



# The Pineywoods Rooter

Newsletter of  
**PINE COUNTRY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY**  
of Deep East Texas

May 2014

Volume 22 Number 5

Page 1

## **Club Officers**

President, Bill Talcott 384-8244  
Vice President, Joe Griggs 381-1123  
Secretary, Michelle Talcott 384-8244  
Treasurer, Sharon Stalsby 382-5314

Membership & Publicity,  
Jonetta Nash

### **Newsletter Editor**

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Member News, Michelle Talcott  
fizzycola@sbcglobal.net

### **Membership**

Club Membership is open to all who  
are interested in the Earth Sciences  
and the Lapidary arts.

Dues are \$24 yearly for families,  
\$18 for single adults and \$2 for kids.

### **Meetings**

The regular monthly meeting is held  
on the third Thursday of every month  
at 7 p.m. in the Club Building at 110  
N.Zavalla St. in downtown Jasper.

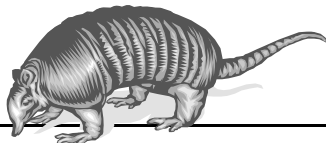
Visitors are invited to attend any of  
the regularly scheduled meetings.

### **Club Purpose**

Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society  
was formed for the purpose of  
encouraging interest and a better  
understanding of all phases of the Earth  
Sciences and Lapidary Arts and to  
promote fellowship and cooperation  
among members and with other  
groups with like interests.

### **Member Club**

South Central Federation of  
Mineralogical Societies  
and  
American Federation of  
Mineralogical Societies



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

It seems that this year is already flying by fast as they seem too as we get older. Here it is already May and summer is just around the corner with spring....where did it go? Anyway it seems that we just had the April meeting and here it is on us again.

If you haven't been by the club house recently you might just be surprised to see a new back door installed and a lot of lumber scattered about and if everything works out by next the next week's meeting perhaps some walls up for the new workshop area. We had a short work day several weeks ago and got a lot accomplished. One more good day and the whole back room will have taken on a new look. The goal is to have everything framed out in the next several weeks. Then the electrical installed and then work stations and then and then and then.....it will come together sooner than later.

Also I want to keep you reminded that the annual show is just around the corner and I have had several people ask about it already. Remind your friends and anyone you are talking to about the show. It is getting a good reputation and we want to keep the pressure on in the community. See you Thursday night.

Bill Talcott

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday, May 15, 2014  
7:00 P.M.**

**102 Zavalla Street, Jasper, Texas**

**Program: Sheriff Mitchel Newman**

UP-COMING SHOWS &

MAY 24-25 FORT WORTH, TEXAS  
Worth Gem & Mineral Club  
Will Rogers Memorial Center  
Amon G. Carter Exhibit Building  
3401 West Lancaster

JUNE 7-8 GRAPEVINE, TEXAS  
Arlington Gem & Mineral Club  
Grapevine Community Center  
1209 South Main Street

**ANNIVERSARIES**  
JONETTA JOHN NASH 5/16


**2014 Officers**  
President . . . . .Bill Talcott  
Vice President . . .Joe Griggs  
Secretary . . . . .Michelle Talcott  
Treasurer . . . . .Sharon Stalsby


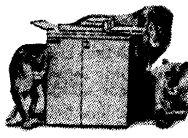
**Board Appointees**  
Activity - Field Trips . . . Fred Brown, Paul James  
Membership - Publicity . . Jonetta Nash  
Web Page . . . Sonja Richard  
Programs . . Bill Talcott & Others!  
Historian . . . OPEN  
Auction . . . John Nash  
Education . . . Janice Herron  
Chamber of Commerce...Ann James  
Show Chairperson . . .Ann James  
Hostess...Donna Ducote  
Building Chairman...Bill Talcott  
Address Correspondence to:  
Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society  
P O Box 2513, Jasper TX 75951  
**CLUB WEB SITE: [www.pinecountry-gms.org](http://www.pinecountry-gms.org)**

**BIRTHDAYS:**

RUTH HOWELL 5/14  
KRVIN FARRELL 5/19  
STEVE HOBBS 5/21  
MAXINE WAGNER 5/28

**BIRTHSTONE FOR MAY:  
EMERALD OR CHRYSOPRASE**

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**Notice to Exchange Bulletin Editors:**  
You may reprint any article in this newsletter in non-commercial club publications, provided that credit is given to the author of the article copied and to the Pineywoods Rooter. Editor

## Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society Meeting

Pine Country Gem and Mineral Society Meeting  
P. O. Box 2513 – Jasper, Texas –

**MINUTES FOR APRIL 17, 2014**



The PCG&MS met on April 17, 2014 at the clubhouse for the regular monthly meeting. There were thirty members attending and one visitor, Latrelle Foreman.

The meeting was called to order by Bill Talcott. The business meeting began with a motion by Rich Geist and a second by Joe Griggs to accept the minutes as recorded in the bulletin. The motion passed. The Treasurers report was given by Sharon Stalsby with a motion to accept by Charles Kerr and seconded by Ron Ducote, the motion passed. Jonetta Nash will file the tax report when it is completed.

Committee reports were presented. Paul James/Fred Brown (field trip) reported that everyone had a great time on the trip to Louisiana to view Don and Rita Brown's mineral and rock collection. They are also working on a trip at a later time to Woodward Ranch. Jonetta Nash (membership/publicity) reported that updated membership lists are available. Janice Herron (education) will have summer programs at the area libraries. Ann James (Chamber activities) reported some of the activities sponsored by the Chamber include the business breakfast, Hospice butterfly release, and golf tournament. Ann James (Annual Show) reported she has heard from all of the venders. She collected \$1830.00 from venders and paid for the Event Center which was \$1500.00. There will be a "kids only" auction table at the show. Bill Talcott (building) a work day will be scheduled next week, watch for the e-mail.

No old business to report.

No new business to report.

Winner of the half and half drawing was Fred Brown and Paul James won the door prize drawing that was provided by Sharon Stalsby. On a motion by John Nash and seconded by Olivia Marsh, the meeting was adjourned.

Attendees at the Meeting: Lonnie and Sharon Stalsby, Paul and Ann James, Bill and Linda Talcott, Ron and Donna Ducote, Joe Griggs, Maxine Wagner, Fred Brown, Charles and Sharon Kerr, Julia McCormick, Ron Carpenter, Lori Horne, Fred and Janice Herron, John and Jonetta Nash, Mike and Linda Lang, Rich Geist, Keith Stephens, Wayne and Olivia Marsh, Jay and Bobbie McDonald, Robbie Smith, and Jody Dorman.

Submitted by Linda Talcott, Acting Secretary

### Members Happenings

By Michelle Talcott

The Azalea Festival in downtown Jasper was March 15. Many rock club members were venders and shoppers.

The Talcott's and Stalsby's participated as venders at the Good Oil Days in Humble, Texas on April 5.

A reminder to everyone that if you take a trip, attend a festival, or simply get to do something interesting, e-mail me so that we can share it with the club. My e-mail is [fizzycola@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fizzycola@sbcglobal.net)

President

## SOMEBODY MESSED UP

Yes, it was me! Last month I placed two articles in our newsletter and gave incorrect credit. One article, Fulgurites, I credited Jody Dorman. Wrong- I copied the article from THE ROADRUNNER, March 2014 who got the article from THE TRILOBITE, September 2013. The other article, UV Light, I gave credit to Ann James. Wrong again. I am still trying to figure that one out. My apologies to both the authors of these articles and the newsletters from whence they came. John D

### New Method of Tumbling

by Al Nutile in Tulip City Conglomerate

The writer believes that the following idea can take much of the work from the popular method of tumbling. All of the instructions we have seen state: "Wash stones and tumble very clean between each change of grit or final materials," at the same time stating, "If liquid is too thick add some slurr or grit from previously used material."

We know some will argue against our method, but here goes: Don't wash at all after each week of tumbling with grit! Start with #50 grit, tumbling a week. Then DON'T EMPTY THE TUMBLER, but add 5 teaspoons of new grit [one step finer] to the mixture in the three pound tumbler. Follow this procedure through #190, #320 and #600 grit. Now [finally] thoroughly wash the stones and tumbler before pre-polish and final polishing.

For a really glossy finish, take one or more weeks [after washing out the polishing powder] adding three spoons of sugar, one spoon [level] of *Cascade* or *All* or any non-sudsing detergent and add about ten drops of muriatic acid, if you have some, let stand one minute - open, close tub, and tumble for a week.

We have run eleven tubs using this method and found that even ordinary sandstone comes out highly glossed. Except for extra final steps, you save three washings and getting rid of the slurr each time. Saves time, work and mess, and still gets a better polish.

From Pickin's & Diggitis 7/96 et al via The

Rockhounder October '99 via The Pseudomorph  
May 2000 via Rock Chips 6/00 via SCRIBE CD 08

### Emerald Factoids

Emeralds have been highly prized and valued as a gemstone since early times. Of all the members of the beryl family of minerals, the emerald is considered the most valuable.

From the Greek, "smaragdus" and the Latin "beryllus" and "emeraude," the name "Emerald" was first coined in the sixteenth century.

In ancient times, emerald was associated with the goddess Venus and endowed with the power to show faithfulness in one's partner. The Romans brought medicinal connotations to emerald and associated it restoring sight and soothing weary eyes.

Over the centuries, all sorts of mystical powers have been attributed to the emerald including the power of prescience, to attract wealth, and ward off epilepsy.

The two most important historical emeralds are the 1,384 carat Devonshire Emerald and the 630 carat Patricia Emerald displayed by the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

### Classification and Grading:

Emerald can be defined as opaque, translucent or transparent beryl with medium to dark tones of green in color. Beryl that is light or very light in tone are more properly called "Green Beryl." Over the years a number of terms and classification nomenclature has been used to describe gem grade emerald. These include:

- \* Colombian Emerald - The finest qualities have traditionally been called Colombian after their country of origin. These fine grades are characterized by the deep, intense pure green with either yellow or blue undertones.
- \* Siberian or Russian Emerald - From the Ural mountains these stones are lighter and more yellow than Colombian stones.
- \* African Emerald - In some cases the color of these stones rivals fine Colombian but more commonly are characterized by blue and gray overtones.

## FEELING MINERALS

By Dr. Bill Cordua, Minnesota Mineral Club Member

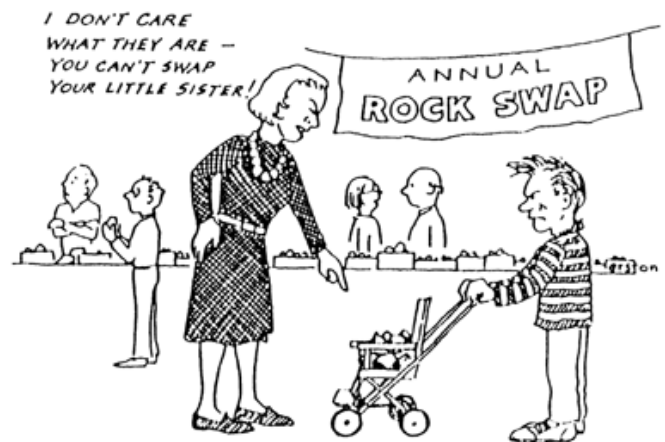
Most of us are sight oriented when we study rocks and minerals. Once, though, I was asked to give a program on minerals for the Minnesota Society for the Blind. As I was preparing this, I was impressed by the number of properties minerals have that can be sensed with the hands. It's worthwhile reviewing some of these as they are good identification tools for anyone. Density (or specific gravity) is one of the more familiar ones. This is the mass per volume. As an example, think of suitcases. They have a certain volume. When they are empty, they have little mass, thus a low density. Put clothes in them and they get heavier for their volume. If you're a typical rock collector, you have probably put rocks in your suitcases and increased their density immensely, much to the annoyance of airport luggage handlers. Mineral densities can be evaluated the same way - by "hefting" them. If they have a medium density, they will feel about normal in mass for their size. If they are low density, like pumice or muscovite, they will feel light. If they are higher in density, like garnet, galena, copper, barite or magnetite, they will feel heavy for their size. There are, of course, many ways to measure this density precisely, but "the heft test" still is a useful field test requiring no expensive instruments. You can fine-tune your approach by practicing hefting known minerals. Another property that can be appreciated with the hand is tenacity - the resistance of a mineral to mechanical crushing or bending. Brittle materials will break when stressed. Most minerals are brittle. Malleable minerals, such as copper or gold can be flattened into sheets. Those who collect on the old copper mines in Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula are aware of the resistance of copper bearing rocks, and the spiny feel of the broken copper edges. These minerals are also ductile, meaning that they can be drawn out in the form of a wire. Some minerals like chalcocite or gypsum are sectile, meaning they can be cut with a knife. Gypsum is soft enough to be cut by a fingernail. Some minerals, like the micas, are elastic and can return to their original shape after being bent. Some minerals like talc are flexible. Once bent,

these minerals stay bent after the pressure is released. The smoothness or slipperiness of a mineral's surface can also be used as a tool. Talc feels slippery. Serpentine feels greasy. The fibrous character of splintery or asbestiform minerals can also be sensed. Other minerals have distinct surface properties related to their wettability. This has to do with the way particular atoms on the surface of a mineral interact with water or other materials. Crysocholla becomes sticky when moist, as do many clay minerals. Some clay minerals, such as those in the smectite\* group, actually swell when they absorb water and lose their strength. This is one reason why so many Western roads (where smectites\* are common in the soils) are good when dry, but become slippery mud holes after a rain. Diamonds do not wet with water. If a pile of crushed minerals is saturated with water to become a slurry, then run over a grease (such as Vaseline) the uncoated diamonds will stick to the grease while the well-wetted gangue minerals will slide right by. Beryl, corundum, rutile, spinel, topaz and zircon are other minerals that wet with difficulty. The capacity of dirt to slide off of mineral surfaces also affects their cleaning.

People who remark to me that datolites can be recognized on the mine dumps of the Keweenaw by the way the dirt seems to slide off of them are using this property.

Minerals are great to look at, but the enjoyment of their properties span all the senses.

From the The Rockviter May.2003 Rock Rustler's News, 3/03; via The Southwest Gem, 4/03.



Cartoon from Rockbuster News 6/89  
via T-Town Rockhound 9/97  
via The Burro Express 10/97

## GYPSUM

by Jody Dorman, member PCGMS

One of nature's most spectacular and largest mineral deposits lies in the desert country of south central New Mexico, White Sands is 225 square miles of dazzling white gypsum sand that has been blown into dunes up to 60ft in height. In another spectacular deposit is at the Cave of Swords, in Chihuahua, Mexico, numerous transparent, sword like selenite gypsum crystals reach lengths of 6ft. or more. Selenite, from the Greek word selene, meaning "the moon", is the name for transparent crystals of gypsum, but is often incorrectly used for gypsum in general.

Gypsum takes its name from the Greek *gypso*, meaning "chalk", "plastic", or "cement". Uses of Gypsum: Is an important economic mineral since the time of ancient Egyptian civilization, gypsum was mined to the west of Alexandria, near Suez, in the Al Fayyum, and near the Red Sea coast. It was used for mortar and plaster in the Giza necropolis, and it was used elsewhere to plaster walls, cover bodies, make statues and masks, as an adhesive, and as a filler in pigments. The Romans discovered that heating gypsum to 600 degrees made a plaster that sets hard when mixed with water. This plaster was used for building, and is still widely used today. Gypsum is also used to help clear up muddy ponds. Gypsum is widespread calcium sulfate hydrate that is found in a number of forms, and is of great economic importance. It is colorless or white, but impurities tint it light brown, gray, yellow, green, and orange. It often occurs in well-developed crystals. Single crystal can be blocky with a slanted parallelogram outline, tabular, bladed, or in a long thin shape like a ram's horn. Twinned crystals are common, and frequently form characteristic "swallowtails" or "fishtails". Gypsum is also found in a parallel, fibrous variety with a silky luster, called satin spar. The massive fine-grained variety is called alabaster. Rosette-shaped crystals are called desert rose, and are common and less dense than the barite "sand crystals" that they resemble. Gypsum occurs in extensive beds formed by the evaporation of ocean brine, along with other minerals similarly formed in particular, anhydrite and halite it has low solubility and is the first mineral to separate from evaporated sea water.

Gypsum also occurs as an alteration product of sulfides in ore deposits; as disseminated crystals and rosette-shaped aggregates in sedimentary deposits, including sands and clays; and as deposits around volcanic fumaroles. Gypsum occurs widely throughout the world, but the US, Canada, Australia, Spain, France, Italy, and England are among the leading commercial producers of gypsum.

Properties

Group: Sulfates

Crystal System: Monoclinic

Color: Colorless, White, Light Brown, Yellow, Pink

Form/Habit: Prismatic to Tubular

Hardness: 2

Cleavage: Perfect

Luster: Subvitreous to Pearly

Streak: White

Gravity: 2.3

Transparency: Transparent to Translucent

Source Smithsonian Rock and Gem Book

## MORE ON CABBING

—By Carl Childers

as an addendum to his program on Sept. 7

My method of cabbbing has evolved over many years and one difference in my method over most was discovered using an old Graves faceting machine (slow speed). I was unable to enjoy removing lumps and bumps with the expandable drum. I began experimenting with a flat lap with sponge rubber and resin pad charged with 270 diamond at a very slow rpm — I now use 50 to 300 rpm depending on material.

For grinding I use a 6" sintered 270 grit diamond wheel at motor speed. With the 270 grit pad I am able to smooth the surface entirely without lumps, bumps and scratches at the slow speeds, keeping the cab in motion at all times. Sanding for steps 600 through 14000 is also at slow speed, usually.

Polishing with 14000 diamond, depending on the material, is not always satisfactory — so I use a variety of oxide polishes with vinegar, colloidal silica, and a variety of oxides in colloidal suspension. Pelton®, felt, leather or velvet carry the polishes, depending on the material.

—From Rockytier, Oct 2004 via The Shin Skinner

## Sphere Making Tips

—By Dan Imel

First Tip: From a recent trip to another club show, I picked up the following tip: One of their club members had told a member to use a ball chain in a loop long enough to reach into the cup of slurry below with a little sitting on the bottom.

It sits on the sphere at the front of one of the cups. As the cups rotate, so does the chain. It drags the slurry back up to the cups. Seemed to work really well but I suspect you have to wait until you have a slurry actually started. This has an advantage over machines with an automatic grit feed because it uses the grit over, not so much waste.

Second Tip: They had accidentally allowed grit to run back along the motor shaft and ruin a motor when it got into the gears. I was thinking about the problem and came up with the following solution. I love laundry detergent bottles, especially the 300 ounce size because they have a fairly large flat area you can use. Either by hand with a utility knife or using a hole saw like you'd use to install a door lock (it can be much smaller) cut three circles of plastic from the detergent bottles, one for each shaft on a three motor sphere machine, with a center hole slightly smaller than the shaft on the motors. Remove the cups on the sphere machine. Take an O-ring that's tight on the shaft and push it on ahead of the plastic washer you've made. Leave a slight gap in front of the motor. Place the washer on, then another O-ring to lock it in place and help seal things. No glue necessary. If the shaft is inclined so the grit runs down the shaft, the washer and O-rings will block it from getting to the motor, much like a collar on a bird feeder helps stop squirrels from climbing up to the food. The spin of the motor will prevent the grit from getting back to the shaft on the other side of the washer. This solution shouldn't affect cooling of the motor either and, since the washer spins with the shaft, it shouldn't wear at all. The detergent bottle plastic doesn't readily degrade with use and is very durable. If you use a hole saw to cut your washers, use a block of wood as a backer for the saw to cut through to.

From Rock Collector, April, 2006 via The Shin Skinner News, May 2006 via SCRIBE CD

## Ocean Jasper Dan Sperber

Since I started cutting Ocean Jasper, everyone asks me what it is and where it comes from. Well, I decided to do a little research and this is what I came up with. The recent introduction of the newest stone in the jasper family is spectacular orbicular jasper, known as Ocean Jasper. This stone, the product of one mine on Madagascar's remote northwest coast bordering the Indian Ocean near Marovato, was only discovered after years of searching, in an area so isolated it has no roads and the only way it can be accessed is by boat. All ocean jasper mined here must be transported to a more developed area of Madagascar using the same method...by boat.

Ocean Jasper can only be observed and collected at low tide. It is made up of 'rhyolitic' spheres or orbs, and comes in an astonishing array of colors and color combinations, many of which, in the gem trade, can go for a ton of money. One of the most sought after forms of ocean jasper, is the stuff that is translucent. Stones cut from this material and set into jewelry can go upwards of a hundred dollars each...or more. I found a reference to a story about the discovery of this great material, from an article published in the June 2001 edition of *BC Rockhounder*, by the owner of the Ocean Jasper Mine, Paul Obenich. "Back in the 1950's, a buyer was shown a few pieces by a prospector, but the latter couldn't remember where he'd got the material. After some confusion, it was agreed that it came from a remote and rugged section of coastline...on the northwest side of the island. Not a very encouraging description to pinpoint the source!" "In the 1977 edition of *Grund's Mineral Encyclopedia*, there was a photograph of the mythical jasper, but its source was still unknown.

The mystery remained. Then, in 1998, Paul Obenich, owner of Madagascar Minerals, spent 45 days traveling up the coast, stopping at fishing villages and asking everyone he met if they knew of this striking rock." "...he found it, but in the most bizarre locality. ...the mystery of why the deposit had remained hidden for so long became clear when he discovered it was only accessible at low tide! Hence the new name—ocean jasper."

via Stoney Statements, May 2006 via SCRIBE CD