up in the list? The table below shows his list.

#### AMERICAN GEMSTONE BIRTHLIST BY GEORGE FREDERICK KUNZ

MONTH	BIRTHSTONE	WHERE FOUND
January	GArnet, Rhodolite	Montana, New Mexico, Arizona, North Carolina
February	Amethyst	North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia
March	Californite	California
April	Sapphire	Montana, Idaho
May	Green Tourmaline	Lake Superior
June	Moss Agate	California, Montana, Wyoming, Arizona
July	Turquoise	New Mexico, California, Arizona
August	Golden Beryl	California, Connecticut, North Carolina
September	Kunzite	California
October	Aquamarine	North Carolina, Maine, California, Colorado
November	Topaz	Utah, California, Maine, Colorado
December	Rubellite	Montana

Birthstones do not necessarily have to follow the month in which you were born – there are also lists of birthstones for the astrological sign you were born under. There are many lists - this one is from <https://www.melorra.com/jewellery-guide-education/gemstone/which-is-good-for/gemstones-by-zodiac-signs/>. As with many of the Birthstone lists, there is a commonality of the Birthstones, but the period to which they apply is not consistent.

#### BIRTHSTONES FOR ASTROLOGICAL SIGNS

ZODIAC SIGN	STONE		ZODIAC SIGN	STONE
Aquarius	Garnet		Leo	ONYX
Pisces	amethyst		Virgo	Carnelian
Aries	Bloodstone/Diamond		Libra	Peridot
taurus	Sapphire		Scorpio	Beryl
Gemini	Agate		Saggitarius	Topaz
Cancer	Emerald		Capricorn	Ruby

There also exist birthstone lists for different cultures. Many of the birthstones for the different cultures are the same as the current American list. However, the period to which the stone applies is often different. Some of the cultures for which birthstones are aligned

with the months of the year were examined. include were Arabic, English, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Polish, Roman, Russian, and Tibetan cultures. However, not all cultures have a birthstone associated with the months of the year or even the astrological signs. One such culture is the Chinese. It is not the month in which you were born that is important, but rather the year in which you were born. Every year the Chinese celebrate a New Year, but it is not on January 1st. The Chinese New Year is based on a complicated formula involving Full Moons and the Equinox.

There is a power figure for each Chinese year, and there is also a stone associated with that power figure. Most of us have heard of the Chinese power figures. They repeat on a 12-year cycle. The year 2021 is the Year of the Ox.

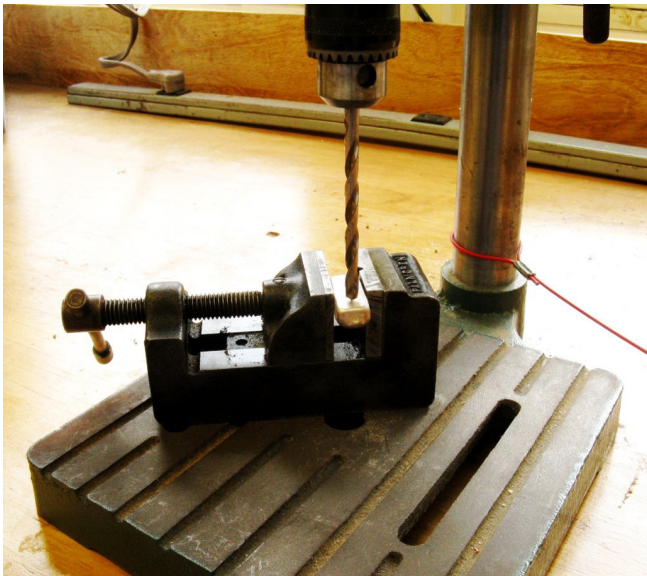
### CHINESE BIRTH YEARS AND BIRTHSTONES

YEAR	STONE		YEAR	STONE
Rat	Garnet		Horse	Topaz
Ox	Aquamarine		Sheep/Goat	Emerald
Tiger	Sapphire		Monkey	Peridot
Rabbit	Pearl		Rooster	Citrine
Dragon	Amethyst		Dog	Diamond
Snake	Opal		Pig	Ruby

## BENCH TIPS FOR JUNE

*By Brad Smith*

### THE DRILL PRESS



A drill press vise is a versatile tool that will hold a work piece securely and in precise alignment. It reduces the risks of working with high-power motors, using larger drill bits, and dealing with heat generated in the operation. The vise can be clamped to the drill press table if needed, and it is quite handy for use at the bench to hold things for sawing or riveting.

They are available at stores that carry machine tool supplies.

My feeling is that the best ones are made from steel. In particular, I like the ones with V-grooves cut into the jaw plates. That lets me hold a punch straight upright or hold a rod horizontal. To find a supplier, search on "drill press vise" at sites like micromark.com, msdirect.com/enco, smallparts.com, grizzly.com.

## DENTAL GOLD

You might think that a couple pieces of dental gold would be valuable, but if you only have a small amount, it can be a problem. Sending it to a refiner is expensive for small lots.

I made the mistake of thinking I could melt it and roll out my own sheet. It turns out the trace metals in dental gold make it a good material in your mouth but cause it to crack if you try to forge it or roll it out as a sheet. They ruined my whole ingot.

So what to do with a couple gold crowns? A reasonable alternative is to try incorporating the metal into your jewelry. If you have enough material to do a casting, that's probably the best use for dental gold.

If you're not into casting, try melting it on a solder pad and while molten, divide it into small pieces with your solder pick. Then re-flow each piece to make little gold balls for use for accents on your designs. The balls can also be planished a bit to make small discs or struck with a design stamp to add texture.

### SMART SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR JEWELRY MAKING PROBLEMS:

<https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith>

Happy hammering!

BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com



### HGMS SHOP RULES – SAFETY FIRST!

Revised June 2021

#### GENERAL SHOP SAFETY

- There must be at least 2 adults in the building when anyone (even a Shop Supervisor) is using machinery or a torch in any Shop area. Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian to work in the Shop. This is for safety reasons and will be enforced.
- A Shop Supervisor must be present for general members to use any Shop area.
- Members must be current on their dues to use our shops. For insurance reasons, non-members may NOT use shop equipment.

## LAPIDARY SHOP

- Hearing protection is recommended while working in the Lapidary Shop, especially when lots of people are grinding and sawing. We have disposable ear plugs available – ask a Shop Supervisor if you need some.
- Eye protection is REQUIRED when using the grinding equipment and trim saws. If you do not have your own safety glasses, ask a Shop Supervisor to get you a pair.
- Report Equipment Damage: Tell the Shop Supervisor on duty if anything breaks or is damaged so we can get it fixed. We know accidents happen . . . BUT, if you leave without telling anyone you are at risk of having your shop privileges revoked. We check the video recordings.

## JEWELRY/METALWORKING SHOP

- The Shop is equipped with individual benches, flex shafts, and shared torches, rolling mill, buffer, and similar larger equipment. Members must bring their own hand tools, flex shaft attachments (burrs/drills/buffs etc.) and materials for personal work outside of classes.
- HGMS offers casting classes. Any member who wants to do centrifugal or vacuum casting outside of class needs to contact Tony Lucci. NO EXCEPTIONS.

## PALEO AIR ABRASIVES SHOP

May be used during any Open Shop time by trained members. Contact Neal Immega for training.

## CENTER CLASSROOM ORION TIG WELDER AND LATHE

May be used during any Open Shop time by trained members. Contact Neal Immega for training. Club provides 316 Stainless Wire for welder; if you want something else you will need to bring it. Welder handpiece must be checked out from Neal for each use.

## LAPIDARY SHOP FOR YOUTH SECTION

Lapidary Shop grinding equipment is reserved for exclusive use by Youth Section from 10am – noon on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month. Parents must remain in the Club with their children. If shop space permits, other members may use the Trim and Slab Saws during Youth sessions – ask a Youth Supervisor first please.

## SHOP LOG & FEES

Write your name in Shop the Logbook when you arrive (one log for all Shops located at the check in table in the Lapidary Shop). Record your use on the way out -- please leave your cash or check payment in the can. If you find yourself short, please fill out an IOU form which needs to be paid up within two weeks. Only one (1) open IOU at a time per person allowed.

- Slab saw cuts are \$.25 per square inch of material; ask a Shop Supervisor if you need help determining the correct fee for your slabs
- Lapidary Shop grinding equipment and trim saw use is \$2.00/hour
- Orion TIG Welder is \$2.00/hour.
- Jewelry/Metalworking Shop use (except casting) is \$2.00/hour

- Paleo Air Abrasives Shop use is \$2.00/hour
- Use of equipment in the center classroom is a flat \$2.00/day (no time limit).

## MORE THAN ONE WAY TO ROCKHOUND

Phyllis George talked her neighbors into letting her have a large schist boulder in their yard since they did not want to move it to their new house near Austin. She mentioned that whoever bought their house probably would consider it “just a rock.” She, on the other hand, is a member of HGMS and could therefore appreciate its special properties.



Okay! You can have the rock, but how to move it? David George to the rescue! The schist boulder was hoisted onto a cart.



After a short walk down the street the rock was in its new home.



## THE JOYS OF MINERAL MINING AT HOME

*by Alanna Maharajh Stone  
from The Bulletin-12/2020*

If you are like me—very outgoing—it takes some wonderfully engaging things to occupy downtime at home during a pandemic. I did a lot of research about places to go rockhounding for various minerals, and to my delight I found quite a few mines that were able to ship ore or other mining materials directly to me. While we can't travel too far, I would highly recommend the following activities to satisfy your mining curiosities. When it is safe to travel everywhere again, I strongly encourage you to venture out to visit these mines and other rockhounding spots. It's always best to go out in the field and get your hands dirty!

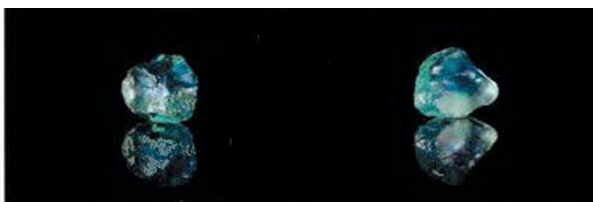
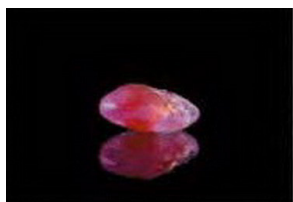
### SPOKANE BAR SAPPHIRE MINE, MONTANA

<https://www.sapphiremine.com>

This is what started it all!

I would really love to go out to Helena, Montana to do some sapphire mining there, and as I researched, I came across Spokane Bar Sapphire Mine where you can buy sapphire gravel. I initially started with a gem kit to sort through with my family over the winter. These included sapphire gravel and garnet gravel as well as a tweezer and a small screen. I would recommend starting with that to see if you enjoy sorting. Of all the types of home mining I have done, this takes the most patience and perseverance, but it is worth it. It's sort of Zen, and you can find various color sapphires from clear to blue to green to pink and more, and some hematite seed fossils and beautiful river rocks. Ideally, you need water to rinse the gravel in the screen and bright sunshine (or a bright light) to help you spot the glassy sapphires. I use an old baking tin with water to duck the screen in and give it a good shimmy. Then, I pour some water over it from a glass to rinse any remaining dust/dirt out. Use the tweezer to sort carefully through the gravel and see what you find. I enjoyed this so much, I bought a gravel bag to sort through. I'm still finding more as I go. You can purchase these from three different areas of the mine.

Here are pictured two of my favorite finds from this mine—a pink sapphire and a deep blue green sapphire—kindly photographed for me by my husband, Jonathan Stone, who is a phenomenal macro photographer of minerals (as Studio Mineralia).



### OCEANVIEW MINE, CALIFORNIA

<https://digforgems.com> (store)

<http://www.oceanviewmine.com> (details on this mine and Pala)

I was excited to come across Oceanview Mine as you can find several types of minerals here. In the ore bags from this mine, I've found tourmalines, quartz, kunzite, morganite, aquamarine, lepidolite, spodumene, mica, and more. You can sort through the ore in a larger screen (see the sapphire mine above if you want to buy one or you can make one yourself) and rinse with water.

My favorite find so far from this location is a green tourmaline crystal that—if you look very closely—there is a form within that looks very much like a musical note. I work in music, so for me this still makes me smile just thinking about it. Here is a lovely photo of it to share with you, taken by Jonathan Stone/Studio Mineralia.



### SEARLE CANYON RED BERYL MINE, UTAH

<https://gem.tours/info-redberyl>

<https://gem.tours>

Searle Canyon Red Beryl Mine and Solar Wind Mine are both run by Jeremy Fuller and his colleagues. I bought a 51b. bag of ore from Searle Canyon, and I was blown away by the beautiful topaz and red beryl (bixbite) minerals you can find. Red beryl is extremely rare. It's possible to also find pseudobrookite and bixbyite there. For sorting this and any other fine substrate, I would advise you to wear a mask as the particles are small. You can sort through the bag, or screen the materials. It is easier to find red beryl by sorting through the bag directly. This is a wonderful place to get some particularly cool specimens for your collection, and it's easy to spot the minerals within. You can buy various-sized ore bags, but I would recommend at least a 5-1b bag. Jeremy also offers mineral clubs discounts on gem tours at the mines and welcomes inquiries.

### SOLAR WIND MINE, UTAH

<https://gem.tours/info-solarwind>

<https://gem.tours>



Solar Wind Mine has some awesome bixbyite, topaz, and pink topaz. You can buy various-size ore bags, but I would recommend at least a 5-1b bag. I was lucky to find some larger bixbyite cube specimens that are cool, and some combination ones with topaz. I did find some pseudobrookite and amethyst in the ore here as well. For sorting this and any other fine substrate, I would advise you to wear a mask, as the particles are small. Sort through the bag, or screen the materials. I find it easier to sort through the bag directly. This is another wonderful source for some particularly cool specimens for your collection, and it is easy to spot the minerals within. Jeremy also offers mineral clubs discounts on gem tours at the mines and welcomes inquiries.

### **EMERALD HOLLOW MINE, NORTH CAROLINA**

<https://www.emeraldhollowmine.com>

<https://www.ehmlapidary.com/product-page/1-native-bag>

I bought a Native soil bag from Emerald Hollow, as I wanted to get a sense of what was actually there. They have other bags for sale that are “specialty bags” with certain minerals within, but I can't speak for those as I've only tried the Native soil type.

This you definitely need to do outside—if possible—as the dirt on the minerals makes it very hard to see what you have until they are washed. I created a crude sluice outside with a hose and my old baking tin, putting some of the soil on the screen above the tin and washing the materials thoroughly with the hose. I've found quite a bit of what may be the strongest mica I have ever come across (it's very hearty!) as well as some quartz, and biotite mica. I still have a bunch more soil to sort through, so I'll send an update once that's all set.

### **DIG MAINE GEMS, MAINE**

<https://www.digmainegems.com>

<https://www.digmainegems.com/shop> (store)

Mount Mica ore finds can include tourmaline, beryl, quartz, garnets, aquamarine, optical quartz, rose quartz, mica, smokey quartz and more. I bought a Mt. Mica Straight Run Box of dirt from the quarry in West Paris, Maine as I was excited to compare the finds from Maine alongside those from California. Still going through it, and it does not disappoint! I have found all of those minerals within the first couple of times mining. For this I advise a bigger screen that could hold a few handfuls would be very helpful, a hose to rinse the material, and an old baking tin to place beneath the screen so you can catch anything that may slip through. My crude sluicing works pretty well. It's messy, but certainly fun! I sort the baking tin again by pouring the contents into a strainer and rinsing it off once more with the hose to catch any smaller minerals. Did I say to do this outside? Well definitely if you can. Otherwise, I would be careful of the mess indoors. It can still be done!

### **EMERALD VILLAGE, NORTH CAROLINA**

<https://www.emeraldvillage.com>

<https://www.emeraldvillage.com/shop/gem-mixes/emerald-only-mix>

This time, I did something I don't usually do—I bought a salted Emerald Only Mix of crushed local rough mine ore mixed with emeralds from various global locations. Normally I would just opt for a straight version of a mine's ore to find minerals only from that location, but this option is not available here. You can sort through this pretty quickly with or without a screen. I have come across some lovely rough emeralds so far, and I'm looking forward to seeing what else emerges.

**VIVA USPS AND FLAT RATE MAILBOXES!  
ROCK SOME MINERALS ALWAYS. CHEERS AND BE WELL!**

# HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES

May 4, 2021

by Nancy English

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

President Stewart called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. A quorum was present.

### PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

The HGMS clubhouse remains closed for member use in order to minimize the danger of Coronavirus spread. Some Sections are scheduling virtual meetings. The May and June General Meeting programs can be experienced virtually. Classes will not be scheduled until the Club reopens. The Board of Directors will determine when it is safe to reopen.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion: Tricia Rittaler moved to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2021 Board of Directors meeting, as printed in the May 2021 BBG made available online on May 1, 2021. Michele Marsel seconded the motion and it passed.

### TREASURER REPORT:

Treasurer Michele Marsel sent the Treasurer's Report to members on May 2, 2021.

- Treasurer Marsel received the AT&T contract renewal notice for the Club phone (281) 530-0942; she will contact AT&T to clarify offers and complete the renewal before the June 1 deadline.
- The Amigo Energy electricity contract of thirty-seven months ended on April 29, 2021. Treasurer Marsel renewed it for another thirty-seven months. The renewal rate is higher than the old rate but lower than current rates for competing companies. The old rate was \$0.0485 per kWh and new rate is \$0.055. The lowest rate from other companies was \$0.062. She also updated the contact information.
- Treasurer Marsel agrees with Phyllis George and others that Jewelry Artist (formerly Lapidary Journal) has articles enjoyed by most interest groups within HGMS. There is enough money in the budget, so it will be renewed at Club expense when it comes due.
- Last month at the April BOD meeting the Board voted to move the money in the maturing Chase CD and the bulk of the funds in the Chase high yield savings account to a new Money Market Savings account at Live Oak Bank. In the nineteen days since

it was opened on April 12, 2021, the new account has earned more interest than all the other accounts this year.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

BBG: 2nd Vice President, Beverly Mace notified members on May 1, 2021 that the online version of the May BBG is available on the HGMS website. The paper copy of the BBG will be picked up and mailed on May 5, 2021.

Donations and Auction Committee: The “Save the Date” notification was sent on April 26, 2021 for the Online Auction. Final testing and data load will be completed the week of May 3. Notification with a link to preview and instructions on how to participate will go out on May 9 or 10. The Auction will be held on Saturday May 15 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. HGMS members will receive an additional reminder on May 14.

Education Committee: Members can find links to online projects in the HGMS Sunday E-blasts. Maggie Manley has contacted former teachers to check on their continuing interest in teaching when the Club reopens.

Scholarship Committee: Mike Sommers reported via email that all the notices are out. He received replies thanking us for the information. He will send some reminder emails in a couple of weeks, trying to encourage students to apply, and to look for some feedback about our scholarship.

Show Committee: Scott Singleton reported on progress toward the 2021 Show and his concerns about the Club’s ability to support the Show with enough volunteers. The bullet points that follow represent the ensuing discussion.

- Via email, on April 18 the Board voted to proceed with the HGMS 2021 Annual Show in person.
- Scott modified the dealer application. Dealer contracts need to be sent out.
- Scott is concerned that we will not have enough volunteers to fill the 125 volunteer slots over the three days of the show since the clubhouse is shut down and membership is dropping.
- Steve Blyskal pointed out that the Volunteer Coordinator needs to poll the membership to determine the number of willing volunteers.
- Michele Marsel reported that we have 247 members. That is half of the members we had in 2019 at Show time. It is difficult to refer to them as active members now that the Clubhouse is closed. It will take a couple of months to stir up enthusiasm for the show.
- President Stewart interjected that the issue is when to reopen the Club.
- Randy Carlson suggested we cut dues in half in June and Beverly Mace, Membership Chairman agreed that it would be a good incentive to join.
- President Stewart is hesitant to start having General meetings in June. Tricia Rittaler reminded us the CDC guidelines caution against indoor meetings with people not in the same household.
- If volunteers are not interested/available, Scott will need to cutback expectations for the annual show. If we do not reopen the Club this summer, he predicts that volunteer participation at the Show will be down. When asked what would be cut back, he listed Education programs, the Mineral and Paleo Section Tables, the fluorescent booth, Dino Dig, demonstrators. All these areas need volunteers to run them. The essential areas are the Info Booth and Ticket Sales.

- Mike Dawkins suggested that the Mineral and Paleo tables be staffed for limited time frames.
- Humble Civic Center is not in the City of Houston, HCC has its own guidelines: It recommends wearing masks but does not enforce it. It does not enforce 50% attendance. The HGMS floor plan already meets the 6-foot distance guidelines. HGMS pays extra for the janitorial services on Saturday and Sunday. Those services do not include frequent sanitization.
- Nancy English was waiting for this meeting to occur to begin contacting volunteers and talking up the Show with volunteers, e-blast, and colleges.
- Scott needs to have a Show Committee meeting to verify who is on the Committee. It will be a Zoom meeting. He is waiting for the Board to commit to have volunteers to staff the Show.
- Scott said three things need to happen:
  - The Publicity Committee needs to start producing ads.
  - The dealer contracts need to go out.
  - The Volunteer base needs to be verified.
- Nancy English asked if Scott was asking for a decision to reopen the Club in June or July. He said in his Show Committee report he is commenting on the upcoming motion to reopen the Clubhouse. He is concerned about the volunteer participation by a membership that cannot meet at the club.
- Nancy English informed the BOD that only thirty to fifty volunteer slots are filled by Club members. The other eighty to one hundred positions are filled by the college students that are provided by University of Houston Downtown, San Jacinto Junior College, and Alvin Junior College. She will contact the colleges in the next few days.
- Maggie Manley is prepared to teach a Beading Class during the Show. She will talk to Tony Lucci and Joy Lester about teaching classes at the Show.
- Steve Blyskal reminded us that the Show Swap area will be open. At least one volunteer will need to be there for each shift.
- Steve Blyskal reported that the Abilene, TX Show was one-third more successful this year than in prior years. There appears to be a pent up enthusiasm for in-person shows.

Web Site Committee: Scott Singleton is working on a new Show page, and he has asked other members of the Web site committee to review it. The Annual Show page needs to go live, because he is receiving requests for dates and times.

Section Reports were postponed until after Old Business item Clubhouse Reopen.

## OLD BUSINESS

Clubhouse Reopen Proposal for Limited Reopening of HGMS Effective June 1, 2021. Neal Immega wants to open the Shop so he can teach cabochon making to vaccinated individuals. Appointments are already increasing for Shop use and people are dropping in to use the Shop and the Library.

- Mike Dawkins suggested HGMS reopen in June and see who comes to get an idea of the interest.
- It was suggested that members bring their own hand sanitizer or HGMS supply it.
- Fred Brueckner said to ask the Shop Foremen if they are ready to open the Shop to everyone. Fred also suggested the future Section meetings be hybrids of in-person

and Zoom presentations.

- Maggie Manley said the Beading Section is ready to meet in person.
- Steve Blyskal said the Mineral Section may have virtual meetings during in-person meetings to reach people out of state that have been participating.

Motion: Michele Marsel moved that HGMS open the clubhouse effective June 1, 2021 for all activities, except Youth Section, including Shop use, General and Section Meetings, classes and field trips with appropriate masking and social distancing per CDC guidelines for small to medium group gatherings, and that the official reopening policies be published in the weekly Member Eblast and the BBG to:

- a. Masks are still required for activities inside the Club.
  - b. Seating for meetings must maintain 6-foot distance between parties from different households.
  - c. HGMS class instructors may require proof of vaccination to participate in classes.
  - d. Members should use their own discretion and attend activities in accordance with their own comfort levels, as they may be near individuals who have not been vaccinated.
- Steve Blyskal seconded the motion and it passed.

## Return to SECTION REPORTS

### SECTION REPORTS

All In-Person Section Meetings are canceled until June 1, when the Club reopens as described above. Some Sections may continue to conduct virtual meetings.

Beading Section: third Saturday, 1:30 p.m., May 15, 2021. Zoom program. Ann Money will lead the group in making a beaded loop tassel.

Day Light Section: first Wednesday, 1:00 p.m. May 5, 2021. No program planned. Fred Brueckner, Day Light Board representative, will contact the Day Light Chairman, Nancy Searle, about the Club reopening so she can ask the Day Light regulars if they are interested in starting in-person meetings on June 2, 2021.

Gemstones and Faceting Section: second Tuesday, 7:00, p.m., May 11, 2021. Randy Carlson announced that the May program will be ONE DAY earlier on Tuesday, May 11 at 7:00 p.m. due to a scheduling conflict. The meeting will be on Zoom instead of Webex. For the May program, Randy will share information on California benitoite, a rare blue barium titanium cyclosilicate.

Lapidary and Silversmithing Section: third Monday, 7:30 p.m., May 17, 2021. No program planned.

Mineral Section: third Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., May 19, 2021. Zoom program planned. Tricia Rittlar reported that Steve Blyskal will continue his Fluorite PowerPoint presentations focusing on Fluorite localities in France this time. Steve will also ask the attendees if they want to resume in-person meetings in June or if they want to continue Zoom meetings. Sigrid Stewart suggested a hybrid meeting both in person and online.

Paleo Section: third Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., May 18, 2021. No program planned. Neal Immege has asked Mike Dawkins to schedule a field trip. Mike will start with Whiskey Bridge and only 25 people. Steve Blyskal shared news from Frank Roberts who is vaccinated now; and he is scheduling trips to Emerald Ridge and a copper mine near Fredericksburg. Fossils can be hunted near Fredericksburg. Other Texas locations discussed are: Wilson

Pit, Briarwood, Canyon Lake to collect crinoids, Jasper, Midlothian for fossils and petrified wood, Texoma, Post Oak Creek, and Jacksboro.

Youth Section: first and third Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to Noon., May 15 and June 5, 2021. No programs planned.

Return to OLD BUSINESS

Rekey the building:

Neal Immega, Michele Marsel, and Fred Brueckner researched new key systems. Neal Immega is in favor of changing to keyless access system. Michele sent the Board a write-up on the proposal for an Access/Lock system for the HGMS building. She recapped the information and answered questions.

- The proposed high security access system has both a deadbolt and lower latch. This system allows HGMS to know who comes into the building. It can be coded to lock automatically at a certain time.
- The Brooklet door must remain open during hours the building is occupied for emergency exit. The door will open from the inside when it is pushed, but it will be locked to the outside. There is a sidewalk to that door for handicap use. Also, the large garage door opens for handicap access.
- Current Board members, current Section Chairmen, and active shop supervisors (who run two or more shops per month) will be authorized to choose a six-digit personal access code. Temporary codes will be available for class instructors.
- There are two ways to get help if needed: the manufacturer and the company that sells the system. In the event of a total lock failure, there are two people with master keys to unlock it, Neal Immega and Michele Marsel.
- The Board will publish clear instructions to the code users. They will be required to accept the rules for using the code and penalties for sharing their codes.
- The installer suggested batteries be changed at the same time the smoke detector batteries are changed each year.

Motion: After Board discussion, Michele Marsel moved to have Howard Lock & Safe proceed with installation of the High Security Access Code Lock System with Latch and Deadbolt on the parking lot door and modify the Brooklet St. front door with a thumb-screw for emergency exit only. Access policies will be communicated to those issued access codes. Fred Brueckner seconded the motion and it passed.

Display Cases: President Stewart spoke with one cabinet maker who said it would cost at least \$400 per case to duplicate what we had; he will, however, give us a quote. That person is too busy to take on the whole project, but he has recommended an acquaintance who is also preparing a quote and may build a scale model. There is more research to be done on locks, glass types and the proper LEDs to light cases. Mike Dawkins will contact a carpenter he knows about bidding on building the cases.

NEW BUSINESS

The 2022 SCFMS and AFMS Convention needs a home. Don Shurtz contacted HGMS because the East Texas GMS cannot host the Federations in 2022. He included the requirements for meeting spaces and catering.

Scott Singleton said “we are the largest and most capable club in the multi-state area that encompasses Texas and adjacent states. Yes, I could lead such an effort— we have

the expertise because we have done it before. However, I cannot and will not do it myself. The club needs to support this and be willing to back up that support with volunteer effort. So, the dependent factor for me to offer to lead that effort, and Sigrid going out on a limb with the SCFMS and the AFMS, will be for the Board to vote to do it. I would suggest that before they vote to approve or not approve, and that they poll the club to see what kind of response they get.”

The Board asked Sigrid to contact SCFMS President Jerrold Simpson, SCFMS Executive VP Roger Burford and/or SCFMS Secretary Liz Burford to ask them when we need to give an answer. The issue will be revisited after that conversation.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be the first Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. June 1, 2021.

The next General Meeting will be the fourth Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. May 25, 2021. Steve Blyskal and Sigrid Stewart will present a talk on “Agates from the Kokernot 06 Ranch: a new collecting locality in Brewster County.” This is an historical old ranch featured in the Texas Monthly magazine in the 1990s. It has recently opened up to collectors. Steve will have pictures and information about the spectacular agates and picturesque views of the ranch.

ADJOURN: Nancy English moved to adjourn. Mike Dawkins seconded the motion and it passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

## **HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY**

### **GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

May 25, 2021

*by Nancy English*

President Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. She welcomed eleven members.

### **PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS**

Great News! On June 1, 2021, the HGMS Clubhouse will open! More information was shared during Old Business.

President Stewart reminded the members that the 68th Annual HGMS Gem, Mineral, Jewelry, and Fossil Show is scheduled for in-person exhibitions November 12-14, 2021, at the Humble Civic Center: Friday and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Tricia Rittaler moved to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2021 General Meeting as posted in the May 2021 BBG. Nancy Fischer seconded the motion and it passed.

### **COMMITTEE/SECTION 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 Houston Gem and Mineral Society ([publicity@hgms.org](mailto:publicity@hgms.org)). If you are a member and not on our e mail list, please contact the Publicity Chair at [News@hgms.org](mailto:News@hgms.org), Subject Line: New Member to be added.

President Stewart invited other Section Chairs and Standing Committee Chairs to make any additional announcements. None were made.

Donations and Auction Committee: Michele Marsel reported about the May 15, 2021 HGMS online public auction via email. Now that the dust has settled, and all bidders have paid, Michele is happy to announce that one hundred and forty people registered to bid, and forty- four bidders won one or more items. Because of the successful online auction, we were able to clear out the main room before reopening the Clubhouse on June 1, 2021.

Nominating Committee: No committee yet.

Show Committee: During the May 4, 2021 Board meeting, Scott Singleton expressed his concern about having enough volunteers at the 2021 HGMS Annual Show. The Board discussed ideas for creating enthusiasm among the members. The most important solution is to open the Clubhouse to create the social environment needed to encourage people to volunteer. The advertising and website notices are being created. The Volunteer application will be on the website soon. The Show Committee's first meeting was on Monday, May 17, 2021 via Zoom.

Website Committee: The Website Committee met and considered re-writes of the Show Page.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

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

Clubhouse Reopen June 1, 2021. No appointments are needed for members to use the shops and the library. General Meetings, Section Meetings, and small classes can resume. Some Section Chairmen may want to continue holding meetings virtually. The Youth Section may wait to resume meetings because many children are not vaccinated yet. Field trips can be scheduled, since in-person meetings are okay now. For the time being, the Board requests that the following be observed:

- Masks are still required for activities inside the Club.
- Seating for meetings must maintain a 6-foot distance between parties from different households.
- HGMS class instructors may require proof of vaccination to participate in classes.
- Members should use their own discretion and attend activities in accordance with their own comfort levels, as they may be close to individuals who have not been vaccinated.

Display Cases: President Stewart continues to solicit bids to rebuild the display cases. Two bids have been received. There is more research to be done on locks, glass types and the proper LEDs to light cases. The insurance company told Sigrid how much they will pay for the cases. So far, the bids to build the same type cases we had are one and two hundred dollars more per case than they originally cost. (The materials and labor of the original cases were donated.)

Rekey Clubhouse: Neal Immega, Michele Marsel, and Fred Brueckner researched new key systems. The old lock on the parking lot door was replaced with a new access code system on May 18, 2021. The front door (Exit Door by the office) on Brooklet is now an



emergency exit only.

The Board has authorized access codes for current Board members, current Section and Committee Chairs, and current Shop Supervisors who run two or more shops per month. Temporary codes will be available for class instructors. Questions should be directed to [access@hgms.org](mailto:access@hgms.org)

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Field Trip:** Paleo's first scheduled field trip in 2021 was canceled due to rising river levels and potential heavy rain. Mike Dawkins planned to take twenty-five people to Whiskey Bridge, just west of Bryan, TX on the Brazos River. He will reschedule.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. June 1, 2021.

The next General Meeting will be Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. June 22, 2021. This will be our first in-person General Meeting in the Meeting Hall of the HGMS Clubhouse since February 2020. Sigrid Stewart and Steve Blyskal will be out of town for this meeting. Neal Immega will do a Paleo program.

**Drawing:** Mary Ann Mitscherling won the chunk of agate large enough to slab and make cabs.

**Auction:** President Stewart auctioned off three items. Tricia Rittaler bought the copper-bearing "green rock" with azurite, and malachite. Tricia bid on and won two calcite crystal rhombi. Steve Blyskal bought the bag of nice slabs: Rain Forest Jasper and agate slabs.

**Show-n-Tell:** Steve Blyskal showed off the agates he recently purchased online: two Laguna agates, two Coyamito agates from Rancho Coyamito, an Agua Nueva agate, and a pseudomorph.

**Adjourn:** Nancy English moved to adjourn. Nancy Fischer seconded it, and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Vice President Blyskal introduced the Program: Steve Blyskal and Sigrid Stewart presented a talk on "Agates from the Kokernot 06 Ranch: a new collecting locality in Brewster County" Part I. This is an old historical ranch featured in the Texas Monthly magazine in the 1990s. It has recently opened to collectors. Steve showed pictures of the ranch, the guide, and the agates he and Sigrid collected. Maps described the area near the triangle of the towns of Alpine, Marfa, and Ft. Davis.

Steve will bring the agates and more information about the Kokernot 06 Ranch to the July 27, 2021 in-person General Meeting for Part II.

## 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	Vacant	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

## JUNE 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 SHOP 10-3 DAYLIGHT 1-3	3	4 SHOP 10-3	5 SHOP 10-3
6 SHOP 10-3	7	8	9 SHOP 10-3 FACETING 6:30-8:30	10	11 SHOP 10-3	12 SHOP 10-3
13 SHOP 10-3	14	15 PALEO 7:30-9:30	16 SHOP 10-3 MINERAL 7:30-9:30	17	18 SHOP 10-3	19 SHOP 10-3 BEADING 1:30-3:30
20 SHOP 10-3	21 LAPIDARY 7:30-9:30	22 GENERAL MEETING 7:30-9:30	23 SHOP 10-3	24	25 SHOP 10-3	26 SHOP 10-3
27 SHOP 10-3	28	29	30 SHOP 10-3			

## JULY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 SHOP 10-3	3 SHOP 10-3
4 SHOP 10-3	5	6 BOD 7:30-9:30	7 SHOP 10-3 FACETING 6:30-8:30	8	9 SHOP 10-3	10 SHOP 10-3
11 SHOP 10-3	12	13 PALEO 7:30-9:30	14 SHOP 10-3 MINERAL 7:30-9:30	15	16 SHOP 10-3	17 SHOP 10-3 BEADING 1:30-3:30
18 SHOP 10-3	19 LAPIDARY 7:30-9:30	20	21 SHOP 10-3	22	23 SHOP 10-3	24 SHOP 10-3
25 SHOP 10-3	26	27 GENERAL MEETING 7:30-9:30	28 SHOP 10-3	29	30 SHOP 10-3	31 SHOP 10-3

# 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

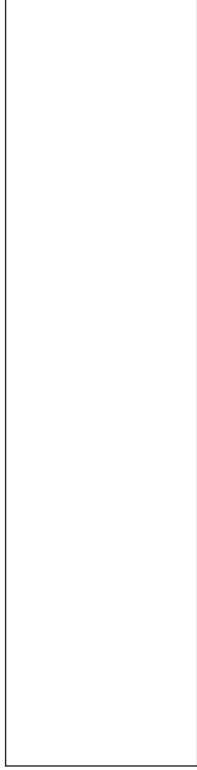


#### AFMS

- 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)



NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
BELLAIRE, TX 77401  
PERMIT NO. 303



**DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE DO NOT DELAY !**